Education for Sustainable Development

For a long time, I was not quite aware what Education for Sustainable Development really meant. I had a rather vague idea about sustainability of my food, so I was focusing on where I was buying my food, how it was produced and the price people got for their products.

Education for sustainable development was, for me, no more than making children aware of what they were doing with their waste; maybe Jamie Oliver was doing a good job to focus on the school canteens and their school meals. Increasingly, it looked as if people were talking about quite different things from those I had in mind. It made me a little bit restless but, compared to my social environment, I was far ahead of them. So, I was satisfied.

Later I found this on the website of UNESCO:

"Education for Sustainable Development means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take actions for sustainable development. Education for Sustainable Development consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.

Education for Sustainable Development requires far-reaching changes in the way education is often practised today."

Reading this, I was embarrassed. It was shocking at the same time: was it that wide? And I had to re-conceptualize all my ideas about ESD.

Please, find a range of perspectives about ESD in this double-sized edition of the Magazine of the Learning Teacher Network.

Gerard de Kruif
Editor

Authors in this edition

Articles with no author mentioned are produced by the network’s admin team.

Printed at JustNu, Karlstad, Sweden on eco-labelled paper, ISO 14001

Front page photo: Courtesy by Anne Mara Sillevis Smitt

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS AND AUTHORS

www.learningteacher.eu/magazine

The Learning Teacher Magazine is published by The Learning Teacher Network.

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VOLUME 5   No. 3-4/2014
NOVEMBER 2014
ISSN 2000-2610
In order to meet the challenges for the future, education and training need to address the areas of innovation, learning and sustainability.

Development of today’s education and training is crucial to the ability to create innovative solutions and find new paths to enhanced learning and a better future.

Innovation and innovative are words we use to describe things, events, methods, and ideas that are new and useful. Innovation is defined as “the process of making changes to something established by introducing something new.” It applies to “…radical or incremental changes to products, processes or services.” Over the years there have been many changes in the way education is designed and delivered in parts of the world. Innovative approaches in teaching and learning aim to inspire, challenge and engage all young people in rich and rewarding learning experiences that will equip them with the essential skills and attitudes for life, learning and work in the 21st Century. Learning is acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. Learning is contextual. It does not happen all at once, but builds upon and is shaped by what we already know. To that end, learning may be viewed as a process, rather than a collection of factual and procedural knowledge.

Education for sustainable development (ESD) is not a particular programme or project, but is rather an umbrella for many forms of education that already exist, and new ones that remain to be created. ESD promotes efforts to rethink educational programmes and systems (both methods and contents) that currently support unsustainable societies. All educational programmes need to be based on five fundamental pillars of learning: Learning to know; Learning to do, Learning to live together; Learning to be; Learning to transform oneself and society.

The conference will contribute to the exploration of these perspectives.

Welcome to the Learning Teacher Network’s 10th International Conference
Innovation for Development in Learning and Sustainability
Zagreb, Croatia on 16-18 April 2015

The Learning Teacher Network’s 10th International Conference will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in Zagreb, Croatia on 16-18 April 2015 with the title ‘Innovation for Development in Learning and Sustainability’.

The full conference programme is published on the network’s website. The conference topic will be introduced by internationally recognized experts in the thematic area of the conference, followed by parallel sessions of lectures and workshops led by practitioners and researchers.

We look forward to welcoming colleagues from all levels of education and training in Europe and beyond to a golden opportunity for gaining new knowledge and sharing experience in a good and friendly atmosphere in an international setting.

Innovation for Development in Learning and Sustainability
Welcome to the LTN 10th International Conference
Zagreb, Croatia on 16-18 April 2015

Keynote and Distinguished Speakers

Riel Miller, Head of Fore-sight at UNESCO, Paris
Education versus Learning: Changing Conceptions of Agency by Using the Future Differently

Dr. Maja Nenadović, the Western Balkans programs coordinator for the Anne Frank House and Co-founder of HERMES, Croatia/Hungary
Applied Debate: An Educational Method of Countering Democratic Crisis

Stephen Harris, Executive Director/Founder, Sydney Centre for Innovation in Learning Australia
Future Schooling: Bringing together the key elements for whole school transformation

Prof. Charles Hopkins, UNESCO Chair on Re-orienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability, Canada
Distinguished guest and presenter of Session B1

GAP Building: Learnings of the DESD

Full information and on-line registration on www.learningteacher.eu/zagreb-conference-2015
How to achieve high-quality teaching for sustainable development?

This is not a new question, but still awaits a definitive response – or preferably several. Of particular interest is the transformative process that is prescribed as an integral part of ESD. This is the focus of a book by Mehlmann and Pometun (2013). ESD-Dialogues, Practical approaches to Education for Sustainable Development by and for educators. (Global Action Plan International/Book on Demand). The book addresses ESD at both the systemic and the individual level, including references to international policy documents.

The book begins with a critical examination of the trans-disciplinary character of ESD, leading i.a. to a need for collaborative planning and inter-sectorial collaboration. Such processes take time, and time is at a premium. The suggestions in this book for possible trans-disciplinary cooperation are therefore more important than ever.

The book also describes how ESD of necessity has a strong behavioural component, experienced by many teachers as a burden since it can be seen not only as moralizing, but also as threatening their own views of ‘the good life’. To work productively with questions of personal values in school requires competence in philosophy and ethics, which many teachers regard as lacking in their education (Bursjöö, 2014).

The early part of the book is written as a dialogue between Marilyn Mehlmann, with a background in Nordic adult education, and Olена Pometun, a Ukrainian academic. Mehlmann’s long experience of behaviour-change programmes in the NGO world contributes experience and examples; Pometun’s contribution is research-based and offers examples of the transformative process that in-depth learning can trigger.

In-depth changes challenge the pupils’ ideas of what is important – in short, their values. For such work there are methods; the difficulty is to balance philosophical concepts like free will with actual behaviour changes, so that the latter are not a result of indoctrination. Such balanced ways of influencing, referred to by the authors as ‘empowerment’, are complex and certainly not linear, as recent research (e.g. Mezirow 1978, 2000) has made clear.

The authors’ view of the teacher’s role is that of coach and support for pupils in the transformative process. This places high demands on the teachers’ competence, consisting not only of their ability but also of the will to work in this way; the implication is that not all are capable of becoming effective ESD teachers. Of particular interest is action competence, for both teachers and pupils.

The authors describe desirable teacher competences at a rather advanced level, for instance giving qualified feedback, reflection, creating a dynamic learning environment, authenticity. Not easy but nonetheless important – in my opinion, for all teachers.

This leads to a key question: is there a need for a particular pedagogy for ESD? Based on decades of experience and eight years of research, I tend to the opinion that a good education, across the board, promotes sustainable development. However it is not easy to reach consensus on what constitutes good education, even less to implement it. This question deserves more attention, not least concerning ethics and trans-disciplinarity, both of which are central to ESD.

The authors contribute an interesting discussion on how to create effective learning environments, a highly topical question in many countries. Society is changing and the role of education needs to be constantly re-examined in order to make the pupils’ attendance meaningful, as an alternative to sitting at home with their computers. In this context group dynamics are extremely important. The authors also touch on action learning and action research as valuable tools; that is, pupils undertake self-identified explorations and actions, with a focus on their own future and that of their society.

This is the book’s strength as a handbook, offering concrete advice and experience that can support and inspire a teacher to invest the necessary time in an ESD project. The book is well suited for use by a group of teachers for their professional development, including suggestions not only as to process but also content. A basis is offered for evaluating and assessing teaching processes. There is also a discussion of the eternal dichotomy between integrating it into every subject or making it a separate subject.

The book is opportune in that it reveals ways for groups of educators to make faster progress in ESD.

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Children Drawn In to Darwin’s Countryside


Ewa said ‘People often focus on the exotic species Darwin discovered when on his Beagle voyage, but I have always wanted to highlight the amazing range of wildlife that could, and can still, be found in south-east England in an area Darwin knew well and studied intensively. The stories are based on many true facts gleaned from writings of Charles Darwin and his family as well as my personal knowledge of places Darwin investigated, which I helped to manage in my role as Countryside Projects Officer.’

The book comprises fourteen short stories. Each story gives the reader a chance to eavesdrop on discussions between a wild, native animal and Charles Darwin, where he explains some of the scientific investigations he is doing. A Roman snail, Large Skipper butterfly and Wren are just some of the characters encountered.

On the website www.madaboutcharlesdarwin.co.uk can be found ‘The Truth Behind the Fiction’ which reveals the facts on which the stories are based. Each story includes illustrations by the artist Diana Catchpole; the full suite of illustrations can once again be found on the website.

Aimed at children of 9-11 years of age, the stories can be read at home for pleasure or used in the school environment to support children in their learning of ‘Evolution & Inheritance’, a new National Curriculum topic. Lesson ideas associated with the book are available at www.madaboutcharlesdarwin.co.uk.

This project follows the publishing of Ewa’s book ‘Shropshire & Downe: Two Landscapes Darwin Held Dear’, in February 2014, and website, in late 2013.

Editors notes:
• A sample copy of the book may be sent to editors once ready, if desired, for review (please email ewacountry@hotmail.co.uk with a request and appropriate name and address).
• There have been a number of published articles in recent years highlighting the value that stories can have in communicating science topics. Some simple ideas for lessons associated with each story, for teachers to deliver, are available at www.madaboutcharlesdarwin.co.uk.
• The publisher of both of Ewa’s books is DB Publishing/JMD Media Ltd. The Managing Director is Steve Caron (steve.caron@jmdmedia.co.uk Mobile: 07914 647382).
• Down House is now managed by English Heritage (www.english-heritage.org.uk/DownHouse); the property is open to the public. Though located in Kent in Darwin’s time, it now falls within the London Borough of Bromley.
Financial education seeks to improve financial capabilities - an individual’s capacity to understand and engage in matters concerning their financial wellbeing. Programmes often aim to impart knowledge and skills around key financial concepts, including savings and investments, in order that individuals may make informed decisions concerning their financial well-being and security now and into the future.

