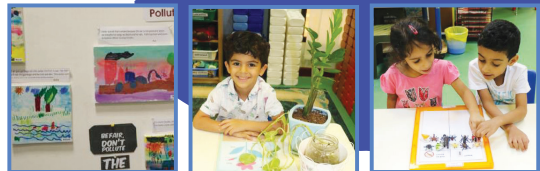




EIU Best Practices 2019

Educating Pre-School Children to be Global Citizens

A Case from **Oman**



APCEIU

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Asia-Pacific Centre of
Education for International Understanding
under the auspices of UNESCO

국제연합
교육과학문화기구

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Foreword

The Education for International Understanding (EIU) /Global Citizenship Education (GCED) Best Practices programme is one of APCEIU's efforts to share diverse experiences, practices, and approaches to bolster EIU and GCED which can inform and inspire education professionals who wish to design and implement policies, activities, and educational programmes on EIU and GCED. A total of 49 EIU Best Practices has been published and disseminated around the Asia-Pacific region and beyond since 2006. This year, Dr. Khalaf Marhoun Al' Abri's case has been added to the series with the series number 52, which includes community-based and youth education programmes for the peace of Oman.

In the past few years, APCEIU has encouraged the participants of its capacity-building programmes to share their experiences and stories of promoting EIU and GCED through these series. At the end of each training workshop organized by APCEIU, participants present their own action plans to implement EIU and GCED after returning home. This publication shows the continued commitment and endeavors of APCEIU's training alumni to carry out EIU and GCED after the completion of the workshops. In fact, Dr. Khalaf Marhoun Al' Abri's case is the outcome of the action plans established from his learning in the Global Capacity-Building Workshop on GCED 2017.

The EIU/GCED Best Practices Series is unique in that it provides insights into how EIU/GCED is interpreted and put into practice in different contexts by those who are at the forefront of education. Although each case is set in different locations and institutional backgrounds, others can draw practical ideas and observations and learn from the case contributors' experiences, challenges they faced, strategies used, and lessons learned while striving to overcome those challenges. I hope that the EIU/GCED Best Practices will continue to serve as a

useful reference for educators, policymakers and practitioners, who share a strong commitment for EIU and GCED.

Lastly, I would like to convey my deepest appreciation and congratulations to Dr. Khalaf Marhoun Al' Abri for his continuing efforts to promote EIU and GCED, and creating a synergy effect among themselves by encouraging each other and sharing ideas, which I believe contributed to the successful publication of the EIU/GCED Best Practices 2019.

September 2019



LIM Hyun Mook
Director

EIU Best Practices is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of Education for International Understanding (EIU) since its inception, in line with one of the pillars of education “Learning to Live Together.” EIU is a UNESCO initiative to promote a Culture of Peace through education, which is central to UNESCO’s mission. EIU aims to foster global citizens with values, attitudes, knowledge and skill sets necessary for learning to live together and overcoming racial, cultural, and religious conflicts. In the recent years, this mission has been reaffirmed by the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education 2030. The SDG-4 and the accompanying Target 4.7^① highlights the importance of promoting global citizenship education (GCED).

APCEIU launched EIU Best Practices in 2006 to encourage and support educators, scholars and activists who wish to promote EIU and GCED by collecting and sharing success stories and lessons learned in promoting EIU/GCED in different social and cultural contexts. The EIU Best Practices aim to provide practical ideas and insights on how to design and implement EIU and GCED by sharing specific examples and practices carried out by practitioners on the ground.

The programme is conducted through the following steps: 1) Call for applications: APCEIU sends announcement letters along with application forms and guidelines to the alumni of the EIU/GCED capacity-building training programmes organized by APCEIU; 2) Screening and selection: Submitted applications are reviewed by the Screening Committee, who select the five best practices; 3) Online Monitoring: The selected applicant is required to make his or her programme/project available for online monitoring. The selected applicant

is obligated to cooperate in terms of making arrangements for APCEIU's online monitoring on his/her respective country. 4) Case presentation and award ceremony where selected applicants present their cases and receive the Global Citizenship Education Award at one of APCEIU's international events; 5) Submission of the final reports: Selected applicants submit the final reports to APCEIU based on the guidelines; and 6) Publication and dissemination: Final reports are published and disseminated on and offline.

APCEIU encourages educators, scholars, and activists to apply and share their diverse experiences and perspectives. It is hoped that the EIU Best Practices will continue to inspire and inform practitioners, generate meaningful dialogue, and serve as useful materials for those who are committed to promote EIU and GCED and contribute to building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

① Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Contributor



Dr. Khalaf Marhoun Al' Abri

Assistant Professor, College of Education,
Sultan Qaboos University

Khalaf Al'Abri is an Assistant Professor in the College of Education at Sultan Qaboos University. He is researching education policy in the Arab Gulf States with a focus on the global and regional impact. More specifically, Dr. Al'Abri studies the impact of globalization on education systems and their policies and how international organization play a role in the development of nations' education systems.

