



Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire
World Organisation for Early Childhood Education
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
www.omep.org.gu.se

OMEP Project about ESD

respect

the rights
of the child

reuse

make more use
of old things

reflect

on the cultural
differences in the world

reduce

we can do more
with less

rethink

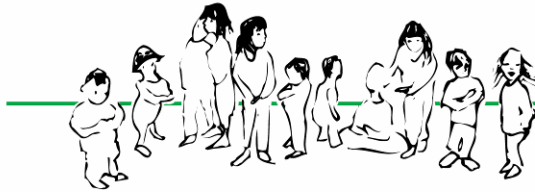
people today
value other things

recycle

someone else
can use it again

redistribute

resources can be
used more equally



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Education for Sustainable Development in Practice

A report for the OMEP World Assembly and Conference
on the OMEP WORLD ESD Project 2010-2011

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Introduction and aim

Today, children of the world have a stronger position than before. Children have the right to express their opinions and influence decisions that affect them. The preschool child as a learner has the right to be involved in issues that concerns her life here, now and in the future. How can we work for a better future, individually and collectively, with and for all children? How can we work together to develop cultural identities within a social and ecological "everyday life"- context? How can we support culture focusing on a democratic and sustainable society?

OMEP has appointed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as the major project for the next coming years. The purpose of ESD is to reorient education in order to contribute to a sustainable future for the common good of present and future generations. The OMEP World Assembly in Lagos in August 2009 decided to start a project on ESD, and in Gothenburg in 2010 to expand the OMEP World Project on ESD with a Part 2 – ESD in practice. The idea behind the project is to introduce and invite children and professionals to discuss Education for Sustainable Development. This is one way for OMEP members and national committees to work with children on ESD, and by using the large OMEP organisation the project will have a worldwide coverage.

The overall aim of the ESD project is to enhance the awareness of Education for Sustainable Development among OMEP members, young children and early childhood education at large. The aim of ESD project Part 1 - Child interviews is to collect information about young children's thoughts, comments and understanding of the OMEP 2010 Congress logo. The focus was on child interviews with a sincere intention to actually listen to what children say. When children get the possibility to talk freely about what they see in the picture, children's interpretation of the image, the words and concepts children use, provide a good basis for approaching the children's experience. This perspective of how children reason can give cues about how sustainable development as a perspective and as a content could be handled in the pre-school. Many interviewers were amazed by all the knowledge the children showed them. The children had thoughts and ideas to bring up about the state of the earth in relation to sustainability. The result shows that young children have knowledge about the environment, thoughts about environmental issues, the responsibility people carry and ideas about what to do. Using informal child interviews were a successful method. The report on Part 1 of the project can be found on the International OMEP web site www.omep.org.gu.se .

The aims of Part 2 - ESD in practice are to implement Education for Sustainable Development together with the children in early child-hood education practices and to collect information and further understanding of young children's ideas and actions within ESD. The OMEP world project has been very well spread and 28 countries have joined the project. Hundreds of professionals and thousands of children have been participating. We would like to thank all the participants sincerely. Your contributions and efforts have made the project possible.

This document is a report made for the OMEP World Assembly in Hong Kong, 2011. The report is based on the 21 reports delivered during June 2011. It will serve as a starting point for the symposium about the ESD World Project. The full report on this project can be found on the OMEP World Web site www.omep.org.gu.se later in 2011.

Education for Sustainable Development - ESD

Children of today face a rapidly changing society with new challenges and possibilities. For four decades environmental issues have been on the educational agenda, initially named environmental education. Sustainable Development (SD) is widely understood as *'a form of development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'* (Brundtland, 1987). Therefore, SD can be considered to represent an attempt to provide equity with, to and for, future generations.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that children have the right to be involved and to be heard in matters that are affecting them. In Agenda 21, the UN agreement for global sustainable development from Rio 1992, children are recognized as important participants in the shaping of a sustainable future.

“Children not only will inherit the responsibility of looking after the Earth, but in many developing countries they comprise nearly half the population. The specific interests of children need to be taken fully into account in the participatory process on environment and development in order to safeguard the future sustainability of any actions taken to improve the environment”.

(Agenda 21, 1992, chapter 25:12)

The United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome document, refers to the *'interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars' of sustainable development; social development, economic development, and environmental protection*. The three pillars are intertwined in ESD and a characteristic is that neither can be neglected.

