

**Human Rights Council****Fifty-fourth session**

11 September–6 October 2023

Agenda items 2 and 3

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General****Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development****Views of States and other stakeholders on the target sectors,
focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth
phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education****Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights****Summary*

In the present report, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights summarizes the views of States and other stakeholders on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. In this regard, the report refers to contributions received up until 30 June 2023 following a consultation launched on 2 March 2023 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The feedback received reflected the diversity of approaches and priorities of respondents, often based on specific national and regional contexts or mandates. Some global patterns and general conclusions are presented at the end of the report.

A majority of respondents indicated various groups and individuals in vulnerable situations (including children and youth, women, migrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and minority groups) as priority sectors for the fifth phase of the World Programme. Many respondents indicated the need to continue the focus of the fourth phase on young people, with a particular emphasis on those from marginalized groups. Other respondents proposed human rights training of professional groups, such as parliamentarians, as well as of legal and health-care professionals. Respondents also emphasized the importance of continuing the implementation of human rights education programmes in the sectors covered by previous phases, particularly in formal education systems.

* Agreement was reached to publish the present document after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



With regard to possible thematic areas, a majority of respondents noted that the fifth phase (2025–2029) would lay the foundations for a post-2030 world, and suggested focusing human rights education efforts on some pressing global challenges, particularly human rights in the digital space, environmental rights and climate change, and gender equality.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 51/2, the Human Rights Council requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to seek the views of States, relevant intergovernmental organizations – in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, the United Nations Youth Office, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, national human rights institutions, national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and other relevant stakeholders – on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, bearing in mind possible synergies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant initiatives on human rights education and training, and to submit a report thereon to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fourth session. The present report was prepared pursuant to that request.

2. On 2 March 2023, OHCHR addressed a request to Member States for their views and contributions. On 1 May 2023, OHCHR launched a call for inputs, on its website, inviting all other stakeholders listed in Human Rights Council resolution 51/2 to submit their views and contributions.¹ From 2 to 11 May 2023, OHCHR reached out specifically to relevant intergovernmental organizations, special procedures of the Human Rights Council, national human rights institutions, national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, and civil society.

3. In addition, OHCHR supported with technical inputs three related initiatives of various stakeholders, at their request: an online meeting on 8 May 2023 of the NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning, of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, where member organizations exchanged their views with a view to producing a joint submission; a youth consultation held virtually on 23 May 2023, which was organized by the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth to inform its submission; and a meeting of Member States held on 24 May 2023, which was organized by the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva and was sponsored by the governmental Platform for Human Rights Education and Training (which also includes Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal and Thailand), to provide States with a space to exchange their views.

4. As of 30 June 2023, OHCHR had received 50 submissions (including three joint submissions) from 53 respondents: 15 States, three intergovernmental organizations, four special procedures of the Human Rights Council, eight national human rights institutions, two national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, 17 civil society organizations (including two networks), and four individuals. The submissions may be consulted on the webpage dedicated to the World Programme for Human Rights Education on the OHCHR website.²

¹ The call for inputs is available on the OHCHR website at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2023/call-inputs-views-stakeholders-upcoming-fifth-phase-world-programme-human>.

² The submissions are available on the OHCHR website at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/world-programme-human-rights-education/fifth-phase-2025-2029-world-programme-human-rights-education/correspondence-states-national-human-rights-institutions-and-other-stakeholders>.

5. The Governments of Angola, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Brunei, Colombia, El Salvador, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Slovenia and Togo replied to the request sent by OHCHR.

6. The following intergovernmental organizations replied: UNESCO, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the Council of Europe.

7. The following special procedures of the Human Rights Council replied: the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, jointly with the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special rapporteur on the right to education; and the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls.

8. The following national human rights institutions replied: the Office of the National Ombudsman (Defensor del Pueblo de la Nación) of Argentina, the Office of the Ombudsman (Procurador de los Derechos Humanos) of Guatemala, the Human Rights Commission (Comisión de Derechos Humanos) of Mexico City, the Office of the Ombudsman of Namibia, the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, the Office of the Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo) of Panama, the Portuguese Ombudsperson (Provedor de Justiça) and the National Human Rights Commission (Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme) of Togo.

9. The following national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up replied: the Interministerial Committee on Treaties, Conventions and Protocols of Botswana and the National Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights.

