# Curriculum Development of Human Rights Education in Cameroon: An Analysis of Strategies for Implementing

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**ABSTRACT:** *Human Rights Education (HRE) is one of the emerging contents in the Cameroon educational system. HRE is central both to the dissemination of knowledge about human rights and also to the promotion of universal respect for, and observance of, all human and fundamental freedoms. It contributes of national integration and conflict prevention while enhancing the social and emotional development of students and by introducing democratic values. Its enable learner to develop attitudes of solidarity across issues and social cohesion. HRE becomes a more common feature of international policy discussions, national curriculum reform and social cohesion educational policies. This article explore strategies for implementing HRE in Cameroon school. The work review curriculum development and practices, organized around the national educational policies and its implementation, the learning environment; the teaching process and the professional development of teachers.*
**KEYS WORDS:** *Human Rights Education (HRE); curriculum development; formal educational system; implementing.*

## I.  INTRODUCTION

Human Rights Education (HRE) is key to the implementation of human rights. In lines to operate human rights as a practice in our daily lives, the citizen need to know their rights and possess the attitude and skills to claim them, and the duty-bearers needs to know their human rights obligations and develop the attitudes and skills to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. Over the past four decades, HRE has become a greater part of international discussion of educational policies (Osler, & Starkey, 2006; Tibbitts, 2017).While scholars and practitioners have noted the rise in education strategies as part of larger human rights effort and the emergences of HRE on its own as a field of studies and practices, there appear to be diverse perspectives on the HRE orientation in curriculum development (Mihr, 2009; Osler& Starkey, 2010).  This work attempts to explore the curriculum development of HRE within the Cameroon education system. It highlight the curriculum framework for implementation HRE, from supra level, to macro level, before exploring the framework for social sciences subjects. Data presented in this work are drawn from fieldwork conducted during our Ph.D research. The method includes content reviews of extensive document from international organizations, government and NGO materials.

## II.  HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION (HRE): DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1  Definition

HRE can be defined in several ways in accordance with the professional filiation. Therefore scholars tend to define HRE from different angles, such as religion, politics, economics, psychology, sociology, education, etc. (Muhammad M. Zain-al-din, 2015). However, there are some basic principles that find unanimity by most researchers, what Bajab (2011) names "broad agreement about certain core components of human rights education" (p.482). As state by the United Nations, HRE can be defined as
Education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and molding of attitudes directed to:
(a)      The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
(b)      The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
(c)      The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
(d)      The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;
(e)       The building and maintenance of peace;

(f)      The promotion of people-centered sustainable development and social justice.

For Mihr (2009), HRE is a set of educational and pedagogical learning methods to inform people of and to train them in their human rights and usually encompasses cognitive, affective and behavioral elements. The council of Europe (2010) presents HRE as "Education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behavior, to empower learners to contribute to the building and defense of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms".

The United Nation Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) defines HRE as "A long-term and lifelong process by which all people at all levels of development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies (…) it significantly contributes to promoting equality and sustainable development, preventing conflict and human rights violation and enhancing participation and democratic process, with a view to developing societies in which all human rights are valued and respected". In this extend, the UNCHR rise the issues of the crucial relation between HRE and equity, sustainable development and prevention of conflict. Therefore, the primordial role played by education in the development of societies integrate the core human rights values. Moreover, Amnesty international emphasizes not only on the "development of respect for human rights", but also as a tool which aims to "empower students to defend to defend and claim rights, which has more of an activist element to it". This is from a definition formulated as follows:

Human rights education is a deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities ... Its goal is to build a culture of respect for and action in the defense and promotion of human rights for all (...) Human rights education can also play a vital role in building social structures that support participatory democracies and the resolution of conflict, and can provide a common understanding of how to address political and social differences equitably and celebrate cultural diversity. (Amnesty international, 2017).

In clear, HRE can be viewed as a learning process by which all man in a given society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in the communities. These definitions reveals that HRE, whilst aimed at fostering a universal culture of human rights, is also aimed at the enabling of all citizens to participate properly in a free and harmonious society.

