What can education concretely (and realistically) do to mitigate contemporary threats and foster lasting peace?

Technical Brief N°2[i]

This document is an original draft of a Technical Note prepared for the UNESCO Section on Global Citizenship and Peace Education in support of the effort to revise the 1974 Recommendation concerning education for international understanding, co-operation and peace. Specifically, this note seeks to summarize the state of current knowledge on the role of education in mitigating contemporary threats and fostering lasting peace.

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For more information on the 1974 revision visit the dedicated website.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this technical note is three-fold:

1) to identify building blocks of an effective transformative approach to education that supports international understanding, co-operation, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and lasting peace,
2) conduct a review of evidence of these effective approaches, and
3) explore the implications from this evidence toward revising and improving the 1974 Recommendation.

As a starting point, global threats to peace (i.e., inequality and inequity/exclusion, war, inequitable/unsustainable development, resource exploitation, climate change, pandemics and other threats to health, the rise of violent ideologies in various forms, declining democracies, gender-based violence[ii]) are understood as interrelated and interdependent, requiring contextually relevant, comprehensive and holistic educational responses. Toward mitigating global threats, and addressing related challenges, education can be approached as a response, as a tool of prevention, or as a tool of transformation to build social cohesion and peace.

In essence:

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[i] This Technical Note is part of a series of three Technical Notes developed by UNESCO to help guide the revision of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace, and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms that was adopted in 1974 by UNESCO General Conference (hereafter referred to as 'the 1974 Recommendation').

[ii] These threats will be detailed in a companion Technical Note N°2 that has yet to be developed (as of Dec 30, 2021).

- the institutionalization of education as a form of prevention and tool of personal, political and social transformation is strategically vital to the possibilities of establishing lasting peace;
- formal schooling can contribute to the production, reproduction and/or transformation of direct, structural and cultural violence, inequities and inequalities;
- to be effective, content and pedagogy should be contextually relevant and pertinent, reflecting the needs, traditions and practices of the communities in which it takes place;
- non-formal and informal education are vital to 1) complement formal education efforts and 2) foster innovation and challenge the status-quo in education; and
- lifelong learning is essential to supporting the full development of the person, and nurturing capacity development throughout life to respond to emergent threats in a changing world.

The application of transformative pedagogies and frameworks is vital to the complex task of mitigating global threats and building lasting peace. Transformative learning is:
- holistic, incorporating cognitive, affective (social and emotional), and active dimensions;
- should be directed toward the full development of the human person;
- incorporates various modes of reflection that are essential to fostering human agency;
- and is both a personal and social process.

In general, the evidence shows that:
- short-term education programs generally yield positive, measurable results, but may fall short of addressing deeply held beliefs and worldviews that drive threats to peace if not articulated with accompanying long-term goals, approaches and strategies;
- comprehensive and sustained integration of educational interventions into the whole of society is more likely to yield transformative results;
- similarly, whole school approaches yield more impactful results;
- and the effectiveness of educational efforts are context dependent, requiring interventions to reflect social, economic, political and cultural contexts.

The review of evidence and emerging understandings of transformative education supports several opportunities for revising, updating, and generally strengthening the effectiveness of the 1974 Recommendation, including:
- embedding education for global citizenship, sustainable development and health and well-being at all levels of the education systems as transformative frameworks
- prioritizing the development of lifelong learning as both an educational cultural shift and an essential strategy for addressing emerging threats and fostering social cohesion
- nurturing stronger partnerships between formal and non-formal education (its institutions methods and actors)
- bringing greater attention to inclusion, gender equality and equity in education
- empowering youth and fostering authentic youth engagement and participation in the design and delivery of transformative education
- increasing support for the autonomy of higher education in view of reinforcing their role as agents of change
- strategically prioritizing pre- and in-service teacher training in transformative pedagogies
- providing support for training in context specific, peace promoting pedagogies

- providing lifelong learning and teacher training that fosters awareness, understanding and capacity development to respond and adapt to the complexity derived from continuous changes in the interrelated economic, political, social and technological order
- closing the digital divide, harnessing new media, promoting critical media and information literacy, and fostering digital citizenship in view of notably preparing learners to steer the development of technological developments in a direction that supports lasting peace
- bringing renewed attention to the importance of education for disarmament and de-militarism
- supporting understanding of how violent ideologies develop and introducing effective educational approaches to prevent the spread of violent extremist ideologies

What can education concretely (and realistically) do to mitigate contemporary threats and foster lasting peace?