Khalaf is currently the director of the Quality assurance and Academic Accreditation Unit at the College of Education where he supervise and manage the accreditation process of the college. He also teaches courses on education systems, planning, policies and leadership at the Department of Educational Foundation and Administration.

In his recent academic work, Al'abri studies deeply global citizenship education and how it can be implemented in education systems. For his great efforts, Khalaf won the Global Citizen Award from APCEIU for one of his projects on GCED that focuses on teaching pre-schooling children to be global citizens. Dr.

Al'Abri finished his PhD degree from The University of Queensland, Australia in 2016. Khalaf has published in various international journals and presented widely in international conferences around the world.

Acknowledgement

I would start by frankly stating that this project would not be completed and achieved its objectives without the support and touches of certain organizations and individuals. The gratitude goes to Sultan Qaboos University(SQU) and its College of Education for encouraging this project and providing all logistics for implementing it. The Dean of the College of Education, Prof. Sulaiman Al-Balushi, helped a lot in making the project to be a success.

The project would not also happen at all without the efforts and time of the SQU Child Care Center teachers and directors. Their willingness and passion of the teachers to carry the project had made every step of designing and implementing the activities much, much possible and easy. The director, Mrs. Gazwa Nashaba, had played the great role in believing in the importance of teaching GCED to pre-schooling children.

Moreover, it is really important to thank the Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science and the UNESCO Beirut for their advocacy and promotion to carry on the project. Special thanks to Mr. Bader Al-harthy and Mrs. Nadeya Al-mamari from Oman NATCOM and Dr. Hejazi Idris from UNESCO Beirut.

Finally special thanks to the champion of GCED in the whole world, it is the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU). To say the truth, from this center, I learned the A, B, Cs of GCED when I attended the Second Global Citizenship Capacity-Building Workshop in September 2017. The fruits of this workshop made me leading GCED projects and activities in

Oman and the Arab World. The follow-up and the emails of APCEIU staff, that I have been receiving since I finished the workshop, have been the real motive towards promoting GCED in the Arab World. Many thanks to every individual staff at APCEIU for their continuous efforts and support.

This mentioned project came as a fruit of collaboration between myself and four organizations which are the Child Care Center at SQU, College of Education at SQU, the UNESCO office in Beirut and APCEIU.

Summary

This project is dealing with a critical group of learners who are at their early childhood (pre-schooling children). Specifically, the project aimed at producing global citizens from those children when they had moved from their small families to the more complex environment of the Child Care Center. The contributor considered this phase of early childhood as the foundation age and the best timing for teaching global citizenship and creating caring human beings. In general, the project is based on the idea that children's understanding of the wider world is best created and nurtured at this phase of learning.

In its full cycle of implementation, the project started with training the director of Center and the teachers about global citizenship who in fact ended up designing activities and implementing them. The contributor with the teachers designed the activities of the project around three main themes which were Life in the Environment, Our Community and Saving the Environment. These three themes were found to be the most suitable areas of global citizenship to be introduced to pre-schooling children. The activities focused on the values, morals and ethics of societies, religions, and cultures. Children are taught to be nice and kind to their families, neighbors, animals, the whole society, the environment and everything surround them.

The evaluation of the project showed that the children of the Center had become aware of the difference between themselves and other children and therefore children's respect to each other is reinforced. The results shows that Children now understand that they belong to a wider community of various differences. The contributor also noticed that children awareness of protecting the environment was developed through the recycling and stop-pollutions activities.

The contribute by implementing the project in the Omani context wanted to present a good model for the Arab region in teaching global citizenship to pre-schooling children. Indeed, the project is believed to be even suitable to be implemented by other child care centers around the world. The project has the aim of encouraging child care centers around the World to make GCED as one of the main activities and focuses so the globe would be peaceful and has sustainable development.

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Educating Pre-School Children to be Global Citizens

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

It all started during the 2nd Global Capacity-Building Workshop on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) conducted by the Asia-Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU). Mr. Khalaf participated in the workshop where he learned about the importance of GCED in achieving sustainable development for all nations around the world. It ignited his aspiration to conduct activities on GCED and the workshop becomes instrumental to realize this undertaking. The project focuses on pre-schooling children at the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) Child Care Center, teaching them to be global citizens.

This project was made possible through the participation of the following organizations: SQU Child Care Center through its College of Education supported the idea by providing all the needed facilities and communication; UNESCO Beirut for providing materials and on GCED and most especially APCEIU who trained and supported all my endeavors.

