Education for human dignity

Based on human rights and wellbeing

Educo's education strategy and approach


**Education for human dignity: Based on human rights and wellbeing**

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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual framework</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educo’s approach</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to education</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights in education</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights through education</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework for action</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage.”
Paulo Freire
Introduction

Education forms the backbone of the work we carry out at Educo. We share the conviction that while education is an end in itself, it is also the ideal means for guaranteeing the exercise of rights, the enjoyment of wellbeing and a life of dignity. We believe, as Delors states, that “the right to education is an indispensable means for children to discover their potential, exercise their freedoms, take responsibility for their own wellbeing and participate in collective processes that are aimed at bringing about favorable changes in human development”. We are thus committed to education as a core strategic area point, as it fulfills a dual purpose in channeling the exercise of interdependent and inalienable rights.

This document outlines the education model that Educo promotes, as well as its approach and strategy. Said strategy is based on the organization’s own understanding of the context, which is formed from a flexible standpoint and attuned to the changes taking place in the different realities in which we are immersed. The paper then presents the main conceptual references, theoretical foundations and practical bases that shape the institutional approach, which is adapted and renewed in light of reflective practice. This approach, along with the education goals set forth by Educo in its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, are then explored in depth, and emphasis is placed on its main aspects, affording them the timeless nature they deserve. This is followed by an outline of the key components of every educational action at the institutional level and, finally, an implementation plan based on four broad lines of action.
The strategy responds to the need to establish a common understanding of education that is underpinned by a shared conceptual basis and can be compared with actual practice in the field. It therefore does not seek to offer a series of methodological or operational steps that can be repeated mechanically, but rather aims to stimulate an in-depth and careful reflection that may alter our approach, generating, in turn, new reflections that pave the way for an ongoing cycle of reflection-action. At the same time, it establishes a series of basic common lines of action and building blocks that are sufficiently flexible to both provide coherence at a global level and to uphold relevance at the local level. We aim to be recognized with this approach and these strategic lines of action, and to learn and improve as an organization as we put these lines of action into practice.

Action in the field of education is inevitably reflective and critical, and it is precisely through this document that Educo aims to “think out loud” about what type of education it believes in and wants to promote in order to achieve the world we envision and pursue; a world where all children fully enjoy their rights and lead a life of dignity.
Context

Children today are living in situations in which their rights are severely violated.

And while practically all countries in the world have legislation that recognizes children’s rights, many children are still unable to fully exercise or enjoy them. This contrast becomes remarkably clear following the Child Rights Situation Analysis (CRSA) carried out in eleven of Educo’s program countries in 2015.

The development model that has dominated the sector over the last 50 years, one based on economic growth instead of on people, has only exacerbated this situation. Inequity has reached unsustainable and inhumane proportions: at a material level, over 50% of the world’s wealth is controlled by a mere 1% of the population; the economy is in the hands of the market “machines” that are already responsible for more than half of stock market transactions; in terms of recognition, gender equity has still not been achieved; so-called progress continues to mean the elimination of many indigenous peoples; and, with respect to freedom, the comprehensive development of human capacities continues to be denied for so many, thus hindering their wellbeing and sense of dignity.

The environment is still an object of plundering and destruction. Several studies affirm that we are on the road to the sixth massive extinction in history. There can be no doubt as to human responsibility for the climate change, nor to how this is affecting our wellbeing and possibilities for sustainable and harmonious development. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) sustains that several critical global, regional and local thresholds have already been exceeded or are close to being exceeded. Once these thresholds are crossed, abrupt and possibly irreversible changes to the life-support functions of the planet are likely to occur, with significant adverse implications for human wellbeing.

We live increasingly detached from nature and from its essence within ourselves. Over 50% of the world’s population lives in cities and, according to UN data, this percentage will reach 66% by the year 2050. Moreover, the world population continues to grow and with it, our capacity and hunger for consumption. According to Tim Jackson, our culture is based on an insatiable appetite for the new, which is the symbolic aspect of objects. As Bauman confirms, this appetite, this type of behavior, is essential for preserving the progress of our type of economy, the consumer economy.

The obstacles to overcoming this—he further asserts—are huge, and nothing

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1 Educo has carried out CRSA in: Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Mali, Nicaragua, and the Philippines. A CRSA is expected to be carried out in Peru in 2016.
5 Bauman, Z. (2013). On Education: Conversations with Ricardo Mazzeo. Ed. Paidós. Bauman affirms that it is because of this appetite, which is deeply rooted and which we have been aggressively trained to develop, that we find ourselves in a situation that constantly drives us and makes us predisposed to act in a selfish and materialist way.
except true “cultural revolution” would be effective in facing it. And as limited as the power of the current education system may seem, its transformative power is still enough to consider it a promising factor in this revolution.

Indeed, at an educational level, we are immersed in a key moment in the evolution of the global educational situation. The year 2015 marked the end of the period established for the fulfillment of the Education for All (EFA) Goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While the evaluation of these goals acknowledges the progress made towards the proposed targets and values the capacity these have had in prioritizing international agendas, it has also become evident that this progress continues to reflect profound inequalities and that the international community has failed to fulfill the goals overall, as well as to meet the targets established in the year 2000. In addition to the lack of resources, the States’ have exhibited a clear lack of interest in fulfilling their commitment to education. This becomes even more evident when we consider that this commitment is heavily conditioned by the economically oriented discourse that prevails at the international level, a discourse that is dominated in the education sphere by the growing influence of the theory of human capital.

In September 2015, a new education agenda was established, setting a common goal for the Education 2030 Framework for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This single global goal is accompanied by 7 targets and 3 means of implementation that should be achieved over the next 15 years, and as international organization, Educo subscribes to these. Given the progress made in terms of access in recent years, the new agenda—which is in harmony with Educo’s strategic goal—places emphasis on quality and meaningful achievements in learning and focuses more clearly on the aspects of inclusion and equity.

Today, however, according to UNESCO statistics, 58 million primary school age children are still out of school—a third of these in West and Central Africa—with this figure rising to 63 million for the first cycle of secondary education. Access, despite being the factor that has most improved in recent years, is still an unresolved problem that needs to be addressed by responding to the main obstacles and most deeply-rooted causes. It has also been observed that initial improvements came to a standstill in 2007-2008, which suggests that more than a priority, this was a possibility. Several of Educo’s program countries, like Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, India and Mali, continue to report over half a million out-of-school children. And these figures would be even higher if we consider preprimary and secondary school levels, which is where we observe the main gaps with respect to the equitable enjoyment of the right to education. In the Guatemalan department of

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6 Ibid.
8 The essential components of this framework were established in the Incheon Declaration in the Republic of Korea in May 2015, and offers a more comprehensive vision of the education agenda for the next 15 years.
Quiché, for example, 67.7% of children are still without access to preprimary education\textsuperscript{10}. In Mali, where more than half of the country’s children still do not have access to school, data from 2006 reveals that only 6% of children between 3 and 6 years old are schooled\textsuperscript{11}.

This is compounded by the fact that the private sector is gaining ground in both of these education segments, and that this often means an increase in inequity, especially when it comes to girls\textsuperscript{12}, children from ethnic minorities and children with disabilities. \textit{The phenomenon of education as an attractive business}—affirms Kishore Singh, Special Rapporteur on the right to education in his September 2014 report—\textit{is assuming alarming proportions, with scant control by public authorities, and education is being recast as a sector and increasingly opened up to profit-making and trade, as well as to agenda-setting by private, commercial interests}\textsuperscript{13}. The privatization of education forces families to think of how to obtain the highest possible return on investment and to consider their long-term needs. This means that families with scarce resources must face the hard decision of choosing which of their children will enjoy the rights to an education, or at least which kind or degree of education their different children will receive. Even if trends start changing and we observe that in increasingly more countries boys are the ones not benefitting from education or dropping out prematurely, these decisions continue to be heavily influenced by dominant gender patterns, on the one hand, and by the labor market, which is deeply affected by these, on the other. This leads to significant negative discrimination against girls, which not only affects their “school life”, but also their enjoyment of the right to an education throughout their lives, and to their enjoyment of the other closely-related rights.

Nonetheless, the largest gaps continue to exist in educational quality and equity, since access to school is not, in itself, a guarantee of learning and since learning is not the same for all. It is taken for granted that learning happens simply because one attends school, although learning


\textsuperscript{12} CEDAW (2014). Privatisation and its impact on the right to education of women and girls.

is something that is habitually neglected in school. This means that more than 250 million girls and boys are not acquiring basic knowledge. And the majority of them live in impoverished countries, in situations of conflict, in remote and isolated areas, are girls or are children with functional diversity.

Once again, it is confirmed that the principal of non-discrimination continues to be neglected, and that the most vulnerable population is the most affected. This is the result of a lack of quality teacher training, both initial and ongoing; a lack of adapted and inclusive educational materials; the deficient state of existing infrastructures; insufficient funding for education in central and decentralized sectors of educational administrations, as well as a lack of coordination between these; and a lack of opportunities for children, families and communities to participate in educational spaces.

This represents the State's obligation with respect to the protection, promotion and provision of the Right to Education. The non-application of the legislative framework is thereby evident and occurs in a climate of impunity and a lack of accountability. This neglect of responsibilities on the part of primary duty bearers is compounded by other deeply rooted sociocultural aspects, such as social norms, patterns and cultural beliefs that constitute harmful practices and that broaden the gap of discrimination. This translates to high dropout rates among girls who are forced into early marriage, as reflected in data from countries like Benin¹⁴, and Bangladesh, among others. It is also reflected, in the case of Burkina Faso¹⁵, in the fact that 66% of people with functional diversity do not receive any level of instruction and only 16.5% of them have reached primary school.