Understanding Threats to Peace

In order to designate effective educational approaches, the nature of the threats to peace (i.e., war, inequitable/unsustainable development, exclusion, resource exploitation, climate change, pandemics and other threats to health, the rise of violent ideologies, declining democracies, gender-based violence) and the various related issues that education seeks to respond to, mitigate, and transform must be understood. Reflecting an evolved understanding over the past half century, global threats are now generally understood as interrelated and interdependent. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development further delineates these linkages. For example, the direct violence of war is interdependent with the indirect violence[1] of inequitable global development and climate change. Violence also manifests itself in structural and cultural forms. Structurally, violence is embodied in unjust laws and institutions that perpetuate gender, ethnic and social inequity and unequal access to resources and human rights for the most marginalized in human societies. Structural violence is often rooted in and derived from cultural assumptions and beliefs and is shaped by political agendas. Furthermore, many contemporary threats to peace transcend borders, thus requiring a global response rooted in a global mindset. These understandings of the interdependence of various threats to peace require the designation of comprehensive and holistic educational strategies and approaches to address them. Context is also an important consideration, as the influences of collective histories, cultures, languages, structures and institutions shape local conditions and social and political relations. Thus, transformative education is context dependent, and must be responsive and adapted to local needs and realities.

Key Points
- Contemporary global threats to peace transcend national borders, are interrelated and interdependent, requiring comprehensive and holistic educational strategies and approaches to address them.
- Violence is contextual, requiring culturally, politically and socially relevant educational responses.

Educational Pathways for Addressing Threats to Peace

Education is widely accepted as a tool for addressing and transforming threats as well as a pathway to sustainable peace, but what are its roles and functions? In seeking to provide evidence for what education can concretely (and realistically) do to mitigate contemporary threats and foster lasting peace, this technical note starts by identifying generalized educational pathways that have historically shaped educational responses.

Educational strategies addressing threats to peace might take one of three generalized pathways. it can, or has been historically approached and developed as:

    1) a response to a threat,
    2) a tool of prevention, or
    3) a tool of transformation and peacebuilding.

Education as a response to threat can be utilized to mitigate threat impacts and promote actions and strategies to resolve/transform threats. Education approached as *a tool of prevention* is key to prevent threats and create conditions (norms and institutions) for sustainable peace. Education approached as *a tool of transformation and peacebuilding* supports the transformation of conflict by addressing its root causes, including violent political and cultural practices, institutions and ideologies, while supporting the establishment of healthy relationships and behaviors, human rights, gender equality, new norms, institutions, and mechanisms for nurturing and maintaining a sustainable peace. Some of the generalized learning objectives of these three pathways are described in the chart below. These generalized pathways are overlapping and interdependent. While education as a response is critical when threats arise, the implementation and institutionalization of education as a form of prevention and transformation is strategically vital to the long-term goals of sustainable peace.

Education as a "Response to Conflict/Crisis"	Education as a "Tool of Prevention"	Education as a "Tool of Transformation and Peacebuilding"
*These learning goals, far from complete, are designated to help indicate some of the generalized goals for each approach. Many of the goals are overlapping and interdependent and could be cross-listed amongst the approaches.		
Learning Objectives ▪ provide critical & factual knowledge of the nature of the threat ▪ counter mis-information and worldview assumptions ▪ utilize education as an emergency response, tending to communities most effected ▪ develop skills and capacities to respond to the threat ▪ educate about and for human rights ▪ probe history to provide analysis of historical contexts and conditions that gave rise to the threat ▪ address conflict related trauma	Learning Objectives ▪ provide general knowledge of violence, health, conflict, peace, and human rights ▪ develop understanding and awareness of how history and historical narratives shape and influence conflicts ▪ build skills and nurture nonviolent capacities for responding to conflict ▪ develop awareness of conflict/violence warning signs ▪ nurture civic responsibility, engagement, and global citizenship ▪ develop skills and capacities for media and information literacy ▪ promote health and well-being ▪ foster critical thinking and scientific reasoning	Learning Objectives ▪ strengthen socio-emotional skills that are critical for social cohesion and integration ▪ nurture critical thinking and analysis, skills of imagination, futures thinking ▪ build skills and nurture capacities for human agency and fostering social responsibility ▪ build skills and nurture capacities for institution building and systems design to prevent and transform conflict ▪ develop knowledge, skills and capacities for engagement in democratic practices ▪ foster global citizenship ▪ build understanding of the relationship between personal and collective choices and public health ▪ facilitate ethical, moral and worldview reflection in support of personal and social change

Key Points
- In addressing threats to peace, education can, and has been historically approached as 1) a response, 2) as a tool of prevention, or 3) as a tool of transformation and peacebuilding.
- Education as a tool of transformation and peacebuilding will incorporate the learning goals of the other two pathways, while providing an additional emphasis on futures thinking, institutional building (and institutional transformation) and systems design.

- The adoption of education as a form of prevention and transformation into formal education is strategically vital to the long-term goals of sustainable peace.

