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**Education for Sustainable Development**  
... research and capacity development for ESD

# Progress Report: Research on & by RCEs

Education for Sustainable Development Programme  
UNU Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)



REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE  
ON EDUCATION FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACKNOWLEDGED BY



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ProSPER.Net

# ESD Programme

## 5 Programme Components

1. Advocacy
2. Regional Initiatives (RCE)
3. Higher Education
4. Training
5. E-learning

## 4 Research Components

1. Regional networks (RCE)
2. Higher Education
  - ProSPER.Net
  - Competencies & Capabilities
3. Training & Capacity Development
  - Private Sector, Government, Youth
4. Building inter-disciplinary (inter-discourse) bridges (EE/ESD, EFA/ESD, EIU/ESD)



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# Creating and Testing Models of Innovation

## RCE

- Innovative platform for multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships
- Enhancing vertical alignment of school curriculum and horizontal linkages among schools at all levels
- Linking formal and non-formal education
- Embracing diversity within and across RCEs
- Articulating a global vision in local terms

## ProSPER.Net

- Integrating the concepts and practices of SD into postgraduate education and research
- Piloting SD programs and courses in different fields
- Documenting challenges and achievements



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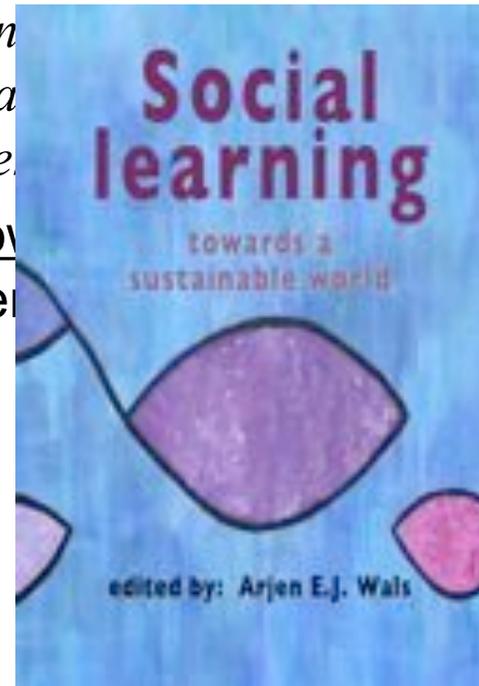
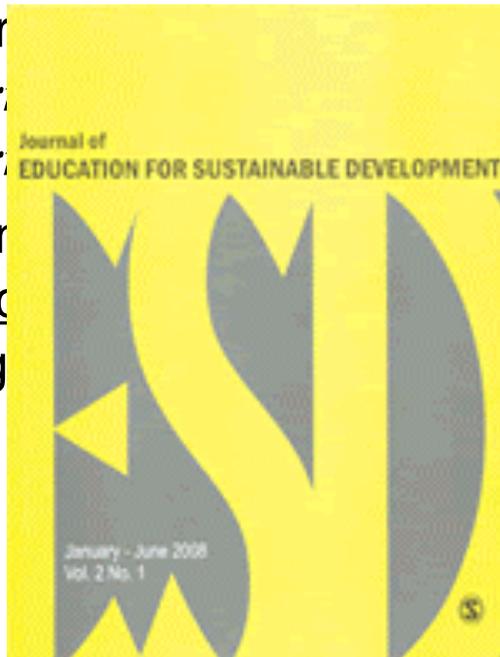
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# RCE Research (1) – Concept

## 🎗️ Publication of academic articles and book chapters

- Peer-reviewed article in *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*; *International Journal of Environment and Sustainability in Higher Education*
- Arjen E.J. Wals, *Social Learning towards a Sustainable World: Principles and Praxis*. Wageningen Publishers.



