

YOUTH ETHICS EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Dear friend:

Some young people from different regional GNRC networks have been nominated to represent the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) with the objective of bringing about the Ethics Education Initiative to peers in our region.

Two of us met in Geneva in January 2006 and worked on ideas to facilitate youth involvement in the initiative and to support the development of concrete activities by young people.

This is a report and a guideline with information about youth involvement, how to initiate a youth group in your region, how to carry out your first meeting and some ideas of projects already organized by some youngsters.

We believe that young people and children can participate in the promotion of ethics education by leading initiatives that can impact their societies. Those initiatives bring actions to our global strategies and make the mission and vision a reality.



"We believe that ethics education will enhance children's innate ability to make positive contributions to the well being of their peers, families, and communities, and that this in turn will help the entire human family to thrive in an environment of greater justice, peace, compassion, hope and dignity."

- [Content](#)
- [How to initiate a team to work on the Ethical Education Initiative? For Young Leaders](#)
- [How to carry out your first Youth Meeting](#)
- [How to prepare an Action Plan](#)
- [Example Activities](#)
- [Case Studies](#)
- [How to initiate a team to work on the ethics education Initiative? For Coordinators](#)
- [Outputs Youth Meeting. January 2006](#)



HOW TO CARRY OUT YOUR FIRST YOUTH MEETING

Here you will find a proposed outline to carry out the first meeting with your Youth Team.

It will help you to get started and to create ownership of the Initiative among the participants.

Objectives of the Meeting:

- Explain and clarify what the ethics education initiative is about.
- Get clear understanding of our role as ambassadors of this Initiative.
- Come up with a concrete action plan.
- Get started as a Youth Team.



Proposed Agenda

Materials:

50 pieces of quarter colored cardboards, 20 flipcharts, 5 markers, 4 scissors, newspapers and magazines.

One day Meeting

10:00 – 10:30. **Getting to know each other**

Introduction of the participants: Name, a little bit of their families, their countries, what they like to do, how they got involved with the GNRC.

10:30 – 11:00. Objectives of the meeting. Why are we here? Expectations from the participants.

11:00 – 12:15. **Core Values Activity**

There will be 4 flipcharts on the wall with the name of the 4 values: Respect, Empathy, Reconciliation and Responsibility (1 value in each flipchart). Each participant should describe what they understand by each of them through: words, pictures, newspapers headlines, etc. (15 min).

Then the facilitator will ask what those “words and pictures” mean to them and will explain **what ethics education is** and how those **values are related to ethics education**. After this discussion the facilitator will ask the participants: **What do they mean for children and young people?**

Note: This activity will help them to understand what the Ethics Education Initiative is, to clarify concepts about values, ethics, morality and their inter relation.



12:30 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30. The Values and our Societies

In this session participants will discuss and visualize how those values are applied or not applied in their societies by giving concrete examples.

There will be 2 flipcharts on the wall, one with: **THEY ARE APPLIED AND THEY ARE NOT APPLIED.** Through a discussion about **what happen in their own societies** participants will come up with specific cases where values are applied or not and all the ideas will be posted on the flipcharts.

The discussion should be complemented by some questions as:

- ☺ Why do you think people do not apply those values?
- ☺ What does it make people apply those values?

Answers should be written down in colored cardboards (1/4) and put them in a kind of mind map on the wall, so they can see their answers and also connections: **Problems and Solutions.**

15:30 – 16:00. Break

16:00 - 16:30. How can we help other young people to apply those values?

In this part the facilitator will ask participants to **share their own experiences working with values.** This is the time to share experiences working in other groups, in school and also about the Toolkit on Interfaith Learning and Ethics Education.

16:30 – 17:15. Ask the participants to think how we can help other young people to apply those values in different contexts:

- School
- Neighborhood
- Leadership groups they belong to.
- House

Note: This is a brainstorming; let participants to tell as much ideas as they have. Collect all the ideas in flipcharts or use cardboards.

At the end we will have a series of activities to be carried out. Once we have finished they will **select the 2 most suitable ones.** The ones they can lead as Youth Team.



17:15 - 18:00. How can we make those activities happen?

After choosing the 2 most suitable ideas to start implementing, the team will come up with specific action plans to carry them out.

HOW TO PREPARE AN ACTION PLAN

Answer the following questions once you have selected the activity you will carry out:

ACTION PLAN

- **What.** Clear description of your activity.
- **Who.** Focus group. To whom the activity is focused on.
- **How many.** Number of participants.
- **Who.** Who will be responsible to carry it out? Who else do you need to be able to organize it?
- **Where.** Where exactly will it happen?
- **When.** When will it happen?
- **What** resources do you need?
- **How.** How will it happen? Explanation of the activity.
- **How should we start?** Next steps.

