

The 6<sup>th</sup> ADU Educational Forum  
**Early Childhood Education: Together  
Towards Tomorrow**

# Nurturing global citizenship in the early years

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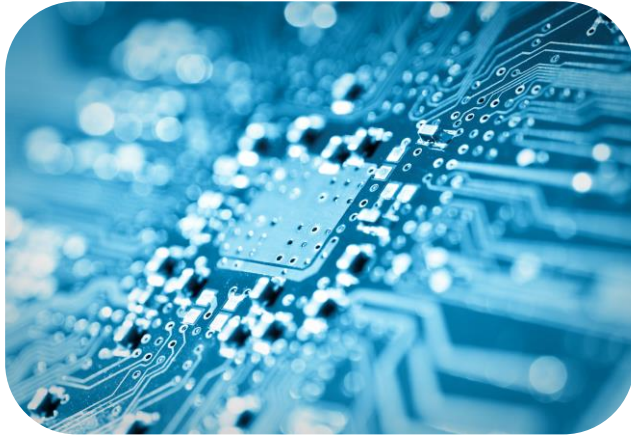
**May 18, 2023**

# Outline of the presentation

- Contextualization
- GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup>-century education
- GCED in early childhood: examples from practice
- Concluding remarks

# Contextualization

Globalization draws us closer...



**The total number of internet users is growing.**

147 million people have used the internet in the past 12 months. Globally, internet user numbers are growing at an annual rate of 2.9 percent.



**The number of people crossing the globe is increasing.**

3.7 billion people used air transport in 2022, with an expected rise of more than 6.4 billion in 2030.



**The global trading system is increasingly inter-connected.**

A quarter of the content of world exports has foreign value added.

# Contextualization

Ongoing tensions and conflicts draw us apart...



## **The number of refugees is growing.**

By the end of 2022 over 200 million people were forcibly displaced (in 2012 were 4.1 million).



## **More people are dying as a direct result of armed conflict.**

Data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project show around 9,000 fatalities due to conflict in 2022, up from about 6,000 the year before.



## **Children are also casualties of war.**

In 2022 nearly 20,000 children were affected by recruitment and use, killing and maiming, abduction and other forms of violence.

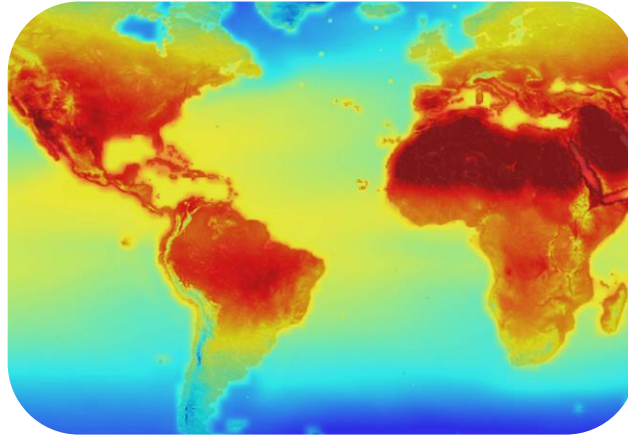


# Contextualization

Challenges are crossing national borders, becoming global problems.



**Forced displacement**



**Climate change**



**Pandemics**

# Contextualization

With issues like these threatening human and environmental well-being, we need to re-think the role and relevance of education.



**Just access to education isn't enough.**

We need access to an education that facilitates not only academic knowledge and skills but also enables us to reach our full potential as human beings and to learn how to live together.

# Contextualization



**Lessons need to go beyond cognitive knowledge** to also instil core values, attitudes and skills that encourage, for instance, respect for diversity and environmental sustainability.

