Workshop 4.1 ESD for Transforming Formal Education (School Systems)

Whole school approach to ESD - contribution to implement the SDGs in general

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Background

This paper was developed within the context of the ESD-Expertnet, an international cooperation in the field of ESD including experts from India, Mexico, South-Africa and Germany. The network was initiated by the German Government, Ministry for international Cooperation in 2010 and works in the field, leadership training, training of multipliers, mentorship for ESD and material development. The network is maintained and organised by "Engagement Global" the German Agency for development cooperation within the education sector and the civil society.(www.esd-expert.net)

Main content

For children and adolescents, globalisation includes more and more areas of life; their every-day life is influenced by globally produced commodities. Every day, the media offer insight into other parts of the world and into the global change. School by itself is a microcosm of this transformation, and it is determined by diversity. Children's and young people's future areas of work and life are also subject to global interdependencies in business, politics, environment and society, which all take influence on their life. In order to face these challenges while keeping in mind the objectives of sustainable development, education is faced with increasing expectations.

Sustainable Development, perceived as autonomous and co-determined sustainable design of all areas of life including the universal human rights and the requirements and chances of cultural diversity, is impossible without learning in an appropriate way. More than before, this connection of globally and sustainably designed development processes is in the focus of the

Global Development learning area, the SDGs define a new framework of actions and offer additional areas of activities at school.

Apart from school, this also applies to other areas of formal education as well as the areas of non-formal education. This aspect is gaining importance in the UNEESCO reports in the context of the UN Decade Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).[1]

The UNECE[2] strategy also puts the holistic development approach of ESD in their focus. Hence, schools are asked to reflect upon their own activities against the background of the principle of sustainable development, the SDGs and to identify chances for an (increased) integration of the idea of sustainability in their specific areas.

The development of a "whole school" as a school which integrates sustainable development on all levels requires – apart from the curricular implementation of the Global Development learning area – the advancement of school as an organisation.

Apart from a closer coordination of the specific subjects with one another and their alignment towards sustainable development, for school education the structural integration of sustainability in school as an organisation is important.

Increasingly, the expectations for schools reach beyond the area of subject-related teaching of knowledge. In this context, new kinds of local cooperation, changing requirements for the school board and closer cooperation's with the local school environment have important roles. The general competences for every-day life are increasingly focused in school education which also effects the subject-specific education. The interconnecting between the SDGs and competences and life style of students could be illustrated by the following graphic of UNEP:

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[1] UNESCO, Paris 2012

[2] United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (includes Europe, USA, Canada and Central Asia, UNECE has developed an own strategy for ESD, this strategy is already implemented and includes whole school approach, teacher education and special programs on vocational education and training, for more information www.unece.org)

The establishment of full-time schools supports these developments and broadens the perspectives of the design and priority setting of schools. Apart from the coordination of thematic references in subjects and learning areas, the educational institution as a whole is becoming increasingly important through the connection of its different elements. The principle of sustainable development should also be relevant for the school management and for school life in general, so that schools can become models for sustainable living. Here, apart from the central task of education, other areas are increasingly coming into focus:

- School management and the steering of school development
- democratic division of tasks and cooperation of the stakeholders
- social work at school
- school life and proposals which supplement the education
- networks, cooperation and partnerships
- the management of the school, cycles of matter and resource management
- design, construction and furnishing
- quality development and measurement of results

For each of these focuses, partners can be found to cooperate with; they will not only advise the school managers professionally, but often also develop proposals for cooperation which are aligned to the pupils' activities and to the lessons.
The concept ESD as a task for the whole school is not a closed structural specification but an open platform which supports the educational institutions' efforts to connect the already existing focuses and enhance them with elements of Education for Sustainable Development. The development of the learning area contributes to the improvement of school quality. This is

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[3] UNEP 2015

a task of the whole school community, school bodies, management, teachers, employees, students, pupils, parents, cooperation partners and friends.

