

# **Kassel Declaration 2024: Structurally strengthen Global Learning & Education for Sustainable Development!**

We, the civil society actors at the WeltWeitWissen congress, have come together to discuss how global learning and education for sustainable development can make a significant contribution to a more just world for all, in line with the Frankfurt Declaration for critical-emancipatory civic education. As a result of the discussions during the congress, we present the Kassel Declaration 2024.

**We are calling on politicians at both state and federal levels to work together in order to further develop global learning and education for sustainable development as comprehensive educational concepts.**

**These must be financially stable, sensitive to discrimination, aware of power relations, democratic and inclusionary, decolonial, and contribute to a global socio-ecological transformation.**

## **Global learning and education for sustainable development: encouraging and empowering others to solve crises in a spirit of solidarity!**

Today's crises and challenges cannot be understood within a purely national setting: The environmental and climate crisis, war and militarization, widespread poverty, the rise of nationalist positions and far right-wing movements, the exploitation of limited resources, discrimination, and human rights violations all have global and historical root causes, as well as consequences. Global learning and education for sustainable development enables people to understand and experience global interdependence. They reinforce peaceful, respectful coexistence and encourage people to take responsibility for themselves, for others and for future generations.

Faced with the global challenges mentioned above, every human being - adult, youngster or child - needs to have skills that enable them to navigate a globalized world, and that help to shape the world responsibly, with solidarity and visionary thinking. This includes the ability to change perspectives, to reflect on one's own role in globalized societies, to analyze global-local interrelations and to appreciate diversity. Accordingly, global learning and education for sustainable development must become a part of all areas of education along the lines of lifelong learning - from early childhood education to work with senior citizens.

In the social realm of schools, for example, this requires the participation of school boards, school management, teachers and extracurricular partners.

Global learning and education for sustainable development are having an increasing impact on responsible action in companies, trade unions, sports clubs, art and cultural organizations and religious institutions. Civil society organizations are essential to the success of global learning and education for sustainable development, particularly in the field of lifelong education and adult education. It is the responsibility of policymakers to empower, support and strengthen these actors by creating the right conditions in formal and non-formal contexts for learning processes to take place.

## Policy Demands

Global learning and education for sustainable development require support and an appropriate framework. We therefore call upon the responsible stakeholders at state and federal levels to commit to global learning and education for sustainable development as an important part of socio-ecological transformation. This includes structurally embedding global learning and education for sustainable development in various formal and non-formal contexts of social learning and training. Budget cuts fundamentally and inherently stand in the way of this!

1. **Funding for global learning and education for sustainable development in the federal and state budgets must be significantly increased.** This requires the responsible federal and state departments to establish structures that guarantee resources for non-formal providers of global learning and education for sustainable development. To achieve this, it is essential to provide longer project durations, cross-departmental funding and institutional support that set global learning and education for sustainable development free from precarious working conditions and short-term planning horizons and enable networking. **Global learning and education for sustainable development are simultaneously democracy education, anti-racist education, civic education and intercultural education (etc.),** which precludes a strict separation of these areas.
2. There needs to be **clear responsibilities for contact persons in the ministries of the federal states and the federal government, as well as well-equipped ESD coordinators who are independent of government agencies and directly linked to civil society.**
3. **Financial and time resources are needed for initial training, continuing education and further education in order to ensure the sustainability of lifelong learning.** This applies first and foremost to teachers, learning facilitators and educators in all formal and non-

formal education centers. To achieve this, global learning and education for sustainable development must be included in legislation regarding education as well as in the training content of (pedagogical) professions. For universities and vocational schools, this means incorporating global learning and education for sustainable development in the curricula as well as the study and examination regulations.

4. Global learning and education for sustainable development exceed just imparting knowledge and must be thought of, and practiced as a **whole- institution approach** in formal educational institutions. Realizing these structural implementations in institutions requires specific **responsible specialist staff**, the **participation of children and young people**, and a **budget for project implementation**, as well as the establishing of structures within the institutional context.
5. Today's **global inequalities and current racism** are also **legacy of German and European colonialism**. Current global power structures are a product of history. Decolonial perspectives and discussions about colonialism are therefore an important part of global learning and education for sustainable development and must be eligible for funding as such. **Migrant and diaspora organizations are a pillar of global learning and education for sustainable development**, bringing with them experiences and perspectives (from the global South) into educational work. **Often, migrant and diaspora organizations and their expertise are insufficiently recognized. Greater support** for these groups of actors in particular, is of central importance for the structural anchoring and further development of global learning and education for sustainable development.
6. **Sensitivity to discrimination** must be demanded and encouraged at all levels. Seemingly self-evident world views and assumptions are reproduced also by funding structures and prevailing hierarchies of knowledge. In order to avoid exclusion and discrimination, **the participation of people with diverse and marginalized perspectives is necessary in all parts of this work, beginning with the design and establishment of funding structures and general conditions**. This requires both time and financial resources. Funding guidelines need to be explained in **clear and simple language**. There is also a **need for assistance in managing administrative procedures. Overall, bureaucratic processes need to be simplified**.

## References for our positions

National and international policy framework documents contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These include in particular

- The National Action Plan for Education on Sustainable Development 2030
- The Framework for Global Development Education
- Recommendation of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs on Education for Sustainable Development in Schools
- The UNESCO ESD 2030 program
- The Berlin Declaration on ESD (2021)
- The European Declaration on Global Learning by 2050 (Dublin Declaration)

In practice, important steps are missing towards implementing these reference frameworks, which have already been decided at the highest levels. This is where political decision-makers at state and federal level must take action and give more importance to global learning and education for sustainable development, both financially and in terms of incorporating them in education plans!

We understand global learning and education for sustainable development as based on the UN Goals for Sustainable Development and human rights and in the sense of civic education that foment democratic participation, personal responsibility, self- reflection and empowerment.

**In the context of the Frankfurt Declaration for a critical and emancipatory civic education, we see global learning and education for sustainable development as education that encourages people to negotiate crises collectively and in solidarity, to give visibility to conflicts and controversies, to reveal their implication in power structures, and to assume responsibility for the present and future generations.**