

HRE News

Issue 9

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Racing for Human Rights

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In April AI France held an exciting HRE weekend workshop for their members at the section office in Paris. The workshop was attended by over 60 people who came from AI groups around the country. The weekend activities included a combination of speakers and workshops.

Workshop topics included: using images in HRE; interactive methodology; the rights of refugees; freedom of expression; child labour; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; working with the judicial system; difficult questions about torture and the death penalty; using stories for children.

Jenny Luck, International HRE Coordinator, attended and as a result of this very successful weekend the HRE Team invited the AI France HRE Committee to write the article on page 8 about their work.

continued on page 8

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AI France is collaborating with Thierry Dubois, the famous skipper of the yacht Solidaire. He participated in a round-the-world single-handed race 'Vendée Globe' with the aim of mobilizing young people to become involved in human rights. He believes the sea creates an image of freedom and that combining this with a sporting event will inspire people and gain media attention.

The AI group from the Loire Océan region initiated this collaboration in 1996 and AI France became involved during the 'Vendée Globe 2000'. Since then at least 20,000 young people have joined in the activities. AI developed a dossier on the human rights situation in each country that the race visited and went past.

The number of dossiers increased during the 2002 race as it passed many more countries. Since then AI appeal cases for young people in different countries have been added to the dossiers for discussion and to engage young people in action. These are distributed to the AI sections and structures in all the countries en route to involve young people in the race and the issues. The aim is for young people to participate in actions and exchanges, setting up networks and twinning between schools in different countries.

[photo caption]

Thierry Dubois' boat Solidaire with sails made from a children's drawing competition. © AI France

[end caption]

The next race, starting in September, will be the final one with children's rights as its theme. The race starts in Newport (USA) and passes through Cape Town (South Africa), Auckland (New Zealand), Salvador de Bahia (Brazil), Torbay (UK) and returns to Newport (USA). Forty single-handed sailing boats will participate with various sponsorships. Solidaire will be promoting AI and children's rights.

Leading up to the race, painting and drawing competitions are being held in primary and secondary schools all over France. The schools can invite AI to assist teachers to organize activities around the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and explain the competition and the race. Each painting must reflect one of the rights from the Convention and will be judged by Thierry and a special panel. The panel will judge the entries on simplicity, symbolism and the effectiveness of the message.

The secondary schools' winner will have their drawing made into sails for the yacht and the primary schools' winning drawing will decorate the cabin of the yacht.

In each country where the boat stops there will be further competitions and an itinerary for Thierry to meet young people and discuss the theme. Children in France and other stopover countries are also being encouraged to give Thierry human rights messages to pass to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

Page 2-3

Developing an HRE program for the formal education sector - a paper for discussion

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Integrating human rights into the formal education system is a major component of most AI HRE programs. This article is taken from a presentation given at an HRE International Experts Meeting in May, organized by the Center for Applied Policy Research in Munich, Germany.

The presentation was given by Barbara Weber who is the HRE Coordinator at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights in Vienna, Austria and a member and former HRE Coordinator with AI Austria.

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Introduction

It is interesting to reflect on the type of school where the human rights principles of equality, justice, solidarity, human dignity and responsibility are truly implemented. What would it

look like – how would we describe the building and the people who teach, learn and work there?

This vision of a school dedicated to human rights principles is an inspiring starting point for developing a human rights education program. It provides the opportunity to ask and identify exactly where there is a possibility to influence the school system to bring human rights not just into the curriculum but into the daily agenda of the school.

This paper discusses the different possibilities for integrating HRs into a school and examines their advantages and disadvantages. HRE strategies can be targeted at the formal or informal level. Formal approaches are through the curriculum, text books and teacher training. Informal ways are supplying teachers with manuals, conducting workshops for teachers or pupils and supporting teachers' activities. A combination of both ways can develop a sustainable human rights education strategy for schools.

School curriculum

There are basically three ways of including human rights education in the school curriculum:

1. A separate subject for human rights
2. A part of the curriculum in specific subjects
3. A part of all subjects.

The selected option or options will depend on the specific situation of the education system in a country and the possibilities for influencing it. Each way has advantages and disadvantages and do not necessarily exclude each other.

Integrating HRE on a formal, legal basis makes it much easier to demand resources for putting it into practice. If it is part of the curriculum it will be taken more seriously and will not only be left to a few dedicated teachers.

