From peace education to culture of peace: context and issues

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1. *Peace education*

Peace education is considered by some authors both a philosophy and a process that includes different abilities and an adequate and respectful behavior of people's rights. The scholars recognize also that the first educator who has reflected on peace education was Maria Montessori in her book "Education for a New World", where she wrote: "Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; establishing peace is the work of education"[1]. Maria Montessori urged the teachers to abandon all authoritarian educative form, replacing these by a dynamic curriculum from which they could choose what to study. She was seeing that peace depend on an education that would free children's spirit, promote love to others and remove the climate of compulsory restriction[2].

Peace education considers the necessity to define peace values. Surely respecting the dignity of human being the fundamental value on which many other are built[3]. The essential importance of peace entails the postulate that children, adolescents, and also adults, must learn to appreciate peace as one of the fundamental values in their own lives and in humankind's development[4].

The meaning of peace education, however, is different in relation to the different cultural groups, the complexity of local situations, and the social and political context of the involved populations . Some consider peace education as a necessary change of people's mentality. Example of this is the specific reference that UNESCO made, by saying "*Building Peace in the minds of men and women*". This change of mentality should first lead to understand and act for the respect and wellbeing of people and in the spirit of tolerance.

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[1] M. Montessori, *Education for a New World,* Milano Garzanti, 1991, p. 35; *Education and Peace,* Milano, Garzanti, 1970. Maria Montessori for the International Bureau of Education in Geneva in 1932, translated and published by the bureau that year as a booklet of the same name.

[2] I. Harris, *Conceptual Underpinnings of Peace Education*, in G. Salomon, B. Nevo (cured), *Peace Education. The Concept, Principles, and Practices Around the World,* London, LEA, 2002

[3] R. Aspeslagn, *Pluralism and Education*, in H. Lofgren, *Peace Education and Human Development,* Malmo, Graphic System, 1995.

[4] *Ibidem.*

Tolerance implies willingness to tolerate a position, idea or behavior, which are expressed by a person but considered wrong by his fellow. Nevertheless, the other acknowledges its existence, respecting the right and freedom of the other person to express them and to conduct his life according to those ideas and beliefs. The tolerant may react in a "negative" – passive way, namely ignore or overlook views, which he objects to. He might also react in a "positive" – active manner by supporting and defending the right of another person to express ideas, which he might consider wrong politically, morally or in the social sphere[5]. As UNESCO indicates, tolerance is integral and essential to the realization of human rights and the achievement of peace. In its most simple and fundamental form, tolerance is according others the rights to have their persons and identities respected[6].

Another interpretation considers peace education as a progressive development of specific competencies that create the predisposition to nonviolent conflict management and resolution [7]. In this case, we can consider the need of interacting with others, evaluating and acting by behaviors that tend to accessibility, dialogue and encounter, so that problems can be solved without violence.

In contexts of strong social inequality, where the processes of autonomy and research for independency of local social conditions still generate political transformations, the biggest investment is oriented towards problematic, related to human rights' respect . In these contexts, peace education does not pertain to the need of dialogue, encounter, and prospective research of shared conflict resolution, but to educate to the identification, acknowledgement and guarantee of rights. This process is strictly linked with the development of the education system, of its curricula, and the social opportunities that people identify in society.

For those countries living in certain economic standard condition, even in presence of part of the population, who lives in poverty and with different political models of democracy, and although with different characteristics, peace education is generally linked, on one side, to peace movements, and to local and global social issues, on the other. In the first case, it is possible to consider the strong presence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), involved with the support of the human and economic development, in at risk contexts of internal warlike conflict, civil struggles, and, externally, of conflict involvement with belligerent countries. Within this kind of interventions, the reflection about peace education is mostly towards providing knowledge and tools for human resource management and the use of technologies in socially deprived areas [8].

