

# Compilation of the outcomes of Regional Consultations

## Report

This document was prepared as part of the consultation process to inform the revision of the [1974 Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms](#).

This report has been compiled by UNESCO's Division for Peace and Sustainable Development based on the reports prepared by Regional Offices in Bangkok, Beirut, Dakar, Nairobi and Santiago, and with contributions from UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) and UNESCO's Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

For more information on the revision visit the dedicated [website](#).



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Published in 2022 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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# Compilation of the outcomes of Regional Consultations

## Executive Summary

UNESCO's 1974 Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace, and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms (hereinafter 'the 1974 Recommendation') was designed to guide Member States on how to ensure their education policies and plans embrace a culture of peace and international solidarity. However, the world has changed dramatically since 1974 and countries are being faced with new threats that endanger peace and human survival, such as climate change, pandemics, the spread of violent and hateful ideologies, conspiracy theories, persistent inequalities, discrimination and xenophobia, conflicts and regression of women's rights. These issues have transformed education across the globe in a multitude of ways.

While commonalities can be found across continents, many countries are faced with a variety of region-specific issues that are impacting access to quality education for all and lasting peace. Recognizing the need to consider the variety and complexity of these issues when revising the 1974 Recommendation, UNESCO gathered the contributions and feedback of stakeholders across its five world regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab States, Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

This report highlights the common themes that emerged from the contributions and feedback received during the consultations, along with issues that are unique to the social, environmental and economic conditions of each region. This document begins by summarizing the key issues, before providing more detailed summaries of each of the regions which capture the specific views exchanged during the consultations.

## Introduction

At the 41<sup>st</sup> session of UNESCO's General Conference, Member States invited the Director-General to prepare the revision of the landmark the 1974 Recommendation.

In view of preparing a preliminary set of proposed revisions to the text – to be later discussed, negotiated, and finally adopted by Member States – UNESCO developed several background reports, undertook a global survey and conducted a series of technical consultations. This process was designed to be inclusive and participatory to engage a wide range of key stakeholders who were invited to share their views on the possible scope, depth, and detail of the required revisions.

In order to identify region-specific issues that need to be considered in the revised 1974 Recommendation, UNESCO organized six online regional consultations in Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab States, Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Each regional consultation included a regional survey as well as online meetings, which each took place over a period of two days between 22 March and 8 April 2022. Each event was organized by UNESCO Headquarters, relevant Field Offices, and UNESCO Institutes. Participants in the consultations included educators and teachers, young experts and students, academics,

representatives of civil society organizations, think tanks and foundations, as well as policymakers and professionals working within Ministries.

The regional consultations took place according to the following calendar:

- Sub-Saharan Africa consultation, 6 and 7 April 2022
- Arab regional consultation, 22 and 23 March 2022
- Asia-Pacific consultation, 6 and 7 April 2022
- Europe and North America consultation, 7 and 8 April 2022
- Latin America and the Caribbean consultation, 6 and 7 April 2022

The first day brought together a wide range of professionals and experts (up to 300) to discuss some of the major global challenges to lasting peace and sustainable development for all. The second day comprised a smaller group of experts (up to 50), who closely examined the 1974 Recommendation and the initial reflections proposed by the Secretariat, and explored further required revisions. Overall, the regional consultations involved more than 1,000 participants.

### Purpose and objectives of regional consultations

The purpose of the consultations was to collect regional perspectives that could inform the development of the first draft of the revised Recommendation. More specifically, the objectives were as follows:

1. to collect feedback on preliminary ideas on the scope of the revisions to be prepared by UNESCO;
2. to discuss the region-specific issues that need to be considered in the revision and inputs in terms of vision, structure, and other new perspectives and ideas; and
3. to identify opportunities of cooperation within the region to promote and implement the revised Recommendation once officially adopted by the General Conference.