## 2.2  Historical development of human rights education

The evolution of Human Rights Education (HRE) is in lines with the history of fights for freedoms, social justice and rights. Several authors make and attempts to present that evolution, among other, Keet (2007) and Mihr, (2009). Keet (2007) developed the three-phase-model which analyses the historical development of human rights education within three great periods. We have:

-       The first phase before 1947 which is the period of the roots of human rights education. Here, the human rights education was perceived differently in the different areas of the world. In the western world, the sources were ancient Greece and Roma civilization. In Africa, the foundation was ancient Egypt and the great empire.

-       The second phase from 1948 to 1994 is called the period or formalization of human rights education. It corresponds to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in December 1948 with it famous article 26 which leads down the foundation of modern human rights education. The preamble is so clear when it rise that "…every individual and every organ of society should strive by teaching and education to promote the respect for these rights and freedoms…" And the article 26 states that education shall be directed towards "the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (United Nations, 1948, art. 26.2). Furthermore, it can be noted that it is during this period the world assisted to the organization of several summits and the adoption of an important number of instruments in favor of human rights education. Among other, we have the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Still within this phase, we have the UNESCO declaration on human rights in 1974, the Montreal Declaration of 1993 and the Vienna declaration and plan of action in 1993 which contributed in enriching the recommendation in HRE. The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action reiterated the obligations of states under the above instruments and underlined the need for HRE. The instruments, in fact, served as basic documents for the UN Decade for HRE. In the African context, we can note in 1981 the adoption of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. This phase was concluded by Keet (2007) as such: "The first HRE 'curriculum' based on an epistemology of diplomatic consensus which was ontologically supported by the perceived existence of a 'universal moral order'. This was followed by a series of 'Syllabi' captured as conventions, declarations, principles and covenants between 1948 and 2005. No wonder that event today, HRE practitioners quixotically keep on demanding the 'inclusion' of HRE as a pre-packaged curriculum which is so distant from the realities of how

education systems are structured, how they operate and whose interests are pre-configured within them. (Keet, 2007, p.52).

The third and the last phase from 1995 till date is recognized as the period of proliferation of HRE. It is characterized not only by the adoption of the United Nation Decade for Human Rights education (1995-2004), but also by proclamation of the day of HRE and training and the world declaration for human rights education and training. This lead for the sectorial plan of action for implementation which the first was devoted at the promotion of HRE in primary and secondary schools around the world. Osler and Starkey (2006) and Tibbitts (2008) recognized that since the inception of United Nation Decade for Human Rights education (1995-2004), a considerable growth in interest and activities in HRE and related pedagogies has been noted. That growth in HRE area is evident in accordance of the number of related documentation and resources generated; its increasing presence in informal and formal education; a growing focus within third level education curriculum and research and the increase of the HRE activities of the NGO settles. The instrument noted above have been ratified by Cameroon and hence there is an obligation to educate on human rights on the countries. The Resolutions and Declarations passed within the framework of the United Nation are also relevant normative bases for Cameroon considering his membership. With specific reference to Africa, the African Charter, under its article 25, imposes on states, obligation to teach or educate on human rights. This is an instrument which enjoys complete regional ratification and, therefore, Cameroon is duty-bound to adopt and implement HRE programs. The dynamism in HRE can be attributed to the states' commitments to provide HRE that accompanies the developing international framework of human rights instruments. Then, the government have obligation to fulfill those rights by providing education about human rights (Marie, 2001). Those obligations on States to insure HRE, however, does not sufficiently explain the evident growth in the sector.

## III. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION(HRE) AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON

### 3.1     HRE knowledge, values and skill in school environment

In the United Nation Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET), it is states that ''HRE should provide persons with knowledge, skills and attitudes to empower them, to contribute to the building and promotion of universal culture of human rights''. These three learning dimensions have been highlighted as central to all types of curriculum development policies in relation with HRE. In general, HRE has an important skills, attitudes and knowledge base that needs to be embedded in school curricula and practice for children to be able to understand their rights and respect the rights of others. Research into student knowledge and attitudes towards human rights in Cameroon, which found a low level of knowledge and only moderate levels of interest suggest the need for HRE to be explicitly provided for within school curricula (Fonkoua, 2007). Skills relating to conflict resolution, critical thinking, and empathy and understanding perspective are important components of HRE. The key knowledge involves understanding of human rights instruments at international and regional level and in local and global contexts. (Jennings, 2006). Therefore, human rights education practitioners have to apply the three learning dimensions when defining learning objectives and while developing and implementing educational program, ensuring that the curriculum addresses all dimensions. Although the learners will not be able to acquire a comprehensive knowledge of all human rights instruments, or all the skills necessary to apply them, nor indeed will they be able to change all their attitudes. The teachers will still have to choose what to focus on and what to leave out, in accordance with the course aims, the participants' learning needs and background. (Osler& Starkey, 2010). Thus, these learning points should always be focused and angled further in accordance with the focus of the course.

