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Human Rights, Ethics, and Social Justice in Education: A Review of International Legal and Policy Perspectives

Firdausih Firdausih

Institut Agama Islam At Taqwa Bondowoso, Indonesia, <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1490-6564>

Abstract

Education is a universal right, but access is not equal; its implementation is weak; it is discriminatory; and it is not equally enforced in different regions and among different social groups. The present study will be a review on Human rights, ethics and social justice in education from international legal and policy perspective. It examines key normative documents, ethical principles, forms of educational inequality, policy strategies towards inclusion, the rights of vulnerable learners and the disconnect between law and practice. The issues of poverty, disability, migration, conflict, gender inequality, digital exclusion, AI, data privacy, academic freedom, and the increasing influence of private actors in education are all given special focus. The review reveals that educational rights are not fully realised without fair funding, effective governance, inclusive educational institutions, qualified teachers, clear and transparent regulation and mechanisms for redress. It also points out that new technologies can facilitate learning and access but can pose threats to access and learning in terms of surveillance, bias, commercial influence, and learner autonomy. A stronger international cooperation and locally-based reforms are needed to link legal requirements to quantifiable educational results. The dignity, the sense of fair treatment, participation, inclusion and public responsibility are therefore integral to a rights-based approach to education, in order to provide meaningful and socially just educational opportunities for all learners.

Keywords: human rights, educational ethics, social justice, inclusive education, international education policy

1. Introduction

Education has a special place in the human rights agenda as it is a right unto itself and a vehicle by which other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are being realized. Meaningful education can help to expand individual freedom, enhance citizens' engagement in democracy, create more opportunities for work, and empower students to resist discrimination. However, the recognition of the right to education has not resulted in equal educational conditions. This means that income, gender, disability, language, ethnicity, migration status, geographical location and exposure to conflict remain significant factors in who enters school, who stays in school and the benefits of school learning. Without accelerated progress, some 84 million children and youth would continue to be out of school in 2030, and nearly 300 million learners would not have acquired basic numeracy and literacy skills (United Nations, 2023).

These inequalities stake education as an ethical and social justice issue, not just an access or lack of access to institution one. It is possible for an educational system to increase its enrollment while simultaneously creating injustice through exclusionary curriculum, inaccessible facilities, unequal funding, unequal discipline, and/or lack of recognition of cultural identity. Respect for human dignity, fairness and autonomy, care, accountability and non-discrimination are the principles of ethical education. Social justice introduces issues of opportunity, resources, recognition, and power in terms of distribution. UNESCO thus proposes a new social contract for education based on human rights, solidarity, cooperation, cultural diversity and education as a public good and common cause. The proposal arose from a two-year consultation process with about one million people that drew in widespread concern that education should work to address current injustices and to equip societies with shared and sustainable futures (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021).

This agenda has been made even more urgent during COVID-19. School closures had an unprecedented impact on schooling and home-based learning could be better suited to families with home devices, Internet access, electricity and adults available to support them. The losses were not “socially neutral” and long lasting. Less than 3% of government stimulus packages in low- and lower-middle-income countries were allocated to education, and that percentage was even lower in most other parts of the world (World Bank, UNESCO, & United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF], 2021). These differences show that there is a gap between universal law promises and states' ability to safeguard education during emergencies.

Leadership and governance are thus at the heart of turning rights into reality. Laws and policies need to be adequately funded, held accountable, have well-trained teachers, decision-making processes are inclusive, and leaders see equity as a part of their job and not an optional programme. Despite decades of international commitments, the current global monitoring estimates that 251 million children and young people are still out-of-school (UNESCO, 2024). In this context, the relationship between human rights, ethics and social justice in education is explored from an international legal and policy perspective in different national and regional contexts,

in a narrative review. It examines the normative basis, ethical issues, trends in inequalities, policy interventions, implementation constraints, and new issues that have emerged when developing educational systems that are more inclusive, accountable, and respect for rights.

2. Conceptual Foundations

Human rights, ethics, equality, equity, inclusion and social justice are interconnected but different principles to consider in assessing education. A human-rights perspective considers education as a right based upon human dignity, not a benefit which is awarded based on income, social status, ability or citizenship. Educational ethics refers to moral principles governing choices relating to the students, teaching, assessment, discipline, behavior in the school and use of resources. It needs respect, fairness, care, autonomy, accountability and protection from discrimination. Democratic education in turn extends these responsibilities by helping learners to become citizens in plural societies. The Council of Europe states that there are 20 competences for democratic culture, grouped under the headings values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge with critical understanding. These competences are linked to education for respect for human rights, cultural diversity, dialogue, responsibility and civic participation (Council of Europe, 2018).