In an attempt to translate the definitions of sustainable development into educational goals Pramling-Samuelsson and Hägglund (2009) also stress the integration of environmental, social and economical dimensions but they also add value dimensions. They point out the similarities between ESD and peace education, education for democracy and values and citizenship education. These fields are ideological and political, which is why normative approaches are common within ESD.

UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development

UNESCO has declared a UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014. Formal, informal and non-formal education and learning processes for sustainability must be strengthened and prioritized. The purpose of ESD is to reorient education in order to contribute to a sustainable future for the common good of present and future generations. The following key education principals are addressed in the United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome document:

- interdisciplinary and holistic
- values-driven
- critical thinking and problem solving
- multi method
- participatory decision making
- applicability
- locally relevant

Participation and involvement are necessary components of ESD, with an emphasis on empowerment and agency for active citizenship, human rights and societal change. Re-orientation is necessary at all levels and in all phases of education, and encompasses

community learning, thus making ESD a wider process challenging the form and purpose of education itself (The Gothenburg Recommendations, 2008).

Specific recommendations for Early Childhood Education and ESD are also included in the Gothenburg Recommendations (2008) on the following themes: Access for all to a process of lifelong learning, Gender, Learning for change, Networks, arenas and partnerships, Professional development to strengthen ESD across all sectors, ESD in curriculum, Sustainable development in practise and Research.

ESD is also a problematic concept

Education for sustainable development as a concept is challenging. As was learned during the first project year, the concept of Sustainable Development does not even exist in all languages. Thus, translation to other languages is necessary. Most children had never heard of ESD, although they had experiences linked to the issues linked to SD.

Modern educational systems are closely integrated with the global economy (EPSD, 2010) and the economy directs education towards needs that are themselves the product of systems nourished by neo-liberal market ideologies (Bunar, 2010). Researchers have expressed concerns about the uncritical acceptance and promotion of educational programmes based on 'developmentally appropriate practices'. The dominance from the Minority world, e.g. the North, industrialised or the American-European societies, has even been interpreted as cultural imperialism towards the Majority world, e.g. the South, non-industrialised or the previously called developing countries (Siraj-Blatchford, 2009).

ESD is grounded in the belief that formal education has a significant role to play in establishing beliefs and practices that will promote more sustainable approaches (EPSD, 2010). Ideally, ESD should empower children and societies by equipping them with values and basic skills aligned with sustainability. However, the spread of dominant European-American notions about *best practices* and preferred outcomes in early childhood challenge traditions and values in the majority world, such as learning from the elders and connection with nature (Pearson & Degotardi, 2009). If ESD is to be meaningful and successful, it has to be rooted in the local concrete reality of young children. Change and sustainability may co-exist if they are accepted both in the local and in the global society. Innovations need to be meaningful to children, teachers and the extended families if they will promote a sense of agency and empowerment (EPSD, 2010).

Australian teachers and researchers have adopted the concept education for sustainability (EfS), which includes the pros in sustainable without being compromised of the negative connotations to development. EfS emerges out of critical theory and also turns the focus towards the pedagogies of humans as agents for change (Elliott & Davis, 2009).

Although problematic, in the upcoming 2012 UN- conference in Rio, RIO PLUS TWENTY, sustainability will again be a key concept. As development often is linked to growth, Sustainable development can be perceived as the opposite to sustainability (Leach, Scoones & Stirling, 2010). However, it may be a discursive resource for rethinking policy and to reorient towards a common future. Rethinking will be necessary to reach beyond simple statistics towards the well-beings of humankind, also integrating equality and a resilient and balanced environment.

Recognising the child as a world citizen and, at the same time recognising the difference between being child or adult, leads to a need for addressing ethics and moral issues and for balancing values, e.g. solidarity versus individuality and how children think about taking care

of themselves, of each other and the world. Both children and teachers need competencies such as courage, integrity, critical thinking and responsibility. Listening to and respecting children create real meetings, where relationships can be built and learning may take place (Johansson, 2009). However, research shows that discipline and obedience are values or priority from the perspective of teachers. Do preschools really provide an environment for critical thinking?

Early childhood education and ESD

Although there are international and national objectives for ESD, research indicates that the texts are not well known and do not give sufficient guidance although early childhood education has a pedagogical tradition well aligned with ESD (Davis, 2009, 2010). The integrated curriculum approaches, thematic oriented instruction and authentic topics are embedded in children's everyday lives. Close relationships between teachers and children and leaning on child participation are important perspectives in early childhood education as well as within ESD. Experiential learning, values clarification, creative thinking, problem solving, story telling and inquiry learning are important in both early childhood and in education for sustainability.