### Common themes

Across the regional consultations, a number of common issues emerged. While many of these issues already exist in the Recommendation (in some form or another), ensuring that these elements are kept, re-emphasized or strengthened is vital. Among the most common themes voiced were:

- **Gender equality:** there are still many patriarchal communities around the world where issues related to gender stereotypes are prevalent and barriers continue to hinder educational opportunities for girls and women.
- **Human rights:** regions emphasised the need for education on human rights to be transmitted to learners in order to promote peaceful coexistence and teamwork.
- **Climate change:** regions have suffered from the impact of climate change, such as ravaging drought and floods, which have led to environmental and ecological damage, famine, food insecurity, displacement and damage to school infrastructure. In some regions, these issues have led to climate-related conflicts. The effects of climate change have thus affected student access to education in a multitude of ways. With regards to education on climate change, regions also recalled insufficient attention in education systems to environmental issues and sustainable living, highlighting the need to educate and put into practice concepts of stewardship of the environment, co-existence with nature, respect of biodiversity.
- **Lifelong learning:** regions called for more promotion of learning which spans across learners'

lifetimes beyond school, including formal, non-formal and informal teaching, as well as offline, online, blended and hybrid approaches. Lifelong learning must be underpinned by flexible learning pathways and should harness cross-sectoral and cross-generational connections.

- **ICT & Artificial Intelligence (AI):** regions drew on the need to integrate and provide access to ICTs and digital technologies in education, improve digital literacy and improve teacher training and preparation in ICTs and digital/online tools, ensuring learning in these new virtual environments is safe, secure, and participatory, and that learners are educated in and protected from online cyber bullying and hate speech.
- **Equity and inclusion:** regions emphasized the importance of ensuring no one is left behind in education systems, including marginalized groups such as people with disabilities, displaced people, minorities of all kind, Indigenous Peoples, women and girls and the rural poor, among others. Oppressive, discriminatory and racist ideologies and practices should be avoided. Equity must extend to digital resources such as connectivity, language, content, devices, and capacity to use and evaluate information.
- **Learner-centred education:** regions called for educational practices to actively put the student at the centre of the educational process and to consider shifting power to learners and youth. This could be accomplished by getting young people more involved at the conceptualization and implementation phases in the education system. Learner-centred education should consider the differences of knowledge and learning capabilities among students and focus on socially constructive pedagogies.
- **Teacher training and development:** the need was emphasized to train teachers, educators, and other educational actors to ensure that they perform their professional roles effectively and efficiently and contribute to the promotion of education for peace, sustainability and human rights.
- **Whole-of-society approach:** regions mentioned the need to enhance holistic education that goes beyond the classroom and school, and addresses the cognitive, social-emotional and behavioural dimensions of learning. The whole-of-society approach involves all stakeholders, both state and non-state actors, in promoting education for human rights, peace and sustainability in formal, non-formal and informal settings.
- **Strategic and deliberate engagement of youth:** regions called for the full engagement of youth, both in the revision of the recommendation and in subsequent policy dialogue, implementation, and monitoring. They also called for more collaborative learning and empowering youth to think creatively and critically.
- **Social Emotional Learning:** regions called for education systems to go beyond traditional methods of teaching cognitive learning and focus more on the behavioural, social and emotional components of learning as well as a higher emphasis on students' mental well-being and provision of psychological support.
- **Monitoring implementation and impact:** regions highlighted the need to integrate the process of monitoring the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation into country education monitoring systems in order to understand to what extent principles and practices highlighted in the 1974 Recommendation are being implemented at classroom level. The monitoring process should go beyond government self-reporting by including perspectives

from multiple data sources and stakeholders and by monitoring non-formal and informal education.

## Region-specific perspectives

### Sub-Saharan Africa

During the Sub-Saharan Africa consultation, participants highlighted key structural, societal, environmental and health-related challenges, which are negatively impacting access to quality education for all and lasting peace on the continent. They also underlined the positive contribution of education for sustainable development and global citizenship education, as well as the importance of introducing mother tongue languages in curricula and national policies, and the use of transformative pedagogies.

