GPERC

Global Peace Education Research Center

Table of Contents

Theory of Change

If you want the certainty of war—teach the ways of war. If you want peace—teach the ways of peace.

We long for the immense possibilities and benefits that a culture of peace will bring to our soul, spirit, society and the world. We know all too well what our destructive capabilities have to offer unimaginable human suffering including violence, oppression, inequality and denial of basic human rights. We are able to split the atom and fly to the moon but are unable to live in peace. Why?

The human predicament -
It is a given fact that we humans possess pro-social behaviours like compassion, empathy, kindness, helpfulness and actually solve most of our conflicts constructively rather than destructively. We also have in us the exact opposite of the above mentioned behaviours and thus possess immense potential to inflict pain and suffering on our fellow humans and the planet at large.

Pro-social behaviours are not all inborn traits and require skill and understanding that have to be taught and modeled. The same can be said for anti-social behavior. Each of us is born into a certain social background, swirl of forces and systems that makes us who we are, including our identities, values, beliefs and behaviours.

Because people everywhere are educated, that is, informed through (formal and informal) systems of information and education, we learn what to desire—and what to build— through them. We are formed by systems of education. Most of the education we receive shapes us into persons, communities, and assemblages that defend, justify, perpetrate, and promote what peace and conflict scholars call cultural and structural violence. We have learned to build systems of violence, and they show up throughout our ordinary days, when we (also) learn to see them.

We must build systems of peace to replace systems of violence. Systems of peace (like systems of violence) cannot be produced without corresponding systems of information and education. In a world of chronic and acute cultural and structural violence, even when it is subtle, sophisticated, and seductive—we need peace education. Peace education attempts to raise awareness of non-violent and constructive means of dealing with conflicts, and to promote the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values.

We believe that it is a basic human right to live dignified lives in peace. Therefore a basic human right is to learn peace education in order that we and future generations are skilled at peaceful problem solving, aware of our interconnectedness to each other and all forms of life, and conscious of our responsibility for the well being of all life. We must be critical and reflective in

thinking, in order to recognize systems that perpetuate repression, intolerance or hatred between people and in societies, and possess the capability to change these into cultures of peace.

Therefore peace education is the key to transforming our dominant 'culture of violence' into a 'culture of peace, by nurturing peaceful attitudes and skills, and by stimulating a change in the consciousness of children and adults. This idea is reflected in UNESCO's constitution: "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed".

To respond to this profound need, we must build the **Global Peace Education Research Center** that will offer an ecology of ways to educate the planet's people, children through adults, in the skills of peace and carry out multilayered initiatives as described further down in this document. So that peace, the most cross-cutting of all global topics, will be a basic and integral part of formal, non formal education and research.

What do we mean by peace education?

First of all, we must make clear what we mean when talking about peace?

By peace we do not merely mean what conflict and peace scholars call "negative peace," which is the mere cessation of direct lethal violence. We also mean what scholars call "positive peace," which is the presence of the conditions that prevent lethal violence from emerging on a mass scale. Positive peace includes cultural, political, economic, and other institutional forms of justice, opportunity, equality, freedom, and all forms of human security.

Peace education includes lifelong learning processes to achieve negative peace and build positive peace, through educating people to transform conflict from destructive modes of operation into constructive modes of operation, in response to cultural, structural, and direct violence. Peace education, therefore, takes place in personal, interpersonal, community, national, and international contexts. In order for peace to be resilient and sustainable, this comprehensive approach is necessary.

Peace education competences:

Peacebuilding Competency	Purpose	Attitude/ ethic/ disposition required	Skills applied	Knowledge required
Analysis	To identify the root causes of violence and of a particular context.	Openness; inquisitiveness, curiosity; rigor.	Inquiry and questioning; research.	Political, social, and cultural context and history.
Responsiveness	To respond to conflict with thoughtful and strategic actions.	Responsibility and duty to self and others; care.	Method of nonviolent intervention; perspective taking.	Human rights and human dignity.
Prevention	To build new foundations for relationships so as to prevent future violent conflict.	Wholeness; community and relationship integrity.	Conflict resolution/transformation and mediation.	Rules and norms of justice, equity.
Envisioning	To vision a value informed preferred future that can be pursued and worked toward.	Creativity; hope; willingness to suspend expectations of probable future outcomes.	Reflection and recollection; imagination.	Awareness/inventory of preferred values and ethics.
Transformation	To transform violent attitudes and worldviews.	Empathy; understanding.	Peace pedagogy	Human psychology, sociology, culture and history.