Every interaction in preschool can be analysed with regards to certain questions, e.g.:

- In what ways do this activity or this project or this daily routine contribute to sustainability?
- What possible learning about global citizenship, solidarity and individuality might come about in the preschool?
- What kinds of value conflicts evolve?
- What issues of power and powerlessness are actualised?
- How is participation or lack of participation expressed?

ESD in ECE should be recognised as dynamic rather than static, as a means rather than an end, and as a challenge for continuous cultural and social change rather than a once and for all measurable outcome (Hägglund & Pramling Samuelsson, 2009). A way to integrate sustainable development into the agenda for pedagogical activities is to handle it as a vision or a perspective rather than a specific content.

The seven RE-Words

Part 2 – ESD in practice is inspired by the 7 Rs, as illustrated in the Part 2 Logo. The participants are asked to work with the children around the 7 Rs, one, two or many. The Rs were originally identified by the Brundtland Commission *Our Common Future* (1987), and have now been further developed by the OMEP World Assembly. Together, they include all three ESD pillars; Respect, Reflect and Rethink relate directly to social and cultural dimensions, Reuse and Reduce highlight environmental aspects and Recycle and Redistribute clearly draw on the economic perspective. Duncan (2011) summarises how these RE-words were understood in Norwegian preschools in the following way (put under the explanations given in the logo):

Respect – the rights of the child

It is about learning to be fond of nature, to respect nature, but also to respect children and their competences. To talk about the children living under different living conditions without the 'sorry-for-the-ones-living-abroad' - feelings.

Reflect – on the cultural differences in the world

Talking about how children live in other countries and making reflections possible during children meetings. Bringing up the consumption-mentality and the different weather conditions, using music as a means and language.

Rethink – people today value other things

Challenge the culture of consumption and inspire the children to be creative, e.g. by using drama in role-modelling.

Reuse – make more use of old things

Draw on both pages and copy on both pages. Design an 'exchange corner' where parents can bring things their children don't need any more and get things their children need.

Make new toys from used articles / trash, make instruments and decoration (from empty cans). Ask parents to deliver material they don't use any longer. Reuse computer parts in an owl birdhouse project

Reduce - we can do more with less

Reduce amount of toys bought, and make it possible to give something back. Think about what we buy

Recycle – someone else can use it again

Sorting out waste, and making birdhouses from recycled wood. Start composts so the children can follow the entire process (waste becomes dirt in the vegetable yard), from sorting waste to harvestation. Waste becomes art- projects.

Redistribute – resources can be used more equally

Donate toys to the Salvation Army during Christmas and enrol into solidarity action projects by bilateral exchange with preschools in the South.

Procedure

All OMEP Committees were invited to sign up to the continued project through a project launch letter **OMEP World Project on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)** (October 2010). In this letter the OMEP World Assembly decision was described and the 7 R- words were introduced shortly. The national committees were to appoint national leaders. All together, 28 countries participated this year, some for doing child interview as in Part 1 and most for doing ESD projects including children.

In a separate letter to the national project leaders **Guide for realisation of the Education for Sustainable Development project ESD in practice – Part 2** (October, 2010) the coordinators sent out the time-table for the project and wrote some inspirational instructions for how to start the local projects:

Children, teachers, parents or other adults choose together how to organise ESD in practice projects; what can be done in everyday life and what to focus on. Those, who took part in the OMEP Child interview project, already have knowledge about the most important issues for young children for a sustainable lifestyle. Part 2 ESD in practice can thus be a continuation, leaning on the answers from the child interviews. For all, a starting out question could be:

**What do you think is NOT sustainable here in our centre/preschool/school?
How can we change this together?**

There has not been any designed method for the ESD in practice projects, as the coordinators thought this was best decided locally, by the teachers and together with children and other participants.

In April 2011, information about how to structure the national report was sent out to the project leaders together with a Summary Form and a reminder about the time-table. The reports were due on June 10, 2011.

