

# Communication as a tool to promote and spread the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*

Rodrigo Caetano <sup>1</sup>, Volnei Garrafa <sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

The *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* is one of the basis of the XXI century world biotechnological agenda. The referred document is insufficiently national and internationally known, not only by the population but also by the academic community. In order to allow the Declaration principles and contents to be more assimilated, it is necessary to adopt communication strategies to promote bioethics themes. This paper aims to propose – throughout a communication plan – an international promotion of the Declaration principles in public policies and its inclusion in universities, research centers and by citizens themselves. Besides, this study aims to establish democratic devices whose purposes are the empowerment, the liberation and the emancipation – principles of the Bioethics of Intervention, a conceptual line with foundations in Latin America and epistemologically consolidated – of the most vulnerable populations. The desired consequence is a bigger international spread of bioethics which will contribute to transform social reality.

**Key words:** Bioethics. Human rights. Communication. Public policies.

## Resumo

### Comunicação como ferramenta para divulgar e promover a *Declaração Universal sobre Bioética e Direitos Humanos*

A *Declaração Universal sobre Bioética e Direitos Humanos* (DUBDH) é um dos pilares que pautam a agenda biotecnológica mundial do século XXI. O documento é insuficientemente conhecido em âmbito nacional e internacional, tanto pela população como pela comunidade acadêmica. Para que seu conteúdo seja assimilado é indispensável a adoção de estratégias de comunicação com vistas a divulgar os temas abordados. O trabalho objetiva propor, por meio de um plano de comunicação, uma melhor divulgação internacional dos princípios da DUBDH e sua inclusão nas políticas públicas, no cotidiano das universidades, centros de pesquisa e pelos próprios cidadãos. Por meio de estratégias programáticas o estudo propõe instrumentos democráticos cujas metas são o empoderamento, a libertação e a emancipação – referenciais da bioética de intervenção, linha conceitual de fundamentação latino-americana e epistemologicamente consolidada – das populações mais vulneráveis. A consequência desejada é maior divulgação internacional da bioética, que poderá contribuir para transformar a realidade social.

**Palavras-chave:** Bioética. Direitos humanos. Comunicação. Políticas públicas.

## Resumen

### Comunicación como herramienta para divulgar y promover la *Declaración Universal sobre Bioética y Derechos Humanos*

La *Declaración Universal sobre Bioética y Derechos Humanos* (DUBDH) es una de las bases de la agenda biotecnológica mundial del siglo XXI. Dicho documento es insuficientemente conocido en nivel nacional e internacional, tanto por la población como por la comunidad académica. Para mejor asimilación de sus principios y contenido, es indispensable la adopción de estrategias de comunicación para divulgar los temas abordados. El trabajo objetiva, por medio de un plan de comunicación, proponer una mejor divulgación internacional de los principios de la Declaración y su inclusión en las políticas públicas, en el cotidiano de las universidades, centros de pesquisas e por los propios ciudadanos. Por medio de estrategias programáticas, el estudio sugiere herramientas democráticas cuyas metas son el empoderamiento, la liberación e la emancipación – que son referencia de la Bioética de la Intervención, línea conceptual de fundamentación latinoamericana y epistemologicamente consolidada – de las poblaciones más vulnerables. La consecuencia deseada es la mayor divulgación internacional de la bioética que podrá contribuir para la transformación de la realidad social.

**Palabras-clave:** Bioética. Derechos humanos. Comunicación. Políticas públicas.

1. **Doctorate** rodcaetano@hotmail.com 2. **PhD** garrafavolnei@gmail.com – Universidade de Brasília, Brasília/DF, Brazil.

## Correspondence

Rodrigo Caetano – SQSW 301 Bloco B apt° 311 CEP 70673-102. Brasília/DF, Brazil.

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The *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* (DUBDH), adopted at the 33rd General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in October 2005, in Paris, represents a milestone for global bioethics.

