

Arts Education and Sustainable Development. Examples from Around the Globe and What We Can Learn from Them



Ernst Wagner

Abstract This paper discusses examples for the development of arts education in the context of “Education for Sustainable Development” (ESD). The first part gives an introduction into the background of the discussion on arts education and ESD within the framework of UNESCO and UN. The second part presents and analyzes examples contributed by arts education stakeholders around the world. The third part attempts to systematize the lesson that can be learned from these examples. It also proposes a first, preliminary grid or framework as a base for a “sustainable arts education” to be developed in the future.

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is considered an important partner for all stakeholders when it comes to “Education for Sustainable Development” (ESD) as well as arts education. UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with 195 member states at present. In order to understand UNESCO’s commitment, it is important to take the historical background of the organization into account: the first General Conference took place in 1946, in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. UNESCO’s declared purpose has since then always been to contribute to peace by promoting international collaboration in education, science, and culture. NGOs like the *International Society for Education through Art* (InSEA) or the *International Society for Music Education* (ISME) were established under the auspices of UNESCO, as early as the 1950s, led by the hope that cultural exchange and international understanding through art would help to promote peace. In that sense, “education through the arts” (Lindström, 2012) has always been understood as “education for peace and fostering humanity”.

Since then, arts education has not been so much on the forefront of UNESCO’s agenda. However, coinciding with the start of the twenty-first century, UNESCO

E. Wagner (✉)
Academy of Fine Arts, Munich, Germany
e-mail: ernst@wagner-mchn.de

has intensified its efforts in arts education. After several regional conferences, two world conferences were held in Lisbon, in 2006 and in Seoul, in 2010. One result of these enduring endeavors was the publication of the “Seoul Agenda: Goals for the development of arts education” (UNESCO, 2010). The Seoul Agenda has three pillars:

- Ensure that arts education is accessible
- Assure quality in arts education
- Contribute to resolving today’s societal challenges.

In the context of this paper, we are mainly concerned with the third pillar.

SDGs and Arts Education

In 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations, the mother of UNESCO, adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, as the essential base for its work in the coming 15 years under the title “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (United Nations, 2015). In this policy document, we find 17 big goals, including “Quality Education”, “Sustainable Cities”, and “Responsible Consumption” (Fig. 1). This manifesto is all-embracing and encompasses a broad variety of aspects. It is based on a specific understanding of the term “sustainable”, defined in the Brundtland Report already in 1987. It says: “Sustainable



Fig. 1 The SDGs (Screenshot UN Website: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals)

Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (United Nations, 1987) The environmental dimension is in the focus of this definition, though it is not named. Not mentioning it explicitly means that the “needs” Brundtland speaks about, cannot be narrowed down to this aspect. A first glance at the 17 SDGs makes clear that these goals have to be related to more than one specific dimension. Different aspects such as environment, governance (the socio-political dimension), economy, culture, and education need to be considered as well.

Reading the whole UN document with the eyes of the arts education specialist (looking for goals that obviously combine the dimensions culture and education already), reveals that there are specific goals for which arts education can play a role. It also becomes clear that the SDGs match the Seoul Agenda, in particular, in its third pillar. All possible of “today’s challenges”, addressed in the Seoul Agenda, can be brought together under the headline of “sustainable development”. Bearing this in mind, we can state an ongoing relation between UN’s or UNESCO’s overarching goals on the one hand and discourses in the arts education communities on the other.

The following part suggests a theoretical framework that systematizes possible approaches of arts education to sustainable development. For *arts education* this framework distinguishes between a social, an economic, and an art-specific or cultural dimension (O’Farrell et al., 2016, 43—see Fig. 2). Two dimensions in this list represent also the broadly accepted dimensions *in education for sustainable development (ESD)*, as developed by UN or UNESCO (UNESCO, 2014, p. 33/5.a): the social and the economic dimension. The cultural dimension is missing in official ESD documents, and we find one additional dimension, the environmental. It is obvious, not only in the context of arts education, that it is necessary to include the cultural aspect in ESD. On the other hand, we need the environmental dimension within arts education when it comes to the bridge between both realms (Fig. 2).

Many of the 17 SDGs can be related to these dimensions. This means that each of the SDGs has a characteristic profile that relates to these four dimensions, e.g., sustainable consumption, production and settlements have a strong relation, especially to the *environmental dimension*. The SDGs inclusion (including social diversity), equality, and peace can be referred, in particular, to the *social dimension*. We have mainly “*cultural SDGs*”, that is, goals where culture as a dimension is directly and obviously addressed, like education, cultural diversity, heritage, and lifestyle, and last but not least, work, tourism, and innovation as most of all *economic dimensions* (Fig. 2).

Examples

After the considerations above, it is obvious that we can find strong bridges between arts education and ESD in theory. But how does practice in this field look like? A set of examples is needed to examine the concept and to form a point of reference for the emerging discourse and the development of practice that has to come. This paper

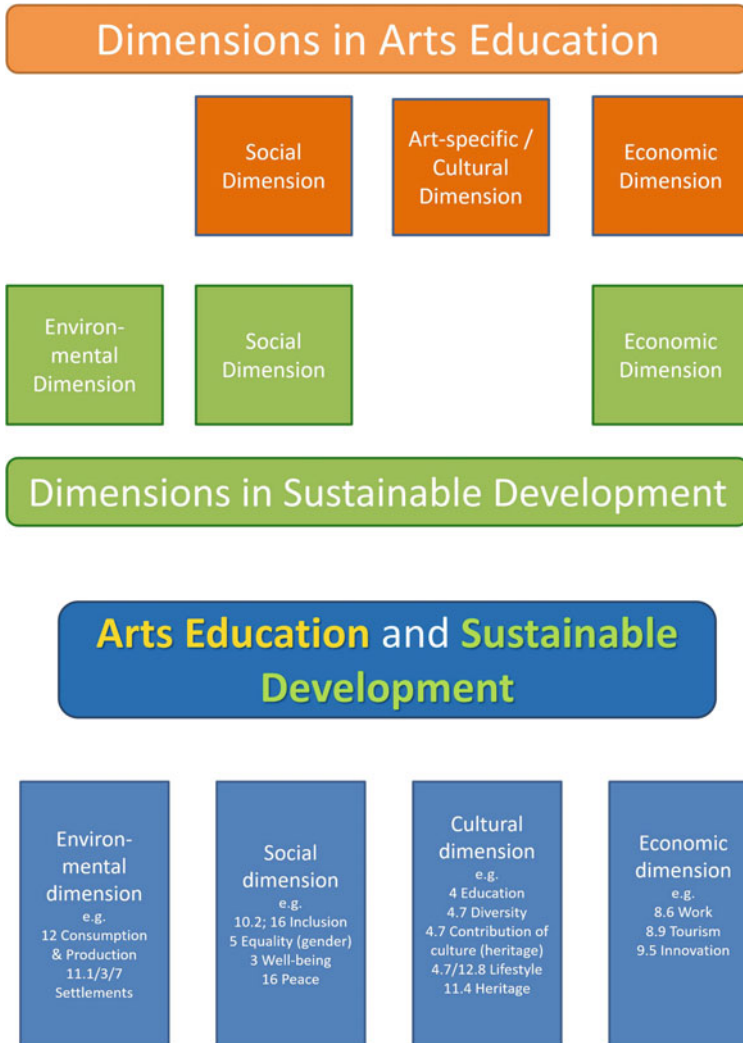


Fig. 2 Dimensions in arts education and ESD upper part; SDGs most relevant for arts education lower part

should serve as a first step into this direction. I asked stakeholders in arts education from different parts of the world and different art forms to send good practice examples that address the aspects of sustainable development in arts education. Being members of the *International Network for Research in Arts Education (INRAE)*, they were asked to describe and analyze the examples, exploring how arts education can be connected with ESD. Eleven colleagues answered. They come from different parts of the world. In the following, part I will present these examples and discuss them against the framework developed above.

