



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International Institute
for Capacity Building
in Africa

Consultation and Experience Sharing Meeting on Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020 through Investing in Youth Education

Meeting Report

UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) with UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) and Arigatou International

October 26-27, 2020, 14:00 - 16:30 South Africa Time

Venue: Zoom

Recording of the Webinar:

Day 1, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtVhFMzPBLU>;

Day 2, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BrsqxBDP2RE&feature=youtu.be> and
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGmMIEfXNbc&feature=youtu.be>

Introduction

The COVID-19 health crisis is imposing negative ramifications for social, political and economic relations around the world. Apart from catching the world totally unprepared, the pandemic is exacerbating tensions and inequalities in many African countries. There is an increased risk that youth in vulnerable communities may become disenfranchised and fall into violence and extremism.

This project is urgently needed to address the need for peace education to prevent further degradation during and after the pandemic. UNESCO IICBA amplifies the African Union's call on countries to "Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020," and anchors this goal in the education sector with a focus on peace education.

The objective of this two-day experience sharing and consultation meeting, co-hosted by IICBA and Arigatou International, was to bring together approximately 30 experts and stakeholders from four south African countries (Malawi, Zambia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) and from others (Algeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda) which were involved in UNESCO IICBA's pre-virus peace education project. The consultation meeting aimed to develop learning strategies for peace, resilience and prevention of violent extremism under the theme of "Silencing the Guns" to explore the challenges these countries have faced, and to review the existing mechanisms on peace education.

Day 1

Welcome Address

Ms. Eyerusalem Azmeraw and Dr. Victoria Kissakye, Program Officers at UNESCO IICBA, commenced the meeting and welcomed the participants. Then, Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki, Director of UNESCO IICBA, set the theme and purpose of the meeting. She alluded to UNESCO IICBA's direct work in peace education, resilience, and capacity building since 2017, with the support of the Government of Japan. She also spoke of the need to prioritize and embed peace education in education systems. "Peacebuilding would not be sustainable if efforts are not mainstreamed in education and implanted in the minds of young people," Yumiko said. "Our education systems of today need to emerge from the past and look towards the future and enable youth to live together and face challenges with resilience and peaceful intentions."

The next inception speech was delivered by Ms. Bridget Makiwa, who was representing the Secretary General, Ms. Margaret Chirapa, of the UNESCO National Commission for Zimbabwe. Ms. Makiwa emphasized that "The achievement of SDG 4 rests on the development of teachers," and expressed her desire that schoolchildren grow up as peacebuilders and reconcilers, not bullies.

Sharing of Country Experience

Then, the consultants discussed on a country level their countries' educational landscapes and current peacebuilding capacity. Specifically, they discussed:

- 1) What are the thematic areas of your focus to address violence, discrimination and xenophobia in your context?
- 2) What strategies have been implemented in the education system to address them?
- 3) Lessons learned and challenges: What are the ongoing activities in your countries and what have been the progress and results achieved?

The delegates from **Zambia** shared that the violence in society stems from discrimination based on gender and sexuality, teenage pregnancy, poverty, and fear HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. Zambia includes civic education and sexuality education at the secondary school level and has installed some relevant policies on school inclusivity, school violence, and re-entry for young mothers.

South Africa shared similar causes of discrimination, and elaborated on the underlying issue of inequality, which manifests in racism, gang violence, homophobia, punishments in rural schools, and the radicalization of youth. The country participants discussed the potential of using history as a tool to address social strife, and the need for conflict resolution and dialogue. South Africa already has a life orientation subject which is mainstreamed through student exams.

Zimbabwe shared that it has a policy framework that incorporates the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to some degree promotes common values, inclusion, and cultural diversity. The country participants also cited national liberation movements for building tolerance, social cohesion, and national unity.

The delegates from **Malawi** shared that their education sector is exploring ways to use history to teach lessons about violence pasts, and is trying to incorporate youth innovation and ideas for solving issues in their communities. Malawi is improving its civic and citizenship training to build peacebuilding into its education system.