With this international document, the bioethical issues that contextualize the human being as a moral, social, cultural and political agent are included in the new agenda for the twenty-first century debates. Sané emphasizes that DUBDH is the first historical, large, international milestone of the principles of bioethics<sup>1</sup>. For Saada, it represents a paradigm shift in the concept of bioethics: *DUBDH This opens up new spaces for ethical reflection is a necessary tool that governments can establish laws, regulations and appropriate legislation in the bioethics field*<sup>2</sup>.

Similarly, Barbosa points out that *the content of this document consolidates a concrete step towards a new epistemological framework and a new thematic agenda for the twenty-first century bioethics: a more humane, tangible and closer bioethics to true persistent conflicts that affect most the peripheral countries of the Earth*<sup>3</sup>.

The document, considered legally as a *non-binding standard*, without the force of law, but with important political significance, was signed by 191 signatories and addressed issues of social (human dignity, violence, fighting poverty, solidarity), health (universal access to health systems, equity in care) and environmental nature (water quality, biodiversity). The DUBDH also provides *guidance to decisions or practices of individuals, groups, communities, institutions and public and private companies*<sup>4</sup>.

The DUBDH represents a great political and theoretical progress toward a more socially fair world. During its construction, however, there were many conflicts between the richest and poorest nations; between the world centered on the Euro-American context and the peripheral world. In the preparatory meetings, richer countries advocated a text exclusively focused on biomedical and biotechnological issues. In turn, the poor and developing countries also battled for advancing in social, environmental and health issues.

The commitment to communication and dissemination of the premises of the official text is laid down in Article 22 of DUBDH: *States should take all appropriate measures character of legislative, administrative or other nature, in order to implement the principles established in this Declaration and in accordance with international law and human*

*rights. Such measures should be supported by actions in the spheres of education, training and public information*<sup>3</sup>. Since 2005, steps were taken to make this content public, but there is still progress to the diffusion becomes a practical reality and applied in the lives of people, communities and countries.

The lack of knowledge and understanding of DUBDH is a factor that contributes to the maintenance of unequal *status quo*; contributing to populations remains distant to enjoy various nuances of social justice. This is because this ignorance, combined with factors such as low education and lack of debates of crucial themes to people's lives, reinforces ignorance, apathy and lack of mobilization to pressure public and private powers to adopt solutions that aim at social and economic development for all.

According to Lorenzo<sup>5</sup>, social vulnerability is a phenomenon determined by the structure of everyday life of people and communities, directly related to the factors that determine it, such as lack of resources such as income, information, knowledge and technologies and lack of access to government and other types of social representation<sup>6</sup>. Accordingly, as a result of this process of *alienation*, vulnerable populations are excluded in political decisions, failing to participate in an integrated manner in the decisions that affect society in general.

The lack of disclosure of DUBDH assumptions, both nationally and internationally, has direct impacts on different sectors and areas of activity. In Brazil, for example, in a very close voting in the Supreme Court (STF), in 2008, with six votes in favor and five against authorization of the use of stem cells for research and therapy, the ministers of the country's highest legal court at no time were based on and cited the assumptions of the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights*.

This absence becomes even more striking (and alarming) when one realizes that the DUBDH is considered the most current international and strategic document in this sense, that preaches values and assumptions down in defense of life and human rights. This lack of knowledge may result from misinformation of magistrates who occupy largely known positions and, when they must have consolidated their arguments, they ignored the importance of the concepts contained in the document.

The fact cannot be taken in isolation, which demonstrates and reinforces the need to invest in communication policies regarding DUBDH in public and private areas. Therefore, this study proposes the use of tools and strategies in the field of com-

munication to contribute to the dissemination, promotion and popularization of the content, concepts and ethical bases contained in the document.

Articles 22 and 23 of Statement argue that information and concepts of the text are disseminated especially among young people – who are responsible for building the future. Both articles emphasize the need to have a current, dynamic and skillful instrument that can cause reflections and practical changes – in this case, a plan of structured communication, the subject of this work.

