

Achievements of Uzbekistan in the Fourth Phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education: Progress and Prospects

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Abstract: Immense progress has been made in advancing the agenda of human rights education and promoting universal human rights around the globe over the last thirty years. The World Programme for Human Rights has served the international community well in this journey. Uzbekistan has demonstrated significant progress in the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which has focused on empowering youth through comprehensive human rights education. However, with the state of the world as it is now, there is a need for bigger and more unorthodox methods. The author propose directing funds and energy towards engaging global youth in conferences for peace. At the same time, author propose to establish a centralized platform that allows creators to contribute human rights education material that others can learn from.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, human rights education, World Programme, youth empowerment, National Action Plan, digital platform, international collaboration, fifth phase.

For the last three decades, the global community has been elevating the human rights education agenda in five-year phases. What started as the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education – a ten-year program that seeks to promote a common understanding of basic principles and methodologies of human rights education – was extended to 25 more years of activism in five distinct five-year periods¹. The World Programme for Human Rights Education stretching from 2005 and onwards, was established by the United Nations General Assembly's with the aim of advancing the progress and practice of human rights education globally across all layers of society.

Currently, countries, governments, international bodies, non-government structures and activists worldwide are focused on empowering youth through human rights education. In the adoption of Resolution 39/3, the Human Rights Council concurred to make youth the focal point of the World Programme for Human Rights Education's fourth phase. In order to create inclusive and peaceful societies, this strategy placed a particular emphasis on education and training in the areas of equality, human rights, and non-discrimination, as well as inclusion and respect for variety. Aligning

¹ OHCHR, 'World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing)' <<https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/world-programme-human-rights-education>>.

with target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which is part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, was another goal of the fourth phase².

Uzbekistan, as one of the most active members and signatories of the World Programme, has been most active in all phases of the program. Particularly, Uzbekistan approached every phase of the program with a specific and detailed action plan. For the fourth phase of the program, The National Program of Action for the Implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training was developed by the National Center for Human Rights and adopted by the Parliament of Uzbekistan. The whole government apparatus of the Republic of Uzbekistan has been working on promoting human rights education and creating the right environment for the prosperity of human rights according to this agenda action plan.

The government of Uzbekistan created a monitoring mechanism for the progress of the human rights education agenda within its senate. A committee consisting of the most experienced members of the Senate in the fields of law, human rights, education, youth works, and leadership were included in this committee. While the National Action Plan identifies responsible parties for each item in the agenda, the Senate committee monitors that these responsibilities are being carried out to the highest of standards.

The value of the National Action Plan lies in its expansive nature to cover all the human rights-related challenges while providing a Roadmap to tackle these challenges. The fact that the World Programme is being carried out in phases and international bodies are submitting periodic review reports on the progress made, allows governments to create Action Plans and Roadmaps with the benefit of hindsight. In a similar manner, the current Roadmap for the fourth phase of the World Programme in Uzbekistan was created based on the monitoring results of the National Programme for Human Rights Education in Uzbekistan during 2020-2022 and was approved by the President of Uzbekistan through Resolution No. 46 on February 7, 2023.

The roadmap under discussion covers **seven major areas** that need attention to advance the education of human rights specifically among youth. These seven areas have been populated with **30 tasks** each described in detail in paragraphs. Still, the most important part of the process is the implementation. Implementation of new practices in human rights education is what is reported to the Senate Committee and included in the periodical reviews. Most importantly, implementation is what makes a difference in the society.

As outlined in the Roadmap, Human Rights Week was held throughout Uzbekistan. "Human Rights Week" was held by the National Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights in cooperation with central and local government authorities, government organizations, civil society institutions and international

² OHCHR, 'Fourth phase (2020-2024) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education'
<<https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/world-programme-human-rights-education/fourth-phase-2020-2024-world-programme-human-rights-education>>.

organizations. The events were held throughout the country - in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regions and the city of Tashkent, districts and cities.

A program of training courses on women's rights, children's rights, and human rights has been developed and approved in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, the National Centre for Human Rights, TSUL, UWED, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the University of Public Security, and the Institute of State and Law in order to implement paragraph 2 of the Roadmap. Since the 2023–2024 academic year, this curriculum has been incorporated into the higher education and vocational sectors.

The element of competition was seen as a vital part of engaging young people and activists in the promotion of human rights education. Therefore, 3rd paragraph of the Roadmap postulated the organization of a nationwide competition on 'Education and Innovation in the Field of Human Rights and Freedoms'. This was a year-long nationwide competition where participants applied to take part in categories 'Best human rights training course,' 'Best drawing on the theme "Human rights through the eyes of children",' 'Best video clip on human rights and freedoms,' 'Best educational literature on human rights and freedoms (printed and electronic),' 'Best article on human rights (scientific and popular),' 'Human rights expert,' and 'Author of the best innovative idea on human rights.' individually, as organizations or in teams. On December 4, 2023, an award ceremony for the winners of the National Competition 'Education and Innovation in the Field of Human Rights and Freedoms' was organized at the National Centre for Human Rights of the Republic of Uzbekistan³. Uzbekistan has been moving forward with the agenda of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education with decisive steps. Outlined above are some of the achievements of the fourth phase.

However, as the world has been witnessing outright appalling human rights scenarios in multiple parts of the globe, work in the field of protecting and promoting human rights needs to be accelerated and given a strength boost.

It would be more beneficial if the **fifth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education** focused on two things.

Firstly, there should be more popular academic talks on human rights by allowing young people to organize conferences. If young people are empowered by being allowed to organize and participate in MUN or TED Talks-style conferences on a variety of topics within the field of Human Rights, definitive progress will be made towards stabilizing the world nowadays and ensuring a peaceful world in the future. After all, ongoing armed conflicts are the main source of breaches of human rights across the globe. Today's youth are more idealistic and are ready to favour humanitarian values as

³ National Centre of Uzbekistan for Human Rights, 'Information on the implementation of the National Programme for Human Rights Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan and its "Roadmap"' <<http://nhrc.uz/en/activity/information-on-the-implementation-of-the-national-programme-for-human-rights-education-in-the-republic-of-uzbekistan-and-its-roadmap>>.

opposed to materialistic competition. Therefore, these conferences could create a change of tone in international dialogue.

Secondly, there is still room for digital enhancement of human rights education tools. Although online conferences and training have become part and parcel of the human rights education process, there are still not enough centralized global platforms where creators can contribute and learners can pick and choose their next step in development courses in human rights. The current state of online resources for human rights education is more scattered and unsystematized.

Creating a centralized open source vetted platform for human rights education materials ranging from videos, podcasts, interviews and others would allow diversify and intensify the process of human rights education globally. At the same time, this solution would remove the challenge of language barriers as contributors from all over the world would be creating.

Uzbekistan's achievements in the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education underscore the importance of systematic action and government collaboration. By engaging youth through competitions and partnerships with educational institutions, the nation set a strong example. However, the next phase should prioritize youth-led global conferences to foster dialogue and understanding, and establish a centralized digital platform that allows for inclusive, comprehensive education. Such strategies will deepen global collaboration and strengthen the reach and impact of human rights education worldwide.