Learning to Live Together

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INTRODUCTION

Handling conflict constructively is central to human life. As human beings, we must learn to walk our own walk and talk our own talk, giving rise to skills of cooperation and compromise with others. In stable times, social norms and structures facilitate this, although some people benefit more than others. Nowadays, however, the rapid pace of social change means that social institutions and family traditions may seem out of date, unfair or wrong. Parents worry about whether their children will survive the hazards of peer pressure for risky behaviours during adolescence. At the national level, many countries, especially those with with marked economic disparities between ethnic or religious groups, face tension, political instability or civil war. No wonder then that the Delors Commission on education for the twenty-first century concluded that 'Learning to live together, learning to live with others. This type of learning is probably one of the major issues in education today.'[1] [2] The theme of learning to live together was taken up by UNESCO and others, as an umbrella title for initiatives designed to lessen the risk of armed conflict and promote non-violent approaches to solving interpersonal, national and international problems.[3]

MULTIPLE RESPONSES, OVERLAPPING GOALS

There have been many educational initiatives with the aim of helping people cooperate and live together in peace. Most deal with a particular goal rather than the whole spectrum of learning to live together. 'Values education' offers a basic framework for interpersonal relationships.[4] 'Education for conflict resolution' teaches how to deal with disputes at personal or societal level.[5] 'Education for peace' aims at building 'positive peace', in which people cooperate and negotiate to solve problems.[6] Veteran peace educator Betty Reardon (1995) prepared a teachers' guide to tolerance education which covered similar ground, in connection with the United Nations Year of Tolerance (see Table 1).[7]

Table 1. Tolerance: general learning goals

Values	Knowledge	Capacities and skills
Human dignity/ rights	Varieties of human, personal and cultural identities, social issues	Living with diversity: cross-cultural co-operation; using human rights standards to make judgements
Social justice/democracy	Multiple forms of democratic processes and governance	Exercising responsibility: critical reflection; communication of facts and opinions; political decision-making
Co-operative non-violent society/ peace	Alternative ways of responding constructively to human differences and conflicts	Managing conflict: discussion and debate; conflict resolution; reconciliation; social reconstruction; co-operative problem-solving and task achievement

Source: Reardon, 1997:Unit 1, p.53

'Education for human rights' is based on values acknowledged by the international community and their application to civic, social and economic aspects of social organisation, including peace and conflict resolution.[8] The ICRC's study programme 'Exploring humanitarian law' complements human

rights education by promoting rights specific to the context of armed conflict, with goals such as the welfare of non-combatants.[9] 'Education for mutual understanding' was the title of a programme in Northern Ireland intended to help reconcile historic enmities. It was succeeded by a programme of 'citizenship education,' with the goal of promoting acceptance of diversity and inclusion, and building respect for human rights and social responsibilities, equality and justice, democracy and active participation.[10]

These goals have actually been committed to by the international community, from the writing of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the ongoing World Programme of Human Rights Education (UNHCHR, 2006). All but two countries have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child which sets forward clear educational goals in this area (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Education for peace, human rights and citizenship under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989)
States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: *[...]* *(b)   The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms [...]* *(c)   The development of respect for [...] the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;* *(d)   The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.* *(e)   The development of respect for the natural environment. (Article 29)*

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000, governments committed themselves to conducting education programmes 'in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict'. They further committed themselves to 'life skills' education that would, inter alia, help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, which is one of the biggest threats to children's right to life and welfare in parts of Africa and increasingly threatening in other regions.[11] Education to prevent HIV/AIDS, like education to reduce substance abuse, aims at respectful relationships that permit negotiation of safer lifestyles despite peer pressures towards risky behaviour. To achieve these health-related goals, the education programmes must cover the themes of values education, education for conflict resolution and human rights, in their application at the level of interpersonal relationships. 'Life skills' for HIV prevention and reduction of substance abuse are thus another central aspect of 'learning to live together', the more so because effective education towards any of the goals cited above requires young people to apply key concepts to their own life situations; and for young people, pressures for unwanted or unprotected sex and substance abuse are often major challenges in their daily lives.[12]

To date, there has been insufficient linkage between advocates of life skills education for health and advocates of education for peace, human rights and citizenship.[13] Moreover, there has been weak linkage between advocates within the peace-human rights-citizenship group, with peace educators claiming the lead position since they focus on building a better society while human rights advocates use the existence of international human rights instruments to claim that they must take the lead. The overlap between the various goals relevant to learning to live together is evident, and a more holistic approach is clearly needed (see Table 3).