# Contextualization

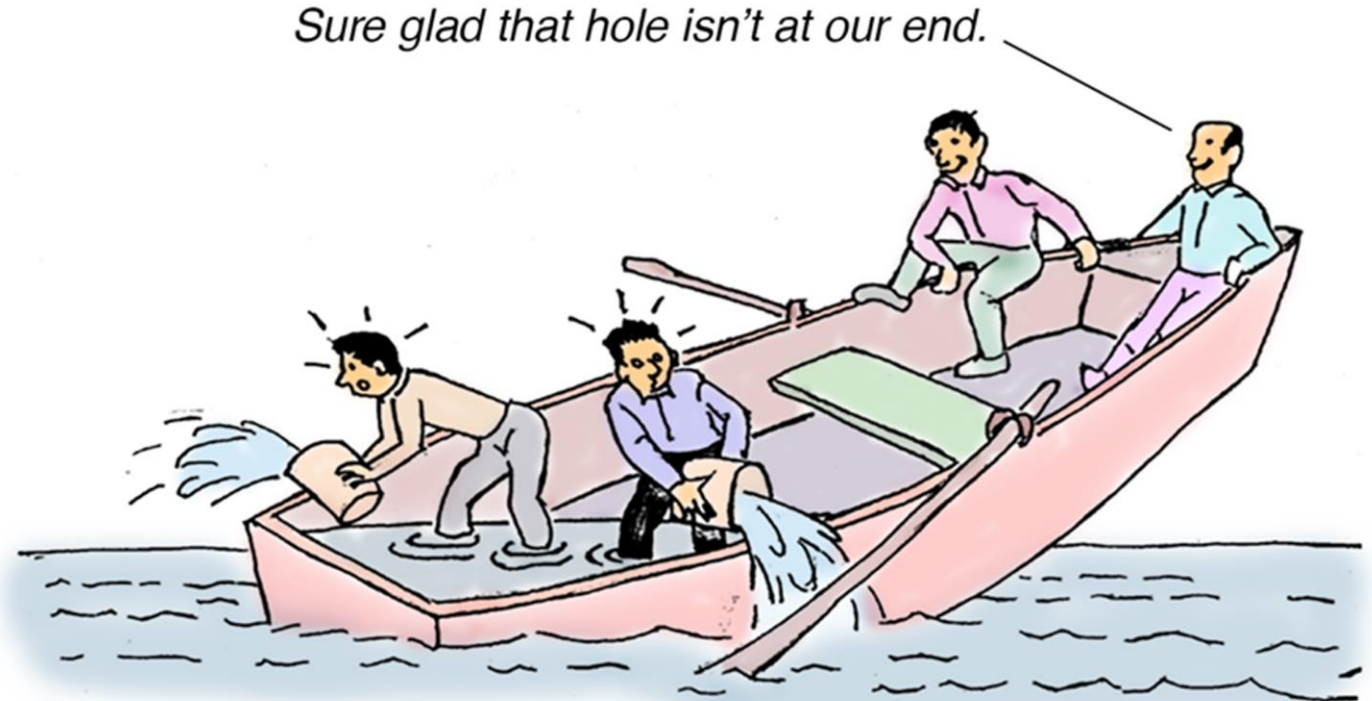


**Education needs to target learners of all ages both in schools and through non-formal and informal venues.**



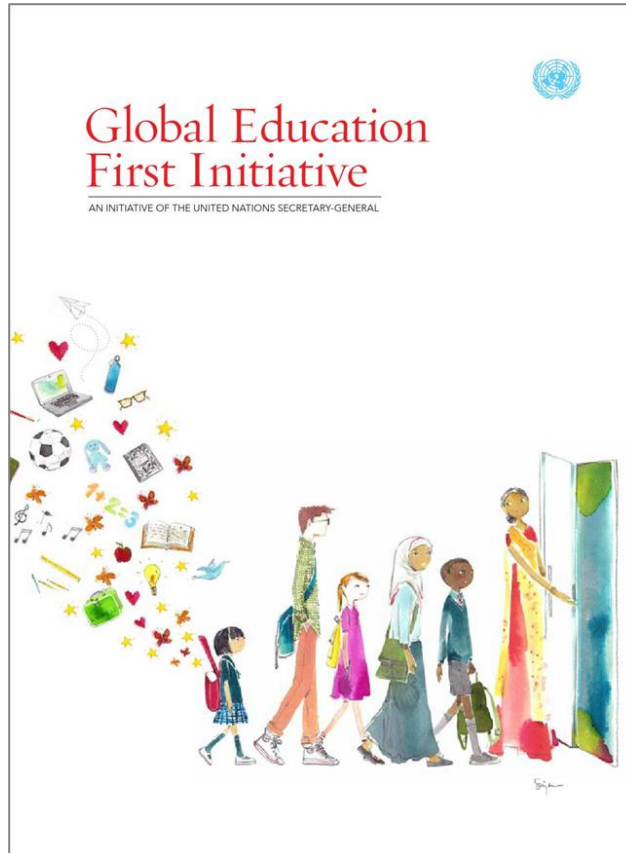
# Contextualization

Education gives us a profound understanding that **we are tied together as citizens of the global community, and that our challenges are interconnected.**



[https://www.reddit.com/r/funny/comments/5b8hki/sure\\_glad\\_that\\_hole\\_isnt\\_at\\_our\\_end/](https://www.reddit.com/r/funny/comments/5b8hki/sure_glad_that_hole_isnt_at_our_end/)

# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education



**“Education must be transformative” and “fully assume its central role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies.”** (UNESCO, 2012, p. 20)

# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education

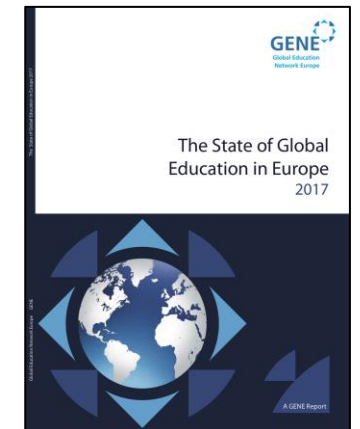
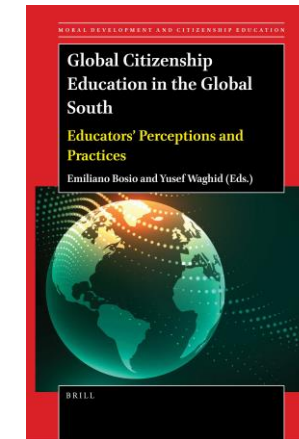
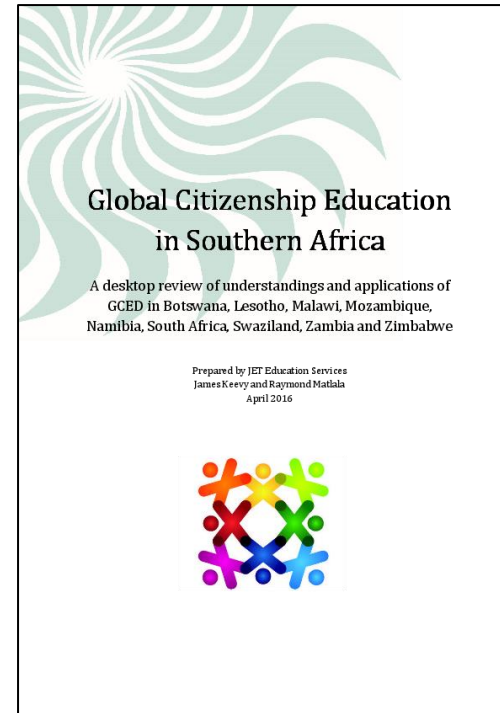
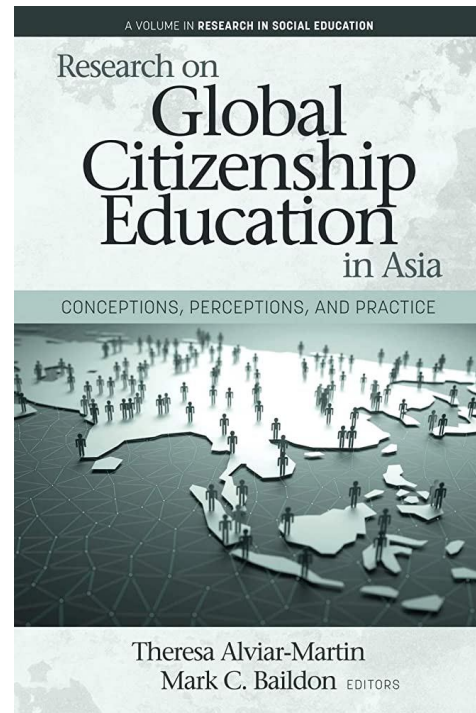
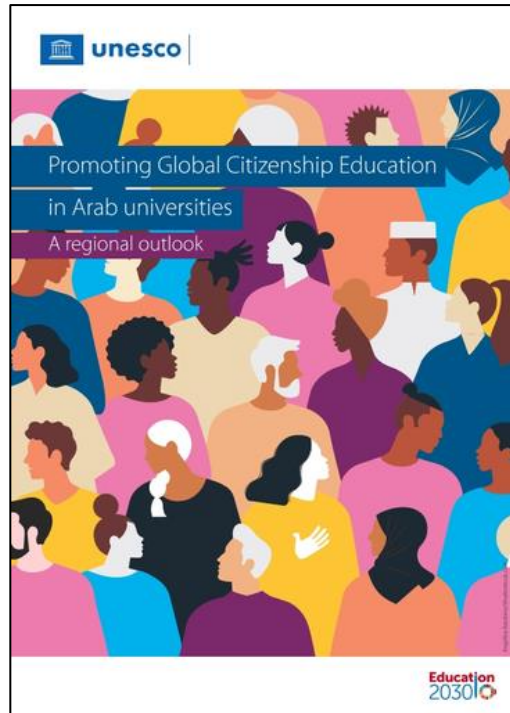