Participants

28 countries have signed up for the project from the five regions:

Africa; Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria

Asia Pacific; China, Hong Kong, Korea, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka

Europe; Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Turkey, UK

Latin America; Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama,

North America and the Caribbean; Canada

Of these 28 countries, reports were sent in on national and local activities from 21 countries. However, only 13 of the reports included the Summary form with statistical information. A statistic summary, based on these 13 forms, is to be found in Appendix 1. Anyway, it is an amazing result that within these 13 countries, during one academic year, this OMEP World project on ESD has involved as many as 30 714 children and 12 075 adults. Some interesting numbers from the 13 documents:

Institutions involved (preschools, schools, others)	381
Urban/Rural settings involved	228/37
Children involved (birth to 8)	30 714
Adults involved (teachers, parents, others)	12 075
Number of local projects in total	396

The project leaders were also asked to, if possible, to tell how the local projects were aligned to the 7 R- words. This was not an easy thing to do. Many projects attach to several of the R- words. Other projects have not used these R- words as points of inspiration, and thus have not mentioned them in their reports, even though they sometimes are aligned with the R- concepts. Based on the reports, the projects were associated to the R- words in the following way:

Dominant ESD Dimension:	Social – cultural Respect, Reflect Rethink	Environmental Reuse Reduce	Economic Recycle Redistribute
Number of projects:	146	156	111

The national project leaders were asked to choose some interesting projects and to add these examples to their reports. This became a challenge, as the examples also included illustrative photos and pictures, which are heavy to download. Hopefully this rich material can be used for OMEP booklets on ESD in practice and that there is a way to put them on the OMEP international web site.

Results

The result chapter cannot give justice or even summarise the local projects. Instead, it is a presentation of some of the various approaches, challenges and lessons learned that was found when reading and analysing the reports. The projects will hopefully also become available on the OMEP international web site.

Different aims on national level

In addition to the aims for the OMEP World project, some countries have added broader aims, e.g. Colombia, and more precise aims, e.g. Sweden.

One example from Colombia:

Education for sustainable development is influenced by the culture, which outlines the diversity, the knowledge, the languages, the vision of the world and the own world vision as well as the own values. The project is about:

- To develop capacities, competitions, attitudes and positive values to be involved actively in the sustainable development in the levels locally, nationally, regionally or internationally, and to orientate the efforts towards a major future equity and sustainability, putting emphasis in the integration of the citizens in the decisions related to the environment and to the economy.

One example from Sweden:

The project circled about democracy and citizen education and the aim was

- to give an example of democracy as it is carried out in elections and to practice the voting procedure.

Organising the content

In Russia the ESD project has enrolled 2200 teachers and 18 820 children. The success may be explained partly by the way the national project leader chose to present the multiple ideas and different content that could be put in focus during the projects. Similarly in the Czech republic, a list of possible practical approaches to the ESD content was suggested.

Russia (categorization of the projects):

- **Projects aimed at changing the immediate environment** (kindergarten territory, nearby park, one's own town)
- **Projects concerned with the rational resources use** (water, energy, paper, old batteries, metal cans)
- **Nature protection projects** (own Red Books of plant and animal species, excursions to protected natural areas, care for animals)
- **Projects, cultivating sparing attitude to food products** (bread, milk, vegetable, links between plants and their environment)
- **Ecological holidays projects** (the Earth Day, The Birds' Day, The Sea Day and other holidays, own ecological holidays)
- **Projects of studying the world's diverse landscapes, cultures, continents and countries** (Antarctica, the Arctic, Africa, Australia, South America, made their models, learned about animals, plants and nature protection problems in these regions)
- **Projects dealing with global problems** (what is sustainable development?: a series of experiments, what is global warming?: a model was made. Why should people join their efforts to solve global problems? How global problems are connected to the local ones?)

- **Projects, aimed at solving specific problems crucial for the city** (settlement, region, the whole world, restoring forests after the last year's fires, protecting unique landscapes, supporting the Baikal forests)
- **Projects, aimed at support for cultural diversity and preservation of cultural traditions** (including the traditions of natural resources use, folklore, indigenous population).
- **Projects dedicated to reuse of old things and waste** (exchanging and repairing books and toys, using waste material to make laboratory experiments equipment, musical instruments, game accessories, stage costumes and decoration)
- **Some non-standard projects** ("7 wonders on our way to kindergarten": children and parents found unusual natural objects on their road to kindergarten, "geocaching project": children and their parents found "secrets" on the city maps, "Keys from the city", "Rainbow over the city": studying different environmental problems of their native town)

The Czech Republic, examples of activities:

Visiting ZOO, reading books, puppet show, separation of subjects, monitoring the development of butterfly from larvae, collecting packaging waste and its use for further activities of children, games with plastic lids, exhibition of products from packaging materials, artistic expression of experience, work with picture material, experiments, travelling exhibition, presentation in local newspaper, use of PET bottles as music instruments, performance of fairytale, story, work with interactive board, collection of old mobile phones, constructive activities, work with a map, food tasting, collection of unused toys – gifts for children in homes, use of packaging material for artistic and work activities, etc.