### 3.2     Understanding the HRE Curriculum

This work is based on the HRE curriculum policies in secondary schools in Cameroon. The HRE curriculum is based on the following components:
-        A definition of HRE: the definition adopted by the framework is the one defined by the United Nations.
-        A goal and aims: the goal and aim help structure the overall scope of the HRE curriculum.
-        Key concepts: the key concepts help support the aims and provide guidance when integrating HRE into teaching and learning methodologies;
-        HRE core competencies: the HRE curriculum is defined and measured by the attainment of student competencies. These competencies are about knowledge, values and skill.
Taken together, these four components provide teachers with the support to undertake HRE in the classroom. HRE is now widely recognized in the Cameroon as an essential part of the formal education sector.

**3.3    Components of effective curriculum of HRE**

The HRE is hardly important for African countries included Cameroon. The obligation of the latter to develop and implement curriculum in that area. Therefore, although meaningful curriculum of HRE has not been launched in many several African states. The opportunities created by the UN decade for HRE has not been properly implemented. Actually, one of the conclusion of the mid-term global evaluation of the UN decade was that "effective national strategies for HRE have rarely been developed". Not much has been done even after the evaluation. These show that there is still a need for special attention to HRE in Cameroon. States have to put in place effective curriculum policies of HRE.

For the HRE curriculum to be effective, in the sense of attaining its ideal goals and playing its proper role, certain requirements should be fulfill. Firstly, the HRE must be based on a simple but clear and comprehensive conceptualization of human rights and human rights education. Secondly, it should be a real commitment to educate on human rights. This has to be reflected by adopting national policies and institutional framework, and plan of action for human rights in general and HRE in particular. Thirdly, HRE should be adopted as a subject by itself or as a part of interdisciplinary courses. The obligation to such curriculum development have to show from the very point of its design to its implementation. The decisive elements of effectiveness of HRE have got to do with program design, targets, contents and methodology of education.

-    **HRE Curriculum design**

Each environment in the world has its own specificities in terms of History, cultures and ideologies. As such, HRE curriculum should be designed in lines with the diversities of the world. Furthermore, the curriculum needs to be geared towards the needs of the group. For instance, school children and police officers may not have the same curriculum. This implies the contextualization of HRE curriculum. The needs assessment for HRE should be conducted and must include identification of human rights problems in the country and, consequently, emerging priority groups in need of HRE. One of the purposes of needs assessment in the research should be that of setting clear educational goals. The background study will show the need to educate student on human rights. This will, in turn, help to decide on more specific goals and other elements of HRE curriculum, including development of materials, decide on the contents of the courses, methodology of teaching. For the follow up purpose, and to make sure the goals have been attained, curriculum evaluation should be conducted. The program should give room to these important elements at the very stage of its design.

-    **Time of the Curriculum**

The process of designing should otherwise take note of the peculiar nature of HRE. In so doing, the curriculum should be designed for a long time commitment. Since HRE aim at providing learners with sufficient knowledge, it requires to be conducted with continuity, over a period of time.

-    **Target groups**

Human rights belong to all human beings and everybody deserves to know his rights. Therefore, HRE curriculum has to target as wide a given population as possible, especially formal avenues of education like in this case. This is basically school based approach. It implies the integration of human rights themes in authorized curricula either as a separate course or part of multidisciplinary courses. This includes trainings, workshops and other way of dissemination of information about rights to officials, professionals and the given public.