Table 3: Learning Goals of Educational Initiatives

Educational initiative	Nature of learning goals

Peace education	Conflict resolution, peace, reconciliation, tolerance, respectful relationships, respect for human rights, gender equality, civic participation...
Education for mutual understanding	Social cohesion, respect for diversity, inclusive national identity...
Multicultural/intercultural education	Tolerance, respect for diversity, anti-racism, non-discrimination...
Human rights education	Respect for human rights and responsibilities, rights of women, children and minorities, tolerance, non-discrimination, prevention of bullying, civic participation...
'Life-skills'/ health education	Preventive health/HIV-AIDS prevention, prevention of substance abuse, respect for the health rights of others, gender equality, respectful relationships...
Citizenship education	Active and responsible participation in civic/political life, democracy, gender equality, respect for human rights, tolerance...
Education for sustainable development	Environmental sustainability, respect for the rights and welfare of all...
Humanitarian education	Respect for humanitarian norms, humanitarian acts, non-discrimination...
Values education	Internalization of values of peace, respect and concern for others.....[14]

The above-mentioned goals are important to all children and young people, and should be explicitly catered for in school curricula, as part of a strategic approach to 'learning to live together'. The degree of focus on particular themes, and the titles chosen, will vary according to national circumstances as well as the age of the students; programme titles should have the maximum motivational force for those concerned.

CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES, CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

The goals mentioned above differ from the goals underlying core school studies such as literacy and numeracy, because of their values orientation and the need to develop personal and interpersonal skills to be able to apply these values in real life situations. If the goal is for students to learn and internalise prosocial attitudes and behaviours, then the teaching-learning process has to reach the inner seat of personal identity, to enable the sense of 'us and them' to be broadened to 'us.' The challenge is to replace exclusion and antipathy by empathy and concern for the basic needs of human beings beyond our immediate friends, relatives and our 'side' of a conflict. This requires experiential approaches such as role plays to provide practice in responding constructively to conflictual situations. For students in lower primary school, the focus may be on core skills and values for living together. In later years of schooling, both the core skills and values and their applications, with associated knowledge and procedural frameworks, need specific attention.[15]

As an example, the core framework used in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) peace education programme (now known as the Peace Education Programme of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, INEE) centres on developing the skills outlined in Table 4, presented through stimulus activities which are followed by class discussion applying the new experiences to the idea of peaceful living.[16]

Table 4. Curriculum framework for the INEE Peace Education Programme

Note: The curriculum is repeated with different content and applications for each year of schooling from grade 1 to 8, and is also used for community education. • Understanding similarities and differences (for older children, exclusion and inclusion) • Active listening • Better communication (two-way)

- Handling emotions
- Understanding that perceptions vary and avoiding bias
- Understanding others' situation and feelings (empathy practice)
- Cooperation
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Problem analysis and problem solving
- Negotiation
- Mediation
- Conflict resolution (with conflict transformation and reconciliation)
- Human rights
- What have you learned about peace?

Very similar curriculum elements are suggested in UNICEF's framework of life skills education for HIV/AIDS prevention, and in the HIV/AIDS education materials developed by UNESCO and WHO (1994).[17] In this case, there is special emphasis on assertiveness and refusal skills, applied to negotiation of win-win solutions between young people when one asks another for unwanted or unprotected sex. Research on AIDS education suggests that repeated practice in such negotiation is essential for the young person to identify with these responses sufficiently to be able to practise them in real life (Kirby et al., 2006).

