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EFA-ESD Dialogue: Educating for a sustainable world

EFA-ESD Dialogue:

Educating for a sustainable world

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UNESCO

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Note on Process

A first draft of this paper was produced and then discussed at the 1st technical meeting on Education for All (EFA) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Dialogue by the following: members of the UNESCO Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) Reference Group; the DESD Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group (MEEG); EFA experts from Japan, Sweden, Finland, France, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team. The discussion included follow-up workshops on specific topics. Key points from the discussion have been incorporated in this version of the document, but there is also an edited report of the discussion itself in the appendix. Many thanks are due to all those who contributed to the rich and wide-ranging discussion.

The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of the facts contained in this document and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

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Preface

UNESCO has initiated the “EFA – ESD Dialogue” to further the understanding and effective implementation of Education for All (EFA) and the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). As the lead agency and coordinator for three UN initiatives in education – EFA, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the DESD – UNESCO’s position is that a clearer understanding of the linkages between these initiatives is crucial to establish synergies in programme implementation at country level.

This dialogue is important and timely. Our societies face unprecedented global challenges: more than one billion people live in extreme poverty, growing inequality prevails within and between countries, and rapid technological advances require the capacity to constantly adapt. This is why building a more sustainable future now is vital for the well-being of present and future generations.

Education plays a fundamental role in addressing these global challenges. It gives individuals the knowledge and skills to make informed choices and participate in social and economic development. To a large extent, the type of education we envision will have a determining impact on the type of society we construct.

The common starting point for this dialogue is that education is a human right. The commitment to provide quality education for all is a pre-requisite for reducing poverty, improving health and securing more sustainable livelihoods – the main tenets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this regard, EFA provides the basic foundation for building more just societies focusing on rights, empowerment and development, but it does not go far enough. This is where ESD reinforces EFA efforts by challenging dominant conceptions, structures and content of education, thereby helping to improve its relevance. It is interdisciplinary in nature and focuses on critical thinking and lifelong learning. Moreover ESD’s emphasis on values such as peace, equality, respect for human rights, gender, environment and cultural diversity are key contributions to improving educational quality.

UNESCO’s main objective in commissioning this study was to enhance understanding of the synergies between EFA and ESD and the potential for their closer integration, particularly at country level. It analyses the various processes and mechanisms in place for linking education, learning and sustainable development and provides a number of entry points for enriching discussions. In particular it attempts to make a case for the strategic role of ESD in achieving the MDGs by strengthening educational capacities to address poverty reduction in a context of global warming, climate change and the need to address environmental sustainability.

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Summary

This paper will explore both the tensions and the common ground between Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Education for All (EFA) and identify the potential synergies between them. It will argue that ESD has a strategic role to play with regard to key Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially the over-arching goal of poverty reduction, as well as in terms of environmental sustainability. The paper will consider ways in which ESD and the DESD can contribute to the EFA agenda and will demonstrate how this could strengthen and enhance the EFA goals towards quality education for all. While acknowledging the different agendas and unique strengths and perspectives of EFA and ESD, this paper will propose a strategy for moving towards increased synergy and collaboration. In doing this, it will take both a structural and conceptual approach. It will identify some of the organizational and learning implications for this process and examine how this coming together will build support for education and help to raise the national and international profile of both ESD and EFA. Finally, this paper will try to suggest ways forward for bringing together ESD and EFA within shared mechanisms and processes.

Limitations and Challenges

In preparing this study, there has been a broad review of relevant DESD and EFA documentation, and this has raised many key questions and issues, which this paper will attempt to highlight. Due to the limitations of time and space, this paper will not seek to place this debate in the full context of all the key issues affecting educational policy in global and local arenas. Relevant issues that cannot be fully explored here include the following: General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the globalisation of education provision; the fact that many global learning agendas are still deeply influenced by neo-liberal concepts of vocationalism (the educational policy time-lag) and as a result fail to reflect the expansion of economic agendas to include issues of environmental sustainability and social justice; global issues of militarization and conflict and their educational impacts (e.g. the rise in the need for refugee education and provision in conflict zones); and the spread of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their impact on education and learning.

Section 1

Introduction

Context and Background

Enabling people to free themselves from poverty and to build sustainable livelihoods is both a key role for education and a prerequisite for sustainable development (SD), which brings together three pillars of development: society, environment and economy. However, current education practices have not enabled people to live sustainably thus far; indeed, many would argue that they have actively contributed to unsustainable living, especially in northern or so-called 'developed' countries (DCs). However, it must be remembered that education and learning are part of the iterative dynamic of social change: in order to change society, we need to change the way we learn and educate, and in order to change the way we learn and educate we need to change society.

Education has risen higher on the international and national agendas in the last two decades since Jomtien (1990) highlighted the importance and relevance of education for development, closely followed by the Earth Summit in 1992, which highlighted the role of education in sustainable development. The commitments to EFA that followed identified some important links with the ESD agenda, links that were further strengthened by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). These links and commitments have been recognised in international policy documents, such as the International Implementation Scheme for DESD (IIS) and the Global Action Plan for EFA. However, while 'the links are understood in general at the global level, synergies are yet to be realised during implementation at the country level' (UNESCO 2007). One of the key questions for this paper to ask is why this might be so and to suggest some possible ways forward. The other relevant question in this context is this: how can both ESD and EFA help to promote and build sustainable development for all? One answer is to bring ESD and EFA closer together over time. This paper considers both the conceptual and structural issues inherent in bringing ESD and EFA together, as well as the kinds of joined-up conceptions and structures that could facilitate this union.

Before embarking on this task, it is important to clarify exactly what is meant by 'ESD' and 'EFA'. Two distinctions need to be made here. The first distinction should be made between the two constituencies of ESD and EFA and the policy statements made about them. The two constituencies each have a particular history that contributes to the current emphases of their respective approach and practice. This can be seen partly as the difference between actual and potential forms of ESD and/or EFA. A common aim of all such initiatives is clearly to relate practice more closely to theory, but it may also be the case that parts of the constituency will theoretically understand 'ESD' and/or 'EFA' in ways that differ from UN policy. The second distinction concerns the definitions of the

constituency of ESD and EFA. Are all those who can reasonably be judged to be 'doing' ESD or EFA part of the constituency, even though they may not have heard of these terms or define themselves in that way? Equally, can one say that some programmes that come under other headings are a legitimate part of 'EFA'? One aim of both ESD and EFA is to create an inspirational movement, with which a wide range of people can identify, for learning and developing with others. Thus, both these initiatives have developed a public face or 'brand', which can be an important recognition factor for participants, governments and funders. Combining initiatives thus raises the question of developing a new or combined 'brand' – an issue which will be addressed later in this document.

As UNESCO has already demonstrated (see Figure 1), the two agendas of EFA and ESD already overlap a great deal, but the extent to which these agendas are shared for mutual benefit and effectiveness is less clear and would benefit from further examination. The table identifies potential synergy around key areas, and this will be explored in more detail later in the paper.

Figure 1

EFA	EFA/ESD Overlap	ESD
<p>Basic education and literacy available to all learners</p> <p>Particularly addresses those who are excluded from quality basic education</p>	<p>Commitment to quality education</p> <p>See education as a human right</p> <p>Promotion of human rights, especially gender equality and rights for marginalised people</p> <p>Concern to improve the quality of life, reduce poverty, improve health</p> <p>Importance of primary education</p> <p>Participation of all in education and development: governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector, communities and individuals</p> <p>Includes non-formal learning</p> <p><i>*NB some of these elements are more in evidence in ESD or EFA respectively</i></p>	<p>Broader purposes beyond education</p> <p>Relevance and importance of ESD for all within or outside planned learning activities</p> <p>Includes those in privileged positions in societies where consumerism dominates</p> <p>Emphasis on basic values, processes and behaviours as part of all learning</p>

Challenges and Tensions

The diagram above (drawn from UNESCO 2005 Technical Paper 1) also identifies some of the key areas of difference between the agendas of EFA and ESD. This section will focus on some of the key areas of tension.

Basic education for all and ESD

What counts as 'education'? EFA is primarily concerned with organized (formal) education programmes and in providing opportunities for the widest number of people possible to participate. ESD not only stretches from formal education, to training, to raising public awareness, but also considers how entrenched learning through socialisation may need to be challenged (and/or preserved). Further, ESD covers social learning about sustainability between different sectors of society (such as state, business and civil society) as well as learning within and between organizations (Wals, 2007). Because most basic education takes place within formal learning settings, this makes it more difficult to question or challenge the curriculum and structures within which it takes place. However, in some cases school systems may actually contribute to the difficulties faced by disadvantaged pupils and may be unable to promote ESD. While EFA recognises the importance of non-formal and community education, its focus is on formal structures. This means that synergy between the constituencies does not always occur. There is clearly potential for EFA and ESD to work together to find mechanisms for greater cooperative action, or synergy, between them.

There is a necessary tension between somewhat uncritical approaches to the idea of basic education and the more critical approach of ESD, which directly challenges and questions current dominant conceptions and structures of education. David Orr (2004) reminds us that highly educated people have created most of the unsustainable practices of the world, and he warns us of the dangers of some kinds of education:

Education is no guarantee of decency, prudence or wisdom. Much of the same kind of education will only compound our problems. This is not an argument for ignorance but rather a statement that the worth of education must now be measured against the standards of decency and human survival – the issues now looming so large before us in the twenty first century. It is not education but education of a certain kind that will save us.

EFA has raised the profile of education internationally and gained resources from governments to make basic education an entitlement for all. Significant progress has been made with 20 million new primary school students in Sub-Saharan Africa and West Asia and with 47 countries achieving universal primary education (UN Global Action Plan 2007:2). Clearly though, more basic education as is currently taught will not create sustainable societies (IIS, Annex I:pg 29). Basic education levels are very high in the developed and rapidly growing economies, but these countries also have the biggest footprints presenting the biggest challenges to sustainable development on the planet at present. In fact, those countries that have the smallest global footprint are the very countries that lack opportunities for basic education. These are the same countries blighted with extreme poverty

and deprivation and lack of development, sustainable or otherwise. Therefore, one cannot overestimate the importance of basic education, which is an acknowledged human right and which has been shown by a number of studies (UN Development Programme, UNESCO, World Bank) to have a key link to poverty reduction. However, as the IIS argues, 'basic education must also include the ability to analyse issues that confront communities and should enable individuals to make lifestyle choices that do not erode the natural resource base or impinge on the social equity and justice of their neighbours.' (ibid)

Broader purposes of ESD

Some tensions between ESD and EFA undoubtedly arise because ESD has a broader agenda than EFA. ESD is concerned with moving towards a more sustainable society by changing attitudes, values and actions. ESD promotes and necessitates critical reflection by all teaching and learning institutions and individuals themselves upon their own behaviour, actions and commitments and the way these affect sustainability. This activity of self-reflection is a key part of what it means to be a 'learning organization for sustainability' (Pedlar et al, 1991). Although it is also true that many EFA practitioners are clearly engaged in critical reflection on curriculum and pedagogy, EFA could be seen as involving more unquestioned and traditional, less self-reflective organizations and pedagogies. EFA is often still conceptualised in the 'development' model, as an adjunct, or as a road to development. By way of contrast, ESD questions development and the assumption that current dominant forms of development are necessarily inevitable and desirable. From this point of view, ESD is more contentious than EFA. However, it should be remembered that mainstream institutions charged with economic development (the World Bank, for example), are also engaged in re-thinking development in the light of both environmental sustainability and a more complex account of poverty (addressed more fully below). With regard to poverty issues, ESD is arguably aimed not just at poverty reduction but also at poverty prevention, as proponents seek to bring about changes that can reverse present harmful trends towards social and environmental degradation. In this respect, ESD must challenge education that supports these tendencies.

As noted, EFA tends to view basic education as a means to development; however, the picture is made more complex by the fact that education is also viewed as an integral part of development. Education is viewed as part of the means to a fuller human life as well as 'the answer' to a range of social ills. Again, by way of contrast, ESD involves a spectrum of models of education and change from the purely instrumental, whereby educators are charged to 'deliver' policy on SD and to change views and behaviour in accordance with the current understanding of policy-makers, to the development of skills and capacities that enable a range of unpredictable and creative responses to the challenges to meet sustainability. A point of similarity between EFA and ESD is the range of their desired scope of change from the personal/individual to wider social change. However, ESD also emphasises the need to change personal/individual and social relations to the local and global ecosystems that we inhabit, including relations of consumption and production.

