

Environment and Disaster Education

Many perspectives on the nature, scope and purposes of education for sustainable development were discussed, presented in different conferences nationally and internationally. World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) of Johannesburg in 2002 discussed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in different perspectives. It was revealed that a strong political commitment is required for the effective implementation of education programs. As a result, the International Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was proposed and adopted from 2005 to 2015. Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 on “Education, Awareness and Training” states the following: “Education, including formal education, public awareness and training, should be recognized as a process by which human beings and societies can reach their fullest potential. Education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues. While basic education provides the underpinning for any environment and development education, the latter needs to be incorporated as an essential part of learning. Both formal and non-formal education is indispensable to changing people’s attitudes so that they can have the capacity to assess and address their sustainable development concerns. It is also critical for achieving the environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behavior consistent with sustainable development and for effective public participation in decision-making. To be effective, environment and development education should deal with the dynamics of both the physical/biological and socio-economic environment and human (which may include spiritual) development; should be integrated in all disciplines, and should employ formal and non-formal methods and effective means of communication”.

This all-encompassing nature of education for sustainable development means that it needs to relate to four key audiences and purposes: 1) improving basic education, 2) reorienting existing education provision, 3) building understanding of and skills for sustainable living in the general community, and 4) integrating sustainable development into professional and vocational education within government, business and industry. Being relevant to all sectors of the society and education- formal, non-formal and informal education for sustainable development calls for the active collaboration and participation of all stakeholders.

Environment and disaster education targets the education process, which goes beyond the school or formal education boundary. Two specific issues are: education for actions, and education as a process.

