



5 years

84,000

young people

92

schools

Human Rights Friendly Schools

NEWS October-November 2013



Happy 5th year anniversary to all!

Dear Friends,

This is a very special issue of the Human Rights Friendly Schools Newsletter as we are celebrating the 5th year anniversary of Human Rights Friendly Schools!

In 2008, we had the idea of adopting a new approach to human rights education: supporting the holistic integration of human rights into schools around the world. Five years later, this idea has become a reality: 92 schools, 5,000 teachers and 84,000 young people in 20 countries are now involved in Human Rights Friendly Schools.

This expansion is the direct result of the adaptability of the project to a wide range of local contexts. Together we have successfully tested a model of human rights education that is both locally relevant and beneficial to schools around the world!

In this issue, we are focusing on the achievements of **Human Rights Friendly Schools in Mongolia**, which has reached 6,000 young people in the past 5 years!

For more information, please visit our website:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/rfsp>

or contact us at HumanRightsFriendlySchools@amnesty.org

About the Human Rights Friendly Schools Newsletter

Amnesty International's Human Rights Friendly Schools project aims to empower young people and promote the active participation of all members of the school community to integrate human rights values and principles into all areas of school life. Amnesty International works in partnership with secondary schools around the world, supporting their journey to becoming Human Rights Friendly. This newsletter aims to share information, ideas and experiences across the International Human Rights Friendly Schools Network.

More newsletters available online in English, French and Spanish

2013

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/008/2013/en>
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<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/011/2012/en>

NEWS OF THE MONTH

Five years of Human Rights Friendly Schools in Mongolia

From 2009 with one school partner, Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School in Ulaanbaatar, Amnesty International Mongolia has been playing a leading role in the area of human rights education in Mongolia. By the end of the pilot phase in 2011, the Human Rights Friendly School approach had expanded to two new schools in Edernet and Darkhan project's Provinces; and in 2014 will continue to expand to eight more schools in Ulaanbaatar city.

Celebrating five years of project implementation in Mongolia, the successes of Human Rights Friendly Schools can be summarised as follows:

- **Increased knowledge about human rights and better community cohesion** as a result of increased participation in activities and interest in different human rights issues among students and the integration of new and interactive methodologies in curricular and extracurricular activities.

- **Increased youth activism and engagement** as 30% of Amnesty International Mongolia members are graduates from Human Rights Friendly Schools. Amnesty International Mongolia can count on a very active younger generation of activists that have a deep understanding of human rights issues and are empowered to take action.

- **Promoting human rights education** by adopting a bottom-up and holistic approach to integrating human rights education in secondary schools in Mongolia. Amnesty International Mongolia is now recognised by the educational authorities as an expert in integrating human rights in schools. This recognition led to the expansion of the Human Rights Friendly Schools approach to eight more public schools with the support of the municipality of Ulaanbaatar.



Students at the Human Rights Friendly School - Mongolia-India Secondary School - raise their hands for human rights, Mongolia, 2013 © Amnesty International

“There are already some initiatives and good practices on integrating human rights in the curriculum in Mongolia, for example Amnesty International Mongolia is leading on this”

Mr. Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia, after his first election in 2009 presented Amnesty International resources on national TV to encourage the government to integrate human rights in the curriculum and work closely with non-governmental organizations.

For more information, contact Ganchimeg Sodnomdoo, Human Rights Friendly Schools Coordinator at Amnesty International Mongolia: sodnomdoo@yahoo.com

STORY OF CHANGE

Students from Mongolia Human Rights Friendly Schools share their experience



Tim, former Mongolia-India Joint Secondary Student. Mongolia, 2013 ©Amnesty International

“Your rights are limited by your nose! It means that you can say to others that you think what they are doing is affecting your rights.”

Tim, former Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School student

“Students used to be bullied a lot and teachers did not pay much attention to that before. Now teachers are more concerned about students’ well being.”

Auygarb, Erdenet Bayan-Undur School student

TIM, a former student of Mongolia-India Joint School and now a University student, looks back at the evolution of his school since the project began and the personal impact it has had on his life.

“At the beginning of the Human Rights Friendly School Project, I had no knowledge of human rights or Amnesty International. I think with the project, students of my class became extremely involved and concerned about human rights issues in the world. It made me very active and still now I am always trying to take part in activities related to defending against human rights violations. **I think the project has changed my way of viewing things and showed me how to be loud against human rights violations.** We were definitely more aware of human rights violations, especially in Mongolia.

