Abstract
Central to this research will be to build the concept of CE & ST being shared and agreed upon by the Network members. Hence, the research team designed several workshops and activities, with the aim of boosting, interpreting and validating the contributions and reflections of each one of the organisations participating in the research, focusing on their interest in delving deeper into and refining a common definition.
In this process, progress was made in defining the essential and common elements of CE & ST, among which it is worth highlighting those relating to the approach, methods and attitudes involved. With regards to the approaches employed, those worth highlighting include Gender, Rights, power relationships and the 'glocal' approach. With regards to the methods used, the ones worth highlighting are Interculturality, Action-Reflection-Action, Cooperation and Group Processes; Communication and Dialogue; and Active and Critical Participation. With regards to attitudes and values, it is worth noting the priority given to the changes in personal attitudes as the basis on which to improve educational practices. Some of these include respect and thoughtfulness; breaking away from attitudes that lead one to feel like a victim; raising awareness; a collaborative spirit; coherence, etc. During the research, the organisations debated and questioned various aspects so as to begin refining their definition of CE & ST. They proposed debates at both concept and methodological-practical levels (in terms of management and operations).
In this article, we wish to share the findings, the guiding principles of this process and some notes on methods of this research with the educational community.

1. Context, purpose and author of the research
This research is part of the 'International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation' project, which is co-financed by AECID. It is a network set up across

---

1 Member organisations constituting the Network: There are 10 member organisations from 7 countries that make up the International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation: Novamerica (Brazil); Centro de Derechos y Desarrollo, CEDAL [Centre for Rights and Development ] (Peru); Instituto para la Educación en los Derechos Humanos y la Paz, IPEDEPH [Institute for Education in Human Rights and Peace] (Peru); Fundación Del Viso [Foundation] (Argentina); Fundación Pequeño Trabajador [Young Workers’ Foundation] (Colombia); Centro de Derechos Humanos Victoria Díez [Centre for Human Rights] (Mexico); Pronatura Sur, A.C. (Mexico); Centro Multiservicios Educativos [Educational Multi-service Centre] (Mexico); CEMSE (Bolivia); Centro de Educación Alternativa Jaihuaco, CEPIA [Jaihuaco Centre for Alternative Education] (Bolivia); and InteRed (Spain).

2 This research was conducted within the framework of the 'International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation' project, which aims to contribute towards the provision of training for holders of rights so that they can actively engage in citizenship activities and, through their critical participation in civil society, transform their non-inclusive societies; boost their ability to denounce, their political advocacy, and social mobilisation that have an effect on social transformation; and promote joint learning, exchange work models and educational methods among member organisations. RESEARCH TEAM: Alejandra Boni Aristizábal, Estela López Torrejón and Jadicha Sow Paino for GEDCE [Development, International Cooperation and Applied Ethics Study Group] of the Valencia Polytechnic University and two independent researchers: Begoña Arias García and Monique Leivas Vargas. Adaptation by Guillermo Aguado.
WEAVING CITIZENSHIP WITH THE THREADS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION. RESEARCH ON THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION. International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation

continents that, by means of socio-educational and political processes, aims to collectively build a citizen-base organised to achieve the creation of fair, sustainable and inclusive societies. It has, since its inception, been based on the desire to harness synergies and maximise the impact of the work conducted by the organisations involved, aiming to aid social transformation, with a firm belief that they all share a common horizon and that sharing learning and life experiences is a positive step. In addition, it stems from the notion that development education, regardless of where it is implemented, must work towards building a critical citizen-base and promoting a culture of solidarity, justice and advocacy of human rights.

It aims to contribute towards the provision of training for holders of rights so that they can actively engage in citizenship activities and, through their critical participation in civil society, transform their non-inclusive societies; boost their ability to denounce, their political advocacy, and social mobilisation that have an effect on social transformation; and promote joint learning, exchange work models and educational methods among member organisations.

With the aim of being one step closer to achieving the Network's objectives, several training, consolidation, communication and dissemination activities were conducted in addition to the group research, which will come to an end with the publication of the full research under the title of 'Weaving citizenship with the threads of Global Education' (ISBN 978-84-937893-3-6). In this article, we wish to present the findings, the guiding principles of this process and some notes on methods of this research to the educational community. Hence, partial verbatim sections of the research were used.