Formal Schooling: Concerns, Challenges & Opportunities

Integrating peace education into formal schools is an essential peacebuilding strategy,[2] as formal schooling is perhaps the most influential site of cultural production and reproduction in any given society. Formal schools not only impart certain predetermined knowledge and skills, but they also shape social and cultural values, norms, attitudes and dispositions.[3] However, it is well documented[4] that certain practices, policies and pedagogies utilized in formal schools can be impediments to peace, often contributing to the maintenance of cultures of violence and the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes and ideologies. Certain pedagogical approaches can normalize violence, racism and exclusionary practices, which have a detrimental impact on learners and their ability to become agents of peace. Many formal school systems throughout the world emphasize teacher-centered approaches, knowledge reproduction, and reductionist testing that perpetuate individual epistemic assumptions and encourage conforming to a narrow view of acceptable forms of knowledge and thought. Some have argued that this is a form of epistemological violence that "produces cognitive biases, and is an obstacle to the development of a learner's full human potential, well-being, and flourishing."[5] More generally, in various contexts, and throughout history, schools have been utilized to produce social conformity and has also contributed to the spread of hateful propaganda, imbued values of militarism[6] seen as necessary to advancing the goals of the State, and to maintain social stratification.[7]

The content, form and structure of education[8] all have significant influences on learning outcomes within schools, and should reflect the needs of the learners and the local context. The *content* of the learning should be meaningful and relevant to the contexts in which it takes place, rooted in an understanding that such needs, while local, are also global in scope. Local social justice concerns, in particular, should be reflected in the curricula. For example, anti-bias, anti-racist, and inter-ethnic/intercultural education are particularly relevant to places experiencing migration crises caused by conflict, climate change, health and other factors. In countries emerging from protracted violent contexts, disarmament and post-conflict peacebuilding education can be utilized to addresses the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on children and the disruption to educational activities. Post-conflict peacebuilding education also supports processes of reconciliation, truth-telling, and post-conflict justice.[9]

The form and pedagogy of education must also be relevant and accessible to all. This can imply, for example, ensuring when relevant that pedagogies are derived from local cultural and indigenous practices. The use of learner-centered pedagogies[10] that draw forth and elicit the interests, needs and motivations of the students are especially effective and preferred. A student-centric approach is in contrast with the more traditional teacher-centered approach, embracing the autonomy and accountability of the learner and supporting more meaningful learning.

The structure of education is also of critical importance. Factors such as the ways in which knowledge is divided into heterogeneous subjects, the scheduling of classes, learning culture, disciplinary practices, the surrounding environment, the relations between students, teachers and administrators, and the connection between the school and community, singularly and collectively have an influence on learning outcomes and can present obstacles to the goals of transformative learning outlined in this technical note. Meaningful learning is jeopardized when students receive messages in the classroom that are

disconnected from or contradicted by other institutional practices. Whole school approaches[11] are a particularly effective strategy for integrating peace values school-wide. Whole school approaches bring integrity and holism between the curriculum, school culture, disciplinary policies, student-teacher relations and management practices. Whole school approaches also encourage parent participation in learning and integrate the voices and needs of the local community.

Key Points
- Critical awareness of the ways in which schools can produce and reproduce direct, structural and cultural violence must be developed.
- The content of learning should be contextually relevant, reflecting the needs, cultures, traditions, and interests of the community in which it takes place, understanding that such local needs are also global in scope.
- The form and pedagogy of education should be learner-centered, meaningful to the local contexts, and derived from local cultural and indigenous practices.
- Applying a whole school approach is an important strategy for integrating peace values school-wide and into the local community.

Formal & Non-Formal Education & Lifelong Learning

While pursuing and institutionalizing peace through formal education is a vital strategy,[12] it must also be complemented by non-formal and lifelong learning efforts. Research[13] has demonstrated that non-formal grassroots education efforts contribute significantly to social, political and cultural change. Non-formal education has the ability to challenge the status-quo of formal education and can more adeptly circumnavigate political obstacles to educational change. In some contexts, non-formal educational interventions conducted by NGOs and grassroots community groups have led to the adoption of educational policy and legislation in support of peace education. These efforts take root in community spaces, where their values and learning goals become culturally embraced.[14]

As explored thru the work of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, lifelong learning brings focus to adult learning with a particular emphasis "on furthering educational equity for disadvantaged groups and in the countries most afflicted by poverty and conflict."[15] By supporting continuing education, lifelong learning contributes to equitable and sustainable development. However, lifelong learning is more than vocational training, it is the foundation for an educational cultural shift fostering an ethos of a learning society[16] that supports learners in achieving their full potential and capacitating them to address threats and challenges in an ever-evolving world.[17]

Key Points
- Non-formal education plays as vital a role as formal education in fostering social change.
- Non-formal education can challenge the status quo.
- Lifelong learning is essential to supporting the full development of the person as well as capacity development for respond to emergent threats in a changing world.

Transformative Dimensions of Learning in Responding to Global Threats

Global threats are complex, and to create lasting peace requires pursuing changes across multiple dimensions. Various scholars and practitioners have identified several broad and overlapping dimensions through which transformation must be pursued:[18] personal, relational, political, structural, cultural &

ecological. The learning objectives and generalized approaches of each dimension are explored in the chart below. These dimensions of learning are cross-cutting and interrelated, each shaping and informing the other.