Compared to different schools and also with what I see at University, **students from Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School are more educated and they respect each other much more.** I can see the difference between a normal situation and activities that are not ‘human rights friendly’. Teachers explained to us that one person’s rights are limited by someone else’s rights. Your rights are limited by your nose! It means that you can say to others that you think what they are doing is affecting your rights. People need to be more aware. Not only thinking about human rights but most importantly in taking actions. Respecting human rights starts with the simplest things.”

Auygarb, from Erdenet Bayan-Undur School in Mongolia, shares “when I first joined the school, the project was already being implemented. I heard about it through teachers. I thought it was a good idea because I think young people should be able to defend themselves and be protected.

Ever since I was a kid, I had some understanding of what human rights were through elementary school and through my parents and my older sister. **I think we are generally happier and friendlier with each other.** Students used to be bullied a lot and teachers did not pay much attention to that before. Now teachers are more concerned about students’ well being. In my opinion, it is really important for the students to have a connection with their teachers as each of us should be able to rely on adults and not everyone can do that outside of school.”



FROM THE TEACHERS' CORNER

Teachers at the Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School are very engaged in finding ways to integrate human rights in their daily lessons. They find that students are more active and participative when adopting the Human Rights Friendly School approach.

Mrs. Gantigmaa, an English teacher at the school, reflects on how the project has impacted the school community, admitting that “the Human Rights Friendly Schools approach is one of my favourite things. I have always been very involved in social life. Since we started the project, a lot of our students have seen their lives change and their attitudes as well, how they view social life and social background. There are lots of success stories in the school. For example, students have become closer to each other, and more responsible. Teachers with experience have also become participatory trainers themselves, improving our methodology and making education more practical.”



Mrs. Gantigmaa, English teacher at the Mongolia-India Secondary School. Mongolia, 2013 ©Amnesty International

“This project contributed to my career and teaching skills, and teaching experience. My teaching methodology has completely changed. Before this project I used to focus only on grammar and text book exercises. Now, I try to link social issues to my English classes. For example I focus more on life experiences and life examples in my teaching.”

Mrs. Gantigmaa, English teacher at the Mongolia-India Secondary School



Students in Mrs. Gantigmaa's class participating in a *Before-After* activity to assess how school life has changed since integrating the Human Rights Friendly approach. Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School, Mongolia, 2013 ©Amnesty International

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ERDENET BAYAN-UNDUR HIGH SCHOOL

A Human Rights Friendly School promotes an atmosphere of equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion and respect. These values go hand in hand with the environment in which learning takes place. Erdenet Bayan-Undur High School in Mongolia improved its school policies, practices and relationships amongst members of the school community; working together to make the school a more comfortable and safe environment.

For example, students set up a free-wall in the school where they can anonymously write their enquiries, concerns or demands. The school management collects them and addresses these issues on a regular basis.

The school also aims to improve communication between students and their parents. In classes, students are invited to write anonymous notes to their parents, addressing topics that they may be afraid to say out loud or do not get the chance to do in person. Teachers then collect these notes and discuss them during teacher-parent meetings, while ensuring the anonymity of the students. This method helps improve overall school relationships between teachers, students and parents.

“Our main goal is to make our students aware of their rights and responsibilities from the youngest age. We have many examples where we encourage students to take part in the decision making progress. For example, each class developed their own class charter which is useful to ensure respect of the rules that they themselves came up with. Another example is our Open Day. Once a year, students become teachers. One student per class per subject is leading their fellow classmates. I am paying attention to how students can be involved in the decision making process.”

Mr. Gunshinsuren, Director of Erdenet Bayan-Undur High School, Mongolia



Students participating in human rights education activities at Erdenet Bayan-Undur High School, Mongolia 2013
©Amnesty International

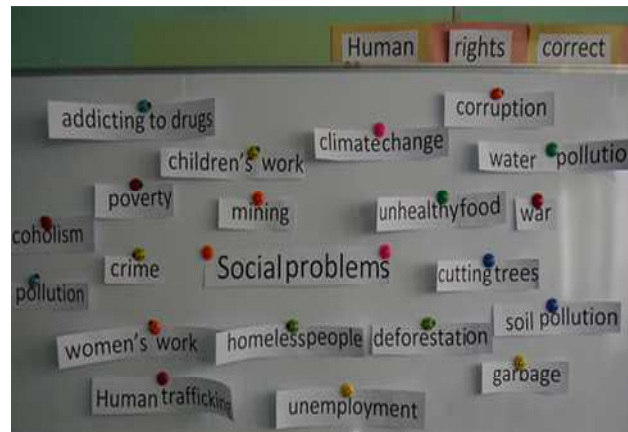


Integrating Human Rights in the Curriculum

At the Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School teachers integrated human rights issues into their planned lessons.