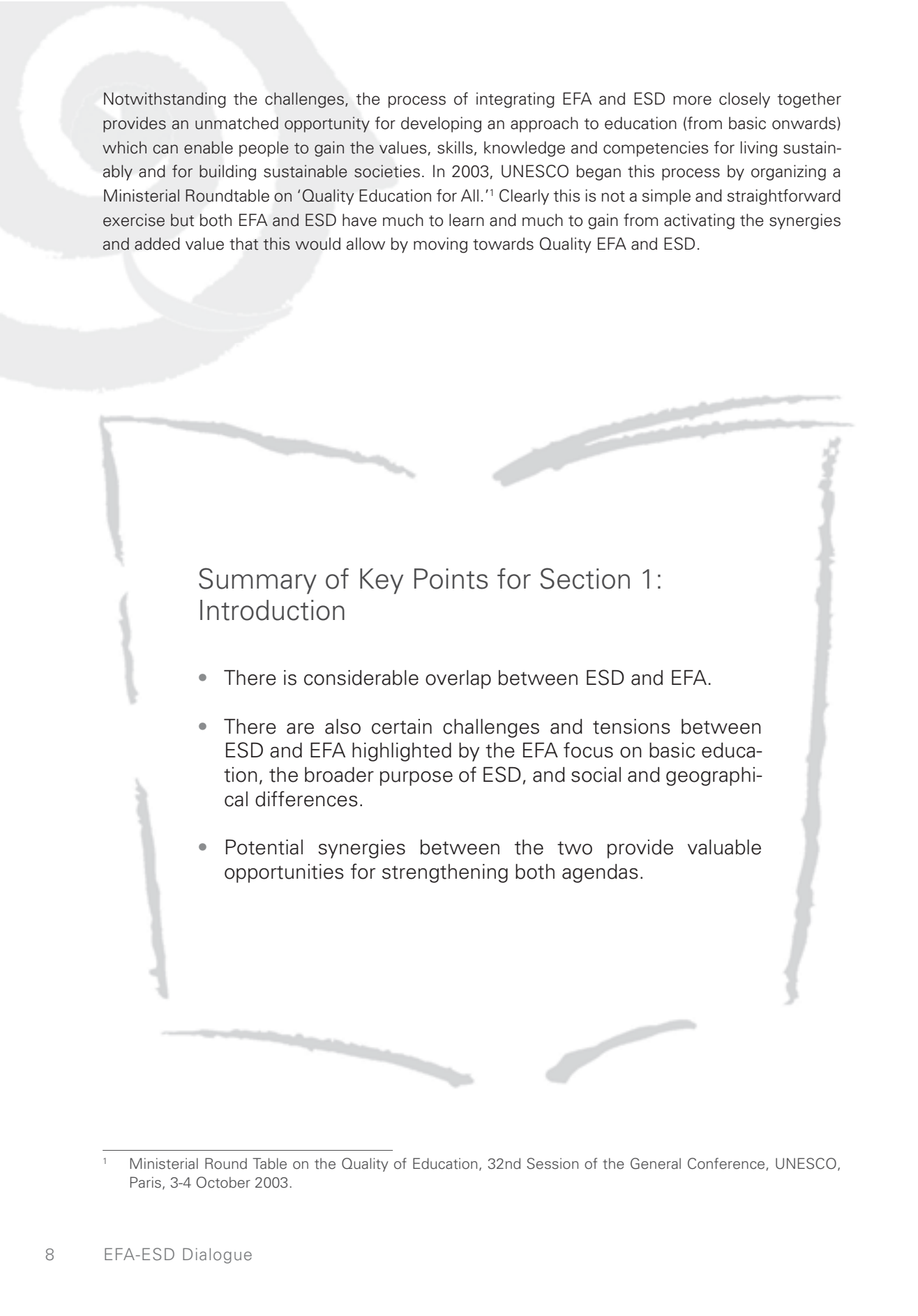
Social and geographical focus and constituencies of ESD and EFA

The question of the two differing constituencies in relation to policy and practice is relevant. The constituency of ESD is still very much in the making. It has involved, and continues to involve, debate and dialogue between educators who have come primarily from an environmental education background and from other orientations, including development education, peace education and global citizenship. There are those who adopt a primarily ESD approach, but arguably distinct histories and orientations can still be discerned. Equally, ESD is an area that has a history of being constructed and lobbied for by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in conjunction with UN processes, and its adoption by governments has been largely in the wake of these earlier developments. EFA by contrast has been an initiative that has had the support of governments needing assistance to fulfil EFA commitments but it has also had support from NGOs. However, a key element that could attract support is the idea that by linking EFA and ESD, a mutually beneficial situation could be achieved whereby the outcomes of both could be better addressed for our shared future.

In order to achieve sustainable development (SD), we need to look at education in the richest countries as well as education in the poorest. EFA naturally focuses on developing countries because that is where the basic education deficit is at its worst (and that is its specific remit), but without a reorienting of education systems in western, consumption-driven societies there is a risk of replicating these unsustainable models. Most northern or so called 'developed' countries are working from a base where formal education is available free to all; hence, the main challenge is to develop an educational entitlement which can help to build a society which is committed to sustainable development. Many southern or so-called 'developing (and least developed)' countries are working from a base where there is an education deficit, where education is not available freely to all and hence the main challenge is to make basic education universally available in order to build sustainable development.

Differences of geographical focus may act to exaggerate differences between EFA and ESD. As EFA is primarily an initiative to extend formal educational opportunities, it tends to target poorer countries. By way of contrast, ESD is sometimes seen as more important for richer countries as their citizens have a disproportionate impact on global sustainability, and they can thus be regarded as more important agents of change. However, ESD is also vitally important for poor communities, especially those that depend directly on ecosystem goods and services. This knowledge may be, at least partly, recovered from the past, in the form of understanding developed over long-term inhabitation of a bio-region. These distinctions, however, may be rather simplistic in today's rapidly changing world, where income divisions within countries as well as between countries are growing wider. Although the scale of poverty is very different, poverty reduction and regeneration strategies are now part of the landscape in wealthy countries also.

A focus on the education of wealthy elites in developing countries is also clearly integral both for ESD and for building support for EFA. Elites need to understand the impact of high consumption lifestyles on global ecosystems and on the life chances of the poor. However, elites also need to understand the importance of universal education for our common global future. This understanding could generate greater support for the aims of EFA, both politically and financially.



Notwithstanding the challenges, the process of integrating EFA and ESD more closely together provides an unmatched opportunity for developing an approach to education (from basic onwards) which can enable people to gain the values, skills, knowledge and competencies for living sustainably and for building sustainable societies. In 2003, UNESCO began this process by organizing a Ministerial Roundtable on 'Quality Education for All.'¹ Clearly this is not a simple and straightforward exercise but both EFA and ESD have much to learn and much to gain from activating the synergies and added value that this would allow by moving towards Quality EFA and ESD.

Summary of Key Points for Section 1: Introduction

- There is considerable overlap between ESD and EFA.
- There are also certain challenges and tensions between ESD and EFA highlighted by the EFA focus on basic education, the broader purpose of ESD, and social and geographical differences.
- Potential synergies between the two provide valuable opportunities for strengthening both agendas.

¹ Ministerial Round Table on the Quality of Education, 32nd Session of the General Conference, UNESCO, Paris, 3-4 October 2003.

Section 2

Strategic Role of ESD in Achieving MDGs

According to UNESCO, 'ESD could be seen as lending meaning to EFA and the MDGs [and] could be perceived as the vehicle to achieve these objectives' (UNESCO Introductory Note on ESD-DESD Monitoring). It is important to try to identify some elements of a strategic role for ESD, 'especially in supporting poverty reduction and in addressing the emerging issues such as global warming, climate change and environmental sustainability' (UNESCO 2007). This section will focus on ESD's overarching role in bringing together development and environmental concerns. It will then consider ESD's actual and potential contribution to achieving the MDGs, especially in relation to poverty reduction and EFA.

It seems evident that the concept of sustainable development has the potential to provide an overarching coherence for the MDGs. According to the IIS 'It is clear that (ESD) goes beyond education and touches upon all aspects of the social and institutional fabric. In this sense, sustainable development provides a way of articulating the overall social project and aim of development' (UNESCO 2005: IIS Annex 1:4). The first element of a strategic role for ESD then is to bring together development and environmental concerns and agendas in order to reduce poverty and promote SD. It is here that 'learning organizations' and social learning approaches seem particularly appropriate, as further discussed below, to achieve these aims.

Bringing Together Development and Environmental Concerns and Agendas

Sustainable development and the MDGs

Developing the emerging concept of SD is essential for achieving the links between the MDG goals of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The need for this is illustrated by the fact that out of all of the MDGs, the scorecard for achievements in relation to the commitment to environmental sustainability (MDG 7) has little positive to report. Indeed, it is mostly negative with deforestation continuing apace, biodiversity declining and greenhouse gas emissions increasing (UN MDG Report 2007). One of the reasons for this is that environmental and development agendas have still not come together in an effective way, particularly in relation to poverty reduction.

According to the Human Rights Commissioner, 'It is now widely accepted that – on the one hand – poverty should not be seen only as a lack of income, but also as a deprivation of human rights, and – on the other hand – that unless the problems of poverty are addressed, there can be no sustainable development. It is equally accepted that sustainable development requires environmental protection and that environmental degradation leads directly and indirectly to violations of human rights' (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2002).

An understanding of poverty needs to take into account the dependence on the biophysical as well as the social environment. In addition, an understanding of these dependencies needs to be developed and explored more fully. The separation and tensions between the development agenda and environmental agenda illustrate to some extent the Western perspective of the split between the human and the natural world, a split which many feel is one of the major obstacles to sustainable development. Therefore, those of us who have been brought up in a Western educational/academic setting may have more to unlearn than those who have not. In many southern and emerging countries, environmental and development issues are more obviously interconnected and linked and there has not been a long history of separate constituencies. In South Africa, for example, Lotz-Sisitka (2004:67) points out that, 'environmental education is strongly focused on the social, political, economic and biophysical dimensions'.

However, we have to recognise that the dominant paradigm still operating in the world today is predominantly a Western one and this colours policy at both national and international levels. Over the last two decades it has, nonetheless, become clear that SD required a radical re-thinking of the environmental and development agendas rather than a simple addition and coming together (Wade: 2008). This re-thinking was never going to be straightforward as there are too many potential contradictions and conflicts of interest. The starting points can be summarised as below:

Figure 2

Environmental agenda	Development agenda
Conservation of the natural world is the priority People can sometimes be the problem Development issues and poverty eradication are secondary to this	People come first Poverty reduction, social justice and development are the main priorities Environmental and conservation issues are secondary to this

The tensions between environmental and development agendas need to be acknowledged and worked through and ESD can provide a framework for doing this. ESD has a strategic role in helping to address these tensions and move towards a clearer, more fully conceptualised and integrated form of SD which puts poverty reduction at its heart. This initiative needs to happen at all levels: international, national, regional, local, community, family, and individual. ESD is in a position to provide the framework for this. By its very nature, ESD necessitates the forming links across subject disciplines, across ministries and departments and across formal and non-formal sectors.

Thus, through a joined-up learning organizations' approach it can provide a structural, as well as conceptual framework to achieve the MDGs.

The conceptual tensions between development and environmental agendas are often reflected in the structures and management of poverty reduction strategies, as well as in conservation and environmental management plans. The environment is increasingly seen as the foundation of economic growth and poverty reduction. A report by the IDL group shows that Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda emphasise the need to include management of the environment and natural resources in poverty reduction objectives. 'But the PRSPs do not make clear what needs to be included or how this is supposed to happen in practice' (Ireland and Tumushabe, 2005). Some positive examples are provided by the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) of how communities in South East Asia and Madagascar have taken responsibility for environmental conservation, which in turn has provided sustainable livelihoods (IIED, 2005). However, this kind of work is still not widely disseminated and many environmental management strategies often fail to make links with poverty reduction strategies. For example, in a review of progress towards Agenda 21 in Kenya, Dorcas Otieno feels that 'the environment has been looked at in great detail from the biophysical view but with less emphasis on economic and social perspectives.' Through multi-sectoral and linked-up organizational learning, ESD has the potential to multiply the outcomes of these strategies for the MDGs and for SD (Leautier 2002).

ESD, poverty reduction and climate change

One way that environmental and development agendas could be brought together is through the issues of poverty reduction and climate change. It is widely agreed that climate change now poses possibly the greatest threat to human development and security, both in the north and in the south. Local and global conflicts over scarce resources are bound to increase, and with conflict comes further great social and environmental costs. Unless this challenge is addressed, the poverty reduction agenda of the MDGs, which has made some significant gains, will be reversed (Stern, 2006) as climate change will create new areas of poverty. Since the poorest people live in the most fragile areas and within the most threatened ecosystems, it is inevitably these poor who will suffer most. Key agencies are now beginning to assess for 'vulnerability to Climate Change impacts' as part of general vulnerability assessments (Biggs and Satterthwaite, 2005). However, global production, consumption and finance are now so interlinked that rich countries will also suffer huge economic and social costs as well as the loss of high-capital infrastructure. The 2007 MDG report underlines this by stating that 'addressing the challenge of climate change needs to be a new but integral element of each country's development strategy. More importantly it should become an enhanced part of the global development agenda.'

