





# **Diagnostic Study: Forming Responsible Citizens Project**

*Promoting Equal Citizenship Education to  
Prevent School Violence against Girls*

## **Morocco Report**

## Abstract

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Despite efforts of educators, those of the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the documents and publications issued with the aim of implementing responsible citizenship education inside the classroom settings, still forms of uncivil conduct such as violence, drug-taking and vandalism are spreading across educational institutions. This diagnostic study investigates how teaching and admin staff, students and parents perceive citizenship education, and attempts to measure the extent to which students and parents are engaged in school issues and governance. The study also explores how educators and school administrators deal with uncivic behaviour such as violence and gender inequality issues. It analyses a number of documents with a particular focus on the educational ones. Triangulation has been used as a research method and data from focus groups and interviews have been collected and analysed qualitatively. The main findings indicated that “Contents of the textbooks are substantially disconnected from political and social realities and overlook the gap between democratic principles and practices mentioned in school curricula” (Faour, P. 10). They have also revealed existence of a wide gap between the stated goals of the MOE programs and their actual implementation and activation inside and outside classroom situations. Finally, a number of conclusions with recommendations have been drawn to enlist educational authorities to promote equal citizenship education, and foster interactive approaches and active methods in order to prevent school violence.

This qualitative study consists of five main chapters. Chapter I introduces some background information about the project of “Forming Responsible Citizens” (FRC), the rationale, research questions, the Moroccan educational system context, and the structure of the study. Chapter II presents a review of relevant scholarly literature pertinent to our research topic. Chapter III discusses the results of focus groups discussions, while chapter IV deals with individual interviews held with university students. Finally, Chapter V presents a number of conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.



## Acknowledgements

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**We would like to extend our appreciation to a number of institutions including the Morocco Ministry of Education, the Regional Academies for Education and Training as well as the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research.**

**We also appreciated the feedback and the comments on drafts from the following people:**

- Dr. Alden W. Craddock, Associate Vice President and Director of Center for Civic Engagement and Democracy at St. Louis Merryville University, Missouri, USA
- Dr. Alicia Cabezudo, co-Vice President of the International Peace Bureau, Geneva, Switzerland.
- Mr. Miguel Silva, Program Manager of the Global Education, North-South Center of the Council of Europe.

Special thanks are due to those who have responded to our requests to make this diagnostic study happen.

Finally, thanks to Ms. Chiara Guidetti, former Executive Director of Ideaborn, Mr. Jaume Guardans, CEO of Ideaborn and Mr. Elarbi Imad, President of the Moroccan Center for Civic Education for their support and heavy involvement in the diagnostic study process.

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## List of acronyms

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COSEF	Special Commission for Education and Training
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EACPE	Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement
FRC	Forming Responsible Citizens
GEFI	Global Education First Initiative
HCETSR	Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research
MCCE	Moroccan Center for Civic Education
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCET	National Charter for Education and Training
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
RAET	Regional Academy for Education and Training
RGPH	General Census of Population and Housing
SDEC	Social Development and Empowerment Center
UFM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (formerly, United Nation's International Children's Emergency Fund)
WB	White Book

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# Chapter I: Introduction

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## 1.1. Forming Responsible Citizens project

The FRC project is supported by the Union for the Mediterranean (UFM) and funded by the Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is led by the Barcelona-based organisation, Ideaborn, in collaboration with the Moroccan Center for Civic Education (MCCE), Morocco, the Social Development and Empowerment Center (SDEC), Tunisia and the Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (EACPE), Egypt. The project aims to contribute to the prevention of school violence against girls through the implementation of adequate citizenship education curricula in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.

The FRC project aims to achieve the following main objectives:

- To establish schools as a key vehicle to disseminate citizenship and gender equality values through the implementation of a new citizenship education curriculum
- To prevent school violence, especially against girls and women
- To encourage policy makers and legislators to invest more effort in gender equality and prevention of violence through the development of sound values of equality in our education system.

### **Expected actions**

- Analysis of documents and textbooks used to teach citizenship education in the three countries: Morocco, Tunisia, and Egypt.
- Design of a new citizenship curriculum, followed by teacher training in citizenship education.
- Facilitate meetings with the community to establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that get parents, educators and administrators to work together.

### **Expected results**

- A new, school curriculum encompassing the concepts of citizenship education, systems and processes of civic life, education for equality, tolerance, coexistence,

intercultural dialogue, rights and responsibilities, education for human rights, in addition to inclusive and sustainable development.

- Teacher training in professional development and on the use of the new citizenship materials.
- Roundtable meetings for project transparency and reinforcement of PLCs.

## 1.2. Citizenship Education

Recently, interest has been growing in citizenship education across the world. Many books, articles and reports have been written on the nature of citizenship education and democracy. Studies have addressed the issue of citizenship education at the national, regional and global level. From this growing literature on citizenship and democracy, many definitions of citizenship education emerge. Eurydice (2012) defines citizenship education as:

*“the aspects of education at the school level intended to prepare students to become active citizens, by ensuring that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to the development and well-being of the society in which they live” (Eurydice, 2012, pp. 8-9).*

Patrick (2001, p.7) describes a commonly acknowledged four-component model of education, consistent with democratic life that includes civic knowledge, intellectual skills, participatory skills, and civic dispositions. US civic educators have generally agreed that the foundation for civic competence lies in the development of these fundamental components. Providing students with learning experiences that help them acquire these components reflects the key purpose of a good citizenship education. In Britain, Crick (2007) identified three major strands that constitute the quality of citizenship education that largely mirrors Patrick’s formula:

- **Social and moral responsibility:** Learning about moral values and responsible behaviour, and developing the ability to apply these in practice both in and outside the formal education setting.
- **Community involvement:** Learning about and becoming active citizens and contributing to community development through community service and involvement.

- **Political literacy:** Learning about how governments and institutions work and understanding the issues of democracy and how to interact with all of these elements (Crick, 2007, p.7).

Complementary of this theoretical literature, in September 2012 the United Nations Secretary General launched the Global Education First Initiative (GEFI) signalling a shift in the role and purpose of education. The initiative includes global citizenship education as one of the priorities.

*“We must foster global citizenship. Education is about more than literacy and numeracy. It is also about citizenry. Education must fully assume its essential role in helping people to forge more just, peaceful and tolerant societies.” Ban Ki moon (2012).*

The Carnegie Middle East Center (2011) released a report on North Africa and the Middle East that concludes: “Citizenship education in the Arab world is a key element in education reform and in the development of future pluralistic societies as well as sustainable political systems and economic models.”

Based on this literature, we concur with the statement that “The purpose of citizenship education is to develop well-rounded, responsible citizens who are aware of their legal rights and duties, and who apply such awareness to evaluate government policies and practices” (Faour & Muasher, 2011, p.9).

### **1.3. About the study**

This diagnostic study is situated within a vast educational field which is both challenging and yet very exciting, as it taps into different vital elements of which repercussions reach numerous dimensions: political, economic, cultural, social and educational. Indeed, “modern” violence has many aspects and is embedded in all the layers of society which ultimately impacts the civic behaviour and values in the world. To remain a passive witness of the resurgence of the violence phenomenon is unforgivable and may be considered as an unacceptable complicity. This diagnostic study will hopefully contribute to revealing some useful elements to contain the spread of violence and reduce its harmful effects during schooling age. This is an especially important area, because it is a site so promising in terms of bringing about healthy changes and hope of positive, safe development.

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Since we are interested in studying the complex subject of citizenship education impact on values, we have not limited our investigation just to the analysis of the manuals used in middle-school education institutions. While the manuals are indeed an essential element of the educational curriculum, they cannot reflect the purpose, conception and implementation of an academic discipline on their own. For that reason, our research has also included document analysis, focus groups discussions and interviews with university students.

The timing of this study in Morocco has faced two major constraints: 1) the end of the academic year(2014-2015), which entails intense effort on part of the teaching and administration staff to complete the coverage of the learning programs, and the exams preparations for assessment; 2) the availability of our target population who are called upon by MOE or their administration to undertake many tasks simultaneously at this time of the academic year.

However, thanks to the solidarity of the research team and their sense of organization, and willingness to accept the challenge, we managed to collect the information necessary to the success of our project by carefully scheduling meetings with the whole target population. These individuals should also be recognized for their helpfulness and generosity in responding favourably to our call, regardless of their personal commitments.

## **1.4. Research questions:**

**The focus group discussions and interviews concentrated on the following questions:**

- How do educators, students and parents perceive citizenship education?
- What changes in civic knowledge and skills occur after the implementation of citizenship education activities?
- To what extent are students engaged in community issues?
- To what extent do parents participate in school governance?
- How do educators and administrators deal with un-civic behaviour such as violence and gender inequality issues?

## **1.5. Demographic context**

The Kingdom of Morocco, lies across the North West coast of Africa and has a coastline on the North Atlantic Ocean as well as the Mediterranean Sea along an area of 710,850 square Joint venture of Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt coordinated by ideaborn, promoted by the Union for the Mediterranean and financed by Norway and Monaco

kilometers. Its rich culture is an intermixture of Arab, Berber, European and African influences, but the majority of Morocco's population is Berber and Arab by identity.

According to the sixth General Census of Population and Housing (RGPH 2014), the legal population of Morocco has reached 33,848,242 in September 2014, including 33,762,036 citizens and 86,206 foreign residents. The 2014 census also declares that the number of households reached 7,313,806 and that 20,432,439 people live in urban areas, 13,415,803 in rural areas, representing an urbanization rate of 60.3% in 2014 against 55.1% in 2004.

At the political level, different political changes have accentuated the Moroccan society since 2011. Driven by the situation in the Arab world, the Kingdom managed to undertake, in a determined and inclusive way, its own process of democratic changes and conducted a very positive approach of the Arab Spring that led to a constitutional reform. Overwhelmingly approved by a national referendum, the Constitutional reform of July 1st, 2011 enshrined several key changes to Morocco's political system. The reforms strengthened the rule of law by broadening the legislative powers of Parliament and mandating an independent Judiciary. They also made Amazigh an official language in Morocco, alongside Arabic and the Arab Hassani Language of the Saharawi tribes. Currently, the government in Morocco is moving towards regionalization as a new way for effective governance.

There are also major changes regarding women in Morocco leading to marked improvements. To start with, in May 2002, The Moroccan Parliament approved a proposal that sets aside 30 seats for the election of women in the national elections of September 2002. Another important improvement, that represents a real achievement for woman and human rights in Morocco, was The Moudawana, which is a Moroccan approach to address family issues. After many years of debates, the Moudawana came to existence as a landmark reform in Morocco that promotes equality between men and women, guarantees women's and children's rights and makes changes in divorce procedures.

## **1.6. Moroccan educational system context**

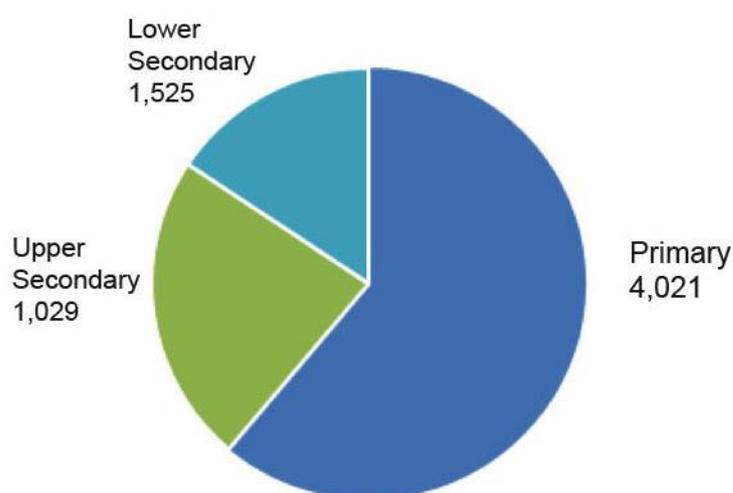
In Morocco, basic education, between ages 6 and 15 is free and compulsory. It should cover 9 years that are divided into two levels, 6 years of elementary school and 3 years of lower secondary school (middle school: translation of French collège).

