



EMBEDDING EDUCATION IN THE CLIMATE CHANGE AGENDA

Education is a key link to tackling climate change. In a world that is faced with a rapidly changing and deteriorating natural environment, the international community is scrambling to find ways to manage the causes and effects of climate change.

Education is often overlooked in debates, strategies, and national action plans as is its role in creating communities that are aware of their environment and equipped to deal with the impact of climate change. 'Education for Sustainable Development', a larger framework of education which seeks to integrate values, principles and practices of development which address the social, economic, cultural, and environmental problems people face in the 21st century, has taken a back-seat in the climate change discussion.

Delegates of the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Cancun, Mexico, from 29 November – 10 December 2010, offered warm words recognizing the

relevance of improving awareness and understanding of climate change to better prepare people to deal with the impact of changing weather patterns and to advocate for climate-related policies. But they sadly fell short of a serious effort to advance a coherent education strategy to address climate change.

Countries represented at the Cancun climate conference are also signatories to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC is an international treaty that was signed at an Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Article 6 of the Convention highlights climate change-related education, training, and public awareness.

To address the challenge of teaching and learning about climate change, delegates of a Climate Change Conference held in New Delhi, India, in 2002 adopted the 'New Delhi Work Programme' recommending a list of activities to



ensure public awareness, development of educational and training programmes on climate change, and activities to engage the public to address climate change issues. The New Delhi Work Programme was amended in 2007.

Delegates of the Cancun climate meet reviewed the amended New Delhi Work Programme, identified gaps, and addressed challenges in the Programme that calls for action including ensuring –

- Support to formal education in schools and institutions at all levels, non-formal and informal education on climate change and development of educational and public awareness materials.
- That intergovernmental and non-

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Civil society organizations are calling for women to have a greater role in managing the impact of climate change

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governmental organizations share information on their activities through the Climate Change Information Network (CC:iNet), a web portal on public information, education, and training on climate change offering easy access to ideas, strategies, contacts, experts and materials that can be used to motivate and empower people to take effective action on climate change.

- Training opportunities are available for groups with a key role in climate change education and communication, such as journalists, teachers, and community leaders.
- That more young people, women, indigenous people, civil society groups, and grassroots communities are involved in decision-making on climate change globally and nationally.
- Recognition of Education for Sustainable Development as an agent for change that can help build the foundations for more resilient societies that are able to respond and adapt to their environment.

The 'Report on essential needs for, potential gaps in, barriers to, and progress in the implementation of the amended New Delhi Work Programme' however noted lack of finances for education and capacity-building, trainings or capacity-building activities organised as one-off

events, and the lack of a national strategy for environmental education especially in the poorer countries, as some of the gaps in the implementation of agreements contained in Article 6 of the UNFCCC.

Acknowledging that education and training have a significant role to play in empowering communities to deal with climate change is a step in the right direction. Having a mechanism for reporting on progress on the implementation of commitments contained in Article 6 is also welcome. The current analysis in the climate change discourse however reveals a limited appreciation of the all too important role of education in adaptation and mitigation – key strategies in the emerging deal on climate change. The analysis relegates education, training, and public awareness building to a collection of discrete, disparate activities – not elements coming together to form a core education strategy, critical for citizens, especially the poorest, to survive, cope with and reverse climate change.

Education campaigners have for some time now recognised that the vision of quality education for *all* stands challenged by the increased occurrence of natural disasters in greater scale and ferocity, with climate change as a clear causal factor. Disasters damage or destroy learning centres, schools and educational systems and disrupt education processes. The loss of life and livelihoods have severe social and economic repercussions which impact

school participation and attendance especially of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Education campaigners have been arguing for education planners and governments to anticipate the continued impact of the climate crisis on education systems so that the right of citizens to quality education access is not compromised in its wake.

The strategic *education* response to climate change, however – as advanced within the Education for Sustainable Development framework - bears stronger articulation and support. Education systems can play a powerful role in promoting values and shaping attitudes that shift unsustainable consumption patterns. They can cultivate and nurture the scholarship and intellectual resource base required to develop alternative, greener technologies. Much less recognized is the imperative for a strong education response to arm people and communities – especially the poorest - with the knowledge and skills to reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, lessen their disaster risks, make informed decisions to adapt their lives and livelihoods, and participate in defining and actively advancing alternative development systems that are sustainable, equitable and just.