Educational centers are not always the safe, healthy and protective environments they should be for children. Different focus groups carried out by Educo, as part of the ChildFund Alliance, in Bangladesh¹⁶, show that violence is so present in children’s lives, both in school and at home, that it is seen as natural. The same occurs in El Salvador¹⁷ where a culture of violence pervades daily life. And the reality is not so different in other Educo program countries. For example, a recent report by Educo on children in Spain—which incorporates first hand perspectives on the phenomenon of violence—reveals that “nearly half experience a high risk of suffering violence and abuse at school, with school violence being a phenomenon that seems to particularly worry older boys”¹⁸. This confirms that school is not always a safe place, and yet the boys and girls who were interviewed go on to call for education and awareness raising to be given a role as a tool for change, not only in their own lives but also in society. Thus, they introduce the fundamental distinction between school and education, that Educo addresses throughout this document.

Finally, this brings us precisely to another element that is neglected by education: giving a voice and paying due attention to what children themselves have to say. The Child Rights Situational Analysis carried out by Educo dramatically and constantly reflect this reality: children are ignored,

and they are systematically robbed of their capacity to have an opinion and to make decisions about their own lives.

All this has consequences that go beyond the educational dimension that have an impact on all aspects of children’s lives, and therefore requires a holistic multi-sectoral approach. But in the face of this reality, new voices and experiences emerge, strongly going against the current. Social movements find new ways of organizing and find new support in increasingly global connectivity, achieving greater impact and transformations. Different communities and societies are bringing about profound cultural changes thanks to worldviews that offer alternative visions of life and development, like sumac kawsay. These voices resound in a global claim backed by movements like that of degrowth, or the promotion of slow life and initiatives that assess people’s wellbeing by taking happiness and quality of life into account. We have more options for learning than ever, and there is greater awareness and conscientiousness about the environment and social injustice. That is why, if we want to consolidate a radical change that includes all people, it is more necessary than ever to remain constant in our claim for and promotion of a dignified education: an education based on human rights and wellbeing19.

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19 In keeping with Bradshaw (2007), we understand wellbeing ‘as the realization of children’s rights and the fulfilment of the opportunity for every child to be all she or he can be in the light of a child’s abilities, potential and skills’.
Educo regards education as an intrinsic human right that is an inherent part of the entire life cycle and that allows other rights to be enjoyed and reinforced. Foregoing a more development-oriented perspective, which associates education with schooling, Educo promotes comprehensive quality education based on equity to enhance people’s capacities, autonomy and freedom, and to transform their environment by building more just societies. Ultimately, we promote education that is based on and promotes rights and dignity, and that fosters environments that generate wellbeing for one and all.

Our concept of education, its meaning and goals is drawn, in large part, from various international human rights standards; and given that Educo is a child right-based organization, it takes, as its fundamental basis, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This implies integrating the following key considerations:

- Recognize the fundamental responsibility of States to respect, protect, and provide education.
- Apply the four core principles of the CRC: non-discrimination, best interest, survival and development (optimal development) and participation.
- Plan on the basis of Child Rights Situation Analyses and integrate and promote accountability.
- Prioritize capacity building and empowerment through community-based efforts.
- Give priority attention to the most vulnerable population.

With respect to the aim of education, the main treaties assert that this is to promote personal development, foster respect for human rights and freedoms, prepare individuals to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, friendship, tolerance and respect for the environment. The aim of education has also been extensively addressed in Article 29 of the CRC.

As regards the importance of Article 29, General Comment No. 1 of the CRC establishes that the aims of education that it sets out, which have been agreed to by all States parties, promote, support and protect the core value of the Convention: the human dignity innate in every child and his or her equal and inalienable rights. This provides Educo not only with a comprehensive conceptual framework but also with a legitimate framework for action as an international organization. Nevertheless, we are aware that the existence of specific legislation does not necessarily mean the fulfillment of the right or rights this is supposed to cover. The right to education and equitable

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access to education are legally recognized in virtually every country in the world, yet we know that such access is far from a reality in many of them. As Hoffmann\(^\text{21}\), asserts, for education to become a true human right, it has to be seen as a concept that stretches beyond legislation and the conventions signed by countries. A right that is recognized by the State but cannot be exercised is not enough. In this vein, we agree on highlighting the possibilities offered by the *capabilities approach* and its contribution to the *life skills education approach*. In this framework, Hoffmann associates the central human functional capabilities (CHFC) identified by Nussbaum\(^\text{22}\)—linked to human rights—with the four pillars of learning defined by Delors in the report *Learning: The Treasure Within*\(^\text{23}\). (See Table 2)

*Learning to know* is the understanding and use of knowledge and incorporates, among the capabilities defined by Nussbaum, the capacity for practical reasoning, including cognitive skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving and decision-making. *Learning to do* directs us towards practical skills and among the CHFC (Central Human Functional Capabilities) would include life skills, bodily health, bodily integrity and control over one’s environment. *Learning to live together* focuses on interpersonal and social skills; in accordance with Nussbaum, we would refer to core skills related to *emotions*, *affiliation* and *respecting differences*, and specifically communication, negotiation, refusal, assertiveness, cooperation and empathy skills. Finally, *learning to be* is linked to the concept of agency and within the CHFC would refer to the senses, *imagination and thinking* and the capacity to *play*. It includes abilities related to self-awareness, self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience. It also covers skills for building an identity and setting goals.

Education for all must be a fundamental goal of *quality education* and while this may seem obvious, unfortunately it is all too often overlooked. At Educo, we believe that Delors’ framework for learning is still essential for guiding education and, having integrated new meanings over time, is more valid than ever before. In line with the foregoing statements, we believe that the capabilities approach might help give substance to education as a right and provide, in addition to greater possibilities for contextualization and recognition\(^\text{24}\), Education for all must be a fundamental goal of *quality education* and while this may seem obvious, unfortunately it is all too often overlooked. At Educo, we believe that Delors’ framework for learning is still essential for guiding education and, having integrated new meanings over time, is more valid than ever before. In line with the foregoing statements, we believe that the capabilities approach might

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\(^{22}\) We do not want to debate the universal validity of these capacities, but rather simply underline the value that this has for our work as a common reference within the different realities in which we operate.


\(^{24}\) Here, the concept of recognition refers to the theory regarding the link between recognition and justice put forward by Honneth and Fraser. We concur with the idea expressed by Robeyns, according to which justice as recognition can be integrated within the notion of justice of the capabilities approach or is at least compatible with it. As Pereira asserts (2014), a measure of capabilities is a measure of justice and recognition.
help give substance to education as a right and provide, in addition to greater possibilities for contextualization and recognition.

All this brings us to another core feature of the education that we promote, equity, and its relationship to the achievement of essential learning and the development of every learner’s full potential. To this end, equity must be indisputably palpable everywhere: from access and throughout the education process, as well as in the results and long-term effects of education. This implies, first and foremost, respect for the principle of non-discrimination and recognition of diversity; equity, as such, is both inclusive and fair. Drawing on the words of Sánchez Santamaría and Gracia Ballester Vila, equity is inclusive when everyone enjoys the same opportunities to achieve something fundamental and the opportunities express and afford possibilities so that each individual can fulfill himself/herself as a citizen. And, it is fair when it is guaranteed that everyone has access to and obtains basic education in order to build a decent life project for himself/herself.

In a broader sense, equity expresses the extent to which a society is capable of generating and distributing wellbeing among all its members. This implies including the community dimension in our vision of education and recognizing the capacity of education to redress inequalities and to generate social transformations. It involves regarding education as a social process that is profoundly influenced by a socio-cultural environment characterized by consumerist, heteropatriarchal and competitive values in which, according to Freire, we are not beings of adaptation but of transformation.

Indeed, society entrusts a major part of children’s education to schools, and it is for this reason that Educo’s educational program focuses mainly on them. However, taking action only in schools would be excessively reductionist, given that many of the determining factors and facilitators for the effective exercise of the right to education are found outside of school and that education also takes place beyond its confines. We are referring, in particular, to the family, the surrounding community or immediate environment, as well as to the more global community and its constituent structures. We are certain that quality education will not be possible if these agents are not connected in any of the actions that are undertaken. It is therefore necessary to consider integrated approaches that involve capacity building amongst families and the community towards improving education. The idea is to develop programs that integrate: people who learn in schools that learn in communities that learn. (See Figure 1)

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25 Literally, person who learns. Educo assumes adopts this concept instead of other alternatives like student, educated because of the passive connotation that the latter have and because of its more inclusive nature, since it transcends the idea of the teacher as being the person who possesses knowledge and of the student as being the person who receives it. This is also a way to both reflect and call for greater commitment to using inclusive language.

26 Sánchez Santamaría, J. y Gracia Ballester Vila, M. (2014). Desarrollando el éxito educativo para todos: reflexiones, propuestas y retos conceptuales en torno a la equidad educativa. REICE.


People who learn encompasses all those learners in the education process, every child at the heart of the learning process, as active and key players, who aim to exercise their right to education so that they can lead an independent life of dignity.

Schools that learn are spaces with well-trained education professionals who continue to improve their practices by acquiring new knowledge. These are schools that grow under the pedagogical guidance of the management body and bring educational practice to fruition beyond the classroom, throughout all the spaces of the learning establishment. These are places that create stimulating learning environments that are educational and that nurture personal relationships as a primary source of education.

Communities that learn are those that take part in defining education, that mobilize resources to ensure education as a right that is exercised throughout life, particularly for the most vulnerable populations. These are communities that encourage learning among families and the community through empowered\textsuperscript{29} individuals who are committed to good governance, sustainability and social equity.

The interaction of these three levels articulates our institutional framework and educational approach, which regards learning as the empowerment of individuals who recognize themselves as rights holders, are aware of the determining factors that influence their lives and society, and are active agents of change. This is only possible if we go beyond making technical and methodological modifications and seek to bring about a profound cultural change and to ensure that the circles that connect each of these levels come to form interdependent circles of collaboration. It is mutual support that will make it possible for empowered people to become, as we said at the beginning of this chapter, builders\textsuperscript{30}, of environments that generate wellbeing for all.