In recent years, the need to improve the general level of financial capability of children and youth has increasingly featured in public discussions. This is driven in part by evidence that interventions at early ages can more effectively change knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour which then predict lifelong well-being.

Despite this, many questions remain about the effectiveness of financial education interventions with children and youth. Some researchers argue that providing financial information at later ages when the topics are more salient is more important than simply intervening at younger ages. Others have found disappointing results in evaluations of financial education interventions. Indeed, the simple transfer of knowledge is often insufficient. In many instances, people know that they are making bad financial decisions but proceed to make them anyway.

A single study cannot put to rest such arguments; therefore a synthesis of all completed high quality evaluation research was needed.

**Methodology**

The study combined two methodologies often used together, a systematic review and meta-analysis.

A systematic review utilizes a pre-defined, replicable, and exhaustive search to identify all existing literature related to a particular research question. Unlike a literature review, a systematic review must have clear pre-determined search criteria and rules for which studies are included or excluded. A meta-analysis uses statistical techniques to combine the results of multiple studies to determine the average effect across all studies to resolve conflicts between individual studies and increase overall statistical power to detect effects a single study might miss. A well executed systematic review and meta-analysis can provide a definitive statement about how much evidence currently exists, what that evidence says about the effectiveness of an intervention, and what might explain variations in outcomes.

The study’s purpose was four-fold:

1. Explore the efficacy and effectiveness of financial education programs aimed at children and youth.
2. Explore causal links between financial education, literacy and outcomes.
3. Identify which types of programs are showing promise and which are less effective.
4. Provide a definitive statement of the quality and scope of the evidence regarding financial education aimed at children and youth.

**Results**

After searching databases containing millions of articles, over 1300 potential studies were identified by the search string. These studies were then reviewed independently by the two authors to determine if they fulfilled the research question criteria resulting in the identification of 21 studies of financial education for children and youth that used randomized controlled trial methods for evaluating outcomes. Of those studies, thirteen provided sufficient statistical data on financial knowledge, attitudes, or behaviour outcomes for meta-analyses, resulting in the following findings:

**Financial Knowledge**

Eleven studies included financial knowledge outcomes and they indicated that financial education has an important positive effect on financial knowledge of comparable size to other programmed instruction interventions in education. The strongest effects came from the Stock Market Game which was implemented in the United States and the secondary school financial education program that was integrated into five subjects in Brazil with support from the World Bank.

**Financial Attitudes**

Nine studies reported financial attitude outcomes and this result suggests mixed results in financial attitudes. The average effect was positive but the statistical significance of the finding varied across models of analysis, indicating wider variation in outcomes. The strongest effects on financial attitudes came from an intervention called the Suubi Project in Uganda. The intervention provided matched savings accounts, mentoring, and financial education...
workshops for single and double orphans.

**Financial Behaviour**

Six studies reported financial behaviour outcomes, the average across studies found a modest but robust positive effect on changes in behaviour – especially savings behaviour. The most robust effects on financial behaviour came from a methodology called Aflatoun that focused on learning by doing, targeted children, and combined financial education with social topics. The Aflatoun programme showed a consistent effect size that was twice that of the average effect in the financial behaviour meta-analysis.

**Conclusion**

There is a large and growing body of rigorous evidence regarding financial education interventions for children and youth around the globe. Future interventions should be built on the knowledge and evidence generated to date rather than attempting to start from theory alone.

Through this research we were able to bring together and analyze all available impact evaluation research on financial education for children and youth. The findings show that the way you teach financial education has an impact on what sorts of changes that you see in young people.

Longer programs, with classroom components, focused solely on financial topics have the largest impact on financial knowledge, but such programmes are not the most effective at changing attitudes and behaviours. Meanwhile, programmes targeting younger ages that combine financial education with matched savings accounts that engage family members, such as the Suubi Project, were most effective at changing attitudes.

Finally, programmes, such as Aflatoun, that targeted younger ages, used activity based learning, and combined financial topics with other salient social topics were most effective at changing actual financial behavior.

This indicates that practitioners and policy-makers need to be clear about what the goal of financial education is and build their interventions accordingly. Such practice and policy should build on these evidence based models while also taking into consideration contextual differences.


**Note:**

Financial support for the study was provided by Aflatoun, Child Social and Financial Education <www.aflatoun.org>. The lead author of the study was Llorenc O’Prey from the University of Bristol. The second author was Daniel Shephard from Aflatoun. To prevent conflicts of interest, Llorenc O’Prey made all final judgments regarding interpretation and analysis of Aflatoun specific findings. Authors had complete intellectual freedom in conducting and publishing the study findings.

Daniel Shephard
Daniel@Aflatoun.org
The Eco Schools programme is an internal community as well as countries abroad. It gives pupils the opportunity to explore natural habitats and to grow and take care of a variety of plants and wild flowers. This facility has encouraged pupils to be Nature Detectives, identifying plants and animals and making them aware of seasonal changes. Pupils are also involved in ‘Clean Up Campaigns’ giving them a pride in keeping their environment clean and tidy.

At Princes we are aware that our future is dependent on how we care for ourselves, each other and our environment and we endeavour to ensure that this is embedded in our management decisions, teaching, learning and curriculum.

The school is committed to developing the school grounds as a valuable learning and social space and we take pride in maintaining a litter free environment. We have endeavoured to improve the grounds with outdoor play equipment, seating areas and cycle facilities. The vegetable garden running at the side of the school is nurtured to produce a range of salad crops, herbs and vegetables in order to promote healthy eating. We have achieved the International Extended Healthy Schools Award.

All pupils have access to the Sensory Garden which is a haven for minibeasts.

Eco Green Flag Award
‘A Commitment to Care’

Princes Primary School and Assessment Unit is situated in the City of Liverpool in the North West of England and caters for pupils aged 3-11 with severe learning difficulties. Over 50% of pupils have an additional diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder and 10% have medical, physical or sensory needs.

The school has achieved the renewal of the Green Flag Award which has enabled pupils and staff to have a positive impact on the school environment, the local community as well as countries abroad. The Eco Schools programme is an international award which offers nine topic areas to choose from including energy, water, biodiversity, school grounds, healthy living, transport, litter, waste and global citizenship.

At the start of each year the Eco Committee carries out an environmental review of the site. The areas for action are recorded on an action plan template which identifies who is responsible for each action and time frames for completion.

The school has a ‘Can do’ philosophy and we find that our pupils given the right support can rise to any challenge. It is important to us that every pupil in the school has the opportunity to get involved and they take great pride in their achievements.

As part of our commitment to the ‘Every Child Matters’ agenda pupils are encouraged to feel confident about finding solutions and to enjoy making positive contributions to the school and society. The committee communicates their work and ideas to the whole school through class meetings, assemblies, and articles in the school newsletter, which is sent to parents and school governors each term.

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All pupils have access to the Sensory Garden which is a haven for minibeasts. It gives pupils the opportunity to explore natural habitats and to grow and take care of a variety of plants and wild flowers. This facility has encouraged pupils to be Nature Detectives, identifying plants and animals and making them aware of seasonal changes. Pupils are also involved in ‘Clean Up Campaigns’ giving them a pride in keeping their environment clean and tidy.

The School’s Travel Plan promotes Walking and Cycling Proficiency and pupils are encouraged to walk to local parks and shops.

Through our Community Cohesion programme we strive to involve parents, local businesses schools, students from the University and community groups in our projects.

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<td>Articles in International magazines and Eco Web site</td>
<td>the school grounds as a valuable learning</td>
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<td>Class Meetings - Circle time</td>
<td>and social space and we take pride in</td>
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<td>Whole School Assemblies</td>
<td>maintaining a litter free environment. We</td>
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<td>International links with school in Africa</td>
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<td>Cycle Storage</td>
<td>Detectives, identifying plants and animals</td>
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<td>and making them aware of seasonal</td>
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The committee communicates their work and ideas to the whole school through class meetings, assemblies, and articles in the school newsletter, which is sent to parents and school governors each term.
As an Eco School we are conscious of the need to conserve energy and water and we have promoted methods to encourage efficiency in these areas. We continually monitor energy use and develop ways of reducing consumption. We display an Energy Use Certificate and classes nominate an energy monitor on a weekly basis to oversee the turning off of lights and computers.

Through ‘topic’ work pupils discover the importance of water, its uses, where it comes from and how to conserve this valuable resource.

Enterprise projects enable pupils to recycle materials by making items worthy to sell to family and friends in order to raise money for school projects as well as projects abroad.

In 2013 we took part in the Mersey-side Enterprise Competition and were winners of the Junior Award with our ‘Bugs Bazaar’ Stall. Our company name is Princes Products and pupils made items from recycled materials to sell at the event. We also hold table top sales when pupils bring into school unwanted DVDs, books and toys which are sold to raise money or donated to charity shops.

This year we have we have sponsored the construction of an Elephant pump in Zimbabwe and have links with the Sreepur Village in Bangladesh helping them to pay for a repair to a water well.

We have raised awareness of other cultures through special events including the ‘Bucket of Love’ project and the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. Pupils and staff donate much needed items which are sent out to people in need. Geography Days have also developed pupils awareness of conditions in other countries and what life would be like to live there.

The school celebrates Earth Day and Flower Power Days when everyone gets involved in planting bulbs, herbs and seasonal plants. Plants are donated to us from a local garden centre which are not considered to be of top quality for sale to the public.

Joint projects at the local Women’s Hospital have been undertaken in the last few years involving pupils working with a local mainstream primary school to plant fruit trees, herbs and spring bulbs. It has made a huge impact on the environment and is enjoyed by all.