Even though education is free of charge, many children, especially girls in rural areas, still do not attend school or drop out at an early age. The Moroccan education system cycle is

composed of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The system is under the purview of the MOE. To improve the quality of education in Morocco, the government has taken several reforms including an Education Emergency Plan.

According to the World Bank Report 2014, Morocco has a total of 6,575,000 pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education. Of these pupils, about 4,021,000 (61%) are enrolled in primary education. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics<sup>1</sup> notes that in 2012 “approximately 26% of youth have no formal education and 23% of youth have attained at most incomplete primary education, meaning that in total 49% of 15-24 year olds have not completed primary education in Morocco.

The following figure represents the number of pupils by school level (In 1000S)



**Data Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2012 -2013**

**Figure 1: The number of pupils by school level (In 1000S)**

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<sup>1</sup> The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) is the statistical office of UNESCO and is the UN depository for global statistics in the fields of education, science and technology, culture and communication.



## Chapter II: Review of the literature/Document Analysis

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### 1.1. Document Analysis in Morocco

In developing this study, we retrieved and researched documents from the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Regional Academies for Education and Training, the Higher Council for Education and the Training and Scientific Research (HCETSR) to identify relevant documents. We also used Internet sources to identify international, regional and local resources such as research papers on citizenship education and school violence using the following key words: '*Morocco education, violence at schools, facts about Morocco, citizenship in Morocco, civil society in Morocco, the white paper in Morocco, Morocco constitution*', citizenship education, education for democracy. We collected information in three languages: French, Arabic and English.

Once the documents to study and analyse had been targeted and identified, they were collected from the relevant departments of the MOE, retrieved from the resource-people or drawn from our own archives. They were ordered according to their characteristics, and were subject to analysis of the contents related to the theme of the research project. The basic documents that we analyzed are:

- The Moroccan Constitution (2011 version)
- The Royal Message addressed to the National Colloquium on the School and Civic Behaviour
- The viewpoint on civic behaviour of the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (HCETSR)
- The National Charter for Education and Training (NCET)
- The White Paper (WP) related to the education reform
- MOE framework document related to the education reform
- MOE notes and memos

- The curriculum of citizenship education with the guidelines, targeted competencies, objectives, school programs, levels of education and learning, time allotted and evaluation tools
- Didactic tools: school manuals, their concepts, methodological choice and content.

The study has also drawn upon additional sources of information:

- Focus group discussions with educators including teachers, supervisors, teacher trainers, students, parents/tutors, and community service organizations reps.
- Interviews with university students.

## 1.2. The Moroccan Constitution (2011 version)<sup>2</sup>

Driven by the situation in the Arab world and the social movement called “the Arab Spring” that spread across North Africa late in the year of 2010, Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco undertook a series of structural and institutional democratic changes. The Kingdom of Morocco has managed its own process of democratic changes and adopted a positive approach to the Arab Spring, which ultimately, led to drafting and adopting a new constitution in 2011.

Article 19 of the Constitution stipulates that

*“The man and the woman enjoy, in equality, the rights and freedoms of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental character, announced in this Title and in the other provisions of the Constitution, as well as in the international conventions and pacts duly ratified by Morocco and this, with respect for the provisions of the Constitution, of the constants and of the laws of the Kingdom. The State works for the realization of parity between men and women.”*

Thus, the Moroccan constitution is clear about the rights of the citizens regardless of their gender. Both men and women are to enjoy the same rights to the same degree in compliance with local and international standards. Gender equality has been stressed to the extent that a special authority branch has been set up to guard against all sorts of discrimination.

Article 22 stresses the fact that *“the physical or moral integrity of anyone may not be infringed in whatever circumstance that may be and by any person that may be, public or*

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<sup>2</sup> Moroccan Constitution: [http://www.constitutionnet.org/files/morocco\\_eng.pdf](http://www.constitutionnet.org/files/morocco_eng.pdf)

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*private... Torture practice, under any form and by anyone, is a criminal act punishable by the law.”*

Article 32 focuses on family in general, and the child in particular. Since the family is considered the basic cell of society, the state takes the responsibility of protecting the family at all legal, social, and economic levels in order to guarantee its stability and preservation. The state guarantees equal, social and moral consideration to all children regardless of their family status. Fundamental schooling is the child’s right and a responsibility of both family and the state. To further these ends, the Consultative Council of the Family and of Childhood was created.

Article 161 has to do with human rights, and allows for the National Council of Human Rights to investigate all matters in relation to the defense and protection of human rights and liberties, issues dealing with the preservation of dignity, individual and collective rights of citizens in strict compliance and with the national and universal referents in this subject matter.

Article 169 defines and guides the procedural aspect of article 32, stating that *“the mission of the consultation board of family and children is to ensure follow up of the family and child situation, to emit its opinion on national plans in relation to this field, to animate public debate on family policy, and to supervise the implementation of national programs, initiated by different departments, structures and competent organisms.”*

Looking back at the selection of the articles mentioned above, and after a quick glance at the new outcome of the present constitution, it is worth noting that this new version has been more progressive by including a number of universal values such as ‘democracy’ and ‘human rights’, on which the old Constitutions were quite cautious and skeptical. However, some of the ‘new-comer’ rights, such as the right to social welfare, health care and descent housing, are left without precise explicit normative content. (The 2011 Moroccan Constitution, A Critical Analysis)

In the same line of thought, Article 19, which is supposed to establish and defend equality between men and women, is contingent of respect of the “permanent characteristics of the kingdom” which points to a continued political basis for the monarchy.

It seems to us that elaboration of such new concepts and principles should be supported through the school system and activities of civil society organizations. Our literature review

has pointed out that it is the historical purpose of citizenship education to make these constitutional principles practical realities.

### **1.3. Royal Message addressed to the participants in the National Colloquium on the School and Civic Conduct**

In His message to the participants in the National Colloquium organised by the Higher Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education on the School and Civic Conduct, held on May 23 & 24, 2007 in Rabat, the King of Morocco proclaimed: *“The ultimate goal sought from the promotion of civic behaviour is to bring up citizens who are committed to the immutable religious and national values of their country; who respect its fundamental symbols and open cultural principles; who are deeply attached to their varied, yet cohesive identity; who are proud of who they are, and who have a deep awareness of their rights and obligations”*

It is also about: *“stimulating the engraining of values of tolerance, solidarity and co-existence, allowing him/her, in turn, to contribute to the democratic life of their country, armed with confidence and optimism, self-reliance and demonstrating the spirit of initiative.”*

In this perspective, the key to civic behaviour lies in the respect of values, rules and regulations that manage life in society. It is important to consider civility as a system of ethical-moral values, integrated and undividable, taking two balanced, parallel lanes. The first lane allows infusion, with the aim of dissemination, of full citizenship values, which assumes actual exercise of fundamental rights and effective respect of individual and collective responsibilities. The other lane is the battle against all forms of incivility, more particularly violence in all its forms, as well as fraud, corruption, ill-treatment and other abuses that morals does not welcome, and whose effects are extremely pernicious when they settle down in schools.

Therefore, the main goal of citizenship education is to build *“a nation based on responsible citizenship, democracy, solidarity, the rule of law and adherence to universal values”*. (Royal Message)

## 1.4. The Higher Council viewpoints on civic education and the new strategy to reform education

The view-points of the Higher Council for Education Training and Scientific Research (HCETSR), coming as a result of the National Colloquium on the School and Civic Behaviour, held on May 23 and 24, 2007, affirmed that:

*“The school is the mirror that continuously reflects the facets of the society of tomorrow, and in order to reinforce it, it needs first to be protected”. They also insist that “promoting civility / citizenship is, no doubt, not only the responsibility of the educational system, but also that of the family, the media, and institutions with pedagogical, cultural and training interest”*

The principles set forth in the recommendations of the colloquium and the viewpoints within the Higher Council for Education Training and Scientific Research provides further impetus to the promotion of citizenship education in schools and community. Moreover, the MOE, through their regional and local authorities should take measures to implement citizenship education concepts in collaboration with their stakeholders to connect the school with the community. This can be done by activating policy memos and promoting voluntary work and community service.

In July 2015, the HCETSR released the ‘2015-2030 Strategic Vision’ under the theme: “Towards a School of Equality, Quality and Promotion”. According to this vision, the Moroccan school has given priority to education for values, human rights and citizenship education since the adoption of a national programme to promote citizenship, human rights, equality and tolerance. However, the acts of “un-civic conduct, such as exam cheating, violence, environment damage and vandalism, continue to spread inside and outside the schools of education and training” (p. 55)

According to this vision, the 18<sup>th</sup> leverage recommends making education for democratic values, active citizenship and the promotion of equality a strategic option to be implemented through the four following levels by:

- Integrating these values into the school curriculum;
- Promoting democratic practices via community service and voluntary work;
- Launching new training workshops on citizenship education;
- Strengthening the partnerships between the schools and their stakeholders.

## 1.5. The National Charter for Education and Training<sup>3</sup>

Recently, the educational system in Morocco has received much attention as “two national reforms of the educational system were undertaken under the supervision of the MOE. In 1999 the Charter for National Education and Training was followed in 2009 by an “Emergency Plan” to accelerate the implementation of the reform during the following years” (p 20 Violence against Children in Schools: A Regional Analysis of Lebanon, Morocco and Yemen)

The **National Charter for Education and Training** (NCET) is a document produced by a Special Commission for Education and Training (COSEF) *“For the purpose of adopting a new educational system, improved by taking out the negative aspects of the past approaches, and centred around the goal attainments of our times, ... to suggest fundamental choices that would allow the reform of this vital sector, in accordance with our supreme goal of building the national school of tomorrow, a school worthy of taking place in the next century.”*<sup>4</sup>. The NCET is the result of many investigations in the field, thorough debates on the teaching problems that Morocco was facing during the 90s, surveys of opinions and study-abroad trips for a comparative/contrastive approach to different educational systems.

The first part of the charter states the fundamental principles that contain the constant foundations of the educational and training system, its ultimate goals, the rights and duties of different partners and the necessary national mobilization for success and reform. The second part is devoted to the propositions of renovation.

### **Constant Foundations:**

The Moroccan system of education has as pillars some constant principles upon which all teaching and learning draw. First and foremost of these are the values and principles of Islamic faith. In this regard, the state endeavours to bring about a “virtuous citizen, as a model of rectitude, moderation and tolerance, and who is open to science and knowledge, and endowed with the spirit of initiative, creativity and entrepreneurship”( Charter 1999).

