

In November 2009 for the first time school coordinators from South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, Germany and Poland met in the framework of the UNESCO Associated School network to introduce and to discuss projects of education for sustainable development. The participants were asked to define common goals and discussed ways to raise awareness of sustainability in the participating countries. At the same time the teachers were supposed to discuss efficient ways of communication to be able to inform each other about the latest developments and to benefit from results in other countries. This way, existing relationships between the countries in Southern Africa and Germany should be strengthened and lifted to a higher level.

In a first phase the project "Solar Net" was introduced. With the help of this network young people from all continents coordinate global activities and prepare and undertake local education, environment and aid projects. The workshop "Intercultural Learning and Media Competence" demonstrated to the participants how modern communication can be used to implement UNESCO'S educational goals.

The composition of the workshop group was heterogeneous concerning both the implementation of general UNESCO goals in schools and the understanding of the complex term of sustainability. In a second working phase the teachers and coordinators exchanged their views on what role sustainability and education for sustainable development play in their countries and schools and why sustainability is a topic that will be decisive for the development of our societies in the next years.

After this phase the participants introduced sustainability projects that have proved to be particularly successful. Later the positive and negative aspects of these projects were gathered in order to generalize the experiences and to draw conclusions for future project work.

The participants exchanged their opinions on how schools should tackle the topic of sustainability in their everyday work. Measures that covered the following points were worked out:

- desired results
- target groups
- potential partners
- required resources
- funding
- implementation and
- evaluation.

These measures were presented to the other participants and explained.

The coordinators decided to launch new sustainability projects this year. The new insights should be used and the other partners should be regularly informed about all steps of the projects. For this purpose a new internet platform was launched in Berlin. With this platform mutual information as well as mutual support can be delivered. The time line is from November 2009 to December 2010. On the 8<sup>th</sup> International Project Day of the German ASP net in April 2010 the first interim results will be evaluated.

The goals of the workshop have been achieved. The new internet platform will accompany the projects that put sustainability on the agenda of the schools and their respective partners. Both the North-South dialogue and the South-South dialogue were strengthened. The workshop and the intensive exchange in the multinational working groups made the participants realize that without prejudices all sides can benefit from each other.

The international network of the UNESCO Associated Schools is seen as an umbrella that creates the perfect environment to work on the implementation of

UNESCO's educational aims, to benefit from other schools' experiences and to further use the school network for local activities.

It is intended to conduct a second workshop in Namibia in December 2010. Apart from evaluating the projects the participants wish to discuss strategies how the concept of education for sustainable development can be brought on its way from the school to the community. Teaching and learning concepts will be elaborated which reflect both the diversity and the common ground in the network.

In conclusion, this new school network will serve the implementation of education for sustainable development, and it aims at a higher intercultural competence in the participating schools.

With the support of the national commissions, UNESCO's school networks are very efficient at making UNESCO's aims and principles visible. The stronger these networks are, the stronger the public's perception of UNESCO will be.