

# Human Right Peace Education: Need of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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## Abstract

*India is signatory of United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, a veritable platform on which freedom from Political, Civil, Economic, Social and all types of freedom has been given. Although Human Rights Education is a sensitive subject because of its centrality to development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. India, the largest democracy in the world, is a big country with a lot of human rights challenges. If Human Rights are violated in India, the largest democracy in the world will be in danger. For the sake of democracy and sustainable development in India, Human Rights Education in India is essential. Knowledge of Human Rights is the best defense against their violation. The present paper highlights the need and importance of human rights education and what goal should be there for the human right education for coming generations. The paper also discusses and interrogates the need of Human Rights Education (HRE) and Peace Education in India and also some suggestive measures that should be taken as a part of educational programmers for making human right education an effective tool for elimination of human rights violations in the world.*

## INTRODUCTION

*“Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.” - Albert Einstein<sup>1</sup>*

Introduction to Peace Education and Human rights is to acquaint with the meaning of Peace and Human Rights Education including the methods of learning peace, the need for peace, Peace building, other means and measures of enforcing peace and Human Rights and how to promote it through policies of UN. Through it, understanding of education about peace and Human rights, Human rights and Peace Processes, peace pedagogy, the gender education, Leadership for Peace and peace education.

### Human Rights Education

“Human Rights Education is all learning that develops the knowledge, skills, and values of human rights.” As per provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other International documents and treaties, Human Rights Education can be defined as

education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of Human Rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and molding of attitudes directed to:

- a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
- c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
- d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic Society governed by the rule of law;
- e) The building and maintenance of peace;
- f) The promotion of people-centre sustainable development and social justice. There are three dimensions to the promotion of Human Rights

1. <http://www.worldpeace.com/albert-einstein-quote.html>

Education: → Knowledge--- providing information about human rights and the mechanisms that exist to protect those rights; → Values, beliefs and attitudes----promoting a human rights culture through the development of these processes; and → Action--- encouraging people to defend human rights and prevent human rights abuses.<sup>2</sup> It is possible through awareness of Human rights through human right education.

The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), World programme on Human Right Education, Universal Declaration on Human Right Education and training etc have defined Human Rights Education as "training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights and duties through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes which are directed to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and full development of the human personality. Human Rights Education (HRE) in 21<sup>st</sup> Century is an emerging field of educational theory and practice gaining increased attention and significance worldwide. Human rights education is all learning that develops the knowledge, skills, and values of human rights and the sense of its dignity, including the promotion of understanding, respect, gender equality, and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups apart from it. The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society and the furtherance of the activities of the United Nations for the Maintenance of Peace." (Adapted from the Plan of Action of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004). During this Decade, the UN is urging and supporting all member states to make knowledge about human rights available to everyone through both the formal school system and through popular and adult education.

### **Understanding of Peace and peace education**

The concept of peace can be understood in different ways. For some it means the absence of war or the absence of direct violence. According to this view a society without war or direct violence is peaceful. However, there are other thinkers, such as Johan Galtung, who sees peace as something more than this. A society is peaceful when exploitation is minimized or eliminated and when there is neither direct violence nor structural violence. There also seem to be different interpretations on when a society is peaceful. Out of this it is possible to assume that the actors from MD see peace in a negative way. Their aim with engaging in conflicts and peace operations is to stop the war and make sure that the parties follow the things that are set in the peace agreements and does not start the fighting again.

In a seminar by the national institute for educational research (NIER, 1999) of Japan on teacher education for peace and international understanding, the core curriculum for peace and international understanding was identified, which cut cross all subjects. The core curriculum stresses following values:

- Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Mutual Understanding
- Democracy
- Tolerance, Inner Peace and Harmony
- Human Dignity
- Sustainable Development
- International Cooperation, Caring and Sharing
- Justice in all aspects of life
- Appreciation of diversity

The problem the world faces the world today is not that of individual morality or social behavior but of inter-group and international behavior and morals. This problem today has reached such a critical and crucial stage, that either we solve it satisfactorily or we perish as the human race, along with the civilization that we have created by painful effort and the travail of centuries. Every step in this advance has meant the devoted service of the pioneers, often enough carried through at the expense of their lives.<sup>3</sup> It is not one

2. <http://apjor.com/downloads/0203201617.pdf>

3. Keeves, John P/ and Watanabe, Ryo (Eds.), *International handbook of Educational Research in the Asia-Pacific Region* (Springer Science + Business Media Dordrecht) 2003

concerned principally with organization. It is not one of balance of power or of devising checks and balances. It is not one of inspection, complete or limited. It is not even one of organizing a World Government, a highly desirable and useful proposal. The problem is primarily moral. Of course, political, social, economic, international issues do arise, and so also those of organization. But these will not be difficult to tackle successfully if we can *solve* the fundamental moral problem involved.