[photo caption]

Human rights day at school with AI Pakistan. © AI

[end caption]

These dedicated teachers are often criticized by colleagues, the school's leadership or parents with remarks such as “the school is not a playground”, “children should learn something useful instead”, “students learning about their own rights will only provoke unrest and trouble at school”. A legal basis supports teachers who are integrating human rights into their lessons.

The way in which HRE is formally implemented has an important impact on the quality of human rights education at school.

Human rights education material

Text books

In many countries text books are the hidden curriculum. The majority of teachers rely on them when pre-paring their lessons and so it is important to get human rights included.

If there is a commission in the country that licenses school text books, they can be lobbied to include human rights issues. Often authors of school books are not aware of human rights and can be persuaded to include them.

Other material for human rights education

A growing number of NGOs are now developing HRE materials. They can be used as a supplement to official school books because they are not so restricted in the content that they select.

[photo caption]

Children take part in a painting competition with AI Bangladesh to campaign against the torture of children. © AI

[end caption]

An effective HRE program includes activities that involve students and help them develop skills and change attitudes as well as providing theoretical information about human rights. It is useful if the material is suitable for different school types and ages so that the activities can be easily adapted by teachers. The more practice-oriented the material (for example, master copies for handouts or OHP transparencies) the more likely it is to be used.

[photo caption]

School children in Nepal taking action against torture as part of HRE. © AI

[end caption]

Teacher training

In order to reach all teachers, HRE should be included as part of their curriculum and taught by the normal teacher trainers. This will convince trainees that what they are learning can be put into practice in the classroom. This is important because HRE methodology is often different from the usual way they are taught to teach.

Informal seminars and workshops conducted by NGOs or other institutions can be a good supplement to this. NGOs can talk about the experience of their work and bring new perspectives into teachers' training. It can be a valuable support for teachers and open the possibility for engaged people to get together and network with like-minded colleagues.

Unfortunately, if this is the only type of HRE training available for teachers, there is the chance that it only reaches those already interested in the subject. Often the enthusiasm produced by a good seminar is difficult to keep up in the reality of the classroom, although follow-up programs can help maintain the momentum.

Workshops with pupils

Many NGOs offer workshops and seminars for pupils. Meeting human rights defenders or victims of human rights violations during a human rights project in school can be an amazing experience for young people. NGOs and IGOs are a useful resource for accessing such people, but resources are always a problem.

In summary

The school plays a crucial role in developing an understanding of the importance of human rights and the skills needed to protect them. This should be done by formalizing the teaching of human rights and by creating an environment within the school where these rights are respected and implemented.

Putting a human rights education program into practice in a school can be a frustrating experience because expectations are often very high and programs lasting only a

few weeks are insufficient to change a system that has grown over decades. However, the effort is worthwhile as it provides an important opportunity to give young people the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills to make a real difference to human rights in the long term.

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1. HRE as a separate subject

Benefits

- Sufficient time for the subject can be given to ensure that skills, knowledge and change of attitude can be incorporated. These factors are often not taken into account when human rights is included with other subjects.
- Teachers, organizations, and institutions are in a better position to ask for more resources from official sources.
- HRE has a higher status in the country because some kind of human rights education training has to be provided if it is a specific subject.

Disadvantages

- Teachers might not think it necessary to include human rights in other lessons because there is a special subject for it.
- If the subject is optional it will lower the status of HRE in the country, in which case many students may not receive any education on human rights.
- An optional subject is more vulnerable to being abolished for economic or political reasons.

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2. HRE as part of the curriculum in specific subjects

Benefit

- Human rights issues are an important part of many subjects – for example, history, geography, civic or religious education – and so can easily be incorporated into the curriculum.

Disadvantage

- Human rights are only taught through content leaving out the fundamental principles of human rights and factors such as values, attitudes and skills.

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3. HRE as a part of all subjects

Benefits

- If taken seriously, all teachers would be trained in HRE methodology and human rights would be included in the text books for all subjects .
- Many national school systems already have underlying educational principles, such as intercultural learning, democracy and gender equality, which have to be included in all subjects. Human rights could become one such principle.
- If there was a general policy to include human rights in all subjects, students would come to see it as part of their daily life.

Disadvantages

- It is difficult to meet this requirement and to ensure that teachers take the responsibility of implementing it.
- It needs a lot of resources which are always difficult to obtain.

[end box]

Rights – Education – Action Program

Written by Vibeke Eikås, REAP Program Coordinator, AI Norway and the IS HRE Team.

