DRAFT ONLY

UNESCO

United Nations

Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
(January 2005 – December 2014)

Framework for a Draft International Implementation Scheme

July 2003

CONTENTS

PREAMBLE: THE UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION ON THE DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2005-2014

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the ten-year period from 2005 to 2014 as the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.[1] Governments around the world are invited to use the Decade to integrate education for sustainable development into their national educational strategies and action plans at all appropriate levels.

As Lead Agency in the promotion of the Decade, UNESCO is required to consult with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to develop a draft international implementation scheme for the Decade, bearing in mind the relationships between education for sustainable development and current international educational priorities, especially the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum and the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD).

The Executive Board of UNESCO ratified the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development at its 166th Session in April 2003 with the activities to support the Decade incorporated into UNESCO's operational plans of the next biennium

This paper presents a framework upon and from which a draft international implementation scheme for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development can be prepared through consultations with UN and other partners.

Section I elaborates the nature of education for sustainable development and clarifies its links with other major international educational processes and priorities. This serves to highlight the synergistic nature of sustainable development and education and the priority areas of poverty alleviation, gender equality, health promotion, the conservation and protection of the natural resource base upon which social and economic development depends, rural transformation, human rights, peace, international understanding, cultural and linguistic diversity and the potential of ICTs.

Section II describes a partnership approach to the development of a draft international implementation scheme for the DESD. This identifies a range of partners at the sub-national, national, regional and international levels who will need to be involved to ensure the successful implementation of Decade activities and that these activities have maximum impact upon education policy, programmes and practice around the world. It also outlines a range of possible strategies for enhancing participation, ownership and commitment by partners in the Decade. Emphasis is placed upon supporting initiatives at the local level and ensuring that structures at the national, regional and international level provide direction and guidance for local initiatives.

Section III concludes the paper with a proposed schedule of activities aimed at catalyzing world society in preparation for the DESD over the period July 2003 – December 2005. These are organized in the two areas of (i) communication and advocacy and (ii) building momentum, partnerships and support for the Decade.

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[1] United Nations General Assembly,Resolution 57/254, 2002.

SECTION I: EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Rio Declaration from the World Conference on Environmental and Development 1992 began by stating:

> Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

The Johannesburg Declaration at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 built on this aspiration and expressed the commitment of world leaders "to build a humane, equitable and caring global society cognizant of the need for human dignity for all."

Meeting Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals provide a pathway to attaining sustainable development. Sustainable development is a dynamic and evolving concept with many dimensions and interpretations and reflects locally relevant and culturally appropriate visions for a world in which development "meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".[2] The Millennium Development Goals provide targets for international actions to bring such visions into reality by: overcoming poverty; improving child, maternal and sexual health; expanding educational provision and redressing gender inequalities in education; and developing national strategies for sustainable development.

While considerable progress has been made around the world, it has been uneven, with regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and many small island states yet to see the benefits promised by globalisation. Thus, despite many notable achievements in improving health, new problems such as HIV/AIDS have reversed hard-won gains in infant survival and life expectancy in a growing number of countries and communities worldwide. And around the world, unsustainable processes of development maintain pressure on natural resources while unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, especially in developed countries, threaten the fragility of the natural environment and intensify poverty elsewhere.

Thus, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, has argued that:

> *Our biggest challenge in this new century is to take an idea that sounds abstract – sustainable development – and turn it into reality for all the world's people.* [3]

Education: Making the Abstract Real

Making the abstract real, and developing the capacities of individuals and societies to work for a sustainable future is, essentially, an educational enterprise. Indeed, the four principles for achieving sustainable human development enunciated at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002 reflect the four pillars of education described in the Delors Report[4]:

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[2] World Commission on Sustainable Development (1987) *Our Common Future*, Oxford University Press, p. 43.

[3] United Nations press Release: SC/SM/7739 "Secretary General Calls for Break in Political Stalemate over Environmental Issues", 15/03/01.

[4] *Learning: The Treasure Within*. Report of the Independent Commission on Education for the 21st Century, UNESCO, 1996.

