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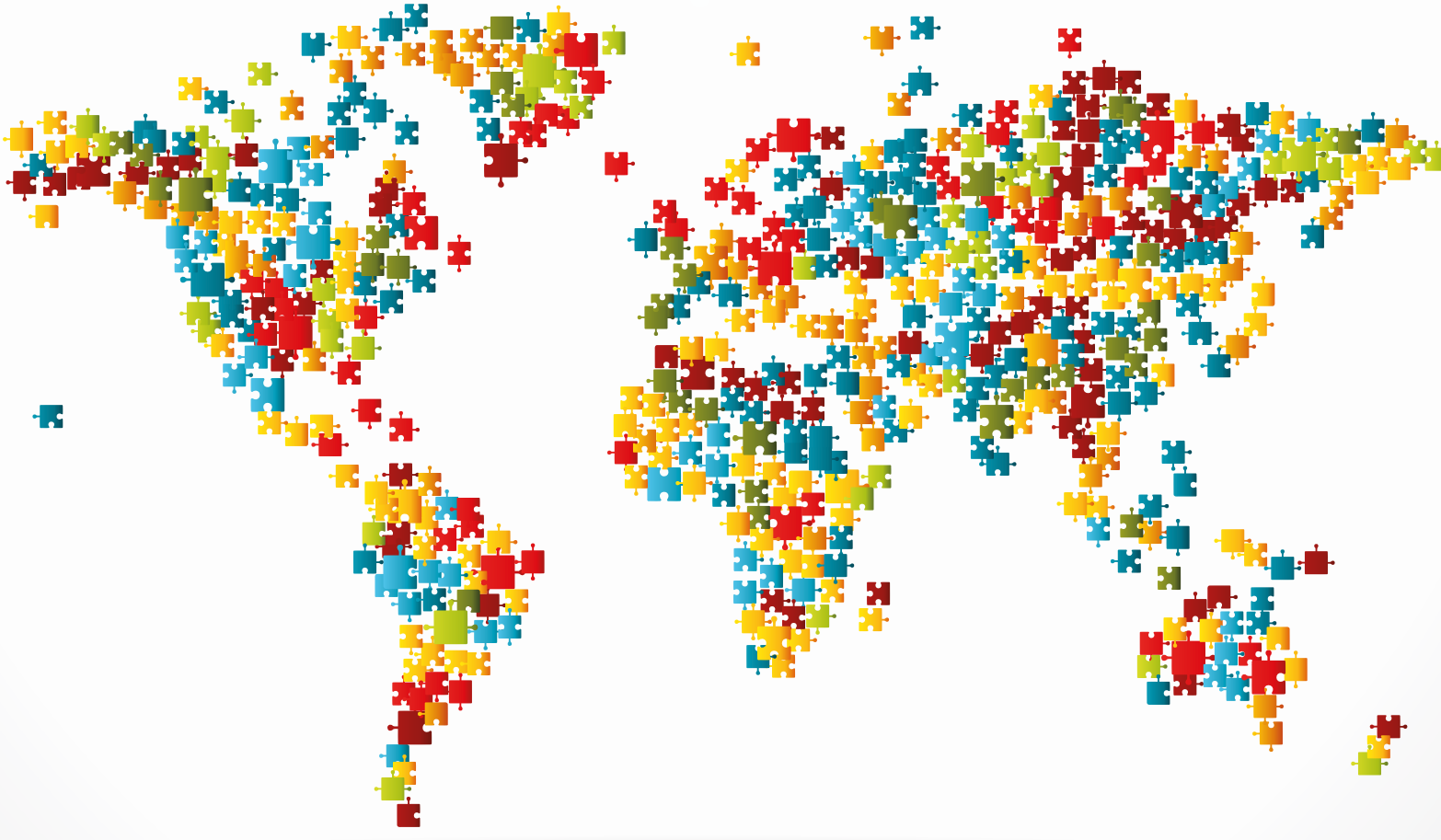
Education
Sector

Global Citizenship Education:

Taking it local



Education 2030

UNESCO Education Sector

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation on which to build peace and drive sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education and the Education Sector provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens national education systems and responds to contemporary global challenges through education with a special focus on gender equality and Africa.

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Education Sector

The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to ***"ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."*** The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments.

