RATING ESD IN EARLY YEARS: A NECESSITY OR A CHALLENGE?

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

• ESD/GC in early years
• Rating and measuring ESD/DG
• The example of the Environmental Rating Scale for Sustainable Development in Early Childhood (ERS-SDEC, OMEP, 2013)
• Application of ERS-SDEC in 2 different contexts
  • Cranborne Pre-school in Dorset and Ng’ondu in Kenya.
• Thoughts and reflections
ESD/GC IN EARLY YEARS

• Education for sustainable development provides a vision of education that seeks to balance **human** and **economic** well-being with cultural traditions and respect for the **environment**.

• **Investing** in early childhood (human capital) and **building** a sustainable society are strongly interrelated (Pressoir, 2008)

• “There is now a growing international recognition of ESD as an integral element of **quality education** and a key **enabler** for sustainable development.” (UNESCO 2014:9)

• Early childhood education for sustainability is **much more** than environmental education; principles, values, practices of sustainable development

• **Fragmentation** has been identified as a major barrier to effective implementation of practice in ECCE, ESD and lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2011, p 17)
RATING AND MEASURING ESD/DG

• By setting ESD/DG goals or indicators we:
  • can ensure equity and parity in children’s learning experiences
  • can see what is effective (what works) and what is not
  • can share good practice and perhaps apply it to different contexts
  • can make more explicit how aspects of ESD/DG can be embedded in the curriculum
  • can set benchmarks for learning achievement outcomes, which leaders, stakeholders, parents, learners and teachers can understand (Shaeffer, 2013; Yao et al, 2014)
  • can help in common understanding

**However,**

Does one size fit all?

What is the purpose of ESD rating scales?
THE ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (ERS-SDEC, OMEP, 2013)

- Based on same rating procedures as: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) (Harms, Clifford and Cryer, 1998) and - Extension (ECERS-E) (Sylva, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2003)
- User handbook, translated in
- Research tool & self-assessment tool for practitioners
- The ERS-SDEC scale measures from 1 to 7 with 1 = inadequate, 3 = minimal 5 = good and 7 = excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Inadequate (1)</th>
<th>Minimal (3)</th>
<th>Good (5)</th>
<th>Excellent (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Some books, pictures, dolls and display portray gender and ethnic or racial stereotypes.</td>
<td>3.1 Some books, pictures and displays include images that do not conform to social and cultural stereotypes, (e.g. showing a black teacher or police officer that is wearing a religious head scarf.)</td>
<td>5.1 Many books, pictures and displays show images of men and women that do not conform to social and cultural stereotypes (gender, ethnic, tribal, or racial, etc.).</td>
<td>7.1 The children share their ideas and knowledge of their own and others’ cultures in group sharing times and are able to speak openly about diversity.</td>
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ERC-SDEC

• for children aged 2 ½ - 7 yrs

• The ERS-SDEC may be applied by individual or groups of practitioners to audit their education for sustainable development curriculum, and to help practitioners and preschool centre managers in setting curriculum development priorities.

• Based on 2hr-observations and data collection from other sources (i.e. interviews with staff-children-parents, documents-records-displays).

  • Social and Cultural Sustainability (Global Social Justice)
  • Economic Sustainability (Equality)
  • Environmental Sustainability
CURRICULUM AUDIT TOOL IN PRE-SCHOOL PRACTICE 2014-2016

5 GENDER EQUALITY

15 LIFE ON LAND

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
‘MATARIJIO’ (HOPE – EXPECTATIONS) AT CRANBORNE PRE-SCHOOL AND NG’ONDU KENYA 2014

• World OMEP Pilot project in 2012 UK/Kenya Partnership

• Empowering the child through play.

• OMEP 7r’s of ESD in practice (Reflect, Rethink) social, (Re-Use, Reduce, Recycle) environmental and (Redistribute and Respect) economic.
• Socio-dramatic play to empower and enhance positive female role models.
• Children in the UK learning about people, communities outside of their experience
• Environmental Education session to enhance sustainability and awareness of their environment using woodland products.

“I kept stumbling and falling and stumbling and falling as I searched for the good. Why?” I asked myself. Now I believe that I was on the right path all along, particularly with the Green Belt Movement, but then others told me that I shouldn’t have a career, that I shouldn’t raise my voice, that women are supposed to have a master. That I needed to be someone else. Finally, I was able to see that if I had a contribution I wanted to make, I must do it, despite what others said. That I was OK the way I was. That it was all right to be strong.”

-Wangari Maathai, environmentalist, Nobel Peace Prize winner, Founder of The Green Belt Movement
‘DOING THE BEST
WE CAN’

• Wangari Maathai wanted to plant a billion trees around the world.

• The meeting of human and women’s rights in Africa sending a message to young children on the empowerment of women and the importance of environmental education both locally and internationally.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWMW6YWjMxw
CRANBORNE PRE-SCHOOL ‘W.A.S.H FROM THE START’
2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>EYFS – AREAS OF LEARNING</th>
<th>RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing the importance of hand washing through a story – ‘I don’t want to wash my hands’, by Tony Ross</td>
<td>C&amp;L – Listen to stories with attention and recall. What would happen if we didn’t wash our hands?</td>
<td>Story book – ‘I don’t want to wash my hands’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To create posters in the toilet area to remind the children to wash their hands when they have used the toilet. Take pictures of the children as they wash, use soap and dry their hands.</td>
<td>PD – Health and Self-care. Have an understanding that good practices with regard to hygiene can contribute to good health. LD – Reading. Recognises familiar words and signs</td>
<td>Camera Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To create a sign to put above the sink to remind us to wash our hands after craft activities and before snack, using our hands prints.</td>
<td>EA&amp;D – Explore colour. What happens when we mix colours together</td>
<td>Paint Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn a hand washing song to sing every time we wash our hands. This is added to our sign to put above the pre-school sink.</td>
<td>EA&amp;D – to learn new songs.</td>
<td>The hand prints of the paper from the previous activity with the song written on it.</td>
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THE CHILDREN OF MOUNT KENYA ACADEMY USING A TIPPY TAP
• 56% of Kenyan’s live below the poverty line

• 65% of the children aged 3-6 years are currently not accessing ECCE services. In arid and semi-arid areas only 9 percent of children aged 3-6 access ECCE services.

• 56% of teachers remain untrained (turnover 40% annually)

• 122,000 under 5 year olds die each year and these deaths are caused mostly by lack of water, sanitation and hygiene.

• 75% of children are unable to wash their hands with soap or ash after visiting the latrine and before eating.

LILIAN TALKING TO HER CHILDREN ABOUT POACHING AND THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANTS
I WOULD LIKE TO THANK PROFESSOR JOHN SIRAJ-BLATCHFORD FOR HIS EXPERTISE IN 2014 AND PHOTO PERMISSIONS,
KAREN RICHARDSON AND HER STAFF OF CRANBORNE PRE-SCHOOL, DORSET, UK,
LILIAN OKAL OF MOUNT KENYA ACADEMY AND THE STAFF OF TOWNSEND MONTESSORI, UK.
I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK PROFESSOR INGRID PRAMLING-SAMUELSSON FOR PERMISSION FOR HER UNPUBLISHED REPORT.
THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

• Restrictions based on the scale?
• Not all practitioners ‘accept’ it → performance management?
• Could people become demoralised if their efforts do not score highly?
• Can a single scale be applied across cultural contexts?
• Are such scales necessary or desirable?
THANK YOU!