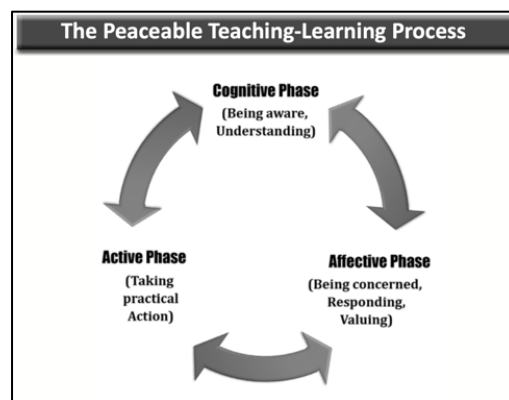| Dimension	Learning objectives	Transformative Learning Approaches/Practices
Personal	Develop capacities for managing internal conflicts, biases, and ethical/moral decision making; engage in critical self-awareness and introspection; nurture social-emotional intelligence and creativity; engage in worldview reflection; and foster political agency.	▪ self-reflection ▪ ethical/moral reflection ▪ journaling ▪ perspective taking ▪ critical thinking ▪ social-emotional learning
Relational	Develop empathy and understanding of others, as well as appreciation of cultural, ethnic and national differences; foster global citizenship, developing awareness of interdependence & interconnection across cultures and amongst and between members of nation states; understand the relationship between personal choices, behaviors and health; and develop skills and capacities for resolving & transforming conflicts without violence.	▪ social-emotional learning ▪ conflict transformation and resolution ▪ reflective listening ▪ dialogue ▪ education for health and well-being ▪ cooperative & collaborative learning ▪ restorative and circle processes ▪ peer mediation
Political	Develop understanding of basic principles of rights and responsibilities; foster civic engagement, political agency and develop advocacy skills; experience and practice collective and democratic decision-making processes; and learn to dialogue across differences.	▪ critical thinking ▪ cooperative & collaborative learning (working toward common goals) ▪ dialogue and deliberation ▪ experiential and place-based learning ▪ nonviolent direct action ▪ human rights learning
Structural	Develop awareness of the systems in which relationships are embedded and the institutions through which norms and values are established and maintained; develop awareness of structural violence (the conditions, processes, and root causes that give rise to direct violence); understand equity and justice and how to pursue them; engage in systems and institutional analysis & design.	▪ restorative justice ▪ history education (exploring history and historical narratives) ▪ futures thinking ▪ systems thinking ▪ critical/analytic thinking ▪ designing institutions & systems
Cultural	Develop awareness of the cultural roots of knowledge creation and meaning construction; cultural assumptions related to communication, expression of emotion, ways of settling differences, & approaches to dialogue; nurture appreciation of cultural differences and develop intercultural competencies; and explore cultures of peace.	▪ experience different cultures ▪ cross-cultural and intercultural dialogue ▪ global citizenship education ▪ creative thinking and expression
Ecological	Nurture respect for all life and ecological thinking and awareness; foster systems and future thinking in support of sustainability; develop awareness of interdependence and interconnection amongst and between peoples and the broader web of life; and nurture ecological responsibility; develop awareness of relationship of self to others and all living systems.	▪ systems thinking ▪ futures thinking ▪ education for sustainable development ▪ experiencing nature

Key Points
- Transformative education requires holistic learning that pursues the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviors required for change from the personal to the ecological.

Transformative Frameworks & Approaches

Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Education for Health and Well-being (EHW), three of the most prominent normative educational frameworks pursued by the UN and UNESCO in the 21st century, comprise holistic educational agendas and pedagogies particularly suited to respond to global challenges. While GCED, ESD and EHW, and the above passages identify the breadth and scope of the transformative educational task, the following pedagogical frameworks are offered as examples that can be utilized to organize intentional, transformative learning for peace in multiple contexts.

The Peaceable Teaching-Learning Process

Loreta Castro and Jasmin Nario-Galace describe a peaceable teaching-learning process[19] developed and utilized in multiple contexts in the Philippines. Their approach is transformative and holistic, incorporating *cognitive, affective (social and emotional),* and *active* dimensions of learning.   The *cognitive* dimension explores the roots of conflict, fosters critical awareness of social and political reality, and explores alternatives. The *social and emotional* dimension asks learners to reflect upon and consider values, engage in perspective taking, and nurtures empathy for others, and fosters agency. The *active* dimension invites learners to consider practical personal and social action to pursue change.

The Peaceable Teaching-Learning Process

Cognitive Phase
(Being aware, Understanding)

Affective Phase
(Being concerned, Responding, Valuing)

Active Phase
(Taking practical Action)

Learning from and reflecting upon experience[20] is foundational to all transformative learning processes. Brazilian popular educator Paulo Freire[21] framed transformative learning as a praxis: a cycle of theory, action and reflection. "Theory" is drawn forth from the students' experiences of their world, inviting them to consider what they know, feel, and believe, and helps them to find ways and means to express and articulate their experience (*theorizing* an understanding of their reality). Learning from experience is both cognitive and social and emotional.   It is learning that emphasizes meaning making, and when accompanied by action, may lead to human agency (see also below).

