



Promotion of a Global Partnership for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)



The International Implementation Scheme for the Decade in brief





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Printed in the workshops of UNESCO

(ED-2006/WS/60)





Education for sustainable development, of course,
must be more than just a logo or a slogan.

It must be a concrete reality
for all of us – individuals, organizations, governments –
in all of our daily decisions and actions,
so as to promise a sustainable planet
and a safer world to our children,
our grandchildren and their descendants.

KOICHIRO MATSUURA
Director-General of UNESCO

New York, March 2005
International launch
of the UN Decade of Education
for Sustainable Development



WHY AN INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION SCHEME?

In resolution 57/254, the United Nations General Assembly of the proclaimed in December 2002 the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014, DESD). UNESCO, designated coordinator of the Decade, initiated wide-ranging consultations in 2003 in order to prepare an International Implementation Scheme (IIS) for the Decade.

Given that the Decade is implemented locally, nationally, regionally and internationally and given the large number of stakeholders involved, to ensure success, the IIS serves as a framework under which all stakeholders can make their varied contributions. The International Implementation Scheme is designed to facilitate collective ownership of the Decade, and it invites us to build bridges between various global initiatives to promote education. Furthermore, the IIS also meets two concerns of the United Nations General Assembly, namely how to encourage governments to give life to the Decade and to build public awareness so that everyone will contribute to the Decade.

But what does the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) consist of?



WHAT IS THE DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

Before describing the Decade, education for sustainable development (ESD) must be considered first. What does this name mean?

- It means education that enables people to foresee, face up to and solve the problems that threaten life on our planet.
- It also means education that disseminates the values and principles that are the basis of sustainable development (intergenerational equity, gender parity, social tolerance, poverty reduction, environmental protection and restoration, natural resource conservation, and just and peaceful societies).
- Lastly, it means education that highlights the complexity and interdependence of three spheres, the environment, society – broadly defined to include culture – and the economy.

These are all challenges to be taken up during the Decade.

The aims of the Decade are more specifically to: help improve the quality of education and learning through ESD; assist countries in achieving progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals through ESD efforts; give countries new opportunities to incorporate ESD into their educational reform; and facilitate the formation of networks and interaction among ESD stakeholders.



To achieve these aims, all Decade stakeholders will endeavour to:

- ▶ **promote and improve the quality of education:** the aim will be to refocus lifelong education on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values needed by citizens to improve their quality of life;
- ▶ **reorient the curricula:** from pre-school to university, education must be rethought and reformed to be a vehicle of knowledge, thought patterns and values needed to build a sustainable world;
- ▶ **raise public awareness** of the concept of sustainable development: raising awareness will make it possible to develop enlightened, active and responsible citizenship locally, nationally and internationally;
- ▶ **educate the employed:** continuing technical and vocational education of directors and workers, particularly those in trade and industry, will be enriched to enable them to adopt sustainable modes of production and consumption.

Creating synergies with other earlier international initiatives is also an important feature of the Decade because the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are geared to poverty reduction, Education for All (EFA), which focuses on universal access to education, and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), which is devoted to adult education, all share a common vision: education is the key to sustainable development.



WHO IMPLIMENTS THE DECADE?

The Decade will be a success if and only if all of us – governments, international organizations, associations, communities, educators, the private sector and citizens – contribute to it together, for no institution, no organization, no government will succeed on its own in making sustainable development a reality.

Each of us therefore has responsibility at the local, national, regional or international level for the implementation of the Decade.

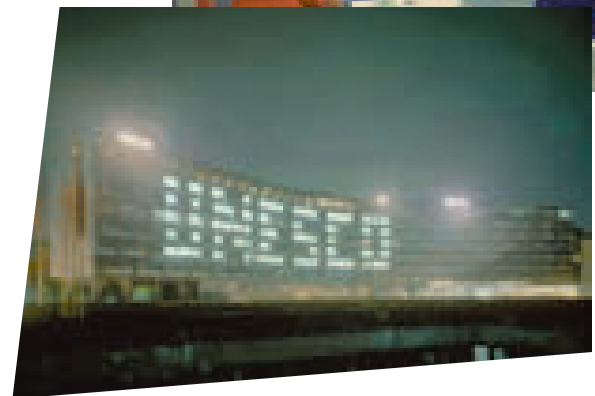
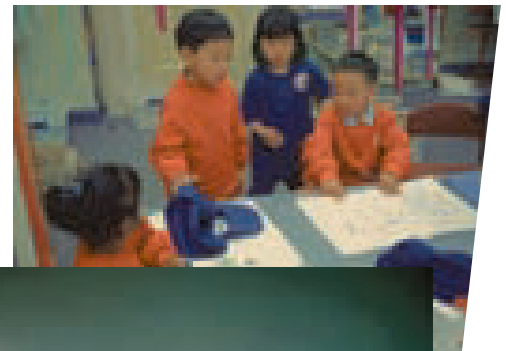
UNESCO's role

As the Decade's lead agency, UNESCO's role, through its offices, institutes, National Commissions and other bodies, is more specifically to:

- act as laboratory of ideas, standard-setter, clearing house, capacity-builder and promoter of international cooperation;
- encourage new partnerships with the private sector, youth and media groups;
- promote monitoring and evaluation;
- promote a research programme and serve as a forum for ESD research;
- serve as a honest broker for meetings of Decade stakeholders;
- share good ESD practices;
- establish links between Member States that have launched ESD programmes,

policies, research, etc., and those that need help;

- convene flexible working groups on particular subjects.