As described in the media and literature, Oman is a beautiful and peaceful country surrounded by Yemen, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Iran. Being located in such geographical area with war in Yemen, the blockade of Qatar and neighborhood of Iran, promoting GCED in Oman is need in order to prepare good citizens who respect others and do not interfere in the lives of other nations. Oman is known for its efforts through its foreign diplomacy to keep the region peaceful and sustainable.

In Omani education institutions at all levels (schooling and higher education), there is recently great attention to GCED, with a whole department (Department of Citizenship) under the Minister of Education, directly taking care of promoting

citizenship education. With the recent introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Omani government aimed to achieve these SDGs. On-going projects as well as other efforts are being done to support GCED. The schools and universities in Oman are directed and encouraged to make GCED a core component of the curriculum practices and policies.

1.2 Rationale and background

In Oman, pre-schooling education is not obligatory; it is the decision of the parents to send their children to kindergartens. However, the majority of the parents send their children to prepare them to start school successfully. These kindergartens/pre-schooling centers are run by the private sector but still under the supervision of the Omani Ministry of Education. Our university, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), has a center called 'The Child Care Center', founded to provide distinctive quality training and experience to the College of Education candidates as well as to create a quality teaching center to the children of the University staff.

At SQU, staff are coming from around the world, with distinguishing diversity environment. They prefer to send their children (aged 4-6) to the SQU Child Care Center. Thus, children at SQU Center are from different countries while Omanis are of the majority. Such diversity requires more attention in which children have to be educated to understand each other and respect each other's differences. Before introducing the current programme on GCED, there had been no intended efforts, focus or structure activities from teachers. There are no collective efforts to integrate GCED in Omani pre-schooling system.

There is no doubt that early childhood is the foundation age for creating a human being who feels and has empathy for others, and protects its surrounding environment. At this age level, children's understanding of the world is created and nurtured. This project has been established to gradually integrate the principals of GCED in the learning of children so when they go to school, they gained enough knowledge about others and the globe, and have acted responsibly towards differences and diversity around them. Indeed, the project aims to produce global citizens from those children when they move from their small families to the more complex environment of the center.

Two issues emerged upon discussions with the Omani officials at the Ministry of Education about educating GCED at kindergartens. It is too difficult to create

activities and teaching materials to teach GCED to this group of pre-schooling children. Also, it was mentioned that teaching GCED might not work with them as it is difficult for them to comprehend global issues such as diversity and related concepts of GCED. This programme has been also introduced to design activities and train teachers to invest on GCED.

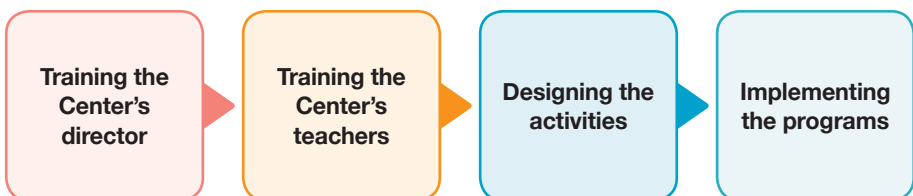
To sum up, the main and ultimate rationale for the project has been to focus on children at ages of 4 to 6 years old (pre-schooling children) as agents of sustainable development when GCED is promoted at the child care centers. The project aims of encouraging child care centers around the world to make GCED as one of the main activities in order to achieve peaceful and sustainable world.

2. Descriptions of the Programme

2.1 Outline of the Programme

The project started with the idea of introducing GCED into the SQU Child Care Center. The first step was to discuss the idea with the Center Director and convince her of the importance of making GCED as one of the main focus of the center. The Director was positive and enthusiastic with the idea. Upon consultation and approval with the College of Education, the planning of the project started.

It was agreed with the Director of the Child Care Center to train the teachers on GCED since it was a new topic for them. The plan was to train the Director first and then the Director would carry the training herself to the teachers. The following diagram shows the steps of the project.



The training of the director was supported by the UNESCO Beirut and APCEIU. The training of teachers was carried by Mr. Khalaf and the Center's director. After

having enough training, the teachers started designing the activities based on the guidance of the UNESCO, prescribed on the publication “Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives”. After the trainings, the implementation of the activities started.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

The project has some general and specific objectives as follows:

The general objectives are:

- Prove that pre-schooling childhood is the most suitable age for creating global citizens
- Put the foundation for teaching GCED in Oman and the Arab World.
- Contribute to the Sultanate’s of Oman as role model for tolerance, peace and acceptance of others
- Implement GCED in the Omani education system
- Equip Omani pre-schooling teachers with knowledge, skills and dispositions related to GCED.

