



INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE (IAC) FOR THE UN DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (DESD)

SEVENTH MEETING MINUTES

**13-14 December 2012
UNESCO, Paris, France**

Background

The 2012 Annual Meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) took place on 13-14 December 2012 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France.

The first day was a one-day workshop on addressing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) through ESD and had the following objectives:

- To enhance IAC members' capacity on DRR/ESD;
- To share information on members' ongoing DRR work;
- To share information on the functions and work of DRR Education coordination bodies such as the ISDR Thematic Platform on Knowledge and Education (TPKE) or the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE);
- To explore joint activities of the IAC members on DRR.

The second day focused on the post-2014 ESD framework, as well as a review of 2012 activities, and had the following objectives:

- To consult with IAC member agencies on the post-2014 ESD framework
- To discuss ESD in global processes towards the post-2015 agenda
- To discuss any other issues relevant to the current and future work of the IAC.

Participants

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UNITAR

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UNESCO

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Observers

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DRR Workshop only

Association Prevention 2000, France

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Plan International

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Workshop on Addressing DRR through ESD

Thursday, 13 December 2012

Introduction

In the opening by UNESCO representatives, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was mentioned as being of importance to quality education as much as quality education being relevant for DRR. DRR through education not only can save lives but also ensures sustainable development.

Presentations by experts and NGOs

The following presentations reflected the work and expertise of leading NGOs and addressed the implementation at country level: (see *presentations attached*)

1. DRR and ESD, an innovative approach in France, by Olivier Schick (Association Prevention 2000)
2. Comprehensive School Safety, by Marla Petal (Save the Children)
3. DRR Education at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by Marjorie Soto Franco
4. DRR Education in Turkey, by Zeynep Turkmen Sanduvac (consultant, Turkey)
5. DRR Education at Plan International, by Kelly Hawrylyshyn

Discussion

Building on the presentations, the following additional points were mentioned as relevant for future work on DRR Education:

- Partnerships with communities and local governments (e.g., mayors) in planning and implementing DRR Education programmes are highly important.
- More evidence and data are needed, especially at the regional level. There is a possibility to obtain data via the centres of reference of the IFRC.
- The title “Comprehensive school safety” does not reflect properly the scope of DRR Education. It was proposed to consider rephrasing the title to reflect the entire education sector and not only schools.
- Integrating DRR and other related themes into curricula that are already overloaded poses a considerable challenge. Linking DRR to existing subjects is a good strategy in that regard.
- Non-formal education is highly important for DRR and should not be overlooked.
- It remains important to link climate change and DRR in education. Some progress has been in that regard with the newly adopted Doha work programme for article 6 of the UNFCCC at COP 18.
- INEE is a vibrant network with considerable potential. It should be used more.
- The IAC can play an important role in advocating for the incorporation of DRR Education into the post-2015 frameworks, including with regard to EFA, the DESD follow-up, and the follow up to the Hyogo Framework of Action, etc.

Presentations by UN agencies

The expert and NGO input was followed by a series of presentations on UN agencies' work on DRR. UNITAR, UNICEF, UNISDR, UNU, FAO, CBD, INEE, UNESCO and UNEP made short presentations on their respective DRR activities (see attached presentations except for CBD and UNEP, which are summarized in the following).

The CBD Secretariat reminded the group that strong and robust ecosystems are the front line of defense against many natural hazards and therefore fundamental to DRR. The importance of biodiversity was pointed out in that regard. Steps need to be taken to ensure that biodiversity loss is stopped by 2020, based on the international commitment made through the adoption of the Aichi Targets.

UNEP, who participated in the meeting online, introduced its key activities in DRR:

- (1) A graduate course (a Master of Science Elective Course on Environment and DRR) developed with the University of Cologne and UNEP's global network of 10 universities to influence future generations of policy and decision makers, coupled with a Training of Trainers package to train lead faculty members from the selected universities on the course;
- (2) Training on Ecosystem-based DRR (Eco-DRR) targeting government officials and major public training institutions, in which UNEP together with the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR) delivers a national training course to enhance government capacities to undertake more sustainable and resilient development planning; and
- (3) Pilot Eco-DRR projects in specific sites in four countries where UNEP currently has ongoing country operations: Afghanistan, Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan.

