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# Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Tools

## Education for Intercultural Understanding



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Sustainable Development:  
Guidelines and Tools**

# **Education for Intercultural Understanding**

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## Preface

In March 2005, the United Nations declared 2005 to 2014 as the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), and UNESCO has been tasked to lead the Decade.

To contribute to this initiative, the Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) in UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, Thailand, has organized several meetings to identify and conceptualize key content areas for ESD, and to recommend guidelines for reorienting existing education programmes in these areas, under the Mobile Training Team project with the support of the Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

A key outcome of the meetings is the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Regional Network of Teacher Education Institutes for ESD (ESD-Net) to coordinate efforts to incorporate ESD concepts, principles and values into their pre-service teacher education curricula, and to develop relevant teaching and learning materials. Based on requests from Member States in the Asia-Pacific region, some thematic issues were identified as priority areas, including climate change, natural disaster preparedness, environmental protection, human and food security, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender sensitizing, peace education and inter-cultural understanding.

Subsequently, regional and national-level capacity building workshops were conducted to share good practices and lessons learned in incorporating these ESD-related themes into two specific school subjects – science and social studies. More importantly, the workshop participants found the materials, pedagogies and processes developed and used in the training workshops to be valuable, relevant and practical.

Representing the collective effort of facilitators, deans and directors of teacher education institutions, teacher educators and teachers, these teaching and learning materials are now available in this series of publications, *Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainable Development: Guidelines and Tools*. We hope that they will be a useful reference for educators and teachers seeking to instil and inculcate sustainable development concepts, principles and values into the minds of their students.



Gwang-Jo Kim

Director  
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## Introduction – How does Intercultural Understanding Fit within ESD?

In attempting to reorient teacher education to address sustainability, it is important to understand the role of intercultural understanding in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), and why it is important to promote understanding among cultures for ensuring a peaceful, just and sustainable world. However, the issue of intercultural understanding cannot be addressed in isolation, separately from other important concerns that affect societies.

Humanity is facing multiple, complex problems that are interdependent at all levels: local, national, regional and global. Every problem or issue has multiple interlinked dimensions that may be political, social, economic, technological, environmental or cultural, and cannot be solved simply from one perspective. With the advent of globalization, economic, political and technological considerations have mostly dominated, while socio-cultural and environmental implications have received a lower priority. We are now experiencing the consequences of this imbalanced approach, in terms of environmental degradation and increasing social conflict, both within and beyond territorial borders, accompanied by economic turmoil due to greed and excess.

The interrelated nature of global issues was acknowledged in UNESCO's Integrated Framework of Action for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy, declared by Ministers of Education in 1994, and more recently in the International Implementation Scheme for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development for 2005-2014. ESD therefore promotes a holistic, trans-disciplinary and integrated, values-based approach to education, within the broader context of socio-cultural, economic and environmental factors and the socio-political issues of equity, poverty, democracy and quality of life.

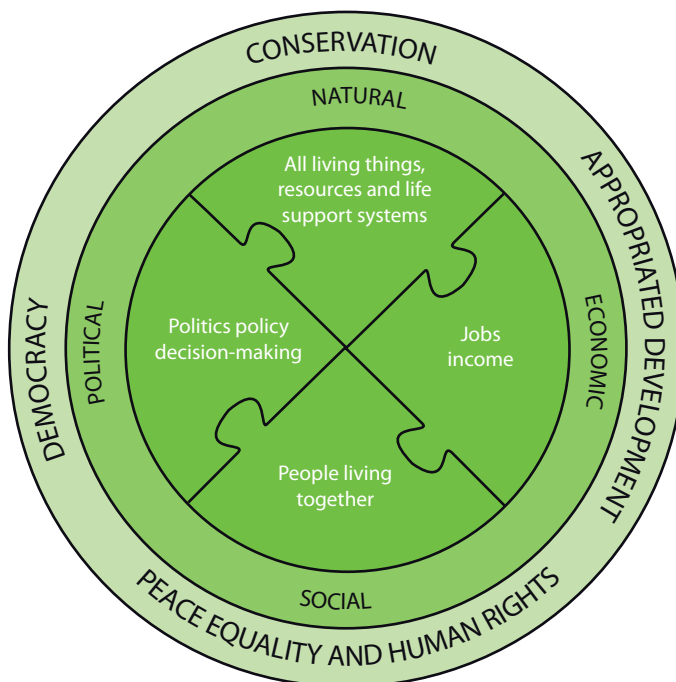
The International Implementation Scheme (UNESCO IIS, 2005) outlines three spheres of action and learning for sustainable development which are interconnected through culture as the underlying fourth dimension, namely:

- Environment (i.e. natural);
- Society (including politics); and
- Economy

The theme of intercultural understanding and respect for cultural diversity falls within the social dimension of peace, equality and human rights, underpinned by the cultural context, within and through which learning occurs, and which forms the basis for inter-linkages between the various sustainability dimensions (i.e., socio-political, environmental and economic). Within the International Implementation Scheme, the value of respect is seen as central to all aspects of sustainable development: respect for self, for others and for all life on earth.

In summary, this means that in order to learn to live together peacefully, sustainably and in harmony with other cultures, we also need to ensure that social and economic justice and human rights are maintained, as conflict is often the result of injustice. This also applies to environmental sustainability, since responsible and equitable use of the world's resources is more likely to lead to reduced local, regional and global conflict. Where war and conflicts do occur, cultural practices and artefacts are lost or destroyed, the social and economic infrastructure is disrupted, and the natural environment is also severely degraded in the process. Figure 1 shows a diagrammatic representation of the multiple aspects of sustainability.

Figure 1: A diagrammatic representation of the various dimensions of ESD



*Social, political, economic and natural (i.e. environmental) dimensions of sustainability occur within CULTURAL contexts*

Described briefly below are some of the ways in which culture is linked with the three interrelated dimensions of sustainability; environment, society and economy.

## Environment

There are interdependent links between how cultures shape the environment, and how the environment shapes culture, meaning that biological, cultural and linguistic diversity go together as distinct but closely related aspects of the diversity of life on earth. The loss of biodiversity in recent times is accompanied by a rapid loss of cultural and linguistic diversity,

and the valuable indigenous knowledge of the environment that goes with it. This is particularly the case, for example, when large tracts of forest, where minority ethnic groups may live, are cleared for the timber industry, or to make way for economic or residential development. Cultural, linguistic and biological diversity are therefore inextricably linked and face common threats.

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity asserts that cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature, so much so that a new word has been coined to describe this symbiosis: “bio-cultural diversity”. Culturally diverse ways of knowing, doing, being and problem-solving are vital for supporting the search for innovative ways of living sustainably together with finite resources and a fragile planet. For these reasons, understanding and preserving diverse cultures must be central to ESD.

## Society

The social dimensions of ESD relate to the need for individuals and societies to live and work together peacefully, with justice, equity, care and respect for human dignity and rights. This requires people of diverse cultures to understand and respect each other, and to treat each other equitably and inclusively, whether within or between nations. Learners must try to understand how conflicts, colonization, political regimes, discrimination, globalization and power relationships have impacted on the human rights and circumstances of diverse cultures, faiths, and indigenous peoples. They need to become aware of current conflicts between cultures and faiths and those of the past, and learn conflict resolution skills for peace, reconciliation and forgiveness.

In culturally diverse societies with a history of migration, or with pre-existing indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities, conflict resolution entails mutual understanding, non-discrimination, respect for difference, inclusion and equal opportunity, regardless of race, culture, gender, language or religious or political beliefs. It is difficult for a society without equity or justice to remain peaceful or socially cohesive. Without peace or harmony, economic and environmental sustainability are also threatened.

When human rights are not observed and injustices occur, peace and harmony are disturbed both within the community or nation, but also within the region and beyond. The only way that peace may be maintained both locally and globally is for human rights, justice and equity to prevail in all societies and across nations. The recognition of cultural difference and the right of all cultures to be expressed equally extend beyond the local or national context to global forms of communication and the media. Learners need to be aware of the processes of cultural homogenization due to globalization and information and communication technology (ICT). If children do not see their culture reflected in the media, on the internet or in other forms of communication, it is difficult to maintain cultural pride, and it is easier to believe that the dominant culture is superior. Teachers must try to counter this in the classroom while also modeling respect for all cultures.



## Economy

The economic dimension of sustainability is also closely linked with society, culture and the environment. We need to understand how economic globalization has affected diverse cultural groups inequitably, leading to wealth and information gaps, injustice and poverty. A healthy economy with enough for everyone will have a greater capacity for development that is socially and culturally inclusive and environmentally sustainable. Economic action for survival tends to sacrifice both equity and the environment out of necessity, and sometimes also out of greed and political expediency. ESD promotes economic justice and equity, regardless of race, culture, gender, language or religious or political beliefs, to ensure enough for all while preserving culture and the environment.

Globalization has become a threat to many cultures and languages, necessitating urgent action to stem the rapid loss of languages and cultural knowledge. Globalization has brought the values, products, practices and behaviours of other globally dominant cultures to the doorstep of almost every child on the planet, challenging family values, local practices and traditional cultures and beliefs. This not only undermines the local culture but also reduces the capacity of the local community to market and sell their own products and artefacts. The strengthening of cultural identity and heritage must therefore also be linked to productivity and sustainable development. Societies that are unable to withstand the onslaught of globalization, risk losing their language and the culture and knowledge that go with it. Unless local cultural heritage and identity are strengthened, linked to social and economic development, minority cultures cannot remain sustainable. Cultural, linguistic and biological diversity will subsequently be significantly reduced.

Intercultural understanding within the ESD context is therefore also about understanding the interconnectedness between cultural diversity, peace, human rights and sustainable development.

## Understanding Culture – What is Culture?

UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) defines culture as “the spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a social group” including the values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, customs, traditions, practices, identity, lifestyle, language and religious faith of diverse peoples.

Culture is reflected in our language and colloquial expressions, dress, food, laws, heritage, history, technology, and the values or attitudes that are reflected in our conversations and relationships, in the ways we relate to each other as family and friends, and in the way we do things. It is also expressed in the arts, music, dance, theatre, architecture, literature and in the festivals we celebrate. Many of these determine the face of sustainability in each society, and therefore also form the basis for the content of a curriculum in intercultural understanding.

While culture may be highly visible, it may also be difficult to see, because it shapes the way we think and provides a filter through which we perceive the world, reflecting our values, beliefs and attitudes. It is reflected in our ways of knowing, doing, being and living together. Culture is a total way of life and is so inextricably woven into our identity and who we are in everyday life, that we are often unaware of it. For this reason, it can sometimes be difficult to understand those who are different from ourselves, to the extent that we may even fear them or perceive them as a threat to our cherished way of life.

To integrate Intercultural Understanding within curricula, a broad definition of culture is adopted which includes the whole experience of life in all its dimensions, as follows:

**physical** – cultural practices and what people *do*

**intellectual** – traditional knowledge and diverse ways of *knowing*

**emotional** – diverse ways of expressing emotions (e.g. grief)

**spiritual or religious** – beliefs, practices, cosmology

**aesthetic** – art, music, dance, concept of beauty, etc.

**linguistic** – languages spoken

**social** – social issues faced by diverse cultures, equity/inequity, human rights, disadvantage, discrimination, experience of social conflict and harmony

**political** – diverse political systems

**historical** – the history of cultures, migration, colonization, experiences of disadvantage and marginalization, war, conflict and peaceful co-existence

**power relations** - disadvantage, injustice, minorities, marginalisation

**moral/ethical** – differences and similarities in values across cultures

In the past, it may not have been as important to foster intercultural understanding or to affirm, strengthen, celebrate and develop pride in one's own cultural identity and heritage through schooling, because learners were surrounded by their culture in every aspect of their lives. Cultural values at home, in the community, in places of worship and at school were consistent. Cultural artefacts were familiar and were a part of daily life. Standards of behaviour were well known and were transmitted consistently to children both at home and at school. In this situation, children in dominant cultures were secure and confident of their culture due to limited exposure to cultural difference. However, this experience may not have been shared by cultural minorities, due to discrimination, neglect and limited opportunities to express and affirm their own culture.

The situation is very different today, as children are exposed to other cultures constantly within their own community and through the presence of the media, necessitating education in intercultural understanding to strengthen their own culture and to gain deeper understanding of others.

## Cultural Context – Diversity in the Asia Pacific Region

Throughout human history peoples have migrated, traded, conquered, sought refuge and interacted with other cultures both near and far. The colonial period further increased contact between peoples, as predominantly European powers (i.e. British, Dutch, French, Spanish, Portuguese) established colonies throughout the Asia Pacific region, often dominating and displacing indigenous and local cultures and imposing their socio-cultural, religious, political, economic and linguistic structures on the local populations in the process. However, never before has the intermingling of cultures been quite as extensive as it is now.