Countries in a more advantaged economic condition pose attention to

[5] Y. Iram, *Culture of Peace: Definition, Scope and Application*, in Y. Iram, H. Waharman, Z. Gross, *Educating toward a culture of peace,* Michigan, IAP, 2006.
[6] UNESCO, *Tolerance: the threshold of Peace,* Paris, UNESCO, 1994.
[7] M. Sinclar, *Learning to Live Together. Building Skills, Values and Attitudes for the Twenty-two Century*, Geneva, International Bureau of Education, 2004.
[8] Different examples of these kinds of interventions are presented in the second part of the book.

peace education in relation to environmental and ecological issues, and to the debate about sustainable development and commitment to disbarment, through an attempted campaign to inform about collective responsibilities to development and conservation of this industry and the costs that it requires, as well as the research for most sophisticated "neutral and cold" weapons and its production. In societies, where economic wellbeing is more prevailing, the topic of peace education is directly linked to the need of peaceful coexistence between different cultures, ethnicities and religions, to activate, especially through dialogue e reciprocal knowing. This entails, as well, the attention towards topics such as racism, anti-Semitism, and social discrimination. This opens to internal debates about the respect of diversity and the welcome of people coming from stories, experiences, and different cultural, formative, and social backgrounds. All of this refers in the specific to the intercultural aspects, that imply the capacity of knowing how to welcome in the name of the respect of diversity, the interest of comparison, as well as, the respect of social norms, in the places and environments of new dwelling, in order to guarantee pacific coexistence, in the growth and cultural osmosis.

In line with these aspects, UNESCO[9], the most important international governmental organization involved with these thematic, affirms that its goal is:

> to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science and culture, in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights, and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations[10].

UNESCO defines, in short, peace education as "a set of valued, attitudes, models of behaviors and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their roots causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations" [11]. In particular it is considered that in order for this culture to take form and became true in different contexts, we need to guarantee different levels of integrated intervention, that support action, in the implementation and in the sustainability of the development in question.

In this sphere, peace and security, in the sense of the guarantee of human security in terms of the defense of life as well as health, environment wellbeing and fundamental needs of each individual, can be realized with a reciprocal commitment among nations, as well as of each person. Central to all of this is the development of culture and knowledge of all the people

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[9] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization www.unesco.org.

[10] www.unesco.org Art.1 I of the Constitutive Act of UNESCO. In the article in question it is later asserted that war is made possible by the negation of the democratic principles of dignity, equality, and reciprocal respect.

[11] http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm.

on the planet. Education becomes a strategy, a medium, a fundamental and necessary social engagement, so that, we can make way for peace and study methods and tools that would allow this to happen, in the respect of differences and social justice.

All efforts to establish and maintain peace are dependent on people's acknowledgement of human dignity which obliges educators to awaken respect for each individual in his or her inalienable personality regardless age, gender ethnicity, nationality, social status, educational standard and religion. Consequently, any violation of his or her personal intactness is in fundamental contradiction to the basic human values[12].

Galtung considers that the peace must thought and taught peacefully. The educators and teachers use, often the violence in the classroom. The violence can be in the relationship or in other implicit forms that the pupils feel, but that they cannot counter. Therefore he "has argued that peace education itself must use methods and techniques that model peace including allowing students to participate fully in running the class, affirming differences and skills that students bring to peace education, and engaging in open ended dialogue, about the problems of war and peace"[13]

This claim, which surely opens up to many other reflections, one of them being that – when speaking of peace – we do not draw attention to war, has been introduced in this space, to better understand the passage from peace education to culture of peace [14].

2. *Culture of Peace*

The concept of culture of peace was formulated only in 1989 [15], in view of the necessity of building up a new vision of peace, through the development of a new culture, specifically oriented to and based upon the universal values of respect for life, freedom, justice, and solidarity.

It is defined as consisting "of values, attitudes and behaviors that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavor to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to

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[12] W. Mitter, *Education for peace and Tolerance between Universalism and Cultural Pluralism: a Global Need*, in H. Lofgren, "Peace Education and Human Development", op.cit.

[13] I. Harris, M. L. Morrison, *Peace education,* North Caroline, Mc. Farland Company, 2003, p. 52.

[14] 53/243 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, 6 October 1999, http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm.

[15] Two event of end of 1989 need to be remembered as corollary of this new interest for a new world vision: the fall of the Berlin wall on November 9th and the end of the Cold War, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child on November 20th of the same year. In spite of the terrible bellicose events of the '90s such as the one on the Balkans, everything must also be seen in the precise prospective of change that was being prepared for the approach of the new millennium.

solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society"[16]. Therefore peace education fosters the culture of peace and, for UNESCO it was the heart of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

Furthermore, the culture of peace also promotes tolerance and endeavors to prevent conflicts, facing the generating causes and individualizing possible solutions, where everyone is a main character, where everyone is on the same level for the discussion and legitimacy , and where communication is supported and inspired by dialogue, negotiation, and meditation. Only through the guarantee of the fulfillment of the forms of social participation, through the different means, it is possible to guarantee the development of democracy and active citizenship, responsible of the individual and collective wellbeing. From this, it is possible to understand how the culture of peace concept includes, in itself, the concept of peace education. In matter of fact, peace education requests the promotion of a culture of peace based on the value of the United Nations Charter, interested in guaranteeing conditions of pacific relations between nations, and on the respect of human rights, democracy and tolerance, the development of peace education in its different forms, gender equality, and violence and conflict prevention at different level (national-civil and international).