ESD's role in promoting multi-sectoral approaches towards the MDGs

Nonetheless, we are beginning to see a convergence of environment and development agendas in some agencies. For example, some conservation NGOs and agencies have begun to include, as

a central tenet, attention to the human development and livelihoods aspects of their projects. For example, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF-UK) is working with the UK Department of International Development (DFID) to include poverty reduction goals in their project planning and evaluation. They also point out that this means, conversely, that they can now command the legitimacy to include conservation and sustainability aspects in national poverty reduction strategies (WWF, 2006). Equally, the sustainability debate is bringing about changes in the approaches of those working for poverty reduction. At the country level, some NGOs are helping to provide some of the ways forward. For example, Nature Kenya, has demonstrated the relationships between the Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity (WEHAB)² initiative and MDGs, especially in poverty reduction, and it has developed an education programme which involves teachers and community educators (Deche 2005).

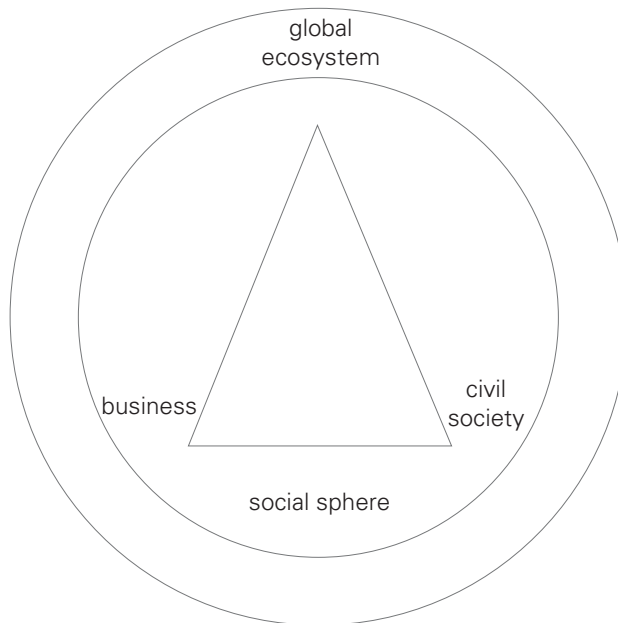
Another key area of practice where growing convergence between environment and development agendas may be seen is that of assessment for major infrastructure projects. Social Impact Assessment (SIA) seeks to ascertain the social impacts of projects, especially major infrastructure projects affecting vulnerable human populations. As, in the field, SIA practitioners are working side-by-side with Environmental Impact Assessors, where there is a rapidly developing dialogue about ways to conceptualise the relationships between biophysical and social change. (Burdge, 2004)

As practitioners on the ground struggle to unite environment and development concerns in a practical way they contribute greatly to ESD by raising important new research and development questions and challenges for pedagogy. At present, much of this learning on the ground is not being utilised owing to lack of capacity in ESD, especially in respect of learning organizations. This may be partly due to the dominance of formal learning in education policy discourse and funding, which can act like a centrifugal force, marginalising hugely important other areas.

ESD's wider remit also means that it is in a position to work across sectors and to bring them together to participate in the learning required to start to integrate the agendas. UNESCO's 'Partnerships for Education' (PfE) programme, launched in 2007 at the World Economic Forum, recognised this need to create 'a global coalition to advance multi stakeholder partnerships in education', (WEF 2007) in particular to bring in private sector involvement, which is not very evident so far in relation to EFA. The diagram below reminds us that when considering sustainability, the socio/political/economic sectors need to be placed in the context of the global ecosystem on which we all depend.

² Kofi Annan, WSSD, 2002 (water, energy, food security, responsible agriculture and biodiversity).

Figure 3 – Developing Synergy Across Sectors (Strachan, 2008)



With ESD's experience at multi stakeholder approaches, this new initiative could provide a great opportunity to develop the synergy in strategic terms between EFA, ESD and the MDGs.

Poverty Reduction and ESD

The second element of a strategic role for ESD in achieving MDGs is to strengthen and promote the links between ESD and poverty reduction. The Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development recognises poverty eradication as one of the greatest global challenges facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development (UNESCO 2002: paragraph 6).

However, it is important that the educational debate should take cognisance of the developments concerning concepts of poverty. The increase in complexity of the concepts of poverty being used by various key agencies not only presents new challenges for educators and educational policy, but also opens up new possibilities for demonstrating the links between educational initiatives and poverty reduction and prevention. What is meant by 'poverty' and how is defined? Concepts of poverty are changing, linked to the variety of indicators that are proposed for its measurement. Poverty used to be defined economically as 'less than a dollar a day'; however, a range of other kinds of awareness of the human condition are now contributing to the following more complex notions.

Concepts of poverty reduction

It is becoming widely recognised that poverty takes various forms, including the following: the lack of sufficient income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or no access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and disease-related mortality; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. Furthermore, restrictions on, or lack of, participation in the decision-making process and in civil, social and cultural life not only can be important features of poverty, but are also violations of human rights. 'A multidimensional understanding of poverty helps us define poverty as a human condition characterised by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. This definition enables us to see poverty as a subjective experience, an issue of participation and human assets – and as a structural deficit that requires a multi-agency response, in which education and lifelong learning can play a part' (Quoted in Preece 2005).³

In addition to income poverty, then, three further interrelated analytical categories, developed from the work of Amartya Sen, are put forward here to classify the different forms of poverty that contribute to various levels of social injustice in society (Preece 2005).

- Capability Poverty: lack of knowledge and skills to participate in economic life.
- Participatory Poverty: lack of participation in social life, decision-making processes.
- Consequential Poverty: result (sometimes unintentional) of deliberate human actions on the natural and/or social environment.⁴

ESD and poverty prevention

The above definitions of poverty are construed as a lack of various agreed 'goods' and capacities. The positive account of the interacting range of human goods needed for a decent life has been developing side-by-side with the definition of poverty. One foundational attempt to outline the necessary range of human 'goods' in a legal form is found in the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Another way of expressing these goods is in the form of 'capital' such as human capital, social capital and natural capital (Scoones 1998). This approach stresses the poor as active agents who utilise different forms of capital to construct 'livelihoods'. From this approach, therefore, poverty can be seen as resulting from a lack of a sufficient amount of any of these elements. ESD has a strategic role in helping to develop these complex understandings and in particular the links between degradation and depletion of the natural environment and poverty. With its broad remit it also enables issues of poverty to be looked at in conjunction with issues of appropriate development both in individual terms, and in relation to communities and groups.

³ Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2002) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁴ The first two categories have been adopted by the UNDP.

This approach links strongly to ESD not only as poverty reduction but also as poverty prevention, as ESD is (at least partly) about protecting and maintaining sources of prosperity and well-being.

ESD looks to the likely impact of current trends in the future, especially when added together into a 'big picture'. ESD represents our best attempts to work from the knowledge we currently have to prevent future poverty by the following means:

- Widening awareness of local, regional and global issues of environment and development and their connections.
- Spreading knowledge about environment and development, and their causal relationships – turning 'unintended outcomes' into predictable and thus preventable outcomes.
- Encouraging action research in sustainability and learning on the ground and gathering and disseminating reports and case studies.
- Encouraging, and providing an intellectual forum for, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral links resulting in new knowledge about sustainability.
- Promoting the recognition, conservation and use of indigenous and local knowledge in conjunction with 'expert' formal scientific knowledge for sustainability.

The recent Stern Report (2006) has pioneered the economic concept of the prevention of ecosystem decline as being 'investment in the future'. ESD needs to find ways to systematise and measure poverty prevention outcomes in terms of current trends and their reversal or mitigation through learning and related actions or behaviour change. This perspective is already outlined in the 'Precautionary Principle' with regard to ecosystem effects. ESD could help to develop a broader conception of a precautionary principle for poverty. The role of ESD in meeting the challenge of climate change is addressed in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4 – ESD and Poverty Reduction and Prevention:
The Example of Climate Change**

What is ESD doing already?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Raising awareness of links between lifestyle actions and environmental outcomes– Raising awareness of the impacts of negative environmental outcomes on the poor– Popularising and spreading the conclusions of climate scientists– Arguing for low consumption values which reduce carbon footprints and suggesting ways to do this– Raising more fundamental questions about energy sources, their risks and benefits– Raising transport issues and engaging in debates about alternatives
All these should lead to the mitigation of Climate Change through support for mitigation and prevention at individual, local, national, regional and global levels.

What does ESD have the potential to do?

- Clearly conceptualise climate change as a key example of wider sustainability issues and concerns - giving hope that there is a framework within which to comprehend this frightening threat to humanity
- Make links between ecosystem degradation, climate change and human livelihood choices including industrial consumption and production
- Engage all organizations in a steep learning curve developing Carbon Neutral policies and profile – starting with the UN itself
- Make stronger links to current poverty outcomes of climate change and likely future poverty outcomes
- Engage more fully with economic accounts of Climate Change (e.g. the Stern Report)

Connections between ESD, EFA and poverty reduction and prevention

The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) is increasingly documenting poverty which results partly from the decline of ecosystem services – for example, with a series of scoping studies ‘Connecting poverty and ecosystem services’ – with the following rationale:

Ecosystems provide more than the resources needed for material welfare and livelihoods. In addition to supporting all life and regulating natural systems, they specifically provide health and cultural benefits to people. Moreover, their loss is a significant barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals related to reduction of poverty, hunger and disease. The literature review of Mali’s ecosystem services revealed four critically stressed ecosystem services: maintenance of biodiversity; food and fibre provision; water supply, purification and regulation; and fuel provision. (UNEP 2005: 1)

This study makes clear that the current and future poverty resulting from the decline of these ecosystem services is a prime instance of (unintended) consequential poverty. This underlines the importance of including sustainable development in National Poverty Reduction Strategies, and the importance of including ESD along with EFA as complementary educational strategies and approaches.

Many studies (UNDP, World Bank, UNESCO) have identified the strong links between education and poverty reduction, although it is not a straightforward relationship. It is not within the remit of this paper to review these links but for example, ‘There is a particularly close relationship between parental education and child mortality. Simply stated, the healthier the mother, the healthier she and her child are likely to be’ (Oxfam 2000: 21). While the direct causal connection is still debated and patterns differ from country to country, what does not vary is the disproportionate representation of the under-educated in the ranks of the poor. In Scotland, despite a highly acclaimed state education system available to all, there are some very high levels of poverty and poor nutrition. However, those suffering in these high levels of poverty are not taking full advantage of the educational

system. There may be social and cultural barriers that exclude them; there are also concerns about the relevance for all of the education that is on offer. Rapid urbanisation means that exclusion is also happening in some developing countries; for example, The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education (1998) in studying the data on permanent school exclusions for 1997 found that Nigerian pupils from deprived areas/communities were more than four times as likely to be permanently excluded from school compared to pupils from an affluent rich neighbourhood (Finipari 2008). Although the correlations between education and poverty reduction are well known, hard evidence of causal links is in short supply. Specific links between the curriculum and poverty alleviation have been less explored 'in spite of a (tacit) agreement between education specialists, politicians and sociologists about the influence that the curriculum can have on both improving the living conditions of communities and on individual social development' (Pigozzi 2003).

Utilising the framework below, the following table starts to identify some of the ways in which EFA and ESD are currently contributing to different types of poverty reduction and prevention. In addition, it seeks to highlight some of the potential for added value by bringing EFA and ESD together. This would present a strong case to bilateral and multilateral donors and help to build alliances and mobilise resources. The table attempts to demonstrate the clear overall connection to all MDGs; however, those MDGs that are most relevant are identified in the last column. (NB. Of necessity, this table is highly simplified and could benefit from further consideration and development.)