10. The following civil society organizations and networks replied: Amnesty International, Association for the Promotion of Human Rights (Association pour la Promotion des Droits Humains), Baltasar Garzón International Foundation (Fundación Internacional Baltasar Garzón), Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education, Facing Facts, Human Rights Education Associates, iCure Health International jointly with Citizen Outreach Coalition, Institute for Development and Human Rights (Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos) jointly with the National Human Rights Movement (Movimento Nacional de Direitos Humanos), Make Mothers Matter, New Humanity, NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning, OBOR Legal Research Centre, Soka Gakkai International, UN Etxea – Basque Country Association for UNESCO (UN Etxea – Asociación del País Vasco para la UNESCO) and UPR Info. Four individuals also submitted their views.

11. The first phase (2005–2009) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education was dedicated to integrating human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems.³ The second phase (2010–2014) focused on human rights education in higher education and human rights training for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel.⁴ The third phase (2015–2019) focused on strengthening the implementation of the first two phases and promoting human rights training for media professionals and journalists.⁵ The fourth phase (2020–2024) has focused on youth empowerment through human rights education.⁶

12. In the present report, OHCHR summarizes all the submissions received and presents some general conclusions on the basis of the information contained in them. As requested by the Human Rights Council, OHCHR focuses on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues proposed for the fifth phase. Information on specific human rights education programmes or other issues raised by respondents has not been included.

³ See [A/59/525/Rev.1](#).

⁴ See [A/HRC/15/28](#).

⁵ See [A/HRC/27/28](#).

⁶ See [A/HRC/42/23](#).

II. Responses from Governments

13. The Government of Angola proposed law enforcement officials as a target sector for the fifth phase of the World Programme. According to the Government of Angola, this focus would enable law enforcement officials to promote and protect human rights in the communities where they operate and to play a more significant role in the national working commissions pertaining to human rights.

14. The Government of Azerbaijan suggested, as a thematic focus, the role of women and girls, which human rights education efforts should help to enhance, and as a target sector, populations returning to territories affected by conflicts and contaminated with landmines and other explosive devices.

15. The Government of Brazil, through its Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship, proposed issues related to media education as a thematic focus for the fifth phase, stressing the need to develop the ability of learners to critically interpret media information from a human rights perspective. In the digital age, this included the ability to use digital information and communication technologies to communicate, access and disseminate information, produce knowledge, solve problems and exercise leadership in personal and collective life. Through its Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Government of Brazil also proposed law enforcement officials as a target sector, and the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts as a focus area.

16. To prioritize equal access to education and livelihood opportunities by children with disabilities and children from underprivileged families, the Government of Brunei suggested these two groups as target sectors for the fifth phase. It also suggested their full participation in society as a focus area.

17. The Government of Colombia proposed a focus on the non-formal education sector, given that the formal education sector had already been addressed in previous phases of the World Programme. Within non-formal education, the Government of Colombia proposed a list of possible target sectors, including ethnic minorities, peasant communities, communities living in rural and/or remote areas, workers in the informal economy and employees of non-governmental organizations. In terms of focus areas, the Government of Colombia proposed the history and principles of human rights, international and regional human rights instruments, and the similarities and differences between international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

18. The Government of El Salvador suggested several target sectors and corresponding focus areas. For example, it suggested focusing on the right of children to be heard in the administrative justice system, given that this right was often not respected. It also suggested addressing emerging challenges, such as the virtual world, the employability of young people, climate change, and the protection of groups in vulnerable situations.

19. The Government of Italy proposed focusing on education for sustainable development and environmental issues for primary and secondary school students.

20. The Government of Kazakhstan suggested digital rights and personal data protection as focus areas for the fifth phase, noting that citizens were largely unaware of the importance of these issues. According to the Government of Kazakhstan, regulations alone could not ensure the realization of the right to privacy in the digital age, hence the need for increased efforts in the field of education.

21. The Government of Kuwait recommended reinforcing the role of schools in promoting human rights values in the community. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education, a holistic approach should target a number of different actors: school leaders, local administrations, civil society organizations, private businesses and researchers. Moreover, the practice of community service would be encouraged.