The specific objectives focus on children and the whole community.

Children will be able to:

- Know the cultural, social and individual differences around them
- Protect the environment
- Understand other children and care about them
- Feel empathy for others
- Enhance the children’s multicultural understanding

Other specific objectives:

- Make SQU’s Child Care Center as a center of excellence in educating GCED for early childhood
- Build the capacity of SQU’s Child Care Center teachers to deliver GCED
- Create activities on GCED that are suitable for pre-schooling education
- Prepare the candidates of the College of Education to teach GCED after graduation

2.3 Targets of the Project

The project has three target groups namely: the pre-schooling children at the SQU Child Care Center, the teachers at the Center and College of Education and the candidates who are doing pre-schooling education degree. The children of SQU Child Care Center are the main beneficiaries. The program expanded to include the SQU Child Care Center teachers and the College of Education candidates in terms of capacity-building on GCED. Here are the characteristics of each group:

The children of SQU Child Care Center

- Sons and daughters of SQU Staff
- Age between 4 to 6 years old
- Coming from different nationalities
- Girls and boys
- Spend two years at the center before joining schools

SQU Child Care Center teachers

- All female teachers
- From four nationalities (Omanis, Turkish, Australian, Lebanese)
- Have degree in pre-schooling education
- Abilities to write children stories
- Two have art and drawing talent
- Employed by SQU

College of Education Candidates

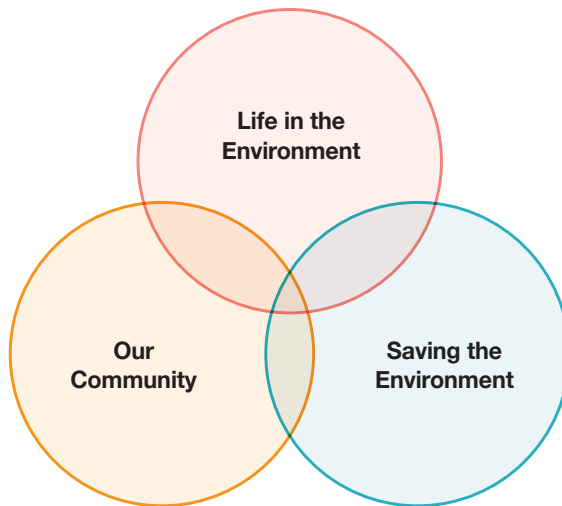
- Doing Bachelor of Education in Pre-schooling
- All female candidates
- Spend their teaching practice at the SQU Child Care Center
- Aged between 18-24
- All Omanis

2.4 Structure of the Project

Stages	Activity	When and where	Beneficiaries
Stage 1: Training the Center Director	2018 Regional Seminar: Integrating GCED and Shared Universal Values in Teacher Training Programmes in the Arab States: Vision and Trends	1-2 October 2018 @ Levatio Hotel, Muscat	The Center Director
Stage 2: Training the Center Director	National Training Course on GCED	3 October 2018 @ Levatio Hotel, Muscat	The Center Director
Stage 3: Training the Center teachers	Workshops on the principles, topics, learning outcomes	November 2018 @ Child Care Center	The Center teachers
Stage 4: Designing the activities	Workshops led by the Center director to develop the activities	Between November and January @ Child Care Center	The Center teachers and College Candidates
Stage 5: Implementing the Programme	Designed activities were introduced to the center children by the teachers and college candidates	Feb-May 2019 @ Child Care Center	The Children of the Center
Stage 6: Exhibition on GCED	The GCED activities were presented by the Center Children	29 April 2019 @ Child Care Center	Parents of children and all College of Education staff

2.5 The Activities

The activities described here are activities mentioned on stage 4 above. These activities were developed by the teachers and College of Education candidates. To do so, teachers designed the activities based on the principles of GCED mentioned in the UNESCO publication, “Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives”. The activities were built around three main themes namely: Life in the Environment, Our Community and Saving the Environment.



These three topics are aligned with the themes of global citizenship. A sample of the activities in which a detailed description of each activity is presented.

Topic 1: Life in the Environment

This topic is meant to make children understand the environment around them and the need to protect it. Children are thought through these activities that a healthy planet is the responsibility of every person in this world. Also, children learn that a healthy environment is needed to make every living people, animals and plants survive.

The activities designed by the teachers in this topic have also the objective of introducing to children how they can help in protecting the environment.

Through small and possible techniques, children learn to use materials and objects around them to help in saving the environment. The teachers believe that children if taught from this age to think possible ways of protecting the environment, they are prepared to be global citizens when they grow up.

