Communicating Sustainable Development and SDGs: Experiences of a NGO

16th ESDN Workshop - Communication of Sustainable Development and the SDGs: Strategies and Good Practices
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Germanwatch, Policy Director
• founded in 1991
• about 700 members
• Around 50 staffers in Bonn and Berlin

Observing, Analysing, Acting

• We actively promote North-South equity and the preservation of livelihoods. We observe, analyse and act.
• In doing so, we focus on the politics and economics of the North with their worldwide consequences.
• Our topics are World Trade and Food Security, Climate Protection and Adaptation, Corporate Accountability and Human Rights, the Financial Sector and Sustainability as well as the Financing of Development Cooperation.
• All of these are in one way or the other targeted by SDGs.
Tension Creates Dynamic: Germanwatch

Far reaching targets

Pragmatic Implementation

Affected people

Decision makers D/EU

Development

Environment

Structural Change

Life style

Force of better argument

Making a difference which makes a difference

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Climate crisis and acidification of oceans
SDG 13, 7, 6, 14, 2, 3

Loss of biodiversity
SDG 14, 15

[in red: planetary boundaries, which are already broken]
Rights based Implementation of SDG's

• Our various projects in different fields aim for and communicate a human rights based implementation of the SDGs.

• Most explicitly we communicate / aim to raise awareness for the SDGs in Germanwatch’s educational projects:

• Transformative Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Target groups are mainly (not only) young people, pupils and students.

• SDGs should be correlated to relevant human rights: Countries like China try to replace human rights with SDGs.
Empower
Empower learners to transform themselves and the society they live in

Transform unsustainable structures

Transformative Education for Sustainable Development

Action
Use the political sphere as learning field

From knowledge to real life political action

Face the new situation after Agenda 2030 and Paris Agreement for global cooperation and transformative action

Change
ESD as a tool for life long learning for all learners

address decision makers
How to measure success?

• It is not mainly about peer reviewed articles but about people to behave more sustainable.

• So we would ask: does our target group reduce their ecological and social footprint? And even more important: Do they increase their handprint of active participation in society and/ or politics?
Future needs

• People must understand how and why SDGs are related to their live. So far most of them understand them as a nice UN-thing, not really relevant for them.

• For people it’s more concrete to see that they have also rights and the state has to deliver. (But even the relevance of human rights has to be shown)

• Take it seriously: *Leave no one behind!* - Reduce the social gaps in between societies

• Renewing our social contract with next generations.
Many thanks for your attention!

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