Over the past few decades, the processes of economic globalization, combined with rapid advances in ICT and more rapid forms of transport, have brought us closer together, thereby increasing interconnectedness. Such close links and communication between peoples and cultures could potentially bring greater understanding, international cooperation and knowledge exchange, forging greater levels of interdependence, harmony and improved human relations. Unfortunately, the opposite has occurred in many cases. Increases in intercultural exchange have sometimes led to a rise in racial, social and religious tensions, increasing intra-state and inter-religious conflicts, discrimination and intolerance, threatening peace, human rights and security.

Through the processes of globalization, and advances in ICT and transport, diverse peoples, ideas, products, cultures, faiths and languages are being transmitted to every part of the globe. The increasing closeness and proximity of cultural diversity, beamed through the culture of the screen, on the Internet, in movies and on television, challenges traditional and local cultures more than ever before. While the growth of ICT and the media have the potential to improve communication and understanding, they also give rise to new threats and inequalities, such as a growing digital divide and the loss of linguistic and cultural diversity furthering cultural standardization, as the English language and Western cultures dominate the screens and Internet.

“As nations and cultures become ever more entwined, education systems must give priority to: developing intercultural education as an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence, in a spirit of respect for values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace; promoting social cohesion through education, through the development of citizenship education programmes, emphasizing core values (e.g. pluralism, human rights, tolerance, participatory democracy, equality of opportunity, justice).”

*UNESCO in a Globalizing World, April 2000, p. 4.*

The Asia Pacific Region is the most culturally and racially diverse region in the world, containing a rich diversity of languages, religions, ethnicities and heritage. It is also the most populous and fastest-growing region of the world, containing 65 percent of the world's population, and over 30 percent of the earth's land area, and representing over 30 percent of the world economy.

The vast cultural, linguistic and religious diversity we enjoy in the Asia Pacific region sometimes has us co-existing harmoniously, and at other times not. In addition to mainstream cultures, there are many minority ethnic groups and indigenous cultures that are endowed with valuable local knowledge, skills and cultural practices which have inherent benefit and may also provide sustainable sources of income for these communities. Some countries are more culturally diverse than others (e.g. Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines) due to their history, geographical location or their desirability as a destination for migrants. Other countries are relatively mono-cultural (e.g. Korea, Japan). However, even in countries that have one dominant culture there may be minorities of which learners are largely unaware (e.g. Dalits, Sikhs and Muslims in India; Hwakyos in Korea; Buraku in Japan). Yet others may be in conflict with neighbours over territory or struggles for independence (e.g. India and Pakistan, People's Republic of China and Taiwan).

In many countries throughout the Asia Pacific region, there may be one predominant language and culture alongside other less dominant or minority cultures. This situation has come about due to colonization and the many migrations and people movements that have occurred over the centuries as peoples left their homelands in search of safety elsewhere, due to famine, conflict or natural disasters. Many times a colonizing culture would superimpose itself on the pre-existing or indigenous cultures, to become the dominant cultural and linguistic force. In some cases, the migrating peoples became the dominant force, and in others they became cultural minorities within their adopted country, sometimes living alongside each other in relative harmony.

Throughout the Asia Pacific region, there are issues involving members of different cultures or faiths living alongside each other, mostly within national borders but sometimes in adjoining countries, that affect national life in a variety of ways.

Strategies for addressing cultural conflict may range on a continuum from military action or active oppression at one end, to harassment, discrimination, neglect, intolerance, and finally to the active protection and promotion of minority cultures and their full range of rights, including the teaching of their language and culture, at the other end of the spectrum.

Nonetheless, it is in the Asia Pacific region that there is potential for developing a model approach to intercultural and interfaith understanding, based on mutual respect for diversity, and unified action for the common purpose of a peaceful, just and sustainable world through shared values. These values include respect, justice, dignity, peace, co-operation, equality, freedom, responsibility, tolerance, solidarity and dialogue, which are drawn from international human rights instruments and other relevant documents (see section on International Instruments). Teachers and learners need to become familiar with these documents.

All cultures have the potential to learn from each other in different ways and to contribute to the heritage of humankind from which we may all benefit. Intercultural understanding in education plays an important role in ensuring that we benefit from cultural diversity instead

of it being a source of conflict. In the classroom, teachers need to design their approaches to education for intercultural understanding in ways that are relevant to the local intercultural context, while also addressing broader national, regional and global intercultural issues.

## International Instruments and Reports Relevant to Intercultural Understanding

For over 60 years, the United Nations have encouraged global dialogue on common goals and shared values, beginning with the establishment of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). These were followed by numerous international declarations, conventions, reports and treaties on issues ranging from human rights, social and economic justice, equality, peace, tolerance, diversity, international understanding, environmental conservation, sustainable development and climate change among many others. From this dialogue has emerged an international consensus around a set of shared, or universal global values, that are repeatedly expressed in these documents and which contribute to building a peaceful, just, humane and sustainable world.

The most prevalent among these global values is that of “respect”, which is essential for intercultural understanding and central to education for sustainable development, and is common to many cultures. It is possible for both local and global values to co-exist in complementary ways, especially since respect for diversity is accepted as a shared global value. Although the global values in numerous international agreements potentially provide the basis for living together on this planet peacefully, humanely, equitably and sustainably, they do not, however, replace individual personal, cultural, religious or national values, that are best agreed to by convention or consensus to suit the local context.

Among these documents are many international agreements which acknowledge the equal rights of all peoples to practice their culture, language and religion. The maintenance of culture, with all that this entails, including language, faith, values and practices, is a human right that is repeated in all human rights documents. It may be found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 27, UDHR, 1948), which states that “everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.” It may also be found in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 15), which recognizes everyone’s right to take part in cultural life; and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 27), which states that ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities have the right to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language.

Article 26 of the UDHR also outlines the role of education in intercultural understanding, stating that “Education shall be directed to...respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.” This is re-endorsed in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states that:

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups.”

The right to freely practice one’s culture is emphasized in all human rights documents. For example, Article 4 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National, or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) calls upon states “to take measures enabling persons belonging to minorities to develop their culture.” Most relevant for teachers is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), which affirms the rights of children to respect their own cultural identity, language and values, and to enjoy their own culture, practice their religion, and use their own language (Articles 29 and 30). Article 29 (c) of the Convention states that education should be directed to the “development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own.” This principle is expressed even more strongly in Article 30 of the Convention which states:

“In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous, shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his/her group, to enjoy his/her own culture, to profess and practice his/her own religion, or to use his/her own language.”

Education systems, schools and teachers are therefore responsible for strengthening the child’s cultural identity and values, while also promoting respect and understanding for the culture of others.

Teachers should particularly familiarize themselves with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, since there are many provisions in the Convention that are relevant to their work, and which emphasize the rights of the child to:

- be protected against all forms of discrimination;
- preserve identity, freedom of expression, thought and religion;
- have access to information and material from diverse sources;
- ensure safety and social, spiritual, moral, physical and mental well-being;
- continuity of ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background; and
- equality of opportunity and equal access to education.

Article 29 of the Convention further states that education should prepare the child for “responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.” This represents the essence of education for intercultural understanding.

The Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights (1996) affirms the equal rights of all language groups to be recognized as a member of a language community; to use one's own language in public and in private; to have access to education about one's own language and culture and about other cultures; and to have their language and culture equitably represented in communications media. The expression of these rights should not, however, hinder integration into the broader community, nor hinder the rights of others to their own language and culture. This Declaration also contains a section that specifically addresses the role of education in:

- fostering capacity for linguistic and cultural expression;
- maintaining and developing languages spoken by the language community;
- providing opportunities for all learners to learn any language, including their own and that of the broader community;
- promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, and harmonious relations in society; and
- providing trained teachers, appropriate books and learning resources, equipment and facilities.

There is also a large suite of documents pertaining to non-discrimination on many grounds, such as culture, language, race, gender and disability. Among them is the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), which affirms the necessity of speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world in all its forms, and of securing understanding of and respect for the dignity of the human person. The Convention states that "discrimination between human beings on the grounds of race, colour or ethnic origin is an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and is capable of disturbing peace and security among peoples and the harmony of persons living side by side, even within the same state."

The UN Convention against Discrimination in Education (1962) re-affirms the UDHR principles of non-discrimination; the right of equal access for all to education and equality of educational opportunity; the right of minorities to the use of and teaching of their own language; and the role of education in promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups.

There are also three international documents that relate specifically to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities, which recognize the injustice and discrimination that they have suffered, and reaffirm their social, cultural and political rights:

- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992)
- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2006)

UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) seeks to promote awareness of the positive value of cultural diversity by humanizing globalization, making it more culturally sensitive, believing that inter-cultural understanding is the best guarantee of peace. It raises cultural diversity to the level of "the common heritage of humanity", making it an ethical imperative which accompanies respect for human dignity. A high value is placed on cultural identity and cultural heritage in all its forms, which the declaration states "must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations." The Declaration states that "we are distinguished and united by differences and similarities. Such diversity challenges our intellect and emotions as we learn to work and live together in harmony." Teachers should therefore expose learners to both cultural similarities and differences, and guide them towards appreciation of diversity.

The Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development, entitled *Our Creative Diversity* (de Cuellar, 1995), not only promotes the intrinsic value of culture for its own sake, for socio-cultural development and for the heritage of humanity, but also promotes the instrumental value of culture as a productive good which fosters economic growth and development. The report addresses the need to strengthen cultural heritage due to the erosion of culture and traditional values caused by globalization, the media and advances in transport and communication. It asserts that the preservation of culture is necessary to ensure the creativity that comes from rich cultural diversity, which in turn contributes to the economic and social development of cultures and the enrichment of humanity.

Another significant international document relevant to education for intercultural understanding is UNESCO's Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (1995), which calls on nations to take all positive measures necessary to promote tolerance as a "necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples."

Closer to home, the Joint ASEAN-SEAMEO Statement (ASEAN, 2006) on the promotion of identity and socio-cultural identity in the region, emphasized the critical role that education plays in fostering inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-racial understanding within and between societies in the region. The statement also recommended that we build on country experiences in managing cultural and racial diversity in their multi-ethnic societies.

The next section shows how the values and principles expressed in many of these documents form the basis for education for intercultural understanding. Both teachers and learners should therefore be familiar with these documents and also use them as a basis for research activities.

## What is Education for Intercultural Understanding?

Having established the rationale for the importance to teach intercultural understanding and having placed it within the context of education for sustainable development, this section describes and summarizes education for intercultural understanding and outlines its core content and learning processes as a guide for teachers and teacher educators.



At first glance, it would seem obvious that intercultural understanding involves awareness, knowledge and understanding of many aspects of other cultures, for the purpose of living together peacefully and harmoniously. However, changing attitudes and behaviours towards those who are different from ourselves involves much more than raising cognitive awareness, which we know does not by itself change actions. An understanding of our own culture, a deep exploration of our personal and cultural values, and the experiential development of respect and compassion for the rights of others, translated into positive action, are also required. This means that the processes of teaching and learning intercultural understanding are just as important, if not more so, than its content.

UNESCO considers that quality education includes education for intercultural understanding. The UNESCO Ministerial Round Table defined quality education as the knowledge, values, competencies and behaviours needed for a globalized world, balancing local, national and global aspirations, reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity for equity, equality and quality of life, and for peace, freedom, solidarity, democratic citizenship, human rights and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2003). This statement appropriately captures the breadth and scope of education for intercultural understanding.

UNESCO's 1996 report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century identifies four pillars of learning as the foundation of education for lifelong learning and for drawing out the full potential and latent abilities of learners as individuals and as members of society, while learning to live together for sustainable human development (Delors, 1996). The four overlapping and interconnected pillars of learning, which the report says should receive equal attention in education, are:

- Learning to Know;
- Learning to Do;
- Learning to Be; and
- Learning to Live Together.

While many refer to “learning to live together” as the pillar that relates to education for intercultural understanding, in fact all four pillars are relevant, as discussed below.

“Learning to know” combines the inherent pleasure of learning, research, understanding, knowing and discovering with learning how to learn independently, requiring both breadth and depth of knowledge, and the use of ICT. It includes developing concentration, memory, and a balance of concrete, abstract, inductive and deductive thoughts. Education for intercultural understanding involves knowledge and awareness about other cultures, comparing and contrasting diverse ways of thinking, and developing deep understanding.

“Learning to do” refers to the creative and innovative application of knowledge using personal, social and occupational competencies, ICT skills, interpersonal communication and life skills, teamwork, managing and resolving conflict, taking initiative and risk as entrepreneurs and agents of change, the ability to adapt to a wide-range of vocations and to be of service to

others. This pillar also lends itself to developing skills for putting values into action, through positive behaviours and relationships, living harmoniously and collaborating with others of diverse cultures.

