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UNU-IAS

Institute of Advanced Studies

Capacity Development and Training Workshop for RCE Coordinators in Africa

September 7 – 9), 2012
Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Introduction

The United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS) in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community Regional Environmental Education Programme (SADC-REEP) and RCE Makana will run a capacity development and training workshop for coordinators of Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) in Africa. The workshop will be held at Rhodes University, South Africa from 7 – 9 September 2012. The workshop will be followed by the 30th Environmental Education for Southern Africa (EEASA) Annual Conference from 11 – 14 September, which will be attended by RCE coordinators from SADC countries. UNU-IAS will organise a panel discussion on the role of RCEs in fostering social learning and sustainability change in Africa.

The first two days (7 & 8) of the workshop will focus on the implementation of capacity development course modules that were recently designed by a team of RCE coordinators in partnership with UNU-IAS. The last day of the workshop will be used to convene the second African RCE Continental Meeting in which strategies for advancing regional and global partnerships for ESD projects will be deliberated. The participating RCE coordinators will be expected to later implement the modules in their RCE contexts.

Background

The United Nations, through its Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005 – 2014), identifies capacity development and training as one of the strategies for implementing the vision of ESD. The UNU-IAS is contributing to this strategy through its Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) initiative. The RCE initiative is a response to the call of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) for partnerships on mobilising diverse stakeholders towards achieving sustainable development. Currently there are 101 Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development operating globally with 17 of the RCEs occurring in Africa. Each of the 17 RCEs has identified sustainable development issues to collaboratively address through environmental learning and research processes.

It has been acknowledged that Africa has the highest poverty, lowest carbon footprint and some of the highest biodiversity in the world. The RCE network provides an excellent opportunity to address sustainability issues, and at the same time strengthen the African resilience in the context of contributing to a low-carbon society. Various RCEs in Africa are involved in mobilising diverse actors to address sustainability issues through collaborative ESD activities. The activities range from organising environmental learning workshops for educators to enabling universities in Africa to connect with people and society needs. However, RCEs in Africa are faced with many challenges in their quest to involve communities and facilitate a networked approach to addressing sustainable development issues. These challenges range from poor network governance systems to inadequate funding for collaborative ESD projects. There is need to strengthen the capacities of RCEs in Africa to respond effectively to operational and sustainability

challenges in their regions. It is against this backdrop that a capacity development and training workshop for RCE coordinators will be held at Rhodes University, South Africa. The workshop is part of a broader UNU-IAS capacity development programme aimed at strengthening capabilities of RCEs to deliver ESD.

The UNU-IAS capacity development programme for African RCEs seeks to enhance capabilities for ESD at four levels – individual (RCE coordinators), organisational (RCE stakeholders), network (entire RCE) and broader African context in which the RCEs operate from. The programme lays emphasis on participation, ownership and sharing of facilitation roles. Capacity issues are being considered from a systems perspective, with an appreciation of the dynamics and inter-relationships amongst stakeholders in a specific RCE. Capacity development is viewed as a reflexive and participatory process focusing on the importance of network relationships, dialogue, collaborative learning, systemic thinking and the role of multi-actors in enabling sustainability and social change in specific geographic regions and beyond.

Other than contributing to the implementation of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the UNU-IAS Capacity Development Programme for African RCEs contributes also supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A key objective of NEPAD environment action plan is to place Africa on a path of sustainable growth and development through eradicating poverty, building peace, and conserving the integrity and diversity of its ecosystems. This requires partnerships between Africa and the international community. Strengthening the capacities of African RCEs to deliver ESD within a collaborative perspective is fundamental to placing the continent on a path of sustainable growth, as envisaged by NEPAD environment action plan.

Since 2011, the UNU-IAS in collaboration with the SADC-REEP has been implementing a capacity development programme for African RCE coordinators. Under this initiative, two workshops and the first African RCE continental meeting have been facilitated. During the first workshop that was held in August 2011 and hosted by RCE Makana, four focal areas were identified as being central to strengthening capacities of African RCEs to respond to sustainable development challenges in their regions. The four areas are – transformative learning, network governance, collaborative partnerships and research. In a follow-up workshop that was held in March 2012 and hosted by RCE KwaZulu Natal, a small team of RCE coordinators were engaged in writing course materials on the four focal areas (modules). The course materials in a modular form are ready for piloting, and later implementation in individual RCEs.

Objectives

The purpose of this Workshop is to pilot the four emerging capacity development modules, with a view to equipping RCE coordinators with knowledge, skills and motivation to implement the modules in their contexts. The specific objectives of the Workshop are:

1. To equip the participating coordinators with motivation, tools, methodologies and skills to implement capacity development modules in their RCEs.
2. To strengthen capacities of RCE coordinators to implement transformative ESD projects through networked governance mechanisms.
3. Identify opportunities for further development of African RCEs and explore possibilities for undertaking collaborative research projects.

4. To convene the second African RCE continental meeting, with a view to refining a position paper for sharing at the 7th Global RCE Conference.

These objectives will be realised through reflexive deliberations and presentations during the workshop and African RCE continental meeting (see **Annex 1** for draft Programme). Fundamentals of the following modules will be implemented:

- **Module 1** – Transformative learning as an education for sustainable development goal
- **Module 2** – Collaboration, partnerships and networking in RCEs
- **Module 3** – Governance and management in RCEs
- **Module 4** – Research and development for sustainability

Participation

Workshop participants will be drawn from the 17 UNU acknowledged RCEs shown in the Table below.

