

**“GOOD PRACTICE” IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE UNECE REGION**

**"Good practices in ESD"** are initiatives closely related to Education for Sustainable Development, that demonstrate good practice, generate ideas and contribute to policy development. These good practices:

1. focus on the educational and learning dimensions of sustainable development.
2. are innovative. They develop new and creative solutions to common problems, such as:
  - ❖ ways to discover what the key local issues of sustainable development are
  - ❖ ways to adapt processes to relevant teaching and learning strategies
  - ❖ ways of fostering links between learning situations and the community
  - ❖ ways of integrating local knowledge and culture
  - ❖ curriculum development processes enabling content to be decided as locally relevant
  - ❖ starting points on how Education for Sustainable Development can best be put into effect.
3. make a difference. They demonstrate a positive and tangible impact on the living conditions, quality of life of the individuals, groups or communities concerned. They seek to bridge gaps between different societal actors/sectors and are inclusive, in order to allow new partners to join the implementing agents/bodies.
4. have a sustainable effect. They contribute to sustained improvement of living conditions. They must integrate economic, social, cultural and environmental components of sustainable development and reflect their interaction/interdependency in their design and implementation.
5. have the potential for replication. They provide effective methodologies for transdisciplinary and multi-sectoral co-operation. They serve as models for generating policies and initiatives elsewhere.
6. offer some elements of evaluation. They have been and can be evaluated in terms of the criteria of innovation, success and sustainability by both experts and the people concerned.

***If you submit more than one "good practice", please indicate the priority 1, 2 or 3.***

**1. NAME OF THE INITIATIVE CONSIDERED AS A GOOD PRACTICE<sup>1</sup>:**

Designing Action Community Programs through creating networks amongst school, parents and local community

**2. RESPONSIBLE COUNTRY/ORGANIZATION:**

Name PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE OF CYPRUS, CYPRUS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

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**3. CONTACT PERSON (name and title):**

Dr Aravella Zachariou,

Coordinator of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education and Culture

**4. FOCUS OF THE INITIATIVE (check one or more box(es)):**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment             | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace, Human Rights & Security          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educators          | <input type="checkbox"/> Water                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy, Regulation, Governance          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overcoming Poverty            | <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change          | <input type="checkbox"/> Intercultural Understanding             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality               | <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity            | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Diversity                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Promotion              | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Reduction      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous knowledge         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Development       | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools and materials (e.g. Media & ICTs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Urbanization      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Consumption | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research / Development       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Responsibility      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Tourism     | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional / international cooperation    |

<sup>1</sup> Your response to this questionnaire should not exceed 2 pages. Font: Arial , size - 9; margins - 2 centimeters.

Economy

Citizenship

other (please specify)

## 5. INITIATIVE DESCRIPTION (provide brief description)

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▪ **Type (governmental, non-governmental, municipal, other):**

Governmental project that was conducted under the auspices of the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus which is the coordinator body of the Ministry of Education and Culture for implementing Education for Sustainable Development in Cyprus Education System.

▪ **Working language(s):**

Greek language

▪ **Setting / Target group(s) / Number of persons involved:**

The particular project was a multifaceted project designed for implementation on a National basis, taking into consideration the main principles of ESD and the needs and particularities of Cyprus. The project was implemented in 37 in pre-primary and primary schools all over Cyprus. Parents, students, teachers and various stakeholders were the main target groups. Particularly, the project involved 266 parents, 1100 students, 45 teachers.

▪ **Starting year and Duration:**

The project covered the period 2003-2006.

▪ **Budget and Funding Sources:**

The project's implementation was based on the voluntary participation of schools and community, which were responsible for finding the necessary funding resources.

▪ **Partner organisations involved (if any):**

A number of governmental and non-governmental organizations were involved in the project: The Department of Forestry, the Department of Environment, the Department of Energy, the Recycling Affiliation, Environmental Education and Information Centers etc. According to the requirements of the sustainable issue each school, proportionally involved various organizations.

▪ **Stakeholders involved (e.g. local community). Describe their involvement in this initiative and the kind of relationship you have with them.**

Local community and specifically indigenous people, parents and municipality cooperated and were actively involved in a project in order to investigate a particular problem of their community, and determine alternative ways for confronting the particular problem. The stakeholders interacted with the schools and were actively involved in all the phases of the project (design, application, implementation), and in all kinds of indoors and outdoors activities. Our cooperation with them was based on guiding and counseling the various groups of participants, during all the phases of the project.

