

Foreword

In May 2023, WHO has formally declared that COVID-19 was no longer a public health emergency, which led to lifting of various different measures that restricted our freedoms in one way or another during the pandemic that began in 2020. It was a welcoming shift for many of us, especially for those working in hospitality sectors such as tourism and entertainment.

What we should not forget, however, is that we had experienced numerous forms of serious human rights violations during the pandemic. In Japan, COVID-19 patients as well as doctors and nurses who took care of them became targets of discrimination and exclusion. According to media reports, there were cases where an ex-COVID-19 patient had to move due to relentless notes posted on a front door to blame infection or children of doctors and nurses had to hide professions of their fathers and mothers in order to avoid discriminatory remarks from classmates.

Human rights violations that we witnessed during the pandemic should serve as an important basis for advancing our awareness on and understanding of human rights and, for that purpose, human rights education will play a crucial role.

The Volume Thirteen of Human Rights Education in Asia-Pacific covers a wide range of initiatives and experiences of human rights education from Asia and the Pacific. In this volume, we are delighted that two articles address issues of human rights in Japan, one about experiences of Corporate Federation for Dowa and Human Rights Issue, Osaka and the other on human rights education in Japanese universities. It is our pleasure also that an article by Pacific Islands Students touches upon nexus between climate crisis and human rights, which is one of the most pressing issues globally.

The present crises in Ukraine and Gaza inform us that the war is the most serious form of human rights violation. It is our sincere hope that human rights education will pave a way to restore peace.

We welcome any comments and feedback on the articles of this volume from readers.

ATSUKO MIWA

Director

Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center