



## **European Conference on Intercultural Dialogue in Development Education**

9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

### **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over 230 participants from national ministries and state agencies, parliaments, EU institutions, European civil society, international organizations, local and regional authorities and research institutes participated in the European Conference on Intercultural Dialogue in Development Education on 9-10 June 2008 in Ljubljana. The conference focused on the implementation of the European Development Education Consensus<sup>1</sup> in the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. It was organized by SLOGA (the Slovene NGDO platform), in co-operation with CONCORD, the European Development Education Consensus Steering Group, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia and the European Commission.

In a time of unacceptable global injustice, growing inequalities in the distribution of power, accelerating climate change, and unwavering racism and social exclusion, we are today facing the biggest challenges of human history. As Europeans we have both the responsibility and the moral and material capacity to face these challenges and to engage in the important and exciting fight for global justice, solidarity, human dignity and sustainable ways of living. Development and Global Education in Europe are fundamental in this process, by enabling every European to become an active, responsible global citizen, living up to our shared values of humanity, and by contributing to overcome European policies that perpetuate the mentioned problems.

The conference calls on growing political commitment and strengthened policy in the field of Development Education, at European and national level, namely implementing “The European Consensus on Development: The contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising” (2007).

The Conference led to the following main conclusions, and to further specific proposals from individual working groups as outlined in the papers annexed.

The recommendations were approved and adopted by the participants in the last stage of the conference.

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<sup>1</sup> “The European Consensus on Development: The Contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising”. This document was elaborated by members of a wide range of organization and institutions (including EC, European Parliament, members states, international organizations, local authorities and civil society). It is available in 22 European languages from the European Commission (DG Dev A4)

1. The conference welcomes the European Development Education Consensus which provides common vision, principles, objectives and challenges of all development education actors in Europe. The actors present at the conference take the commitment to use the Consensus as an orientation for their work and to promote it vis-à-vis other stakeholders.
2. A multi-stakeholder steering group will continue the work to facilitate and support the implementation of the European Development Education Consensus. The steering group will take forward the outcomes of this conference, support the existing and emerging national strategies, ensure coherence and move the process forward in a transparent and open way.
3. Development Education actors on national and local level (Ministries of Foreign Affairs/Development, Education and others; local/regional authorities; Civil Society Organisations; schools/universities; media etc.) should elaborate their own coherent national Development Education strategies in a multi-stakeholder process and link them to the European Development Education Consensus.
4. We encourage members of the parliaments to participate proactively in the implementation of the European Development Education Consensus at European and national levels.
5. The conference recalls previous commitments to provide adequate funding for Development Education and recognises the efforts made by some governments in this respect.
6. Increased effectiveness, quality and impact in Development Education are also required. This requires improvement and increased resource provisions for teacher training – both pre-service and in service, and in the education and training of trainers in both formal and nonformal education and informal learning. This also necessitates greater clarity regarding the differences along the continuum from development education to awareness raising to information and campaigning, and coherence between development cooperation and education. Appropriate mechanisms of evaluation in these related, complementary but differing spheres are essential.
7. The conference encourages all actors in Development Education to contribute, in their activities, to intercultural dialogue, taking into account the complex character of cultural identities of each person. Culture is multifaceted and should not be reduced to geographic origins. In order not to be culturally biased, Development Education should integrate the point of view of disadvantaged groups whose views are often not represented.
8. NGOs, academics and other stakeholders in research related to Development Education should cooperate more, sharing and learning from each other to develop best practices. The process of collaboration should recognize strengths and limitations of all stakeholders, with the aim of capacity building in North and South. Research must be grounded in participatory methodology and a full understanding of the context (gender, culture...). We should promote more open, flexible and collaborative approaches, including those which challenge our usual ways of thinking and working.
9. All Development Education practitioners should set up mechanisms of effective participation of Southern actors in all elements of the project cycle of Development Education projects, including planning, funding, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

These recommendations are addressed to all actors of society who are able and interested in further improving the impact and quality of development education. This includes among others the EU institutions, national ministries, and international and civil society organisations, research institutes, and media working for active and informed global citizens.

## **Annex: Specific recommendations from the working groups**

Working group 1 focused on the importance of development education partnership at the national level and proposed concrete steps for development of national DE strategies.

Working group 2 involved the European Multi stakeholder steering group who discussed about the future of European DE process, particularly about the implementation strategy for the European DE Consensus.

Working group 3 focused on the importance of embedding the southern perspective into organisational life and elaborated on possibilities of creating North-South development education networks.

Working group 4 built its discussions on the evaluation of current research methodologies in the field of development education and intercultural dialogue and on possibilities of creating DE research partnerships.

Working group 5 discussed the possibilities of linking the concepts of development education and intercultural dialogue, focusing on integrating aspects in different cultures and the importance of understanding different attitudes and processes.

### **1. Working group 1: Promoting development education partnership at the national level**

- 1.1. The development of national strategies on global and development education should be based on in-depth analysis of stakeholders, practice within and beyond the existing curriculum and experiences from other countries.
- 1.2. Definitions, objectives, target groups and challenges as defined in the European Development Education Consensus should be the starting point to formulate national DE strategies .
- 1.3. A inclusive multi stakeholder approach should strengthen the development of national DE strategies, as the process will gain trust and credibility.
- 1.4. Once the development of a national DE strategy is started, stakeholders should make joint actions for actors not jet involved to raise awareness on the process.
- 1.5. The European DE Consensus multi stakeholder steering group should accompany national processes and serve as a focal resource point.