#### CONCEPTIONS OF PEACE:

Every major system of faith and belief, whether religious or secular in character, has in some way or other promised peace as an outcome of the implementation of its precepts.<sup>4</sup>

Definitions of peace --

John Cater ---

*"It would be naive to think that peace and justice can be achieved easily. No set of rules or study of history wills automatically solve the problems.... However, with faith and perseverance, complex problems in the past have been resolved in our search for justice and peace. They can be resolved in the future, provided, of course, that we can think of five new ways to measure the height of a tall building by using a barometer."*<sup>5</sup>

While peace is undoubtedly one of the most universal and significant of human ideals, Raimon Panikkar describes it as "one of the few positive symbols having meaning for the whole of humanity"<sup>6</sup> the ways that we think about peace is often diffuse and content-dependent. We profess to honor peace in the abstract--for example, within a framework of religious precepts and affirmations--while organizing our thoughts about life and politics around more mundane ends and objectives. Implicitly, we circumscribe the meaning of peace to accommodate a system of largely implicit beliefs about how the

world works, about what power consists of, and about what is expedient. As a result, the peace ideal is either co-opted by competing value priorities or remains distant from our daily activities and experiences. The "ideal" becomes separated from the "real," and peace becomes a pious invocation, a means to an end, or an empty term of rhetorical self-justification.

#### **Approaches to peace-- Power Politics: Peace through Coercive Power**

The first peace paradigm, power politics or "realpolitik," is the traditionally dominant framework in the field of international relation. The absence of a world government or "higher power" to which states must submit themselves renders politics among nations anarchic and unpredictable, characterized by shifting alliances and the ever-present threat of violence.

Though not necessarily indifferent to global problems linked to widespread poverty and ecological deterioration, exponents of power politics argue for an outlook of moral minimalism, in which the world is construed as a "self-help" system. Justice is defined as an absence of gross abuses of human rights, such as genocide, and peace is conceptualized simply as an absence of war or, more precisely, as a temporary suspension of hostilities secured by military power. "If you want peace," argue proponents of the power politics paradigm, "prepare for war." Violence arises inevitably from human competitiveness and covetousness; peace is secured through the forceful imposition of order.

#### **World Order: Peace through the Power of Law**

This paradigm, which views the "order" created by practices of power politics as a form of disorder, proposes that sustained cooperation among states and other significant factors, such as non-governmental (activist) organizations and intergovernmental organizations, is both possible and necessary. Cooperation is possible because human nature contains the potential for both selfishness and altruism; cooperation is necessary because the

4. Ibid.

5. <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/528966>

6. Aron, Raymond, *Peace and war: A Theory of International Relations* (New York: Doubleday), 1966, pp. 44-47.

7. <https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/peace%20paradigms.htm>

unmitigated competition favored by the power politics paradigm cannot be sustained.

These rights being fundamental requirements for existence of human beings are associated with the very birth of mankind<sup>7</sup> and according to the United Nations publication, could be generally defined as inherent rights in human nature without which none can live as a human being.<sup>8</sup>

To affirm that principled cooperation is possible, the world order paradigm emphasizes human choice and intentionality while asserting that nation-states do not have a monopoly on power to shape global politics. The nation-state is not the only forum for political<sup>9</sup> activity and accountability, and the national interest is not the exclusive criterion for desirable behavior. In an age of globalization, politics involves a complex interplay of global and national as well as local loyalties, values, and interests. Modern communications and transportation technologies have empowered citizens to form transnational networks for advancing concerns linked to peace, human rights, ecology, and development. The concerns of these citizen networks have helped to define agendas both for National Governments and for such institutions of global governance as the United Nations. Through conscious design, states and engaged world citizens can operate within the framework of these value-maximizing institutions to move beyond fearful and reactive behavior, extend the rule of law into the International sphere, and provide global public goods.