5 Pillars of Education

The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century[22] put forth a vision of education as taking place inside and outside of the classroom, and as a lifelong process. Their report suggests that "education must…simultaneously provide maps of a complex world in constant turmoil and the compass that will enable people to find their way in it" (p. 85). More recently, UNESCO's International Commission on the Futures of Education[23], emphasized that "education must aim to unite us around collective endeavors and provide the knowledge, science, and innovation needed to shape sustainable futures for all anchored in social, economic, and environmental justice. It must redress past injustices while preparing

us for environmental, technological, and social changes on the horizon" (p. 11). Together, these reports[iii] establish five pillars of education that may serve as holistic, foundational elements of a transformative approach.

Pillar 1: Learning to Know
Learning to know emphasizes acquiring a relevant body of knowledge, learning to learn, and nurturing a capacity for lifelong learning. Learning to learn entails the development of capacities of knowledge retention, reflection, critical thought, and curiosity. Learning to learn should lead to the desire of learning as a "never-ending process… [which] can be enriched by all forms of experience" (p. 88).**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Pillar 2: Learning to Do
"Learning to do" expands the aims of education from skill development to the development of competencies. *Competencies*, understood as the ability to apply knowledge and skills, may even be too limiting a frame. Alternatively, Betty Reardon emphasizes the development of *capacities*, understood as innate qualities that can be drawn forth and nurtured in the learner. As Reardon frames it, "the purpose of learning…is transformative, drawing from within learners' capacities to envision and affect change and helping them develop the capacity to transform that existing system…The most influential factor in transformative learning is the conscious, reflective experience of the learner"[24] (p. 159). "Learning to do" emphasizes the action component of the peaceable teaching-learning process and Freire's praxis. While Freire refers to direct social and political action to change our world, in the classroom *action* can be pursued by providing opportunities for students to try out new skills, test theories, apply new knowledge, model new political and institutional arrangements, and exercise new ways of expressing themselves, their beliefs, values and questions.

Competencies and capacities particularly relevant to nurturing sustainable peace include learning to cooperate and collaborate toward the achievement of common goals, self-reflection, reflection on action, adaptability, skills of communication and reflective listening, conflict resolution & transformation.

Pillar 3: Learning to Live Together
"Learning to live together" has been the foundation of most efforts of UN, UNESCO, and international education. It invites education to foster empathy, interdependence, and mutual understanding and is rooted in and supports values of pluralism and peace. It is presumed that developing these as formative values and capacities in early childhood development will support their application throughout life. This pillar is the leitmotiv of the 1974 Recommendation.

Pillar 4: Learning to Be
"Learning to be" refers to the development of the whole person: mind, body and spirit. It acknowledges humans as autonomous beings, worth of dignity, well-being and flourishing. This pillar, connecting most closely with the affective dimension of the peaceable teaching-learning process, supports learners in engaging in moral and ethical reflection, nurtures social-emotional intelligence and personal peace

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[iii] "*Learning: The treasure within,*" the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, designated the first four pillars, while the International Commission on the Futures of Education establishes an implied fifth pillar: learning to become.

practices, and the development of critical and ethical capacities seen as necessary for worldview consideration and change.

Social emotional learning (SEL) is foundational to the development of the whole person. Several research studies have demonstrated that SEL programs improve "students' social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to school, positive social behavior, and academic performance; they also reduced students' conduct problems and emotional distress."[25] SEL, combined with cognitive and action oriented learning, supports the development of 5 fundamental competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.[26] SEL has long-term impacts, with evidence showing higher levels of well-being throughout life.[27]

Pillar 5: Learning to Become with the World

This new pillar, a cornerstone of the recent "Futures of Education" Report,[23] addresses the urgency of human and planetary survival derived from the universal threats of climate change and the global coronavirus pandemic. "Learning to become with the world" calls for inculcating planetary awareness rooted in the premise that "human and planetary sustainability is one and the same thing" (p. 1).[28] "Learning to become" requires education to foster awareness and agency rooted in an understanding of humans as interdependent with the Earth and other living systems. It is particularly futures oriented. It further calls for a dramatic "paradigm shift: from learning about the world in order to act upon it, to learning to become with the world around us." This shift is supported by the normative educational frameworks of Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Education for Health and Well-being (EHW).

Transformative Learning for Human Agency

As noted above, one of the primary aims of transformative learning is to nurture learners' motivation to contribute to the building of a more just world. Theory suggests that learning must provide opportunities for reflection on the interdependence between personal and political realities for it to lead to human agency[29]. Such reflection is the foundation of a transformative learning process. The research of educational sociologist Jack Mezirow[30], pioneer of transformative learning theory, suggests that worldview transformation that leads to human agency is pursued through four stages. A transformative approach begins by 1) centering the experience of the learner. Their experience provides the basis of the subject matter and the learning. 2) Critical self-reflection of experience follows. This is the internalized processes of meaning making. Following internal reflection, 3) learners engage in rational discourse with others. Dialogue with others supports social validation in the process of worldview transformation. 4) Transformation is then finalized through various forms of responsive action, which establish new ways of being in the world. The integration of transformative education across the