We believe that by fostering positive attitudes about sustainable issues and developing awareness and critical thinking in our pupils, staff, parents and the wider community, future generations will be better equipped to manage the challenges that lie ahead for our planet.

Our Eco journey has no end and we hope to build on our achievements and continue to learn about the world in which we live. We can all make a difference.

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Teaching Internationally

Teaching at International schools is more than just an adventure, it’s a lifestyle. And it’s one that I love from getting my first job offer in Indonesia to discovering new ways of life while teaching in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States.

With new professional opportunities along the way, there has been some form of excitement around every corner in my life. Yet, travelling the globe is only aspect of what makes me an International teacher. I have changed and have grown both personally and professionally.

The people with whom I work in International schools are incredibly positive, interesting, confident, independent people. Most colleagues are really open, friendly and interested in you as a person. I think these are the type of people who is attracted to working abroad. You are also dependent on each other for so many things because most have no family close at hand. As a result, you become more supportive and inclusive of others who are in the same situation. When I was in Bangladesh, life could be hard because poverty is so apparent and Dhaka is such an overly crowded city.

Knowing that others experience and feel the same was surprisingly comforting. I feel that each country has offered so much and I have tried to make the most of it. I have gone boating and mountain biking through Bangladeshi’s paddy fields, driven over endless stretches of African beaches, camped in remarkable places, visited stunning Japanese hot springs and have swum with dolphins in the Atlantic Ocean.

Having lived in variety of countries and having worked at diverse school settings, I feel enriched and enlightened, knowledgeable and fortunate. But with each new place, my family and I have needed to adjust and adapt. As a teacher, it means getting used to a new school, becoming involved in a new community and understanding a new curriculum.

International teaching is almost the opposite of teaching by rote or from books. Often the curriculum at International schools does not follow traditional methods and the curriculum is developed and personalized by the staff at each school. The curricula are continuously evolving and revised to accommodate the student body, the staff, the community and the country in which the school is located.
International schools have a strong and vibrant community that often is brought together through school assemblies. Such assemblies truly unite the community, and to allow students to shine, I have taught children from all different cultures, and when you teach students from all around the world you have a wealth of backgrounds and experiences at your fingertips. You learn to expect the unexpected. Teaching at International schools has mostly exposed me to students who are extremely willing and eager.

But, great students also expect great teachers. They will constantly ask you how they can improve and believe in working hard and like being challenged. I have learned that as an International educator, I am teaching students, more than anything else, to be problem solvers – acquiring the ability to generate multiple ideas. I also teach them to be able to access, assess, analyze, synthesize, apply information and to think creatively as well as analytically.

Consequently, parents of such amazing well-rounded international children expect teachers to work hard. Administrations expect high standards and seek balanced, highly developed teachers. It is not an easy ride: lessons have to be thoroughly planned, collaboration with colleagues is crucial, homework has to be authentic and challenging, technology wholly integrated and detailed assessments daily based and individualized.

But, working hard is precisely what brings the community of an International school together.

To be continued....

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Child Participation and Children’s Rights in the City of Peace, Law, and Safety

November is the national month of children’s rights in The Netherlands, a month in which much attention will be paid to rights of children and youth. Twenty-five years ago, in 1989, the United Nations adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, also known as the CRC or UN-CRC. The Netherlands ratified the Convention on the Rights of Children in 1995.

The Hague University of Applied Sciences is located in the city of The Hague. The Hague with its International Criminal Court, the Peace Palace and the establishment of many Non-Governmental Organizations is also known as the ‘City of Peace, Law and Safety’.

With research topics as ‘right to good governance’ and ‘safety of people and society’, students, lecturers and research fellows contribute to the production of knowledge with regard to current social issues that furthermore connect to the profiling of the city.

This is why the teacher education department, part of the faculty of Social Work and Education, of The Hague University of Applied Sciences has decided to organize a conference under the name ‘Children’s Rights NOW’, and has put this issue on the educational agenda of the department (and the university). With this conference the national month of children’s rights was opened.

In order to make this conference a success, the conference was organized with several partners, among others the research and development department of the university as well as with the ‘Children’s Rights NOW Foundation’ [Stichting Kinderrechten NU] and the health department of the city council. The conference was not only meant for students of the university, but was also for professionals working with children, like teachers, care takers, policy makers etc., and for parents of course.

Main goal of the conference was to show a review of the current state of thinking of scientists, educators, policy makers and other people who are involved in raising children, with regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the compliance of it. Rights of children seem to be a matter of fact. Practices in families, neighbourhoods and schools show that reality can be unruly and that people do not always know how to act in situations with children and youth.

From a variety of experts, the following questions were central: What do children need to grow up? How do we do justice to the rights of children in order to offer them optimal chances to develop themselves? In which way can child participation be stimulated at home, in education, and other spots where children are, and people work with children? These questions will be addressed in several ways and from different disciplines.

Keynote speakers were councilwoman Ingrid van Engelshoven; Prof. Dr. René Diekstra, professor of psychology; Leonard Geluk, chairman of the executive board of The Hague University of Applied Sciences; and Dr. Martine Delfos, researcher. Keynote speeches were alternated by 2 series of 8 practical workshops about among others: cyber bullying, Socratic dialogues in classrooms, the rights of children in a European context, and medical consequences of maltreatment.

In order to really contribute to more knowledge and understanding of students on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, follow-up activities have been organized, such as session during educational pedagogy and civic education classes. The organizers of the conference hope to roll out this topic to the faculty as a whole the coming year, and probably to more university faculties in the following years.

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Consumer education

Consumer education is becoming an area of interest and concern in many European countries. For almost two years now, Consumer Classroom has been gathering resources, developing tools to offer the teachers with the objective of making it easy for teachers to learn about consumer topics.

The Consumer Classroom is an EU funded portal site for teachers across the EU to equip them with ready-to-use resources for teaching consumer education. Available in the 23 EU official languages, it is dedicated to secondary school teachers of students aged 12-18 years old in all 27 European Member States.

It aims to promote consumer education and in particular to encourage its teaching in European secondary schools. Consumer Classroom also invites teachers to become part of a dynamic web community throughout Europe and beyond. It helps them to share with their students, encourages inter-school multi-disciplinary projects and also offers teachers the opportunity to become a consumer education expert on the website.

Consumer Classroom provides a means for teachers to learn about consumer education themselves and to pass this information onto their students through cross-curricular projects. This website will help teachers to give their students everyday examples of how to be a better consumer through interactive and engaging lessons.

Key figures
To this date, the Consumer Classroom website has already received 528,336 European visitors. Among these are 21,436 registered users, including 13,656 teachers and 181 experts.

The registered teachers have contributed in creating 1,135 lessons that they can use for their students and share with other teachers. To create these lessons, they have access to a database of 960 resources that have been evaluated and approved.

Consumer Classroom also relies on a network of 1055 partners across Europe who contribute to the resources and promote the platform.

Features
Resources
Consumer Classroom offers its users a collection of quality educational resources. Resources are either identified, reviewed and then approved by the National Team Partners - consumer and education experts in each UE member State - or directly submitted by the users and published on the platform after they have been evaluated by the Consumer Classroom moderator.

Consumer Classroom community
In addition to its content and tools, Consumer Classroom offers the teachers the possibility to be part of a community. Users can access the teacher directory and contact other motivated teachers all around Europe. They can also engage with experts in consumer education.

What better place for this than the forum, where teachers, experts and moderators can exchange freely on consumer education and where there is always someone to answer the questions.

Inter-School Projects
Teachers can find partner classes across Europe and use the interactive tools to share an intercultural experience together with their students.

Inter-School Competition
The annual Inter-School Competition website has become a popular event. The competition encourages teachers to collaborate with a school from another EU country to build a multi-disciplinary project.

European teachers are invited to involve their students in a fun and exciting project, to think creatively and share their ideas on a range of consumer education related topics. At the end, they can win great prizes.

News
Consumer Classroom is also a premium source of news on consumer education. Thanks to its news section, event calendar, newsletter and social media channels, everyone can stay informed on consumer education.

Ready-to-use tools
Lesson builder
Registered teachers have access to a variety of tools to help them transform the available resources into lessons for their students.

Teachers can create tailored lesson plans with the Simple Lesson Builder or complex interactive digital lessons thanks to the Advanced Lesson Builder, which have been specifically developed to answer the teachers’ needs. They can then share them with their students.

My class
My class allows the teachers to organise their classrooms and share lessons and assignments quickly and easily. With the noticeboard tool they can post messages or questions about the lessons in a secure area.

Want to know more? Visit www.consumerclassroom.eu
For any partnership requests, please contact Irakli Katchkatchishvili
For any other information, please contact: info@consumerclassroom.eu
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The WASO Summer School was attended by 25 participants from 7 countries. The meeting of scientists, educators, musicians, opera people, and more provided a unique platform for exploration of creative approaches within science education. The course leadership also included a variety of fields ranging from science education to music to visual arts to drama and beyond.

The first Write a Science Opera (WASO) Summer School took place at Stord, Norway in August, 2014. This week-long course, aimed for educators within science and the arts as well as scientists, musicians, visual artists, drama specialists and policy makers, provided tools for creating bridges between science and arts education in schools.

The Summer School was part of the implementation of the EU Comenius project, “Implementing Creative Strategies into Science Teaching (CREAT-IT)”: www.creat-it-project.eu. In CREAT-IT, a variety of creative inquiry-based science education case studies are implemented for teachers in 6 countries (Norway, UK, Serbia, Italy, Greece, Belgium). WASO is one of these.