\textsuperscript{30} In keeping with Mayall (2002), we would say that these are actors who become agents.
Educo’s approach

Introduction: three rights and two education-centered areas of intervention

Educo’s mission is to work with children and their communities to promote more just and equitable societies that guarantee their rights and wellbeing.

This implies directing Educo’s efforts towards the effective fulfillment of children’s rights and placing these at the heart of the organization’s purpose at a political, methodological and practical level. Consequently, as an organization, we incorporate, promote and advocate for Child Rights in pursuit of the maximum wellbeing for all children.
Based on the principles of universality, interdependence and indivisibility, the right to education constitutes a strategic pillar for Educo that not only facilitates access to other rights, but also calls for rights to be modeled and practiced. Educo’s main goal in education is that “children and adolescents exercise and enjoy their right to an equitable, transformative and quality education throughout their lives”31. Working within this framework, we address education in conjunction with the strategic goals of protection and governance.

Indeed, from a pedagogical perspective, the strategic goals are intertwined, joined by a central point that moves between school or the educational space and community, guided by the rights-based approach:

1. The first area moves from this first encounter with alterity, that is the acknowledgment of diversity that comes with educational experience, towards a more cosmopolitan identity32, a core that is built through equitable, pertinent and democratic education in which people learn to be, to do, to know and to live together.

Educo’s vision of education extends beyond the acquisition of certain knowledge and the full development of human character, cognitive, emotional and social skills and a sense of self-dignity. Rather, and based on the conviction that people’s development is linked to the quality of relationships that they can form with their peers33, as well as with adults such as their parents and teachers, we believe that the aim of education transcends the individual and is to foster people’s commitment to society as citizens who, with their collaboration, are capable of transforming their environment by building more equitable communities.

2. The second area traces the process of converting schools into inclusive educational spaces characterized by a safeguarding culture and of transforming their surroundings (neighborhoods, communities, municipalities, etc.) into safe and protective environments for children. This is also a two-way process: the environment may promote child protection and engage the educational center or it may be the center that engages the environment in its process of creating a safe and caring space.

Educo is firmly committed to protecting children against any form of mistreatment, which is manifested in the building of a safeguarding culture. In this sense, schools are significant living environments for children, where feeling safe and protected is not only key to their optimal development, but also as an essential condition for quality education.

Along similar lines, education must extend beyond the educational space, since these cannot effectively be safe and caring spaces if the way to get there is riddled with obstacles and risks or if, once beyond its confines, the feeling of security disappears. Safe and caring treatment must be propagated at school and spread to the surrounding environment and vice versa.

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31 The goal of Education was established in Educo’s 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 4: ”Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”.

32 Cosmopolitan identity is referred to here as that which emerges from the multiplicity of realities and diversity, and is oriented towards social justice in a perspective that exceeds unclear limits and polarities such as North and South. For more information, refer to the work of Beck, Pietersee, Delanty, among others.

This calls for specific strategies that are adapted to the field of action and, above all, close collaboration with children, parents’ associations, municipal authorities, committees, associations, etc. in the comprehensive construction of safe and protective environments for children.

We incorporate protection in Educo’s framework for educational intervention, working systematically and complementary so that each educational center establishes a basic child protection policy and to ensure that its implementation and impact affect not only the center itself but also its surrounding environment.

3. Finally, the third area charts the democratic path from participatory educational spaces to municipal governance where a children’s right to participate and be heard becomes effective and real.
The educational center as a meaningful space for children is intrinsically linked to their immediate surroundings. It is there that children can voice their opinion and decide on the kind of education in which they would like to participate; on the rules that must govern the school; on what they wish to learn; and, ultimately, on how they take part as rights holders in school life. The same is true for other community participation mechanisms, which lead to public decision-making spheres. There, children take part in those decisions that concern them, influencing public policies in an organized manner and advocating for their effective implementation.

**INSTITUTIONAL PILLARS AND PRINCIPLES**

Two elements characterize Educo’s action: proximity, prioritizing in-depth understanding and work at the local level in close collaboration with all the agents and actors present; and sustainability, addressing the structural causes of vulnerability and exclusion, focusing on building local capacities so that their positive impact is sustained.

The main principles are operating standards that guide these actions: participation, as the exercise of full citizenship; non-discrimination, as the recognition of equal rights and dignity, as well as of diversity as something that enriches us as people; transparency, as an exercise of responsibility; and dynamic spirit, as the capacity to adapt and be creative in our response; for the purposes of this strategy, the latter becomes a call for the right to creativity as a right of every child that allows them to freely develop their own critical curiosity.

Education thus supports and calls for a systemic approach that sets out Educo’s strategic goals from the school to the community setting and vice versa. This perspective calls for the focus to look beyond cause-effect relationships and to explore the complexity of the relationships that exist between the different members and elements of each specific environment.

Educo gives substance to this approach in a framework that adapts the three dimensions of education as a right: the right to education, rights in education and rights through education. And it does so to reaffirm two strong convictions:

- The need to break with the access-quality dichotomy, because we are convinced that access to non-quality education is ineffective and because we believe that quality education that does not include everyone stops being a right and becomes a privilege.

- The need to clearly assert our understanding of education as a Human Right and to focus our action on its enjoyment in an interconnected manner with other rights.
Right to education

The right to education draws on Article 28 of the CRC and mainly concerns the aspects of availability and accessibility defined by Tomaševski, that is equitable access to quality education.

### EQUITABLE

- Do all children enjoy their right to education?
- Is education accessible to all without any form of discrimination? What form does gender discrimination take?
- Is the right to education for any specific group especially infringed upon?
- Are resources available? Are the resources adapted to each learner and to a changing context?
- What are the main determining factors governing the enjoyment of this right?

### HOLISTIC

- Do children build learning that is essential to leading a life of happiness and dignity?
- Is a holistic approach taken to the educational process?
- Do educational alternatives exist for children who cannot access the formal system? Do opportunities exist to participate in non-formal education processes?

Four major issues should be addressed when analyzing the dimension of the right to education. The first is determining whether all children exercise their right to education. Without a doubt, every educational program must be based on knowledge of the contextual reality. Child Rights Situation Analyses (CRSA) provide fundamental information and analysis in this regard and therefore will constitute our main starting point.

In the event of the violation of the right to education, we will ask whether this particularly affects a specific group; in other words, we will analyze the case of discrimination in education and should necessarily note that the very existence of a rights violation implies that discrimination is present.

Discrimination may be evident or remain hidden by indirect determining factors. It is evident if the education law does not provide for free compulsory schooling, if it favors private schooling over public schooling, or it does not contemplate the cultural or linguistic particularities of ethnic minorities or the specific needs of people with functional diversity. It may be hidden if it does not also take into consideration the indirect costs of education, if it ignores the fact that girls systematically assume reproductive responsibilities, or if it requires a birth certificate which not all children have.

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35 For further information, see Educo's position on private education.
Discrimination does not only occur in access to basic education. It may occur even earlier if options for pre-school education are not offered to everyone fairly and in different forms; it may occur during the education process if, instead of addressing the particularities of each student, we only allow some of them to thrive while setting others up for failure; and, it may occur later, by either limiting the options for lifelong learning or allowing these to have differing effects due to prejudices, stereotypes or other factors that are independent of the achieved learning.

Equitable: Context and Available Resources as Determining Factors

The fight against discrimination involves ascertaining the obstacles to the effective exercise of the right to education for all, that is, identifying which factors determine whether education is accessed or not. Analyzing the essential elements for availing of existing educational opportunities calls for a systemic approach to redressing them and ensuring they are properly taken into account and addressed.

Some of these factors may include the socio-economic context, health issues, place of residence, culture and religion, as well as the extent and nature of any previous educations. Moreover, they may include environmental, climatic or geographical aspects associated with the person, such as motivation, interests and aspirations, or family. We are referring here, for example, to school segregation, that is, the concentration of many children in situations of vulnerability in the same educational centers, with serious educational consequences: worse educational experience, lower levels of academic performance and high rates of teacher turnover. We believe that the capabilities approach can help us to conduct a more comprehensive analysis of this and other aspects.

Other important factors are linked directly to education processes, such as the availability of existing infrastructure, material, teaching and pedagogical resources and their characteristics. In this regard, Educo’s efforts seek to foster safe and protective spaces through sound and healthy infrastructure that are also stimulating for the learning process. By infrastructure, we refer not only to the classroom but also those spaces that contribute to making education an integral and holistic process, such as libraries, artistic and recreational spaces, laboratories, and spaces allocated to dining, health and hygiene, and the like. It also involves providing and adapting educational materials to make them accessible to all students—including also those with disabilities. This line of work is secondary to capacity-building processes and should be consistent with them. For instance, teaching material may complement the infrastructure or methodological training, thus reinforcing the promotion of inclusive education or the creation of safe and protective environments. In keeping with what Mel Ainscow asserts, this aims to push past a vision that emphasizes the idea of integration (as a model of assimilation to “normality” or the “normalization” of individuals) in order to progress towards inclusive education in which the goal is to reorganize schools so that they respond to the needs of all students. In this case, as

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37 For further information, see the Educo document “Espacio y pedagogía”.
38 Ainscow, M. (2004). Inclusive education ten years after Salamanca: setting the agenda. The University of Manchester. This document traces the shift from an integrative approach, with its perspective that additional resources should be organized to respond to so-called special students within an unchanged school system, to an inclusive approach, in which the goal is to reorganize schools to respond to the needs of all students.
in all aspects of Educo’s actions, collaboration with education authorities—as the guarantors of the exercise of the right to education—will be especially taken into account.

BANGLADESH: EDUCATION IN THE SLUMS

In Bangladesh more than 7.5 million children between 5 and 17 years of age must work to help their families survive. Most of them are illiterate and work in precarious and exploitative conditions in exchange for miserable wages. Having to work means that many of these children cannot go to school, which only perpetuates the cycle of poverty and marginalization. Many families not only see child labor as a necessity; it is also considered socially acceptable.