Achieving sustainable development requires:	Education provides the skills for:
Recognition of the challenge	Learning to know
Collective responsibility and constructive partnership	Learning to live together
Acting with determination	Learning to do
The indivisibility of human dignity	Learning to be

Thus, education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development, increasing people's capacities to transform their visions for society into reality. Education not only provides scientific and technical skills, it also provides the motivation, justification, and social support for pursuing and applying them. The international community now strongly believes that we need to foster — through education — the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future. Education for sustainable development has come to be seen as a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities. Building the capacity for such futures-oriented thinking is a key task of education.

This represents a new vision of education, a vision that helps people of all ages better understand the world in which they live, addressing the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future. This vision of education emphasises a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to developing the knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as changes in values, behaviour, and lifestyles. This requires us to reorient education systems, policies and practices in order to empower everyone, young and old, to make decisions and act in culturally appropriate and locally relevant ways to redress the problems that threaten our common future. In this way, people of all ages can become empowered to develop and evaluate alternative visions of a sustainable future and to fulfil these visions through working creatively with others.

The Four Domains of Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development has four major domains, reflecting diverse goals and audiences: promotion and improvement of basic education, reorienting existing education at all levels to address sustainable development, developing public understanding and awareness of sustainability, and training.

- *Basic Education*: The content and duration of basic education differ greatly around the world. Access to basic education remains a problem for many, especially girls and illiterate adults, the majority of whom are women. However, simply increasing basic literacy and numeracy as currently taught will not significantly advance sustainable development. Instead, basic education needs to focus on sharing knowledge, skills, values and perspectives throughout a lifetime of learning in such a way that it encourages sustainable livelihoods and supports citizens to live sustainable lives. This approach to basic education also supports public participation and community decision-making, which in turn, help communities to achieve their sustainability goals.

- *Reorienting Existing Education Programs*: Rethinking and revising education from nursery school through university to include a clear focus on the development of the knowledge, skills, perspectives and values related to sustainability is important to current

and future societies. This implies a review of existing curricula in terms of their objectives and content to develop transdisciplinary understandings of social, economic and environmental sustainability. It also requires a review of recommended and mandated approaches to teaching, learning and assessment so that lifelong learning skills are fostered. These include skills for creative and critical thinking, oral and written communication, collaboration and cooperation, conflict management, decision-making, problem-solving and planning, using appropriate ICTs, and practical citizenship.

- *Developing Public Awareness and Understanding of Sustainability*: Progress towards sustainability requires that the growing global awareness of social, economic and environmental issues is transformed into understanding of root causes and that local, national and global visions of what it means to live and work sustainably are developed. Thus, achieving the goals of sustainable development requires widespread community education and a responsible media committed to encouraging an informed and active citizenry.

- *Training*: All sectors of the workforce can contribute to local, regional and national sustainability. Business and industry are thus key sites for on-going vocational and professional training so that all sectors of the workforce have the knowledge and skills necessary to make decisions and perform their work in a sustainable manner.

Linking DESD to other International Educational Priorities

The plan of implementation of the WSSD focuses largely on policies, programmes, resource mobilisation and institutional frameworks. The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development is an opportunity to put the human element at the forefront of efforts to facilitate the plan. The understandings, values, commitments and skills outlined above, that only education can provide, will support the more technical elements of the plan, reminding everyone – children, youth, adults – that the sustainable development agenda is in fact an agenda for all of us. It is about the way we live our lives, the way we respect the lives of others – far and near, present and future – and our attitudes to the world around us.

Sustainable development requires a holistic approach: Education for sustainable development has connections with other programmes and concerns in education. It is not a new programme but a call for a process to re-orient educational policies, programmes and practices so that education plays its part in building the capacities of all members of society to work together to build a sustainable future.

Thus, the focus of DESD activities will be advocacy, communication and networking directed at facilitating all educators to include sustainable development concerns and goals in their own programmes.

UNESCO currently has the responsibility for coordinating two major world initiatives in education: Education for All (EFA) and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD). Coordination of EFA was established at the World Education Forum in 2000, but has roots in the previous decade, following Jomtien (1990). The UNLD started in 2003 and is in the initial stages of implementation. Thus, in terms of efficient management and maximizing impacts, it is essential that the DESD is coordinated in conjunction with both EFA and the UNLD.