### Intervention bioethics: politicizing DUBDH dissemination

For any instrument of dissemination bring practical results that motivate the process of social transformation, it is essential that there is an ethical and political commitment to do so. Thus, the participating nations of the construction of DUBDH are committed to dissemination and diffusion of its concepts.

This political form of global commitment has been achieving positive strategic results, such as the agreement for *Millennium Development Goals* proposed by the United Nations in 2000<sup>7</sup>. In it, the international community of nations has set a series of commitments to be met by member states in 15 years. Altogether, there are eight core subjects, among which public health and the environment, divided into 18 targets and 48 indicators. Each country, according to its reality, has committed itself to achieve certain population indexes related to social inclusion for, together, change the fate of humanity.

The Millennium Development Goals, which is a popularly known name, won a space in the international political agenda, and they were debated by government, business and civil society entities. Because they have been disseminated globally with clear targets and goals regarding results, each state and its society were encouraged to create their own strategies to meet the goals taken.

In this context, communication, for Melo<sup>8</sup>, serves as a bridge to the practical implementation of that policy agenda, given it is the basis for relations between individuals and groups in society. The media can contribute to the dynamic changes in interpersonal relationships, and the ability to intervene in the social fabric, respecting and – in some specific cases and in a positive way – overcoming cultural barriers.

But the communication of a guideline (as proposed by the DUBDH) requires a dissemination

strategy so that the message reaches the desired goals. In this study, communication is associated with intervention bioethics, which argues the politicization of moral issues as a way of implementing so-called applied ethics, replacing the merely descriptive or normative bioethics<sup>9</sup>. For it, peripheral countries need new bioethical approach, *based on interventional, direct and harsh practices that instrumentalize the search for a decrease of inequalities*<sup>10</sup>, i.e., points out the intervention way for State to overcome inequalities and enable social inclusion for the most vulnerable ones<sup>9</sup>.

When this epistemological line of work defends the politicization of issues of bioethics in general, it uses the perspective of the French philosopher of Greek origin, Cornelius Castoriades, for whom *politics is the field where the big decisions truly happen, which exclude or include individuals as beneficiaries of the scientific and technological development*<sup>11</sup>.

With politics as necessary path for the individual to act and influence important decisions, it is essential that the actors in the struggle for social inclusion empower themselves through more knowledge and rights, and release themselves in the broadest sense that the concept of Paulo Freire on releasing allows by emancipating<sup>12</sup>. Communication and strategic targeted action can help in each of these processes

The empowerment of vulnerable groups strengthens and supports the liberation advocated by Freire, for whom social subjects are political actors whose actions can maintain or change the status quo<sup>13</sup>: *Communication [is] the co-participation of subjects in the act of thinking (...) [it] implies a reciprocity that cannot be broken (...) communication is dialogue to the extent that it is no transferring of knowledge, but a gathering of interlocutor Subjects who seek the significance of the meanings.*

Freedom is more than the recognition of power. The group that has autonomy and freedom marks their position, establishing a *locus* and shows a load of performance and power in a democratic context against the socioeconomic and cultural domination. The intervention bioethics argues that the political struggle should result in freedom *from the awareness of the forces that oppress them and by concrete action opposed to them*<sup>9</sup>.

Finally, as a natural consequence of the two pillars described, emancipation comes as an important theoretical framework for intervention bioethics, which means that: *it is only emancipated the one*

who suppressed their dependence, who achieved mastery over themselves and can ensure not only the survival but their choices facing the means of achieving this survival<sup>12</sup>. This line of thought advocates that the act of emancipation has political character. Being emancipated should be a right won, not granted.

Therefore, disclosure of the essential concepts of DUBDH must be seen as a global and interventionist political act, which must be directly taken, with stipulation of annual targets, by the 191 nations that signed the document. And this interventional act depends, among other things, on a communicative action plan to achieve the goal of transforming social reality.

