

STATERA ESD HUB

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Statera has been an active member of BSRESND since 2014 and works in the field of sustainable development, regional development and ESD. Statera belongs to several international and national, multi-stakeholder organisations and is actively involved in several initiatives, activities e.g. being responsible for the drafting of the national “Organic Estonia” strategy, belongs and is active in the local organic farmers’ organisation, local community development networks and is responsible for the ESD conference series, organised in Estonia during 2016 (among other activities).

Goal and aims of the HUB: The hub is established to create broader discussions on ESD among multiple stakeholders. As the understanding of SD is still limited to environment protection issues, broader dissemination of global initiatives and discussions are needed to address multiple stakeholders. Meeting target groups like organic farmers, municipality officials, other civil society organisations and unions, that are active in closely related fields, is essential to broaden the understanding of sustainability as well as negotiate societal innovation as transformation process for more sustainable futures. Education, as a field itself, is in the middle of transformation, so putting these changes into the context of sustainable development is urgent. Thus, the initial goal of the hub includes bringing together local levels of educators, teachers, non-formal education specialists, municipality officials, parent organisations, organisations dealing with fields that are close to sustainable development etc., to initiate broad discussions on implementing GAP (includes SDG communication, overall discussion of global problems focused on in Education for Sustainable Development). The main aim of the hub is to focus on quality and build a strong, sustainable national network of motivated participants.

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

1. Co-ordination of activities, professional presentations,
2. Multi-stakeholder seminar: cross-sectoral two day seminar (2-3 April, 22 participants) with an aim to bring together the educators and entrepreneurs in order to initiate sustainable practices, implement ideas, etc., that helped to clarify ideas and topics to be discussed during the conference on 23 April;
3. Conference: thematic conference organised in Haapsalu (23 April, 36 participants, guest speaker: Assoc. Professor Tiiu Kuurme (TLU)) and communicated through different media channels;
4. Meetings, seminars with different stakeholders locally and nationwide to provide information about SDG and GAP, to introduce the goals of the hub, to identify the core group of the hub, to negotiate and plan activities of the hub, to discuss possible cooperation;
5. PR, communication activities, media coverage activities: to ensure strategic and web-based communication, to make agreements with public media sources, to share information regarding the hub and its activities.

Since during the project a strong core group gathered to implement the activities, as an indirect result of the project two more education conferences were held (in Pärnu and in Tallinn), which fell outside the limits of the present project; however, the idea and topics were the same, as a need for and interest in such events all over Estonia was noticed. Statera Hub was also represented in the discussions on sustainable rural development at the Commission of Rural affairs of the Estonian Parliament.

Target groups of the HUB, structure and collaboration: Educators, teachers, non-formal education specialists, municipality officials, parent organisations, and organisations dealing with fields connected to sustainable development. The target groups were both (a) selected and invited to a 2 day seminar based on the criteria to represent different fields and different stakeholders (education, economy, teachers, trainers, entrepreneurs, etc.), (b) open choice, i.e. the conference was open to all interested participants.

The hub supports the organisation of events, communication between multiple stakeholder groups and dissemination of the information through different channels. It also co-ordinates activities in a more organized and targeted manner. ESTHUB complements the implementation and monitoring of SDGs, especially in the field of education, economy and governance.

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

Local context: In the case of sustainability transition, quality is more important than quantity. This means it is important to ensure a deeper understanding and a holistic approach to activities rather than merely reaching the quantitative number of participants etc. As the concept of sustainability is not fully recognised in public, thorough discussions, individual mission and motivation are dimensions that need attention and time to provide the necessary, positive impact.

Link to the BSRESND strategy: The BSRESND network and hubs are closely linked, so the question of strengthening lies on both sides. Hubs make the network more integrated and the network helps to sustain the hubs. Since the hubs mostly target their activities at a local and national level, the overall network serves as a supporting expert group where different problems and questions are discussed, where professional assistance is gained. The hubs become active units for the network, strengthening the communication and coherence of activities of and for the network. Hubs also become more organised centres for collecting relevant data, analysing, utilising research results and experience from Baltic Sea countries and ensuring the sustainable implementation of GAP as a co-operative effort.

Link to SDGs: SDGs frame the context of the work of the network and are the link for local and global relationships.

Sustainability of the HUB: The hub acts as a unit for and with BSRESND, therefore the sustainability of the Hub and the network are interlinked, supporting each other. Estonian hub mostly targets its activities at a local and national level, the overall network serves as a supporting expert group where different problems and questions are discussed, where professional assistance is gained. The hub becomes an active unit for the network, strengthening the communication and coherence of activities of and for the network. Estonian Hub intends to become a more organised centre for collecting relevant data, analysing, utilising research results and experience from Estonia and ensuring sustainable implementation of GAP as a co-operative effort.

Multiplication and publicity of the HUB's initiatives: The Hub activities have been discussed and strategically planned, due to the complex nature of "national innovation" that the initiative is aimed at. Thus, a PR agency is consulted to draft a strategic approach for the promotion of the topics and activities of the hub, to ensure the long-term sustainability effect of the hub's activities. The results have been disseminated through network activities and different target groups, social media, webpages and connected networks. Statera's webpage and FB page are used as platforms for communication but a PR agency's support is used to reach a wider audience and for public dissemination and promotion.