-    **Content**

The curriculum development in HRE involves selection of content and teaching materials. Although content and teaching material can be benefit from the framework shape by UNHCHR, UNESCO and international NGOs such as amnesty international, it is very important to note that content and teaching material have to be adapted to the social, economic, political and cultural realities of a specific country. They have to be "home grown". The ideals, values, and principles underpinning the instruments are criteria which citizens can use to judge the means and ends of government, as well as the means and ends of the myriad groups that are part of civil society. Citizens who know their human rights are better able to hold their governments accountable and ensure that their rights are protected. This is because, they would want to exercise their rights and challenge the violation of the same. Though the instruments are central to HRE, it should move beyond simply disseminating information about human rights law. Learners should be equipped with critical thinking skills, which refer to thinking that involves analyzing, and focusing on what to believe or do in a particular situation. The program content should give enough room to the development of skills necessary for public participation and to challenge and avoid violation of human rights.

It is also recommended that HRE should include peace, democracy, development and social justice, as set forth in international and regional human rights instruments, in order to achieve common understandings and awareness with a view to strengthening commitment to human rights (Vienna Declaration, 1993). This means

that human rights should not be taught in isolation. Other ideals and values which are related to them and reinforce the commitment of the learners should be included. In diverse, developing nations, and post-conflict societies, HRE should ideally be linked to tolerance promotion, conflict resolution and problem-solving. (Andrepoulos, 1997). In the same vein, it is suggested that HRE should address issues of good governance and impunity in relation to the commission of crimes. These points should be taken into consideration in determining the content of HRE.

- **Methodology of teaching**

The implementation of HRE curriculum is a crucial step which involves many issues which have direct impact on its effectiveness. Firstly, the training of teachers or trainers, especially in human rights. The method of teaching or training of professional are determines factors. An acceptable methodology of HRE has to engage the participants in attitudinal skills as well as knowledge development. It is submitted that educators apply the active learning methodology of teaching or training as opposed to the lecturing method. The former is an educational process which involves the active participation of learner or trainees and aims at developing their problem-solving skills.

As different from lecturing method, which follows a teacher dominated spoon-feeding approach, active learning is a student-centered approach in which the teacher facilitates or supervises, of course with inputs, the exercises (case study, role-playing, and small group discussion) aiming at the development of knowledge, skills and traits. The participatory approach is viewed as motivating, humanizing and ultimately practical, since this form of learning is linked more strongly with attitudinal or behavioral change than is a pure lecturing method. This is the approach which can provide the necessary knowledge and skills to respect human rights and challenge their violation. In the matter of HRE, the elements of knowledge and practice are intrinsically linked and must be able to progress in a joint and coherent manner. HRE must not be theoretical, but relevant to people's daily lives. It should be related to the realities on the ground. The method in developing materials as well as teaching or training should enable learners or trainees, to relate the knowledge of human rights they acquire to their application in practice. This is possibly one source of challenge to HRE in Africa. Learners would want to relate their knowledge to what is happening on the ground. Considering that there is poor record of respect for human rights in many countries, in comparison to the commitments they have entered, educators may face problem convincing learners in the ideas they advocate.

Besides, regimes whose preservation are dependent upon the maintenance of the status quo are most likely to resist or repress the efforts of HRE program. A course on human rights should enable learners to grasp their rights and responsibilities, and equip them with the skills of inquiring the related practical situations. In this endeavor, the teacher should avoid imposing his/her own bias and prejudice on learners. This is a necessary precaution, especially in the case of HRE targeting the ordinary public and school children. In the case of state officials, it would be good to provide them with knowledge and skills which enable them to respect the rights of citizens and avoid abuse of power. This can mainly be attained through making them conversant with the standards of protection of human rights in international, regional and national instruments stressing the reasons and the need for the respect of human rights. It is also necessary to engage them in the evaluation of the realities on the ground in terms of the standards put forth in the relevant human rights instruments. Also, the setting in which the education is conducted, for example, a school, should serve as a model of a situation where human rights are respected. There has to first be learning or training environment in which rights and responsibilities are respected. It would, for instance, be naïve to teach about the rights of students as human beings in a situation where there is a tough school environment with respect to the teacher-student relationship in which the former is a dictator. In such circumstance, the teacher would not be teaching with a possible goal of change. Neither would the students be learning to be citizens informed of rights and their respect. HRE requires that teacher-student hierarchy be removed from the educational setting.