Mezirow's stages of worldview transformation

experience

critical self reflection

rational discourse (social validation)

responsive action
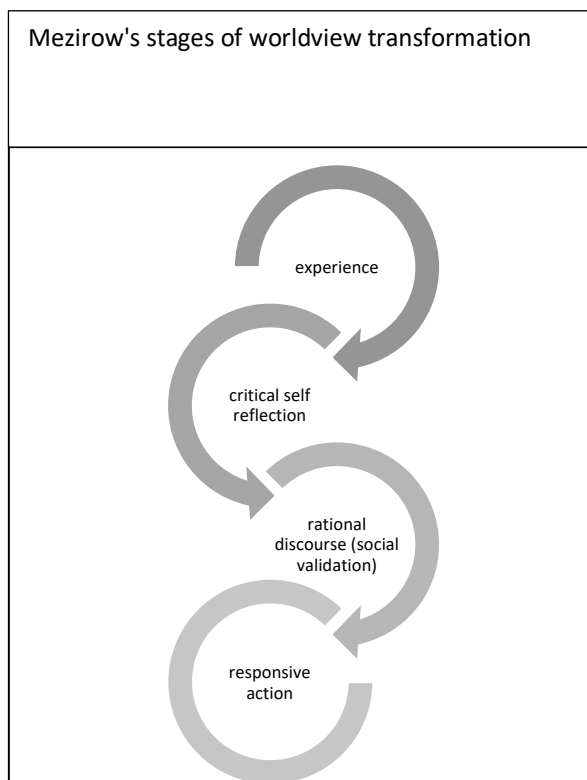
education sector was one of the final recommendations of the recently concluded "5th UNESCO Forum on transformative education for sustainable development, global citizenship, health and well-being."[31]

Key Points
- Transformative learning is holistic, incorporating cognitive, social and emotional, and active dimensions
- Learning should be directed toward the full development and empowerment of the human person
- Learning from and reflecting upon experience is foundational to all transformative learning and is essential to fostering human agency
- Transformative learning is both a personal and social process - internalized learning is validated through social learning, linking the personal to the political

Examining the Evidence: Education Mitigating and/or Transforming Contemporary Threats and Fostering Lasting Peace

Evaluation of educational interventions yields mixed results. Several studies generally substantiate the effectiveness of short-term formal peace education efforts.[32] Research by Nevo and Brem, analyzing 79 studies of peace education programs in relatively tranquil States from 1981-2000, "found that 80-90% were effective or at least partially effective."[33] Other research has shown similar positive effects, particularly related to sense of self, attitudinal, and behavior change.[34] Participants are generally able to apply the knowledge and skills they learn in their daily lives. However, it is undetermined if short-term interventions are able to "affect deeply held cultural convictions" (p. 188)[35] or transform worldview assumptions, particularly in contexts of intractable and enduring conflict. In other words, short term interventions are observed to be generally effective at transmitting fundamental knowledge and developing relational and conflict skills, yet may fall short of achieving enduring behavioral change and the more longitudinal and transformative relational, structural and cultural changes that result from human agency. Furthermore, efforts designated to support personal and interpersonal change may be ineffective in contexts of enduring direct and structural violence, where inter-group relations should be given greater priority.[36] Many theorize that deeper social and cultural transformation is not possible without the comprehensive and sustained integration of context specific educational interventions into the whole of society, through formal, non-formal and lifelong learning efforts. Such an integrative approach leads to the legitimization and acceptance of new ideas, norms and values by the general society.[37] Similarly, as explored above, whole school approaches that integrate peace values into the curricula, school culture, institutional and disciplinary practices, and community generally yield more effective outcomes.

Beyond measuring the outcome of the extent to which students learn new knowledge and skills, and change their attitudes and behaviors, is the question of efficacy. "How does the learning contribute to social change? What actions do participants take due to their new learning and experiences?"[38] These outcomes are much more difficult to measure as they are less easily observable, more longitudinal in nature, and are impacted by culture, collective histories and traumas, as well as concurrent and evolving social, political and cultural realities. The previous sections on transformative learning and human agency establish theoretical, yet well-tested pedagogical bridges for linking the more observable personal and relational transformations to social, structural, political and cultural transformations. Future efforts should seek to design methodologies and evaluative frameworks to examine the impact of transformative pedagogical methods upon learner outcomes.

While the research may be less than conclusive, hope can be found in an ever-increasing body of qualitative research conducted in nearly all world regions evaluating the impacts of peace education contributing to lasting peace. An index of peer-reviewed research and reports, representing a sample from all world regions, can be found at the end of this technical note.

Key Points
- Short-term programs generally yield positive, measurable results related to the development of a sense of self, and attitudinal and behavior change, but may fall short of transforming deeply held beliefs and fostering the human agency necessary for pursuing structural and social change if not articulated with accompanying long-term goals, approaches and strategies.
- Whole school approaches, and the comprehensive and sustained integration of educational interventions into the whole of society, through formal, non-formal and lifelong learning efforts are likely to yield more transformative results.
- The effectiveness of educational interventions are context dependent.
- Transformative pedagogies establish strong theoretical links between personal change and social and structural change.

Implications for the 1974 Recommendation: What does this review of evidence imply in terms of the revision of the 1974 Recommendation?

The preceding review suggests several opportunities for revisions, updates and additions to strengthen the 1974 Recommendation.