Education 2030

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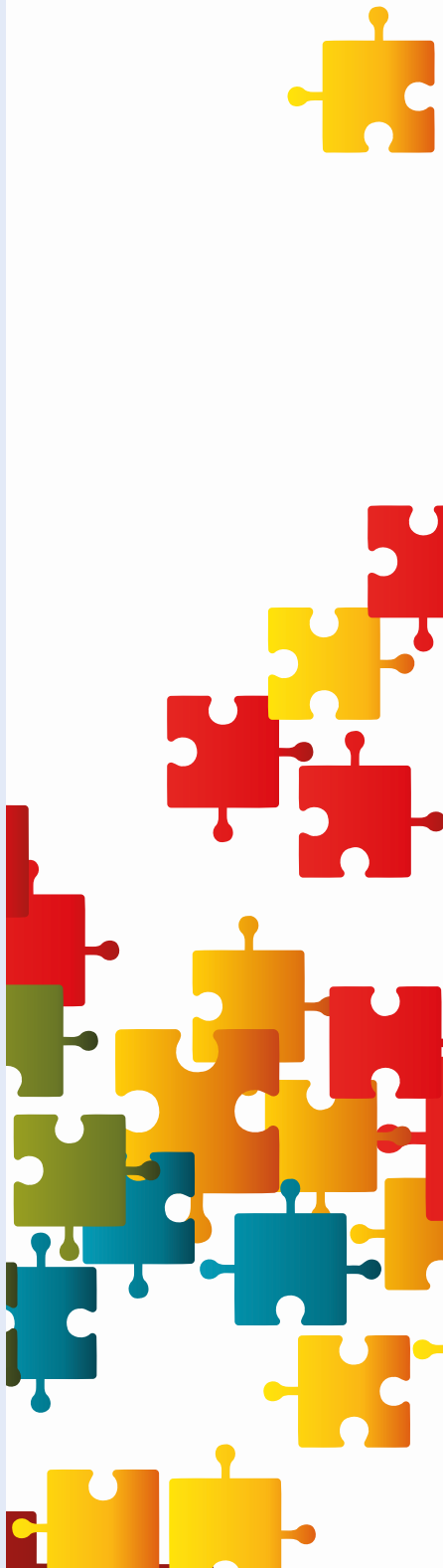

1. Introduction

- For UNESCO, Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is an educational approach that nurtures respect and solidarity in learners in order to build a sense of belonging to a common humanity and help them become responsible and active global citizens in building inclusive and peaceful societies. GCED, combined with Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), converge in Target 4.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Since its emergence in the global discourse on education (2012), GCED has been a contested concept. For some, it is perceived as dissociated from local needs and realities, while for others it is a timely approach that underlines the need to sharpen the relevance of education. Tensions and debates around GCED have been particularly intense in contexts where the words 'global' or 'globalization' are misconstrued as referring to processes that are exogenous to their societies -- for instance, with globalization being equated with "westernization".

- All the while, UNESCO has observed that many countries and societies have national/local/traditional concepts that promote ideas that echo those at the core of GCED (for example, *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* in France, *Hongik-Ingan* in Korea, *Ubuntu* in Southern Africa). These local concepts resonate with the three notions that distinguish GCED from other educational approaches: (i) "respect for diversity", (ii) "solidarity", and (iii) a "shared sense of humanity".

Three core notions of GCED

- These concepts are rooted in local cosmogonies, founding stories, and national histories, and they can often be found in constitutions, national anthems, and government policy documents, as well as in the writings of historical figures ("founding fathers and mothers").

- Unfortunately, these concepts are sometimes insufficiently known and celebrated beyond their regions of origin. They are also sometimes insufficiently valued as meaningful starting points to teach and learn about GCED in ways that are locally relevant. For these two reasons, UNESCO has produced this document.

- The purpose of this publication is to identify examples of concepts that convey similar notions to those found in GCED and can serve as effective starting points for teaching it.

- On this basis, we hope to promote the idea that GCED is not a new concept but a shared aspiration among all peoples to live together in peace, both within and beyond their own borders.

Target 4.7

Target 4.7 indicates that by 2030 all learners will "acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development."

2. A tour of the world through local concepts

La Charte du Manden (in Mali): "The Charter of Manden"

▶ *Mali, West Africa: Islamic Koranic School*
robertonencini/Shutterstock.com

Explanation - Dating from the 12-13th centuries and established under the rule of Emperor Sundiata Keita of the Mandingo Empire, the Charter of Manden is **one of the oldest recorded references to fundamental rights**, including the concepts of respect for human life, the right to life, the principles of equality and non-discrimination, women's rights, individual freedom, justice, equity and solidarity. Passed down through oral tradition, there are two versions of the Charter, which advocates for social peace in diversity, the inviolability of the human being, along with education, the integrity of the motherland, food security, and freedom of expression and trade. Born from a context of diversity of ethnicity and faith, the Charter of Manden provides guidance on how to respectfully and peacefully interact with other cultures and societies, thereby illustrating notions that are key to GCED, namely *respect for diversity* and *solidarity*.

Contemporary relevance to education - The Charter of Manden is highly respected within Mali, promoting a message of respect, love, peace and fraternity which has been cherished through the ages. It is widely seen to form the foundations of the values at the heart of Malian society. In 2011, the Malian government decreed the Charter to be part of the national cultural heritage of Mali. Also known as the "Kouroukan Fouga Charter", it is now included in the law syllabi of West African universities.

Ubuntu (in South Africa): "I am because we are – we are because I am"

Explanation - *Ubuntu* is a humanist concept that means "**I am because we are, we are because I am**", speaking to how a person is a person through his/her relation to and respect for others. This refers to an ethos for living together on the basis of care and respect, which is developed through the conviction that a person's actions have impact on others and vice versa, and points to the notion of mutual responsibility. The idea of *shared humanity* is the strongest GCED notion within *Ubuntu*, where South Africans learn from childhood about the oneness of humanity based on biological oneness, spiritual oneness, and the recognition of a common destiny. In addition, the concept