Below are the key region-specific issues and challenges that emerged from the consultations:

**Ethnic and cross-border conflicts:** in recent years, violent extremist groups have caused widespread insecurity and instability – particularly where they have a strong hold in a country. Education remains a target for these groups, leading to further instability and insecurity for schools. Inherently such security issues have also severely affected the social and economic fabric of African communities.

**Impact of the pandemic on education:** the COVID-19 outbreak left an unprecedented imprint on the education sector. During the peak of the pandemic, many parents or guardians lost their jobs, became unwell or in some cases, died due to COVID-19, leading to a significant school drop-out rate, with many learners having to assume responsibilities to support the family. Due to disparities in connectivity (i.e. lack of access to devices and internet), many were unable to continue their learning through online means, further illustrating the digital gap, which undermines the right to quality education for all.

**Lack of access to quality education for all:** school facilities and equipment are key for the right to quality education for all. However, the Sub-Saharan Africa region is still affected by a wide range of challenges such as poor sanitation systems, lack of water supply (which has a significant impact on the overall health and hygiene of learners), lack of access to libraries and information and technology labs (especially in rural areas). This hinders learners' abilities to acquire the required skills and competencies for societal participation and access to employment in the twenty-first century.

**Education for the twenty-first century:** throughout the Sub-Saharan Africa region, there is a general trend of education systems focusing more on cognitive learning, with a lesser emphasis on the behavioural and social and emotional components – hence hindering a holistic learning approach. In addition, the participants called for more practice-based learning, with a need to focus on technical and vocational education and training (TVET), employability and self-employment skills development, in order to ensure that Africa's youth population will have concrete prospects for post-education employment. This is particularly important to address issues of forced migration or 'brain drain', as there are not enough remunerative jobs for everyone, limiting and in some cases stifling the continent's economic growth.

Given the region-specific challenges confronting the continent, participants highlighted the following reflections on the required revisions for the 1974 Recommendation:



**Languages:** the introduction of mother tongue languages in the curriculum forms the basis for self-expression, harnessing of cultural values and knowledge, intercultural dialogue and understanding, learning new concepts, skills and excelling in other languages. Having a strong mother tongue foundation leads to much better understanding of the curriculum. This requires respect for all language groups and communities, given the diversity in the region.

**Curriculum:** review the curriculum to ensure it is relevant to the current needs of learners and adapt it to the rapid technological changes while ensuring the provision of the necessary teaching and learning infrastructure, including digital technologies and the development of a competent and high-quality teaching force.

**Integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED):** starting first with inclusion in teacher education curriculum, this would ensure that teacher trainers are familiar with these educational tools and pedagogical skills, and are able to pass on knowledge to trainees (i.e. the teachers).

**Transformative pedagogies:** use transformative participatory pedagogies to help to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills to enable learners to analyze their own position and context before reaching conclusions. This will help them to deal with ethnocentrism, tribalism, racism, and stereotypes that often lead to the emergence of violent extremism, which continues to impact countries in West Africa and the Horn of Africa, in particular. In this regard, co-curricular activities such sports, music, drama, and debates should be utilized as avenues where the intangible core values of peace, responsibility, and human rights, empathy and respect are transmitted to learners to promote peaceful coexistence and teamwork.

**Endorsement:** the values espoused by the 1974 Recommendation need to be understood and adopted by everyone. For this reason, the document needs to be disseminated with wider audiences and beyond the realm of teachers and experts.

To conclude, the deliberations of the Sub-Saharan Africa consultation provided some concrete suggestions for a way forward, as participants recognized the implementation and dissemination of the revised Recommendation as a top priority. In this regard, participants called for:

- I. **An effective communication strategy** is required to facilitate the implementation of the revised 1974 Recommendation. This would advance a uniform approach in the understanding and implementation of the Recommendation.
- II. After revising the 1974 Recommendation, some participants stressed how UNESCO **should consider advocating to raise the Recommendation to the standard of a Convention** to make its implementation binding for all Member States.
- III. Use the UNESCO website, leaflets, billboards, and pledges to **publicize and disseminate** the Recommendation widely.
- IV. **Share the revised Recommendation with Ministries of Education** for dissemination to all levels of education including primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.
- V. **Organize training workshops for all the relevant stakeholders**, including policymakers, educators, teachers, NGOs, faith-based organizations, foundations and other grassroots actors.
- VI. **Engage media, art and culture and creative industries** to publicize and advocate for the revised Recommendation.