Educo works in five slums in the capital city of Dhaka to guarantee access to education by providing primary school education that has been adapted to working children’s schedules and capacities. They cover in four years the same subjects as the formal education system, can take the official exams to obtain a primary school certificate (Somaponi) and pursue their secondary education, if they so choose.

A key factor in the success of this project is the implication of the families and employers, which ensures that children can attend class and concentrate on their studies. We work to raise parents’ awareness of the value of their children’s education and of the problems of child marriage, in particular for girls.

It would be erroneous not to include technological means and internet access among the necessary available resources. The so-called “digital revolution” is deeply transforming human relationships and the property, control, access and production of knowledge. As such, the question is not do we integrate technological media in educational spaces; the question is how do we do it. Technology, per se, has little impact on the quality of the learning process. It does, however, require the guidance and accompaniment of an educator, who must assume new functions. Teachers are no longer regarded as a single source of knowledge and information; rather, they come to be viewed as facilitators of learning who must discriminate between pertinent and irrelevant information, foster the formation of positive relationships through new media, and build the inquisitive and collaborative capacity of the learners.

Finally, funding is another core element to ensure the equitable exercise of the right to education. Without funding, building a quality education system is not possible and it is up to the State to guarantee it. In this sense, the 2016 Human Rights Council Resolution on the right to education urges States to recognize the significant importance of investment in public education to the maximum of available resources, to increase and improve domestic and external financing for education as affirmed in the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action in order to contribute to education as a public good. The resolution also urges States to establish a

Holistic: From Access to Impact

The last major issue explores what learning can be built through the education process. Indeed, while we recognize the ongoing and permanent nature of the education process, here we refer to the question of determining which stages our actions will cover and what Educo understands by basic education. Given that this concept varies significantly from country to country, Educo adopts as reference the CRC and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the latter assigns greater obligation to the States at all three education levels\(^42\). In light of this, Educo promotes the education process from pre-school education to at least the end of secondary education\(^43\), with careful attention to the transitional periods between these stages. It is clear to us that we cannot discontinue our support until the student has at least reached the minimum working age and can do so under decent conditions. While the stages described correspond to a more formal vision of school, Educo supports both formal and non-formal educational processes. For example, we contemplate the formation and accompaniment of family circles in early childhood; of alternative

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\(^{41}\) DAs members of the Global Campaign for Education, we call for at least 6% of GDP and 20% of the budget to be allocated to basic education. We also demand that the ODA allocate at least 10% of their grants to education.


\(^{43}\) According to the International Standard Classification of Education set forth by UNESCO ISCED 2011, we refer at least to levels ISCED 0, ISCED 1 and ISCED 2.
models for the most vulnerable children, such as mobile schools, Accelerated Learning Programs, etc.; and technical and professional training.

INDIA: NIGHT SCHOOLS

The Night Schools are secondary schools for young people who work in the marginal urban areas of Maharashtra. The five-year program focuses on building the capacities of the parties responsible for the sustainable management of the schools. Educo collaborates with the local organization Masoom to transform this program through professional training and student leadership. Masoom works to facilitate a quality education to young workers, not only so that they can expand their knowledge, but so that they can develop to their full potential and improve their quality of life. As such, the young people are involved in the program’s planning, implementation and evaluation. Moreover, the program seeks to ensure that the schools work together to engage in advocacy actions that influence public policy.

In terms of content, Educo regards basic education as that which is aimed at learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. It is therefore oriented towards building knowledge and capacities based on the four pillars of education and, as we discuss later, it takes both the results and the learning process itself into account. In line with Article 29 of the CRC, we insist that all educational processes should be holistic in nature, ensuring a balance between the intellectual, emotional and social dimensions in order to maximize children’s capacity to take part fully and responsibly in a free society.
Rights in education

**CONTENT**
- Is the educational curriculum pertinent and relevant for students?
- Is the syllabus contextualized in the local culture and context? Is the local language used as the medium of instruction?

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Is the educational establishment’s environment safe, stimulating and pleasant for students?
- Do the children feel free?
- Does the educational climate encourage the generation of trusting, respectful and caring relationships between all the participants?

**PROCESS**
- Does the learning process take the different capacities and diversity of the students into account?
- Are educational professionals recognized and trained to develop quality and equitable teaching-learning processes?
- Are educational methodologies focused on students? Do they encourage their participation, cooperation and interaction?
- Is educational evaluation, as part of the learning process, oriented towards the person’s full development?

*Rights in education* are based on Articles 28 and 29 of the CRC and essentially aim to build an educational space and environment that is based on the exercise of rights and respect for the principles of non-discrimination, participation, optimal development and the best interests of the child. It includes the aspect of acceptability and is based on the dimension of adaptability. We are referring to an education process that is child-centered, that is built inclusively, and that recognizes and values diversity in a way that is meaningful given their environment and reality. Moreover, this process is guided by aptly recognized, trained, motivated and supported educators, who alongside adapted material and methodological resources, develop—as expressed by General Comment No. 1 of the CRC—a broad range of life experiences and learning processes which enable children, individually and collectively, to develop their personalities, talents and abilities and to live a full and satisfying life within society.

The dimension of rights in education ensures that children’s rights are respected and exercised in general. It includes aspects regarding the educational content, teacher training, teaching and learning methods, the educational environment and the relationship between people, assessment and learning content. All of these aspects are established and defined in each classroom.
or learning space of each educational center with which we collaborate. It is therefore necessary, in addition to an overall analysis of the educational context, to have an in-depth understanding of what occurs in each and every one of these educational spaces and to make children rights holders and active agents in the education process. In order to monitor our work, clear indicators must be established that measure our progress in the implementation of an initiative, project or program. At the same time, we must be clear that these indicators do not replace the need to understand each learning process we are strengthening, as well as the existing relationships in each of these processes and the participants’ opinions regarding the same.

Content: Relevant, Meaningful and Inclusive Curricula

Firstly, it should be noted that we understand content as both that which is taught and learned explicitly, the explicit curriculum, and any underlying content or the hidden curriculum44. We believe that content is not static, but rather is under constant reconstruction by all the educational actors. As we set forth in the previous section, Educo promotes education that is aimed at learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be as four fundamental pillars of lifelong learning; this can be complemented by contributions of the capabilities approach and, more specifically, the core capabilities presented by Nussbaum. In this sense, we wish to highlight the importance of sharing fundamental and basic concepts that may be global, this helping us to steer education towards a person’s full development. As asserted by General Comment No. 1 of the CRC45: “Basic skills include not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills such as the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and to develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents, and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their options in life.”

The syllabus must integrate the minimum basic skills established at the national or state level in order to guarantee equity in education that; at the same time, it must be sufficiently flexible to incorporate the knowledge and expertise found in the immediate environment, as well as the expectations and opinions of those involved. Educational policies as syllabuses are a reflection of predominant values, ideas and beliefs and are linked to existing power structures. It is therefore necessary to foster dialog between the different worldviews from the outset, so that the syllabus can integrate different knowledge systems, always aware that, in its implementation, it will be shaped by the relational universe of those participating in the education processes. Hence we believe that the syllabus must foster respect for diversity and the rejection of all forms of hegemony, stereotypes and (cultural46). prejudices. In this section we explicitly make reference to gender discrimination, given its unmistakable scope and magnitude. We believe efforts must be made to reverse existing cultural patterns both in terms of the educational establishment’s curriculum and culture and to consolidate coeducation, promoting equal education for all in a system of values, behaviors, norms and expectations that are not hierarchized based on sex.

BOLIVIA: INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The Aymara are a pre-Colombian people who have lived in the Andes regions for centuries. However, their language and cultural richness have been historically marginalized until the Education Law of 2010 recognized pre-Colombian cultures and established teaching in indigenous languages. Nonetheless, the lack of resources and organizational capacity has undermined the effectiveness of its application.

In this context, Fundación Machaqa Amawta and Educo support the implementation of an intercultural teaching model with a gender perspective in Aymara communities in the Ingavi Province of the La Paz Department. One of the basic strategies involves adapting school syllabi to the socio-cultural reality of the Aymara people, which includes recovering ancestral knowledge, many of which are related to a respect for the earth and the sustainable use of natural resources. This helps to reinforce the cultural identity of the community and boost self-esteem after centuries of marginalization.

In addition to adapting the syllabi, didactic materials are published in the Aymara language—which requires careful research, given the lack of written tradition in this language—and teachers are trained in multilingual teaching methods and in educating in values in order to reinforce their ability to apply this learning model in the classroom.

Recognition of the value of diversity—human47 and contextual—and its inclusion implies that education programs must be built and adapted to reflect the local context, so that it will be pertinent to the students’ social, economic, cultural and environmental situation, and have a meaningful relationship with their own characteristics. It also implies conducting a critical analysis that reveals the power structures designed by said programs in their own interests and redirecting its sights on the best interests of the child48.

This new perspective does not obviate discrimination, also shaped by power, that are concealed by those visions that are considered “normal” or “normalized” and that place diversity at the margins of that which is standard, or that in some cases even view it as “deficient” or “disabled”, thus concealing the social causes of said discrimination. In the educational setting, this implies acknowledging the importance of how the educational space is organized, and of the forms of teaching—learning when it comes to making it possible for every learner to develop his or her potential, skills and talents. As such, we believe that it is necessary for children to participate, as we

47 We understand human diversity not only as the group of strictly descriptive, personal and external characteristics associated with each person, but also as including particular characteristics of their own functioning. Toboso Martín, M and Arnau Ripollés M.S. (2008). La discapacidad dentro del enfoque de capacidades y funcionamientos de Amartya Sen. Revista Iberoamericana de Filosofía, Política y Humanidades, N°20.

48 We believe, as do Romañach and Lobato, that what is considered “normal” is no more than a statistical fiction whose nature is merely instrumental. Romañach, J. and Lobato, M. (2005). Functional diversity, a new term in the struggle for dignity in the diversity of the human being. Independent Living Forum.
will see later, in the construction and review of educational contents, so that they can ensure that these truly reflect their realities and aspirations.

