



Global Fairness- Schools as Agents for Change

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Lessons learnt for strengthening Global Education
in formal education



**GLOBAL
FAIRNESS**



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1) Introduction

In 2002, the European Congress on Global Education held in Maastricht brought together for the first time in history stakeholders from governments, parliaments, local authorities and civil society to discuss the future of Global Education (GE) in Europe and beyond. Several political achievements with regards to GE at UN, European, national and regional level have been made since then, for example, the adoption of the first European legal standard on Global Education in 2011 (Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to Member States on Education for Global Interdependence and Solidarity¹).

NGOs and civil society organisations across Europe have been able to strengthen their cooperation over recent years and to exchange their experiences on GE. Additionally, the European Commission has consulted with a broad range of stakeholders with a view to improving its initiatives to support DEAR (Development education and awareness raising) in Europe, in particular through the pan-European DEAR Study it commissioned in 2010–2011².

Even though numerous efforts have been made to raise awareness, to enlarge the capacity of practitioners of GE and to give general recommendations on the integration of GE into curricula, there is very little concrete information on school development with regard to GE. This present document – the final conclusions and recommendations of the project “Global Fairness – Schools as Agents for Change (2012-2015)” funded by the EuropeAid Programme with partners from Germany, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic and the UK, intends to contribute to closing this gap by providing concrete recommendations and advice on school development.

The document specifically addresses policy makers and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local level. However, we experienced that civil society organisations active in the field of school development themselves have a crucial role to play in facilitating this process, and consequently we also give recommendations on how civil society organisations can support schools in their school development regarding GE.

The main areas of action of the project *Global Fairness* are:

1. Strategies for school development
 - Development of school profiles
 - Strengthening of South-North school partnerships
 - Certification of Fair and Fairtrade Schools
2. Methods and resources for global learning
 - Teaching and learning resources for global learning in the classroom (workshops, guidelines for teachers)
 - Creative methods (e.g. theatre at school, film festivals, mobile cinema)
 - Competence development for teachers (teacher training, experience exchange, development of teaching material)
3. Global education in practice
 - GE in classrooms (e.g. interactive exhibition, climate breakfast, Global Classroom)
 - “Agents for Change”
 - International Youth Conference

¹ <http://nscglobaleducation.org/index.php/resource-center/item/33-global-education-recommendations>

² https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/aidco/index.php/DEAR_Final_report

The present recommendations are based on the lessons learnt for strengthening GE in formal education conducted by the European project partners within the framework of the project *Global Fairness*. As the situations of schools, NGOs and civil society organisations vary greatly within the EU Member States, we give specific advice and best practice examples according to the partner countries involved in the project. These observations and experiences may also be transferable to other EU Member States.

2) How can civil society organisations support schools in their school development regarding GE?

In general, school development with regard to GE is a rather complex and time-consuming task. School development covers many areas such as human-resource development, development of a school culture, classroom training and the development of the school as an institution. An NGO therefore has to consider carefully in which areas it can support a school in a professional manner, e.g., if a school has profound expertise in teacher training in GE. This can enhance the area of human-resource development and have positive effects on how teachers use GE in their classrooms. As schools gain more and more autonomy in developing their profile, there are very good opportunities for NGOs to work with schools to integrate GE into their school programmes and/or into their school culture. It should also be taken into consideration that civil society organisations might effectively support schools in areas where the schools lack capacities, provided that the intervention of the NGO in the school is also economically sustainable.

As already mentioned, the situation and working conditions of NGOs and schools have been different in each European country involved in the project. Therefore, we include recommendations based on country-specific characteristics and developments as known from Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the UK.

Germany

In Germany, EPIZ has developed a good-practice concept for a whole school approach, namely the “Fair School Concept” (www.faire-schule.eu/), which is linked to the “Fair School Award”. A school can receive this award when it can provide evidence of activities in three areas, namely “to be fair to each other”; “to be fair to the environment” and “to be fair to people around the globe”. This holistic approach enables schools to make real changes in several areas of professional school development. As EPIZ offers a bundle of supporting activities and several consultations within the process of applying for the award, we can see the changes that happen within schools: for example, more and more interdisciplinary classroom projects on GE, an increase in Fairtrade products in the schools, a rights-based approach to education and a strengthening of democratic practices in school.