The Cancun climate talks call for protecting tropical forests while safeguarding indigenous peoples' rights

In as much as education sector plans need to be more seriously informed by the reality of the climate crisis, clear and concrete education strategies, backed by resources, should form an integral part of the climate change adaptation and mitigation plans of governments and communities. Advocates of the right to quality education are called upon to embed education more firmly in the climate change agenda.

EDITORIAL



EDUCATION IN A CLIMATE- CHANGED WORLD

*By Dr. J. Roberto Guevara (RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia),
 President, ASPBAE*

In 1991 we explored the feasibility of an environmental education program within ASPBAE prior to the first General Assembly in the Philippines. In 1992, we participated in the First Journey of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development in Brazil.

In 1995, we identified the key principles of adult environmental education in the Asia-South Pacific region. These principles informed the Darwin Declaration, which in turn, shaped our advocacy agenda at the 5th International Conference of Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) in 1997.

In 2005, we were awarded the honour of being a Centre of Excellence in Education for Sustainable Development.

The above organisational history speaks of the depth of our experience that draws from the tireless work of our members who continue to ensure that the communities they work with understand the links between environment and development and act accordingly.

So when I was asked, what is new

about educational responses required to address climate change, my answer was – There is nothing new, except that it is **URGENT**.

It is urgent that as educators we help to develop an **UNDERSTANDING** of the complexity of climate change. We need to facilitate an understanding that recognises how politics and justice are central to effectively responding to climate change.

It is urgent that we **RESPOND** to the demands of our learners and their communities. The most vulnerable communities in the region are those at the mercy of disasters. These same communities tend to be those least capable of understanding the causes and impacts of climate change due to their lack of access to education and literacy.

The most vulnerable within these communities are women and children. Therefore, whatever educational responses to climate change we propose needs to have a solid foundation on **GENDER**.

It is urgent that our educational responses **EMPOWER** individuals and their communities to not just prepare to adapt to the perceived

impacts, but to challenge and transform the root causes of climate change.

The complexity and urgency of the problem requires that as educators we **NETWORK** and **NEGOTIATE** across the different key players and levels. No one can do this alone, we need to learn our way out of this complex problem – together.

Finally, it is urgent that the educational responses be **TRANSFORMATIVE**. We need to develop education that will transform us all, including those who have contributed most to climate change, those who will have to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and those who will have to develop ways to mitigate climate change.

We are not waiting for climate change; we are already experiencing climate change. So while it is URGENT to contribute to climate change education, I believe that we should within ASPBAE be creating the spaces and leading the debates of the kind of education we need in a climate changed world.

NOTES FROM AN ADVOCATE WHO DECIDED NOT TO GO TO CANCUN

By *Dominic M. D'Souza, Associate Director, Laya, (Andhra Pradesh, India)*
and ASPBAE Executive Council Member

As a representative of civil society organizations, I had the opportunity to attend 6 Conference of Parties (COP) on Climate Change: Delhi, Milan, Nairobi, Bali, Poznan and Copenhagen.

I did not go to Cancun because I was frustrated and demotivated after high hopes in Copenhagen, where the urgency of the problem was put on the back burner. Also the voices of the impacted communities were not heeded; the need to change the consumptive lifestyles to mitigate Climate Change was accorded the least priority. Rather the focus was on profiting from the problem and waiting for a techno-fix to address the Climate Change. More frustrating and incomprehensible was the deliberate restriction of democratic space for civil society organizations in Copenhagen.

I am disillusioned with the negotiation process. The Kyoto Protocol (KP) was a diluted compromise of wishing away the historical emissions from the time of the Industrial Revolution, ignoring the loot and degradation by the developed countries during the Colonial Period and agreeing to just 5 percent emission reduction to get the turncoat USA and its poodles on board. Not only has this minimum not been complied with but by 2010 the developed countries have blatantly increased their emissions by 5



Is climate change education too little, too late?

percent beyond the 1990 levels. Some of the countries, notably USA and Australia, are even negotiating the baseline of 1990. As the KP regime comes to an end in 2012 there is further dilution of the resolve to address climate change. The action so far does not reflect the concern to resolve the problem but, what is more unacceptable, to convert it into an opportunity to profit at the cost of increasing the vulnerability of the developing nations. Further, the developed countries are using the future emissions of the more developed: Brazil, South Africa, India, and China among the developing countries as an excuse for non-compliance.