On these foundations, education cultivates the values of citizenship that allow for everyone to fully participates in public and private life, in perfect knowledge of the rights and duties of

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<sup>3</sup> The National Charter for Education and Training:

[http://www.men.gov.ma/sites/AdministrationCentrale/DAJC/DocLib1/charte/charte\\_fr.pdf](http://www.men.gov.ma/sites/AdministrationCentrale/DAJC/DocLib1/charte/charte_fr.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Royal Message King Hassan II of Morocco to his advisor, Mr. Abdelaziz Mezian Belfquih, on March 8th, 1999

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each and every one. Education focuses also on developing a spirit of dialogue. It preaches acceptance of difference, and pushes towards democratic practice in the context of the state of law.

Another principle is that the Moroccan education system is a dynamic interaction between the cultural heritage of Morocco and the great universal principles of human rights and the respect of dignity.

### **Major Goals of the reform of education**

The reform of education has placed the learner in the centre of pedagogical reflection and action and educators have been advised to focus on the learner. From this perspective, it obliged to offer the children of Morocco the necessary conditions for their development. Educators and society as a whole adopt an attitude towards learners in general, and children in particular, of understanding, guidance and help for a progressive education in the process of learning, socialization and internalization of religious, civic and societal norms.

For the educational and training system to carry out its missions successfully, its actors and their partners should converge toward, and focus on the training of the citizen whose profile is defined under the following conditions:

1. A school that is actually a living school, with pedagogy based on active learning, instead of passive reception, and which fosters cooperation, discussion, and collective effort rather than individual work.
2. A school that has an open environment thanks to a pedagogical approach based on hosting society inside the school, and the school going out to society. This environment requires building new links between the school and its social, cultural and economic setting.
3. Educators and teachers undertaking more seriously the tasks and responsibilities inherent to their mission. These include a canvas of interrelated colours such as placing the interest of learners above all other considerations. They should also provide good examples of conduct, perseverance of knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and a critical and constructive spirit. Another important point that really affects learners, either positively or negatively is the educators' design and implementation of exams for assessment and evaluation. Here, teachers should demonstrate a good sense of objectivity and fairness.

On a larger scope, the people in charge of managing the educational institutions and related administrations enjoy the same rights and responsibilities as the educators do. They must

essentially display attention and understanding of the problems facing the learners, educators and teachers, and should look for possible solutions to problems. They must also communicate and consult with teachers, parents and partners of the school.

Students should be able to rely on their families, teachers, communities to which they belong, society and the State, the corresponding rights and duties of the parties cited above. Their rights are for example: not to be subject to mistreatments, and to take part in the school life (Extra-curricular activities). But they have duties as well, such as diligence, discipline, and conformity to the schedules, rules and regulations of the school. They should take care of equipment, hardware and reference books. They should also effectively take part, individually or collectively, in class work, collective games and activities.

As regards the involvement of parents in school governance, the NCET “*makes direct reference to the parents of pupils, indicating that regional and local councils must give parents and tutors some hope and confidence in their children’s future*” (Educational reforms in Morocco: evolution and current status, p 96).

Even though, Morocco allocates more than “30% of the national budget to education, which is its second priority since 1999, when the National Education and Training Charter was adopted, Morocco still has the highest rate of illiteracy in North Africa: 50% of the population and 36% of the young adults”. (Euromed Youth, p 6)

Moreover, citizenship education concepts are still limited in terms of being implemented and reflected in community and society at large.

## **1.6. The White Book**

To implement the guidelines and principles set forth in the NCET, an enlarged committee consisting of several educational actors from different specialties has prepared a portfolio “the White Paper” on educational engineering and revision of teaching methodologies in both primary and secondary education. This document recommends a values education through the acquisition of skills related to these values with particular focus on elementary education.

### **In elementary school**

At the basic level of primary education, these values are conveyed by the Islamic education, provided by a weekly schedule consisting of 68 hours for each of the first two years. The topics are close to students’ intellectual capacity with the aim of progressive socialization in societal norms. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of pre-school education, the student should overall:

- Acquire behaviours related to public morality, social life to facilitate integration and allow easy communication with others.
- Be able to develop his/her knowledge, and adjust his/her behaviour to prepare for school life.
- Have the capacity to participate actively in the collective activities, and undertake responsibilities to acquire the bases for social integration.
- Be able to observe some social phenomena and perceive the existing relationship between people.
- Immerse himself / herself in values, adopt behaviours, and follow the guidelines approved by society, defined by its culture, and promoting their inclusion in contemporary life.

In a more specific manner, some academic disciplines work towards the foundation of skills such as:

- Islamic education: awareness of roles, rules and basic duties
- Arts Education: gradual acquisition of aesthetic sense, positioning in time and space, interest in the environment, relationship with others and with objects, sharing with others (singing)
- The sensor motor education: position relative to others
- Maths: make logical judgments, namely order
- The physical education: participate in collective activities, respect the rules/regulations
- Arabic: know friends, members of one's family, greet, go visit one's family, protect plants, learn how to behave on the road, play with comrades

In Elementary school, from the first to sixth year, all subjects that are taught are potential carriers of targeted values. In the fourth year, a new subject is introduced into the school curriculum: History, Geography and Citizenship education.

#### **Schedule Slots and time allotted:**

For History, Geography and Citizenship education: 34 hours per year during the 4<sup>th</sup> year and 51 hours for the fifth and 6<sup>th</sup> since one weekly hour given during the 4<sup>th</sup> year and 1 hour 30mn weekly given during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years for 3 components of the discipline taught in shifts.

The NCET outlines the direction of educational reform. It essentially calls for values education and reinforcement of skills; an education in making choices, and making decisions; the openness to the natural and human environment; and the preparation to understand differences in the various fields of human activity, and have positive relationships with others.

### **1.7. Ministry of Education policy memoranda related to school violence and equality between boys and girls**

The Ministry of Education has issued a number of memoranda related to school violence and equality between boys and girls. The following are a few representative examples:

#### **MOE policy memo N°146, November 23, 2007**

This note is devoted to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which is celebrated on 25 November each year. The aim of this document is to consolidate the culture of human rights and promote civic behaviour. It recalls the role of school in social education, education for the noble values and the fight against all forms of violence. The celebration of this day is marked by the organization of an awareness campaign to sensitize students towards violence against women and its consequences, and to promote the culture of human rights and civic behaviour.

The proposed activities stress the importance of organizing awareness sessions and the encouragement of creative initiatives among students to express themselves artistically, or verbally against violence in all its forms especially against women and girls.

#### **MOE Policy memo N°09, February 6, 2008**

Under the motto "Family and school together to strengthen civic behaviour", this memo aims to develop civic behaviour in educational institutions in the light of:

- The Royal Message of May 21, 2007 on "school and civic behaviour"
- Point of Views of the HCE No. 189, August 3, 2007 on the civic behaviour
- The National Charter for Education and Training
- Review of the education programs on human rights

The objectives were to make the school year 2007/2008 a year of thorough mobilization and a wider debate on the ways to design a national contractual framework to realize the content of the motto used, and also strengthen the foundations of civic behaviour within and outside

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school, in different areas, and make it a daily concern. Another aim was also to prepare regional and local plans to develop civic behaviour and try to eradicate non-civic ones.

Activities that were expected from this memo were:

- Identification of civic conducts and reinforcement of positive behaviour
- Conducting a diagnostic study to detect uncivil behaviour and identify the causes in order to take appropriate prevention measures
- Dissemination of citizenship education best practices
- Evaluation of the work of school clubs, school boards, and involvement of school partners
- Benefit from other countries' experience and expertise
- Hold citizenship education events and awareness sessions
- Collecting proposals regarding the establishment of a National Plan for Civic conduct development.
- Involving civil society organizations.

#### **Policy memo N°37, March 17, 2009**

The purpose of this memo was to update the information regarding the clubs of Human Rights and Citizenship Education in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations. Its main objectives were

- Identification of operational and active clubs of Human Rights, Citizenship Education or Environment;
- Reflecting on effective means to lead these efforts; and
- Expanding the network of school clubs and the partners.

#### **MOE policy memo N°13- 017, January, 2013**

This memo updated the information regarding school violence, based on **memo n°11/111 of April 19, 2011** whose main objective was to create and activate local school violence observatories.

It also stressed the importance of protecting the students, educators, and property of school against violence they may encounter, and had as an objective the adoption of a strategy to

fight school violence by involving all the stakeholders including parents, CSOs, and other departments outside of the MOE in effort to encourage school life.

### **MOE policy memo 9-1112, March 5, 2013**

This memo calls for the establishment of clear data on fighting school violence against women while commemorating March 8<sup>th</sup> as a day to recognise the role of women in society. The proposed action was to organise events such as exclusively female panels and exhibitions inside and outside schools if possible.

### **MOE policy memo 15-002 February 9, 2015**

The purpose of this memo was to reduce violence and non-civic conduct, and to reinforce mechanisms to fight this phenomenon through a strategy that rejects all kinds of violence against students. The memo recommends the creation of a relaxing atmosphere and motivating environment for learning in schools based on the following elements:

- Adopting a global and harmonious vision to remedy the problem by reinforcing positive means of intervention through anticipation, observing, following up and acting to identify alternative solutions.

As a result of these policy memoranda, a number of local and regional meetings were held across Morocco to debate school violence under the main theme “Schools without violence”. Other departments like the Ministry of Justice, Home Office, and CSOs were invited to discuss school violence and suggest means of fighting the phenomenon.

Among the recommendations suggested after meetings and events across the Moroccan territory we can cite:

- Reinforcing the capacities of educators and administrators to prevent school violence;
- Disseminating the concept of citizenship education and respect for others;
- Improving the support of students who are victims of school violence;
- Heavy involvement of school stakeholders, including CSOs and mass media;
- Integrating citizenship education and human rights concepts during the pre-service and in-service training of teachers;
- Encouraging research in school violence;
- More extra-curricular activities with focus on citizenship education; and
- Allocating more hours to citizenship education in time-tables.

The Ministry of Education in Morocco has been issuing Ministerial notes and policy memos throughout the whole year to combat school violence through implementing citizenship education activities. However, statistics show that the number of school violence incidents is increasing. Moreover, “Children in Morocco reported neighbors, peers in the neighborhoods and ‘unknown persons’ as perpetrators of the physical violence they experienced in the 12 months prior to the survey”. (**PAGE 22 AFRICAN VIOLENCE**) as shown in the table below

Table: Perpetrators of physical violence in schools

Perpetrators	Uganda	Zambia	Ethiopia	Mali	Morocco
Teacher(s)	40	35	33	25	19
Classmate(s)/class monitor	20	12	26	7	22
Peer(s) in the community	15	10	8	13	13
School director(s)	6	13	5	2	4
Peer(s) from the neighbourhood	5	2	11	13	18
Friends	4	5	1	14	17
unknown person(s)	3	4	9	5	16

Source: Based on data from ACPF's national studies on violence against children in selected countries in Africa (2012)

**Figure 2: Perpetrators of physical violence in schools**

## 1.8. The curriculum of citizenship education and school manuals

With the assumption that the values of citizenship education and human rights are present in the spirit of the education reform letter, all school disciplines potentially embed these values. However, particular interest is given to them in the subjects of History and Geography, and Citizenship Education, where the general principles focus on the obligation to the competencies and programs in alignment with the students' age and priorities of learning. The activities suggested, in their operational, methodological and cognitive dimensions, aim at meeting such objectives by mobilizing specific as well as transversal competencies in order to create an environment of autonomous learning.

In line with the other school subjects, the components of History & Geography and Citizenship Education come into the framework of the reform of education system with the aim of forging a new generation of citizens. The curriculum is designed as a strategic tool

whereby the learning activities are in compliance with the fixed objectives and its components play a decisive role in intellectual and citizenship education of the learners. They contribute to the improvement of the learners' structuring and representation of space, time, and their perception of their rights and responsibilities, in the hope of anchoring a social intelligence for managing their daily, personal, professional and community lives.

