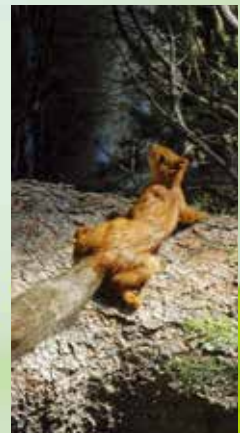


Sangsaeng

Living Together Helping Each Other

Ecocentrism and GCED: Beyond Human Rights to Nature's Rights



ISSN 1599-4880

No.63 | 2024



Centre
Under the auspices
of UNESCO

APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre of
Education for
International Understanding
유네스코 아시아태평양 국제이해교육원

CONTENTS



- 03 Editor's Note
- 04 **Special Column**
Creating Respectful, Valued Society – Strengthening Global Citizenship Education (GCED) to Combat Hate, Racism, and Discrimination Worldwide / Peter K. Ngure



- 08 **FOCUS**
**Ecocentrism and GCED :
Beyond Human Rights to Nature's Rights**
Getting Over Ourselves – Ecocentrism: The Importance of Earth Jurisprudence, Compassionate Conservation, and Personal Rewilding / Marc Bekoff
Combating Decline of Nature's Diversity – Global Citizenship Education for Geodiversity, Biodiversity Conservation / Eunhee Lee
Ecocentrism and Global Citizenship Education – Fostering Coexistence with Critically Endangered Primates through Citizen Science / Andie Ang
Dolphins Dream of Peace: Beyond Human Rights to Nature's Rights / Interview with Seungmok Oh



- 23 **Special Report**
Small Actions, Global Ripples – How GCED is Revitalizing Peace / Micha Aime



- 26 **Best Practices**
What's Good for the Community – GCED in Action Fosters Culture of Bulungi Bwansi in Uganda / Barbara Nakijoba
Sharing Emotional Sensibility in Education – Practicing Arts Opens up the Spirit of Global Citizenship / Seoyoung Bae
Teaching GCED through Liberation History – Working to Eradicate Entrenched Racism, Intolerance, Xenophobia / Charles Chikunda



- 36 **GCED YOUTH NETWORK**
How Youth Leaders Redefine Advocacy, Leading Global Change to Shape our Future – Deep Dive into South Asian Youth Declaration on GCED, Facilitation Techniques for Empowered Youth / Noora Elkenawi
- 39 **Peace in My Memory**
Pathway to Inner Peace – Journey is Interconnected with Relationships and Environment / Itseng Kwelagobe
- 42 **Story Time**
From Drops to Waves – Power of Poetry-telling in Times of Crisis / Kalpani Dambagolla & Alessia Marzano
- 45 **Understanding the Asia Pacific Region**
Central Asian Heart of Culture – Legacy of Horsemanship from Tradition to Modernity / Gulzhan Kabysheva
- 48 **Letter**
Raising a Global Citizen / Nelly Aluanga Omino

- 50 **APCEIU in Action**

EDITOR'S NOTE



UNESCO's engagement with bioethics commenced in the 1970s, a time characterised by swift industrialisation and development. Acknowledging the pressing necessity to conserve the natural environment, UNESCO initiated the Biosphere Reserves programme, which centres on the sustainable management of ecosystems. This dedication to the preservation of biodiversity was further underscored by international frameworks, notably the 1993 Convention on Biological Diversity and Article 17 of the 2005

Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights.

In the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, issues on global citizenship and sustainability are highlighted by SDG Target 4.7, which emphasises the need to harmonise cultural and biological variety. As we learnt in previous issues, threats to ecosystems are ultimately threats to humanity. Coexistence and interdependence should be the guiding principles for all global citizens on earth. As the climate crisis escalates, there is an increasing recognition of the significance of biodiversity.

It is imperative that we transform our perspectives regarding flora, fauna, and all other forms of life, acknowledging them not merely as resources to be exploited but as essential constituents of our shared ecosystem. In this light, global citizenship now demands that we treat all beings ethically, acknowledging their intrinsic value within the ecosystem. In this context, *SangSaeng* 63 focuses on Ecocentrism and Global Citizenship Education (GCED): Beyond Human Rights to Nature's Rights.

The theme for this issue of *SangSaeng* was partly inspired by discussions about granting legal personhood to the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin off the coast of Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. Assigning legal status to ecologically significant entities marks a new chapter in nature conservation, ensuring their rights to exist, evolve, and thrive. Such entities would be protected by ecological guardians, highlighting that ethical responsibility goes beyond mere preservation – it includes acknowledging their rights as sentient beings.

This shift from an anthropocentric worldview toward ecocentrism marks a significant evolution in how we perceive the natural world. The focus section of this issue seeks to promote the idea that overcoming anthropocentric worldview requires a deep respect for and coexistence with nature.

By staying attentive to issues such as animal welfare, environmental protection, and sustainable development, and by redefining the concept of global citizenship as that of an eco-citizen or earth citizen, we establish the foundation for a genuinely ecocentric global citizenship. In addition, this issue covers recent international trends in Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and amplifies the voices of young people.

In the Special Column, Ambassador Peter K. Ngure addresses "Creating a Respectful, Valued Society" and emphasises the role of Global Citizenship Education in challenging prejudice and fake news spread through the media. In the Best Practices section, Barbara Nakijoba presents best practices in the case of empowering communities through environmental conservation and GCED. In the Youth Network section, Noora Elkenawi, GCED youth network team, presents "Toward Peace and Reconciliation by Promoting Global Citizenship Education," drawing attention to the importance of Global Citizenship Education for young people.

In the era of diversity, humans are also called 'Homo Symbiosus,' a concept first proposed by Professor Jaechun Choe, signifying 'humans who coexist.' As humanity faces crises shaped not only by the urgent environmental challenges but also by the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), humans must expand their horizons of community. This includes not only other humans but also animals, plants, the atmosphere, and even AI itself. In this sense, I would like to remind our readers that our task in this century is to be reborn as Homo Symbiosus.

Kwang-Hyun Kim

SangSaeng [상생] is published two times a year by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) under the auspices of UNESCO.

SangSaeng [상생], a Korean word with Chinese roots, is composed of two characters: *Sang* [相], meaning "mutual"[each other] and *Saeng* [生], meaning "life." Put together, they mean "living together," "helping each other," which is our vision for the Asia-Pacific region. *SangSaeng* [相生] aims to be a forum for constructive discussion of issues, methods and experiences in the area of Education for International Understanding and Global Citizenship Education.

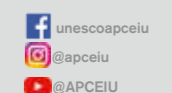
Publisher: Hyun Mook Lim
Editorial Team: Kwang-Hyun Kim, Kyung-Hwa Chung, Yosep Park
Copy Editor: Yoav Cerralbo
Designed by: Seoul Selection
Printed by: Chunil Printing

Address: 120, Saemal-ro, Guro-gu, Seoul (08289) Republic of Korea
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Cover: The mosaic image shows that the Earth is a connected system where all species coexist as equal partners

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Photo by Andie Ang, Dohyung KIM, Kwanghyun KIM, Seung-mok Oh.



CREATING RESPECTFUL, VALUED SOCIETY

Strengthening Global Citizenship Education (GCED) to Combat Hate, Racism, and Discrimination Worldwide

By Peter K. Ngure (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Kenya to UNESCO)



△ All types of bullying caused by hatred.

The world today faces a resurgence of hate, racism, and discrimination that threatens peace and cohesion. These issues traverse religious, cultural, social, economic, and political boundaries.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has positioned itself strategically to combat these challenges. With various inter-sectoral initiatives, UNESCO strives to foster understanding, counter divisive narratives, and cultivate a global citizenry grounded in respect for diversity and human rights.

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is at the heart of this mission, an initiative designed to empower individuals with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to build a more inclusive and just world.

GCED's Role, Impact

Global Citizenship Education represents a transformative approach to education that seeks to move beyond academic knowledge to cultivate values and competencies essential for responsible and empathetic global citizens.

Recognising that each individual belongs to their country and a broader international community, GCED encourages learners to understand the world's interconnectedness and recognise their shared responsibility in addressing its most pressing challenges. Therefore, a global citizen values the richness of cultural diversity and actively participates in collective actions to promote peace, justice, and equality.

GCED equips learners with a deeper understanding of the complexities of global issues, from economic inequalities to environmental sustainability.

By fostering critical thinking, cross-cultural respect, and collaborative problem-solving skills, GCED empowers individuals to work across national and cultural boundaries, paving the way for collective solutions to issues too large for any nation to solve alone. In recent years, GCED's relevance has only grown as the need for empathetic and globally aware individuals has become increasingly urgent in light of rising nationalism, xenophobia, and online hate speech.

GCED's focus on promoting respect,

empathy, and active engagement in addressing societal challenges makes it a powerful tool for fostering a more peaceful and cohesive global community.

Role of Digital Literacy

A significant modern challenge to GCED's mission is the rise of hate speech, particularly online. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have become battlegrounds where harmful rhetoric can spread rapidly.

The anonymity of the internet often emboldens individuals to share offensive or discriminatory content, fuelling divisions and inciting violence.

Victims of online harassment frequently suffer severe emotional and psychological harm, leading to feelings of isolation, depression, and even despair.

In response to this challenge, GCED emphasises digital literacy as a fundamental component of its curriculum.

Digital literacy is not only about learning how to use digital tools but also understanding how media and information can be misused to manipulate public opinion, spread misinformation, and amplify hate.

A digitally literate individual possesses the skills to evaluate online content critically, identify misinformation, and recognise the emotional and psychological impact of hate speech. One pressing area in digital literacy education is equipping young people with the ability to discern "deepfakes" – videos and images manipulated through artificial intelligence to mislead audiences. Deepfakes can be used to create false narratives or distort public perception, often in ways that promote fear, hatred, and discrimination.

By educating learners about these technological threats, GCED fosters a generation that is more resilient to digital manipulation and more empowered to stand up against online hate speech and cyberbullying.

Targeting Vulnerable Populations

Racism and xenophobia remain deeply ingrained issues that disproportionately impact vulnerable populations, including immigrants, minorities, and refugees.

Around the world, individuals from

“

Global Citizenship Education represents a transformative approach to education that seeks to move beyond academic knowledge to cultivate values and competencies essential for responsible and empathetic global citizens.

”



△ Cyber Bullying and Racist via Internet.

marginalised communities face prejudice in multiple areas of daily life, from workplaces and schools to public spaces and law enforcement.

In the United States, instances of racial profiling continue to raise concerns. At the same time, in countries such as South Africa and parts of Europe, xenophobic sentiments have spurred far-right movements and hostile actions against migrants.

GCED addresses these pervasive issues by fostering empathy and understanding across cultural divides.

Through the programme, learners are encouraged to examine the roots of prejudice and explore the socioeconomic and historical contexts that have shaped perceptions of different groups.

By nurturing an understanding of shared human experiences, GCED aims to build bridges across divides and challenge the stereotypes that underpin discrimination.

When individuals recognise the value of diversity and embrace cultural differences as strengths, societies become more resilient to the forces of division.

The GCED curriculum goes beyond classroom learning to promote active community engagement and real-world applications of its principles.

By encouraging learners to participate in multicultural exchanges and intercultural dialogues, GCED provides the tools to dismantle harmful narratives and empower young people to become advocates for inclusivity and social justice within their communities.

Youth to Challenge Prejudice, Embrace Diversity

Young people are among the most impacted by hate speech and discrimination.

Their formative years are critical for shaping values, beliefs, and behaviours, making it essential to address issues of prejudice and intolerance early on.

GCED's approach is comprehensive, incorporating not only traditional education but also mentorship, community involvement, policy advocacy, and media literacy.

By creating a supportive environment

that fosters empathy and understanding, schools, families, and communities can work together to raise a generation that values diversity and rejects hate.

To support this, GCED promotes curriculum enhancements that emphasise lessons on racism, discrimination, and social justice.

Through these teachings, young people learn to challenge stereotypes, appreciate diverse perspectives, and develop the emotional intelligence to engage with others respectfully.

By helping learners understand that personal backgrounds and experiences shape worldviews, GCED cultivates a culture of empathy and tolerance crucial for harmonious societies.

Digital literacy is also central to these efforts.

As young people become more active in online spaces, they must be equipped with the skills to navigate the digital world responsibly.

GCED's focus on media literacy makes learners aware of misinformation and its potential harms. This education empowers

young people to recognise false narratives and respond constructively, creating a positive digital presence that promotes inclusivity and counters hate speech.

Sustaining Momentum

Combating hate, racism, and discrimination requires a coordinated, multifaceted approach that involves stakeholders from all sectors.

In collaboration with other United Nations entities and international organisations, UNESCO has created a platform for multilateral cooperation that encourages joint efforts to counter these global issues.

These collaborations help build awareness and enable the exchange of resources, expertise, and best practices essential for driving systemic change.

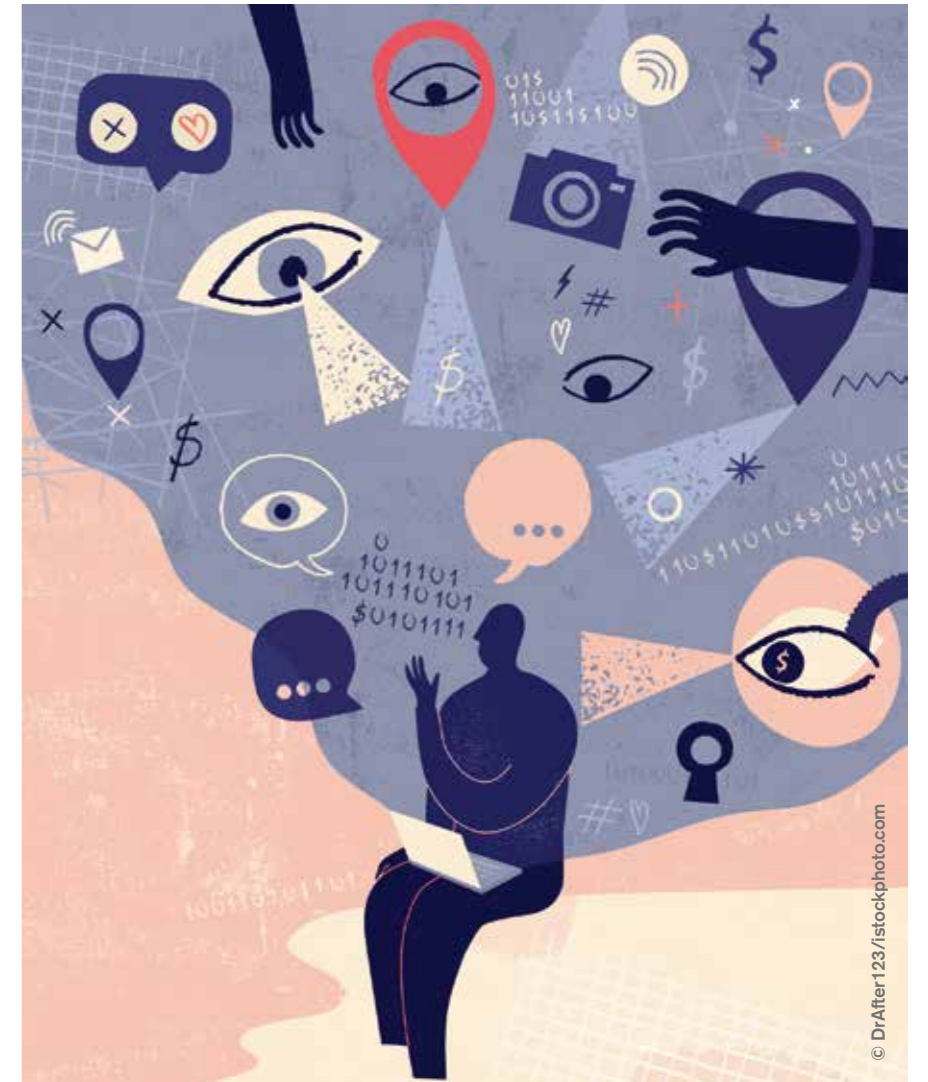
One prominent initiative in this regard is UNESCO's International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR), a coalition of over 500 cities worldwide. ICCAR works locally, helping municipalities implement inclusive education, employment, housing, and cultural engagement policies. By addressing discrimination in these fundamental aspects of society, ICCAR exemplifies how local governments can lead in the global fight against hate and bigotry.

