Reorienting Education and Training Systems to Improve the Lives of Indigenous Youth

Global research project 2017-2020

Executive summary

UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability
YORK UNIVERSITY
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Executive Summary

This global research project, “Reorienting Education and Training Systems to Improve the Lives of Indigenous Youth” (2017-2020) aims to improve the lives of Indigenous youth, in or from traditional communities by enhancing the quality of their education. The research follows a community-based participatory research approach. Its results are expected to assist education and community leaders worldwide by providing policy recommendations. The recommendations will be based on analyzing varying perceptions of what constitutes quality education, collecting examples of existing good practice and conducting action research. The unique approach of this research on how education outcomes for Indigenous youth can be improved is by engaging education for sustainable development (ESD), i.e. addressing local social, economic and environmental issues and designing appropriate pedagogical approaches.

The UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education towards Sustainability at York University, Toronto, Canada leads and coordinates the project by involving more than 120 (research) institutions and communities having schools with Indigenous youth in approximately 40 countries/Indigenous peoples’ territories.

The research is designed to serve the Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 4 on Education. It is aligned with SDGs 8, 11 and 16 as well as Education 2030, the overall UNESCO framework for the implementation of SDG 4.

By establishing the project globally, the first international research network on SDG Target 4.5 is launched with the possibility for research institutions to collaborate beyond this initial four-year research project.

Findings will be disseminated through a variety of networks, including United Nations agencies, Indigenous communities, ministries of education and other means.
While working with schools and community leaders, project partners will proceed with a minimum of the following three research initiatives and providing tangible products emanating from these initiatives:

- Exploring the various perspectives on quality education and its desired outcomes as seen by ministries of education, Indigenous community leaders, principals and teaching staff, parents, students and other stakeholders: an analysis of the various perspectives on quality education is expected in 2018.

- Collecting examples of “Good Practice using ESD” in delivering quality education for Indigenous youth: A publication of the collection, is expected in early 2019.

- Performing action research in exploring ESD approaches to improve the overall quality of education for Indigenous youth based on how quality education is perceived by stakeholders in research initiative 1: a publication of the findings is expected by 2020.

- The results of the three phases will be aggregated and disseminated widely in a final report in 2020.

The research project is awarded with patronage by UNESCO-UNEVOC and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

Research contact:
Charles A. Hopkins, Chairholder
UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability
YORK UNIVERSITY
233 Winters College, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto ON, Canada M3J 1P3
Email: CHopkins@edu.yorku.ca