Central to this research is the building of a concept of Citizenship Education and Social Transformation that is shared and has been agreed upon by the International Network's members. It was conducted by Alejandra Boni Aristizábal, Estela López Torrejón and Jadicha Sow Paino for GEDCE (Development, International Cooperation and Applied Ethics Study Group) of the Valencia Polytechnic University and two independent researchers: Begoña Arias García and Monique Leivas Vargas. Different people from groups belonging to the Network member organisations took part in it.

Hence, the research team designed several workshops and activities, with the aim of boosting, interpreting and validating the contributions and reflections of each one of the organisations participating in the research, focusing on their interest in delving deeper into and refining a definition that has been agreed upon.

---

3 A full copy of the publication can be checked and downloaded on http://www.intered.org/sites/default/files/files/recursos-educativos/Tejieno_cidadan%C3%ADA%20InteRed.pdf
2. Research principles and process

Even though early on in the research process the Network already had its own definition of CE & ST, there was an interest and concern in refining this concept even more. The aim was to fuel the debate as to the essential elements that made up the concept of CE & ST in order to classify them and share their educational experiences with a view to fostering the citizenship practices and social transformation not only among the organisations within the International Network for CE & ST itself but also with other social movements and institutions as well as civil society as a whole.

This objective led the team to come up with a design based on the assumption and core theme of generating reflection and learning acquisition processes among the Network's organisations by working on several action-reflection scenarios:

- **Individual:** Methods and techniques were employed to bring about personal reflection on the personal commitment of each participant towards CE & ST-related themes. Hence, group exchange and analysis was promoted by involving the participants themselves in face-to-face workshops conducted within each of the organisations.

- **Intra-organisational:** the work on CE & ST conducted by each one of the Network's organisations was looked into with a critical eye, while attempting to reflect on their vision, their institutional relations with the 'trainees' and with other institutions of similar or conflicting approaches, their educational practices at conceptual, strategic and operational level, etc.

- **Inter-organisational:** Institutional proposals and practices were exchanged between the organisations that constitute the Network. An attempt was made to foster the enriching experiences that can be gained from their own practices, which are based on knowledge attained through reflection upon other educational proposals that have teaching approaches and tools that can be extrapolated and adapted to different contexts.

The addition of integrality among these three action-reflection scenarios in the research was an ambitious premise when understanding the actions conducted by those committed to social transformation on the basis of their educational practices on the three levels above. This involved a holistic approach with regards to the organisational identities and relations of each of the participants, not only as citizens, but also as members of educational social organisations and institutions constituting a network of educational transformation based on 'glocal' reflection.

Moreover, when proposing an inclusive model, the great diversity consisting of the many local realities in which the educational practices of each of the organisations take place was considered at all times. It is clear that proposing a model that catered to such diversity enriched the proposals made since it brought the historical background of the organisations to the table as well as their collaboration-contrasting relations with other social movements, government agencies, vulnerable groups
excluded in multiple ways and problems inherent to rural and/or urban realities. Hence, the research began by taking this varied background into consideration to be properly implemented, entailing mutual enrichment while remaining complex.

Therefore, the challenge was to incorporate multiple contexts as an actual element and not just as a way to allow minority groups to voice their opinions. Hence, each practice and link with the local reality provided new perspectives to the concept of CE & ST. In practical terms, this meant creating an inclusive definition in which not only was the feminist discourse incorporated, which came from the revolutionary force proposed by the EBDH, but in which there are also various institutional actors with whom to coordinate, where local reality is based on neighbourhoods, as well as rural settings. In the latter, the problems of the social reality show different forms of exclusion and the main actors might have been marginalised over time through stereotyping and labelling people as indigenous and/or young people who do not have freedom to create their own life projects.

Going back to the initial characterisation of the different action-reflection levels, the scope of each of them (individual, organisational and inter-organisational), varied according to two factors inherent to the research. On the one hand, the fact that the research was not conducted face to face and, on the other, the level of initial adaptation to and communication within the network among the different organisations that constitute it, which have not worked in together long.