## IV. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN CAMEROON: STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND CHALLENGES

In Cameroon as well as in several African countries, a framework for effective HRE curriculum is laid down. Thus, the others pressing and relatively important issues is who have to play a role in launching, implementation, evaluation and coordinating HRE curriculum. Let's first state that under various human rights instrument, the States have a functional obligation to carry on the activities of education and training about and for human rights. Even though, NGOs have designed and conducted agenda on HRE. HRE is therefore seen as a joint venture uniting efforts to fulfil treaty and comply with the duty to work together for human rights promotion and protection. Above the single-handed attempt by government and NGOs, there is a need for coordination at international and regional levels. It is in that vein that the UN Decade for HRE (1994-2004) has been declared. Even though African countries did not register much success in the decade. Considering the

particular importance of HRE in Cameroon, a way of coordination at the regional level should be figured out. This should be established from the obligation of States to educate in HRE.

### 4.1 The government

In Cameroon, for public or private schools; for primary or secondary education, the government is the only entity that produces the curriculum for formal school through the Ministry of Basic education and the ministry of secondary education. Consequently, the implementation strategy involves primarily those two ministries in charge of education. The implementation of HRE call for government to deal with concern like education policy; program planning; curriculum development; teaching and learning material development; the in-service training of teachers and other education personnel; the teaching and learning methodologies; inclusive education; research; dissemination of information, etc. for a successful delivery of human rights in school system, an important collaboration is required with bodies or agencies such as: teachers training college, faculties of education and universities; teacher's credit union and corporation; national commission of human rights and freedoms; national commission for UNESCO; parents association. The country can base on the four stages edited by the world program for human right education in line to facilitate the planning, implementation and evaluation of HRE in the school system.

Stage One: This stage is concerned with the provision of guidelines to assist member states in implementing the plan of action. This they do with addressing the question: where are we? They also help to provide guidelines and how to collect information on and analyze the following:
- Current situation of the primary and secondary system, including the situation of human in schools.
- Historical and cultural backgrounds that may influence right education in the school system.
- Human rights education initiatives.
- Achievements and shortcomings of the obstacles to initiatives undertaken within United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004.
- Involvement of various actions such as governmental institutions, national human rights institutions, universities, research institutions and nongovernmental organizations, in human rights education in the school system.
- Good human rights practice existing at national and regional levels.
- Role of similar types of education (education for sustainable development, peace education, global education, multicultural education, citizenship and values education) that may exist in the country.
- Determine which measures and components of human right education exist already; and
- Identify key features and areas by analyzing and determining advantages, disadvantages, as well as opportunities for and limitations to human right education in the school among others.

Stage two is the setting of priorities and development of national implementation strategy. With regards to this section, the plan of action for the second phase (2005-2007) addresses the question; where do we want to go and how? It helps by:
- Defining a mission statement which in this sense is the main goal for implementing human rights education in the school system.
- Fixing objectives of human rights education. The priorities set here will help to focus on issues potentially necessary for the achievement of the strategies for implementing human rights education and will lead to impact in the society generally. Impact as used here refers to what can be actually achieved. Direction of the national implementation strategies is set in such a way that it links objectives with available resources by identifying inputs which are allocation of available resources such as human, finance and time. It also has to do with identifying activities such as tasks, responsibilities, time frame and milestones as well as outputs. Outputs here refer to concrete products such as new legislation, studies, capacity-building, seminars, educational materials, and revision of textbooks among others.

The third stage is implementing human rights education. According to world program for Human Rights Education (plan of Action2005-2007) this is the implementing and monitoring stage. This simply involves the dissemination of the national implementation strategy as well as monitoring the implementation using fixed milestones.

The final stage is the evaluation. Evaluation addresses the questions: Did we get there? Here the plane of Action advises that we adopt evaluation as a method of accountability and a means to learn to improve a possible next phase of activities. This of course may involve the use of self-evaluation as well as independent external evaluation to review implementation. It also involves the checking of the fulfillment of the set objectives and also examining the implementation process. It finally involves the acknowledgement, dissemination and celebration of achievement of results.

### 4.2 Nongovernmental organization

The role of NGOs in investigating, monitoring and highlighting human abuses is nowadays so common. They are the main witness and challengers of human rights violation. Base on the fact that several

NGOs are independent, exposures of human rights violation and criticizers of governments are their daily activities. This can explain why some government are openly hostile to NGOs and engage in harassment and abuse of activists. Specifically, NGOs like international human rights law group, Amnesty international or Human rights Watch have done a crucial work in lines with HRE. Both the UN and its Member States have repeatedly recognized the invaluable contribution of NGOs to HRE.

