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## **HRE**

### **Campaign for Human Rights Education**

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## **From the favela to the world - the success of AfroReggae!**

The AfroReggae Cultural Group is one of Brazil's most innovative and effective non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It is one of only a handful of organizations able to move freely around Rio de Janeiro's more than 600 shanty towns, or favelas, nearly all of which are controlled by heavily armed drug gangs. Working closely with communities, and using art, Afro-Brazilian culture and education, AfroReggae pursues a mission of promoting social justice and inclusion.

Begun by a group of like-minded young people in 1993, the original AfroReggae project was a newspaper dedicated to Afro-Brazilian music and youth culture. Soon, pressing political and social issues also began to be covered.

Then, later the same year, a military police "death squad" murdered 21 innocent and unarmed residents of the Vigário Geral favela. After the massacre, José Junior, one of the founders of the newspaper, began attending meetings in the community. The first AfroReggae workshops took place a few months later.

Today, permanent AfroReggae centres in four of Rio's most deprived areas offer courses in subjects ranging from percussion and drama, to graffiti, computer skills and capoeira. Out of these projects have developed a theatre group, a circus troupe and a number of bands. The main AfroReggae band recently released its second album and generates about one third of the organization's turnover. Ultimately, AfroReggae aims to become fully self-supporting.

By bringing visitors to the favelas and taking young people from these communities to the outside world, AfroReggae promotes a culture of social integration and exchange. And such projects are beginning to be developed outside of Brazil. Earlier this year, AfroReggae visited

the UK to work with children and teenagers from inner-city areas and bring them together with young people from privileged backgrounds.

2006 is an exciting year for AfroReggae in many ways. For the first time they are taking their workshops to Rio's police forces. The new initiative brings police officers – the majority of whom come from poor backgrounds themselves – into contact with young people from the favelas. It also examines the police officers' own welfare and human rights concerns, an area too often neglected.

In January, police and residents of Vigário Geral attended a landmark concert at Rio's military police headquarters. AfroReggae performed John Lennon's "Imagine", together with a police jazz band. The track was recorded for AI's Make Some Noise campaign, and can be downloaded from [www.amnesty.org/noise](http://www.amnesty.org/noise).

[BOX]

### **AfroReggae join young people in the UK to spread the 'Control Arms' message.**

Working with AIUK, AfroReggae used their inspirational music, dance and theatre skills to engage young people in London in campaigning against local and global gun crime.

Over five days in February, AfroReggae worked with 120 school and college students in the city. During the workshops, which were themed around the global "Control Arms" campaign, the young people learned Brazilian drumming, capoeira and physical theatre and shared their experiences of the damage caused by guns to communities.

Using their newly acquired skills, they then carried their anti-gun messages to thousands of others through performances in their schools, at the AIUK – Human Rights Action Centre, and at one of London's top theatres.

For more information on the Control Arms Campaign, visit [www.controlarms.org](http://www.controlarms.org)

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[PHOTO CAPTION]

AfroReggae perform backed by a military police jazz band, January 2006.

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## **AI Morocco helps make human rights training a priority issue**

AI Morocco has a decade of experience of getting human rights training into schools. It began with a workshop in 1995 which built upon existing political will to include HRE in the official curriculum throughout the country. Participants shared ideas and their experiences of working in the human rights field and drew up a plan of action for furthering human rights

training in Morocco. Before the workshop was over, the participants had agreed to adopt a national strategy for human rights training. The main focus areas of the national strategy were:

- Human rights training for young people: through the creation of democratic forums for discussion in schools and the community.
- The consolidation of women's rights: both within and beyond the school system and by various means, including national literacy programmes, the revision of school curricula and textbooks, and the use of the media and entertainments industries.
- Human rights training in the wider society: this could be done by supporting civil society organizations in developing their action techniques, and coordinating communications among the different organizations and between them and the relevant government departments.

