



Outcome document of the Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education: An Emerging Perspective

This document draws on inputs to, and common perspectives emerging from, a Technical Consultation on Global Citizenship Education organized by UNESCO and the Republic of Korea (i.e., the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education, and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding) in Seoul on 9-10 September 2013¹. Informing this draft document are: a) responses from the expert participants to a questionnaire circulated by UNESCO in advance of the consultation; b) presentations from experts during the consultation; c) discussions during the consultation; and d) reference material contributing to, and prepared for, the consultation.² The final draft of this document was prepared by UNESCO's Division of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development at Headquarters in Paris, with the assistance of a drafting team. Inquiries on UNESCO's work on global citizenship education can be addressed to: gce@unesco.org

The document intends to present common perspectives emerging from the consultation on the following questions:

- (1) Why global citizenship and global citizenship education now?*
- (2) What is global citizenship education?*
- (3) What needs to be done at the global level to support and promote global citizenship education?*

1. WHY GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION NOW?

1.1. Shifts in education discourse:

- 1.1.1. Education in a globalized world is increasingly putting emphasis on the importance of values, attitudes and communication skills as a critical complement to cognitive knowledge and skills. The education community is also paying increasing attention to the relevance of education in understanding and resolving social, political, cultural and global issues. This includes the role of education in supporting peace, human rights, equity, acceptance of diversity, and sustainable development.

¹ http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/online-materials/single-view/news/unescos_seoul_consultation_deepens_understanding_of_global_citizenship_education/#.UjxKSX-bFng.

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- 1.1.2. The Global Education First Initiative (GEFI), launched in 2012 by the UN Secretary-General, includes global citizenship education as one of its three priorities. Within UNESCO, education for peace and sustainable development is being proposed to be the overarching goal of its education programme for the next 8 years, with empowered global citizens as an objective. Work is underway through the Learning Metrics Task Force to define what is required to support young people become “citizens of the world,” including learning outcomes and competencies.
- 1.1.3. There is a clear opportunity to include reference to global citizenship education in the post-2015 development agenda as part of the knowledge, skills and competencies that learners require in the 21st Century and beyond.

1.2. Increasing interdependence and interconnectedness of people and places:

- 1.2.1. Phenomenal advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have enabled people to connect and interact with others around the globe anywhere, anytime. This has contributed to an intensified perception and reality of being inter-connected and living beyond local perimeters, albeit virtually.
- 1.2.2. People have become also more interdependent. Participation in sub-regional, regional and international governance bodies and structures of all sectors, including private enterprises and civil societies, has created new stakeholders that reach beyond national borders. They are required to think and act globally and locally at the same time.
- 1.2.3. Increased transnational migration is making communities inevitably more heterogeneous or “*glocalized*,”³ and the necessity of learning how to live together more acute. The expansion of democracy globally has led to an accompanying demand for civic and other rights at the national level by citizens. In addition, various social movements taking place in different parts of the world have demonstrated the collective power of citizen action.

1.3. Ongoing global challenges:

- 1.3.1. Tensions and conflicts among populations which have causes and impacts beyond national boundaries continue. Challenges such as sustainable development, including climate change, are demonstrating the need for cooperation and collaboration beyond land, air, and water boundaries. Continuing global challenges call for collective actions at the global level as well as at the local level.

³ “Glocalisation is a portmanteau of *globalization* and *localization*.” See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glocalisation>

2. WHAT IS GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION?

2.1. Global citizenship:

- 2.1.1. The definition of citizenship itself is contested, and a widely agreed definition of global citizenship is yet to be developed. Some have called global citizenship 'citizenship beyond borders', or 'citizenship beyond the nation-state'. Others have noted that 'cosmopolitanism,' as a term, may be broader and more inclusive than global citizenship; or still others opt for 'planetary citizenship', focusing on the global community's responsibility to preserve the planet Earth.
- 2.1.2. In all cases, global citizenship does not entail a legal status. It refers more to a sense of belonging to the global community and common humanity, with its presumed members experiencing solidarity and collective identity among themselves and collective responsibility at the global level. Global citizenship can be seen as an ethos/metaphor rather than a formal membership.
- 2.1.3. Being a psychosocial framework for collectiveness, global citizenship can, and is expected to, generate actions and engagement among, and for, its members through civic actions in the public domain to promote a better world and future. And it is, necessarily, based on and respects the universal values of human rights, democracy, justice, non-discrimination, diversity and sustainability, among others.

2.2. Global citizenship education:

- 2.2.1. **Goal:** Global citizenship education aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles both locally and globally to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable world.
- 2.2.2. Global citizenship education is transformative, giving learners the opportunity and competencies to realise their rights and obligations to promote a better world and future. It draws upon learning from other transformative education processes including human rights education, education for sustainable development, education for inter-national / inter-cultural understanding, and education for peace.
- 2.2.3. **Delivery:** Global citizenship education is built on a lifelong learning perspective. It is not only for children and youth but also for adults. It can be delivered in all modes and venues of delivery, including formal, non-formal and informal education.
- 2.2.4. The formal system, in most countries, could be the main mode of delivery for global citizenship education. It needs, however, to be complemented by the non-formal and informal systems. In these systems, flexible and variable pedagogical approaches may be more useful in targeting populations outside the formal system and those who are likely to engage with new information and communication technologies (e.g., social media).

