

Sustainability Starts with Teacher Leaders Community of Practice



SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR ESD



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WELCOME TO SSATL-ESD PROJECT'S ONLINE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

What is a Community of Practice?

Wenger-Trayner define Community of Practice as ***“sustained learning partnerships among people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”*** (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). In the context of SSATL-ESD project, the partners aim to build a thriving network of various communities to help the teacher leaders implement their Change Projects on ESD.

In October 2025, the **Online Community of Practice (OCoP)** was launched. It has been conceptualised as both a networking hub and a professional development platform, designed to enable knowledge co-creation, peer learning, and resource sharing across African higher education and training institutions.

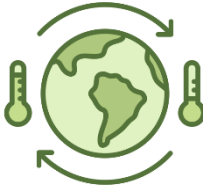
Informed by Wenger’s Community of Practice framework, the **OCoP is envisioned around three dimensions:**

1. A shared domain of concern: advancing ESD leadership, pedagogy, and policy.
2. A community: fostering dialogue, trust, and collaboration among members.
3. A shared practice: generating and reflecting on tools, innovations, and experiences in ESD

In the table below you may find a list of OCoP established as of August 2026.

To learn more about the SSATL-ESD project and CoP, please visit our website lead4esd.net or contact us directly at unescochair@leuphana.de

Table 1: Summary of Established CoPs

ESD Theme	Project	Institution	Members	Summary	Core Theme	Strength
 Climate Change	Curriculum Integration of Climate Change (Geography)	University of Namibia	4 teachers	Integrates comprehensive climate change content into the junior secondary Geography syllabus to build foundational scientific literacy	Climate Change; Sustainability Education	Addresses a critical gap in formal education, ensuring future generations have core knowledge to act on the climate crisis.
 Energy Transition	Energy-Efficient Stove for ECD Centres	University of Namibia	4 members: Expert in heat retention cookers; Resource mobilization person; Trainers of ECD teachers.	Introduces an insulated foam-and-cloth heat-retention cooker to reduce electricity consumption and costs at ECD centres.	Energy Transition; Sustainability Education	Provides a simple, low-tech, high-impact, and scalable solution that directly links energy saving with cost reduction and ESD.
	Biomass Briquette Production (College-Community Partnership)	University of Malawi	3 institutional staff members (3 males) 1 female teacher from a demonstration primary school, Students from the institution and community members.	Establishes a partnership where the college and community produce briquettes from agricultural waste to promote renewable energy.	Energy Transition; Community Engagement; Environmental Protection	Creates a powerful circular economy model that tackles waste, energy access, and poverty simultaneously through collaboration.

 Energy Transition	Waste-to-Energy (Eco-Briquettes & Biogas)	University of Malawi	Institution management; Academic staff members in Chemistry and Physics; Community leaders; Students	Aims to convert all types of waste (paper, organic, yard trimmings) into clean energy (briquettes and biogas).	Energy Transition; Environmental Protection; Community Engagement	Offers a holistic, ambitious project that positions the university as a living lab for sustainable energy innovation using all waste streams
 Social Justice	Zomba City Wastewater Management	University of Malawi	Environmental Justice and Sustainability Clinic; Students, surrounding community, City council.	Embraces a rights-based project which addresses the failure of the city's sanitation system, which has caused severe pollution and health risks for vulnerable communities.	Social Justice; Environmental Protection; Community Engagement	Explicitly frames the crisis as a governance and justice failure, shifting focus from a technical problem to systemic inequality.
 Community Engagement	Composting Initiative	University of Namibia		Helps learners and communities convert organic waste into compost using local materials to promote waste management and soil health.	Community Engagement; Environmental Protection	Presents a simple, hands-on demonstration that empowers individuals to see waste as a valuable resource, directly improving local food security.



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**Whole institution
Approach**

Whole institution Approach	Kasama College of Education (Multiple Identical Projects)	Copperbelt University	7 members: 4 lecturers; 1 for Monitoring and Evaluation; 2 managing the project.	Aims to create a comprehensive institutional environmental sustainability policy and culture through cleanliness, waste management, and greening.	Whole-Institution Initiatives; Environmental Protection	Seeks systematic change, shifting from ad-hoc efforts to a policy-driven culture where sustainability becomes everyone's responsibility.
	Rainwater Conservation & Harvesting System	University of Namibia	3 Females and 2 Males (Project leader, communicator, builder, Technical experts)	Establishes a comprehensive institutional rainwater harvesting system to enhance water security and reduce municipal water costs.	Whole-Institution Initiatives; Environmental Protection	Innovates an infrastructural change that saves money and water while integrating into teaching, research, and outreach as a living example.
	Whole Institutional and Community Partnership Project	Copperbelt University	6 members of staff from departments of hospitality, expressive arts, social studies, science education and the student body.	Aims at greening and keeping the campus environment litter free, and promoting a health campus	Environmental protection and Whole institution greening initiative.	Promotes a healthy and clean environment.
	Play-Based Pedagogy for ESD	University of Namibia	3 females (2 from department of ECD and 1 from a local primary school.	Transforms teacher education by embedding play-based pedagogy into the ESD curriculum through Play Labs and curriculum redesign.	Sustainability Education; Whole-Institution Initiatives	Develops a profound form of change that focuses on the process of teaching, creating a multiplier effect by transforming how future teachers are trained.