AI Morocco designed its own strategy for human rights training drawing both on this experience and on the general objectives laid down by the International Secretariat. One of the main strands of AI Morocco's strategy is to provide training to a new generation of human rights activists. The strategy also aims to transform Moroccan schools into places not just of knowledge but environments that nurture the personal development of young people, to provide them with the self-confidence to participate fully in society.

### **The strategy**

From the outset, AI Morocco's strategy has been based upon the principle that effective human rights training combines knowledge and experience. Human rights training needs to be reinforced and developed on a daily basis by making it part of the classroom routine. This in turn necessitates exemplary training of teachers that encourages good attitudes and manners.

In order to achieve this long-term vision, we set ourselves the following objectives:

- To encourage the inclusion of human rights issues in educational and formal training programmes as well as in educational institutions.
- To develop and widen the scope of non-official programmes for human rights training.
- To facilitate the exchange of training materials, skills and experiences both within the human rights community and with relevant government departments.
- To get the backing of the government to include human rights issues in training programmes for civil servants and government officials.
- To form links with various governmental and non-governmental programmes for development, peace, environmental and religious studies, as well as those for civic and democratic training.

The main target groups of the programme were:

- Groups of "multipliers": workers in the education and justice systems and other concerned government officials
- Educational institutions, including teacher training centres
- Institutions in the justice sector, including centres for the training of prison staff and rehabilitation centres.

The training itself employed a range of educational techniques, such as small group discussions, question and answer sessions, case studies and role plays. Each workshop was evaluated by AI Morocco and the trainers, and by means of participants' evaluation forms.

An official project for human rights training has now been in place in Morocco for over 10 years, forming part of a broader programme of reform of the education system. As part of this reform programme, AI Morocco has provided human rights training to teachers' trainers and has just started a new human rights training project with emphasis on civic values. Obviously, this poses a new set of challenges for AI Morocco. Its human rights training activities will need to be further developed to match the shift in emphasis, but there is great cause for excitement. So far, AI Morocco has had considerable success in achieving its goals: human rights training has become a priority policy of the educational system in Morocco.

[PHOTO CAPTIONS]

Workshop in a secondary school in Errachidia, Morocco.  
© AI

Workshop on children's rights held in a school in Fes, Morocco.  
© AI

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## **West Africa HRE project yields successes**

An innovative and ambitious human rights HRE project covering nine countries in West Africa was launched in June 2003 by the International Secretariat of AI. The project is of three years' duration and has the long term aim of contributing to the eradication of torture in all its forms in the nine West African countries where AI has a membership structure. These countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The project is also proving to be an effective vehicle for promoting AI's current campaign to Stop Violence against Women and for involving the general public in human rights activism.

The project's objectives include developing and strengthening the HRE skills of human rights activists; producing training and campaigning materials that are culturally relevant; raising awareness in local communities about the high incidence of violence against women in West Africa; and sharing information about relevant human rights instruments. AI activists trained as educators through the project go on themselves to organize workshops and awareness-raising events targeted at teachers, journalists, community leaders and women's organizations.

The project is now in its final year and tangible results are being seen at grassroots level. Major achievements include the following:

- 28 activists have been trained as educators able to conduct workshops and run educational programmes for the four target groups identified by the project
- 200 teachers in six countries have been trained to address issues of human rights in their classroom
- 50 journalists in four countries have been trained to address issues of violence against

women and gender equality

- 50 community leaders, male as well as female, have been trained in addressing human rights issues, particularly violence against women
- 100 women have been trained to address issues of violence against women in their communities
- Awareness about violence against women has been raised in at least five urban communities through radio and TV programmes

A “training of trainers” package is also being prepared, based on the materials and methods developed by the project team. It will be produced in French and English and widely distributed in order that the knowledge so far gained can be shared and built upon.