“Learning to be” relates to “the all-round development of the individual – mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility and spiritual values... independent, critical thinking ... (able to) form their own judgement” (Delors, 1996, p. 94). This pillar involves an internal, personal development process, to which values are central, occurring in stages as the child matures throughout life, starting from self-knowledge at the individual level, and progressing to understanding others through interactions at the collective level, as member of a family and community, national citizen, worker, and eventually as a global citizen. “Learning to be” involves the process of “becoming” a culturally aware person, and developing positive values and attitudes, including the courage and commitment to live by those values, treating others with respect, even if this means going against the norm. Knowing oneself is seen as an essential foundation for understanding others, thereby linking with the “learning to live together” pillar. However, some consider that we come to know ourselves through a better understanding of others, calling for a reciprocal interaction between these two pillars.

“Learning to live together”, which provides an underpinning structure for all the pillars, is seen as one of the major issues in education today. It can enable peaceful cooperation with others in all areas of human endeavour, through knowledge, understanding and appreciation of others’ culture and values, mutual respect, equity and peaceful resolution of conflict towards harmonious interdependence.

Since the Delors Report was published, environmental sustainability has become increasingly important, as has the need for peace, justice, equity and human rights. The changing global context necessitates an expansion of the meaning of “learning to live together” to include learning to share the world’s resources and societal wealth in peaceful, equitable, humane and sustainable ways. The “learning to live together” pillar is differentiated from the other three, which may be equated approximately to Pestalozzi’s “head, heart, hand” framework. The “head” refers to intellectual and cognitive processes of knowing; the “heart” to the affective processes of being, feeling and valuing; and the “hand” relates to manual, functional or skills development for doing, creating, implementing or taking action.

“Learning to live together” arguably involves all three learning processes of “head, heart and hand”, thereby providing both a framework and a renewed sense of purpose for education, directed to the knowledge, values and skills needed to live together peacefully, humanely, equitably and sustainably, applied by citizens and a workforce that contributes to collective socio-economic well-being. It involves developing understanding, consideration and respect for others, their beliefs, values and cultures, in order to avoid conflicts, resolve them peacefully, and to co-exist peacefully. It also entails managing difference and diversity positively, as an opportunity and a valuable resource to be used for the common good, rather than as a threat.

The broad definition of education for intercultural understanding means that it necessarily overlaps with many other areas of education, including human rights and citizenship education, education for peace and non-discrimination. While there is a place for specifically learning about each of these areas separately, teachers must also recognize their interconnectedness.

## Underpinning Principles of Education for Intercultural Understanding

Six principles emerged from the international documents and reports mentioned above to form the basis for education for intercultural understanding:

- **Identity, language and cultural heritage**

This principle upholds the rights and freedoms of all to retain, express and enjoy their culture, language and religion, and to retain and strengthen their cultural heritage, even if this differs from the majority culture in their country. This involves teaching and modeling the value of respect for difference as the basis for all social interaction and providing opportunities for all learners to learn, strengthen and express their culture, language, heritage and religion.

- **Social justice, equity and human rights**

This principle entails promoting freedoms, rights, equality, equal access and opportunities for all, to participate fully in economic, social, cultural, educational and political life in their country, ensuring that every person has equal opportunity regardless of their race, culture, language, religion, gender or disability. Education should therefore enable learners to participate effectively at local, national and global levels.

This principle may also be covered in topics within human rights education and may also involve taking special measures to reduce disadvantage, eliminate discrimination and exclusion, and correct past injustice, as well as create opportunities for all learners to reach their maximum potential. Education should also promote a human rights and human relations approach for countering racism and discrimination by, for example, fostering awareness of racism and discrimination, developing strategies for countering stereotyping and racism, and by developing skills in critical analysis to understand the structure of power that leads to injustice. It should also strive for equitable access to education and equitable learning outcomes for all learners.

- **Valuing diversity and creativity – social and economic benefit for all**

This principle entails actively promoting the value, benefits and contributions of others cultures and languages to the community so that all are valued in the country for their diversity, rich creativity, and social and economic benefits that diversity brings.

Education should ensure that all learners have the opportunity to benefit from recognizing, appreciating and understanding the cultural diversity in their community. Learners should learn to value the linguistic and cultural assets of diverse peoples as a valuable resource from which we all benefit. Educational institutions may also promote this diverse resource to maximize the benefits for the overall development of the community (see the report, *Our Creative Diversity*).

- **Unity and solidarity in diversity**

In order to avoid potential social fragmentation, education should also foster civic responsibility among all learners, encouraging them to commit to their country first and foremost, while also respecting the rights of all to their own culture, language and faith. This approach to unity in diversity ensures social harmony regardless of the many cultural differences that may exist within a country's borders.

The freedom to enjoy one's culture and to have equal access and opportunity must be built on a strong foundation of civic values of justice, mutual respect and equity, regardless of cultural or ethnic background. Education should strengthen civic values and commitment to one's country, while respecting the rights of all others, based on a common civic platform, and allowing diversity through freedom. It also entails acting in solidarity with others of diverse cultures when one sees that they are being treated unfairly. This principle may also be covered in topics within civics and citizenship education.

All individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within the country's legal and institutional framework, in which at least one language is shared and taught throughout the education system, including opportunities for the teaching of minority and mother tongue languages.

- **Fostering tolerance, peace and social harmony**

Since the purpose of education for intercultural understanding is to promote peace and social harmony, both within countries and more broadly, learners need to develop understanding and knowledge about other cultures, and learn the values of mutual respect, tolerance, a peaceful and accepting orientation towards others, care, compassion and empathy, by experiencing themselves in the shoes of others, flexibility, as well as openness and generosity of spirit.

This principle may also involve promoting positive interactions among learners of diverse cultures, learning conflict resolution skills, fostering understanding and forgiveness for past wrongs, and actively participating in reconciliation, healing and forgiveness processes. This learning builds a society that lives and works together with others harmoniously for a shared future, in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. This principle may also be covered in topics within peace education.

## • Cultural inclusiveness and cultural appropriateness and sensitivity in education

Educational institutions and educators need to model appreciation for diverse cultures by demonstrating cultural inclusiveness throughout the institution and in class by, for example:

- basing learning experiences around the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community, school or class;
- incorporating a range of diverse cultural knowledge, experiences and perspectives across the curriculum (including indigenous and gender sensitive perspectives);
- celebrating, valuing and learning about the histories and lives of diverse cultures and indigenous peoples, languages, faiths, achievements, and issues past and present, including through the stories and perspectives of those cultures;
- valuing and including in the learning the cultural and linguistic knowledge, experiences and skills of diverse learners, either in the class or in the community, visiting culturally significant places if possible; and
- enabling learners to recognize, acknowledge and engage in positive, diverse, cultural learning experiences wherever possible.

Educational institutions and educators also need to ensure that all education is historically accurate, unbiased, culturally appropriate, and culturally and gender sensitive, and that content is not inadvertently offensive to some cultures or faiths. This may employ a range of strategies such as the use of:

- culturally and gender sensitive language;
- relevant and effective, culturally appropriate methods of teaching;
- learning strategies that acknowledge and accommodate the diverse learning styles of all learners;
- culturally appropriate strategies for diverse learners, especially for indigenous learners who learn in different ways; and
- using textbooks and resources that are historically accurate, gender and culturally sensitive and appropriate, and which foster positive attitudes and understanding towards others.

Some of these approaches may involve consulting with cultural experts or local indigenous communities, elders and custodians, where appropriate and possible. In some cases, it may be possible for learners to learn directly from local members of diverse cultures and indigenous communities.

While these six principles may be used to underpin the integration of intercultural understanding within teacher education and school curricula, it is most important that these principles also underpin the operation of the educational institution, reflected in

policies and practices, and modeled through the behaviour of institution staff (see the section on Creating a Positive Learning Environment).

## Learning Outcomes for Education for Intercultural Understanding

The above principles of education for intercultural understanding lead educators to strive for the following learning outcomes for their learners.

All learners will:

- have the opportunity to learn about and express their own language and cultural heritage, and strengthen them through education;
- learn about, value and appreciate the culture of others and the contribution that these make to society;
- have the opportunity to learn the national language and their own mother tongue and/or another language where possible;
- have equal access to education, and the opportunity to reach their full potential, enabling them to participate fully in society, through special support measures where needed;
- learn about and express their own rights and freedoms and respect those of others, and practice the values underpinning human rights through all their interactions;
- become responsible, productive citizens, able to contribute fully to society, while expressing their own language, culture and faith and respecting the rights of others to do the same;
- become tolerant, understanding, compassionate and caring towards others;
- develop skills in resolving conflict when it occurs, and in mediating mutually beneficial, harmonious outcomes in culturally diverse contexts;
- live and work harmoniously with others of diverse cultures, including them in their lives and among their friendships where feasible;
- behave in ways that are culturally appropriate and sensitive with others of diverse culture or gender, being mindful of language and jokes; and
- advocate for others and act in solidarity, when others of diverse culture are being treated unfairly.

The learning outcomes for teacher trainees undertaking education for intercultural understanding are the same as those above, but include developing the knowledge, values, skills and confidence to be able to deliver the above outcomes for their learners in the classroom.

## Content for Education for Intercultural Understanding

This section attempts to outline what learners need to know in order to live together in a culturally diverse world. While the specific content of what learners need to know for intercultural understanding may change according to the context, the issues of the day, and the cultural demographics of the society, educators may choose from the following range of content areas that are most relevant.

### • Culture, language, heritage and cultural diversity

- Awareness and understanding about all aspects of diversity – cultural, social, religious, spiritual, linguistic, political, artistic, environmental – including history, heritage, cultural practices, food, dress, festivals, ways of being and seeing the world, traditional law and knowledge, achievements, famous people, cosmology and belief systems etc.;
- Awareness and understanding about issues faced by diverse indigenous peoples, minority cultures, migrants and refugees, including the history of colonization, exploitation, disadvantage, discrimination and power relations. This may entail the loss of language and culture, land rights, poverty, impacts on health, education and unemployment, and the appropriation of traditional knowledge and culture for tourism or economic gain (this topic may also be covered under human rights issues);
- Learning to value diversity and to appreciate the achievements and contributions of other cultures and how they benefit society socio-culturally, economically, politically and environmentally;
- Learning and practicing the values of mutual respect, equality, tolerance and compassion by sharing differences and commonalities, and by seeking to experience the world through the eyes of others;
- Learning to share each other's culture and to learn from each other, to work effectively and productively together, making use of the creative synergies of diversity;
- Learning the national language(s), one's mother tongue and another language where possible; and
- Understanding similarities and differences among cultures.

### • Civics, citizenship and cultural identities

In any society, but particularly in those that are culturally diverse, there are multiple identities at personal, local, national and global levels. These include that of national citizen, the identity of the majority culture, and the identities of minority cultures. Added to these is the identity of all learners as emerging global citizens. Learners need to become aware of these multiple identities and have the opportunity to develop, strengthen and nurture them without experiencing undue internal conflict.

This could be included as part of civics and citizenship education, or elsewhere in the curriculum, to enable learners to become responsible and productive local, national and

global citizens, while expressing their own family and cultural identity and respecting the right of others to do the same. This may entail exploring, comparing and contrasting differences and similarities in values at local, national and global levels, identifying a common universal human core, and coming to understand that diverse values need not be incompatible.

### • **Equality and human rights**

Learners should develop a critical understanding of the universal principles, concepts and legal instruments that govern human rights and freedoms, and how they translate in practice, with examples of where human rights have not been observed throughout the world and in history, and examples of good practice in societies.

Some of the topics that may be covered are:

- History of colonialism and its impact on diverse cultures;
- Impacts of globalization on cultures and languages;
- Homogenizing effect of ICT on cultures;
- Power relations in societies and the experiences of minorities (e.g., ethnic, indigenous, migrants, etc.);
- The structure of discrimination and disadvantage, leading to inequity, injustice, marginalization, illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, loss of culture, language and land rights, etc.;
- Experiences of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and religious conflict;
- Understanding equality, equity, equal opportunity and equal access, and how they are expressed in good practice;
- Understanding culturally appropriate and inclusive behaviour, practices and language; and
- Education in human rights – including cultural and linguistic rights and socio-economic justice (for indigenous people, migrants, refugees, etc.).

### • **Peace and harmony among diverse cultures**

Education should expose learners to an accurate representation of history about war, intercultural and inter-religious conflict and examples of peace and harmony throughout the world. This may overlap with peace education and human rights education programmes.

In addition, education should attempt to include the following:

- Expressing solidarity with others who are experiencing inequitable treatment;
- Formulating strategies for countering racism, discrimination and xenophobia (human rights issues);



- Exploring examples of peace and social harmony among diverse cultures, currently and in history, and the essential features that create these conditions;
- Developing personal inner and outer peace;
- Participating in reconciliation activities;
- Learning and practicing the processes of forgiveness and healing in conflict relationships; and
- Learning and practicing conflict resolution, mediation and harmony building skills.

