

**Workshop Title: Human Rights (e.g. LGBT rights) in cultural context**

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**Main issues, questions discussed:**

- How to ensure human rights if free speech is not given?
- How LGBTQ+ rights are placed in the ethno-cultural context
  - o The anti-LGBTQ+ feelings are used in opposition to colonialism or European power sometimes.
- Even if the right is there, for teachers it is a delicate issue to address in class.
- Universal rights vs. relativism → How to accept or oppose local led views which are against “Western” human rights standards? (If the views are in position at all)
  - o Often human rights and the call for basic rights and part of many of our project contexts.
  - o In Switzerland LGBTQ+ rights are not “universal” in social context, but maybe in a legal context.
  - o Discrimination exists in Switzerland, maybe to a lesser extend reg. LGBTQ+ but against Muslims for example. Against this background how can we blame other when it comes to discrimination?
  - o Observation shared: colleagues in Senegal argued that if you give LGBTQ+ rights, then everyone would turn gay.
- The topic LGBTQ+ has never been raised in EdM's project planning – Is it relevant to our partners at all?
- Is education the ice breaker for this topic?
  - o Mindfulness, empathy and diversity might be entry points and words to use in education in order to avoid counter reaction which LGBTQ+ or gay/lesbian could create.
  - o Part of the solution in education: Help children to learn to accept themselves and other in their full diversity. How can we accept different concepts of living?
  - o Classrooms need to become a safe space where children learn to love and respect themselves and others.
  - o Provide spaces for different realities of live, in order that children can learn to take other perspectives.
- Discrimination as a barrier in education
- How to internalise human rights in our daily live?

- We need to listen and understand what the slogan/ tag of a concept (such as HRBA) mean to people and put it in context of their feeling of oppression. E.g. look at the power dynamics which these concepts mean to these people – sometimes discriminatory attitudes are an expression of opposition to something else.
- We need to understand the LGBTQ+ question from a love perspective and not just talk about sexuality. In social live homophobia is an issue everywhere, in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc.
  - We don't need to forget the influence of religion and church à Research on anti-gender movement is often funded by fundamentalist churches.
  - Religious believes work on overturning local culture and lead to discrimination in a context where this discrimination didn't exist in this sense.
- How to keep the achievements
- Human rights are a western concept (individual vs. collective rights, property rights etc.) à This demands ongoing debate on human rights and its evolution.

**Conclusions:**

To mention only one main point: Schools and educators need to create save spaces where learners can learn to love and accept themselves and others and their lived realities.