Moreover, UNESCO's partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights exemplifies the benefits of multilateral cooperation.

Together, these organisations co-lead the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which champions the "Leave No One Behind" principle, ensuring that efforts to combat discrimination are inclusive of all communities and mindful of intersectional challenges.

This commitment to inclusivity and equity strengthens the foundation of GCED, reinforcing its mission to create a world where everyone is respected and valued. Since 2021, UNESCO has launched a series of initiatives to advance the fight against racism, hate, and discrimination on multiple fronts.

A cornerstone of these efforts is the Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination, which brings together member states and expertise that lays the groundwork for a more inclusive and peaceful world by promoting tolerance,



△ Dangers And Risks Of Internet.

empathy, mutual respect, and civil society to share insights, strategies, and commitment to action.

UNESCO's Master Class Series against Racism and Discrimination is another notable programme, training over 6,000 students across the globe to champion antiracism and inclusivity within their communities.

UNESCO's partnerships with institutions like the Oxford Internet Institute are also essential in addressing the challenges posed by online hate speech.

Through a project funded by the European Union, UNESCO and its partners assess global capabilities for monitoring hate speech, developing tools that help countries track trends and devise solutions.

Complementing this work is

UNESCO's Media Information Literacy (MIL) programme, which fosters critical thinking and media awareness. By teaching individuals to analyse media with a critical eye, MIL empowers people to recognise and reject discriminatory narratives.

Building More Inclusive, Just World Strengthening Global Citizenship Education is essential in the battle against hate, racial prejudice, and discrimination.

Through education that values diversity and collective action, GCED equips individuals to actively combat divisive forces and create a global society where everyone is respected and valued. 🌍

GETTING OVER OURSELVES

Ecocentrism: The Importance of Earth Jurisprudence, Compassionate Conservation, and Personal Rewilding

By Marc Bekoff (Professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, USA)



△ Globe in hand that symbolizes protection of wildlife.

“**T**hat the universe is a communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects is the central commitment of the Ecozoic. Existence itself is derived from and sustained by this intimacy of each being with every other being of the universe,” said Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry.

I came to ecocentrism as a youngster. My focus was on other animals, but, as time went on, I also incorporated humans and all our homes into a broad ecocentric perspective.

I always attribute my compassion for nonhuman animals to my mother’s warm and compassionate soul, my positive thinking, as well as keeping my dreams alive to my incredibly optimistic father.

In retrospect, I know I was very lucky to be born into a home where playfulness and laughter were highly valued, as was hard work.

I didn’t live with any animals except a goldfish. I used to talk to him as I ate breakfast. It felt very natural to do this. I told my folks that it wasn’t nice to keep him cooped up alone.

My parents told me that when I was around 3 years old I started asking them what animals—especially the dogs, squirrels, birds, and ants with whom I had contact outside of our apartment in Brooklyn—were thinking and feeling.

They said I was constantly minding animals; not only was I attributing minds to them, but I also was very concerned with how they were treated. I always said we needed to mind and care for them because they couldn’t do it for themselves.

My concern for individual animals has continued on for decades as I work in the rapidly developing field called compassionate conservation. Ecocentrism recognizes that a nature-centred, rather than a human-centred, view of nature means that many people will have to change their values if they favour humans over nature as a whole, including nonhuman animals and their homes.

One Piece of the Puzzle

Earth Jurisprudence can be viewed as a philosophy of law and human governance that is based on the idea that humans are only one part of a wider community of beings and that the welfare of each



△ A modern building harmonize with nature.

member of that community is dependent on the welfare of the Earth as a whole.

Thus, societies of humans are part of a wider community that incorporates societies of other animals and where they choose to live or are forced to live. All community members are dependent on one another. No individual is an island, and we all depend on one another to thrive and to survive.

Embracing Earth Jurisprudence is essential in the Anthropocene, often called “the age of humanity.” Given how human animals are plundering our magnificent planet and surroundings, I call the Anthropocene “the rage of inhumanity,” in which the interests of humans regularly trump the interests of nonhuman animals. The idea that all of Earth’s residents are part of an interconnected community forms the basis of my ideas about personal “rewilding” that are outlined in the book “Rewilding Our Hearts: Building Pathways of Compassion and Coexistence.”

The ideas are novel and call for personal (and some might say individual) spiritual transformations that serve to reconnect people to nature and to embrace the magnificence of our planet. All individuals are seen as stakeholders who must work together. The growing interdisciplinary and international field of compassionate conservation also mandates that all

individuals are stakeholders and is based on the principles of: first, do no harm; all individuals matter; and we must strive for peaceful coexistence among all of Earth’s residents. Currently, while many people talk about how all individuals matter and how all individuals must work together, in the end, human interests regularly trump those of nonhumans.

This has produced a chaotic world that is falling apart daily.

Rewiring to Rewild

Personal rewilding and compassionate conservation can change how we go about business as usual and can come to the rescue and reverse these destructive trends.

As such, I’ve called for a “rewilding manifesto” based on compassion and biophilia—our innate drive to connect with Mother Nature—that will help to foster hope for the future. Along these lines, what I call “the ethology of rewilding” entails focusing on what we know about who other animals truly are and using this information to come to a deeper appreciation of the similarities and differences among nonhuman animals and between nonhuman and human animals.

I lean toward the side of offering practical solutions. We don’t need more science to know that we must change our ways, and we already have enough information

COMBATING DECLINE OF NATURE'S DIVERSITY

Global Citizenship Education for Geodiversity, Biodiversity Conservation

By Eunhee Lee (Principal Researcher, Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources, Republic of Korea)



△ Slipped slope of Vorarlberg, Austria.

Most people are familiar with the concept of biodiversity, which refers to the vast variety of living species on Earth and the genetic variations within species and ecosystems they form.

Biodiversity is the foundation of life on our planet, playing a crucial role in supporting the stability and resilience of ecosystems.

Diverse ecosystems are better equipped to withstand environmental stresses, such as climate change, drought, or disease, because the wide range of species within them can fulfil different ecological roles.

In addition to its ecological importance, biodiversity provides essential services to humanity, such as pollination, water purification, carbon sequestration, and soil fertility.

It directly supports various industries while also contributing to cultural identity, spiritual values, and recreational activities. Recognising the importance of biodiversity, the global community has made significant

efforts to advocate for its preservation.

For instance, the member states of the United Nations ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, an international treaty focused on conserving biodiversity, promoting its sustainable use, and ensuring equitable sharing of benefits from genetic resources.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land), directly target the conservation and sustainable use of marine and terrestrial ecosystems. One of these UN agencies that plays a pivotal role in biodiversity conservation is UNESCO.

Through various educational programmes, scientific advancements, and partnerships, UNESCO promotes sustainable development and ecological conservation worldwide.

An example is UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, which establishes a global network of Biosphere Reserves—areas dedicated to fostering sustainable development through research,

conservation, and local community involvement. Then what is geodiversity?

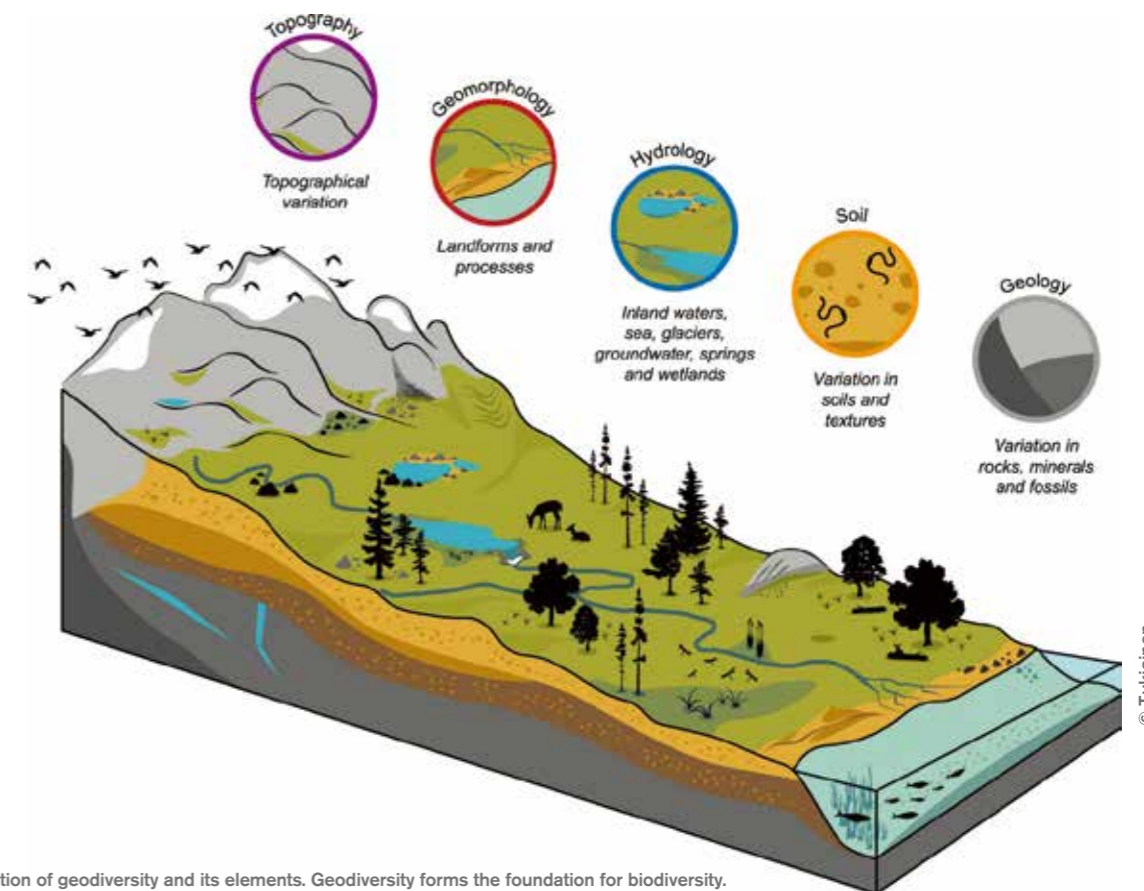
While the importance of biodiversity is widely recognised, the concept of geodiversity may be less familiar. To understand geodiversity, consider how volcanic islands like Hawaii or Jeju differ from glacial and mountainous regions such as the Himalayas, the Alps, or the Taebaek Mountains.

This diversity in geological landscapes influences the species that inhabit these areas, as well as the lifestyles and cultures of the people living there.

Geodiversity refers to the natural variety of geological, geomorphological, pedological, and hydrological features and their processes. It encompasses large-scale elements like mountain ranges and river systems, as well as micro-features such as rocks, minerals, soil types, and fossil deposits.

While biodiversity refers to the living aspects of Earth, geodiversity covers the non-living components.

Like biodiversity, geodiversity provides critical ecosystem services.



△ Illustration of geodiversity and its elements. Geodiversity forms the foundation for biodiversity.

© Tukialainen



△ Marine iguana around mangrove forest on Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos Archipelago, Ecuador.



△ Mangrove forest scenery destroyed by the urban expansion.

Geodiversity supplies essential natural resources such as minerals, fossil fuels, and construction materials.

It also influences how landscapes respond to natural hazards, provides immense cultural, spiritual, and aesthetic value, and enables scientific understanding of Earth's processes.

Recognising the importance of geodiversity and geosciences in solving major challenges that humanity is facing today, UNESCO's General Conference proclaimed 6 October as International Geodiversity Day.

Geodiversity Plays Crucial Role in Shaping Biodiversity

While biodiversity forms the foundation of life on Earth, it is geodiversity that provides the groundwork for biodiversity and extends its influence even further. Geological processes create mountains, valleys, plains, and plateaus, which in turn give rise to a variety of habitats.

These diverse environments allow species to adapt to different ecological niches, thereby contributing to high levels of biodiversity.

For example, different soil types, which originate from various parent rocks, support distinct types of vegetation. This vegetation, in turn, sustains a wide range of animal life.

Similarly, freshwater ecosystems—such as rivers, lakes, and wetlands—are shaped

by hydrological processes like water flow, erosion, and sediment deposition. These ecosystems foster a unique array of both aquatic and terrestrial species that have evolved specifically to thrive in freshwater conditions.

Geodiversity also plays a key role in regulating Earth's climate, particularly through the carbon cycle.

Carbon is stored in rocks, oceans, and forests, and changes in carbon levels—whether due to volcanic eruptions or human activity—affect global temperatures.

As a result, conserving geodiversity and promoting the sustainable development of geoheritage are crucial for transitioning to a low-carbon society and ensuring a sustainable future for our planet.

At its core, Earth provides the essential environment for all life, and its diverse geological features have shaped the characteristics, diversity, and functions of living organisms.

Increasing Threat to Geodiversity, Biodiversity

Geodiversity and biodiversity are closely interconnected, each influencing the other and shaping global ecosystems.

A decline in biodiversity caused by the loss of geodiversity can have ripple effects on food chains, water resources, and climate patterns, and vice versa.

Therefore, addressing both geodiversity

and biodiversity would need a holistic approach that considers their interactions with each other and with climate change.

It is crucial to recognise that all aspects of our planet—whether living or non-living—are interlinked. Any threat to one system can trigger wide-reaching impacts on others, leading to global consequences such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events, food insecurity, and species extinction.

Let's explore examples of how geodiversity, biodiversity, and climate change are interlinked.

Wetlands are one of the examples demonstrating close interaction between the geosystem, ecosystem and climate change. Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on Earth, providing shelter, nursery areas for diverse plant and animal species, and wintering grounds for migratory birds.

If you think again about the geological aspect of the wetlands, you will soon figure out that geology plays a crucial role in shaping wetland environments.

The region's geology determines the types of soils in wetlands, which influence water retention, nutrient availability, and the species of plants and microorganisms that can thrive.

Additionally, the topography and geology shape the landscape by creating depressions for water accumulation and affecting the flow of surface and groundwater.

Groundwater, in particular, is a key water source for many wetlands, supplying necessary water resources for animals and plant species found in wetland systems.

Protection of geological elements of wetland, therefore, is the key to maintaining wetland ecosystems against various environmental stresses. Wetlands are also among the largest carbon stores on the planet. They sequester carbon through plant photosynthesis and store it in plant biomass, sediments, and soil.

Despite covering only 6–9 per cent of the Earth's surface, freshwater wetlands hold up to 33 per cent of the world's soil carbon.

The capacity of wetlands to capture carbon largely depends on soil conditions, water levels (often controlled by groundwater inputs), geochemical properties, and biodiversity – all of which are increasingly disturbed by human activities.

If wetlands were to disappear, for instance, due to reduced groundwater flow, the greenhouse gases stored within these ecosystems would be released, accelerating global warming. Another example of how human activity affects geological processes and biodiversity is the formation of plastiglomerates.

Plastiglomerate is a new rock-like material created when plastic waste melts and binds with natural materials like sand, seashells, coral, and volcanic rock.

First discovered on Kamilo Beach, Hawaii, in 2006, plastiglomerates are considered a geological marker of the Anthropocene due to their human-made origin. Plastiglomerates pose an emerging threat to ecosystems.

As they erode, they break down into smaller particles, contributing to the growing issue of microplastics, which are harmful to marine life.

The release of microplastics from plastiglomerates introduces toxins into the food chain. Additionally, the production of plastic, which leads to plastiglomerates, is tied to fossil fuel use.

As plastic production increases, so does its contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, further exacerbating climate change.

Decline in Geodiversity, Biodiversity is a Global Issue

Climate change, along with the loss



△ The Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland comprised of hexagonal basalt columns.

of geodiversity and biodiversity, are challenges driven by human activities like deforestation, pollution, and carbon emissions. These impacts are felt worldwide, particularly in vulnerable regions that lack the resources to adapt or recover.

No single country can tackle these problems alone. Global partnerships, cooperation, and education for global citizenship are crucial to addressing these critical challenges and ensuring sustainable development for all.

Protecting biodiversity is a shared responsibility that transcends national borders. A deeper understanding of the link between climate change, geodiversity, and biodiversity highlights the need for global citizens to work together to protect the planet and sustain ecosystems.

Promoting sustainable development and encouraging responsible environmental stewardship is essential, as geodiversity and biodiversity are key to maintaining ecological balance, supporting human life, and ensuring future generations can meet their needs. UNESCO provides platforms and educational resources to promote global action for sustainable development and environmental protection.