## Target 4.7

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



# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education





# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is an educational approach that nurtures respect and solidarity in learners in order to build **a sense of belonging to a common humanity** and help them become **responsible and active global citizens** in building inclusive and peaceful societies.

*Global citizenship education: taking it local* (UNESCO, 2018, p. 2)

Global education empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future.

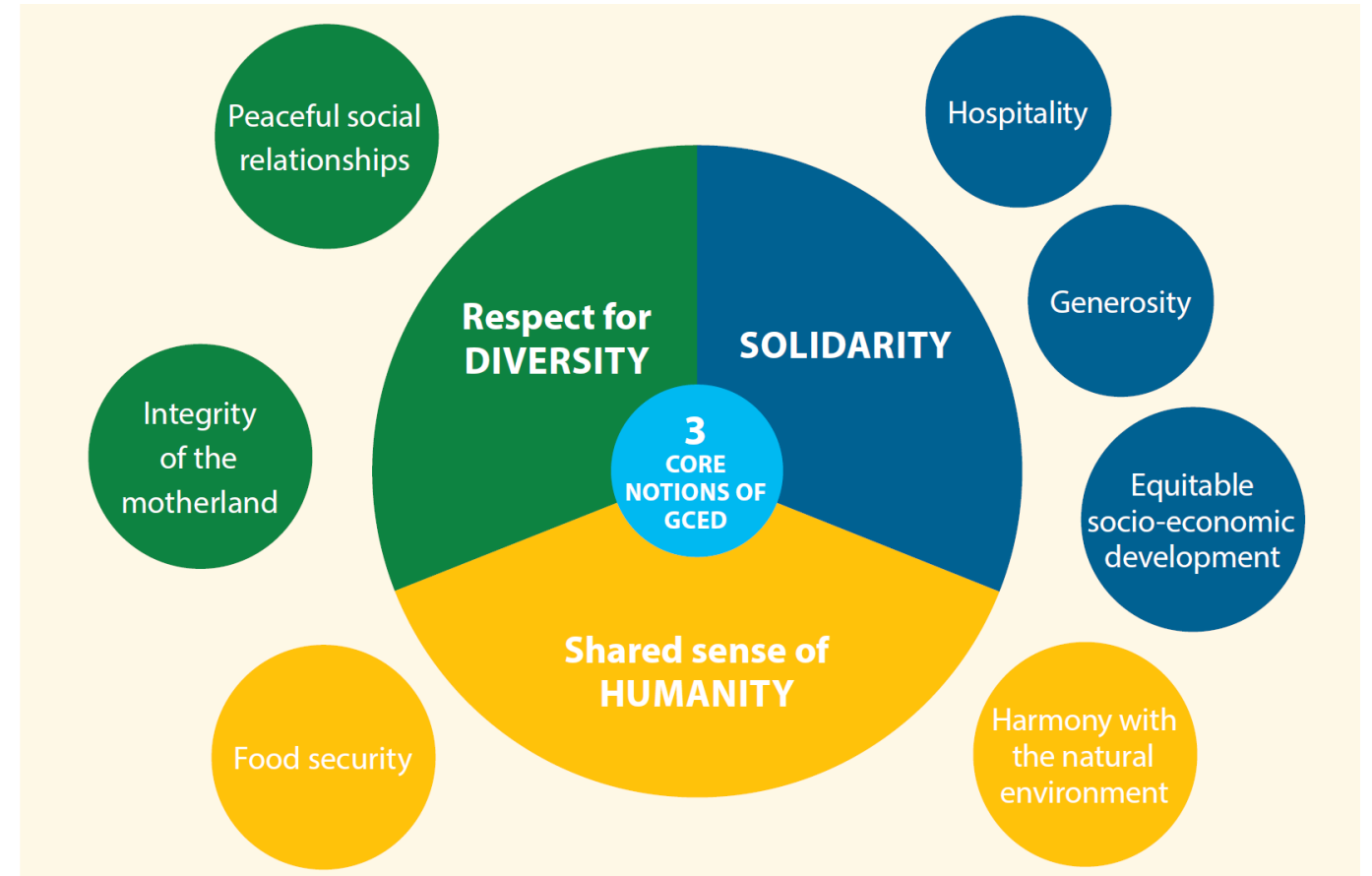