During the first year, while the learners are between 12 and 13, focus is on the anchoring of preceding competencies first, before moving on to the learners' acquisition of competencies and essential values, with the awareness of what these entail as rights and duties. Examples of such concepts are dignity, equality, liberty, justice, minors' court, democracy, etc... Students are then introduced to the content of international charters signed by Morocco, as well as other national documents. The elements that constitute the main theme of this program draw upon the pillar concepts underlying human rights and citizenship. Some of these elements are: dignity, the struggle for human liberty (individual and collective), universal declaration of human rights, racial discrimination, international solidarity (red cross/crescent), just to name a few. Students make visits to some institutions dealing with human rights, conduct research and make interviews in order to write reports and make presentations.

During the second year (students aged 13 -14), the competencies targeted are: insights into constitutional institutions, development of the feeling of belonging, awareness of the role of institutions towards individuals and groups, initiation to the rules of political and social life, and development of intellectual and methodological capacities. Elements of this course draw upon the Moroccan state, the constitution, the kingdom, research and report on 'the King, Parliament, Government, procedures of a law promulgation, public liberties, freedom of opinion and expression' etc...

When the students reach the third year (age 14 – 15), emphasis is laid upon their awareness of rights and duties as inseparable elements, together with reinforcement of their awareness of civic participation as an element of development of the self and the group. Their intellectual and methodological capacities are sharpened through specific tasks, such as using grids and spreadsheets to exploit data, developing critical thinking, planning and implementing operations etc... Units of this module tap into topics such as: participation as a right and responsibility (e.g. elections, dealing with social problems using local examples, individual and collective responsibility with emphasis on the responsibility of the student at this age. At a larger scale, units address more general issues such as preserving national assets,

governance of water resources use, Morocco and the dialogue between religions, Morocco and world peace.

### **The nature of the curriculum**

The vision of this curriculum is based on a double entry, the first being ‘competencies/values’, aiming at developing the learners’ autonomy by putting them in situations of knowledge construction, experience acquisition, and the second being the establishment of values for implementation in their behavior.

The general principles are:

- The curriculum is based on the authorities’ principal documents – (the National Charter for Education and Training, Framework document, the White Paper)
- The specific competencies stand for the three components of the subject area (history & geography, citizenship education) and define the teaching approach and the nature of activities.
- Complementary links among the three components and between these components and the other disciplines constitute shared transferable competencies.
- Specific competencies, transferable competencies and methodological competencies are translated into tasks aimed at in each program of the school subjects.

The learning process takes place at two levels:

- a) Throughout the periods/cycles taking into consideration the cognitive stage, the cultural level, and perception degree of the learner.
- b) Within each period/cycle on the basis of a cumulative, progressive approach.

Therefore, we witness phases of:

- **Sensitizing** at the primary school level
- **Acquisition** at the middle school level
- And **consolidation** at the level of high school throughout the different school subjects, (Citizenship Education as a self-standing school subject disappears from the school program in this cycle)

More specifically, the competencies and basic notions of “citizenship education” for primary school are: self-awareness, reflection, decision making, argumentation, making choice, expression, desires and needs, needs and rights, rights and duties, rules and rights, respect of

difference, equality, cooperation and participation. The time allotted to this component is 25 hours per two weeks during Pre-school education (2 years). At the level of Primary school, for History & Geography, and Citizenship Education, the time table changes to 34 hours for 4<sup>th</sup> year, 51 hours for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years, equaling 1 hour per two weeks (4<sup>th</sup> year), and 1 hour 30 minutes (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year).

The detailed progression in primary school is:

4<sup>th</sup> year, 9/10 year-olds            the theme of the program is: Me and the others

### **Elements of the program:**

1. I become aware of myself as a human being
2. I consider myself as I am
3. I take the others as they are
4. I take care of myself/ I think about the dangers/ I argue
5. I think about my traffic safety
6. I get to know the dangers of smoking
7. Rule and Law
8. How to organize my work at home and school
9. How to listen interactively / communicating
10. Importance of team work, acting within a group, taking part in solidarity actions at school, neighborhood, and village
11. How to do research, organize data
12. Desires, needs and rights

### **5<sup>th</sup> year, 10/11 year-olds**

At this level a new line of themes is dealt with gradually. Elements of this course focus more on rights and duties, such as ‘what is a right?’; ‘what is the relationship between my right and other people’s right?’, and ‘how to exercise our citizenship at school’. Students are also trained and helped to create their own class councils, discover city/rural council (local democracy).

### **6<sup>th</sup> year, 11/12 year-olds**

The basic theme of this level program is ‘the Charter of the child rights’, covering elements such as ‘non-discrimination (e.g. boy/girl), the right for a name, a nationality, an identity, a flag.

### **At middle schools**

According to the ministry's framework document, **civic** education has been replaced by **citizenship** education because of the importance of citizenship values and human rights in the spirit of the letter of the education reform. The social function of citizenship education is distinguished by its contribution to the forming of a citizen, who is critical to the success of the development of the country faced by the challenges of the modern world.

Morocco has opted for strategic choices characterized by democratization of institutions and behaviors, reinforcement of the state-of-rights in correlation with the moralizing of public life, implementation of the new concept of authority, governance, and broadening of the scope of liberties and participation to civil society in order to meet the challenges of modernization.

In this regard, the school is endowed with a large and important role of anchoring values of active citizenship necessary for forming men and women with a sense of belonging to, and acting simultaneously for the welfare of the country. Schools are expected to help produce citizens that serve their communities with respect and generosity and for the fulfillment of the self in dignity.

For this reason, citizenship education is tasked with contributing to the education of young people in the conscientiousness of individual and collective rights and responsibilities. To do so, MOE memos and NCET have stressed that fact that the school has to be an open, appealing space for personality building, and acquisition of autonomy; a space for coexisting with others, and practicing effective citizenship. Such practice is not linked just to the legal majority allowing for political representation, especially in elections. For every stage of life, forms, expressions, and formulae for such practice are presented in the hope of socializing the child. Citizenship education, seen from the angle of its capacity to promote citizens' daily behavior, is likely to continue over time and participate with other channels in the anchoring of values in the spirit and behavior, and evolve through a normal, voluntary and continuous process.

With regards to the Moroccan Ministry of Education school manuals, we have examined a number of Social Studies textbooks used in middle schools. The Citizenship Education course was introduced in the Moroccan national curriculum in September 2003. Currently, this component is being taught from the fourth to the ninth grade. The middle school one focuses on a number of units such as the Civil and Political Rights, Political Parties, Labor Unions, the Rights and Responsibilities, Local Democracy, the Parliament, the Morocco Constitution,

Political Participation, Anticorruption, Peace, Human rights and Judiciary System. Each unit is allocated about 60 minutes per week. It is also worth noting that other disciplines such as French, English, and Arabic include some citizenship education concepts in the target language.

## 1.9. The educational context and didactic references

The objectives and pedagogical approaches are defined in compliance with the orientations of ‘the Charter’, ‘Framework Document’, and the ‘White Paper, which insist on:

- Building in the learner the desire to participate in public and private affairs;
- Awareness of rights and duties;
- Values of human rights;
- Meeting social needs especially through the development of citizenship education and democratic practices such as the attitudes necessary for ‘dialogue’, tolerance and respect of differences; and
- Meeting personal needs by encouraging positive interaction with the social environment across its different levels, anchoring the sense of responsibility and discipline, practice of citizenship and democracy, and respect of the natural environment.

It is worthwhile defining the concept of citizenship in its historical, political, and social context. Some definitions have to be retained.

“Citizenship is a necessary practice in democratic societies”

“It necessarily refers to rights and duties in all fields”

“It is organically linked to the notion of equality between all citizens”

“Its learning/acquisition necessarily takes place in a practical vision”

### Objectives of citizenship education

The effort invested by the school, in this regard, is to construct a citizen (man & woman) aware of his/her rights and responsibilities, and ready to practice them towards themselves and the community in which they belong.

It is, in essence, an education towards initiative taking, responsibility, and autonomy. It not only prepares the growing generation for practicing active citizenship, but also develops in

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them – if adequate teaching tools (syllabi, programs, learning strategies..) are effectively used - the capacity to be, at any age, any time, a citizen in the full sense of the word.

The learning cycle of citizenship education as behavior and practice is articulated in three main steps. The first step is **Discovery**: comprehension, and sensitizing. The second step is **Reaction**: awareness of the legal and civic dimensions of the issue(s) approached, as a step towards involvement. Finally, there comes the phase of **Action**: to make of the learner, in the short and long term, an active citizen at the national and international levels.

The implementation of the curriculum should fulfill the following objectives:

- Cognitive level: acquisition of cognitive capital to be functional in the field of citizenship; knowledge of styles, techniques, and forms of communication allowing for methodic actions.
- Affective level (attitudes): acquisition of citizenship values in two dimensions: rights and responsibilities.
- Practical level (action): taking concrete, even simple, actions to prove the realization of learning objectives in the field of citizenship education.

The ministerial frame document defines the referential competencies in terms of:

- a) **knowledge acquisition**, such as knowledge about events, concepts, and relationships helping the learner understand and be familiar with local, regional and national institutions; knowledge of the basic child and human rights.
- b) **Acquisition of methodology**, such as mastering research methodology, developing ways of behavior towards public buildings and how to preserve them, acquisition of tools of reflection allowing distinction between citizenship values and the concepts of human and child rights they entail. The curriculum also aims at allowing the learners to acquire a well-structured reflection in terms of creation, planning, and implementation.
- c) **Boosting of values and attitude taking** through the settling of the spirit of rules and regulations and respect of these rules, while practicing them on a daily basis; and also through the respect of local, regional and national institutions as well as contributing positively to their reinforcement.

In a nutshell, the concepts supporting competencies at the level of middle school could be summarized in the following list:

- Self-esteem, reasoning, decision making, argumentation, making choices,
- Desire/need, need/right, right/duty, rule/law
- Respect of difference, equality, mutual help, cooperation, solidarity, conflict resolution,
- Peace, democracy, tolerance, institutions, rules of social life, politics, and citizenship.

However, the time allotted to citizenship education at middle school is one weekly hour for each of the three components, which totals **32 hours each per one\_year**. This is not enough time to allow for effective teaching.

### **1.10. The teaching/learning strategy and approaches:**

Citizenship education cannot accomplish its mission if it is considered as a separate school subject. Its essential principles, drawn from personal experiences and daily-life events, must be infused across all activities, both in or out-of-school activities. Another essential requirement is that, for the curriculum to meet the desired objectives, students must be effectively reflecting, discussing, involved in, and expressing their opinion so that their adherence to values and principles stems from conscious choices. The field of citizenship education taps into the whole system of religious, social, and universal values, the components of which constitute the basis for harmonious management of a rich and diverse society. .

Program units are articulated in terms of practice activities, and students directly involved. Reflection and student interaction are also encouraged in the units. Activities are varied and an environment is fostered where learning, preparation, follow-up and application are supported. The instructor (teacher) should be a coach and a model, making use of different techniques such as role play, case studies and scenarios.

Assessment is mostly summative, and “paper-and-pencil” exams are administered for students to get a pass-or-fail mark. This is a major handicap to the nature of citizenship education as a discipline, since behavior is often challenging to grade.