Quelle: Orientierungsrahmen KMK 2015, Reiner Mathar
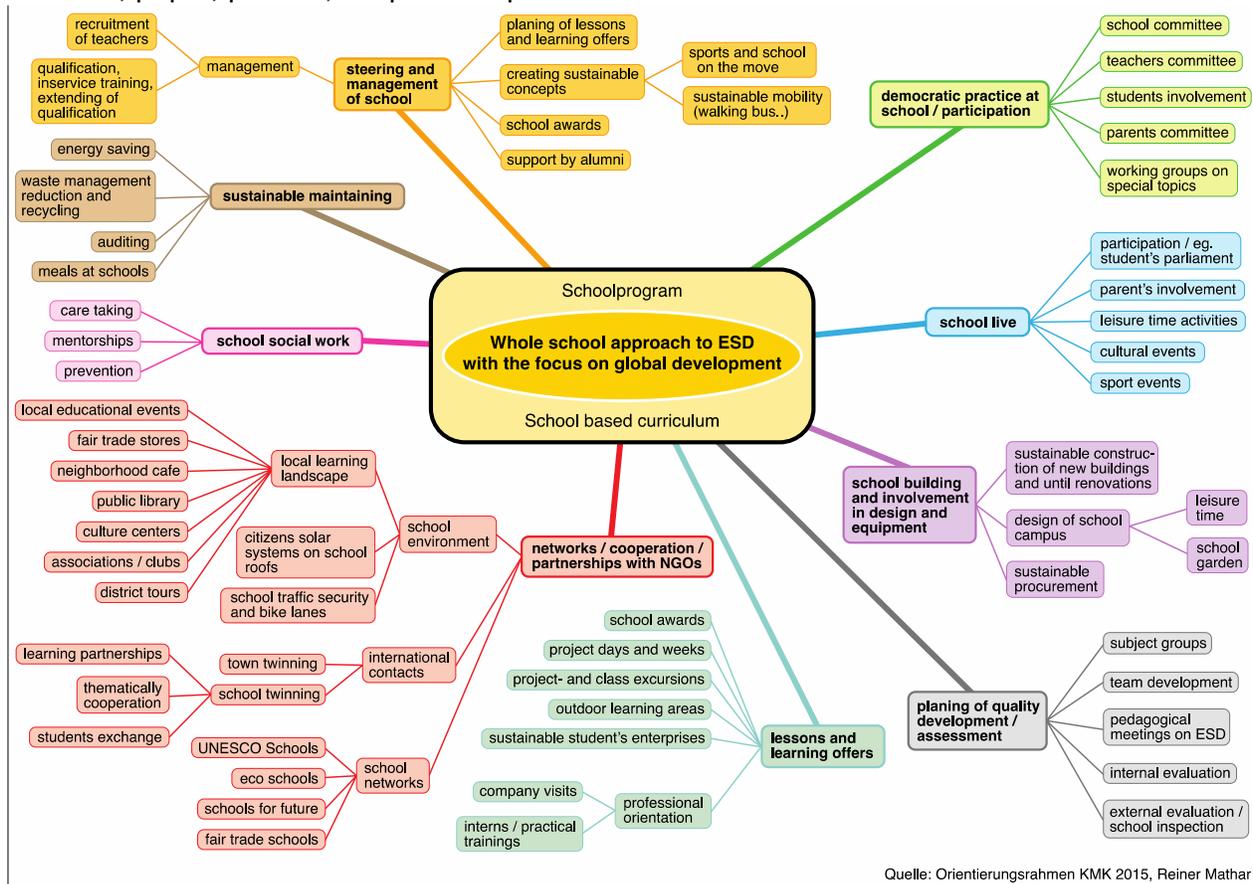
School profile, school programme and school curriculum are – with differences in their distinction – elements of the schools' focusing and mid-term planning and hence important tools for the school development. The intended structural anchoring of ESD in formal education1 with the Global Development learning area has to appropriately include these focuses in the school profile/ school programme/ school curriculum.Working for the school programme should be understood in terms of a process and open dialogue about the focuses and projects for sustainable development.

Many schools which have started in different ways to pursue this process towards ESD, environmental education or other educational areas of sustainable development provide inspiring examples.

Steering and management
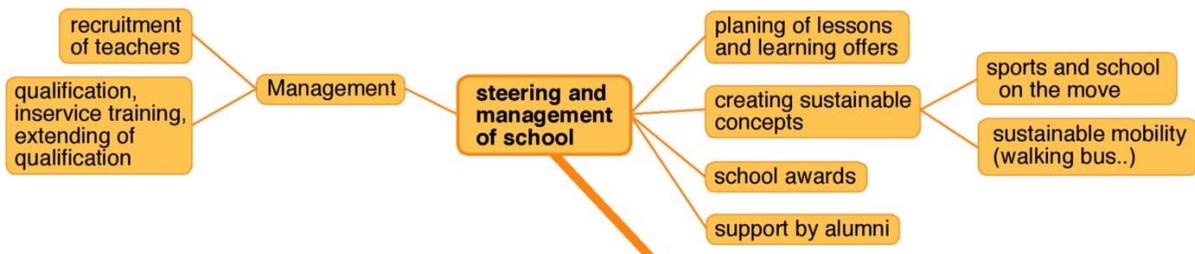
The school management has an important role in the design ESD. Hence, in the context of qualification and advanced training of school managers and of the school supervision, an in-depth understanding of the principle of sustainable development and the resulting management measures should be communicated.