According to the experience of the partner KATE, a good way for NGOs to support schools is to provide them with good-practice examples and consultations on how to implement and include GE in their curricula and consequently in the schools’ general approach. NGOs often have tremendous experience in GE as well as GE within the school context. This experience can be shared, discussed and forwarded to the schools. This can take place during school meetings, for example, when the teachers who are responsible for certain related subjects meet. Presentations by NGOs at schools also proved to be efficient, as well as the approach involving pupils through GE-related training and peer-to-peer concept such as climate breakfast (www.kate-berlin.de/klimafruehstueck-de). Moreover, institutions representing pupils can be involved: Pupils’ councils or other bodies can be supported in their striving for more and improved inclusion of GE at the schools. In this way, GE becomes an issue for the pupils much more easily than though a top-down approach by the heads of a school, their teachers and so on.

The partner GSE recommends NGOs to develop tailor-made materials and give support in using them such as *My fair treasure* box (www.gse-ev.de/seite/217901/berlin-brandenburg.html). Additionally, they should provide long-term assistance for schools who

decide to conduct GE and give information on activities, campaigns, awards concerning GE and related fields and advise schools on possible funds for activities in GE.

Finally, the BGZ and EPIZ have had good experience with stimulating direct communication between peers in the Global South and with initializing or enhancing South-North school partnerships (www.epiz-berlin.de/schulentwicklung/schulpartnerschaft/).

Hungary

Artemisszió Foundation (AF) realized that schools in Hungary welcome external actors in several domains. In the past years, Artemisszió has been cooperating with schools providing GE workshops to students, mentor programmes to students in difficulty, teacher training, summer camps, forum theatre activities, evaluation and revision of school practices in the domain of intercultural education, facilitating communication with parents, even assuring professional assistance in school linking and project building with African schools.

Opinions maintain that the centralisation of education and the extra burden put on teachers make schools resistant to innovation and the extra work demanded in the case of cooperation with external actors. However, AF's experience has shown that NGO expertise in these domains is definitely welcome if accompanied by a financing scheme, which is generally the case with an EU-funded project.

At the same time, AF still sees several possibilities for intervention which remain closed to them. Now that there is an obligation for pupils to spend the whole day in school and since there is no teaching in the afternoon, in theory there would be plenty of opportunities to offer extracurricular optional activities to children within the school system.

NGOs can be useful partners to link schools with the external world (parents, communities, the city, the region, other continents, etc.), to bring new practices and pedagogical tools into the school and to challenge and motivate teachers and school directors to revise and improve their own practices. Yet the opportunity to intervene in these domains remains dependent on structural options and constraints (for example, by introducing awards, enhancing school partnerships with schools from the global South, etc.).

United Kingdom

LeedsDEC has enhanced school development on GE in various ways. For example, they have encouraged schools to write their own Global Learning Charter, which outlines why they feel GE is important and how they will approach it at school. In their experience, this should be closely linked to the school's statutory obligations in order to increase the assimilation of those schools that are willing to engage with GE. Furthermore, they created a Global Schools' online platform (www.globalschools.org.uk), where schools can access high quality GE-resources, such as *Global Education toolkits*. According to LeedsDEC, it is important that this online platform is attractive and that practising teachers can upload resources.

LeedsDEC also created peer-education toolkits which students could use with other students on GE themes (uploaded to the website above). Their advice is that peer education toolkits should be as simple and as accessible as possible.

Moreover, they made a "What is Global Learning?" film which showcases one school's practical approach to Global Learning, through children's rights. Being able to have a film professionally produced was a fortunate situation that was the result of a good working relationship with a local school. However, this might not be easily transferable, so incorporating a sizeable amount of funding into the budgeting process for such possibilities would be recommended. They also organised school celebration events, where schools could network, learn from each other, observe good Global Learning practice and be equipped with resources and ideas. It would be recommended that sufficient time be allowed to prepare the schools leading the workshops, nor should the importance of good publicity be overlooked.