Interesting methods

Many different and varied methods have been used within the projects. From the report from Brazil, the methods used are clearly described. In Sweden, one project was significant in its child perspective. And in Colombia, one project was very concrete: promoting interrelatedness by creating a song in three different languages.

Brazil:

- The Project "*Recreação sustentável: produção de brinquedos com sucata*" (Campo Grande, MS), developed the concept of sustainability through human relation directly connected to environmental care, involving teacher educators, young apprentices and preschool children supported by OMEP/BR/MS. This resulted in good practices of sustainable actions, involving children in selection and reuse of garbage: artistically workshops with teacher educators and young apprentices around craft techniques, using junk and the production of a play to teach children about reuse and recycle.
- The project "*O lixo nosso de cada dia*" (São Luis do Maranhão, MA) became a very important practical that reflected about sustainability on that region. First of all, the leaders of this project valued the participation of the parents and the community and invited them to suggest practical actions of sustainability for the children.
- In another Project, "*Revelando Olhares, Detalhes, e Sensibilidades com as Pequenas Sutilezas da Natureza*" (Santo André, SP), children were taught to recognize themselves as parts of the natural world and to establish strong connection between themselves and Nature. During this close contact with Nature, discoveries of new and real perceptions about what is Natural and Environmental education were made.
- The project "*Projeto Envolver-se para (Des) Envolver-se*" (Campinas, SP) established a very interesting method to provoke the community into a change of attitude to preserve the planet by starting to understand sustainability in a deep dimension and

looking at the relation between humans and the respect for life, proposing a change in thinking, from individualistic and selfish to more collectivistic and biocentric thinking.

Sweden:

Our project *Using again* is a project driven by the children, by their questions, investigations and by the interviews made by the children and the teacher, resulting in Explorative learning and Child participation.

Colombia:

The composition of the song “*What World Will You Build to me?*” in three languages English, French and Swedish and a Play. For this project we met several conscious interested parties to discuss what we were not doing as educators, and started analyzing and structuring a model to generate impact and reach the children. This is how the idea of create and Audio Visual story was born. The work includes the reality of our planet suffering, with a Character who symbolized the teacher and he approaches easily to access the children , he brings children to feel the values, basic rules and cares that we need to preserve our planet, “it’s disease is in our hands we can take care of it”.

Russia:

Participation in the project has become a support for pedagogues’ work according to the ESD principles. Many kindergartens and municipal education departments felt proud of participating in the international project. They published the information about the project on their websites and even on official regional administration sites. A pedagogue from Barnaul city: “We’d like to express many thanks to all coordinators of the project! We have felt support for our work, found new energy and new plans!”

A number of projects have been fulfilled by students of pedagogic universities, by pedagogues that were engaged in advanced training programs. Some of the projects were used as a basis for their undergraduate papers or graduate diplomas. Three interesting projects were implemented in families: collecting and sorting out waste, observing a crow which raised its nestlings under the window pane, estimating environmental traces and input of each family member into sustainable development

Some children wrote letters about their projects to children in other countries. Participants of the project “Clear water seen by the eyes of little beaver” wrote to Canada, participants of the project “Our forest” wrote to Sweden, participants of the project that have planted vegetables in their kindergarten wrote to North America, the region where the vegetables originated.

Among the participants of the project there also were children of different nationalities, children with special needs (for example, with impaired vision), children from indigenous nations. Many preschool institutions, especially in rural areas, function as centers that spread ideas of sustainable education in the area.

Major challenges

The reports show that the ESD project has faced many challenges in the different countries:

Brazil

- Mobilizing and heighten the awareness the involved community to get the results in their lives like something permanent for using day to day, in a new perspective about sustainability;
- The sustainability concept is not to be understood just as a framed school subject;
- Sensitizing children and adults to understand the causes of consumerist behavior and act on the systems that maintain became from our own practices;
- Ensuring that the work group, collectively, flow their activities to other places.

Russia:

Every country, including Russia, has its own specifics in education, implementation of the ideas of sustainable development and including elements of ESD in their educational programs. Therefore, while we were working on the ESD Project in Russia, we have encountered a number of problems, caused by particular national circumstances that we had to deal with. The term “sustainable development” has been poorly translated into Russian (as “stable development”), its interpretations are disputable among pedagogues, and the term itself isn’t often used in work with children of early age. After I have sent the information about the project for the first time, I saw that the requirements of the project wouldn’t be understood without further details. Some of the 7R principles have no corresponding terms in Russian and are not used in education of preschool children. The pedagogues could not use them in their work with children. That’s why explanations and recommendations for the OMEP Project participants from the national project leader were developed and detailed explanations of the conditions for the project the kindergartens were recommended to take into consideration all the three pillars of ESD.