Local level

Locally, the aim will be to incorporate ESD into the various curricula as indicated in the table below.

Local stakeholders	Responsibilities	Cooperation with the various stakeholders
<p>Government State/provincial/district departments of education and development sectors</p> <p>Municipal authorities</p> <p>Schools, adult education programmes</p>	<p>Incorporate ESD into ordinary educational activities and curricula</p> <p>Define and implement learning strategies</p>	<p>Identify local sustainable development problems</p> <p>Incorporate local knowledge and skills into ESD</p> <p>Exchange ESD experience and use it to improve practices</p>
<p>Civil society and NGOs</p> <p>Community organizations, local NGO sections, denominational groups, town development committees, adult education groups, clans and families</p>		
<p>Private sector, firms</p>		





National level

Nationally, government departments will incorporate ESD at all levels through a national concerted DESD response plan based on the factors below.

National stakeholders	Responsibilities	Cooperation within the national ESD task force
Ministry of Education and other competent ministries	Provide a national policy framework for ESD Budget and mobilize resources Support subnational services Foster public awareness of ESD and sustainable development	Examine and recommend ESD policy options that reflect local experience and problems Include ESD in planning for EFA and the United Nations Literacy Decade, in the context of the EFA Forum Provide a forum for the exchange of positive and negative ESD experiences
NGOs, NGO and civil society networks and alliances	Facilitate the exchange and sharing among members of information on ESD practices and experiences	Draw up a list of ESD research issues and plan joint research projects Identify capacity-building needs and the stakeholder best placed to meet them
Media groups and agencies	Incorporate awareness-raising in support of ESD and sustainable development into media strategies	Devise relevant ESD monitoring indicators
Private sector firms and professional associations	Provide a forum for the identification of the sustainable development challenges that they face and draw up a list of education needs to be met	

Regional level

Regionally, stakeholders will consult each other in order to draw up regional ESD implementation strategies and act as a catalyst for Decade activities.

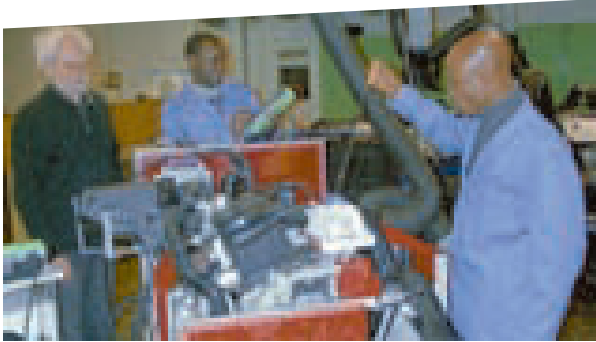
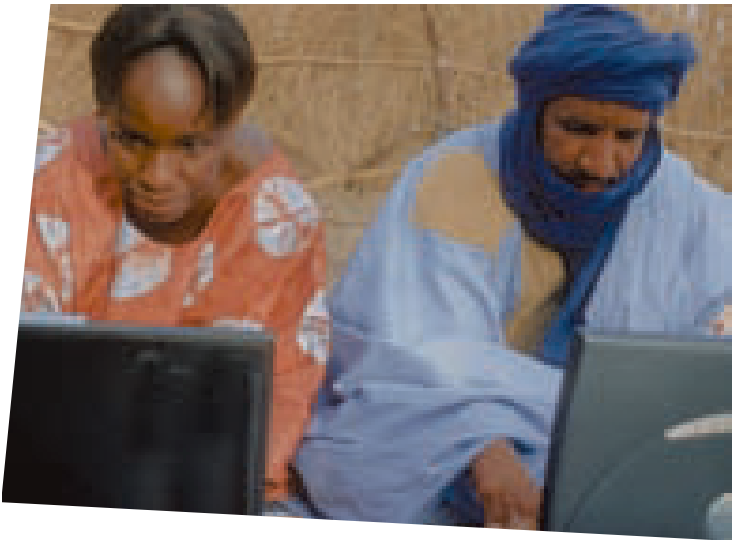
Regional stakeholders	Tasks specific to each stakeholder	Cooperation within the regional ESD group
Representatives of national governments	(See national level)	Hold regional consultations on DESD priorities
Regional intergovernmental organizations	Support the formulation of national policies Promote the exchange of experience and information	Pool policies, practices, knowledge and advances Identify common challenges Learn from various strategies
Regional civil society and NGO networks, coalitions and alliances	Promote exchanges and learning among member networks and organizations	Work out a consensus on regional problems and action
Regional media groups	Establish joint media strategies for sustainable development and ESD	Organize international training and capacity-building
Regional private sector associations	Promote cooperation between the private sector and other ESD stakeholders	
Regional representatives of international institutions	Learn and disseminate lessons from international experience Facilitate international exchanges on ESD	
Regional representatives of bilateral cooperation	Determine means of supporting national and regional ESD initiatives	





International level

Internationally, the effort will be led by UNESCO, the Decade lead agency, which will ensure that ESD is featured on the agenda of international working groups and forums.