### The power of communication and its tools

The concept of communication has been broadened in the globalized world. Currently, there are not necessary only basic elements, such as sender, receiver and message, but also aspects such as content understanding, assimilation and processing of information to cause conscious action and possibly transforming in the lives of each one and all.

Communication influences individual and collective behaviors and can assist in broadening the debate to further awareness about various subjects and for positioning the person as a citizen. It is with this objective that a communication plan will be designed in the context of this work, as a practical tool to assist in a broader process of attempting to disseminate DUBDH in the community of nations, enabling practical results for people's everyday lives.

According to Castells<sup>14</sup>, currently there is a new form of relationship among economy, state and society, as a result of the technological revolution which is in the basis of the so-called *information society*. Here, communication is of great relevance in the development of acting concepts, perception, awareness and understanding of the global issues relevant to humanity. The challenge is to raise awareness and, in the case of the contents of DUBDH, making important topics to be tangible, embedded, noticed and assimilated in the daily lives of everyone. How to do this? Among other actions, through the application of appropriate communication strategies<sup>15</sup> – as seen below.

Applied as a tool, communication can provide practical results of assimilation of the current proposals in the document of the international body, such as respect for human dignity, equal rights and

justice. Studies on public perception indicate that the dissemination of scientific topics such as sustainable development, global warming, biotechnology and GMOs, for example, combined with other strategies in various means of mass communication, provide significant results for increased understanding contained therein<sup>16</sup>.

In the case of DUBDH, there is a range of subjects ranging from respect for human dignity, from understanding of consent forms in scientific research, to access to health systems and medicines. Because of this diversity, understanding may be more complex. With the intention of bringing issues to people's daily lives, it is critical to use the mass media to give visibility to information, without of course losing quality.

According to Castells, *the collective thinking (which is not the sum of individual thoughts on interaction, but a thought which absorbs everything and that it is diffused throughout society) is elaborated in communication. It is from communication that the pictures, information, opinions come and it is through these communication mechanisms that experience is disclosed and transmitted to the collective/community*<sup>17</sup>.

So the communication appears as the means by which the DUBDH can become widely disseminated, known and popularized to be taken from theory to practice, influencing the social responsibility of governments and civil society on issues such as health and collective well-being, preservation of the environment and cultural diversity and the struggles against poverty and social exclusion<sup>18</sup>.

Habermas proposes a theoretical model – the Theory of Communicative Action – in which people interact, and through the use of language, organize themselves socially, by seeking consensus freely and free from any external and internal coercion. This author believes that for the transformation of society, and solving of serious social problems, it is necessary the recovery of communication rationality, in which dialogue and communicative action are the engine of social interaction and the construction of places of power with the action of critical and engaged individuals<sup>19</sup>.

The language is a key part of the Theory of Communicative Action. For Habermas *socialized individuals, when in their daily life communicate with each other through the common language, they cannot avoid to use that language in the sense dedicated to understanding. And in doing so, they need to take as a starting point certain pragmatic*



assumptions, in which something like a communicative reason is worthy<sup>20</sup>.

Therefore, this communication plan proposes the use of current techniques from different areas, and strategies for the population to increase the assimilation of subjects and bring them to an understanding of reality in the context of their lives. This process makes the human beings to be increasingly prepared to exercise citizenship, giving them more autonomy, dignity and justice and therefore more awareness to fight for their rights and respect their fellows, one of the assumptions of bioethics<sup>1</sup>.

Miguel highlights the importance of communication and its relationship with politics: *The media is, in contemporary societies, the main instrument for the dissemination of worldviews and political projects; in other words, it is where they are exposed to the various representations of the social world, associated with the several groups and interests in society*<sup>21</sup>.

### The communication plan for the dissemination, promotion and popularization of the Declaration

Every communication plan has a basic script that may be suitable according to the reality of each body, country, government or company that decides to adopt them. The plan proposed here may represent an effort to strategic planning produced mainly to increase the visibility of an issue, of a product or company to the general public or specific audiences<sup>22</sup>.