As mentioned in the document, the culture of peace can be supported by a stronger educational commitment that is activated in first place through the revision of scholastic curricula, the promotion of values of quality, attitudes and behaviors appropriate and coherent with the development of the culture of peace's actions. This needs to include the pacific resolution of conflicts, dialogue, the building of a participative consent and non –violence in social actions. All of this is strictly linked to the promotion of sustainable economic and social development, reducing poverty and social inequality and fostering the conditions for security, guaranteed both for people's life and the recognition of their different longing and needs. In particular, here the reference is to the necessity of intervening with specific means towards groups with special needs.

Another specific element of the culture of peace is the promotion of the respect for human right, because where war and violence rule, each and every human right is denied. There is nothing that can justify war, not even the one proclaimed in defense of people's rights. Therefore, it needs to be clear that at the base of every culture of peace worth if its name, one can find the principle of equality, parity of rights and social participation among men and women, even towards of the one considered as "the enemy". Until when the culture of supremacy of men over women will continue to dominate, we won't be able to speak of culture of peace. All of this is integrant part of the attention to encourage the democratic participation of everyone, towards the achieve-

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[16] UNESCO, A/RES/53/243 www.unesco.org.

ment and maintenance of peace and social and environmental security [17]. The commitment for the creation of democracies, more and more transparent and capable of answering, with adequate means to social and economic lack of balance made by several financial crisis waves, needs the individualization of adequate tools to understand the superior powers, generated by the noxious part of globalization, beyond appearances and mass media superficialities.

The culture of peace promotes, as well, actions of understanding, tolerance and solidarity. Only by learning from differences and within differences, it is possible to build the necessary tool for the development of dialogue and active participation. These themes, in particular the one of tolerance, through the course of historical experiences have had connotations nonspecifically positive. A broader understanding of this aspect is given by the consideration of tolerance as the will of allowing the existence of ideas and positions that diverge from one's own and the ones of the group of reference. For UNESCO, this is the way to initiate the process of acknowledgement of the person, in order to guarantee their respect and life. However, tolerance, as mentioned above, can assume a passive form, when it is carried out an action in which the other is ignored and not involved, or heard, but distanced and marginalized; or positive, that expresses itself in an active form through the acts of supporting, endorsing and defending the right of other people to express ideas of peace and democracy [18]. Tolerance is a concept that interests not only the sphere of human attitudes and behaviors, but the politics and the strategies of social intervention. Beyond its origin in the history of religious clashes of the 17th century, today, tolerance can be considered an important instrument for the renewal and the launch of pluralistic societies, this because it fosters forms of opening, exchange and reciprocal listening, on top of the research of the aspects that human diversities can have in common.

3. *The development of Culture of Peace*

For the development of culture of peace participative communication and free information and knowledge flux are necessary. This poses the question on how to use informative sources with different perceptions of the issues and analysis prospective, and in which way to create information tools such as news, radios and TVs that will make space for different perspectives, involv-

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[17] The subject of security has been analyzed in the international debate through the specific focus of the Human Security, considered the security guaranteed to each human being, groups, and broader communities. This refers to the guarantee of life and development of the person, which satisfies one's own needs in the context where one lives as well as on the whole planet. Human Security issues goes from the guarantee of education for everyone to the access to first necessity resources such as water and food. It is possible to talk about Human Security when the three dynamics, social, economic and environmental, are integrated within the respect of human rights preservation.

[18] Y. Iram, *Educating toward a culture of peace, Information*, USA, Age Publishing, 2006.

ing as well positions that find themselves "enemies" in the conflict. Itinerar-ies like these, that bring into play the reciprocity and the acceptance of the mindset of the Other, become concrete experiences for the development of the culture of living together [19].