There is clear basis in the WSSD Plan of Implementation for linking the aims and strategies of these initiatives with the DESD. Firstly, the WSSD Plan of Implementation endorses the EFA goals and cites the Dakar Framework for Action as the point of reference for educational development. Secondly, it endorses the two education-related goals of the Millennium Declaration.

The Dakar Framework for Action sees education as 'the key' to sustainable development, especially in the areas of poverty reduction or alleviation. Citing the role of education as the key to equitable and sustainable development, the *International Strategy to put the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All into Operation* , published in 2002, sees education as part of the basic economic and social infrastructure for sustainable development" (p.8). It also called for broad-based co-operation between all concerned partners so that educational strategies build peace, hope, stability, tolerance and mutual understanding as a platform for sustainable development" (p.25).

Similarly, the UN General Assembly resolution and plan for the UNLD both state that "literacy for all is at the heart … of ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy."

These references establish clear common ground. Whether from the point of view of sustainable development, or from that of EFA and the UNLD, education is a central strategy for sustainable development.

Key Themes in Education for Sustainable Development

Common ground also exists in the critical issues that underpin ESD, EFA and UNLD. These issues constitute the priorities for planning programmes and activities that will support the objectives of DESD, and include:

- *Overcoming Poverty*: It is axiomatic in all three initiatives that poverty alleviation is key in development efforts. However, there is an important distinction to be made. While EFA and UNLD see poverty alleviation as the framework within which action for development is undertaken, the DESD sees it as one of the key pillars (appropriate economic development) by which sustainable development will be supported. There is room therefore for ESD to work with EFA and UNLD so that this broader view of development becomes the norm. All three initiatives should advocate for education that recognises the complexity of poverty and its alleviation and refute a view of education as merely a means to increase income.

  Beyond that, poverty alleviation is central to all Millennium Development Goals that recognize the importance of gender issues, education, health and environmental protection to sustainable human development. This makes gender equality, health and protecting the resources base upon which social and economic development depends important educational concerns.

- *Gender Equality:* This forms the basis for one of the EFA goals, and is elaborated in one of the twelve EFA strategies. The General Assembly also identified it as one of the motivating reasons for establishing the UNLD. In the WSSD Plan of Implementation gender equality is seen as both an aim and a pre-condition of sustainable development. Gender equality in formal education is also the main objective of the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). All these initiatives emphasise the need for gender-sensitive approaches and materials, and for the integration of gender perspectives into all educational activities.

- *Health Promotion*: The issues of development, environment and health are closely entwined, reflecting the complex links between the social, economic, ecological and political factors that determine standards of living and other aspects of social well-being that influence human health. A healthy population and safe environments are important pre-conditions for sustainable development. However, the education of many children and young people around the world is compromised by conditions and behaviours that undermine the physical and emotional well-being that makes learning possible. Hunger,

malnutrition, malaria, polio and intestinal infections, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and injury, unplanned pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections are just some of the problems we face that have enormous implications for health. The WSSD Plan of Implementation, EFA and UNLD embrace health education activities to achieve their goals, with schools acting not only centres for academic learning, but also as supportive venues for the provision of essential health education and services.

- *Environmental Conservation and Protection:* There can be no long-term economic or social development on a depleted planet. Education to develop widespread understanding of the interdependence and fragility of planetary life support systems and the natural resource base upon human well-being depends lies at the core of education for sustainable development. Key resource priorities identified by the World Summit on Sustainable Development include: water, energy, housing, agriculture and biodiversity – the issues that came to be know at Johannesburg as the WEHAB Agenda. 'Environmental literacy" depends upon such understandings – and EFA and UNLD are central to developing the capacity for such learning. It also entails the capacity to identify root causes of threats to sustainable development and the values, motivations and skills to address them.