Figure 5 – Poverty Reduction: Adding Value through ESD and EFA Synergy

Capability poverty: Lack of knowledge and skills for participation in economic life	EFA	ESD	ESD and EFA (Added Value)	MDGs
Values	Human rights values	Values of ESD (Including human rights)	Strengthens values' dimension	All
Skills	Vocational basic skills	Skills in critical thinking, systems thinking, inter-generational and futures' thinking	Basic and higher level skills which enable people to deal with change, risk and uncertainty	MDG 7

Capability poverty: Lack of knowledge and skills for participation in economic life	EFA	ESD	ESD and EFA (Added Value)	MDGs
Curriculum	Literacy, numeracy Engagement of curriculum developers Focus on girls' education and on disadvantaged groups	Relevant and appropriate, local and global issues Importance of local and indigenous knowledge Links between environment and development Lifelong learning	Relevant and appropriate literacy and numeracy curriculum Retention and dissemination of useful local and indigenous knowledge Understanding of SD Inclusion of girls and disadvantaged groups Available to all ages Improved retention and entry rates to schools	MDG 1, 2, 3, 7
General	Focus on education departments and ministries	Multi-sectoral Involvement of range of ministries e.g. Environment Importance of social learning Influence of NGOs/ CSOs Media and public awareness campaigns	Strengthen links between ministries, governments, NGOs and private sector to build understanding and support for EFA and ESD	MDG 8
	National systems set up, governments engaged	Wide range of ESD/ DESD networks set up	Synergy between networks Systems set up to develop Synergy between EFA and ESD	MDG 8

Grids outlining the contribution of ESD and EFA to the alleviation of participatory and consequential poverty can be found in Appendix 1.

Raising Public Awareness, Building Alliances and Support for MDGs

The third element of a strategic role for ESD in achieving MDGs is in raising public awareness and building public and governmental support and resources. This paper has already shown how ESD conceptually and structurally can make the link between MDG 7 on environmental sustainability and the other MDGs. In addition, its broader remit enables ESD and DESD, in particular, to concern themselves with media and public awareness campaigns. Both ESD agendas and EFA agendas could benefit strongly from the potential synergy here in building support for education and its role in sustainable development and poverty reduction. Alliances with bilateral and multilateral donors could be strengthened, and a strong case for further resources could be made. ESD's experience and focus on multi- sectoral approaches further makes links across sectors, government ministries and departments to build support for MDGs. The strong involvement of NGOs in the ESD agendas offers additional space for innovation and development.

Further, ESD's broader remit means that it has the potential, especially through DESD, to promote the importance of the MDGs for sustainable development through raising public awareness, media campaigns and wider communication and information strategies.

Summary of Key Points for Section 2: A strategic role for ESD in relation to MDGs

Providing a framework in order to integrate the environmental and development concerns of the MDGs. These signs of convergence are welcome but much more is needed, and the pace of change, mutual understanding, information and skills exchange needs to be speeded up. ESD has a strategic role in developing this process and in showing how the agendas can be brought together and in developing their practice on the ground.

- Promoting multi- sectoral approaches to MDGs.
- Highlighting the role of ESD, together with EFA, in poverty reduction and prevention.
- Demonstrating the value added of ESD and EFA synergy in terms of poverty reduction and building a case for mobilising resources.
- Raising public awareness and support for MDGs in their role in sustainable development.

Section 3

Raising the Profile of ESD in the National and International EFA Agendas

The previous section has identified the contribution of ESD to MDG and EFA to poverty reduction agendas, highlighting the potential synergy of bringing ESD and EFA together. (See Figure 5)

One key point to consider, however, is that EFA agendas have already been developed over time and have, to a certain extent, fixed and agreed upon assumptions. To minimise disruption and enhance positive and creative co-working, it obviously will be necessary to choose agendas and initiate discussions with care. This section starts by making some general points about methods of introducing ESD to EFA agendas and vice versa. It then identifies the general point that working together can strengthen the overall case for education. This section then discusses the general contribution of ESD to EFA agendas and the reverse. Finally, this section considers the Quality Agenda in some detail, as this is a currently developing agenda, not yet set in stone, and thus allows space for debate and work together. These ideas build on Pigozzi's paper 'Re-orienting Education in Support of SD through a Focus on Quality EFA.' (2003)

Engaging ESD and EFA Constituencies towards Mutual Understanding, Joint Learning and Operational Linkages

It will be important to consider the backgrounds, motivations and orientations of practitioners, supporters and donors in any moves to develop these initiatives towards greater harmony and effectiveness between the constituencies. The Earth Charter process, for example, has demonstrated that inclusive processes of development and debate are of great importance in engaging varied groups and that the agreements resulting from such processes will be more likely to appropriately

⁵ See www.earthcharter.org

reflect a diversity of contexts and concerns.⁵ The importance of these constituencies should be reflected in the approach that will be taken in the development of each of these initiatives. While being united at the level of policy is clearly essential, if policy does not have legitimacy and ownership by the constituencies, then it may not produce the desired outcomes. DESD provides a great opportunity to develop legitimacy and ownership in cooperation with education for sustainability (EFS) initiatives. Accordingly, there is a proposal for a joint learning approach, which involves practitioners as learning partners.

This also links to the desirability of the 'learning organizations' approach to creating positive change. This is a reflexive approach, which means that all organizations, especially the proponents of education and learning, should look to embedding learning processes and highlighting learning opportunities in their organizational workings and structures (Tilbury, 2007; Pyburn, 2007). This would include the identification of learning opportunities in working with other organizations in the complex task of moving towards SD. However, structures need to be able to facilitate these processes and greater consideration needs to be given to them. For example, some interesting work has been carried out in Kenya by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in developing an ESD strategy which draws upon existing educational initiatives. However, the Kenyan National Education Support Strategy draft document does not contain one reference to this in 278 pages. As these support strategies (UNESS) are now part of the EFA process, there is a strong case to be made to include ESD, and a clear opportunity here for ESD to demonstrate relevance and synergy.

ESD, EFA and the Case for Education and Learning

In order to live sustainably we need to act consciously and act together. This makes education absolutely central. It is important to be aware and informed in order to act consciously, and it is essential to have some shared understandings in order to act together. One key aim of ESD and EFA with regard to the MDGs as well as other UN agendas is to make the case for the overall importance of education and learning. To increase the global capacity for fast, effective, joined-up learning about sustainable development in its human development and ecosystem protection aspects, greatly enhanced learning processes are needed throughout all organizations, supported by appropriate developments in formal education systems. Bringing together ESD and EFA could greatly enhance their effectiveness and impact in making the case for this kind of education and learning. Again, it will be important to initiate discussion at the national and regional levels as to how this synergy could best be achieved. In order to make the case for ESD as an essential form of education this requires the widespread acceptance of the importance of education and learning as such. Currently, one of the most 'urgent challenges for EFA' (UN EFA Global Action Plan 2007: 14) involves raising the resources to achieve EFA. With ESD and EFA working together this is far more likely to be achieved. At present, Overseas Development Aid (ODA) falls far short of what is necessary and the 2007 Global Monitoring Report estimates that in order to achieve EFA goals, external funding requirements of £11 billion per year are needed. EFA can benefit from the fact that ESD has clear links to key issues in the public arena such as climate change, and can therefore help to make this case for education. DESD mechanisms present a clear opportunity to take this forward, for example, through the DESD vision building and advocacy strategy.

What Does ESD Have to Offer EFA Agenda?

As this paper has shown earlier, there is substantial overlap and potential synergy between ESD and EFA. This is already quite strongly acknowledged within the EFA international policy documents and vice versa. EFA and ESD are founded on the premise that education is a human right. They are both based on a number of international instruments and commitments from national governments. According to the Global Action Plan for EFA, the 'vision of EFA is to offer everyone a basic education of quality, enabling children, youth and adults to grasp new opportunities, become more active citizens and to initiate manage and sustain positive change' (ibid: 1). Because EFA and ESD come together in this vision of quality education for all, this is where there is the greatest potential for synergy. This vision of quality education is the essential underpinning of all the EFA goals and is recognised in all of them: from goal one on 'improving comprehensive early childhood care' to goal six on 'improving all aspects of the quality of education'. By developing collaboration and synergy between EFA and ESD this will clearly support and strengthen the task of achieving the EFA goals.

The goal of the DESD goes even further: 'to promote education as a basis for a more sustainable society' (Pigozzi 2003: 5), and according to the UN Global Action Plan for EFA, 'thus strengthens the EFA agenda by bringing into focus the content, processes and quality of learning. It enables EFA to promote values such as peace, equality and respect for human rights, gender, environment and cultural diversity through all aspects and modes of education – thereby equipping citizens and their societies to develop in sustainable ways' (EFA GAP 2007: 19). In other words, because ESD brings in strong social justice elements it strengthens EFA. The DESD is further recognised and endorsed by the 2007 EFA Global Action Plan that, according to Pigozzi, aims to strengthen the 'higher profile of education as the key component in developing human potential in the framework of sustainable development.'

In relation to EFA, it would seem that ESD has already been acknowledged within EFA documentation as an important element. However, despite this high level acknowledgement there are very few references to sustainable development in the entire EFA Global Action Plan. This is perhaps understandable as the focus is on the specifics of the EFA goals, namely literacy, numeracy, HIV/AIDS education, girls' education and inclusion. This represents one of the fundamental challenges for ESD – the lack of political profile in the EFA goals and MDGs and, concurrently with this, a lack of understanding of the relationship of ESD to quality education for all. International policy generally lags behind global imperatives and emerging issues, and if the MDGs were to be reworked in 2008, it is highly likely that there would be much stronger reference to environmental sustainability and its links with poverty reduction, especially in relation to climate change issues.

What does EFA have to offer ESD Agendas?

As noted, EFA already has in place mechanisms, alliances and partnerships that could be a valuable resource for ESD. EFA has links to a wide variety of practitioners and also has an established connection to issues of poverty reduction and consequent political and financial support. With shared

learning and development the potential added value of ESD and EFA could be achieved. As was shown in Figure 5, ESD could learn from EFA where it has greater experience and expertise, such as in the case of HIV/AIDS education and gender initiatives, for example.

One very important area for EFA on which ESD is comparatively silent is the matter of gender empowerment. Discussions of the role of gender in ESD have been dominated by discussion (both positive and negative) of ecofeminist perspectives (Gough, 2004). A number of commentators have started from an independent analysis of the relevance of women's varying roles and knowledge to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2003, see also Braidotti et al, 1994), but overall, gender issues have been somewhat neglected.

Bringing ESD and EFA together offers the opportunity to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of both agendas and to present a stronger case for increased resources. In addition, EFA also presents some of the following useful challenges for ESD:

- to make the educational needs of the poor a priority. EFA provides a constant reminder of the actual state of basic education on the planet and a renewed focus on equity issues and educational provision.
- to make much clearer the relationship between ESD and poverty reduction. This could make the relevance and importance of ESD much clearer to everyone, helping to explain that ESD is not just talking about a distant future but about seeking to ensure the well-being and livelihoods of current generations and their descendants.
- to make clear a concept of education as sustainable development as well as education for and about SD.
- to make gender empowerment a much more central concern of ESD and to recognise the realities of the global oppression and greater poverty of women. This would involve coming to grips with the many issues pertaining to gender and ecology including natural law constructions and the association of feminism with a 'modernity', which some proponents of sustainability associate solely with destructive forms of development.

ESD and the Quality Agenda

Currently, according to the UN Global Action Plan for EFA, one of the most 'urgent challenges for EFA [is] 'Improving educational quality' (UN 2007 EFA GAP: 14). This has been recognised as essential in order to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) (MDG 2) and to answer other urgent challenges of EFA, such as improving access and completion rates. 'Being in school or in an adult learning programme will not have positive impact unless it is of high quality and leads to usable knowledge and competencies' (ibid: 2). In addition, one of the key links between quality education and poverty reduction is appropriateness and relevance, which are considered crucial (UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) project team 2005:11) to encourage families to send their children to school and to attract girls and other disadvantaged groups and keep them in the education system. There is great disparity both within and between school systems (in DCs as well as LDCs) (Pigozzi 2003:3). In fact, Pigozzi (2003) argues that many school systems are less about

preparing for life and more about 'systems that either exclude or award qualifications inappropriate to the real world' (ibid: 15).

ESD's shared commitment to quality education offers a great opportunity for convergence and synergy in developing a shared concept of quality that strengthens both ESD and EFA at national and international levels. A vision of 'Quality Education', which takes into account both ESD and EFA, can be described as:

A quality education must reflect learning in relation to the learner as individual, family and community member and part of a world society. A quality education understands the past, is relevant to the present and has a view to the future. Quality education relates to knowledge building and the skilful application of all forms of knowledge by unique individuals that function both independently and in relation to others. A quality education reflects the dynamic nature of culture and languages, the value of the individual in relation to the larger context and the importance of living in a way that promotes equality in the present and fosters a sustainable future. (ibid: 5)

Seen through this lens it would be hard to identify the difference between an entitlement curriculum for ESD and one for EFA. The elements of ESD identified by UNESCO below both support and reflect this vision.