The pedagogy required for themes of learning to live together is very demanding on teachers, except in the earliest years of schooling. Active learning methods are needed, which are unfamiliar to teachers in many countries. In developing countries especially, active learning approaches are held back by a lack of classroom resources as well as a tradition of respect for elders that can preclude holding discussions with them. Facilitating discussion is also held back by a lack of familiarity with the subject matter and of reference materials. The sensitivity of the topics, ranging from human rights to sexual matters, adds to the hesitation of teachers. Even in Northern Ireland, where teachers have received good training in active learning and facilitating discussion, and have reasonably adequate resources, the political sensitivity of 'education for mutual understanding' was keenly felt (Smith & Robinson, 1996). Thus education for learning to live together requires major in-service training programmes as well as support for teachers' initial work in the classroom. For example, UNHCR's pilot programme of peace education in the refugee camps in Kenya provided the refugee teachers with two weeks' training in each of three successive school vacations, and with classroom support from trainers during the course of the term.[18]

In developing a unified curriculum framework for the goals relating to learning to live together, it is important to take note of the stages of cognitive and emotional development of children and adolescents, as well as the social context. Many approaches are possible. One idea is to focus more on the skills and values with younger children, while focusing more on their various applications for the older students (see Table 5).

Table 5. Exemplar holistic curriculum framework to help develop skills and values for learning to live together[19]

Initial Schooling (skills and values introduced, with application to simple life situations)	Middle Schooling (skills and values development, with application to different aspects of living together)
Similarities and differences	Similarities and differences: *Citizenship, human rights, diversity (CHRD)*
.	Inclusion/exclusion: *CHRD*
Active listening	Active listening *Peer mediation, Gender*
Communication	Communication: *Sexual and reproductive health/HIV-AIDS prevention (SRH)*
Handling Emotions	Handling emotions: *Gender, SRH*
Perceptions and Empathy	Perceptions and empathy: *CHRD, Gender*
Co-operation	Co-operation: *SRH, CHRD* *Environmental conservation (EC)*
	Assertiveness: *SRH, CHRD, Gender*
	Analysis: *CHRD, SRH*
Problem-Solving	Problem-Solving: *SRH, CHRD, Gender, EC*
Conflict Resolution	Conflict Resolution: *SRH, CHRD, Gender, EC*
Negotiation	Negotiation: *SRH, CHRD, Gender, EC*
Mediation	Mediation: *SRH, CHRD, Gender, EC*
Reconciliation	Reconciliation: *SRH, CHRD, Gender*

Illustrative Upper Schooling Modules (applying skills and values, with focus on specific topics)

Sexual and reproductive health, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other adolescent health risks (locally relevant themes)

- Communication
- Handling emotions
- Perceptions and empathy
- Assertiveness
- Negotiation

Peace, citizenship, human rights, diversity, humanitarian norms (locally relevant themes)

- Inclusion/exclusion
- Communication/assertiveness/advocacy
- Perceptions and empathy
- Co-operation
- Problem analysis and problem solving
- Negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution
- Reconciliation

Gender (locally relevant themes)

- Similarities and differences
- Active listening
- Communication
- Handling emotions
- Perceptions and empathy
- Co-operation
- Assertiveness
- Analysis
- Negotiation

Environment, other topics….

- Inclusion/exclusion
- Communication
- Co-operation, problem-solving, mediation, etc….
- Conflict
- Conflict resolution

One of the biggest controversies concerns the way learning to live together topics such as peace education and preventive health education for adolescents can be included in an already overcrowded school curriculum. Some people argue for 'infusion' or 'integration', with the idea that teachers can somehow insert the necessary activities into existing subjects and time allocations. This may be possible with well-trained and well-resourced teachers catering to very young children in developed country schools. Otherwise, experience suggests that new programmes should begin with separate lesson periods allocated specifically to the learning to live together topics, either timetabled as such or earmarked within 'carrier subjects'. In the preventive health literature, 'explicit' and 'officially timetabled' approaches of the 'separate subject' type or modifications of it are widely recommended, based on the failure of 'infusion' and 'integration' approaches.[20] See Table 6 for a comparison of intervention models.