Finally, for the promotion of peace and international security, it is necessary to make public and publicize each and every social and cultural commitment oriented to nourish the idea that human society does not depend on weapon production produced by society, but on the capacity that society has to grow at the social and cultural level. This must lead to increase every effort and com-mitment for the negotiation of pacific agreements, the elimination of weapon-trafficking and the creation of humanitarian actions intra and post conflict [20].

A special attention needs to be reserved to the necessity of intervening in those contexts, where there is a high involvement of children and young people in armed conflict. The annual Education For All [21](EFA) reports, ori-ented to the identification of educational needs, the achieved interventions and the generated progress in the sphere of the education and the wellbeing of the most disadvantaged communities, show the difficulties encountered by millions of people, adult and children, in those contexts of conflict. Said situ-ations on top of creating situations of high human suffering, vulnerability and social fragility, determine as well a high percentage of children that linger outside the chance of attending a school. More than 40% of children, who do not attend school, live in a country in conflict. These are countries experienc-ing strong gender inequalities, where people are forced to live with really low levels of literacy.

Conflict areas become problematically dangerous contexts, because of the elevated exposure to direct violence, mostly towards the most vulnerable people, like girls and women. At the same time, they are the cause of destruc-tion of school systems and of those spaces of rehabilitation and shelter[22] . In

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[19] Among the many examples we can mention one: The Palestine-Israel Journal of politic, economics and culture, http://www.pij.org.

[20] http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm.

[21] http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=42579&URL_DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html Education For All is a program launched by UNESCO in order to provide a qualified base education for all children, young people and adults that still live in a condition of analphabetism. The first time attention was drown to this problem was in 1990 by the different international organizations affiliated with the United Nations and interested with issues related to education, children's rights and human development (UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF). Ten years later, in 2000, the international organizations, making their own problems related to those collectivities still living a lack of instruction, expressed in Dakar the commitment to achieve instruction for all by 2015. Six fundamental goals, necessary to reach this result, were identified: spread an early the nurture and education for early childhood, guarantee a free and mandatory education for everyone, promote the education of young people and adult to life skills, increase the literacy of adults by 50%, reach gender parity and equality, improve the quality of education.

[22] UNESCO, *The Hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011*, Paris, UNESCO, 2011.

this settings peace education includes a series of aspects that belong to education in emergencies [23]. This specific aspect considers the necessity to put in a priority position, the subject of education in situation of natural disasters and/or social and military conflicts of different level and entity. In many contexts of emergency, school and the attention to early childhood and youth need linger in shadows comparing to social necessity such as those related to health, medicine and food, that right away awaken the interest of humanitarian organizations. Children's problems about their life, about their environment's safeguard do not represent a priority, nor an immediate need. For these children, whose estimate is around ten millions, the right to formal education is not guaranteed. The intervention of peace education become in this case, a necessity to fulfill the right to learn and to the wellbeing of early childhood and youth, as well as, a starting point to understand the responsibility and resource that education can give to the upkeep or lack of conflict.

The inadequate attention for a sudden intervention to support the guarantee of education in situation of disaster or conflict is due to the fact that, historically, instruction has been viewed as a part of an intervention that involves a long period of life, instead of a necessary intervention to answer to emergencies [24]. Education in emergency situations can be defined as a set of planning activities, linked and integrate, that allow and foster the development of structured learning processes, oriented towards the construction of better and peaceful living conditions, in moments of acute crisis and/or places of instability[25].

Facts have in many cases showed that the difficult situations for communities continue for a long time and that, beyond the emergencies of the first humanitarian aids, it is necessary to promptly intervene with further efforts and commitments. A different perception of the issue should be adopted, to realize a first return to normality and the recovery of the people involved. The effects of disasters and conflicts, in fact, last generally many years and this implies that children remain out of reach by the chance of returning to their natural and appropriate educative space, vital and essential for their growth. For a long time, it was not enough considered that the lack of priority, regarding the safeguard of children's rights, not only in nutrition, health and safety – surely fundamental for their wellbeing and for, as much as possible, their balanced growth – but also concerning education, play and the fantastic, imaginary and creative children's world, has an equal right to be considered as a priority. The absence of this kind of intervention leads to a vicious circle which makes the settings fragile and dependant on conflicts and local powers. It is, then, clear that interventions to activate educational and school itineraries need to represent a priority, because their lack place people in situations of ignorance