22. Referring to the tense geopolitical situation at the global level, the Government of Lithuania proposed that the fifth phase be devoted to the protection of the human rights of persons in vulnerable and critical situations. Furthermore, concerned by the fragmented

protection of the rights of intersex persons worldwide, the Government of Lithuania also suggested including a focus on their rights.

23. Noting the key role played by parliamentarians for the realization of human rights at the national level, the Government of Malaysia proposed parliamentarians as a target sector for the fifth phase. The Government emphasized that, as part of their main functions, parliamentarians not only ratified human rights treaties, but also oversaw the work of the executive in fulfilling its human rights obligations, including in the delivery of transparent, accountable and efficient public services to its people.

24. The Government of Mauritius suggested that the fifth phase focus on environmental issues, in particular the impact of climate change on biodiversity, the consequences of marine pollution and extreme weather events. Additionally, the Government of Mauritius suggested focusing on agricultural knowledge as a means to support adaptation and mitigation actions to combat these issues.

25. The Government of Morocco proposed that climate change and its repercussions on children's rights should be the focus of the fifth phase.

26. To build on the achievements and challenges of the fourth phase, dedicated to youth, the Government of Slovenia suggested that youth should continue to be the focus of the World Programme in its fifth phase, with a particular emphasis on youth belonging to marginalized groups or living in challenging contexts, including in crisis, conflict and post-conflict settings. In addition, the Government of Slovenia suggested the rights of girls and women as a thematic focus for the fifth phase, with a view to contributing to the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights and to the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices. As such, the fifth phase could also target health-care personnel, educators and humanitarian actors.

27. In addition, Slovenia submitted, as a relevant input, a report on a meeting of Member States on 24 May 2023, organized by its Permanent Mission in Geneva and sponsored by the governmental Platform for Human Rights Education and Training (which also includes Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, the Philippines, Senegal and Thailand), which provided States with a space to exchange their views. Participants suggested various target sectors as possible focuses for the fifth phase, including children and youth, parliamentarians, and groups in situations of vulnerability, including women and girls. They also suggested various focus areas and thematic issues, including the protection of human rights in crisis situations, as well as future-oriented issues such as the environment, climate change and digital technology. They stressed the importance of the focus of the World Programme being relevant to learners in different contexts and significant for the years to come.

28. The Government of Togo, through its National Commission for UNESCO, recommended that various educational approaches inform the fifth phase – including digital, media and information literacy, global citizenship education, education for sustainable development, and peace education. It emphasized that, in the current digital age, it was important to consider the role of media and information in determining the capacity of learners – especially young people – to enjoy their rights as autonomous subjects and to act as responsible citizens in favour of a just, peaceful and sustainable future.

III. Responses from intergovernmental organizations

29. UNESCO suggested that the fifth phase of the World Programme should focus on human rights education in the digital age for youth, with a view to enabling young people to engage in digital environments safely, critically and responsibly. UNESCO stressed that while young people were often at the forefront of the fight against inequalities and injustices, both online and offline, they were also among those most adversely affected by invasions of privacy, disinformation, hate speech and recruitment by violent extremist groups in digital spaces.

30. In the past two years, UNESCO had been leading a relevant initiative pertaining to human rights education, namely the revision of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human

Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.⁷ The recommendation has been used to measure human rights education efforts by governments as part of their implementation of target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which focuses on ensuring that learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including through human rights and global citizenship education. The revision aims to take stock of the threats and disruptions that have arisen and that may have an impact on education since the recommendation was adopted, in particular those associated with climate change and the digital revolution. After consensus has been achieved on the revised text, the instrument is expected to be submitted to the General Conference of UNESCO at its forty-second session for final adoption, in November 2023.

31. The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth reported on a virtual consultation with youth representatives about the possible focus of the fifth phase, which the Office held on 23 May 2023. The youth representatives expressed their full support for the current fourth phase of the World Programme, dedicated to youth, and identified young human rights defenders as a relevant target sector for the next phase, given the key role they play as change-makers in their community and the multiple obstacles they face in exercising their rights. Several thematic issues were also suggested, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, climate action, political participation and digital rights. In light of the virtual youth consultation, the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth recommended that the fifth phase continue to focus on youth, putting a stronger emphasis on their role as human rights defenders, educators and advocates. The Office called for the World Programme to recognize young people's agency, resilience and positive contributions as agents of change, in line with the system-wide United Nations Youth Strategy, also known as Youth 2030: working with and for young people.