Table 6. Comparison of intervention models for learning to live together themes

	Advantages	Typical problems
Integration/ infusion approaches	• A 'whole school' approach • Uses accepted school subjects • Many teachers involved • Potential for reinforcement	• Difficulty of ensuring cohesion and progression in what students learn (skills and values for peace, human rights, citizenship, preventive health behaviours) • Difficulty of accessing, training and supporting all teachers in skills-based experiential approaches and influencing all textbooks • Lack of lesson time for experiential activities and discussion • Can be lost among higher status elements of currriculum • Pressure to focus on examination topics • Some teachers do not see relevance to their subject • Potential for reinforcement seldom realized due to other barriers • Teacher turnover necessitates costly training and support programmes • Students may not become conscious of what is being taught or identify with the values of learning to live together
Cross-referencing approaches	• Special skills and values-focused lesson units prepared centrally for insertion by subject teachers as enrichment or application of certain topics means that information and guidance is provided to non-specialist teachers	• Difficulty of cross-referencing to subject syllabi • Difficulty of accessing, training and supporting teachers of subjects concerned in skills-based approaches • Lack of lesson time for experiential activities and discussion • Pressure to focus on examination topics • Teacher turnover necessitates costly training and support programmes
Carrier-subject approaches	• Teacher training and support easier because fewer teachers involved and some have relevant background due to their subject experience	• Risk of an inappropriate subject being chosen (eg. biology is less good than health education or civic education for HIV/AIDS education because of the social and personal issues, and the tendency of science teachers to focus only on transmission of knowledge)

	• Teachers more likely to see the relevance of the skills and values • Cheaper and faster to integrate the components into materials of one subject than to infuse them across all	• Needs an extra timetable period for new experiential content • Pressure to focus on examination topics • Some of the subject teachers may be unsuited to experiential approaches and facilitating discussion of sensitive topics • Teacher turnover necessitates long term training and support programmes for carrier subject teachers
Separate subject approaches	• The specially trained teacher needs intensive training but through constant practice gains competence and is motivated to keep the job by actually teaching the skills, values and behaviours required by his employers • Clear labelling of the subject and adequate time allocation assist students to internalize appropriate values and behaviours	• Requires decision to find space in existing timetable or add an additional school period to the school week • Pressures on the specially trained teachers to do other things, especially if their programme is given low status • In small isolated schools, the specialist teachers need additional tasks to fill their timetable • Teacher turnover necessitates long term training and support programmes but for a limited number of teachers

Adapted from Gillespie (2002) and Pamela Baxter (personal communication).

A good national or regional strategy is to introduce the new material and approaches in a pilot group of interested schools, and expand this network of schools on a progressive basis, with ongoing government support. This will avoid having the programme damaged by bad publicity generated by reluctant or ineffective schools forced into an unwelcome compulsory scheme. The network expansion approach will also generate experience of what works well, so that the best elements of the programme can be built into future revisions of the national curricula and textbooks.[21]

IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP AND LONG TERM SUPPORT

The key figures in educational innovation at the school level are the head teachers, whose support for any learning to live together initiative is essential. For a national programme, there needs to be a team of influential educators within and outside the education ministry who are committed to this area over the long term. Funding for an initiative in the field of learning to live together can be phased down after the initial period but if it is phased out then the programme is unlikely to endure. There have been many initiatives in this area which have lasted as long as the enthusiasts who started them or while a particular crisis was on international television. Learning to live together is too important for this situation to continue. But a school or education system cannot accommodate separate initiatives in all the different areas mentioned above. To gain acceptance, the various goals within living peaceably together need to be seen in a unified holistic framework. Learning to live together should become a key educational aim of school and national leaders and a primary feature of curriculum discourse. See Table 7 for suggested policy guidelines.