One of UNESCO's flagship programmes, the Man and the Biosphere Programme, combines scientific research, education, and capacity-building to improve the relationship between people

and their environments.

The International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme of UNESCO promotes international collaboration in geoscience research and education, while UNESCO Global Geoparks serve as unique sites that combine protection, education and sustainable development by keeping geodiversity as the central core of its value.

Through initiatives like the Associated Schools Project Network, UNESCO works with schools globally to raise awareness about biodiversity and environmental stewardship.

Programmes like the UNESCO Youth Forum, the UNESCO Green Citizens Project, and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) engage young people in promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Global action is essential to combating the decline in geodiversity and biodiversity, as well as climate change.

A unified, global response ensures the shared distribution of responsibility and resources to address these issues effectively.

Global Citizenship Education should focus on increasing understanding of the interconnections between geodiversity, biodiversity, and climate change, promoting a holistic approach to address cross-border challenges and ensuring equitable solutions for all. 🌐

ECOCENTRISM AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Fostering Coexistence with Critically Endangered Primates through Citizen Science

By Andie Ang (President of the Jane Goodall Institute, Singapore)



△ Citizen Scientists participating in environmental monitoring.

In an era characterised by ecological degradation and social inequities, ecocentrism and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) emerge as crucial frameworks for fostering sustainable and harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

Here, I would like to explore how local initiatives, such as citizen science programmes, can play a pivotal role in promoting these ideals, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable future.

Understanding Ecocentrism

Ecocentrism is a philosophical and ethical standpoint that emphasises the intrinsic value of all living organisms and their ecosystems, regardless of their utility to human beings.

This perspective challenges anthropocentrism, which places human interests above all else, often leading to environmental harm. Ecocentrism posits that a healthy relationship between humans and nature is essential for the well-being of both. It encourages us to see ourselves as part of a larger ecological community, where every element plays a vital role.

Framework for Change

Global Citizenship Education seeks to empower individuals to engage with local and global issues, fostering a sense of responsibility towards the planet and its inhabitants.

GCED promotes awareness of global interconnections, urging individuals to consider how their actions affect others and the environment. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and active participation in addressing challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and social justice.

GCED aligns closely with the principles of ecocentrism, as both frameworks advocate for a holistic understanding of our relationship with the planet. By integrating these philosophies into education, we can cultivate a generation of citizens who value ecological integrity and are committed to fostering sustainable communities.

Role of Local Initiatives

Local initiatives, such as citizen science



△ Raffles' banded langurs and her baby.

programmes, embody the principles of ecocentrism and GCED by encouraging community engagement and promoting environmental stewardship.

Citizen science involves the public in scientific research, allowing individuals to contribute to data collection and analysis while fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for their local environment.

Case Study: Citizen Science in Action for the Conservation of Endangered Primates

Raffles' banded langur (*Presbytis femoralis*) is one of only three species of non-human primates found in Singapore.

With a remaining population of around 75 individuals, it is classified as critically endangered. Its elusive behaviour, arboreal lifestyle, and small numbers contribute to low public awareness of this species, which in turn hampers conservation efforts.

To address this, I launched a citizen science project focused on Raffles' banded langurs in Singapore through a partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute (Singapore) and the National Parks Board Singapore.

We conduct a volunteer training workshop every six months to introduce the programme and teach simple data collection methods.

Following that, recruited volunteers head out to designated nature parks in Singapore to find and observe the langurs

and other wildlife they may encounter.

They conduct their field surveys during the weekdays or weekends (08:00–11:00 and 15:30–18:30) and are committed to doing six surveys over a six-month period.

Since August 2016, we have recruited more than 600 participants, with the current 15th round happening from April to October 2024. Based on data analysed of the first four years, we found that the average volunteer retention rate was 38 per cent. This means that while 38 per cent of volunteers continued to the next cycle, 62 per cent were new recruits.

During this period, over 150 sightings of Raffles' banded langurs were documented, resulting in a 24.9 per cent encounter rate, equivalent to one sighting for every four survey assignments. On average, 65.8 per cent of volunteers observed the langurs at least once.

By analysing sighting locations, group demographics, high-resolution photographs submitted by citizen scientists, and data collected by researchers, we identified five groups of langurs, comprising 34 individuals along the survey route, which was roughly half of the total langur population in Singapore.

Additionally, the data revealed the langurs' use of roads to travel between forest fragments, enabling authorities to plan and construct two rope bridges for their safe crossing. We regard this citizen science project as a success due to the high number of observations of these critically



△ Citizen Scientists participating in environmental monitoring.

endangered and rarely seen primates.

This programme empowers community members to actively participate in environmental monitoring, contributing valuable data that can inform conservation efforts and policy decisions.

By engaging citizens in the scientific process, the programme fosters a deeper understanding of ecological systems and the importance of biodiversity. Most crucially, this initiative exemplifies a successful collaboration among the public, government agencies, nongovernmental organisations, and educational and private institutions.

Building GCED through Local Action

Citizen science programmes like the langur surveys serve as vital stepping stones toward fostering global citizenship.

By participating in local initiatives, individuals develop a sense of agency and empowerment, recognising that their contributions can lead to meaningful change. This local engagement fosters a broader understanding of global issues as participants learn how local environmental health is interconnected with global ecological systems.

For example, a citizen science project focused on monitoring local water quality can reveal how pollution in a nearby river impacts both local ecosystems and global water supplies.

Participants become aware that their local actions, such as reducing plastic use or advocating for cleaner waterways, can have ripple effects beyond their immediate environment.

Education as a Tool for Transformation

Integrating ecocentrism into educational curricula can help nurture a sense of environmental responsibility among students.

Schools and universities should prioritise experiential learning opportunities, encouraging students to participate in local citizen science projects and community-based conservation efforts.

This hands-on approach not only enhances academic knowledge but also fosters a sense of belonging and stewardship towards the environment.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Building strong partnerships between educational institutions, nonprofit organisations, and local communities can enhance the effectiveness of citizen science initiatives.

Collaborative efforts can amplify the reach and impact of these programmes, allowing for more comprehensive data collection and analysis. Furthermore, by bringing diverse perspectives and expertise together, these partnerships can create a richer learning experience for participants.

Advocating for Policy Change

Citizen science programmes can also serve as a platform for advocating policy changes that promote environmental sustainability.

By collecting and presenting data on local ecological issues, participants can engage with policymakers and advocate for practices that protect natural resources.

This active engagement fosters a culture of accountability and encourages decision-makers to prioritise environmental health in their policies.

Meaningful Stewardship

The principles of ecocentrism and Global Citizenship Education are vital in fostering a sustainable coexistence between humans and nature.

Local initiatives like citizen science programmes exemplify how community engagement can lead to meaningful environmental stewardship and promote global awareness.

By empowering individuals to take action in their local environments, we can cultivate a generation of ecologically conscious citizens committed to protecting the planet for future generations.

Through education and community action, we can build a more sustainable and equitable world, rooted in the understanding that our well-being is intricately linked to the health of our planet. 🌍

DOLPHINS DREAM OF PEACE: BEYOND HUMAN RIGHTS TO NATURE'S RIGHTS

Interview with Seungmok Oh, Documentary producer for DOCUJEJU, Republic of Korea

The Sangsaeng editorial team, along with the chief editor, sought to highlight the groundbreaking initiative for animal legal personhood through the interview with a documentary film producer, Seungmok Oh and his efforts to preserve the Ind-Pacific bottlenose dolphins around Jeju Island.



△ A bottlenose dolphin jumping in the air.

Q1. You are known to film diverse wildlife around Jeju Island, and Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are especially featured in your work. Is there a special reason why?

DOCUJEJU, the company to which I belong, has partnered with the Whale and Marine Life Conservation Research Center of Jeju National University to monitor and research Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins. So we've been working together to monitor them for over two years.

Before I got to the bottlenose dolphins, I documented lots of other wildlife. Avian species were my main focus, but I also documented various plants.

Back in June 2022, I was documenting the hawks that breed on the coasts of Jeju—they're designated natural monuments. I happened to see a pod of dolphins swimming by, so I filmed it. I assumed they would be just regular dolphins, but when I monitored them closely afterward, I found something hanging over the snout of a mother dolphin. To find out what it was, I asked Professor Kim Byung-yeop of Jeju National University. He told me, "It looks like a dolphin calf no more than three or four days old. And it seems like it's dead." That was a shock.

I reviewed the clip several times, but I didn't see any movement from that dolphin calf. That meant I discovered a dolphin that actually died immediately after birth. I had known that there were dolphins around Jeju Island, but I started asking why such young Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins would die.

That same year there was a project to release another Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin called Bibongi from an aquarium.

Today, capturing dolphins is strictly forbidden, but at the time, if a wild dolphin gets incidentally caught in a fisherman's net, it would be sold to perform at an aquarium. Bibongi was one of them.

And releasing an animal back to the wild takes requires some training.

So to document the process, I visited Bibongi in training several times, which got me more interested.

Bibongi was finally released on October 16, 2022. After was released, we then needed to track him to see if he was adjusting well to the ocean. Professor Kim asked me if I could help with this process, so I ended up dolphin tracking around Jeju.

As I was tracking Bibongi, I found a pod of dolphins making the entire coasts of Jeju their habitat, and I was able to glimpse their various behaviors. That made me think I really should observe all these other dolphins more closely, let alone track Bibongi. So from that point I started following after dolphins almost daily.

Q2. Are the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins endangered species today?

They are listed in a CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) appendix and are nationally designated endangered marine species. This is apparent just by observing their habitat situation around Jeju Island.

Just in the period when my team conducted focused observations, we've been seeing more and more dolphin calves die each year, and there are also lots of cases of dead full-grown dolphins washed ashore. It's estimated that there are 120 dolphins around Jeju, but that's certainly not a large number.

If we want to preserve the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins around Jeju, we have to see their number increase beyond what it is now. We're not seeing that yet, so yes, they are at risk.

Q3. Besides dolphins, you also film little egrets and grey herons. Are you also concerned with their preservation?

When you're observing dolphins, you're bound to run into egrets and herons. They're easily seen near the sea since there are no rivers or lakes in Jeju. There was no special incident that got me interested in them. It's just that little egrets and grey herons don't usually breed on Jeju Island. Egrets are common on the mainland, but in Jeju I was the first to document them mating, laying eggs, hatching, then leaving their nests. For grey herons as well, my team discovered a siege of herons breeding. Before, there were doubts that egret species like little egrets and grey herons would really breed in Jeju's environment, but then we saw these cases. So we began paying more attention to them.

And attention to wildlife preservation is unquestionably necessary.

One reason to preserve them is to avoid risks to us humans. We're intimately



△ Seungmok Oh, Documentary Producer for DOCUJEJU.

connected to wildlife. If the species that are part of the food chain go extinct one by one, then down the road, this is bound to be detrimental to humans.

If a problem occurs in an ecological process because of human interference or impact, the affected species may go extinct, which will also impact other processes and eventually cause problems in our own food supply such as fruit production. These processes are all linked.

Q4. In Jeju there is an initiative to recognize dolphins as legal rights holders to ensure their protection. Are there other countries that are designating special legal status for animals to acknowledge their legal personhood? And what is legal personhood?

There are some cases that apply to animals in general, but to my knowledge there is no case of a specific animal species like the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins. So are case is distinct. This was initiated by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Provincial Council. Granting the dolphins in the sea legal personhood ultimately means we should treat them like we would humans. And since it's difficult to grant them legal personhood based on existing laws like the Conservation and Management of Marine Ecosystems Act, some legal revisions are necessary.

Ultimately, the legal provision would hold individuals who harm Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins legally accountable, similar to how we treat human beings. But we should recognize that this is yet another form of human interference.

It would be ideal if we can stay away and let them to overcome problems in their environment on their own and reproduce. But based on what I have seen, the number of dolphins seems to be decreasing compared to before, and their outlook is grim. They are impacted by dolphin sighting tours and fishing boats, and discarded fishing gear from these boats is polluting the dolphins' habitat. All this is making the sea too inhospitable for the dolphins to reproduce. So the initiative to grant legal personhood was raised as a way to improve the situation.

Q5. In global citizenship education we often talk about empathy. Dolphins are highly intelligent mammals and they are also known to show much affection to their young. How would you compare them with humans?

Dolphins exhibit profound love and affection for their offspring. Actually, their bond seems even stronger than that of humans. Usually, a dolphin calf is cared for by the mother for three to six years.

And in those years, the calf is always close to the mother. They're never far away as they move from one place to another, and they're always communicating with each other.

This deep maternal affection is apparent when a calf dies. When a calf is motionless the mother first carries the body up to the surface several times to try and save it. Like humans, dolphins also breathe with their lungs, so the mother helps the calf breathe. Once the mother accepts that the calf is dead, she starts the mourning process.

Dolphins live in the sea with currents, so they constantly have to swim and tread water. So to mourn the death of a calf, the mother has to carry it on her snout if it is small enough, and a larger calf might be carried on her dorsal fin. This means carrying the dead to mourn the loss is much more strenuous than it might be on land.

The mother only lets the calf go when the corpse has rotted so badly that it's impossible to swing it over any part of her

body. The duration may vary depending on the season and the water temperature, but it typically lasts for about a week to 15 days. And the whole time the mother also has to eat. So other dolphin in the pod might carry the body of the calf while the mother takes a brief respite to hunt. Still, the mother devotes most of her time to carrying the calf. So it's apparent that they do grieve. They carry the calf as long as they possibly can.

Dolphins are also highly social animals. They embrace new dolphins into their fold. Seeing how a mother and her baby dolphin show affection to each other in both life and death is more inspiring than many human relationships. We humans have a lot to learn from them.

Q6. Could you explain the concepts of ecocentrism and anthropocentrism?

I can only document these things because my own values match well with ecocentrism.

When we construct massive infrastructure for human convenience, we

▽ Pod of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins near the surface off the coast of Jeju island.



© Suengmok Oh



△ A pair of hawks mating on a cliffside rock.



△ A great white egret feeding chicks in nest.

often damage nature. On the other hand, humans also conduct nature conservation projects. So whether it is about ecocentrism or anthropocentrism, humans are always involved. The difference is in the intention: Is it conducted primarily for human benefit, or is it primarily concerned with the ecosystem?

I believe we need to adopt ecocentrism because if we continue to prioritize human convenience by developing and building infrastructure at the expense of

nature, there will be no space left for other living beings in the environment. Incessant development will lead to extinctions. And this will inevitably be detrimental to humans. So for the sake of our own survival, we must embrace ecocentrism. If the ecosystem is destroyed, humanity will suffer as well. The ultimate goal of ecocentrism is the preservation of humanity.

Q7. How can global citizens take action to protect marine life and

wildlife diversity in the ecosystem? Is there anything you would like to say to the readers of SangSaeng?

I believe most people really love and respect nature. At the same time, they also want to live in nice buildings and drive nice cars on well-paved roads. As humans keeps advancing to new heights, we should always remember to find ways to slow down for the sake of both nature and humanity.

Next, one consistent issue is corporations. Profit-seeking businesses don't seem to pay much attention to the ecosystem or nature. When corporations conduct development projects, they often engage in surface-level restorations like reforestation projects for public relations purposes to enhance their bottom line. What they should do instead is write in real and practical plans to minimize harm to nature from the beginning of their development projects. A shift in the way we see nature must begin with corporate owners.

We absolutely agree that preserving natural diversity is essential for humanity's survival. We hope that the movement to grant legal personhood to nature keeps spreading globally so that we can better conserve the environment. 🏡

SMALL ACTIONS, GLOBAL RIPPLES

How GCED is Revitalizing Peace

By Micha Aime (Graduate Candidate at George Washington University, USA)



△ Participants of the 9th International Multilateralism for Peace through GCED posing for group photo.

“Every little action of every little individual matters,”

were the closing words of Cecilia Barbieri, chief of Global Citizenship and Peace Education at UNESCO, during the 9th Annual International Conference on Global Citizenship Education (IConGCED).

As she reflected on the two-day gathering, it became clear just how relevant that message had been throughout the entire conference. From the opening remarks to the final discussions, the power of small, collective actions in the pursuit of peace and global understanding was a recurring theme.

Her quote was a reminder of the profound impact that each participant, from educators to policymakers, could have in shaping the future.