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[23] http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_cp.htm.
[24] http://www.ineesite.org/post/about_education_in_emergencies1/.
[25] Save the Children, *Education in Emergencies: A toolkit for starting and managing a programme*, London, Save the Children UK, 2008.

and vulnerability, therefore, at-risk of social marginalization, which does not let them contribute to social change. In situation of crisis, conflict or natural disaster, children are the first to be affected, not only for the serious situation, but also for trauma and fear experience. These are contexts where it is easy to lose relatives, to remain alone, to have not a known and safe place to live, to easily fall in the net of violence. For children living these experiences, where important reference points for their growth and development are lost, dangers of getting involved in even more traumatic experiences are high. In these situations, where the vulnerability and difficulties of children are high, it is necessary to act rapidly through direct and indirect educative forms. The first ones directly address children to avoid trauma and vulnerability increase, the second ones prevent situations of further increase of children's difficulties. At the same time, they try to create situations of social and political awareness, as well as, of financial contributions that satisfy the education needs of children. In these contexts, education can both save the life of those that are involved in the disaster, and support life providing physical protection, psychosocial support, survival skills, environmental and cultural knowledge [26]. In emergencies, priority must be given to the return of children to school, after the disaster, or as soon as the acute moment of the conflict has passed. This can help children and relatives to find again a sense of routine and normality, contributing to the identification of new spaces for social interactions and support. These are spaces of specific structured activities, where children are helped to give reinforcement to their original resilience and to try to answer in an immediate way to the experienced trauma[27]. These approaches require a deep attention and sensibility about how children's feelings silently move and speak. In certain cases, children do not show what and how much deeply hit them. They do not tell what happened to them or what they saw. Many actions of daily life can suddenly become an experience of stress, fear, and emotional disorder[28].

Recently, the understanding of this issue became clearer. In particular, INEE Network[29], to whom international governmental organizations, research centers and NGOs belong, has considered, as a priority, to work to provide a quality instruction, also inclusive of aspects such as physical wellbeing and psychosocial protection, because this represents an important investment for the safeguard of people's life. Familiarity with the causes of violence, people's exploitation, poverty's conditions and human rights, as well as of those related

[26] Save the Children, *Education in Emergencies.* op.cit.
[27] A.E. Calò Livnè, *Giù le maschere. Il bene è in ognuno di noi*, Milano, Proedi Editore, 2005.
[28] In the latest years an important scientific research on the problems related to the effects of trauma on people has developed. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is considered a problematic mostly linked to adults, while for childhood and youth the identification of the problematic and its causes appear more complex. A. Dyregrov, *Supporting Traumatized Children and Teenagers: A Guide to Providing Understanding and Help*, London Jessica Kinksley Publishers, 2010.
[29] Inter-Agency Network for Education Emergencies.

to natural disasters, is needed to guarantee people's survival and social welfare. In other words, a quality education that keeps in mind social and environmental set of problems, at local and global levels, can save the life of many people. People are, in fact, directly and responsibly involved in events, they are committed for a different future and do not remain passive and dependent on events. Situations of violence in many cases lead to submission, generated by fear and incapability to see alternative solutions to their own condition. When a child is in a safe and stimulating learning environment, he has less chance of being sexually and economically exploited or exposed to high risks that can easily affect excluded and/or disadvantaged populations, like in cases of recruiting in terroristic organizations or of participation to organized crime. Knowledge and education acquisition can give general information that reinforce the necessary skills of survival in these war and postwar settings, facing the presence of minefields and of dangers often due to widespread infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS[30]. In these environments, peace education represents an important occasion to support social change, through the review of curricula, the involvement of all interested parts in the resolution of social, environmental, political and economic issues through the creation of different participative forms and a direct investment in the formation of quality educators and teachers. The nature of the interventions needs to be integrated and capable of answering in an holistic way, producing situations of change having the goal of guaranteeing the safeguard and the wellbeing of people, and, at the same time, of creating participative conditions that are rarely present – if not completely absent – in social settings of vulnerability[31].