### **Conference**

As part of the West Africa project, a regional conference on torture was held in Dakar, Senegal, in December 2005. The two-day conference was an opportunity for participants to examine existing regional human rights mechanisms, particularly those for torture-related situations. It was also a chance to highlight the project’s activities and achievements to date. Participants were able to make new contacts and learn about the work of other NGOs in the region. There was discussion around the particular issues involved in campaigning against torture in West Africa, and the opportunity to learn about some successful programmes that stand out as “best practice” examples.

Sixty-five participants attended, including NGO delegates, government officials and human rights defenders.

### **Final phase**

Plans for the final phase of the project include raising its visibility in order to influence legislation on violence against women, torture and other inhuman treatments. It is hoped that by strengthening existing regional networks and building new partnerships it will be possible to widen the impact of the project and avoid duplication of efforts.

[BOX OUT]

“Two years into the life of the project we are encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment shown by AI sections in Africa, as well as other NGOs. This continued interest is largely due to the fact that activities have received sustainable and continued funding and also because we have in place a team which is the focal point for all activities undertaken in the nine countries involved in this regional initiative.”

Stephane Mikala, Manager of the West Africa HRE project

[END OF BOX]

[CAPTION]

Left and opposite: Participants working together during a Training of Trainers workshop in Cotonou, Benin, October 2005.

© AI

## How AI works with governments on HRE

As the world's largest human rights organization, AI prides itself on its independence and the impartiality of its research and campaigning. In order not to compromise its unique position, AI is funded almost entirely through membership donations and charitable trusts.

HRE is distinct from the reactive research and campaigning usually associated with AI in that it is preventative, promotional human rights work. For this reason, on HRE projects AI sometimes works in a more co-operative way with governments and can even accept government money to fund educational work.

Allowing government funding for educational programmes does not mean that AI is being co-opted or compromising its impartiality, but rather that it recognizes the willingness of many governments to promote a greater understanding of human rights issues in their own country and around the world. Nevertheless, AI has developed strict guidelines for the acceptance of government funding for its educational work. Any and all applications for funding from such sources are scrutinized by the international HRE team before being submitted to the treasurer of AI's own governing body, the International Executive Committee (IEC).

The IEC treasurer assesses applications not only to see how they fit with the overall work of the section or structure requesting the money but, even more importantly, whether they would in any way compromise AI's impartiality.

AI members can request copies of the guidelines, Protecting Impartiality: Procedures and criteria for approval of HRE fundraising from government organizations (AI Index: FIN 21/004/2001) through their section or structure offices, or those with access to the HRE database can download an electronic copy. Non-members can obtain further information from their local AI offices. For contact details go to: [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

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## Education for all means HRE for all

The right of everyone to a primary education was brought a step closer to being realized when governments from around the world agreed the Millennium Development Goals. These eight goals form part of an historic commitment to meet the needs of the world's poorest people by 2015. Among them was a promise to "ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling".

That same year, 2000, this vision was given further force at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, where participants committed themselves to "ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality".

AI's new International Human Rights Education Strategy, agreed at last year's International Council Meeting, focuses on the right to education and calls for action to "influence government and educational authorities to guarantee the right to education and further a culture of human rights in schools". AI has long held the view that human rights education is essential to quality education. Not as a distinct area of learning, but as an integral part of the whole curriculum. Education needs to be holistic, combining cognitive development and

educational attainment with the fostering of values that respect and promote human rights standards.

This position has recently been echoed by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz, who has made explicit the link between quality education and HRE. He has expressed his belief that quality education means both the educational curricula and the environment in which learning takes place being “human rights-sensitive”.

In a report submitted to the Economic and Social Council in December 2004, he expressed his intention to “continue strengthening the human rights dimension of education” by encouraging states to develop policies that address the right to education, thereby meeting their existing international obligations.

AI welcomes these comments, as well as the Rapporteur’s clear message, in the same report, that, “the integration process must involve education as a whole, not just isolated parts of the curriculum”. He is emphatic that implicit in the right to a quality education is the need for the learning process to be within an environment that fosters respect for such qualities as dignity, diversity, peace and mutual co-operation.