UK:

The basic aims were predominantly Social-Cultural (Respect, Reflect, Re-think) based on the Reflect, Re-think aspects. There was evidence which could be put under the title of Respect, however, there were discussion about weather the children were too young for these kind of abstract concepts.

Hong Kong:

Even though some projects have adopted all 7Rs, it appeared that the designed activities were somehow deviated from what the ‘R’ really meant. For examples, the idea of ‘Rethink’ and ‘Reflect’ may be too abstract for teachers to apply in daily learning activities. Some teachers often associate ‘Rethink’ and ‘Reflect’ only with the environmental protection issues; whereas OMEP suggests that ‘Reflect’ is the ‘reflection on the cultural differences in the world’ and ‘Rethink’ is ‘rethink people today value other things’.

The results imply that teachers in Hong Kong often associate ‘Sustainable Development’ only with ‘Environmental Protection’. In that sense, they have somehow neglected the Social (Respect, Reflect, Rethink) and Economic (Recycle, Redistribute) aspects of ‘Sustainable Development’. This phenomenon can possibly be explained by the current education policy in Hong Kong because Education for Sustainable Development is only implemented in Primary schools and Secondary schools but not in Preschools. It highlights a need for teachers’ training focusing in this area.

New Zealand:

When inviting teachers to participate we needed to be sensitive to the other impacts on their lives at this time. As previously mentioned – Early Childhood funding cuts nationwide meant morale was lowered and job security was threatened. Experience, qualified staff is often on higher pay and some of these valued people have left the centre. The present government has not had the commitment towards ECE that was shown by the previous government.

Lessons learned

Some national reports have given rich contributions under the heading Lessons learned, e.g. the reports from Russia, Colombia, Norway and Brazil:

Russia:

The OMEP project has united pedagogues, researchers, students from very different regions of the country. Different kindergartens, centers and schools (state and private, from different regions, for the children with problems, for indigenous children, rural and urban and so on)

are involved into ESD Project. Some institutions chose several projects, some kindergartens decided to join forces for one project.

One of the most important results is support for the children's initiative (Respect). Often pedagogues show no support for the initiative of children: they themselves define the theme of a project and then try to involve children into the research. During the course of the OMEP project many pedagogues for the first time took the children's opinions and initiative so seriously. Children offered subjects for research, proposed their own versions of kindergarten territory decoration etc. Pedagogues and parents came to a conclusion that children have their own point of view on sustainable development and their own propositions for environmental changes and protection. So, children were active participants of the projects. They did not only follow the plans that adults have created for them. The older were the children, the more part they had in the project. Thus, ideas and questions of children were used in the projects. Pedagogues supported the initiative of children, their right to play games, to individual and group activity (children could choose some part of the project and engage in it independently or in groups, or at home). Pedagogues created conditions for children to play individually, without adults and for the other types of activity. The projects have also implemented a right of children to healthy and safe environment.

Many children, pedagogues, parents, and also many state officials and public organizations members not only were introduced to the SD ideas, but also learned about OMEP thanks to the project. The project helped to develop social partnership. Thus, children from the town of Izhevsk restored a natural spring together with the people living in the adjacent blocks, with the help from the reinforced concrete construction plant. Moreover, the initiative came from the kindergarten.

Children, pedagogues and parents found a new perspective on their immediate surroundings (rethink -- new insight into our own behavior, into nature, for example, understanding value of nature in our lives, the ability to see, hear nature, admire it and spare it). Thus, after several families had learned about the volume of water daily used by an average Moscow family, decided to confirm the information and measured their water use while taking a shower, a bath or using the toilet during a week. As a result they have made a decision to use water more rationally.

Children, teachers and parents started to use drawing paper more efficiently (for instance, use both sides of a paper sheet), keep scraps of paper and other waste to use them later creating pictures, hand-made articles, indoor design and design of the kindergarten territory. Teachers in kindergartens, instead of buying new plants, asked parents to bring young plants from home; to collect and grow food for the kindergarten animals, use waste material to make toys, research equipment, decorations; they made fertilizer of the remnants of plants and fallen leaves and used it on flower beds and kitchen gardens instead of bought chemical fertilizers; reduced the volume of food waste etc. Children and adults recognized that reuse of old things reduces the amount of waste and, consequently, lowers the levels of environmental pollution and spares resources (resources are not used to produce new things).