Peace education represents an innovative proposal to promote the cultural change in emergency settings, since it can provide assistance to innovative school programs, modify internal processes of instruction, stereotyped by the social hostilities and forms of social exclusion. It can modify curricula, guaranteeing a higher quality education and, through the identification of social, cultural, and economic obstacles, limiting free access of everyone to education, increase and complete the participation of all children to benefit in the school system. It is necessary to always work by involving the entire com-

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[30] *Ibidem.*

[31] The condition of social vulnerability is characterized by aspects that concern stagnation, tension and the high risk for people's life, sporadic violence, political instability and similar factors, that create ongoing erosion for the growth of communities and their wellbeing. This condition represents a difficult and heavy obstacle to the realization of positive conditions for a pacific coexistence. In front of this situations, interventions of change of whom education and formation are active part and a specific responsibility, have to consider the possibility that this needs to happen from the bottom up, with a conscious involvement of people, as well as through precise political actions, that reveal themselves as weak and incapable of guaranteeing safety and social wellbeing for people. J Mosselson, W. Wheaton, P.J. Frisoli, *Education and Fragility: A synthesis of the Literature*, "Journal of Education for International Development", 4_1, April 2009.

munity, which is affected by crisis and emergency needs, because it is essential that everyone can understand the opportunity and possibility of building new educational systems to improve life quality of people and communities. This means that intervening in a concrete way for social transformation, through the creation of programs, allowing access to education to previously excluded groups from education, like: girls, differently abled children, indigenous communities, needy and sick people, and young women. The optimistic commitment to education allows to see that crisis can become a chance for change. The use of human resources that can emerge in these settings, helps teaching new competences and values to community members, for example: the importance of school integration and active participation, the necessary conditions for a pacific coexistence, tolerance, human rights, conflict resolutions and respect and conservation of the environment and its diversity[32].

A rather critic worldwide scenery is the one of children living alone or with families as refugees or asylum-seekers. In many cases, as already showed in emergency interventions, education for refugee children living in transit camps, at the margins of social context of countries, must represent a fundamental component for the protection and safeguard of children's development. The international organization UNHCR[33] is the responsible organism to supervise, in concentration with other local and international partners, the interventions for the realizations of educative situations of quality during the forced stay of children in the camps. Differently from emergency situations, the condition of sufferance of children that live in these conditions, can be present from birth. The first attentions towards this problem began in 1951, following the definition of a specific Convention highlighting these people's issues. The status of refugee requires a precise legislative intervention by countries within the international conventions. It considered a refugee a person that "has escaped from their country" for fear of being persecuted for reasons related to race, religion, nationality, membership to a specific social group or political opinions."[34]. Refugees' reality is often characterized by the experience of forced relocation and loss of home and familiar place, besides family and community groups. The fundamental aspects that peace education carries out in this setting address the maintenance of reference with own cultural roots of origin and community identity. The rooting out from their own lands has to be considered with attention and care in educative processes, often more oriented to guarantee the learning setting necessary to acquire knowledge and essential competencies to understand and promote gender equality, pacific coexistence ad relation among different ethnic com-

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[32] INEE, *Minimum standard for education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*, INEE, NY, 2010.
[33] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees http://www.unhcr.org.
[34] Art. 1 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951.

munities[35]. The condition of refugees, in many cases, makes the possibility for children of regularly attending school, problematic. International interventions and funds allow it, establishing, as an essential goal, that these children can regularly attend primary school, as a fundamental base for any possible knowledge development. In the specific, learning process is oriented to guarantee refugees to live/survive to difficult psychological, social, environmental conditions, having a healthy and productive life. According to the protocols of intervention, this can be reached if besides basic school competencies, children can also be prepared for competencies, allowing a peaceful life, respecting human rights and conflicts roots understanding. The interventions in this context, as those aforementioned, require a primary commitment for teachers' and educators' education, which is able to answer to these needs and to those of children. Teachers' education, although representing a starting point for every education reform undertaking change and innovation tasks, has not gained a priority level, yet, that can assure the success of best humanitarian and social politics. Training and recruitment of these professional profiles is still scarcely monitored and retribution level is very low.

Finally, the development of culture of peace can be seen in a gender perspective. Within this perspective there is, above all, the necessity to understand and change patriarchal and sexist culture. Rooted culture that fosters and justifies continue violent acts against girl-children and women. The war context reinforces and exploits gender stereotypes and exacerbates, even encourages, violence against women. "Changing these circumstances, devising a peace system, and bringing forth a culture of peace requires an authentic partnership between men and women. Such a system would take fully into account the potential and actual roles of women in public policy and peace making as advocated in UNESCO's Statement on Women's Contribution to a Culture of Peace"[36]. This means that education for gender equality is an essential component of education of education for a culture of peace.

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