

Development Education Research Centre

Institute of Education, University of London

Context

The Development Education Research Centre was established in 2006 with funding from the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) to act as the hub for knowledge generation, new thinking and quality output on development education. It is part of the Institute of Education, University of London, which is the UK's premier educational institution. The Centre is also part of the London International Development Centre, a cross-collegiate initiative within the University of London that promotes research and teaching on international development.

Objectives of the Centre

The Centre has been established to

- promote the value of development education as part of the essential learning of the twenty-first century;
- provide evidence to DFID as to where and how development education contributes to its strategy on 'Building Support for Development';
- promote and encourage critical reflective engagement with the meaning and effectiveness of development education;
- develop a community of researchers and body of evidence through a series of published material, establishment of a new academic journal, academic articles and seminars;
- develop a master's degree course on development education aimed at NGO practitioners, teachers and educationalists;
- develop and embed development education principles and practices across teacher training and other educational courses and initiatives within the Institute of Education, and thereby in turn to other similar institutions.

Main Areas of Current Research

Impact of policies to support development education and related areas:

The Centre has been working on analyzing strategies by governments and civil society organizations on securing greater public engagement and support for international development across Europe. This has included working in partnership with higher education institutions in Germany, Finland, Netherlands and Ireland. The Centre to further this area of research has remained in close contact with Global Education Network Europe (GENE) and the European Development Education Forum.

Global Dimension within the Formal Education System:

A major area of research for the Centre to date has been on the Impact of the global dimension within schools in England. This research has been funded by the English Ministry for Children, Schools and Families. The Centre has also been working with colleagues in the Institute on the contribution of global school partnerships to building support for development.

Global Skills:

In the drive for 'world-class skills', the Centre has been investigating where and how an understanding of the wider world is included within the debates, policies and programmes of training providers in the UK. This has included a major project for the Centre for Excellence in leadership, a UK research and training institution for vocational education on what is meant by 'global skills'.

Young People and Global Issues:

A key interest of the Development Education Research Centre is the development of research on how young people relate their views and understanding about global issues to their own identities in the context of debates on themes such as global citizenship and cosmopolitanism. A feature of this area of research has included the completion of a research report for the UK National Youth Agency.

Global Perspectives Within Higher Education:

The Centre has been working with a number of other UK universities on the development of their strategies, outcomes of research on interest in global perspectives and the extent to which students see themselves as global citizens. A key element of the Research Centre's involvement with the London International Development Centre is the identification of where and how development education principles and practices can be reflected within the other Bloomsbury Colleges.¹

Education for Sustainable Development:

The Centre is actively involved in the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development and is managing a research project on behalf of UNESCO UK on progress on Education for Sustainable Development within the UK. It is also engaged

in identifying potential areas of research that link the debates on sustainable development to that on global citizenship.

Developing a Theory of Development Education:

Through partnerships with the Open Space for Dialogue and Enquiry Methodology² developed at Nottingham University and with colleagues in Germany, Austria, Finland, New Zealand and USA, the Centre is working on outlining some new models and theoretical frameworks for development education, global learning and global citizenship.

Research Students:

The Centre has established a team of doctoral research students linked to the above areas. It is aiming to expand this area in the coming years.

Consultancy

The Research Centre has worked with a range of NGOs including: African Women for Arts and Development, British Red Cross, People and Planet, Engineers Against Poverty, Hindu Aid, VSO, British Council, National Youth Agency.

Courses

A new masters course in development education will commence at the Institute in October 2008. It is firstly meant for staff responsible for managing and delivering development education or related programmes with NGOs, professional bodies and government departments. Secondly, the course is also suitable for professionals in teaching, youth work or in community, adult or higher education who apply development education principles within their work environment.

The masters course includes two online core modules [(1) principles and practices in Development Education and (2) Training for Development Education], a dissertation and a series of optional modules related to both theory and practice including training, school partnerships, citizenship and education and development. Students can complete the course as full-time or part-time students. The course can be completed as a distance learning MA.³

Publications

International Journal for Development Education and Global Learning:

The Centre has established a new academic journal in partnership with Trentham Books. The Journal aims to bring together current research and debates on development education and related concepts such as global learning, global citizenship and global education from around the world. The Journal has an international editorial board and is published three times a year. Linked to the Journal is an international network of academics covering areas of development education, global learning, global education and global citizenship.⁴

Development Education: Debates and Dialogue:

The Centre has also sponsored a major new publication on development education including chapters by Annette Scheunpflug, Barbara Asbrand, Vanessa Andreotti and Dave Hicks and edited by Douglas Bourn⁵ and has already established a team of doctoral research students.

For further information on the Centre go to www.ioewebsserver.ioe.ac.uk/ioe/cms/get.asp?cid=4381&4381_0=14597 or contact d.bourn@ioe.ac.uk.

Annotations

1 www.lidc.ac.uk.

2 www.osdemethodology.org.uk.

3 For details about the MA and how to apply go to: http://ioewebsserver.ioe.ac.uk/ioe/cms/get.asp?cid=882&882_1=830&var1=5&var2=MADE.

4 For details on subscriptions go to: www.trentham-books.co.uk/acatalog/International_Journal_on_Development_Education_and_Global_Learning.

5 For details about this publication go to: www.ioewebsserver.ioe.ac.uk/ioe/cms/get.asp?cid=7816&7816_0=7905.

Douglas Bourn

(Director of the Development Education Research Centre)