



Workshop 21

Education for Sustainable Development and lifelong learning

Time: 2 April, 9.00-13.00h

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Globalisation should ... lead to the promotion of shared understanding, values and cooperative actions on a transnational and trans-societal level. It would be a movement that recognizes and respects the diversity, variety and richness of local discourses, codes and practices, while developing viewpoints and the understanding that facilitates cooperation and coordination at a global and totally inclusive level. (Catherine Odora, 2003, p. 14)

Learning for sustainable development is a process that continues life long and therefore takes place in a whole range of learning environments that may be formal, non-formal and informal in nature; the ultimate objective is 'a better future for all'. (Heideveld & Cornelissen, 2008, p. 15)

One of the challenges of lifelong learning for sustainable development is how to put global solidarity, rather than international competitiveness at the heart of learning. (Scandrett, 2008, p. 7)

Introduction

There have been a number of recent initiatives designed to foster dialogue between those working in the fields of lifelong learning and education for sustainable development (ESD). These include a South-South policy forum on lifelong learning, held in Jakarta (UIL, 2008), that produced a strategy paper calling for a clear conceptualization of lifelong learning and vision of sustainable development; essential competences for social, cultural, environmental and economic development; learning strategies condu-

cive to sustainable development; and institutional mechanisms to support lifelong learning for sustainable development (LLLSD). In June 2008 the national commission for Unesco in the Netherlands held a conference that recognized two priorities: establishing North/South dialogue, and clarifying terminology.

This workshop has been planned to reflect the strategies and priorities established at those conferences. We recognize that the theory and practice of the related fields of sustainable development, lifelong learning and ESD is diverse and contested and that it is unrealistic to expect agreement on those concepts, visions, competences, learning strategies, and institutional support mechanisms that should guide LLLSD. Any attempt to survey the constituent fields of LLLSD in this background paper would be counter productive as it might shape or limit the views expressed in the workshop. Instead we have used this paper to outline the objectives, activities, and key questions of a workshop that should enable diverse theory and practice to be shared, celebrated in a future collection of case studies, and serve as a pointer to necessary institutional reforms.

What follows outlines the five stages of the workshop and associates each with one or more of the objectives, key questions and outcomes listed in the table on page two. Like all workshop outlines this one is provisional. What happens on the day partly depends on your responses.

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Activity 1 Meeting other practitioners (Objective 1, Key question 1)

First we will do an activity to give everyone an understanding of who is represented/not represented in the whole group. Then in twos, you will introduce yourself to a person you have not met before. Then

you will both share your knowledge of each other with another pair of participants. In this way you will get to know a little more about three people, their backgrounds, and why they are at the workshop.

Objectives

1. Appreciate and understand the diversity of approaches to lifelong learning for sustainable development (LLLSD) practiced in different contexts around the world.
2. Reflect on different meanings of lifelong learning and sustainable development and thereby better understand the range of theoretical and political principles underpinning LLLSD.
3. Evaluate two case studies of LLLSD in terms of their potential to draw on local knowledge and contribute to the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of social, economic and educational outcomes for disadvantaged groups.
4. Explain institutional changes that may be necessary to increase the connections between formal, informal and non-formal ESD and to shift the policy agenda from basic education for all to basic ESD for all.

Key Questions

1. How is LLLSD best **conceptualised** and what **principles** should inform its practice? Are there ways to differentiate along cultural or North-South lines? Is there a coherent approach at the national level?
2. How should LLLSD engage with **people's existing knowledge, skills, ways of viewing the world, and learning agendas**? How should it equip them to recognize and potentially transcend social norms, group thinking and personal biases? What **competences (knowledge, skills and values)** will they need to cope with new natural, social, political and economic conditions, and to give shape and meaning to their lives?
3. What **learning strategies** may enable people to become more sensitive to and learn from alternative ways of knowing, valuing and doing? How can LLLSD close theory/practice (values/action) gaps and develop new forms of **(environmental, ecological, global) citizenship**?
4. How should we create **formal, non-formal and informal settings** that are conducive to the emergence of LLLSD and what **institutional changes** would enable basic ESD for all? (with acknowledgement to Wals (ed.), 2007, p. 19)