- *Rural Transformation*: The challenge of education to serve rural transformation is one of the main themes of the Education for All effort. The problems of poverty and deprivation in rural areas, and their spill-over into urban areas, cannot be solved by preventing urbanisation and keeping rural people confined to rural areas. Rather, many, if not all, of the EFA and Millennium Development Goals require special attention to the situation of rural populations. In spite of rapid urbanization, three billion or 60 per cent of the people in developing countries, and half of the people of the world, still live in rural areas. Three quarters of the world's poor, those earning less than a dollar a day, live in rural areas. One in five children in the South still does not attend primary school and, while rural-urban statistics on education are scarce, many countries report that non-attendance in school, early dropout of students, adult illiteracy and gender inequality in education are disproportionately high in rural areas, as is poverty. Urban-rural disparities in educational investment and in the quality of teaching and learning are widespread and need to be redressed. Rural people and rural areas are not homogeneous, and so for education to be relevant, it needs to respond to the diversity of rural situations. Educational activities have to be linked to the specific needs of the rural community for skills and capacities to seize economic opportunities, improve livelihood and enhance the quality of life. A multi-sectoral educational approach involving all ages and formal, non-formal and informal education is necessary.

- *Human Rights:* Without respect for human rights there will be no sustainable development – this view emerges in the WSSD Plan of Implementation, and one of those rights is the right to a quality basic education, of which literacy is a part. Both EFA and UNLD underline the rights-based nature of their agendas. It is not just a matter of exercising an individual right, as an adult or child, to be educated, but of arriving at a point where societies see fulfilment of that right as a *sine qua non* of sustainable development. This common approach should inform policy formulation at national level with particular attention to the implications for educational systems of a rights-based approach.

- *Intercultural Understanding and Peace*: Many opportunities for education and sustainable human development are being undermined by the lack of tolerance and intercultural understanding, upon which peace is founded. The resulting aggression and conflict causes significant human tragedies, overwhelms health systems, destroys homes, schools and often whole communities, and has led to increasing numbers of displaced

people and refugees. The goals of literacy and EFA cannot be met under such circumstances. Education for sustainable development therefore seeks to build skills and values for peace in the minds of humankind, as enshrined in the UNESCO charter.

- *Sustainable Production and Consumption***:** Sustainable lifestyles and ways of working are central to overcoming poverty and conserving and protecting the natural resource base for all life. Sustainable methods of production are needed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and manufacturing. Use of resources need to be minimized, and pollution and waste reduced. Likewise, there is a need to reduce the social and resource impacts of lifestyle consumption habits to ensure the equitable availability of resources for all around the world. Education and training for sustainable production and consumption depends upon literacy and basic education, and education for the world of work and responsible citizenship, are key goals of both EFA and UNLD.

- *Cultural Diversity:* "Our rich diversity . . . is our collective strength" was the way that the Johannesburg Declaration stressed the importance of this concept. The WSSD Plan of Implementation focuses on the protection of biodiversity as an essential component and indicator of sustainable development, within the broader context of cultural diversity. For the UNLD, the recognition and analysis of cultural and linguistic diversity is a premise on which the design of literacy programmes is built – the 'literacies' approach is defined, in part, by differences in cultural patterns of learning and in the use of languages. A key aspect of diversity is respect for indigenous and other forms of traditional knowledge, the use of indigenous languages in education, and the integration of indigenous worldviews and perspectives on sustainability into education programmes at all levels.

- *Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs):* All three initiatives see ICTs as a useful tool of learning and expression. The common problem is expanding access to ICTs and developing their use to enhance basic education. The Dakar Framework for Action articulates the dilemma that their increasing use 'may tend to increase disparities, weaken social bonds and threaten cultural cohesion'. This dilemma applies also to the promotion of literacy and of context-sensitive education for sustainable development, and includes the question of how use of ICTs relates to traditional learning tools (paper and pen, chalk and talk, for example). This is an area where common cause should be made by advocating strongly for local input into how ICTs should be used.

These many areas of overlap and common interest, both in approaches to education and in areas of substantive objectives, suggest that joint initiatives across DESD, EFA and UNLD can add value to the common effort of each individually.

SECTION II: A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO THE DESD

As the agency designated to take the lead in coordinating the DESD, UNESCO has the role of working to strengthen the vision and commitment of partners over the ten-year period. It is particularly important to build broad ownership at the start of the Decade, through a clear articulation of the value added by each partner.