## Arab States

The Arab States consultation highlighted a few cross-cutting issues such as the need to include marginalized and vulnerable groups, foster gender equality through education, and accelerate the achievement of all SDGs through education, with a particular focus on climate change. The participating stakeholders noted that central priorities included the need to build digital skills and prepare teachers to adapt to a rapidly changing technological environment. The challenges discussed during these consultations often made reference to the detrimental effects of war and conflict on education in the region and the need to focus more on conflict resolution within schools as a means of instilling principles of peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Many participants also emphasized the importance of moving away from traditional methods of learning towards pedagogies that are socially constructive and focused on the psycho-social dimension of education and wellbeing of learners, including those living in war zones and post-conflict areas.

Below are the key region-specific issues and challenges that emerged from the consultations:

**Crisis-affected countries:** with many countries heavily affected by crises and violent conflicts, either because they were engaged in civil wars, fighting wars with other nations, or have received very large numbers of refugees that have put the education system and their society at large under extreme duress.

**Quality of educational facilities** that are not conducive to learning, whether due to violent conflict or neglect. In addition, the technological upgrades necessary for modernizing education are also lagging at the levels of resources, infrastructure, and capacity building.

**Gender-related factors** continue to hinder educational opportunities for girls and women in parts of the Arab world.

Given the region-specific challenges confronting the continent, participants highlighted the following reflections on the required revisions for the 1974 Recommendation:

**Family engagement in all aspects of the educational experience and to support students emotionally and socially:** the engagement of families with the school, especially during crises such as the pandemic, is critical for students as well as parents themselves because it ensures that what is learned in schools is reinforced at home, positively impacting students' behaviour in and out of the school.

**Explore cultural values that advance education and learning for peace:** values emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and reconciliation are alive in the Arab region. Such values should be emphasized in all aspects of the educational experience to promote tolerance and non-violence among students, through dialogue and mutual respect, and with a view to prevent bullying, harassment and violent extremist ideologies. Peaceful means to resolve conflicts should be incorporated in the curricula and pedagogies. Cultural and religious stories emphasizing mutual respect and care for the community and neighbour could be used to this effect.

**Focus on relevant 'soft skills' such as conflict resolution which are applicable to students' context and life:** this includes the implementation of curricula such as peace education to reduce violent conflict. This can be achieved by ensuring that education policies are geared towards the transformation of conflicts and keeping children safe from all forms of violence in and around schools. A school-based approach must engage stakeholders at all social levels to



make immediate and lasting improvements to children's safety and protection daily in their immediate environment.

**Attention to the educational needs of learners in war zones and post-conflict areas:** this includes addressing issues of infrastructure, safety, and mental health. Conflicts have significantly damaged the infrastructure of technical and vocational education and training institutions, which negatively reflects on the quality of education and job opportunities for graduates of these institutes. It is necessary to rehabilitate these institutions and increase the contribution of humanitarian organizations in rebuilding efforts. If such issues are not addressed, there is the risk of creating deep grievances that would fuel anger and resentment.