The educational resources and materials employed in the various educational spaces must also adapt and respond to the diversity of student characteristics and capacities, as well as to their context, if it is to connect to their lives.

Finally, a relevant and meaningful syllabus must be appropriate for all students by recognizing and valuing existing diversity, rejecting any possible manifestation of discrimination, breaking down stereotypes and adapting to the unique evolution of their different capacities.

**Educational Environment: Safe, Caring, Stimulating and Pleasant**

In the dimension right to education, we have already discussed the importance of educational infrastructure that is adapted to the existing diversity and particularities so that they do not hinder access to and participation in education. Insecurity in the educational center or its surroundings is one of the major reasons that children drop out from school, especially in the case of girls. In this section, we will focus more on its pedagogical role in learning processes and its importance when it comes to helping education to uphold a dialog-based approach.

The first fundamental premise is that children should feel good in the educational space, that is, welcome and treated with respect and care by the participating adults and also by other children. This entails building the educational space as a pleasant living environment where children feel free to learn, to feel and express their emotions, and to resolve conflicts in a manner that helps them grow as people. This begins at birth, through the development of attachment and positive emotional ties, and later continues throughout the entire educational process. To establish a nurturing and stimulating educational climate based on safe and caring treatment\(^{50}\) and protection, coexistence plans must be designed and established by children, in addition to protection policies that link the educational space to the surrounding context to eradicate any treatment that violates children’s human dignity. This is clearly outlined in Article 28 of the CRC when it calls on States Parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention. Compliance with the Convention mainly refers to Articles 19 and 37(a), thereby confirming its application in the sphere of education and concerning all the actors involved\(^{51}\). In addition, we adopt its broad meaning and understanding, not only referring to physical punishment but also to any form of violence and abuse, whether physical, psychological or emotional, and in its most visible and invisible forms. With respect to the latter, we must weigh those actions, such as examinations and external assessments, that, under the guise of objectivity and neutrality\(^{52}\) serve rather to judge, categorize and label people. Instead of helping people to build their skills and continue to grow, these actions end up affecting their self-esteem, self-confidence and ex-

\(^{50}\) For further details, see: Educo. (2015). Child Safeguarding Policy.


pectations, and will influence the perception they have of themselves throughout their lives\textsuperscript{53}. Thus, education becomes something threatening instead of something protective that favors the development of healthy, confident, empathetic and resilient personalities. That is why, from a holistic perspective, we call for compassion in pedagogy and for the fundamental importance of the development—at children’s pace\textsuperscript{54}—of emotional education\textsuperscript{55} in learning processes.

The climate or environment, as well as the education process itself, is defined in large part by the relationships established between the participants; and the quality thereof is, in turn, linked to the person’s development. Affective relationships and love are a fundamental part of people’s development and intellectual and emotional growth and should therefore be considered as central to the teaching-learning process. As affirmed by Edgar Morin, forging respectful, caring relationships firstly implies recovering the posture and dignity of the student; it involves validating the original relations with students as legitimate others\textsuperscript{56}. Relationships built from inter-subjectivity are limited, as we have seen, to a specific space and are influenced by the physical and material conditions existing therein. Both relationships and material conditions shape and are shaped by the subjective perceptions of each participant in the education process as a process of building meaning in their lives. These three dimensions—material, relational and subjective—constitute the child wellbeing\textsuperscript{57} approach from which Educo draws its inspiration. This approach provides a useful framework for evaluation when analyzing the environment—understood here as the quality of life—of the educational spaces we promote. Given that learning is relational, as Vygotsky sustains, we call for educational space not as a place of “preparation for”, isolated in time and space, but as a living space where one lives and learns to live freely and responsibly. It will only be possible to ensure that the educational space is constituted as a space of wellbeing if we dignify children’s lives.

**Child-Centered Teaching-Learning Processes**

Education, educating, is a slow and profound process; and, at the center of this process—as Mehedi sustains in a statement of great pedagogical caliber—lies the subject of education: the human being\textsuperscript{58}. Integrating the human rights approach implies acknowledging the centrality of the subject, in this case the child, and also recognizing the importance of the process, not as learning compared with results but as a basis for the long-lasting acquisition thereof so that these can be internalized. When we place students at the center of the education process, this process comes to consider their optimal development and wellbeing as core areas, and the principle of the best interest of the child takes precedence over other interests, such as those of teachers, families, institutions, etc.

\textsuperscript{53} Several studies confirm the impact of the experience of education on people’s self-perception. Here mention is made of the study drawn up by Gallacher et al., cited by Walker, M. (2004). Human capabilities, education and doing the public good: towards a capability-based theory of social justice in education.

\textsuperscript{54} We are referring to the characteristic pace, slow and deeply present, of children. A pace that somehow brings us back to the basics in life.

\textsuperscript{55} As neurologist Francisco Mora affirms, “the information that we capture through the senses passes through the limbic system or emotional mind before being sent to the cerebral cortex, which is responsible for cognitive processes”. This implies that learning without emotion does not exist.


\textsuperscript{57} For a greater understanding of this framework, see the series of reports on Child Wellbeing in Spain, produced by Educo.

Educo supports Xamfrà, a musical and theatrical center for social inclusion, in a project that contributes to changing the self-perception of children and young people in three neighborhoods in Barcelona. More specifically, we collaborate with an educational and artistic project that focuses on inclusion, in the relationship between group members, in their needs and in the implication in a collective project that seeks social transformation.

Through theatrical workshops, improvisational song, musical theater or basket beat, participants boost their own independence by driving the formative process, adopting different attitudes that they themselves have chosen and that will shape their social relationships and their ability to communicate and understand the world.

This process uses a socio-affective and artistic methodology, and creates a group dynamic that encourages the positive resolution of conflicts and personal transformation. This paves the way for a less anguished self-view, which enables them to live in and enjoy the present, having awakened brighter outlooks for the future, while it also favors their self-recognition as citizens of a global community of peers.

The centrality of the child implies respect for the rights and principles of the Convention; curricula and learning processes must be related to students’ everyday lives and to what is important to them. It implies, as Hammarberg, confirms, that school should be child-friendly, based on the right of the child to be curious, to ask questions and receive answers, to argue and disagree, to test and make mistakes, to know and not know, to create and be spontaneous, to be recognized and respected. We hold, as affirmed by the Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All drawn up by UNESCO and UNICEF, that, “traditional models of schooling that silence children and perceive them as passive recipients are not consistent with a rights-based approach to learning”.

Educational spaces must guarantee children’s participation in decisions that affect them and, assuming the education process to be a significant life process in their lives, no one doubts that participation should be present throughout all spheres of day-to-day educational life. It implies, as Freire would say, the permanent exercise, albeit with limitations, of their curiosity and their freedom.

Autonomy, as an exercise in freedom to which personality development is linked, should be a fundamental part of education, understood as a process of developing and strengthening capacities that allow children to make truly free decisions. In order to raise autonomous, not automated, children, we must take into account the different abilities of every child and how as individuals they learn in different ways and at different paces, which is not solely dependent on age. In fact, skills development does not occur uniformly according to age, but rather individual circumstances and experiences bear an impact on its development. And it is precisely these unique

circumstances and experiences that convert the educational space into a space for learning about diversity. At Educo, we recover the value and wealth that is implicit in the recognition of differences and, on that basis, we promote the building of meaningful and relevant education.

This calls for the need to adopt a dialog-based approach to learning that favors educational methodology based on projects and collaboration between students who exercise increasingly more control over their own learning process. Classroom organization strategies and educational methodologies should therefore be at its service. In this regard, learning communities represent a good experience thanks, among other aspects, to the organization of interactive groups; small heterogeneous groups in which learners engage in dialog and collaborate to resolve learning activities with the guidance of adults. Meaning is thus built upon interactions that emerge from egalitarian dialog with their peers, teachers, family members, friends and other people. Learning thereby becomes dialog-based. To reinforce this approach, it is essential that the educator maintain a climate of high expectations, which also affects the process of building knowledge in the students’ psychological and social aspects, and allows them to fully develop their abilities. This means that all students can achieve standard basic educational goals if learning is organized in line with the characteristics, needs, interests, expectations and experiences of each student. Child-centered education is, in short, education that seeks to formulate questions rather than offer answers; education that stimulates curiosity as an inquisitive concern.

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Learning about how we learn thus becomes a substantial concern for education. Scientific progress, particularly in the field of neuroscience, is essential for advancing our knowledge in this field and for building learning that is both drawn from and meaningful for each learner.

The evaluation process must be part of child-centered learning and, as such, its main goal shall be to improve and delve deeper into the process of building meaningful knowledge. We therefore speak of formative assessment that focuses on processes and not only on results and is integrated at all stages of education. Therein, the reference point is the progress of each student and not the result provided by its comparison with the rest. In keeping with this, students’ participation in self and peer assessment processes must be guaranteed. Self-assessment, peer evaluation and action research thereby constitute methods that foster greater awareness of learning while also strengthening the ties between the participants.

Finally, another aspect that is critical to child-centered learning has to do with the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960) supports the right to use the mother tongue or receive education in one’s native tongue, provided members of minorities are not excluded from understanding the language and culture of the whole community and the delivery of education is not inferior in quality to general education. Similarly, Article 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child underlines the right of the child to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion or to use
his or her own language. Use of the local language as the medium of instruction in the education process does not exclude the teaching and use of other official languages and, in contrast, involves significantly enhancing the quality of education.

Evidence reveals that the benefits of bilingual education\cite{66} are extensive but require a comprehensive approach to make them effective. Educo works in multilingual countries and multilingual communities whose cultural and linguistic wealth demand greater efforts for adaptation and recognition when contextualizing the education process and when recognizing both individuals’ and groups’ linguistic rights. Therefore, our educational guidance will endeavor to reinforce language policies that respect the aforementioned rights and lead to improving the quality of the teaching and learning process. It will include the teacher training and preparation we discuss below, as well as the adaptation of educational materials and media.