This section identifies key principles upon which a partnership approach can underpin the development of an international implementation scheme for the Decade.

Partners

Partners in the DESD include all those organisations, networks, bodies and alliances that share the conviction that sustainable development depends to a large extent on broad-based awareness through educational and learning processes. As Table 1 shows, there are partners at all levels – sub-national (local, community) level, national, regional and international levels, and from all spheres – governmental, civil society and NGOs, and private.

Table 1: A sample list of potential partners in DESD

	Governmental	Civil society and NGOs	Private
Sub-national	▶ provincial/state/district departments of education and development sectors ▶ municipal authorities ▶ schools, adult learning programmes	▶ Community-based organisations ▶ local sections of NGOs ▶ faith-based groups ▶ village development committees ▶ adult learning groups	▶ local business ▶ clans and families ▶ individuals
National	▶ national government departments of education and development sectors ▶ universities and research institutes ▶ EFA networks	▶ national NGOs and NGO coalitions ▶ branches of international NGOs ▶ faith-based organisations ▶ teachers' associations and trade unions	▶ private sector businesses ▶ business associations
Regional	▶ regional inter-governmental groupings ▶ regional EFA networks	▶ regional CS and NGO groupings and networks	▶ regional business associations
International	▶ CSD ▶ EFA High-Level and Working Groups ▶ UNDG member agencies ▶ Millennium Project Task Forces ▶ official/semi-official watchdog bodies	▶ sustainable development education networks ▶ NGO UNESCO Liaison Committee ▶ CCNGO/EFA ▶ Global Campaign for Education ▶ international environmental NGOs	▶ international associations of businesses (eg in the extractive sector) ▶ TNCs (eg media corporations)

Principles for Developing Partnerships

With such an enormous and diverse group of potential partners, there is a need to focus on networks and alliances. Three key principles are: (i) vision, (ii) demonstration programs and (iii) networking.

- *Vision*: If each partner is to play its role within the DESD, it is essential that they are able to articulate clearly what the vision of ESD is in two ways: first, the overall vision of ESD to which all partners subscribe, and second, the particular vision for ESD within the parameters of their own aims, concerns and programmes.

  To facilitate this, it is essential that UNESCO develop a general statement of vision before the commencement of the DESD on the basis of extensive consultations. This should be widely distributed and then revised in partner-specific adaptations. The key to this will be ownership of the general statement. Further guidance may be useful for ways of sharing the vision with partners' own networks and contacts, based on a plan of advocacy and communication.

- *Demonstration activities*: Ultimately the DESD aims to see ESD implemented in thousands of local situations on the ground. This will not involve ESD as a stand-alone programme, but the integration of ESD into a multitude of different learning situations. Therefore, no standardised programme can or should be proposed. However, demonstration activities and programmes for adaptation in locally relevant and culturally appropriate ways can be developed and disseminated as catalysts for action. Each demonstration activity should include, among other things and for the situation it addresses:

  - ways to discover what the key local issues of sustainable development are

  - adaptive processes to accord with relevant teaching and learning strategies

  - ways of fostering links between the learning situation (school, adult programme, etc) and the community

  - ways of integrating local knowledge and culture

  - curriculum development processes enabling content to be decided locally relevant

  Such demonstration activities can serve as a resource for local discussion of how ESD can best be put into effect.

- *Networking*: As has been mentioned, sustainable development links with most aspects of life and development. Education for sustainable development concerns all kinds of educational structures and learning situations. From the outset, therefore, the orientation of DESD partners must be outward-looking, seeking to make connections with initiatives, programmes, groupings and networks through whom ESD will be further promoted and implemented. Particular attention must be paid to connecting with both national governments because of their central coordinating role and resources and with civil society networks, because their grassroots connections can enable DESD messages to fan out and down to local levels. To facilitate these processes it will be useful to spell out the why and how of building partnerships, and to model these processes at international level in preparation for the Decade.

These partnership processes are designed to build participation, ownership and commitment to catalyze momentum for the DESD.