ESD is facilitated through participatory and reflective approaches and is characterised by the following:

- 1) *is based on the principles of intergenerational equity, social justice, fair distribution of resources and community participation that underlie sustainable development;*
- 2) *promotes a shift in mental models, which inform our environmental, social and economic decisions;*
- 3) *is locally relevant and culturally appropriate;*
- 4) *is based on local needs, perceptions and conditions, but acknowledges that fulfilling local needs often has international effects and consequences;*
- 5) *engages formal, non-formal and informal education;*
- 6) *accommodates the evolving nature of the concept of sustainability;*
- 7) *promotes life-long learning;*
- 8) *addresses content, taking into account context, global issues and local priorities;*
- 9) *builds civil capacity for community-based decision-making, social tolerance, environmental stewardship, adaptable workforce and quality of life;*
- 10) *is cross-disciplinary. No one discipline can claim ESD as its own, but all disciplines can contribute to ESD;*
- 11) *uses a variety of pedagogical techniques that promote participatory learning and critical reflective skills (UNESCO 2007 Introductory Note on ESD).*

However, these principles are not always reflected in the EFA documentation and guidelines, or in educational practice. As the IBE team pointed out in 2005, the EFA guidelines on the content

of education, teaching and learning strategies and school life 'are still very general and – given the global nature of commitments – non contextualised and insufficient to build capacity in education and play a role in poverty alleviation by means of basic education curricula' (UNESCO IBE 2005:11). So one of the challenges for ESD and EFA, therefore, must be to find ways to make this vision of quality education a reality. The following subdivisions will try to identify some approaches for doing this.

ESD's emphasis on values

Some commentators have expressed the view that EFA is to all intents and purposes value neutral. However, values discussions do exist at the global policy level within the aims of EFA with regard to poverty reduction and gender parity as well as from the basic education agenda, which is 'geared to tapping each individual's talents and potential, and developing learners' personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies' (UNESCO Dakar Framework 2000). These values are further evident in the EFA vision (EFA GAP 2007), which aims to enable 'children, youth and adults to ... become more active citizens and to initiate, manage and sustain positive change' (EFA GAP 2007: 1) Wider UN agreements, to which EFA has strong links, are themselves infused with values, such as human rights commitments, for example.

A review of the Global Action Plan for EFA shows that it acknowledges the importance of DESD in enabling EFA to strengthen the values' dimension by promoting 'values such as peace, equality and respect for human rights, gender, environment and cultural diversity through all aspects and modes of education – thereby equipping their citizens and their societies to develop in sustainable ways.' (ibid: 19) However, with no further development of this in the rest of that document there is a danger that it will remain largely rhetoric.

As noted earlier, education without a strong underpinning of these values risks being more damaging than no education at all. This is as important, perhaps even more so, for education in DCs as in LDCs. Pigozzi stresses ESD's contribution to quality education with regard to values which 'instil in learners that ability and will to integrate sustainable living practices, for themselves and others, in their daily lives.' (Pigozzi 2003:6) The underpinning of ESD values is a rights' based approach to quality education; however, the values' dimension in education always presents some difficulties as values are culturally contextualised and difficult to measure (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002). One of the recognised challenges, according to this report, is that it is very hard to measure 'values, capacities and other non cognitive skills that are also important for education.' However, work has been started in this area. The DESD MEEG group is looking at some innovative ways to address this issue, presenting an opportunity for discussions and shared learning between ESD and EFA constituencies at both national and international levels.

ESD's emphasis on interdisciplinary, multi-sectoral, local and indigenous approaches to the curriculum

It is also important to consider the relationship between formal education and the wider communities of learning in which it is embedded. Family and community learning may support formal learning provision, and this is very relevant for all EFA initiatives, especially the Early Childhood Care and Education Agenda.

For ESD, however, synergies between different forms of learning are also of a central concern. Some proponents have stressed the importance of multi-sectoral social learning and creating 'learning organizations for ESD'. In addition, ESD has highlighted the importance of embedded indigenous and traditional knowledge with regard to the importance of local and situated knowledge. While EFA may take note of debates around colonial influences on knowledge, including the language of transmission, the question of 'whose knowledge' and knowledge processes is brought to the forefront in ESD. Pigozzi makes the point that 'every learner that has the potential to bring indigenous and other own knowledge and wisdom to the learning environment and is prevented from doing so is an opportunity lost' (Pigozzi 2003:8). At the same time, learning from EFA, ESD could investigate more fully links with discussions of gender and the curriculum and the role and importance of women's knowledge both for social well-being and for ecosystem health.

Therefore, bringing ESD and EFA together again presents opportunities for added value and learning (see figure 5). Interdisciplinary links involve the recognition of the joined-up nature of our world and can help to make learning topics relevant to the bigger picture. In addition, systems-thinking approaches can not only help to make these interdisciplinary links but also aid in developing general skills in 'linking thinking' (Sterling: 2005) that can be transferred to any practical situation. ESD can be seen as 'joined-up problem-solving', and this is relevant to a wide range of livelihood strategies and local conditions. Because of the 'big picture' aspects of ESD, it can bring inspirational motivation and idealism back into education, demonstrating where all approaches can make their contribution to knowledge for ESD (Parker, 2008). The importance (at all levels, from the global, national to local and individual) of making the connections between environmental and development concerns and for developing a framework for SD has already been noted in the previous section.

Pigozzi also recognises the importance of educational processes (a frequently overlooked aspect of quality) and the need for learning and teaching processes which encourage participation for all and a sense of equality among learners. ESD's emphasis on shared and group learning for problem solving again has the potential to develop added value with EFA.

With regard to content and curriculum, ESD is essentially about the bigger picture. Its role in re-orienting education systems seeks to address the issue of relevance that 'a lot of what is taught worldwide is no longer relevant to learners' (Pigozzi 2003:11). A number of EFA programmes are already trying to address curriculum relevance in relation to poverty reduction. For example, a 2005 UNESCO IBE project in Sub-Saharan Africa tried to address ways in which the curriculum could play greater role in poverty alleviation. It found that 'most of what is taught in schools and the teaching methodologies is elitist' and it proposed a number of elements that were essential for the

curriculum to start to address poverty in a critical way (UNESCO IBE 2005:14). Most of these could be addressed by utilizing an ESD framework and its approaches in the following ways:

Figure 6

Essential Curriculum Requirements for Poverty Alleviation ⁶	What ESD can Offer ⁷
A more flexible curriculum which can take into account local contexts and concerns	3, 4, 6, 8,10,11
Building on the relationship between formal and non- formal education, especially with regard to community participation, teaching methods, and links between theory and practice	4, 5,11
The curriculum as a multi dimensional process, including teacher training, resource materials and assessment methods as well as a document	3,11,10
The curriculum as a linkage between the local and the global Curriculum as a political process with strong institutional support	1,4,8
A focus on equity between students	1, 2, 3, 10
A competence-based approach	9, 10
Community support, with stakeholder participation and involvement in change	3, 5, 7, 9

These essential curriculum requirements imply a need for a greater interdisciplinary approach to quality, one that is more thematic, issue-based and oriented toward problem solving. Indeed among the examples of curricular innovations in poverty alleviation listed by the IBE teams, were ‘the systematic integration of transversal contents in curricula and the promotion of integrated basic education in which thematic approaches and the integration of local knowledge in curricula have been given greater importance’ (UNESCO IBE 2005:14).

The quality education consensus

In some ways, when it comes to quality education it would seem that there is perhaps a false dichotomy made between EFA and ESD. Among educational practitioners there is considerable agreement around the pedagogy and approaches, which underlie an effective curriculum. This growing

⁶ Educational Innovation and Information, April-August 2005.

⁷ Refers back to the list on page 5 of this paper identified by UNESCO Introductory Note on ESD.

consensus could be expanded and developed to bring in the additional dimensions of ESD, which are currently missing. The most obvious of these include the futures' dimension as well as a linked understanding of ecological and social processes. EFA's strong focus on gender and diversity issues means that in regard to some of the social dimensions, ESD may also have a lot to learn. This presents an opportunity for joint discussions, which could lead to the shared development of a framework (which might be called Education for Sustainable Development for All or ESDFA), which could bring the social and environmental dimensions together more effectively in the context of learning.

In terms of constituencies it seems that divisions between development and environment are still presenting obstacles, which underlines the need mentioned earlier in relation to MDGs for a strategy to bring the constituencies together in a meaningful way. To some degree EFA still represents the development agenda, while ESD tends to be seen as representing the environmental agenda. This may be understandable when looking at the constituencies from which EFA and ESD have developed, but this represents both a challenge and an opportunity to move towards a new conception of quality, which follows Pigozzi's vision of bringing these strands together.

Figure 5 (Poverty reduction, EFA and ESD) identifies how bringing the two agendas of EFA and ESD together would strengthen both. ESD has already been shown to have a substantial amount to offer to both these agendas, which presents a great opportunity to highlight ESD within EFA agendas and vice versa.

Lifelong, community and social learning

As noted earlier, education and learning does not start or end with school nor is it confined to formal education. A concept of quality education that fails to take this into account will inevitably fall short. ESD is not constrained by this; indeed, lifelong learning is a key component of ESD, and so it offers an additional dimension to bring to EFA and the Quality Agenda. Furthermore, ESD recognises the importance of intergenerational learning, for example, to encourage 'students to act as catalysts of environmental communication and learning beyond school boundaries' (Ballantyne, Connell and Fien 2006). This emphasis on lifelong learning and processes can help to deliver goal 3 of the EFA, which concentrates on Youth and Adults. At present, neither ESD nor EFA has really addressed the potential for social learning and how it affects global citizenship and sustainability, given the strong potential of growing Internet access. Globalised media of all kinds, though subject to concerns about bias and power, are a potent and growing source of planetary learning.

Too much emphasis on individualised learning will fail to address key issues for poverty reduction and sustainable development. The relevance of social and inter as well as intra community learning has been identified earlier in terms of developing an understanding and an imperative for SD. However, this is also essential in building support for education in general. Community support and involvement have also been identified as contributing to entry and retention rates for formal schooling when the curricula have been seen to have relevance and appropriateness (UNESCO IBE 2005). The contribution of lifelong learning and community learning to poverty reduction (Figure 5) has also been highlighted earlier. The important links between social learning and social capital have

also been noted (Fien and Skoien 2002). The role of learning organizations for sustainability has also been identified as including reflexivity, an important indicator of quality ESD. Learning organizations have the potential for dynamic social transformation that is essential for ESD and demonstrate how other sectors can learn from the sensitivity to change in the private or business sectors. In turn the business sector can learn that without social and ecological responsibility innovation could lead to a dead planet.

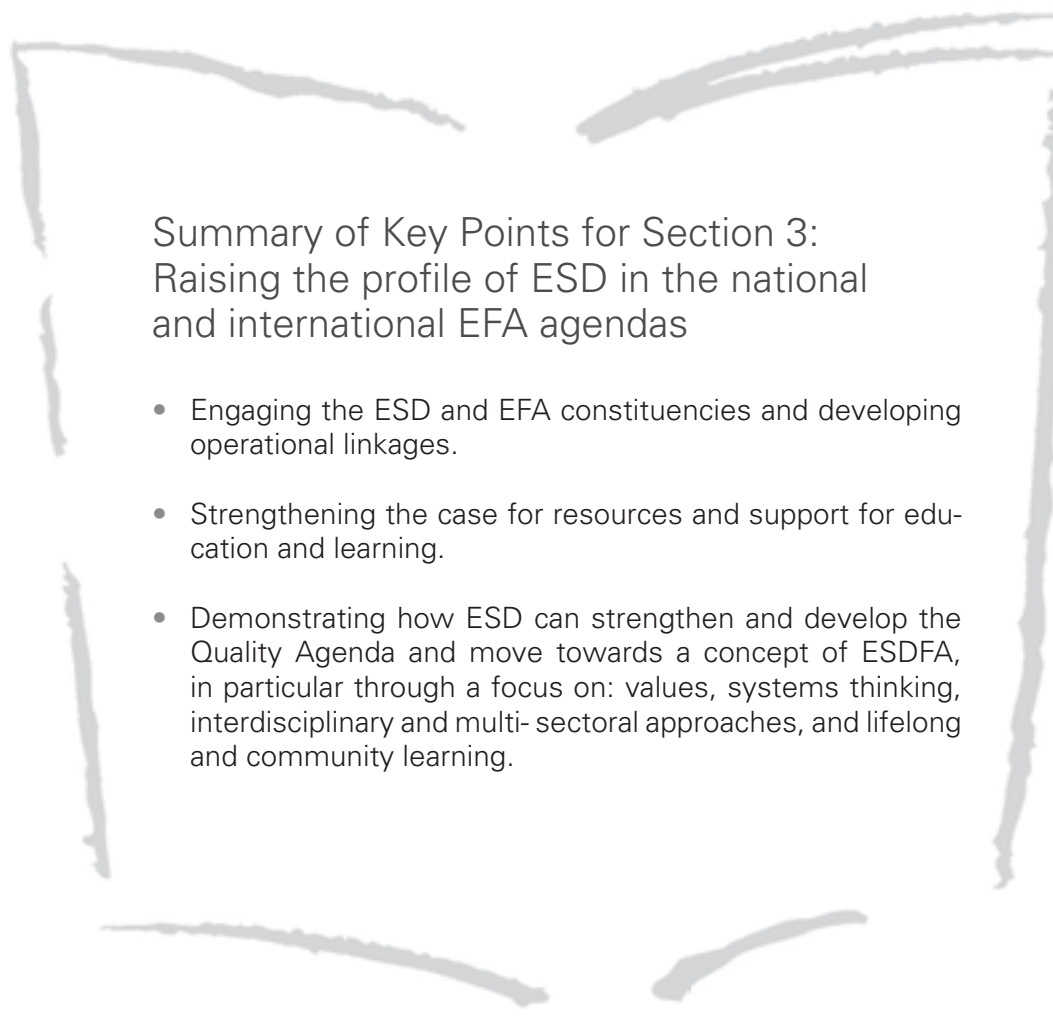
Assessment, targets and indicators

EFA and ESD share many aspects, including similar values and aspirations, but EFA is largely talked about in an instrumental way – partly because of the assessments methods used, which are recognised as flawed (Amadio et al 2004). ESD also has its quota of instrumental approaches in terms of pre-set desired behaviour change and attitudinal outcomes. In addition, where an ESD element forms a key part of a multi-faceted sustainability project, it is expected that outcomes of awareness-raising and participatory learning should be measured. In this respect there may be much to learn from NGOs whose project planning, indicator setting and evaluative cycles and materials are well established.