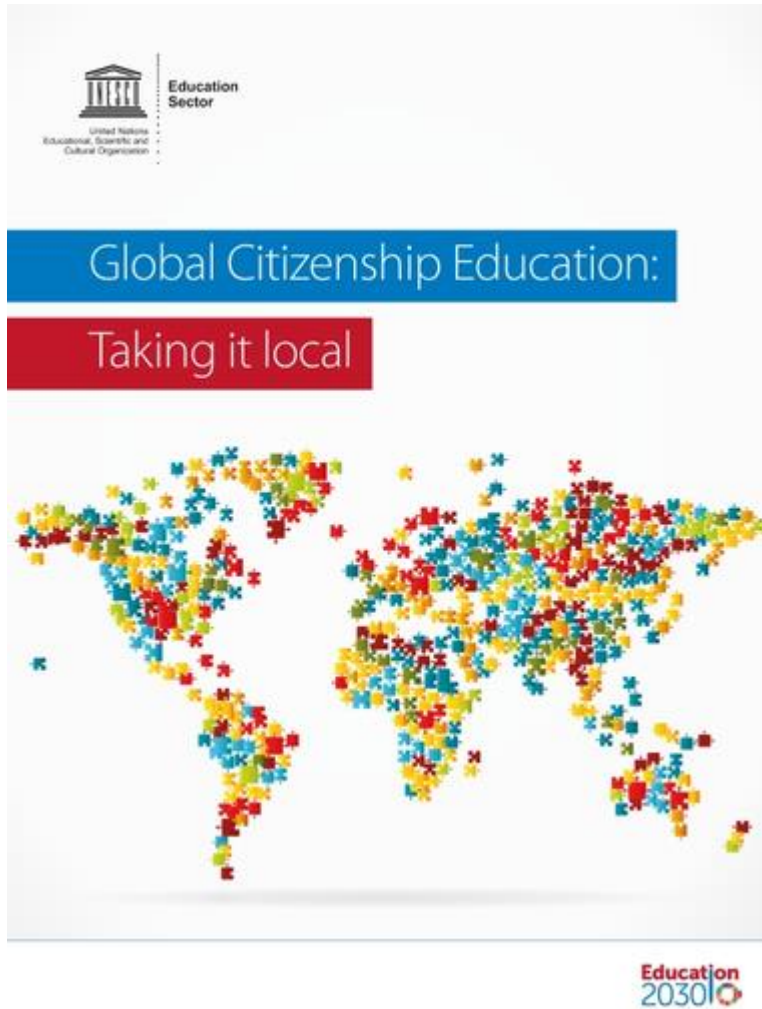
*The European Declaration on Global Education to 2050*  
(GENE, 2022, p. 6)

# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education

## Criticism to GCED

- For some, it is perceived as **dissociated from local needs and realities**, while for others it is a timely approach that underlines the need to sharpen the relevance of education.
- Tensions and debates around GCED have been particularly intense in contexts where the words 'global' or 'globalization' are misconstrued as referring to processes that are exogenous to their societies - for instance, with globalization being **equated with “westernization”**.