Discussion

The following areas for collaboration were discussed on the basis of the presentations.

- **Resource mobilization**: There is a strong need for further resource mobilization. There are two funds available that the DRR education community can tap into: GEF and GPE. In order to facilitate programmes in countries to access these funds to implement DRR/CCE activities, UNICEF suggested a comparative study of GEF and GPE implementation. The guidance notes on DRR IIEP developed together with GPE can be a basis for future collaboration between the UN family and GPE. The World Bank's global facility for DRR was also indicated as a potential funding source at the national level.
- **Developing a common approach to DRR Education**: Participants reiterated the importance of developing a common approach to DRR in order to advance UN cooperation on human security. The "comprehensive school safety" framework is seen as a valuable reference; it should be further elaborated.
- **UN coordinated action**: Uncoordinated UN work at the country level needs to be avoided. Joint proposals for joint projects will also help in resource mobilization efforts.
- **Knowledge-sharing platform**: The sharing of knowledge should be improved. The existing Prevention Web <<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/>> is rather static and there is a need to better manage information and make available a directory of DRR-related activities.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**: In order to make a stronger case for DRR education, there is a need for a stronger evidence base to demonstrate (1) the impact of disasters on education as well as (2) the impact of DRR education on resilience. It is also important to capture how non-formal education activities affect community resilience.
- **Connecting existing centres of excellence**: As a means of synergizing and enhancing activities carried out by different agencies, the importance of building on the existing centers of excellence coordinated by different organizations (e.g. "center of reference" by the International Federation of Red Cross and "regional centers of expertise" coordinated by UNU) was noted.
- **Common messaging**: It was suggested to develop common messages for DRR education to be presented at several fora such as the 2013 ISDR Platform and post-2015 discussions.

The IAC Chair and Secretariat will coordinate the follow-up to the suggested action points, depending on available resources.

Post-2014 ESD Framework & 2012 IAC actions

Friday, 14 December 2012

Introduction

Soo Hyang Choi, Director, Division of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, opened the meeting, pointing out that while UNESCO is the lead agency for the DESD and the current chair of the IAC, it depends very much on its UN partners to jointly implement the DESD. The IAC is an important asset that will likely be useful beyond the end of the DESD in 2014. The main purpose of this year's meeting, Ms. Choi pointed out, is to discuss priorities and activities for follow up to the DESD.

Follow up from the 2011 IAC annual meeting and the 2012 teleconference

During the 2011 meeting and the 2012 teleconference, a number of actions points were agreed upon (see the documents shared in advance of the current meeting). Reviewing these points, it was remarked that much progress has been made on some of them, but it would be helpful if more agencies filled in the matrix on country-level activities, so that synergies can be sought and overlap avoided in the implementation of ESD on the ground. It was agreed that regular systematic information sharing is important for joint work.

Specific discussion points and suggestions included the following issues:

- The joint production of position papers, such as for the Rio+20 conference, is a fruitful activity that should be undertaken more. Joining forces on the occasion of big conferences is generally fruitful.
- Regarding the preparation of the 2014 ESD World Conference, the list of workshop themes is about to be finalized. For various workshops, UN agency input will be crucial. UNESCO will contact its partners. (NB: the IAC is a member of the International Steering Group of the conference.)
- The idea to establish IAC working groups on specific issues, such as climate change education, may be further explored. Ongoing joint work on the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, the DRR Thematic Platform on Knowledge and Education, CC:learn and around Article 6 in the UNFCCC are good examples of interagency work related to ESD. These groups could exchange over the course of the year and report on the occasion of IAC/DESD annual meetings.
- Regarding communication, it was agreed to post specific examples of joint IAC work and examples of ESD work of individual agencies on the web.
- It was recommended to forge a proper identity for the IAC/DESD to which each partner could relate to. The creation of an IAC fact sheet or leaflet was suggested.