Examples of possible activities:

- Discussion clubs with young people about the 4 values.
- Role plays about a topic related to the values.
- Volunteer activities to help elder people.
- Create an information board at schools with pictures, case studies, messages about ethics.
- Create a newspaper in schools to transmit ethical values to other young people and children

CASE STUDIES

The African and Middle East Region have already started some activities with young people.

If you want to read more about them, click on the following links:

[Peace Clubs](#)
[Fishers Program](#)



In January 2006, Nour Ammari and Emanuel Mathias from Jordan and Tanzania, respectively, met in Geneva to come up with action plans to activate the youth involvement in their regions. [Click here to see the outputs of the meeting.](#)

How to initiate a group to work on the Ethics Education Initiative? For Coordinators

❖ *Pre-selection of young leaders*

If you do not have yet a group of young or children you can use some of the following ideas:

1. During the development of workshops, conferences or courses in your region, present the idea of the creation of a youth/children group to represent the GNRC among other young and children. During the meeting appoint a group of young and children (three is a good number), generally those who have showed interest and leadership, to start the Initiative Group.
2. If you know one or two young people or children who haven been attending your meetings and have showed interest and leadership, empower them to commence the Initiative Group.

❖ *Empowerment of young leaders*

Once the young leaders are already selected, make sure they:

1. Know what the Ethics Education Initiative is (concepts, values definition, etc).
2. Understand the objectives, relevance and scope of the Initiative.
3. Understand their role and responsibilities as leaders of the Initiative.
4. Have the necessary tools and resources to start the initiative (access to other young and children, meeting rooms, materials, etc).
5. Are trained to train other young people and children.
6. Are motivated and confident about their role.

How to initiate a team to work on the Ethics Education Initiative? For Young Leaders

❖ *Selection of your Youth Team*

If you do not have yet a team of other young or children you can use some of the following ideas:

1. Invite other young people from your school, your neighborhood or those who have participated in GNRC workshops in your city. (You can start with a group of 10 people.)
2. Ask your GNRC coordinator to help you with the names of some organizations working with young people where you can find interested participants.

Note: Make sure those participants are from different faiths.

❖ *Initiation of your Activities*

Once you have already your team, make sure they:

1. Know what the objective of the team is.
2. Are willing to spend some hours during the week to meet.
3. Understand their role and responsibilities as members of the Team.
4. Are willing to spend one day to plan your activities.
5. Are motivated and confident about their role and team.

OUTPUTS YOUTH MEETING JANUARY 2006

During the youth meeting in January, Nour Ammari and Emanuel Mathias together with Masue Suzuki and Maria Lucia Uribe, facilitators from the Arigatou Foundation, worked on the development of different ideas to bring ethics education to their respective regions.

They followed the agenda proposed in this Manual. The following are the outputs of the meeting.

1. Values Activity

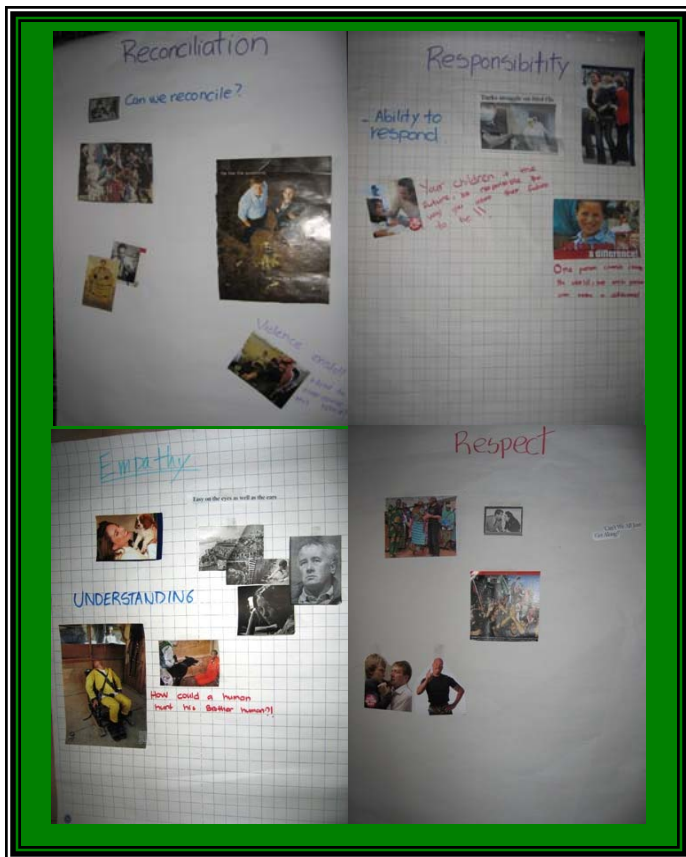
We went through the understanding of four values: reconciliation, empathy, respect and responsibility.