### **Conflict Resolution: Peace through the Power of Communication**

The third paradigm, conflict resolution, offers a highly pragmatic approach to peace through the development and refinement of skills for analyzing conflicts and responding to them with effective strategies of communication and negotiation. Where protagonists of world order concern themselves primarily with macro-level,

structural issues such as distributive justice and the institutionalization of international cooperation, practitioners of conflict resolution focus more on processes of interaction among individuals and groups and on the relationships that characterize them.

### **Nonviolence: Peace through Willpower**

One of the most common misconceptions about the fourth approach to peace, nonviolence, is that it is a paradigm that enjoys passivity. From the standpoint of nonviolence activists, this assumption reflects the dominance of power politics assumptions, which equate power with the ability to hurt and therefore regard it as the exclusive possession of governments and armed militant groups. In response, the nonviolence paradigm proposes that the power of any government derives primarily from the consent of the people, and only secondarily from coercion. By consenting to any given state of affairs and operating within the framework of norms that it offers, human beings empower that order and, if its norms are dehumanizing, disempowering and dehumanize themselves. Alternatively, by defining their own behavior as moral agents irrespective of external norms and pressures, they may become agents of change who can awaken others to new possibilities.

As Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and many others have underscored, nonviolence is action animated by principle and informed by the proposition that means and ends are inseparable. Rhetoric about the ends of social change must always correspond with the actual effects of the means that have been chosen to advance these ends. Peace between human communities cannot be achieved through violence, nor can democracy be secured through armed insurrection within a society. Peace, then, cannot be disconnected from justice, and justice entails an absence of oppression, whether perpetrated indirectly by inequitable structures and institutions or directly through use of weapons. In other words, peace entails an absence of violence, broadly conceived as avoidable insult to human needs (and, we might add, to the balance of nature). Genuine peace can only be attained through peaceful (and therefore just and nonviolent) means of action-actions

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8. [https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Report\\_eng.pdf](https://www.fidh.org/IMG/pdf/Report_eng.pdf) (Human Rights-Violation and Remedies under Constitutional law of Bangladesh, page 194, HR Law, BBC By Justice A M Mahmudur Rahman).  
9. Ibid.



that seek to undo conditions that degrade human beings and to break cycles of retaliation that cheapen the value of human life.

Irrespective of race, religion, colour or gender such rights being natural are neither earned nor could be denied and are protected by rules of law and being treated as legal rights as distinct from and prior to law to be used as standards for formulation of both national and international law so that the conduct of government and military forces also strictly comply with such standards.

### **Transformation: Peace through the Power of Love**

The final approach to peacemaking investigated in the peace paradigms course is the transformation paradigm, a paradigm that focuses on the centrality of education, cultural change, and spirituality in all genuine attempts to make peace a reality in daily life. Transformation, then, involves the cultivation of a peaceful consciousness and character, together with an affirmative belief system and skills through which the fruits of "internal disarmament" and personal integration may be expressed. Transformation unites doing with being, task with experience. Inner freedom is felt in the midst of action, and sacred ideals are personalized for application by the individual. Peaceful behavior is learned behavior, and each individual is a potential and needed contributor to a culture of peace. Transformation, then, involves the cultivation of a peaceful consciousness and character, together with an affirmative belief system and skills through which the fruits of "internal disarmament" and personal integration may be expressed. Transformation unites doing with being, task with experience. Inner freedom is felt in the midst of action, and sacred ideals are personalized for application by the individual. Peaceful behavior is learned behavior, and each individual is a potential and needed contributor to a culture of peace.