Equality is often the equal of giving learners the same formal rights or opportunities. Equity acknowledges that equal treatment is not equal opportunity due to unequal resources, experiences and social advantages that learners bring to the educational setting. Equitable systems will thus respond to different needs without placing undue obstacles to poor, people with disability, gender, language, migration, ethnicity or geographical location. There is evidence of socioeconomic inequality in international assessments: over the OECD countries, the highest socioeconomically advantaged 10% of students outperformed the lowest 10% by an average of 141 reading-score points. The differences illustrate how family background can persist in shaping educational outcomes and subsequently social mobility (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018). Table 1 identifies the key concepts which are used in the review and illustrates how each one underpins the idea of education from a rights-based perspective.

Table 1. Core Concepts in Rights-Based and Socially Just Education

Concept	Central meaning	Educational application	Main concern
Human rights	Education is a universal entitlement grounded in human dignity	Equal access, legal protection, non-discrimination, and effective remedies	Whether every learner can claim and exercise educational rights
Ethics	Principles guiding fair and responsible educational conduct	Fair assessment, privacy, autonomy, care, accountability, and professional responsibility	Whether educational decisions respect learners
Equality	Provision of the same formal rights and	Common admission rules, equal legal status, and	Whether learners receive equal

	opportunities	uniform access standards	treatment
Equity	Differentiated support according to need and disadvantage	Additional funding, assistive technology, language support, and targeted assistance	Whether unequal starting conditions are addressed
Inclusion	Transformation of institutions to accommodate learner diversity	Accessible infrastructure, flexible curricula, inclusive teaching, and participation	Whether learners can participate and belong
Social justice	Fair distribution of opportunities, resources, recognition, and power	Redistribution, representation, institutional reform, and accountability	Whether structural inequalities are reduced

Inclusion is not just about the reintegration of learners who might have been excluded in the past. It demands that schools, curricula, teaching, assessment and learning environments change so that diversity becomes a commonplace part of education. This knowledge is based on the principle that barriers should not be blamed on individual disabilities but on the educational system itself (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2017) and that all learners are equally important. Inclusive practice then becomes about access and participation, belonging, achievement and recognition. It also mandates that teachers and school leaders look at who is listened to, who is represented by what they know and who is being ignored. Designed to foster the use of learner diversity as a resource and to reinforce and improve partnership-building between schools, families, and communities, a whole-system approach encourages educators to do so (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2021).

Social justice provides a way of linking these ideas, namely through the way education opportunities, institutional recognition, representation and power are distributed. The application is particularly crucial in higher education, where admission does not necessarily mean meaningful participation or successful completion. A system based on the rights of individuals should not only take up issues of entry to school but also the academic and financial support, social and cultural needs after enrolment. It is, therefore, important to pay attention to the needs of a variety of learners when designing policies, involving the experiences of each of these learners, which is what social justice requires in terms of structural change, not just isolated support for certain individuals (UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2022).

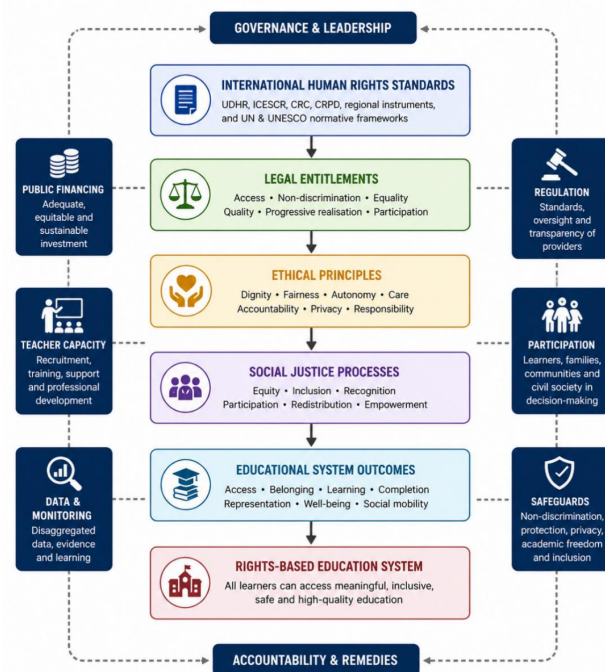


Figure 1. Integrated relationship among human rights, ethics, social justice, and educational outcomes.