Finally, they also delivered workshops in schools on GE to students and teachers. Their advice is that workshops should be hands-on, relevant and linked to the curriculum.

Czech Republic

Ecumenical Academy Prague (EAP) has very good experience in supporting schools with workshops, seminars, printed materials such as leaflets, and awarding them the title “Fair Trade School” (www.fairtradetowns.org/news/mobilizing-czech-towns-and-schools-to-engage-in-the-fair-trade-movement/). The award enables the schools to show how committed they are in terms of Fairtrade /GE and it works very well. In terms of GE, the majority of teachers are not accustomed to using GE methods and topics in lessons and the schools rely on the work of NGOs.

According to the Czech experience, a school partnership with the global South is a big challenge. Even though Czech schools are interested in having partners in the Global South, funding streams supporting this type of school partnership do not exist. Therefore, it is recommended to use any methods which have been developed to enable the partnership without cultural bias or reproduction of cultural stereotypes.

Austria

Welthaus Linz (WHL) has offered workshops on new creative approaches regarding GE. Their path to success was the collaboration with partners in the creative media industry. Together they developed creative workshops on GE topics, such as globalisation of food production. Moreover, WHL initiated the film competition “Smart up your life” (www.smartupyourlife.wordpress.com/), a smart-phone short-film competition for students dealing with the topics of climate change and nutrition. Students from all over Austria participated and submitted entries. WHL highly recommends this approach as they could observe great interest both on the side of the teacher and of the student to be active in the workshops and the film competition, and thus in topics of GE.

Finally, WHL supported and consulted schools interested in school partnerships with the global South, whereupon they developed a manual with concrete advice and evidence of good practice for school partnerships (www.dioezese-linz.at/institution/8044/mut/globalfairness/article/11315.html). Special attention was given to the challenges of partnerships with the global South: time management, obstacles to communication and the slow rate of success.

3)Challenges for NGOs and schools

Challenges for NGOs active in the field of educational cooperation and schools in the different countries depend very much on the situation of the NGO sector in general and on the educational sector as a whole. Nevertheless, the partnership could observe some generalities valid for all participating countries.

In most European partner countries, schools have, for example, very rigid and inflexible curricula and schedules. Teachers often seem to be overloaded with tasks and often claim that they do not have much time for activities which are “outside of the curricula”. Additionally, it is often difficult to get in touch with them and to motivate them to conduct activities which they perceive as ‘additional work’. Moreover, they often find it difficult to integrate GE content and method into their everyday work as it is often not part of the school’s curricula yet, or the existing material and methods do not easily accommodate it. Teachers often claim that the GE methods and content on offer are excellent but that they have to invest too much effort into the adjustments to fit them into their lessons.

For both NGOs and schools, the almost non-existent long-term perspective due to a lack of long-term funding is another major challenge: Many participants are struggling because it is difficult to develop and maintain stable structures. Hence, many schools and NGOs lack the possibility to maintain effective partnerships and to create structures which are sustainable. Often the people involved move on due to precarious job situations on the side of the NGOs, which makes it difficult to establish networks and to keep existing knowledge and contacts alive.

For many teachers it is also difficult to include GE due to a lack of support from the heads of the schools. Often special arrangements need to be put in place and these may need the support of key figures who are in positions to decide on arrangements (such as changes of curricula, project days and weeks, school trips and so on).

Further promotional work with support from a network of greatly involved NGOs and with interference from the political decision makers is of the highest importance to the present challenging situation.

Germany

In Germany, not all NGOs active in the field of Global Education have specific expertise in school development, which means that training for NGOs is essential in order to become professional counterparts for the schools. Good preparation is crucial to avoid risks, such as conflicts within the school, which could lead to the situation that a school could stop the consultation process or decides to focus on other aspects rather than GE.

A project-financed NGO cannot easily replace cooperation with a “lost school” with a new one, as the whole process of agreeing on the terms of cooperation and reaching agreement within a school community may take as long as the project lasts. Moreover, even if a school is very motivated and interested in long-term cooperation, the NGO cannot offer a reliable long-term perspective as it is never certain what kind of funding can be secured.