How can this be promoted? What mechanisms can be identified to structure the necessary communication and dialogue? This section makes several proposals in response to these questions, beginning with a focus on mechanisms which will give voice to the local level – a 'bottom-up approach'.

Community-based Processes

One indicator of the success of the DESD will be the extent to which ESD becomes part of the development dialogue at community level. Spaces for dialogue generally exist at community level – associations, school support groups, cooperatives, faith-based groupings, self-help groups, development committees, and many more.

Giving maximum voice to local community level raises two significant challenges:

• What kind of support is needed to stimulate and sustain the process?

• How can community voices be heard beyond the local level?

These questions concern the way in which different levels are, or can be, linked with each other. As earlier sections of this paper have indicated, these links will be most effective if they provide space for local action, a supportive and positive policy environment, opportunities for exchange, as well as capacity-building.

In other words, a fundamental approach of the DESD should be to foster cooperation at all levels with the aim of strengthening local-level effectiveness. This implies that any organisation involved in ESD will also be part of a larger cooperative effort at the relevant level. Table 2 illustrates examples and for this in terms of individual action and broader cooperation.

Table 2: Community-level cooperation

Community-based institutions and organisations such as:	Working individually to:	Cooperating in ad hoc or formal local groupings to:
▶ schools, school support groups, cultural associations, youth organisations, cooperatives, faith-based groupings, self-help groups, development committees	▶ integrate ESD into regular learning activities and programmes ▶ identify and implement learning strategies	▶ identify local sustainable development challenges ▶ integrate local knowledge and skills into ESD ▶ exchange ESD experiences and learn lessons for better practice

National, Provincial and Local Government Processes

It is clear that input and leadership will be required to establish and initiate such processes. Input can be provided as governments and civil society networks distribute, in appropriately modified form for national circumstances, the guidance materials produced internationally – their principal emphasis will be how to generate local debate and identify locally relevant issues. Government departments at local level as well as civil society organisations could give leadership in forming ad hoc groupings.

Table 3 illustrates many ways in which such important input and leadership can be provided. However, the importance of locally relevant action in ESD means that no one pattern can or should be mandated.

Table 3: National-level cooperation

Actors at national level	Working individually to:	Working together as an national ESD task force to:
Education ministry and other relevant ministries	▸ provide a national policy framework for ESD ▸ budget and mobilise resources ▸ support sub-national departments ▸ foster public awareness on ESD and SD	▸ debate and recommend ESD policy options which reflect local-level experience and challenges ▸ integrate ESD into EFA and UNLD planning in the context of the EFA forum ▸ provide a forum for exchange of experience, positive and negative, in ESD ▸ identify research issues in ESD and plan cooperative research projects ▸ identify capacity-building needs and the actor best placed to meet them ▸ develop relevant monitoring indicators for ESD
NGOs, NGO and civil society networks and alliances	▸ facilitate exchange and information sharing among their members about ESD practices and experiences	
Media groups and agencies	▸ integrate ESD and SD awareness building into media strategies	
Private sector companies and trade associations	▸ provide a forum to identify SD challenges they face, and identify necessary learning needs	

Such activities can be catalyzed and coordinated by the establishment of an open ESD Task Force, constituted at national level, to provide a forum for all the actors to engage with each other. In addition, ESD should be an integral part of the agenda of national EFA forums, as must be the UNLD.

Regional Processes

Examples of regional processes are illustrated in Table 4.

Wider regional grouping for ESD will be useful coordinating bodies also. However, since EFA regional forums exist (or at least EFA regional meetings take place), it would be best to organise ESD regional groups in conjunction with them. Since ESD draws potentially on a wider range of actors/sectors, this would have the advantage of including such participants in the EFA meeting. (Indeed, cross-sectoral links are a key concern of EFA).

In the Timeline (Section III), a series of special regional or sub-regional workshops are suggested for 2004 as part of preparation for the DESD. Attended by governmental and non-governmental representatives of the region, these will focus on how countries can structure a process of consultation and awareness raising at the local level. The aim is to follow these meetings with in-country local-level consultations over the first year of the Decade, thus providing input into provincial and national ESD planning for following years. It is important to start the Decade with an emphasis on contextualised planning and to emphasise local voices in that process.

