

Director's Message

The UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) was established with a mandate that goes naturally towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 7 (SDG 4.7). The vision of the Institute is to transform education for humanity which cuts to the heart of fostering education for peace, sustainable development and global citizenship to build peaceful and sustainable societies.

The global indicator established for SDG 4.7 measures the extent to which Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed in national education policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment.

There are two methods through which we can interpret the term 'mainstream' in the global indicator. The first method, which I would call the 'traditional approach', entails the introduction of specific subjects on ESD and GCED into the existing school curriculum and students being tested in similar fashion as mainstream subjects such as mathematics, sciences, geography and languages, among others. The second method, which I would call the 'integrated approach', emphasises the integration of core concepts, principles and examples of sustainable development, global citizenship, gender equality and human rights within the present cadre of mainstream subjects.

The choice of which approach to take must be dictated by the ground reality countries presently face. And in most countries this reality is depicted by growing unemployment among the youth within a job environment that demands technical skills. Moreover, we must also acknowledge that adding more subject matter to an already overloaded curriculum is unrealistic.

A majority of reports produced to date have evaluated the mainstreaming of ESD and GCED based on the traditional approach. This report is different as it focuses on reviewing the existing policies and curricula of traditional subjects and exploring how sustainable development, peace, gender and human rights are illustrated in these subjects. It is indeed an ambitious endeavor; however, I am encouraged by the results that have emerged by this first review within the Asia region, across 22 countries.

I sincerely hope that some of the recommendations and future actions summarised in this report are taken forward by the Member States and UNESCO,

including an overall re-think on the fundamental priorities of education policy, promoting a participatory model for curriculum development and creating a platform to bring together experts in child-centered education and curriculum to design core subjects at the primary and secondary level, amongst others.

I am confident that this report will demonstrate how SDG 4.7 can be achieved, while simultaneously improving competencies in the core subjects.



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