

# Rethinking ESD from local community perspectives ‘Inclusive’ and ‘Participatory’ process making and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

\*Fumiko Noguchi<sup>1</sup>, Takako Takano<sup>2</sup>

1. United Nations University, Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), 2. Waseda University / ECOPLUS

The root causes of the sustainability problems that we face in everyday life at local community level, have complex interlinkages across different sectors and fields. Holistic approach is required for the fundamental solution. This is why making inter-linkage between the goals and targets holds the key to achieving 2030 Agenda (UN, 2018). In this regard, multi-stakeholder partnership holds the key to success. Multi-stakeholder partnership is the process of mutual learning and actions where diverse stakeholders such as policy makers, academics, NGOs, residents and marginalised groups, bring their knowledge and experience to create a new knowledge and work together for local sustainability.

In this process, it should be noted that knowledge that they share is not singular. There are multiple knowledges including not only modern/scientific knowledge of experts, but also diverse local knowledges of stakeholders such as indigenous, ethnic, elderly, women, sexual minorities, children, traditional, people with disability. The approach to learning the local knowledges is also diverse, involving the experience based, hands-on and contextualised. Local knowledges are different in its nature from the modern scientific knowledge; the modern/scientific knowledge can be deductive, logical, conceptual, verbal and explicit, while the local knowledges can be inductive, experiential, contextual, tacit and implicit. These knowledges and the ways of learning are identified, highlighted or overlooked and trivialized in policy, practice and research, in a very complex relationship to modern values and way of thinking that often puts superiority in modern knowledge, modern approach to learning, and its knowledge holders (often those who are called experts) to the others.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which is addressed in SDGs Target 4.7, is the interplay between the empowerment and participation of multistakeholders and their active collaboration and action for social transformation. The role of ESD in SDGs is neither just one of the 17 Goals nor one of the 169 Targets. As clearly stated in ESD for 2030, which will be launched in 2021 and led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ESD is “an integral element of the SDGs on quality education and a key enabler of all the other SDGs” (UNESCO, 2019). ESD provides the framework for developing critical and contextualized understanding of the efforts for sustainable community development by raising questions on the inter-linkages and tensions among different SDGs (UNESCO, 2017).

This presentation investigates how the inclusive and participatory process can be created when the multi-stakeholders are working tougher for local sustainability, and how the process aligns with the policy making process for SDGs, through a dialogue of co-authors. Takano and Noguchi have committed to working with diverse local community stakeholders, bridging the multiple gaps between local and global; rural and urban; human and nature; modern and local/traditional and indigenous; and policy, research and practice across the world. Takano provides some insights based on her extensive experience leading research and NGO practice with local communities on the learning and knowledge creation process in the

multistakeholders partnership. Noguchi facilitates the discussion, aligning key discussions with the global SDGs and ESD policies, emphasising the importance of creating a participatory and collaborative process for policy making.

UN. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1). United Nations.

UN. (2018). *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018*. NY, USA. United Nations.

UNESCO. (2017). *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives*. Paris, France. UNESCO

UNESCO. (2019). *Framework for the Implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) beyond 2019 (40 C/23)*. Paris, France. UNESCO

Keywords: Multi-stakeholder partnership, Community empowerment, Local Knowledge, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)