### **2. Working group 2: European Development Education Consensus was officially unveiled – what is next?**

- 2.1. There is a need for cross-sector, cross-institutional exchange on DE in Europe. The frame of the DE Consensus multi stakeholder process should continue to provide this space for exchange on DE between various actors.
- 2.2. This exchange should be based on democratic principles, transparency, participation and openness.
- 2.3. It should facilitate the implementation of the DE consensus on different institutional levels.
- 2.4. A steering group should hold a constitutive meeting in September 2008 to decide on working modes and precise activities. An invitation will be send by the co-chairs of the DE Consensus steering group to all relevant stakeholders.
- 2.5. The new steering group should elaborate more specific recommendations based on best practices (e.g. national approaches).
- 2.6. The new steering group should enlarge the field of scope (e.g. culture, environment) and stakeholders (e.g. trade unions, foundations, universities) and improve information exchange on specific topics (e.g. quality, funding).

- 2.7. Close interlinking with different networks, actors and processes (e.g. North South Centre recommendation process, Council of Europe, GENE, CONCORD, Global education week network, non EU states, other actors from the non development field) should be strengthened in order to create synergies and to avoid parallel and possibly competing processes.
- 2.8. A multi stakeholder conference in the first semester 2009 should review ongoing processes in the field of GE/DE (esp. the EC DE funding evaluation, OECD Development Centre study on DE spending, North-South Centre recommendation)
- 2.9. MEPs should be more involved in the debate on global and development education. A presentation of the DE Consensus should be organised in the European Parliament.
- 2.10. The European Commission should elaborate and officially adopt a strategy paper for development education in Europe (e.g. a EC communication).
- 2.11. Member states should elaborate and adapt national DE strategies, based on consultation with various stakeholders

### **3. Working group 3: Drawing on experiences in the south**

- 3.1. Authentic Southern voices should be seen as partners in work and not as guests of honour. The creation of North-South networks, the inclusion of accountability measures and procedures in these partnerships and the inclusion of North-South partnership in DE actions should be the basis for meaningful participation of southern partners in events referring to realities from the South.
- 3.2. Consultations with both Northern and Southern partners on the need, effectiveness and the amount of funding needed for development education should be organised.
- 3.3. Southern perspective should be embedded into organisational life. In projects, clear references to culture, values, attitudes, structures, ideas, relationships and practices both from North and South and how interventions maintain or change these should be included. New and different thinking on methodologies and research to reflect our common humanity should be developed.
- 3.4. In project monitoring and evaluation input from different actors should be included (e.g. relevant Southern experts, relevant experts in working with European public and even relevant outsiders).
- 3.5. Collaboration with migrant populations in Europe should be strengthened, acknowledging their unique perspectives that link Northern and Southern perspective, and at the same time recognizing that there might be differences concerning values, feelings, needs and experiences from the people living in the South (“decentralise the south”).
- 3.6. In funding applications and project design, emphasis should be made on good practices, benefits and mutual learning instead of focusing exclusively on the “problem”.
- 3.7. Northern organisations should commit to identify most practical and authentic ways to include partners from the south in project planning, implementation and evaluation of all projects.

### **4. Working group 4: Contributing to and learning from research**

- 4.1. Research must be grounded in a full understanding of the context (e.g. gender, culture), discovered through participation and collaboration. We should promote more open, flexible and collaborative approaches, including those which challenge our usual ways of thinking and working.
- 4.2. Specific research methodologies for development education and intercultural dialogue(DE/ID) should be developed: research into thinking space on the field of

DE/ID, research prior to action, research on impact and evaluation of DE in a variety of contexts: lifelong learning processes, integration of Intercultural Dialog in the Curriculum, media and other forms of technologies.

- 4.3. More and better collaboration between NGOs, academics and other stakeholders is needed, in order to share and learn from each other to develop best practices. The process of collaboration should recognize strengths and limitations of all stakeholders, with the aim of capacity building in North and South.
- 4.4. We should develop ways of sharing research (findings and methods) between stakeholders in a form of a database and research network.
- 4.5. New budget lines should be set up to support joint research projects (NGOs, academics and others) in line with the mentioned recommendations.

## **5. Working group 5: Linking Intercultural Dialogue and Development Education**

- 5.1. We should identify integrating aspects in different cultures appreciating differences as well as commonalities.
- 5.2. The debate on definitions of concepts such as development education, global education etc. should continue and deepen.
- 5.3. Public awareness raising needs to be specific and continuous, focus on attitudes rather than opinions, evaluate the processes, make the issue recognised, bring positive rather than negative messages, and use creative ways of presentation in a sensitized way.
- 5.4. Stakeholders should create bridges, look for synergies and integrate all actors into dialogue.
- 5.5. Disadvantaged groups should be empowered in intercultural dialogue to prevent culturally biased perspectives.
- 5.6. Media training should be provided on how to adequately present 'hot' DE/GE issues (e.g. media event Football World Championship South Africa 2010).