### Teachers with Quality Training, Motivation, Support and Decent Conditions

It is impossible to center the education process on children without proclaiming the responsibility held therein by educators and building their capacity to shoulder said responsibility. Teachers are the backbone of any educational improvement process that seeks to create respectful environments that promote rights and wellbeing. Studies and reports show that the quality of an education system is based on the quality of its teachers\cite{67} and this depends on factors such as the training received, the motivation of the teaching professionals themselves and their working conditions. As stated by UNESCO and UNICEF\cite{68}, it is neither possible nor acceptable to demand that teachers respect children’s rights when their own rights are violated and ignored.

These strategies to improve these factors are numerous: they may focus on aspects of teacher selection, on improvements in recruitment and geographical availability; on improvements in initial and ongoing training; on promoting support and monitoring; on strengthening teachers’ unions, etc.

At Educo we favor those strategies that, by focusing on the building of local capacities, consolidate sustainable processes that guarantee positive impacts. In accordance with these criteria, our interventions will prioritize ongoing teacher training and the reinforcement of permanent support that can be offered by the education authorities and the school management. These programs must seek alliances or be complemented by advocacy processes aimed at improving the other factors mentioned; therefore, one endeavor would be to work with tenured teachers or to otherwise reach agreements with the authorities to include non-tenured teachers who take part in training processes in a given period. Efforts will be made to ensure that job mobility does not jeopardize the sustainability of interventions and that training will not only bring improvements

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\cite{66} UNESCO. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005. Benson summarizes these studies and highlights the many benefits of becoming literate in a familiar language, namely: gaining access to communication and literacy in the second language; having a language and culture that are valued by the school; feeling good about the school and the teachers; being able to demonstrate what they know; participating in their own learning; having the courage to ask questions; and reducing the likelihood of being taken advantage of. Benson, C. 2004. The importance of mother tongue-based schooling for educational quality.


in teaching practice, but also improvements in teachers’ working conditions, providing them with officially recognized qualifications that could possibly enable them to advance in their careers or earn points towards professional betterment. This can be accompanied by other advocacy processes aimed at improving teacher selection and recruitment conditions, improving initial training plans or strengthening networks of teacher associations, unions, etc.

MALI: TRAINING IN THE “BALANCED LITERACY”

We collaborate with the local organization RARE to improve quality education in the country through the implementation of the “balanced approach”. This involves a series of strategies and techniques aimed at facilitating literacy learning in Mali, where statistics from 2009 reveal that 94% of second grade learners were unable to read a single word of French. This approach is based on the use of mother tongue and meaningful learning through works and stories that make sense to children. The focus lies in teacher training that reinforces the didactic aspect language, reading and writing as tools and is supported by active methodologies and the use of educational technologies.

One of the keys to success of this approach lies in that the trainings are not only directed at teachers; rather, they include the participation of members of school management boards and educational administration who are responsible for monitoring the effective application of what was learned.

Teacher training will integrate the child rights-based approach in a cross-cutting manner to develop specific skills that will be applied in the teaching-learning process. These capacities will include aspects such as child participation, adaptation to children’s evolving capacities, the application of positive discipline and other methodological and organizational aspects already outlined above in the discussion of the teaching-learning process.

In addition, teacher training programs should address, or at least take into account, the different domains of teaching action, balancing aspects such as teaching skills, classroom and relationship management and pedagogical management. The promotion of reflective practice by teachers, as well as of critical, innovative and creative learning shall be common to all programs. This will involve professional collaborative learning processes, through teaching-related action research processes and the promotion of professional learning communities, that are focused on real practice and that aim, to the extent possible, to integrate ongoing learning in the practice of the educational space itself69.

The training processes will take into account the diversity of teachers who bring with them different experiences, capacities, qualifications, expectations, etc., and special attention will be given to coaching, which will be provided both throughout and after the training phase.

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Our experience has shown us the importance of integrating school management in the training sessions so that they can subsequently lead the widespread use of the learning and the appropriate application thereof in everyday practice. Management's responsibilities must extend beyond the exercise of their administrative role, a role that probably takes up an excessive amount of their available time, and focus on providing guidance and pedagogical support to educators, as well as answers to their concerns. Their role is essential in promoting reflective teaching practice, active critical learning, innovation and creativity in educational spaces. As we have seen, they are also key to creating stimulating learning environments for children with different learning needs and learning styles and establishing a climate of rights that permeates the day-to-day life of the educational spaces they lead. We cannot also not overlook other professionals in the educational space who, while they may not be directly involved in the teaching-learning process, do play an important role in creating the educational environment.

Finally, if we are to consolidate processes and ensure their sustainability, it is essential to integrate them in training processes for educational authorities, as well as in guidance, monitoring and evaluation processes. Capacity building of public authorities as the main bodies responsible and guarantors of the right to education will be a basic line of action in Educo’s educational programs.
Rights through education

Rights through education are based primarily on Article 29 of the CRC and encompass part of the dimension of adaptability defined by Tomaševski[70]. We include here those education processes that breathe and breed rights, and draw a connection between this dimension and the power of education power to effect change, which we regard as essential. Indeed, we are referring to education that can reach beyond the confines of a specific educational space and establish ties with the surrounding environment, thus generating greater justice and wellbeing for one and all.

The rights through education dimension is comprised of two basic elements[71]. On the one hand, it seeks to integrate human rights in the curriculum and in the culture of the educational system and spaces; and, on the other hand, it promotes education that lays the foundations for the enjoyment of other rights, and thus empowers people and transforms their context.

Integrating rights in the curriculum and educational culture involves not only teaching children what their rights are, but also supporting them in developing their awareness as rights holders and building their capacities to claim and defend them before duty bearers.

Neutral education or education in the service of other needs, as Vernor Muñoz[72], states, cannot build the sort of character that respects human rights, because neutrality potentially and in fact helps to consolidate inequalities. To quote Freire, education should be a free space for the exercise and study of all human rights, responsibilities and capacities.

In the same vein, when Educo contemplates human rights through the educational lens, we become aware of its strong links to emancipatory or critical pedagogy, as defined by Freire. Critical education extends beyond the acquisition of a set of knowledge and seeks to develop a critical lens through which to view society and the power relations existing therein so that students become active players in their own transformation and assume responsibility for their actions. The dialectical relationship between theory and practice, the interpretation of the world and its transformation, form the basis of a significant learning process that builds on the critical relationship between students and their context. They thus become an active part of a learning process in which they are empowered to be and to act. Ultimately, it is a matter of developing their freedom of agency and self-perception as beings in a world under construction.

71 Verhellen, 2010.
Culture of Rights

As outlined in Article 29 of the CRC, instilling human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the goals of education. General Comment No. 1 further develops this point, stating “human rights education should provide information on the content of human rights treaties. But children should also learn about human rights by seeing human rights standards implemented in practice, whether at home, in school, or within the community.”

At Educo we strive to include human rights and the rights of the child in the curriculum, in addition to knowledge of and respect for other cultures, gender equity, a sense of global citizenship and respect for the environment. Nonetheless, we are aware that this does not give rise to the automatic ownership or enjoyment of these rights. This calls, as we saw in the previous chapter, for in-depth transformations of educational policies; of teaching processes and methods; of teacher education, of books and other educational support materials; as well as of the educational space itself, so that these reflect the experience and enjoyment of rights and project these in the surrounding environment.

We believe, as CEDAL affirms, that Human rights education should be approached in a fashion that includes the analysis, understanding and reading of power relations and social forces so as to enable a struggle to change those power relations that impede the full realization of human rights. This leads us to ask ourselves about the prevailing structures and values in the educational space and the need to rebuild the culture thereof. The educational space is undoubtedly a vehicle for social and cultural norms that, in general, are assumed unknowingly; therefore, a rights-based approach to education shall seek to underline, critically discuss and rebuild said norms. This will inevitably be a source of conflict, due to the dissociation between the previous culture and the culture under reconstruction, but at the same time, its mediation and resolution can become a practical expression of the culture of rights.

One of the basic premises for cultural change is conceiving change as a process in which everyone should be involved. In the rights in education dimension, we outlined the importance of teacher training and the necessary inclusion of the rights approach therein. Training must, in this regard, generate new knowledge that makes alternative professional practices possible and that is progressively integrated in everyday life and permeates the culture of the educational space. Decision-making must include educators, taking into account their educational experiences and perspectives and thereby ensuring their role as agents of change. In addition to the essential participation of education professionals, the adoption of a culture of rights and wellbeing calls for the active participation of children and other people who form part of their environment. This means that students shift from forming part of the school culture to actively forming this culture, contributing in this way to the creation and recreation of educational spaces and processes.

73 General comment No. 1 (2001), Article 29 (1), The aims of education
Children’s participation

EL SALVADOR: CHILD PARTICIPATION

The “School open to the community” Project promotes child participation in several of the country’s municipalities by creating Student Councils: bodies formed by child representatives chosen democratically by their peers, whose aim is to act as interlocutors with school management and to present these with student-formulated proposals for improvement and advocate for their implementation. Through these councils, children learn how to organize themselves, voice their opinions, debate and negotiate, form alliances with other stakeholders (local government, NGOs, community development associations, etc.) and reach agreements. One 7th-grade student council member described the experience, affirming that “this way, adults don’t make decisions without considering us; instead, the decisions are all of ours”.

Educo supports the student councils by building children’s capacity to draft and monitor action plans. We also work with families, teachers and school managers to encourage their collaboration in creating an environment that is conducive to real and meaningful child participation.

The right of children to be consulted and have their opinion taken into account in issues that concern them is one of the basic principles of the CRC. As Hammarberg states, a democratic school gives the pupil power over his or her own learning process. If we consider a rights perspective, which places children at the center, we would add that the democratic educational space is that which somehow returns “the power taken away” from children, so that they can take part in decision-making processes as active players in their own lives. General Comment No. 1 (2001) asserts that Article 29 of the CRC clearly calls for schools to be child-friendly, in the fullest sense of the term, and to be compatible with children’s dignity in all respects. As the Convention sets forth, children’s participation in school life, the creation of school communities and student councils, peer education and peer advising, and students’ involvement in school disciplinary proceedings should all be promoted within the learning process and the experience of the realization of rights. To ensure that this participation is meaningful and inclusive, Educo is committed to guaranteeing the fulfillment of certain standards.