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The name of the resulting opera was “Scarlet’s Choice”. The opera, based on sections of the 13-15 year old science curriculum in Norway, addressed issues of artificial intelligence and the nature of science. The course’s science education tutor, Professor Marianne Ødegaard, who is the Head of Research at the Norwegian Science Education Center in Oslo, continuously provided ideas for how the opera may interpret and provide grounds for exploration of the curriculum.

The course leadership provided literature to support the process: The WASO Guidelines, which are currently available free of charge in English, Norwegian, French, Greek, Serbian and Italian through the CREAT-IT project (see website for further details).

The following are quotations of several participants about the Summer School:

“WASO is a fantastic opportunity for science teachers and others from a science background to collaborate with music, art and drama specialists to create something unique. The training programme is challenging yet great fun and is both stimulating and informative. If you want to invigorate your science teaching and work with enthusiastic and talented people from a wide range of backgrounds, then the WASO course is for you! I’m looking forward to putting the techniques I’ve learnt into practice and communicating the joy of WASO with colleagues and students back at home.”
Dr Richard Spencer, MBE MSB CSciTeach CBiol PGCE PgCERT BSc (Tech) PhD, Head of Science, Middlesbrough College, UK

“It was an unforgettable experience for me! I was in need of such an experience in my life”.
Sandra Ladeira, Science Teacher (Portugal)

In 2015, WASO will be one of several creative Case Studies explored at the CREAT-IT Summer School in Athens, Greece. For details please contact the CREAT-IT Implementation Manager, Professor Petros Stergiopoulos: plagiavlitis@yahoo.gr or the CREAT-IT project coordinator, Associate Professor Oded Ben-Horin: oded.ben@hsh.no

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Youth Exchange for Global Warming

The project ‘Climate Changes as Fast as Fashion’ was carried out during the last week of August 2014. All the participants were in the Camping place in Platres, Limassol, Cyprus. The camping place is on the mountains in the forest of Troodos.

Seven groups with eight members each with their trainers from Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Austria were involved in research related to the topics of Climate Change and Global Warming and to focus on the cause of the problems.

The project took place in Cyprus where all participants were hosted for 8 days (7 nights). All participants took part in morning sessions (4 hours every day) with different activities every day but with a common purpose: to be informed about Climate Change, present their findings and discuss them with the other groups.

This was done by means of using non-formal learning methods. Some sessions were done based on the existing groups (every country has its own group) whilst other sessions required the involvement of multicultural groups.

In this way, every country presented the global warming problem from its own perspective and suggested ways that could help to deal with the problem on a national level, which were at the same time unite the participants, thus helping the global confrontation.

In afternoons they had the chance to visit environmental centres, the central offices of Youth Exchange and got immersed into the Cypriot culture. Every evening was dedicated to each country in order to show to the other groups their culture through food, dance, music and other interactive activities.

The final outcome of the project (total duration 1 year – from April 2014 until March 2015) were posters on which the participants presented the results of their research in the form of drawings e.g. comics.

In this way they shared the information and their experience through a different point of view. More specifically each group came up with 3-4 posters, which were placed in an exhibition (during the days of their stay in Cyprus), and posted on a website that was created for the programme. In the final stage, every group made a brief report about their experiences, and then the Cypriot group made a presentation based on these reports to the public.

All partners involved in the project were concerned with the environment in general and the effects of global warming either through formal education or through other actions carried out in their own organisation, in relation to these topics. The environment has always been an issue which interests young people, so there is a great response from partners.

Problems related to the Environment and the new order in relation to global warming, as well as climate change is a matter of concern for all partners. Therefore, deeper knowledge and understanding of the subject is a high priority for all the promoters.

Under the guidance of experienced instructors, the young participants learned through their own initiatives and discussions from the internet and discussions with experts in their respective countries about global warming and climate change, researched the topic, and tried to recon-
struct their knowledge in the form of posters, which will allow for them to express their vision. Through non-formal learning, the young people were given the opportunity to approach the phenomena of global warming and climate change.

During the exchange in Cyprus, they had the opportunity to gain further understanding through informative sessions/workshops, games, field trips, other visits, as well as by means of informal learning. They shared their knowledge and opinions, and ultimately drafted proposals for ways to reducing this climatic phenomenon.

The young people involved were also in charge of preparing and setting up the social networking page as well as the website, which was a vital part of the project with regard to communication between the participants, and the dissemination of the project’s results and findings.

The programme gave great importance to non-formal and informal learning, and generally to Youth Participation by providing space for them to be able to express their views on the subject. All programme materials, including the website, posters etc will be the work accomplished by young people as part of their non-formal educational path.

Read more:
http://ccafaf.webnode.com/about-us/

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Eagle, White-tailed Eagle, Falcon, Rainbow, Tawny Owl, Robin and Butterfly are sitting around me. They have just found me in a tree in the forest of Baarn. They have come to "The Preserved Land" with their class to follow a three day nature education programme. These children (around age 9) arrived this morning at the house of Miss Fleur, who lives in this forest and invited them by surprise last week at their school. She has taken them into the forest to look for me and the other guards of The Preserved Land. I was in my tree waiting, and blowing my whistle so they could find me. I will be their guide for the coming three days in the forest and my name is Blue Tit.

They look at me curiously, some reluctantly. One of them asks whether we are going to climb trees and I promise we will. First they have to choose a new name, a name connected to The Preserved Land. Some of them immediately have one, others struggle more. Surprisingly their new names will mostly perfectly suit their characters.

We are going to explore the forest now and we have a mission to find herbs for the soup Miss Fleur will be making for us this afternoon. But of course - I almost forgot it - they first want to climb trees! We talk about the rules (wet means slippery, dead branches, how do you recognize them, always three points connected with the tree etc.) and they are off.

After a while, I remind them that Miss Fleur needs her herbs and they come down and we start walking again. "Cuckoo!" Eagle suddenly shouts. He has found a small frog and we all come to look at it. Eagle has taken it in his hands but it suddenly springs away and some of the children are a little scared and take a quick step behind. But soon after they also want to grab it and try to get it!

We continue and I show them some plants and leaves which we can eat. We try some thick grass and discover that it tastes like cucumber and since you really have to chew it, Falcon says it’s like chewing gum. Now all the children want their ‘forest chewing gum’ and walk with a stick in their mouth!

We come to a small path, that we guards know as the Silence Path and I explain to the children that they all are going to walk this path on their own, being silent.
Butterfly says immediately she wants to go first. Butterfly is a child who has never been in a forest before. She does not know it at all, but is very thrilled to be here.

Now I see in her face she suddenly realizes that she is going to walk all by herself in a surrounding which is not familiar to her. I support her and she starts walking first. When we have all reached the place where it ends, I ask how it was. Butterfly says she was little nervous to be totally on her own, not knowing where she was going. I praise her for her courage and she gets even more enthusiastic than before, totally drawn away by her natural habit to explore the world.

At the end of the day we all eat Miss Fleur’s soup with our own collected herbs and the children enjoy it. Next week the children will come again to learn more about the lifecycle and to do the ‘Senses Path’, a rope which they will follow blindfolded by a bandage.

This Senses Path opens up the senses, except sight, and it is amazing to see how other parts of their characters become dominant. The boy with the big mouth is suddenly very small and little nervous and the silent, but thorough girl just does it without reserve... I can’t wait till they come back next week!

Anne Mara Sillevis Smitt alias Blue Tit coach - consultant mareluna@live.nl

The Preserved Land is a nature education programme in Holland designed to give children between 8-10 years old an intense (positive) experience of nature. More and more children are raised without natural surroundings. They don’t play outside as much as they did in the past. Therefore most of them miss a connection with nature and are often afraid of (parts of) nature. This programme hopes to change their attitude towards nature fundamentally through experience based learning.

There are 4 levels of learning involved: physical level (e.g. climbing trees), emotional level (e.g. silence path), intellectual level (e.g. relationship between forms of life) and creativity level (e.g. translating experiences in play or song). The focus is on emotional and physical experience, through which knowledge about nature is gained. Children get the possibility to experience nature and to be surprised by it. The programme overall lasts a month in class. Children get a workbook with exercises through which they prepare their visits to the Preserved Land. Teachers get a handbook for the course of the programme.

Link: www.hetbewaardeland.nl (Dutch only)
Creating Student Success Pathways
Collaboration is the Key

In an earlier article we shared information about a collective impact initiative in Portland, Oregon that we call All Hands Raised, and in which Portland State plays a major role along with six school districts and many community partners.

This initiative has established a common arena for bringing together city and county leadership and resources linked with business, school district and community leaders to identify a set of high priority issues across the full spectrum of birth through higher education, “cradle to career”, and to solidify a method of action that is supportive of the success of all organizations. Problems are identified in a collaborative manner, resources are deployed in a manner that benefits all organizations, and responsibility for results is shared by all participants.

The initiative now has Collaboratives that are coordinating efforts. The most recent development is the expansion into the post-secondary area with the creation of the new Post-Secondary Collaborative. The local school districts, community colleges and Portland State University have come together to establish grants and actions to more fully integrate high school courses with college and university credits and degree programs. We have secured grants to bring teachers and college faculty together to work on course design and assessment criteria and to work on course credit transfer agreements so that students have better information on which courses are the appropriate requirements for particular degree pathways.

The Early Learning Multnomah Early Childhood Collaborative represents a planning effort across the region in coordinating early learning programs. They had early success in a campaign to get more students registered on time for kindergarten so that students do not miss the very important first weeks of school. Between 2011 and 2012, the percentage of students registering late for kindergarten declined by 6 percentage points from 20% to 14%.

They also operationalized the idea of Community-Based Early Childhood Workers and trained community residents in outreach strategies for connecting with young mothers on getting health and education support to their children, linking them to existing services in their communities.