(Davies et al., 2005; Parekh, 2003)





## HEAD

**Cognitive dimension**  
To develop knowledge, understanding and critical thinking on global, regional, national and local issues and on the interdependence of different countries and populations.



## HEART

**Socio-emotional dimension**  
To have a feeling of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity.



## HAND

**Behavioural dimension**  
To act effectively and responsibly at the local, national and global level for a more peaceful and sustainable world.



# GCED: a priority of 21<sup>st</sup> century education

## Global citizens...

- Are aware of the wider world and have a sense of their own role as world citizens.
- Respect and value diversity.
- Have an understanding of how the world works.
- Are passionately committed to social justice.
- Participate in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global.
- Work with others to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place.
- Take responsibility for their actions.



(Oxfam, 2015, p. 4)

# GCED in early childhood

## Why is it important?

- Develop a sense of belonging and empathy
- Foster cultural awareness and understanding
- Promote peace and conflict resolution
- Encourage environmental stewardship
- Prepare children for a globalized world

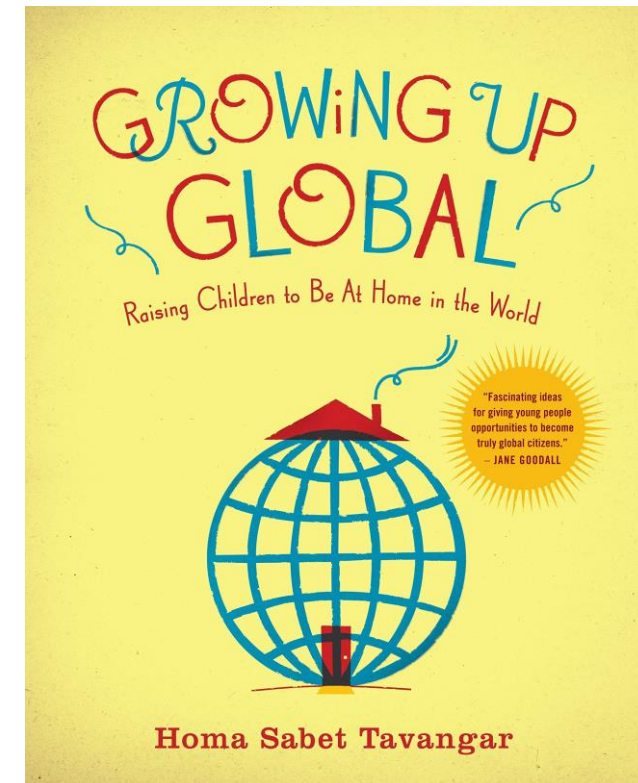
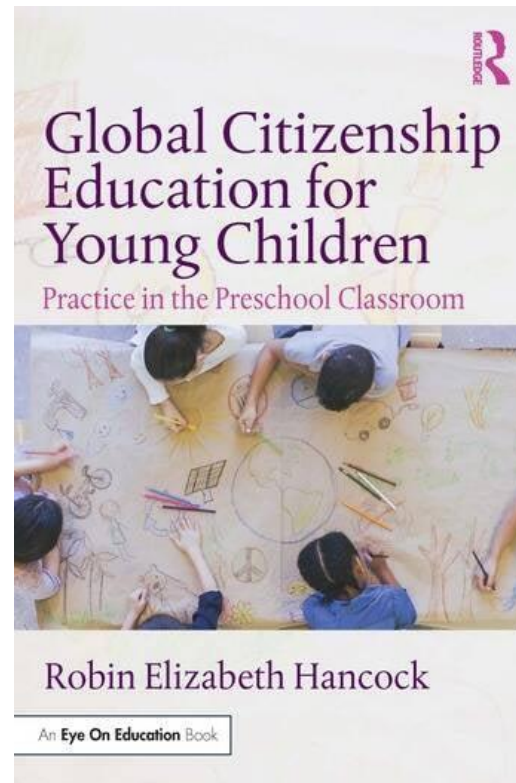
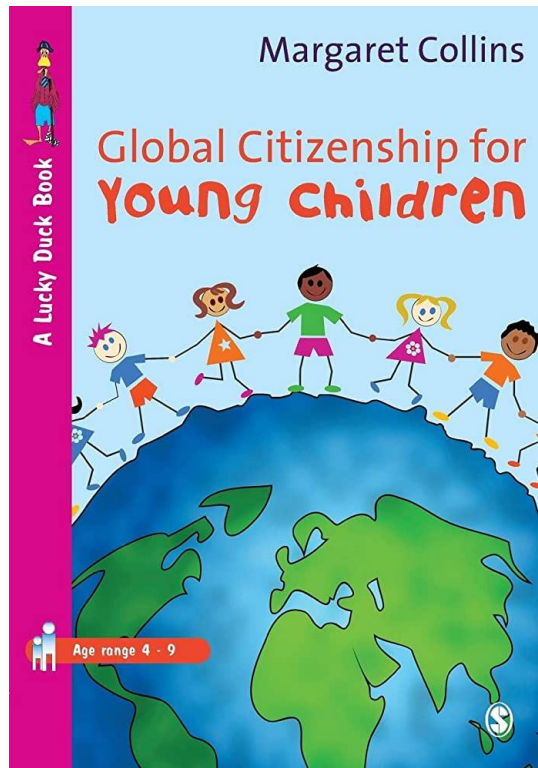


