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# GOOD PRACTICES AND LOCAL INITIATIVES IN ESD IMPLEMENTATION

## Case Stories from Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes

**ISAP 2014**

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1. Introduction

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## The Fragile Living Planet

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(Source: Murray, 2011)

**That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart**

James B. Irwin, lunar astronaut, 1930-1991 (National Space Science Data Centre)

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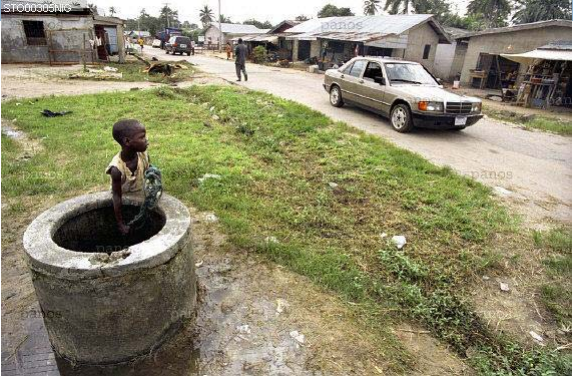
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## Local Sustainable Development Challenges

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(Source: Murray, 2011)

**What tensions and contradictions does this image portray?**

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## Local Sustainable Development Challenges

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(Image copyright: John Lund) (Source: Murray, 2011)

**What thoughts does this picture provoke in your mind?  
What key words/phrases arise from examining the car image?**

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**We are living in times of accelerating change ...**

**We are facing unparalleled and complex sustainable development challenges associated with unstable and accelerated changing economic, political and social contexts.**

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**Presentation Overview**

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1. Introduction
2. A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to ESD Implementation: The Case of UNU RCEs
3. Sharing Case Stories from RCEs
4. Conclusion

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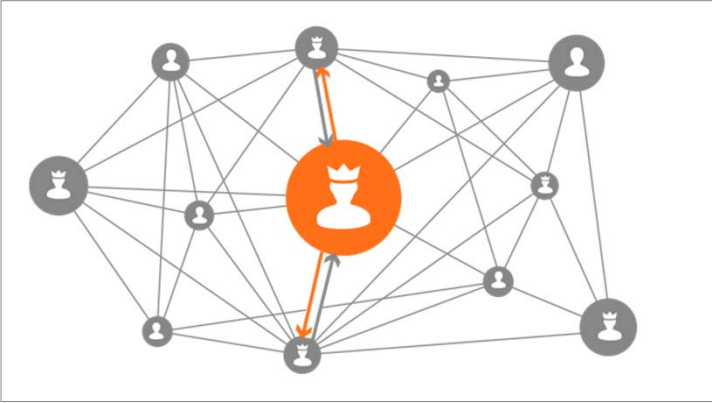
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## 2. A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to ESD

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### The Case of UNU Regional Centres of Expertise

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### There are 129 acknowledged RCEs as of June 2014

#### Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development



RCEs around the world  
There are 129 acknowledged RCEs as of Apr 2014

[www.rce-network.org/](http://www.rce-network.org/)

For more information  
rce@univicecentre@unu.edu

The Global RCE Service Centre  
Education for Sustainable Development Programme  
United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

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### Positioning RCEs for Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes

**Tongyeong Declaration on RCEs and ESD**  
24 September 2012

The global network of Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs) as acknowledged by the United Nations University with the support of the Uthmaniyah Ministry, having met in Tongyeong, Republic of Korea, and reaffirming all previous declarations related to education for sustainable development (ESD), hereby declare their commitment to implementing strategic actions that build a global learning space on ESD.

As the world looks to 2014 and beyond, RCEs recognize their distinctive ability to respond to our global systems in crisis and their moral responsibility to act on these well beyond the end of the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development.

RCEs are a tool for transformation to a more sustainable society, combining education and action for sustainable development. RCEs reaffirm their shared commitment to improving their systems of governance and quality of their actions. They are committed to expanding their collaboration with as wide a number of stakeholders as possible, and further expanding the global network in five years, thereby increasing their global impact.

RCEs are dedicated to building their capacities to plan and implement collaborative ESD projects critical for establishing a global learning space. Capacity development will be viewed as a transformative learning process, generated from within the RCE network.

RCEs will put sustainable development issues into a scientific and social context, provide a constructive critique and help to develop new policies, programmes and projects. At the same time, RCEs will continue to dedicate themselves to advancing sustainable market opportunities and other sustainable livelihood strategies for all individuals—especially the most marginalized—to improve human well-being and ecosystem health.

RCEs recognize their unique position, as grassroots, multi-stakeholder networks, with distinctive capacities for research and innovation that can revolutionize education at all levels through flagship projects. An organically based yet globally connected network, RCEs form a global learning space on ESD, working to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to learn the values, behaviors and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive social transformation.

**Strategic Actions**

- RCEs and the Global Learning Space
- RCEs and Capacity Development
- RCEs and Research and Development

**Thematic Actions**

- RCEs and Climate Change
- RCEs and Health
- RCEs and Higher Education
- RCEs, Traditional Knowledge and Biodiversity
- RCEs, Youth and School
- RCEs, Sustainable Consumption, Production and Sustainable Livelihoods

**Assessment**

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### Multi-Stakeholder engagement processes in RCEs

**Search for sustainable development (SD) solutions (Research and Development)**

**The pooling together of ESD capacities, expertise, resources and experiences (networked governance)**

**Joint implementation of priority actions and projects (Flagship Projects)**

**Emphasis on developing partnerships and networks (Collaborative networks)**

**Enable learning at individual, organisational and community levels (transformative learning processes)**

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## Underlying Theoretical Perspectives

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1. Contemporary social movement theory
  - ▣ RCEs viewed as a global **social movement**
2. Social learning theory of change
  - ▣ RCEs understood as **communities of practice**
3. Theory of deliberative democracy
  - ▣ RCEs regarded as platforms for **dialogue** and **cooperation**

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## Approaches to dialogue

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Right End of Spectrum

1 Informing participants about the issues at hand

2 Consulting the community about the problem

3 Involving individuals in the decision-making process

4 Facilitating **collaboration** between different sectors of society

5 Empowering community members to take ownership of the issue and work together to resolve it

*Deliberative techniques vary widely in scale, process and outcome, but they tend to fall under levels 3-5 of the engagement spectrum.*

Source: [http://sustainability.ualberta.ca/Projects/~media/sustainability/Projects\\_deprecated/Documents/DOCS/DoCSToolkit\\_FINAL.pdf](http://sustainability.ualberta.ca/Projects/~media/sustainability/Projects_deprecated/Documents/DOCS/DoCSToolkit_FINAL.pdf)

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## Deliberative engagement in RCEs

RCE ESD projects and activities embrace the significance of relationships, collaborative learning, networking, systemic thinking and the roles of diversity and flexibility in fostering sustainable communities

**A well-planned deliberation:**

1. Provides participants with a thorough understanding of the **complexities** and trade-offs surrounding an issue.
2. Is uniquely effective at bringing together a wide variety of **perspectives** and incorporating them into decision-making.
3. Reshapes individual perceptions and behaviours, often **transforming** participants who had little prior knowledge of or engagement with an issue into passionate advocates and **change agents**.

*(Logan McIntosh and Jeff Savage)*

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## Reorienting curriculum processes in schools

Reoriented curricula integrate values, principles, skills, perspectives and issues related to sustainable development at different levels of school systems

- Development of new courses and learning materials (e.g. RCE Grand Rapids, RCE Khomas-Erongo)
- Professional development workshops for teachers (e.g. RCE British Columbia, RCE London, RCE Denmark)
- Integration of ESD into teacher training (e.g. RCE Denmark)
- Enhancing literacy and numeracy in early childhood education (e.g. RCE Khomas-Erongo)

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## Application of innovative pedagogies

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An ESD curriculum is grounded in collaboration and cooperative pedagogies to ensure that educators and learners work together to address local, regional and global sustainable development challenges

- Use of **virtual** education conferences, e.g. RCE Grand Rapids has developed a virtual technology platform
- Use of rivers as **outdoor living and learning laboratories** for hands-on, collaborative, participatory and project-based learning (e.g. RCE Greater Western Sydney)
- Application of **networked** and **nested collaborative** action learning processes (e.g. RCE Pune)

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## Improving skills and employability of learners

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A transformative goal of ESD is to develop capacities for future-oriented thinking in learners and communities. RCEs are contributing to this goal through provision of integrative learning and education processes aimed at improving life skills and employability of learners.

- Integration of science education and entrepreneurship into school (e.g. RCE Rhine-Meuse)
- Strengthening national identity of the youth (e.g. RCE Yogyakarta)
- Equipping youth with 'marketable knowledge and skills with sustainability practices' (RCE Dhaka)

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## Integrating sustainability into higher education

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Higher education institutions as agents of change for sustainability are tailoring their programmes and curriculum to address local issues. They are promoting practices which embrace a knowledge base that integrates environment, economy and society.

- Development of online teaching resources and methodologies (e.g. RCE Graz-Styria)
- Strategic approaches to quality enhancement in higher education (e.g. RCE Severn)

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## Transforming livelihoods through community engagement

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As sites of transformative learning RCEs have implemented collective visions and projects aimed at transforming community livelihoods. For example, the vision of RCE Gippsland is to:

*“Advance the Gippsland region as a cohesive sustainable community that is **empowered** and **resilient** in the face of environmental challenges. We will provide leadership that promotes and supports ESD throughout rural and regional Gippsland communities”.*

Community engagement emphasises a two-way approach in which RCE actors and local communities collaborate to develop and apply sustainability innovations to improve livelihoods.

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## Community engagement and collaboration

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(Images: Courtesy RCE Zomba)

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## Community engagement practices

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- Engaging local communities in **eco-tourism** and biodiversity conservation activities (e.g. RCE Lesotho)
- Bee-keeping and sustainable livelihood project (e.g. RCE Mau Ecosystem Complex)
- Cultivation of mushroom as a sustainable source of livelihood (e.g. RCE Swaziland, RCE Kakamega-Western)
- Promoting sustainable farming practices (e.g. RCE Greater Phnom Penh)
- Community radio to share knowledge on climate adaptation strategies (e.g. RCE Zomba)
- Enhanced research, dialogue and inclusive learning on ESD within local communities (e.g. RCE Okayama)

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## Creating sustainable neighbourhoods

**RCE Grand Rapids working with a community of 2,000 residents to transform their neighbourhood by:**

- Promoting collaborations & partnerships
- Applying SD best practices
- Building local resident leadership and trust
- Deep listening to community voices

There is a focus on developing an integrated urban community strategy

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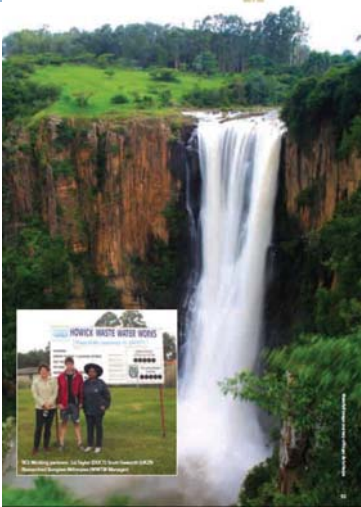
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## Community engagement in water quality monitoring

RCE KwaZulu Natal closely works with the local community around uMgeni River to regularly monitor its water quality.

**This has contributed to:**

- Increased monitoring, reporting and documentation as well as communication and dialogue about water quality issues
- A deeper understanding around complex water quality issues within the local community
- Improved relationships between local community and water service provider



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## Committing RCEs to a post 2014 ESD agenda

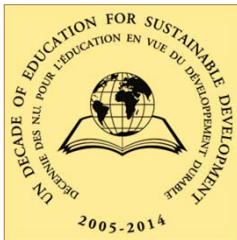
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Multi-Stakeholder engagement processes have inspired the belief that local communities have the power and responsibility to effect positive change and improve their livelihoods.

**RCEs to scale up actions on multi-stakeholder engagement processes within a post 2014 ESD agenda to:**

1. Accelerate search of sustainable solutions at the local level
2. Transform learning and training environments
3. Advance policy through ESD/SD research and practice
4. Build capacities of educators and trainers
5. Empower and mobilize youth to address SD challenges

(UNESCO, 2014)



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## Refocusing Sustainable Development Efforts

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- Use of **frameworks** that can make SD more appealing to politicians, scholars and citizens alike
- Increase **community-engaged** and **policy** research
- Orient SD policy towards:
  1. Human **needs** – moral engagement
  2. Equipping humans with **capabilities**
  3. Research on **well-being** and life courses.
- Global SD efforts should be refocused on **capabilities, needs and quality of life.**



Source:  
<http://nourishtheglobe.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/environmental-sustainable-development.jpg>

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