**Global Citizenship Education (GCED), for which there is support in educational circles in the Arab world:** in furtherance of the principles contained in the Recommendation, it is necessary to update legislation at the local, regional, and international levels to strengthen international dialogue and link international education to the concept of global citizenship contained in the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

## Asia and the Pacific

The need to integrate and provide access to ICTs and digital technologies in education and invest in social and emotional learning (SEL) were identified as priorities in the context of the consultations in the Asia-Pacific region. Participants stressed the role of the 1974 Recommendation in helping to build and sustain 'positive peace', in particular by promoting stewardship of the environment. Participants also underlined the necessity to rethink the purpose of education given the complexity of global challenges and called for more inclusive learner-centred models of education that are applying a whole-of-society approach to learning, as well as valorise, motivate, and support teachers and constructively engage local communities – and more broadly non-state actors – in the delivery of relevant and quality education. During these consultations the need for education to be formative first and then transformative was recognized as a fundamental approach for building more just, peaceful and sustainable societies for all.

Below are the key region-specific issues and challenges that emerged from the consultation:

**Post-pandemic education:** the COVID pandemic has resulted in an 'educational divide' between learners who are able to access education, both digitally and in person, and those who are not able or less able to do so.

**The evolving role of the teacher:** changing needs and methods of learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, use of technologies in education and advances in artificial intelligence could substantially affect the future role and function of the teacher.

Given the region-specific challenges confronting the continent, participants highlighted the following reflections on the required revisions for the 1974 Recommendation:

**The importance of inculcating sympathy, human dignity, empathy, and compassion to learners through education:** teachers should address inequality, racism, and discrimination and should listen to the most vulnerable.

**Building and sustaining positive peace in the region:** the proposed revised 1974 Recommendation should contribute to positive peace. Positive peace in this context does not

mean only the absence of conflict but also includes sustainable development and the protection of human rights and dignity across the region.

**Focusing on spirituality, mindfulness and empathy:** education system should consider focusing on developing the ‘whole person’, an idea that includes an element of spirituality, which in this context would mean developing mindfulness, empathy, and the understanding that humanity has been placed on Earth. Similarly, participants reiterated the need for a more nuanced focus on culture that would extend beyond the fine arts and music, to take in better account spirituality, religion, and other societal traditions.

**Redefining and rethinking the purpose of education at a fundamental level:** at present, education tends to be defined by the labour market and is regarded in terms of learners having to expediently attain a skillset necessary to obtain a job. Participants discussed a need for a more comprehensive definition of education that would consider the holistic needs and development of the learner, as well as outline clear and well-defined short, mid- and long-term goals and objectives by developing clear indicators for the competencies necessary to be inculcated in all learners.

**Distinguishing between formative education and transformative education:** participants raised the importance of defining these forms of education and for *formative education* to precede *transformative education*. In the opinion of the participants, formative education should focus on the kind of individual that the education system hopes to develop and further inspire.

To conclude, participants offered some action areas regarding the revisions of the 1974 Recommendation. In particular, they highlighted the following:

**Education in the region needs to go beyond its traditional parameters and reinvent itself to address current challenges more effectively:** participants discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic has decisively and abruptly changed the education landscape, and ushered in our current need to strengthen education systems, making them more robust and adaptable to unforeseen disruptions. In many cases throughout the region, when education resumed virtually, some learners who had limited or no access to the internet were left behind. Mental and emotional stresses due to the lock-down, financial difficulties faced by families and the inability to meet in person, and seek help from friends and teachers has had a lasting effect on learners. In this unprecedented context, education in the region must be transformed in order to address current global challenges, particularly when it comes to reducing the deepening digital gap.

**More focus on the well-being and mental health of teachers:** given the COVID-19 pandemic and the abrupt way teachers have been forced to adapt, the well-being and mental health of teachers must be protected. In this regard, there is a need to recognize the teacher as not just an ‘educational tool’, but rather a whole person, possessing both strengths and vulnerabilities, particularly in regard to the mental and emotional pressures of daily realities.

**Strengthen regional cooperation:** in order to support a comprehensive promotion of the revised 1974 Recommendation, an emphasis should be put on strengthening cooperation at the national and regional levels and within inter-UN partnerships. Participants additionally highlighted the need to consider establishing a strong regional committee comprising relevant government officials, NGO representatives, civil society organizations, youth,

women, and academics. This committee would hold regular consultations, forums, and conferences, and provide comprehensive strategies and impactful implementations for carrying out integrated peace efforts in their respective countries.