Some important work is being done by the UNESCO Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group for DESD (MEEG) which recently agreed upon a work plan to develop global indicators for ESD as well as to set up research projects to track change on the ground (MEEG 2007:11). The first meeting of the MEEG has identified several key issues:

- The difference between assessing for kinds of provision of ESD and evaluating whether they actually help to achieve SD outcomes. The different models of effectiveness that people use for different provision and the different models of education, learning and change that people use, depending upon context (i.e. in some contexts people have less or more opportunities to put their learning into practice).
- The need to keep in focus the wide learning remit of ESD, but also the difficulties of doing so. While ‘participation’ in the process has been highlighted, this is not the same thing as assessing, for example, the state of public understanding of key elements of SD, or reporting on the successes and failures of citizen information initiatives and/or proposals for behaviour change.
- The need for a research effort to support and extend these activities.

While it is unlikely that a set of global indicators could fully capture the values’ element, there is more possibility that research on the ground could identify this in more detail, at least in assessing some elements of attitudinal change. Moving towards a shared concept of Quality ESDFA would enable UNESCO to develop creative and innovative assessment processes, which could track quality as well as quantity with regard to its educational agenda.



Summary of Key Points for Section 3: Raising the profile of ESD in the national and international EFA agendas

- Engaging the ESD and EFA constituencies and developing operational linkages.
- Strengthening the case for resources and support for education and learning.
- Demonstrating how ESD can strengthen and develop the Quality Agenda and move towards a concept of ESDFA, in particular through a focus on: values, systems thinking, interdisciplinary and multi- sectoral approaches, and lifelong and community learning.

Section 4

Making it Happen

As this paper has shown, there are no easy routes or quick fixes that can bring ESD and EFA closer together. Both come with complex agendas, constituencies, structures and mechanisms. However, they also share many common interests (Figure 1), including a shared imperative to build support and resources for education in national and international agendas and to develop quality education for all, which brings together development and environmental agendas.

The DESD Reference Group has already identified some key operational and priority activities for DESD in 2007 (DESD Reference Group 2006). Some of these present opportunities to build in a stronger emphasis on the links with EFA, for example, in 'conceptual clarification' papers and advocacy and capacity building strategies (ibid: 9). Bearing this in mind, what follows will attempt to identify some further possible ways forward.

Constituencies, Learning and Operational Linkages

Some questions that may be useful in developing dialogue and shared agendas between ESD and EFA have emerged from the previous sections, namely:

- Question for ESD: How can ESD pay more attention to reducing and preventing poverty?
- Question for EFA: How can EFA pay more attention to the links between poverty reduction and prevention and environmental protection and conservation?
- Question for both: What learning is needed in ESD and EFA constituencies and organizations to move towards a concept of ESDFA?

Participation and ownership

As noted earlier, without participation and ownership by the ESD and EFA constituencies in the development of both concepts and structures, an effective strategy is unlikely to develop. A change of emphasis is, therefore, proposed from implementers to 'learning partners'. This is in line with the DESD Reference Group's suggestion that 'a more participatory approach to the DESD should be developed so that ministries, NGOs, all government departments, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), media, etc should be engaged' (ibid). The EFA constituency could also be engaged and involved, with additional cross-constituency events for discussion of ESD/EFA linkages.

A possible agenda for such meetings:

- General conceptual issues of linking ESD and EFA
- Looking at the contribution of both to help achieve MDGs
- Developing concepts of quality education which bring together ESD and EFA
- Issues of joint reporting and assessment
- Practical suggestions for linking meetings and communications
- Developing a mutual learning agenda
- Developing a jointly agreed upon research and development agenda
- Developing learning organizations for ESDFA and leadership development

Building alliances with bilateral and multilateral donors

To a great extent this will be up to those with a close cultural and political knowledge of donors and their agendas. What has been provided here are conceptual resources that can be presented in different ways to various different audiences to make these resources accessible and relevant. In addition there are some general points to be made about challenges. First, donors tend to be sectoral in targeting funds – this presents a challenge in raising their interest about joined-up approaches. Secondly, donor funding increasingly goes with outcomes that can be delivered – thus the challenge for us to develop ways of demonstrating improved outcomes from joined-up approaches. Thirdly, while EFA has assessed the resources required to achieve its global objectives, ESD has not yet done so. This raises a challenge for ESD in terms of presenting clear programme and targeted requests to donors. All these points also suggest that we will need to engage in awareness raising for donors and to ensure that new approaches and language are clearly explained.

In terms of donor support the concept of the ‘added value’ gained by linking the two initiatives should be stressed. Resources should go further and synergies can be created which will realise a more effective contribution to achieving the MDGs. Extra money for EFA should help to bring about a more sustainable world – provided that EFA can be shown to build in sustainability outcomes. This should represent a win-win situation, provided engagement of the constituencies is achieved. Other benefits for donors could be provided in terms of more holistic evaluation and assessment of the effectiveness of their input in producing the desired outcomes. For example, outcomes could be assessed in terms of improvement in a range of ‘quality of life’ indicators. Ultimately projects could be demonstrated to have multi-faceted outcomes in terms of environmental sustainability, improved and/or protected livelihoods, improved health, diminished vulnerability, as well as human development.

Capacity development in ESD and EFA

Leadership development in ESD and EFA

There is recognition of the need for leadership in ESD, but currently no clear mechanisms to develop this capacity. There are EFA links with professional support programmes for educators and those

involved in increasing educational capacity in management, development and finance. There is some experience of leadership development in education in the UK and elsewhere, for example, which could possibly be critically explored here in terms of models and resources.⁸

Learning organizations for ESDFA

As this paper has noted, moving towards some convergence between ESD and EFA agendas will demand high levels of learning and development at all levels, from the individual to the organizational. There is, therefore, a need for UNESCO to support the development of learning organizations. As part of this strategy, UNESCO could take the lead by conducting some internal action research with the purpose of considering changes towards a learning organization approach to ESDFA across UNESCO. This would centrally involve looking for learning opportunities in the following:

- Organizational culture: attitudes and values fostered through operational norms and assumptions
- Planning and monitoring mechanisms
- Career development trajectories and supervision
- Reporting back and de-briefing on projects
- Reflexive learning of all kinds – critically applying principles to one's own activities
- Discussion in the organization about vision, aims and objectives
- Own organizational contribution to meeting the MDGs

On the basis of modelling this for others, UNESCO could then possibly undertake research into the potential for the UN as a whole to adopt a learning organizations' approach to sustainability. This could draw on 'system leadership' models, involving the sharing of ideas and strategies for sustainability across sections of large organizations.

Synergies for ESD and EFA in informal and organizational learning

As previously noted, cross-sectoral approaches have been recognised in ESD but the potential of cross-sectoral learning about ways to link education, learning and sustainable development is still not fully developed. More engagement is clearly needed between education policy makers at international, national and local levels on establishing this relationship. UNESCO could allocate the task of identifying learning synergies for ESD and EFA in the non-formal sector, especially across state, business and civil society sectors, to key individuals and/or a group. This could possibly build on emerging concerns about climate change challenges.

⁸ For example, in 'Leadership for SD' by the UK Centre for Excellence in Leadership in collaboration with LSBU and Forum for the Future.

Operational linkages to highlight the case for education and learning

As previously stated, a common general aim of ESD and EFA is to make the case for the importance of education and learning. This could form the topic of joint meetings and be the basis of some joint working arrangements and/or products such as a document for other UN agencies and/or the three sectors of government, civil society and business. This case for education and learning could emphasise theory and practice links and the challenges for theory deriving from practice on the ground. These discussions could also consider how to maximise contribution to meeting the MDGs and how to motivate people by helping them identify with a vibrant and developing global educational movement. This could form the focus of joint meetings, expert-working groups etc. Desired outcomes could include:

- Suggested improvements to both ESD and EFA respectively with regard to helping to meet the MDGs
- Ways that bringing together ESD and EFA might help improve their contribution to helping to meet MDGs
- Ways to support and motivate individuals and organizations to take leadership roles in promoting ESD/EFA

Integrating ESD into EFA Processes

The key challenge for ESD is that EFA processes are well established and reporting functions are already in place. Partnerships have also been established. There is also a specific focus for each year, which allows for the development of particular themes and partnerships to be built into EFA development. Currently DESD mechanisms are less developed, as they are more at the planning and aspirational stages. Moves towards convergence in processes should ideally also be the outcomes of consultation and creative, contextually-informed thinking on the part of the constituencies themselves. This means providing opportunities for the ESD and EFA constituencies to develop as learning partners.

Opportunities for integration within current processes and mechanisms

DESD processes are being envisaged on the 'three sector' analysis of Government, Civil Society and NGOs, and Business. They are also being organized at 4 scales: sub-national, national, regional, and international. This represents an attempt to achieve a Bottom-up and Top-Down interchange that can be seen as facilitating a learning relationship. The kinds of tasks in which these different levels might engage are further identified in more detail. In particular, at the local level comes the identification of local challenges; at national level the creation of a national plan is seen as a priority; at a regional level consultations are envisioned and the planning of regional capacity-building activities; at the international level one key aim is to integrate DESD with other initiatives, to keep up

the profile of education in Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and elsewhere, and to organize initiatives at other levels to advance DESD. A joint and democratic process is envisaged: According to DESD research, 'The organizers also have the responsibility to make the planning process inclusive, democratic and transparent, not secretive. It is the organizers' responsibility to report back to stakeholders through regular reports. The reports should reflect stakeholders' inputs and opinions' (UNESCO 2005: Annex 1, 9).

EFA has very similar, albeit well established mechanisms (see Appendix 2 for full summary), and there is, therefore, clear potential for integration and linkages. The EFA process could be said to be somewhat more top down than DESD, depending as it does on donor support and government structures and organization. However, many of the EFA and DESD structures and mechanisms are similar. Instead of operating as parallel processes, it makes obvious sense to maximise resources by bringing the two together where and when it's possible. Clearly, this cannot be forced, but this paper has tried to present an argued case for the conceptual and structural benefits of this.

At a country level, the development of national EFA plans does present an opportunity for ESD agendas to play a part, but structures need to be in place to facilitate this. DESD has already provided an incentive for many countries to develop ESD strategies, so a global policy lead, which brings the two agendas of ESD and EFA together, could prove very effective. At the global level, the annual EFA Collective Consultation for NGOs presents a clear opportunity for raising questions and issues of joint concern, especially as many of these NGOs have a shared interest in both EFA and ESD.

The involvement of the three sectors (although the business sector has only recently become involved in EFA), as with DESD, does allow for the possibility of shared agendas and discussions between ESD and EFA, which could allow real synergy to develop while maximising the resources of both. This process would need the political will and support of the High Level Group and in order to gain this, a strong case could be made about maximising current resources as well as mobilising additional resources.

Global Monitoring Report (GMR)

The GMR is the main national and international reporting mechanism for EFA. Each year this addresses a particular focus, such as Early Childhood Education (2007), Literacy (2006) and Quality (2005). A strong case can be made for including ESD as an element of the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR), particularly with regard to quality education. 'Sustainable development' was seen as an element (although a small one) of the Quality Agenda in the 2005 Background Paper on Quality Education for All, prepared for the Global Monitoring Report (Amadio, Gross, Ressler, Nhung 2004).