A third Collaborative, Ninth Grade Counts, continues to be a strong support for youth making the transition from eighth to ninth grade. Since 2009, 4,000 high school students in all six of the districts in the partnership have participated. Students deemed at risk of dropping out of school are the major target group. The most recent evaluation done in 2012 indicated that students who participated in the program earned significantly more 9th grade credits (6.0 vs 5.1), met the “on-track to graduate” criteria threshold of 6 credits in ninth grade at a 12.2 percentage point higher rate, and had a 2.4% better attendance rate.

The Communities Supporting Youth Collaborative tackled one of the region’s most perplexing problems, chronic absenteeism. Early data analysis indicated that students attending school less than 90% of instructional days were a widespread problem, particularly for low-income students of color. Target schools around the region were identified and attendance workers are now placed directly in the schools.

These workers develop relationships between the school and families to identify the reasons for chronic absenteeism and to work with the home and school to get the student back into school and to support their regular attendance.

The Eliminating Disparities Collaborative has two major areas of focus. The first is to work with all of the school districts and community partners to help them focus on a review of their current policies and practices related to issues of race and success of students of color; and to develop a board-approved policy statement on the priority the organization places on eliminating racial disparities.

The second focus area is discipline disproportionality and schools. Two major data analyses have been completed clearly showing the disproportionate level of out-of-school discipline (students not allowed to attend school for a period time) experienced by students of color. The U.S. Department of Education Institute of Educational Sciences published one of the studies completed by local partner and research non-profit, Education Northwest, nationally. Two national video conferences were provided on the data and the approach taken locally. School districts identified schools in which specific training is to be targeted and each of the school districts in the county identified this area as a goal for improvement in the coming year. The report from Education Northwest can be found at: http://relnw.educationnorthwest.org/resources/suspension-and-expulsion-patterns-six-oregon-school-districts

Here is a link to the most recent Chapter 01 Report to the Community: http://allhandsraised.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Chapter01.pdf

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Reggio Emilia in Bulgaria

The Bright Child Care and Development Centre was established as an alternative nursery and kindergarten in Sofia, Bulgaria, for people who would like their children to speak English as a mother tongue. English, as the only language of communication, opens the door of the centre for expats and gives us the opportunity to build a multicultural environment and the children to grow tolerant, open-minded, citizens of the world.

Based on the Reggio Emilia Approach, our educational philosophy is that the more the children’s preferences, ideas, opinions, wishes are respected, the better people they grow. That is why children are encouraged to invent and create everything that is currently of interest to them. For this purpose, we provide all sorts of source materials that they may turn into a construction and we build together, in small or big groups, castles, robots, dinosaurs and picture collages etc.

These kind of free mind activities develop wonderful relations in the group and help children to find their way to express themselves as they feel comfortable sharing ideas and negotiating different approaches in the specific situation. Meanwhile, the teachers might be involved in the process of creating or become observers, taking notes on the behaviour and attitude of the children who participate in the project, whether they take a leading role or follow instructions of the other children for instance.

Collated together, these notes help provide a very clear profile of the personability of the children identifying uneasiness or discomfort in them. The notes also help us to build a strategy for coping with the situation and conveying concern about it to the parents so they can also give support.

We truly believe that the attitude in any communication is essential. That is why the relationships between teachers, children and parents are based on Nonviolent or Compassionate Communication practices. They involve having close conversations on all topics that both children and adults find interesting, spending time sharing personal information or experiences and really being together.

Listening comes first, speaking is short and teachers and children take equal turns in talking. This makes the children feel important and helps for building good self-esteem and confidence.

The Nonviolent Communication is also related to developing emotional intelligence in the children, guiding them and helping them identify their own feelings and needs. We use flash cards that represent the feelings and needs with pictures, as we understand clearly that children often get confused talking about how they feel.

Words are not enough for young children to express abstract conditions so pictures really help. For instance, a conflict between two children can be solved only by helping them identify their feelings and the feelings of the other child; they only have to find the flashcard that shows how they feel. Understanding the emotions and feelings of the others and respecting them is a huge step in the personal development of children and adults as well. We use the cards of feelings and needs also in everyday situations. We also use them as group activity where we put them on the carpet and children pick first their feelings and then their needs and then we comment on them.

After a few months of practice, the children over 5 years old are capable of making a difference between feelings and needs and they feel much more confident to share their inner world with the others. Thanks to this practice, we identified the strong need for attention in the family of a girl who was quite tense in her contacts with others in the kindergarten; she was quite pushy, never paying attention to the ideas and opinion of others.

In several activities, she picked the same cards – feeling: lonely, need: family warmth. The next step was to inform the parents about our observations and help them find a solution.

In conclusion, putting personal development as a basis of the educational process, we give the children the opportunity to take active part modelling an environment of their own. They learn through experimenting and creating. The parents are welcome to share their children’s personal space away from home and spend some time taking part in different activities or celebrations.

All together, we build an environment of friendship and trust, respect and real care that supports the children in becoming confident, active and creative individuals.

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Promoting British Values in Teacher Education

**British values in policy**

From September 2014, all schools in England have been required to show how their work with pupils is effective in promoting ‘fundamental British values’. This requirement has come about partly in response to allegations that a small number of schools in England were promoting an extreme Islamist agenda, leading to an investigation into what became known as the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair.

Political pressure for schools to focus on values is not new. Following ‘race’ riots in the North of England in 2001 and events such as ‘9/11’ and the London bombings in 2005, the previous Labour Government placed a duty on all schools to ‘promote community cohesion’.

The duty had a positive aim to promote ‘a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities’, but emerged alongside agendas aimed at tackling violent extremism and debates about Britishness which suggested there were a fixed set of values which individuals and communities were either ‘for’ or ‘against’.

Now the Government has defined the British values that schools should promote, including: democracy; the rule of the law; individual liberty; mutual respect; and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Whilst these might be easily endorsed, it is not clear how the Department of Education has arrived at this list, on what authority they feel able to define these and what makes them especially British?

They have also arisen within a context of negative political and media discourse on immigration, and the rise of small but powerful groups like the UK Independence Party (UKIP), contributing to a sense that British identity is somehow under threat.

So, the question for teachers and teacher educators is how to respond?

**Values in teacher education**

At Liverpool Hope University, we deliver a course to trainee primary teachers called Wider Perspectives in Education. The course requires students to think about the role of teachers in addressing wider social, moral and ethical issues and it is within this context that students are encouraged to reflect on their personal and professional values, and the values they might seek to promote with children and young people.

The course begins by prompting students to reflect on the purpose of education in the 21st century where the emphasis is on thinking about education in a global context, beyond national policy and curriculum requirements. Students are introduced to international agendas such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and UNESCO initiatives on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to stimulate thinking about the kind of knowledge, skills and values young people might need growing up today and the role of values in shaping different futures.

The course explicitly encourages students to engage in ‘big issues’ such as Rights and Responsibilities, Fairness and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, but connections are also made with local classroom issues. Towards the end of the course students are required to deliver a short project on a local-global theme which is carefully negotiated with a local school. This offers opportunities for students to reflect on values in practice by engaging with issues which are locally relevant to schools. For example, recent projects have focused on challenging negative attitudes towards newly arrived immigrant communities, including asylum seekers. These are supported by close working Refugee Ac-
tion who provide students with clear information and encourage them to reflect on their own attitudes before embarking on these projects with schools.

Throughout the course there is a strong emphasis on teaching methods which emphasise the process of learning: how knowledge is constructed and applied and the skills for engaging with different perspectives and critically reflecting on values. For example, students are introduced to Philosophy for Children (P4C), which uses a stimulus (story, image or other) to generate imaginative and philosophical questions which children then explore collectively through group dialogue. The process both models values in action (caring, collaborative) and provides a safe and structured space for exploring different values.

(Back to) British Values

The approach we have taken in Wider Perspectives in Education aims to promote students as critical educators with the skills to engage with values and with the process of clarifying values with children and young people. This approach draws on local contexts, many of which reflect the issues and tensions of living in a diverse world.

The latest requirement to ‘promote fundamental British values’ raises tensions and questions and these will need to be addressed explicitly in the course. We can also draw on recent research with trainee teachers which concluded that they were able ‘to combine a critical stance with a willingness to teach about the complex issues, while generally refusing to promote simple or simplistic messages on behalf of politicians.’ (Jerome and Clemitshaw 2012). This offers some optimism and support for the approach taken so far.

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Under the banner of “Today for Tomorrow”, the 2014 UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) marked the end of the UN Decade of ESD (2005-2014) and adopted the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD.

The conference took place from 10-12 November 2014 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan and was composed of 1,100 invited delegates from 140 countries including 71 Ministers. In particular, delegates were composed of government officials, NGO's, academia, the private sector, individual experts, youth and UN agencies. The coordinator of the Learning Teacher Network, Magnus Persson, was invited as expert and participated on behalf of the Network.

In her opening speech, the UNESCO’s Director-General, Irina Bokova, described the conference as a call to action, since the planet is reaching the limit of its capacity to support life. "The core message of the UN Decade is one that echoes the opening lines of the UNESCO Constitution. Building the foundations for lasting peace must start in the minds of women and men. And this must begin with education. Education is the way to connect the dots between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.”

In a video link greeting to the conference, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon, expressed the need for changes to begin now, with a renewed sense of urgency, by saying “There is no Plan B; and, there is no Planet B.”

The World Conference also showcased initiatives, key players, networks and ideas that the Decade has stimulated. Such examples from all over the world will help to generate future action under the Global Action Programme.

The outcomes of the World Conference inform the deliberations of the World Education Forum to be held from 19 to 22 May 2015 in Incheon, Republic of Korea.

The 2014 World Conference in Aichi-Nagoya pursued the following four objectives:
1. Celebrating a Decade of Action “What have we achieved, what are the lessons learnt?”
2. Reorienting Education to Build a Better Future for All “How does ESD reinforce quality education?”
3. Accelerating Action for Sustainable Development “How are sustainability challenges addressed through ESD?”
4. Setting the Agenda for ESD beyond 2014 “What are the strategies for our common future?”