Clarifying and refining the concepts of ESD and RCE



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# RCE Research (2) – Case Studies and Meta-Analysis of RCEs

## ⌘ **Case studies of RCEs** (written by RCEs themselves)

- Publication in the peer-reviewed journal: IJSHE's special issue on the role of HEIs in RCEs (Vol. 9, Issue 4)
- Proposed book on RCEs

## ⌘ **Meta-analysis of RCEs** (based on annual reports submitted by RCEs and regular interaction with RCEs worldwide)



- Identifying 'good practices' and disseminating them
- Analyzing drivers and barriers to implementing ESD at the local level



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## RCE Research (3) – Reflexive Monitoring & Evaluation

- **Organization of a workshop “*What difference is ESD Making?: Learning and Assessment of ESD Practice*” at 5WEEC @ Montreal, 13 May 2009**
- **Inter-RCE Working Group on Assessment**



- Addressing an ongoing challenge for RCEs to design a self-assessment process (that can give empowering space for diverse stakeholders to have reflections on the RCE's vision, goals and progress) on the one hand, and to develop own indicator frameworks for effective monitoring and evaluation of ESD within the context of DESD on the other



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# RCE Research (4) – Thematic and Continental Networks

- **Inter-RCE Thematic Networks**

- Sustainable Production & Consumption, w/ emphasis on food
- Youth
- Health
- Teacher training
- Biodiversity
- E-learning

- **Continental Networks**

- North America: May 2007 (at CSD); May 2008
- Europe: December 2007; December 2008
- Asia Pacific: October 2008 (in Tongyeong)



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# Summary reports from RCE Workshops at 5WEEEC

- ⌘ Sustainable Livelihoods and SPC (Roger Petry, RCE Saskatchewan)
- ⌘ School & Community (Lyle Benko RCE Saskatchewan & Mana Nakagawa, UNU-IAS)
- ⌘ Ecologising Colleges and Universities (Kiran Chhokar, Indian RCE Focal Point)
- ⌘ Urban Challenges (Sanskriti Menon, RCE Pune & Jos Hermans)
- ⌘ Assessment & Learning in Society (Heila Lotz Sisitka, RCE Makana and Rural East Cape)



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# 5WEEEC Thematic Workshop: Sustainable Livelihoods and Sustainable Consumption and Production

- 🌿 *Thematic Niche:* Relationship between Ecology and Economy
- 🌿 *Coordinators:* Roger Petry, Zinaida Fadeeva
- 🌿 *Participating RCEs:* RCE Skane, RCE Rhine-Meuse, RCE Saskatchewan, RCE Western Jalisco, RCE Grand Rapids, RCE Greater Sendai, RCE Graz-Styria



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# Key Questions

- ⚡ How do we alter our valuations so that we value those things that take greater effort?
  - Example: riding a bike versus driving a fancy sports car
- ⚡ What are critical factors in changing good intentions related to SCP into good practice?
  - How do we create an environment conducive to these positive changes in behaviour?
- ⚡ What are core competencies and capabilities needed to achieve the best outcomes for SCP in specific contexts (e.g., schools, workers, society)?
  - What are key processes of education in this regard?



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# Theoretical Framework & Approaches

## Sustainable Production & Consumption (SCP)

- ❑ “The use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations.” (UN DESA, 1994)

## Sustainable Livelihoods (SL)

- ❑ “A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain and enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contribute net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.” (Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway, 1992)



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# Theoretical Framework & Approaches (continued)

- 🧵 Requirement for new methodological approaches and pedagogical approaches that are contextually situated, for example:
- *Historically situated*: taking into account the past, present, and future enabling a story line to emerge (3 glasses: *mirror* to see past, *magnifying glass* on present, and *telescope* for future)
  - *Socially situated* (for example, within the context of the family and its values)



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# Major Observations and Findings

- 🎗 Importance of intergenerational learning for SCP
  - Value of students reflecting with professionals and retirees on SCP and SL
- 🎗 Need to enable innovators in SCP to tell their stories (e.g., about how benefits outweigh costs; own sense of pride/accomplishment)
  - Can influence others, for example, with advocacy to governments, hiring graduates, sharing at open and non-formal conferences with business invitees



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# Major Observations and Findings