On September 4 and 5, over 300 participants gathered at the JW Marriott hotel in Seoul, Republic of Korea, with an additional 300 joining online for this groundbreaking conference.

This year's theme, “Revitalising

Multilateralism for Peace through GCED” (Global Citizenship Education), was organised by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in partnership with UNESCO and the Chungnam National University BK21 Four Center for GCED.

Current State of Multilateralism

The opening remarks by Hyun Mook Lim, Director of APCEIU, set the tone for the event. Lim quoted Eduardo Galeano's words: “Many little people, in little places, doing little things, can change the world.”

These words struck the participants deeply because, as the conference progressed, it became clear that this message resonated with many. Lim spoke about the weakening of multilateralism and the rise of hate and anger across nations. His call for mutual understanding through education, particularly GCED,

was a rallying cry for all participants.

Throughout the conference, Galeano's quote seemed to echo in various forms, underscoring the importance of collective, grassroots action in addressing global challenges.

The keynote speech by Professor Audrey Osler offered a sobering reflection on the fractured state of our world. Osler's call to action was directed particularly at the youth, whom she described as not only the future but also the present leaders of movements addressing climate change, racial justice, and human rights.

The question she posed to us all was this: “How do we translate global policies like the SDGs (Social Development Goals) and UNESCO recommendations into tangible changes in schooling and communities?”

The gap between international frameworks and local realities was a recurring theme throughout the conference, and it was clear that bridging that gap would require innovative approaches and sustained efforts.



△ NAM Sangeun, a panelist, delivering speech on 'Reshaping Governance, Policy, and Partnerships'

Navigating Pressing Challenges

Continuing the momentum from the opening, the plenary session titled "Navigating Current Challenges Where Multilateral Efforts Are Most Required" further set the tone for the conference.

Led by Han Seung Mi and a panel of experts, Rawan Arar, H.E. Peter K. Ngunjiri, Yi Sangwook, and Ai Kihara-Hunt, the conversation quickly dove into the heart of the matter: how can we collectively address the most pressing issues facing the world today—racism, human rights abuses, geopolitical tensions, and the ethical dilemmas brought on by emerging technologies like AI?

Listening to their stories and reflections was like peeling back the layers of global challenges, revealing the complexity and interconnectedness of the problems we face. It was clear that no single country, no single institution, could tackle these issues alone.

One particularly poignant moment came when Arar discussed the refugee-migrant binary, a concept that drives much of the humanitarian response around the world.

She spoke about the ways in which states categorise people and how these categorisations impact their access to rights. "So, all of this needs to become a part of the conversation, which frankly falls out of the conversation if we only frame this as a human rights issue concern and forget how politics shapes people's access and limits their access to human rights in the present and in the future," she remarked, emphasising how political

systems determine who receives protection and who is left out.

Her words resonated deeply, prompting participants to reflect on our ethical responsibility as global citizens to rethink how we approach displacement and migration.

Tools to Tackle Ethical Dilemmas

The first day ended with concurrent workshops; the one I attended was led by Meredith Jane Harbord and Sara Riaz Khan, where they explored innovative approaches to tackle ethical dilemmas using critical thinking and creative problem-solving techniques.

They introduced participants to "The Time Tunnel," an imaginative visual thinking tool that facilitates metaphorical time travel. This tool enables individuals to place themselves in different historical periods and future scenarios to gain diverse perspectives on pressing issues.

Focussing on the topic of the refugee crisis, the tool was used to delve into the ethical dilemma of balancing national interests with humanitarian obligations. By projecting themselves into various time zones, participants examined how different historical decisions could have altered the present situation and considered the potential future impacts of current actions.

Another dilemma was mandatory vaccinations, highlighting the tension between individual rights and public health and illustrating how ethical dilemmas often involve competing values.

To tackle these challenges, Harbord and Khan introduced tools like "The Thinking Generator" and "The Clock Tool" to spark critical thinking and guide group discussions.

For 45 minutes, participants worked in teams, using these tools to analyse the dilemmas and explore diverse perspectives. This approach emphasised the power of creative problem-solving and visual thinking to address complex global issues with empathy and understanding.

Youth's Role in Peacebuilding

Day two began with "Youth Voices: Advocating for Peace as Change Agents," where young leaders from around the world shared their experiences and challenges in peacebuilding.

Noora Elkena Wi, an activist from Egypt, spoke about the importance of multilateralism in fostering intercultural dialogue and highlighted the need to support refugees, sharing a personal story about a Sudanese family in crisis.

Oshan Gunathilake, from Sri Lanka, emphasised that youth must be active partners, not just beneficiaries, in peacebuilding, while Kimhan Minyoung, from the Republic of Korea, questioned the glorification of militarisation in her country and its impact on youth.

Their reflections provided both practical advice and thought-provoking challenges for educators and policymakers.

Importance of Curriculum

During the session "Renewing Curriculum Pedagogy and Assessment," Genevieve Mensah from Ghana highlighted her country's efforts to align its curriculum with global agendas like the SDGs while also tackling low literacy rates.

The revised curriculum promotes learner-centred education, though challenges remain in translating these competencies into everyday classroom practices.

"We needed to review the curriculum to address gaps in literacy and align with the global agenda, such as the SDGs," Mensah explained.

Choi Sunjoo from the Republic of Korea discussed the success of social-emotional learning (SEL) programmes, which have led to a 40 per cent increase in



△ Plenary session on "Youth Voices: Advocating for Peace as Change Agents"

emotional literacy among students.

"If we would teach just one thing, it would be social-emotional learning," Choi said, emphasising its importance for both academic success and civic engagement. Adding to this, Yoke Pin Chen reminded the audience that "Even in a community, you can be a global citizen. Educators are not the knowledge givers; they are the facilitators."

Her statement underscored the shift in education from traditional methods of teaching toward a more facilitative role, where educators guide students in discovering their place as global citizens, fostering a deeper connection between community and global responsibility.

Implementation Challenges

The challenges of implementing GCED were also at the forefront of the conference.

In "Reshaping Governance, Policy, and Partnership," Kiengkay Ounmany from Laos spoke candidly about the difficulties of monitoring and evaluating GCED in his country. He highlighted the lack of clear indicators for measuring success, a challenge echoed by other speakers throughout the conference. Yet, despite these challenges, Laos continues to push forward with capacity-building initiatives and localised educational materials.

Ounmany's honesty about the limitations of current systems was refreshing, and it emphasises the need for greater investment in monitoring and evaluation frameworks that can capture the true impact of GCED.

Spirit of Solidarity

As the discussions continued, Tanya Samu's presentation in the session "Accelerating Collective Efforts: Bridging Local, Regional, and Global Initiatives" stood out for its deep connection to Indigenous Pacific cultures.

Samu shared a powerful story about a nation that was unable to attend the most recent festival due to political tensions. In a remarkable show of solidarity, all the other nations honoured and represented them, embodying the fluid, collective identity that defines the Pacific region.

During this session, Samu, alongside Nanise J. Young Okotai, sang a traditional song in Samu's native tongue. The lyrics, which translated to "Love, hope, and peace for us all," perfectly encapsulated the spirit of solidarity and togetherness that had been present throughout the conference.

Her words, "We are not all the same, but we come together as one," echoed a broader theme of finding unity in diversity.

As the conference drew to a close, the final session, "A Way Forward: Revitalising Multilateralism by Transforming the Learning Landscape," brought together reflections from educators and policymakers on how to take actionable steps in their own countries.

Arabboy Akhmadullaev emphasised the need to incorporate peace education from early childhood, while another participant from India spoke about using storytelling and the arts to enhance GCED efforts.

This final plenary reinforced the idea

that GCED is not just about policy but about making real changes in how we teach and connect with our students and communities. One participant captured the collective sentiment when they said, "I am taking back a lot of knowledge, ideas, and motivation to lead me in the path of GCED."

Final Thoughts and Reflections

Reflecting on the 9th Annual International Conference on Global Citizenship Education, I'm reminded of the opening message: "Many little people, in little places, doing little things, can change the world."

This theme feels especially urgent as we confront global challenges like the refugee crisis, AI, and climate change.

GCED is crucial in today's world, offering a way to foster empathy, critical thinking, and collaboration in the face of growing polarisation and global threats.

By promoting human rights, cultural understanding, and shared responsibility, GCED helps equip individuals to address these pressing issues, empowering local actions that lead to global change. In terms of the conference's objectives, it successfully emphasised the need for multilateralism and collective action. The sessions highlighted the importance of education in addressing global challenges, from youth advocacy to curriculum innovation.

While the conference achieved its aim of fostering dialogue and collaboration, the real challenge will be applying these insights in practice.

Ultimately, the impact of this gathering will depend on how participants turn these ideas into action in their own contexts. Whether it's through peace education in Northeast Asia, grassroots efforts in Cyprus, or the preservation of Indigenous knowledge in the Pacific, the message is clear: every action counts.

And in the pursuit of global citizenship, these actions—small as they may seem—have the potential to shape a more peaceful and just world.

The conference was a critical step in revitalising the role of education in global cooperation, and now the challenge is to turn these ideas into tangible, lasting impact. 🌍

WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY

GCED in Action Fosters Culture of Bulungi Bwansi in Uganda

By Barbara Nakijoba (Monitoring and evaluation officer, Uganda Youth Development Link)



△ Group photo of Bulungi Bwansi project participants and organisers.

In today's world, we face an environmental crisis that affects every corner of the planet. From deforestation and climate change to polluted oceans and vanishing wildlife, the natural world is under immense pressure.

But there is a growing awareness that the earth is not just a resource for human consumption. It is a living system, rich with interconnected species and ecosystems that deserve respect and protection.

This idea centres on valuing nature for its inherent worth, not just its utility to humans. A shift in viewpoint at its core is an environmental philosophy that moves the focus from humans to the entire ecosystem as valued in and of itself.

Rather than viewing nature as something to be used and exploited for our benefit, it asks us to consider the intrinsic value of all living things – plants, animals, rivers, forests, and even microscopic life.

This perspective is especially powerful when combined with Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which emphasises the importance of global awareness, empathy, and responsibility.

When people understand their connection to the broader world, they become more committed to preserving it.

GCED encourages individuals to act locally but to think globally, recognising that the health of their own



△ Participants delivering group presentations.



△ Participants raising their hands during a discussion session.

communities impacts the entire planet. Uganda's "Bulungi Bwansi" (good for the community) project is a success story of environmental stewardship in action that brings together communities in the Makindye Division of Kampala to solve pressing environmental concerns and is a great illustration of this nature-centric ideology and GCED collaboration. "Bulungi Bwansi" is a term rooted in Ugandan tradition, where community members come together to solve common problems under the leadership of local chiefs.

In this project, the concept is applied to environmental protection. Through combining values that prioritise nature's wellbeing with GCED principles, the "Bulungi Bwansi" project empowers local communities to address issues like waste management, deforestation, and pollution. Let us take a closer look at how this community-driven project came to life and what makes it such a compelling example of sustainable action.

Execution of 'Bulungi Bwansi' Project

The "Bulungi Bwansi" project was carried out over a five-day period following my training under the 7th capacity building session and workshops on GCED in 2022, which brought together 12 key stakeholders from the local community.

These stakeholders were chosen to represent all the vital sectors of society, including: two community members, two social workers, two youth representatives from the local slum communities, two

government representatives, two teachers, and two religious leaders. The diversity of participants enabled every voice in the community to be heard and represented. Together, they worked to address the environmental challenges affecting their neighbourhoods.

Training, Workshop Focus

The workshops began by introducing participants to the principles of Global Citizenship Education, which are ideologies grounded in values such as inclusion, empathy, participation, and respect for human rights, all of which are necessary for meaningful environmental protection.

These workshops also emphasised how local environmental degradation ties into broader global issues, encouraging participants to think beyond their immediate surroundings and recognise their role in a global ecosystem. Topics covered during the workshops included:

- Global Citizenship and Climate Adaptation: understanding the role of global citizens in addressing climate change and how local actions can contribute to global environmental goals.
- Understanding Environmental Problems: exploring how issues like deforestation, waste management, and pollution impact not only the environment but also the health and well-being of communities.
- Community Action Planning: developing strategies for engaging the broader community in sustainable practices like

waste reduction, recycling, and environmental stewardship.

Identifying Most Pressing Needs

One of the core activities during the training sessions was problem identification.

Participants were asked to reflect on the challenges facing their communities and prioritise which issues needed immediate attention.

Through group discussions, role-playing, and collaborative brainstorming, they identified improper waste management as the most pressing issue. In Kampala's Makindye Division, where the project took place, garbage disposal is a significant challenge. Much of the waste is dumped into drainage systems and trenches, leading to water contamination, health risks, and environmental degradation.

Participants recognised that tackling this issue would have the most immediate and widespread positive impact on their community's health and the environment.

Formation of the Katwe 1 Bulungi Bwansi Group

At the end of the training, participants came together to form the Katwe 1 Bulungi Bwansi Group (KBBG), a leadership structure modelled after traditional practices of community collaboration.

This group was tasked with spearheading local environmental efforts, including waste management, tree

planting, and advocating for the protection of natural resources. The group's leadership structure was designed to be inclusive, with representation from all community sectors: one community member representing the interests of local residents, one youth representative from the slum community to engage young people in environmental efforts, one social worker to address how environmental issues affect vulnerable groups, one government representative to ensure collaboration with local authorities, one teacher to incorporate GCED principles into schools and educate future generations, and one religious leader to inspire environmental stewardship through spiritual guidance. This diverse leadership team was aimed at making sure that environmental issues are addressed from multiple angles, involving everyone in the process of creating sustainable solutions.

Best Practices from 'Bulungi Bwansi' Project

Inclusive Community Engagement:

One of the standout features of the "Bulungi Bwansi" project is its ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders. From youth leaders to religious figures, the project harnessed the collective power of the community to address environmental challenges. Engaging multiple sectors promoted a stronger, more unified response to environmental issues. Local Solutions to Local Problems:

The "Bulungi Bwansi" project is firmly rooted in addressing the unique challenges of the Makindye Division. Through focusing on waste management, the community developed practical, localised solutions that could be implemented immediately. For instance, residents organised neighbourhood clean-up campaigns, built waste disposal systems, and educated their neighbours on the importance of proper waste management. Building on Cultural Traditions:

Through drawing on the traditional practice of "Bulungi Bwansi," the project resonated deeply with community members. This cultural connection made environmental action feel more natural and meaningful, as it tied into existing values of working together for the common good. When environmental

projects are aligned with cultural traditions, they tend to be more successful and sustainable. Creating Long-term Structures:

To ensure the project's longevity, the KBBG created a formal leadership team responsible for overseeing future environmental efforts. Through building a structured team, the project guarantees that its momentum will continue beyond its initial implementation. Promoting Peaceful Advocacy:

The "Bulungi Bwansi" project also focused on promoting peaceful advocacy, encouraging participants to respectfully engage with local authorities to bring attention to environmental issues. This approach has already led to calls for improved waste management infrastructure in the Makindye Division and more governmental support for environmental education. Expanding the 'Bulungi Bwansi' Model:

Following the success of the "Bulungi Bwansi" project in the Makindye Division, there are plans to expand the initiative to neighbouring communities. The KBBG is committed to rolling out similar efforts in other parishes and advocating for the integration of GCED principles into Uganda's national education system. Through educating future generations on the importance of ecocentrism and environmental protection, the project aims to create a ripple effect of sustainability across the country. Model for Global Change

The "Bulungi Bwansi" project is a shining example of how ecocentrism and Global Citizenship Education can come together to create lasting change. Through engaging communities, building on cultural traditions, and empowering individuals to take action, this initiative shows that environmental protection is not just a goal; it is a shared responsibility. Every one of us has a role to play in protecting the planet. Whether through small, local actions or broader policy changes, we can all contribute to a healthier, more sustainable future.

The "Bulungi Bwansi" project demonstrates that by adopting an ecocentric mindset and promoting global citizenship, we can create real, lasting change that benefits both people and the ecosystems we rely on. 🏡

SHARING EMOTIONAL SENSIBILITY IN EDUCATION

Practicing Arts Opens up the Spirit of Global Citizenship

By **Seoyoung Bae** (Education programme manager, visual communication and creative art department, The Global Citizenship Forum, Republic of Korea)



△ Students participating in a class at the Global Citizenship Forum School of Culture and Arts.