3. International Legal Frameworks for the Right to Education

International human rights law does not regard the right to education as a service that is provided to those who can afford it, it is an entitlement that is available to everyone. States are expected to honour access to education, safeguard learners from interference and discrimination, and make good on the right through laws, funding, institutions and remedies. The four entitlements usually mentioned in relation to these duties are: that educational provision must be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. These standards, when taken together, demand adequate institutions, equitable access, acceptable quality, cultural sensitivity and sensitivity to shifting learners' realities.

An increasing role of commercial providers, particularly in Australia, has placed a heightened emphasis on state responsibility. The Abidjan Principles of 2019, adopted after three years of consultation, make it clear that governments are still responsible for providing quality public education and that they must regulate the private education sector to prevent fees, admissions, curricula and profit-making practices from exacerbating inequality. The Special Rapporteur also cautioned the continuing lack of funding and inadequate regulation of the private sector could hamper progress towards SDG 4 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2019).

International protection also demands States to ensure free primary education,

expand access to other levels of education progressively, eliminate discrimination and ensure safe and inclusive learning environments. The Human Rights Council has reiterated that education shall foster the "full development of the human personality, in full equality, dignity and social participation" (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2021a). Its cultural interpretation also recognizes the need for students to have access to, contribute to and participate in education that respects language, identity, heritage and a diversity of knowledge systems (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2021b). Table 2 succinctly outlines the legal and policy aspects of the right to education.

Table 2. International Legal and Policy Dimensions of the Right to Education

Legal or policy dimension	Core obligation	Educational implication
Availability	States must maintain sufficient educational institutions, teachers, and facilities	Schools and learning opportunities must exist in adequate numbers
Accessibility	Education must be physically and economically accessible without discrimination	Fees, location, disability, gender, language, or status should not prevent participation
Acceptability	Education must meet appropriate standards of quality, safety, and relevance	Curricula, teaching, discipline, and assessment must respect dignity and rights
Adaptability	Education must respond to social, cultural, linguistic, and individual needs	Systems should accommodate diversity, emergencies, disability, and changing conditions
Public responsibility	States remain responsible even when private providers operate	Private institutions require regulation, transparency, and accountability
Progressive realisation	Access beyond compulsory education should expand over time	Higher and lifelong education should become increasingly available and affordable
Cultural participation	Education should respect identity, language, heritage, and knowledge systems	Learners should participate without cultural erasure or forced assimilation
Effective remedy	Rights violations should be reviewable and correctable	Learners need complaint mechanisms, oversight, and legal protection

Higher education is part of the same set of norms. While access can be progressively realised, admission should be based on capacity and be supported by fair financing, non-discrimination, academic freedom and reasonable accommodation (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] & Right to Education Initiative, 2022). This framework is necessary now for digital education, lifelong learning, climate change, mobility, privacy and emergency provision. UNESCO thus believes that the right to education should be transformed, but not abandoned, as a commitment to public responsibility, equality, and inclusion, and to accountability (UNESCO, 2023).

4. Ethical Principles in Education

Ethics in Education are the rules governing the relationships between and within institutions and their learners, the distribution of opportunities to education, the exercise of authority in education, and the way technologies are used in education. No learner can be a data point – they must be recognised as a holder of rights in order to uphold human dignity. Fairness and non-discrimination require that admissions, assessment, discipline and access to resources are not based on gender, disability, ethnicity, income, language or digital access. These tasks are part of participation, safety, privacy and responsible communication online. Digital citizenship is divided into 10 areas by the Council of Europe, access and inclusion, ethics and empathy, rights and responsibilities, privacy and security, demonstrating that digital competence is moral, as well as technical (Council of Europe, 2019).

AI introduces additional complexities because educators could rely on AI-driven tools to suggest lesson materials, track student conduct, predict outcomes, and inform decision-making. Children need protection because they might not have a grasp of how their information is being gathered and used. UNICEF lists nine elements for child-centred AI: privacy protection, non-discrimination, transparency, safety, inclusion, development and well-being of children, and others (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2021). Ethical use mandates human oversight, not to take the place of responsibility for the automatic recommendation.