This means that the research was imbued in a highly participative spirit; however, given the fact that the facilitator team and organisations were working together remotely, the spaces found for inter-organisational reflection were scarce. Mechanisms for the exchange of experiences between the organisations for the purpose of conceptual, methodological, and, in short, ideological learning were put in place, although the creation of these remote spaces received proportionally less attention compared to the individual and intra-institutional reflections that were clearly central. This issue could be concluded by pointing out that the research achieved a learning approach between the network’s organisations based on ‘learning from each other’ although not quite yet 'learning together'.

Another issue that was present from the research inception stage was the creation of remote face-to-face debate and consensus spaces to refine and delve deeper into the research objective. Emphasis was placed on ensuring a rigorous approach concerning the information collected through workshops by means of a proposal to create local actors to act as promoters and rapporteurs that record the participations and analyses addressed in the face-to-face workshops as reliably as possible. This written and

---

4 On many occasions, exclusion falls upon different identities of the same individual. For instance, being a poor, illiterate, indigenous woman from a rural background, etc.
photographic record was sent to the researchers for them to undertake the analyses and return the information complemented, summarised and nuanced by the thought processes of the other participating organisations.

The generation of these spaces meant a significant appropriation and joint responsibility by the participating organisations, since they were the ones in charge of conducting, within their institutions, the workshops proposed by the research team (with a precise methodological and operational proposal), and the collection of information and debates that arose throughout them (for which templates are also provided for the systematic recording of the assessments and analyses).

So, if we were to highlight the element that characterised the research proposal the most, it would be, without a doubt, the intention to ensure that the debates and questions were always articulated on the basis of the critical reflection upon their own practices grounded in local realities, in order to subsequently be able to make generalisations linked to the concept of CE & ST. This involved a methodological proposal going from practical to theoretical matters, the lessons of which could be applied to change each one's 'own individual and institutional practices'. That is, it was a process inspired by Participatory-Research-Action.

The analyses conducted by the research team adopted a more qualitative than quantitative approach in the search for common and divergent elements, based on the interpretation of the concepts, values and thoughts poured into the research process. In order to prevent the subjectivity associated with how the researchers interpret and understand the world from creating biased interpretations or misconceptions, on two different occasions, we envisaged returning the analyses conducted to all the participating institutions and individuals. Thus, it was possible to validate and refine information permanently. A key example worth highlighting throughout this process was the interviews with key informants from each of the participating organisations prior to the preparation of research reports and the addition of reflection times and evaluation forms of the reports containing the details of the analyses and justifications provided by the network's institutions.

The entire research process, as we have been describing, was viewed positively on account of its progress in achieving a more nuanced and shared CE & ST concept. This definition must be the result of a gradual process in which to achieve inter-institutional consensus that would seem forced at this point in common along the network's path.

In summary, the research enabled reflections to be channelled and participants to feel represented in their diversity. It was also characterised by modesty and honesty of the scope whereby the process itself became the true value of research.

3. Research methods
With the aim of facilitating actual participation of the Network's organisations, both in terms of conducting the appropriate scheduling of the research techniques and of incorporating potential emerging interests resulting from the thought processes, the research consisted of two phases.

The first was proposed as a starting point to incorporate the needs and concerns regarding content and time availability of the network's organisations, from which the second phase was drafted accordingly. It was carried out between 1 June and 30 September 2010 and its specific objectives were:

a) For the organisations to become acquainted with the network's vision
b) To determine the network's contribution to the organisations
c) To standardise the network's organisations' relevant practices
d) To identify elements of change that have occurred within the organisations.

Once this part was completed, the results obtained and the proposal of the research team for the work to be conducted in the second phase were returned to the participating organisations, in order for the latter to refine, change and/or validate this proposal.

The second phase of the research was conducted between 1 October 2010 and 31 January 2011 and focused on two aspects. First, we worked on the discussion and validation of the elements that characterise the proposed CE & ST, which were found in the first part of the research. Second, the exchange of methodological tools among the Network's organisations was proposed with a view to promote specific educational learning experiences, by adapting them to the contexts in which they apply.