Another challenge, apart from financial issues, is to make the process as participatory and inclusive as possible. If students are involved in questions regarding which aspects of school development are important to them, the opinions might be quite different from those of the teachers or even of the school management. So it is important to find a balance between the different perspectives and find solutions that work for all stakeholders.

When talking about integrating GE into schools, we usually mean not only what one or two enthusiastic teachers do with their students, but also having it written down in school programmes, in the school’s curricula, having working groups for teachers and students, including and informing parents, as well as opening the school to cooperation with external partners. Not all teachers are interested or willing to do this. So it is crucial to gain a “critical mass” of teachers who like the idea and a group of highly motivated participants that guide the way towards changes in schools.

Hungary

Experience in Hungary has shown that schools lack resources to support even the slightest action although they do cooperate voluntarily with NGOs. An experiment was conducted whereby a reduced participatory fee was charged for a teacher training course which is usually fully booked when free of charge. The result was that they could not hold the training course because teachers do not have any purchasing power, schools do not have extra resources and even if they did, they would be tied up by the central maintenance authority. As a result, only randomly distributed, externally financed projects can ensure NGO-school cooperation. There are several problems with this Hungarian system:

Schools in general have reduced capacity to initiate projects themselves, thus remaining dependent on proposals coming from outside. Most of the NGOs with a capacity to respond to EU projects are located in Budapest, and it is their network and not the need that will decide which school benefits from which project. With no central strategy, in projects initiated by NGOs, it is generally presumed that the NGO brings in extra competence and the school is the beneficiary. This is very counter-productive as it creates a structural inequality where NGO workers get paid for their work, while the work of teachers in the project is considered as a standard contribution, necessitating no salary. Even in cases where a small salary is designated for teachers, the project structure is generally not favourable for fully-fledged cooperation, as the philosophy behind the projects implies an hierarchical relationship between the developers and the developed.

It is not the schools’ needs that decided what sorts of services are bought in the schools but structural constraints and the priorities of the available funding scheme.

From the side of the NGO there are also impediments. In a call for proposals it is supposed that NGOs have state or municipality support in order to complete their own contribution and ensure covering running costs, which in Hungary today is not true (although in the past there were calls for covering part of their own contribution, as well as support for running costs). That restricts the capacity of NGOs to propose projects, especially in this new system of EuropeAid calls, where size is preferred to quality and creates a pronounced inequality

between large “Western” and smaller “Eastern” NGOs, which is not justified by the difference in professional competence.

In Hungary, the present situation is even more difficult, as the present government does not consider NGOs as allies, and support of GE is not on its list of priorities. As a consequence, NGOs work in an environment, which is, if not explicitly, at least implicitly hostile to their efforts.

United Kingdom

A major challenge for schools and NGOs in the United Kingdom is a much narrower school curriculum. There is even more pressure on schools to deliver the ‘core curriculum’ of English, Maths and Science, with references to ‘Global Citizenship’ being replaced by concepts of preparing students for life in the UK through learning about parliament and electoral responsibilities. Teachers have also seen their workloads increase and there is a great deal of demoralisation and stress within the profession.

In addition, there is also a lack of government funding to support NGOs with school development on GE, which makes opportunities for co-financing fairly limited.

Czech Republic

A significant challenge for NGOs in the Czech Republic is the lack of capacities. There are over 4000 basic schools and almost 1300 secondary schools. Compared to this, there are only 20 NGOs active in global education. This means that it is impossible for them to offer training in GE to all teachers and students. They cooperate mainly with interested schools, but there is still a large majority which do not show any interest in GE. The quality of schools and teachers is also very variable. GE in general does not belong to priorities the schools have, although it is part of the obligatory National Education Plan.

As a conclusion, NGOs take over the role of teachers and pedagogy faculties as they provide GE workshops directly in the classrooms and they train the teacher in teaching GE topics. Despite the important role they play in the GE, they are still underfinanced. Long-term financing is never sure, as it is based on short-term subventions (1-2 years). Methods and learning tools focused on GE are insufficient and this is also due to lack of financial resources.