From Contemplation to Agitation

India

Mousumi De, a visual art educator and co-founder of the Asian Society for Education through Arts and Media in New Delhi, shared the example of the work of Jinan KB, an educator based in Thrissur, Kerala, India. “Having studied in one of India’s prestigious design institutes, Jinan”, as De explains, “preferred alternate approaches to teaching and learning. [...] Jinan has facilitated several workshops on art and aesthetics (beauty) that are implemented in rural and/or natural surroundings. Children are encouraged to play and learn and/or make art in a free manner in which children take a stronger role in their learning process. Through such approaches, they are sensitized to nature by observing it, playing with it and creating art out of it. In one particular workshop, children used a variety of natural elements available in the surrounding such as flowers, leaves, stones, mud, etc.”

Jinan has published several images and videos on these workshops such as on YouTube and his website to demonstrate his ideas. One such video shows a boy standing in the rain, observing what happens in a puddle for several minutes. It is a very quiet video. The most important issue in the clip is probably, that apart from the observation of the rain, “nothing happens”. We can imagine the experiences the boy has. They are experiences of nature, nature as an aesthetic space. Additionally, we notice in this clip that there is no direct intervention or supervision by an adult. Here the main role of the teacher is to provide a free and secure space for experiencing and learning, which is necessary for the development of this kind of contemplative observation of rain and earth. The video shows how the boy is totally focused and immersed in this experience.

Jinan’s website provides many such examples, showing activities like playing with shoes, arranging colors, creating artworks from a variety of dried leaves, and so on. The core idea of these approaches, as De explains, is that these provide a learning environment that allows for the development of senses to observe, experience, interact with and immerse in nature, and hence develop a relationship with nature. This interaction with nature helps in developing a sense of respect for nature.

Trying to connect this example from India to the grid of SDGs proposed above, we can relate it mainly to the cultural dimension (see Fig. 3), as it stresses a specific way of living, a lifestyle based on a specific perception of the environment. Nature in this case is not the nature that has to be exploited; there is no domination or mastery over nature. Rather, nature opens the space for a sensory and aesthetic, embodied experience. Nature becomes a resource that is respected. The person and the environment are both interacting. The boy plays with what he finds in his natural environment, not with man-made toys. So the only way he is “exploiting” nature, without harming it, is through sensory experience. And he creates or produces in his playing nothing that will become waste. Therefore, we can also relate this example to the environmental dimension, mainly to sustainable consumption and production (see Fig. 4).



Fig. 3 Video still from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuEuSQ_m6o4 (2020, March 1)

Arts Education and Sustainable Development

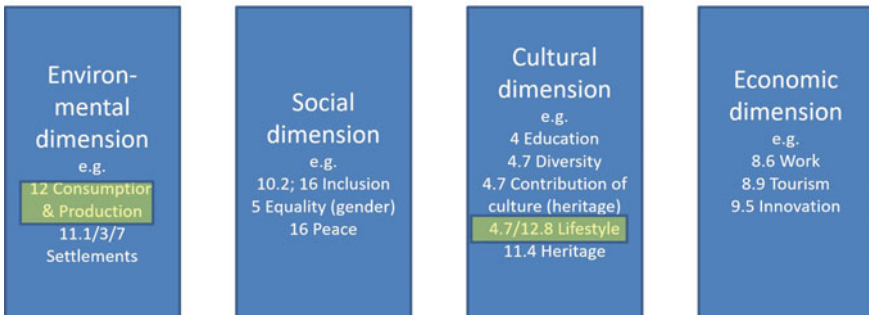


Fig. 4 Example from India

Naturally, it is important in the context of educational science whether the attitude of these children can be maintained until they are teenagers or adults, which means to an age in which they will take more and more responsibility towards the environment. The danger is that the boy shown in the film, when grown up, will find fast cars or dangerous weapons as attractive as he found raindrops in a puddle as a child, and that he will perhaps declare his former attitude towards nature as “childish”. This means that models should be developed how such an approach can be preserved and refined or enhanced in the further biography of the boy. How this could happen will be discussed below.

New Zealand

The example from India calls upon our awareness in a very indirect way. In comparison, the following example from New Zealand has a very clear, distinct, and directly addressed message. It was suggested by Ralph Buck, who works in Dance Studies at the University of Auckland. Ralph writes about this example: “Mark Harvey, a dancer, created this performance as part of the Maldives Exodus Caravan Show (The Maldives are focused in this artistic performance as climate issues are affecting the world, but mostly low lying states such as the Maldives and many countries in the Pacific Ocean). “Political Climate Wrestle”, the name of his project, was a live dance performance. The “Wrestle” was performed/presented by my colleague, the dancer Mark. He defined an area in a park and invited members of the public to wrestle with him about climate issues. Mark explained to participants that as they wrestled he would ask questions and give facts about climate change. He invited the co-wrestler to respond using his/her body and voice, to agree or disagree. Each wrestle lasted for several minutes and each wrestle attracted large audiences who would also start to voice views and opinions about climate change. Mark, a professional performer, managed the physical interchange expertly ensuring that the wrestle was about ideas not the other person.” A video of a performance presented at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, gives a good impression of how these wrestles took place (Fig. 5).