Table 4: Regional cooperation

Actors at regional level	Working individually to:	Working together as a regional ESD group to:
National government representatives	(see national level)	
Regional intergovernmental organisations	▶ support national-level policy-making ▶ foster exchange of experience and information	▶ conduct regional consultations on priorities for DESD ▶ share policies, practices, knowledge and progress ▶ identify common challenges ▶ learn from diverse strategies ▶ forge consensus on regional challenges and action ▶ organise cross-national training and capacity-building
Regional civil society and NGO networks, coalitions and alliances	▶ foster exchange and learning among member networks and organisations	
Regional media groupings	▶ share media strategies for SD and ESD	
Regional private sector associations	▶ promote cooperation of private sector with other actors in ESD	
Regional representatives of international agencies	▶ learn and communicate common lessons from cross-national experience ▶ facilitate cross-national exchange on ESD	
Regional representatives of bilateral cooperation	▶ assess ways to support national and regional ESD initiatives	

International Processes

There are already several fora where ESD issues can and should be prominently and regularly on the agenda: the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) relevant conferences of all UN agencies, programmes and organisations; NGO networks, and various EFA and UNLD meetings. These are depicted in Table 5. Many additional suggestions will be made and included in the development of the draft international implementation scheme for the Decade.

Table 5: International cooperation

Actors at international level	Working individually to:	Working together in various for a to:
International Ad hoc Working Group	▶ gather information on developments in ESD and emerging priorities ▶ promoting DESD	▶ advise UNESCO on developments and emerging priorities in ESD ▶ assist UNESCO in forming partnerships and developing projects in support of DESD
Intergovernmental agencies (UN and others)	▶ contribute to Inter-Agency Task Force ▶ integrate ESD planning into relevant workplans and initiatives ▶ participate in international and regional fora	▶ keep ESD high on the CSD agenda ▶ mobilise political will and strengthen mutual commitment, through CSD, or an Inter-Agency Task Force ▶ integrate ESD into EFA agendas (Monitoring Report, High-Level and Working Groups) ▶ foster global exchange of practice, policy and progress ▶ organise international, regional and sub-regional capacity building workshops, and conferences to advance DESD and ESD
UNESCO (DESD Lead Agency)	▶ promotion and capacity building for ESD and DESD within and across UNESCO sectors ▶ advocacy and communication with international community ▶ building partnerships and collective momentum	
Civil society and NGO networks	▶ promote inter-regional exchange and learning ▶ inform members of ESD developments	
Bilateral and multilateral development agencies	▶ integrate ESD into programmes and budgets ▶ promote research in ESD	

Monitoring

On-going monitoring is a prerequisite for a purposeful and well-organised Decade. This can be accomplished by integrating the monitoring of ESD into EFA and UNLD monitoring mechanisms at all levels. However, it may be useful to consider an inter-agency task force to meet, for instance, once a year to provide a place to monitor how far ESD issues continue to be firmly and visibly on the agenda of the international agencies, and to harmonise initiatives and avoid overlap.

Communication and Advocacy

UNESCO will develop a detailed communication and marketing plan to cover at least the next 18 months before the start of the Decade. This will include as a minimum:

- internal capacity building and staff training within UNESCO so that the organization as a whole is mobilized to fulfil its role as Lead Agency

- preparation and dissemination of sample sections of text (of several lengths, e.g 1,3,5 and 10 paragraphs) on the DESD to all UNESCO staff so that they can include appropriate reference to and discussion of the DESD in papers and presentations that they make in international fora.

- a website – updating the current UNESCO Education Sector ESD site.

- formation of a UNESCO Advisory Committee for DESD

- print and web materials which present:
  - ⊳ the vision of ESD and aims of DESD
  - ⊳ the links between ESD, EFA and UNLD
  - ⊳ the guidance as suggested in this paper
  - ⊳ an ongoing inventory/database of DESD initiatives
  - ⊳ links to UNESCO's own examples of innovations and good practice in ESD (e.g *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*)
  - ⊳ links to external websites of examples of innovations and good practice in ESD

- a programme of media releases on both the substance and process of DESD

- development of information packages to support partnerships for DESD, national launches of DESD, and guidelines for developing national ESD programs

- awareness-raising at international events and conferences

- proposals for linking the DESD with International Literacy Day and the Global EFA Week, and with the wide range of celebratory days in the United Nations calendar.