Air, Land and Water

In this activity, the child is empowered to sort objects according to whether they are found in the air, on land or in the water. Sentences are then formed to describe each object. For example, a car drives on the land. The child is then questioned regarding our need for each of these aspects of our environment and what other forms of life on Earth also need them. The child also explores how we use each of these parts of the Earth. This activity teaches the children the necessity of air, land and water to their survival as well as the survival of plants and animals. They learn their importance in their lives and the necessity in preserving them.

This activity is designed mainly to make children understand that each and every component of the environment is crucial to our survival in this world. The ultimate purpose of this activity is based on the idea that we cannot neglect any component from air, land or water; they are all important and altogether make our beautiful planet. Teachers focus on the importance of teaching children to respect the environment to live all happily.



Parts of a Plant

There is no doubt that plants are very important to the survival of human beings in this planet. Through this activity children are sent with the message that plants needs to be protected and for the sake of our life as human beings.

The child refers to a diagram of a plant alongside some real examples of plant life and names the various parts and describes their functions. This activity develops an appreciation of plant life and the need for clean air, land and water in order to produce plants to eat and to beautify our world. By understanding why plants are important to our life, children learn that we need to protect plants, take care of them and not to cut them down.

The Life Cycle of the Plant

The child places pieces representing the various stages of the plant life cycle in order. The child then describes the cycle and the need for air, water and sun in order for the plant to grow. This activity teaches the cyclical nature of life on our planet. Plants are an integral part of the planet's ecosystem. In this activity, children are made aware of how to take care of plants at home and work to increase them in this world.



The Life Cycle of the Chicken

The child places pictures representing each stage of the life cycle of the chicken in order in a circular arrangement. The child then describes each stage of the life cycle of a chicken. This activity teaches children about animal development and the need for food to grow. More importantly, children understand through this activity that even animals grow up in stages and they need a proper environment to live peacefully.

Insect/Not an Insect

The child sorts objects representing various insects and other animal life into two sections, one for insects and one for other creatures. The basis of their sorting is the number of legs that the creature has. This activity develops an awareness of the insect class and the great variety of life that exists on our planet.

In this activity, children also learn that insects are very crucial components of the ecosystem of this planet. In many ways, children are introduced to the functions that these insects are playing to balance the life. The activity has also a purpose of making children not to hate insects but to value why God has created them.



Topic 2: Our Community

This second topic with its various activities help children to build a good relationship with their surrounding community. Children are made aware that they are part of a community in which they need to respect and be good citizens on their community. Teachers work in this topic to connect children with their community and culture.

The knowledge, feelings, skills and behavior of children is targeted towards valuing being members in a community. The activities start from children's home, understanding their valued relationship with their parents, siblings and the extended family. Then, the activities go broader with teaching children to understand their relationships with neighbors, animals, their countries and so on. Teachers making children value various relationships at different levels at the surrounding community are helping them to value the importance of these relationships and at the same time know their roles and responsibility in the community. Teachers also pay attention to how

children should be involved in their community and participate in the prosperity of their community.

Kindness to Animals

The child retells the story of “The Kind Man and the Thirsty Dog” using props. This activity teaches about the importance of being kind to animals by retelling a story narrated in the Prophet Mohammed’s sayings and highlights its importance as an act of worship.

This story teaches children to take care of animals. Children are also encouraged to have animals at home as pets. Through this story, they also learn how to treat animals and value their existence in our lives. It is wrong to be cruel to animals and they should be treated humanely.

Obedience to Parents

This activity is aimed at making children value their parents. Teachers built this activity around the instruction of every religion and culture that children should obey their parents and respect them. By respecting parents, children are taught that families live together happily and peacefully. They learn that family is the foundation of society where the values of being a global citizen is formed.

The child describes various pictures representing good behavior that should be displayed with one’s parents. This activity teaches about the importance of family in creating a cohesive society and the need to love and respect one’s parents.





Being Good to Neighbors

This activity goes beyond the fences of the family house to reach neighbors. Children are intentionally directed towards understanding the importance of having neighbors. The teaching of this activity is based on understanding the ways to be a good neighbor. Children learn the importance of being a good neighbor and how to maintain cordial relationships with them.

In this activity, the child describes various pictures representing good behavior that should be displayed while dealing with one's neighbors. This activity demonstrates the various ways in which love is instilled between neighbors as a micro community and the importance of caring for our neighbors.

Feelings

Human beings are known for showing their feelings depending on the situations. These feelings vary from sadness, happiness, anger, surprise and fear. Children are taught in this activity how to respect others when expressing their emotions and feelings. They become aware that feelings are important to show others their emotions.