### 4.3 Discussion

The plethora of international resolutions and recommendations promulgated by the UNHRC, provide instructions on methods by which the international community should implement HRE at national level. As such, The World Program for Human Rights Education established on 1 January 2005 aims to ensure human rights education remains a priority in the international community and provides a framework for promoting and implementing HRE beyond the decade. The World Program began on 1 January 2005 and is structured in consecutive phases. As a result, HRE not only can be integrated into existing school curricula (as part of social sciences subject), but it can also be found in arts program, non-formal clubs and special events occurring in school settings. However, more can be said about the incorporation of HRE in both formal and non-formal educational frameworks. Thus, it can be inferred that HRE does not only imply adding a subject on school curricula, but it entails a larger and more significant change in formal and non-formal education practices and approaches.

The United Nations systems as well as other multilateral organizations are urged to increase considerably the resources allocated to program aiming at the establishment and strengthening of national legislation, national institutions and related infrastructures which uphold the rule of law and democracy, electoral assistance, human rights awareness through training, teaching and education, popular participation and civil society.

States are called upon to increase attention to HRE for the constructive role it plays in the promotion and protection of human rights. As the Economic and Social Council affirms in the 25 May 2005 General Assembly: "Through human rights learning communities can better equip themselves to evolve strategies for development which are sensitive to human rights. It is the deficit in human rights learning that creates a gap between what is professed and what is practiced".

States' duties to implement HRE (and learning) and the striving toward a more inclusive society can be summarized as follows: When human rights-based work is framed as efforts to universalize respect for human dignity, it provides an alternative way to link local, national, and global efforts but also takes human rights into areas formerly involving only state actors. (...) A human rights framework provides a tool to make this shift inclusive of those who are marginalized and excluded from the social, political, and economic rewards of participating in society. Human rights, then, becomes a means to extend individual and social agency.

There are structures available to support Member States in the implementation of HRE. For example, the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights and the UNESCO have devised a World Program for Human Rights Education (First Phase) by putting together a Plan of Action (2006) (57 pages booklet) which highlight the significance of HRE, defines its values and provides the list of stages for its implementation. Whilst not being the sole instrument available to Member states for the implementation of HRE, the Plan of Action can be defined as an approachable and easy to use source. It envisages HRE as promoting a holistic, rights-based approach; it also identifies five key components for success:
- Educational policies. Understood as statements of commitment on the part of a government, which should explicitly promote a rights-based approach to education.
- Policy implementation: The effective policies need a consistent implementation strategy. Such a strategy should take into account the multiplicity of stakeholders at both the national level (ministries of education, teacher training institutions, research bodies, and non-governmental organizations) and the local level.
- The learning environment: Human Rights education strives towards an environment where human rights are practiced and lived in the daily life.
- Teaching and learning: introducing or improving human rights education requires a holistic approach to teaching and learning that reflects human rights values.
- Education and professional development of school personnel: this must foster educators' knowledge about, commitment to and motivation for human rights.

## V. CONCLUSION

Human rights are recognized claims which are based on human worth and belong to all human beings without distinction. Be this as it may, many people do not have functional knowledge of these rights. This brings the need for HRE in to the picture. HRE is a process of learning that develops knowledge of human rights and skills necessary to claim or enforce them. HRE is practiced with different perspectives. In the setting of

African countries which have undergone conflict, military rule and authoritarianism or where democracy is being consolidated, the perspective of social and political transformation to a better order through nurturing values should be adopted. The primary goal of HRE should be the creation and strengthening of human rights culture. This can be attained through the formation of informed, critical, responsible and responsive citizenship. This importance should also be seen with respect to state officials. HRE can also play a decisive role in fostering democratic governance through increased and knowledge based public political participation. It can also serve as a shield against human rights violation. These roles of HRE are particularly relevant for many African countries in which human rights are often violated and democracy is taking roots. But, for the goals and roles to be realized, African countries have to develop and implement effective programs of HRE. There is a normative foundation for this obligation in applicable human rights instruments.

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