



Learning to Live on Planet Earth

National Conference on Education for Sustainable Development
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ESD and Information and Communication Technologies

Introduction

One of the most important developments during the last two decades has been the change ushered in by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Exemplified by the birth and phenomenal growth of the Internet, especially the World Wide Web (WWW), though not limited to it, ICTs have transformed the way we access information, do business and communicate. But its most critical impact is on human learning, knowledge management and information dissemination. Consequently, ICTs have come to be accepted as a promising development tool with the outreach to access different audiences in diverse settings and, more importantly, present content in an endless variety targeting particular stakeholder groups.

This has made it possible to support wide ranging development initiatives in the social, economic and development sectors including environment, education, health, business, governance, research, civil society activism and networking. In a globalized world struggling to meet the challenges of sustainable development, ICTs have a huge potential for teaching and learning, making geographical boundaries meaningless, if not redundant.

That said, in the developing countries there is a major issue of access, particularly in the rural areas. Also, the great possibilities that ICTs present in the development context have yet to be tapped, much less tested and tried. In Pakistan's case, access and use remain major issues. While this may present a gloomy picture, it also highlights the need for concerted efforts not only by government but all sectors of society to address these issues through models and examples which could enable it to get the right technological choices for sustainable living.

Given the ubiquity of these technologies in our lives, the workshop will focus on the relevance of ICTs in the Pakistani context and their potential role in the sustainable development agenda.

Facilitator

Hasan A. Rizvi is one of the pioneers of Internetworking in Pakistan. He is a physicist by training and spent several years at CERN (European Centre for High Energy Physics) in Geneva, the institution that gave birth to the World Wide Web (WWW). Rizvi subsequently became director of UNDP's Sustainable Development Networking Programme in Islamabad, following which he served as the head of the Education, Communication and Knowledge Management Unit of IUCN Pakistan for nearly four years. Currently, he is based in Lahore and is CEO of FiveRivers Technologies (Private) Limited.

Participants

The workshop will be attended by university faculty, teachers, I.T. professionals, civil society representatives and policymakers.