The flow-chart summary shown below provides a sample of both periods in terms of duration and the tools included in each.
As part of this article, we will not be describing each of the techniques proposed by the research team, but these are available in the full publication. Yet, it seems pertinent to at least mention them.

In the first research phase, it was proposed that the organisations should carry out several tasks: the 'Venn Diagram' and 'most significant change' workshops, the analysis of a relevant practice of their own and that of a relevant practice from another organisation. This was intended to create a space for self-knowledge, mutual knowledge and recognition. From the collection of a wide range of information and the result of the interviews that were conducted with key informants from each of the organisations, the research team reported the results of this first part.

In the second part of the research, taking into account the preferences collected from the participating organisations (mainly gathered through interviews), the researchers proposed a list of key contents that they felt should be worked upon:
- Creating an 'Educational Toolkit' containing samples of successful methods that, given the diversity of contexts, could be adapted and transformed by the other organisations.
- Discussion and validation by the organisations of the elements that characterise the proposed CE & ST collected in the first part of the research.

Faced again with the need to clarify some queries about the results and receive suggestions and views on the pace of the research, collect any additional information and understand the perception and usefulness of the techniques suggested by the research team, interviews with the organisations were arranged.

### 4. Previous status quo
Before the research, the participating organisations jointly responded to the question of what the output profile of a person involved in the process of CE & ST would be like: *what are these citizens like, who have the ability to transform their reality?* And the following was concluded:

- Subjects who are sensitive, responsible and committed to a life plan, consistent with what they think, feel, say and do, generating creative proposals in the face of adversity through persistence, conviction and hope.
- Subjects who are inspired by a utopia of identity deeply rooted in local and global principles, with a critical eye, exposing hegemonic perspectives and transforming reality in line with their environment.
- Holders of rights who are informed, empowered, leaders and organised with the ability to feel indignant and outraged at injustice, while becoming involved and proposing new ways of doing politics by freely exercising their citizenship to impact their own reality.
- Subjects who, individually and collectively, build their identity on the basis of the differences, who have listening skills and empathy, establishing relationships based on dignity, reciprocity and equivalence, and in exercising of power.

The **defining principles** of the CE & ST concept of education are:

- **Education as a tool for social transformation.**
  Citizenship Education is considered a social and political practice, to the extent that we recognise, within the act of educating:
  - The knowledge-power relationship: Access to knowledge, to the most important understanding in a community, facilitates, conditions and determines the possibility of access to and exercise of power. Historically, knowledge and power have been closely related. They are two sides of the same process. When we talk about politics, we are referring to the 'construction of power' within a certain context. The power to make, to transform, the reality of social injustice experienced by our communities.
  - The education-social organisation relationship. Any educational practices that generate different levels of organisation (within a group, a classroom, a school, social organisations, etc.) involve continuous learning experiences that lead to making changes in institutions, the neighbourhood, the community, a region, a country and so on.

- **The concept of organised participation and the social protagonism of childhood and youth.**

---

5 This question was answered in the 2nd International Network Meeting, held from 23 November to 3 December 2009.
Development education processes are approached through the concept of popular education as an expression and production of liberating teaching of independence. Democratic practices in education require community participation and social organisation processes that must be promoted and monitored.

Learning to organise ourselves and exercising organised participation can enable and contribute to small social changes and to the transformation of the society we live in. Furthermore, organisation processes involve significant learning that fosters changes in the organised parties themselves, in their groups and in the context. That is why organisation processes have a strong educational component.

By calling for participation, such participation becomes associated with the practice of social protagonism, construed as the democratic exercise of power. Participation without also taking on collective rights and duties, is no such thing. Therefore, organised participation is fostered, not only in terms of the effectiveness and sustainability of the participation, but also as a means of building citizenship.

Based on these convictions, citizenship is built, emphasising the organised participation of the individuals and institutions that are the protagonists of the process, in the conviction that the only truly sustainable action is that which can be measured in terms of education and social organisation.

