



Workshop 13

Global responsibilities and local realities: fostering ESD through institutional frameworks

Time: 2 April: 9.00-13.00h

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Purpose

The focus of the workshop will be on *sharing experiences* in the development of international, regional, national and local institutions to progress the objectives of education for sustainable development, *identifying their relevance* to the achievement of these objectives and *developing recommendations for future actions*.

Background

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) called for an increased emphasis on the role of education in promoting sustainable development. As part of the process of responding to this challenge, there is a need to improve the capacity of individuals, organisations and governments to engage effectively in ESD. This requires not only the education of individual educators in the principles of ESD but also the development and establishment of institutional frameworks to promote ESD at a policy and system level.

In some countries national and regional strategies and frameworks for ESD have been developed to guide coordinated action at sub-national and national level. The Africa region launched the DESD and its regional *Strategy of Education for Sustainable Development for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSAESD)* at the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) Biennial meeting (Libreville, Gabon, 27-31 March 2006). The regional strategy for the

Asia-Pacific was launched at the Asia-Pacific DESD Regional Launch in Nagoya, Japan, in June 2005. In Europe and North America a regional ESD strategy was prepared under the leadership of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and was adopted at the UNECE High-level meeting in Vilnius, Lithuania 2005. The regional strategy document, entitled "*Building Education for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*" was completed in 2007. These regional frameworks are significant steps, in mobilising concerted regional effort and promoting action by informing local institutional frameworks. Furthermore, several initiatives have already been taken at international level by the following: International Agencies (United Nations and other) UNESCO¹, Civil Society and NGO networks, bilateral and multilateral development agencies. The International Implementation Scheme (IIS) outlines some of the potential partners and their roles in DESD². →

¹ See more details on UNESCO's role from the document: UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD 2005-2014) The First Two Years, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/0014/0014086/148650/E.pdf.pdf>

² See <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001540/154093e.pdf>

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Issues

Given the global and interconnected nature of sustainable development, there is a need for action on ESD at all levels. While local action is essential, the establishment of frameworks that promote broader cooperation and coordination is vital in order to achieve the degree of societal change required. Integral to such change is cross cutting issues such as Gender, Inclusion, Culture, Traditional Knowledge and Human rights. There is also a need to understand issues of sustainability based on three key areas: educational activities, the role of values in ESD, and the linkages between the Decade and other educational initiatives (MDG's, EFA, and UNLD)³.

Various questions arise. What frameworks are required? What is in place in different parts of the world? What has been proven to work effectively? How important are different cultural settings in establishing institutional frameworks? How important are institutional arrangements that entail whole-organisation and whole-system approaches? While ESD involves all areas of society, how important is the engagement of national governments in providing leadership for education for sustainable development? How do institutional frameworks enable ESD that will take into account the multiple and diverse indigenous knowledge systems and cultural perspectives? How do institutional ESD frameworks take into account issues of gender, inclusion, culture and human rights? How do countries relate the national and regional frameworks with institutional frameworks? How do we galvanise whole-institutional participation in ESD without duplication? What are the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms needed to assess progress made in fostering ESD through institutional frameworks. What are the recommendations to the conference on future actions in line with the global responsibilities and local realities/challenges

Target Group

The target group for this workshop is government and non-government participants who are involved in policy setting and program implementation at a system and institutional level.

Session Content and Structure

The workshop will provide an opportunity to learn from the experiences of other countries in building ESD capacity through the establishment of institutional frameworks at local, national, regional and international level. The focus will be on knowledge exchange with a view to identifying what institutional frameworks have been shown to work, what gaps exist and what enhancements might be made to achieve better outcomes. Resourcing issues are important but the emphasis will be on identifying the relevance and priority of different frameworks not funding solutions.

The scope of the workshop will cover all forms of education – formal, non-formal and informal – and the role that both government and non-government bodies can play.

Objectives/Expected Outcomes

1. Increased knowledge by participants of various approaches to establishing institutional frameworks aimed at promoting improved education for sustainable development.
2. Appreciation of issues and needs in the establishment of ESD institutional frameworks.
3. Recommendations to the broader conference on future actions.

³ MDG's, EFA and UNLD: Millennium Development Goals, Education For All and United Nations Literacy Decade respectively.