Question-and-Answer Session

In the ensuing discussion, several participants brought up fresh perspectives. One participant pointed out the need to prioritize and integrate indigenous knowledge systems and solutions in peacebuilding efforts. Another participant cited the need to introduce peace education earlier in early childhood development programs. Several participants emphasized the need for a more holistic approach towards peace education which includes the whole school and community.

Day 2

The second day of the consultation and experience-sharing meeting began with a recap of the first day, focusing the need to dive more deeply into the structural causes of violence, and to put policy ideas into actual practice. “For transformations to take place, we must get at these root causes of violence,” said Suchith Abeyewickreme, Ethics Education Program Coordinator at Arigatou International.

Root Causes of Violence Within Countries

In country breakout rooms, participants analyzed their countries’ socio-political and educational challenges to peace. Specifically, they discussed:

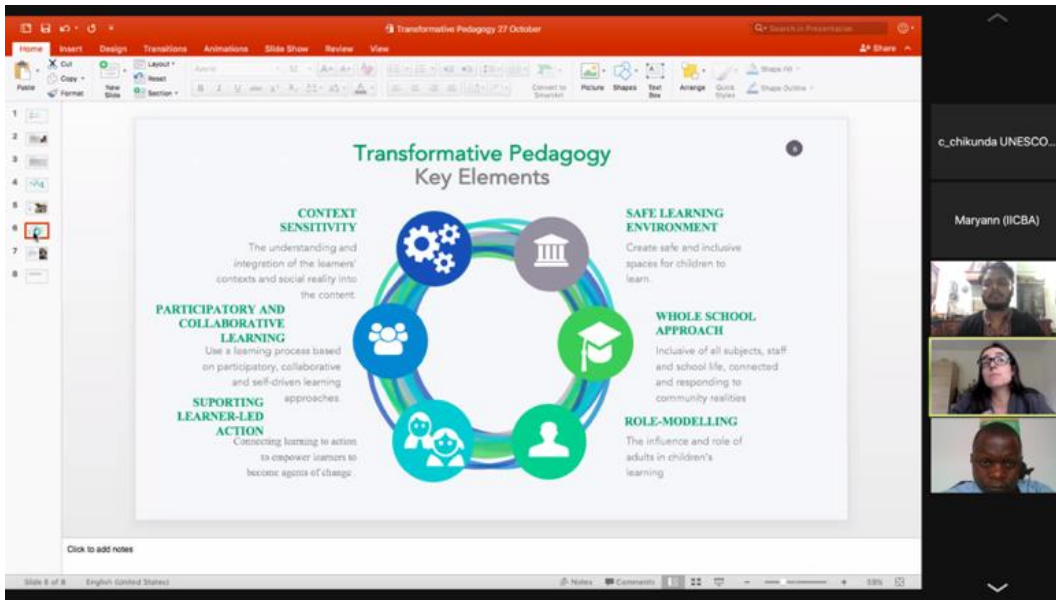
- 1) What are the root causes of violence, discrimination and xenophobia in your context?
- 2) What are the gaps in the educational responses you have in place?
- 3) What are the competencies teachers require to address these gaps?

Several countries cited the structural violence of colonialism and apartheid, and how education has been used as a weapon of oppression and control. Moreover, education has been taught from an alien, outsider perspective within Africa. Now, the transformation forced upon us by COVID-19 presents the opportunity to incorporate African knowledge into education solutions, for example by living and teaching by “Ubuntu” values and by sharing information across borders on a Pan-African level. This point was echoed by participants from Zimbabwe, Zambia, and South Africa, who emphasized teaching values in all subjects, decolonizing the mind, and recognizing and disrupting one’s own biases.

Teacher capacity building was also discussed at length. Teachers need skills in conflict resolution (conflict), as well as methods to integrate peace education in any and all existing subjects (pedagogy). Some countries expressed concern that teachers may not be deeply committed to fighting inequality or some forms of it. It is important, therefore, to cultivate not only teachers’ competencies, but also their buy-in.

