



Regional Exchange Programme on Promoting Community-based ESD

(Hiratsuka, Japan /online)

August 10-11th, 2021

Promoting community-based Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has been advocated in the global society, which is also one of the five core working areas in *ESD for 2030* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2019. ESD has been recognized as playing a significant role in pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. In this regard and given the current COVID-19 pandemic globally, demands for collective learning on policy-making, practices and research have grown among practitioners and trainers of trainers working for the community education and development.

Under this background, Asia-Pacific Exchange Programme on Promoting Community-based ESD was held on 10 and 11 August in collaboration with Hiratsuka City and Tokai University Student Achievement Center in Japan and funding support by the Japan Foundation Asia Center and UNESCO Beijing.

The overall objective was to review and discuss based on the experiences of UNESCO's regional project on community-based ESD and explore future actions in participating countries. The Hiratsuka city of Japan, which was one of the participating communities in the project, hosted the workshop while participants from six countries joined online.

In the opening session, Mr. Yoshino Masahiro, Superintendent of Hiratsuka City Board of Education made an opening remarks, followed by Mr. Shahbaz Khan, Director of the UNESCO Cluster Office in Beijing welcomed all the participants through a video message, stressing the crucial importance of bottom-up approaches to ESD implementation in achieving sustainable development. During the 2-day workshop, cases from China, India, Japan, Lao PDR, Mongolia and the Philippines were presented and around 50 participants including local ESD practitioners and ESD experts exchanged their experiences and opinions.

The learning process in each country was shared and discussed, and the importance of continuing to learn even amid COVID-19 was emphasized. As every learning takes place in a local context, it is important to understand each need through such as intergenerational dialogue and traditional knowledge with multi-stakeholder participation, which is also highlighted in implementing the Reflect-Share-Act, a practical guide developed by the UNESCO

Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok. In this perspective, youth members in Japan's community development initiatives shared their stories on how the learning happens both inside as well as outside of schools where young people not only express their opinions and interact with their communities, but also share their own knowledge and experiences across generations. The importance of institutions and organizations as catalysts for young people's participation was also raised.



The workshop provided an opportunity for ESD promotion at the local level recognised within an international framework, and created the network for the future collaboration on ESD activities.



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From case studies of each country



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Reflect

engages learners in critical reflection to review and analyse their own experiences and practices from a sustainability perspective, and give meanings to the concept of sustainable development in their own community contexts.

Share

guides learners to share their reflections and understandings with others in the community and engage them in a Reflect-Share-Act process.

Act

helps learners put their understandings of sustainable development into action.

Comments from participants ► *Continue to empower educators to recognize how ESD and Reflect-Share-Act can be identified and celebrated in the current practices of youth, local community organizations, local governments who do GOOD Community work. We need to help them embed more explicitly ESD in the same way Hiratsuka spoke about it at the start, not boring lectures, but through Fun and Engagement.*



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