Austria

Austria is in the process of reforming the education system, which will lead to more autonomy for all schools. Nevertheless, there is - especially in secondary education - a narrow curriculum and great pressure on teachers to prepare their students for the new, centralised A-level examination. Consequently, the Austrian partner observed that in general there is a lack of flexibility concerning the integration of GE into the curricula. Furthermore, many Austrian teachers lack the interest and the time to become more involved in advanced training on GE as they are very focused on preparations for the final examinations and very often are not willing to spend their free time with extra training.

An additional challenge for Austrian NGOs active in the field of GE and school development is the short-term financial support, which makes it difficult to offer long-term support to the schools and teachers.

4) Conclusions and recommendations

The European cooperation within *Global Fairness* allows drawing conclusions and recommendations resulted from working in the field of integrating GE into formal education, which shall be addressed to the European Union, the Member States and to the regional and local authorities.

(a) To the EU

We believe the EU is to

- Take into account the different sizes, resources and capacities of NGOs, as well as the countries and regions participating in the call for proposals, recognise the importance of the small NGOs, countries and regions, and provide equal opportunities in the application process.
- Take into consideration the power in balance between the Member States (e.g. size, financial capacities) and adjust the conditions of the calls accordingly (esp. EuropeAid).
- Provide continuation funds to extend successful cooperation projects if they can demonstrate need.
- Provide more funding for training on school development.
- Enable a better exchange on school development and the development of quality criteria/standards at the EU level.
- Encourage and allocate resources for collaboration between local authorities and Development Education NGOs as a way of creating wider public awareness of development issues.
- Foster equal cooperation between parties in the projects, be it between Northern and Southern participants, or between participants from schools and NGOs.
- Make funding available to state participants to actively promote cooperation between schools and NGOs.
- Provide resources so that schools can initiate their own projects on development issues in partnership with the NGOs.
- Recognise human and financial resources spent on project preparation (e.g. project design, writing applications).
- Focus on identifying effective strategies in raising awareness of development.
- Support research to assess the positive impacts of GE, in terms of academic achievement.
- Increase efforts on training for teachers with special focus on GE.

(b) To the Member States

We believe the Member States are to

- Coordinate the increasing numbers of NGOs individually active in the GE and enable exchange and work in coalitions.
- Commission research to identify and analyse different awards (e.g. Fairtrade School, Healthy School), create a working group to compare the awards and enable exchange on them.
- Recognise the huge reserve of knowledge, competence and professionalism accumulated in NGOs and incorporate these resources in development of national programmes.
- Recognise the potential in NGO and school cooperation and provide financial resources to enhance it.
- Provide continuation funds to extend successful cooperation projects if they can demonstrate need.
- Provide long-term funding for cooperation between schools and NGOs as this would enhance the quality and efficiency of GE projects and improve long-term effects.

- Provide co-financing for EU projects related to GE.
- Encourage their administrative bodies to engage with NGOs in order to work towards quality standards in GE.
- Set educational directives to include GE.
- Support research to assess the positive impacts of Global Learning, in terms of academic achievement.
- Educate and empower young people to transform their surroundings through social actions. To do this, provide educational settings which enable them to query issues critically, to be creative and allow them to discover their potential.
- Invest more human and financial capacities in training future teachers at university level on development issues.

(c) To the regional and local level

We believe the regional and local authorities are to

- Take advantage of the implementation of the priorities of Agenda 21 and identify common development issues.
- Provide opportunities for NGOs active in GE to exchange and discuss their different experiences and approaches regularly.
- Identify schools that are experiencing difficulties with student involvement and recommend that they take part in projects such as fair schools' or schools without racism.
- Support networks between schools and GE-NGOs.
- Encourage partnerships of schools in partner towns with regard to global issues and Fair Trade.
- Encourage the synergies of towns and schools in order to promote sustainable development and awareness of global issues.
- In partnerships with schools, enable more activities within the framework of different initiatives related to GE, e.g. Fairtrade schools and towns.
- Become involved in GE-promotion at the national level and remain in constant dialogue with State authorities with regard to further financial support for NGOs committed to GE.

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