AI literacy and governance is a duty being increasingly recognised as such in international policy. Beijing Consensus advocated for inclusive access, teacher preparation, transparent data use, and human-centred deployment while acknowledging that AI might exacerbate inequality if infrastructure and skills are not levelled (UNESCO, 2019). UNESCO's ethics guidelines stipulate proportionality, accountability, explainability, cultural diversity, environmental responsibility and freedom protection throughout the AI life cycle (UNESCO, 2021).

The use of generative AI raises concerns on authorship, accuracy, bias, intellectual property, assessment integrity, and learner autonomy. UNESCO suggests using generative AI tools with age-appropriate content and recommends a minimum age of 13 years for engaging in age-appropriate discussions with generative AI platforms. Institutions should establish rules, safeguard data, cross-check outputs, declare AI support and maintain teacher-student relationships (UNESCO, 2023).

5. Social Justice and Educational Inequality

Educational inequality is the difference in access to, participation in, achievement and future opportunities for learners that is caused by social and institutional conditions. Unfortunately, poverty still plays a significant role and has an impact on disadvantaged students who may have fewer resources such as learning materials, have less support for their learning, and not have access to well resourced schools. According to PISA 2018, about 12% of the variation in reading performance across OECD countries was due to socioeconomic status. However, there are some pupils with disadvantaged backgrounds who have performed well, reflecting that the funding of schools, teacher quality and school environment all help to reduce the link between socio-economic status and attainment (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019).

The barriers related to migration and forced displacement include disrupted schooling, lack of legal status, language differences, discrimination and lack of recognition of previous qualifications. Policies which isolate migrant and refugee learners from national systems can extend the length of their exclusion and limit their social integration. Flexible admission, language support, trained teachers, recognition of prior learning and protection from xenophobia are all inclusive responses (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2019).

Other factors affecting participation in education include disability, ethnicity, location, language, and social identity. Less than 10% of countries had laws that facilitate full inclusion in education; and 25% of countries continued to have laws that stipulate the education of students with disabilities in separate settings. These can keep the door open for physical access but hinder feeling at home, engaging and participating equally (UNESCO, 2020).

Digital inequality is growing to be more related to gender inequality. There were 244 million fewer women worldwide with internet access compared to men, and women made up just 35% of graduates in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields. These gaps hinder women's access to digital learning and participation in technology development (UNESCO, 2024).

Access is not equated when children move into school. It is estimated that 70% of 10-year-olds were unable to read and comprehend a simple age-appropriate text in 2022 in low and middle-income countries. The problem of learning poverty thus represents a deeper justice issue: Without effective learning, education cannot be used to realize the right to education, nor educate for meaningful social mobility (World Bank et al., 2022).

6. International Policy Approaches to Inclusive and Equitable Education

There is a growing link between the concepts of access and inclusion, sustainability, learning quality and social justice in international education policies. It acknowledges that the right to education is not limited to just enrollment, and that issues of discrimination, out-of-reach learning environments, poorly-trained teachers and weak learning outcomes can compromise that right. The United Nations has

recognized the need to transform education systems through equitable and adequate public investment, empowering teachers, integrating diversity into curricula, providing access to digital tools and improving accountability. Over 130 countries pledged to transform their education systems at the Transforming Education Summit 2022, emphasising the widespread understanding that the current system was not working for many learners (United Nations, 2022).

UNICEF's global approach puts the most excluded children at the heart of education planning, especially girls, children with disabilities, displaced children and children living with poverty and emergencies. It supports increased access, improved foundational learning, transferable skills and flexible provision in formal and non-formal contexts. The problem is huge, and in the current scenario, it is estimated that 420 million children will not have basic childhood skills by 2030, while 825 million young people will graduate from secondary school without acquiring essential skills (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2019).

Sustainability is also an important element of inclusive education policy. UNESCO's international framework calls for education as a tool to build the knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviour required to respond to climate change, inequality, environmental degradation and social conflict. It highlights five priority areas, including policy, transformative learning environment, educator capacity, engagement of young people and local action (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2019). The roadmap that is related works to coordinate action by governments, institutions, communities and international organizations, and recommends curricula that link environment and environmental responsibility with human dignity and social participation (UNESCO, 2020).

