

# GENEVA HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

- > **Date 18 – 19 June 2024**
- > **Venue IBE Room, Geneva**

## About the Geneva Human Rights Dialogues

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Since 2021, the Swiss Commission for UNESCO together with UN agencies, academia and NGOs organizes [human rights dialogues](#) in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication. The Dialogues provide platforms for frank and open discussions between leading thinkers and practitioners about challenges, trends, and strategies for strengthening international cooperation covering both substantive rights matters as well as the effectiveness of human rights mechanisms.

Participation adheres to the Chatham House rule for confidentiality and results in a public report with key insights and recommendations. The first three dialogues, which focused on freedom of expression, the right to science and cultural rights have helped frame new avenues for policy debate and multilateral action ([learn more here](#)).

## 4th thematic Dialogue – The Right to Education

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### Context

The right to education is a fundamental human right, pivotal for achieving personal and societal development. Despite national commitments and global support schemes, millions around the world still face barriers to accessing quality education due to systemic inequalities. These structural challenges are exacerbated by trends in areas such as privatization, the digital divide, and the prevalence of crisis (including climate change). As we strive towards inclusive and equitable quality education for all, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 4, addressing systemic inequalities complexities and reverting negative trends is crucial to advancing the right to education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This event aims to shed light on the right to education in the context of today's persistent and emerging challenges and on-going human practices, exploring innovative solutions to overcome inequalities and enhance effectiveness of the implementing of this essential right.

## Desired outcomes

Our first objective is to discuss and exchange on the **overall theme of inequalities in education**, specifically addressing emerging issues and trends in three critical areas;

1. **Privatization:** How emerging issues and new privatization practices impact inequalities
2. **Digitalization:** How practices and emerging issues in the field of digitalization impact on equality of opportunities
3. **Crisis situations:** How humanitarian situations such as climate displacement threaten the enjoyment of the right to education

The second objective is to take an in-depth look at the **effectiveness of human rights mechanisms and partnership efforts**.

By examining the effects of privatization, digital advancements, and crises on educational access and quality, we aim to understand emerging trends and formulate actionable recommendations. The outcomes of this dialogue can guide policymakers, educators, and other key stakeholders in reinforcing the educational rights of every learner. These discussions will also inform the work of the [UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education](#), as well as UNESCO's [Evolving Right to Education Initiative](#) which seeks to explore how the right to education could be further reinforced and expanded to meet evolving needs in support of the Transformation of Education Agenda and considering the forthcoming [Summit of the Future](#).

## Target audience

The event is intended for people with interest and expertise in the field of education and human rights.

## Format

**Before the event**, speakers will be asked to provide bullet-point inputs responding to a research questions concerning each topic and linked to the overall theme of inequalities and the right to education. These inputs will be shared with participants for their reflection and preparation ahead of the event.

**During the event**, there will be short 3-4 minute input presentations by panelists on their relevant topic (informed by the outlined research question) which will then be further unpacked and discussed with the wider group of participants. The discussion will also include guiding questions eventually leading to collective insights and possible recommendations for action. These will be synthesized in a summary document.

**After the event**, speakers and participants will be encouraged to disseminate the outcome document and engage in further dialogue with their respective networks.

## Draft Program

Time	Session
<b>Day 1: June 18<sup>th</sup></b>	
8.20	<i>Arrival &amp; Coffee</i>
9.00 – 9.05	<b>Welcome address</b> Nicolas Mathieu, Swiss Commission for UNESCO Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva
9.05 – 9.20	<b>Opening remarks</b> 1) Stefania Giannini, ADG ED UNESCO 2) Nada Al-Nashif, UN OHCHR (tbc) 3) Thomas Zeltner, CSU
9.20 – 9.40	<b>Keynote speeches</b> 1) Farida Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education 2) Svein Oesttveit, UNESCO, IBE
9.40 – 11.10	<b>1<sup>st</sup> segment: Privatization</b> 1) David Archer, ActionAid 2) Thibaut Lauwerier, UniGE 3) Ignasi Grau, OIDEL 4) Ashley Berner, John Hopkins Institute 5) Peter Colenso, Global School Forum 6) Mark Bray, University of Hong-Kong
11.10 – 11.30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11.30 – 12.50	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> segment: Digitalization</b> 1) Fanny Rotino, ITU (tbc) 2) Wayne Holmes, University College of London 3) Paul Olivier Dehay, hesit.ai 4) Janja Komljenovic, Lancaster University 5) Sobhi Tawil, UNESCO
12.50 – 14.10	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14.10 – 15.40	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> segment: Crisis situations</b> 1) Dean Brooks, INEE 2) Carolina Vergara, UNESCO, Geneva Hub on EIE 3) Moira Faul, NORRAG (tbc) 4) Jonghwi Park, UNU 5) Aiman Badri, UNESCO Sudan 6) Ilaria Paolazzi, GECPA
15.40 – 15.50	<i>Coffee Break</i>



15h50 –17.20	<b>4<sup>th</sup> segment: Mechanisms</b> 1) Rolla Moumne, UNESCO 2) Ann Skelton, Committee on the Right of the Child 3) Gina Pancorbo, Education International (tbc) 4) Delphine Dorsi, Right to Education Initiative 5) Jakob Schneider, OHCHR's HRTB
17.20 –17.30	<b>Conclusions and impressions Day 1</b>
<b>Day 2: June 19<sup>th</sup></b>	
8.20	<i>Arrival &amp; Coffee</i>
9.00 – 11.30	<b>Wrap-up</b> / Key messages and recommendations
11.30 –12.15	<b>Conclusion</b> (40 min) – Borhene Chakroun, UNESCO – Swiss Commission for UNESCO – Farida Shaheed, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education <b>Youth Rep</b> – Ajmal Ramyar – Diandra Ni Bhuachalla  <b>Closing remarks and next steps</b> (5 min)
12.15 –13.00	<i>Lunch</i>