32. The Human Rights Education Youth Programme of the Council of Europe, following a consultation with some of its stakeholders and partners, and taking stock of the third review of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, proposed as target sectors for the fifth phase young people in vulnerable situations, since they experience the most difficulties in accessing their human rights, including their right to human rights education. Under this category, the Human Rights Education Youth Programme listed young people experiencing intersectional discrimination, including those belonging to Roma, refugee and LGBTI communities, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and those affected by armed conflict and its consequences. Two specific thematic focus areas were also suggested, namely the relationship between human rights and the digital environment, and the relationship between human rights and environmental justice.

IV. Responses from special procedures of the Human Rights Council

33. In a joint submission, the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls and the Special Rapporteur on the right to education suggested the inclusion of sexuality education in the thematic focus of the fifth phase of the World Programme. The mandate holders stressed that sexuality education promoted human rights, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, healthy and respectful relationships, well-being, empathy, respect, autonomy, consent and diversity, and referred to the Compendium on Sexuality Education⁸ that they had recently produced.

⁷ Information on the revision of the UNESCO recommendation is available on the UNESCO website at <https://www.unesco.org/en/education/1974recommendation>.

⁸ The Compendium on Sexuality Education is available on the OHCHR website at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/tools-and-resources/compendium-comprehensive-sexuality-education>.

V. Responses from national human rights institutions

34. The Office of the National Ombudsman (Defensor del Pueblo de la Nación) of Argentina stressed that the three branches of government, at various administrative levels, needed to be trained to exercise their respective roles in accordance with relevant national and international human rights legal frameworks. For this target sector, the Office of the National Ombudsman proposed a focus on the rights of groups in vulnerable situations, including children and adolescents, women, persons with disabilities, migrants and Indigenous Peoples, in order to tackle racial discrimination and other forms of institutional violence.

35. The Office of the Ombudsman (Procurador de los Derechos Humanos) of Guatemala suggested several target sectors and corresponding focus areas: first, community leaders, with a focus on food security, as food is fundamental for physical and intellectual development; second, educators, with a focus on healthy ageing, so that older people are better supported to maintain good health, independence and quality of life; and third, women's groups, with a focus on the right to work, as women's work in the informal sector or the household is often not recognized.

36. The Human Rights Commission (Comisión de Derechos Humanos) of Mexico City proposed early childhood (up until 8 years of age) as a target sector, with special attention devoted to children with disabilities, children on the move and children in street situations. The Human Rights Commission emphasized that early childhood was determinant for a person's later physical and mental health, emotional security, and cultural and personal identity, and for the development of skills and competences. Other thematic focus areas were also suggested, such as the rights to equality and non-discrimination, to be heard, and to play.

37. The Office of the Ombudsman of Namibia proposed two target sectors: persons with disabilities on the one hand, and Indigenous and minority groups on the other hand, given that both groups face barriers in accessing their rights because of entrenched patterns of exclusion. For the Office of the Ombudsman, those belonging to these groups should be made aware of their rights, so that they can better claim them; at the same time, society at large should be educated about their particular needs as well as about strategies to include them in areas such as education, employment and health.

38. The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights recommended that the fifth phase focus on politicians, parliamentarians and members of regional and local councils, with a view to building their knowledge of rights-based good governance as well as of international legal frameworks and mechanisms. The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights stated that as previous phases of the World Programme had focused largely on rights holders, including children and youth, the fifth phase should address duty bearers' roles and responsibilities in the realization of human rights.

39. For the Office of the Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo) of Panama, it was important that work related to the first four phases of the World Programme be strengthened. With regard to the fifth phase, the Office of the Ombudsman recommended a number of thematic issues: rights of persons in vulnerable situations, prevention of racial discrimination and profiling, prevention of gender-based violence, right to a healthy environment, climate change, information and communication technologies, business and human rights, and prevention of harassment and discrimination in the workplace. In terms of target sectors, the Office of the Ombudsman suggested focusing, on the one hand, on civil society organizations, to strengthen their capacities to support the population through community-based work, and on the other hand, on private companies, to increase the companies' knowledge of their responsibility to respect human rights in line with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

40. The Portuguese Ombudsperson (Provedor de Justiça) proposed that the fifth phase aim to enhance the appreciation of migrants' cultural diversity among the general public, given the current incidents related to xenophobia, racism, racial discrimination and religious intolerance worldwide. According to the Ombudsperson, education and training for tolerance and respect of the "other" should include information about migrants' positive contributions to their host societies. In addition to the general public, the Ombudsperson recommended

also targeting law enforcement officials and employees working in administrative detention centres and accommodation facilities for migrants.