## Other research, evaluation and reports on the health of citizenship education in Morocco

- The publication in December 2004 of a report by the Moroccan Organization of Human Rights (MOHR):

20 books on 64 programmed by the MOE were analyzed with emphasis on respect for fundamental human rights values and citizenship based on tolerance, equality and respect for the dignity of the individual. "In terms of content, a lot of ground has been covered in this first generation of reform of the books, but flaws remain. Certain beliefs and values, old reflexes still continue to be carried by some sections of the faculty", says one of the studies on educational reform.

- In January 2005, the American organization, Human Rights Education Associates, in association with the Central Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship under the Department of Education, conducted an analytical reading of 50 Moroccan textbooks covering virtually all materials in order to determine the place given to human rights and equality between the sexes.

- In November 2013, the synthesis of a study by Progetto MLAL\* and Amnesty International Morocco was presented. It was intended, according to its authors, to "identify and classify gender stereotypes prevalent in Morocco, and identify the mechanisms by which these stereotypes help nourish discrimination and perpetuate violence against women. There was also an analysis of different male and female representations and finally analysis of perceptions and attitudes of women and young people vis-à-vis gender stereotypes. (Progetto MLAL: NGO national and international volunteering.)

The textbook reform remains one of the areas where the Charter of Education and Training has made the most progress, certainly, and great effort in the development of textbooks has been accomplished; yet, the fact remains that improvements are still needed to optimize profitability in terms of impregnation values of equality and the fight against violence and discrimination against women and especially the girl. If the results of the conducted studies and surveys vary according to the consulted manuals and targeted themes, two major findings appear to be predominant:

- A real commitment on the part of MOE to openness and modernization to be in harmony with the universal principles of human rights.
- The persistence of stereotypes and prejudice on the role and place of women in society.

Thus, according to some of the studies cited above:

- The quality of the content of some manuals is mixed because they have not complied with the specifications
- There is an inequality in the place given to women in all school books
- More than direct violence, the presence in some manuals of symbolic violence ‘clichés’ by which men are stronger, smarter and crafty; and women are fearful. Gender relations are based on value judgments to describe the differences. According to these studies, the image given of women in textbooks does not allow the girl to find positive role models; eg for gender equality, in consulted manuals, the image of man is predominant and macho (93%) compared to that of women (7%) (this is the man who goes to work when the girls help their mother in the kitchen). In another textbook, 93% of men play sports against 7% of women. Thus, the woman is almost 7 times less represented than man. "We have the impression of living in a society of men!" deploras a responsible. In other books, the woman is described as being sensitive, fine, soft, kind, loving and laborious, often assigned to domestic work, education of children, to the role of mother and housewife, while the man, intelligent, courageous, assertive, inquisitive, occupies the role of head of household, takes care of the materialistic needs of his home. The Woman is, thus, driven to devote herself to the private sphere of her husband and his family, when the man enjoys a fulfilling social life. Moreover, if she has a profession it is often a subordinate profession.

## Chapter III: Focus group discussions

### 3.1. Data collection

This focus group discussions covered five different regions of Morocco; north, west coast, mid country, and south as shown in the table and map of Morocco below. Sampling was done in both urban and rural areas. In fact six schools have been selected, each providing a focus group of 6 to 10 participants representing: the student, administration, teachers, parents, and civil society. Gender was taken into consideration to allow for equal representation of both genders as shown in the table below:

Date	Number of Participants	Gender		Are / Site
		Male	Female	
11/05/2015	8	6	2	Casablanca
15/05/2015	10	4	6	Salé
22/05/2015	10	5	5	El-Jadida
23/05/2015	10	3	7	Tetouan
29/05/2015	10	3	7	Beni Mellal
30/05/2015	6	4	2	Marrakech
Total Number	54	25	29	6

**Figure 3: Focus group participants**



Figure 4: Map of Morocco

### 3.2. Focus Group Discussions

The sample was a convenience one; carefully drawn to ensure that the respondents should be able to supply sufficient, varied and detailed accounts for the purpose of the study. The investigation intended to diagnose people's conceptualization of responsible citizenship, their involvement in civil society, and their attitudes towards violence in the school environment.

Collection of data was deemed appropriate through a single meeting of nearly two hours with each group.

The focal theme of discussions was citizenship education and violence in schools and their surroundings, as well as violence directed to the female gender. However, for thorough understanding of the Moroccan scene, other satellite subjects had to be tackled during these focus-group discussions such as: a) participants' awareness and conceptualization of civic education, b) effectiveness of teaching approaches used, c) parents' involvement in school management, d) students' involvement in civil society, and e) effectiveness of civil society. Finally, each focus-group meeting closed with an invitation of participants' suggestions and recommendations in order to ward off, or reduce school violence especially against women.

For all the focus groups, discussions within each group were chaired by a moderator (International expert), assisted by two local experts. All meetings were audio recorded, with notes taken by moderators and their assistants. Participants' contributions were structured in such a way that would likely avoid participants' influencing, intimidating, or embarrassing one another, due to their differing backgrounds in terms of age, gender, level of instruction, life experience, and mastery of the language of communication. Therefore, it was preferable always to start an item discussion with the young students talking first, before giving the floor to teachers or headmasters to expound on the same question or issue.

The moderator's role was to ensure that all participants had a chance to speak in relation to each new item on the agenda. Monopoly or domination from the part of individual participants was dealt with promptly so as to allow for equal share of time of speech for all participants. No agreements or disagreements, nor value judgments were expressed, or conveyed by the researchers or their assistants as to participants' contributions.

### 3.3. Data analysis techniques

A set of techniques was used to analyze the transcripts and notes yielded by the group meetings. First of these techniques, **classical content analysis**, was adopted to allow for mixed methods content analysis. **Key-words-in-context** was also used as a supplementary means of analysis for better grasping of the culture of the use of words (Fielding & Lee, 1998). Where and when appropriate, **discourse analysis** was used, whereby unique segments of the transcript were selected and analyzed in order to "examine how versions of elements such as society community, institutions... emerge in discourse" (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002),

always bearing in mind the three fundamental assumptions: **antirealism**, **constructionism**, and **reflexivity** (Cowan and McLeod). **Non-verbal** communication was also taken into consideration, and was part of data collection and analysis by the research team.

### 3.4. Findings and discussion

#### Civic Education / Responsible citizenship

##### (Definition, curriculum, teaching methods, and parents' contribution)

Participants showed differences in their understandings of the term “civic education”. For some students (6 in 10) it was associated with “good behavior”/ “good conduct”. Two students said it was a set of values such as solidarity, cooperation, compassion and tolerance. Another student defined it as ‘serving the community and the country’. For another student it meant education and training on a set of ‘ethics’.

We observed frequent use of short sentences and longer pauses in the discourse of this group of participants. However, no signs of reluctance or intimidation showed on the students.

The teachers were very keen on discussing the subject and almost all of them elaborated on the definition from different perspectives. Consensus was that responsible citizenship means:

- A set of values that have to be built in the learner so that he/she becomes a fit citizen.
- Solidarity, cooperation, call for peace and democracy, respect of others and tolerance.
- Equality and equity

In each group there was at least one participant who mentioned that citizenship education started from home and should be given the importance it deserves as of the early years of schooling.

Talking about the efficiency of curricula and teaching approaches as regards the school subject of civic education, many concerns were expressed and challenges underlined. Among those challenges, teachers, headmasters and even civil society representatives expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that the subject is not introduced until the middle school, when the students are already over the age of twelve and then disappears from the curriculum in high school. Moreover, the few weekly hours allotted to it are not enough to guarantee effective teaching/learning. Due to these limitations, the subject is seen to be emptied from its

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essence as a system of thinking and conduct, and is dealt with in the same way as other school subjects, so that students take it just as **‘something to learn for the exams’**

The teachers themselves who are responsible for this subject matter have had no prior training in the field and find themselves not well equipped to teach it more effectively. In addition, they recognized that the assessment system of MASSAR<sup>5</sup> makes it difficult for them to deal with civic education as a competence or behavior because of the marking system imposed on all school subjects at regular intervals.

***“It is almost impossible for us to conciliate between the processes of changing the students’ behavior in the real world, and compliance with the grading system of evaluation. Behavior is difficult to evaluate and mark, on the one hand, and the ministry requires you to provide the administration with exam grades to feed to computer software –MASSAR (Female teacher)***

Another interesting point raised by administrative staff and teachers was their concern that parents do not contribute enough to the education of their children. General agreement in the opening discussions had been that responsible citizenship and civic education always starts at home; yet, administration and teachers claim that they had difficulty communicating with parents, and getting assistance from them as concerns their children’s misconduct at school. Instead, they claim that parents always support their own children against teachers and administration in cases in difficult situations, which only leads to students’ increased adversity towards teaching staff and schoolmates as well. Such a situation, in their opinion negatively impacts the efficiency of the whole process of civic education, so that, they feel like “hopeless transporters” of a subject matter devoid of its true meaning to uninterested students who, in turn, seem unwilling to get involved.

However, from our part as professional researchers, we analyzed the discourse of this category of participants from different perspectives, and though we are not in a position to value-judge participants’ statements, opinions and attitudes as being true or false, we should note that attention should be paid to rhetorical organization, accountability, and positioning of

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<sup>5</sup> MASSAR is a newly integrated School Management System that provides a number of electronic services for the benefit of teacher, students and their parents

the speakers in the interpretation of their contributions (Cowan & McLeod, 2004; Billig, 1996).

## **Violence & School violence**

### **(Definitions, types, causes, participants' attitudes, and suggestions for remedy)**

The theme that captured participants' interest most was that of school violence and gender inequality. Participants were asked to give their own perceptions and definitions of what they considered as violence. Then they were asked to enumerate the different types or facets the phenomenon and relate them to possible causes. Some participants (teachers, students, and parents) even narrated their own experiences whereby they had either witnessed or underwent similar situations.

Defining violence in the general, broad meaning of the word, students were more concerned with the physical (corporal) manifestation of the act, such as wrestling, punching, slapping or kicking acts between two people or groups of people. Most of the boys claimed that such behavior is often times legitimate, or more, necessary to ward off other people's aggression.

**“How do you expect me to react when someone insults my mother in front of others? Or when they just want to take your possessions (pens, hat, mobile phone etc...) just because you look gentle, thin or you seem not to belong to a particular clan?... now very few dare mess with me after I had almost a week's fight with some guys who had bullied me on many occasions. I had to bring my elder brother and his friends after school for five successive days and start a ferocious fight with the enemy, till administration intervened. They knew I was not the instigator”.** (speaking in a very proud satisfied way)

#### **A male student, 14 years old**

In 4 groups out of six, the female students stressed the fact that they were much more worried about verbal violence, especially from boys within school and males of all ages outside school. A student, almost in tears, talked about her own experience:

**“It's quite normal to exchange angry words or come to grips with someone, for there is always a reason behind the fight; but when you keep hearing dirty language wherever you are just because you are a 'woman', and no one dares defend you, and you have to**

**accept it, this is depressing**". She added "even your family does not seem to sympathize with you; on the contrary, they put the blame on you claiming that the way you dress is the cause giving the others the right to treat you as a 'girl-of-the-street' (sic)"

For a female student, violence was associated with verbal and corporal mistreatment:

*"When I hear violence I immediately imagine beating, yelling and insulting"* (female student)

For another student, *"violence reveals the doer's level of instruction and education as well as his/her weakness of personality"*.