Ralph explains the link between arts and sustainable development: “The focus was on climate change and how members of the public interact with knowledge about climate change and their own consumption, production of goods and lifestyle that influences climate change. The event took language such as “fight against climate change” literally; raising awareness of the actual combat that is required. Doing this,



Fig. 5 The wrestle, video still from www.youtube.com/watch?v=ks9eKFgXX8o (2020, March 1)

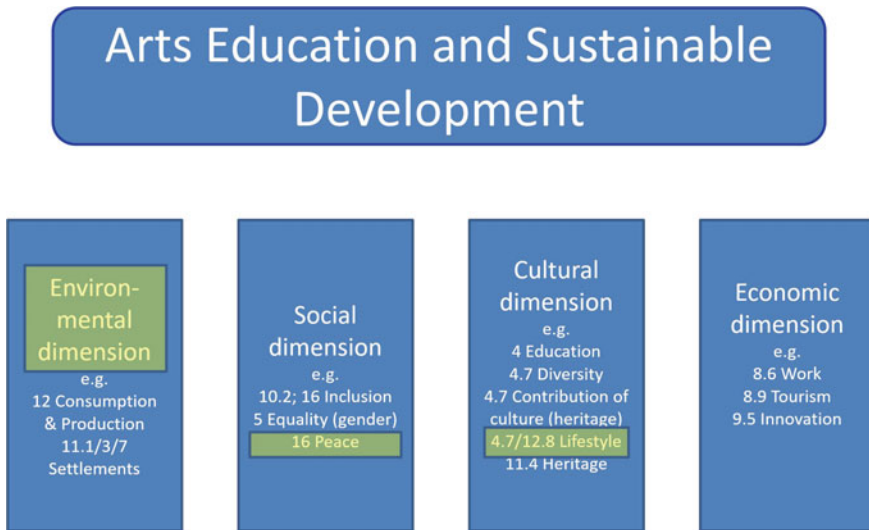


Fig. 6 New Zealand

the performance addresses the question, what does peace mean in this context? The performance was very successful in raising awareness of climate issues.” (Fig. 6).

In comparison with the first example, the difference becomes quite clear: the target group shifts from children to adults, and thus the method of educational “intervention” changes as well. In the second case, the environmental dimension is addressed in a very direct way by an artist. In both cases, the audience is immersed into specific experiences, each in different shapes, nature versus art (an avant-garde art form). The latter addresses conflict, not harmony, in the “unprotected”, open space.

Actually, in both cases, the educational outcome is unclear and perhaps cannot be assessed. Mousumi and Ralph, who sent the two examples, assume or hope that these efforts will lead to a change in attitudes as an essential part of a competence model for sustainable development (see below) that form the base for a specific kind of behavior.

From Individuals to Communities

Israel

The two examples above already show the broad variety of possible bridges between arts education and the SDGs. The diversity gets even richer when we look at further examples sent by the experts. Shifra Schonmann from Israel, for instance, gave an example that is focused on a single girl, Aliza, an immigrant Ethiopian girl. This girl had written a letter to her drama teacher, Ruth: *‘Dear teacher, My dream is that all*

the white girls will treat me nicely like they treat the rest of their white friends...my dream is to have a white complexion, blonde hair and blue eyes so that all the white children will play with me... My dream is that every black Ethiopian who comes to Israel will turn white. In Ruth’s class there were immigrant children from Ethiopia and Russia, as well as native Israelis, of various origins.

Shifra described this situation: “From Aliza’s letter arises a bitter cry asking to change the color of her skin. Deeply moved, Ruth decided to start a process of producing a school play in which the children wrote the text of the play, using *The Ugly Duckling*, a fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, as a framework. The result was a rich and moving social document based on authentic pluralism. In the play, Aliza took the role of Aunt Clara, who was a dominating and manipulative figure, without much written text to speak, but with plenty of opportunity to show all the others what she thought. After the play was performed, Ruth had a talk with Aliza and asked how she felt. Aliza replied: ‘I stood in front of the mirror and looked at my reflection and then I knew that black is beautiful’.”

Shifra comments her example: “The school play is commonly considered as an effective dramatic means for a cultural encounter where social and personal issues are enacted. Israeli society is characterized by its multi-ethnicity and, as such, deals with problems of acceptance and tolerance among diverse cultural groups. Dramatic action is always a physical and concrete expression of a role. It is the conversion of thoughts and feelings into form; it is thus significant and symbolic. The “as if” situation is not merely a matter of putting yourself in someone else’s shoes. It requires avoiding stereotypes. When students act in drama, they are actively involved in learning new ways of thinking and doing things. The main potential of a school play rests on the encounter between personal needs and social needs, logic and aesthetics, and hard work and pleasure.” (Fig. 7).

Thus, the example addresses the social and the cultural dimension of the framework, using arts education to foster personal advancement and empowerment. Drama is an instrument that helps each single student to develop self-confidence, a prerequisite for an inclusive social development in groups. The learners acquire the skills

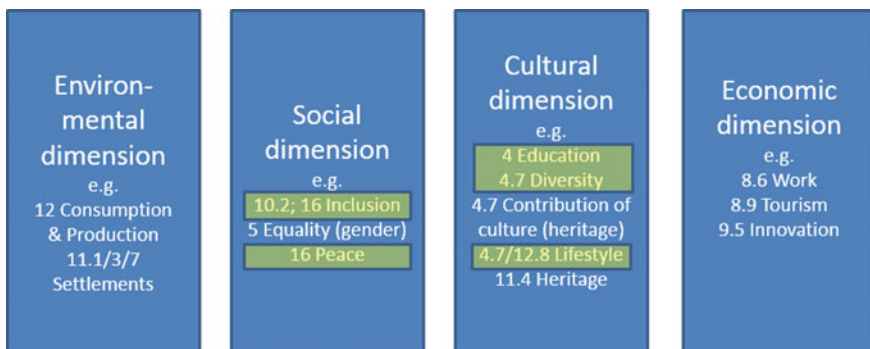


Fig. 7 Israel

needed to promote inclusion, a culture of peace and non-violence, as well as appreciation of cultural diversity.

Korea

To shift from the empowerment of a single girl to the empowerment of a whole village, we have to take a look at the example Serin Kim Hong from Korea contributed to this collection. “Back in 2011, there was a school in a small island in Korea called Kajo-do, with a population of about 1,200. The school had only 36 students and was about to close due to the lack of student enrollment. But the community tried hard to keep the school open and applied for the government funding under the “Arts Flower Seed School Project” scheme that allows small schools in rural areas to plant arts and cultural activities. The school was selected as one of the “Arts Flower Seed Schools” and was able to hire two artists to teach flute, clarinet, saxophone, keyboard, and guitar, eventually to form a unique ensemble, the “Dream Notes Ensemble”. To add musical flavor, a hand-bell group was formed additionally and performed together. Through music lessons, practices, and patience, the students in the ensemble were able to make beautiful harmony and learn how to be a true music lover.” (Fig. 8).

New school teachers, incoming students, and parents kept supporting this music program, not only by providing financial support, but also by joining the program as participants. The “Dream Notes Ensemble” has been regularly performing at a local community center for their own community as a local favorite. They were even invited to perform at Tong Yeong Music Festival 2016, which comprised of professional musical groups’ performances. In the meantime, there were families who moved to the island to send their children to this specific Arts Flower Seed School, and the students’ number increased to 80. The island is no longer isolated, but have been raising the number of residents and visitors.