41. The National Human Rights Commission (Commission Nationale des Droits de l'Homme) of Togo suggested a number of target sectors for the fifth phase, considering that these had not yet been sufficiently addressed by the World Programme: groups in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, persons with albinism, and migrants and refugees, and also workers and trade unionists, civil society organizations and human rights defenders. Several thematic human rights issues were also suggested: rights of groups in vulnerable situations, workers' social protection, corporate social responsibility, freedom of opinion and expression, safety at work, and freedom of association, including for trade unionists.

VI. Responses from national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up

42. The Interministerial Committee on Treaties, Conventions and Protocols of Botswana proposed that the fifth phase strengthen the first, second and fourth phases of the World Programme, by extending training to employees in educational institutions. Moreover, the Interministerial Committee proposed a number of additional target sectors: persons with disabilities, national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, judicial officers, parents and community members, and parliamentarians and traditional leaders, with a specific focus on issues related to gender-based violence.

43. The National Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights suggested a number of target sectors for the fifth phase: children and youth, who can be powerful agents of change; women and girls, to empower them to advocate for their own rights and participate fully in society; marginalized groups and groups in vulnerable situations, including refugees, migrants, Indigenous Peoples and persons with disabilities, to ensure that human rights education efforts are truly inclusive and recognize the unique challenges and perspectives of these groups; civil society and community-based organizations, to build their capacities to advocate for human rights; and businesses and corporations, to promote ethical and socially responsible practices that respect the rights of workers and consumers. In addition, the National Centre suggested that the fifth phase should focus on human rights education in the digital age, in particular by leveraging technology to reach wider audiences and by addressing the challenges posed by online disinformation and hate speech.

VII. Responses from civil society

44. Amnesty International submitted consolidated inputs from its Human Rights Education Network, reflecting views of national sections in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa regions. According to Amnesty International, the fifth phase of the World Programme should be directed to uphold the rights of marginalized groups and adopt a holistic and intersectional lens to support access to human rights education for as many people as possible, both inside and outside the school environment. In terms of priority target sectors, Amnesty International identified children and young people, marginalized groups such as Indigenous Peoples, racialized communities, LGBTI persons and refugees, and professional groups such as journalists, health-care professionals and law enforcement officials. Amnesty International also suggested a focus on the thematic human rights issues of discrimination, gender, climate change, freedom of expression, and economic, social and cultural rights.

45. In order to facilitate the social integration of migrants and refugees and empower them as equal members of society, the Association for the Promotion of Human Rights (Association pour la Promotion des Droits Humains) proposed that the fifth phase focus on people on the move as well as on those who work with them, including managers of camps and accommodation facilities, law enforcement, border and detention officials, health-care professionals, language teachers and social workers. The Association for the Promotion of Human Rights recommended drawing inspiration from intercultural education approaches recognizing the positive contribution brought about by cultural diversity.

46. To address the progressive erosion of the rule of law around the world, the Baltasar Garzón International Foundation (Fundación Internacional Baltasar Garzón) recommended that judges, prosecutors and lawyers be the target sectors of the fifth phase, as these actors all had a responsibility and a role to play in ensuring that rights holders had effective access to justice. According to the Foundation, providing human rights training to professionals in the judicial system is especially important given the worrying trend of increasing strategic lawsuits against public participation leveraged against activists and journalists. It would, moreover, contribute to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

47. Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education recommended that the fifth phase continue focusing on youth, with a view to enabling young people to think critically about the impact of their behaviours, to problem-solve, and to take action to promote greater respect and inclusion in their communities. Moreover, Equitas suggested that the fifth phase focus on gender equality and be informed by a gender-transformative, feminist approach. Such an approach would seek to examine gender norms, tackle the root causes of gender inequalities, and address the barriers and specific needs of women, men, girls, boys, and two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (2SLGTBQI+) persons.