A communication plan is not just regarded to disclosure; their proposals are made to strengthen a brand, in this case, the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* of UNESCO as a proposal for the international social agenda in the XXI century. The plan in question is aimed at creating greater visibility for bioethical concepts that can mobilize politically and transform, in practice, the reality of people. Its central objective is, besides contributing to greater visibility of bioethics in a global context, help in improving the quality of life of vulnerable and establish more socially just relations for humanity.

Usually, a communication plan follows several steps, such as: situation analysis, strategic orientation, choice of media, creative direction, budget preparation, technical realization and evaluation of results. It is noteworthy that the plan suggested here would be the strengthening of a set of measures and socio-economic, political and communication actions that need to be concurrently in course in each country.

The proposal does not end in itself and it should be taken as a starting point, eventually needing to be reviewed, updated (due to the speed of technological advances) and modified. The suggestion with the presentation of this communication plan would not be the construction of an absolute and static manual of communication actions. Neither would it claim to exhaust all possibilities for the DUBDH to be known, publicized and popularized. Continuing education in bioethics is essential for own awareness and society, besides helping practically to change the situation of the least social and economic advantaged ones.

Increasing access to information is a global challenge and, at the same time, an obstacle to achieving the objective of disseminating the values of DUBDH. The same barrier can be addressed to the assimilation of such content not only by people with no education, but also by who makes the laws in the country, by actors involved in national and local politics and ordinary citizens from different social classes. The two mentioned aspects should be considered for the development of the type of communication plan proposed here.

### Definition of the message

Communication depends on many aspects to be effective. Among them, it would be the definition of the message and the appropriate means for its propagation<sup>23</sup>. A message can be transmitted in personal conversations during professional seminars, by e-mails or mobile phones, through advertising or the media performance and their vehicles (television, radio, newspaper, magazine, internet). In the era of the information society, a message can be disseminated in an alarming speed and cause both positive and negative effects. For this reason, the messages of the plan need to be well defined and elaborated in more accessible language to the many types of audience. Products, actions, media, contacts and interlocutors would be necessary to create and play messages and information systematically to society.

For this communication actually happens, the messages would need to be/have: 1) objective, short, simple and easy to understand; 2) language appropriate to the level of understanding of the receptors, to age range, gender, ethnicity, among others; 3) contextualized, so that the receiver feel really participating in the communication and believe that they are part of this inclusive process; 4) visual,

sensory and emotional appeal that eases openness, trust, honesty and cooperation on the part of transmitter with the receiver; 5) be adapted to the reality of the receiver – which involves socioeconomic aspects of the audience, besides the physical capacity to receive a certain message. (For example, how to make a message real to a deaf-mute and a blind person?); 6) high quality transmission with low cost; 7) persuasive effect, creative, bold and innovative.

### Situation analysis, research and strategic guidance

The starting point for a communication plan would be the diagnosis and analysis of the situation and scenarios. Most likely, the majority of the world does not know DUBDH and its contents. However, its concepts can be inserted in the moral daily life of people without they know it.

In order to design a diagnosis and identify which are the most demanding aspects, it would be required to conduct public opinion surveys to map the perception and identify the level of information and the behavior of certain sectors of society on issues of DUBDH. The study of quantitative and qualitative questions is the starting point for each country to identify their needs and design a diagnosis. He also will serve as a basis for guiding the strategies of this communication plan. The solutions need to be customized from this initial survey.

Such a project can be implemented nationally, regionally or even internationally, depending on ambition and/or objectives of its performers. The purpose of this study is not the implementation of the proposal itself, but rather to provide theoretical and methodological aspects, as well as practical tools for project execution disclosure of DUBDH in different situations domestically in the countries and joint efforts between them.