More interestingly, two students considered violence as being manifest even non-verbally, especially coming from teachers who neglect their students by not sincerely listening to them, or even by showing irresponsibility, when they let students in class alone, doing nothing and not being attended to, and just leave the classroom to engage in long talks with their colleagues.

Physical/corporal aggressive behavior was considered by most participants to be most prevalent among male students, who were viewed to easily become involved in street-fighting, even within the classroom in the presence of their teachers, and most often for 'trivialities'. On the other hand, female students stated that they were very frequently victims of harassment within school from their peers and, in some cases, from teachers, too.

A girl and a boy from one group declared that showing violence and aggressive behavior was sometimes necessary either for the sake of survival in a community, which they considered aggressive by nature (the home, the street, and the school surroundings), or as a strategy to integrate school groups (clans) and guarantee security/protection, or just to ward off opponent clans' aggression.

Another group of students confessed that they reverted to disruptive behavior because the class felt bored with lessons or with a particular teacher, or just for the sake of having fun, but not because they were really 'BAD' students.

Other instances of students' aggressive conduct within the classroom were related to the teachers' own behavior towards students in the form of humiliation, insults and corporal punishment:

*“We must confess that we do not accept open criticism in front of others (i.e. class mates). That’s why we sometimes overreact, even if the teacher was right”*, a male student said.

However, what is worth noticing in this section is that most students, girls and boys, (12) vehemently defended their violent attitudes or aggressive behavior as being an expression of **revolt against social and academic pressure** that they are exposed to. A girl said:

*We were often terrorized at home by my elder brother, who was a drug addict, and I was always terrified when he got home and thus could not work on my school subjects or do homework’.*

Teachers approached the issue of violence from different angles and provided more extensive definitions including types, sources, and directions of violence. They underlined the physical aspect of it, the verbal and even the hidden (non-verbal) aspect, especially from adults (parents/teachers) towards the young.

Depicting the sources, reasons and causes of violence, teachers from four groups reported that:

- Pressure on parents to cope with life necessities causes their failure to foster adequate education and supervision of their children.
- Violence is spreading within families and homes.
- Violence is becoming a common facet of the Moroccan society, witnessed almost everywhere. The best examples are our Moroccan football stadiums and the thousands, if not millions, of supporters within stadiums or outside in cafés.
- Concepts and values are constantly changing in our society creating a loss of identity. This may be due to permanent exposure movies, TV programs from all corners of the globe.
- Youngsters have lost or are losing the sense of differentiation between civic conduct and non-civic conduct, or right and wrong.
- Early-age smoking, alcohol and drug addiction have invaded our schools, while adolescents are left without protection or assistance.

- Teachers working conditions are not encouraging (underequipped, overcrowded classes, overloaded timetables, and very difficult, spoiled students) and have led to a ‘let-go, let-do’ attitude.

*“You just put the blame on the whole system when you get lost and feel helpless”.* (teacher)

When the question of parents’ involvement and contribution into school governance and their children’s learning outcomes, most teachers and administrative staff (including two headmasters) complained about the fact that **“the majority of parents are convinced that the matter of their children’s education is totally the school’s responsibility”**. A teacher made a quite striking observation. He said that he had noticed that students had common attitude and behavior according to the relative districts or neighborhood they came from; which he interpreted as the impact of the ‘outdoor’/ ‘street’ outweighing the impact of family education on the students. His conclusion was that parents are almost disconnected from their own children as these children grow to take on irresponsible street behavior which they value and thus take with them to schools.

### **Who assaults whom?**

Teacher-student violence was reported to make up a large proportion of violence within schools. It was emphasized from some female students that many teachers trespass the limits of their responsibility and respect towards female students. Intolerance and irritability was also seen as a common feature among contemporary teachers, too.

*“They get angry very quickly and start yelling and swearing, and use or threaten to use ‘bad marks’ for punishment, or else use the situation as an excuse to stop giving the lesson and retreat to their desk-corner of the classroom”* (student)

*“A female teacher of ours uses offensive language with girls in front of everybody, and leaves you in tears, and you can’t react... (shows emotion)... some students fear such situations and start missing school, during which time they take up undesired practices (insinuating smoking, drugs etc...)* (student)

Student-student violence was reported as the most prevalent in the school environment and surroundings. The most frequent form is bullying. The bigger, older boys are often bullying

the weaker, younger ones. Bullying victims typically do not report incidents to administrators or teachers for fear they will be assaulted again once they leave school.

One teacher mentioned (and others agreed) that it is most often low achieving students who tend to be disruptive and aggressive towards their classmates. He related violence, in general, to the absence of parent control, or even care whether their children attend school or not. “In other instances,” he continues, “those who feel outcast because of their low achievement, or because they can’t afford extra-time classes for financial reasons, try to attract attention by fair means or fowl”.

Student-teacher violence was also mentioned and thoroughly discussed in all six groups. From their part, the students who had a say in this issue, mostly stressed the causes as being: a) problems they have at home and anxiety they undergo trying to cope with living conditions, on the one hand, and lack of teachers and admin staff who really listen to them and understand how they exactly feel. (The term ‘**understand us**’ was used over 10 times by the students).

Another cause was reported to be the underlying the teaching ‘programs’ and the ‘ways they are taught’ (here meaning syllabus and teaching methodology). They claim that lessons were not interesting in many instances; communication was almost impossible due to class size and noisy atmosphere and all was crowned by irritable teachers.

Dealing with the administration was another cause in the eyes of students. Administrative staff was reportedly too hard on students, so that expulsion from a class or refusal to give leave to a student to resume classes, after a prior absence, always required summoning their parents to school. The consequence is that students often choose not to inform their parents and stay away from school for longer periods. Lastly, discrimination of teachers among students of the same class was one of the causes, they said, that drove them mad, so they think they have the right to explode from time to time, paying no heed to anyone or anything else.

Administrators’ views provided a very different perspective. A headmaster expressed his concern that students were becoming more and more violent for almost no justified reasons. He gave the examples of vandalism happening everywhere through the country.

***“You can’t find a school where taps are not broken, or taken off, light bulbs of high ceilings battered, walls written on in ugly ways and bad language. Even students’ desks are***

*damaged, to the extent that in thirty desks of a classroom, you may find that only ten or twelve might be usable, because the seating place or the desk board has been torn apart. And this is not natural degradation. It's a pity our students have lost the sense of responsibility and respect*

(Headmaster)

Administration also puts the blame on parents, in that they do very little or nothing at all to reduce their children's non-civic behavior. Worse, Administrators' claimed that some parents are not even aware of the true personality and character of their children, and tend to back them against their teachers and school administration in general. They noted that some parents equate schools with prison institutions.

An administration member said that students are spoiled at home, and have no sense of accountability. The member believed that students associated rigor for them as punishment. The member also noted that educators have to deal with many cases at the same time and solve problems on the spot every day, every morning or afternoon session and that they have situations almost every break-time. Therefore, the administrator felt that they have to be alert every single minute of the working day and have ready-made solutions. Moreover, the member said that they have to wear so many hats at the same time, and perform roles that they have not been prepared or trained to perform: they must be the parent, the classmate, the teacher, the warden, the lawyer and judge etc...often without the assistance of the teachers.

*“Teachers have to be in more control of their classes, and should call for us less frequently to solve their problems with their students. I think teaching ways should be reconsidered in order to sensitize our learners on good, responsible conduct and also make them benefit from and feel the positive results of such conduct”.*

(Class warden)

The teachers who discussed students' violence towards teachers could be classified in two different categories in terms of perception and approach.

The first category viewed students' aggressive behavior towards their teachers and administration as part of, or sample of the whole image and culture of modern society. For them society is increasingly getting more violent with the exposure to media. They remarked that the news media reporting is focused mostly on wars and killings throughout the globe,

and on violent crimes committed in the country. They also noted the high prevalence of violence in the film media as a vehicle that introduces violence in everyday life of our students. Therefore, they reason that viewing violence has led to our students' becoming more aggressive and thus more difficult to control.

Other teachers agreed on the universality of violence, but stressed the particularity of Moroccan schools. They say the situation is alarming, and that many teachers do not feel secure working in some school districts that are considered dangerous since their students bring in to school the culture of their environment.

When asked about solutions, or suggestions for solutions, participants suggested the following:

- Students: setting up listening centers for students; Election of student reps for each class; involving the students in school decisions; and better communication at home.
- Teachers suggested two ways of dealing with violence; a) immediate action, through listening centers; and b) **preventive anticipatory action**, that is, through communication and negotiation with the students throughout the school year. In other words, teaching staff and administration should be more involved in their students' social and family life in order to have more and deeper insight into the pupils' personality make up.
- Establishing a counseling service to diagnose the cases of violence.
- Holding regular meetings with parents and teachers.
- Giving positive feedback, and motivating the students to love school, and love their country.

Other suggestions have also been given such as social assistance and psychiatric help in order to cut off the students from the risks of the outside world. A teacher felt nostalgia for the old values of education and the culture of respect that prevailed in our society and homes two decades ago.

Speaking for the community, the NGOs representatives expressed their dissatisfaction with the situation. They highlighted the lack of cultural and social activities in many schools, plus the refusal of schools to host the community activities. They stress the total absence of press

and media from the scene of civic education, though they can play a major role in sensitizing the youth towards the importance of rights and responsibilities.

Community representatives who took part in these focus groups, had their say in each and every point evoked in discussions. Suffice it to make, here, a brief sketching of the main concerns they expressed, and the contributions they think they made in the field of sensitizing both the citizens in general, and the students in particular towards responsible citizenship.

- “For more than six years now, we have been working on involving people to keep their environment clean and safe, by conducting periodical ‘street-cleaning’ with the help of neighbors and their children... but this is not the only thing we want to do for eternity. We need to work closely with students at schools; conduct seminars and workshops; provide awareness campaigns and have the students speak up their minds; Yet, school administrations do not allow us easy access. Perhaps they are afraid of political partying, or afraid that their weaknesses are revealed to the external environments.”

NGO leader from Casablanca

- “some school staff accused us of illegally interfering with their own business. Absurd! Isn’t it?”

NGO representative of Sale

- “We have planted trees around Al Khawarizmi high school in Casablanca, and painted its walls from the outside. The headmaster allowed us to enter and clean the sports grounds of the school and refurbish the facilities such as the spectators’ benches, the dressing rooms, and the showers, but when we asked to use the school facilities for both students and neighborhood residents to promote citizenship through cultural and social activities he was reluctant. He said it was not within his authority to allow in strangers to the school. The Ministry of education forbids such actions, for fear of vandalism or accidents of people not covered by Government insurance.”

NGO based in Casablanca

- “Procedures to operate within schools or with students belonging to a school are so complex and complicated that we often act on the street as if we were holding a trade fair. Only passers-by and very few students get interested in what we do”.
- “We have more access to higher education institutions than to schools. Administrative procedures are so complex.

## Chapter IV: Interviews

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Allowing a qualitative aspect for our investigation, and paving the ground for sound, reliable triangulation, this part aims to introduce another tool of research, which is the interview protocol. Far from being just a matter of taste or aesthetics, interviews are likely to provide the researcher with in-depth information pertaining to the participants’ experiences, viewpoints, and attitudes towards a particular topic.

For the purpose of this diagnostic study, we had to choose among three different formats of interviews, summarized and discussed by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), which are: (a) Informal Conversational Interview (ICI); (b) General Interview Guide Approach (GIGA); and (c) Standardized Open-Ended Interview (SOEI).