The management and supervision of the school have to face the challenge to align the targets of public educational policy with the tasks and targets of the school authorities. If f.e. a "fair" and "ecological" procurement is targeted for the school canteen, this requires appropriate action by the school authorities. If the cycles of matter at school shall be organised in a sustainable way the staff of the school authority has to be included in the organisation. All this can be a part of a regional educational programme which is targeted at sustainable development.
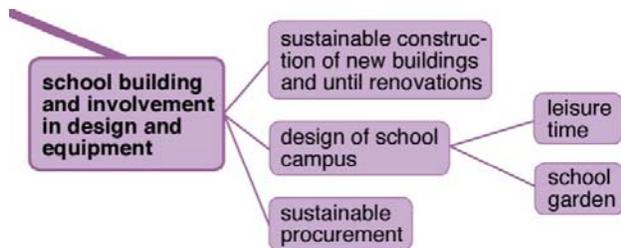
The **selection and qualification planning of the teachers** is essential – as is evident for the focusing of schools. Incentives through the creation of advanced positions which support ESD with responsibility structures can be an important element of human resources planning in this context.

For the formation of the social and cultural dimension of sustainable school development it is particularly important to staff the school beyond the requirement of teachers for the lessons. The organisation of assistance and the inclusion of social work at school with the opportunity of pupils to participate as well as the inclusion of parents and extra-curricular partners are very important areas. There are, f.e., already tested organisational forms for sport and cultural events, parents' cafés and cooking workshops.

It is crucial for the success of such school development projects to include the school boards in a way that is transparent and shares the responsibility. As far as this is part of their tasks and possibilities they should be able to identify with a sustainability profiling and support this in public with all its various aspects.

Often the management of larger schools is in the hands of a steering committee. Apart from the process steering and school development this group is often also in charge of proposals for the improved utilisation of flexible lesson schedules, for the concrete design of the time tables as well as for the daily and annual rhythms and routines. These structural specifications or proposals are essential for the implementation of the contents of any principle. They set the limits for test projects and for curricular agreements, they can motivate or demotivate, and they require an attitude that is oriented at the pupils and at the principles.

Schoolground,building,roomsandequipment

school building and involvement in design and equipment

sustainable construction of new buildings and until renovations

design of school campus

leisure time

school garden
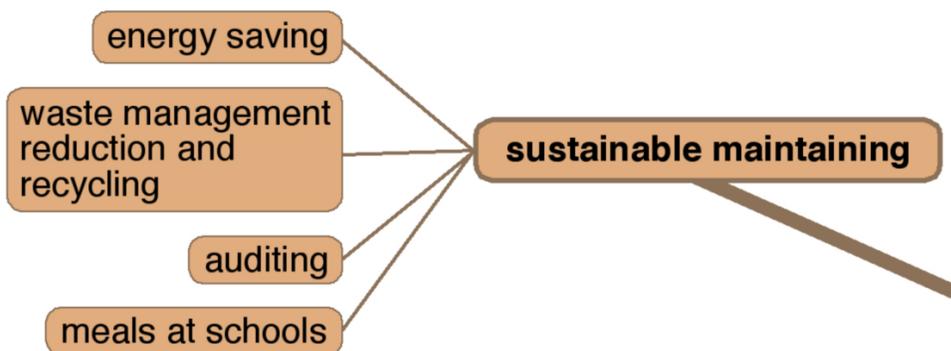
sustainable procurement

The school area, the building, rooms and equipment are an apparent expression of the school's self- image and of the society's sustainability principle. Today, the construction of new schools, their remodelling and extensions are no longer carried out by the building project organiser, the architects and construction companies alone, by order of the school board.
Participation processes of the future occupants and the quarter have become self-evident, even if they are not always easy and not always satisfying for all.

Particularly with regards to sustainable construction forms and materials, to sustainable energy and procurement concepts, we are dealing with a complex process of learning for all participants. Here, schools are quickly overstrained as co-deciders and hence they depend on the support by professional partners.
Anyway, the chances to develop the own or a neighbourhood school towards an efficient location for the installation of natural science, technical, economic, artistic and vocational learning processes are almost perfect.

The equipment and facility management are other dimensions of the processes of learning sustainable development. The sustainable public procurement has become an important faculty which has many tools at its disposal.126The true-to-life confrontation with the related opportunities and problems as well as their discussion in the wider environment of school, with parents and friends facilitate (even if often only indirectly) the acquisition of important experiences of purposefulness of learning processes and of a feeling of self-efficacy.
The development of concepts of the (more) sustainable organisation of cycles of matter and use of resources as well as the dialogue about this will confront the pupils with conflicts of implementation of sustainable development, and they can acquire competences for shaping their own lives.

energy saving

waste management reduction and recycling

sustainable maintaining

auditing

meals at schools

The focus on sustainable development also implies approaches for the solution of sometimes trivial and often annoying educational tasks in the fields of waste prevention and disposal, cleanliness, thriftiness and care for public institutions.