48. For the fifth phase, Facing Facts proposed a focus on digital education for multi-stakeholder communities of practice that have a responsibility in addressing hate crime and hate speech. To that end, Facing Facts suggested building on the target sectors of the second phase, in particular civil servants and law enforcement officials, and placing greater emphasis on digital learning, with a focus on access, quality and collaboration.

49. Human Rights Education Associates suggested that the fifth phase should focus on Indigenous groups as a target sector, with an emphasis on climate justice as it connects to the right to development and wealth inequality. It noted that Indigenous groups were particularly vulnerable to the climate crisis because of the overlap between their traditional territories and naturally resourced areas targeted by extractive industries. For Human Rights Education Associates, human rights education initiatives for Indigenous groups would increase their ability to engage in policy reform and community grass-roots initiatives, while empowering them to bring their traditional ways of knowing and being in relation to the environment to the forefront, thereby contributing to new pathways around solutions to the climate crisis.

50. In addition, Human Rights Education Associates submitted a consolidated report on an online consultation with its global human rights education network – made up of 8,000 members in more than 90 countries – carried out between 1 and 17 May 2023. There was a total of 62 respondents from 45 countries from all regions of the world. The respondents were primarily from the civil society and higher education sectors. The report highlighted the fact that the infusion of basic human rights education within the formal and non-formal education of children and youth remained a sustained interest. Similarly, there was a strong focus on educating groups in vulnerable situations about their human rights, so that they could know and claim their rights, as well as on educating possible allies among more privileged populations. Different target sectors and thematic issues as a response to current global challenges were also highlighted, such as Indigenous Peoples and climate change, refugees and asylum-seekers, and civic participation for human rights and democracy.

51. iCure Health International, jointly with Citizen Outreach Coalition, expressed concern about the low quality of medical and health-care services in various nations, especially for marginalized groups. They proposed that the fifth phase should target health-care professionals, with a view to improving the quality of medical and health-care services offered and thereby the lives of millions of people across the world. They stressed that such an inclusivity-centred human rights training programme would entail prioritizing a non-discriminatory form of health care that focused on the rights of LGBTQI+ patients, addressed racial health disparities, promoted culturally responsive care, and supported victims of trafficking.

52. The Institute for Development and Human Rights (Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos) submitted, jointly with the National Human Rights Movement (Movimento Nacional de Direitos Humanos), a consolidated report on a consultation conducted from 20 April to 15 May 2023 with the technical support of UNESCO in Brazil

and in partnership with the Brazilian Network for Human Rights Education (Rede Brasileira de Educação em Direitos Humanos). There was a total of 40 respondents – educators from elementary to higher education levels and members of civil society – from four of the five regions of Brazil. As a result, the Institute for Development and Human Rights and the National Human Rights Movement suggested that the fifth phase should continue focusing on youth and devote particular attention to addressing online disinformation and hate speech.

53. Make Mothers Matter suggested that, building on previous phases, the fifth phase should target parents and other caregivers, in particular women who were subjected to intersecting forms of discrimination, including on the basis of age, race, migration or socioeconomic status, so that they could be empowered to better claim their rights. Make Mothers Matter also suggested a thematic focus on care, as women continued to bear the brunt as a result of the inequitable distribution of unpaid domestic work and responsibilities.

54. Noting that rapid developments in the fields of artificial intelligence and neurotechnology had the potential to profoundly alter the human experience and affect individual thoughts, privacy and freedoms, New Humanity proposed that the fifth phase focus on digital challenges and “neuro rights” and target professionals working in the technological sector. Moreover, New Humanity called for the promotion of a relational approach to human rights as a means to reinforce their interrelated, interdependent, indivisible and universal nature.

55. The NGO Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning submitted a consolidated report on a consultative process among its members. Building on the fourth phase, the Working Group recommended that youth and their duty bearers be the target sectors of the fifth phase. Duty bearers would include those in the formal education sector, such as teachers and policymakers, as well as those in non-formal and informal education, such as families, caregivers, religious leaders, employers, community leaders and educators. The Working Group recommended the adoption of an intergenerational, holistic, values-based, context-appropriate approach, and that the arts and sports be considered as impactful educational methods.

