

ESD Citizens' Initiatives in Japan

The civil society has played a significant role in ESD promotion in Japan. This pamphlet is to present ESD-J's activities in Japan and Asia as well as the ESD statement and recommendations developed by ESD-J along with the ESD practitioners from all over Japan in 2014.



ESD-J was established in 2003.

The founders are the NGO members who made the proposal of "the UN Decade of ESD" in the Johannesburg Summit and made a great effort in realizing it.

We have developed learning for problem solving, that the citizen sector had steadily built and participatory leaning and experience learning. We have been trying to integrate such learning into the mainstream of educational activities through "the UN Decade of ESD."

Today, ESD-J has grown into a network NGO with 100 organizations and 250 members.

ESD-J has been working with the Japanese Government sometimes by making policy proposals to the Government and sometimes by working together on some projects. The proposals from ESD-J resulted in a government Roundtable Meeting for ESD promotion.

ESD's major concepts were identified through community meetings in 40 locations in Japan by ESD-J, which were incorporated into the National ESD Action Plan decided by the Japanese Government in March 2006.

We have been focusing on promoting alignment between schools and communities and promotion and encouragement of ESD coordinators who can bridge various stakeholders.

Then 10 years have passed.

Various ESD activities were implemented in school education, social education and community building. Some of the communities now have the ESD promotion mechanism based on partnership and collaboration of various actors.

Taking the UNESCO World Conference hosted in Japan as an opportunity, we worked with communities and schools who have been proactively promoting ESD, looked into the outline of those implementations, shared the challenges and developed the recommendations.

These recommendations are to call for various stakeholders related to ESD to "take actions" and propose policy support to the governments and other relevant administrative bodies.

We are conveying this statement to the world with our wish for further development of ESD in and after 2015 and our commitment for continued actions for the realization of sustainable future.

Statement on ESD Promotion by Citizens

The blessing of nature is unique to its community and has formed the foundation of our livelihood through delivering food and energy to us. This has created a way to support our livelihood and culture.



“Education for Sustainable Development :ESD” is an activity to learn from wisdom nourished from the long history of such communities, revisit what we have today and develop a vision for the future.

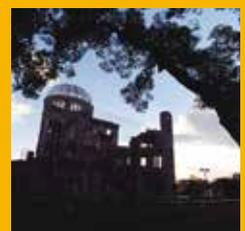
You can find the ESD activities in your daily lives. Schools, workplaces and communities are the places for learning, where both children and adults can be students as well as teachers. Various people get engaged and learn the challenges of their community from each other within their community. For addressing such challenges, we take actions, so that “daily lives” of each one of us can be fulfilling and enjoyable for sustainable future. Providing such sense of learning is what we are willing to achieve through ESD.



ESD derives people’s ability to lead their lives proactively and empowers the community’ with autonomy. Accumulating small steps of autonomy can lead to a great power to change a society. Enormous issues that are unlikely to be resolved such as the world’s poverty, environmental disruption, conflicts and discrimination are all linked with our lives. Thus, if we change ourselves, the community will change. When the community changes, the world will change.



“The UN Decade of ESD” has brought various changes in schools, villages, towns and cities regardless of its size. Some of the activities may not have been called as ESD, however, there is increasing number of activities where citizens take initiative to resolve a challenge for sustainable society, and business and government sector people take part and cooperate across sectors. We will build a network to promote sustainable community, and continue to strengthen such movement.



While the social transformation called ESD may seem to be a roundabout and optimistic approach, we commit to strongly promote this movement further in and after 2015 through partnership with various stakeholders.



ESD Recommendations from communities and the civil society

Promoting ESD from a community as a whole

[GAP5. Local communities]

Recommendation 1

Improve and enhance alignment between a local community and a school, and promote ESD with the local community and the school together. A minimum unit of a local community can be one school district for an elementary or a junior high school level.

Recommendation 2

Identify, train and encourage ESD coordinators having ESD viewpoint. Develop opportunities for ESD coordinators to use their skills.

Recommendation 3

Create a vision of a "sustainable community/society" in harmony with local, regional, national and global challenges with participation of various stakeholders from a community.