As diversity has become a central issue in today's globalised world, Korea has recently emerged as a multicultural society, recognised as one of the first of its kind in Asia.

Some media reports suggest that the influx of a multicultural population could help address Korea's low birthrate and declining population issues.

However, before focussing on the

demographic aspects, we must reconsider the importance of embracing diversity to empower young generations to become responsible global citizens. By doing so, our society can work towards building equitable and sustainable multicultural communities.

The key question, therefore, is: how do we get started?

To lay the groundwork for intercultural communication in our society,

the Global Citizenship Forum (GCF) proposes that global citizenship can be cultivated through arts education, incorporating elements that are intercommunal, interrelational, and interactive. With the goal of fostering diverse cultural communities within an inclusive intercultural society, GCF established the Global Citizenship Forum School of Culture and Arts (GCFSOCA), which comprises three

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Every one of us has a role to play in protecting the planet, through small, local actions or broader policy changes.

”



△ Appointed visual arts educator Kura Yang with students at Songshin Public Elementary School, Pyeongtaek, 2023.

departments: visual communication and creative art, youth chamber music, and cultural diversity education.

The school emphasises promoting an understanding of cultural relativism by providing young generations with access to the key concept of “sharing emotional sensibility.”

The visual communication and creative art department, alongside the youth chamber music department, allows students to experience the arts as a universal language through which they can share their stories. Meanwhile, the cultural diversity education department empowers students to build and strengthen their cultural identities.

Arts as a Medium for Global Citizenship: Sensing Culture, Sharing Stories, Becoming Our Heritage

To promote the spirit of global citizenship among young generations, the GCFSOCA has introduced semester-based regular school class programmes specifically designed for public schools in districts with a high ratio of cultural diversity. These programmes focus on creating opportunities for students to establish common ground and initiate communication across cultural and linguistic differences.

[Case 1] ‘Pairing Class’ for Multicultural Special Class to Foster Interconnected Relationship

The visual communication and creative

art department has been offering a regular art class at Songshin Public Elementary School in Pyeongtaek, where over 35 per cent of the student population comes from foreign-born and migrant families.

This programme has been running for three semesters since its inception in 2023. Conducted over 16 sessions per year (eight sessions per semester), this semester-based programme is specifically designed as a pairing class for 4th and 5th grade migrant and indigenous students to foster connections and mutual understanding.

The systematic design of this programme was made possible through the collaboration and support of Mr. Seung Min Yoo, the teacher of the multicultural special class, who played a pivotal role in tailoring the programme to meet the unique needs of the students before its implementation.

The multicultural special class is an educational programme offered in public schools situated in areas with a high proportion of students from diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, including migrant and foreign-born populations. It is designed to help these students integrate into the school environment, overcome language barriers, and receive tailored academic support to enhance their success and adaptation within the school community.

Led by appointed visual arts educator Kura Yang, this programme immerses

students in the fundamental theme of “Discovering Art through the Lens of Nature and Environment in Our Lives.”

This approach encourages students to engage in a thought-provoking process of transforming everyday materials into creative artworks. By exploring the intricate connections between humans, nature, and the environment, students are encouraged to reflect on the continuity of culture and heritage.

[Case 2] ‘Inter-activity Class’ for All General Classrooms to Enhance Empathy, Communication

The department has been conducting regular art classes across multiple public schools in Pyeongtaek, Hwasung, and other areas with a high ratio of multicultural populations.

This semester-based art programme spans 28 sessions per year, specifically targeting all general 5th-grade classrooms. Under the theme of “Art Movements in Global History,” led by appointed visual arts educator Jiyun Kang, students embark on a journey through time, exploring the cultural practices that have shaped societies across the global world.

This curriculum immerses students in the study of various art movements, exposing them to not only artistic styles, but also the traditions, social values, and historical contexts that gave rise to these movements in the East and West. By situating art within the broader framework of human experience, this comprehensive approach broadens students’ understanding of diverse cultures.

The class introduces students to inter-activity art workshop disciplines, encouraging them to engage with one another as they create artistic pieces.

The process involves reproducing elements of historical heritage or artwork using the skills they have acquired in class. For instance, when students learn about Cubism and create Cubist portrait masks, they are tasked with drawing three layers—frontal face, right profile, and left profile—of their partner’s portrait. As they observe each other closely and make eye contact, the activity often leads to moments of giggling and light-hearted interaction, fostering a deeper connection between the students. Another example is when students reproduce “Pungsokdo,” a



△ Students’ artworks, including “Cultural Landscape of Our Classroom,” featured in the Global Citizenship Forum’s annual special exhibition at the Seoul Baekje Museum, 2022.

genre of cultural landscape painting from the Joseon Dynasty.

In groups of four or five, they revisit memories from their classroom experiences. They replicate situations, take photos, draw on rice paper, and compile their work into a book titled “Cultural Landscape of Our Classroom.”

Through revisiting and sharing these memories, students gain valuable insight into their peers’ perspectives and opinions on shared situations, fostering emotional bonds and mutual understanding. The students’ artwork is then collected and showcased at the Global Citizenship Forum’s annual special exhibition or as part of a travelling exhibition.

Expanding Familyship to Global Citizenship: Diversity Exists within All Families

Creating a communication platform for families is essential to deepening global citizenship among young generations.

The Global Citizenship Forum School of Culture and Arts offers short-term programmes specifically designed for parent-child families from diverse cultural backgrounds, including indigenous communities, migrants, and multicultural families.

These programmes enhance cultural diversity awareness at both the family and community levels. The youth chamber music department has developed a multi-disciplinary programme that combines

music and floral design as universal languages of human expression.

Led by appointed music educator Bora Noh, this programme invites parent-child groups from various backgrounds to engage in storytelling through themes such as affection, consolation, and celebration within the context of family events. Participants begin by watching and appreciating classical music performances. Ms. Noh then explains the cultural and emotional significance of each piece, helping participants gain a deeper understanding of classical music within its broader cultural context.

The programme immerses parent-child pairs to engage in dialogue, where one takes the role of interviewer and the other as interviewee, sharing their individual life stories. Together, they express these memories in response to the music, creating a family bouquet.

This process helps families recognise that each member may have unique cultural experiences and perspectives shaped by factors such as place of origin, generational differences, personal experiences, social influences, and values.

By acknowledging the diverse cultural histories within a single family, participants can better appreciate the complexity of identity and foster empathy and respect for differences.

This deeper cultural awareness is essential for cultivating a more inclusive and interconnected society.

Sharing Emotional Sensibility: The Central Role of Arts Education in Fostering Global Citizenship

In response to the positive reception of its professional programmes, the GCFSOCA is continuing to expand its educational reach in 2024.

This expansion includes offering six semester-based arts programmes at public elementary schools in Pyeongtaek and Seoul, two long-term mentorship programmes for migrant youth in collaboration with the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, three programmes for migrant families with the National Children’s Museum in Sejong, and over 15 short-term programmes for government-run family centres across 15 counties in Korea. To build equitable and sustainable multicultural communities within an inclusive intercultural society, it is essential to place that cultural communication at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals.

By continuing to emphasise the role of arts education in sharing emotional sensibility, we move closer to making global citizenship a reality, ensuring that the principles of sustainability, diversity, and inclusion are deeply rooted in future generations.

The Global Citizenship Forum is committed to expanding this educational movement beyond borders, reaching communities across the globe. 🌍

TEACHING GCED THROUGH LIBERATION HISTORY

Working to Eradicate Entrenched Racism, Intolerance, Xenophobia

By Charles Chikunda (National Programme Officer (ESD and GCED), UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa)



△ Close up hand of woman holding iron bar in jail.



Despite being one of the continent's most prosperous regions, Southern Africa still faces a number of problems, such as marginalisation, intolerance, discrimination, and violence against migrants, women, immigrants, and the young. The multidimensional crises in the region, as viewed from the socioeconomic and geopolitical frameworks, have led to an increase in social divides and patterns of exclusion.

Yet, Southern Africa is also well-known for its historical collective fight against colonial oppression and racial discrimination, demonstrating a unique manifestation of solidarity, a sense of togetherness, freedom and justice, and attachment to the universal principles of people's rights.

Solidarity in Southern Africa's Liberation History

Colonialism and apartheid left trails of identity crises across Southern Africa as nine major European countries scrambled to divide Africa amongst themselves.

The period was characterised by settler colonialism and the forced displacement of the indigenous population, the division of the colonised into different groups with different rights, severe restrictions on movement, and violent suppression of resistance.

When the time to emancipate herself came, Africa united to regain independence with the objective of achieving the support of neighbouring countries and the continent of Africa, as well as with the assistance from Nordic countries and support groups.

The Frontline States (FLS), for example, were formed in 1970 to coordinate and committed to ending apartheid in South Africa and South West Africa (today Namibia) and white minority rule in Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe). The FLS included Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique (from 1975), Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (from 1980). Unfortunately, knowledge about the liberation and decolonisation of Africa has not been collected and shared in a sustainable format that is accessible to the next generation of youth in Southern Africa, the

so-called "born-frees."

What Needs to be Addressed?

Today's youth are becoming increasingly disengaged with the past political and social reality.

In South Africa, for example, xenophobia stands out for its particularly violent nature against foreigners from other African countries.

According to Witwatersrand University's Xenowatch, xenophobic attacks resulted in 669 deaths, 5,310 looted shops, and 127,572 displacements between 1994 and March 2024. In May 2008, attacks took place in at least 135 locations across the country.

The perpetrators of such attacks did not target white people but rather migrants from other African countries. Some experts say that the reason that black vigilantes target black Africans might be rooted in South Africa's apartheid-era education system, which portrayed the rest of the continent as uncivilised and underdeveloped, leaving the majority of South Africans without a



△ The Frontline States (orange), 1975. www.sahistory.org.za/article/frontline-states

sense of Pan-Africanism.

Indeed, there has been little education about the critical role that African states have played in supporting South Africa's dismantling of the apartheid regime, thanks to an archaic education system that continues to teach a Eurocentric history. "South Africa was disconnected from the rest of the continent, and the whites drummed it into the blacks' minds that they were better off than other black Africans and painted the rest of the continent as being riddled with disease, dictatorship and genocide," said Savo Heleta, a researcher at Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth. The emergence of Put South Africans First and Operation Dudula (meaning "Pushback" in isiZulu) also indicate a shift in the way in which anti-immigrant campaigns are organised in South Africa.

They were almost exclusively and deliberately organised on social media in contrast to previous anti-immigrant protests that were typically spontaneous responses to real or rumoured incidents involving migrants in townships.

These organisations have attempted to

bridge online and offline spaces in their mobilisation against migrants and create professional networks that cross geographic boundaries. Social media platforms play a key role in amassing support for anti-immigrant online movements that cut across townships.

Facebook and Twitter are used as propaganda tools for nationalist and xenophobic views, which can reach millions of users.

Due to their accessibility and ease of use, these platforms allow common citizens to organise and participate in mass xenophobia, including marches and violent attacks.

Private online messaging platforms like WhatsApp have also created echo chambers where users share discriminatory stories and conspiracies about migrants.

SALH, GCED Integration Roadmap

In view of this context, Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministers responsible for Education and Training, Science, Technology and

Innovation approved a roadmap for the integration of Southern Africa Liberation History (SALH) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) in member states' curriculum in June 2021.

This breakthrough followed the adoption by the SADC member states of Decision 22.1 in 2018 that stipulates that the teaching of SALH should "promote social cohesion and regional identity," while also "contributing to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4 Target 7 in relation to promotion of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development." UNESCO Regional Office Southern Africa (ROSA), in partnership with the SADC secretariat, is promoting regional integration, peaceful coexistence, and social cohesion targeting youth through the teaching of SALH, which is a part of the broader concept of GCED.

Ministers are convinced that SALH promotes tolerance and social cohesion and strengthens the concept of ubuntu while addressing intolerance, xenophobia, and other social challenges of regional and cross-border dimensions.

SALH, they are convinced, contribute to a shared identity, and promote intercultural dialogue, drawing on the solidarity and values of the liberation struggles.

Learning to live together in diversity, building on shared history, SALH contributes to a deeper sense of belonging to the SADC region and the African continent, cementing the African identity and culture.

Key priorities of the roadmap are education policies, curriculum, pedagogies and assessment, and teacher training and support.

Rolling out the Roadmap

The findings of UNESCO's desk study, published in 2021, on the amount of integration of SALH education in the region's school curricula found a modest introduction of SALH, with a focus on national rather than regional history. It was also shown that there are no resource materials that offer guidance on SALH education in the region, meaning that each country uses its own textbooks or learning materials.

The current absence of teaching of a



△ Leaders of the Front Line States—Chairman Mwalimu Nyerere with Presidents Samora Machel of Mozambique, Ketumile Masire of Botswana, José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, and host Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. Photo by Charles Chikunda

regional viewpoint in the SALH inhibits the achievement of the ubuntu spirit, as countries pursue limited nationalistic objectives rather than unifying regional ones. Promoting a sense of unity is central to sustaining peace in the region. To respond to these shortcomings, the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) partnered with the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) to develop pedagogical materials on SALH to support intergenerational dialogue and youth engagement, with the objectives of providing compelling resource materials for youth engagement, including via social media, as well as for the nonformal education interventions. Examples include Module 1, which examines the struggles of youth fighting for liberation and beyond, and a documentary video centred around the youth's struggle for liberation. Module 2 is about the teaching and learning of liberation history. It includes a broader range of national experiences as well as a regional perspective with basic information and creative methods of teaching that emphasise the role of this history in personal and regional development. Module 3, which is under development, focuses on the liberation history as seen by women. In the same vein, a preliminary registry of valuable archives on liberation heritage was published in 2022, entitled "Preserving Memory of African Liberation through Access to Heritage Archives."

This publication identifies existing heritage archives in the nine countries covered by UNESCO ROSA (Botswana,

Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe), noting the existing heritage archives that may need support for preservation or digitisation and can be recorded in national, regional and international registries, with identification of some that can be recommended for inclusion in the global Memory of the World register maintained by UNESCO. Still guided by the roadmap, UNESCO ROSA, in collaboration with the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa, reviewed a training guide on transformative pedagogies to integrate SALH as an element of GCED. The guide was also translated into Portuguese and French.

English and Portuguese versions are available online, and print copies are distributed to Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Zambia. Capacity development, mainly for education planners, teachers, and teacher educators, was conducted to roll out the guide. Capacity building centred on assisting participants to:

- Reflect on how peace, conflict, violence, and issues related to citizenship, such as identity, solidarity, social cohesion, and equity, manifest and intersect in the Southern Africa region
- Articulate the role of education in promoting "Learning to Live Together through GCED," "Liberation History Education" and "Education for Peacebuilding and Prevention of Violence"
- Discuss how to strengthen transformative pedagogy in educational settings
- Identify strategies for integrating transformative pedagogy in country and institutional contexts
- Plan the cascading and mainstreaming of the training both in the curriculum and pedagogical practice at the country level

One teacher educator confessed on one of the capacity-building workshops:

"Certain GCED elements can also be applied to SALH education. For instance, in regard to the knowledge element relating to understanding complex interdependency, the social studies or history teacher can engage

in an activity (individual or group) in which learners research the role of the Frontline States in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa's liberation and ask them to reflect on what it entails in relation to interdependency, tolerance, solidarity and coexistence, as well as citizenship and human rights. This can also be discussed in relation to cultural world views such as ubuntu and challenging issues such as xenophobia and Afrophobia.

The teacher will then ask learners to reflect on how behaviour can be changed, for example, as it relates to xenophobia and Afrophobia. Such activities can help learners develop competencies for peace and may help transform their behaviour, perceptions, and attitudes towards the 'other.'"

According to Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), there has been a wider exposure of the one-sided nature of conflict history in which women and their experiences have been silenced or excluded from the grand narrative.

Due to this gender blindness, a male experience of conflict is placed centre stage, allowing men to be the main players both before and after war. The result of this can encourage pre-existing gender inequalities and structural violence against women.

In view of this, UNESCO ROSA, with the support of the Ministry of Combatants of Mozambique and the SARDC, organised the "HERstory: Heroines in the Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa" conference as a valuable platform for sharing stories and experiences of women in the liberation from colonialism and apartheid in the pursuit of equality, dignity, justice, and freedom.

