

INFORMAL COUNTRY REPORT

ARMENIA

Proposed topics for reporting on progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

The educational system of Armenia is in the stage of reforms and is involved in certain international processes. With the support of the World Bank and some other donor organizations reforms are going on in the public education sector by introducing innovative educational standards and programs, applying interactive methods of teaching, formulating new assessment system, as well as providing new progressive and supportive learning atmosphere. Public education sector has become a priority being basis to prepare children for life and further professional-orientated education. The public education sector has passed on 12-year educational system and a lot of works are being done to input a new model of school and to insure a high-quality education.

- a) In the frame of formal education some courses, manuals, educational materials have been developed for public schools (2-12the grades) which include some topics related to Education for Sustainable Development.**

The topics are involved in different subject areas: Natural Sciences and Social Sciences courses in all the stages of education to provide humanism, priority of national and international values, human life and health assurance, free and comprehensive development of an individual, emphasizing the importance of political consciousness, respect to an individual and human rights, dignity, patriotism, hard-working, responsibility, tolerance and formulation of ecological viewpoint.

“The Law of Education” (July 10, 2009) defines the state standard on the basis of which the subject programs have been formed. Some courses have been input to provide a comprehensive development of an individual and knowledge of qualified application. They are Civic Education, Basis of Economy, Human Rights, Life Skills, Ecology, etc.

In the frame of school component the following subjects have been recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of RA: **“Ecology”, “Environment Protection”, “Usage of Energy and Resources”, “Farming”, “Life Skills”, “Applied Economy”, “Logic”, “Psychology”, “Aesthetics”, “Morality”**. In some topics all the critical issues of sustainable development have been involved. In order to provide effective teaching of the above-mentioned subjects the experts of National Institute of Education are developing curricula for different stages of schooling.

Overview of activities undertaken during the reporting period:

1. “Water: a Chemical Solution” Global experiment organized within the framework of the program “The International Year of Chemistry 2011” by UNESCO and IUPAC was coordinating in the Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies NAS RA since February 2011 by UNESCO Chair. Meetings have taken place with the directors and teachers of Yerevan and regional schools. Five schools (400 scholars) have been selected, that almost free of chemical laboratories, for those by agreement chemical kits are expected to arrive. The experiment is anticipated to run by two phases: preliminary and basic. The first one was conducted in schools from 20-30 of September, the second in from 25-28 October.

The collected data we input on the global map of Global Water Experiment in webpage: <http://water.chemistry2011.org/web/iyc>

2. The ecological education project “One Planet Lifestyle” for teenagers (14-18 years old) was implemented by the NGO “Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment” under the coordination of WWF – Armenia, 2011. The 1st phase of the project involved awareness - raising campaign and the development and approval of the guide entitled “One Planet Lifestyle” on reduction of the climate change impact (footprint). The guide was approved by the RA Ministry of Education and Science as an additional educational manual for use in secondary schools. The awareness raising project was implemented for 59 biology and geography teachers of 35 schools of the city Yerevan and the provinces. The 2nd phase of the project involved an essay-competition for teenagers on Local Ecological Problems and Solutions to Address. 207 schoolchildren participated in the competition; 109 essays were submitted. On the whole, 1771 schoolchildren increased their knowledge. The 3rd phase of the project involved activities with the involvement of the participants of the best essay – competition.

3. Since 2012 Armenia has also joined the program UNESCO IITE and ASPnet Pilot Project “Learning For the Future” (UNESCO ASPnet on the Way towards a School of the Future”). Social partners supporting or involved into the Project was National Commission for UNESCO of RA, Ministry of Education and Science RA, UNESCO Chair on “ESD”.

b) As it is highlighted in “Law of Education” the on-going improvement in accordance with international standards and integration into international educational system are the main principles of education. This is why some important topics of sustainable development are partially involved in teacher training courses.

But the topic “Education for Sustainable Development” as a complex educational process is not taught as there are no relevant teacher trainers, curricula, materials and needed financing. Meanwhile in “The Law of Education” there is a note on the “mutual agreement between public education and other educational programs”.

c) The present stage of Armenian social-economic development demands a professional high-quality education. The provision and accessibility of above-mentioned quality is one of the main factors of economic growth for calming down poverty and inequality.

There are a number of events implemented according to the principles of Bologna and Turin processes in the direction of improving professional development and enhancing of the training of personnel in accordance with European standards and the demands of trade market.

In the sphere of Initial Crafts and Vocational Education works have been done according to concept(2012-2016) of development of these spheres, 2009-2011 timeline and action plans of the reforms implemented in these spheres.

The strategy of Initial and Vocational Education has been approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The goals and objectives have been defined and the ways of solving them. The program initiated by UNDP is supporting the reforms going on in Initial and Vocational Education.

The British Council Armenia is implementing a program which aims at adapting the educational system to the trade market requirements. This helps to raise the effectiveness and contributes to the free movement of employees.

The Collegial governing bodies have been formulated including employers and trade unions. A National Council of Vocational Education and Training Development, which consists of the representatives of employers, trade unions and state bodies has been established.

There is also an action plan implemented by EU. That is a field-supporting programme to decrease poverty by means of reforms in Vocational and Initial Educational system.

In the frame of the budget supporting programme in 12 experimental colleges the technological base has been renewed and the colleges have been rebuilt and become regional colleges.

In 2009 the Government of Armenia approved “The Concept of Social Partnership in Vocational Education” and “The Concept of Lifelong Education”.

The Republic of Armenia has been involved in Turin’s process which is implemented by European Educational Foundation since 2010. The aim is to validate the analysis of VE reforms including critical tendencies, challenges, obstacles, as well as defining successful experiments and possibilities.

In the results of reforms in Vocational Education a new list of professions is approved. New standards are also approved on the basis of which curricula are reviewed. Training of Vocational Education teachers and masters have been carried out. Almost in all the curricula and modules core subjects are included such as “Political Science and Sociology”, “Basics of Law”, “Basics of Ecology”, “Social-Protection and Problems of Extraordinary Situations”, “Basics of Economy”, “Basics of Morality and Aesthetics”, “General working Skills”.

The specific needs of the Republic of Armenia in frames of “Education for Sustainable Development”

In 2013-2014 it is planned to hold a series of training(of workshopes) on sustainable development of international, regional and local processes for NIE (National Institute of Education) specialists as well as education policy makers and educators of the content of education, in order to raise competence in “Education for Sustainable Development” by the UNECE channels.