On these shaky foundations it is not surprising that Cancun has constructed a skeletal edifice expecting Durban to do the substantive work. The posturing and procrastination by the developed countries at Cancun has resulted in hoodwinking the impacted communities that some 'positive' steps are being taken.

The deviant behavior of the developed countries, as the 'earth ship' sinks with the weight of the increasing atmospheric carbon and other green house gases, is nothing but a déjà vu of the sinking of the 'unsinkable' *Titanic*.

The impacted communities across the globe watch the fruitless negotiations in the face of urgency with mute disbelief and despair, which can soon turn to anger and violence. When that happens all would want to know who is responsible. But then, it would be too late.

No longer then we can depend on our ministers and bureaucrats to end the impasse in the negotiations for the survival of the 'earth ship' that is sinking in the deep waters of doom.



Dominic M. D'Souza, ASPBAE Executive Council member

Hence, eschewing Cancun I went to Manila, where the newly initiated network, CLIMATE Asia Pacific, met for a two-day meet on 'Climate Change Learning Initiative Mobilizing Action for Transforming Environments in Asia Pacific' to scope Climate Change Education efforts in the Asia Pacific region, identify gaps and strategize future action. Thereafter, I participated in the 'Forum on Climate Change and Environmental Education in Asia Pacific' and made a power point presentation on 'Forests and Climate Change Education' based on my experience of working in a forest eco-region in north Andhra Pradesh, India.

The ironical hope, I believe, lies in the wisdom of community science of impacted communities to continue to contribute to balance the mitigation by their energy deficient lifestyles and adapt to the realities in the climate changing world. Is climate change education too little too late to address the urgency? Do we need to rearticulate 'education' itself in the climate changing world? The voices of the impacted communities must

find a place in the negotiations. Climate change education can focus on the global citizenship responsibility of communities, which can demand for and restore the sanity and urgency in the negotiations. What we need then is climate change education that focuses on the science, the political economy, the ethics and urgent action.

This motivated me to go to Manila instead and contribute to concrete actions that attempt to build a core climate change education strategy from the community perspective that examines the causes of climate change and addresses its impacts.

CANCUN: A STEP FORWARD FROM COPENHAGEN

For civil society organizations, while governments didn't agree on a clear path forward, Cancun was an improvement from the previous climate conference in Copenhagen where governments failed to reach agreements and fell far short of compelling and motivating countries to address the climate crisis.

The Cancun climate talks specifically called for governments to established a fund to deliver the billions needed to deal with climate change and stop deforestation; devise a mechanism to protect tropical forests while safeguarding indigenous peoples' rights and biodiversity; and while recognizing that previous commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions were insufficient, to pledge to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 25-40% by 2020. Other organizations such as the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) called for greater attention to women and their role in dealing with and managing the impact of climate change. The ICAE stressed the importance of having structures that enable women to participate fully in decision-making related to climate change financing, mitigation, adaptation, technology, and capacity-building education.

PREPARING PEOPLE FOR DISASTERS

By Ramon Mapa, Director, People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development (PILCD), Philippines



A landslide after Typhoon Pepeng in Northern Philippines

It was 25 September 2009 and we were having our local *tck tck tck* campaign for the International Climate Change Conference to happen in Copenhagen in December in that year.

While our resource person from Greenpeace was making his presentation on climate change, he received a text message that flood waters in his house in Manila were knee deep. Typhoon Ketsana (Ondoy) was flooding Metro Manila.

Ketsana poured more than a month's

worth of rain in just 12 hours submerging many areas in Metro Manila with water 12 feet high. Houses were destroyed. Several people died and were reported missing.

Two weeks later, I was on a midnight bus from Baguio city to Manila to catch an early morning flight to Bali, Indonesia. It was 9 October 2009. It had been raining all day. Typhoon Pepeng (Parma) had entered northern Philippines. We were told that roads going out of Baguio were inaccessible and low-lying provinces nearby were flooded. I spent the night at the bus station.

It was morning when I got a ride back home and saw the damage along the road. *"I just passed that way last night"*, I thought, while looking at a huge mass of soil and mud blocking a major road intersection. A few hours later, I found myself with my colleagues in our office cleaning thick layers of mud off the floor brought in by flood waters.

I did manage to get out of Baguio city a few days later and attend the meeting in Bali.