As may be seen, some of the content areas overlap with other areas of the curriculum such as civics and citizenship education, peace and human rights education. For this reason, education for intercultural understanding should not be seen as a separate subject but rather a cross-curriculum perspective that is not only integrated across the curriculum, but also across the practices and behaviours that are modeled throughout the whole school or educational institution.

## Values for Education for Intercultural Understanding

This section lists the values that learners need for understanding how to live together in a culturally diverse world. These values are reflected in many of the international documents discussed above.

- Mutual respect, tolerance, acceptance and understanding
- Peace and harmony
- Appreciating and valuing diversity
- Respect for human dignity and the individual worth of all people
- Compassion, empathy, care and concern for others
- Equality, equity, justice, fairness, inclusion, sharing
- Solidarity, cooperation, collaboration, commitment to collective well-being
- Protection and strengthening the cultural identity, language and heritage of minorities
- Responsible local, national and global citizenship, unity, interconnectedness
- Reconciliation, forgiveness, peace, harmony, non-violence, dialogue
- Mutual trust, truth, courage, commitment, love

Educators may substitute the values for other words that are best suited to the socio-cultural context and the age group. The process for integrating values in learning is discussed in the next section.

## Skills for Education for Intercultural Understanding

This section outlines the skills that learners need, and what they need to be able to do to live and work together harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. It is not enough to know what leads to intercultural harmony or the values leading to intercultural understanding. Learners need the skills to put into practice consistently in their everyday lives the required knowledge and values. The learning is an ongoing process of becoming a responsible citizen of the world, which continues throughout life, until learners become role models for others of what it means to live harmoniously with others.

### • Culture, language, heritage and cultural diversity

Learners need to be able to:

- have a strong sense of their own cultural heritage and identity, express their culture and share it with others;
- compare and contrast differences and similarities among cultures and identify strengths and positive features among them; and
- be accepting of other cultures, faiths and languages, and their right to express these freely.

### • Equality and human rights

Learners need to be able to:

- treat others equitably, with respect and dignity;
- observe human rights, as reflected in their values, actions and behaviours in all contexts;
- avoid and counter bias, prejudice and discrimination;
- think critically, question injustice and be able to engage in logical debate; and
- stand in solidarity with others against injustice.

### • Civics, citizenship and cultural identities

Learners need to be able to:

- explore, negotiate and express multiple identities (local, national, global);
- exercise responsible citizenship; and
- accept the cultural identities of others and their right to express it.

### • Peace and harmony among diverse cultures

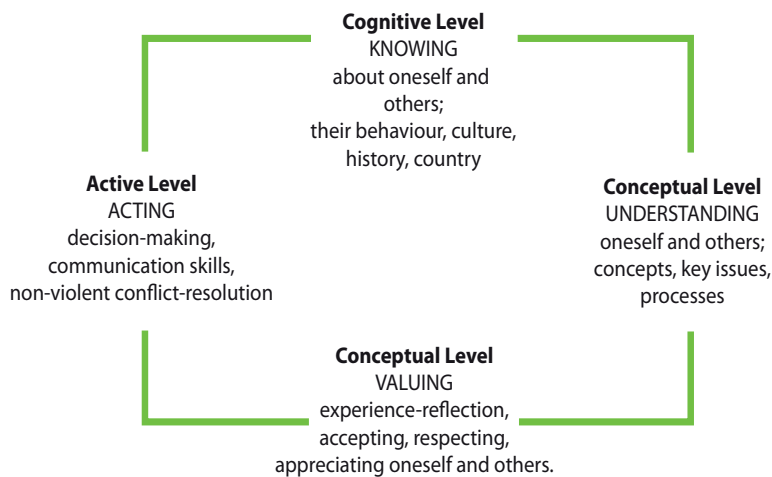
Learners need to be able to:

- live, study and work harmoniously in culturally diverse contexts, in creative synergy with others, expressing and blending their diverse strengths;
- engage in active listening, communicate effectively and handle their emotions positively;
- mediate, negotiate and resolve conflict, reconcile differences, and express sorrow and forgiveness; and
- cooperate effectively with others and find creative “win-win” solutions to social problems.

## Pedagogical Approaches to Education for Intercultural Understanding

For intercultural understanding, the teaching methodology should include, not only the acquisition of knowledge and deeper understandings of cultures, but also an exploration of personal values and attitudes, and the values of others, combined with skills development and participatory exercises in practicing the necessary values and skills. This approach equates with Pestalozzi’s “head, heart, hand” framework, discussed briefly in the previous section, and should be reflected in the pedagogy, which is best captured in the teaching-learning cycle developed as shown in Figure 2. In this cycle, learning activities include a mix of knowing, understanding, valuing and action.

Figure 2: Teaching and Learning Cycle<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Developed by Quisumbing, L.R., 1999, in A Framework for Teacher Education Programmes Towards International Understanding and a Culture of Peace, Kyongju, Korea.

Depending on the local cultural context, the teacher may select from one or more of the following ways in which a variety of socio-cultural learning and experiences may take place.

- **intra-cultural learning** about one culture in depth, focusing on such aspects as language, family, religion, laws, heritage, history, technology, etc.;
- **intercultural learning** about other cultures where usually only a few components are studied across cultures (e.g., international day celebrations involving food, music, dance);
- **cross cultural learning**, which involves investigating, comparing and contrasting one component or issue across a range of cultures (e.g., art);
- **multicultural learning**, which affirms the multiple and diverse cultural identities associated with living in a culturally plural context as local and global citizens, including the recognition and acceptance of the cultural identity and heritage of minorities. This also emphasizes equal access, equity, inclusion, affirmative action, and culturally sensitive and appropriate teaching processes; and
- **trans-cultural learning**, which involves exploring the common values and shared elements across cultures, to transcend differences and unite us as one human family.

Where possible, these approaches should incorporate the knowledge, skills, understandings, views and needs of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds within the school, or of members of local and nearby communities. In this way, the cultural and linguistic diversity of local communities may be valued and acknowledged. By drawing on the diverse cultural knowledge, skills and experience of the learners in class, one ensures full cultural inclusion, fosters pride among learners in their own cultural heritage, and shows learners that others also value their culture.

The teacher should create a general climate of respect for all differences in class, including gender, disability, and different learning styles and abilities. In the values-based classroom, the teacher becomes a role model of respectfulness in practice by being culturally inclusive, drawing on the cultural knowledge, skills, values and experience of the learners in the class, and constantly reinforcing the strengths and positive aspects of each culture. The basic intention should be to increase the learner's awareness of the positive aspects of their own culture and that of others around them, leading to self-respect, mutual respect and understanding. In developing an attitude of respect towards other cultures, learners should be encouraged to develop their own definitions of values such as respect, and identify ways in which they may be respectful towards others in the classroom, at school and in the community. Ideally the value of respect would be modeled throughout the entire school.

Teachers should also discourage the formation and expression of all prejudices, stereotypes and value judgements about others in the classroom on the basis of, for example, race, skin colour, physical appearance, gender, socio-economic class, ethnic origin, religion, language and other cultural or behavioural manifestations. Such prejudices may lead to oppression and bullying of some learners. To do this, teachers may need to first re-examine

themselves and become more keenly aware of their own prejudices and stereotypes, and then encourage learners to do the same.

An important starting point is to strengthen the cultural identity of all learners in the classroom, which then provides a solid foundation for accepting the cultures of others. There are many methods that are used for strengthening cultural identity, ranging from exploration of personal, family and cultural values and practices, to conducting creative activities, events and festivals, which celebrate all aspects of culture, including music, dance, food, art, literature, poetry and the making of artefacts. However, culture has deeper impacts on the lives of learners than what may be seen and experienced during a cultural festival. As learners mature, teachers must be prepared to explore ever more deeply the unspoken assumptions, values and beliefs that underpin a culture and influence the inner development of the emerging adult.

The processes of teaching and learning for intercultural understanding should emphasize the participation of all learners in the activities, whether observational, oral or written. The learning activities should include opportunities for researching information, extending awareness and knowledge, deepening understanding, exploring values, and making comparisons and contrasts of differences and similarities between cultures in positive ways, without stereotyping or making judgments, and practicing what has been learned through school-based or community projects.

Both teachers and learners may use the internet and library resources to discover information about other cultures, and to look up the meaning of words such as “culture”, “cultural identity” and “globalization”. The teacher may draw attention to interesting themes or sources of information for learners who may wish to research further. Alternatively, the learners may conduct the research themselves.

There may also be opportunities for using visual media and undertaking creative or artistic activities. Public presentations of completed artwork and performances of cultural dramatizations may be used to positively influence the attitudes of the broader community, and are also useful for assessment purposes. Learners could keep journals to record thoughts, insights, and reflections on their learning, another useful form of assessment. Providing as many opportunities as possible for learning about each other’s cultures will pave the way for mutual cultural understanding and respect. Finally, learners should be encouraged to commit themselves to action based on what they have learned.

Having explored the culture(s) of the learners in a classroom or community, the teacher may then extend the learning to other cultures in the country, region, or further afield. Learners may respond to intercultural exposure in various ways. Some may seek to embrace the foreign and external cultures to which they are exposed, with the undesirable effect of rejecting or perhaps feeling shame for their traditional heritage. Sometimes youth may reject their own culture and consider other cultures to be better, due to their exposure to idealized images of foreign cultures that dominate the media, where their own culture and

language may not be represented. For this reason, it is important for learners to develop an understanding and respect for their own culture, as well as those of others.

Others may react to external influences by turning more strongly to their own culture while rejecting that of others. Yet others may feel quite confused about the conflicting values they witness, in particular the difference between the lifestyle they live and the lifestyles they see on the screen. These are all good reasons for ensuring intercultural understanding through education, thereby strengthening one's own culture and identity, while fostering understanding for the culture of others.

Some learners may belong to two cultures because their parents are from different cultural or religious backgrounds. The richness of the bicultural and bilingual heritage of these learners should be affirmed and celebrated as a strength from which the learner and others will always benefit. Other learners may be unaware of their cultural heritage, or may have experienced racism and discrimination as a result of it, causing them to hide, reject, or feel ashamed of their heritage. A sensitive teacher will gently work with such learners, maybe on a one-to-one basis, until they are more accepting and confident of their own cultural identity.

There may be subcultural groups represented within the classroom. For example, religious affiliation may be the basis for significant cultural differences. Other factors such as parental employment and income, place of residence and family interests (e.g., sports, music), and even gender may contribute to subcultural differences. The teacher is faced with the challenge of enabling learners to understand and respect these differences as well as valuing their common regional or national cultural identity.

When learners explore their own culture, understand and appreciate its strengths, benefits and contributions, are proud of it and willing to share it confidently with others, they are able to sustain it in the face of exposure to other cultures. In addition, learners need to explore other cultures and identify their strengths and contributions to the world, develop an understanding and appreciation of them, learn from them and develop the ability to listen openly and respectfully when others share their culture. By observing the differences and similarities among cultures and their values, learners deepen understanding of both their own culture and those of others.

Learner development theory shows that learning and internalizing the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills needed for intercultural understanding benefit from an integrated curriculum that continues and deepens throughout the years of schooling. A cyclical curriculum enables the skills and values to be revisited in greater depth each year, with practice in their application to different age-appropriate life themes, including resolving conflicts in the home, community and then further afield, as learners mature.

In order to integrate intercultural understanding across the curriculum, one may address it through each separate subject, as demonstrated in the examples in the following section, or the school may allocate a time for "integrative studies" to bring the learning together around specific themes.

## Integrating Intercultural Understanding across School Curricula

This section provides examples of ways in which intercultural understanding may be integrated into subjects in the school curriculum. Please note that subjects have different names in different countries, so readers will need to adapt the examples to fit their own context.

### **Intercultural Understanding in the Arts (dance, theatre/drama, media, music, visual arts)**

Learners will:

- understand that the arts shape and represent cultures and identities;
- explore roles, purpose and meanings of diverse cultural art forms through time and the importance of arts to cultural identity;
- develop and adapt performances and art works that represent the perspectives of diverse and marginalized cultural groups;
- use or adapt art forms from other cultures (e.g., indigenous dot paintings), understand their meaning, sacred significance and history (e.g., rock art and cave paintings) and what they reveal about cultures;
- explore the diverse media, elements, approaches and technologies used in arts across cultures that reflect the time, place and cultural setting;
- trace the influence of the cultural works of other peoples to inform one's own arts practice; and
- explore how the arts connect people throughout the world.

### **Intercultural Understanding in the Sciences (earth and space science, physics, biology, chemistry)**

Learners will:

- appreciate the contributions of diverse cultures to the sciences through history;
- become aware of traditional indigenous knowledge (e.g., nature, flora, fauna, survival, herbs for medicines);
- become aware of culturally diverse ways of constructing knowledge;
- discover that science builds on cultural traditions of observation and inquiry;
- become aware of diverse cosmologies across cultures and faiths, as well as the sensitivity of some debates (e.g., creationism and evolution);

- view phenomena through diverse cultural lenses to broaden and deepen understandings in ways that are not possible from only one cultural perspective; and
- learn that the observations, data and interpretations of scientists are influenced by cultural experience, understandings, values, economics, power and relationships.