By exploring each paradigm, we learn to more actively wrestle with our assumptions and evaluate claims in the light of our full range of experiences. We exercise both our reasoning faculties and our intuitive sense of

what is "right," "real," and "true." In such a manner, we make peace a more integral aspect of our lives, and become more aware of the homes we have built for our moral imaginations. We prepare to lay the foundation for our own unique and original peace paradigm--a structure built of precepts and practices of our own choosing. Instances of human rights violations are legion and they do not paint a picture of a world in which human rights are respected. A cursory glance is sufficient highlight the abuses sustained by for example women, children, refugees and prisoners as reported in 2001, some 3, 00,000 children under the age of 18 years were thought to be fighting in conflicts round the world. 14 million children were refugees or internally displaced within their own countries as a result of conflicts—UNICEF estimated that some 12 million children under the age of five die every year from preventable disease; some 10.3 million young people between the age of 15 and 24 years had have AIDS or were HIV infected, there were 5,00,000 to 8,00,000 orphans in South Africa alone through aid and it was estimated that that figure would have risen. According to the same sources, it was also reported that one hundred and thirty million children were still not receiving education, some 900 million people, that is one sixth of the world's population over the age of 15 were illiterate, 60 million girl children were not alive because they were of the female gender, some 90 percent of girl children in certain communities in Asia were sold into prostitution and the number for boys is also increasing, children are deliberately maimed because a cripple child beggar is more appealing.

Unfortunately, the above scenario of human rights violations around the world has remained unchanged. Moreover, the numbers of victims and areas of human rights violations is increasing day by day in an alarming manner. Although, the world is witnessing so-called developments of many fortunate in the context of educational facilities, art and literature, astronomical, scientific and technological knowledge, discoveries, inventions, industrializations, multilateral ways of communications, access to information and even in so many types of

adventures such as conquering the Moon, the Mars and other celestial bodies in the sky one after another, but even after the first fifty years celebration of the founding of the United Nations Organization and the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in the beginning of the Third Millennium and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, because of the random violations of human rights in a very rubbish manner and because of continuous race of conflicts, armament and war around the world, 'peace', the dreamed touchstone of humankind and the fundamental prerequisite for ultimate progress and development in the world, has made its appearance unavailable.

Human person being the central subject of peace and development and all human beings having the responsibility for establishing peace and achieving development individually and collectively, taking into account the need for full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms to practice tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, human community needs to concentrate all out efforts that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and all individuals on the basis of the benefits resulting there from.

In this Regards, the world people need to raise a single voice against any activity of unworthy conflict, terrorism and war and in favor of universal peace and development, and that voice is absolutely a single voice of millions and millions of people around the world with a single vision and mission of achieving ultimate peace and development of the world people as a whole. Therefore, to confirm continuous peace and development worldwide it is imperative to make the world terrorism and war free at the earliest.

The matters always concerned in keeping the world terrorism and war free and to confirm continuous peace and development worldwide having been crying human needs are the issues of 'life, food, dress, shelter, education, religion, culture, health, environment, employment, marriage and choice of spouse, security, freedom, democracy, good governance, equality and justice etc. which give birth to various rights of every individual irrespective of gender, religion, race, color,

language, caste, place of birth, political or other opinion, national or social which deserve remedial measures and protection of law for peace and equal development of all. But in the present day world as no individual and no country exists in isolation and as all we live simultaneously in our own communities and in the world at large we all are very much connected and interdependent and therefore human rights being universally inherent, inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family which the states and their public authorities are to ensure for the people, need global treatment across the planet'.

The denial of human rights is not only an individual and personal tragedy, it also creates conditions of social and political unrest sowing the seeds of violence and conflict within and between societies and nations and as such as a result of work of government, non-government, national, regional and international organizations around the globe human rights transcend national boundaries and jurisdiction and thereby go beyond the jurisdiction of a particular nation's public law.

The charter of United Nations imposes clear, compelling, legal obligations on all member-nations/states to promote economic and social development and human rights through collective and individual efforts. The human rights groups throughout the world are performing commendable tasks drawing attention to violation of human rights and taking steps to implement these rights, protecting one against person, repressive society and polluted environment, and above all, man-made bad laws. But what is needed is action derived from collective wisdom if we are to bequeath a happy peaceful and developed world. To attain the goal, equal protection of law, equal and reasonable opportunities for everybody to avail the course of law to improve our quality of life is a must.

A successful investigation to find out proper guidance for protection and promotion of human rights for peace and development in the world is an international human need.