There are obvious problems (noted earlier) in monitoring quality, both in relation to EFA and ESD, but there are also opportunities for shared approaches and mutual learning. It would seem apposite to look at opportunities for an ESD element at least to become part of future GMRs. The web

consultation, which is run concurrently with the work of the GMR, could provide possibilities to raise some issues regarding synergy with DESD.

Moving towards joint quality monitoring and assessment mechanisms

There are many difficult issues in linking monitoring and assessment of ESD and EFA. One key issue is that work (MEEG) has only just begun on the difficult and complex task of assessing for ESD. It would almost certainly be premature to consider uniting these forms of assessment before all the issues to do with ESD have been fully considered. One area that has been highlighted in the foregoing discussion is the need to develop ways to monitor and assess the poverty prevention capacity of ESD. This may require the assistance of economic analysts who recognise the advances made in methodology in the Stern report, for example. Developments here could also support the case for poverty reduction as an outcome of EFA.

To start the process of convergence, this paper suggests the co-opting of at least two ESD members onto EFA assessment and monitoring bodies. These new members could have a responsibility to liaise with the developments in the MEEG group and feed in issues and concerns relevant to linking with EFA.

When thinking through and establishing standards for ESD, and considering how these might be linked to EFA, it seems particularly key to involve as wide a group of people from both constituencies as possible. One way to begin a wider discussion might be to organize regional events looking at both ESD and EFA together as contributing to the MDGs. One of the items on the agenda could then be joint quality and reporting approaches. Such a discussion might start from Pigozzi's approach to defining quality, as previously outlined.

Further, in the process of developing this document it has been extremely enlightening to assess both ESD and EFA in relation to their role in helping to achieve the MDGs. The MDGs have the advantage of having been agreed through UN processes but have also proved quite testing for both ESD and EFA. This highlights the potential for the contribution to the MDGs to be developed in the form of indicators of key aspects. This could be discussed and formulated at the MEEG, with a view to consultation and development with the constituencies of ESD and EFA. The process could also benefit from further research into the relationship between ESD and quality education for all, especially in relation to poverty reduction and poverty prevention. An indicative research agenda to take forward ESD/EFA synergy is outlined in Appendix 2.

Summary of Key Points for Section 4: Making it Happen

Constituencies, learning and ownership:

- Emphasis on ESD and EFA as learning partners
- Organize cross-constituency events for discussion of ESD/EFA
- Develop a research agenda for EFA/ESD (See Appendix 2)

Building alliances with bilateral and multilateral donors:

- Emphasise the concept of 'added value' by linking ESD and EFA
- Demonstrate multi faceted outcomes of projects

Integrate ESD into EFA processes:

- Allow space for ESD/DESD to develop mechanisms etc.
- Emphasise ways of working that are consultative, creative and contextually informed
- Propose ESD element of National EFA plans
- Propose ESD discussion in relation to quality education for EFA Collective consultation with NGOs
- Develop joint three sector approaches and events
- Make the political case with the EFA High Level Group for maximising of resources through ESDFA
- Propose ESD element in GMR 2008 web consultation and report
- Build in milestones for convergence for ESD and EFA (Based on DESD stepped milestones)
- Bring ESD and EFA constituencies together in order to raise awareness about MDGs nationally and internationally and to maximise educational response to meet MDGs
- Bring ESD and EFA constituencies together in order to promote the case for education and learning, nationally and internationally
- Identify and develop synergies for ESDFA in the non-formal sector
- Encourage more engagement between education policy makers at international, national and local levels
- Initiate more research into the relationship between ESD and quality education, especially in relation to poverty reduction (See Appendix 2 for Indicative Research agenda)

Move to joint monitoring and assessment:

- Co-opting of 2 ESD members onto EFA assessment and monitoring bodies
- Organize regional events looking at ESD/EFA' contribution to the MDGs, including joint reporting approaches
- Workshops for ESD/EFA to develop a shared concept of quality education

Develop capacity with regard to leadership and with regard to learning organizations for ESDFA:

- Build mechanisms to promote leadership development in ESD and EFA
- Set up action research project to encourage UNESCO to become a learning organization for ESD
- Stepped milestones for ESDFA: possible stepped milestones and strategies which seek to develop the convergence of ESD with EFA can be found in Appendix 4

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Appendix 1

Summary of the discussions on EFA-ESD Dialogue

A first draft of this discussion paper was presented at the first technical meeting on “EFA – ESD Dialogue”, which took place at UNESCO Paris on 21 September 2007. Participants at this meeting included members of the UNESCO DESD Reference Group, Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group, EFA Experts from Japan, Sweden, Finland, France, OECD and EFA Global Monitoring Team.

The ESD – EFA Dialogue Meeting – Debate

The discussion at the meeting was guided by the background paper and its recommendations. The participants appreciated the background paper and congratulated UNESCO for taking on the timely initiative and organizing the meeting. Participants welcomed the beginning of a dialogue between EFA and ESD constituencies and the shared understanding that both have the quality agenda at heart.

The key outcomes of the discussion were the following:

Quality Education for all: It was agreed that EFA and ESD goals come together in quality education and that ESD-EFA synergy is essential in achieving this goal. EFA goal 3 was found to offer a relevant and rich joint working platform for EFA and ESD synergy, and in addition, EFA goal 2, 4 and 6 also link to EFA and ESD. Both EFA and ESD are rights’ based education constituencies, and this should be emphasised.

Distinctiveness of EFA and ESD: A number of people felt that EFA and ESD are already two strong ‘brands’ in their own right and should continue to develop in their own right, as well as working together where it is most appropriate. People thought EFA was easier to understand, while ESD could be very difficult. EFA and ESD mechanisms are different but there are opportunities within both for more overlap and synergy. However, it was also recognised that without ESD knowledge and values as part of EFA, then there would be little progress towards sustainable development, which is an increasingly urgent imperative for the planet.

Tensions and differences between EFA and ESD: The paper identifies the key issues of tension, but meeting participants felt that these should not be over emphasised. Education ministers tend to see education as a tool for policy targets. This contributes to a tension between the instrumental versus the emancipatory with regard to education. While this is an issue for both EFA and ESD, EFA tends to be regarded more in an instrumental way. ESD needs to mainstream concerns for women’s empowerment throughout theory and practice.

The role of education in international policy making: Participants welcomed the links made between ESD, EFA and the MDGs and thought this was key in strengthening the case for education at the international policy level. More synergy between EFA and ESD could help to emphasise the contribution of education to poverty reduction and prevention and sustainable development. It was also suggested that notes for policy makers should be developed.

Poverty reduction and prevention: The strong case made for the role of education in poverty reduction and prevention was welcomed, but it was also clear that more research is needed in this area. Participants felt that there would be some difficulties in measuring poverty prevention.

Assessment should not lead the process: We still need assessment to provide deliverables for funders. Learning and assessment need to be at individual, organizational and social levels. The danger is that EFA is just seen at the individual level. ESD's wide remit can make focussing for assessment very difficult.

Climate change: Participants felt this was a key issue for both north and south, and a number of participants felt that the paper should stress more that climate change would affect the rich countries as well as the poorer LDCs. This is not an issue where anyone in the world can afford to be complacent, and participants felt that ESD could help to make this case. Policy makers need to understand climate change as one example of sustainable development together with the role of ESD/EFA in mitigation and prevention of climate change.

ESD's role in sustainable development: ESD's role both for and as sustainable development should be emphasised strongly by improving the culture of sustainability within the education system. Also, we should ask 'what can sustainable development do for education?'

The concept of ESDFA is welcome but it is too early to merge EFA and ESD to make ESDFA, as this may lead to confusion among the stakeholders. Participants felt that both should be allowed to progress in their own ways, with mechanisms to bring convergence between the two through the continuation of dialogue. The role of the Earth Charter in supporting the development of this dialogue should be further explored.

EFA and ESD have a common approach to donors: Instead of competing for scarce resources, both should work towards making a case for improved quality education. With its broader agenda ESD needs to find ways to tap into resources established for other developmental goals (example, funds for environment, poverty reduction, HIV&AIDS etc.)

There is a need for strong leadership for ESD, but presently there are no strategies to develop and support leaders for ESD. UNESCO has established its leadership for EFA and as the lead agency for the DESD, UNESCO has the responsibility to take this leadership role and to make a political case for ESD.

Continue the "EFA-ESD Dialogue" to encourage participation of governments, private sector, communities and individuals at the international, regional and national levels to enhance synergy between EFA and ESD.

Continue seeking joint working mechanisms within UNESCO through the EFA monitoring processes, EFA High Level Group and the EFA Working Groups. Consider including an ESD focus for the GMR 2010. DESD could use Regional Centres for Excellence (RCEs) for ESD to help promote EFA.

Suggested ways forward in making use of this paper:

- Participants proposed that one or two pilot projects should be set up quite quickly to bring EFA and ESD constituencies together in order to inform future work and developments.
- Participants recommended that a summary paper should be presented at the UNESCO general Conference in November 2007.
- One of the key audiences should be UNESCO's 50 field offices in different countries and their 8 institutions of education. There should also be an emphasis on education at the country level.
- Participants found initial teacher education (ITE) to be particularly significant for EFA and ESD synergy as it offers the multiplier effect and the potential to cascade out into schools and wider education circles. This is of particular importance in African countries.
- It was suggested that a paper should be prepared by UNESCO on ESD for donors.
- The 2008 International Conference on Education could have links with ESD. To further this idea, it was proposed that UNESCO could produce (in EFA language) a page of A4 on 'Opportunities for EFA-ESD'.
- It was recommend that UNESCO revisit the paper and progress on EFA-ESD synergy in a year's time and again in 2 year's time.

Appendix 2

Indicative research agenda

This agenda takes into account the distinction between the necessary wider processes of curriculum and institutional change for ESD and EFA that are the proper responsibility of governments, managers and learning communities, as well as the innovation that requires extra support for its research and development. All the items in the list below are considered to need a special research and development effort. Some of them have a specific ESD or EFA focus, but all could take linking processes as part of their remit – some of these research topics could be of interest to potential partners (indicated in brackets).

EFA and ESD synergy

- Targeted research on ways to demonstrate benefits of bringing together ESD/EFA for funders
- Clarification and social marketing of ESD and EFA messages
- Research and pilot on poverty prevention and ESD/EFA (with UNEP/World Bank?)
- Research on joint EFA/ESD quality and reporting approaches (with GMR?)
- Research into effective support for leadership for EFA/ESD including Finance, Governance and Management issues of curriculum, strategic and organizational change
- Researching appropriate models of Educational, Environmental and Social Change with specific reference to Climate Change and EFA/ESD
- Links between EFA, ESD and Decade for Literacy
- Developing the Rights' perspective on linking EFA and ESD (with HCHR?)
- EFA/ESD relevance for learning in conflict zones and failed states
- EFA/ESD contribution to HIV Aids education and mitigation
- Research and development re Gender Empowerment and EFA/ESD

ESD

- Quantifying the financial support needed to achieve a range of outcomes for the DESD
- Research and development linking business learning on ESD/EFA with particular issues of developing countries (with UNEP/World Bank?)
- Researching ways that evaluation might move towards quality of life outcomes linked to Millennium Development Goals (with GMR?)
- Research and development of methods to create learning synergies for sustainable development across social sectors – business, state and civil society

General

- Action research into learning organizations for sustainable development and MDGs (with GMR?)