The child matches various pictures of children exhibiting different feelings and describes them. The children learn how to identify their feelings and the feelings of others as a means to better understand one another. Children through this activity are expected to behave well when expressing their feelings.

We are all alike, we are all different

In teaching global citizenship, it is important for individuals to understand that God has created human beings to be different in order to live happily together. Being different from each other means that our community is much stronger. This activity teaches children that differences among human beings is not a fault or shame. It is part of the message that God has created us to serve each other and build our planet. Children learn to respect and appreciate diversity.



In this activity, the child describes various similarities and differences between children in a series of photographs. This activity promotes understanding that each individual is unique in terms of gender, race, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, among others. They learn to embrace and recognize individual differences.



Community Helpers

This activity is based on the different ways of serving the community. Children are taught that each individual is serving the community with his knowledge, experience and skills. There is no superiority of one job over the other. Each one is serving the community and with such differences that makes the community stronger. In this activity, the child uses various dress up materials and props and describes the activities undertaken by different community helpers, in this case, the doctor and fire fighter. The children learn about the people in society who work tirelessly in order to ensure that all of the needs of the community are met.



The Globe

This activity aims to understand each other. Children learn that the world is composed of various continents and countries. This is to a message to children that we are not the only people living in this world but there are others who should be respected. The idea of the activity is also based on the need of children to know that the world is a small village but with big oceans, continents and countries.

The child uses a globe with the various continents represented by different colors and a sun lit by a candle to describe the parts of the Earth and how day and night occur. This activity teaches about the composition of our globe and how the days and nights occur due to the rotation of the Earth. This activity demonstrates that we share one Earth as distinct from the other planets and that we need to work together to preserve our world.

My Country

This activity is mainly to give children an idea that there are other countries in the world. This makes children think of others having other nationalities. Children are told that although each child may have different nationality, all children are global citizens and have the same rights.

In this activity, each child spoke about their country of birth. They displayed their flags and national dress and spoke about the capital city and official language. Despite coming from different parts of the globe and speaking different languages, the children share a learning environment and forge friendships.





Topic 3: Saving Our Environment

This topic is intended to make the children aware about the importance of saving the environment. Children in this topic through simple tasks and activities learn about using the surroundings to protect and save the environment. Stopping pollutions and not cutting trees are among the main themes that children focus on to save the environment.



Saving Water

Children in this activity are taught the importance in our lives and they have to save water and stop polluting it. Teachers show that all people around the world deserve to have clean water. It is the responsibility of all human beings around the world not to pollute water.

In this activity, the children cut out drops of water using cardboard and drew ways that they use water. They explained their

drawings and the teacher wrote what they said. The children described how water is used and its importance in our lives. Clean water resources need to be preserved and used wisely to ensure the survival of our planet.

Air, Land and Water Pollution

Children in this activity are learning about how as good citizens they have to stop pollution. More importantly, the teachers through this activity aimed at making children aware of the things that pollute the environment. They are required to think of how they can help themselves in protecting the planet from pollutions.

The water table was used to simulate environment, the air, the land and the water. It was used to demonstrate how pollution impacts the environment and how we can protect it. This activity demonstrates how carelessness in disposing of rubbish and excessive use of unrecyclable items has a detrimental effect on the entire ecosystem.



Composting and Planting

Children in this activity learn about the issue of excessive use of plastic in harming the environment. The aim of the activity is linked to empower children to use the plastic bottles and other plastic stuff that they use at home to recycle it and make it something useful.

The children made vases from plastic bottles and painted them. Compost was created using kitchen waste and then children planted their own flowers in the vases. They explained how kitchen waste can be used to make compost to create nutrients that can be added to soil to encourage the healthy growth of plants.



Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

The children made flowers from plastic bags, playdough and used straws. They made paper bags and decorated them. They made bangles from plastic bottles and wool. They made fridge magnets from old CDs and used plastic cups.

They made paper holders and bags from plastic bottles. These activities stressed the importance of reducing the amount of waste that we produce and the need to find biodegradable alternatives to plastic. Paper bags were suggested as replacements for plastic ones and examples of various ways in which items can be reused were demonstrated.



Computer Artwork

This activity also focuses on using plastic materials on something useful and creative. Frames were made for the children's artwork with bottle lids, plastic bottle pieces, straws, sand and pieces of foam. Through these small ideas, children understand the concept of using materials around them rather than throwing them in rubbish bins.



2.6 Relevance of Activities to GCED

When designing the activities mentioned above, the Center's teachers consulted me to align these activities with the requirements of GCED. The activities were tailored to suit children at this young age with the aim of making children feel that they belong to the broader community. The chosen topics such as saving the environment and respecting the community are clearly linked to what global citizenship means in terms of thinking locally and acting globally.