A successful policy should ultimately enhance the knowledge and ability of learners. World Bank says that education without learning is an education failure and a social injustice. 61 million primary-school-age children and 202 million secondary-school-age children were out of school in low- and lower-middle-income countries in 2016. To achieve inclusive reform, therefore, the commitment must be shared politically around learning for all children, school leadership is essential, evidence-based teaching is necessary, and reliable learning assessment is imperative (World Bank, 2018).

7. Rights of Marginalised and Vulnerable Learners

This right to education is afforded to each and every learner regardless of their opportunities being limited due to disability, displacement, poverty, conflict, gender, ethnic, linguistic or minority status. However, this does not go far enough as vulnerable learners may need accessible facilities, financial assistance, language support, psychosocial care, flexible admission, and protection from violence. In times of crisis, these obligations are particularly pressing. In 2023, 224 million school-aged and youth children were impacted by emergency situations, with approximately 72 million children out of school. Girls, out-of-home children and learners with disabilities were especially at risk of being excluded (Education Cannot Wait, 2023).

An armed conflict can turn a school environment into a place of danger. About 6,000

cases of attacks on students, teachers, schools and universities were recorded in 2022 and 2023, including attacks by the army on educational facilities. These have risen by almost 20% from the previous two years, causing injuries, abductions, arrests and deaths to over 10,000 students and education workers (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2024). Safe-learning policies, continuity plans, policies of accountability for attacks and restrictions on the military use of institutions are necessary for protecting education. Safe-learning policies, continuity plans, accountability for attacks and restrictions on the military use of institutions are needed for protecting education.

Structural barriers are presented to children with disabilities as well. Almost 240 million children around the world have a disability of some kind. They are 49% more likely not to have ever been to school, and 42% less likely to have basic reading and numeracy skills than children without disabilities (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2021). Four key components for inclusion are reasonable accommodation, accessible infrastructure, assistive technology and trained teachers, along with reliable data disaggregated by disability.

Refugee learners suffer from interrupted schooling, documentation issues, language barriers, financial difficulties and exclusion from the national system. The overall rates of school-aged refugee children not in education (NEIE) were as high, with nearly half of the estimated 14.8 million not currently in school, and tertiary education enrolment was only 7% in the reporting period of the 2024 assessment (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2024). International human rights principles thus require states to incorporate refugees into the national education system, and not maintain parallel education systems. These should involve recognised qualifications, equal access at all levels, appropriate language provision and no discrimination (United Nations General Assembly, 2018).

8. Gaps Between Legal Commitments and Educational Practice

The formal status of education as a human right does not guarantee that every learner is able to enjoy the right equally. Despite constitutional guarantees, inclusive policies and international commitments, implementation is hampered by weak enforcement, inadequate infrastructure, institutional fragmentation, and unequal technological access by many governments. These vulnerabilities became very apparent in the time of school closure. Of the 67 countries evaluated in the Remote Learning Readiness Index, 31 countries are below average and 19 are above average. Countries with low preparedness had some 196 million school children who were at high or extremely high risk of climate and environmental risks, and continued to face threats of interruption to school provision (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2021).

Emergency measures also revealed the shortcomings of using technology as an alternative to a resilient public education. Some learning was maintained through online platforms, TV and radio, but a range of factors, including household income, electricity, connectivity, devices, accessible content and parental support, had to be in place for these to be accessible. The pandemic also exacerbated discrimination

against learners from low-income, rural, and other marginalised groups, such as those with disability and those who are displaced. A rights-based approach should have governments review the impact that a crisis policy makes for various groups, and prioritise the continuity of in-person learning, trained teachers, social support and institutional accountability over temporary digital solutions (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2020).

There is also a lack of consistency in the governance of private education. Non-state actors deliver education in educational systems, to many learners, but are poorly regulated, allowing for selective access, high fees, poor labour rights and educational disparities. The public and private sector institutions are part of one accountable system under shared standards, transparency and the protection from exploitation (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021).

Financing remains the most persistent implementation barrier. The government accounts for about three-quarters of the financing of education in the world, and households for the majority of the rest. While the total amount of ODA in 2022 amounted to US\$16.6 billion, the share of education in total ODA fell from 9.3% in 2019 to 7.6% in 2022. These trends contribute to lower capacity of lower income countries to implement legal commitments into well resourced, participatory and efficient institutions (World Bank, UNESCO & UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024).

