Cultural Dimension of the Right to Education – EAA

Education Above All’s background and programmes:

The Education Above All (EAA) Foundation was established in 2012 by bringing together 3 programmes established by Her Highness Sheikha Moza. The first programme being Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict (PEIC), which was founded in 2009 following the bombing of schools in Iraq, Her Highness sought to find a way to ensure that attacks on education would be held to a greater degree of culpability in the ICC and ICJ. Therefore, PEIC was established as a Law and Policy advocacy programme that would hold perpetrators of attacks against education accountable whilst strengthening the efficacy of international law in regards to the right to education.

The second programme founded by Her Highness was Al Fakhoora in 2009, which was to help support students in Gaza to attain a higher education, now Al Fakhoora works in civic engagement as well providing Higher Education opportunities to students in the Middle East region.

The third programme established in 2010 is Educate A Child (EAC) which was founded by Her Highness to address the number of out of school children (OOSC), Her Highness met her goal in enrolling 10 million OOSC and has announced in 2019 that she will be aiming to reduce the number of OOSC to zero.

In 2018 Reach Out To Asia (ROTA) joined the EAA umbrella, however they were launched in 2005 by Her Excellency Sheikha Mayassa in order to address the provision of primary and secondary education and encouraging relationship amongst communities.

Right to Education:

Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights pertains to the right to education which is core to all four programmes of EAA. This is achieved by EAA through each of its programmes. EAC works by enrolling OOSC children and ensuring the rate of retention. Al Fakhoora does so by providing scholarships to students within the Middle Eastern region. PEIC works to ensure that attacks on education are held to account and also works on the field level to address the gap of rights based education. ROTA works to secure primary and secondary education whilst also empowering beneficiaries through peace based education.

Leisure, recreational and cultural activities:

Cultural advocacy is used commonly within EAA both as a tool for education as well as a tool for advocacy. EAC harnesses the power of sports for OOSC to engage with education and ensure the rate of retention. PEIC works to use sports as a tool to teach peace-building and communication skills in order to help with social cohesion. PEIC also utilises art as a tool for advocacy to convey the voice of our beneficiaries to a wider audience. ROTA have sports enrichment programmes that they have added to their international educational projects.

Children with disabilities:

With regards to children with disabilities, EAA works with marginalised populations in the locations we operate in. EAC projects in West Africa ensure inclusivity when it comes to OOSC with disabilities. Al Fakhoora have done civic engagement projects in Gaza for those who are short sighted, by providing braille to help supplement people with vision impairment. EAA as a whole ensures inclusivity with regards to their Youth Advocates in particular to include persons with disabilities.

Children of minorities or indigenous populations:

As stated previously EAA works with marginalised populations in all locations we operate in to ensure that the neglected members of the community are engaged are integrated into mainstream education. EAC has projects for instance in Thailand where they perform outreach to engage with indigenous populations OOSC to provide them with the opportunity to attain a formal education. PEIC operates through high level advocacy to ensure that high level stakeholders are engaged with the right to education and are actively partaking in its provision. Thus PEIC was present in the 2019 HRC in March advocating to ‘Leave No One Behind’ which brought together SDG’s 5, 8, 10 and critically 4.