# GCED in early childhood

By integrating education for global citizenship in early childhood, we can **nurture responsible, engaged, and socially conscious individuals** who are equipped to contribute positively to their communities and make a difference on a global scale.



# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice





# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice



## Approaches

- Dialogue-based learning
- Problem-based learning
- Project-based learning
- Collaborative-based learning

## Strategies

- Storytelling
- Dramatizations, simulated games
- Sports activities
- Service learning and volunteering...

(Council of Europe, 2010, 2019; Lourenço, forthcoming; Lourenço et al., 2023; Oxfam, 2015; UNESCO; 2015)

# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice

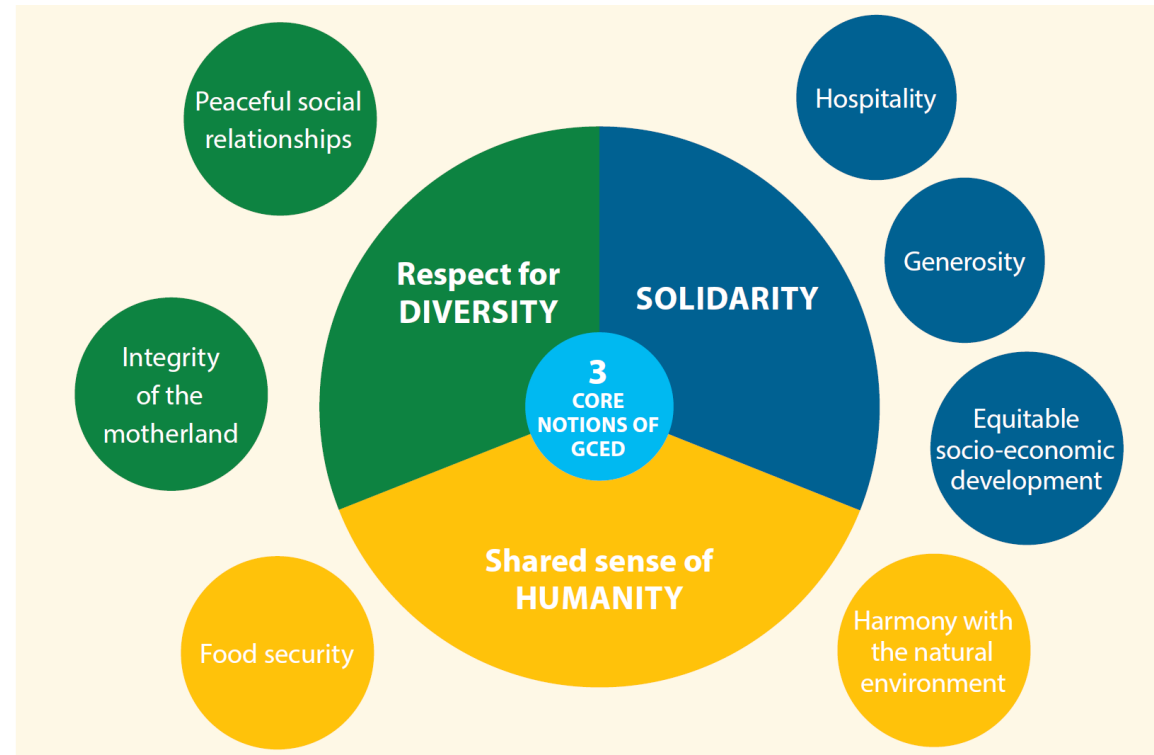


## Resources

- Authentic pictures (photographs)
- Objects from different countries/cultures(authentic resources)
- Videos
- Infographics
- Interactive maps
- Books (stories) in different languages
- Puppets
- Interactive sessions (Skype)...

(Council of Europe, 2010, 2013; Lourenço, forthcoming; Lourenço et al., 2023; Oxfam, 2015; UNESCO; 2015)

# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice



# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice

### ***A house where we can all fit* (2021-2022)**

Vera Silva &amp; Mónica Lourenço (Portugal)

Institutionalized children living in a residential home (aged 3-6)

## Aims of the project:

- Develop children's self-awareness and self-esteem
- Raise awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity
- Foster respect for others
- Promote communication and collaboration skills



## Educate for global citizenship and peaceful coexistence





## A house where we can all fit

13 sessions over the course of 5 months

**Contents:** greetings; personal identification; physical description; likes & preferences (food & entertainment); emotions & experiences; continents & countries of the world; people, languages & cultures

**Main strategies:** multilingual activities and virtual exchanges with children in Tanzania and Colombia living in similar institutions

### My world: eat, play, feel

- Making drawings about emotions (I am afraid of... sad when... happy when....) and preferences (my favorite food is... I love playing with...)
