ESD Policy interventions through RCEs: Lessons from Kenya

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Background

• Globally, 129 RCEs acknowledged by UNU by April 2014
• Kenya has 9 RCEs (5 acknowledged by UNU) – highest number in Africa
• 1st RCE acknowledged in 2007 (RCE Greater Nairobi)
• NEMA coordinates RCE activities pegged on its mandate
ESD policy enablers

- Kenya constitution (2010) provides sustainable development as a national value and that every Kenyan has a right to a clean and healthy environment.
- The Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA, 1999) mandates NEMA to be the principal agency of government in the implementation of all policies relating to the environment.
- NEMA exercises general supervision and coordination over all matters relating to the environment.
Policy enablers cont’d

• National ESD strategy finalized in 2007
• Vision 2030 requirement for ESD policy and curriculum reorientation
• Mandatory requirement for public sector to meet Environmental Sustainability targets - NEMA provides guidelines on mandatory sustainability reporting for entire public sector
• National ESD policy 2014
Policy interventions within RCEs

- NEMA maps, directs and regulates establishment of RCEs
- Sensitized and encouraged the RCEs to get established
- RCEs mainstreamed in NEMA’s corporate strategy and workplans
- Support – financial, moral, technical
RCE mapping

- NEMA divided the country into regions
- Identified strong institutions to host RCEs
- Kenya has potential to host 11 RCEs, 9 already in place and 5 acknowledged by UNU
- The RCE mapping is guided by the following considerations
  - Ensuring that RCEs are equitably scattered to cover the whole country
  - Ensuring that there are no overlaps in regions covered by the RCEs
  - Ensuring that proper mobilization of stakeholders was done
Policy makers lobbying

- ESD policy published
- National Policy on Environmental Sustainability Reporting – National guidelines development and sensitization
- Launch of Green Universities Network by January 2015 with UNEP
RCE advisory

- NEMA provides national outlook for RCEs
- Advices RCEs on how to position themselves better
- Discourages misplaced investment of energy and effort
Support for stakeholder mobilization

- RCEs strength proportional to stakeholders support
- NEMA provides funds to each RCE for this purpose (Ksh 100,000 for each RCE in 2014)
Project realignments

- **Aim** – to ensure RCEs are active
- **Plan** – Align NEMA activities to ensure implementation at RCE level
- 4 projects already ongoing – waste management, ESD school, Biodiversity, climate change
- Environmental sustainability targets require similar partnerships
Dialogue meetings and forums

• Stakeholder mobilization meetings – at least one per RCE per year
• Annual RCE conference
• Annual RCE coordinators meeting
Strengthened RCE governance

- Kenya National RCE Network
- Elected officials steer the network
- NEMA encourages each RCE to involve more stakeholders in their governance structure
- NEMA intervenes in governance related conflict resolution
RCE mentoring

- NEMA designates RCEs and provide oversight
- Identifies experts from acknowledged RCEs to mentor upcoming RCEs and nurture innovations
- NEMA facilitates the mentorship process
Conflict resolution

• Conflicts noted in RCEs on issues such as governance, hosting, establishment of new RCEs, spatial coverage of RCEs, general leadership of RCEs
• NEMA regarded as neutral arbiter
Challenges in national RCE coordination
# Funding - Inadequate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in RCE conferences</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual RCE conference</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support RCE projects</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship for new RCEs</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCE meetings</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.3 Million</td>
<td>11.0 Million</td>
<td>10.825 Million</td>
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</table>
Funding cont’d

- Wrong perception – NEMA to fund RCE activities or influence donors to do the same
- Inadequate funding – long wish list
- NEMA’s funds pegged on interests
- Stakeholder meetings meant to chart way forward on resource mobilization for RCEs
Stakeholder mobilization

- RCE idea still a reserve of few people
- RCEs hosting institutions have not convinced local stakeholders e.g. lecturers, other staff
- RCE is not yet a movement at the local level

Branding

• Contextualized interventions lacking
• Lecturers still “thinking global” but sparingly “acting locally”
• Conceptualization of contextualized practical activities are a challenge
• Linkage with government and private sector initiatives inadequate
Team management

• Some RCE coordinators are “too technical” and poor in team management skills
• Stakeholders stretch outside the host institution and this requires special leadership skills
• Addressed during annual coordinator’s meeting
How NEMA is addressing the challenges

• Environmental sustainability policy guidelines – proof of partnerships
• Devolved contact persons from NEMA
• Encouragement and reminders to RCEs through memos, social media etc.
• Policy development (e.g. JKUAT, Pwani)
• Capturing RCE activities in NEMA corporate strategy and workplans
• Meeting with RCE coordinators
• Capacity building and mentoring for RCEs
• Funding some RCE activities e.g. botanic garden, solid waste project, ESD school,
Interventions cont’d

• Annual RCE conference
• Meetings with policy makers
• Recruit institutions to undertake specific tasks within the bigger RCE framework
• Quarterly monitoring and evaluation by NEMA – ISO-SOP
RCE engagement post 2014

- National ESD policy developed
- ESD mainstreamed in diverse legislation passed by parliament & NEMA’s corporate strategy
- Government policy on mainstreaming Environmental sustainability
- These policies and legislation will be instrumental in helping RCEs engage fully in ESD post 2014
Conclusion

• RCEs have great potential to address sustainability issues
• Road towards RCEs implementation bumpy
• NEMA is committed to making the RCEs operational
• Main role played by NEMA is national coordination, capacity building, conflict resolution and funding some projects
End