56. OBOR Legal Research Centre expressed concern about the increasing pervasiveness of artificial intelligence and automation, which had affected the right to work, in particular by marginalized groups. OBOR Legal Research Centre thus called for the World Programme to raise awareness of the right to work as being central to the achievement of socioeconomic development. OBOR Legal Research Centre further suggested that the fifth phase target the private sector, policymakers and the general public, and emphasize the duties of governments and the responsibilities of companies with regard to the right to work.

57. Noting that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had affected young people’s access to education – including human rights education – during the fourth phase of the World Programme, Soka Gakkai International proposed to continue focusing on youth in the fifth phase, with an emphasis on young people with marginalized backgrounds or in vulnerable situations, including young refugees, migrants, internally displaced persons, LGBTIQ+ persons, young persons with disabilities, young women, youth living in extreme poverty, Indigenous youth and young people from the Global South. Soka Gakkai International stressed that human rights education focusing on young people who were marginalized and in situations of vulnerability was an indispensable step to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and to leaving no one behind. It would, moreover, help reduce their vulnerability, facilitate their participation in the formulation of laws and policies that concerned them, foster equality and help tackle discrimination and xenophobia.

58. UN Etxea – Basque Country Association for UNESCO (UN Etxea – Asociación del País Vasco para la UNESCO) proposed that the fifth phase should target groups in vulnerable situations and focus on peaceful coexistence, in line with target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Stressing the mutually reinforcing nature of human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Etxea noted that the principles of universality and inclusivity called for special attention to be devoted to groups whose rights had historically been denied. According to UN Etxea, human rights education had the potential to contribute to addressing diversity in a positive way and to contribute to building the foundations for a post-2030 world.

59. UPR Info noted that although judges, prosecutors and lawyers were critical to the protection of human rights and to safeguarding the rule of law, they had not yet been targeted by the World Programme. Hence, UPR Info suggested that the fifth phase should target those actors, whose work ensured access to justice and the enforcement of human rights standards. UPR Info also stressed the importance of groups living in vulnerable situations being considered in all judicial proceedings, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

60. Four individuals also submitted their views. A man from Afghanistan suggested that the fifth phase aim to empower women and raise awareness about gender-based violence. A woman from Australia proposed communities that were particularly vulnerable to human rights violations and abuses, such as persons with disabilities, refugees, Indigenous Peoples and sexual minorities, as target sectors. A researcher from Argentina recommended that the fifth phase target teachers in primary and secondary education and focus on environmental education. A human rights defender from Mexico underscored the central role of duty bearers in the realization of human rights, and the special position of children and adolescents, who represented the future of society. He suggested focusing on freedom of opinion and expression, as well as on due process in criminal justice proceedings.

VIII. Conclusions

61. **The views submitted by States, intergovernmental organizations, special procedures of the Human Rights Council, national human rights institutions, national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up, and civil society on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education proposed diverse approaches and priorities, often reflecting specific national and regional contexts or mandates.**

62. **Several respondents stressed that, during the fifth phase, all stakeholders should continue to implement human rights education programmes in the sectors covered by the four previous phases of the World Programme – namely the formal education system (primary, secondary and higher education and vocational training), civil servants, media professionals and journalists, and youth. In their submissions, respondents often proposed these as target sectors for the fifth phase.**

63. **An overall consideration mentioned by many respondents was that the fifth phase (2025–2029) would lay the foundations for a post-2030 world. Hence, several respondents noted that it should contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions as well as target 4.7 on quality education. Some highlighted the strategic importance of leveraging synergies between human rights education and other educational components of target 4.7, including education for sustainable development and global citizenship education. It is relevant to note, in this context, that the ongoing process of revision of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms – used by UNESCO to measure implementation of target 4.7 – has been initiated inter alia to reflect, among educational priorities, the need to address recent threats associated with climate change and the digital revolution.**

64. **A majority of respondents suggested having marginalized groups and individuals in vulnerable situations as a priority for the fifth phase, given that these groups and individuals faced the most obstacles in accessing their rights. These typically included, among others, women, children, youth, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants, Indigenous Peoples, racial, religious, linguistic or other minorities, persons with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, people living in remote or rural areas, workers in the informal economy, people living in extreme poverty and people affected by crises or conflicts. Respondents explained that engaging with these groups through human rights education would reduce their vulnerability,**

facilitate their participation in the formulation of laws and policies concerning them, and foster equality.