- Recording an individual presentation video
- Exchanging the drawings and videos with the other children

### The world 'out there'

- Preparing a fruit salad
- Listening to songs in different languages
- Playing games (finding similarities and differences between languages)

### Here we are

- Reading and analysing the book *Here we are* by Oliver Jeffers in different languages

### A house where we all can fit

- Decorating a cardboard house, a metaphor for planet Earth

# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice

## What did the children develop?

- Heightened awareness of the world and of linguistic and cultural diversity
- Openness to diversity
- Willingness to learn languages in the future
- Self-awareness
- A more grounded sense of confidence and optimism
- Communication skills
- Collaboration skills



(Silva & Lourenço, forthcoming)

# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice



Beach Trash: A Whale of a Problem (USA)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6CuB-dqueM>

# GCED in early childhood: examples from practice

## What did the children develop?

- Mathematical skills
- Communication skills
- Creativity (express their content knowledge through art)
- Social responsibility to better the community and better the Earth





# Concluding remarks

- It is possible and desirable to nurture children's global citizenship early on.
- Integrating GCED in the early years should not mean a profound change in the curriculum, but **a new vision** that permeates the way teachers consider the contents to be dealt with, the objectives to be achieved, the methodology to be used and the activities to be carried out.
- **GCED is not an end goal but a path** that will (hopefully) continue throughout children's lives.
- **Teacher professional development is key** to ensure that teachers possess the necessary confidence, knowledge and skills to educate *about* and *for* global citizenship.

**We need great teachers to grow great minds – to create a more peaceful, more secure and a more just world.**

Sunny Varkey, founder of GEMS and of the Global Teacher Prize



**GLOBAL  
TEACHER  
PRIZE**  
VARKEY FOUNDATION

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