

Core development ideas underpinning development education

- Development which sees the world only in dichotomised terms (e.g. a 'developed' west and 'underdeveloped' rest or a 'rich' world, 'poor world') is not development.
- Development is not about economic development or about aid or development co-operation, it's about the whole human story – human development.
- Development (and underdevelopment) happens here as well as there – we need to understand both as well as their connections and interactions.
- Sustained commitment to the changes needed here for full human development there will require an extensive campaign of education to prepare people for the necessary changes and in order to ensure that governments make the 'right' decisions.
- Development debates and decisions are not the preserve of elites, whoever they be – there is an unavoidable necessity for democratic ownership of the agenda.
- A human rights perspective and/or an environmental perspective on development highlight peoples' rights or entitlements alongside their responsibilities – people have the right and the responsibility to own and challenge the agenda.
- Aid can by definition never solve the problem; more fundamental change is needed and development education is a basic ingredient of that.
- Third World perspectives raise the fundamental issue of how the West (and not just the government and business elites within the West) faces the very fundamental contradictions and hypocrisies that underpin 'development today' etc.
- Development is a dynamic, ongoing world phenomenon.
- Contrary to the arguments and beliefs of many involved in the 'development' or 'aid' business, people in the West are highly interested in basic rights for all people internationally but they are not given effective and realistic opportunities to become involved.
- Far too many of the images used in media reporting and in fundraising only portray a part of the reality of human development today and, far too often, only the negative realities.
- People throughout the world are not just victims of development but also its architects.
- Education which presents one view of the world is not education.
- There is a fundamental commonality in the human experience anywhere in the world ... understanding this commonality is vital to exploring difference and seeing issues of injustice in context.
- Education itself offers experience of participation (if these are not recognised and planned for then the experiences might be negative ones). The 'how' of what we learn is as important as the 'what'.
- Education priorities should reflect our educational needs in the context of change (in knowledge, technology, awareness eg of the global nature of environmental systems) and of the increasingly interdependent globalised society in which we live.
- We need to develop our skills in dealing with the issues. Skills which focus on analysis and thinking things through for ourselves. Skills that we can then apply to real life situations.
- Attitudes are important. There should be opportunities for us to reflect on our own attitudes and assumptions and to consider how they influence ways in which we interpret other information. (Development education is not about prescribing particular attitudes).
- Education can be a negative experience – de-skilling and reducing our capacity for participation. The value of education cannot be assumed.
- Education should offer us experiences of democracy and insight into democratic ways.
- Education can help us work on our own dispositions to change and to see the dynamic nature of the world and how we can contribute to a better future.
- Participation brings with it responsibilities which affect both individual 'everyday' choices and our part in society coming to terms with what is going on in the world. Education should contribute to this.
- Education itself is a form of development and a prerequisite for any form of development, however defined.