Fig. 8 A music lesson in Kajo-do (© Serin Kim Hong)

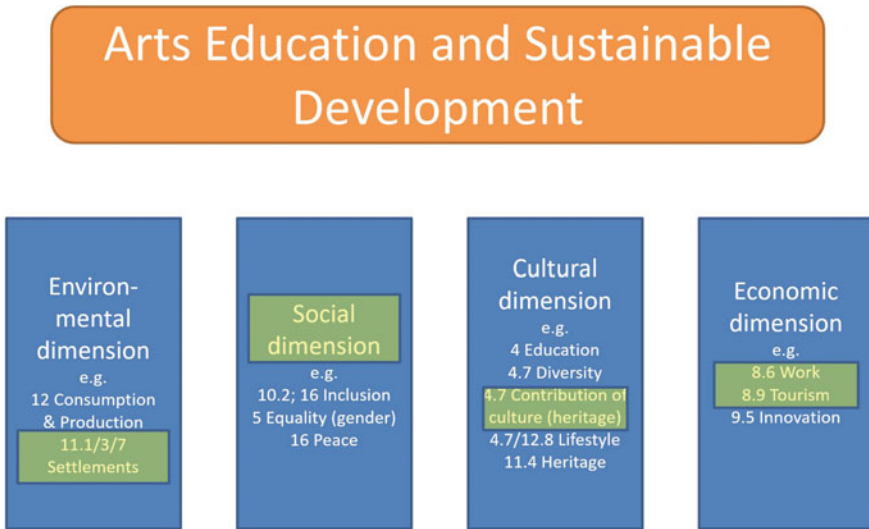


Fig. 9 Korea

Serin explains: “Inspiring the children through arts education was possible by the supports and devotion from the music teachers, administrators, and the community. Their hard work reveals resilience and sustainable development for their community. The beneficiaries of the Arts Flower Seed School Project were not only the students who were in the ensemble, but the whole community.” The exodus from the island stopped, the community gained collective confidence and an awareness of self-efficacy. Thus, all the dimensions of the framework are addressed (Fig. 9).

From Experience via Skills and Knowledge to Attitudes, Habits, and Motivation

Canada

Ben Bolden, teaching at the Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, suggested the example of the H’Art School in his city (www.hartschool.ca). The school was established in 1998 as a non-profit arts hub that provides opportunities for people with disabilities and those facing barriers to create and study works in the arts. Professional artist-educators work with the students to produce visual art, music, theater, and dance performances. The H’Art School program offers students a chance to build literacy skills and social skills while engaged in the practice and enjoyment of arts (Fig. 10).

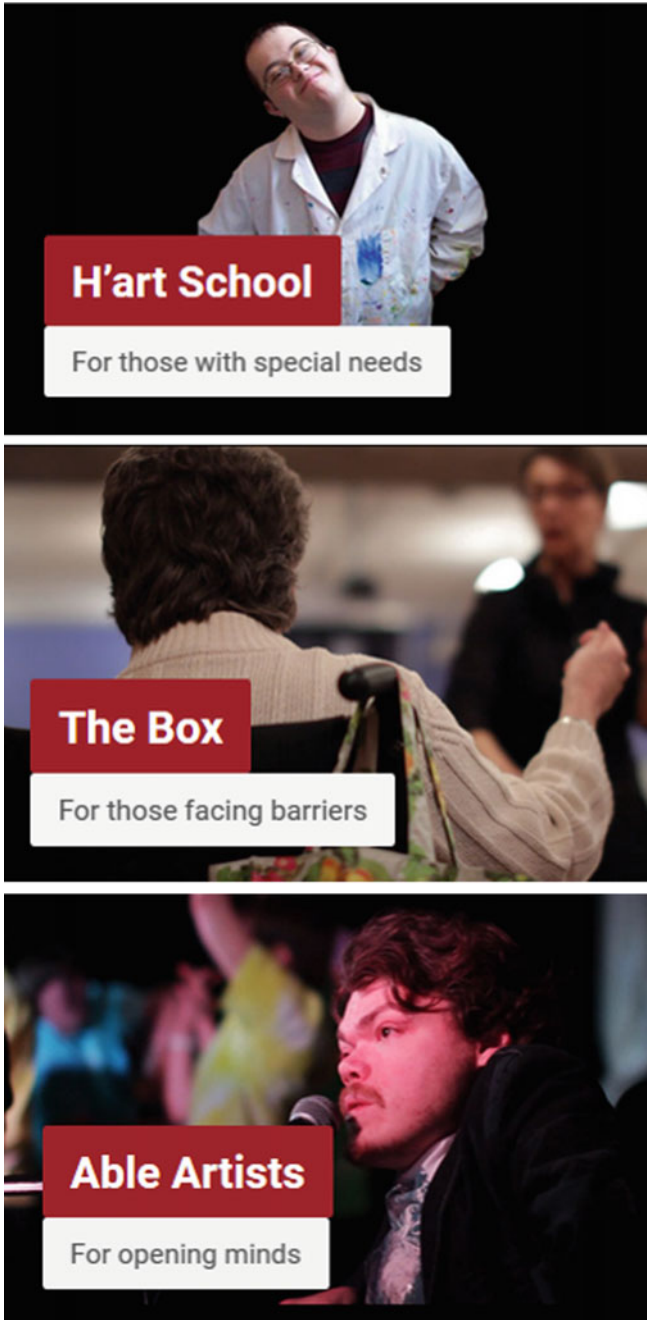


Fig. 10 Screenshots from H' Art School's website www.hartschool.ca

Focusing on inclusivity, public engagement and community collaboration, the H’Art Centre has introduced more than 15,000 people to the creative abilities of people with disability. The school trained over 200 volunteers, fostered over 40 community arts collaborations, and engaged more than 100 professional artists. H’Art School participants have created more than 3000 pieces of artwork, performed on stage in original musicals for thousands, improved their social skills and fitness through dance, collaborated on original music for plays, learned to use iPads and Smartboards, and have written and illustrated three children’s books.

Ben explains: “Disabled people over 18 years old have the right to express themselves, to enjoy their life, to live together, and to create together—but they have limited opportunities.” Thus, the community has provided a space where these people can develop their creative abilities and interact with all members of the community, enjoying art. All community members are able to see inclusion and diversity as richness (Fig. 11).

While school-age individuals with disabilities receive many government supports and opportunities, there is very little government support once the individuals reach the age of 18. The H’art programs give these marginalized and ignored members of society experiences that bring joy and meaning to their lives and the lives of those who work with them. Accordingly, through its service to marginalized members of society, the H’art school promotes well-being; inclusive and equitable quality education; and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