- Combining SCP and SL approaches could be quite promising in addressing urgent issue of poverty
  - Each model enables specific types of questioning and critical thinking/reflection (e.g., students mapping out own livelihoods)
- Central role of media and advertising in consumption needs to be addressed
  - Focus on quality of life outcomes (e.g., happiness index) vs. goal of consuming and accumulation of goods
  - Identify how producers can promote thoughtful consumption versus consumerism
  - Recognize SCP is led by changes in consumer demand
  - Make linkages that create solidarity for SCP along production chains (e.g., foreign country awareness of local producer realities (e.g., staple food vs. luxury export) and across market roles



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# Next Steps: Agenda for Future Research

- Need to document case studies from RCEs in SCP and SL to allow grounded learning and provide concrete activities for action
  - Examine not only results from completed projects but the importance of specific *processes*
  - Activities that integrate theory and practice allow for rapid learning and ongoing evaluation
  - Can identify best points of intervention to work with specific communities (media, NGOs, cities, schools, family) and in relation to specific roles in each (e.g., principal, teacher, student)



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# Next Steps: Agenda for Future Research

- 🌱 Create alternative models of development that can co-exist alongside existing models
  - Invent, implement, and analyze what is occurring and the driving forces that make them happen
  - Identify incremental steps that may be needed (e.g., firms having ISO certification prior to attempting Cradle-to-Cradle certification)



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# 5WEEEC Thematic Workshop: “School and Community”

*Title:* Reorienting Education Towards a Sustainable Future: Examples from RCEs

*Coordinators:* Lyle Benko (RCE Saskatchewan),  
Mana Nakagawa (UNU-IAS)

• *Presenting RCEs:*

- RCE Skane: *Primary science and conflicts of interests*
- RCE Saskatchewan: *Pre-Service Teacher Model of ESD and Climate Change Workshops*
- RCE Delhi: *BEACON (Building Energy awareness on Conservation): An approach towards ESD*
- RCE Montreal: *Flagship Projects in Montreal*



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# Theoretical Framework & Approaches

- ⌘ RCE presentations on reorienting education towards a sustainable future as *social learning processes*:
- ⌘ **Social Learning:**
  - ⌘ “An essentially ‘revolutionary’ concept, as its implementation implies an opening up of existing routines, values and assumptions embedded in the institutions that have co-evolved with earlier, ‘unsustainable’ modes of socio-technological development....the elaboration of SD into practical options for action must include a reflexive perspective ...learning goals are, at least in part, internally determined by the community of learners itself.” (Grin, 2006)
- ⌘ Non-restrictive social learning framework crucially emphasizes value of *unlearning and relearning* new pedagogical practices for reorienting education towards a sustainable future.



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# Key Discussion Questions

- ⌘ Do key challenges to ESD identified by *schools* differ from those identified by the *community*? If yes, what and why?
- ⌘ What are the key challenges and benefits of school-community partnerships in your region?
- ⌘ What obstacles do *youth* face when working with other actors in the community? How do they cope and overcome such challenges?
- ⌘ What aspects of your RCE's 'case study' could contribute to an "ESD Model" that could help address key challenges faced by the global RCE community?
- ⌘ How does your RCE play an intermediary role between your local school community and the Global ESD Community? What opportunities and challenges emerge through this intermediary role?



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# Major Observations & Findings

- ⌘ Diversity of RCE cases both beneficial and challenging
  - ⌘ Different perceptions/interpretations of “school-community partnerships”
  - ⌘ Diverse interpretations of how to address SD in communities/regions
- ⌘ Apathy in current young generation
  - ⌘ How will children discuss and engage in ESD \*in connection to their everyday life?
  - ⌘ Awareness → *Understanding* → *Concern* → *Commitment* → Action
  - ⌘ “*My generation is to facilitate the change which should happen in the future*” – Jos Hermans



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# Next Steps: Agenda for Future Research

## 🌿 Immediate Next Steps:

- 🌿 RCE contributors need to collaboratively revisit framework to emphasize “school-community partnerships” in reorienting education
- 🌿 Case studies to move beyond focus on school-community partnerships
- 🌿 Further develop common paper with feedback from workshop

## 🌿 `RCE ESD Tool-kit`

- 🌿 Which RCEs need one?
  - 🌿 RCEs at different development levels
  - 🌿 What does “transformative education” mean in formal/non-formal education?