The outcomes of the world conference are described on the following page.
UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD 2005-2014) Final Report

The World Conference marked the end of the Decade (DESD) by launching the DESD final report, titled ‘Shaping the Future We Want’. The report reveals ten key findings and highlight major trends and leverage points for ESD, which are based on evidence from 10 years of work around the world:

- ESD, an enabler for sustainable development
  1. Education systems are addressing sustainability issues
  2. Sustainable development agendas and education agendas are converging

Importance of stakeholder engagement for ESD

- Political leadership has proven instrumental
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships are particularly effective
- Local commitments are growing

ESD is galvanizing pedagogical innovation

- Whole-institution approaches practise ESD
- ESD facilitates interactive, learner-driven pedagogies

ESD has spread across all levels and areas of education

- ESD is being integrated into formal education
- Non-formal and informal ESD is increasing
- Technical and vocational education and training advances sustainable development

Challenges

Despite the successes of the DESD, Member States and other stakeholders have indicated considerable challenges remain in realizing the full potential of ESD. These include the need for further alignment of education and sustainable development sectors; the need to do more work for institutionalizing ESD – to ensure strong political support to implement ESD on a systemic level; and, finally, the need for more research, innovation, monitoring and evaluation to develop and prove the effectiveness of ESD good practices.

Launch of the Global Action Programme (GAP) and the Roadmap

As a follow up to the final report 2005-2014 the UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the GAP on ESD was adopted and launched.

The overall goal of the GAP is to generate and scale up action in all levels and areas of education and learning to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

The GAP has two objectives:
- to reorient education and learning so that everyone has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development - and make a difference;
- to strengthen education and learning in all agendas, programmes and activities that promote sustainable development.

The GAP will focus on five Priority Action Areas:

1. Advancing policy;
2. Integrating sustainability practices into education and training environments (whole-institution approaches);
3. Increasing the capacity of educators and trainers;
4. Empowering and mobilizing youth;
5. Encouraging local communities and municipal authorities to develop community-based ESD programmes.

The Learning Teacher Network is one of in total 360 by UNESCO approved, certified and listed GAP commitments. The Network will work in the Priority Action Area 3 and support the international capacity building of educators and trainers, and help catalyze further activities by other stakeholders.

The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development is quoted in full on the following pages.


Read a summary and/or download the documents mentioned in this article: www.learningteacher.eu/news/2014/11/unesco-world-conference-nagoya-new-global-action-programme-esd
Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development

“We, the participants of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, from 10 to 12 November 2014, adopt this Declaration and call for urgent action to further strengthen and scale up Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), in order to enable current generations to meet their needs while allowing future generations to meet their own, with a balanced and integrated approach regarding the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

This Declaration recognises that people are at the centre of sustainable development and builds on the achievements of the United Nations (UN) Decade of ESD (2005-2014); the deliberations of the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Aichi-Nagoya; and the Stakeholder Meetings held in Okayama, Japan, from 4 to 8 November 2014, namely, UNESCO ASPnet International ESD events, the UNESCO ESD Youth Conference, the Global Regional Centres of Expertise Conference, and other relevant events and consultation processes, including regional ministerial meetings. We express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Japan for hosting the UNESCO World Conference on ESD.

1. CELEBRATING the significant achievements made by the UN Decade of ESD (2005-2014), in particular, in putting ESD higher on national and international agendas, advancing policy, improving the conceptual understanding of ESD, and generating substantive good practice amongst a wide range of stakeholders;

2. EXPRESSING our appreciation to many governments, UN entities, non-governmental organizations, all types of educational institutions and setups, educators and learners in schools, communities and workplaces, youth, the scientific community, academia and other stakeholders who have actively committed to and participated in the implementation of the UN Decade of ESD, and to UNESCO for the leadership role it has played as lead agency of the Decade;

3. RECALLING the international commitment to further promoting ESD that was included in the outcome document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), The Future We Want;

4. NOTING that the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, endorsed by the 37th session of the General Conference of UNESCO as a follow up to the Decade of ESD and a concrete contribution to the post-2015 agenda, aims at generating and scaling up ESD actions in all levels and areas of education, training and learning;

5. REAFFIRMING ESD as a vital means of implementation for sustainable development, as recognised in intergovernmental agreements on climate change (Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Doha Work Programme), biodiversity (Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its work programmes and related decisions), disaster risk reduction (Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015), sustainable consumption and production (Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production 2012-2021), and children’s rights (Articles 24[2], 28 and 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child), among many others;

6. WELCOMING the growing international recognition of ESD as an integral and transformative element of inclusive quality education and lifelong learning and an enabler for sustainable development, as demonstrated by the inclusion of ESD as a target in the Muscat Agreement adopted at the 2014 Global Education For All Meeting and in the proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the Open Working Group of the UN General Assembly on SDGs;

7. RECOGNISING the establishment of the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 195th session,

We, the participants,

8. EMPHASISE the potential of ESD to empower learners to transform themselves and the society they live in by developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, competences and values required for addressing global citizenship and local contextual challenges of the present and the future, such as critical and systemic thinking, analytical problem-solving, creativity, working collaboratively and making decisions in the face of uncertainty, and understanding of the interconnectedness of global challenges and responsibilities emanating from such awareness,

9. STRESS that ESD is an opportunity and a responsibility that should engage both developed and developing countries in intensifying efforts for poverty eradication, reduction of inequalities, environmental protection and economic growth, with a view to promoting equitable, more sustainable economies and societies benefiting all countries, especially those most vulnerable such as Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries;

10. UNDERSCORE that the implementation of ESD should fully take into consideration local, national, regional and global contexts, as well as the contribution of culture to sustainable development and the need for respecting peace, non-violence, cultural diversity, local and traditional knowledge and indigenous wisdom and practices, and universal principles such as human rights, gender equality, democracy, and social justice;

11. APPRECIATE the commitments to ESD expressed by all concerned stakeholders through their specific contributions to the GAP Launch Commitments;

12. COMMIT ourselves to building and maintaining the momentum of the launching of the GAP, in its five Priority Action Areas for ESD, namely policy support, whole-institution approaches, educators, youth, and local communities, through inclusive quality education and lifelong learning via formal, non-formal and informal settings;

13. CALL UPON all concerned stakeholders, including governments and their affiliated institutions and networks, civil society organisations and groups, the private sector, media, the academic and research community, and education and training institutions and centres as well as UN entities, bilateral and multilateral development agencies and other types of intergovernmental organisations at all levels, to: a) set specific goals, b) develop, support and implement activities, c) create platforms for sharing experiences (including ICT-based platforms), and d) strengthen monitoring and evaluation approaches in the five Pri-
ory Action Areas of the GAP in a synergistic manner.

14. URGE all concerned stakeholders, in particular Ministries of Education and all ministries involved with ESD, higher education institutions and the scientific and other knowledge communities to engage in collaborative and transformative knowledge production, dissemination and utilization, and promotion of innovation across sectoral and disciplinary boundaries at the science-policy-ESD practice interface to enrich decision-making and capacity building for sustainable development with emphasis on involving and respecting youth as key stakeholders.

15. INVITE governments of UNESCO Member States to make further efforts to:

a) Review the purposes and values that underpin education, assess the extent to which education policy and curricula are achieving the goals of ESD; reinforce the integration of ESD into education, training, and sustainable development policies, with a special attention paid to system-wide and holistic approaches and multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnerships between actors of the education sector, private sector, civil society and those working in the various areas of sustainable development; and ensure the education, training and professional development of teachers and other educators to successfully integrate ESD into teaching and learning;

b) Allocate and mobilise substantial resources to translate policies into actions, especially building necessary institutional capacities for both formal and non-formal education and learning at national and sub-national levels along the five Priority Actions Areas of the GAP; and

c) Reflect and strengthen ESD in the post-2015 agenda and its follow-ups processes, ensuring, first, that ESD is maintained as a target in the education goal and also integrated in SDGs as a cross-cutting theme; and, second, that the outcomes of the 2014 World Conference on ESD are taken into consideration at the World Education Forum 2015 to be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 19 to 22 May 2015.

16. REQUEST UNESCO’s Director-General to continue to:

a) Provide global leadership, support policy synergy, and facilitate communication for ESD; in cooperation with governments, other UN entities, development partners, private sector and civil society, within the framework of the UNESCO Roadmap to Implement the GAP;

b) Harness partnerships and mobilise networks including the UNESCO ASPNet, UNESCO Chairs, Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites, as well as UNESCO Clubs and Associations; and

c) Advocate the importance of ensuring adequate resources including funding for ESD."

Adopted on 12 November 2014
International Seminar on ESD in Istanbul
- Developing Network Recommendations on GAP/ESD


The International Seminar, titled ‘ESD at the Crossroads’, aimed to investigate and conclude on five key ESD questions in order to highlight practitioners’ in education and training views and experiences on successful practice, and to determine action for the upcoming UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD.

The interactive seminar mixed round table discussions with shorter, inspirational presentations by participants portraying their own practice.

The key questions addressed were:
- How can ESD support whole-school perspectives?
- How can ESD guide students to have the knowledge, skills and values to care for and solve the sustainable development issues that will arise in their lifetime?
- How can ESD promote innovation in the teaching - learning conceptual framework?
- How can ESD update and improve educational purpose and outcomes?
- How can ESD help to improve and enrich school curriculum development?

The final conclusions of the seminar dialogue, which identified a need for principal and initial action, are formulated into nine recommendations for consideration in the implementation of GAP/ESD and addressed to UNESCO, governments and the educational community.