## Europe and North America

The European and North American consultations underlined a number of challenges, such as the need to counter the rise of exclusionary and nationalist discourses by providing opportunities for democratic participation and the need to attend to the perspectives of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in society. The value of transformative and human rights education was highlighted, together with the role of the 1974 Recommendation in addressing global challenges and advancing universal values of a culture of peace and intercultural understanding. There was a strong call for the involvement of youth in the revision process and in the subsequent policy dialogue, as well as a broader range of actors in the implementation and monitoring efforts.

Numerous region-specific issues and challenges were underlined during this consultation. These include:

**Rise of exclusionary and nationalist discourses:** these types of discourses can hinder commitment to solving global challenges and promoting the values of interconnectedness and interdependence.

**Providing opportunities for democratic participation:** there should be more of a focus on providing these opportunities in order to counter the rise of exclusionary and nationalist discourses.

**Risks of future global health crises:** as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic and through a variety of climate crises that have occurred in recent years, the risks of future global health crises should be more seriously taken into consideration.

**The need for education to help repair inequalities:** education should contribute to repairing multiple types of socio-economic, cultural, geographic divides and inequalities.

Given the region-specific challenges confronting the continent, participants highlighted the following reflections on the required revisions for the 1974 Recommendation:

**Transformative education:** notions of peace, international understanding and human rights should be framed today around transformative education. This concept is fundamental. It aims to foster just, equitable, peaceful, healthy, sustainable, respectful societies and develop the well-being and full potential of human beings. As a holistic approach to education, it can nurture values and social competencies, as well as knowledge and skills. It promotes critical thinking, the evaluation of information/dis-information, and learning through others' knowledge and languages. It is the foundation of quality education that drives standards, monitoring and assessment.

**The importance of participation:** built into the idea of transformative education is the need to facilitate structured democratic dialogues between institutions, youth, educators, and communities at all levels, for both policy design and implementation, signalling a shift in the dynamics of power.

**Responding to global trends:** the revised 1974 Recommendation must maintain its global perspective since contemporary challenges such as climate change, poverty, impacts of COVID-19, discrimination, conflicts and violence, migration, xenophobia and systemic racism are global and interconnected. It must also include an integrated vision of the global agenda of the SDGs (particularly SDG 4.7) and help address both the challenges and opportunities offered by globalization. It must consider also possible trends beyond 2030.

**Keeping a focus on the aim of lasting peace:** the revised 1974 Recommendation should continue to build on the UNESCO Constitution, which underlines that peace is a mindset and a behaviour that cannot be taken for granted. It is not merely an absence of violence and conflict but must be constructed through social and individual action.

**Emphasis on values:** the revised 1974 Recommendation should continue to stress the importance of universal values, including human rights, democratic principles, respect for others, justice and gender equality and the right to education and freedoms (to think, act autonomously and connect). Contextualizing these values is also needed to ensure that they do not become unattainable abstractions and disconnected from people's realities.

**A forward-looking vision:** as the revised 1974 Recommendation is expected to remain relevant beyond 2030, the revisions should consider possible trends beyond the horizon of the Sustainable Development Agenda.

**Making connections between local and global issues:** recognize and build connections between the specificities of the local contexts and the realities of the global environment and emphasize the primacy of local participation and ownership.

**New constructive approaches to culture and cultural diversity:** contemporary understandings of the way culture and education intersect are more nuanced today. Integrating these considerations into the way education policies and programmes are designed and implemented is critical to fostering social cohesion and peaceful societies. Education has an important role to play in fostering cultural diversity and intercultural understanding, repair and reconciliation. Both teachers and learners need to acquire and strengthen the capacity to conduct dialogue across borders and to consider differences in viewpoints, including across genders, generations, religions, languages, ideologies, and geographies.

**Regional responsibility:** the region must recognize its responsibility to utilize its resources for the global implementation of the aims of the 1974 Recommendation.