Indeed, it will be important to provide children with the necessary capacities, conditions and stimuli so that they can express their viewpoint on all matters that concern them, as well as to provide them with age-appropriate information upon which to form their own opinions. We are not referring simply to making use of those spaces that are mandated or pre-defined by education authorities, but rather to learning to participate as democratic citizens by encouraging students to express their

76 Articles 12, 13, 14 and 15 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, among other related articles.
ideas, to appreciate the freedom to think for themselves and to respect the views of others. The right to education includes this practice of liberty\textsuperscript{79}.

Needless to say, while this necessarily implies efforts to strengthen the existing structures and regulations through which participation materializes (representatives, school boards, student governments, etc.), it goes far beyond that—from students systematic participation in all educational matters\textsuperscript{80} to their role in designing and running organizational structures that they themselves have defined and establishing the democratic operating and decision-making mechanisms that will later influence the day-to-day of the educational space.

An Educational Space Open to the Community

Most of Educo’s program countries have established regulations regarding the participation of the actors involved in educational administration. Regulations exist for school boards, school management committees, parents’ associations, etc. However, the roles of these actors is often clearer on paper than in practice, due, in large part, to a lack of awareness of their role; unequal power relations; insufficient resources or capacities; or non-democratic foundations and management practices.

\textsuperscript{79} Muñoz, V. (2009). El mar entre la niebla. El camino de la educación hacia los derechos humanos. Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education. Luna híbrida

At the same time, these bodies are duty bearers, and thus play an essential role in demanding, defending and respecting rights to, in and through education. Moreover, they constitute an indispensable vehicle for community participation in the educational space and vice versa. Comprehensive improvement of the education process calls for a holistic vision that also includes building the capacities of duty bearers so that they can adequately fulfill their obligations and responsibilities. As such, in addition to reinforcing the role of the existing participating bodies, this may also imply designing specific training processes for families, particularly in areas such as literacy.

BENIN: ACCELERATED COURSE PROGRAM

In Cotonou, in two of the largest markets in West Africa, Educo works with other local organizations* to improve the wellbeing of children in situation of risk. More specifically, the project establishes outreach points and organizes activities within the markets themselves in order to provide these children with psycho-emotional support, guidance and education.

The aims of the project are to protect and promote the rights of children in street situations—victims of economic exploitation—by favoring their education and reintegrating them in society. This is done from an inclusive approach that engages all stakeholders in child protection and encourages the participation of families and social actors. Project activities include: awareness raising and dynamic street actions, deferrals to shelters, social surveys, guidance, insertion in Accelerated Course Programs or formal education structures, and professional training.

The project’s success is dependent, in part, on the active participation of the communities, competent authorities and families, as defenders of child rights.

It is imperative for families, either through associations or other participatory bodies, to be able to contribute to shaping and reshaping the education process; to improving regulations and facilities in the educational space; to monitoring children’s progress; and to demanding that educational professionals meet their responsibilities. Towards this end, they can attend educational meetings organized for these purposes, but they can also take more active part in the education process by being present in the classrooms and participating therein as teachers and/or students. This level of participation not only provides them with practical skills; it also increases their engagement with the education center and their commitment to the effective education of children\textsuperscript{81} that, as the evidence suggests\textsuperscript{82}, has an impact on the quality of thereof. When families, regardless of their origin, are committed to learning, their children tend to improve in the education process, to remain in the system a longer time, and to continue on to higher education.

\textsuperscript{82} Henderson, A.T. and Mapp, K. L. (2002) A New Wave of Evidence. The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. SEDL.
Taking collective impact as a criterion, Educo’s intervention seek to strengthen organized representative bodies such as those mentioned above—parents’ associations, school boards, school management committees, etc.—by empowering their members to support and defend the enjoyment of the right to education through the effective fulfillment of their roles. We also propose integrating in the latter a role designed specifically to foster a culture of rights within the educational space, either by assigning some of its members or appointing a committee to provide support and guidance on the integration of the four principles of the CRC in the day-to-day life of the educational space. This requires prior strengthening of the capacities needed to bring this about and the establishment of the corresponding training processes.

Communities or surrounding environments also play a key role in shaping an environment conducive to education, within a framework of the enjoyment of rights and wellbeing. Immersed in a global trend towards decentralization, local governments are often charged with certain responsibilities when it comes to guaranteeing the right to education. These may include teacher recruitment, monitoring the education process, establishing education development plans and channeling community members’ thoughts and feelings about education. There will therefore be increasingly more actors involved in the capacity-building processes we undertake, which aim to:

- Promoting awareness raising of education as a human right and promoting the inclusion of marginalized groups excluded from enjoying said right, with an emphasis on gender issues.
- Promoting the active participation of families and other stakeholder groups in the education process.
- Ensuring the contextualization of the education process, by basing this on local knowledge and capacities and adapting it, both in content and form, to local realities and adjusting timeframes and schedules as necessary.
- Ensuring a favorable environment for the educational space by guaranteeing protection, security and safeguarding.
- Guaranteeing and channeling children’s participation as rights holders in public decision-making spaces.

Ultimately, the aim is for the community to form an active part of the educational space by assuming its role as an educational agent that seeks to promote participation, reflection and the analysis of the educational situation and to improve upon this in order to guarantee children’s full development as members of the community.

In turn, the educational space is open to the community, its needs and interests, offering itself as a complementary cultural space for all members of the community.
Transparency and Accountability

Accountability is a basic principle of human rights. As duty bearer, the educational space must uphold this principle through a transparency approach and publicly share the overall development of the education process in order to improve the quality thereof. This implies not only focusing on effectiveness and results, but also addressing inputs, resources and processes83. Indeed, this helps us avoid the trap of pressuring educational spaces to exclusively demonstrate the products obtained and to focus on passing a series of standardized tests or obtaining a limited series of quantitative indicators, especially when it is possible that they do not have the necessary resources to be held accountable at this level. In line with the social justice approach, the accountability process is associated with affording a greater presence and voice to families and the community and its success will depend on the empowerment to be able to interpret the information—which is accurate and accessible—and to act accordingly84.

Having greater autonomy to define their own education project, one that reflects the characteristics and situation of the environment, will lead to education that is more adapted to and accepted by the community. And while more autonomous management will, in turn, allow for greater accountability on the part of education professionals, to do so effectively will require the financial and material resources necessary to assume this responsibility.

Accountability may thus be established in the exchange of perceptions between the participants in the educational space and the surrounding community, when each publicly manifests its commitments and goals for improvement to be subject to the review of the entire community.

NICARAGUA: EDUCATION WATCHES

In Nicaragua, Educo promotes educational management that prioritizes the participation of the entire educational community. The first step in this endeavor is to inform the educational community, especially families, about what happens in the educational space, so that they can offer their opinions and participate based on this understanding. To do this, “Education Watches” have been created as collective forums for reflection and action regarding the processes and indicators corresponding to the educational quality of the schools. This not only facilitates accountability on the part of the school, but also fosters family and community engagement in learning processes.

Transformation of the Environment

The education process is often seen as a process that is isolated from its environment and suspended in time that prepares children for a life that seems to arrive later, at another stage, in another time and elsewhere. Formal education is thereby detached from their lives and other possible forms of education, such as that provided by family members, communities and other environments, or non-formal and informal alternatives, etc. As a result, education is often viewed as a pool of knowledge to be transferred to children so that they are ready when their lives finally “arrive”. In this sense, it becomes a product or commodity85 and children become the have and have-nots.

Changing this concept of education is the basic premise for bringing about wider changes in the community and in society at large. Thus, learning would involve constantly shaping and reshaping our inner world through our interaction with the other, and consequently transforming the outside world. The resulting transformation is not, however, the product of a passive wait or naïve expectation, but inevitably comprises and shapes the education process itself.

It is for this reason that we have described in this paper the concept of holistic education embraced by Educo: education as a vital process based on individual and collective learning and that interacts with the social level.

At the **individual level**, we recognize the differences and value the diversities that enable and give meaning to the education process. We respect the different ways and paces of learning and seek to promote education based on the needs, interests, expectations and motivations of each individual to fully develop their capabilities and their autonomy.

We understand that this is not possible without interacting with others. From this standpoint, we view learning as a **collective process** shaped by the relationships between participants86, and seek an education process rooted in cooperative, non-competitive, dialog-based and democratic learning.

At a social level, we recognize that the educational space is immersed in a particular physical and temporal environment and, while it is indubitably shaped by this context, we believe it is also capable of influencing it. As we have already manifested, we firmly believe that education is capable of transforming its environment. But we are not naïve in our conviction; we do not perceive education as a magic solution to problems with causes that are deeply rooted elsewhere, such as in society or the economy, and thus we do not pretend to change them without getting involved or influencing those spaces.

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85 Bauman, Z. (2007) in *Los retos de la educación en la modernidad líquida*, discusses the study on teaching ideas and educational frameworks in 13 different civilizations, executed by Myers, E.D. (1960) and his observation of the growing tendency to consider education as a product rather than as a process.

86 From this perspective, relationships are not something that we have but rather we are beings in relation.
This intervention or influence is explained in our educational action based on children's capacity to exercise agency as citizens and rights holders and on the connections drawn between the educational space and the wider community.

By agency we refer to the capacity to pursue values and goals that a person considers important and that contribute to achieving greater collective justice and wellbeing. This agency is exercised from the moment that newly acquired capacities and knowledge are put into practice for the common good, even when this comes at the expense of individual wellbeing. Undoubtedly, education that fosters learners’ capacity for agency is an education that fosters the capacity to reflect critically about their own goals and values, on the one hand; and that develops their emotional capacities, and especially empathy, on the other. Pereira, holds that it is through processes of mutual recognition with others that one acquires the necessary conditions to become an agent.