Outcomes

1. A **systematic synopsis** of the different positions and ways to differentiate them
2. A **wall display** that illustrates the participants' understandings of sustainable development, lifelong learning, and LLLSD.
3. A **briefing document** that will allow participants to submit **case studies** of LLLSD to a standard format following the workshop. Short case studies are likely to focus on the principles of LLLSD guiding practice, the inputs provided by local people, the knowledge, skills and competences developed, and the learning strategies employed.
4. **Recommendations** regarding those institutional issues that would increase the connections between formal, informal and non-formal ESD; and to shift the policy agenda from basic education for all to basic ESD for all,
5. The **posters** will be displayed on the wall for you to compare and then Antoine Heideveld from the Netherlands will reflect upon them the different interests and perspectives in the light of his research on LLLSD. He will provide a systematic synopsis of the different positions and ways to differentiate them.



Activity 2 Analyzing and discussing statements about LLLSD (Objective 2, Key question 1 and 2, Outcome 1 and 2)

This activity is planned in a way to deepen and systematize further the different positions and approaches with regard to LLLSD. You will be given an activity sheet on which there are five short statements about those competences (knowledge, skills and values) that LLLSD should develop (see below,

page 3). You will be invited to write your own sixth statement that better reflects your own conceptualization of LLLSD. The aim of Activity one is to highlight the different perspectives and interests in the field of LLLSD.

Five statements about Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development

- A. LLLSD should develop those competences that people require to develop appropriate technologies and sustainable livelihoods within the informal economy.**
- B. LLLSD should develop those competencies that would improve the labour market for environmentally friendly technologies, and thus LLLSDs relevance for employment.**
- C. LLLSD should not develop pre-determined competences. Those that people require will only emerge as they address issues facing their community and learn alongside others.**
- D. LLLSD should develop those competences that people require to resist the further dispossession and privatisation of environmental knowledge and resources and work with others to realize environmental justice.**
- E. LLLSD should develop those competences that people require to understand their relations with one another and the rest of nature and realise forms of citizenship that enable the continued co-evolution of human and non-human nature.**

Next you will be asked to discuss in groups the statements you have been given and those you have written. Who is likely to support each statement and what conceptualizations of sustainable development and lifelong learning do they reflect? In what ways are any two or more of the statements complementary or contradictory?

Then your group will be asked to select one of the statements. It may be the one that claims most support from group members or the one about which group members show most interest. You will write

this statement at the top of a poster and below it list the principles (beliefs and values) that, in the group's opinion, inform it. Also on this poster you will list no more than four key texts or articles that have enabled group members to increase their understanding of different conceptualisations of education and lifelong learning for sustainable development.



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Activity 3 Case studies of LLLSD (Objective 3, Key question 1 and 2, Outcome 3)

The focus will shift to key question 2 and the ways in which this is answered by practitioners working in varied contexts across the world. Lui Yunhua from China, and Muhammad Ibrahim from Bangladesh will present case studies of current practice and you will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Your attention will then be drawn to outcome 2 and Unesco's intention of publishing a collection of such case studies. Working in small groups you will write the outline of a briefing paper to guide the authors of these studies. A number of groups will report back explaining the outline they propose before the processes whereby the actual briefing is prepared, case studies submitted, and the publication compiled and edited, are discussed

Activity 4 Making recommendations about institutional changes to enable LLLSD (Objective 4, Key question 4, Outcome 4)

Ms Koumba Bolly Barry from Burkina Faso will address key question 4 by outlining those institutional changes in her country that would in her view encourage greater synergy: between formal and informal ESD; and shift the policy agenda towards basic ESD for all. She will be followed by two or three participants who would also outline institutional changes in her/his country. The aim is to highlight the different ways to solve the problems with regard to interrelationships between formal, non-formal and informal ESD.

You will then be asked to recommend the two institutional changes that, in your view, would best enable these goals to be realized in your own country. These recommendations will be taken to a conference in Brazil (Adult Education for viable and sustainable futures) in May 2009

We look forward to meeting you in Bonn.
Please bring a copy of this paper to the workshop.

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Workshop coordinators and facilitators

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