International stakeholders	Tasks specific to each stakeholder	Cooperation in various forums
International ad hoc working group	<p>Gather information on ESD developments and emerging priorities</p> <p>Promote the DESD</p>	<p>Advise UNESCO on ESD developments and emerging priorities</p> <p>Assist UNESCO in establishing partnerships and in developing projects in support of the Decade</p>
Intergovernmental institutions (United Nations and others)	<p>Contribute to the inter-agency task force</p> <p>Include ESD planning in relevant work plans and initiatives</p> <p>Participate in international and regional forums</p>	<p>Ensure that ESD remains a priority on the agenda of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)</p> <p>Mobilize the political will and strengthen mutual commitment through the CSD or an inter-agency task force</p>
UNESCO (DESD lead agency)	<p>Promote and build capacities of ESD and DESD in and across UNESCO sectors</p> <p>Advocacy and communication with the international community</p> <p>Building partnerships and collective momentum</p>	<p>Include ESD in the EFA agenda (Monitoring Report, High-Level Group and Working Group)</p> <p>Encourage the exchange of information on practices, policies and progress</p> <p>Organize international, regional and subregional capacity-building workshops, and conferences to promote DESD and ESD goals</p>
Civil society and NGO networks	<p>Promote interregional exchange and learning</p> <p>Inform members of ESD developments</p>	
Bilateral and multilateral development agencies	<p>Include ESD in programmes and budgets</p> <p>Promote ESD research</p>	

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HOW IS THE DECADE TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

Main stages

To facilitate the implementation of the Decade at the level of the Member States, the following stages are proposed for adoption:

- implementation of plans and/or clearly identifiable activities in the Member States;
- designation in Member States of focal points responsible for reporting;
- formulation of plans or strategies;
- definition of indicators on progress accomplished and of mechanisms to monitor such progress;
- identification of sources of technical assistance and of examples of good practices;
- sharing of information on relevant research and development and innovations;
- identification of means of fostering partnerships;
- provision of advice in key areas;
- submission of mid-term and end-of-Decade reports to the General Assembly of the United Nations.



Seven strategies

The implementation of the Decade can also draw on the seven strategies set out below.

► **Formulation of a common vision and mobilization**

The success of the Decade rests on the formulation and sharing of a common vision of ESD and general mobilization in support of ESD. The media are a partner of choice for achieving such large-scale mobilization.

► **Consultation and ownership**

A common vision of the DESD will be owned by all stakeholders: broad participation of stakeholders in defining the vision, formulating policies and planning their implementation will ensure such ownership. This process will be the responsibility of governments.

► **Partnerships and networks**

ESD is multidisciplinary and intersectoral. The establishment of partnerships and networks to create synergy and disseminate information on the implementation of the Decade is essential.

► **Capacity-building and training**

All the skills of the full range of partners will be needed to attain the goals of the Decade. Pooling such skills on the one hand and making them available for the training of stakeholders, in particular teacher trainers and pre-service and in-service teachers, on the other are challenges to be taken up.

► **Research, development and innovation**

The application of research findings will make it possible to speed up the implementation of the Decade, and ongoing activities must also be guided by research. Imagination is required to adapt ESD to the local context



and to the wide variety of learning situations. Here is where innovation plays a part.

► **Use of information and communication technologies**

During the Decade, information and communication technologies (ICTs) will be used to link up distant partners, store data and share information quickly.

► **Monitoring and evaluation**

A key monitoring and evaluation feature is the definition of adequate and relevant indicators at all levels – local, national, regional and international and for each initiative and programme. Thus monitoring and evaluation will take place at many levels, national, regional, local, institutional, etc. and will be an integral part of new initiatives and directions, which the Decade may stimulate.

CONCLUSION:

**making ESD come true ...
with adequate resources**

Through the International Implementation Scheme governments and other partners, especially potential donors, are urged to assess existing ESD resources and needs in countries, reallocate existing resources and find means of mobilizing new resources to ensure that ESD will not be a mere slogan but actual reality.



Some tools available from UNESCO:

- brochure on “UNESCO and Sustainable Development”
- folder of ESD information briefs
- Guidelines for National DESD launches and activities
- “Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future” CD-ROM
- Guidelines and Recommendations for Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability
- Links between the Global Initiatives in Education

See also the DESD site:
www.unesco.org/education/desd