The aim of the conference was to provide a gendered experience in telling the story of the liberation of Southern Africa from colonialism and apartheid, to strengthen regional integration and cohesion, and to continue to eradicate entrenched racism, intolerance, and xenophobia. [📄](#)

HOW YOUTH LEADERS REDEFINE ADVOCACY, LEADING GLOBAL CHANGE TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE

Deep Dive into South Asian Youth Declaration on GCED, Facilitation Techniques for Empowered Youth

By Noora Elkenawi (GCED youth network core team trainer and physician)



△ Small working groups discussions with Noora.

What can possibly happen when young voices come together for a common goal?

In the tapestry of human history, youth have frequently served as the vibrant thread weaving together change and innovation in the world we are living in.

In South Asia, a region brimming with youthful energy and diverse cultures, young people are standing together to make their voices heard on the world stage, shaping a future they want to see.

Youth are showing themselves as catalysts for change and a force to be reckoned with in a world that is constantly evolving. They are bridging divides, challenging the systems, and redefining their future.

At the heart of this youth-led movement is the Global Citizenship Education (GCED) Youth Network working together with APCEIU and the little art institution to empower young people to become actively participating global citizens who take action.

This is where we dive deeper into the GCED youth network's latest regional workshop and the South Asian youth declaration that was developed, standing as a Tekhenu-Obelisk of hope and witness of their coalition.

The Global Citizenship Education Youth Network is an international youth-led structure that unites youth from across the globe to work together in the advancement of GCED. We aim to train, support and connect young advocates with mentors, resources, and allies from various sectors. We assist them to gain access to experts and advisors; youth participants gain knowledge, confidence, and credibility to champion their causes on larger platforms.

What Makes the Global Citizenship Youth Network Unique?

The fact that we emphasise the relations youth form in our activities, making it extend beyond events or workshops; they foster partnerships, collective projects, and a support system that makes their movements sustainable.

It was formed in October 2016 with the support of APCEIU; since then, the



△ The youth leaders who worked on the first ever SA youth declaration on GCED.

GCED Youth Network has been working closely with APCEIU and other local, regional and international organisations to promote GCED and active youth participation. The Network provides a collaborative space where youth leaders share strategies, attend skill-building workshops, and exchange experiences that strengthen their advocacy.

The future of South Asia, and indeed the world, rests in the hands of you, its young people. By empowering young people to become active citizens, these initiatives are shaping a new era of development and prosperity.

The youth leaders who took part in the Youth4GCED regional workshop this year in Lahore, Pakistan, worked together to draft a youth declaration on GCED for the region.

They are highlighting the key issues related to its implementation and the importance of full inclusion of Global Citizenship Education in formal and nonformal education in the South Asian region.

Over the three-day workshop, young advocates from different countries, backgrounds and multiple levels of GCED understanding passionately learnt together more about Global Citizenship, leadership, storytelling, advocacy and the declaration itself! Which, as mentioned by the group, was not a tool that was familiar to them, with 99 per cent of the participants mentioning they never used or read

one.

By setting a positive tone that reflects their aspirations for solidarity and desire for change, they worked on brainstorming and forming the declaration themselves, building it word-for-word.

Rather than focusing solely on universal topics like climate change or gender equity, the process started with them exploring their own individual silent issues in their communities and an envisioning exercise of what kind of future they want, thus acting as the potential topics for their own document.

They focused their attention on issues deeply rooted in South Asia, such as access to education in remote areas, challenges around migration, and the effects of political disparities.

They then went into presenting their issues and discussing them with an open mind.

After deciding the common themes among the issues they wanted to work on, they embarked on a prioritisation activity exercising diplomacy, voting rights and rules, and the decision-making matrix to finally decide on their own topic to work on: GCED in Education in South Asia.

The declaration amplifies the youth observations, concerns and aspirations for change and emphasises what clear and measurable demands they are calling to action for. They are addressing different stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, civil society and the private



△ Participants listening carefully to each other's feedback and presentations of the declaration.

sector; it is outlining what each stakeholder can do to help achieve the goals.

After going through the first group discussions, they had multiple exercises for feedback from each other, shuffling the groups, swapping their flip charts and visiting other groups in a gallery-like atmosphere to build on layers upon layers of discussions and refinement.

The declaration is not only a tool to ask for action from other parties; it also expresses the youth's own commitment to the cause, which is the promotion of GCED in regional education, and specifically mentions the actions they will commit to in supporting their cause.

It builds their ownership over the process and will be used as an advocacy tool to be presented at summits, conferences, stakeholder meetings, and sponsors to communicate their voices and gain support for their causes and projects.

Sharing their input on the experience, Chhoying Pem, a teacher and young leader from Bhutan who participated in the workshop, said: "The drafting of the Youth Declaration for Education during the Youth4GCED workshop was an empowering experience that brought to light the common goal of South Asian youth for an inclusive, equitable, and progressive educational system. We were able to incorporate a variety of viewpoints through the collaborative process. This declaration is a cohesive call to action,

imploping decision-makers to give GCED priority in education. It is also a vehicle for advocacy that aims to promote significant change in educational practices. It represents our shared dedication to an educational system that develops compassionate, knowledgeable global citizens capable of handling various issues of the modern world. It is a roadmap for our future interactions with peers, leaders, and educators. We were able to reaffirm our position as champions for a more equitable and inclusive future with this declaration."

Another valuable insight by Sawera Khadim, a young leader and activist from Pakistan, shared: "The 2024 Youth4GCED Regional Workshop was a truly transformative experience for both my personal and professional growth. The trainers, the insightful information they shared, and the dynamic leadership activities were incredibly energizing. A key highlight of the workshop was the South Asia Youth Declaration sessions. It was divided into three sections, where I first learnt about the declaration itself, how policies are created, programmes designed, and the ways we can coordinate efforts nationally to bring positive change to our communities. We discussed how we could build effective collaborations and address educational issues to make a meaningful impact. One of my favourite activities was the 'Uncover the Stinky Fish' exercise.

Through this activity, I learnt to identify the core issue and develop more precise, practical solutions. Writing down my fears allowed me to pinpoint and address them, making this exercise professionally valuable and personally empowering. Throughout the three GCED Youth Declaration sessions, Noora Elkenawi taught us effective methods for identifying problems and creating solutions. As a leader, I've often been preoccupied with finding ways to solve issues, which can be overwhelming. However, I now feel equipped to identify and resolve challenges more effectively. Inspired by what I've learnt, I plan to organise a one-day workshop on educational leadership training after Ramadan. I'm currently working on this project, and I'm eager to apply the knowledge gained from these sessions in my future work. This experience was more than just an opportunity – it has become a new motivation to find authentic solutions to a variety of issues."

Moving on, the Network can drive policy change as the declaration will be used in meetings with policymakers, participation in international forums, and partnerships with NGOs. Young people have the right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

The declaration calls for greater youth engagement in governance and policy-making.

In the upcoming months, our participants will embark on further expanding their written work by garnering inputs from their local communities as well as posting online and completing surveys to further develop a declaration that represents the general youth population of South Asia's aspirations and needs.

In a true declaration manner, I urge our readers to follow up with the network's platforms, to partake in the next phases of the declaration development, to reflect their opinions and call to action.

I call every educator to teach advocacy by utilising our experience and any of the methods mentioned or other methods they got inspired to try. Finally, we commit to honouring young people's strength and motivating the upcoming generation of leaders to create a better world. 🌍

PATHWAY TO INNER PEACE

Journey is Interconnected with Relationships and Environment

By Itseng Kwelagobe (Secretary-General, Botswana National Commission for UNESCO)



△ An event co-hosted by Ministry of Education and Skills Development and Botswana National Commission for UNESCO.

Pathway to Inner Peace, Sustainable Coexistence

In our modern, interconnected world, the importance of peace—both within ourselves and in our communities—cannot be overstated.

As society grapples with increasing division and conflict, the role of education emerges as a crucial first step in fostering inner tranquillity. Education equips individuals with the tools to understand themselves, embrace diversity, and cultivate harmonious relationships with their environment.

This article explores how education serves as the foundation for personal peace, community cohesion, and sustainable living.

Role of Education in Self-Discovery

Education is not merely a transfer of knowledge; it is a transformative journey that fosters self-awareness.

Through various forms of education—formal, informal, and experiential—individuals gain insights into their own beliefs, values, and motivations.

This self-discovery process is vital for achieving inner peace.

Self-Reflection, Personal Growth

Engaging with different subjects and perspectives allows individuals to reflect on their own views. This self-reflection encourages questioning—why do I believe

what I believe? What are my biases?

When people are prompted to examine their thoughts, they begin to see themselves more clearly. This self-awareness is the cornerstone of inner peace.

It enables individuals to accept their imperfections and recognise their worth, leading to greater self-acceptance.

Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution

Moreover, education fosters emotional intelligence, which is critical for maintaining peace.

Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to understand one's own emotions, empathise with others, and



△ The sight of children in Botswana joyfully skipping rope.

manage interpersonal relationships judiciously. When individuals are educated about emotional dynamics, they learn to navigate conflicts more effectively.

For instance, a person equipped with emotional intelligence can approach a disagreement with a neighbour not as an adversarial confrontation but as an opportunity for dialogue.

This understanding can diffuse tensions and foster cooperation, creating a peaceful coexistence.

Embracing Diversity Through Education

Once individuals attain a sense of inner peace, they become more open to engaging with others who hold differing viewpoints.

Education is pivotal in promoting this openness. It nurtures an appreciation for diversity, teaching that differences can enrich our lives rather than divide us.

Learning from Different Cultures, Belief Systems

Exposure to various cultures, religions, and philosophies is fundamental to cultivating an inclusive mindset.

Through education, individuals can learn about the histories and experiences of others, breaking down barriers of ignorance and prejudice. This understanding fosters empathy, allowing people to see the world through others' eyes.

When we learn about different belief

systems, we can appreciate the common values that unite us, such as compassion, justice, and respect.

This appreciation can lead to greater tolerance and less hostility towards those who think or believe differently.

Consequently, individuals who are educated about diversity are more likely to engage in constructive conversations rather than resorting to conflict.

Importance of Dialogue

Educational institutions often serve as microcosms of society, where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together. In these environments, opportunities for dialogue arise.

Engaging in discussions that involve different viewpoints encourages individuals to listen actively and respect differing opinions.

This culture of dialogue is essential for peaceful coexistence, as it nurtures a sense of community and belonging. Connection Between Inner Peace and Community Harmony

Achieving inner peace is not just a personal endeavour; it has broader implications for community dynamics.

When individuals find tranquillity within themselves, they contribute to a more harmonious community.

This concept is rooted in the idea that peace is contagious—when one person radiates calm and

understanding, it often inspires those around them to respond in kind. Ripple Effect of Personal Peace

Individuals who have attained inner peace are more likely to engage positively with their neighbours. They approach conflicts with a mindset of collaboration rather than competition, fostering an atmosphere of trust and support.

In communities where individuals prioritise understanding and respect, social bonds strengthen, leading to resilience in the face of adversity. This ripple effect can be seen in various community initiatives.

For example, a neighbourhood mediation programme can flourish when individuals approach conflicts with empathy and a willingness to listen. These initiatives not only resolve disputes but also build relationships, reinforcing a culture of peace.

Building Resilient Communities

Resilient communities are those that can withstand challenges and conflicts without descending into chaos. Education plays a critical role in building this resilience.

By teaching conflict resolution skills and promoting emotional intelligence, educational programmes prepare individuals to handle disputes constructively.

Moreover, educated individuals are more likely to engage in community service and activism. They recognise the importance of contributing to the common good and are equipped to advocate for positive change.

This active participation fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for one's community, further enhancing collective well-being.



△ Raised hands of multicultural children, showcasing unity.

Understanding Our Environment: Education, Sustainability

The journey toward inner peace extends to our relationship with the environment.

Education cultivates an awareness of our interconnectedness with the natural world.

This understanding is crucial for fostering sustainable practices that ensure the longevity of both our well-being and the health of the planet.

Interconnectedness of Life

Education teaches us about ecosystems, biodiversity, and the impact of human activities on the environment. By understanding the delicate balance of nature, individuals can appreciate their role within it.

This awareness fosters a sense of responsibility—when we recognise that our actions affect the world around us, we are more likely to adopt sustainable practices.

For instance, individuals educated about climate change and its consequences may be more inclined to engage in environmentally friendly behaviours, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and supporting sustainable agriculture.

These actions contribute not only to personal well-being but also to the health of the planet.

Sustainable Living as an Extension of Inner Peace

Sustainable living is a reflection of inner peace. When individuals are at peace with themselves, they recognise the importance of living in harmony with their surroundings. They understand that their well-being is intertwined with the health of the environment.

This understanding leads to a commitment to sustainability, ensuring that future generations can also thrive.

Furthermore, communities that prioritise sustainability often experience a heightened sense of cohesion.

When individuals come together to work toward common environmental goals, they cultivate a spirit of collaboration and shared purpose. This collective effort enhances community bonds, reinforcing the principles of peace and understanding.



△ A safari in Botswana, a symbol of Earth's biodiversity.

Role of Education in Shaping Future Generations

Investing in education is investing in the future. By equipping the next generation with the skills and knowledge needed for self-awareness, empathy, and environmental responsibility, we lay the groundwork for a more peaceful and sustainable world.

Educational Curricula that Promote Peace

To achieve this vision, educational institutions must prioritise curricula that emphasise social and emotional learning, diversity, and environmental stewardship.

Programmes that teach conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, and the value of diverse perspectives can empower students to navigate an increasingly complex world.

Moreover, integrating environmental education into school programmes can cultivate a sense of stewardship for the planet.

When students learn about the impact of climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable practices, they are more likely to become advocates for change.

Lifelong Learning, Community Engagement

Education should not be confined to the classroom; it must extend into

communities.

Lifelong learning opportunities, such as workshops and community forums, can foster ongoing dialogue about peace, diversity, and sustainability. These initiatives encourage individuals to remain engaged, curious, and committed to personal and communal growth.

By fostering a culture of learning, communities can adapt to new challenges and opportunities, creating a resilient and peaceful society.

Quest for Peace

Education is the cornerstone of personal peace and communal harmony. It empowers individuals to embark on a journey of self-discovery, embrace diversity, and cultivate sustainable practices.

As we invest in education—both formal and informal—we pave the way for a more peaceful world.

Ultimately, the journey to inner peace is interconnected with our relationships with others and the environment.

By nurturing self-acceptance and understanding, we create a ripple effect that extends beyond ourselves, fostering a society where all individuals can thrive together.

In this quest for peace, education stands as our most powerful ally, guiding us toward a future rooted in compassion, understanding, and sustainability. 🌱

FROM DROPS TO WAVES

Power of Poetry-telling in Times of Crisis

By **Kalpani Dambagolla** (Managing editor for Human Rights Education Review) & **Alessia Marzano** (PhD fellow in media studies at the Arctic University of Norway)



© Alessia Marzano

△ A yellow birch leaf hanging in a delicate balance.

In a world marked by unrest and ecological crises, the pursuit of peace and environmental restoration is more critical and complex than ever.

Conflicts and the impacts of climate change fill our screens, reminding us daily

of the urgent challenges humanity faces.

While globalisation has bridged distances, questions arise about our collective ability to address these issues effectively and affect a positive change.

This collective piece, however, is less about

what we should do and more about what imagination and art can do for us.

This conversation surfaced from our friendship and shared experience as international human rights and multiculturalism students.

Since our lives became entangled, we have shared personal, political, and poetic experiences, which also deepened our friendship. We share a love for art and creative practices, and we believe they can be a medium to express solidarity, explore alternative perspectives, and reflect on the future.

In this sense, we do not refer to the adage “art for art’s sake.” Times like these require art to be political, addressing climate change, past and present genocides, wars, and violations against Indigenous peoples, racism, and discrimination through an approach that merges art with activism. This paper brings together some reflections that surfaced during these challenging times and led to our shared poetic practice of poetry-telling.

In our conversations, and since 2021, when we were human rights students, we have discussed the role of stories and poetry in helping us embody a questioning and critical attitude to what surrounds us and reflect constructively about our pasts, present, and shared future(s).

Drops or Waves?

Activism and solidarity are two concepts that are well-known and often used but rarely explained or clarified. Most of the time, and primarily through the media, activists are depicted as radical, aggressive, violent, and not prone to dialogue.