[photo caption]

Vibeke Eikås, the REAP AI Norway Program Coordinator, talking with children at a child labour school in rural Morocco. © AI

[end caption]

[box]

India

A six-month project reflects the needs and current issues facing AI India and aims to raise the level of awareness about human rights in the states where membership is growing. The activities will identify a core group of activists within AI who will be trained to conduct HRE programs at the grass roots level for existing members and other potential HR activists. The project is in two stages – the first stage began in March with a series of workshops for members to identify potential HRE activists and develop a common understanding about the human rights movement in India. The second stage of the project will train the identified activists to be able to conduct HRE programs at the community level.

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Background

The Rights-Education-Action Program (REAP) is an AI HRE program that will be implemented over a 10-year period. Beginning in 2000, it followed on from the 1991 Teaching For Freedom (TFF) program. REAP is administered by AI Norway with funds from the Norwegian 1999 National Broadcasting Telethon (NRK).

The TFF evaluation identified that the project played a major role in promoting and supporting HRE within AI sections and structures. It was also a learning experience in HRE programs administration. These lessons provided the basis for developing the procedures for implementing REAP.

REAP in action

The program aims to:

- contribute to the fulfilment of AI's long term HRE strategy;
- address clearly defined local needs and human rights issues at the country level;
- work with multipliers from specific target groups. For example, teachers who can work with children.

The first few years of the program have supported projects in AI's former high priority countries for development but this will change in the second half of the project.

Sections and structures are encouraged to:

- plan the project strategically and ensure that it is integrated into their general strategy;
- develop a national HRE strategy or identify the potential for HRE work;
- include HRE capacity building.

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Morocco

A three-year project was approved by REAP this year following a project planning workshop. It started in July with the first stage of a seven-day “train the trainers” program conducted by the IS HRE Team. The project builds on previous HRE programs and targets NGOs working on the rights of women, law enforcement agencies and teachers. AI Morocco has an active HRE committee who will all participate in the project which covers three regions of the country. In between the first and second stages of “training the trainers” the committee will carry out a needs analysis of the target groups which they will use to plan workshops and develop materials in the second stage of the course.

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[photo caption]

AI South Africa’s HRE Committee and Board members relaxing after a workshop that began the process of developing an HRE strategy. © AI

[end caption]

Program coordination

An AI International Steering Group, with members from AI Norway, the International Executive Committee and the International Secretariat, is responsible for the major decisions relating to the program. AI Norway is responsible for coordination and administration and has appointed a Program Coordinator. The HRE Team at the IS provides advice on HRE and assistance with capacity building, working closely with the REAP Program Coordinator.

Project planning

There is extensive consultation between the Program Coordinator, the HRE Team and the section or structure which includes meetings, workshops and ongoing discussions. A recommendation is then made to the Steering Group which decides whether to invite the section or structure to prepare an application.

Additional assistance such as a planning workshop can be conducted by the HRE Team and Program Coordinator. These three or four day participatory workshops are facilitated in a way that ensures the needs and ideas of each section or structure are incorporated into the criteria established by REAP.

Planning workshops have been conducted with AI Morocco and Poland and are now available as a generic tool for planning HRE projects.

In conclusion

AI Mexico, Morocco, India and Poland are now implementing their projects and AI South Africa and Thailand are in the preparatory phases.

REAP is an exciting concept and plays a significant role in providing AI with the opportunity to continue to be a major player within the arena of human rights education.

REAP is unique because it allows AI to plan strategically, build capacity in HRE and develop good cooperation with relevant local NGOs. It also ensures that AI is not duplicating the work done by other NGOs but is developing an HRE niche for itself within a country.

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Poland

A project planning workshop identified teachers, scout groups and selected journalists as the target groups. These groups were chosen because they were accessible to AI Poland, could have an impact on AI's work and were an extension of the current HRE program. The HRE network identified their own need for HRE capacity building in the first phase of the project followed by time to engage with the target groups, identify needs and develop programs. They selected the common theme of "Tolerance" for all the target groups because discrimination in society against people from minority groups is a significant human rights problem in Poland.

[photo caption]

AI Poland with their project time-line at the end of the planning workshop. © AI

[end caption]

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Mexico

A three-year project started in 2001. At present it is implemented in three states by a team of five educators experienced in popular education who come from AI and other NGOs. The target group for the project is grass roots community leaders. In the initial stage the team of educators make contact with the identified communities and through participatory exchanges and discussion develop a program that meets the human rights needs of that community. In one state the educators work directly with the leaders but in the other two states the educators work through local NGOs who are then responsible for working with the leaders.