Transformative Pedagogy

Then, Eleonora Mura, a Program Officer at Arigatou International, gave a presentation to the participants on transformative pedagogy. Transformative pedagogy builds on children’s resilience and strengthens their socio-emotional wellbeing, empowering them as agents in their own learning. It creates an emotionally safe environment and requires a whole-school approach.



A key moment of the meeting came when three countries (Algeria, Kenya, and Somalia) shared their countries' lessons learned while implementing transformative pedagogy.

Algeria shared that under transformative pedagogy, teachers are becoming facilitators with the disposition, knowledge, skills, and commitment to support students to develop their full potential as peace-builders to solve issues in their own environment and develop critical thinking. Representatives from **Kenya** explained how their country has conducted training of trainers (ToT) sessions using UNESCO IICBA's guidebook on transformative pedagogy. Interestingly, Kenya credited transformative pedagogy with having an impact on the election process, as students helped facilitated a peaceful voting process. Kenya has also had success in involving local communities. **Somalia** shared that they have initiated a civics education course for pre- and in-service teachers, and are developing teacher education curricula which emphasizes inclusivity and human rights. All countries identified progress made since their initial consultation with UNESCO IICBA, and expressed desire to mainstream transformative pedagogy.

Conclusion

The meeting culminated with capstone remarks by regional partners. Mr. David Mulera, Acting Deputy Executive Secretary of UNESCO National Commission for Malawi, reinforced the spirit of "Ubuntu" and the "need to support each other and share resources." Professor Hubert Gijzen, Regional Director for UNESCO Southern Africa, echoed the words of the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." He also urged participants to focus more on peacebuilding and prevention, to avoid the need for later intervention, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution, when it may be too late.

Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki, Director of UNESCO IICBA, read a message from Satoshi Iwakiri, the Japanese Ambassador to Malawi, thanking the consults for such a participative session on such an important topic. Finally, Mr. Joe Samuels, representing Mr. Carlton Mukwevho, the Secretary general of National Commission for South Africa), ended by reminding the participants that this peace education is an opportunity to focus on those most marginalized in society.

Ms. Eyerusalem Azmeraw thanked the participants and reminded them of the follow-up meeting scheduled in December 2020.

Agenda

Time	Activities	Responsible person
DAY 1- 26 October 2020 Time 14.00- 16.30 SAST		
14:00- 14:20	Opening and Welcome remarks Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki, Director, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) Ms. Margeret Chirapa: Secretary General UNESCO National Commission for Zimbabwe	Dr. Victoria Kissakye
14:20- 14:30	Introduction of the Project	Ms. Eyerusalem Azmeraw
14:30- 14:50	Getting to know Each Other Round of introduction	All participants
14:50- 15:10	Mapping the landscape: Sharing ongoing activities 4) What are the thematic areas of your focus to address violence, discrimination and xenophobia in your context? 5) What Strategies have been implemented in the Education system to address them? 6) What are the ongoing activities in your countries and what have been the progress and results achieved? Lessons learned and challenges.	Country groups
15:10 - 16:30	Sharing in Plenary and Conclusion	Participants
DAY 2: 27 October 2020 Time 14.00- 16.30 SAST		
14:00-14:05	Recap from the Previous Day	
14:10- 14:35	Context analysis and Root causes: 7) What are the root causes of violence, discrimination and xenophobia in your context? 8) What are the gaps in the educational responses you have in place? 9) What are the competencies teachers require to address these gaps?	Breakout rooms in Country groups
15:00- 16:10	How can transformative pedagogy address the root causes of violence, discrimination and xenophobia in your context? Country representatives from Algeria, Kenya and Somalia. Discussion.	Arigatou International Geneva,

16:10-16:30	<p>Way Forward and Closing: Dr. Charles Ndakala Secretary General, NATCOM, Zambia</p> <p>Mr. David Mulera Acting Deputy Executive Secretary, NATCOM, Malawi</p> <p>Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki Director, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)</p> <p>Prof. Hubert Gijzen, Regional Director for UNESCO Southern Africa</p> <p>Mr. Carlton Mukwevho, Secretary General, NATCOM, South Africa</p>	Ms. Eyerusalem Azmeraw
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