### **Peace Education**

Peace education in UNICEF refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills,

attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully that are occurring in neighborhood countries like India and Pakistan, Iran and Iraq etc; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. Peace education represents a convergence of ideas that have been developed through the practical experiences of UNICEF peace education programmes in developing countries. It is UNICEF's position that peace education has a place in all societies – not only in countries undergoing armed conflict or emergencies. Because lasting behavior change in children and adults only occurs over time, effective peace education is necessarily a long-term process, not a short-term intervention. While often based in schools and other learning environments, peace education should ideally involve the entire community<sup>10</sup>

### **Human Rights and Peace Education and Teaching**

The Teaching of Human Rights: Education is one of the primary human rights. It is the one which largely conditions in a very substantial manner over the other rights. Article 26 of the UDHR relates to education, article 21 A of Indian constitution education and teaching should be based on the principles which underline the UN Charter, the UDHR, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other international human rights instrument equal emphasis should be placed on Economic, Social, Cultural, Civil and Political rights as well as individual and collective rights. The indivisibility of all human rights should be recognized. The teaching of Human rights and duties should be compulsory from primary to secondary and at higher levels.

### **Need for Human Right Education and Peace Education<sup>11</sup>**

It is the human right education which may rise awareness about the Human Rights, protects

from any sort of discrimination, unfair treatment and provide democratic structure, values as well as individuals freedom:

1. It contributes towards the development of global and wide perspectives, insights into the idea of international wide perspectives, insights into the idea of international society and community.
2. It helps to Make all Human beings, Human rights –literature and Peace literature
3. It ensures essential respect for Human Rights in a democratic and multicultural society where tolerance and patience are inevitable for all.
4. It protects from infringement of rights of racial, ethnic and religious groups in any country or area through inculcation of global awareness and mutual understanding among the citizens.
5. It ensures the probability of acceptance of global citizenship in all regions of the world to protect humanity based culture and democratic responsibilities.
6. It is possible to remove the fear of war in future through eradication of Human Rights abuses, social injustice human a selfishness and self orientedness.

### **Different Goals of Human Right Education**

According to different documents, Human Rights aims to promote a culture of civil, political, economic, social and cultural and collective development of rights, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international conventions, and to strengthen the values of democracy and citizenship and the same is possible through the means of Human Rights Education. Coordination of the implementation of the international Plan of Action for the Decade throughout the United Nations system was entrusted to the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Plan of Action has five objectives:

- Assessing needs and formulating strategies
- Building and strengthening Human Rights Education programmes at

10. [http://demo.sytion.com/sites/default/files/peaceeducation\\_78.pdf](http://demo.sytion.com/sites/default/files/peaceeducation_78.pdf)

11. Naseema C, Human Rights Education : Conceptual and Pedagogical Aspects (Delhi: Kanisha Publishers), 2003.

international, regional, national and local level

- Developing and coordinating the development of Human Rights Education materials
- Strengthening the role of the mass media
- Promoting the global dissemination of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>12</sup>.

Education teaches both about Human Rights and for human rights. Prime goal of HRE is to help people understand human rights, value human rights, and take responsibility for respecting, defending, and promoting human rights. Education about human rights provides people with information about human rights.

Not only teaching but Learning is also a part of Human Rights Education, It includes learning about the inherent dignity of all people and their right to be treated with respect about Human Rights principles, such as the universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of Human Rights. It tells about How Human Rights promote participation in decision making and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Different articles of Universal Declaration of Human Rights that describes the importance of Human Right Education strengthening the respect for Human Rights and fundamental freedoms (UDHR Article 30.2), it also nurturing respect for others, self-esteem, and hope for better understanding the nature of human dignity and respecting the dignity of others empathizing with those whose rights are violated and feeling a sense of solidarity with them recognizing that the enjoyment of Human Rights by all citizens is a precondition to a just and humane society perceiving the human rights dimension of civil, social, political, economic, and cultural issues and conflicts both in the so many countries valuing non-violence and believing that cooperation is better than conflict. Education for human rights also gives people a sense of responsibility for respecting and defending Human Rights and empowers them through skills to take appropriate action.