About The Global Peace Education Research Center

GPERC's goal is to become the world's largest open peace education research platform, home, hub and network for peace education. A center of excellence in knowledge, innovation and research, a global voice for peace education and a source of advice and support for countries. The network will include peace education organizations, schools, educators, scholars and other institutions wanting to contribute to and benefit from the vast body of information to be collected and studied.

GPERC is distinct in that it will be the first global center of its kind devoted to the research of peace education - acting as a global hub and forming synergies, innovating, sharing information and enhancing the work of all partners involved. **GPERC** will also embrace Freirean praxis (critical reflection plus critical action) with innovative programs and activities in schools and communities worldwide.

Mission:
Advance and mainstream peace education by supporting institutions and partners to engage, collaborate and innovate in research, education, service, and advocacy.

Vision:
All people sharing a peaceful, inclusive, vibrant and united world where equality, diversity, justice, human security, nonviolence and truth are pursued and upheld.

Program Types

GPERC will develop and implement the following programs

Clearinghouse of Resources

● **Collection and Database Development**

The biggest online database of peace education curricula and other peace education related data and recommended resources (including publicly accessible resources from other organizations) updated regularly. Curricula will be categorized according to themes, languages, age groups, etc.

The database will be used by schools and organizations worldwide and will be freely accessible to all. So that an ever-growing number of educators can use the resources we collect and innovate, to build systems of peace, and peace-informed students and citizens.

Teacher Training and Assessment

Research, enhance, develop and evaluate teacher training methods in collaboration with teacher training schools to be implemented in the teacher training schools themselves or to be taught by **GPERC** by different means such as webinars, in-person symposia, seminars and workshops.

Research and Evaluation

● **Provide evaluation and evidence of the effectiveness of peace education**

Continually research, evaluate, improve and innovate the field of peace education. Including peace education curriculum, programs, case studies, best practices and lessons learned.

Findings will be used for program improvement, creating effective peace education models, future research, scholarly debate, and hard data to be used in our advocacy campaigns to policy makers. Thus helping in our planned advocacy and campaign efforts to mainstream peace education in educational systems worldwide.

● **Promote the field of peace education research**

Peace education research is relatively in its infancy and there is great need to expand and develop research in the field and to bring peace education to the forefront of academia and human existence.

● **Global Peace Education Index (GPEI)**

In a yearly report countries and societies (Institutions, schools and organizations) will be ranked based on implementation of peace education in school systems. The metrics for the ranking will be developed in consultation with an international panel of peace education experts and in cooperation with the Global Peace Index. Data on the status and trends of peace education will also be displayed, including statistical analysis that will be applied to GPEI data to show the relationship between peace education and people's well being, levels of violence, the economy, environment, government, etc…

GPEI reports will be transparent and widely dispersed amongst the public and relevant institutions. Each country will be held accountable for their current status of peace education and whether they have taken and are taking steps to improve their ranking.

- ● **Publications**

Publish cutting edge articles, reports, books and publications based on findings from research on peace education curriculum, programs, case studies, best practices and lessons learned.

Curriculum and Program Development

- ● **Development**

When needed and/or requested peace education curricula will be developed according to specific local, cultural and regional needs.

- ● **PeacEd Gateway**

Create, monitor and continually develop the PeacEd Gateway - a globally connected web portal of K-16 educational systems worldwide provide schools and humanity at large with up to date, evaluated and effective peace education programs. The PeacEd Gateway will embody the process of acquiring the values, knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment. This innovative web platform will:

1. Enable teachers and students around the world to access lesson plans based upon their needs.
2. Develop the profound connection of youth worldwide.
3. Empower students to collaborate and act as "solutionaries" on projects with peers in their communities and around the world. Unleashing the collective genius of a global community of schools.