65. Among these respondents, a large number emphasized the importance of adopting an intersectional lens, by considering the particular needs and perspectives of women, children and youth from marginalized background or in vulnerable situations, in accordance with the objective of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind. These included, inter alia, youth and children with disabilities, young refugees, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, young people affected by armed conflict, children from disadvantaged families and children in street situations.

66. Many respondents also recommended that the fifth phase continue focusing on youth, considering that the COVID-19 pandemic struck only a few months after the start of the fourth phase, seriously reducing education opportunities for youth, including in the area of human rights education. Several respondents highlighted the key role that young people played as changemakers in their communities and the multiple obstacles they faced in exercising their rights.

67. Other target sectors proposed by a number of respondents were professional groups with roles and responsibilities in the effective realization of human rights. For instance, it was noted that parliamentarians not only ratified human rights treaties, but also oversaw the work of the executive in fulfilling its human rights obligations. Judges, prosecutors and lawyers were also deemed critical to the protection of human rights and the safeguard of the rule of law, as their action or inaction had a direct impact on access to justice for rights holders and the application of human rights standards.

68. Other suggested target sectors included human rights defenders and other civil society actors, considering the pivotal role they played in supporting the population through community-based work; private businesses, including in the technology sector, with a view to promoting ethical and socially responsible business practices that upheld the rights of workers and consumers in line with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; families and caregivers, as their education efforts were often overlooked because of the unequal gendered distribution of unpaid domestic labour; and health-care professionals, who should be trained to prioritize the specific needs of patients belonging to marginalized groups.

69. With regard to thematic issues on which to focus educational efforts, three areas stood out in equal measure: human rights in the digital space, environmental rights and climate change, and gender equality.

70. Given the advances in the fields of artificial intelligence and neurotechnology, which had the potential to profoundly affect individuals' thoughts, privacy and freedoms, several respondents noted that regulation of the technology sector alone was unlikely to guarantee the effective realization of human rights in the digital age. Hence, developing a human rights-informed digital, media and information literacy was seen as crucial to enable learners to engage in digital environments safely, critically and responsibly. This thematic focus was largely associated with youth as a target sector, as young people – though more tech-savvy and connected than older populations – were often among those most adversely affected by invasions of privacy, disinformation, hate speech and recruitment by extremist groups in digital spaces.

71. In the light of the worsening global climate crisis, a number of respondents called for the World Programme to address climate action and climate justice as a priority. According to these respondents, a focus on environmental and climate change education should encompass the impact of climate change on biodiversity, the consequences of marine pollution and extreme weather events. Some respondents highlighted the specific standpoint of Indigenous Peoples in relation to this thematic issue: on the one hand, Indigenous Peoples could be particularly vulnerable to natural degradation and depredation; on the other hand, they could contribute to new pathways around solutions to the climate crisis, if they were empowered to leverage their ancestral knowledge through human rights education.

72. The third thematic issue highlighted by many respondents was gender equality. In order to remove the barriers to the full and equal participation of women and girls, as well as of sexual minorities, in society, some respondents called for the World Programme to adopt a gender-transformative approach through education, to examine gender norms and tackle the root causes of gender inequalities, and to include sexual and reproductive health and rights and the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, and child, early and forced marriage. The benefit of comprehensive sexuality education was particularly highlighted, as a means to promote human rights, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, healthy and respectful relationships, well-being, empathy, respect, autonomy, consent and diversity.

73. Some submissions suggested other thematic focuses, such as economic, social and cultural rights: respondents noted the importance of access to quality food for physical and intellectual development; the centrality of the right to work to achieve socioeconomic development, in particular in the age of automation; and healthy ageing to maintain good health, independence and quality of life. Civil and political rights were also mentioned, such as freedom of association for trade unionists, access to justice for litigants, and protection from strategic lawsuits against public participation leveraged against activists and journalists.

74. The results of the consultation on the target sectors, focus areas or thematic human rights issues for the fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education point to youth and to various groups and individuals in vulnerable situations as possible priority target groups, and to the issues of human rights in the digital space, environmental rights and climate change, and gender equality as possible priority focus areas.