- The concept of dialectic methods. The popular education perspective.
  This includes the possibility of self-change, of change with others and of change of the environment, not only the transfer of knowledge. Through these statements, the Network supports each of the principles of the pedagogy of autonomy. These principles, which define a true pedagogy of democracy, summarise the values that are attempting to be built in its educational practices.
  The Network conceives development education processes as a constant dialectical relationship between practice, reflecting on the practice and creation of knowledge based on such reflections, which leads us back to rethink and reformulate specific practices, based on what we have learned.

In addition to its educational concept, it was vitally important for the internal operation of the Network to be a benchmark of the transformation model it aimed to propose. For this reason, special emphasis was placed on defining the values that must guide the daily work of the Network, and that must be promoted in the course of its activities:

1. **Interculturality**: Respect for and celebration of diversity, based upon which exchange and collective construction of an inclusive identity are sought.
2. **Justice**: Focusing all actions on the full exercise of individual or collective human rights.
3. **Horizontality**: Reciprocity and co-responsibility in relationships, based on equivalence and decentralisation.
4. **Coherence**: A search for harmony between the declared mission and values and the actions carried out.
5. **Solidarity**: Determination in working for the common good, establishing relationships in which each individual or group accepts the needs of others as their own and becomes responsible along, with the latter, for defending their rights.

6. **Joy**: Choosing to face every situation in a positive, constructive way, overcoming difficulties and trying to enjoy everything done.

### 5. Findings of the research

The research has led to progress made along two lines: Progress in the concept of CE & ST by identifying the meeting points (and issues for debate); and creating consensus among the organisations that share the Network regarding the relevant educational practices. Due to length restrictions, we shall refrain from reproducing in this article all the practices and techniques shared, which can be seen in the full publication.

However, we will discuss the progress made in the concept of CE & ST here. The research enabled us to identify a series of common elements, among which, we could highlight:

- Regarding the **approaches** of CE & ST:
  - *Gender Approach*: To aid in developing a world in which a person's gender is not a cause for discrimination, but rather an essential part of the plural, complex and enriching human diversity.
  - *Rights Approach*: In acknowledgement of the fact that every individual is entitled to certain inherent rights that must, therefore, be exercised and which involves acknowledging who is responsible in relation to these rights. The aim is to place human rights at the centre of the proposals, with a marked political nature, seeking to promote, recognise and demand the rights of individuals and society and to denounce violations thereof. As a specific practice, here we can speak of the Principle of Enforceability: *Speaking out* against the violation of rights.
  - *Power Relationships*: Analysing and creating awareness about power relationships that foster or hinder our practice.
  - *'Glocal' Approach: Think globally, act locally*: In order to transform reality, a preliminary theoretical approach is made regarding the problems we face globally, in order to act in consequence locally, within our neighbourhoods and communities, and to help solve these global problems through our participation in our immediate setting.

- Regarding the **methodologies** of CE & ST:
  - *Interculturality*: Recognition, respect and promotion of diversity.
  - *Action-Reflection-Action*: Using practice to create theories that will be used in practice. In other words, experience makes us revise our theories and theory makes us revise our actions.
WEAVING CITIZENSHIP WITH THE THREADS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION. RESEARCH ON THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION. International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation

- Cooperation and Coordination: Collaboration between the numerous actors is crucial in educational actions and actions relating to the enforceability of rights from a horizontal democratic viewpoint.
- Group Processes: For the collective construction of knowledge based on each individual's experience and what they have learned.
- Communication and Dialogue: Educational practices are based on communication and dialogue as the basic tools for knowledge transfer, collective knowledge building and conflict resolution.
- Active and Critical Participation: By everyone, in order to ensure that all the voices are heard and so that we can speak of true horizontal democratic practice.

- We also find other approaches within the organisations in the Network that enrich CE & ST:
  - the gender perspective,
  - the experiential cycle (experience- reflection- transformation- action),
  - recreational participatory methodology,
  - fostering intergenerational spaces,
  - pedagogy of tenderness,
  - interdependence of societies,
  - creation of leadership with cultural values,
  - environmental sustainability approach.