Conducting periodic surveys would be an important tool to find out how people notice, understand and assimilate certain topics and situations. The result of these reviews gives the planning of communication more likely to succeed. Already, the plan would also suggest that, in each place where it was executed, if they carry out studies to identify key spokespersons (opinion leaders) in civil society and in the political field (parliamentarians, governors, mayors) and their speeches on the main themes of DUBDH. The survey results would serve to guide a political relationship and supply of information to be relayed to society in general.

Another important focus would be the media. The plan would suggest that it was made a survey of what are the most present issues related to bioethics, treated in the mainstream media of the places chosen for its execution. In this framework, it would be important to identify the frequency of reports, news, articles and reviews that mention bioethical issues directly or indirectly. An important study, also related to the media, would be destined to know which are the vehicles and the journalists who write more about bioethical issues and what kind of view they usually issue.

From these analyses it would be possible to think of communication and relationship strategies to provide information to several audiences, increase the number of professionals who can manifest themselves properly on the issues, increase the frequency of publication and discussion of bioethical issues in the media, in political means and in society and, finally, classifying the speech of those ones who makes the press coverage. Thus it would be giving visibility to the issue and reinforcing the broad discussion about such topics.

### Definition of target audiences

The challenge of disseminating and promoting the DUBDH among the various audiences that make up the population of a country is quite complex, as each nation has a different social, economic, political, religious and cultural system. But within this broad universe there are specific sectors that need to be sensitized and informed so that – again, applying the assumptions of intervention bioethics – the exchange of ideas and debates occur and can influence the creation and discussion of public policies benefiting the greater number of people within the population.

The role of the State – as a representative entity in the United Nations – is strategic. It needs to lead and drive the process of awareness and discussion within the public sphere and involve its whole power structure: who manages the State, who builds the laws of the country, who shall act on the application and enforcement of laws and those who suffer their direct consequences. The government sphere, in democratic countries, is the target of influence and pressure from many sectors of civil society. A more mature democracy allows the people to realize their power and act on decisions of the State.

For the DUBDH and its concepts have greater legitimacy than that given by the government, it is also fundamental to the involvement of civil society

organizations in the dissemination, promotion and implementation, responsible for exercising social control process. Michael points out that (...) *the inequality of access to public discussion is not only the effect of control of the media, but also delegitimization of the expression of the dominated ones in the political field, which requires the handling of certain ways of speech* <sup>24</sup>.

Different representations of workers, business sector, non-governmental organizations, opinion leaders, academics, professionals in the areas that are related differently to bioethical decisions, as well as other professionals in the areas of health, education, communication, culture, science and technology, research, environment and human rights <sup>4</sup>, need to be involved in this knowledge, understanding, dissemination, intervention process and, finally, social transformation of the State.

The communication plan provides a closer work to priority audiences. It is the first phase, at which time the concepts, debates, discussions and practical actions would multiply and gradually serve as a transforming agent of reality. In this first moment, the priority audiences would be: a) press, media professionals and opinion makers; b) entrepreneurs and professionals from the business sector; c) civil society; d) public managers, politicians and parliamentarians; e) entities related to the theme of the Declaration.

For each public they would be proposals, strategies and specific approaches. However, the main axes of action would be:

- training professionals of many different ways to qualify the speech, action and intervention in their niche of expertise;
- performing relationship actions with influencers and leaders of each one of the target audiences;
- creating public knowledge networks and information exchange;
- stimulating interaction for participants to experience certain situations *in loco*, experiencing and reporting situations;
- developing public and media spaces to encourage discussion and debate on bioethical issues;
- creating permanent actions to keep subjects in the country's political and social agenda;
- promoting policies that value, financially and socially, who acts as the protagonist or partner on the engagement and the advocacy of ethical values;

- acting in a way that encourages continuous learning in bioethical issues.