9. Emerging Ethical and Human Rights Challenges

Digital technology is changing education, and its proliferation has raised questions regarding equality, privacy, autonomy, commercial influence and institutional accountability. AI can be used for individualised teaching, translation, access and administrative planning. However, automated systems can also perpetuate bias, create inaccurate materials, profile learners, or have a negative impact on admission, assessment, and discipline without an explanation of value. The Special Rapporteur has emphasized that AI must be used within the human context and should not be an alternative to teachers, undermine learners' agency, or drive the decisions made in education to private technology firms. Before adopting a high-risk system, States should put in place a system of regulation, impact assessment, transparency, data protection and accessible remedies (United Nations General Assembly, 2024).

The public nature of education is also impacted by digitalisation. Learning platforms can gather a wealth of data on attendance, performance, behaviour, communication and personal identity. This information can be stored, merged, and sold without students' proper consent, especially when there is no real choice available for the platform the students must access. To secure rights-based digital education, it is important to show educational value and ensure privacy and freedom from surveillance, discrimination and the influence of profit motives regarding curricula and pedagogical approaches (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2022).

Academic freedom faces related pressures. They need the freedom to explore, challenge established knowledge, share their results, and engage in institutional decision-making without being censored, intimidated or professionally retaliated against by teachers, researchers and students. The Special Rapporteur proposes to

understand academic freedom as a separate human right, associated with education, expression, association, science, and cultural participation. Thus, institutional autonomy should be linked with intellectual autonomy and hold itself accountable to democratic and human rights principles (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2024).

Technologies may expand access in times of emergency, but unequal access and access to technology and devices may deepen exclusion. Only 40% of primary schools, 50% of lower secondary schools and 65% of upper secondary schools in the world were connected to the internet for pedagogical purposes. There is also limited evidence of effectiveness and education technology products may evolve more rapidly than independent evaluation or regulation. For this reason, digital tools need to be used alongside human interaction and not as a replacement for trained teachers, safe institutions, and well-funded and robust public education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2023).

10. Policy Implications and Future Directions

The transition from declarations to contractual obligations, financing, and results needs to be made if rights-based educational reform is to become a reality. Governments should incorporate the principles of non-discrimination, reasonable accommodation, data protection, child participation and access to complaint mechanisms into education legislation. Disaggregated data on enrolment, attendance, learning, disability, gender, displacement and income should be made public by oversight bodies to identify and address inequalities. UNICEF-supported education programmes helped reach 26 million children and adolescents with education, including almost 9 million children in emergencies, and delivered over 17.5 million children with learning materials in 2024. The findings highlight the importance of coordinated public systems, humanitarian planning and partnerships for learners who have been excluded (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2024).

Policy also needs to safeguard education financing against debt pressures, conflict, shocks to climate, and evolving donor priorities in the future. UNESCO estimates that the amount of aid to education could fall by over 25% by 2027, which is the highest drop since the 1990s. It advised increased support via multilateral organizations and national budgets, less earmarking and more institutional strengthening, and lower borrowing rates (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2025). Capacity building should be prioritized in the context of collaboration rather than stand-alone projects. Continued studies are needed to determine the impact of legal changes, digital systems, funding structures and accountability systems on the participation, learning, dignity and representation of marginalised populations.

11. Conclusion

Education cannot be recognized as a right in the law and not be realized. There are clear international legal and policy obligations on access, non-discrimination, dignity, inclusion, quality and state accountability, but significant gaps remain affecting the

poor, disabled, and conflict affected learners, as well as rural and minority learners. Ethical education goes beyond the number of pupils. It needs to be treated fairly, provide culturally responsive education, maintain confidentiality, have academic freedom, be inclusive and involve students appropriately, and have appropriate use of digital technologies. Social justice also requires the distribution of resources, opportunities, recognition and decision-making power to be such that it mitigates rather than perpetuates structural disadvantage. The growth of AI, private education, digital platforms, and emergency learning systems has opened new doors and raised additional concerns related to surveillance, bias, commercialisation, exclusion and a loss of public accountability. Therefore, more rigorous regulation, sustainable public funding, clear governance, disaggregated data, easy access to remedies, and help for teachers must be provided. Instead of short-term projects, institutional capacity and cooperation should be targeted internationally. The future of education reform should involve the linking of legal responsibilities with measurable outcomes, and begin to ensure that all learners can be participants, belong, learn, and develop in a way that is dignified. A rights-based, ethical and socially just education system continues to be at the heart of democratic life, social mobility, peace and sustainable development.

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