**Responsibility of the state and multi-stakeholder cooperation:** the revised 1974 Recommendation should stress the responsibility of the State in delivering opportunities for education for peace, global citizenship and sustainable development while also indicating the essential need for multi-stakeholder cooperation at all levels.

To conclude, participants offered some action areas that should be included or reinforced in the revised 1974 Recommendation:

**Many aspects of the 1974 Recommendation are still relevant and should be safeguarded:** some concern was expressed during the consultation that the revised 1974 Recommendation may become less bold or less visionary if too many concepts are included. However, peace-building and the promotion of democratic principles require a strong and bold legal instrument that harmonizes and strengthens other international normative instruments in education,

culture, and related areas. The proposed areas of action should not merely reflect traditional approaches to education, but build on new and recent thinking.

**Future-oriented learning:** education needs to prepare learners to face and thrive in a sustainable future. This implies preparing them to flourish in increasingly diverse, complex and fast-changing societies, to embrace new kinds of work and opportunities, and face new risks and challenges.

**Democracy:** education should equip learners to understand and promote democracy, including how to engage in democratic debates.

**Global Citizenship Education (GCED):** GCED was mentioned by many participants as a relevant approach to education to address contemporary challenges and develop learners' competencies for intercultural dialogue and active engagement in a globalized world, beyond the boundaries of their own country. GCED cuts across many disciplines such as history, language, and literature for international understanding. Some participants underlined the need to ensure that minorities are equipped with the skills to engage in intercultural dialogue without being overcome by 'mainstream' cultures. GCED needs new pedagogies and curricula – for intercultural learning, new knowledge on climate change and ethical principles for the use of digital tools.

**Critical thinking:** the consultation repeatedly highlighted the need to promote and integrate critical thinking and analysis into education curricula in order to understand and affect change and to seek solutions to complex global issue. This would require systematic thinking on the complex interlinkage of issues and problem-solving that requires more than merely technical solutions.

**Media analysis and media and information literacy:** given the extent and complexity of media influence on values, social relations and aspirations, education should promote skills in reviewing, analyzing and critiquing information online. As well as using and interpreting large quantities of information and data, including the using social media positively for global communication and international understanding.

**Removing inequalities and impediments to peace:** education should be emphasized as a means to reduce gaps in wealth and income and increase access to public goods and services. It must also address violence and bullying in schools.

**Resilience:** education has a key role to play in strengthening collective and individual resilience in the face of natural disasters as well as individual and collective trauma.

**International norms:** the revised 1974 Recommendation should offer an introduction to other international instruments, including at least the following: the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

## Latin America and the Caribbean

The consultation for **Latin America and the Caribbean** region identified a series of threats to human rights and peace affecting education in the region, including an increase in hate speech and online harassment, mis- and dis-information, colonial practices permeating the educational curricula, and a growing digital gap affecting learners from disadvantaged communities. It was stressed that the 1974 Recommendation should foster transformative, inclusive, interdisciplinary, intercultural, socio-

emotional and global-citizenship education, and strengthen the monitoring, reporting and evaluation guidelines to encourage concrete implementation through relevant national policies and the mobilization of funds.

COVID-19 has deepened inequalities in the region, climate change is seriously affecting Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and sea frontline countries, and more people are on the move due to political and socio-economic challenges. These factors directly affect the fulfilment of the right to education as well as other fundamental rights and freedoms.

Below are the key region-specific issues and challenges that emerged from this consultation:

**The ‘infodemic’ caused by social media:** in the regional context of profound inequalities, the concept of peace is more complex than the absence of war. Poverty and the violation of human rights have resulted in an increase of hate speech culture and discrimination. Social media amplifies hateful practices through public anonymity and the lack of accountability, creating an ‘infodemic’ fuelled by prejudices, bias and misconceptions, which can lead to cyber-bullying and other forms of online harassment.