In Russia many preschool organizations are engaged in environmental education. That's why so many preschool institutions took part in the sustainable development project. Many preschool institutions are implementing long-term projects (2-3 years). They presented completed parts of their project as a separate OMEP Project during this educational year.

The project helped to form children-adult communities, children and adults did a lot together. The project has involved local educational departments, departments of natural resources use,

business, youth NGOs (student volunteers), NGOs of retired builders, pensioners, botanical gardens, schools, libraries, museums, enterprises. Some of the projects were covered by local papers and by local TV channel.

Colombia:

The best outcome was to see the joy and motivation showed by children with the character “Anyone”, their participation, laughter, Songs, messages and drawings expressing from the result of learning and dialogues sustained with them.

Same Thing happened with teachers that via email send their essays, proposals and projects, allowing us to see their sensitivity and the need of a change that led them to think about the situation of crisis and red alert in several places around the country.

From the department of Education with the results obtained in this wonderful job, we have the responsibility to continue strengthening this idea, the teacher’s job committed us to a mandatory form to support these initiatives that contribute to the city, the department, our country and the world as we are doing today.

Norway:

In Norway, the second year included interviews with teachers in three preschools that were already working with ESD. When analysing the interviews the project leader realized that the teachers also identified local practices that were not sustainable. He put together the following list:

- Use of books/copied sheets as articles for consumption (often to promote language and early literacy and numeracy)
- Excessive use of electricity
- Consumption when doing arts (paint, glue needed even if raw material is reused)
- Need for improvement in sorting out waste, organizing the whole recycling chain
- Part-time employees need to be trained in order to achieve sustainable practice

Brazil:

- It is possible to stimulate thinking and actions for the environment connected with the dialogue between ethical and basics values, to integrate the society and nature;
- The teachers function is essential to encourage changes in education about sustainability values formation, as part of collective process;
- However, the critical consciousness is not enough. It is necessary to include an emotional consciousness, to change attitudes and create a feeling for the environment and a social mobilization to the next generations;
- The schools and other education places, which are responsible for knowledge transfers, must act right way to show integrated and concret solutions;
- The practical classes are better learned than theoretical to the children.

DISCUSSION

In this concluding discussion, some interesting discussions from the national reports will be presented. At the very end, the coordinators of the project bring up some suggestions for future ESD projects within OMEP.

Brazil:

The anthropocentric world vision must be changed. The work done by those involved to understand the need to rethink that stance in support of new concepts and build a sustainable relationship with living beings in the planet, plants, animals and other, all having equal rights for life. Saying no to a consumerism life and producing all the waste, to live a balanced and fair way, with quality and dignified life for everyone with thought and criticism.

But, as we saw in the results, we are far from the harmony with the environment and sustainable life, due the selfish way, the lack of preservation and respect for all living beings. Maybe we have the philosophy, the theoretical and sustainable concepts, but we don't put them in practice as a collective habit, not today and not in the future.

We believe that we need good human role-models, who not only talk about, but also live in a sustainable way. They should be good examples for the others and show that change is possible.

Thinking about it, in ours preschools we have the possibility, as institution, to direct our attention to the teacher educators, caregivers and others. Individually, we have professionals who know their importance in relation to EDS, but they are very few to the huge challenge. To change this, we ask for re-valuing their hard work, recovering the professional self esteem, better work conditions, salary and also, their right to have better formation to help them with challenges of this profession.

Poland:

In our country beginning from kindergarten we pay very much attention to such issues like the protection of nature, the segregation of waste - recycling, also the issues concerning the European Union. In our country teachers are working with children in this field in many kindergartens.

Colombia:

It is important to create a "Unit Development Net" between government, Industry, Universities and educational institutions, to build integrated networks aligned towards ESD.

Sweden:

Being a teacher includes a great responsibility. Preschool is the starting point for life-long learning. Through the interactive communication, learning and playing in preschool, the fundamental values and norms are shaped. The teachers serve as role models and their approach should be based on critical reflection and an including pedagogy. By listening to the children, challenging them but also allowing them to try out their own ideas and pathways, a sustainable future is possible. Teachers can promote the fostering of children, towards thinking and creative human beings who strives for the well-being of nature and mankind.

Slovakia:

The children in one preschool gave the following message to the adults: *Why should we take care of the water?*

Adults, take care of our country so we can play safely without being afraid to step on any garbage and that we can swim in Old Váh not being scared that we would injure ourselves. Let fishes have clean water keep paths clean without any garbage because otherwise we won't get where we want and we won't achieve that the nature will smell good. Because where is garbage there is a horrible smell.