RCE	Secretariat	Country
1. Cairo	Sekem Development Foundation	Egypt
2. Senegal	Association Culturelle d’Auto Promotion Educative et Societe	Senegal
3. Ghana	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology	Ghana
4. Greater Mbarara	Mbarara University of Science and Technology	Uganda
5. Greater Nairobi	Kenyatta University	Kenya
6. Kakamega	Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology	Kenya
7. Mau Ecosystem Complex	Egerton University	Kenya
8. Kano	Byero University, ECOSEC Services & Investment Ltd.	Nigeria
9. Lagos	Horeb Educational Consulting	Nigeria
10. Minna	Niger State Urban Development Board	Nigeria
11. Lesotho	National University of Lesotho	Lesotho
12. Zomba	University of Malawi	Malawi
13. Kuwa-Zulu Natal	Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa	South Africa
14. Makana	Rhodes University	South Africa
15. Maputo	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane	Mozambique
16. Swaziland	University of Swaziland	Swaziland
17. Khomas-Erongo	University of Namibia	Namibia

Participants will be required to complete and submit a pre-course task by 15 August 2012 (see **Annex 2**).

Expected Outcomes

A key outcome will be a revised course manual for RCEs. The course participants will be expected to complete a task on drafting plans on how to implement the course modules upon return to their RCEs. The RCE coordinators will be equipped with skills and tools on how to run a similar capacity development course, and also how to adapt and apply a modular approach to course development. A summary report of the workshop and position paper on African RCEs will be posted on the UNU-IAS website for wider dissemination.



Annex 1: Draft Programme

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AND 2ND AFRICAN RCE CONTINENTAL MEETING

September 7 – 9, 2012, Rhodes University, Grahamstown South Africa

ARRIVAL	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP	CONTINENTAL MEETING
Day 0 (Thurs 6 Sep 2012)	Day 1 (Fri 7 Sep 2012)	Day 2 (Sat 8 Sep 2012)	Day 3 (Sun 9 Sept 2012)
Participants arrive in Grahamstown	0830 – 1030 hr <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Remarks (Prof Lotz-Sisitka) • Introduction to the Workshop (UNU-IAS) 	0830 – 1030 hr Module 3: Governance & Management in RCEs (Dick Kachilonda & David Manyatsi)	0830 – 1030 hr Panel Discussion with ESD Leadership Programme Chair: Prof Lotz-Sisitka
	1030 – 1045 hr <i>Coffee Break</i>	1030 – 1045 hr <i>Coffee Break</i>	1030 – 1045 hr <i>Coffee Break</i>
	1045 – 1300 hr Module 1: Transformative Learning as an ESD Goal (Caleb and David Ong'are)	1045 – 1300 hr Module 4: Research and Development for Sustainability (Dr Tsepo & Prof Lotz-Sisitka)	1045 – 1300 hr
	1300 – 1400 hr <i>Lunch</i>	1300 – 1400 hr <i>Lunch</i>	1300 – 1400 hr <i>Lunch</i>
	1400 – 1600 hr Module 2: Collaboration, Partnerships & Networking in RCEs (Tichaona Pesanayi & Ali Ahmad)	1400 – 1600 hr Implementation of Capacity Development Course in RCEs (Prof O'Donoghue)	1400 – 1700 hr Continental Meeting Chair: Dick Kachilonda
	1600 – 1630 hr <i>Coffee Break</i>	1600 – 1630 hr <i>Coffee Break</i>	
	1630 – 1730 hr Reflections (UNU-IAS)	1630 – 1730 hr Evaluation & Home Assignment (UNU-IAS)	



Annex 2: Pre-course/workshop task (to be completed before the course)

Part 1: Description of yourself and your role in the RCE

Write a short description of yourself, giving insight into your experience in ESD/Environmental Education and in working in an RCE context. Describe your role in the RCE and how you are contributing to the following areas:

- Implementation of transformative learning processes
- Enhancement of networked governance for collective learning
- Fostering of networking within and outside the RCE
- Contribution to research and development to enable sustainability practices

For each area provide a short description of factors that have either enabled or constrained your contribution.

Part 2: Your expectations of the capacity development workshop/course

Write a few short paragraphs outlining what you would like to achieve through participation in piloting the following modules:

- Module 1 – Transformative learning as an ESD goal
- Module 2 – Collaboration, partnerships and networking in RCEs
- Module 3 – Governance and management in RCEs
- Module 4 – Research and development for sustainability

Part 3: RCE participation and support

It is essential that your RCE community supports your participation in the capacity development programme. Discuss the participation of your RCE in the programme, and request endorsement from the stakeholders for your participation on their behalf. An endorsement letter signed by all RCE members will be accepted as evidence of full RCE network support for your participation.

Part 4: Document collection

Collect the following documents and bring them along with you to the workshop. You will need them during the piloting of the modules.

- Copies of strategic plan/proposal that are guiding your RCE's collaborative ESD activities. The plans should originate from your RCE proposal prior to UNU acknowledgement.
- Copies of documents or reports (e.g. annual report, project report) that show evidence of existing sustainable development activities or ESD initiatives in your RCE.
- Copy of governance structure and the vision and mission statement of your RCE.
- Any information on collaborative activities or networks with other RCEs.
- Any information on evidence of involvement of local communities in social learning interactions and small-scale sustainability practices.