**Table 7. Suggested policy guidelines for an integrated approach to skills and values development for
learning to live together: including goals of peace and conflict resolution, tolerance and respect for diversity, respect for human rights and humanitarian norms, active citizenship, environmental sustainability, non-pressured personal relationships and preventive health**

Element 1. Preparatory actions: identifying national and regional human resources for start up, participatory research, feasibility studies, stakeholder consensus-building

Element 2. Strong leadership policy commitment and vision statement

Element 3. Creation of a core development team including committed educators who have proven skills in experiential education and in-service teacher training

Element 4. Creation of a coherent and progressive age-appropriate unified curriculum framework for building skills, concepts, attitudes and values related to the goals of learning to live together, including preventive health

Element 5. Introduction of a 'separate subject' for behavioural skills and values, with an appropriate motivational title, or series of titles, for one period a week throughout the years of schooling. This subject can be totally separate, or if necessary, an earmarked addition to an existing 'carrier' subject. It should have its own:

- Special title(s);
- Special time-slot in the timetable;
- Special active methodology;
- Special support materials based on a pedagogically sequenced curriculum;
- Specially identified and specially trained teachers;
- Special ongoing teacher support.

Element 6. Insertion of supporting course units/lessons units into existing subjects

Element 7. Textbook reform to exclude harmful material and introduce positive modeling of and skills for learning to live together related to the various goals

Element 8. Policy of government-supported step-wise expansion of network of participating schools and other education institutions and programmes (pre-school, vocational, non-formal, higher education) aiming towards universal coverage without diminution of quality

Element 9. Conflict resolution/'life-skills'/citizenship workshops for practising and trainee teachers

Element 10.   'Whole school' and 'whole community' approach, and multiple channels of communication

Element 11.   Research, monitoring and evaluation

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http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-109908004211)

[1] UNESCO (1996: 91). The Commission identified four key objectives: learning to learn, learning to be, learning to do, and learning to live together.

[2] The UN Human Security Commission likewise emphasised the need for education to tackle issues of living together, especially learning that we all have multiple overlapping identities (UN, 2003).

[3] The 46th inter-ministerial International Conference on Education focused on this theme (UNESCO, 2001) as did various related initiatives (UNESCO 2002, 2003). A comprehensive review of US (and some other) initiatives on preventing violence and hatred among children and adolescents addressed the same issues (Hamburg & Hamburg, 2004), elaborating on an earlier paper by David Hamburg (1994).

[4] See, for example, Hill (1998); UNESCO (2002). Living Values, an NGO, has programmes in many countries (Living Values, 2005).

[5] See Fountain (1997) for a manual on conflict resolution education aimed at trainers of primary school teachers; and Aber et al. (1999) for an example of the many initiatives in the USA.

[6] The notion of 'positive peace' has been developed by Johann Galtung (eg Galtung, 1969). A similarly broad view of peace education is taken by Fountain (1999). For a view of how peace education fits into NGO programming in developing countries, see Lowry et al. (2005).

[7] See also the International Network –Education for Democracy, Human Rights and Tolerance (www.tolerance-net.org).

[8] See, for example, the guide by Felisa Tibbitts (1997), Director and co-founder of the NGO Human Rights Education Associates.

[9] See ICRC (2001), Tawil (2001). The Exploring Humanitarian Law programme consists of study modules based on participative educational methods, and oriented to secondary schools and youth programmes.

[10] See Arlow (2001). For a case study of these Northern Ireland programmes, see Sinclair (2004: 93-99). COE (2006) provides an overview of education for democratic citizenship.

[11] See the Framework for Action agreed by ministers attending the conference (World Education Forum, 2000).

[12] Another daily challenge (at least as bystanders) is bullying. As stressed by Olweus (1996) and others, many students struggle with the challenge of living together, -becoming bullies or bullied during their school lives (and otherwise). This cannot be ignored by peace and human rights education, which has to connect with students' lives.

