REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
ON EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACKNOWLEDGED BY

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Guiding Principles for the RCE Community

Preamble

Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) are acknowledged by the United Nations University (UNU) with the support of the Ubuntu Alliance, in response to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD 2005-2014). Each RCE, which is acknowledged by UNU and not a constituent part thereof, is comprised of a network of committed organizations working together to promote ESD in the region where the RCE is located. Collectively, these RCEs form the global RCE network, which constitutes a part of the Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development. This global RCE network is one element of the global RCE community, which also consists of the Global RCE Service Centre at UNU, and the Ubuntu Alliance Committee of Peers for the RCEs. The RCE movement will continue beyond the conclusion of the DESD, and will contribute to the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD and the post-2015 sustainability agenda

In order to ensure that the behaviours of each RCE as well as the global RCE network are in line with the principles of good ethical practices, RCEs are expected to observe these guiding principles in the proper discharge of functions with transparency, collegiality and accountability. These principles, which are aimed at ensuring that words and deeds maintain a high level of professional ethical standards, and that RCE stakeholders collaborate in the spirit of international cooperation, with a commitment to sustainable development, are applicable to any RCE that has been duly acknowledged by UNU, and remain valid for as long as the RCE is officially acknowledged.

1. RCEs and the UN Principles

1.1 Each RCE is expected to subscribe to the values enshrined in the UN Charter – among them, respect for fundamental human rights, social justice and human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men and women.

1.2 Each RCE, pursuant to the UNU Charter, is expected to promote co-existence between people having different cultures, languages and social systems; peaceful relations between States and the maintenance of peace and security; human rights; economic and social change and development; the environment and proper use of resources; basic scientific research and the application of the results of science and technology in the interests of development; and universal values related to the improvement of the quality of life.

2. RCE Guiding Principles

2.1 Each RCE is expected to engage in ESD practices, consistent with the RCE spirit of bottom-up, participatory, multi-stakeholder, research and development, and transformative educational engagements with the community, and to act with professionalism and a commitment to realizing sustainable societies in compliance with just laws, highest moral and ethical standards, and a friendly working environment.

2.2 Each RCE is expected to stay informed of developments within the field of ESD – sub-nationally, nationally and internationally – as well as within the local and global RCE communities, and to facilitate sharing of ESD knowledge and developments obtained through the RCE community.

2.3 Each RCE is expected to promote good ESD practices and refrain from providing or disseminating non-verified, false, inaccurate, or insufficient information that can be misleading or unfair to other members of the RCE community. RCE stakeholders are expected to observe and maintain mutual respect in both intra-RCE and inter-RCE communications.

2.4 Each RCE is expected to use the RCE name or logo appropriately as described in the RCE Logo Use Policy; to refrain from the unauthorized use of the names or logos of the UN, UNU or relevant UNU institutes; to act in line with the character of these institutions; and to refrain from any unethical practices.

2.5 Each RCE is expected to initiate and maintain partnerships within RCEs, and partners

are expected to aspire to address equity, respect differences of opinion, and strive to foster understanding of different contexts.

2.6 Each RCE, on its own volition, is expected to join networks of RCEs that are recognized by the global RCE community – including RCE networks for specific continents and thematic issues – and to act as a responsible member of the network by working in accordance with the tenets of good ESD and SD practices with mutual respect among stakeholders.

2.7 Each RCE is expected to accept and respect differences of opinion among stakeholders, as well as among RCEs, for as long as these differences are deemed in the interest of and not disadvantageous to the network. Differences of opinion are not to be suppressed, but rather dealt with in a transparent and timely manner. In handling these differences, members are expected to focus on the issues at hand, and foster an atmosphere of dignity and mutual respect.

2.8 Each RCE is expected to make a commitment to carry its actions as per core RCE principles – on governance, collaboration, research and development, and transformative education – as well as take responsibility to fulfill their stated goals and objectives, and report annually to the Global RCE Service Centre.

3. Breach of Principles

3.1 In the first instance, any action or practice that is not in consonance with the ethos of these guiding principles may warrant a warning.

3.2 Depending on the gravity of the situation, actions that are incompatible with the guiding principles could be grounds for UNU to suspend its official acknowledgement of the RCE pending appeal period and verification by the Ubuntu Alliance Committee of Peers for the RCEs

3.3 On behalf of UNU, the Global RCE Service Centre is authorized to make an assessment and judgment on any breach of principles, in accordance with the recommendations of the Ubuntu Alliance Committee of Peers for the RCEs, and it reserves the right to act accordingly.

4. Validity and Amendment

4.1 These guiding principles shall take effect upon approval by the UNU-IAS authority serving as Secretariat of the Global RCE Service Centre.

4.2 Any amendment to these guiding principles may be proposed by the Global RCE Service Centre in consultation with the Ubuntu Alliance Committee of Peers for the RCEs, and shall take effect upon the approval of the UNU-IAS authority.

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