In fact, this project was intentionally linked to the principles and topics of GCED. The various activities mentioned above all have the aim of empowering those children at this young age to be thinking about the global issues, teaching them to be global citizens when they grow up. The activities tackled cultural diversity and tolerance of others in order for them to realize and respect differences. The activities conducted focuses on the main themes, principles, and related fields of GCED.

The project also focuses on the values, morals and ethics of societies, religions, and cultures. Children are taught to be nice and kind to their families, neighbors, animals, the whole society, the environment and everything surrounding them. The activities are based on the need of children to create friendly relationships among their friends, families and nations. Indeed, the project indirectly in based on teaching children to be away from violence, bullying and gender biases. The children learn that they are all equal even if they are different in color, gender, nationality and culture. All these topics included in these activities are encouraging children to promote peace and prevent violence which are regarded as main principles of GCED.

Moreover, some activities of the project are framed around teaching children about human survival and well-being of the environment. For example, thinking about the issue of air, water and land pollution is one of core focuses of the activities. Presenting such issues of caring about the planet and the sustainability of the environment help children to grow as good human beings who are critical and supportive of healthy and clean planet. The teachers designed activities that teach children to recycle plastic and stop pollutions. Children also learn that we share this plants with other creatures such as animals, birds and insects that children needs to take care of and not to harm. Overall, the project was able to make children understand the environment around them and make them consciously think about protecting it. This is a main focus of GCED to make learners think about protecting the planet and sustainability of environment.

The project also aimed at preparing children to be ethically responsible towards their family, society, the environment and the whole world. The activities of the project have an element of linking the children to their surroundings, encouraging them to be active members in their community through positive relationships. Part of the project, for instance, focuses on respecting parents, helping animals and recycling plastics. These activities make children ethically engaged with their families and broader community. In fact, these activities do encourage children and teach them the values and skills of caring for others and the environment for a better world.

The activities are also focusing on the three domains of learning which are cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral activity. Each of the mentioned activity starts by making children acquire knowledge about certain issues and understand how these issues are interconnected locally, nationally and globally. For example, children in one of the activities learned about the nationality of each child as they are coming from various countries. They learned about the culture, food and clothes of each one. In terms of socio-emotional, children were made aware that although there were differences among them, they are all human beings and should share values and responsibilities and respect each other. At the third dimension, the activities were made explicit to children to act and behave responsibly and respectfully towards each other. Indeed, all activities mentioned above were aligned by teachers to touch the three dimensions of GCED: cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral domains.

The teacher of the center delivered the three main themes of the activities (life in the environment, our community and saving our environment) in a way to reflect the interconnectedness of the local, national, regional and global contexts. Within the activities, the teachers were concerned and interested in the issues that affect the interconnectedness of the children to their environment and the broader community. Moreover, the activities were designed to target the differences between the children and their culture with the aim of creating respect for diversity. The children through those activities were taught to understand themselves, their families, broader community, nationalities and the environment.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Evaluations and critical reflections

After implementing the project fully, an observation on the learning processes happening at the center was made. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Child Care Center to evaluate the project and gained reflections about the strengths, weaknesses and improvements needed. The results show that the project was successful as the teachers have great willingness and passion to promote GCED among children. Also, one of the positive advantages of the project was to run the project without extra cost. All the training workshops for teachers were done by the author. The designed activities were using resources of the center without requesting more funds. The results also show that the experience of the center's teachers in preparing activities for pre-schooling was a credit to the project. Indeed, all teachers have degrees in pre-schooling.

As mentioned earlier, the project was successful because of the invaluable support from the SQU College of Education especially allowing the project at the Child Care Center. It is also important to mention that this project has been given rise and strength by a national organization (the Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science), a regional organization (UNESCO Beirut) and international organization (APCEIU). Training and providing resources was possible with the support of these national, regional and global organizations. There is no doubt that the materials on GCED made available from APCEIU clearing-house helped much in conducting the training programmes for teachers and designing the activities.

Based on the observation of children, it was clear that they were able to comprehend the individual and cultural differences among their colleagues. Children showed respect to each other. They were able to produce ideas and things that can help in recycling and protecting the environment. The observations also revealed that children had become more caring about their families, the society and the whole world.

During the interviews, the teachers expressed their happiness about implementing the project since it has impact on the lives of the children as well as the community. Teachers mentioned that the project resulted to changes in the behaviors and skills of the children in terms of respecting diversity, protecting the environment and promoting peace. To the teachers, the project was successful and achieved its

objectives by preparing children to be tolerant of others and saving the planet from pollutions. The interviewed teachers stressed that those children were prepared to be global citizens.