12. <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HRTreaties2en.pdf>

### **Human Rights Education—who needs it<sup>13</sup>**

Human Rights should be part of everyone's Education. However, certain groups have a particular need for human rights education: some because they are especially vulnerable to human rights abuses, others because they hold official positions and upholding human rights is their responsibility, still others because of their ability to influence and educate. Some of the groups are as following:

Administrators of Justice:

- law enforcement personnel, including police and security forces
- prison officials
- lawyers, judges, and prosecutors

Other Government and Legislative Officials:

- members of the legislature
- public officials, elected and appointed
- members of the military

Other Professionals:

- educators
- social workers
- health professionals
- journalists and media representatives

Organizations, Associations, and Groups

- women's organizations
- community activists and civic leaders
- minority groups
- members of the business community
- trade unionists
- indigenous peoples
- religious leaders and others with a special interest in social justice issues
- children and youth
- students at all levels of education
- refugees and displaced persons
- people of all sexual orientations
- poor people, whether in cities or rural areas

13. Ibid.



- people with disabilities
- migrant workers<sup>14</sup>

Further, there are different approaches to contemporary human rights education practice: the Values and Awareness Model, the Accountability Model and the Transformational Model. Each model is associated with particular target groups, contents and strategies. The models, approaches are helpful to understand to theory development and research in what might be considered an emerging educational field. Human Rights Education can be further strengthened through the appropriate use of learning theory, as well as through the setting of standards for trainer preparation and program content, and through evaluating the impact of programs in terms of reaching learner goals (knowledge, values and skills) and contributing to social change in the society.

#### **Status of Human Rights And Peace Education**

To consider and report on the different ways and means for promoting HRE in India, University Grants Commission appointed Sikri committee in 1980. At school level, the committee suggested inculcating values without marks weight age. At college level it was felt that all disciplines should be including human rights topics at least which are directly relevant to their disciplines. Now HRE is a part of many university programmes. Interestingly certificates, diplomas, post graduate diploma and even master's programmes in HR are available today. At the undergraduate level, human rights education is generally conducted as international law and Indian constitutional law (fundamental rights).

In India there is great problem that till date, this subject comes under the conventional subjects. In political science departments, HRE is still a limited part of the course on the constitutional and political development of India (fundamental rights) and international politics (United Nations). In some universities HRE is a part of sociology, Economics, and Modern Indian History. At the masters level specialized HRE is given in some departments

of law as an optional course. Very few universities offers a master of laws (LL.M.) degree exclusively in Human Rights law. In political science departments, human rights are taught as part of one or two courses only.

#### **Ambiguities And Challenges**

HRE (Human Right Education) and peace education poses numerous challenges for educators, policy-makers and community leaders.<sup>15</sup> A first set of challenges relates to the different kinds of learning that can take place: HRE programmes must be target-based to address the specific age group and desired learning outcome. Therefore, teaching methods and pedagogical materials must be similarly adapted. For example, a lesson on the concept of liberty would be conducted much differently in a group of five-year olds than in a group of high school students. A different set of challenges concerns the possibility for various interpretations of Human Rights. Although one of the underlying features of human rights principles is the idea of universality, the notion of selective interpretation negates this. Political communities, states, and institutions can interpret the idea of human rights to suit their particular aims or needs. While it is necessary to achieve a harmony between the different groups of rights, that is, between political and civil rights and social and economic rights, this is often not the case. Depending upon the conditions of a particular country, it can be very easy to deny one group of rights in favor of another group of rights in order to achieve certain political goals or garner support among certain segments of the population. But the links between these groups of rights are clear. Civil and political rights ensure that the marginalized and disadvantaged segments of the population have access to what are considered basic human needs (food, shelter, fresh water, etc.). These same rights also ensure that social and economic rights are guaranteed for all. If this harmony becomes unbalanced and some rights are denied in favor of others, it could have a devastating impact on society as a whole. Human rights principles support the notion that our inherent rights and social order cannot be contradictory

14. <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-2/HRE-intro.htm>

15. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001870/187009e.pdf>

to the values and ideals upheld by these principles and must be reaffirmed through the actions of governments. These principles must be applied equally among all segments of the population with no discrimination of gender, religion, wealth, etc. This is a challenge that states need to address if they want to ensure the successful implementation and sustainable impact of HRE and peace and conflict resolution programmes. Responsibilities, both personal and professional, are a duty of every Human being. However in order for respect for human rights to exist throughout society, it is important that all, including those in a position of power, exercise respect for human rights principles.

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