The seminar strongly voiced the need for action. There was a feeling expressed that there has already been ten years of talks and relative inaction during the Decade, relative in the sense that the issue of ESD and its impact on the curriculum of schools has been partial, dependent upon interested teachers and others, and has not been embedded within the curricula of countries. Now there is a firm need to take action and embed ESD concepts and issues with all curriculum subjects and also in all other aspects of what makes an educational organisation work.

The seminar also expressed that the Learning Teacher Network is fully committed to playing its part in the capacity building of educators and trainers as well as promoting, supporting and influencing good practice in ESD in the unfolding context of the GAP developments.
A. Update and improve educational purpose and outcomes, and thereby also improve and enrich school curriculum development, by including ESD in policy, programmes and national strategies.

ESD is a national responsibility and for Government to include in policy, programmes and curriculum in line with international agreements made at United Nations summits and other international conferences.

1. Governments should include ESD into education and national strategies, governance, curricula, advisory systems or inspections and audits, etcetera as a compulsory framework and a mind-set with wider perspectives. This in line with the Bonn Declaration 2009, where it was agreed to reorient curriculum and teacher education programmes to integrate ESD into both pre-service and in-service programmes.

2. Governments should promote ESD’s contribution to all of education and to achieving quality education within a coherent and systemic approach, as also expressed in the Bonn Declaration 2009. Furthermore, to develop national ESD indicators that inform the effective implementation and review of ESD outcomes and processes. These indicators should be included in the national systems for assessment and evaluation.

3. Governments should provide for research into the benefits of ESD to make this more transparent and to be a key and important driver of change.

4. Governments and national authorities should keep the curriculum up to date with “on the agenda” topics and connect ESD with relevant political themes and social challenges.

Access to and retention of Education for All is the first goal of ESD. Education and training are crucial to society for fostering and safe-guarding democracy while ESD is the instrument for addressing a range of perspectives of vital importance to a future sustainable society built on human rights, equality, tolerance and freedom. Youth unemployment and high level of early school leavers are factors that risk feeding anti-democratic movements and are currently unsustainable issues that cannot be ignored. Research could demonstrate socio-economic benefits of ESD.

B. Develop a whole-school perspective and promote innovation in the teaching-learning conceptual framework

Schools and teacher education need to “take ESD out of the box” and to model ways for success. There is a definite need now to move ESD from the hidden curricu- lum to the whole school perspective. This could be achieved by paying attention in particular to the following elements.

5. Schools and teacher education should create an ESD vision with a holistic approach to education for sustainability.

An ESD vision shall explain curriculum opportunities for embedding concepts and values, support cross-curricular teaching and learning, and describe added value, relevance and synergy effects. ESD core framework is about teaching values, social inclusion, respect and positive behaviour and human relationships. ESD shall be seen as part of the governance of schools and offering something of value to stakeholders as part of the whole school curriculum. It must be principled and value driven. ESD must have entry at all levels and any problems with ESD need to be highlighted as well. With a holistic approach with attention to social, economic, and cultural aspects – a wider perspective than environment only - ESD shall be regarded as a body of references, to which each curriculum subject shall relate. All school life teaching and learning should be based on the ideas of ESD. ESD must be mainstreamed so everyone is involved, knows about it and can use it. ESD and the concept of ‘Pay it forward’ by creating an ethical agreement and a common agreed language.

6. Schools and teacher education should create an appropriate working environment to make it possible for students’ learning, teachers’ teaching and curriculum performance to be centred on a vision of ESD.

The point of departure is the involvement of everyone at the school or teacher education, both staff and students. Leadership, coordination and resourcing “strengths” are key as a “whole institution” or systemic undertaking is embedded from policy to practice. Every discipline/group/teacher/employee can and should contribute. Encourage teachers and students to take action in a harmonised and multi-disciplinary approach. Train teachers in competencies, empowerment and values, and make use of teacher education for cascading relevant knowledge and skills. Identify which knowledge, skills and values that will be of major importance for students’ and teachers’ in their commitment to a sustainable society. Use innovative methods to let the students find new solutions, and involve students in the creation of an ESD self-directed style curriculum at all education levels. Make a secure game plan/system for ESD activities, topics, and projects, and allow time for this. Make use of peer education project work, “Pracademic” (practical+academic), “Think and Do tanks”, etcetera. Create action research framework to research the teaching of ESD. Form multi-professional groups discussing practical actions including all stakeholders within and outside the institution. Find ways to make ESD fun (competitions, experiments, exchanges, real life examples, ESD school visits). Initiate a process, make the move ment (do something) and “walk the talk”.

7. Schools and teacher education should introduce new pedagogies and thinking methods, allow for mistakes and generate empowerment.

Implementing ESD perspectives is not about just the individual teacher but building sustainable mind sets and thinking methods; strategies for how to change perceptions. Keys to success in ESD and finding the road to sustainable thinking is by exploring multiple approaches to teaching and learning to make the learning relevant, by allowing for re-thinking and creating meaningfulness of content, and enhancing new and motivating methodologies besides traditional curriculum and teaching techniques so that students can really connect to subjects. Systems thinking model could support ESD through Mind Maps, use of multiple intelligences and feedback loops at every level. ESD is an approach to teaching and learning that includes awareness and how to work for a sustainable future but also self-devel opment in learning instead of short term memorization of facts, combining thinking and action, and learning to adapt to changes because the future is about dealing
with uncertainties. Creating a climate of allowing for mistakes and “making a fertile soil” generates new ideas and new thinking. In particular, to students and teachers such approach builds self-confidence/self-esteem and reduces fears of imposed rules, audits, inspections, etcetera. Encouraging an ‘advisory’ context rather than a judgmental one is a productive approach. Teachers and students must move beyond “the victim role”.

8. Schools and teacher education should build ESD on evidence at assessment and evaluation.

In order to reduce stress and uncertainty when working for ESD there is a need for an evaluation and assessment strategy. Rigorous evaluation and evidence of how change happens and the impact of change in ESD supports the focus on quality in education. Collecting evidence and evaluations from projects, learning from good practice and using evidence based assessment programmes both guarantee sustainability in the ESD work and convince stakeholders on the benefits of ESD. ESD should be part of Whole School Evaluation – assessment of teachers who value ESD. Furthermore, ESD needs to be part of the schools quality systems including the references to evaluations and assessments.

9. Schools and teacher education should strive towards broader collaboration with society.

For successful implementation of ESD schools and teacher education need to address all stakeholders and to widen cooperation with and involvement from stakeholder groups in society. Opening up education and training for partnerships in the wider society will make initiatives enriched and more effective, ESD and curriculum work more real world connected and outcomes both more comprehensive and disseminated. Partnering means learning from other disciplines or areas of society. By opening up for collaboration with other parts of formal and informal education, NGO’s, local business, etcetera the implementation of ESD would create a different dynamic and improve the solving of ESD related matters in a locally relevant way and with local solutions. Educational partnerships through for example e-Twinning can enhance international action.

Reflections from the Istanbul Seminar

Key points emerged

These reflections are an attempt to capture the mood and the broad thrust of the Istanbul Seminar in terms of themes and motivators that seemed to me to be significant.

Throughout the entire seminar in Istanbul I felt a very strong energy and desire to progress the LTN into the wider global debate surrounding ESD. This was apparent at the round table sessions as I outlined in my review but it was also evident during informal conversations at coffee and late discussions in the evenings after dinner. There was concern expressed about time, resources, research and evaluation in particular and finding a balance between personal commitments to ESD and the contractual requirements of work along with the natural challenges of daily living and international cooperation and development. Despite these constraints, there was an unequivocal desire to act.

Another strong feature of the seminar was the concern over time and the need to act quickly. This may have been driven by the proximity of the Japan Conference but it was also driven by a recognition that LTN is a valuable resource that needs to play a bigger role in advocating and leading action both locally and globally. This urgency has not always been evident at the wider LTN conferences that take place annually.

A third observation that struck me was the awareness of, and the need to, exploit media and social network platforms. This was seen as a way to reach a wider audience but also to engage with a younger age group. The need to do this in tandem with empowering young people to contribute to and develop the LTN at every level kept recurring at different sessions and in the plenary on Saturday. Many of the suggested actions and initiatives highlight this awareness and indicate a desire to place the LTN within a different context/milieu while at the same time maintaining its excellent vision and objectives.

Overall the key points and common themes have emerged clearly: time, training, research, motivation, agreed language/definitions, action, evaluation and the need to broaden the LTN base through databases, social networking and greater student engagement. There is a need to look at all of this as Charles points out through holistic systems thinking, sustainable knowledge, awareness and integration and positive action. While at the same time recognising the ethical and democratic challenge of balancing ESD with rights and human expectations between the developed and developing world.

Despite the rain and the traffic, Istanbul has opened a clear and distinct route forward for the LTN!

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Unique experience

“Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.” Albert Einstein

After the crossroads on ESD in Istanbul

Imagine a place all participant education specialists from different part of the world care the one; adapt sustainability attitude into education and they know the starting point. We were 34 delegates from Scandinavian countries to Turkey included the west to east Europe, and from Canada.

A gap in our way will be fulfilled with GAP

Education is a key to solve global common problems from societal to environmental in local levels. For this point, Global Action Programme (GAP) brought different countries’ education and culture perspectives together in Istanbul last month. This was a very unique experience to share a comprehensive view with various experiences on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

While the contents had started to discuss, it was seen that either being a developed country or being a developing country the issues are all same. Some discussed headings may be directly connected with cultural aspects; however, the general scope did not differ in overall. Thus, the topic is carried out on a global level.

The 10th anniversary of ESD announcement will be celebrated in this month. Before new conditions are introduced to countries and the implementation policies are discussed, the Learning Teacher Network presented an opportunity to evaluate the current situation. Here the outcomes from our meeting within the GAP framework:

In regards to improvement of educational purpose and outcomes, it is all agreed that the governments should take ESD into their agendas. If the governments promote the mechanisms and attempts on ESD, it will provide a quality and equal rights of education in a holistic approach. Moreover, the supplementary tools such as curriculum and national strategies are accepted as another important part should be handled by the governments as well.