In terms of the limitations, there were some minor issues faced in conducting the programme such as:

- The training for teachers was done after center working hours which were difficult for teachers.
- No specific budget was allocated to run the programme. It was more of personal commitment using the current budget of the center.
- There was no experience of other center in Oman or the Arab world that focused on GCED to learn from. The teachers started from scratch in designing the activities.
- The activities need some improvements
- The Center has few reading books on topics related to GCED. More reading books on GCED topics are needed.

3.2 Impacts on the target groups

There have been some vivid outcomes for this Project:

- Children at the Center have become aware of the differences between themselves and other children. Through the activities, children understand those differences in color, religion; culture and gender have nothing to do with their rights and responsibilities in life and society. Children learn that they are all equal, belonging to the wider, broader community.
- Children's respect to each other is reinforced through the various activities. The project aims to make them appreciate and accept diversity. Respecting each other is the backbone of living together and creating global citizens.
- Children now understand that they belong to a wider community of various differences. The teachers pay attention to the different countries that the children come from. This made children to understand that there were other countries than Oman in the world with people having different cultures, ethnicity, religions and traditions.
- Through fundraising activities, children have developed positive attitudes and empathy towards needy people. The activity of collecting money from parents and the community taught the children of how to think about other people who were in need. The children also organized a day for selling food that was cooked

by their families at home. The money collected from this day was sent to people in need. The children through this activity were encouraged to contribute to solve the problem of poverty around the world.

- Children's awareness of protecting the environment through recycling is achieved. In this activity, children learnt how plastic could harm the environment and pollute the planet. Children also develop skills of creating beneficial stuff from unheeded, used materials. The new made stuff was decorating the Center walls which made the children proud and happy that encourage them to do recycling.
- Children now understand that there are many countries in the world with people from different backgrounds. This made them value diversity and see it as a benefit to the society. Children learn the concept of learning to live together and love each other despite the differences.
- Children gain knowledge about pollution of water, air and land. The children were encouraged to invent ways to stop pollutions and create solutions.
- A training workshop for pre-schooling teachers on GCED was developed. This workshop can be conducted and repeated in other child care centers in Oman and other Arab countries. In fact, the prepared materials and activities can be replicated in other centers.
- Teachers of the Center now value the need for GCED. After living the benefits of the project, teachers are more passionate now about implementing the project and developing it further.
- Teachers worked as a team and were able to design and develop learning curriculum and activities on GCED. The GCED materials are now available and ready to be used. Teachers promised to further enhance it for future projects.
- College of Education future teachers now understand the significance importance of GCED. The pre-service teachers valued the importance of teaching GCED to pre-schooling children. They affirm their commitment to promote and implement GCED when they become teachers This is would help in upholding GCED to other child care centers around Oman.
- A good list of activities suitable for pre-schooling children was developed. These activities can be used by other centers around Oman. The aim is to spread them through a workshop for pre-schooling teachers that can be organized by the Ministry of Education in Oman.

- The community (the parents of children) developed awareness about GCED through the exhibition. Now, GCED has gone beyond the fence of the Center to reach the community. In fact, it will be spread through parents to the whole community.

3.3 Implications and suggestions

After implementing the programme, the children did an exhibition of all the activities to parents and SQU staff. The Center's teachers evaluated the effectiveness of the designed activities through children observation. The programme was effective but there is always room for improvement. The teachers are confident now that the children have become more tolerant of their colleagues in the center. The children are now aware of the different countries and respect their differences. They are now acquainted with the various global issues and the solutions. The following factors can be addressed in the next implementation:

- Teachers can write stories related to GCED topics
- Secure fund to further develop the project
- More specialized training to teachers on promoting GCED in pre-schooling is needed
- Involve parents and the community in conducting the project
- Involve the SQU College of Education faculty on developing the project
- Cooperate with other Centers in Oman to develop more activities
- Replicate the project in Oman and the Arab countries

■ Annex

A. The three day workshop conducted to teachers

Day 1	
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Introduction to GCED
2.15 pm - 4.00 pm	GCED topics and principles
Day 2	
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	GCED Domains
2.15 pm - 4.00 pm	How to implement GCED in pre-schooling learning
Day 3	
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Designing activities
2.15 pm - 4.00 pm	Designing activities

B. The daily schedules of children learning

Time	Classes	Note
7.45 - 8.30	Arabic classes	GCED is included in all Arabic and English classes as well as the readings in the library. There is no specific time allocated for GCED but integrated across the learning process and curriculum.
8.30 - 9.15	English classes	
9.15 - 10.00	Break	
10.00 - 10.45	Library	
10.45 - 11.30	Arabic classes	
11.30 - 12.15	English classes	
12.30	Center closes	