In view of the links between the DESD and the UNLD, inter-sectoral consensus-building processes have already begun. Efforts will be made also to more fully integrate all UNESCO sectors into this collaborative work so that the strengths and experiences of all sectors are mobilized to support the DESD by a whole-of-UNESCO initiative.

UNESCO will also work with countries and international partners to plan launches of the Decade at the start of 2005, with the emphasis being on launches at national level.

SECTION III: INITIATING THE DESD

The proposed activities are recommended actions for UNESCO in its role as Lead Agency to initiate and catalyse the DESD among other UN and international agencies and organisations, countries and civil society. They are grouped into around the two roles of:

1. Communication and advocacy and

2. Building momentum and support

The recommended activities cover the period from July 2003 to December 2005 and includes tasks, meetings and events proposed in this paper, as well as some international events already programmed, eg EFA events. Timings and durations are indicative and are divided into three-month segments for convenience.

Proposed timeline: July 2003 – December 2005

	2003 July – Sept	2003 Oct – Dec	2004 Jan– March	2004 April – June	2004 July – Sept	2004 Oct – Dec	2005 Jan– March	2005 April – June	2005 July – Sept	2005 Oct – Dec
Communication and Advocacy	Promotion and capacity building for ESD and DESD within and across all UNESCO sectors, field offices and centres, including: • internal capacity building within UNESCO so that the organization as a whole is mobilized to fulfil its role as Lead Agency • dissemination of information on the DESD to all UNESCO staff so that they can include appropriate reference to and discussion of the DESD in papers and presentations that they make in international fora.									
	Extensive consultation on framework of implementation scheme	Formation of International Ad hoc Working Group	Meeting of International Ad hoc working Group	Develop and distribute the statement of DESD vision	Develop and distribute guidelines and multi-media package to support national planning and launches of DESD		International and national DESD launches	SD theme in Global EFA Week	International Experts' Consultation Meeting on ESD (30 years after Belgrade, to prepare for Intergovernmental Conference in 2007 (30 years after Tbilisi)	
	Design Communication and Advocacy strategy	Presentation of the Framework to the General Conference	DESD website launch	Acceptance of international implementation scheme by international partners						
	Design UNESCO DESD website	Presentation of report to UN General Assembly		Develop, maintain and disseminate a calendar of international, regional, sub-regional and national DESD activities						
				Develop and maintain website as major international vehicle for news and networking on DESD activities and discussion						

	2003 July – Sept	2003 Oct – Dec	2004 Jan– March	2004 April – June	2004 July – Sept	2004 Oct – Dec	2005 Jan– March	2005 Apr– June	2005 July – Sept	2005 Oct – Dec
Building momentum and participation	Consultation on and development of the framework of the draft implementation scheme with: • EFA Working Group • Meeting of the Heads of UN Agencies • Member States • International NGOs and specialist ESD community	Presentation of a proposal for a framework of a draft international implementation scheme to: • UNESCO General Conference • EFA High-Level Group (Nov)		CSD 12	EFA Working Group inter-agency ESD Task Force	EFA High-Level Group		CSD 13	EFA Working Group	EFA High-Level Group

UNESCO leads regional/sub-regional workshops to build awareness of DESD and build region and country level commitment to planning of activities for DESD

UNESCO facilitates consultations with regional/sub-regional organisations and national governments, where appropriate, to build awareness of DESD and build regional and country level commitment to planning of activities for the DESD

UNESCO develops and disseminates guidelines and multi-media package to support national planning and launch of DESD programmes and activities

Planning of support structures and strategies for managing DESD by: governments, international agencies, region al organisations, civil society organisations and professional bodies

Governments host sub-national/local stakeholder consultations

Meetings of national DESD working groups