4 QUALITY EDUCATION

The Power of Knowledge for Change: Education and Learning as Drivers for Sustainable Development

22 MARCH 2019, 11:35-13:00
Room 4, International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)
Interpretation in English, French and Russian

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this round tables are:

- to provide a mutual learning space where participants from governments can interact with their peers and other relevant stakeholders in order to exchange experiences, propose solutions to address identified problems and anticipate future developments concerning SDG-4 (Quality Education); and
- to identify main lessons and compile a set of key messages that can be shared with a wider audience to mainstream, accelerate and provide policy support to the regional and national implementation of SDG-4, especially its target 4.7.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality:
- Are countries linking effectively the Education for Sustainable Development processes at the global and regional level to the practical steps on the national and local level? Are there examples of best practice that are successfully promoted through regional collaboration?
- Are there examples of rippling the benefits of Education for Sustainable Development beyond a single institution? What have we learnt about systemic change in education?
- How can sustainable development concerns be integrated in education and learning? What are best practices of utilising the cross-cutting potential of Education for Sustainable Development for achieving particular SDGs?
- What are successful approaches to prevent alienation between humans and the environment?
- How is Forest Education (as a form of informal education) applied for Education for Sustainable Development?

2. Promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development:
- What educational approaches do countries apply to empower learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world?
- What are the examples from countries of establishing meaningful connection between the global citizenship education and national and local contexts, drawing on existing principles of solidarity, respect for cultural diversity and a sense of shared humanity?
- Examples of how to reach all groups of society to sensitize them towards a more sustainable lifestyle?

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CASE STUDIES

Cyprus: New institutional structure to enhance Education for Sustainable Development

Cyprus set up a permanent unit on Education for Environment and Sustainable Development within the Ministry of Education and Culture, following a consultation process of four years. The unit is responsible at governmental level for monitoring the implementation of the national strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, updating and implementing it across the spectrum of the state mechanism, and more broadly in civil society. It aims to shape an education system that will create environmentally literate and democratic citizens, who will be responsible for their choices, will seek alternative solutions and ensure a world based on the principles and values of sustainable development.

Presenter: Aravella Zachariou, Head of the Unit of Education for Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus

North Macedonia / Journalists for Human Rights: Introduction of new learning modules on "Water and Sanitation Safety Planning"

In North Macedonia, society's awareness in the field of environmental protection, water quality and sanitation is relatively low. Under the programme "Water and Sanitation Safety Planning", new learning modules on water and sanitation were introduced in schools. Today, five municipalities work under this programme, and another ten are preparing for the next academic year. Over 500 children have learnt about water and sanitation at summer camps, and since this year all private kindergartens in Skopje, have taken over and adapted parts of the modules for education of preschool children.

Presenter: Natasha Dokovska, Journalists for Human Rights, North Macedonia

Switzerland/ SILVIVA Foundation: Learning in nature – an untapped strategy for enhancing the implementation of the SDGs?

Effective Learning activates many senses, takes place in real-life learning environments and demands the active and self-guided involvement of the learners. The SILVIVA-project "World of the forester" tries to translate these insights into hands-on learning situation with authentic role models. The aim is to provide students with a learning environment which provides the best possible conditions for deep, effective, long-term learning and transfer it into daily life.

Presenter: Rolf Jucker, Director, SILVIVA Fondation

United Kingdom/ University of Gloucestershire: A Rounder Sense of Purpose: Educator Competences for Education for Sustainable Development

This international project set out to 'distil' the educator competences for Education for Sustainable Development to create a more concise framework of assessable learning outcomes that can form the basis of Education for Sustainable Development qualifications for in-service and student educators across Europe.

Presenter: Dr Paul Vare, University of Gloucestershire

BACKGROUND

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE) are key concepts of SDG 4, as specifically of target 4.7: "*By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development*".

UN General Assembly Resolution 72/222 recognizes ESD as a key enabler of all the SDGs. ESD empowers everyone to make informed decisions in favour of environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society for present and future generations. It aims to provide the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to achieve progress on the sustainable development challenges captured in the SDGs. It also helps develop competencies that are relevant to a variety of different SDGs.

Education systems should provide learners with values, attitudes and skills that are based on and instil respect for human rights, gender equality, and social justice, in order to empower learners with the socio-emotional, cognitive and behavioural skills to address current national and global challenges in a globalized and interconnected world with increasing manifestations of both solidarity and intolerance. In these ways, GCE is at the heart of SDG4, and relevant to the achievement of the other SDGs.

In 2016, at the end of the United Nations Decade of ESD and the original implementation period of the UNECE Strategy for ESD, 51 ECE member States (out of 56) have reported to be engaged wholly or in part to advance ESD. Many ECE member States now have ESD policies and frameworks in place to support ESD implementation. Hundreds of initiatives have been launched in the region to integrate ESD into the content and processes of formal, non-formal and informal education, moving from policy to practice. Significant advancements have been made in areas of policy integration, curricula, tools and resources, and cooperation and networking; on another hand, ESD school plans, teacher competences and ESD in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are proving to be more challenging but necessary leverage points in whole-system change.

Relevant background materials (reports, studies, issues briefs etc.).

- [UNESCO. Education for Sustainable Development Goals: learning objectives.](#)

- [UNESCO. Global Citizenship Education: Topics and learning objectives.](#)

- [UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.](#)

- UNESCO (2018). Issues and trends in Education for Sustainable Development.

- Ten Years of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. Evaluation report on the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2005 to 2015. UNITED NATIONS, New York and Geneva, 2016.

- Council of Europe (CoE). COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies (2016).

- MIO-ECSDE, Sustainable Mediterranean, Issue No 74, Oct 2018. First year's progress of the MSESD Action Plan. Proceedings of the 1st Meeting of the Mediterranean ESD Committee, 22 -24 November 2017

- Garcia, C., Dray, A., Waeber, P. 2016. Learning begins when the game is over. Using games to embrace complexity in natural resources management. *GAIA—Ecological Perspectives for Science and Society 25*(4), 289-291. doi:10.14512/gaia.25.4.13

Participants of the round table will share their experience and views on the practical ways of:

- Strengthening skills and knowledge for the sustainability transformation and embedding sustainable development concerns in all forms of education and learning (Education for Sustainable Development).
- Empowering learners of all ages to understand global issues of the complex world they live in, enabling them to speak up, act, and collaborate to create a more tolerant, peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies (Global Citizenship Education).
- Rethinking educational pedagogy, educational quality and the management of education institutions so that sustainable development is mirrored across the system.

SDG LINKAGES

Several other SDGs and targets which are under review in 2019 are linked to the cross-cutting themes of the discussions in the present round table, e.g.:

Goal 8: Reduction of the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (target 8.6); Promotion of sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products (8.9); Development and operationalization of a global strategy for youth employment (8.b);

Goal 10: Social, economic and political inclusion of all (10.2); Equal opportunities and reduced inequalities of outcome (10.3); Orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people (10.7)

Goal 13: Improved education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning (13.3)

Goal 16: Promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels, ensuring equal access to justice for all (16.3); Ensuring public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms (16.10).

PARTICIPANTS

This round table will target a multi-stakeholder audience, including policy-makers, academia, private sector, civil society and youth.

CO-MODERATORS AND RAPPORTEUR

This round table will be co-moderated by Mr. Marco Keiner, Director at the Environment, Housing and Land Management Division at the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and Prof. Daniella Tilbury, focal point to the UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The rapporteur for SDG 4 will be Mr. Roeland Van Raaij, Senior Policy Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality of the Netherlands.

ORGANIZERS

This round table is organized by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in cooperation with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section.