Appendix 3

Summaries showing the potential contribution of ESD and EFA to alleviating participatory and consequential poverty

Participatory poverty: Lack of participation in social life, decision making processes	EFA	ESD	Added Value: ESD and EFA	MDGs
Values	Human rights values	Values of ESD (Including human rights)	Strengthens values' dimension	All
Skills	Literacy, numeracy Basic life skills Health skills HIV/AIDS awareness	Skills of democracy, participation, conflict resolution, problem solving, reflexivity, futures' planning	Attitudinal change, more positive attitudes towards diversity Collaborative and group learning Lifelong and community learning	MDG 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
Curriculum	Focus on inclusion and the most disadvantaged Importance of girls' education	Participatory processes Importance of peace education and concept of global citizenship Interdisciplinary thinking	Potential for entitlement curriculum which values everyone Strengthens moves towards interdisciplinary thinking	MDG 2, 3, 7
General	Focus on formal learning	Importance of non- formal learning Multi sectoral	Strengthens links between formal and non- formal education Strengthens community participation and responsibility	MDG 3, 8

Consequential poverty: Result of deliberate human and political interventions on the natural or social environment⁹

Poverty	EFA	ESD	Added Value: ESD and EFA	MDGs
Values	Human rights values	Values of ESD (Including human rights)	Strengthens values' dimension	All
Skills	Basic literacy and numeracy and life skills	Critical and systems thinking Futures' thinking	Basic and higher level skills which enable people to deal with change, risk and uncertainty Skills to take preventative action, react to interventions	MDG 1, 7
Curriculum	Learner centred Emphasis on quality education Focus on disadvantaged and marginalised groups	Learner centred Appropriate, relevant curriculum Understanding of ecological and social processes Local and global understanding	Strengthens ability of poor and marginalised groups to take action for SD	MDG 3, 7, 8
General	Focus on LDCs	Participation and involvement of stakeholders from NGOs, government and private sector Focus on DCs	Commitment of wide range of stakeholders to SD (e.g. through environmental and social audits, etc.) Develop more understanding of common concerns and issues between LDCs and DCs Develop strategies to tackle current and future causes of poverty	7, 8
		Public awareness raising Links to NGOs and advocacy	Build support for ODA and donor budgets	8

⁹ Preece, Op Cit.

Appendix 4

Education for Sustainable Development For All (ESDFA): possible stepped milestones (adapted from the DESD International Implementation Scheme)

Types of Milestones	Short Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Member states' plans and activities	Begin debate and invite links with suggested starting points – ask for comments to feed into next stage	Provide pro-forma for joined-up EFA and ESD activities and relationship to MDGs	ESDFA approach integrated into plans – especially poverty reduction/prevention plans through sustainable development
Formal points in member states' reporting	Raise education/learning contributions to meeting/raising awareness of MDGs & learning organizations (LOs) for SD	Request assessment of education /learning contributions to MDGs and SD in reporting systems. Discuss criteria	Provide criteria for reporting on education/learning organizations contribution to MDGs/SD
Regional plans/strategies	Use regional discussion forums to start/carry forward debate on EFA/ESD links with a view to consensus-building	Develop outline of links between EFA/ESD for use in plans and strategies including regional LOs for SD	Ask for all plans to show ESDFA and links to MDGs/SD including the development of regional LOs for SD
Indicators, progress and monitoring mechanisms	Discussions through joint meetings of DESD MEEG and EFA GM report. Input from ESD members co-opted to EFA	Consider ways to link developed DESD MEEG guidelines to EFA. Organize constituency consultations on plans	Develop, disseminate and give training and support for joint ESDFA progress and monitoring mechanisms
Sources of technical assistance and examples of good practice	Compile joint EFA/ESD list: resources, key people and projects. Seek partners for linkage projects – establish funding	Identify key cross-over resources, people and good practice case studies etc. Input from linkage projects	Produce/fund/enable joint ESDFA resources, case studies etc including key selection from linkage projects
Information sharing on research, development and innovation	Investigate joint web and networking resources. Commission plans for joint networking involving HE globally	Establish networks with common sharing proformas. Establish pilot activities with HE networks/journals	ESDFA networks operating to develop research agendas/projects collaborating with practitioners/policy makers

Types of Milestones	Short Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Networking, publications etc. for fostering partnerships	Articles on EFA/ESD linkages placed in key publications. Some scheduled meetings themed to include discussions	Conferences/expert seminars on EFA/ESD links – agendas and controversies linked to MDGs and SD	ESDFA joint publications and events helping to create partnerships and LOs for SD – including HE globally
Providing guidance in key areas	DESD Reference Group produce discussion document to disseminate to different constituencies	Identify key cross-over areas and provide guidance for EFA/ESD to move to include elements of the other	Linked EFA and DESD organizations produce joint ESDFA guidance linked to MDGs and SD
Mid-Decade and End-of-Decade reports to the UN General Assembly	Explore commitment (in report to UN GA) to link EFA/ESD through LO, cross-sectoral and formal education approaches	Mid-Decade report on EFA/ESD includes learning in UNESCO and UN & across sectors for SD and MDGs	End-of-Decade ESDFA reporting summary of achievements and lessons learned for future developments

Appendix 5

Summary of key mechanisms for EFA

High level group Key decision makers meet once a year to sustain and accelerate political momentum for EFA and to mobilise resources
Working group Annual meeting that provides technical guidance on key issues and recommending priorities for collective action
Collective consultation of NGOs Mechanism for dialogue and joint reflection and action with civil society, linking several hundred international, regional and national NGOs
E9 initiative Focusing on nine high population countries that account for more than half of the world's school age children
South-South cooperation Promoting cooperation among developing countries of the South, to facilitate knowledge-sharing and mutual assistance
Regional mechanisms Regional and sub-regional for a link not only with the National EFA for a but also all other relevant organizations
National mechanisms National coordinators to establish and promote progress towards the EFA goals at the country level
EFA Plans and Reporting
EFA Global Action Plan Aims at greater harmonisation and alignment of multi ateral organizations towards EFA
Annual EFA global monitoring report (Includes web consultation) Annual focus: 08 Not known yet 07 Early Childhood Education 06 Literacy 05 Quality 04 Gender 02 EFA on track
EFA UN Education support strategies (UNESS) By region and by country (mostly about monitoring, financing, management and organization)
Stakeholders UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA ,UNICEF, World Bank

Partnerships

UNLD (UN Literacy Decade)

UNDESD

WPHRE (World Programme Human Rights Education)

Civil society – wide diversity of networks

Also Collective consultation (see above – over 600 international, national, regional networks)

Global Campaign for education includes teachers' unions, campaigns for more resources for EFA

UNGEI (UN girls' education initiative)

E9 (see above) Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan

FTI -Fast Track initiative. Brings donors, CS and developing countries together around four gaps in relation to primary education: resource, capacity, data and policy gaps

HIV and AIDS Education:

UNAIDS Inter agency task team on education – platform for harmonisation, advocacy and networking among international partners, e.g. agencies, bilateral funders, CS

EDUCAIDS multi-country initiative under UNAIDS to support implementation of comprehensive national responses to HIV and AIDS

Education for rural people:

Focus on marginalised people and improving quality and access to education. Led by FAO and UNESCO jointly

CGECCD:

Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development

Consortium of over 30 agencies (donors, agencies, foundations) involved in ECCE

FRESH:

Focusing Resources on Effective School Health

Provides an overarching framework for agencies, CSOs etc in promoting links between school health and quality education

Education for people with disabilities:

Partnership includes UN agencies, donors, national disability organizations etc. Importance of working with organizations promoting needs of and comprised of disabled people

Teachers and the quality of education:

Builds on partnership of ILO, Education International and UNESCO

Education in situations of emergency and crisis:

Inter- agency network for education in emergencies: NGOs, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals working for right to education in emergencies, post crisis and reconstruction

Partnerships with the private sector:

(These are increasing) PfE Partnership for Education new initiative created by World Economic Forum and UNESCO to harness and help deliver private sector contributions to EFA goals.

Regional initiatives:

Decade of Education in Africa (2006-2015) by African Union

Thematic partnerships:

Also known as 'EFA flagship programmes'

New partnerships:

New partnerships emerge to focus collective energy on parts of EFA Agenda, e.g. at the 2005 High Level Group in Beijing a Global Task Force on Child Labour and EFA was established through collaboration between UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, World Bank and Global March Against Child Labour. New alliances are developing around the drive to abolish fees in primary education.

Appendix 6

Terms of reference for Background Paper on EFA–ESD Dialogue

The Dakar Framework for Action proposes the following elements to attain the Education for All (EFA) goals, oriented towards results:

- Mobilization of national and international commitment in favour of EFA, including resource mobilization;
- Linking of EFA policies to poverty alleviation and development strategies;
- Increased involvement of civil society in educational development;
- Development of participatory and accountable systems of educational governance;
- Systematic monitoring of progress toward EFA goals.

The International Implementation Scheme (IIS) for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) has the following objectives:

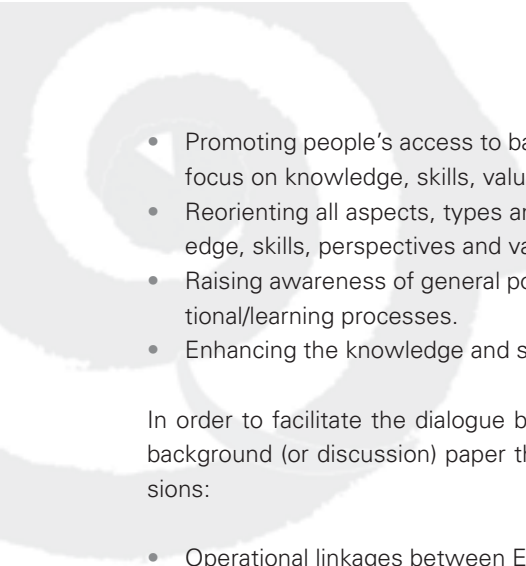
- Promote education as a basis for sustainable human society;
- Integrate sustainable development into education systems at all levels;
- Strengthen international cooperation toward the development and sharing of innovative policies, programs and practices of ESD.

UNESCO has prepared and disseminated widely the publication, *UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development: Links between the Global Initiatives in Education*.¹⁰ This publication enables the readers to see how the international community is working together to promote education for development through the MDGs, EFA, UNLD and DESD, and what are the similarities and differences among them.

Although linkages are understood in general at the global level, synergies are yet to be realized during the implementation at the country level. In this regard, development of UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) documents and the application of the EFA Global Action Plan provide possibilities for greater integration of ESD into national education sector planning and EFA coordination respectively.

As the lead agency and coordinator for EFA & DESD, UNESCO needs to lead the discussions focusing on the normative and policy front as well as facilitate understanding of how EFA and DESD mechanisms could work together towards:

¹⁰ Available on-line at: <http://unesdoc.UNESCO.org/images/0014/001408/140848m.pdf>

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- Promoting people's access to basic education and improving the quality of basic education with focus on knowledge, skills, values and perspectives that are essential for sustainable living.
 - Reorienting all aspects, types and levels of education systems to include the principles, knowledge, skills, perspectives and values related to sustainability.
 - Raising awareness of general population on sustainability issues and challenges through educational/learning processes.
 - Enhancing the knowledge and skills of the workforce to function in a sustainable manner.

In order to facilitate the dialogue between the EFA – DESD partners, it is proposed to prepare a background (or discussion) paper that will among others, explore the following for further discussions:

- Operational linkages between EFA & ESD to promote ESD through EFA and vice versa, particularly at the country level;
- Raising the profile of ESD in the international and national EFA agenda;
- Integrating ESD into EFA processes and enhancing linkages between the EFA Mechanisms (High Level and Working Groups, International Advisory Panel) and the DESD Mechanisms (High Level Panel, Reference Group, MEEG);
- Joint monitoring and assessment mechanisms, and links with the EFA Global Monitoring Report;
- Building alliances with the bilateral and multilateral donors to mobilize resources;
- Demonstrating the strategic role of ESD in achieving MDGs, especially in supporting poverty reduction and in addressing the emerging issues such as global warming, climate change and environmental sustainability.

Appendix 7

Terminology

Sustainable Development (SD)

There are many different accounts of sustainable development, and it is recognised to be a developing and contested concept. This paper takes as central the elements that have been mandated through UN processes, including the Rio Declaration and UN agreements on the DESD:

- All sustainable development programmes (...) must consider the three spheres of sustainability: environment, society (including culture), and economy.
- United Nations' history carries with it a host of values related to human dignity and rights, equity and care for the environment. Sustainable development (SD) takes these values a step further and extends them between generations. With sustainable development comes valuing biodiversity and conservation along with human diversity, inclusivity and participation. In the economic realm, some embrace sufficiency for all and others equity of economic opportunity. (UNESCO DG's report 2005).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

ESD is tied to the development of the SD agenda and perspectives, but also influences it through interpretation and clarification of that agenda. ESD also independently contributes to the SD agenda from the perspective of learning. ESD is an evolving and an on-going process that reflects the ever-growing needs of our society. Therefore, ESD includes processes that enable people to learn to efficiently deal with new economic, social and environmental challenges. To this end, the following are important aspects of ESD processes:

- Future thinking: actively involves stakeholders in creating and enacting an alternative future;
- Critical thinking: helps individuals assess the appropriateness and assumptions of current decisions and actions;
- Systems thinking: understanding and promoting holistic change;
- Participation: engaging all in sustainability issues and actions
(UNESCO Introductory Note 2007).

“it is essential that all the people with a sense of responsibility turn their attention to both the aims and the means of education (...) [to develop] ways in which educational policies can help to create a better world, by contributing to sustainable human development, mutual understanding among peoples and a renewal of practical democracy”.

(Introduction, *Learning: The Treasure Within*,
Delors et al., 1996)