The IAC Chair and Secretariat will coordinate the follow-up to the suggested action points, depending on available resources.

IAC consultation on the post-2014 ESD framework

UNESCO informed IAC members of three ongoing processes which will shape the future of ESD beyond the end of its Decade in 2014: 1) the preparation of the final DESD Monitoring and Evaluation report; 2) the preparation of the 2014 World Conference on ESD, and 3) the consultations and design of a post-2014 ESD programme framework. IAC input will be solicited for all three processes.

UNESCO briefly presented initial ideas for post-DESD priority areas of action. Overall, ESD today has an increased presence within the international community, as evidenced by the Rio+20 outcome document. Major challenges for ESD identified are nevertheless: to move from pilot projects to policy; to move from small scale to large scale initiatives; to move from the margins to the mainstream. Two important strategies are on the one hand continuing efforts to integrate ESD into education, and on the other hand promoting ESD within the sustainable development agenda. Both agendas and stakeholder groups need to be addressed towards 2014 and beyond. Suggested action areas for post-2014 include: at the policy level, strengthening ESD in national and international policies on education and in sustainable development; at the practice level, strengthening ESD at the level of the whole institution ('whole school approach'), in teacher education, and targeting students directly, including through e-learning. Generally, the emphasis of a post-2014 framework should be on scaling up action on the ground.

IAC members subsequently discussed priority areas of action for the framework and successful ESD initiatives that would be worth scaling up after 2014. Suggestions included:

On conceptualizing the programme framework:

- A focus for the programme framework is needed, but the framework also needs to be inclusive enough for all interested stakeholders to find themselves in it. Hence, it may be useful not to speak of priority areas, but rather of specific issues to 'highlight'. The framework may contain a first part with general objectives relevant to all levels and types of education, and a second part with specific highlights.
- Coherence between the action areas 'policy' and 'practice' will be important.
- It will be important to link the post-2014 ESD process and the ongoing post-2015 processes.
- The programme framework should include information that situates ESD in the wider education and sustainable development context. ESD should be promoted as a part of quality education and as crucial for advancing sustainable development.
- The programme framework has to ensure that the different ongoing related agendas are linked to ESD. For example, much DRR and climate change work pursues ESD objectives, while not always necessarily mentioning ESD explicitly. The same is true for activities that run under the label of environmental education. Coherence also needs to be sought with education work under the Rio Conventions. Further conceptual clarifications may be useful in this regard. (It is also suggested that with regard to identifying work on the ground, the field network of agencies can be mobilized.)
- While the difficulties in this area were appreciated by participants, it was suggested that the setting of measurable targets in a post-2014 ESD framework should be explored. Purely relying on qualitative reporting will not be sufficient.
- The issue of resources needs to be raised in a post-2014 framework. The possibility to use the IAC/DESD as a platform for resource mobilization for ESD-related projects implementation was also mentioned.

Initiatives to be scaled up and suggestions for specific thematic areas:

- Higher education is seen as a particularly important area for post-2014. The particular momentum in this area should not be lost.
- Whole institution approaches are generally seen as fruitful.
- Youth is an important group that should play a particular role in the post-2014 programme, and partnerships with youth organizations should be strengthened. The development of the UN System Wide Action Plan for Youth (SWAP) opens up good

opportunities in that regard. There is a number of youth networks on climate change and related issues that should be harnessed to promote ESD. For instance, a request was made to UN ISDR by youth to organize a World Youth Summit for DRR on the occasion of the 2015 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction; this could also be used to promote ESD in the post-2015 DRR Framework.