### **Intercultural Understanding in Social Studies (history, geography, human rights, civics and citizenship, environmental education)**

Learners will:

- explore diverse perspectives in time, place, cultures and societies;
- explore values and ethical issues from diverse cultural perspectives;
- learn how peoples are shaped by social, cultural, religious, historical, economic, political, technological and ecological systems and structures, which develop in different ways, places and times;
- acquire knowledge of diverse societies locally, nationally and globally, and become aware of changing environments and systems over time;
- come to understand the nature, causes and consequences of interdependence between societies and their environments;
- become aware of power relationships, inequality, and unequal wealth distribution in societies;
- learn about cultural diversity and social cohesion in societies and countries throughout the world; and
- learn how diverse cultural perspectives develop and change over time.

### **Intercultural Understanding in Mathematics**

Learners will:

- acquire a socially constructed body of knowledge with roots in many different cultures using universal symbols;
- understand that there are many culturally diverse forms of mathematical knowledge;
- learn about the contributions to mathematics of various cultures throughout history;
- become aware of the diverse role of mathematics across cultures;
- understand the culturally diverse relationships to number;
- explore the history of diverse cultural forms of measurement; and
- become aware that diverse cultural spatial abilities are shaped by one's environment.



## Intercultural Understanding in Language(s)

Learners will:

- understand the interdependence of language, culture, identity and values, how cultural concepts and perspectives are reflected in language, and the cultural principles and practices that influence communication;
- learn about the history and culture of the people whose language is being studied;
- learn about the culture when engaging in language practice;
- analyse cultural texts, poetry, literature, stories, film and theatre; and
- make connections between language use and cultural values.

However, for a truly integrated and transdisciplinary approach to education for intercultural understanding and sustainable development, teachers need to do more than address relevant topics through separate subjects as demonstrated above. Schools need to allocate time in the curriculum for learners to bring together the various themes associated with education for intercultural understanding and sustainable development, and to foster critical, integrated thinking and creative problem-solving in learners. Sessions for “integrative studies” would need to engage the interest and passion of learners, to seek practical solutions to real or hypothetical, and locally relevant problems, using creative and innovative methods.

Such scenario-based, issues-based or problem-based learning may be undertaken through debates, discussion panels, role-plays, theatrical productions or artistic representations which explore various solutions to complex interrelated problems associated with intercultural understanding as an integral part of sustainable development. These activities require holistic systems thinking to draw in the social, cultural, environmental, political and economic aspects of the issue, and the causes and consequences of various decisions and courses of action. An example of this is provided in the next section.

## Creating a Positive Learning Environment Conducive to Intercultural Understanding

However, it is also not enough for educators to integrate education for intercultural understanding in classroom activities and across the curriculum, if the learning environment and the school as a whole do not also reinforce the values of mutual respect, tolerance, non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity.

### Principles of a Positive Learning Environment Conducive to Intercultural Understanding

To make education for intercultural understanding effective, school staff must create a learning environment that is conducive to it in the classroom and throughout the entire school so that:

- the values of intercultural understanding and human rights are part of the school ethos;
- the learning environment is safe, supportive, respectful, enjoyable, equitable and inclusive;
- the learning environment is active, participatory, democratic and learner-centred, enabling the learner's voice to be heard, alongside culturally diverse perspectives;
- the teacher is a facilitator, guide and role model who demonstrates the values of intercultural understanding through behaviour and consistent action;
- learning encourages curiosity, creative and caring thinking, critical reflection, questioning, discussion, dialogue and collaborative action;
- learners develop positive communication and negotiation skills while working collaboratively with others;
- all learners experience a sense of belonging and feel valued and included in the group;
- intercultural understanding is integrated throughout the curriculum;
- the teacher uses teachable moments as valuable opportunities to make learning memorable;
- learning fosters the full development and potential of the whole child who uses all of his or her senses in the learning;
- the teacher provides a wide range of culturally appropriate learning experiences adapted to diverse learning styles and preferences; and
- the teacher involves the learner's knowledge and experience, and builds on their interests and cultural or religious background.

As may be seen, the role of the teacher is vital to the effectiveness of education for intercultural understanding, as it is the teacher who models the desired values and behaviours, and who fosters behavioural change among the learners. Learner motivation and engagement are enhanced by the empathy, understanding and respect that teachers show towards all learners. Teachers are central figures who care, understand, guide and motivate learners and take a learner-focused approach that values the cultural and linguistic background and experiences of learners, within a supportive teaching and learning environment that models democracy in action and addresses issues that are relevant to the learners. To fill this role, teachers need to be self-aware, and to monitor and observe themselves continuously in order to ensure their own continued growth and personal development.

## A Whole-school Approach to Education for Intercultural Understanding

Also important for effective intercultural understanding is the need to take a whole-school approach that integrates the values for intercultural understanding throughout the school environment, including:

- integrated curriculum content;
- holistic teaching practices;
- supportive, culturally sensitive learning context;
- organizational policies, guidelines, rules and decision making processes;
- respectful relationships across the school community;
- school-community partnerships that foster harmonious community relations, taking responsible civic action together;
- engagement with the surrounding local culture and with the culturally diverse life of the school community;
- involvement of parents and communities in the children's learning; and
- underlying school ethos.

Many of the above points are also applicable within teacher education institutions, where the capacity of teacher trainees is being enhanced to enable them to become confident and competent teachers of intercultural understanding and sustainable development. The teacher education institution must become a role model of human rights, intercultural understanding and sustainability in practice, with implications for the development of teacher educators themselves.

## Implications for Incorporating Intercultural Understanding into Teacher Education

Clearly there are many implications for teachers and for teacher educators regarding the many issues raised above. This section will summarise the key implications to be addressed within teacher education institutions.

For effective education in intercultural understanding, teacher trainees need to acquire the following knowledge, values and skills:

- deep knowledge, awareness and understanding of the key issues related to intercultural understanding, and the human rights principles underpinning intercultural understanding, as outlined in the previous section;
- a strong sense of their own cultural heritage and identity as a solid foundation for acceptance of others;
- the ability to think holistically and to link intercultural understanding to the multiple dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, cultural, environmental);
- critical thinking skills to question injustice, debate issues logically and sensitively, and advocate for the marginalized, and the ability to engage learners in such discussions and actions of solidarity;
- the ability to identify, clarify, develop and live the values for intercultural understanding;
- the ability to guide and facilitate values development and attitudinal change in oneself and in learners;
- the ability to model values for intercultural understanding in all one's relationships and in teaching practice;
- competence in the full range of skills needed for intercultural understanding;
- skills in teaching and learning methodologies that integrate the content, skills and values for intercultural understanding into and across school curricula;
- the ability to engender a positive, sensitive and inclusive learning environment that is human-rights-based, gender sensitive and conducive to promoting intercultural understanding;
- awareness of available resources related to education for intercultural understanding and the ability to develop one's own teaching resources;
- the ability to develop and implement whole-school approaches to intercultural understanding;
- the ability to liaise with parents and community members, and to tap into culturally diverse community resources; and

- the ability to engage in reflective practice and action research in collaboration with other teachers, to continually improve approaches to education for intercultural understanding and sustainability.

The implications for teacher educators to integrate education for intercultural understanding into teacher education curricula include all of those listed above for teachers. In addition, teacher educators and administrators need to ensure that the principles and values of intercultural understanding are an integral part of all the operations of the teacher education institutions.

## Activities for Teacher Educators to Address Intercultural Understanding in Teacher Education

The first step towards integrating education for intercultural understanding into teacher education institutions are for teacher educators to:

- reaffirm their own cultural heritage and identity as a solid foundation for deep understanding and acceptance of that of others;
- deepen and broaden their own awareness of the socio-cultural, religious and linguistic demography of their country, region and globally, including the contemporary and historical key issues facing cultural minorities locally and globally;
- become aware of the key international and human rights instruments relevant to intercultural understanding and understand how the principles apply to local contexts;
- engage with peers in critical dialogue around contemporary socio-cultural issues to develop deep and unbiased understanding of the many perspectives associated with them, and be willing to advocate and act for the marginalized and oppressed;
- develop a practical understanding of conflict resolution and mediation strategies to be able to train teachers in developing these skills among school learners, or alternatively be able to access resource persons with these and other necessary skills;
- become aware of one's own values, attitudes and prejudices towards other peoples, and be willing to challenge oneself to change these, to develop personal values in keeping with those listed in previous sections and to become role models who live these values in their lives;
- adapt, enhance and broaden their existing knowledge of pedagogical approaches suited to education for intercultural understanding, and diverse ways of developing conducive learning environments for the entire school;
- become familiar with the available resources relevant to education for intercultural understanding and a range of good practice case studies gleaned from other teacher education institutions; and

- become familiar with action-learning research methodologies and be able to engage with peers in reflective practice, and a continuous learning and improvement approach to integrating intercultural understanding in teacher education for sustainability.

Having established the core personal knowledge, values and skills necessary for integrating intercultural understanding in teacher education for sustainability, teacher educators and administrators may decide to form small teams to engage in a range of implementation projects on key topics, depending on their role in the organization. While these topics would vary from one context to another, focus groups or action teams may wish to, for example, address projects in the following areas:

### **1. Ethos, Policy and Governance**

To ensure that (for example):

- institutional policies, guidelines and practices reflect and model the principles and values of intercultural understanding;
- there are fair and equitable policies to address discrimination, bullying or harassment from teacher trainees;
- diverse cultures are adequately represented among governing and consultative bodies; and
- all staff receive professional development in values and practices so these are translated into behaviours across the teacher education institutions.

### **2. Learning Environment**

To ensure that (for example):

- the learning environment in the teacher education institutions is positive, sensitive and conducive to intercultural understanding;
- teacher trainees of diverse cultures feel comfortable in that environment; and
- all teacher trainees experience the type of learning environment that they will need to create with their school learners for effective education for intercultural understanding.

### **3. Curriculum Integration**

To ensure that (for example):

- opportunities for acquiring the content, values and skills associated with education for intercultural understanding are integrated across teacher education institution curricula where appropriate (in existing course subjects to begin with) leading to eventual total course restructure to encompass all sustainable development perspectives; and

- time is allocated in the teacher education institution curriculum for integrating learning across the various dimensions of sustainability (economic, social, cultural, environmental) based on relevant, real or hypothetical scenarios.

#### **4. Learning and Pedagogy**

To ensure that (for example):

- curriculum units or subjects in the teacher education institution that address the teaching of learning and pedagogy with teacher trainees incorporate the pedagogical principles and practices applicable to education for intercultural understanding; and
- teacher trainees have the opportunity to undertake teaching practice in education for intercultural understanding, preferably within a culturally diverse context if possible.

#### **5. Resources – People and Materials**

To ensure that (for example):

- existing teaching, learning and library resources and textbooks are culturally sensitive and do not convey discriminatory or racist attitudes;
- appropriate teaching and learning resources relevant to education for intercultural understanding are available for both teacher educators and for teacher trainees; and
- working relationships and partnerships are formed with appropriate external resource persons and agencies who may bring relevant expert knowledge and experience to the teaching programme, including instructors who are members of cultural minorities and are willing to share their experiences.

There may be other projects that teacher education institution staff may decide to initiate according to the local context. However, it is vital that the first two tasks be:

- the development of personal knowledge, values, skills and attitudinal change (if necessary) within teacher educators themselves; and
- the development of a whole teacher education institution approach to integrating and modelling the principles of education for intercultural understanding, reflected in institutional policy, guidelines, practices, and in staff relationships with each other, with teacher trainees and with the broader community of cultural resources and expertise.

The result may be integrated across the curriculum of education for intercultural understanding, and the adoption of appropriate teaching and learning approaches.

Annex 1 shows a matrix to guide teacher education institutions in developing their institutional approach to education for intercultural understanding.

## Integrating Intercultural Understanding into Social Studies

In different countries, social studies may include many subjects and topics such as history, geography, human rights, civics and citizenship, and environmental education, to name a few. How each country approaches the integration of intercultural understanding will therefore vary according to the context. This section provides examples of some ways in which such integration might occur.

### Learning Objectives

A sample of learning objectives for social studies was provided earlier, which anticipated that learners would:

- explore diverse perspectives in time, place, cultures and societies;
- learn how diverse cultural perspectives develop and change over time;
- explore values and ethical issues from diverse cultural perspectives;
- learn how peoples are shaped by social, cultural, religious, historical, economic, political, technological and ecological systems and structures, which develop in different ways, places and times;
- develop an awareness of the relationship between cultures (especially indigenous) and the natural world;
- develop an understanding of the links between the loss of biodiversity and the loss of cultural and linguistic diversity;
- experience compassion, understanding and respect for difference in a wide range of local, national and global contexts;
- learn to value and appreciate others and to celebrate diversity for its own sake and also for the benefits it brings to all;
- learn to think critically about bias, discrimination and stereotyped images;
- acquire knowledge of diverse societies locally, nationally and globally, and become aware of changing environments and systems over time; and
- learn about cultural diversity and social cohesion in societies and countries throughout the world;

Other learning objectives may be added according to the topics that are covered in social studies in each context.