- ● **Classroom Connect**

Create, monitor and continually develop Classroom Connect - a program that facilitates the meaningful connection of K-16 students and teachers from around the world to promote peace and understanding through video conference and other digital means. When possible exchange programs for teachers and students will be carried out.

Classrooms must be able to connect around the globe so that children and youth can learn from one another across boundaries defined by suspicion, fear, and ignorance. Open up gateways of meaningful communication between students worldwide as a basic part of education.

Advocacy and Campaigning

- ● **Public relations and communication**

Increase knowledge, awareness and public understanding of peace education.
Educate governments on the many benefits of peace education and peace and its multiplier effects in society.

- ## **Global Campaign**

Launch a global campaign mobilizing college campuses, youth movements and empowering the people of the world to sign the "People's Declaration for Mainstreaming Peace Education" calling upon governments worldwide to implement the 3 points of:

1. Mainstreaming peace education in K- 16 educational systems worldwide. And constitute this in policies.
2. Implementing peace education as part of teacher training.
3. Empowering the students of the world to form meaningful connections with each other as an integral part of education.

- ## **Seminal Conference and Awards**

Hold a seminal conference called "Mainstreaming Peace Education - Bringing Peace to the Forefront of Human Existence".

Peace education experts, ministers of education, government officials, NGO's, nobel peace prize laureates and other dignitaries will convene to an event that will have a global impact, commitment and signing of a declaration for the first time in history to mutually work for and establish the worldwide mainstreaming of peace education and classroom connection.

The conference would then be continued to be held once a year in different regions allowing for participation by local leaders and featuring regional efforts. Follow up conferences will be held in between as needed.

Organizing a global peacebuilders competition and awarding young peacebuilders awards to the youth at the seminal conference.

Networking and Connecting

- **Network**

Form a community of synergy and best practice amongst peace studies programs, researchers, students, practitioners, institutes, academic programs, schools, and organizations who will all contribute, collaborate and benefit from the vast body of information collected. Multidisciplinary and synergistic inclusion of different disciplines\areas - for example statistics, policy, IT, computer science, technology, communications, social studies, arts, ecology and other sciences etc… will all be utilized for the improvement of the field.

- **Host**

Host conferences, classes, workshops, seminars and online conferences for a variety of peace education subjects. Also give workshops at other conferences and venues.

Novelty

The missing "peace"

Whether between states or internal strife armed conflicts are complex situations emerging out of an array of conditions (such as political, historical, economic, and psychological) and cannot usually be explained by reference to single causes.

Throughout history war and violence comes in waves, but never fades away entirely. And we spend far more time and resources responding to crises rather than preventing them. A whole new approach to conflict prevention is necessary. One that focuses on the root causes.

We believe there is a better way to reduce armed conflict that goes beyond the usual tools for preventing imminent conflicts such as economic sanctions, preventive diplomacy, and in rare cases preventive deployments of military force. Beyond economic development, global reductions in poverty, and transnational non-proliferation regimes around nuclear and chemical weapons. These have been shown at times to be even very successful but the scourge of armed conflict still inflicts and looms over us.

We believe that the foundation of the world is peace and the foundation of peace is peace education. Peace education, with its many facets and themes, empowers people and societies to reflect and understand the root causes of conflict and offers an abundance of ways, tailored to local contexts, to make an effective, sustained contribution to creating the conditions for lasting peace.

Considering that there are multiple organizations that work on this topic, which are mostly not connected to each other, **GPERC** provides and facilitates a global multidisciplinary, multi sector platform for instilling peace education in an ecology of ways to tackle the root causes of conflict. It is the missing piece/peace in the puzzle of conflict prevention because it gathers and connects different institutions and people that promote peace education.

It's a small world after all

Preventing and reducing armed conflict and promoting peaceful cultures through advancing and mainstreaming peace education is a collective global responsibility. In honor of this mission **GPERC** is the first multidisciplinary center of its kind bringing together a global community of institutions and partners to engage, collaborate and innovate in research, education, service, and advocacy.