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# Concluding Remarks

## *From facilitators:*

-  Diversity of case studies depict progress of capacity building
-  Acknowledgement of UNU-IAS` vision and support to encourage RCEs to learn & share from each other
  -  `Let us not lose sight of the good things happening`



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# 5WEEC Thematic Workshop: Ecologising Colleges and Universities

- 🌿 *Title:* “Supporting Institutional Changes for Environment and Sustainability in Universities”
- 🌿 *Coordinators:* Heila Lotz-Sisitka, Kiran Chhokar, Nadia Kulikova
- 🌿 *Participating RCEs:* RCE Kano, RCE Samara, RCE Makana and Rural Eastern Cape, RCEs in India (RCE Kodagu), RCE Penang, RCE Guatemala, RCE Candidate Brighton to Oxford



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# Key Questions

- 🎗️ What are the structural conditions that influence what we are able to achieve?
  - 🎗️ What are the agential factors that influence what we are (able to) achieve?
  - 🎗️ What changes result and why?
- OR
- 🎗️ What stays the same and why?



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# Theoretical Framework & Approaches

- ⚡ Used a morphogenic (social change) analysis because it takes account of structural conditions, *as well as* agency (individual and collective), *and through using ‘analytical dualism’*, it helps to identify changes or stasis (what stays the same)
- ⚡ This provides a ‘situationally congruent’ and ‘emergent’ frame for cross-country / cross context analysis



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# Major Observations and Findings

🎗️ Structure adds constraints but can also be enabling

- Constitutional/ judicial directive
- Dynamic/supportive/innovative leader
- Mission statement /corporate plan
- Metaphor – garden vs factory

🎗️ Agency

- Leadership
- Students
- Young lecturers



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# Next Steps: Agenda for Future Research

- 🎗 Case studies from different parts of the world
- 🎗 Analysis of the case studies using the morphogenic analysis
- 🎗 Add political context/aspect



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# 5WEEEC Thematic Workshop: **Urban Challenges**

- 🌿 *Thematic Niche:* Urban Challenges
- 🌿 *Coordinators:* Sanskriti Menon, RCE Pune & Jos Hermans
- 🌿 *Participating RCEs:* RCE Rhine-Meuse, RCE Greater Nairobi, RCE Candidate London, RCE Western Jalisco



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# Key Questions

## Introduction

Urban problems are always complex; there is often an interrelationship between environmental, social and economical issues

Urban problems are often multicultural

## Key Questions

1. What are the similarities and differences between Northern and Southern countries, as regards Urban Challenges, as well as the strategies being adopted by RCEs to address these challenges?
2. Is there a case for collaborative RCE work on Urban Challenges?



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# Theoretical Framework & Approaches

## Urban Challenges

- The Urban Ecosystems approach is a possible approach to adopt
- The approach should be integrative and should study problems and issues from not only environmental, but also and importantly socio-cultural, livelihoods/ economics perspectives



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# Major Observations and Findings

- There are several similarities in challenges in cities across the world, for e.g. migration, sprawl, waste, governance ...
- There are differences which help to understand the issues from other perspectives for e.g. strategies to address waste, mobility ...
- There are many similarities in urban challenges in Southern countries, for e.g. livelihoods, shelter ...
- There are several areas for collaborative work among RCE



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# Contd. Observations

- 🌿 Possible research / collaboration areas
- Waste management
  - Urban biodiversity
  - Transport and mobility
  - Sprawl and city-scape
  - Governance, participation, sustainable community planning, citizen mobilization
  - Intercultural and inter-generation dialogue and sense of community



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# 5WEEC Thematic Workshop: **Assessment & Learning in Society**

- 🎗️ *Title:* What difference is ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) Making?
- 🎗️ *Contributors:* Jos Hermans, Clemens Mader, Jim Taylor, Arjen Wals, Heila Lotz-Sisitka



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