- With regards to attitudes and values, it is worth noting the priority given to the changes in personal attitudes as the basis on which to improve educational practices:
  - Showing respect, consideration and communication with others based on an empathetic attitude. Practising active listening and setting an example based on this.
  - Understanding the family-educational institution relationship and the advocacy of rights as a determining factor in transformation, since reality is created as a whole.
  - An attempt to break away from attitudes that lead one to feel like a victim, acquired through the perception of an inability to prompt personal or social change. Besides using other support elements, this break must be made on the basis of psychological advising to students and their families in order to create a favourable climate.
  - Practising active observation towards an awareness of oneself as an agent of change in all spheres of our personal and professional life. In the words of one participant, this means “looking at others and letting others look at me”.
  - Taking a critical look at the everyday situations that hinder group work and a collaborative spirit.
WEAVING CITIZENSHIP WITH THE THREADS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION. RESEARCH ON THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION. International Network for Citizenship Education and Social Transformation

- Becoming aware of oneself and one’s capacity to offer experience-based wisdom to others.  
- Searching for personal coherence based on exercising my “active citizenship” in every sphere of daily life.

While conducting the research, the organisations debated and also questioned certain concepts in order to further specify their definition of CE & ST. Conceptual debates were held on the ethno-centric bias of human rights, the concept of democracy and development, and the central role of women in the organisations' proposals, methodological debates on the capacity to understand power relationships and the agents who exercise them, how to interact without prejudice, how to carry out mobilisation and protest activities in each context, how to foster self-reflection and about the way of managing conflict, and finally, practical debates took place about how to manage time, participation and communication restrictions, how to more intentionally exchange experiences and learning in the organisations, how to improve representation mechanisms or how to really work on the gender and rights approach without limiting ourselves solely to the concept.

6. Assessment of the Research

The process of thinking about and reviewing our way of understanding Citizenship Education and Social Transformation has enabled us to stop to take a look at and revise our own practices and those of each of the organisations in the Network. In general terms, it has helped us to reflect personally and collectively, looking within ourselves and within each organisation, in addition to standardising our experiences and tools and generating exchange and joint learning.

The process itself has been the most enriching part. Both the techniques used and the principles behind them (participation, pluralism, diversity, etc.) have managed to provide it with a “way of identifying, thinking, acting” that has been evaluated in a positive manner by all the organisations that were part of the research.

In fact, some of them have said that the research process helped them to enrich their own range of available methodologies/tools and to spur future reflections, without external prompting, within their organisations on all three levels studied: individually, on an intra-organisational level and at inter-organisational level. In other words, an appropriation process has taken place not only of the CE & ST contents discussed but also of the epistemology that has guided the research process. Hence the relevance of publishing not only the findings but also, especially, the process undertaken in order to reach them.

---

6 Personal understanding of the fact that I have “wisdom” deriving from my experience in life that goes beyond the field of knowledge catalogued using the positivistic paradigm. My opinion is valuable and therefore I have a commitment to share it with my colleagues.
In addition, despite the fact that the research was not conducted face to face, constant communication constituted the cornerstone upon which the information was surveyed, sharing and verifying interpretations by the researchers with the participating organisations at all times. In this way, it was also possible to mould the research to the organisations, rather than the other way around.

It is also worth highlighting that the commitment, thorough endeavour and co-responsibility of all the people participating has given the research rigour, while also maintaining the flexibility required to adjust the timing, and the application of a methodology that truly adapted to the needs and specific features of each context. In this respect, it also highlighted the ease with which the team of researchers worked, the seriousness of their commitment and their enthusiasm towards the process and results. The team work engaged in was straightforward and very satisfying.

As expressed by the Young Workers' Foundation "This research exercise brings closure to a time in the Network's history when it consolidated mutual recognition and collective learning. What comes from now should consolidate collective work without ever abandoning the implementation of dissemination strategies for the existence, objectives and achievements of the Network. It would be appropriate to have a role whereby we could propagate the experience with the partners that each member has, as identified during the research process. Specifically, this could be a way to acquire something and apply it towards a more active, purposeful network."

The challenges to ensure further progress in the theoretical construct and practical application of CE & ST have been put forward.

Additional support material
- The network's institutional video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9yYkLpDadA
- The network's website: http://www.redinternacionalepd.org
- Publication including the full research report: http://www.intered.org/sites/default/files/files/recursos-educativos/Tejiendo_ciudadan%C3%ADa%20InteRed.pdf