“In the session about professional development and careers, I integrated elements around the work place and safety, as well as discrimination in work environments. The objective of the lesson was to teach students to express their own opinions and to ensure they increase their communication skills and improve their knowledge about social problems. Hopefully, it will help my students to be more mature and educate them to be more engaged when they have graduated.”

Mrs. Gantigmaa, English teacher at Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School.



Class board with key words related to social issues during a lesson integrating human rights in Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School. Mongolia, 2013 ©Amnesty International

INTEGRATED LESSON PLAN AROUND THE THEME “WATER IS PRECIOUS”

In Mongolia-India Joint Secondary School, four teachers with experience in integrating human rights education in the curriculum delivered a series of classes around one theme: *Water is precious*. These integrated lessons covered different subjects including: History and Geography, Mathematics, Chemistry and Technology. Each of the different subjects focused on water resources and how students can engage on right to water issues. Students make the most of the class, linking the different subjects, developing knowledge and skills through a common theme, gaining a deep understanding on water resources in the world, and understanding how to be more conscious about this limited resource. The box below shows how these integrated lessons were put into practice.



Students use recycled material to represent polluted water during a joint lesson at Mongolia-India Secondary School. Mongolia, 2013 ©Amnesty International

‘Water is Precious’ – Integrated lesson plan

Part 1: History and Geography class

This class explores water resources in the world, addressing water shortage and the problem of polluted water.

Part 2: Mathematics class

Students are asked to solve maths problems that are linked to water resources. For example: questions related to how much water we use in a day and, how much water is saved per year when closing the tap when brushing your teeth. Then the teacher asks the students to come up with solutions to responsibly limit the use of water.

Part 3: Chemistry class

Students are asked to solve chemistry cases about water pollution, causes and consequences on humans and animals. How to purify the water with a chemical element? How to purify water/ocean to make it drinkable water? Students are given the task to find out different chemical processes to purify water.

Part 4: Technology/Home Education class


This session summarizes the entire integrated lesson, covering children’s rights and how access to fresh water is related to general health and well being. The lesson ends with a fun activity, where students are asked to bring recyclable material and use it to represent polluted water. The students then explain to the rest of the class why waters are polluted and why they should not be polluted. Students are then asked what they can do to change this situation and come up with actions they can take in their own home and wider community.

JOIN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRIENDLY SCHOOLS Online COMMUNITY


This is our new online community!

Celebrating the 5th year anniversary of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project, Amnesty International has launched the Human Rights Friendly Schools Community online.


Amnesty International coordinators are moderators and are welcomed to invite school members to take part and share their experiences with others online!


 **Judit PéntzesHU** MODÉRATEUR
Discussion - 22 nov. 2013

We started a new HRFS projekt in Borsodnádásd, and yesterday i had to win in a push up (not the bra) competition to make someone let a younger kid to stay. Sometimes you can not imagine how to solve a conflict, when two kids "hate" each other, and after you manage to do 20 push ups, and everything changes:)




+1

 **Francoise Palau-Wolffe**
MODÉRATEUR hier à 16:18
Chere Touria,
Nous nous sommes rencontrees plusieurs fois a des ICM et a des Forum de Presidents. C'est grace a un de tes collegues
[Lire la suite](#)


 **Arnaldo Serna** MODÉRATEUR
Discussion - 22 nov. 2013

#Niños

Hola, comparto este video que prepararon las y los estudiantes de 13-14 años del Colegio José Antonio Encinas. El objetivo se hizo para explicar los derechos humanos a niños y niñas pequeños. Hicieron una adaptación de lenguaje y crearon escenas para ilustrarlo.



Los Derechos Humanos - JAE

+1 

WHAT CAN I DO ?

- **Link** with all Human Rights Friendly Schools around the world!
- **Share** photos, videos, comments, ideas and much more!
- **Exchange** ideas!
- All Amnesty Human Rights Education coordinators can be **moderators**. Once a moderator, you can directly invite your Human Rights Friendly School community members to join!

If you would like to **share your experiences** of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project or **news from your section** related to the project, please contact the IS HRE team (HumanRightsFriendlySchools@amnesty.org) no later than **20 January 2014**, if you wish your entry to be published in the next edition of the Human Rights Friendly Schools News.

