



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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UNESCO STANDS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Across all its programme areas, SHS objectives and activities to address contemporary ethical challenges and social transformations are tailored to favour the progressive realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. SHS encourages human rights research; advances education in human rights; leads action in the fight against all forms of discrimination at national, regional and international level; fosters cooperation among all actors and networks; promotes democracy and furthers reflection on new forms of preventing and combatting violence and encourages human rights research with our partners.

SHS future work in Human Rights

Human rights are the basis of all SHS work. The challenges and responses to be addressed through the Programme will be both defined and assessed in terms of the realization of human rights.

This work will continue to be inspired by the following Strategies adopted by the governing bodies:

- Integrated Strategy to combat racism, discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance; and
- UNESCO Strategy on Human Rights.

In accordance with the **36 C/5 Main Lines of Action 1, 2 and 3 of Major Programme III on Social and Human Sciences**, human rights work will be conducted through the following work streams:

Human Rights and Social Inclusion

Work on social inclusion, which is one of the two priority areas of the MOST Programme, will promote inclusive societies in which vulnerable and excluded groups can fully participate in society and realize their human rights. This will involve promotion of capacities of Member States and local authorities to introduce and implement inclusive

policies and practices, as well as activities that promote the capacities of the target groups (e.g. migrants, youth, and indigenous populations) to claim/advocate for their rights.

SHS will also promote inclusive cities policies by working on anti-discrimination through the Coalition of Cities Against Racism.

Human Rights, Democracy, Youth and Social Innovation

Implementation of the Roadmap on Democracy and Renewal in the Arab World will evolve in the next biennium. A pilot pedagogical training manual on democracy and human rights for youth was produced in Tunisia, to empower young people to participate meaningfully in the democratic process. Its potential is to be exploited.

UNESCO is committed to fostering the civic engagement of youth in emerging democracies, such as in the Arab world. Building on the promotion of youth participation in their communities, emphasis will be put on fostering youth-led social innovation to support non-violence, conflict resolution, social and economic opportunities and successful transition to adulthood respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.



Particular attention will be given to the implementation of the Strategy on African Youth and the African Youth Charter, with emphasis on youth rights to employability through social entrepreneurship. The gender dimension is key to this effort as it is a UNESCO's priority.

Human Rights and Global Environmental Change

Social transformations arising from the challenges posed by global environmental change are the second priority area of the MOST Programme. Environmental pressures on social transformations such as biodiversity loss, freshwater scarcity and climate change are closely associated with issues of human rights, underdevelopment, inequalities within and between countries, global social justice and international law. Understanding the conditions in which environmental change might undermine the progressive realization of human rights is of crucial importance in designing human rights based response policies.

Specific emphasis will be put on environment-related migration and displacement, which are affected by multidimensional issues, including human rights, social inclusion, governance, conflict, gender, economic and human development and public health. Increased displacement and resettlement of migrants in this context will have real impacts for communities in countries of origin, destination and transit.

Human Rights and Bioethics

The link between bioethics and human rights as conceptual frameworks is clearly reflected in the normative action of UNESCO in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005). UNESCO will pursue the promotion of these normative instruments in Member States focusing on principles such as: "Human dignity and Human Rights"; "Consent"; Non-discrimination and non-stigmatization"; "Equality, Justice and Equity"; "Respect for Cultural Diversity and Pluralism"; "Social responsibility and Health" (access to basic needs such as health, nutrition and food), and Sharing of Benefits. An on-line training course in bioethics and human rights will be developed for capacity building, and for awareness-raising of media.

Human Rights-Based Approach

By promoting the application of the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in UNESCO, SHS will reinforce the contribution of the programmes and activities of the Organization to the realization of human rights and ensure that human rights principles and standards guide actions in all areas and in all phases of the programming process.

Other activities include:

- Strengthening capacity-building efforts on HRBA for UNESCO staff and planning programme implementation with a human rights perspective.
- Expanding HRBA to key UNESCO partners, including the Coalitions of Cities against Racism and Discrimination and National Commissions.
- Participation to the activities of the United Nations Development Group Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism.
- Promoting the implementation of the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications (Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).
- Encouraging implementation of the International Charter of Physical Education and Sports which recognizes the practice of physical education and sport as a fundamental right for all (article 1 of the Charter). A special focus will be devoted to Youth.

“A CONSTANT EFFORT”

In this way, human rights become the bedrock of the Social and Human Sciences – not only are human rights strengthened by being applied consciously to all SHS programmes; but expected programme outcomes and processes are defined in human rights terms and incorporating the human rights and fundamental freedoms framework.

As emphasized by UNESCO's High Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures¹, **“the purpose of the New Humanism is to create a climate of empathy, belonging and understanding, along with the idea that progress with respect to human rights is never definitive and requires a constant effort of adaptation to the challenges of modernity”**. This is precisely why the Social and Human Sciences Sector will continue to work on and with human rights to address the emerging social, environmental and ethical challenges of the 21st century.

1 Source: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001923/192362e.pdf>