



Geneva, 31 October 2025

Social Forum 2025

The Contribution of Education to the Respect, Promotion,
Protection and Fulfillment of all Human Rights for all.

Roundtable: Education for political rights- Participation, citizenship, and voice.

Speaker: Leslie Figueroa

Oral statement submitted by

**VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for
Women, Education and Development**

And co-signed by

IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di don Bosco

VIDES thanks the speakers for their insightful remarks, I speak as a young woman myself, who, like many others, has witnessed the exclusion of girls and young women from digital education and -with it- the weakening of their political rights.

Digital education is a **gateway to political rights, active citizenship, and effective participation**. Yet countless girls and young women remain excluded, silenced by lack of access, training and online safety; as cyberbullying, harassment, and privacy threats turn spaces that should be empowering into spaces of fear.

The exclusion from digital education does more than just limit learning- it **has a detrimental effect on active citizenship**, in particular for girls and young women living in poverty, indigenous communities, or rural areas where access is already scarce and boys are often prioritized.

Without the access to digital tools and safe online spaces, girls are **prevented from recognizing, claiming, and expressing their voice, as well as participating in political, civil, and public affairs**.

The problem is not a lack of solutions, but of action. Thus, we call Member States to:

1. **Enforce laws** protecting privacy, digital security, and gender equality especially in political spaces.
2. **Invest in programs** that equip teachers and youth to use digital tools for active citizenship.

This is not about technology or political promises- it is about **justice, human rights, and ensuring every girl can learn, speak, and participate fully in shaping the world**. Our voices matter, but we need you to listen.

We thank you.