Training Guideline on incorporating ESD in the curriculum

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Understanding ESD

- No universal definition

- UNESCO's vision of education for sustainable development is a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation

- ESD is a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term futures of the economy, ecology, and the equitable development of all communities

- The founding value of ESD is respect: respect for others, respect in the present and for future generations, respect for the planet and what it provides to us (resources, fauna and flora)

ESD strategies/approaches around the world

- Current approaches focus on the environment while referring to broad sustainable development concepts and skills (e.g. critical thinking, citizenship)
- However, different elements are emphasized in different regions
  - Asia-Pacific - knowledge systems, cultural context;
  - Latin American and the Caribbean - literacy rates, biodiversity;
  - the Arab States - desertification, sustainable consumption;
  - Sub-Saharan Africa - poverty alleviation, partnerships; and
  - Europe - the most advanced through the Vilnius Strategy for ESD developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in 2005.

- UNESCO's ESD strategy for Asia Pacific:

  "Every person in the Asia-Pacific region learns how to acquire and adapt their knowledge and behavior to contribute to change for a sustainable future and take responsibility for their actions in consideration of others."

Current situation on teacher education curricula vis-à-vis ESD

- Progress in re-orienting programs towards ESD, especially in terms of curriculum content, but lacking in terms of pedagogy and assessment

- ESD is mostly taught in a cross-disciplinary way, in sciences as opposed to in the arts or humanities section

- More research on ESD is necessary, in particular on indicators to assess ESD-challenges, ESD contributions, ESD competences, values and goals

- Lack of communication with stakeholders in the community on ESD

Current repositioning of ESD (Bonn Declaration, 2009):

- Foster linkages between ESD and EFA within a coherent and systemic approach

- Re-orient education and training systems (pre-service and in-service) to address sustainability concerns

- Develop and strengthen existing international, regional and national enabling mechanisms and cooperation for ESD that respect cultural diversity

- Support the incorporation of sustainable development issues using an integrated and systemic approach in formal education as well as in non-formal and informal education at all levels

- Value and give due recognition to the important contribution of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge systems for ESD and value different cultural contributions in promoting ESD

- ESD should actively promote gender equality

Perception of Curriculum:
'Glocal' & Competency-based

- No international success model but a lot to share and learn

- The curriculum expresses and reflects a society's values, attitudes, expectations and feelings about its welfare and development. It is also a complex mixture of visions and interests of multiple institutions and stakeholders.

- Curricular construction is specific and unique in each national context

- Competency-based approaches may be understood as possible progressive ways to achieve an inclusive curriculum, integrating curricular logic (resources and activities to cope competently with different types of situations), learning logic (students developing competencies) and the logic of action in situations (applying competencies)

- Global and local needs must be integrated into the curriculum – wise and adequate balance

Effectively incorporating ESD into the curricula:

I/ Guidelines for Teacher Education Institutions

- Decide which themes to emphasize to ensure that teacher-education curricula and more specifically the programs fit the environmental, social, and economic conditions and goals of their communities, regions, and nations
- Ensure that educators and administrators understand the concept of sustainability and are familiar with its principles

Examples of ESD practice in teacher education
- Requiring students to volunteer at a local social or environmental nonprofit organization as a field experience in early teacher-education programs
- Offering an intensive ESD workshop to pre-service teachers prior to graduation
- Requiring all student teachers to have an environmental education experience regardless of their discipline or specialty
- Placing students in a socio-economic or cultural setting that differs from their own for part of their field experience

Effectively incorporating ESD into the curricula:

- Design criteria to evaluate ESD programmes (UNESCO):

  – Is it locally relevant and culturally appropriate?
  – Is it based on local needs, perceptions, and conditions, but recognizes fulfilling local needs often has global effects and consequences?
  – Does it engages formal, non-formal, and informal education?
  – Is it a life-long endeavor?
  – Does it accommodate the evolving nature of the concept of sustainability?
  – Does it address content, context, pedagogy, global issues, and local priorities?
  – Does it deal with the well being of all three realms of sustainability – environment, society, and economy?
  – It is not imported from another cultural, economic, or geographic region
  – It is not "one size fits all," but must be created to account for regional differences