[photo caption]

Members of AI Mexico listening to a discussion on HRE in the local community in Mexico.
© AI

[end caption]

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HRE motivates the membership in Burkina Faso

The context

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world. Many development NGOs are working there on areas as diverse as health, education, women's issues, environment and water. There are also NGOs such as AI Burkina Faso working specifically on human rights. Over the last few years, thanks to the concerted efforts of these NGOs, there has been a growing awareness and mobilization of the public against grave violations of human rights.

In a recent welcome development, the government of Burkina Faso has created a Ministry for the Promotion of Human Rights. This positive change brings with it major opportunities for AI Burkina Faso in its human rights awareness raising and educational work. In particular it brings opportunities to work towards their goal of integrating human rights in all levels of the curriculum in the country. It is encouraging that the Minister has expressed her willingness to collaborate with human rights NGOs, including AI, in order to further the promotion of human rights in the country.

[photo caption]

Workshop activities on the rights of the disabled with NGO members, July 2002. © AI Burkina Faso

[end caption]

AI Burkina Faso's HRE activities

AI Burkina Faso was created in 1995 and now has around 100 active members organized into eight groups, including a women's group, a youth group and an HRE school club. Human rights education is a priority. A capacity building workshop was organized by the IS HRE Team and the Africa Development Team in October 2001 for members of AI Burkina Faso, AI Benin and AI Mali. The workshop focused on themes such as the introduction of human rights into the school curriculum and the importance of creating an environment in the school which respects human rights. Sessions were held on the use of theatre as a technique for HRE with presentations by leading theatre professionals from Burkina Faso. There were activities and discussions on the incorporation of women's rights into HRE work using the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. AI Burkina Faso obtained excellent media coverage for this workshop on the television news and in several national newspapers. A successful reception was held for members of local NGOs and was attended by a representative of the Ministry.

[photo caption]

Yves Boukari Traore, HRE Coordinator of AI Burkina Faso, with the HRE school club. © AI Burkina Faso

[end caption]

A team has been formed within AI Burkina Faso to specialize in HRE work, led by the HRE Coordinator, Yves Boukari Traore. In March 2002 they organized a very successful training workshop for 50 primary school teachers from the capital, Ouagadougou. They provided the teachers with information and skills to introduce human rights into their teaching practices and develop appropriate HRE materials for use in the classroom. In July a second workshop on the rights of the disabled was held for 30 volunteers and NGO members who work in this field.

AI Burkina Faso have created an AI club for schoolchildren which was launched at a ceremony in a local secondary school in January 2002. The children participated with great enthusiasm in activities for International Women's Day on 8 March and again on 1 May in activities on the theme of children's rights in Burkina Faso.

This program of activities is an exciting realization of the enthusiasm and commitment of the AI Burkina Faso members towards creating a culture of human rights in their country.

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New acquisitions in the HRE library

HRE webpage

Launched in April and can be accessed at : www.amnesty.org/hre

Changing perspectives: cultural values, diversity and equality in Ireland and the wider world: a resource for civic, social and political education

Author: Gannon, Mary

Publisher: CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit, 2002

Standard Number: 0946791201

Shelfmark: EUR-29/GAN

A resource for teachers wishing to explore issues of cultural diversity and equality; includes activities for students to reflect on the values and structures of Irish society and Ireland's relationship with the wider world, including Ireland's perceptions of Africa; contains action projects, ideas for evaluation, and resource materials.

- Website: <http://www.curriculum.ie/>

Facing fear: helping young people deal with terrorism and tragic events

Author: American Red Cross

Publisher: American Red Cross, 2001

Standard Number: S943

Shelfmark: G-SC/AME

Provides activities for the classroom for exploring issues around the 11 September attack in New York, includes pictorial images to discuss, summaries of the Geneva Conventions; cards and evaluation forms for teachers and students. The series is aimed at exploring feelings, facts and the future.

The 'Facing Fear' materials, while copyrighted, are available for downloading from the American Red Cross web site at <http://www.redcross.org/> and can be used with children for educational purposes as long as the materials are used as written. Printed version available in USA only.

Locococo

Author: Burr, Margaret

Publisher: London: Humanities Education Centre, 2000

Standard Number: 1873928017

Shelfmark: G-DV/BUR

A board game based on "Monopoly" encouraging young people to see the similarities between their lives and those of young people around the world; kit contains two pamphlets of general information on the game and project, a game board, dice, photos and question cards that can be cut up and photocopied. Aimed at developing children's understanding of their rights, sustainable development and the relationship between the North and South, through the use of email, fax, photos and video; raises issues of inequality and poses questions about who has the power to address these issues; suggests at least one practical way, the purchase of "Fair Trade goods", where young people themselves can take some action.