ICI relies entirely on the “spontaneous generation of questions in a natural interaction” (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003), lacks structure and is flexible; however, it might be unstable or unreliable, making it difficult to code data (Creswell, 2007).

GIGA, on the other hand, is more structured than ICI, and leaves room for flexibility in the way questions are asked. The only thing that matters most is that the researcher makes sure the “same general areas of information are collected from each interviewee (McNamara, 2009)

SOEI is extremely structured in terms of wording, and allows participants to fully express their experiences and viewpoints; yet, coding data in SOEI is a bit of challenge to the researcher (Creswell, 2007)

Therefore, our choice tended more towards GIGA technique for the advantage it has on both levels of design and data processing, while still borrowing from SOEI the feature of adequacy and appropriateness of topic design and question formulation. We made sure the general topic was broken down into distinct sub-themes, for each of which questions were carefully designed and worded. Such strategy helped us focus the scope of participants' responses in order to guarantee appropriate and reliable raw discourse data.

#### 4.1. Methodology: structure of the interviews

Over 30 participants took part in the interviews. Aged between 20 and 26, 18 males and 12 females, the participants were either university students or post graduates in private higher education institutions from different cities across Morocco. The interviews were conducted during two main events organized by MCCE: a summer camp on leadership and community service held in Bouznika and a round table on to celebrate the International Day of Democracy organized in Casablanca.

The purpose of the interviews was clearly explained to participants, beforehand, and terms of confidentiality, format and timing were addressed by the interviewer. Notes were taken by an assistant during each interview, but for the sake of objectivity and reliability, every encounter was audio-recorded, with the understanding and consent of participants. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Neither questions of bias, nor value judgment questions were asked, so as to preserve the detachment and neutrality of the interviewer.

The following table shows the institutions, the cities, number of participants and gender:

Institutions	City	Number of Participants	Gender	
			Male	Female
Hassan II University, Casablanca	Casablanca	6	3	3
ENCG (National School for Business and Management), Casablanca	Casablanca	4	2	2
Cadi Ayad University, Marrakesh	Marrakesh	4	2	2
ENCG(National School for Business and Management),, Tangiers	Tangiers	3	2	1
Al-Akhawayn University, Ifrane	Ifrane	2	2	0
Abdelmalik Saadi University, Martil	Martil	3	2	1
Hassan I university, Settati	Settat	4	2	2

Ibn Zohr University, Agadir	Agadir	4	3	1
Total Number	7	30	18	12

## 4.2. Data Analysis

**Question: What is your own definition and understanding of citizenship?**

**What is your perception of civic education?**

The first axis of the interviews was “participant’s own definition and understanding” of citizenship, and civic education.

Most respondents demonstrated a relatively good understanding of what the concept meant. For 20 out of 30 participants, citizenship meant participation in the social, and political life of the nation, a set of values and a code of conduct that builds up an individual aware of his/her own responsibilities (duties).

For others (8 males and females) a good citizen was the one who “respects the environment, does not litter, and respects others”.

Two participants view citizenship as a type of education (teaching) of children on a set of principles and values starting from the home, within family, before school takes over the job. And the final objective of it is the construction of a positive citizen who loves his country and contributes to its development.

**❖ Education institutions and citizenship education: to what extent have schools/universities contributed to the teaching of responsible citizenship?**

**Basic Questions:**

- **Did you benefit from any formal training?**

- **How efficient or inefficient was your training on citizenship at your school/university?**

On this point most respondents were categorically negative, and remember very little about the instances or situations where they were directly exposed to teachings on citizenship.

100 % of the respondents claimed they had no subject, module, or lesson explicitly addressing the matter of citizenship education at the level of their university courses. Only two participants declared that one of their teachers at university had always been an active member of solidarity groups and charities, and used to involve his students in serving the community through actions, activities both inside and outside university. He also fostered lessons and workshops to sensitize and motivate his students.

The most outstanding observation is that most of the respondents who mentioned having had classes on citizenship during their high school experience, stressed the fact that: (a) the relative units were just sub-sections of other school subjects such as history and geography; (b) the units or lessons were more like an exhibition of knowledge or vague information from the part of their teachers; (c) the textbooks content was hardly understandable (due to the mismatch between nature of content and age of the recipients), thus boring; (d) whatever they had to learn –understood or not – was for the sake of passing exams or other scoring purposes.

*“During my schooling, I had to collect and gather fragments of knowledge on my own, from different school subjects, and try to make sense of them”... “I also had the opportunity, once or twice, to join some of my neighborhood students in some solidarity and charity activities, which I appreciated very much. And that triggered the interest in me”*

(male participant)

Very few of the participants talked favorably of their school experience, but the ones who keep good memories of that experience (two girl students) spoke high of a former teacher who used to teach “true citizenship” [sic] and behave as a true responsible citizen. This teacher, in their opinion, was the one who opened their eyes on community service, solidarity, respect of one’s limits of freedom.

#### ❖ **Family involvement in school governance and children education.**

#### **Basic Questions:**

- **To what extent have your parents contributed to your education on responsible citizenship?**
- **To what extent have your parents contributed/are now contributing to the running of your institution?**

Not surprisingly, all participants tended to make one interesting point about the questions themselves first. That is, running the school with direct participation of parents was almost fiction for the respondents. They said even parents would not like to be involved that enterprise as it is generally the business of the government and administration people.

*“My parents have taught (told) me mostly what was right to do and should be done, and what was not right to do and should not be done so as to avoid punishment”*

(female participant)

*“The times my parents went to my school (often it was mum) were either to consult attendance records, ask about exam grades, or complain about some of my peers for bullying.”* (male student)

*“I remember we had parents’ associations till high school, and many parents used to attend general meetings regularly (not my parents of course, “smiling”), but I don’t think parents should be involved in our university life. We are old enough to take care of ourselves”.*

In a nutshell, most respondents tend to admit that the majority of parents do not seem to be concerned with the running of their children’s schools as much as in their children’s security and success. Moreover, it would be an insult to young university students to think of their parents’ visiting their university.

Another point mentioned by a participant, regarding parents’ actual involvement, is that regardless of most parents’ education, it was a matter of availability of these parents and not of their will, if they could not be present at their children’s institutions. Most families of today have both parents working, thus they have very little or no time to spare on matters they think pertaining to administration and teaching staff.

#### ❖ **School violence**

##### **Basic Questions:**

- **What is your definition of violence?**

- **How do you feel about school violence?**
- **Females: Have you ever been victim of school violence? What was it? And how did you feel about it?**
- **Males: Have you ever been involved in violence against a female? Can you talk about it now?**

A host of definitions were given to the concept/notion of violence. The most recurring ones could be summarized as follows:

“Violence is...

- Unjustified or exaggerated use of physical or verbal behavior that would constitute a threat to another person, or his/her property.
- Trespassing the limits of freedom of others in an aggressive way.
- Not necessarily physical, but could be verbal, spiritual, mental, gestural.
- Offence on others, physical or moral”.

“Perpetrators of violence could be ...

- Students against other students, males or females
- Students against teachers and admin staff
- Teachers against students, males and females, but in different ways
- Admin staff against students
- Passers-by or invaders of schools surroundings, especially against females

“Instances of school violence:

- Students’ bullying their class/school mates; verbally offending girls
- Students frequently causing unnecessary disturbance in class, just to annoy teachers and intimidate their peers
- Teachers taking extreme disciplinary measures by using negative-mark systems, or humiliating low achieving students in front of their class mates.
- Admin staff abusing of authority in order to intimidate students, and calling it “rigor”

Participants also mentioned the fact that some people, generally other young males from the neighborhood of the institutions, and even from remote places, do assault on the immediate surroundings of the schools, basically to bereave younger or weaker students of their possessions, such as mobile phones, valuables, or just to harass female students.

Most respondents stressed the fact that violence has dramatically increased across all levels of society, and against all odds. That is even the **“so called educated, civilized and well-to-do adult people are ready to show adversity and anger at any time, and for the most trivial reasons”**.

**“Ordinary discourse between youth, and even primary school students is full of dirty, aggressive speech”**

Female participant

Violence was declared to be very frequent between males and a kind of strategy for boys to prove their virility, and ascertain themselves; yet for others joining into aggressive behavior was a means to ensure belonging to a specific clan or group, and thus avoid being target for assault.

Curiously enough, when asked about their opinion and attitude towards school violence, most male respondents declared it was quite normal in a world of clash and adversity, and where crime and organized crime are dramatically expending.

**“Just look at the most popular movies throughout the world, in cinemas and on home TVs. Consider the news we keep getting round the clock. War, crime, rape, hold up, hooliganism in and outside stadiums (mass aggression), all these have become part of your daily routine wherever you live. It is quite normal that we grow as street fighters if we want to get some respect”**.

(Male respondent)

Female respondents sadly confessed that harassment, though very in their university premises, was a commonality among most male grown-ups and adults, who feel no shame or remorse throwing offensive words at them on sight.

**“Some even dare grab your arm and force you to stop and hear the rubbish they have. I get scared at the sight of boys coming my way especially when it is more than one. You never know what to expect from them. Government should do something about it.”**

(Female participant)

Very few males responded spontaneously to the question of whether they had been involved in harassment of girls. Some of them said that it was one way among others to get a date, or it was just fun talking to ladies you encounter. **“It’s just silly, funny words as a way of joking; no offense”.**

### ❖ **Suggestions and Solutions**

#### **Basic Questions:**

- **Do you believe in the possibility of constructing responsible citizens in the near future?**
- **What should be done to reduce violence in schools?**
- **Who do you think are the real makers of change?**
- **If you were asked to suggest an activity or a lesson topic for a text book of citizenship education, what would you suggest?**

At this stage of interviews, respondents were encouraged to come up with any suggestion or recommendation they deemed helpful to offset the present conditions of the Moroccan context. Proposals were numerous, and suggestions tapped into all levels and facets of society. To name just a few for the sake of the instance, the majority of participants underlined the importance of home and family. For them, education starts at home, and parents should make a religion of their children being fully aware of their rights and responsibility, and then acting upon them as innate behavior.

“However, parents must set a good example themselves, by avoiding dispute in front of their little children, and abstaining from dirty language with family members. More importantly, parents should get rid of corporal punishment for their children’s education if they want their children not to develop bad habits unconsciously, and then take them out to society and school.

Nearly half of the participants were skeptical about change in the near future, because for them many aspects and dimensions of our country/society have to be reconsidered. For example poverty and illiteracy yield drug addiction, unemployment, outlaws and crime. Absence of education leads to unawareness and even intended ignorance of responsibility and regulations. Another point made in this regard is the element of time, even in ideal situations.

**“It takes more than fourteen years of teaching for an individual to reach the baccalaureate level. And still they get just 18 years old, which is an age of wisdom yet. So you cannot expect much from them at this age of rebellion”.**

**“Citizenship education programs should match students’ cognitive and intellectual growth. I have always hated lessons I did not understand. They are source of frustration and stress.”**

(Female participant)

Participants’ opinions on real shakers to bring about the change differed a little. Some stressed government ministers as they were the highest ranking authority people, and who can easily raise the necessary funds for projects. Other participants still maintained that parents were the most important actors who really begin the indoctrination of children, and the ones who follow them in their lives even longer than their own teachers. For three participants, it was the legislative and executive ‘law people’ who should be more rigorous in preserving citizens’ security, property and dignity. However, more than twenty of the participants admitted the importance of teachers’ involvement in the success of the rescue operation. They need only the time, adequate content to use, necessary equipment, and training in order to be effective in their mission.

