Where We Are Today
A Snapshot of DESD Implementation in the World

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Educating for sustainable Development means learning to…

• **Respect and acknowledge** the values of the past; while respecting future generations
• **Evaluate, manage and improve** the state of our planet
• **Build and enjoy** a better, safer, more equitable world
• **Become** concerned and responsible citizens.
5 Regional Strategies Developed

Regional strategies for the DESD emphasizing different elements have been developed in:

*Europe* (education for sustainable consumption),
*Asia Pacific* (knowledge systems, cultural context),
*Latin America and the Caribbean* (literacy rates, biodiversity),
*Arab States* (desertification, sustainable consumption), and
*Sub-Saharan Africa* (poverty alleviation, partnerships).
ESD National Coordination bodies

• Over 80 countries have coordination mechanisms

• There are countries that have instead appointed a national focal point (e.g. in Cameroon) or a nodal institution (e.g. in India, with CEE as national focal agency for the DESD).
«You can dream, create, design, and build the most wonderful place in the world ... but it requires people to make the dream a reality.»

Walt Disney
Unevenness in DESD implementation

• Diversity in approaches, challenges, priorities and concerns

• A need to pay attention to different levels of implementation (international, national, local)

• A need to pay attention to different stakeholder groups — engaging the private sector and media professionals
How can ESD get the attention it deserves?

• Mainstreaming ESD into education + Mainstreaming ESD into SD and Development

• The importance of influencing national policies as well as international agenda

• Need to pay attention to regional and local initiatives
Achievements and Challenges

• Increasing awareness among policy makers and civil society
• Countless individual initiatives across the world
• Still often seen as an ‘add-on’
• Link to broader education and development agenda not sufficiently developed
Education for Sustainable Development

Up to 2014 – and beyond
UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

• 2 more years to go in this UNESCO-led global initiative

• Objectives:
  – To integrate sustainable development related themes into teaching and learning
  – To design teaching and learning in a way so that learners acquire critical thinking and related skills
"Learning without thought is useless. Thought without learning is dangerous."  

Confucius
Skills and Competencies in ESD

• Think and act in a forward looking manner
• Acquire knowledge in an interdisciplinary manner
• Handle incomplete and overly complex information
• Motivate oneself as well as others
• Co-operate in decision making
• Show empathy and solidarity
Good Practice in ESD

An ideal ESD project:

• Addresses various dimensions of sustainable development,

• Goes beyond the individual subject area,

• Has real-life relevance,

• Uses interactive, participatory learning,

• Moves beyond the confines of the education institution,

• Cooperates with outside partners.
UNESCO Activities

• Policy advice and capacity building
  – For example, workshops on reorienting education plans and curricula

• Collecting and communicating good practices
  – For example, through publications and the website

• Political advocacy
  – For example, working towards the inclusion of ESD in the Rio+20 conference
Achievements

• ESD increasingly visible nationally and internationally
  – Successful UNESCO World Conference on ESD in 2009

• Large amount of high-quality activities
  – Many projects launched during the UN Decade in Member States

• ESD concept and practice increasingly sophisticated and complex
Challenges

• ESD not enough recognized in the wider education arena
  – Countries’ focus often different
• ESD not enough recognized in the wider development arena
  – See, for example, the Rio+20 process
• ESD not communicated well and strategically enough
Challenges

• Assess ESD progress at local and national levels

• Assess curricular elements that already carry ESD concepts and values

• Go in depth into promising experiences and spread them

• Mobilise media

• Establish partnerships and mobilize ESD stakeholders
Strategies and Priorities for UNESCO up to 2014

• Focus on key themes of sustainable development
  – Climate change, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction

• Communicate better the potential of ESD
  – Quality education, school performance, societal development

• Focus on key change agents
  – In particular, policy makers
Strategies and Priorities for UNESCO up to 2014

• Move beyond the ESD constituency
  – Link to other education and development stakeholders

• Advocate for a central role for ESD after 2014/2015
  – Follow-up to the Decade and to the MDG and the EFA processes
  – Build momentum towards the World Conference on ESD in 2014
Strategies and Priorities up to 2014

For example, Climate Change Education:

• Education needs to respond to one of the major challenges of our time

• An entry point into ESD

• Relevant subject knowledge and critical-thinking skills

• Holistic, taking into account the social impact and ethical questions

• Relevance of Africa and Small Island Developing States, but also industrialized countries
Challenges and opportunities ahead

- Keep the **momentum alive** and translate the commitments into tangible actions
- Enhance implementation at national level
- Raise **public awareness of sustainability** issues in the framework of the DESD
- Identify and secure diversified sources of funding
- Establishing **structures for ESD** that will survive the Decade
«The world we have created is a product of our thinking. If we want to change the world, we have to change our thinking.»

Albert Einstein
A vision for 2014 – Learning our way to sustainability

- **Address** the social, economic, cultural and environmental issues we face in the 21st century through education

- Offer opportunities to rethink and reorient various dimensions of education and training so that people are empowered to imagine and devise sustainable local solutions to global development problems

- **Contribute**, in ways large and small, to changes in thinking, values, attitudes and behaviours conducive to acting responsibly to create a sustainable world

- Further encourage the UN family to support countries and stakeholders in their efforts to foster sustainable human development and promote the vision of this UN Decade
—if you want to build a boat, don’t bring your men and women together to give them orders, to explain every detail, to tell them where to find every plank… If you want to build a boat, trigger in their hearts the desire of the sea. »

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Thank you for your attention!