

CONCEPT NOTE FOR:
REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
Centred on “Modelling ESD programmes for Sustainable Livelihoods”

Institute for Global and Environmental Strategies

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Workshop Background

Substantial attention has been paid to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the formal education sector during the first half of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) both in policy and in practice. At the same time, much less research and investigation has addressed the cross-sector deployment of ESD within the area of community practice. The importance of this “informal” area of ESD is clearly stated in international policy.

As part of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO has identified these key characteristics of ESD:

- Builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, adaptable work force and quality of life.
- Participatory decision-making,
- Local relevancy.

Nonetheless, the application of ESD as an informal component of building communities of practice is rarely undertaken and is overlooked in the majority of research concerning ESD.

Achievement of sustainable development is effected by a plethora of diverse and coexisting factors, including: poverty, livelihood security, resource consumption, environmental degradation, climate change mitigation, and not least of all the need for further education regarding all of these issues. Capacity Development can play a crucial role in simultaneously addressing these multiple factors. More importantly, local-level capacity development aids the establishment of sustainable livelihoods and contextualises issues of sustainable development in the everyday practices of ordinary people. This provides a unique role for Sustainable Livelihoods initiatives to be linked with ESD because it opens an arena of practical, real-world learning and facilitates participation in community-based decision-making. However, for this to occur, ESD programmes must be established within the community so people can understand the pressing need for such activity and be empowered to act for positive social change.

It therefore would be a great opportunity to bring together ESD policy decision-makers, practitioners and researchers to discuss and explore the interchange between ESD, Communities of Practice and Sustainable Livelihood initiatives. From the workshop, we can gain deeper understanding of how to strengthen local-level practice of sustainable development and climate change mitigation through the application of ESD models, especially about how government plays a critical role in expanding ESD to wider livelihood and community

development programmes. We also expect that this workshop can contribute to broadening the scope for ESD by demonstrating an important interchange with work to build communities of practice, both in fact and methodologically.

Workshop Aims

The major aims of the regional workshop on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Southeast Asia are:

- Reporting on best-practices of community-based ESD activities and the connection with Sustainable Livelihood initiatives;
- Providing an opportunity for both ESD policy decision-makers from governments and ESD experts/practitioners from NGOs, universities and institutes to convene and exchange productive dialogues concerning the interchange between ESD, Communities of Practice and Sustainable Livelihood initiatives;
- Supporting future ESD policies and programmes to strengthen local-level practice of sustainable development and climate change mitigation;
- Combining methodologies of ESD, Communities of Practice and capacity development to establish better inclusion and performance – including the modelling of ESD programmes for Sustainable Livelihoods.

Expected Outcomes

From the workshop, we are expecting to:

- Report on best-practice for community-based ESD activities and means for strengthening the connection with Sustainable Livelihood initiatives – including the presentation of a series of case studies from Southeast Asia;
- Provide an opportunity for contribution to developing practical policies which link policy decision-makers and practitioners/researchers to enable them to implement efficient ESD together, especially aimed at local-level practice of sustainable development and climate change mitigation;
- Support future ESD policies and implementation through the provision of strengthened methodologies, an understanding of the broader connections between ESD and communities of practice, and a model of ESD programmes for Sustainable Livelihoods.

Targeted Invitees

- *Governmental officers* responsible for ESD policy at a national level,;
- *Practitioners* who have been implementing ESD, especially concerning community-based programmes and connected to Sustainable Livelihood initiatives, and;
- *Experts* in ESD practice including university/institute researchers at a national/international level.

Date

November, 2009 - *to be determined in consultation with UNEP and UNESCO*

Location & Venue

1) Bangkok, Thailand, and;

2) Exact venue - *to be determined in consultation with UNEP and UNESCO*