

Local Hub “Students as Leaders of Change for Local Communities’ Sustainable Development”

Education for Sustainable Development Association
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Education for Sustainable Development Association (ESD Association) is a non-profit organisation uniting the 34 members from all Belarus areas. ESD Association has been an active member of BSRESND since 2014. All of our projects are resources for collaboration between multi-stakeholders who work together for SD with tools of ESD in communities. Comprehensive support of education initiatives for sustainable development is our mission.

Goal and aims of the HUB: Considering youth as the key agents of change for the sustainable development of local societies, the ESD Association creates backgrounds for development of the competence to communicate with the local population about sustainable development problems, using the language of media communication. Young people, the authors of initiatives for the sustainable development of local communities, create their media works: videos, posters, brochures, leaflets etc. in order to improve their communication with stakeholders, while delivering youth visions about the overcoming of the actual problems in the life of local and global communities. The objectives of these media projects are the promotion of SD values, ideas and principles among various population groups. The aim of the hub is the organisation of the youth media festival “Youth Voices for SD – 2016” that provides a space for meetings, discussions of media projects’ authors, exchange of experience, resources and initiatives of various stakeholders who participate in the SD processes of the local communities. The hub will become an assembly point for the network, strengthening the communication and interconnection of network activities. The hub will become an organised centre for collecting relevant data, analysing, utilising research results and experience from all SD activity participants and ESD agents.

Activities and achievements of the HUB: The main activities of the hub are the following:

1. Coordination meetings;
2. Consulting and expert work that aims to register the participants for the youth festival and to provide consultations and work in the jury committee; 50 video projects and 20 paper projects have been registered, and 25 consultations have been provided for youth project author teams;
3. Organising the youth media festival “Youth Voices for SD – 2016”:
 - Distance (online) stage that involves the creation of “Youth Voices for SD – 2016” Media Festival Web-page and ensures that all videos sent by participants are published and available online on a special Youth Media-Festival’s playlist;
 - Skype training/workshop with experts of the media festival "Youth Voices for SD – 2016";
 - Off-line or on-site stage that includes
 - i. two day meeting in Minsk of the youth media projects’ creative groups and public discussions about SDGs by the media festival participants,
 - ii. art works exhibition “My story: 21” and discussions,
 - iii. workshops for young authors and their teachers.

After the youth media festival its participants will be able to enhance professional skills and as a result improve the quality of their works and build a media gallery of resources in order to promote SDGs, values and the core idea of sustainable development and to deliver support to ESD practices.

These resources as a database would be able to provide essential support for ESD practices' organisation for all generations in Belarus. Moreover, they would lend support to other participants of the regional SD processes, including participants of the youth contest "Think and Act SDGs!" that is usually held by the ESD Association by the beginning of the new school year (for instance, August through December 2016). In order to improve the quality of their work the young authors need expert support in the areas of Media Communication, stage directors, designers etc., as well as direct feedback from the audience about their relation to the project and its impact on the audience. Youth media festival "Youth Voices for SD – 2016" in Minsk is a very useful tool for providing this kind of support.

Target groups of the HUB, structure and collaboration:

- Students of schools and higher educational institutions, teachers, young people who are active in different initiatives of the local communities and regions and searching to enlarge the impact on the cooperation of the NGOs, governmental structures and enterprises in the local action strategies;
- Alumni of the Russian speaking distance learning course "Adobe Youth Voices" and participants of the various projects of the International Education and Resource Network;
- Representatives of the interdisciplinary professional expert community in the media communication of the youth NGOs interested in the promotion of the SD processes and ESD practices.

Local, national, global and conceptual context of the HUB:

Link to BRESNDN: The Association as BSRESNDN's regional Hub is based on a Partnership Network of Sustainable Development Schools that is a network of local Hubs which unites the activities of SD multi-stakeholders in local communities. It means that the ESD Association and BSRESNDN are closely linked, so the question of strengthening lies on both sides. ESD Association and Partnership of SD Schools are providing resources for the broader network and BSRESNDN helps to sustain the hub. Since the hub provides youth activities, as well as activities for all generations for the benefit of the sustainable development of the local communities with media, educational and other resources, mostly at the local and national level, the overall network serves as a supporting expert group where different issues are discussed, and professional assistance is provided. As a member of the BSRESNDN network the ESD Association will be pleased to join the broader network as a hub and invite other BSRESNDN members to take part in the Youth Media-Festival "Youth Voices for SD – 2016" in Minsk as experts and participants.

Link to SDGs: SDGs, their purpose, concepts and pathways for the achievement of goals are the main content of the youth media projects and the most important point for their discussion. Nowadays the promotion of the SD ideas among various population groups has a direct connection to the awareness that young authors show concerning their stand about SDGs. Therefore their media resources would be perfect tools for the implementation of youth initiatives, delivered by the participants of the Contest "Think and Act SDGs!" (as well as the main ESD Association media library, the local hub, which makes a big effort in order to engage Belarusians in the collective work on the achievement of SDGs).

Sustainability of the HUB: The sustainability of the hub will be strengthened by supporting youth initiatives that would be ensured by the post-project activities in the framework of the ESD Association programme "Support of Youth Initiatives for Local Communities' Sustainable Development":

- media gallery, created by the participants of the youth media festival “Youth Voices for SD – 2016”;
- mobile exhibition of the youth media festival “Youth Voices for SD – 2016” participants’ art works in local communities;
- youth contest “Think and Act SDGs!” that will encourage its participants to use the media gallery resources for the implementation of youth initiatives to introduce ideas of sustainable development in local communities.

Multiplication and publicity of the HUB’s initiatives: Activities of the hub will be disseminated through different target groups, social media, web pages and connected networks. The ESD Association provides project financing and private contributions that serve the aim of contributing to the sustainable transformation of societies and implementing SDGs on the local and national level, highlighting issues related to education, economics and governance. Several future projects that will be linked to ESD Hub activities will be developed. ESD Association’s FB page and webpage of the media festival “Youth Voices for SD – 2016” are used as platforms for communication. PR agency’s support is used for the purposes of reaching a wider audience, public dissemination and promotion.