Effectively incorporating ESD into the curricula:

- A competency-based approach to learning
  - Competencies are socio-historical constructions developed through learning situations
  - Competency-based approaches constitute a key principle of curriculum organization
  - Basic features of competency-based approaches are:
    - Teaching contents are more than knowing and knowing-how
    - The student is the main actor of the learning process
    - The ability to use knowledge in context is valued

- Logic of Competencies:
  - Logic of action in context: an achieved competency
  - Curricular logic: resources and activities to approach different types of situations in a competent way
  - Learning logic: students develop competencies by themselves

Effectively incorporating ESD into the curricula:

II/ Guideline for Teachers

To effectively include ESD into their curriculum, teachers should:

- acknowledge their key role as 'cornerstones' of effective ESD programmes
- understand the cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary nature of ESD
- avoid overloading the curriculum and to solely link ESD to disciplines under an inter-disciplinary perspective
- be open to diverse learning strategies to effectively implement ESD principles and contents at the school and classroom levels
- appreciate the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships – working together to address shared challenges and problems

Effectively incorporating ESD
into the curricula:

ESD in the curriculum

- Five components of an education reoriented to address sustainability (UNESCO):
  - **knowledge** to understand the principles of sustainable development,
  - **issues** that threaten the sustainability of the planet,
  - **skills** that will enable people to continue learning after they leave school, to have a sustainable livelihood, and to live sustainable lives,
  - **perspectives** to consider an issue from the view of different stakeholders,
  - **values** to understand your own worldview and other people's viewpoints.

- Curriculum mapping: look closely at your existing curricula syllabi and school activities to identify where themes and issues of ESD are already included
- Next, identify potential areas of the existing curriculum in which to insert examples that illustrate sustainability or additional knowledge, issues, perspective, skills, or values related to sustainability.
- Build on local values, so they can permeate ESD curricula
- Assess the attitudes of students on ESD issues

Effectively incorporating ESD into the curricula:

ESD in the classroom

- Four different modes of teaching ESD (ESD-Net):
  - Values-based learning, which through processes of self-reflection and critical inquiry, fosters critical thinking of one's values and the values of others
  - Learning to transform, which involved developing a vision for ESD and subsequent transformation of thinking for change
  - Whole-school approach in terms of ESD, which aims to develop an entire school culture committed to ESD as opposed to focusing on ESD solely within the curricula
  - Community-based learning where schools act as a social agent, both working as part of the community and inviting the community to be involved as a resource and in decision-making processes.
- Make ESD alive through textbooks illustrating real-life examples
- Use ICT and web-learning resources

Best Practices - UNESCO

- ## **<u>Evidence-based approach</u>**

  It includes engaging in wide consultations with multiple partners in developed and developing countries, emphasizing the global nature of ESD; operating in a cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary manner, integrating contributions from all stakeholders; using a "bottom-up" approach incorporating field perspectives, experiences and challenges; drawing on local, regional and global best practices based on documented research results and country experiences; and linking activities under the Decade with various other educational processes, including the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All (EFA), the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), and the Millennium Development Goals.

Best Practices - OECD

- **ESD teaching framework for knowledge competencies**

  It progresses from giving students a solid understanding of basic economic, environmental and social concepts (primary level), to explaining interdisciplinary concepts and the need for integrated approaches (secondary level), to studying the state-of-the-art in sustainable development governance, measurement, assessments and practices (tertiary level). The emphasis in this approach is on promoting interdisciplinary thinking and analysis, which is at the basis of sustainable development.

Best Practices – Baltic Countries

- **Problem-based learning and the encouragement of critical thinking**

  According to this method, finding solutions to problems is the way to approach learning processes. Gathering information, identifying problems, finding out who or what is responsible and what can be done to reverse or change negative developments are all part of such thinking. Firstly, the word problem denotes a set of questions around a situation or concept. Secondly real life situations are used as the starting point for learning. Thirdly the students themselves are responsible for their learning; it is self-directed. Group work is one of the key working methods.