Promoting educational reform

[GAP1. Policy support, GAP2. Educators, GAP3. Whole-institution approach]

Recommendation 4

Include an "ESD" section in the curriculum guideline as a new direction for education (educational reform), and not only setting the ESD's concept but also clearly positioning ESD in the subjects of primary and secondary education.

Recommendation 5

Integrate ESD training in all opportunities including the teacher training/re-training curriculum, basic training for active teachers (i.e. first year or 10th year trainings), and the principals' training.

Recommendation 6

Develop "sustainable economy education" which realizes "sustainable production and consumption" together with academic, industry and government sector experts.

Youth participation [GAP4. Youth]

Recommendation 7

Higher education institutions including universities should promote ESD with participatory approach and approach addressing local communities' challenges in which students are encouraged to join.

Recommendation 8

Municipal governments and other local organizations should proactively involve the youth in their activities to teach and train the youth.

Developing the system to promote ESD

[GAP1. Policy support, GAP3. Whole-institution approach, GAP5. Local communities]

Recommendation 9

By defining the "praise system" through sharing of ESD best practices and existing awards, develop a system which increase a number of stakeholders engaged in ESD as well as improve ESD quality.

Recommendation 10

Raise funds for ESD promotion through various channels and ensure operation of ESD activities.

Recommendation 11

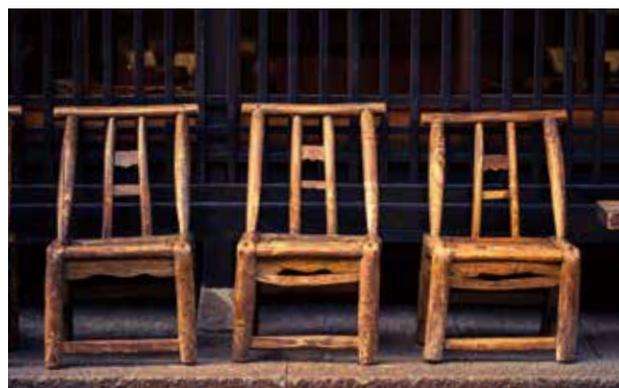
Establish "Local ESD Council" where major local stakeholders can participate at the prefecture or municipal levels.

Recommendation 12

Relevant ministries should work on measures contributing to ESD respectively, designate their existing regional branches as ESD promotion facilities, and support ESD efforts in local communities.

Recommendation 13

Establish "National ESD Promotion Council", a network of multiple stakeholders at the national level and "ESD National Center" an implementation body of such policies to support local ESD activities.



Establishment of Asian NGO Network on ESD (ANNE), to promote ESD in Asia

ESD-J has developed partnership with NGOs in Asia in order to promote ESD in this region since its establishment in 2003 and "Asia Good ESD Practice Project (AGEPP)" was conducted from 2006 to 2008. NGOs from seven countries in Asia participated in AGEPP that allowed us to share ESD good practices at local community level by NGOs and enhanced mutual learning among us. AGEPP showcased 34 NGO practices of the member countries in English and developed a multi-language website introducing the case reports in different Asian languages as well as English(www.agepp.net/).

Through this project, the member NGOs shared our views on how to empower the local community while achieving sustainable community development, and clarified the critical role of NGOs in such process. AGEPP member NGOs also engaged in the policy advocacy activities for the Hokkaido Toyako G8 Summit (2008), the ESD World Conference (2009), the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD/COP10, 2010), and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, 2012). Through these case study and policy advocacy activities, the AGEPP members agreed on the necessity of a NGO network on ESD in Asia.

In October 2014, Asia NGO Network on ESD (ANNE) was formally launched with NGO members who participated in AGEPP.

ANNE Founding Members

India	Centre for Environment Education (CEE)
Philippines	Environmental Broadcast Circle (EBC)
Indonesia	BINTARI Foundation
South Korea	Korea Institute Center for Sustainable Development(KICSD)
Japan	ESD-J



ESD side event at Rio +20 (2012)



ANNE Launcing Ceremony in Okayama (2014)



Field visit and workshop in Surabaya (2010)



Local community eco-enterprise with micro-financing in India



Organic farming in the Philippines

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