While we were discussing among participants, it is a common and initial concern that it is necessary to take ESD seriously and integrate into the system by the governments. At this point, it is also stressed that the teachers’ inclusion into decisions, a partnership while policy making should be cared by decision makers.

As concern to teaching and learning aspects, the limit is the value of students’ acquisition. As it is recently a popular idiom, ‘Think like there is no box rather than think out of box’. The ESD vision is an answer to this. It encourages all to mainstream from curriculum to learning tools, from leaders to families. Here, the self-esteem and self-control abilities are ascending points as the important skills on learning process. Furthermore, innovative method which enables the students’ creative thinking and participatory abilities help them to develop knowledge and skills.

In addition to these, social inclusion is a must for a successful implementation of ESD in schools and learning-teaching techniques. The school is a social venue which lives with its environment. It should not be survive by itself. Building partnerships and cooperating with stakeholders bring a comprehensive vision to school and provide a link to real world.

In short, we have learnt, experienced and shared from each others at crossroads of ESD, now we are looking forward to skip next step which is transferring our learnings into practice as a reflex for a sustainable life.

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Round Tables

The first Round Table considered the following questions:

• How can ESD support whole-school perspectives? And
• How can ESD guide students to have the knowledge, skills and values to care for and solve the sustainable development issues that will arise in their lifetime?

The second Round Table considered the following question:

• How can ESD update and improve educational purpose and outcomes?

With regard to these two Round Table sessions I observe that the first one generated a greater number of Post-It notes than did the second one.

This has no causal connection with the outcomes of each session which were equally illuminating and of interest for the network going forward.

If I had to identify one specific word which describes what participants felt overall about the potential answer to all three of these questions it would have to be the word ‘Action’. There was a feeling expressed that there has already been ten years of talks and relative inaction, relative in the sense that the issue of ESD and its impact on the curriculum of schools has been partial, dependent upon interested teachers and others, and has not been embedded within the curricula of countries. This led to discussions in both Round Tables about the need to take action and embed ESD concepts and issues within all curriculum subjects and also in all other aspects of what makes an educational organisation work. For example, there are environmental aspects to consider in the first place in the building of new schools, or the renovation of existing ones, in addition to considerations of how energy is used and how waste is dealt with. How do students and teachers actually travel to school?

In order to cause this to happen there were views expressed which identified the need for some catalysts to cause meaningful action. For example, there were requests for research and the documentation of best practice as we could already identify, together with the sharing of research and the connecting of the range of stakeholders with an interest in ESD.

Alongside this was a request for the compilation of a practical level database of ESD practice and participants felt that in the first instance this was something that the network may be able to facilitate. It was felt that we should facilitate country specific examples of good practice by the use of a matrix for each country, particularly showing examples of what works on several local levels. There were views expressed which suggested that we need to produce quality indicators which could be used to clarify the vision and evaluation strategy for ESD.

Having a vision was felt to be an important driver of change and that governments and their schools needed to be required to include a vision for ESD in their curriculum materials and public mission statements. Such vision statements could then be monitored but against some meaningful and necessary criteria. It was suggested that there was a need for a holistic approach to ESD so that attention is given to social, economic, and cultural aspects of life.

Participants clearly felt that it was important to raise awareness on a political level and that there was a need to influence decision makers on a national, regional, and local level.

Connected with this was a view that perhaps we should encourage the development of ESD champions who could foster knowledge and awareness of the issues and who could also connect ESD with other political themes and social problems.

Participants recognised that it would be necessary to demonstrate socio-economic benefits and the effects of ESD in order to influence the persuasion process. It was felt that research into the benefits of ESD needed to be done to make this more transparent and to be a key and important driver of change.

As always in education the modelling of behaviour was thought to be important. Tolerance and respect were two words which recurred in the discussions alongside a view which suggested that there needed to be a change in relations between pupils and teachers so that pupils could believe in participation in ESD and could see the modelling of this in their teachers.

Connected with this was also a view that within Europe there should be more possibilities of Erasmus exchanges, especially of younger pupils in Primary Schools so that pupils could see ESD developments in reality in partner countries and schools.

It was stated that in terms of teaching materials there should be an emphasis on the meaningfulness of content so that pupils can really connect to all subjects using systems thinking and tools, and multiple intelligences.

In terms of modelling views were expressed which exemplified the need for the inclusion of ESD matters within the curricula of teacher training and continuing professional development, submitting teachers to new methodologies which motivate them alongside traditional curriculum and teaching techniques.

Apart from having a whole school perspective there were several comments which suggested that there should be more meaningful partnerships developed with local firms or companies, specifically embracing local firms in solving ESD problems within their environment by way of utilising locally based solutions to problems.

In conclusion we have some key words and some key themes emerging from these two Round Tables. Key words include Vision, Action, Modelling, Research. Key themes relate to ESD as a whole world perspective and as a cross-cutting theme in all curricula, developing an awareness of ESD and how to work on a sustainable future.

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In September 2014 The Learning Teacher Network advised Unesco how to move on in the field of educational reform heading towards ESD. One of the advices was: ‘schools should build ESD on evidence at assessment and evaluation’. In the Netherlands an organisation called ‘Duurzame Pabo’ (www.duurzamepabo.nl) in 2011 developed an assessment- and evaluation instrument for ESD in primary education, called PRISE (primary sustainable education).

The instrument is based on the original version of AISHE, auditing instrument for sustainability in higher education (DHO 2001) and the EFQM (European federation for quality management) model for quality check in education. The PRISE instrument is a system based, holistic instrument. It covers policy, environmental care, human resource management, curriculum, assessments, external contacts etc.

After six pilots in and around the city of Utrecht, PRISE was used to analyse twenty-three primary schools in the Northwestern part of The Netherlands. The results of this research were quite similar to those of the pilots. All together these results gave some insight in what’s going on and what’s going wrong when it comes to ESD in Dutch primary schools.

The results of the analyses were used for school improvement in the twenty-three schools. Advises for innovation, mostly based on Lozano (2006), Chenoweth/Everhart (2001) and De Vries (2010), were given and -if possible- worked out:

- The schools nowadays work together with stakeholders like Ecomare (http://www.ecomare.nl), institute for protection of sea life, local and national authorities.
- A curriculum and a website on ESD were developed that all schools use. Every year there is a meeting day for all teachers. The day is used for evaluation of ESD and looking forward.
- Communication with the local community was improves, using internet, excursions etc.
- PRISE criteria were used for further development.
- A general ESD coordinator was appointed for all schools. She acts as coach, trainer, contact person, source of inspiration for the schools.
- Schools split up in communities of practice. Some started working with Guus Geisen on Autopoiesis, a holistic approach towards ESD. Others started working on a solar panel project, using solar panels for energy, checking the electricity supply and cost reduction for all kinds of lessons.

Over all, the PRISE instrument did meet the demands of the schools. And, looking at the advice from the Learning Teacher Network to Unesco, might be a good starting point for discussions on assessment and evaluation strategies for primary schools all over the world.

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The diagram shows higher scoring schools (f.i. the red line with the open blue squares), low scoring schools and a median (the fat blue line) that gives an impression about the general situation in The Netherlands: in most schools ‘something, but not structural’ happens; the higher scores of the median are criteria where external factors (governmental policy, a textbook) are decisive; scores 34, 51-54 are about tests and evaluation, which is rarely done. The most likely explanation for this is the lack of governmental steering: schools don’t have to do anything. High scores mean voluntarily, individual policy of schools and/or teachers inside these schools.
Sustainable Future
– A concept for school and enterprise

We are an upper secondary school from Gothenburg in Sweden which has implemented a green profile at our school. This short text will briefly introduce this green profile, but also explain how we have made it possible and finally the result from it so far.

In 2011 the Swedish Board of Education launched a new national curriculum where the importance of sustainability is overall emphasized. With this in mind, together with the strong support from SKF (which owns the school in a non-profit way, and helps us with resources and several guest lectures), we saw a natural way to build a new profile with projects running through the entire education. We call this green profile Sustainable Future, or simply, SF.

During the first year we provide the students with the knowledge and background to today’s environmental problems, we deal with smart consumption and introduce them to tomorrow’s energy sources. In the second year the students perform a lifecycle assessment on a wind turbine. When they finish this lifecycle assessment they continue and use this for planning of a fictive windfarm. In this project the students investigate what kind of permits they need, how the windfarm affects the surrounding and also how to maintain and sustain their windfarm.

We have also integrated our workshop classes where the students actually manufacture their own miniature wind turbine. In the final year we have involved our nine weeks abroad internship (which is offered to the student), during this internship the students gets a project to investigate certain environmental and energy questions at their specific location, making a green thread throughout their entire education.

We have made this possible by looking into the core contents from all the subjects we have at our school to find some kind of relation between them. Around these “relations” we’ve created projects by taking time from the concerned subjects, which in the same time are examined by related assignments and presentations.

An example from the first year, where there are six topics involved (Physics, Swedish, English, People in industry, Environmental & Energy knowledge and Social studies) is the project “Energialiskt”. We made the project with these subjects and their core content in mind and it provides the background for our present environmental situation. We also raise a debate among the students upon relevant topics of today and finally we’re taking a look into the energy sources of tomorrow.

The result so far has been pleasing to see. Our students have adopted the main content in a better way and they also reflect upon environment issues in other courses. It has also been an excellent platform for our teachers to work in a transversal way with updated topics since ESD also proved to be very adjustable to what is on the agenda in society at the moment, making the content more relevant. But most important, it has increased the general interest of sustainability among our students, making them better and more responsible citizens of tomorrow.

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