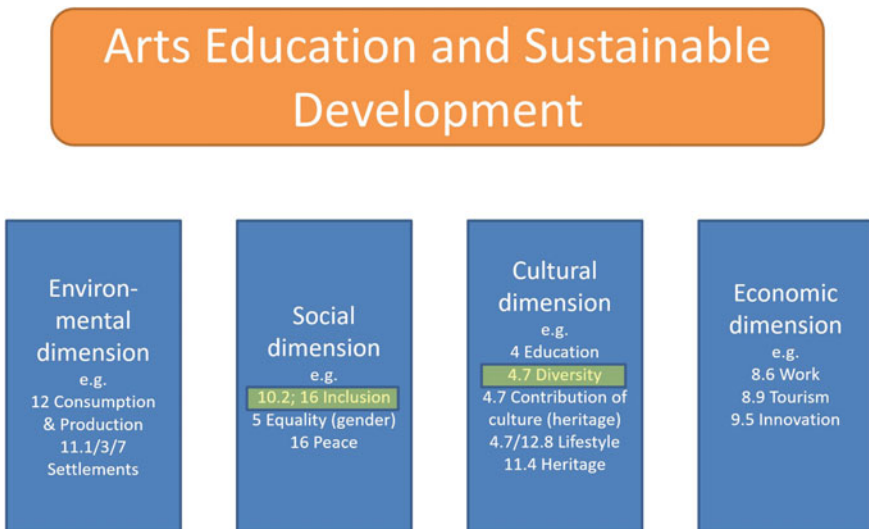


Fig. 11 Canada

Australia

Susan Davis, Senior Lecturer at Central Queensland University, Australia, sent another project. Primary schools (students in year 3–6) worked in partnership with an art and environment program, called TreeLine. The project asked students to collect information about significant trees (see Fig. 12) in their area, e.g., local history and indigenous, post settlement or contemporary stories connected to the respective tree. On this base, they created drawings, photographs, video clips, plays, and an interactive map in the internet. Utilizing drama, visual art, and new media, the students engaged with their environment and shared their work via internet.

Susan writes: “Dealing with environmental and sustainability issues such as climate change, can seem complex or too abstract for children. So there is a growing recognition of work that encourages students to connect to a “place” as a starting point. The focus on trees in our case is a simple but effective way to do this. On the other hand, research has indicated the importance of students having interactions with the environment and opportunities for participation and action.” Susan also penned a case study on this project. She summarizes: “The focus was on encouraging students to actively engage with their local environment through sharing stories about a significant tree. The learnings they recalled were predominantly environmental or science-based learnings, but also included arts learning. Some students signaled changes in attitudes. ... What this study has reinforced, is the value of using arts-based activities to provide a purpose and frame for student engagement with the environment The focus on local trees, arts-based processes and outdoor experiences provided the means of committed engagement for the majority of students.” (Fig. 13).

This example raises a specific kind of awareness for phenomena in nature that are always there, and therefore, taken for granted, such as trees. The trees, in the region threatened through climate change, are explored in regard to their environmental significance, their aesthetic appearance, and their cultural function for indigenous people and today’s society. As parts of the local cultural and natural heritage, they are as well examples of cultural and natural diversity. Attracting attention to them, aims on protecting them. The creative work of the students helps them to gain this awareness and to communicate their ideas through a map that exhibits their results. Using digital media brings in an additional innovative aspect.

Excursus: Sustainability of Learning Outcome

It seems to be obvious that only the chance to experience will probably not be enough to bring forth a sustainable change of attitudes. It can be a first step that needs to be followed by further steps. The two given examples from Canada and Australia above can show us how this could work, they give us a kind of blueprint.

- Both examples have in common that they are driven by a societal or environmental challenge, i.e., human rights for disabled persons or climate change. They are not

Fig. 12 Examples (screenshots) from the website (<http://m.water-wheel.net/34/78/63/-6416378341.pdf>)



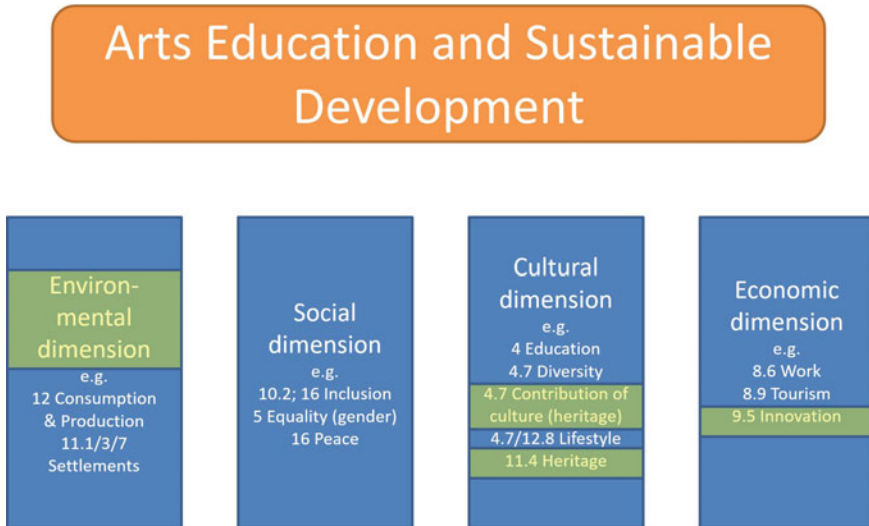


Fig. 13 Australia

driven by an art immanent concern, e.g., to enable self-expression, development of a specific form or creation of something beautiful.

- Both examples also intend to raise awareness for the respective challenges in their communities, to arouse the interest of people in order to change their way of seeing, their thinking or consciousness, their behavior and habits. They have a mission that is addressed to people who are not directly involved in the projects.

To follow this mission in a successful way, they need a clear conviction, a goal, own awareness of the challenge, knowledge about the topic, and skills to communicate their intention in an adequate way. In the light of these reflections, we can state that the pedagogical process that is required could perhaps be characterized in the following way:

- *Space for experience*: education gives space for fundamental experiences, e.g., to experience the beauty of a diverse nature, the beauty of social inclusion. Additionally, the influence of concurrent and contra-productive but often attractive experiences and the influence of negative values is reflected together with the learner.
- *Process of transformation*: in a complex process the initial and basic experience just mentioned is transformed into a value driven attitude, again by cognitive reflection. This process creates knowledge about the importance of the specific attitude, e.g., to protect nature, to be inclusive, and thus delivers a readiness or motivation to act.
- *Transfer of skills*: skills are developed, e.g., being able to contemplate, or being able to create in joint projects, to be able to communicate. Again by reflection,

an awareness of the transferability of these skills to other situations in daily life is fostered.

- *Knowledge*: knowledge about the field in which the person shall act cannot be missed as the fourth dimension in the learning process.

All these aspects shape a setting that gives the chance to make the learning process sustainable, a learning process that starts with a single experience. This will be discussed once more in the final conclusions below.

From Cultural Heritage to Contemporary Art Forms

Brazil

Ailtom Gobira, a writer, mediator, and project leader from Brazil, sent the example of a network of cultural centers that are located all over the city of Belo Horizonte, often in favelas, slums. These slums are mainly populated by people from the working class or poor people without regular work or none. In the cultural centers, children and elderly people come together in a safe, non-violent space. Here they exchange and share their (cultural) knowledge in age-mixed groups (participants are between 12 and 80 years old) and also in constellations in which amateurs and professionals work together. Within this structure, the older people from the favelas hand over their knowledge, skills and attitudes, their culture or heritage to the younger, to the next generation, mainly by creating something together.

The pictures (Fig. 14) show people from one favela that was destroyed by a property boom. They are creating models of their former houses and their habitat by using the earth and clay from the same place. Doing so, they are reconstructing their lost place (and their lost way of living) not only in their individual memory, but also in joint, creative action producing tangible models that can be perceived sensually by touching and smelling the earth. We can imagine the stories exchanged by these people throughout their collaboration. It is important to mention that the participants in this project exhibited the model at a big international conference about arts education in Belo Horizonte. This presentation to the public showed their creative work and their way of dealing with their loss.