Drawing connections with the environment allows us to recognize the home and community as places in which broader economic, political and cultural inequalities are produced and reproduced at the same time, it also affords the possibility to interact in them to influence their transformation by strengthening the relationships that are forged with the educational space and ensuring that these spaces extend their action to the community. This action is reflected, as we saw earlier, in education processes that integrate members of the community and allow learners’ capacity for agency to be exercised towards broadening the culture of human rights and wellbeing: allowing for greater inclusion and equity, the integration of a safeguarding culture both in

the educational space and its environment, and meaningful participation that results in good
democratic governance systems.

As we have seen, the education process must focus on the full development of human capacities
in the intellectual, emotional and social dimensions. Throughout this document, we have explored
Educo’s approach to promoting the development of these dimensions. In this section on rights
through education, however, we have tried to underline two elements that we regard as essential:
on the one hand, we contemplate fully integrating art and play, in all of its possible forms, in
the educational space, based on our regard for these as fundamental drivers of learning and as
builders of social cohesion. Both evoke emotions and incite wonder, as a source of curiosity and
motivation, and with it creativity, imagination and experimentation. They also represent a channel
for expressing these emotions and for the emergence and resolution of conflicts that is conducive
to personal growth and our capacity to live together. That said, we call for more space—in the
sense of both place and time—for play and diverse forms of artistic expression; a space of freedom
that lets children not only do90 and have, but more importantly, be.

On the other hand, we wish to highlight the relevance of learning and service as a proposal that
harmonizes education and agency. It is an educational proposal that combines learning processes
and community service in a single well-structured project in which participants learn to address the
on real needs of the environment with the aim of improving it91.

Finally, we cannot forget that the education process is also confined to a given environmental
context. We live in a finite world that we are destroying at a rapid pace, thereby condemning
future generations to inherit a ravaged planet depleted of its natural resources92. One of the goals
of education from a rights perspective is to instill respect for the environment, and this cannot be
achieved without addressing the socio-economic, socio-cultural and demographic issues that can
hinder or foster our chances for living in harmony and dignity with others and with nature.

90 Educo considers it incompatible to promote spaces of freedom to be when children have no time for play or are overburdened with homework, tasks or
extracurricular learning activities.
Framework for action

The framework for action proposed here should be aligned with the “Approach to Change” set forth by Educo in its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, in which we advocate working to ensure that States and International Agencies fulfill their obligations and are held accountable; for reinforcing families, communities’ and civil society’s capacity to exercise their role as duty bearers; and for strengthening children’s capacities to demand that their rights be upheld.

Key components of action related to the right to education

1. **Any educational intervention is preceded by a Child Rights Situation Analysis** which will make it possible to design and plan the intervention according to a rights-based approach.
   - This analysis is conducted from a holistic perspective of rights and provides insight into the educational reality; it analyzes the violation of the right to education and the capacities of the different rights holders and duty bearers.
   - It targets the most vulnerable population and subsequent planning is consistent with this.
   - Working with groups in situation of exclusion also implies recognizing heterogeneity within the group and identifying and working on the basis of diversity.

2. **We identify the main determining factors that hinder the exercise of the right to education and we promote mechanisms to overcome them.**
   - We focus on those obstacles that correspond to structural causes and to which we can provide a sustainable response. This implies that educational interventions should prioritize local capacity-building processes and progressively phase out those that do not contribute to achieving positive, sustainable impacts.

3. **We promote education processes that guarantee inclusion (and justice in education access, processes, participation, results and impacts).**
   - We target interventions towards the most vulnerable groups to ensure zero discrimination.
   - We promote the adaptation of educational resources, facilities and material to students’ diversity, as part of the broader capacity-building process being carried out.

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93 In specific cases, situation analyses may be carried out to provide a foundation for the intervention.
4. **We promote education aimed at building basic education for all learners based on the four pillars of education.**

- According to the educational situation in each context and the related priorities, efforts will be made to ensure that the learning process embraces the various stages of the life cycle: from early and preschool education to the end of secondary education, such that it coincides at least with the minimum working age.

- Interventions will be designed to foster the improvement of full education stages or cycles.

- The four essential pillars of education will underpin the education processes supported by Educo, without giving precedence to one dimension of learning in particular.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This dimension contributes to the following targets set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the goal related to education:

- Targets 4.1 and 4.2 and, to a lesser degree, Targets 4.3 and 4.4.
- It also clearly contributes to means of implementation 4.a and 4.b.
Key components of action related to rights in education

1. **In order to consolidate education processes that promote rights and wellbeing, capacity building for educators will be an essential component of educational interventions**
   - The Child Rights-Based Approach will be integrated in all aspects of training processes.
   - Training processes will include a period of classroom guidance to consolidate the application of new knowledge in professional practice.
   - Training processes will promote reflective professional practice and foster cooperative learning among educators that is rooted in everyday practice and the reality of each educational space.
   - School management will integrate training processes to guarantee their practical implementation, scalability and sustainability.
   - The capacities of educational authorities will be strengthened to ensure comprehensive and appropriate educational support.

2. **The educational space constitutes a safeguarding environment that fosters a safe, stimulating and pleasant context based on respectful and caring relationships as a driving force behind learning.**
   - The educational space has a plan for coexistence.
   - The protection policy covers the educational space and its environment.

3. **Educational content is appropriate and meaningful for students.**
   - The syllabus combines global, national and local knowledge, promoting diversity and contextualized learning.
   - The educational materials employed in the educational space are appropriate and adapted to the students’ context and reality.
   - The local language is the medium of instruction.

4. **The education process is child-centered**
   - It is based on the recognition of the child as rights holders, equal in rights and dignity but unique in capacities, emotional patterns, interests, motivations and capabilities.
   - It promotes active, participatory and collaborative methodologies that stimulate dialog-based learning.
   - It favors formative assessment as part of the learning process that respects each student's pace and ways of learning.

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**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

This dimension contributes to Target 4.7 set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the goal related to education.
Key components of action related to rights through education

1. **We promote the establishment of a culture of Human Rights and Wellbeing.**
   - Human Rights and the Rights of the Child are part of the educational curriculum.
   - The structures and social relationships that prevent the exercise of rights within and beyond the educational space are identified and analyzed.
   - The structure and values that shape the educational space are based on a culture of rights and children participate therein.

2. **We promote and strengthen the democratic running of educational spaces.**
   - We foster, through student governments or other bodies, the systematic and active participation of students in all aspects of the educational life.
   - We strive for child participation that meets Educo’s standards.
   - We strengthen school boards, school management committees, etc., so that families and other community members and groups take part, alongside educators, in the control and management of educational spaces.
   - We involve and build the capacities of educational and other competent authorities as regards guiding and monitoring the democratic management of the educational spaces.

3. **We promote the transparency and accountability of an educational space that is open to the community and its surroundings.**
   - Accountability aims to share the development of the education process with families and the community on a global level.
   - It gives voice to community members so that they can express their feelings and opinions about the education process and help to define the goals thereof.

4. **The education process influences society, thus leading to greater justice and wellbeing.**
   - The education process promotes the development of the students’ capacity for action.
   - The educational space is permanently connected to its surroundings.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

This dimension contributes to the following targets set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the goal related to education:

- Targets 4.5 and 4.6. It also contributes to means of implementation 4.c
Outline of Educo’s Approach

**RIGHTS TO EDUCATION**
- EQUITABLE
- INTEGRAL

**RIGHTS IN EDUCATION**
- RELEVANT
- INCLUSIVE
- CARING & NURTURING

**RIGHTS THROUGH EDUCATION**
- TRANSFORMING
- DEMOCRATIC

**ACCESS**
- Based on CRSA results
- Attention to most vulnerable populations
- Guarantees the conditions for access and participation
- From birth to minimum legal working age (secondary or vocational)
- Aimed at holistic development: learning to know, to do, to be and to live together

**PROCESS**
- Educators are well trained, motivated and supported and enjoy decent working conditions
- Curriculum and educational materials are relevant, appropriate, and adapted to the context and the reality of each individual
- Safe, stimulating and pleasant surroundings that favor relationships based on respect and affection
- Dynamic and participative child-centred pedagogies
- Formative assessment integrated in teaching-learning processes

**RESULTS**
- Human Rights are integrated in the curriculum and educational life
- Students and families participate in the management of educational spaces
- Open and committed to the community
- Autonomy and accountability

**IMPACTS**
- Rights to education
- Rights in education
- Rights through education
- Transforming, democratic, equitable, relevant, caring & nurturing, integral, relevant, and integral

**EDUCATION SPACES**
- Community

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Curriculum
- Goals
- Materials

**CONTENT**
- Pedagogical Process
- Relations
- Evaluation
Implementation

To encourage and facilitate the implementation of this strategy, Educo will strive to make overall progress in the following areas:

1. **Internal capacity building**
   - Consolidate a global education team with focal point per country.
   - Create mechanisms for sharing ideas and experiences and for facilitating both individual and institutional learning.
   - Implement mechanisms for strengthening internal communication between departments, countries and regions.

2. **Mutual and collective learning**
   - Foster collaborative efforts with other organizations to enhance the impact of implementation and institutional learning.
   - Boost membership in local, national and regional and international strategic networks.

3. **Evaluation and research**
   - Develop criteria for identifying good practices.
   - Standardize the use of evaluations as an exceptional mechanism for improvement and learning within educational interventions.
   - Establish a global evaluation framework.
   - Strengthen our research capacity through specific networks and partnerships, including in the academic and university spheres.
   - Give impetus to applied research associated with our programs to generate evidence and learning and thereby improve the impact of our actions. Assess the relevance of promoting regional and collaborative research.
   - Support research that facilitates the design and implementation of innovative projects and programs.

4. **Impact**
   - Position ourselves on aspects that are relevant for countries and for the global structure.
   - Participate in national and global campaigns.
   - Take advantage of spaces and networks where we are present to give voice to civil society and to children.


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