The Czech Republic:

Some teachers from the kindergartens would like to continue with the project. They want the children to understand that the situation in the world is up to them, and they can together form conditions for permanently sustainable development.

New Zealand:

We continue to have a strong commitment to sustainability in ECE so will research further into how children, teachers and communities work collaboratively to build a strong community where children can contribute to a sustainable future.

Brazil:

The project has shown that there is a huge need for stimulating individuals and collective postures, and for institutional politics that strive for a coherence between what the values of our culture, tradition and history are been said and done.

Linked to the project, the participants can make people more sensitive to create habits to preserving the environment as part of citizenship duties and thus the planet. A collective effort is also necessary to meet the attitudes and obstacles that prevent changes within and between social groups, when faced with the need to see new concepts and overcoming the challenges in ecological sustainability issues.

Concluding remarks

The reports about the many hundreds of ongoing projects are best understood as a collective sign of success for the OMEP ESD projects. To use informal child interviews seems to be a good method that promotes child participation and a listening approach among the adults. The seven RE- words seem to some extent to have served as inspirational and starting-out points for the local projects. However, in some cases they are not recognized. The concepts were given only in English, French and Spanish, and there are many languages around the world where these concepts are not yet translated or given corresponding concepts in the official or local languages. This language issue must be taken into consideration in future OMEP World projects. Maybe there also is a need, as was done this year in Russia, to come up with more concrete examples for local ESD- projects.

The rich data from the reports has given OMEP an inspiring project basis, which must be made available for OMEP members. The fact that the 28 participating countries are found in all regions of the world indicates that OMEP has access to many good examples from North and South, from urban and rural, from preschools, other institutions and homes.

In this way, OMEP may well serve as an important global actor for Education for Sustainable Development. Hopefully, this ESD project will continue for many years towards the aim to enhance the awareness of Education for Sustainable Development among OMEP members, young children and early childhood education at large. The overall purpose of ESD is to reorient education in order to contribute to a sustainable future for the common good of present and future generations and to recognise the dependence of humanity on a healthy biosphere.

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Appendix 1 Statistics based on Summary Reports

Countries	Report	Local projects	Preschools	Schools	Other institutions	Total institutions
Africa						
Cameroon	summary	2	20	16	18	54
Ivory Coast	summary	?				
Asia Pacific						
China	summary	6	5	4	0	9
Hong Kong	summary	11	11	0	0	11
New Zealand	summary	2	5	0	0	5
Europe						
Czech Rep.	summary	19	19	0	0	19
France		1	1	0	0	1
Norway	summary	3	3	0	0	3
Poland	summary	11	8			8
Russia	summary	228	158	5	49	212
Slovakia	summary	82	18	0	0	18
Sweden	summary	6	6	0	0	6
UK	summary	2	11	1	1	13
Latin America						
Brazil	summary	8	8	12	2	22
Total		381	273	38	70	381

Countries	Urban	Rural	Birth to 3	3 to 5	6 to 8	Total
Africa						
Cameroon			50	1950	4000	6 000
Ivory Coast						
Asia Pacific						
China	2	1	127	787	580	1 494
Hong Kong	1	0	-	-	-	-
New Zealand	1	4	0	165	0	165
Europe						
Czech Rep.	19	0	0	323	0	323
France	1	0	0	60	0	60
Norway			-	-	-	0
Poland	1		200	450	250	900
Russia	171	27	870	6650	11300	18 820
Slovakia	14	4	20	410	380	810
Sweden	2	0	18	213	0	231
UK	12	1	17	141	75	233
Latin America						
Brazil	4	0	1252	364	62	1 678
Total	228	37	2554	11513	16647	30714

Countries	Teachers	Parents	Others	Total	Social-cultural	Enviro	Economic
Africa							
Cameroon	75	300	30	405	1	1	
Ivory Coast							
Asia Pacific							
China	212	824	16	1 052	1	2	3
Hong Kong	-	-	-	-	6	10	6
New Zealand	27	0	0	27			
Europe							
Czech Rep.	20	0	0	20	14	16	15
France	3	0	0	3			
Norway				0	1	1	1
Poland	80	900		980	1	2	8
Russia	2200	6430	370	9 000	83	86	59
Slovakia	46	326	0	372	32	33	17
Sweden	15	0	1	16	3	3	0
UK	-	-	-	-	-		
Latin America							
Brazil	36	119	45	200	4	2	2
Total	2714	8899	462	12075	146	156	111