The landlocked province of Benguet in the Philippine island of Luzon was hardest hit. All 13 municipalities were affected. Loss of lives and damage to property and livelihoods were caused because of landslides that resulted from the unusually heavy rains. Pasdong village is one of the remotest areas in Benguet and is a project area of the People's Initiative for

Learning and Community Development (PILCD). The area was inaccessible for almost a month after the typhoon due to damages caused by landslides along the road leading to the village. Bringing out injured people for medical treatment and providing emergency relief was very difficult. Due to its remoteness, the delivery of post emergency and relief assistance was marginal compared to other affected areas near the town and capital center. PILCD's normal project operations in this area came to a halt and a post-emergency program was carried out right after the typhoon.

Part of the post-emergency activities was raising awareness on disaster preparedness. PILCD also assessed the vulnerability of communities to hazards by using methods such as community mapping and chalking out the history of natural disasters in the area.

Most villagers in Pasdong agreed that the heavy rains were very unusual. As a community member observed during a disaster history workshop, *"We've never had this kind of rain as far as we remember. We have had strong typhoons that blew our houses away but not this kind of downpour"*.

"We used to know when a typhoon will come and it used to be just strong winds", said a village resident. Their changing natural environment and the occurrence of unusual weather patterns has forced the community to question what is happening

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People of Pasdong village, in Luzon Island (Philippines), during a hazard mapping workshop

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around them. As traditional early warning systems become irrelevant, people in communities like Pasdong are faced with disasters that they are ill equipped to deal with due to lack of information, learning, and training.

Disaster and Poverty

The acceleration of changing weather patterns not only undermine traditional knowledge but further aggravate the risks that many poor and developing countries are facing. Poverty is higher in areas where natural disasters occur and repeated exposure to disasters makes the situation worse for poor communities.

Disasters don't only worsen poverty, but they also subvert past, current, and future efforts to tackle it.

Disaster Risk Reduction, Literacy, and Education

Reducing risks and enabling people to deal with disasters requires them to understand how they can best protect themselves. Integrating disaster risk reduction in literacy and education programmes is crucial, especially in vulnerable

communities where illiteracy is low. It plays a central role in building skills that can save lives and bring hope to those who live with disasters.

Since the adoption by 186 UN member states of the Hyogo Framework for Action,

In Albert Einstein's own words - No problem can be solved by the same consciousness that created it. We must learn to see the world anew.

disaster risk reduction has been promoted in education systems, particularly in formal education. Policy guidelines, tools, and methodologies were developed as guides to integrate this in the formal education system and were pilot-tested in several countries including in the Philippines.

Disaster Risk Reduction and Education for Sustainable Development

Disaster risk reduction encompasses economic, political, cultural, social, and environmental dimensions. The nature of disasters in our climate changed world and the risks it poses to humanity has forced us to question our behavior, lifestyles, our views on society, the economy, the world, and our environment.

Several questions still remain - how can we make people more prepared if they are not literate? What kind of literacy do we need to develop that acknowledges how their environment has already changed? The challenges we face in a climate changed, disaster-induced world opens up an avenue to rethink the current dominant form of development and education. It provides a platform to create the kind of education that will save us.

TWENTY YEARS ON: STILL CALLING FOR EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

Close to two decades ago, countries came together to sign the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or the UNFCCC, in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Informally known as the Earth Summit, the UNFCCC chalked a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and find solutions to deal with a fast-changing, and fast deteriorating, natural environment. Almost 20 years later, governments, policy makers, vulnerable communities, and indeed the world's population at large, are still trying to manage what has now become an irreversible phenomenon.

Human-induced warming of the climate is expected to continue.

While the effects of climate change are felt by everyone globally, particularly by poor and vulnerable communities, education can offer them a way to deal with climate change. It can empower them to take control of their own lives, and it can liberate them from the often disastrous impact changing weather

patterns have on their lives, livelihoods, communities, families, and futures. In this scenario, it is all the more important that countries and organizations reflect on the progress, or the lack of progress, they have made on global agreements to minimize factors that contribute to climate change and on preparing communities to be prepared for the cause and effects of



Participants of a Forum on Climate Change and Environmental Education in Manila, Philippines

their changing natural environment.