There are a lot, and very different courses in the network of cultural centers in Belo Horizonte, e.g., they are also cooperating with capoeira-teachers. Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art, which has been developed by slaves, bought from Africa. Capoeira combines elements of dance, acrobatics, and music. It was developed in Brazil mainly by West Africans, beginning in the sixteenth century and it is also popular among Brazilian youngsters today.

In both cases the activities of the participants are related to memories, memories of the group, the community (to be seen in the reconstructed model of the favela), and societal collective memories (in the case of Capoeira). In the cultural centers,



Fig. 14 Presentation in Belo Horizonte, Brazil (© the author)

they appreciate and safeguard their memories, their cultural heritage in intergenerational projects. By doing this, they bear it into the future. In all projects, heritage is understood as hybrid, as a diverse one, going back to multiple roots (Fig. 15).

Thus, the cultural dimension is for sure the strongest but not the only dimension. To accept the diversity within the group (different generations, different levels of artistic skills, different origin), can be understood as an important contribution to sustainable settlements and social inclusion within the favelas. In addition, by creating artistic pieces of work, the participants shape stronger bonds between all members of the community, particularly as they bring their results to the public space, showing them to the audience and expressing their reflections within the community, the city.

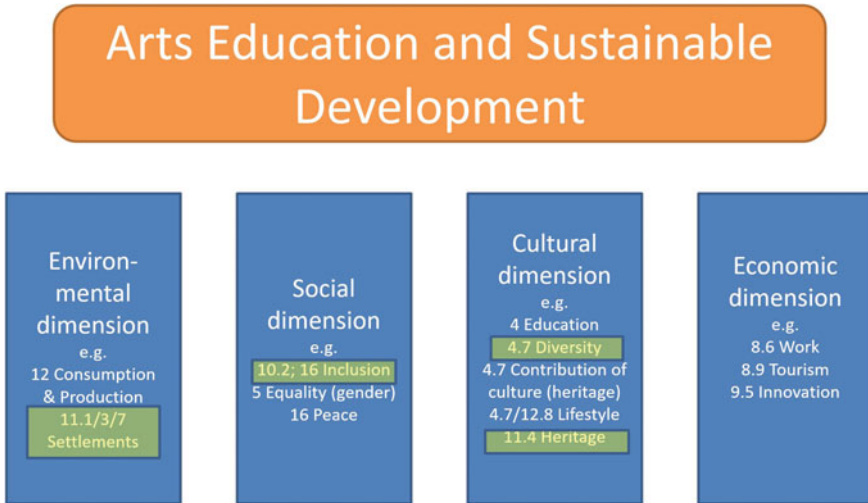


Fig. 15 Brazil

Egypt

Samia Elsheikh, a professor for art education at Helwan University, gives us the following example of an initiative by the artist Abd Elmohsin. Four years ago, Abd Elmohsin started with the interesting idea to connect a special community in Egypt with artists from around the world. His annual project takes place at Lake Burullus, a brackish water lake in the Nile Delta in Egypt. Burullus is a fishing community with low average income. Abd Elmohsen invited artists to produce paintings in the public space of this village, on walls, doors and fishing boats. Children and women from the community were invited to paint their own houses as well. Through the art project, the children got in touch with artists from different cultures (Fig. 16).

Samia explains how important it is for the people from the community to meet artists from different backgrounds and by this to gain an understanding of art from other parts of the world in the first stage. Being open-minded they are, in the second stage, able to transfer this experience into their own creative activity. They learn how to paint, they meet to make art together. Using their skills, they transform the public space of their village into attractive, beautiful places. By their own creations, they take over responsibility for their own surrounding in joint action and this influences the style of living in their community. Doing so, they do not only shape their settlement, but they also learn to respect each other's expressions. From the perspective of an outsider, I may assume that this could also lead to economic benefits, e.g., by attracting tourist to come to this outstanding village (Fig. 17).

Fig. 16 Women and children from Burullus painting (© Samia Elsheikh)



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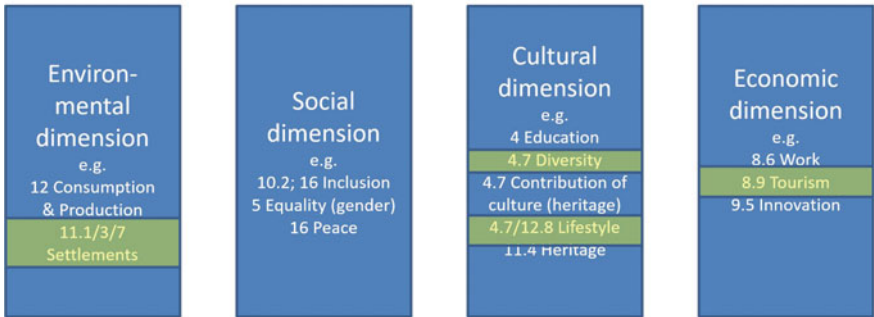


Fig. 17 Egypt

Colombia

After the Brazilian example focusing on heritage, memory, and collective identity and after artistic interventions in the public space of a village in Egypt, we will now get acquainted with a project that focuses on contemporary avant-garde dance. Gloria P. Zapata Restrepo, a music educator at Juan N. Corpas University in Bogotá proposed “The College of the Body” (el Colegio del Cuerpo – eCdC) as a good practice example. In this school, children take part in two possible schemes *Education for dance* or *Education with dance*. *Education for dance* aims at forming professional dancers, choreographers or dance teachers. Half of the students are afro-descendants or from vulnerable populations. They receive scholarships. The other half pay for their studies, and are thus contributing to the formation of those from vulnerable populations (Fig. 18).

Education with Dance works in public schools with children from the most vulnerable areas of the city in a project called “*My Body - My House*”. Funded by the World Bank, 1.200 students have been educated in this program.

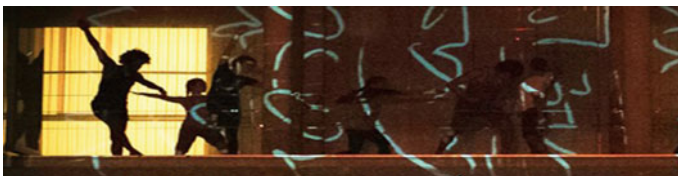


Fig. 18 Dance performance in Bogotá, Colombia (© Gloria P. Zapata Restrepo)

In the project, the education of the body is considered as a strategy for the formation of peaceful citizens, because the students are able to develop responsibility, self-reliance, self-worth, and personal discipline. “This project, eCdC, was founded in 1997 ... as a space created for children, youngsters and the general public where they find the opportunity to approach the expressive and artistic dimension of the human body, through contemporary dance. eCdC is a cultural and an educative space—plural and democratic—that offers the opportunity of the construction of a new ethics of the human body, indissolubly connected to an aesthetic and artistic search; simultaneously associated with contemporary cultural, social, political and economic issues.” (<http://elcolegiodelcuerpo.org/en/el-colegio-del-cuerpo>).