Developed as part of the "Spanish Voices" project exploring issues of development and rights amongst school children in Guatemala, Spain, Western Sahara and the UK within the framework of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; three-year European Commission funded project coordinated by the Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets, UK. Participants of the project included: Young Photographers of Guatemala; Western Sahara Refugee Camps, Algeria; Institute for Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, Spain; Humanities Education Centre, UK.

- A Spanish version of the game is held in the HRE library. Website <http://www.locococo.org/>

Tolerance: basis for democratic interaction

Author: Feldmann, Eva
 Publisher: Gutersloh (Germany): Bertelsmann, 2000
 Standard Number: 3892044449
 Shelfmark: G-RA/FEL

Explores the phenomena, causes and promotion of tolerance especially as a method for non-violent settlement of conflicts; looks at the consequence of achieving competence in tolerance using various strategies; examines types of intolerance including discrimination against vulnerable groups, limits of tolerance, and options available for combating conflicts.

- Website: <http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/publisher.cfm?lan=en&nId=60#1247>

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AI France and Human Rights Education

Introduction

HRE is an important part of the work of AI France with many groups and individual members throughout the country involved in HRE in their local communities.

A committee of 10 members was recently established to bring together and provide a focal point for staff, volunteers, groups and networks who are already involved or interested in HRE. The committee facilitates the exchange of information and materials and produces a regular newsletter. It works on the development and sharing of tools and activities and ensures that HRE work is integrated into the Section's work.

Most HRE activities carried out by the Section are within the formal education system but some activists also work in leisure centres, with rural families, and popular education associations. The future challenge is to expand HRE work with young people.

HRE in the school curriculum

Civic education programs have been included in schools, from nursery to pre-university level, since 1999 and became compulsory in 2001 when civic, legal and social education was introduced to the pre-university program. Human rights is now a significant component of the final exams in secondary education. At university level, the study of human rights is optional.

Civic education manuals are drafted by teachers, university human rights specialists and educators from all levels of the system. HRE is usually taught within history and philosophy subjects but is often not given priority.

Libraries and documentation centres are important in the implementation of civic education. Librarians play an important role in ensuring that information on human rights is available for children. Teachers working in documentation centres help develop activities for use in lessons. There are still many schools without documentation centres but the number is increasing as teachers see the value of using the materials appropriately.

In Teacher Training Institutes, which are autonomous establishments, introduction of human rights is left to the discretion of the principal. Unfortunately this means teachers in the

future may not have access to basic information about human rights and human rights teaching.

Most schools in France are state schools and education is compulsory from ages six to 16. The fact that civic education programs are now a formal part of the curriculum is a concrete indication of the political will to establish a human rights base for teaching.

The role of AI France in the formal education system

The national education system gives certain NGOs the right to participate at the school level to complement the work of teachers. AI France obtained this status in 1996 and in 2001 it was renewed for a further five years. Although this gives AI official authorization to work in schools, they still have to get the permission of the school principal.

[photo caption]

Children representing their understanding of human rights by drawing and painting. © AI

[end caption]

AI France carries out this work in the following ways:

Participation in the classroom:

In cooperation with teachers AI works directly with children on different subjects, but usually related to the civic education program. AI activists provide information, organize activities and demonstrate their commitment to defending human rights.

Access to the Teacher Training Institutes is sometimes difficult to obtain, but when successful, HRE activists propose modules to fit into the course units that lead to teacher training diplomas.

Creation of HRE teaching tools:

AI France has a catalogue of publications which devotes eight pages to HRE documents. It recommends texts covering all the elements of human rights which pupils need to help them understand the concepts and which teachers need to develop lessons, reports and discussions. During major campaigns materials are developed for teachers and young people.

These documents are available to schools, usually free of charge. The texts are published in a variety of languages and are available as video cassettes and books. The French section also makes a wide range of good quality children's books on human rights available to the public.

Activities:

School activities are organized by the national HRE group but local groups are involved in planning and implementation. Many of the activities are very successful and result in public exhibitions and presentations. These have included theatre, exhibitions of drawings and publication of articles in the media.

[photo caption]

Learning about human rights from a Togolese human rights defender with HRE coordinator Christiane Grange. © AI

[end caption]

[photo caption]

Jeanne Henry, AI France HRE coordinator, conducting a human rights workshop for children.

© AI

[end caption]

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