Re-prioritize Human Rights-based Approaches
Human rights are the ethical and normative core of a just and peaceful social, political and economic order and establish the guiding principles for equitable and sustainable development. While human rights receive significant emphasis in the 1974 Recommendation, its importance must be reiterated. Member States should take appropriate steps to assure the full adoption of normative human rights declarations and conventions, including the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. The *United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training*[39] further establishes a guiding framework for human rights education (HRE), where HRE is understood as education about, through, and for human rights, pursued as a lifelong learning process, and taking place in all parts of society.

Introduce & Emphasize Global Citizenship Education
"International education," with its focus on fostering peaceful relations between peoples and States, is the primary descriptive expression used in the 1974 Recommendation (I.1.b, III.4.a.c,f). While this framing remains relevant, it may not fully encapsulate the transformative educational needs of the 21st century. Global Citizenship Education (GCED)[40], already well ensconced within UN and UNESCO agendas, may offer a more inclusive framework capable of addressing the interrelated and interdependent nature of global threats of the 21st century that supersede national boundaries.

Strategically Prioritize Lifelong Learning

"Lifelong learning fosters people's capacity to deal with change and to build the future they want" (p. 10).[41] As envisioned and articulated by expert consultants working with UIL, lifelong learning offers a strategic pathway for changing the culture of learning and for nurturing learning societies more capable of responding to emerging threats. Lifelong learning should be included as a priority concern for national policy planning (IV.7) and should be addressed more directly as a strategy (VI. Action in various sectors of education).

Nurture Strong Partnerships between Formal and Non-formal Education

In the pursuit of lasting peace, formal and non-formal education must be seen as symbiotic partners. While institutionalized education can formally prescribe social learning goals, non-formal and grassroots education often challenge and extend the aims of education. Non-formal education can also be viewed as complementary, helping to legitimize educational aims and support social and cultural adoption. States should consider providing increased support for non-formal education efforts, and should pursue opportunities to bring non-formal learning into formal spaces, and vice versa. Non-formal education should be addressed more directly in the revised Recommendation (VI. Action in various sectors of education).

Prioritize Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

The global climate crisis represents one of the greatest threats to peace. Environmental integrity, justice, peace, and economic viability are deeply intertwined. ESD[42] provides a holistic framework and educational approach for just and sustainable social, economic, and ecological development essential for achievement on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while supporting learning that balances present needs with those of future generations. ESD is already an integral component of UNESCO's Future of Education Initiative, and should be incorporated as a fundamental component in the revised Recommendation (incorporated within "V. Particular aspects of learning, training and action).

Intensify Support to Countries on Education for Health and Well-being

The COVID-19 crisis has been a wake-up call to the fact that schools are more than just places of learning, and better awareness that schools can make substantial contributions towards the health and well-being of learners. The inter-connectedness of health and education are well-recognized, and countries understand that healthy learners learn better, and that education is key towards nurturing healthier societies. EHW is a foundational element of SDG4 with strong links to the other SDGs. School health and nutrition plays a key and increasing role in ensuring the education system and the learners it serves will be strong and resilient for the future.

Prioritize Gender Equality and Equity in and throughout Education

Gender inequality and gender-based violence[43] are a significant threat to global peace. It is well documented that more gender equal States are both more peaceful and more stable.[44] As such, gender and gender-based violence should comprise a fundamental component of education for peace. Localized education efforts on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 have empowered women, promoting their knowledge, wisdom and experience as peacebuilders, and making their lives more secure.[45] Gender disparities in education present additional obstacles to equitable and just social, economic, and ecological development. The revised recommendation should prioritize education about gender (and gender-based violence), as well as gender transformative education, and promote gender equality and equity in education[46] as fundamental strategies for pursuing lasting peace.

Emphasize Youth Engagement, Participation and Empowerment

"Investing in the capacity, agency and leadership of young peacebuilders can strengthen their ability to collaboratively lead peace efforts, and to use their skills to tackle other challenges that affect them," (p. x).[47] Youth are generally seen as the recipients of education, but their concerns are rarely part of the education agenda.[48] For education to be transformative, it must be learner-centered and prioritize the concerns and motivations of youth.[49] Youth should have a say in matters that affect them, particularly in the context of their formal educational experiences and the content of their learning. Their participation in all public affairs should also be encouraged. Furthermore, the revised Recommendation should center content supporting the UN Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (UNSCR 2250 in particular).

Provide Increased Support and Autonomy for Higher Education

Higher Education (addressed in the 74 Recommendation: VI 25, 26, 27) has been deeply impacted by the global economic order. Reductions in State funding, and the increased corporatization and privatization of higher education has turned education into a product to be consumed and has shifted curricular agendas away from social benefit.[50] For higher education to contribute to a peace agenda, it must maintain academic freedom and remain independent of corporate and State influences in determining its curricular agenda, and should receive renewed support from the State. Free access to higher education should also be considered for its public benefit and as a contribution to the establishment of a lifelong learning culture. Given the nature of contemporary global threats, research within higher education should also adopt an "open science" approach, increasing communication, sharing, and making scientific knowledge more accessible for the benefit of human and planetary survival.[51]

Support Teacher Participation, Development, Preparation and Training in Transformative Pedagogies

New knowledge and awareness of transformative pedagogies should be incorporated into pre- and in-service teacher training. Transformative pedagogies are the essential building blocks of the majority of pedagogies that support peace. Teacher participation in the design of teacher policies at the system and school level is critical. Educators should have a direct role in the development of transformative pedagogies as their pedagogies shape learner outcomes. Educational policy and legislation efforts not accompanied by teacher training are generally ineffective.