- UNFCCC Article 6 national focal points (http://unfccc.int/cc_inet/cc_inet/focal_points/items/6833.php) can be involved to strengthen strategic collaboration with UNFCCC on the ground and identifying good CCE practice. UNFCCC pointed out that the current reporting of countries on climate change education may help focusing the programme framework in this area.
- UN CC:Learn is a good example of a One UN approach. It is a partnership of 33 multilateral organizations and supports Member States in designing and implementing results-oriented and sustainable learning to address climate change. An important aspect of UN CC:Learn is to support countries in developing a *National Strategy to Strengthen Human Resources and Skills to Advance Green, Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development* through a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder process. The project promotes linkages with UN country teams. UN CC:Learn and its country-level work could be taken in consideration for scaling up. UNITAR offers its support on CCE with regard to preparing the post-2014 ESD framework and the World Conference on ESD in 2014.
- UNICEF referred to its DRR network and to its joint work with UNESCO on DRR as an area to be expanded for post-2014. This could also build on synergies with the DRR education related activities being carried out by UNEP.
- The UNU-coordinated RCEs have brought about positive change and built capacities in each region. The next step of the RCE programme is to expand the outreach to new stakeholders and initiatives.
- At regional level, there have been important partnerships such as the Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in Africa Universities (MESA) and the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (ETN). These have strong endorsements from Regional Ministerial fora.
- Interministerial cooperation needs to be strengthened at the country level. Too often, it is only individual ministries that promote ESD. In addition, an inclusive participatory process is important for implementation at country level since governments need to develop strategies and initiatives that address local needs.
- Regarding the role of the IAC in a post-2014 framework, participants agreed that the IAC remains relevant but should be scaled up and its visibility should be enhanced, including within each agency. The secondment of staff to the IAC should be explored. Each agency should define and specify more clearly in which area of ESD it can contribute. This may include drafting short papers by each agency.

When drafting the post-2014 framework, UNESCO will take these suggestions into account. It will keep the IAC updated on the drafting process and provide opportunities for feedback.

Positioning ESD in the post-2015 agenda

On the basis of the overview sent out in advance of the meeting, participants discussed the relationship between ESD and other global agendas and explored how the presence of ESD can be ensured in the post-2015 agenda.

Suggestions made include:

- A two-pronged strategy should be pursued. A dedicated ESD framework needs to be put in place at the end of the DESD, and ESD should be included wherever possible into the post-2015 framework. The outcome document of the 2014 World Conference on ESD should make the case for the relevance of ESD also for post-2015.
- Agencies should highlight ESD while they participate in the ongoing post-2015 preparation process (e.g., in the UNESCO-UNICEF-led consultation on education, or in the UNDP-UNEP-led consultation on environmental sustainability). The messaging can be based on the overview distributed.
- The Rio+20 IAC paper should be updated and posted to the post-2015 consultations.
- Synergies and coherent messaging should be sought wherever possible. One example is the DRR message for the 2014 ESD World Conference and the World Conference on DRR in 2015. ISDR suggests the drafting of a joint position paper on DRR and ESD (follow up tbd).
- UNISDR invited the IAC to take advantage of Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2013 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (19-23 May 2013, Geneva) to promote DRR Education in support of ESD.
- Good opportunities to advocate for ESD on behalf of the IAC include the next RCE global meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in Yokohama, Japan, both to be held in 2013.
- The meetings of the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES) convened by UNEP on the margins of the 7th World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) in Morocco in June 2013 also provides an opportunity to highlight ESD amongst Higher Education Institutions, and engage them further in the preparations leading up to the World Conference in 2014. This builds on the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) launched during Rio+20 as a collaborative effort between several UN agencies. UNESCO will also be substantially involved in WEEC and harness the meeting for shaping the future of ESD.
- Key players such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) need to be targeted.
- The preparations for the 68th session of the UN General Assembly should be monitored closely for high-level advocacy opportunities.

The IAC Chair and Secretariat will coordinate the follow-up to the suggested action points, depending on available resources.

Closing and handover of IAC Chair

UNESCO as the outgoing Chair thanked all participants for the fruitful meeting and handed over the chair for 2013 to UNICEF.

Annex:

Presentations from the DRR Workshop

Presentation on the post-2014 ESD framework

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