Whole Institution Approach (WIA) to ESD

Institutions as Communities of Transformational Learning
Definition of ESD

• Inclusive
• Lifelong and life-wide
• Holistic: integrating learning content, pedagogy and context
• Transformative: empowering learners for change
• Enabling individuals to adopt sustainable choices/lifestyles
• Based not only on techno-fixes, but on building a sound ethos
• Implies a systems approach involving learners, content, context (including the community) … an ecosystem
Whole Institution Approach … a definition

- Implication: ESD goes on beyond schooling
- Mainstreaming sustainability into all aspects of an institution
- Implication: reviewing and revising institution’s internal operations and external relationships
- Each institution decides on its own actions regarding three overlapping spheres…
Learning Programme
(teaching/learning and research)

Campus / Site
(management operations)

Community
(external relationships)
WIA … achievements

• ESD is an essential component in any strategy aimed at achieving the SDGs
• ESD is a lifelong and life-wide journey implying continuity between formal, informal and non-formal settings
• Easy to register success in the Formal sector as it is more structured. Yet it is usually not flexible and resists change.
• Steering Committee’s commitment “to ensure that there was an ESD school plan in every school” (need to go beyond publication of documents)
WIA ... challenges

Clearly define the meaning of the term whole institution approach and its implications

... if everything that reports profess has been achieved we have arrived!!

Who should define it? Experts? Institutions? Both?
WIA ... challenges

Develop a concrete framework with areas of generic interest that can be applied to a variety of contexts:

- Leadership
- Quality development
- Youth as part of the participatory processes
- Staff development
- Further training
- Campus management
- Innovation – being open to change and collaboration
- Communication networks within the institution and beyond it

... there is no one size fits all
WIA ... challenges

To identify and describe:

a) the intrinsic elements ... getting a shared vision and how to achieve it

b) the obstacles (that promote the status quo and a business as usual approach) and appropriate measures to address them
WIA ... challenges

To identify the stakeholders (internal and external) that can develop jointly a shared vision for the implementation:

a) who know what ESD and WIA are and their implications

b) representing various sectors and levels
WIA … inherent challenge

To depart from a mindset based on traditional practices still dominant in the formal sector:

a) Emphasis on knowledge transmission
b) Finding new ‘toys’ to convey content
c) Norm referenced vrs criterion referenced assessment
d) Competition vrs collaboration
e) Preparation for a defined future
Activities, suggestions and actions

1. Develop a platform for countries to upload examples of good practices
2. Collection of good practices
3. Include a specific section on WIA in the next cycle of national reports

From the above actions develop the following through expert analysis:

1. A practical checklist that promotes self-reflection on WIA
2. Produce a brief and practical guide tool to WIA implementation.
3. Develop a set of key competences for stakeholders
4. Provide an accreditation scheme or a set of quality criteria for formal, non-formal and informal sectors.
For reflection…

• Could the non-formal and informal sectors provide a better chance to implement a WIA because they are more flexible?

• Are policy documents (especially those of a top-down origin) enough to ensure change in old structures/institutions?

• Could each country come up with its own plan for WIA (based on the COP21 model of action)?