We define activism as direct action



© Kalpani Dambagolla

△ Waves spread across the pond with each drop.

that challenges the system, but we also acknowledge its multidimensionality. That is to say, there are several forms of activity. For example, activism blends art and activism to solicit transformative social action, starting from the premise that the ecological crisis is strictly connected to the cultural one.

Art can be a powerful language. It can be used as a call to action, mobilise people, and be emancipatory. Through activism and by nurturing human creativity, it is possible to envision and work towards human liberation.

As a result, the distinction between an artist and an activist is that the latter expresses their ideals and shared objectives through their artistic creations. Hence, their creativity becomes a means to communicate something beyond themselves and contribute to something bigger. Although not all artists who leverage the emotive power of art to convey solidarity, challenge societal norms, and express strong views on pressing issues consider themselves activists or artists, this does not mean that their art is not political.

Isolated actions are often considered drops in the ocean; however, working

toward shared and collective goals can be visualised instead as a wave, a movement of people expressing themselves in diverse ways, not only by calling us to action but also by challenging ourselves and our imagination. Hence, it shows us alternatives and possibilities, which in turn can inspire change in others. In our discussions on activism, we discovered that these waves don’t always need to resemble a tsunami in order to reach a critical mass; rather, we began to comprehend how even minor everyday microactions might inspire political change. As radical change demands uncomfortable questions, what artistic practices can offer should not necessarily be to provide answers but instead spread questions all around us.

From Empathy to Solidarity: Our Poetry-telling Lab

Emotions and affects have been at the heart of theories behind solidarity. Remarkably, the role of compassion and empathy has been recognised as central.

However, in our conversations, we concluded that empathy is not enough.

For example, empathy for a person

perceived as a victim can arise from a power imbalance; our sentiments can be connected to ideas of vulnerability and innocence. Sentiments of empathy may produce a sense of similarity and universality (thinking about the children of Gaza and all the children in the world, for example), which can lead to glossing over crucial differences.

Thus, what brings us from feeling empathy to acting in solidarity?

A few years ago, in December 2021, we launched a small initiative at our university in Norway called “Decolonising Poetry—Reading Group.” We aimed to “share our favourite poems, resonate, vibrate together, and get to know other people’s perspectives.”

That evening, we gathered with our peers. Everyone was supposed to pick a poem to read aloud so we could discuss it in the circle. We mostly shared our personal experiences connected to the poems we chose to share.

These reflections sparked other ideas and fostered our bonding experience as students from different countries, some of which were (and are) ravaged by genocides, civil wars, political unrest, or



△ The cover image of our first reading group meeting event on Facebook called "Decolonizing poetry - reading group"

read our own poems and decided to evolve the club into a platform, a broader space to connect and inspire other peers, be inspired, and discuss our innermost concerns, starting from our vulnerabilities. Through this lab, we aim to address grassroots initiatives towards social justice and join ongoing conversations bringing activism and education, inner creativity and academic life, and political and personal lives as more-than-academics, bridging human rights theories with political engagement.

Every personal opinion matters, as we consider the lab a platform for freedom of expression. We value every form of respectful expression, including spoken and unspoken words.

climate injustice. In the midst of ongoing genocides, civil unrest, and the escalating ecological crisis, we have had constant conversations on social media over the years as a way to voice our anger, powerlessness, and unity.

Poetry-telling is as powerful as storytelling. But, in hard times, the limit of the words manifests itself, and silence seems the only way.

Words cannot express everything, and during the current conflict in Gaza, it became hard to find the right words. However, isolation is not the answer either.

Words need to be released to express our inner anguish over those who suffer greatly as a result of injustices, wars, and genocides.

Personally, we wanted to share our friends' grief in the face of atrocities, and it became crucial to find a new space between our personal human lives and what was happening around us. Even though we now live far apart, we decided to recreate that space in January 2024, amid the Gaza conflict. This time, it will be a virtual poetry-telling club where we can get together, exchange ideas, and polish them.

These exchanges evolved into fruitful discussions while we shared our common concerns, feelings of powerlessness, aspirations, and expressed solidarity and political ideas.

During our sessions, we wrote and

The proposed project includes workshops that promote solidarity and political participation; situated and environmental storytelling; reflective practice on genocides, narratives, and counter-narratives; personal experience sharing; and a common reading of pertinent literature and poetry.

Taking inspiration from the rhizome, a plant stem that grows roots and stems horizontally, the lab's goal is to grow and expand through shared experiences and knowledge construction.

Through poetic hangouts, we work on micro-acts of change with the common goal of social justice while building on multiple poetic techniques, such as eliciting "random thoughts," creative writing, and using journal cutouts to create poems and poetic walks to find inspiration in urban and natural spaces.

Conclusive Thoughts: Poetry-telling Weaves the Personal and the Political

How can we separate the personal from the collective in this interconnected age?

Waves are constituted

of water drops, which are impossible to isolate and count. However, every single drop matters; from this perspective, drops can be seen as individual, personal stories in the collective with broader waves of political action.

As the line between the individual and the collective blurs, we believe that poetry holds the power to transform drops into waves. In a beautiful interview held on August 30, 1979, Audre Lorde articulated how "teaching is a survival technique." Poetry-telling is our survival technique, a space where we can learn from each other, connect our creative inputs, share our thoughts and words, and resonate to create something together. Taking the motto "personal is political" means recognising how everything that happens around us in these uncertain times shapes our lives, breaching into our personal spheres.

As a practice, poetry-telling allows us to reflect on and resist the pressure of reality; poetry distils the raw materials we ingest every day, personally and collectively. We conjure poetry and storytelling's imaginative power to support us in seeking transformation without neglecting responsibility for present injustices and accountability for generations before and after.

Our poetry-telling practice is also a small, humble drop in the ocean, but it is part of a wave.



△ Example of cut-outs poem by Alessia Marzano.

CENTRAL ASIAN HEART OF CULTURE

Legacy of Horsemanship from Tradition to Modernity

By Gulzhan Kabysheva (Marketing Specialist, The Republic of Kazakhstan)



△ A kazakh participant in World Nomad Games with his golden eagle.

The nomadic civilisation has left a deep mark on the history of mankind, and its legacy continues to actively influence modern culture. This is especially evident in the tradition of horsemanship, which was an integral part of the life of the Kazakhs and other nomadic peoples of Eurasia.

For the Kazakhs, the horse was not just a means of transportation. She occupied a central place in their lives, playing a

key role in warfare, hunting and everyday life.

The art of riding was considered the highest manifestation of strength and skill. The horse was not only a status symbol but also an important element of cultural traditions.

Equestrian games such as "kokpar" (goat fight) and "baige" (horse racing) served not only as entertainment events but also as ways to strengthen social ties

and transfer cultural heritage from generation to generation.

The nomads have developed unique horse control skills, which include riding at high speeds and performing difficult stunts.

Their traditional equipment, such as bridles, saddles and blankets, has been carefully thought out for convenience and efficiency in a nomadic lifestyle. These items serve not only practical purposes but are also significant cultural artefacts



△ Kazakh participants in traditional warrior attire on stilts.

Kazakhstan, the heritage of equestrian culture is studied and preserved.

Equestrian festivals are becoming popular again, and “kumis” (mare’s milk) has once again taken its place in the cultural life of Kazakhstan.

The pandemic has also led to an increase in the number of horses and the revival of ritual practices.

The 5 World Nomad Games (WNG), held in Astana from September 8 to 13, 2024, united sports, culture, and science and demonstrated a unique nomadic heritage.

The games became a significant international event, bringing together 2,800 athletes from 89 countries and a large

number of spectators.

that preserve and transmit the traditions of horsemanship. This event not only increased interest in ethnic traditions but also emphasised the importance of the nomadic heritage, inspiring its preservation.

The traditions of horsemanship had a profound impact on Kazakh art, literature and music. Folk songs and epics often praise the bravery of horsemen and horsemanship.

The horse occupies a special place in the Kazakh language, with many names reflecting its various qualities. Organised for the first time in Kyrgyzstan 10 years ago, these games are international competitions in ethnic sports that promote the culture of nomads on the world stage.

Modern Renaissance, World Nomad Games

For example, the expression “at zhalyntartyp, zhygit bolgany” (the one who grabbed the horse’s mane became a horseman) symbolises the maturation and formation of a young man.

Since the 1990s, after gaining independence, Kazakhstan has witnessed the revival of traditional festivals and equestrian games. They symbolise solidarity and mutual respect, emphasising the importance of preserving cultural heritage in modern conditions.

Events, Cultural Programme

During the WNG, along with sports competitions, cultural and scientific programmes were held, which strengthened intercultural exchange and international interest in the nomadic heritage.

On the eve of the opening, the “ethnoaul” (ethno-village) was inaugurated, where cultural events were held daily on stage. A large fair-exhibition was held where the masters of Kazakhstan showed their products and held master classes, sharing knowledge and secrets.

An important part of the programme was the “akyn” (poet) competition “Aitys,” (Kazakh improvisational poetry competition) a practice that brought together experienced and young performers, as well as the “Universe of Nomads” festival, which presented modern trends in culture.

The “ethnoaul” also hosted bird-hunting competitions and demonstrations on national types of wrestling.

Guests could participate in master classes on the national cuisine of Kazakhstan, where they could try their hand at cooking traditional dishes and drinks, feeling the hospitality of the Kazakh people. The events of the “ethnoaul” contributed to the promotion of cultural heritage and national values, strengthening the cultural brand of Kazakhstan.

The culmination of the ceremony was “Birlik kerueni” (Caravan of Unity).

As in other major international sporting events such as the Olympic and the Asian Games, a special ceremony was also held, in which water became the central element. On the eve of the games, colourful celebrations were held in major cities of Kazakhstan, during which water from sacred springs was collected for the opening ceremony of the WNG.

After that, the caravans passed through the main streets of each region and went to the capital.

The caravan was decorated in the traditions of each region.

Artists and creative teams who took part in the cultural programme of the games arrived in Astana along with the water. Caravans brought “yurts” (Kazakh traditional houses), utensils and objects for the “ethnoaul.”

During the opening day, the regions of Kazakhstan were showcased by a caravan of “batyrs” (warriors) carrying “torsyks” (traditional Kazakh bottle) filled with holy water. The event culminated in a ceremony where water from the sacred springs was used.

The games included sports, cultural and scientific events.

Before the start of the games, an international conference was held at the National Museum of Kazakhstan, where methods of training ethno-sportsmen, the development of ethnosports, standardisation, and the introduction of international rules were discussed.



△ Participants playing the Kazakh traditional game ‘Kokpar’.

Experts also studied the significance of nomadism and its role in civilisation, as well as the phenomenon of neo-nomads.

Spirit, Symbolism of Games

The 5 World Nomad Games were held under the slogan “Meeting in the Great Steppe.”

The official logo of the games represented the solar horseman, an important symbol associated with the nomadic heritage. The main colour of the logo is dark red, symbolising carnolians, which for nomads are associated with vital energy, the sun and the heart.

Household items such as “kamshi” (whip) and “belbeu” (belt) were often decorated with carnolians, and the text part of the logo was made in the style of the Turkic runic script of the eighth-10th centuries, emphasising the uniqueness of the cultural heritage of the nomadic people.

The competition programme included 21 sports, with special attention paid to traditional disciplines reflecting the culture and customs of nomadic peoples. Horse racing, national wrestling, archery and hunting with hunting birds stand out for their unique rules that require high physical fitness and skill.

One of the most popular disciplines has become long-distance horse racing known as “baige,” in particular “alaman

baige,” where participants on horses older than three years overcome a 25-kilometre distance on flat terrain.

The “kokpar,” in which 12 riders compete to deliver a goat or mannequin carcass to the opponent’s circle—a metaphor of a wolf bringing prey to its cubs—offers a similarly breathtaking spectacle.

In the game “tenge ilu,” riders pick up a bag of money from the ground at full gallop, demonstrating the agility and speed necessary for a “kokpar.”

“Audarispak,” traditional horse wrestling, helps to develop skills when riders seek to throw an opponent off his horse, and “zhambi atu” (archery on horseback) requires exceptional accuracy and reaction speed, differing in Hungarian, Korean, Turkish and Kazakh styles.

These disciplines, rooted in the military traditions of the nomads, help viewers better understand the cultural heritage and the importance of sports in the lives of the ancient nomadic people.

Cultural Significance, International Cooperation

The World Nomad Games brought together athletes and guests from all over the world, including Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkey and many other countries, becoming a symbol of global cooperation and cultural exchange.

Representatives from 89 countries highlighted the international scale and importance of the event.

For the first time, the games were supported by UNESCO, which strengthened their status as a global platform for intercultural dialogue and cultural interaction, creating a unique space for the exchange of traditions and experiences.

The games have become a significant platform for popularising and preserving the nomadic heritage.

The ethnic village “Universe of Nomads” allowed guests to touch the traditions, crafts and art of the nomadic people; master classes on crafts were held here, as were concerts where participants could get acquainted with the music and dances of the nomadic people.

The presence of many international guests underlined the importance of the games as a centre of cultural diplomacy aimed at developing peaceful dialogue and mutual respect.

The World Nomad Games have gone beyond a sporting event, representing a whole range of cultural and scientific programmes aimed at preserving and developing ethnic heritage.

Every element of the games, from colourful ceremonies to ethnographic exhibitions and scientific conferences, helps to reveal the unique significance of the nomadic lifestyle and its contribution to world history.

These games bring together people who are passionate about ancient traditions and serve as an important platform for understanding and preserving cultural heritage, showing the importance of nomadic traditions for modern culture.

These games help the world better understand the importance of values such as connection with nature, fortitude and unity, which have been shared by the people of Eurasia for centuries.

The games have become a symbol of cultural diplomacy, bringing people of different nationalities together in a spirit of mutual respect and solidarity.

By supporting peaceful cooperation and intercultural understanding, the World Nomad Games remind us that traditions rooted in the distant past are still relevant and significant today, being an important part of the world’s cultural heritage. 🌍

RAISING A GLOBAL CITIZEN

By Nelly Aluanga Omino (Head of International Curriculum, Kiota School, Nairobi, Kenya)

My hunt for answers to the problems that kids from different family backgrounds encountered and how those problems affected their academic performance began exactly eight years ago.

In my research, I came across the GCED Online Campus, where terminologies like Global Citizenship and Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) revealed my limitations. Upon further review of the course outlines, I knew I was on track and in the right direction.

Having transitioned from a national to an international curriculum school educator and administrator with over 30 years experience, I assumed my understanding of Global Citizenship was informed.

It was not until I met 51 brilliant teacher educators from 21 countries during the 7th Global Capacity-Building Workshop organised by APCEIU in 2022 that my worldview and appreciation of Global Citizenship were unlocked.

Interactions with people from the Asia-Pacific region, Africa, Arab states, and Latin America revealed the interconnectedness of world citizens, the importance of building peaceful communities, and a new perspective on Global Citizenship Education, with the defining moment being the realisation that I am part of a common humanity.

I received clarity and a sense of urgency about my opportunities to be a change agent for the globe while maintaining a global perspective.

One of the key speakers, Dr. Toh Swee-Hin, highlighted the value of GCED learning by stating that learners should be motivated towards social transformation and action for change. This inspired me to become a GCED change agent.

I quickly adopted the “Think, Share, and Act Now” APCEIU changemaker approach and immediately embarked on the journey of “Raising a Global Citizen.”

I started by training teachers and students on Global Citizenship, and collectively, we were able to roll out initiatives within an exciting one and a half years.

The outcomes transformed the school, which was later recognised as the winning school under an extracurricular category amongst over 390 schools.

The appointment of a global ambassador to the Student Council, followed by celebrations of 32 nationalities culminated by flag hoisting, was an acknowledgement of the diversity in the school.

Thereafter, the theme “Better Together, Better Environment” was collaboratively crafted to address persistent challenges and enhance a peaceful coexistence.

The initiatives included everything from student-led campaign efforts to broadening learners’ comprehension of GCED values through the Global Classroom Exchange programme.

Students donated essential items to women in prison and their children.

Remarkable improvements were evident in the students’ ability to



dialogue, communicate effectively and work collaboratively.

Their interpersonal relationships-underpinned by Global Citizenship values that were built into the curriculum, namely respect, diversity and inclusion and which bore the acronym RDI-were embraced by all.

