



EDUCATION and SUSTAINABILITY

## RCE - Regional Centres of Expertise

### INVITATION

Do you already have an active network in Environmental Education or Education for Sustainable Development?

Or

Would you like to extend your network regionally or globally?

The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, United Nations University and SADC are collaborating to support RCEs in the SADC region

objectives of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD 2005-2014), by translating its global objectives into the context of the local communities in which they operate.

#### History

RCEs seek to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future. Using this chance, a number of countries have established RCEs, which are geared towards Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Countries in southern Africa currently participating include South Africa, Swaziland, Malawi and Mozambique.

#### Core elements of an RCE

An RCE should have four elements:

- **Governance** – addressing issues of RCE management and leadership
- **Collaboration** – addressing the engagement of actors from all levels of formal (primary, secondary and higher) and non-formal and informal education sectors in RCE activities.
- **Research and development** - addressing the role of research and its inclusion in RCE activities, as well as contributing to the

#### What is an RCE?

An RCE is a network of existing formal, non-formal and informal education organizations, mobilized to deliver ESD to local and regional communities. The main thrusts of ESD are:

- Public awareness and understanding
- Access to quality basic education
- Reorienting existing education
- Training programmes for all sectors

A network of RCEs worldwide will constitute the Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development. RCEs aspire to achieve the global



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strategies for collaborative activities, including those with other RCEs.

- **Transformative education** – contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihood.

## RCE stakeholders

An RCE involves schoolteachers, professors at higher education institutions, local NGOs, scientists, researchers, museums, zoos, botanical gardens, local government officials, representatives of local enterprises, volunteers, media, civic associations, or individuals who work in the spheres of sustainable development such as economic growth, social development, and environmental protection, students and learners at all levels.

## Function of an RCE

RCEs bring together institutions at the regional/local level to jointly promote ESD. They build innovative platforms to share information and experiences and to promote dialogue among regional/local stakeholders through partnerships of sustainable development. They create a regional/local knowledge base to support ESD practitioners and promote our major goals of ESD in a resource effective manner. The four goals are:

- To re-orient education towards SD
- Increase access to quality education
- Deliver trainers' training programmes



- Lead advocacy and awareness raising efforts on ESD

## Create and support RCEs

- Conduct a survey in your region to identify:
  - Local problems
  - Local priorities
  - Existing capacity in relation to the objectives of DESD
- Identify interested parties and strategies to bring them together to build a vision for an RCE in your region
- Determine potential governance structure of an RCE. Who will be major initiators and promoters of the RCE in your region?
- Outline prospective actions to implement an RCE in your region.

## How to apply for seed funding to link your network to the RCEs

A one-page proposal, including contact details may be emailed to - [sally@wessa.co.za](mailto:sally@wessa.co.za)  
or fax to - +27 (0) 33 330 4576  
or - +27 (0) 865 132 403 (Att. Sally)

## For more information on RCEs in general, contact the RCE Service Centre:

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