

Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) aims to impart skills that enable people to make critical and responsible decisions for a more just and sustainable society today and tomorrow.

Sustainability impacts multiple dimensions. It not only encompasses ecological responsibility, environmental protection and climate change; it also specifically involves the promotion of sustainable social, economic and political development.

ESD addresses issues related to current challenges of the world community and relates them to local, national and global contexts.

UNESCO's roadmap "ESD for 2030" highlights the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a central aim of ESD. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals include a wide range of topics that illustrate the multiple dimensions of sustainability and our shared global responsibility. The field of education offers numerous opportunities to address these goals in an interdisciplinary and holistic way.

DVV International is the Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), the German Adult Education Association. As the leading professional organisation in adult education and development cooperation, DVV International has committed itself for the past 50 years to supporting lifelong learning. DVV International provides support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for youth and adult education in over 30 countries.

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DVV International

Education for Everyone. Worldwide.
Lifelong.

International ESD Alliances



A cross-border Initiative for
Sustainable Adult Education Institutions

Adult education institutions in the context of ESD

Adult Learning and Education (ALE) institutions, such as the German Volkshochschulen (vhs), are particularly important for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Their educational programmes enable broad segments of society to develop skills to act sustainably now and in the future. Through ESD in ALE institutions, citizens are encouraged to promote sustainability in their personal lives as well as to challenge politicians and business leaders to align their activities with sustainability standards.



Whole Institution Approach

ALE institutions themselves constitute organisational role models and should therefore align their own actions with sustainability criteria. As such, they are authentic promoters of sustainability values and illustrate how sustainability can be put into practice.

This kind of holistic organisational orientation is summarised in the concept “Whole Institution Approach” (WIA). The WIA integrates sustainability in every aspect of the institution and is not limited to educational programmes. It also includes designing the teaching and learning environment, the management of the organisation as well as the range of impact in networks.

The “International ESD Alliances” project

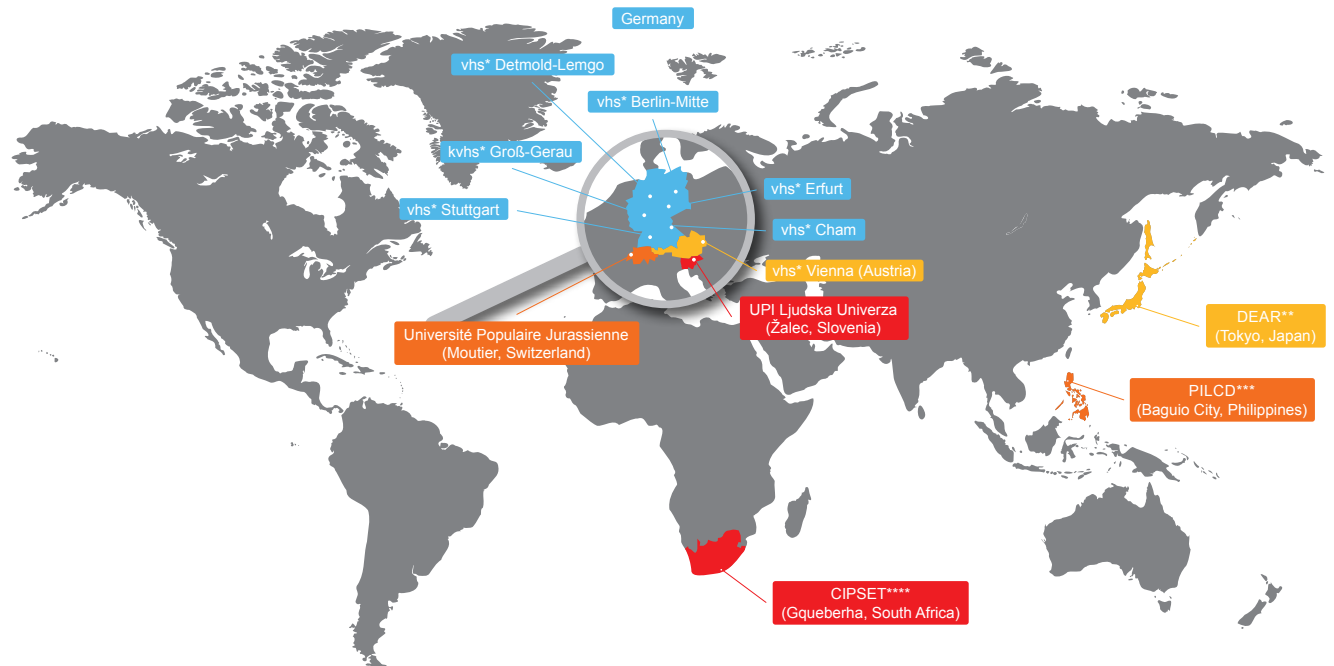
Through this cross-border initiative, DVV International supports the implementation of ESD in terms of the Whole Institution Approach. The project “ESD Alliances” will run until spring 2024 at 12 selected ALE institutions around the world. In addition to six adult education centres in Germany (Volkshochschulen), partner organisations from Japan, Austria, the Philippines, Switzerland, Slovenia and South Africa are also part of the project.

The participating ALE organisations are supported by DVV International and seven experts from the field of ESD. The experts contribute multifaceted perspectives from educational practice, research and consultancy from Germany, Ireland, Japan and South Africa.

Project goals

The participating partner organisations of “ESD Alliances” implement Education for Sustainable Development activities at their institutions. This includes the educational programme as well as other areas of the organisation, e.g. procurement or qualification of teachers and staff.

Drawing on these experiences, the alliance partners collaboratively develop results that serve as the basis for publishing products, such as handouts with concepts for the implementation of WIA and Good Practice examples. These in turn support further educational institutions in their individual implementation of ESD following the Whole Institution Approach.



* Volkshochschule (kvhs = Kreisvolkshochschule)

** Development Education Association & Research Center

*** People's Initiative for Learning and Community Development

**** Center for Integrated Post-School Education & Training at Nelson Mandela University