### Approach for each mean of communication

For Duarte <sup>25</sup>, the act of communicating has ceased to indicate the spread or transportation of information, classic misconception of the area, and taken its original meaning of sharing, pooling, dialoguing, listening – a kind of collective and universal right: *We are in times of new communicative arenas, complex, dangerously fluid and fleeting interactions with different audiences*. The sharing of information has been gaining gradually more democratic forms and means for the promotion of dialogue. The internet is the greatest symbol of society in the age of telecommunication, computer and communication – tele-info-communication.

Cellphones do not only fulfill the function of placing two or more people in touch. Today, this device is a media and information converter. Users use them to surf the internet, join in a mobile way of social networking, taking pictures, documenting facts and reproducing information. The wiki platforms with content made from collective participation and the emergence of social networks and virtual spaces such as blogs, Facebook, Orkut, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Digg, YouTube, Flickr and Second Life pose the challenge of overcoming the communication practice of simply informing in a unique direction. What is observed and stimulated in these channels is interactivity – worldwide segmented virtual communities were created that exchange and discuss information on various subjects.

All these characteristics of this pluralistic and globalized world are being taken into consideration in proposing this communication plan, without neglecting the more traditional media – since the goal would be to reach the widest possible audience at the lowest possible cost. Rabelo summarizes the importance and reach of social media: *Covering numerous areas of focus or content, social media allows, besides communication and publishing themselves, an effectiveness never seen before in terms of transmission of concepts, mobilization initiatives, structuring of collaborative networks and various forms of social coordinated action, giving their users an unprecedented bargaining power with traditional power holders in the fields of communication and social policy* <sup>26</sup>.

The various communication strategies for each method to be used would need to be worked. Again, it is necessary to reinforce that they must be con-

textualized and adapted depending on where they are created and socio-cultural characteristics of the population they are targeting. In general, here are some actions.

### Internet, social media and digital media

Among other things, the plan would include the creation of a portal in UNESCO website with:

- explanatory and informative content in several languages for consultation of segmented audiences and anyone;
- development of kits with textual content and graphics as well as products with official information on bioethics and DUBDH;
- creation, in social networks, of official profiles of the Declaration or on Bioethics;
- production of short promotional films and content that address situations related to values and context of the Declaration, with disclosure in the channels of social networks and YouTube;
- conducting periodic chats with bioethicists in each country;
- stimulating the creation of blogs in the field of bioethics or related to bioethical issues where experts can share their knowledge;
- conducting partnership with Google Maps to create a special map to mark global addresses where bioethics is studied and where people can find courses in the area;
- mobilization of governmental (state and local departments of education and health, for example) and non-governmental networks working with bioethical issues.

### Other media: newspapers, television, radio and magazines

As seen, internet is an impactful way to bring the premises of the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* of UNESCO around the globe. But communication means are complementary. Because of cultural and social issues, there are people who do not have access to multimedia communication and they cannot be jettisoned of this interactive process of communication – they are informed by several other vehicles.

In large communication efforts, such as providing a vaccination campaign in a continental country

as Brazil, all means are coupled for the message to be captured and understood and the ultimate goal is accomplished. This communication strategy ensures a significant vaccination coverage and hence it increases the chances of a public policy fulfill its role.

The communication plan for DUBDH proposed herein provides for the dissemination of ideas, examples and practical cases in the agenda format for articles in newspapers, television, radio and magazines. National States and UNESCO, in partnership with civil society, business sector and professional associations would have the role of involving both public and private communication companies in this current in favor of citizenship and a more socially fair and sustainable world.

Media companies need to be sensitized about this communication effort, from small to large business. Hegemonic media groups should be called for this dialogue and to take a moral commitment to the issues. At the same time, key influencers of alternative media should also participate in this dialogue with the government and Unesco. Small vehicles could reproduce messages and influence excluded populations and without access to the main communication vehicles.

To achieve public in remote places, it would be possible that, through a partnership between the public and private sector, face to face programs for the transfer of content and the dissemination of messages with bioethical content for community radio could be developed. Some radio programs could be created and freely distributed to local inhabitants come into contact with structural assumptions and fight for a better life.