There are currently around 100 million children worldwide who do not have access to basic education, despite the target set by the Millennium Development Goals. The message of the Special Rapporteur is clear: education is a human right and those children currently denied access have a right to basic education that includes human rights education.

It is encouraging to note the growing consensus across the international human rights movement that, as well as being a right in itself, education is the key that unlocks other human rights.

[CAPTION]

Below: Schoolchildren in Mongolia using a rights-based approach to learning about human rights, in an initiative organized by the Mongolian teachers’ trade union in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, December 2005.

© AI

[STRAPLINE]

For more information about the Millennium Development Goals, visit [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

To learn more about the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, go to [www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed\\_for\\_all/framework.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/framework.shtml)

## **We have a right to be taught our rights!**

The action “Your Right to Human Rights Education”, launched in January 2005, is being extended.

This action is in support of the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, which has among its objectives, to “promote the inclusion and practice of human rights in the primary and secondary school systems”.

Since last year, HRE and Youth Coordinators have been engaged with pupils and educators to lobby their governments for the inclusion or further development of HRE in schools. A two-

page update is now available, which includes a generic letter to governments and a children's action. Postcards for the action can be downloaded from the HRE website, and can now be used until January 2007.

Visit [www.amnesty.org/hre](http://www.amnesty.org/hre) for more information.

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## **'For Children's Rights' – a project by AI Argentina's Tucuman group.**

**By Gustavo Díaz Fernández, Karina Crespo, Andrea Estévez and Olivia Blanchard**

"For Children's Rights" was an HRE project organized by AI Argentina's Tucuman group. The project made innovative use of art and modern technology to engage schoolchildren and help them learn about their human rights.

The children who took part were fully involved in the creative aspects of the project, which made use of images to bring to life the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Folk stories, songs, theatre, painting, video, the internet and digital art were among the media employed to develop the children's awareness of human rights. As information becomes more readily available through new technologies such as the internet, awareness can be raised on a larger scale, and children can be helped to learn about and claim their rights from an early age.

Our work used participative and interactive techniques to help people learn about their rights and the rights of others. HRE is long-term: it is about changing attitudes and behaviours, learning new skills, and promoting the free exchange of knowledge, as well as enabling people to enjoy their rights.

In our project, children and adolescents played an active role in processing information, while teachers were on hand to lend support and provide guidance.

We therefore placed special emphasis on the development of specific cognitive, meta-cognitive and self-regulatory abilities. We took into account the pupils' prior learning and presented information in an organized manner, catering to both general and specific needs.

In this way we learned together that knowledge is not simply a copy of what is real.

Rather, acquiring knowledge is a subjective process that results in representations of what is real. It is to this process that we apply the tools of our educational resources.

Experiential learning entails being able to put a range of cognitive functions to appropriate use. It also demands the involvement of the child as a subject, rather than an object of rights.

Creative thinking in education is of primary importance. It allows for personal development, boosts self-esteem, and encourages reflective thought, problem-solving, collaborative working, and respect for diversity. It also helps build ethical codes in which human rights are pillars that sustain growth. These are important since there can be no equitable development



without respect for the common good.

Among the activities organized was the Seventh Arts Exhibition on the Declaration of Children's Rights. This was an opportunity to apply what had been learned about rights and offered the possibility of looking at new ways of understanding and analyzing situations in a range of different contexts.

Students, parents and teachers have provided ideas on strategies for following up the project. These provide the model and incentive for our work throughout the year, and underline the importance of continuing to work in this important area of education.

Together with their teachers, the children involved pledged to repeat the exercise at other schools. The event's positive impact and the fact that it was well received by all the schools and organizations involved, mean that plans have been made for its continuation.

We are grateful to AI Argentina, and to Vibeke Eikas of AI Norway, for their invaluable support. The Project has been funded by REAP.

