



Submission No 35

Inquiry into Human Rights and Good Governance Education in the Asia Pacific Region

Organisation: **Diplomacy Training Program**

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Diplomacy Training Program Response to Supplementary Questions on the SCFDT Human Rights Sub-Committee Inquiry into Human Rights and Good Governance Education in the Asia-Pacific:

1. National Centre for Human Rights Education. Would this assist DTP in its work? What role would DTP playing in this initiative

The proposal for a National Centre on Human Rights Education would be a valuable indication of the value attached by Australia to human rights education. It would assist DTP by being a repository of relevant and up to date information on best practice in human rights education at the national, regional and international level. It may well provide DTP with access to relevant academics and practitioners and develop services that would help DTP enhance the effectiveness of its programs and to increase its collaborations with others in this field.

DTP would welcome the opportunity to be involved in providing input to the development of the Centre's work – within its limited capacity to make a contribution.

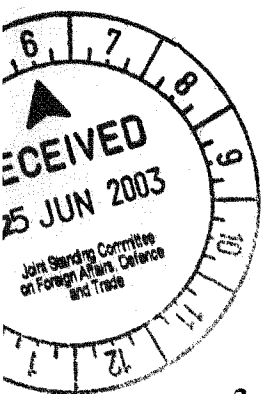
2. Would an enhanced Radio Australia service assist in promoting human rights and good governance education in the region? How could the existing Radio Australia service best be used to support human rights and good governance in the region?

An enhanced Radio Australia would have considerable potential to assist in promoting human rights education in the region, given the low levels of literacy in many countries of the region.

It could do this through dedicated programs and series on human rights, on human rights instruments and the work of UN bodies and on the work of human rights NGOs would be one way.

By providing access to those working on human rights on the ground across the region to tell their stories it would help to build awareness and understanding of human rights issues and give them with a voice and give them access to important new audiences. An interview series with key human rights figures from the region could play a role in overcoming continuing misconceptions that human rights are a western concept. Including human rights training in the training of journalists would be another. Educational modules and courses in human rights could also be broadcast through an enhanced Radio Australia. Accurate and consistent reporting on issues of corruption and other issues of governance is an important way of reinforcing accountability.

3. Incorporation of the Rights of Women into human rights and good governance education. Proportion of women in DTP Programs.



There is an impression that there is not sufficient reference to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in many good governance programs or human rights education programs/projects, but DTP does not have details. Ratification levels for CEDAW in the Pacific Island states where Australia has had particular influence through its aid programs remain disappointingly low.

DTP itself does focus on the importance of addressing all recognised grounds of discrimination in its human rights training and gives particular attention in many of its programs to CEDAW. It has a commitment to gender equity and to attracting women participants. Despite this, over the last few years I understand the proportion of women participants has been around the 30% level.

4. How effective are the various UN agencies in the region in terms of human rights and good governance education?

It is hard to measure effectiveness or to be too general. UNICEF has been actively promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child in all of its work for a number of years with some effect. Only since 1998 has UNDP consciously committed to integrating human rights into its programs. Increasingly all UN agencies have been adopting human rights based approaches to their strategies and programs. The human rights based approach opens up the significant potential to expand awareness and knowledge of human rights at the community level and within government agencies

The UN Treaty Monitoring Bodies play a vital role in promoting awareness of human rights, but lack resources.

Overall it could be said that the UN has played an important catalytic role and provided a global framework and impetus through the UN Decade on human rights education. The UN has provided valuable materials and opportunities for sharing of knowledge, communication and collaboration between civil society and governments but it lacks resources.

5. What more needs to be done to support NGO's engaged in human rights and good governance education?

Giving human rights education greater priority within country and regional resources and increasing the allocations of funds to NGOs providing these programs – including the need for greater flexibility in funding guidelines to ensure they are not overly restrictive or unsuitable for the objectives. At the diplomatic level sending messages that the NGO role in providing human rights education is important.

6. Why have governance programs not worked? Is there a need to redirect or redesign governance programs?

Governance continues to lack clear or universal definition or standards making effectiveness hard to measure. The relationship between governance and human rights is rarely explicit in governance program or project strategies and objectives. Human rights is very seen as a small add-on component within governance programs and aid programs more generally rather than as integral.

Even the best programs on governance are likely to fail if systemic issues of discrimination, marginalisation and unequal development are not addressed in the bulk of the aid program.

Governance programs should be re-designed so that the human rights objectives are negotiated with partners and made explicit and time-bound so that strategies can be more effectively evaluated.

7. How and to what extent can cultural and societal diversity be better taken into account when addressing human rights and good governance education issues?

The emphasis should be on effective processes of participation of civil society and specific stakeholders in all aspects of the design and delivery of programs.

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