EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD) PROGRAMME

Background
Improving and re-orienting education is one of the goals of Agenda 21 of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) (2005-2014) and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio+20).

In 2005, the United Nations (UN) Decade of ESD was launched to enhance the role of education in promoting sustainable development. Since then it has generated many success stories to be scaled up, with many inter-governmental agreements on sustainable development now duly recognizing the importance of education.

At the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio+20), the international community agreed to “promote education for sustainable development, and to integrate sustainable development more actively into education beyond the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development” (UNESCO Roadmap for Implementing the Global Action Programme on ESD)

The UNESCO World Conference in November 2014 in Aichi Nagoya- Japan marked end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the launch of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development a follow-up to the Decade. UNESCO, as the lead agency of the Decade developed the Programme based on broad consultations and input from a wide range of stakeholders. During the 37th session of the General Conference in 2013 UNESCO endorsed the Global Action Programme on ESD as the follow-up to the Decade.

‘There is now a growing international recognition of ESD as an integral element of quality education and a key enabler for sustainable development’ (GAP Road Map, p. 9). Both the
Muscat Agreement adopted at the Global Education For All Meeting (GEM) in 2014 and the proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) developed by the Open Working Group (OWG) of the UN General Assembly on SDGs include ESD in the proposed targets for the post-2015 agenda. The Global Action Programme is therefore designed as a concrete, tangible contribution to the post-2015 development and education agendas.

**Education for Sustainable Development in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2013 – 2018**

Education for Sustainable Development is one of the programmes to be implemented under priority area six under social competences and values - Mentorship, Moulding and Nurturing of National Values in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP).

The Sessional Paper No.2 of 2015: Reforming Education and training Sectors in Kenya, provides for mentoring, moulding and nurturing of national values. Learners are faced with numerous personal challenges that require specific life skills and values in order to facilitate decision making and problem solving. Education for Sustainable Development is one of the cross-cutting issues supported under the National Education Sector Plan. Molding

In view of the contemporary and emerging issues that affect the delivery of quality education, the Department of Education provides an avenue through which Life-skills, principles and values for personal, social and economic development are promulgated. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 Article 10 spells out the National Values and Principles of governance, which bind all persons in the interpretation and application of the constitution. The same values and principles are broadly captured by the Kenya Vision 2030 blueprint (www.vision2030.go.ke)

The Department of Basic Education endeavors to strengthen the capacity of learners to develop their full capacities through facilitating acquisition of relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes through the four pillars outlined in the Dakar Framework for Action 2000, namely; *learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be*. Making pillars priorities of the education sector will enhance the quality of education and contribute to realization of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

ESD is without doubt an integral element of quality education and a key enabler for sustainable development.