[PHOTO CAPTIONS]

Opposite and left: Children participating in workshops organized by AI Argentina's Tucuman group.

© AI

Below: "All children have the right to eat". One of the pictures made by children for the Seventh Arts Exhibition on the Declaration of Children's Rights.

© AI

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## **New HRE publication announced**

At its 2001 International Council Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, AI replaced its old mandate with a new mission that gives the same importance to issues of economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights as to civil and political rights. The decision was historic and timely. In today's globalized world, where some enjoy greater wealth and opportunities while others face greater destitution and despair, it has become clear that the human rights struggle is no longer only against torture, arbitrary detention and unfair trials, but now includes hunger, illiteracy and discrimination. Activists must be ready to promote not only legal justice, but also social justice: an ethical approach to globalization can mean nothing less than a rights-based approach to development.

Being uncharted terrain for AI, the new mission will inevitably present enormous challenges as well as opportunities for the movement. Activists at all levels will want to upgrade their skills and broaden their learning in order to meet these challenges.

In anticipation, the HRE team at the International Secretariat (IS) has been developing resource material to support activists' needs. This new HRE material will provide AI volunteers, staff and activists with a basic introduction to the issues surrounding ESC rights

and has been designed to be used in conjunction with the primer on the subject, Human rights for human dignity (AI Index: POL 34/009/2005). Including step-by-step plans and facilitators' notes for a two-day workshop, the pack will include a variety of interactive activities to promote learning through self-reflection. The material has already been piloted with AI members and other human rights activists from the Czech Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The English version will be ready for distribution to sections and structures later in the year, and it is hoped other language versions will follow soon after. For more information about this material, please contact the Human Rights Education team at the IS ([hreteam@amnesty.org](mailto:hreteam@amnesty.org)).

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## **Fond farewells!**

### **Kate**

As many of you will already be aware, sadly, our very own Kate Moriarty left AI in April 2006 to take up an exciting post with Save the Children UK. Kate started with us in April 2003 and brought dedication, passion and vision to the post of HRE Coordinator. Among her achievements were helping drive through the new international HRE strategy, and seeing the international HRE team undertake its first campaign to get HRE into school curricula. We are sure she will be missed not only by the HRE team and her IS colleagues, but by many of you in the network. We hope you will join us in wishing her the very best in her new position. Since her new job involves working on the right to education, we feel confident that there will be opportunities to continue working together in the field of HRE!

### **Dan**

Sadly too, we must also say goodbye to a legend in the HRE world, the wonderful Dan Jones, who is semi-retiring from his post of Education Officer at AI UK after 18 years. Many of you will remember Dan from our International Forums and workshops, and will be well acquainted with his humour, creativity and wonderful stories! Dan will be sorely missed, but will still be contactable via AI UK for those who want to keep in touch. We wish him a happy semi-retirement!

## **Coordinating Committee**

Finally, we would like to remind people of their Human Rights Education Coordinating Committee representatives, elected at last year's International Forum, in Marrakech, Morocco, February 2005.

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Asia Don McArthur, AI Australia: [Don\\_McArthur@amnesty.org.au](mailto:Don_McArthur@amnesty.org.au)

Europe (East) Romana Frankovic, AI Slovenia: [romana.frankovic@guest.arnes.si](mailto:romana.frankovic@guest.arnes.si)

Europe (West) Tanja Clifford, AI Norway: [tclifford@amnesty.no](mailto:tclifford@amnesty.no)

Middle East and North Africa Danit Shacham, AI Israel: [amnesty2@netvision.net.il](mailto:amnesty2@netvision.net.il)

Olajobi Makinwa had to resign from her post of Committee member for Africa to take up the Director post at AI South Africa. Elections were held via email for a successor who is Bakary Gbane of AI Côte d'Ivoire.

Arek Jarosinski (AI Poland) also resigned from his post for similar reasons, but Romana Frankovic (AI Slovenia), his elected deputy at the forum, has taken his place.