Following my advanced GCED mentorship training titled “Establish a Shared Understanding of Systemic Social-Emotional Learning” provided by APCEIU, the cultivation of SEL competencies through the CASEL Model taught to me by my capable mentor, Ms. Trish Shaffer, confirmed that SEL is an essential component of education.

Values for human dignity and empathy were heightened and evident in the school setting.

Students created a website called “Mental Health for Students by Students” to check in on their well-being.

Designated mental health ambassadors would raise general issues and request intervention.

Inclusion of SEL cards in a math boardgame I had developed marked a significant turning point for the launch of a SEL Math Tool Kit.

All individuals consciously worked on improving self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making, which equally enhanced my leadership style.

My attendance at the 9th Icon GCED International Conference on “Revitalising Multilateralism for Peace through GCED” and the “Advanced Workshop for GCED Alumni 2024” in Seoul resulted in an ongoing GCED collaboration between students in India and Kenya working on Sustainable Development Goal 14.1: reduce marine pollution through management of plastics, the planned adoption of two schools in our respective villages, the introduction of GCED, and student engagement with a human rights organisation.

This multilateral approach to pursuing GCED will undoubtedly broaden its reach and horizons, resulting in more global citizens who embrace Global Citizenship values and engage in activities that build a culture of peace.

Thank you, APCEIU, for the transformational experience that enables me to promote Global Citizenship Education with a focus on Education for Peace. 🙏

KUMLEA RAIWA WA ULIMWENGU

By Nelly Aluanga Omino (Kiongozi wa Mtaala wa Kimataifa, Shule ya Kiota Nairobi, Kenya)

Utafutaji wangu wa majibu kwa matatizo ambayo watoto kutoka familia mbalimbali wanakumbana nayo na jinsi matatizo hayo yanavyoathiri utendaji wao wa kitaaluma ulianza miaka minane iliyopita.

Katika utafiti wangu, nilikutana na Kampasi ya Mtandaoni ya GCED, ambapo maneno kama Uraia wa Ulimwengu na Kujifunza kwa Kihemko na Kijamii (SEL) yalifichua mapungufu yangu. Baada ya kuangalia kwa kina muhtasari wa masomo, nilijua nilikuwa kwenye njia sahihi na katika mwelekeo unaofaa.

Baada ya kubadilika kutoka mwalimu wa shule ya mtaala wa kitaifa hadi shule ya mtaala wa kimataifa na kuwa msimamizi mwenye uzoefu wa zaidi ya miaka 30, nilidhani uelewa wangu wa Uraia wa Ulimwengu ulikuwa umekamilika.

Haikuwa hadi nilipokutana na walimu 51 wenye vipaji kutoka nchi 21 wakati wa Warsha ya 7 ya Ujenzi wa Uwezo wa Ulimwengu iliyoandaliwa na APCEIU mwaka wa 2022 ndipo mtazamo wangu wa ulimwengu na uthamini wangu kwa Uraia wa Ulimwengu ulifunguka.

Mawasiliano na watu kutoka ukanda wa Asia-Pasifiki, Afrika, mataifa ya Kiarabu, na Amerika ya Kusini yalidhihirisha uhusiano wa raia wa ulimwengu, umuhimu wa kujenga jamii zenye amani, na mtazamo mpya juu ya Elimu ya Uraia wa Ulimwengu, huku wakati muhimu ukiwa ni kutambua kuwa mimi ni sehemu ya ubinadamu wa pamoja.

Nilipata uwazi na hisia za uharaka kuhusu fursa zangu za kuwa wakala wa mabadiliko kwa ulimwengu huku nikiwa na mtazamo wa kimataifa.

Mzungumzaji mmoja muhimu, Dkt. Toh Swee-Hin, alisisitiza thamani ya kujifunza kwa GCED kwa kusema kwamba wanafunzi wanapaswa kuhamasishwa kuelekea mabadiliko ya kijamii na hatua za mabadiliko. Hii ilinichochea kuwa wakala wa mabadiliko ya GCED.

Nilipokea haraka mtindo wa “Fikiria, Shiriki, na Tenda Sasa” wa APCEIU na mara moja nikaanza safari ya “Kumlea Raia wa Ulimwengu.”

Nilianza kwa kuwafundisha walimu na wanafunzi kuhusu Uraia wa Ulimwengu, na kwa pamoja, tulikuwa na uwezo wa kuanzisha mipango ndani ya kipindi cha mwaka mmoja na nusu chenye kufurahisha.

Matokeo yalibadilisha shule, ambayo baadaye ilitambuliwa kama shule iliyoibuka kidedea katika kipengele cha ziada kati ya shule zaidi ya 390.

Uteuzi wa balozi wa kimataifa katika Baraza la Wanafunzi, ukifuatwa na sherehe za utaifa 32 uliohitimishwa na kuinua bendera, ulikuwa ni uthibitisho wa utofauti shuleni.

Baadaye, mada ya “Pamoja Bora, Mazingira Bora” ilitengenezwa kwa ushirikiano ili kushughulikia changamoto zinazoendelea na kuboresha cohabitation ya amani.

Mipango hiyo ilihusisha kila kitu kutoka kwa juhudi za kampeni zinazojitokeza kutoka kwa wanafunzi hadi kupanua ufahamu wa wanafunzi kuhusu thamani za GCED kupitia mpango wa Kubadilishana Darasa la Kimataifa.

Wanafunzi walichangia vitu muhimu kwa wanawake walioka matwa na watoto wao.

Mabadiliko ya ajabu yalionekana katika uwezo wa wanafunzi wa kujadili, kuwasiliana kwa ufanisi na kufanya kazi kwa ushirikiano.

Mahusiano yao ya kibinafsi – yaliyojengwa kwa msingi wa thamani za Uraia wa Ulimwengu zilizojumuishwa katika mtaala, yaani heshima, utofauti, na ushirikishwaji, ambayo yanabeba kifupisho RDI – yalikubaliwa na wote.

Baada ya mafunzo yangu ya juu ya uongozi wa GCED yaliyokuwa na kichwa cha habari “Kuweka Kuelewa Kwenye Kujifunza Kijamii-Kihemko Kwenye Mfumo,” yaliyoandaliwa na APCEIU, kukuza uwezo wa SEL kupitia Mfano wa CASEL ambao ulifundishwa kwangu na mkufunzi wangu mwenye uwezo, Bi. Trish Shaffer, kulithibitisha kwamba SEL ni sehemu muhimu ya elimu.

Thamani za heshima ya utu na huruma ziliongezeka na kuonekana katika mazingira ya shule.

Wanafunzi walijenga tovuti iitwayo “Afya ya Akili kwa Wanafunzi na Wanafunzi” ili kuangalia ustawi wao.

Wasaidizi maalum wa afya ya akili wangeweza kuleta masuala ya jumla na kuomba hatua za msaada.

Kuongezwa kwa kadi za SEL katika mchezo wa bodi wa hisabati niliouunda kulikuwa hatua muhimu katika uzinduzi wa Seti ya Zana za SEL ya Hisabati.

Watu wote walifanya kazi kwa makusudi kuboresha uelewa wa kibinafsi, usimamizi wa kibinafsi, uelewa wa kijamii, ujuzi wa uhusiano na maamuzi yanayohusisha majukumu, ambayo pia yali-boresha mtindo wangu wa uongozi.

Mahudhurio yangu katika Mkutano wa 9 wa Kimataifa wa Icon GCED kuhusu “Kufufua Uzalendo wa Kimaataifa kwa Amani kupitia GCED” na “Warsha ya Juu kwa Wanafunzi wa GCED 2024” huko Seoul yalileta ushirikiano wa muda mrefu wa GCED kati ya wanafunzi nchini India na Kenya wakifanya kazi kwenye Malengo ya Maendeleo Endelevu 14.1: kupunguza uchafuzi wa baharini kupitia usimamizi wa plastiki, kupangwa kwa kupitishwa kwa shule mbili katika vijiji vyetu, kuanzishwa kwa GCED, na ushirikiano wa wanafunzi na shirika la haki za binadamu.

Njia hii ya kimataifa ya kufuata GCED hakika itapanua ufikiaji na upeo wake, ikileta raia wengi wa ulimwengu wanaokumbatia thamani za Uraia wa Ulimwengu na kushiriki katika shughuli zinazoleta utamaduni wa amani.

Asante, APCEIU, kwa uzoefu wa kubadilisha ambao unaniwezesha kuendelea Elimu ya Uraia wa Ulimwengu kwa kuzingatia Elimu ya Amani. 🙏

Policy Advocacy

Envisioned Multilateralism for Peace through GCED



The 9th International Conference on Global Citizenship Education (IConGCED) concluded successfully and provided a platform to reflect on the importance and necessity of multilateral cooperation for peace.

The conference was centred around the theme “Revitalising Multilateralism for Peace through GCED.”

Approximately 300 policymakers, educators, researchers, and practitioners gathered to engage in diverse and insightful discussions from 4-5 September.

The conference was co-organised by the Asia-Pacific Centre of International Understanding (APCEIU), under the auspices of UNESCO, with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, in collaboration with UNESCO and the Chungnam National University BK21 Four Centre for GCER.

Related content can be accessed on the official conference’s website (icongced.unescoapceiu.org) and YouTube channel (@International Conference on GCED).

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APCEIU’s AP Policy Dialogue, Launches Awareness for Future Path of ‘The Recommendation’



Regional Policy Dialogue and Launch of the Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific was held from 5 to 7 June in Bangkok, Thailand.

This landmark event was co-organised by UNESCO and APCEIU, with the support from the Centres of Asia-Pacific Excellence (CAPEs), the New Zealand Centre for Global Studies, Sophia University in Japan, and hosted by the Ministry of Education of Thailand. The overarching goal of the event was to raise awareness on The Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation,

Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development and facilitate discussions on implementation priorities at the regional level. APCEIU remains committed to continuing its support for the implementation of the Recommendation, the sole global standard-setting instrument outlining how education can promote lasting peace and advance human development at national, sub-regional, regional, and international levels.

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Capacity-Building

2024 SSAEM Conference



The 2024 SSAEM Conference, concluding the Asia-Pacific Teacher Exchange for Global Education (APTE), took place on November 21 at Suwon Convention Center with around 200 participants from Korea, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

The conference reviewed the year’s achievements and discussed future directions. It featured opening speeches by Ms. SHIN Meekyung (Korea’s Ministry of Education), APCEIU Director LIM Hyunmook, and embassy representatives. A panel discussion involved education ministry officials from eight countries, highlighting the importance of education exchange amid global trends.

Students from Seoul Yongil Elementary presented online exchange experiences, showcasing teacher-student engagement. Afternoon sessions addressed Media Literacy, Cultural Diversity, and Climate Crisis, aligned with UNESCO’s 2023 Revision of the 1974 Recommendation.

The event emphasized collaboration through partner school presentations and alumni sharing follow-up activities. Participants proposed sustained partnerships, inspiring continued efforts to promote global citizenship and educational innovation.

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GCC Directors’ Meeting, 2nd GCC Int’l Conference on GCED Held in Malaysia



The Global Citizenship Education Cooperation Centre (GCC) Malaysia at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) hosted the 2nd GCC International Conference on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) alongside the GCC Directors’ Meeting 2024 in Penang, Malaysia.

The event, which took place from August 6 to 8, was co-organised with APCEIU and brought over 200 people from all over the world, including partners from the GCC Programme and the GCED Curriculum Development and Integration Project (CDI).

During the entire conference, more than 80 papers were presented by participants. It offered a vibrant platform for individuals passionate about GCED to connect, exchange ideas, and share their latest research.

As highlighted during the event, the conference served as a gathering place for GCED advocates from different countries to learn from one another and recognise that they are part of a larger and more supportive community.

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Asia-Pacific Training Workshop Expands Vision of Peace through GCED



The year’s Asia-Pacific Training Workshop on Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) emphasised the need for comprehensive understanding of peace and the transformative potential of GCED in promoting a culture of peace and sustainable development.

With the theme of “Expanding the Vision of Peace through GCED,” the online event that ran from 19-28 June was designed in line with UNESCO’s Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development (2023), which updates the 1974 Recommendation.

Under this theme, 42 educators from 16 UNESCO member states in the Asia-Pacific region successfully completed the workshop and were empowered to become catalysts for positive change in their communities and beyond.

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Implementation of the 9th GCED Global Capacity-Building Workshop



APCEIU organised the 9th Global Capacity-Building Workshop on Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which took place virtually from 18 to

26 July and centred on the theme “Empowering Educators for a Culture of Peace through GCED.”

This year’s workshop highlighted the role of GCED in fostering peace and aligned with UNESCO’s updated 2023 Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development, a revision of the original 1974 Recommendation.

Forty-nine educators from 28 countries receiving official development assistance (ODA) successfully completed the workshop. The programme involved a mix of expert-led lectures, lively group discussions, and interactive exercises that focused on key GCED themes and urgent global challenges.

This collective experience not only reinforced their capacity to drive positive transformation within their local communities but also provided a valuable opportunity for them to gather with educators from ODA-recipient countries and share valuable ideas and opinions.

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36 Teachers from Three Countries Engaging at 18 Korean Schools



A group of 36 teachers from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand are actively teaching at 18 elementary and secondary schools in the Republic of Korea.

From 7-15 October, APCEIU, along with representatives from the Ministries of Education of Malaysia and Indonesia and officials from the Metropolitan and Provincial Offices of Education, conducted a mid-term monitoring of the 2024 Asia-Pacific Teacher Exchange for Global Education (APTE). Before their placement in Korean schools, the invited teachers attended a four-day Local Adjustment Training (LAT) organised by APCEIU starting on 26 August.

The LAT provided practical support, such as opening bank accounts and setting up mobile

phones, as well as various lectures to help the teachers understand Global Citizenship Education and the APTE programme, and prepare for their classes.

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Partnership and Networking

Unlearning Intolerance Event at UN Headquarters



The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) and its partners

co-organised a distinguished event titled “Unlearning Intolerance: Global Citizenship Education and SDG 16” at the United Nations Headquarters. The proceedings on 16 July opened with a welcoming address by Hyun Mook Lim, director of APCEIU.

Director Lim detailed APCEIU’s initiatives and emphasised the pivotal role of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16, which focuses on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

Organised in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Costa Rica and the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, the University for Peace, and co-sponsored by the Ban Ki-moon Foundation, the event underscored the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting GCED and highlighted the need for educational initiatives to foster tolerance, empathy, and global understanding as integral components of sustainable development.

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Roundtable on ‘AI and Global Citizenship Education’



The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding APCEIU under the auspices of UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Korea to UNESCO jointly organised a roundtable discussion on “Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Global Citizenship Education” at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France.

The event, which was held on the occasion of the 220th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board, was organised in partnership with the Group of Friends for Solidarity and Inclusion with Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and UNESCO on 16 October.

The roundtable attracted approximately 60 participants, including representatives from numerous UNESCO member states such as Austria, Argentina, Lao PDR, Canada, the United States, Kenya, Chile, Italy, Serbia, and Japan, as well as GCED and AI practitioners and education professionals.

The active participation of numerous UNESCO member state representatives demonstrated the international community’s high interest in the intersection of AI and education, with participants engaging in in-depth discussions about the role and direction of GCED in the era of AI.

The event served as a significant opportunity to reaffirm the importance of GCED in maintaining human-centred values and ethical principles in an era of accelerating technological advancements.

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Youth Programme

EIU Photo Class ‘Gifts from the Tian Shan: Nature, Culture, and Life’



APCEIU, under the auspices of UNESCO and the National Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic for UNESCO, successfully co-organised the 21st EIU Photo Class at the Ilim Educational Complex in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, from 22 to 29 September.

Under the theme “Gifts from the Tian Shan: Nature, Culture, and Life,” the programme brought together eight South Korean secondary school students and 20 students from the Kyrgyz Republic to promote youth exchanges and cultural understanding between the two countries.

They conducted field photography sessions at various locations, including the Burana Tower of the mediaeval city of Balasagun, the majestic Ala-Archa National Park in the Tian Shan mountains, and the Supara Ethno-Complex, where traditional lifestyles can be experienced. The weeklong programme culminated in a photo exhibition at the Gapar Aitiev Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts on 29 September.

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THE ALA-ARCHA NATIONAL PARK IN THE TIAN SHAN MOUNTAINS OF KYRGYZSTAN
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