

*Education for Sustainable  
Development and Global  
Citizenship: International  
Context*

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# *Aims of Presentation*

- ✧ Summarise aims of Decade on ESD and relevance to ITE
- ✧ ESD and Education for All
- ✧ Current debates in teacher education and ESD internationally
- ✧ Examples of debates in North America, Africa and Europe
- ✧ ESD and GC: Challenges for teacher education



# Decade on ESD

To give an enhanced profile to the central role of education and learning in the common pursuit of sustainable development;

To facilitate links and networking, exchange and interaction among stakeholders in ESD;

To provide a space and opportunity for refining and promoting the vision of, and transition to, sustainable development – through all forms of learning and public awareness;

To foster increased quality of teaching and learning in education for sustainable development;

To develop strategies at every level to strengthen capacity in ESD .



# UNESCO AND ESD

- ✧ ESD is fundamentally about values, with respect at the centre: respect for others, including those of present and future generations, for difference and diversity, for the environment, for the resources of the planet we inhabit;
- ✧ ESD mirrors the concern for education of high quality, in that it is: Interdisciplinary and holistic; values-driven; fostering critical thinking and problem solving; locally relevant in terms of context;
- ✧ ESD will be shaped by a range of perspectives from all fields of human development and include all the acute challenges the world faces;
- ✧ ESD takes place within a perspective of lifelong learning, engaging all possible learning spaces, formal, non-formal and informal, from early childhood to adult life




# UNESCO UK and the Decade

- ✧ UK ESD strategy is based around:
- ✧ Promotion of aims of the Decade
- ✧ Facilitating networking and sharing information
- ✧ Measuring progress on ESD within the framework set by the Decade
- ✧ Contributing to international debates and dialogue

# International Comparisons

- ✧ Recognition that national strategies and programmes are determined by specific ideological, cultural, social and economic contexts
- ✧ Sustainable development means different things to people within societies and communities let alone between them
- ✧ Key is ensuring clarity in implication, application and expectation of concept in specific locales
- ✧ However importance of framework of globalisation, notions of development, power relations and social justice




# Teachers and teacher educators as agents for change:

Unesco Teacher Education ESD international network  
1996 -

30 Teacher education institutions

Unesco Chair ESD

Guidelines for reorientation of teacher education



# Current trends in pre service Teacher Education programmes (Aries programme 2006)

Dominance of economic values

Focus on core content especially literacy, numeracy, science

Teacher education as apprenticeship

De/ re politicisation of the curriculum

# 2 key international educational policy areas:

Education for All (EFA)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Tensions and synergies

Quality Education for All



# Environment and Development Agendas

## Environment:

Conservation of the natural world is the priority

People can sometimes be the problem

Development issues and poverty eradication are secondary to this

## Development:

People come first

Poverty reduction, social justice and development are the main priorities

Environmental and conservation issues are secondary to this



# ESD- GC Values

United Nations' history carries with it a host of values related to human dignity and rights, equity and care for the environment. Sustainable development (SD) takes these values a step further and extends them between generations.

With sustainable development comes valuing biodiversity and conservation along with human diversity, inclusivity and participation.

In the economic realm, some embrace sufficiency for all and others equity of economic opportunity. (UNESCO DG's report 2005)



# Quality Education

A quality education must reflect learning in relation to the learner as individual, family and community member and part of a world society.

A quality education understands the past, is relevant to the present and has a view to the future.

Quality education relates to knowledge building and the skilful application of all forms of knowledge by unique individuals that function both independently and in relation to others.

A quality education reflects the dynamic nature of culture and languages, the value of the individual in relation to the larger context and the importance of living in a way that promotes equality in the present and fosters a sustainable future.

*(Mary Joy Pigozzi Unesco 2003)*



# UNESCO ESD APPROACHES

**ESD is facilitated through participatory and reflective approaches and is characterised by the following:**

- 1) is based on the principles of intergenerational equity, social justice, fair distribution of resources and community participation that underlie sustainable development;
- 2) promotes a shift in mental models, which inform our environmental, social and economic decisions;
- 3) is locally relevant and culturally appropriate;
- 4) is based on local needs, perceptions and conditions, but acknowledges that fulfilling local needs often has international effects and consequences;
- 5) engages formal, non-formal and informal education;



# ***UNESCO ESD APPROACHES CONT.***

- 6) accommodates the evolving nature of the concept of sustainability;
- 7) promotes life-long learning;
- 8) addresses content, taking into account context, global issues and local priorities;
- 9) builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, adaptable workforce and quality of life;
- 10) is cross-disciplinary. No one discipline can claim ESD as its own, but all disciplines can contribute to ESD;
- 11) uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that promote participatory learning and critical reflective skills. (UNESCO 2007 Introductory Note on ESD)

# How do we achieve such a Quality education?

Multi level change

Multi dimensional change

(Aries and others)





# **An international movement?**

Regional networks: Canada, Caribbean, Southern Africa,  
Eastern Europe

The Baltic and Black sea teacher education network



# UNESCO ESD TEACHER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

ESD Toolkit

Guidelines and Recommendations for reorienting  
teacher education to address sustainability

Good Practices in Teacher Education Institutions

[www.unesco.org/education/desd](http://www.unesco.org/education/desd)

# ESD and GC- Key Questions to consider with relevance to ITE

- ✧ Global importance of issues
- ✧ But different perspectives has to be part of the learning process
- ✧ Power Relations- North versus South
- ✧ Social Justice
- ✧ Futures orientation

# Notions of ESD

- ✧ Distinction between sustainability and survivability
- ✧ Danger of hegemony of western notions of ESD
- ✧ Unless society strives for a greater level of social and economic equity, both within and between nations, long term objective of more sustainable world unlikely to be secured.

(Agyeman, Bullard and Evans, 2003)



# Global Learning

- ✧ Global Learning can be understood as the pedagogical reaction to the development towards a world society
- ✧ Social justice is at the outset of Global Learning and deals with the double challenge of globalisation: to find orientation in one's own life and to develop a vision for a humanely formed world society (Scheunpflug).

# Lets Save the World Today

- ✧ The current climate change crisis doesn't give us the luxury for debates, different perspectives.
- ✧ We have to change behaviour
- ✧ Education has to be at the centre of this
- ✧ If teachers don't act as leaders- who will
- ✧ That's okay then?



# Concluding thoughts

- ✧ ESD and GC are important components of teacher education
- ✧ But we must move on from seeing the debates and the context of the Decade as about measuring progress towards pre-determined outcomes
- ✧ We need to constantly question, reflect and critique our own notions of sustainable development.
- ✧ Our challenge is to recognise complexities of our societies, no easy answers
- ✧ Its about dialogue, perspectives, critical thinking, empowerment, engagement



*Thanks*

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