## 6. MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE INITIATIVE (provide brief description)

- Train teachers on how to design and implement autonomous programs-based on ESD-aiming to the social-critical involvement of parents and the school's local community.
- Encourage parents, students and local populations to participate in such programs and sustain a critical involvement in sustainable issues of their community
- Establish community schools that should operate according to the principles of Education for Sustainable Development
- Develop educational and pedagogical tools for educators, which can be used indoors and outdoors, in order to promote ESD in every day school life.

## 7. METHODOLOGY (provide brief description)

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Methods/approach for this initiative (list key background materials that were used; If necessary, use a separate sheet))

This approach was multifaceted and developed in three discrete phases. For each phase different educational methods and approaches were used, which were organized according to the demands of each phase. The first phase included in-service training courses for teachers. Audio visual materials and slides were presented, educational tools, outdoor activities various projects and techniques were suggested, and similar projects on international level were evaluated. The in-service training courses were based on discussions, interactive communication and a creative dialogue. The Second phase included the design and the application of the program. The school and the community interacted in various areas including activities in the school and in the field, visits, interviews, observations, recordings, discussions, use of multimedia and internet, handicrafts, team and cooperative work among all the participants, in order to examine the problem of interest. The third phase concerned the involvement of the community to the solution of the issue already examined. Various strategies were used including particular actions and measures centralized in community campaigns. Presentations, the use of Mass Media, and the preparation of films and articles were some of the techniques that were used.

## 8. RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF THE INITIATIVE (provide brief description and assessment)

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▪ **Results**

The implementation of the programs resulted in major positive outcomes for children and their parents, which were investigated through parent and teacher questionnaires before and after the implementation of the various programs. Parent, pupil and teacher interviews were taken, observations were made and diaries were used during the program implementation in each school. Results showed that children and parents became more knowledgeable and sensitive to the improvement of the quality of life to their community. The programs, which applied according to the demands and particularities of each school and its

community, seemed to help them acquire a sense of ownership and responsibility in their community. Additionally, through these projects a new “learning culture” was created, based on social cohesion of the community, the environmental preservation and protection of local environment. More over the research results indicated that the project helped teachers to improve their educational practice related to ESD. They identified how the National Curriculum can be used for a holistic investigation of a local issue, and how formal and non-formal education could be connected for promoting ESD in school practice.

- **Strengths**

The project takes into consideration the particularities and needs of each school and each community. This motivates all the participants to act on the basis of creative and interactive networking. Community was used as a means for learning, as an educational tool and a place for action, through the parallel use of formal and non-formal education. The community worked as a place for the application of various activities based on participatory learning, tailored to the needs and interests of learners. Finally, through the course, various educational techniques and methods were developed that could be used in Cyprus Schools for promoting ESD.

- **Weaknesses and risks**

Funding and time limitations were the main obstacles for the programs implementation to each school.

- **Problems encountered:***(fill in if applicable)*

- **Conditions for successful replication** *(fill in if applicable)*

- **Unresolved issues** *(fill in if applicable)*

- **Why do you consider this a good practice?**

- The program was a unique and extremely innovative attempt for the case of the educational system of Cyprus, since it was the first time that teachers were trained on implementing educational programs, through the participation of parents and the local community. More over the particular program is a national program designed according to the demands of the Cyprus Educational System taking into consideration the requirements of the local population, the particularities of the schools in each district and the need for reforming the National Curriculum towards creating links between formal and non-formal education. At a broader international level, it reflects an innovative achievement in education, as it indicates how the home and the school can join in an everyday partnership and how the school can critically accomplish its major aims with the participation of their pupils’ families. This is an example for other European Countries as well. It encourages the Implementation of Education of Sustainable Development Programs in partnership with parents, families and their local communities in a critical way, which provides long-lasting benefits for children, parents, schools and communities.

***Please attach one relevant picture, as a separate file (max 1024 x 768 px /72 dpi/ jpg-format 80% quality/ up to 300KB)***

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Please submit your “Good practice” (up to 3 “Good practices” per country/organisation) electronically by *e-mail* to: [esd@unece.org](mailto:esd@unece.org). In addition, you are invited to send us any relevant information you might think useful, including references to documents, publications and/or articles describing the initiative, as well as relevant links to websites.

*For further information, please send request to the same e-mail address or contact: Environment, Human Settlements and Land Management Division, Economic Commission for Europe Palais des Nations, 8-14 avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. fax: 00 41 22 9170107 - web : <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/welcome.htm>*