The program shows a great emphasis on the social dimension. The creation of a peaceful space for artistic experience takes place in a country that ranks in the Global Peace Index 2016 on place 147 (out of 163). That is why Gloria probably stresses the aspect “*promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence*”. Bringing students from different social backgrounds together can also be seen as an important contribution to inclusion. Besides that, the offered dance education can open options for jobs or even a professional career (comparable with the next example from Kenya). It also maintains a specific art form, contemporary dance, as part of our cultural heritage (Fig. 19).

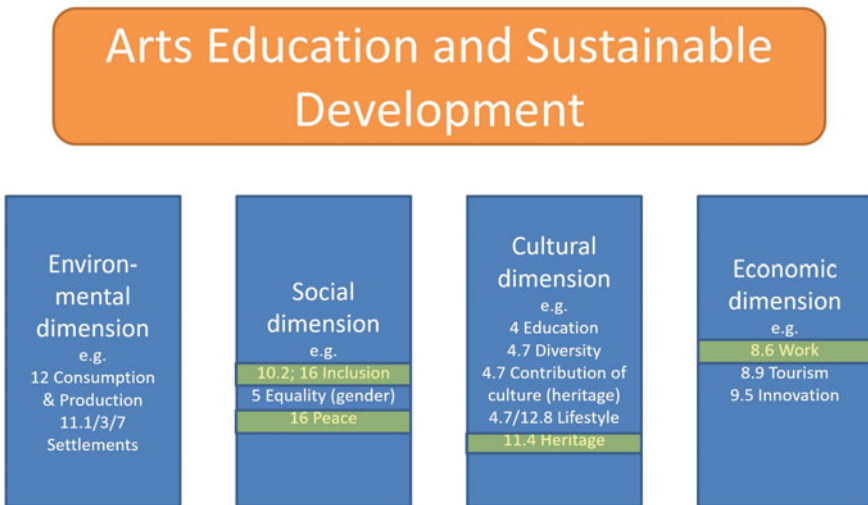


Fig. 19 Colombia

From Economic Empowerment to Sustainable Consumption

Kenya

A project, nominated by Emily Akuno, a music educator from the Technical University of Kenya in Nairobi, displays many similarities to the one from Colombia. She describes the example as follows: “Ghetto Classics is an initiative of an individual with a keen interest in music. It provides music instruction and musical experiences to young people. The music education training project takes place in the Koro-gocho informal settlement area of Nairobi. This settlement is a slum. The activities include teaching children and youth to play western classical music instruments, and to read and perform music of, e.g., Beethoven and Mozart. The project further includes opportunities for music performance in ensembles, leading to participation in a number of fora for an audience of diverse persons from different walks of life.” (Fig. 20).

The project leads to meaningful experiences, positive attitudes, and personal development, that opens new life-perspectives but also opportunities for the young people. They are able not only to develop responsibility, self-reliance, self-worth, and personal discipline, but also to respect gender equality and other people’s culture, in this case western classical music.

The project has a clear cultural focus. The young people are trained in music as part of a global cultural heritage that is different to their own music experience, and they are trained as musicians. The latter means that they are able to organize their life, e.g., in respect to self-discipline. Additionally, we have to take possible social side effects into account: the project fosters gender equality and non-violent, peaceful



Fig. 20 Music lesson in Nairobi, Kenya (© Emily Akuno)

Arts Education and Sustainable Development

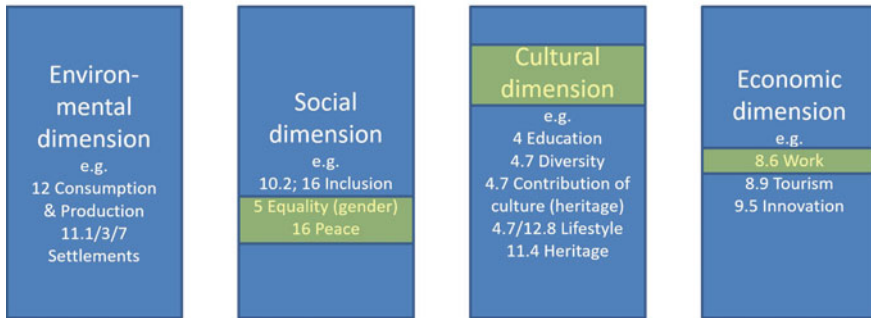


Fig. 21 Kenya

cooperation. In this combination, it develops its specific profile in the context of arts education for sustainable development (Fig. 21).

Germany

A last example was presented by Karola Braun-Wanke, who is the coordinator and co-founder of the sustainability initiative SUSTAIN IT! and has been working at the Environmental Policy Research Centre at Freie Universität Berlin. The SUSTAIN IT! Art lab entitled “*ART TO STAY* – Have a break. Enjoy your coffee” addresses the trend in Germany (and probably not only there) to have more and more “takeaway coffee”. This trend produces a huge amount of litter, 320,000 non-returnable cups per hour in Germany. Often they are thrown away and spread in public space or nature and they are a waste of resources to produce them as well.

In a first step, the participating university students and three artists explored in 150 interviews and participatory observations, why people do this. They found a specific pattern of self-stylization of the “takeaway coffee consumers”: these users try to express that they are modern, hip, active, young, wasting no time, and that they are important. Together with three artists, the initiative decided to comment this trend and to turn it upside down by promoting habits of lingering and enjoying coffee to the full. From “takeaway coffee” to “art to stay”, that is how they called their art lab. Together with 14 students, the scientists and artists created in front of the main canteen of the university three installations, a photo studio, a museum of porcelain cups, and a monumental sculpture of disposable (misprinted) cups. Students that came by were invited to choose a porcelain cup from the cup museum, to have a

coffee in this cup at a table in the studio, and to take a picture as a real coffee-lover (Figs. 22 and 23).

In this last example, a concrete behavior of students that has negative environmental consequences is addressed without moralizing and demanding, but by inviting to an alternative experience full of relish. The expected and hoped change of lifestyle to a more ecological behavior starts from this experience.

Conclusion

To summarize, I come back to the example from Brazil and possible question that can be asked in this context: What will happen after such a project like the reconstruction of a habitat? Is there a perspective that offers the participants the possibility to change the current conditions of their life? Are they mobilized to take action with a promising strategy? How can the memories be connected to the future of the participants and the communities? How can these memories help to construct a future that is created in a sustainable way? These questions lead us to similar reflections as the ones already discussed in the excursus above.

All the case studies presented here have been nominated by the experts, because they are good practice examples related to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Examining them in respect to their basic structure and their relation to the SDGs, can lead us to a first, more systematic and comprehensive model that will help to answer the questions. The most important and decisive aspects for such a model are (a) content and (b) desired or expected outcome.

Content

I begin with content as an important criterion to understand (and to develop) a project. We already have a grid, used above to gain a better understanding of what we find in a specific example in reference to the SDGs. But this grid can also be applied for comparing various examples. I will use four of the examples presented in this paper, the examples from Brazil, India, Kenya, and New Zealand (Fig. 24).