For example, for *civics and citizenship* topics, learning objectives may be as follows:

- raise awareness and understanding of the community, nation and broader world in which learners live and their place in it;
- become aware of personal, cultural, national and global values, to appreciate the similarities and reconcile the differences;
- develop a strong sense of personal and cultural identity, alongside one's identity as both a national and a global citizen; and
- explore one's responsibility as a member of one's family, cultural community and local society, alongside the responsibility as a national and global citizen.

For topics which address *human rights* issues, learning objectives may be as follows:

- become aware of human rights and freedoms, and cultural and linguistic rights;
- become aware of power relationships, bullying, harassment, discrimination and other examples of structural violence in societies;
- become aware of inequalities and injustice locally, nationally and globally; and
- develop compassion and a sense of social justice.

Topics that address *environmental sustainability* issues might have these learning objectives:

- come to understand the nature, causes and consequences of interdependence between societies and their environments;
- appreciate the importance of connection to the earth for indigenous peoples;
- learn from traditional peoples, the value of the earth and respect for its resources and all living things, to be cared for and treasured for future generations; and
- compare and contrast the different ways in which diverse cultures lived off the land through time.

## Individual Learning Activities

This section lists some sample learning activities that individually address some of the learning outcomes listed above for the social studies. The details of each sample learning activity are described in Annex 2 – Intercultural Understanding Learning Activities. However, the examples are not exhaustive and should be adapted and enhanced to suit the local context.

Intercultural Understanding Learning Activities for Social Studies:

- The Culture Iceberg – What Aspects of Culture are Visible and Invisible?
- Protection and Promotion of Diversity

- Similarities and Differences through the Media
- National Symbols around the World
- Perceptions of Difference: Prejudice and Discrimination
- Tolerance
- Respect for Difference
- Equity and Justice
- Challenging Stereotypes

The learning activities have been drawn from various sources and are acknowledged at the end of each activity. As a role model for their trainees, teacher educators should always acknowledge their sources.

## Integrated Learning Activities

Each of the topics mentioned above, and others, may be addressed separately for in-depth knowledge and understanding of the respective issues. However, time also needs to be allocated to an integrated understanding of how these topics are interrelated. For example, good national and global citizenship should be linked to environmental and social responsibility, and observance of human rights, and then applied in practice to real or relevant hypothetical situations that may be familiar to the learner.

Scenarios may be developed, or drawn from local and national newspapers, magazines, television programmes or from the Internet. An example may be as follows:

A multinational company has found a rich source of profitable minerals in a natural forest inhabited for many centuries by a self-sufficient, indigenous community, with their own language and traditional lifestyle, which depends heavily on the forest for food, products and natural medicines. The government welcomes the company's proposed mining project, as it will bring employment and prosperity to the nearby urban community, which has been economically depressed for decades. The urban townsfolk also look forward to the opportunity of being gainfully employed and of providing their children with a good education. The worker's union supports the rights of workers to make a living through mining. However, local environment and human rights activists are very vocal about the destruction of the environment and the indigenous culture that is intimately connected to it, pollution of local water supplies and the loss of rare species of wildlife that depend on the forest.

Such a scenario, or variations on a range of similar themes, can provide months of research topics for learners on related topics, and many opportunities for debate, discussion, problem-solving, explorations of values and human rights, dramatizations and role plays of the various parties, and practice in conflict resolution and mediation strategies.

A useful tool for developing thinking and questioning around the various dimensions of sustainability around intercultural understanding (socio-cultural, political, economic, natural/environmental) is the Development Compass Rose (Annex 3).

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## Annex 1: Learning Objectives for Intercultural Understanding

Knowledge  <i>What knowledge is needed to address intercultural understanding?</i>	Skills		Values and Attitudes  <i>What values and attitudes are needed to address intercultural understanding?</i>	Learning Characteristics  <i>What learning characteristics are needed to facilitate action and change? (interdisciplinary, values-driven, ...)</i>  Learning that is...
	(Cognitive / Technical)  <i>What cognitive and technical skills are needed to address intercultural understanding? (literacy, ICT,...)</i>	(Social / Emotional)  <i>What social and emotional skills are needed to address intercultural understanding? (cooperation...)</i>		

## Whole Teacher Education Institution Approach to Education for Intercultural Understanding

Institutional Policy, Guidelines & Practices	Staff Professional Development Needs	Curriculum Integration	Pedagogy / Teaching and Learning	Learning Environment	Teaching & Learning Resources	Research / Assessment

## Annex 2: Intercultural Understanding Learning Activities

### Activity No. 1: The Culture Iceberg

#### Objectives

- Students will be able to distinguish between the visible and invisible aspects of culture.
- Students will be able to explain how the invisible aspects of culture influence the visible ones.

#### Instructions

1. Before beginning this lesson, remind students that:
  - Culture is a complex concept.
  - Everyone has a culture.
  - It shapes how we see the world, ourselves and others.
2. Explain that metaphors often help us understand big ideas by relating something we do not know to something we do know. A useful metaphor for culture is an iceberg.
  - Ask students what they know about the size and shape of icebergs.
  - How much of an iceberg is above the water? How much is underwater?
3. Make the point that only about one-eighth of an iceberg is visible above the water. The rest is below.

Culture is very similar to an iceberg. It has some aspects that are visible and many others that can only be suspected, guessed, or learned as understanding of the culture grows. Like an iceberg, the visible part of culture is only a small part of a much larger whole. Invisible aspects influence and cause the visible ones.

4. Ask students to draw an iceberg with a clear line delineating the part of the iceberg that is above the water's surface and the larger part that is below the surface.
5. Divide students into groups and have them discuss in their groups which features of culture they think are visible and which are invisible, using the *Features of Culture* worksheet.

Questions:

How do the invisible aspects of culture influence the visible ones?

Why is it important to understand the relationship between the two?



6. Ask students to look at both their outline drawing of the iceberg and the *Features of Culture* worksheet.
  - Have them review the features one by one and decide as a group if a particular feature belongs above the line (i.e. is visible) or below the line (i.e. is invisible).
  - Have students write above the water line the numbers of those features of culture that they, as a group, consider to be observable features. They should write the numbers of the invisible features below the water line.
  - Do the first few features with them. Provide examples (e.g. styles of dress are visible; beliefs about hospitality cannot be directly observed).
7. After students have had time to work in groups on the remaining features, have each group pair with another group and compare their placement of features. Students must be prepared to say why they placed a particular feature where they did. (Note: In the list of features, the numbers that should appear *below* the water line are #3, #4, #6, #8–10, #16–18, #22–24, #26–30).
8. Ask students whether they see any item below the water line that might influence or determine any item above (e.g. ideas about modesty might affect styles of dress; religious beliefs might influence holiday celebrations, painting, and music).

### **Features of Culture Worksheet**

1. Styles of dress
2. Ways of greeting people
3. Beliefs about hospitality
4. Importance of time
5. Paintings
6. Values
7. Literature
8. Beliefs about child raising (children and teens)
9. Attitudes about personal space/privacy
10. Beliefs about the responsibilities of children and teens
11. Gestures to show you understand what has been told to you
12. Holiday customs
13. Music

14. Dancing
15. Celebrations
16. Concept of fairness
17. Nature of friendship
18. Ideas about clothing
19. Foods
20. Greetings
21. Facial expressions and hand gestures
22. Concept of self
23. Work ethic
24. Religious beliefs
25. Religious rituals
26. Concept of beauty
27. Rules of polite behaviour
28. Attitude toward age
29. The role of family
30. General worldview

Source: *Building Bridges – A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Intercultural Understanding* <http://www.peacecorp.gov/www/publications/bridges/pdf/BuildingBridges.pdf>)

## **Activity No. 2: Protection and Promotion of Diversity**

### **Objectives**

- To be aware of the facts related to the loss of biodiversity, and of cultural and linguistic diversity.
- To recognize the close interconnections between biodiversity and cultural and linguistic diversity.
- To be concerned about the implications of loss of diversity, in terms of the inability of future generations to meet their own needs and to connect to their cultural heritage and sense of identity.

- To identify responsibility for the loss of diversity among individuals and corporations.
- To understand and accept personal responsibility and stewardship for the preservation and promotion of diversity in all its forms.

## **Content**

- Awareness of statistical information regarding the rate of loss of biodiversity, and of cultural and linguistic diversity
- Values for promoting and protecting diversity, especially responsibility

## **Learning Activities**

### **Cognitive Level: Knowing**

The teacher asks learners to research and discuss the meaning and definition of sustainable development, particularly relating to the responsibility of present generations to future generations. Many examples of sustainability should be discussed to demonstrate what actions should be taken to sustain resources, species, cultures and languages for future generations to enjoy.

Groups of learners each select an area of research to identify statistical data relating to, for example, the number of plant/animal species lost in the previous year/decade; the number of languages lost each year; the impact of globalization and the media on culture; the number of languages represented on the Internet, etc. Each group presents the results of their research and discuss with the whole class the implications of the data for current and future generations.

### **Conceptual Level: Understanding**

The teacher encourages learners to discuss the major reasons for the loss of diversity and who might be responsible. The responsibilities of the major players are assessed from the individual through to corporations, governments and international societies. Learners may try to estimate with percentages the degree of responsibility for loss of diversity caused by each player, with an analysis of the reasons for their estimate.

### **Affective Level: Valuing**

Using a scale of 1 to 10 (where 1 is very low and 10 is very high), the teacher challenges learners to rate themselves in terms of their own responsibility for and influence on the loss of diversity. The learners share their assessment in their group. Learners explore the values they would need to hold and action to protect diversity for a sustainable world.

The teacher asks the learners to imagine the world without a species that is important to them, or without their family language, or without their cultural practices, etc. How would they feel? What could they do to prevent this from happening?

## Active Level: Taking Action

The teacher encourages the learners to identify an action they could take to help move towards a sustainable society to reduce the rate of loss of diversity, either as an individual or as a group. Design a project around this action that is positive and empowering.

*Source: Adapted from APNIEVE, 2005. Learning to Do. Values for Learning and Working Together in a Globalizing World. Bonn, Germany, UNEVOC. [www.unevoc.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pubs/LearningToDo.pdf](http://www.unevoc.net/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/LearningToDo.pdf)*

## Activity No. 3: Similarities and Differences through the Media

### Online Newspapers: A Look at the World through Different Eyes

#### Outcomes

Students analyze different styles of online newspapers, with a focus on the similarities between different cultural, religious and geographic groups. Students discuss the common issues presented in online newspapers nationally and around the world.

#### Introduction

Students are introduced to online newspapers identifying local and national titles from a range of cultural, religious and geographic communities. By comparing content, students note the similarities and the differences in the types of texts published and the subject matter that people of all backgrounds are interested in. Some analysis of structure, genre and language is included.

#### Worksheets to Download

Worksheet 1: <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/australi.htm>

Worksheet2: <http://www.racismnoway.com.au/upload/MNS%20Online%20news%20worksheet2.doc>

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Online Newspapers

*Class discussion*

- Discuss differences between national and community papers.
- What community newspapers are available in your area?
- Brainstorm the various newspapers and the different groups of people that these newspapers service. Consider different community newspapers nationally, particularly those of diverse cultural, religious and geographic groups.
- Who are the audiences for these community newspapers?
- Introduce the concept of ONLINE NEWSPAPERS.

- Consider why people may choose to read a paper online.

*Note: not all newspapers have an online edition. See Australian Newspapers Online ([www.nla.gov.au/npapers](http://www.nla.gov.au/npapers)).*

## 2. Research

### *Group activity*

- Divide class into groups of 3 or 4, and distribute Worksheet 1.
- Each group chooses an online newspaper to study and appoints a scribe and a presenter.
- Students visit their online newspaper and respond to the worksheet questions. These responses will be presented to the other groups later.
- Once the worksheets are completed, bring students together to discuss the content of each online newspaper.

### *Group presentations*

- Using their group's worksheet responses, the presenters describe their online newspapers to the class.
- On flipchart paper, the teacher lists the most common text types, themes and content included in the online newspapers.
- By comparing the various online newspapers from different cultural, religious and geographic backgrounds, students recognize the similarities as well as the differences. By analyzing these online newspapers, the common interests, fears and the need for people to belong to a community may become evident.