## Chapter V: Conclusions and recommendations

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With reference to the reading and analysis of MOE documents and textbooks, it is worth noticing from the outset that the ambition and drive to promote citizenship education and forge responsible citizens is so strong that almost every single detail of what to teach, when to teach it, and how to teach it has been considered in the main ministerial documents, such as the NCET, the WB, and the Frame Document'. However, this level of “**design**” seems to be incongruent with what actually takes place in the classroom, or school at the level of “**procedural implementation**”, as newspaper reports are constantly growing in number concerning street violence, household violence - especially beaten wives. Even schools are not violence-free (as already stated in previous focus groups discussions). It is high time something was done to overcome such a wide gap.

From the focus group discussions and interviews with university students, it has been revealed that the young and dynamic students are aware of the importance of the subjects of discussions, and are ready to face challenge. However, these subjects need guidance, and adequate supervision to explore and exploit their potentialities for the success of the common project of active, responsible citizenship. Regarding other actors (educators, parents and civil society activists), they are willing to contribute and strive for the noble goal provided that their legitimate requirements for efficiency and efficacy be taken into consideration.

- **Conclusion 1**

The time load allotted to the subject matter of citizenship education (including the child's rights) at the level of middle school is not enough, set against the substantial amount of teaching content, which may consequently lead to superficial classroom treatment of the themes and activities on the part of teachers. These teachers, in turn, suffer from time constraints and large-size classes. In addition, school administrative staff are concerned more about institutional schedules and timings, and not really comfortable with conflict situations.

### **Recommendation**

MOE should devote more time to citizenship education activities to promote human rights and democracy values and to reduce school violence. Therefore, more teacher training

workshops should be conducted. Furthermore, school clubs that involve students should be activated by MOE and NGOs in coordination with parents.

- **Conclusion 2**

The schools seem to be cut off from the outside world, for though it is assumed that students should leave schools to pay visits to different institutions, or to conduct field research, administrative procedures to give students leave to go out of school and guarantee their safety are very complicated. Moreover, NGOs and CSOs are not allowed in schools unless they get permission from the MOE authorities. Therefore, headmasters and school administrators find themselves in a dilemma of whether to grant students permission to leave their schools or allow outsiders in to their institutions.

**Recommendation 1:**

There should be a link between the classroom and the community fostered by rule changes and efforts of the MOE. Elected and community members should be part and parcel of the school management boards to ensure good governance. University researchers should expand their research to schools and be mindful of the students' need in terms of the learning processes.

**Recommendation 2:**

Parents and families should play a role in promoting citizenship education of their children. They must be helped to become more involved in school governance in order to ensure financial transparency and contribute to implementing school activities inside and outside the classroom settings.

- **Conclusion 3:**

The nature of the subject matter of citizenship education differs in many ways from the other school subjects in that it is more like a behavior and attitude than a cumulus of knowledge fragments to be recited and graded in exams. Consequently assessing it seems to be a big challenge for the administration and teachers alike.

**Recommendation:**

Teachers and school administrators should be trained on how to deal with citizenship education assessment using project work, civic education community projects. Therefore, MOE and NGOs should coordinate their efforts to train teachers on communicative teaching and assessing citizenship education.

- **Conclusion 4:**

The documents talk vaguely about general teaching approaches and methodologies complying with the MOE's current choices in the field of education, but there is no explicit statement of how to treat the issue of citizenship education in particular in terms of **approach, design, techniques** and **learning outcomes**.

**Recommendation:**

MOE should work closely with the educational authorities and NGOs including universities and teacher training institutes to develop school materials that can make citizenship a real part of the students' school life. These materials should contain the main values of democracy and human rights in addition to the adequate approaches and methodology as how to deal with them.

- **Conclusion 5**

From the focus groups discussions and interviews with university students, it has been revealed that there is no clear, explicit definition for either educators or students as to what citizenship education is, so that they act upon it as a reliable reference. Teaching staff do not have the appropriate competencies, due to lack of basic, specialized training, or to oversized classes hampering any kind of fruitful, instructive exchange and treatment of the subject.

**Recommendation**

More effort should be made as to the demystifying of the citizenship education concept for both teachers on the one hand, and students and their parents on the other hand in order to avoid vagueness, ambiguity and the feeling of loss on the part of the actors (i.e. Educators and students). MOE and universities should play a major role in clarifying the goals of citizenship education as well as planning and implementation of the course inside the schools and across the community.

**Conclusion 6:**

Although teaching programs contain good chapters, and middle-school textbooks offer good units dealing with responsible citizenship, effective implementation seems to be lacking, and the expected results are not reflected in reality.

**Recommendation:**

Interest in responsible citizenship education should be fostered during middle school education. Students must be initiated and exposed to it while they are still building up concepts of the universe, and should be followed up through to high school and university. MOE and universities as well as teacher-training institutes and NGOs should work together on designing appropriate citizenship education materials that reflect democracy and human rights international values in a way that can be reflected outside the classroom situations.

- **Conclusion 7:**

Community and parents are not really involved in the process of preparing responsible citizens of tomorrow. Parents are worried more about securing a living for their children than about their education. Schools are not flexible enough to cooperate with associations and NGOs to disseminate the values of citizenship education and democracy.

**Recommendation:**

NGOs and CSOs must be part of the solution, and should be allowed easier access and more space in the Moroccan schools so that they foster assistance to the teaching and administrative staff. CSOs should be heavily involved in implementing the citizenship education to encourage youth to be engaged in community issues. In addition, NGOs should take responsibility and play a role in anchoring values and principles of citizenship.

- **Conclusion 8:**

Citizenship education focuses more on school-based activities and does not reach the community. Extra-curricular activities including community service and authentic project work are too limited due to the lack of well-trained civic education teachers and trainers. Teachers do not receive sufficient support, either. In addition, teaching approaches are more academic than open to the concerns of the learners, who are, in turn, more interested in the immediate results of exam than in the acquisition of responsible-citizenship behavior.

**Recommendation**

Teaching methodology and programs should be reconsidered, with teachers getting more effective training and assistance. New approaches to dealing with citizenship education should be integrated at the level of teacher preparation as well as during in-service training. Therefore, teachers in training and supervisors need to be equipped with innovative methodological tools as to how to approach the teaching of citizenship education.

**Conclusion 9:**

it is worth noticing that given the extent of legislative initiatives made by the government to establish civic behavior and reduce school violence, especially against women, good results should be expected; however, far from being eradicated, the phenomenon seems to increase while also taking on new forms.

**Recommendation:**

MOE should provide training for the benefit of educators on how to promote citizenship education and deal with school violence. In addition, universities should encourage research on school violence and ways to reduce it. Textbook designers should integrate school violence prevention in the curricular and manuals as well.

**Conclusion 10:**

Officially speaking, the texts offer largely a framework characterized by rigor. Aware of the dangers of violence, the legislator has proposed drastic measures to face it and from the educational/pedagogical angle, objectives have been defined, competencies targeted, and teaching approaches designed for a variety of teaching content. Furthermore, the process of teaching/learning has been sustained by developing complementary operations of sensitizing and promoting good responses to support civic behavior and non-violence.

**Recommendation:**

As school violence is not the concern of the school alone, but is the job of all layers of society, each with a proportional degree of responsibility, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) should be set up to conduct citizenship activities in terms of planning, implementing and assessing. In addition, they should activate the Regional Observatories for Violence and work toward installing positive behavioral systems across educational institutions to combat all types of school violence.

## General conclusion

Recognizing the many ingredients for the success of the common societal project of fight against violence in the school environment in an integral and global way is a two-fold comfort: On the one hand, it is a comfort for our feeling that it is feasible, and that success is not only possible, but vehemently advisable, even vital. Therefore, education should be considered as “an important instrument to overcome violence and improve respect for human rights” (Salmi, P.14). On the other hand, it is a salving necessity to recognize the scattered efforts, and coordinate between the diverse undertaken initiatives at different levels in complementarity and harmony. The key to success in this regard is: good listening, awareness and cooperation. Certainly, the issue is complex with interlaced dimensions, and multiple destructive repercussions. However; there is always hope in the future, which we realized during our investigatory group discussions and interviews with an institutional arsenal, rich and ambitious, that only needs to be optimized by adequate operational tools and a flexible approach adaptable to the local and regional specificities.

To conclude, as the school is of major importance in the construction of collective memory and orientation, and as it affects thousands of people, and has a decisive impact on the opinions and behavior, it has to change the attitude to make the change including the elimination of stereotypes based on discrimination, relying in this on strengthened national mechanisms of recognition and struggle against violence against women. It must in particular:

- Promote programs against stereotypes and prejudices.
- Eliminate stereotypical representation manuals, negative judgments and ulterior motives concerning women.
- Revise the educational tools that should participate positively to the desired changes in society and help reduce ignorance by showing a more just society and not only report the blockages.

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## ANNEX II: FOCUS GROUPS

A transcription of Arabic names

### I. Focus Group town/area: (Marrakesh)

Name	Status	Contact Number
Abdellah Boukchouch	teacher	0696171775
Yousef Hilmi	teacher	0619024386
Asmaa Najah	University student	0658153242
Ndia Boufra	teacher	0653538434
Hichjam Al Gharraoui	teacher	0665009643
Abdellatif Zouar	teacher	0632607783

### II. Focus Group town/area: (Tetouan)

Name	school	status	Contact number
Mariam Al Amrani	Ahmed Errachidi	student	
Samya Al Warzari	Ahmed Errachidi		0670673447
Alaa Baghzi	Ahmed Errachidi		0611645324
Zaid Al Fakiri	Ahmed Errachidi		0637805748
Ayman Al Maslohi	Ahmed Errachidi		0645054040
Abernous Chomicha		mother	0617006501
Hanane Ben Amer		mother	0671612654
Fatiha Aghmary		mother	0670673447
Najat Al Hafi		teacher	0645056040
Latifa Cheqroun		mother	0662866347

**III. Focus Group town/area: (Azemmour)**

Name	Status	Contact number
Latifa Arami	Teacher	0675501309
Samir Addarsi	Teacher	0659402975
Aboulhouda Fatima Zahra	Student's mother	0632209042
Zakaria Fatna	Student's mother	0608433906
Tamou Azzarouali	Parents' association representative	0691765188
Mohamed Bouja	Education researcher	0675678324
Jamali Mohamed	Admin Representative	
Mohamed Hadi	Admin Representative	
Nouaman Mountassir	Student	
Bouchaib Chajaani	Father	

**IV. → Focus Group town/area: (Beni Mellal)**

Name	Status	Contact number
Aicha Zaki	Administration member	0659723545
Fatima Zahra Benlamqadem	Administration member	0659723784
Nadia Badraoui	Teacher	0672545259
Salma Al Maataoui	Student	0615871112
Wissal Naji	Student	0640560796
Samya Qatfaoui	Student	0605825251
Hayat Ben Hssain	Civil Society representative	0650065420
Mohamed Al Kalakhi	Shool headmaster	0660959858
Youssef Al Kalakhi	Student	0671651954
Fouzia aAit Sariii	Teacher	0668319237

Meriem Kacem	University student	0637304721
Siham Belghity Alaoui	Student	0611085913
Wissal Bakkali	University student	0665379300
Widad Bakkali	Architect/ parent	0621075061
Habiba Amougui	Student	0603144331
Al Morabiti Fatima Zahra	University student "Law"	0637818883

