



SGI Peace News
Newsletter introducing Soka Gakkai International (SGI)'s
activities to promote a culture of peace
July, 2016 (Vol. 12)

Side Event: Non-Formal Education for Gender Equality

Geneva, Switzerland, June 28, 2016

SGI co-organized a side event titled “Non-Formal Education for Gender Equality” with Graduate Women International (GWI) and the World Young Women’s Christian Association (World YWCA) at the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council. The event focused on how non-formal education can reach those who have missed out on formal schooling and people in isolated communities and can be an effective means of promoting gender equality.



Danièle Castle, executive director of GWI, highlighted that non-formal education can impart relevant skills, knowledge and technical know-how that are major instruments for improving life chances. She also noted how some applications of mobile technology have benefited girls and women in literacy acquisition. Jill Anami and Chamodi Peiris from YWCA in Kenya and Sri Lanka highlighted the importance of safe spaces—places where young women who have been overlooked by formal education can gather, dialogue, share information and address challenges—and their function as a tool to achieve gender equality.

Benedetta Barabino, director of Dance With Me, gave a presentation on how art and theater in particular can be a successful non-formal educational tool for the empowerment of individuals at the local level. The panel was followed by small group discussions.

Workshop: Effective Use of Non-Formal Education in Achieving the SDGs

Gyeongju, South Korea, May 30 to June 1, 2016

SGI cosponsored a workshop titled “Effective Use of Non-Formal Education Tools in Achieving the SDGs” at the annual UN Department of Public Information (DPI) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference. Maher Nasser, director of DPI’s Outreach Division, spoke on how the UN has



used multimedia as a tool of non-formal education to develop its outreach. Choi Jie and Azumi Tamae from SGI presented the various exhibition projects that form part of SGI's non-formal educational tools that raise awareness and provide a platform for dialogue.

In his presentation, Oh Ung-Hee from the UN Peace Memorial Hall talked about the UNESCO Youth Peace Ambassador program that works with universities and embassies to foster global citizens in the community.

A lively discussion, moderated by Hiro Sakurai, director of SGI Office of UN Affairs, followed the presentations. The discussion emphasized the importance of non-formal education in promoting "lifelong learning opportunities for all" as stated in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which expresses a vital aspect of education for global citizenship, the theme of the UN DPI/NGO conference.

Supporting the Work of UNHCR

Tokyo, Japan, July 2, 2016

In light of the serious refugee crisis in Syria, the Soka Gakkai is strengthening its support of UNHCR.

On July 2, the Soka Gakkai made a financial donation to UNHCR. The donation was accepted by Dirk Hebecker, UNHCR representative in Japan, and Saburo Takizawa, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Japan Association for UNHCR.



Mr. Hebecker expressed appreciation for the Soka Gakkai's continued support of UNHCR and shared his expectations of the Refugee Higher Education Program agreement recently signed by UNHCR and Soka University in Tokyo. The agreement articulates the annual admission of Syrian refugees to the university.

The Need to Transform Disregard for Human Life

Tokyo, Japan, June 15, 2016

*The following is a statement issued on June 15 issue of Seikyo Shimbun, in which **Kazuo Ishiwatari**, chair of the Soka Gakkai Peace Committee, briefly outlines the SGI's activities toward a nuclear-weapons-free world.*

Together with activities for human rights



education, sustainable development and humanitarian issues, nuclear weapons abolition is a key focus of the Soka Gakkai's peace movement.

In September 2007 the SGI launched an international campaign, "The People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition." In 2012, the organization began touring the exhibition "Everything You Treasure—For a World Free from Nuclear Weapons" to venues around the world.

Soka Gakkai youth in Japan were able to collect more than 5 million signatures to support the Nuclear Zero campaign organized by a consortium of international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Our youth members have organized "Youth Conferences for the Abolition of War" and promoted activities to share experiences of war and the testimonies of *hibakusha*, atomic bomb survivors, to a wider public....[more](#)

Survey on Awareness of the SDGs: A Comparison of Japan and Korea

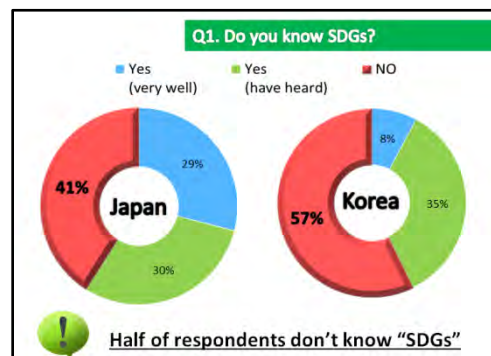
New York, USA, July 15, 2016

On the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development held in New York, SGI cohosted a side event titled "The Roles of Korea and Japan for Effective Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" together with Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation (KCOC), Ugoku/Ugokasu (GCAP Japan) and Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability (JYPS).



SDGs 16 and 17 were discussed with reference to how to enhance further cooperation between governments and civil society.

Tadashi Nagai from SGI presented the results of online survey of youth in Korea and Japan and their attitudes toward the SDGs that was conducted in June and July. A total of 355 responses (100 from Japan and 255 from South Korea) were collected from students mostly in their 20s.



In response to the question "Do you know about the SDGs?" approximately half of the overall respondents answered "No." Responses to "How did you come to know about the SDGs?" were striking in that a high percentage indicated "Friends," whereas a low percentage indicated "Social media." This suggests that while many organizations, including NGOs, have utilized social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to communicate the SDGs, the information hasn't reached or made an impact on youth.

This bimonthly SGI Peace News provides recent updates on SGI's public educational activities to help raise awareness on issues such as nuclear disarmament, human rights, sustainable development, interfaith cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

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