The differences show that each of these projects has its own profile. The Brazilian cultural centers cover three dimensions. But a specific and focused project like the Indian one is more selective. On the other hand, complex artistic interventions like the “wrestle” from New Zealand can also address many different aspects.

It is important to see, that already in these few examples, we face in each one a combination of different dimensions. This is also due to the complexity, hybridity and a certain blurriness that is perhaps typical for *artistic* approaches—in contrast to *scientific* approaches. The second observation is that nearly all dimensions, chosen in the beginning on a merely theoretical basis, are addressed in the examples. We miss only one issue, tourism, perhaps an expected omission, characteristic for the

Fig. 22 The photo studio, pictures of coffee-lovers, the paper-cup mountain (©Susanne Wehr, SUSTAIN IT!, Freie Universität Berlin)



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Arts Education and Sustainable Development

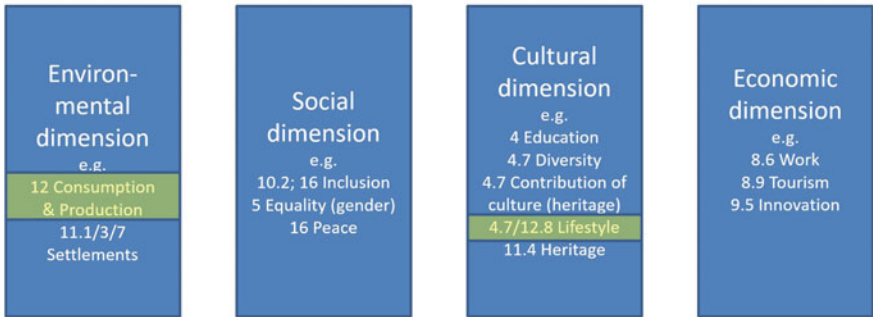


Fig. 23 Germany

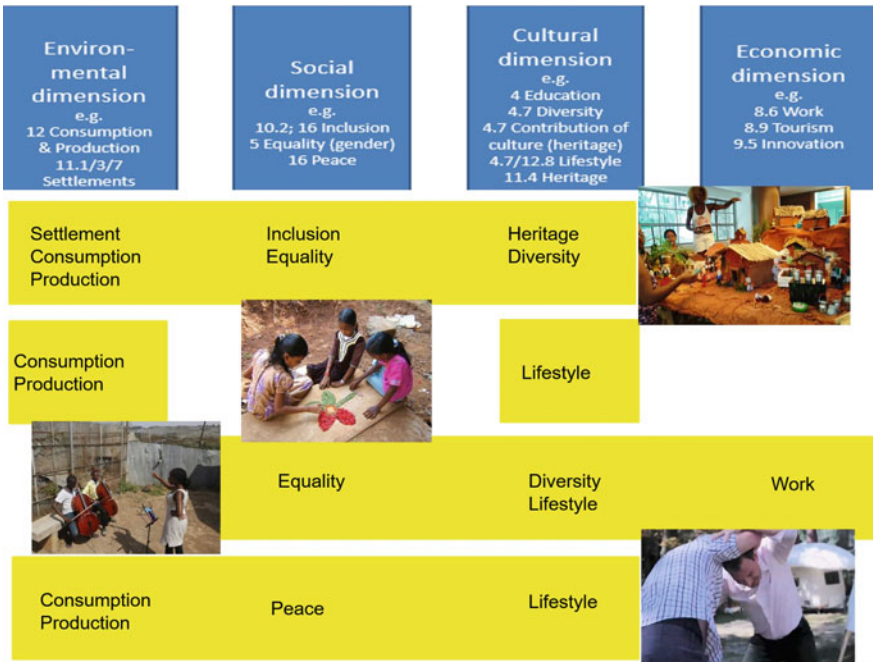


Fig. 24 Mapping examples against the systematics. Source: The Author

field of arts education. This is interesting and it is of interest as well to observe the different combinations in each project and by this the respective project profiles. As already mentioned, this kind of talking about and evaluating projects can help us to understand their special characteristics. But it can also help to clarify, to sharpen the profile and, by this, to come to conscious decisions if one plans an arts education project in the context of sustainable development.

Outcome

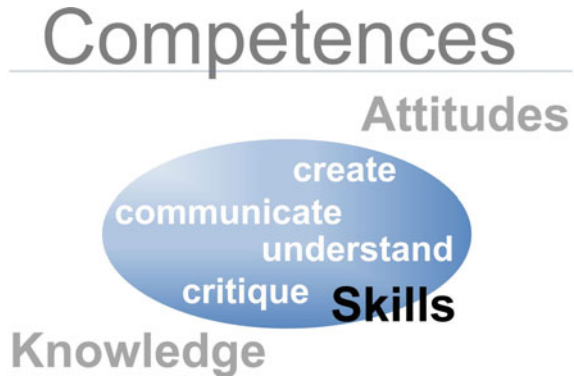
We can do a similar exercise with the second criterion, mentioned before. In every project, the people in charge have to decide what the aims are: What is the desired, expected, achieved outcome? What should the learner learn, which skills should he or she acquire? I am using a very simple model, containing four main skills. It is based on a survey providing an analysis of art curricula in more than 40 countries around the world (Wagner & Schönau, 2016). Nearly all of these curricula work with four main skills: The students should learn to *create* something, to *communicate* something, to *understand* something, and/or to *critique* something. We can now apply this simple and fundamental model to the four given examples (Fig. 25).

I suggest, that in the Brazilian project the participants learn mainly to create and to communicate, they create and communicate meaning. In a slightly different way, the example from Kenya focuses primarily on artistic creation. To the example from India, we can relate “understanding”, which means understanding external but also internal nature by observing, contemplating, exploring, and interpreting. Whereas we can locate the New Zealand example between critiquing and communicating, I have to admit that this is a very rough and preliminary procedure. There are methods to do this in a more analytical and transparent way. Then we will, of course, find



Fig. 25 Discussing the examples in reference to competence model

Fig. 26 The competence model. Source: The Author



more overlaps and intersections. But this is an exercise for later. In the moment, it is important that we can use this model to understand the special characteristics of a project, to clarify and to sharpen its profile.

Competences

As we can call the four skills also sub-competences, it is obvious, as already discussed above, that we are approaching a real competence model, when we add knowledge and attitudes to these skills. Such a competence model could be used to develop arts education in the European, perhaps the global discourse (Fig. 26).

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Ernst Wagner is lecturer and researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, Germany. For his research he explores Visual Literacy, Art Education, International Cooperation, and Art History. Ernst Wagner studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and exhibited in Germany and the USA. He graduated from the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich with a Ph.D. in Art History. He has taught art in secondary schools and worked for the Institute for School Quality and Research in Education in Munich. From 2009 to 2018, he was acting as executive coordinator at the UNESCO Chair in Arts and Culture at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU). Today, he is an honorary professor at the Education University of Hong Kong and teaches at the FAU and the University of Innsbruck (Austria) as well.