Pursue Context and Culture Specific Content and Pedagogies

While this technical note advances several guiding principles that may be applicable in a large number of contexts, they may also need to be contextualized. Transformative education is context specific, and its content and pedagogies should resonate with local concerns and practices. The few pedagogies specifically advocated for in this note (ESD, GCED, HRE, Gender, SEL, PVE-E) are emphasized as they address urgent and emergent global threats. Other peace contributing pedagogies, of which there are many, should be advocated and pursued where relevant. For an overview of pedagogical themes and approaches, see the ongoing list developed by the Mapping Peace Education project.[52] Furthermore, these themes and pedagogies should be seen as complementary and intersectional. For example, GCED, ESD, and Human Rights Education (HRE) are all critical components of an educational approach fostering human and planetary rights, duties and responsibilities for present and future generations, which begin with the building and strengthening of social ties at the family and community levels. When and where possible, teacher training should introduce a wide array of pedagogical frameworks, emphasizing their complementarities and intersectionalities for the development of a strong sense of belonging to humanity.

Technology now connects every corner of the globe in a digital web and presents the possibility of being a great equalizer. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed a great divide in access to emergent digital technologies. The world's most marginalized populations have the least access to the technologies that have the potential to benefit their development. Furthermore, social media, which now connects approximately half the world's population, has established a space for sharing and connection. However, social media platforms have commodified individual and collective data, prioritizing profits over public benefit. This structural violence is further propagated by social media algorithms that herd people into digital echo chambers (leading to increased offline polarization), resulting in the spread of hate and misinformation, ultimately eroding cultures of democracy and civic dialogue.

During the global pandemic, where available, learning rapidly shifted to online platforms. The online digital learning landscape has evolved rapidly and has emerged as a powerful tool particularly effective at spreading information. However, its rapid rise was achieved without training educators in transformative digital pedagogies. Furthermore, the rapid digitization of education has been driven by corporate agendas, many of which may be counterproductive to the aims of education underlying the Recommendation.

Component "VIII. Educational equipment and materials" of the 1974 Recommendation should be completely revised to address the new media and digital landscape. Several specific concerns should be addressed: 1) providing equitable and universal access to digital technologies; 2) providing teacher training in online pedagogies and experimenting in designing and applying transformative pedagogies in the digital space; 3) establishing access to lifelong and vocational learning focused on preparing learners to use digital technologies as a necessity for active democratic participation in shaping and transforming future societies (ie. "digital citizenship"); and 4) prioritizing critical media literacy to counter misinformation and hate-speech campaigns.

Support education to prevent the spread of violent extremist ideologies and bring renewed emphasis to education for disarmament and de-militarism

The rise of violent extremism around the globe presents threats from the local to the global. While violent extremism has long existed, in recent years digital media has rapidly sped its spread, making many formerly domestic extremist movements now transnational in nature. The global pandemic has further exacerbated the problem, as many efforts to contain COVID have added to the structural conditions that typically fuel extremism.[53] This particular threat requires that educators develop an awareness of how violent ideologies are developed and sustained, as well as an understanding of effective pedagogical approaches that might strengthen the resilience of learners in the face of the push and pull factors that drive violent extremism. The adoption of radical, violent extremist ideologies is a nonlinear, dynamic individualized process influenced by individual psychological vulnerability (seeking a need to belong, loss of dignity, being caught in a cycle of violence); the influence of social and group dynamics; push factors such as enduring experiences of direct, structural or cultural violence; and pull factors, such as recruiting messages.[54] Education for the prevention of violent extremism (PVE-E) provides a framework to address these dynamics through social-emotional learning, programming that addresses the push and pull factors, and, most important, creating inclusive learning spaces where students can safely explore and engage in dialogue on sensitive political and religious topics.[55] Fundamentally, it's also important to view violent

extremism in a broader context. Militarism, the socially accepted use of force by the State, legitimizes violence, thereby providing justification for violent extremism. "The effort to rein in and prevent violent extremism is therefore inseparable from the effort to challenge militarism more broadly" (p. 5).[56] Thus, the revised Recommendation should bring increased attention to the importance of education for disarmament and de-militarism, as well as support the inclusion of learning objectives of PVE-E and accompanying teacher training.

Regional Evidence

Below is a sampling, from all world regions, of evidence and analysis of the impacts of education in addressing various threats to peace and building lasting peace.[57]

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[57] The country groupings are based on the geographic regions defined under the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (known as M49) of the United Nations Statistics Division. See: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups