

On the road to Nagoya, where the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) will be held in November 2014, this session aimed at providing a road map for advancing education as a key mechanism in achieving sustainable development. Bringing together ESD experts, the session addressed how transformative learning, social change and transitions to sustainability can be supported through improved educational approaches and the creation of enabling environments for sustainable lifestyles. Additionally, questions on how to best integrate aspects of quality education, ESD learning performance, and global citizenship and peace education into the framing of the Global Action Programme on ESD were explored by session speakers. The panel discussion addressed how this programme can contribute to the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda.

The keynote speaker Mr. Danilo Padilla, Chief of ESD Unit UNESCO Bangkok introduced their ESD-related activities. Based on the results of the DESD implementation in different countries, he emphasised the importance of ESD as an advanced educational concept and the World Conference on ESD 2014 as an important milestone. The first presenter Dr. Paul Ofei-Manu from IGES elaborated on how to enhance aspects of quality education towards SD. He argued in the pursuit of quality education the focus should be on strengthening ESD-based learning performance framed in the holistic and transformative context of ESD. He further called for empowering learners with the capacities to address the challenges of a sustainable future for all. The second presenter Dr. Abel Atiti of UNU-IAS highlighted several cases from their flagship work with the Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) on ESD. The RCEs employ multi-stakeholder approaches to ESD, while their respective projects and activities embrace the significance of relationships, collaborative learning, networking, system thinking and the roles of diversity and flexibility in fostering sustainable communities. The third presenter Prof. Yoshiyuki Nagata from University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo addressed the importance of transformative learning for sustainable lifestyles in relation to youth as change agents and introduced the HOPE evaluation framework (holistic, ownership-based, participatory, empowering) developed by the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) and his implementation of this evaluation approach with youth groups after the Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami. Finally, the featured speaker Dr. Shepherd Urenje, a Senior Programme Specialist in ESD, Swedish International Centre of ESD (SWEDESD) shared the SWEDESD's challenges and successes in implementing transformative learning for sustainable lifestyles. He maintained that transformative learning is a crucial tool to guide future action based on SWEDESD's experience with communities of practice in Africa and Asia.

Key messages of the session

- The ISAP education session speakers including UNESCO Bangkok will further collaborate on the implementation of GAP on ESD in order to contribute to the SDGs and the post-2014 ESD Agenda.
- RCEs on ESD are committed to scaling up action on multi-stakeholder engagement process within ESD Agenda and accelerating the search for sustainable solutions at the local level to address SD challenges.
- IGES encourages quality education by applying the Learning Performance Framework as a roadmap for stronger ESD promotion.
- SWESESD aims to implement whole-institution approaches and encourages local communities and municipal authorities to develop community-based ESD programmes.