



Session 8: RCE Movement beyond 2014

Chair: Kazuhiko Takemoto

Kazuhiko Takemoto introduced the session by identifying three discussion points:

- 1) Consolidation – how can the RCE Community be scaled up and not just grow. It was necessary to carefully look at the geographical parts and pay attention to quality, enhance collaboration amongst RCEs and extend the support to each other where and when needed.
- 2) Change = UNU could deliver policy change as well as research, with a contribution to the global landscape.
- 3) Global Learning Space – it was a challenge to contribute to it.

Five panelists were invited on stage:

Dzulkifli Razak (President IAU)

Charles Hopkins (UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Teacher Education, York University)

Rob O'Donoghue (RCE Makana & Rural Eastern Cape)

Alfred Ortega (RCE West Jalisco)

Ibrahim Abouleish (SEKEM)

Kazuhiko Takemoto asked the panelists to reflect on these three points for ten minutes and to share their own thoughts on how to move beyond 2014.

Dzulkifli Razak

The context was to move forward within the Global Learning Space (GLS). Hans van Ginkel had mentioned that it was about the future. It was very important to talk about commons and consolidation of all RCEs into a bigger form of clusters. What were the common things where RCEs could work together across countries? This was one step towards GLS. He was very pleased to have witnessed the offer from Cairo to the Pacific Islands for student admittance. This was one good example.

Networking needed a common ground without losing one's own identity. What value did an RCE bring? One was talking about the intangible quality. Trust was needed between RCEs. Without trust it was very difficult to sustain the network. All should learn the intercultural differences and how to link with one another, thereby adding ethics and values.

Indigenous knowledge was another set of values that one needed to learn. It was of essence to recover indigenous knowledge. One had to move from production to preservation. The mindset needed to change and instead of maximization one



needed to talk about optimization. Ownership and skills had to be in the focus in order to develop new values of optimization and preservation.

Charles Hopkins

There were four main areas to work on:

1) Access to quality based education, 2) reorienting existing education, 3) public awareness and understanding, and 4) training programmes for all sectors. Public awareness was very important; the world was in need of knowledgeable citizens. Beyond 2014, the RCE vision had to be to use the RCE expertise and turn this into a meaningful global contribution.

GAP priority action areas

- 1) Advancing policy
- 2) Transforming learning and training environments
- 3) Building capacity of educators and trainers
- 4) Empowering and mobilizing youth
- 5) Accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level

All these points were important, but RCEs also worked in other areas. Step one was to change individual behavior and step two was to shift societies. How did one influence collective behavior? There seemed to be a formula on how to impress ministers of the environment (see the slides of this session). All these factors made up a formula, which showed the complexity of the issues at hand and where RCEs could come in. How did one actually implement the complexity at the local level? Kazuhiko Takemoto had mentioned GLS but how did one take the terms down from the university level to the unemployed youth in Bangladesh for example. And on the other end there were scientific discussions amongst researchers on for example carbon capture. The RCEs' social capital was their strength. If one thought of what had happened in the last month in Okayama this community will not forget the impact the conference had made, the social implications. Beyond 2014 some well-positioned people should work on the international level, but each one of us should engage at the regional level.

Rob O'Donoghue

The complexity of the issues at hand was overwhelming and the diversity was inspiring. One had to ask where have we come from? How were our models developing? And where were we going? First was the emergence of ESD in the 70s with environmental awareness creation. Then in the 80s environment and development evolved, in the 90s environment and society as well as ecological components were included. In the 2000s there was a strong sustainability component with the term earth stewardship and future learning, i.e. meaning ESD = participation in sustainable practices (RCE). Everyone had basically been



involved in an experiment of social learning. There had been changes in SD thinking coupled with ESD thinking hence ESD being an expanding concept. Originally the foundation had been to get the message across, and then one shifted to practices. The expanding concept eventually had become participatory and co-engaged. The knowledge had now strongly been linked to ethics and values. This had all been included in the open and expanding concept of ESD, leading to purposeful learning to allow for a response to GAP.