**Colonizing practices of cultural and belief systems:** the history of most of the countries and peoples within the region is marked by colonizing practices of cultural and belief systems that still permeate the educational system and curricula. This especially affects Indigenous Peoples, the LGBTQI+ community, displaced people and people with disabilities, amongst other vulnerable groups.

Given the challenges confronting the continent, participants offered some key reflections on the required revisions for the 1974 Recommendation, in particular they highlighted the following:

**Include concepts of global citizenship education, resilience and multi- or interdisciplinary education:** these forms of education play an important role in providing children and young people with the skills necessary to participate in solving the problems of their community and country, in recognizing the growing global interdependence of peoples and nations, and in tackling intolerance and prejudice that fuel hate speech and violence in schools and the digital world.

**Promoting non-anthropocentric visions, a diversity of worldviews and cultures, and avoiding of hegemonic and colonizing models:** the 1974 Recommendation is based on the importance of respect for all peoples, including the need to value Indigenous and local cultures, as well as ancestral knowledge within the region. This approach links territorial sovereignty to pedagogical sovereignty and ensures the dismantling of neo-colonial interests.

**Considering connectivity as a public good:** connectivity is linked to the right to education and other political, social, and economic rights. It is important to strengthen teacher training and preparation to take advantage of its positive and transformative potential, including new technologies.

To conclude, participants offered some action areas that should be included or reinforced in the revised 1974 Recommendation, namely:

**National-level educational agendas and strategies should be oriented towards models that include interdependent perspectives of different levels of government:** with social actors in strategic alliances, as well as social development and economic growth based on fair and regenerative transitions. Participants also highlighted the need for regional policy frameworks



around sustainable development and lifelong learning, reviving networks where they exist and building new ones to further collaboration within and between countries.

**Train teachers to strengthen their commitment to a human rights-based approach:** in the Latin American context, there are high levels of social violence and youth criminalization, amongst other pressing issues. All teacher training programmes (pre- and in-service) should include core components of human rights education, emotional intelligence, education for international understanding, as well as opportunities to compare experiences with those in other global settings. This sharing of experiences among peers allows space for continuous innovation in the field of education.

**Implement transformative education:** countries should critically review their national curricula to ensure their relevance and implement measures to pursue transformative education perspectives and goals, while also considering needs for updated contents, objectives and methods of delivery that take into account rapid changes in technology.

**Implementation of the Recommendation:** requires commensurate national laws, policies, plans, strategies, and financial investments to address the proposed areas.

**Assessment, monitoring and evaluation of learning** should be considered and used as tools for growth rather than for ranking students in society. Instead, it must be seen and used as a tool to identify capability and possibilities.

Highlights on these reflections are:

1. Evaluation models and matrixes must include a comprehensive and contextualized perspective for each region and country, based on national plans with firm commitments and targets. Indicators should be based on the core elements and principles of the 2030 Agenda, as they support the principles of human dignity, peace, food sovereignty, educational justice and equity, and aim to maintain their relevance beyond the next decade. Guaranteeing fundamental freedoms and human rights demands transformative education as an inception strategy that must be in direct dialogue with public social protection policies.
2. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation of learning and the learning environment should include the various aspects of the school climate: teacher/student relationships, student/student relationships and teacher/parent or tutor relationships.
3. The socio-emotional dimensions of learning should be monitored: this need is due to the fact that the return to classrooms has resulted in higher rates of violence among students and educational institution personnel and increasing criminalization of public activism.
4. Employ a multi-method approach to monitoring and evaluation that is participatory and inclusive to ensure that all the gaps are filled.
5. Establish a joint taskforce comprising representatives from both public and civil society sector that will foster collaboration and help with the national reporting process, aiming to narrow the gap in quality indicators and measures in each sector.
6. UNESCO and governments need to establish a platform for sharing experiences that also provides opportunities for local experiences to be shared, monitored, and replicated.



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## Compilation of the outcomes of Regional Consultations

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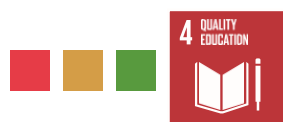
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