A Forum on Climate Change and Environmental Education in the Asia-Pacific in December 2010 brought together participants from different parts of the Philippines as well as international

participants from 7 countries (Uzbekistan, Japan, South Korea, Bangladesh, India, Australia, and Cambodia) to share the impact of global warming in the region. Organized by the Centre for Environmental Concerns-Philippines, the Forum was also

a space where organizations highlighted their experiences in environmental education work and drafted a resolution to make climate change and environmental education more relevant to the needs and desires of communities in the region.

EDUCATION FOR CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE PEOPLE'S DEVELOPMENT

Conference Statement

Forum on Climate Change and Environmental Education in Asia-Pacific

14-15 December 2010, Manila, Philippines

Education for a Climate-Changed World

Education is central to surviving in a climate-changed world... Through education, we are enabled to envision possibilities towards a more viable future and empowered to transform them into reality.

What kind of education is critical to redefining sustainability that prioritizes people's needs and their environments, as well as the welfare of future generations? ... One that is:

- **Inclusive** ● **Owned by the people** ● **Rights-based**
- **Rooted in the people's knowledge, practices, and community science**
- **Threads in the perspective of gender** ● **Mass-based**

... The challenge is how to support such a vision of learning, in terms of content, method, and access:

In terms of content, education must nurture a critical understanding of the roots and solution to the crisis of sustainability, emphasizing the responsibility of developed countries on global warming...

In terms of access ... Support and access to environmental education should be given to marginalized sectors in the rural and urban areas, to the poor whose lives are dependent on nature and are most adversely affected by climate change impacts.

In terms of method, the development of popular, participatory, and accessible approaches and information, education, and campaign materials and tools must be supported.

From Education To Collective People's Action

...In a climate-changed world, education is about advancing social change. Thus, we call for and affirm the following actions:

- The need to support people and communities asserting their rights to livelihood, a sound environment, and protection of patrimony.
- The urgent need to demand justice, responsibility and accountability from Annex I countries, which are the world's biggest emitters.
- The need for government accountability, transparency, and support.
- The need to reject market-based mechanisms, frameworks, and false solutions to climate change which do not reduce GHG emissions and support the further exploitation and corporate control of the people's natural resources.
- The need to uphold the people's rights and knowledge over corporate interests in the agriculture and fisheries sectors.
- The need to sustain our advocacy of climate justice.

To advance our aspirations for education and action for sustainable people's development, we affirm our urgent commitment to building people's solidarity and unity as a response to the global crisis of climate change.

UNRAVELLING THE ‘SCOPE’ OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE ASIA SOUTH PACIFIC

Changing weather patterns and unpredictable natural phenomena are encompassing everyday lives of people around the world. Education is one sure way of ensuring that people know about climate change, what is causing it, and how best to minimize and deal with its effects.

An Asia-South Pacific ‘scoping’ study to look closer at climate change in the



A ‘scoping’ study in the Asia Pacific looks closer at climate change education in the region

region and focus on current and potential education and training related to climate change has been kick-started by several civil society organizations in the region. A CLIMATE Asia-Pacific meet in Manila was organized by the Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines (CEC) from 12-13 December 2010. It brought together participants representing education NGOs and advocates, climate change campaigners and advocates, and

community organisations from the region to share the context of climate change in their countries, climate change education and training that is taking place, and potential for future education. Conveners from this climate change education initiative represent ASPBAE, DVV International (Germany), and the Centre for Environmental Concerns-Philippines.

Education on climate change is education for sustainable development. It develops people’s awareness on the causes and effects of the problem, and links knowledge and practice to technological advances to find solutions to this global phenomenon.

The scoping study is being conducted in 10 countries and is being led by organizations that conduct environmental education. By participating in this study and giving a more in-depth view of the climate change perspective in the Asia South Pacific, organizations are coming together to seek better ways of adapting to global warming.

This initiative reinforces agreements made at the Cancun climate change talks. The document, ‘Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action’ on Enhanced Action and Adaptation states that enhanced adaptation should -

...follow a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems; and be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional and indigenous knowledge; with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions...

The study, which comprises surveys, focused interviews, and case studies from countries in South Asia, East and South East Asia, the South Pacific, and Central Asia, is a valuable contribution of civil society organizations towards reducing vulnerability and building resilience in countries in the region. In this United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (a UNESCO-led initiative from 2005-2014), steps to promote climate change education and training focus on developing knowledge, skills, perspectives, and values to improve people’s lives today and in the future.

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