## 3. Impact of Online Newspaper Design

### *Class discussion*

The format of a newspaper is usually quite rigid and includes the masthead on the front page, a main headline plus one or two other headlines with articles. In contrast, online newspapers do not necessarily follow the same format and variations appear in different online newspapers. As a class, students discuss the design of the various online newspapers presented to the class using the following guide:

- ease of navigation including number of clicks required to access different areas
- organization of different sections within the online newspaper
- impact of the logo design and use of colour. How important is this when designing and building an online newspaper?
- impact of the advertising. Does it detract from the content? Is it appropriate for the audience of the online newspaper?

- appeal of the font and images
- use of features not available to hard copy newspapers, e.g. video clips and sound bites.

Students then vote on the best of the online newspapers presented.

#### 4. Small Group Discussion and Reporting

##### *Distribute Worksheet 2*

- Students read through the questions and discuss responses before individually writing responses. As a class discuss the questions on the worksheet.
- Look at the online newspapers together to highlight the differences in the use of language. Ask students to write down the cultural, religious and local events reported on or advertised in the online newspaper.
- Students may then research these events and prepare a presentation about an upcoming or recent event in their local community.
- Ask students to brainstorm the cultural, religious or local events that are promoted in the online newspaper. Make a list of these events and discuss the relevance to each group. Draw on the knowledge that students bring to the classroom and their understanding of the significance of these events.

##### **Additional Strategies**

1. Students prepare a homepage for a new online newspaper. In small groups, select a cultural, religious or geographic community, outline the focus of the newspaper and using the other online newspapers as a guide, create a mock homepage that reflects the values and concerns of the group selected.
2. Create a poster promoting one of the cultural, religious or geographic events seen in the online newspapers. Consider the use of a logo, colour, design, and appropriate information and how it is promoted to different communities.

##### **Related Resources**

Visit The New York Times Learning Network Daily Lesson Plan, (<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20080201friday.html>), *From the Home Front: Writing Feature Articles to Accompany Front Page Stories*. This lesson, in which students explore feature news stories and create their own articles or blog entries connecting hard news items to their local community, can be adapted to the local context.

##### **Some relevant newspaper websites to visit:**

South Asia Times, <http://www.southasiatimes.com.au/>  
 The Australian Jewish News, <http://www.ajn.com.au/>  
 Bharat Times, <http://www.bharattimes.com/>  
 Croatian Herald, <http://www.bharattimes.com/>

Neoskosmos, <http://www.neoskosmos.com.au/>  
Sada-e-Watan Sydney, <http://www.sadaewatansydney.com/>  
Indian Link, <http://www.indianlink.com.au/>  
National Indigenous Times, <http://www.nit.com.au/>  
The Sydney Morning Herald, <http://www.smh.com.au/>

Australian Newspapers Online, <http://www.nla.gov.au/npapers/> for additional Australian newspapers

Ogden Newspapers Inc, <http://www.oweb.com/> for international community newspapers

Source: Learning activity drawn from: Racism No Way – Lesson Ideas [http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson\\_ideas/20080206\\_85.html](http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson_ideas/20080206_85.html).

## Activity No. 4: National Symbols around the World

### Outcomes

Students explore symbols of nationalism and consider their meaning and relevance today.

### Introduction

Each country has its own national symbols chosen for various reasons at various times in history.

What do these national symbols mean to their citizens? What values do they reflect?

With the growing sense of global responsibility, are the sentiments that these symbols promote relevant or desirable today?

### Suggested Activities

1. As a class, discuss some of your national symbols, their use and origins.

- What are your national flag, coat of arms, national anthem, and floral and fauna emblems?
- What are their origins? Why and when were they chosen?
- Do they still portray the country and the people of today?
- Are they appropriate for the country today?

2. Visit National Anthems (<http://www.thenationalanthems.com/>) or one of the other sites listed below and choose a country.

- i Double click on the flag to play the anthem. Listen carefully.

- What sentiments does the music evoke? Is it sentimental, emotional, stirring, evocative, warlike, etc.? Is the melody easy to remember? Play it several times. Can you hum along with it?
- ii Read the lyrics/words
- What sentiments do they evoke?
  - Are the lyrics patriotic? Are they stirring?
  - Do they ask a religious figure for protection for their country, their monarchy or government or themselves?
  - Do they sing the praises of a religious figure, their monarchy or government or the motherland?
  - Are they a call to arms? Do they record a struggle or victory?
  - What is their main purpose?
  - As a class, classify and list the anthems according to main purpose or sentiment.
- iii When was the anthem adopted?
- Research the history of the country at that time.
  - How might contemporary events have influenced the lyrics and the music?
  - Do you think lyrics should be changed to be more relevant to a country's current circumstances?
- iv Do you think national symbols and national anthems in particular influence the way we consider and sometimes stereotype people?
- As the world becomes smaller, should nationalism and patriotism be encouraged or should we have a more global approach? Or can both exist together?

### **Additional Strategies**

1. Write a personal, family, class, club or school anthem, or design a coat of arms or flag.
2. What events would you recount or represent?
3. What values would you want to promote or exhibit?
4. Would it be a permanent symbol or would it evolve with time?
5. How could it reflect the various cultures that exist in your country?
6. Present your symbol to the class and explain the symbolism.



## Relevant websites to visit:

- National Anthems, <http://www.thenationalanthems.com/>
- Robesus Inc National Flags and Anthems, <http://www.imagesoft.net/>
- National Anthems of the World, <http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/8106/Anthems/>

Source: Learning activity drawn from: Racism No Way – Lesson Ideas [http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson\\_ideas/20040301\\_66.html](http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson_ideas/20040301_66.html).

## Activity No. 5: Perceptions of Difference: Prejudice and Discrimination

### Outcomes

Students understand that people have different perceptions of the same phenomenon (i.e., things, people, events).

### Introduction

Opinion and prejudice are based on perception.

Encouraging the understanding and acceptance of the diversity of perception may lead to greater tolerance.

### Suggested Activities

1. Present the class with a simple classroom object such as a chair.
  - Ask students to write down five words or phrases to describe the object.
  - Share the student observations noting the similarities and differences.
  - Point out that even when an object as simple as a chair is involved, there are different observations. Stress that none of these observations are wrong, just different.
2. Show the students a picture of a scene (e.g., a country or city scene, a sports event, a war scene).
  - Ask students to list three points of interest or importance about the scene and rank them.
  - Ask students to share their points and comment on the reason for their choice.
  - List the points on the board.
  - Discuss how everybody looked at the same scene but many different points were identified as being important or interesting.
  - Again, stress that none of these observations are wrong, just different.

3. **Show students three pictures of adult males or females of about the same age but physically quite different.**
  - Ask students to say who they think is most attractive and why.
  - Ask students who they think might find one person more attractive and why.
4. **Ask students to give their opinion on some recent local, national or international event.**
  - After students share their opinions, ask them to identify other groups of people, in their community or elsewhere, who they think would agree or disagree with them and why.
5. **Ask students to identify examples from their own experiences in which they encountered different perceptions or opinions of the same object, person or events. Some prompts could be:**
  - Differences in describing a painting or a sunset
  - Differences of opinion regarding a film, television programme, book or music
  - Differences of opinion regarding the performance of footballers or other sportspeople
  - Differences in agreement over whether or not someone is pretty or handsome
  - Differences as to the merit or validity of certain political decisions

### **Additional Strategies**

With students, discuss the role that diversity in perception and opinion plays in our lives. Use the examples already discussed, or the questions listed below.

- What would it be like if everyone had the same perceptions or opinions?
- What advantages are there in everyone perceiving things and people in the same way? What disadvantages?
- Would we want to live in a world in which we all saw things in the same way? Or all saw everything differently?
- How can we benefit from a diversity of views, while also working together collaboratively and peacefully towards common goals?

### **Copyright Acknowledgement**

Drawn from Racism No Way: Lesson Ideas

[http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson\\_ideas/20040730\\_70.html](http://www.racismnoway.com.au/classroom/lesson_ideas/20040730_70.html)

(Adapted from Shiman David and McLean Barbara, 1991. *The Prejudice Book - Activities for the Classroom*. Courtesy of the Alfred Dreyfus Anti-Defamation Unit of B'nai B'rith, NSW, Australia)

## Activity No. 6: Tolerance

Intercultural understanding requires tolerance for diversity and eradication of insensitivities and prejudices, recognizing the reality of pluralism and appreciating the rich diversity of cultures and other forms of human expression.

### Objectives

- To appreciate the beauty of diversity and differences
- To learn the value of tolerance
- To assess one's personal level of tolerance to diversity and differences
- To apply initiatives toward increasing tolerance

### Content

The concept of tolerance

### Learning Activities

#### Cognitive Level: Knowing

- Learners research and discuss their understanding of the term "tolerance".
- The teacher presents a range of images and audio visuals that represent examples of tolerance in action.
- Learners discuss the images and clarify their understanding of the meaning of the word "tolerance".
- They collect their own images from magazines or from the Internet that express examples of tolerance in a variety of contexts.

#### Conceptual Level: Understanding

The teacher engages learners in a discussion about the following concepts and learners are asked to elaborate on their understanding of these from their own experience:

- Tolerance is being receptive to the beauty of differences.
- Tolerance is respecting differences.
- The seeds of intolerance are fear and ignorance.
- The seeds of tolerance are love and compassion.
- Tolerance is mutual respect through understanding.

### **Affective Level: Valuing**

The teacher invites learners to work on the Tolerance Activity Sheet attached to this lesson, with the following instructions:

- In the first column, identify some of the types of diversities and differences which you personally encounter (e.g., religion, gender, ability, race, etc.).
- In the second column, using a scale of 0 (intolerant) to 100 (tolerant), rate your level of tolerance for each of the categories.
- In the third column, write key phrases to explain your reasons for the ratings in column two.
- In the fourth column, indicate your openness and willingness to change your current position towards each of the categories, especially with the groups where you have high intolerance, using the following code:

Y = Yes, open and willing to change my position

O = Open but not yet willing to change my position

N = No, not open and willing to change my position

- In the fifth column, write again key phrases to explain your reasons for the rating in column four (Y, O or N).

The teacher leads the learners to review their responses in the Tolerance Activity Sheet and offers the following guide questions for learners to reflect on:

- What do you notice as a general trend in your position of tolerance towards the different categories of diversities and differences of people?
- How do you feel about these positions that you have?
- What accounts for these positions?
- What could make you reconsider some of these positions, especially the ones with very low levels of tolerance?

The teacher encourages the learners to share their reflections in groups of four, then highlights factors from some of the sharing that may facilitate or hinder the practice of tolerance.

### **Active Level: Taking Action**

The teacher reinforces the importance of tolerance and challenges learners to work on two of the categories where they have a low level of tolerance and are open or willing to change. Learners develop a concrete action plan that may help them to change their position, with help from the teacher who also monitors their attempts to apply their plan.

The teacher’s role is to encourage and positively affirm steps taken towards tolerance no matter how small.

The teacher summarizes the learning and emphasizes the need to build a better world where people learn to live together with respect and in harmony while appreciating each other’s differences.

### Tolerance Activity Sheet

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Categories of diversity & difference	Level of tolerance 0-100	Reasons for the rating in Column 2	Level of openness or willingness to change Y/O/N	Reasons for the rating in Column 4

*Adapted from APNIEVE. 2005. Learning to Do. Values for Learning and Working Together in a Globalizing World. Bonn, Germany, UNEVOC. [www.unevoc.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pubs/LearningToDo.pdf](http://www.unevoc.net/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/LearningToDo.pdf)*

### Activity No. 7: Respect for Difference

#### Learning Objectives

- To differentiate between “difference” and “discrimination”.
- To recognize how to live together in harmony with people whose nationality, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion and lifestyle may differ significantly from one’s own.
- To express empathy towards others who are different from ourselves.
- To act against violence towards the human dignity of people who are different from ourselves.

#### Content

- Tolerance for difference and diversity
- Components of unity in diversity
- Distinction between prejudice/discrimination and diversity/difference

## Values

Tolerance, respect, compassion, human dignity, interconnectedness, cooperation

## Learning Activities

### Affective Level: Valuing

- The facilitator (F) invites participants (Ps) to reflect on instances where they observe certain people being made fun of, teased, called offensive names and discriminated against. Ask the Ps to list the categories of people who have experienced this and the kind of remarks they receive.
- F encourages Ps to consider whether they themselves show the same tendency. They will place a "+" sign next to the category of people to whom they themselves show signs of prejudice and a "-" sign next to the category of people to whom they do not show signs of prejudice. It is essential that in the conduct of this activity, Ps are encouraged to be honest with their responses as these will all be a part of learning, whether positive or negative.
- In honest communication, F asks Ps to reflect and share as to why prejudice for certain categories of people exist.

### Conceptual Level: Knowing and Understanding

- F links this to a discussion on the distinction between diversity/difference and prejudice/discrimination and how the latter is detrimental to achieving national unity and global solidarity.
- Then, with the same list created earlier, F challenges Ps to consider alternative ways of perceiving others, to shift from experiencing prejudice to recognizing and accepting difference and diversity.