Nour and Emanuel gave their ideas about those through photos and headlines from magazines and newspapers. It was followed by a discussion on how they understand each of these values and what those values mean.

Note: The flipcharts on the left show the participant's ideas and comments.

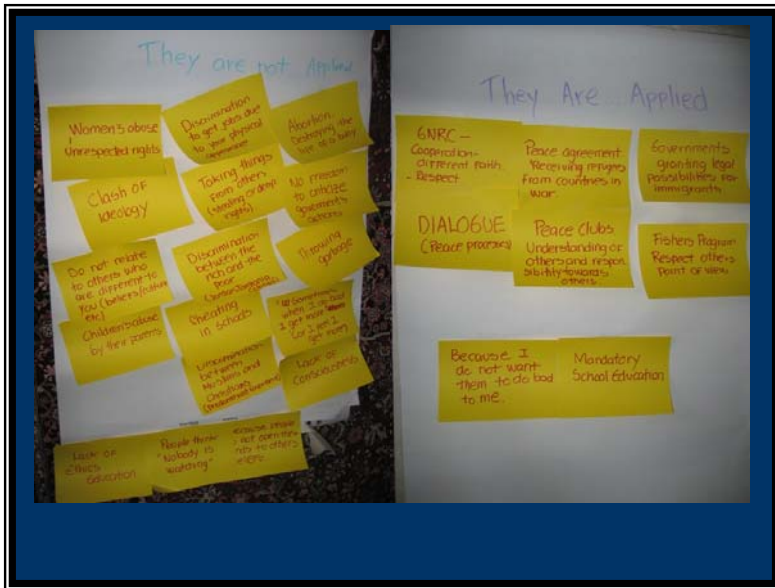
Some of the ideas highlighted by Nour and Emanuel were:

- How a human can hurt his/her brother?
- Violence exists, how can we overcome it by reconciling our points of view?
- Be responsible for the way you want children's future to be.
- Can't we all just get along?



2. The Values and Society

In this part Nour and Emanuel visualized how those values are applied or not applied in their own societies. Some of their ideas are:



Examples of application of those values:

1. GNRC Network. Cooperation among people of different faith.
2. Peace Agreements. Receiving refugees from countries in war.
3. Peace Clubs. Understanding of others and responsibility towards others.
4. Governments granting legal possibilities for immigrants
5. Fishers Program in Jordan. Respect for others point of view.

Examples of no application of those values:

1. Women's abuse. Not respect for their rights.
2. Discrimination to get jobs due to physical appearance.
3. Abortion.
4. Class of ideology
5. Stealing things or denying rights.
6. Discrimination between rich and the poor.
7. Throwing garbage
8. Cheating in schools.
9. No freedom to criticize government's actions.

Why are those values applied?

- I do not want others to do bad to me.
- Because they are thought in School.

Why are those values not applied?

- Lack of ethics education
- People think "nobody is watching me"
- Because people do not open their minds to others' beliefs.
- "Sometimes when I do bad I feel I get more than if I do good"

3. How can we help other young people to apply those values?

Nour and Emanuel sat together and came up with the following ideas to implement in their regions. You can also use some of their ideas in your city.

1. Helping our neighbors to solve their problems and learning from them.
2. Initiating Peace Clubs in schools.
3. Organizing peace competitions among schools.
4. Program exchange between Fishers and Peace Club members.
5. Holding seminars and lectures to explain what Ethics Education is.
6. Wide spreading the Peace net with youth in Tanzania.
7. Children from all over the world could reach what is going on with the GNRC by different media: Articles, newsletters, journals, TV and radio.
8. Visiting NGOs, Institutions, Children's homes and handicapped people.
9. Introducing ethics education in the School's syllabus.
10. Parents must learn how to behave with their children, since parents are examples for them.

For further information and questions to Nour and Emanuel, please contact:

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***THANKS NOUR AND EMANUEL FOR VALUABLE INPUT AND FOR SHARING
WITH US YOUR EXPERIENCES.***