- 2.2.5. Global citizenship education can be delivered as an integral part of an existing subject (e.g., civics or citizenship education, social studies, social/environmental studies, health education, etc.) or as an independent subject area. The former, mainstreaming, approach is commonplace.
- 2.2.6. **Competencies:** Core competencies of global citizenship education include: (1) knowledge and understanding of specific global issues and trends, and knowledge of and respect for key universal values (e.g., peace and human rights, diversity, justice, democracy, caring, non-discrimination, tolerance); (2) cognitive skills for critical, creative and innovative thinking, problem-solving and decision-making; (3) non-cognitive skills such as empathy, openness to experiences and other perspectives, interpersonal/communicative skills and aptitude for networking and interacting with people of different backgrounds and origins; and (4) behavioural capacities to launch and engage in proactive actions.
- 2.2.7. **Enabling/facilitating conditions:** A political, societal, cultural or religious climate that is open to universal values (e.g., human rights and peace) is crucial for the promotion of the goals of global citizenship education. Effective implementation requires policy support and pedagogical guidance. The learning environment should promote links to communities (both local and global), and links for learners to real-life experiences (e.g., community-based humanitarian activities, student foreign exchange programmes, foreign language, area/regional studies) as alternative or complementary paths of learning.
- 2.2.8. It is important to reach learners early, in their formative early childhood stages of development. Young people play a particularly important role in global citizenship education. They can be catalysts and demand-creators, educators/trainers and inform programme design, delivery and evaluation. They must be regarded as an important stakeholder of global citizenship education.
- 2.2.9. **Tensions:** There are tensions within global citizenship education, which are not irreconcilable but merit some attention. Varying in form, they all point to the question of how to promote universality (e.g., common and collective identity, interest, participation, duty), while respecting particularity (e.g., individual rights, self-cultivation).
- 2.2.10. One tension pertinent to global citizenship education is whether global citizenship education should promote global community outcomes or outcomes for individual learners. The former position highlights what global citizenship education can contribute to the world, while the latter focuses on what the area can do for individual learners as per their acquisition of “21st Century skills.” Some educators maintain that these two goals can and ought to be seen as compatible.
- 2.2.11. The debate also relates, in part, to the question of how to promote, simultaneously, global solidarity and individual national competitiveness or how to bring together local and global identities and interests. In countries where identity is a sensitive issue and solidifying the

national identity itself is a challenge, room for promoting a sense of citizenship at the global level could be limited, although this does not necessarily belie a lessened desire of the individual members of these societies to connect and interact globally. Similarly, citizens showing concerns about, and taking actions for, the communal benefits of the globe, could be believed to cause challenges to local/national authorities if their actions are perceived to be in conflict with local/national interests.

- 2.2.12. Research and dialogue could facilitate the reconciliation of local and global identities and interests. Furthermore, under the perspective of diversity, these tensions can also be seen to have a value. The notion of 'de-centering' is also an approach to these questions. Emphasising the gradual process to de-center learners from their local realities and connect them to, and provide them with, a vision of other realities and possibilities, the concept views *local vs. global* on a continuum, closing the dissected gap between the two.

3. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

3.1 Country-level implementation:

- 3.1.1. Reflecting the goal of global citizenship education in countries' curricula is one of the most urgent tasks. This involves the translation of globally accepted concepts into local contexts. A guiding framework on global citizenship education at the global level could help this task. Some indicators or proxies that capture the competencies required for global citizenship education will also be of use for monitoring/assessing the processes and outcomes of learning.
- 3.1.2. Transformative education requires transformative pedagogy that: 1) encourages learners to analyse real-life issues critically and to identify possible solutions creatively and innovatively; 2) supports learners to critically revisit assumptions, world views and power relations in mainstream discourses and consider people/groups systematically underrepresented/marginalised; 3) respects differences and diversity; 4) focuses on engagement in action to bring about desired changes; and 5) involves multiple stakeholders, including those outside the learning environment in the community and in the larger circle of the society. Education managers and educators need additional training and support to implement/deliver such pedagogy.
- 3.1.3. There is a need to support youth-led initiatives. Partnerships with civil society are also needed. Utilisation of new ICTs is critical. New approaches may meet with reservation and/or resistance. An emerging perspective on global citizenship education, however, maintains the need for stakeholders and actors to be open to different, but effective venues and solutions.

3.2 Sharing of knowledge and experiences:

- 3.2.1. In many ways, practice is farther ahead than conceptual clarity and broader sharing of information and experiences at regional and global levels, including evaluations, would be of

value. A forum where concerned stakeholders, including young people and adults, could come together and address and debate related issues would also be of use.

- 3.2.2. Global citizenship education must reflect the voices of diverse stakeholders from different regions, sectors and populations. A network of stakeholders, who could meet for periodic discussions, can help continually renew interests and reconstruct the objectives of global citizenship education. A strong network and expertise must be made available at all levels – global, regional, national and community levels, via all means of communication and interaction.
- 3.2.3. The effort to create, if necessary, a new process or mechanism of networking and partnership should build on existing ones.
- 3.2.4. To address the tensions, research and dialogue would be needed. More country-level examples of global citizenship education reconciling the tensions would also be of value.