In a manageable context, the school offers the chance to test projects for the sustainable use of energy and at the same time learn about the limitations of implementation. These possibilities go from the economical and efficient handling of limited resources to fair, socially and environmentally sustainable procurement to healthy food from ecological and regional sources. Now it is only a short way to establish working groups, to elaborate public internet presentations, elective compulsory projects and sustainable pupils' enterprises but also to include the core contents of the respective subjects.

If we look at this area of school activities and the SDGs it shows that by doing and implementing this the schools offers practical experiences to fulfil the SDGs, showing that sustainable lifestyles are real and could be realized. The school as a "semi protected area" offers even to try and error, to make mistakes, reflect on them and find new and better solutions.

External relations - Integrating the school into the municipality

By including its environment into its processes of sustainable learning the school develops new or extended options. This mainly means communication about local / regional economic developments, about social and ecological problems, i.e. the participation in bearing the local challenges and living the SDGs!

In this way, the school can communicate that it cares for local development and that it realises that the city, the district or the quarter are locations for learning. At the same time these contacts are extremely important for the pupils' vocational orientation which is one of the central tasks of secondary schools.

This requires that the schools are proactive and develop a cooperation with business and civil society in areas like:

- Town twinnings
- Citizens' solar panels on the schools' rooftops
- District cafés and libraries
- Translation and secretarial services for the city district
- Public cycle repair workshops
- Securing the ways to school and extension of cycle tracks
- Participation in the organisation of local events
- Creation of APPs about places of interest and round tours

Partnerships and networking

There are many school partnerships in the region, in other parts of the state or with schools / projects abroad. Often they are founded by individuals, and many of them are hardly or not at

all included in a comprehensive strategy or in the school programme. Here ESD gives chances to strengthen these partnerships with a common goal, with content focuses and with school-internal networking. If the schools use these partnerships to work on concrete topics which are interesting for both sides, it is possible to attach or include them to the lessons. Thus, the planning reliability and long-term coverage can also be facilitated. The development of competences like the change of perspectives can be strengthened by using the own personal experiences. The partners from different parts of the world will get the chance to improve the introduction of their own perspectives.
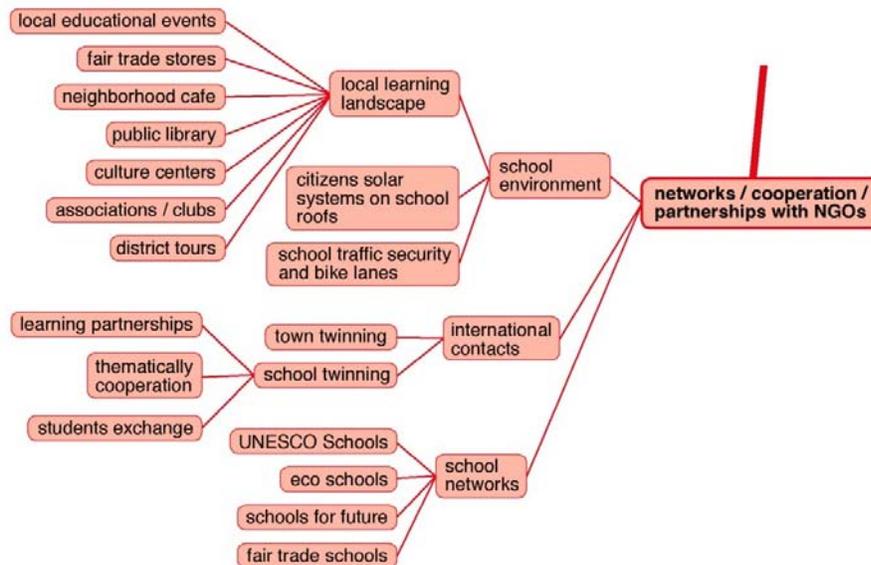
The possibilities to communicate via internet or via mobile network devices are everyday routine for the pupils – more and more even in the countries of the Global South – but the schools still use them but insufficiently for their project partnerships. Furthermore, the systematic inclusion into the educational process and the critical discussion of the pretended freedom of communication can give the pupils orientation for their own use of social media.

In the context of partnerships and cooperation, the Non-governmental play a very important role. They can competently advise the schools and also offer concrete projects and proposals. Within the concept of ESD as a task for the whole school, this hitherto underused possibility to strengthen the cooperation is enhanced to an integrated part of the school programme.