### Advertising communication and events

Communication is multiple and disseminates its messages in different ways. Increasingly, advertising and promotion of events add and diversify the forms of content disclosure. Often, certain concepts and products have greater public acceptance when these tools are activated. There are some suggested actions in the plan, as follows:

- create the World Day of Bioethics and Human Rights, which would be celebrated on October 19, the date of approval of the document. The creation of this date would have important political character to recall the commitments that each country will have taken for the ideas of the Declaration are disseminated and become the vulnerable ones more socially included;



- produce annual advertising campaign to be presented in several media and social networks;
- appoint, in each country, an ambassador of DUBDH on bioethics, with a propositional agenda;
- create a bracelet, or other object, to symbolize the joining of ordinary citizens to the objectives of bioethics and thereby give visibility to the process. The product would be sold at a nominal price, and the money will be later reversed on projects to disseminate the values of the Declaration.

### Continuing education

All these communication actions described not survive without any permanent education behind a great project and dissemination plan. We know that education is the transforming pillar of reality. All spheres that influence the educational process, whether family, community, non-governmental organizations and even the government, should be involved in the process to achieve the desired end: the education of a people to informed citizenship.

Although it is not a direct form of communication, the educational process plays an essential role in the formation of the citizen, in the transformation of the person in a political being capable of debating, positioning themselves and intervening in the environment where they live. The intervention bioethics believes that mobilizing and revolutionary power of education, which can occur in many different ways and at different social levels.

In this sense, the communication plan proposed here to promote and popularize the values of DUBDH argues that bioethical matters and concepts – theoretical and applied – are present at the most basic level of formal education up to the more advanced. It is not possible to advance in the level of human awareness and interference, and hence the autonomy and freedom, without going through a comprehensive educational process that promotes reflection and understanding of the world around.

### Final considerations

Definitely, the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* is at the center of many global debates nowadays. However, what we see is that widespread ignorance about its contents – on the part of civil society, media professionals, the public and policy makers and researchers in gener-

al – retains much of the world's population excluded from participation and important political decision-making.

Therefore, more than necessary, it is essential to have guidelines for communication in public and private areas that build a more productive dialogue among the forces of power. This paper presents a proposal for a plan of communication with the possibility to disseminate and promote DUBDH. This can be done through various communication and education tools that allow making bioethics more known and visible by the general population. This policy in the area should not only allow the exchange of information and debate, but also help in the training of actors involved so that they can build and operate in the direction of public policy for a country or for humanity.

The result of a mobilization of the desired type with this proposal, resulting from actions and communication strategies, may be revealing. The joint efforts can increase knowledge and understanding of the people in several important moral issues, such as access of populations to quality health services. Another consequence of the actions directed in communication is that, from the training of certain characters, they can act in a more qualified way in the social control of important issues. As a result of this mobilizing process, changes may emerge and transform realities in general or more specific ways, with the inclusion of the most vulnerable population.

Politicize the communication, such as intervention bioethics suggests to other themes of conflict and persistent and emerging situations, is proposed path here for important decisions can be made on behalf of the community. According Porto and Garrafa, intervention bioethics advocates as morally justifiable in the public sphere prioritizing policies that favor the greatest number of people, as long as possible, and which result in the common good<sup>27</sup>.

In this sense, the plan can also be seen as a political and inclusive act. Bioethics is a real transformative action<sup>28</sup> and communication is able to promote and cause practical changes in the global geopolitics, with great potential to empower more vulnerable populations<sup>29</sup> and hence help them in the release process, reducing dependency and increasing the voice and prohibition power<sup>30</sup>. Finally, as a result of a complex process, communication can serve as a tool to help in the emancipation of the neediest social subjects<sup>12</sup> with wide chances of increasing their political participation and experiencing, in practice, their so longed citizenship.

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**Participation of the authors**

Rodrigo Caetano participated in the design, organization and execution of research, besides the final wording of the text. Volnei Garrafa participated as advisor, and in all stages of the research.

