



Global Network on Sustainability and Education

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The problem of climate change is complex and challenging. There's a need to elaborate solution approaches inter-disciplinarily and cross-culturally. During the Future of Education Conference in June 2011 the Global Network on Sustainability and Education (GNSE) was founded to overcome the worldwide problem of climate change and its consequences by means of education.

The GNSEs mission is

- to stimulate change at local level.
- to collaborate with global partners.
- to support the network partners with ideas, information, materials, links and contacts.
- to enable the community to grow the necessary critical mass in the necessary timescales.

The GNSE built up a blog providing information for stakeholders in vocational education and adult education: <http://gnse.wordpress.com/>. The network is open for new members.

Educating for a sustainable future is a formidable challenge. How can we better understand the complexity of the world around us? What kind of world do we want for the future? How can we reconcile the requirements of economy, society, and the environment?

There are over 60 million teachers/trainers in the world. Each one is a key agent for bringing about the changes in values and lifestyles we need. For this reason, innovative teacher education and continuing professional development is an important part of educating for a sustainable future. Organizational development of educational establishments can support this effectively (and vice versa).

Educating for a sustainable future is not so much about a destination as about the process of learning to make decisions that consider the long-term economy, ecology and equity of all communities. Its goal is to build an enduring society. This involves learning how to anticipate the consequences of our actions, envision a sustainable future and create the steps needed to achieve the vision. Individuals, organizations and societies will perpetually have to make choices. This needs top-down strategies and bottom-up strategies simultaneously.

In the full paper the bottom up-strategies of organizations will be described more deeply concerning the three dimensions of sustainability:

- economy – e.g. energy consumption of buildings, curricula fit to workplace requirement, efficiency of teaching and learning etc.
- ecology – e.g. low energy strategies, certified equipment, use of low carbon servers,
- society – e.g. qualification and situation of staff, sickness absence rate of staff, drop out rate of participants

The full paper will suggest key points for sustainability in education.