[13] UNICEF's website offers a broad interpretation of the concept of life skills, including HIV/AIDS prevention, health education, human rights and social issues, violence prevention and peacebuilding (http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/index_bigpicture.html). The 'Global education' programmes developed by Pike & Selby (1998), taken up by UNICEF's Middle East & North Africa Regional Office and elsewhere (Ashton, 2000), represented a unified view of interdependence and skills for living together (Sinclair, 2004: 99-105).

[14] This box and others in the paper are adapted from Sinclair (2004).

[15] In the UK, for example, there is an official requirement for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) of some sort throughout schooling, as well as the new citizenship programme for secondary schools. The 'Circle Time' approach (Mosley, 1998) has evolved to address values and interpersonal issues, with the teacher participating in the circle activities and discussions and assuming the role of a facilitator, even with very young children. A pilot programme is introducing emotional and social competence to schools in a number of locations in England (Weare & Gray, 2003). In the US, both 'life skills' and 'social and emotional learning' programmes cover this ground. Elias (2003) emphasises the need for *explicit* teaching of intrapersonal and interpersonal 'life skills' in *each* year of schooling, together with their application to locally relevant themes.

[16] The author helped launch this programme while at UNHCR. The programme was developed by Pamela Baxter, a specialist in civic education and teacher training, and was extended outside Kenya as part of some other UNHCR-funded programmes for refugees, internally displaced and returnee communities. For details see Baxter & Ikobwa (2005) and the overview volume in the set of INEE Peace Education Programme (PEP) materials (UNESCO, UNHCR & INEE, 2005). The 14 PEP manuals are most easily accessed through the INEE website, www.ineesite.org, using the dropdown menu for 'INEE Initiatives'). For an external evaluation, see Obura (2002) and an earlier review by Marc Sommers (2001).

[17] The UNICEF framework (Gillespie, 2002) is reproduced in Sinclair (2004, p.47 and p.55). For an overview of methodology and strategy for HIV/AIDS education especially in the developing country context, see UNICEF (2002). This builds on the important study by Gachuhi (1999), which showed that many programmes were poorly implemented. The classroom manual for HIV/AIDS education produced by WHO and UNESCO (1994) has three volumes, one each for curriculum designers, teachers and students. It provides many useful examples of assertiveness and negotiation applied to situations of pressure for unwanted or unprotected sex. UNESCO's International Bureau of Education has a global database of HIV/AIDS education programmes and is drawing on this to prepare a guidebook for educators (UNESCO, 2007).

[18] The focus was mainly on active learning methods, which are less used in developing than in developed countries, due to lack of resources, undertrained teachers and sometimes cultural factors, as well as orientation to heavily fact-based examinations. For an overview of the problems of introducing themes of learning to live together for populations affected by crisis and during post-conflict reconstruction, with teachers of limited experience and training, see UNESCO (2006).

[19] This framework is based a discussion between the author and Pamela Baxter and draws on the INEE curriculum framework. The latter was devised initially for East Africa through consultation with refugee educators and community members, and placed less emphasis on enhancing individual self-esteem and more on group work than other programmes; -this can be easily adjusted according to need. Pamela pointed out the difficulty of covering both concept and skill development and their application in a school year of effectively 28 teaching weeks with one period a week. This could be overcome if a two-yearly cycle was used for covering the range of skills and topics, instead of the present one year cycle.

[20] The problems of insertion have been widely discussed in the context of HIV/AIDS education, -for example in the review by UNICEF (2002), as well as Gachuhi (1999), World Bank (2003), UNESCO (2007). For further discussion, including examples from peace and environment education, see Sinclair (2004131-136). Mike Arlow (personal communication) noted that the separate subject approach to citizenship education in Northern Ireland, where the teacher becomes a facilitator –another human being, - alongside the students for that particular time-slot, enables the discussion to reach deeper levels of personal identity, with a greater impact on attitude change towards acceptance of diversity.

[21] For examples of the gradualist approach, see case studies presented in Sinclair (2004). Current examples include the World Bank supported peace education pilot programme in Sierra Leone (Bretherton et al., 2003) and a UN-supported pilot programme of education for peace, human rights and citizenship initiated in Liberia in late 2005 (James Ballah, personal communication).