GPERC provides collaborative synergies across disciplines and multi sector stakeholders including:

- Academic institutions
- Educators
- Students
- Peace and Conflict Resolution practitioners and professionals (such as Mediators, Conflict Resolution Experts, Peacebuilding Professionals etc...)
- Research institutes and research community
- Data collectors
- Ministries of Education
- Data and statistics forums and experts
- Policy makers and government officials
- Civil society organizations, and NGO'S
- Legislators\Lobbyers
- Private business
- Funders

GPERC's programs open up opportunities for research institutes and university departments worldwide including Education, Peace and Conflict Studies, Computer Science and Informatics, Social Sciences (Anthropology, Political Science, Languages and Cultures, Philosophy, Psychology, and History), Arts, Humanities, International Development, Economics, Sciences, Law, Engineering, Medicine and Schools of Management.

Potential benefits include:

Benefits to the respective disciplines:
- Facilitate research with larger and more diverse populations of subjects, which will increase the number of significant findings from scholarly efforts.
- Enhance the validity of research, as more generalizable knowledge is produced.
- Increase the amount of high-quality, publishable research, which will enhance the profile of institutions.
- Enhance the ability to compete for large grants.
- Simplifying the process for finding internal and external research funding.
- Information sharing and synergies open up access to new methods, breadth of knowledge and approaches.

Benefits to individual researchers:
- Teacher scholars interested in conducting original research will gain access to students, classes, and campuses beyond their own.
- These resources will enhance publication and grant opportunities, which will help individual scholars gain respect and visibility for their research.
- Teacher scholars can participate in on-going projects in order to gain access to data about their own and other campuses, universities and students.
- Participation can help researchers to meet teaching, research and service requirements for tenure and promotion.
- Access to a supportive network for sharing ideas and knowledge.
- More opportunities and feasibility to participate in cutting edge research.

Offers students greater value:
- Building knowledge, broadening perspectives - A unique opportunity for students to engage with a global community. And interact with faculty and other students from within their own and other disciplines to exchange knowledge, experiences, and ideas.
- Students are empowered with a much broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with peace education, and better prepared to take a leadership role in addressing them.
- Fellowships - Doctoral students accepted into **GPERC** are eligible to apply for graduate fellowship support.
- Conference Funds - Doctoral students are eligible to receive coverage for expenses related to attending conferences, workshops, or other appropriate professional activities during their time at **GPERC**.

Potential Impact

Cultural Change

Implementing **GPERC**'s programs on a global scale through effective cross sector collaborations and sustained efforts, will eventually lead to a groundswell and shift in humanity's awareness of our interconnectedness, interdependence, and ability to respect our diversity and solve conflicts, which are a natural part of life, in peaceful ways. Humanity will naturally move to a world based on cultures of peace.

People will recognize that it is their natural birthright to live in peace, as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges. A world where every child, youth and adult can learn and work for peace. A world where we can encourage a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhance the confidence of everyone as individual agents of peace, and inform people of the consequences of war and social injustice, and of the value of peaceful and just social structures and work to uphold and develop such social structures, and encourage everyone to love the world and care for others.

This will impact our and future generations lives in profound ways, including the many benefits and multiplier effects of peace - from unimaginable human suffering to unimaginable human flourishing in all aspects of society.

Making Violence and Armed Conflict Obsolete

The significant potential of peace education in reducing armed conflict in the short to midterm and making it obsolete in the long term do to:
- Raising and building leaders who value and have the skills to build peaceful multilateral relationships
- Building the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help people either to prevent the occurrence of conflict, resolve conflicts peacefully, or build social conditions conducive to peace.
- Forming citizens that critically analyze and reject proposals and decisions made by their leaders that could trigger violent conflict.
- Building nonviolence through values such as respect for human rights, freedom and social trust
- Building social justice through principles of equality, responsibility, and solidarity.

One Big Diverse Family

Connecting schools around the world through the Peace Ed Gateway and Classroom Connect will bring about a society that is meaningfully connected, aware of the fact that we are first and foremost human beings and appreciative of our different cultures. The world wide web that has revolutionized the way we communicate will be used as a vehicle of peace to transcend borders of fear and distrust. Youth across the world will be empowered to collaborate to take on challenges. This will ensure the prominence of pro social values as the foundation of world order. And people will not go to war against other people that they have been in connection with and are humanized.