### Active Level: Acting

- F leads them to an experience of empathy. Three volunteers will be asked to role play a situation where prejudice and discrimination exist. One volunteer will take the role of offender, a second the role of victim and the third, the role of bystander. The rest of the audience will be asked to select one role and empathize with it.
- After the role playing situation, each volunteer will disclose their feelings about playing that role. Some Ps from the audience will also be invited to share their feelings.
- The group as a whole is then instructed to work out two possible conclusions to the scene played. The first conclusion would revolve around ways in which the discrimination or prejudice is rationalized as acceptable. The second conclusion would illustrate the diversity and difference as acceptable.
- F then challenges Ps to consider how they could bring the respect for diversity and difference in their lives. This could be conducted through the monitoring of their own behaviours with the use of a daily personal journal.

It is important that teachers thoroughly debrief learners after this exercise.

## Suggested readings

UNESCO. 1995. UNESCO Declaration of the Principles of Tolerance. Paris.

*Source: Learning activity drawn from UNESCO APNIEVE Sourcebook: Learning to Be*  
<http://www2.unescobkk.org/elib/publications/LearningToBe>

## Activity No. 8: Equity and Justice

Ensuring equal outcomes by putting in place appropriate measures to overcome all forms of disadvantage. Ensuring equity for ourselves and for others.

### Learning Objectives

- To become familiar with the relevant international documents.
- To raise awareness of the difference between treating people equally and the need for equity to ensure equal outcomes.
- To deepen understanding of the inequities faced by individuals and disadvantaged groups.
- To learn to value and appreciate the diverse contributions made to society and to the workplace by each person, including oneself.
- To identify ways in which equity may occur within one's own life context.

### Content

Equity is not the same as equality. Equality is the absence of discrimination and involves treating everyone the same regardless of:

- Race, colour, ethnicity, language
- National or social origin
- Property
- Birth
- Caste
- Gender
- Religious beliefs
- Political or other opinion
- Association with particular persons or groups

- Trade/labour union membership or activity
- Age
- Medical record
- Marital status and pregnancy
- Sexuality or gender preference
- Disability, physical or mental impairment or illness (e.g., HIV/Aids)

Equality and equal treatment for everyone is of course essential in any context, and there are numerous international documents which call for equality in providing equal employment opportunities for women, the disabled, ethnic minorities and others, and in providing equal pay for equal work and so on.

However, equal treatment and the absence of discrimination are of themselves not sufficient to redress disadvantage, nor do they ensure equality of outcomes in education, training and employment.

Equity on the other hand, relates not so much to equality of treatment, as to ensuring the equality of educational and vocational outcomes, by putting in place certain equity strategies that seek to remove barriers and alleviate disadvantage. In other words, even if students begin their education at a disadvantage, due to language barriers, for example, equity measures may seek to redress that disadvantage, by providing additional language tuition or other extended learning opportunities, so the disadvantage is no longer evident by the end of their formal education and training. However, if the disadvantaged students are merely treated the same as others, then they are likely to remain disadvantaged by the end of their education and unable to achieve their full potential.

Not only do the disadvantaged students and their families suffer, but their communities are also robbed of the benefits of the contributions they might have made, and may even need to financially support them if they are unable to find gainful employment.

Similarly, every person who presents him/herself for employment clearly does not begin from an equal starting point, due to a wide range of disadvantages that some may have experienced due to poverty, language difference, social exclusion, illness, displacement and so on. Some people experience multiple or cumulative disadvantage, as in the case of women and children of ethnic minorities who have been forced to flee their homeland due to conflict. One cannot imagine how such persons manage to survive when they are also physically disabled or mentally impaired.

The ILO Global Report, *Time for Equality at Work*, argues that we need to go beyond equality and that, “affirmative action measures are necessary to ensure that everyone can start on an equal footing . . . especially when socio-economic inequalities between groups are profound and stem from past and societal discrimination” (ILO, 2003, p xii).



Some examples of affirmative action measures are the provision of education, training or work experience opportunities for certain disadvantaged groups, to help bridge the gap and open doors to job categories not previously accessible to them. In some countries, there are even work quotas to be met equivalent to the ratio of, for example, a particular ethnic minority in the population.

Some people resent equity and affirmative action measures, which they perceive as unfair advantage being offered to others and not to them. They would prefer a society in which the “survival of the fittest” is the norm, as this gives them greater opportunity to exploit the situation and benefit personally. A globalized world of free trade in which the “market” decides the price it will pay for goods and services, is also based on the “survival of the fittest”. We are now seeing the devastating impact this economic paradigm has had on the growing inequalities between the rich and poor throughout the world. While the poorest are suffering the most at this time, the consequences will eventually be felt by everyone, rich and poor alike.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to ensure that, no matter what disadvantage a person may face, he/she is included where possible, in all areas of the social, cultural, economic, spiritual and political life of our community. Further, each person should have the opportunity to participate fully in all areas of life, if they wish to do so, and have access to services and facilities which assist them in overcoming barriers to achieving their full potential.

By improving accessibility to employment, we are removing barriers to promote full participation and inclusion in the workplace. Accessibility may relate to:

- Physical environment
- Public transport
- ICT and equipment
- Societal structures involving (for example) poverty reduction strategies
- Training opportunities
- Policies and guidelines

No matter how different others may be from ourselves, they may have unique skills, gifts, talents, knowledge, experiences or personal qualities which add to our experience, deepen our understanding of ourselves and others, and enrich our lives. They may contribute to us personally as individuals, or they may contribute to the society in which we live. In any case, we would benefit enormously by learning to value and appreciate the diverse contributions of others, no matter what forms these may take. We come to understand, that encouraging the full development of all our colleagues leads to increased benefits for all of us.

In the workplace, just as in nature, diversity is vital for functioning effectively, particularly since the new workplace increasingly requires the development of highly productive

teams, where team members complement one another with their diverse range of skills and experience. If we identify certain strengths and abilities that are complementary and work together well in a work team, and then equally value all the diverse skills, qualities and aptitudes, this will inevitably lead to positive outcomes for everyone concerned. A skilled manager will recognize potential in the team members that is not fully developed, and ensure further training and development opportunities so that the whole team achieves high performance as a result.

There are a number of international agreements and other documents, which attempt to protect the well-being of the disadvantaged by ensuring equal treatment and equitable outcomes:

### **UN international documents relating to equity and equality**

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ILO Constitution and Declaration
- ILO Global Report, *Time for Equality at Work*
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

The themes of equality for all and equity for the disadvantaged are common throughout these and other UN documents, relating to a wide range of areas including health, education and employment.

### **Learning Activities**

#### **Knowing**

Provide opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with the relevant international documents, by conducting research either in the library, through the Internet or by providing copies of the relevant documents.

Students could work in pairs or in small groups to draw out the relevant sections of the texts relating to equity and equality in the workplace, taking care to distinguish between these two concepts. In this exercise, they will also need to highlight the workplace equity issues relating to specific groups such as the disabled people, women, migrant workers and others.

The purpose of this exercise is to develop a comprehensive knowledge of the relevant international agreements and understanding of the differences and links between equity and equality in the workplace.

## Understanding

In order to reach a deeper understanding of these concepts, facilitate a class discussion in which students discuss the two concepts of equity and equality in their own context, with specific concrete examples from their own experience, of where these do or do not occur.

The facilitator may wish to establish a debating panel with three speakers on each side, who will be asked to speak either for or against the benefits and merits of equity and affirmative action measures in the workplace.

## Valuing

After the debate, students should be provided with the opportunity to discuss in groups or pairs how they feel about the views put forward in favour and against, and to reflect on how the various views fit with their personal values and attitudes, in relation to, for example, women, disabled people or HIV sufferers in the workplace.

Students are then asked to discuss in groups the values that are needed at every level (i.e., in the family, workplace, community, nation, region), in order to ensure that people with diverse skills, abilities and backgrounds may live and work together, appreciating each others' complementary strengths, leading to peaceful and harmonious interdependence and productive team work.

Such values may be tolerance, respect, understanding, acceptance, appreciation, sharing, cooperation, collaboration, listening, appreciating, valuing difference, consideration.

Each group should then develop an imaginary workplace scenario, in which these values operate effectively towards creating equitable outcomes for a diverse workforce. These should then be shared through presentations to the whole class to develop a composite list of *"Features of an equitable workplace."*

## Taking Action

From the list of *"Features of an equitable workplace,"* students are asked to work in groups to contribute their ideas towards the development of a practical and achievable *"Equity Manifesto"* for their class, underpinned by the values identified in the earlier activity. They will then be required to implement the manifesto, regularly monitoring their progress in maintaining it.

Students are asked to reflect upon the new concepts introduced, and upon the values identified in the previous activity.

They are asked to choose one of the values identified and share in pairs how this value may be applied in their training context or in the workplace, and how they propose to integrate this value into their thoughts, words, actions and behaviours, towards people who may be "differently-abled", of diverse backgrounds or are different in any way from themselves.

Students are then asked to record this in their personal journal to enable them to periodically review their progress towards this commitment.

### **Assessment**

Students could be assessed based on their participation in every aspect of these activities.

The lessons should be followed up after a month or so, to ask students to write a brief summary of their reflections and experiences while integrating their chosen value into their lives, and the barriers they may have had to face in doing so.

If the opportunity for work experience with an employer arises, students may be asked to write a confidential summary of their observations of the extent to which, in their view, the workplace met the “*Features of an equitable workplace*” and some of the challenges and practical barriers that the employer may face in fully meeting them.

### **Suggested readings**

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ILO Constitution and Declaration
- ILO Global Report, *Time for Equality at Work*
- International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

*Source: Learning activity written by Joy de Leo*

## Activity No. 9: Challenging Stereotypes

How do you describe a farmer? A grandmother? A person from China? A Christian? A poor person?

In trying to understand people we have just met, or have not yet met, we try to make links between them and what we already “know” about the groups they belong to. We simplify the complicated images we see, or descriptions we read, connecting them to current concepts of the group they belong to, but this can limit our perceptions and openness to new understandings.

In developing a global perspective, we aim to continually broaden our views of other people and avoid behaviour which is based on unconfirmed assumptions or stereotypes. This means learning to recognize when we have beliefs about a person based on their age, gender, religion, culture or wealth and becoming aware of how these assumptions might influence our attitudes, language and behaviour. While stereotypes simplify and condense a great deal of information, they must not be seen as the complete picture.

Some of the most effective means of teaching respect for others is deepening understanding and challenging misconceptions through a wide variety of experiences, pictures, videos, texts and statistics. Expanding understanding of different groups, appreciating the diversity within the group and countering the stereotyped views, helps develop understanding of the complexity of humanity.

Developing critical literacy and skills to question and critique images and language used also helps us to appreciate diversity. Use these expanding understandings to think about and practise behaviours which will build better relationships with people from other groups.

Adapt these activities for your purposes to assist in understanding the influence of stereotypes on understanding, attitude and behaviours.

Write a description of a farmer, grandmother, person from China, Christian, poor person. Review the description and consider:

- Does this description apply to everyone in the group?
- Where have the ideas for the description come from?
- What evidence is there to support the description?
- Is the description negative or positive?
- Have others described the people in a similar way? Why or why not?
- How do assumptions affect your behaviour toward others?
- Help students to appreciate how stereotypes limit interaction by recalling a time when people have prevented their involvement or made assumptions about their ability by considering them too young or not interested because of their gender. They might share

experiences of when they have been confused with someone else or they were travelling and lumped with others as “they’re all the same” or “I can’t tell the difference...”

- Encourage students to discuss how these assumptions have influenced how they were treated and the consequences of this treatment for them.
- Identify how cartoons, images and biased language in the media have used stereotypes and consider the underlying reasons and possible outcomes.

Split into two groups and collect statistics about a selected country:

a) from the point of view of the government trying to encourage investment

b) from the point of view of a group of people who have felt marginalized by the government

- Compare the differing views these statistics present of the country.
- How do these descriptions feed into stereotypes?

*Source: Global Education, <http://www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/globaled/go/pid/2622>*

## Annex 3: The Development Compass Rose

The *compass rose strategy* is a framework that encourages us to ask a range of questions about issues in any place or situation. Like the compass we use to find our bearings in an unfamiliar terrain, the compass rose can be used to help inquiry about any locality or a photograph representing that place.

The compass rose is used to raise questions about issues and the interrelationships with environment, social, economic and political issues.

Instead of North, South, East, and West, the four main compass points represent:

- Natural /ecological questions
- Social and cultural questions
- Economic questions
- Who decides? Who benefits? i.e. the political questions

The diagonal points highlight the relationship between the four main points. For instance, **NE** raises questions about how economic activity impacts on the environment; **SE** raises questions about the relationship between economic activity and people's lives.

### The Development Compass Rose



Source: *The Development Compass Rose*, Development Education Centre, Birmingham, 1995.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**UNESCO Bangkok**

Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

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