Three rules of thumb, with the model of Okayama being a very good framework to build on:

- 1) Spreading the spirit of ESD by supporting each other
- 2) Being gentle in invitations to other, open and willing to recognize the differences
- 3) Passing on the charm and value to the future

Alfred Ortega

Just like RCE Jalisco, everyone should write their own story and share it. He explained how RCE Jalisco got involved in ESD by connecting different stakeholders. They had more than 25 years of ESD experience. They collaborated with different RCEs from South America, and empowered the youth from Guatemala. During the 3rd Americas meeting he remembered the priorities they had defined. But when he looked at the GAP priorities it felt like working against the clock because awareness was not growing as fast as pollution and sustainability needs. So there was a need of up scaling practices. It would be good to start continental meetings on one specific issue to access funding, and share practices in the field. It had become clear that GAP had strong support from the UNU-IAS system.

Ibrahim Abouleish

The change usually happened when two countries met. What he had experienced was very much enriched by all the meetings. ESD was a very complex issue. It was not only learning, but also human rights, social injustice, health, ecological issues and economics.

One could not focus on only one part, when looking at the four elements of SD. One had to work with other people in other areas of SD such as politicians, economists, the public and other. Working alone in the area of SD would not get the RCEs anywhere, hence all four pillars are to be addressed. RCEs brought in the idea, but since there was no direct research by the RCEs one had to connect with research centres and universities.



Working with politicians was not possible if the RCEs were disconnected from the people. All members had signed the convention of ESD they knew well how very important this was for SD. Convincing economists was not easy but working with them was also part of the duty.

Mario Tabucanon summarized the key points:

- ✓ Value of trust
- ✓ Importance of indigenous knowledge
- ✓ Shift from maximization to preservation to ownership and stewardship.
- ✓ Emerging GAP: how can RCEs contribute?
- ✓ Change process - expanding the concept of ESD
- ✓ Foster values, knowledge skills and link it to ethics.

In conclusion RCEs needed to work in solidarity. RCEs had to break walls and talk the language of all stakeholders.

Floor Discussion

- ✓ Give priority to the younger generation since they are the future.
- ✓ There had been so many comments to bring about change outside, but inside the RCE Community there were few women and young people on stage and in the panels. Change needed to happen inside this RCE community.
- ✓ The panel kept talking about policy, but where was the scientific community, the sports community, not all stakeholders were present in the hall, where was the private sector?
- ✓ Charles Hopkins: Probably most difficult was to bring in the private sector. There had been so much talk on team building and consensus, which were not necessarily the strengths of the private sector.
- ✓ Dzul kifli Razak: the youth conceptualized the future. They need to tell us what they want. The power of the youth is what needs to be mobilised.
- ✓ Let youth contribute. They face problems that the older generation did not face such as getting through education and starting a career.
- ✓ Focus yourself to sustain yourself. Youth should participate in national and international debates and activities.
- ✓ Ibrahim Abouleish: the only chance one had was the best education and a holistic education.
- ✓ One needed to develop programmes to address the different areas. There was no programme to target policy makers. RCE needed to be present in international agreements. Currently there was nobody to follow this through.
- ✓ RCE Minna: They were very thankful for the UNU programme that allowed the youth to take part.



- ✓ Good publicity strategies needed to be implemented for the RCE network.
- ✓ Kim Smith: To create sustainable networks a mix of ages was required.
- ✓ RCE Graz: It was important to reflect on who was at the conference, critical thoughts should be voiced.
- ✓ RCE Greater Dhaka: the youth could learn, they require training. One needed to create knowledge based communities where everyone was the same. All other problems would then dissolve. Manage to divert funds to those that cannot provide youth training.
- ✓ RCE Waikato: There were certain words missing in the Okayama Declaration such as indigenous and traditional knowledge, climate justice, earth stewardships, and values.
- ✓ There needed to be a shift from priority of a global market to a global community. The RCE community had to be clear on what they stood for. Peace and happiness should be part of any declaration. RCEs were not engaged in wars or conflicts. Other items that were not on the agenda were disabled people and terrorism.
- ✓ Social Scientists should be included to hear their perspective.
- ✓ Gender equality was also an issue.

Okayama Declaration

Mario Tabucanon presented the Okayama Declaration, explaining that the process had started in Nairobi. Elements of that discussion could be added as Annexes. The first draft had been released last month, to receive comments. The majority had endorsed it as it was. There had been however specific comments to add substance. Most had been implemented, others were not due to their specificity, which would then be included in the Annex.