 Whole institution Approach	Waste Creation, Reuse & Policy Advocacy	University of Malawi		Addresses paper and plastic waste through a multi-player approach, advocating for policy and creating Teaching Aids from waste.	Whole-Institution Initiatives; Environmental Protection	Connects waste reduction to the core academic mission by turning waste directly into educational resources for learning.
 Sustainability Education	Formalizing EE for Out-of-School Youth	University of Namibia	Department of life-long learning in the Ministry of Education Local Authorities-Town Councils and Municipalities High Education Institutions, Vocational skills Centre and Local Universities Youth Learners	Develops a formal curriculum and vocational training program for Environmental Education targeting out-of-school youth.	Sustainability Education; Social Justice	Ensures sustainability education is accessible outside formal systems, linking informal learning to recognized qualifications and value.
	Re-Using of paper and plastic waste for Creative Teaching and Learning Aids	University of Zambia	8 members of staff from various departments (Mathematics, Literacy and language, Design and Technology,	Develops paper and plastic waste generation, management and proper disposal for use in teaching and learning	ESD, Environmental protection	Creates access to locally developed learning aids, enhance learner understanding and ultimately promote environmental stewardship and sustainability within the institution



**Sustainability
Education**

			Physical education, Expressive Arts).			
	Integrating ESD into Junior Primary	University of Namibia	2 teachers	Empowers teacher leaders to embed ESD principles into everyday teaching and school activities for young learners (gardening, waste reduction).	Sustainability Education	Focuses on the foundational years, nurturing values of responsibility and stewardship through age-
	Biogas production as a practical tool for ESD	University of Malawi	3 academic members (Physics and Chemistry departments); Students from Physics department; Members from the surrounding community.	Focuses on equipping learners and community with knowledge on biogas production and usage,	ESD, Energy transition, Community engagement, Environmental protection	Contributes to overcoming energy crisis and environmental protection in country Malawi
	Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training in Namibia's Vocational Centres	University of Namibia	One faculty member as a co-developer.	Develops a human development ecosystem by imparting skills for employment and self- employment.	ESD, Greening Campus	Aims at attaining green economy as well as the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Goals.
	Omutaku Combined School	University of Namibia	8 members from HoD, teachers, school principal, community members	Integrates ESD into teaching and learning through practical, hands-on activities. -promoting sustainable agriculture	ESD. Climate Change, Environmental protection	Cultivates school food production garden for nutrition, food security and agricultural skills. As well as an indigenous knowledge garden showcasing medicinal plants,

 Sustainability Education				while producing, environmental conservation, water conservation and waste management. - build learners knowledge, skills and values for sustainable living.		indigenous plants where we can have elders with indigenous knowledge educate learners and preserve Namibia's indigenous heritage
	Integrating climate resilience and local agricultural knowledge into the core primary teacher education curriculum.	University of Zambia	4 members of the institution	Focuses on the components of climate and agricultural knowledge in the primary teacher training curriculum	ESD, Climate Change	Fills in a visible gap on the implementation of policies on climate and agricultural knowledge.
	Campus Food Garden for ESD, Food Security and Teacher Leadership	University of Witwatersrand		Establishes a vegetable garden on campus where students and staff can grow food, learn about sustainability, and connect Education for Sustainable Development, known as ESD, to teacher education.	ESD	Responds to these concerns by using a campus food garden as a practical way to teach sustainability, responsibility, food security, environmental care and leadership.
	Documenting Indigenous Craft Skills for Sustainable Indigenous	University of Namibia	5 members: Language editor; Technical person; Teachers	Focuses on documenting various Oshiwambo traditional skills through YouTube videos.	ESD, Community Engagement	Unlocks Indigenous Knowledge (IK), especially in craftwork, and transferring it through education,



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**Sustainability
Education**

 Sustainability Education	Knowledge Transfer in the Digital Era					given its interconnectedness with tourism and entrepreneurship.
	Resilient Sustainable Project	Copperbelt University	Team of 6 (3 males and 3 females) Administrators, Librarian, teaching staff, students	Undertakes agriculture sustainable project supports the TVTC Community through staff and Students involvement	ESD, Community Engagement, Climate change, Environmental protection.	Contributes towards attainment of SDG on zero hunger
	Household food security in Lekkerwater, Gibeon Constituency in Hardap Region	University of Namibia	2 members from South Campus, UNAM.	Zooms into rural households and to assist them with food security continuum, gardening, production to food preservation and marketing.	ESD, Community engagement	Empowers educational and household food security from gardening to food preservation. Generally focus on assisting households with seeds for gardening and limited training for food security and sustainability.
	Gardening creation	University of Zambia	Local farmers in the community; 5 institutional members to provide technical support, training and coordination; students	Initiates Gardening to enhance practical pedagogical approaches and making a green environment suitable for biodiversity system	ESD, Climate Change, Environmental protection	Strengthens SDG 4.7 and SDG 2
	Drumming to learn: Mainstreaming Indigenous Cultural Knowledge in the	University of Namibia	3 members: Physical education, Indigenous languages, cultural officers, In-service teachers.	Develops practical guide for mainstreaming Indigenous Knowledge across all learning areas in the basic education	ESD	Accelerates the mainstreaming of Indigenous knowledge in the basic education curriculum.

	Namibia's Basic Curriculum.			curriculum, focusing on drum making, drumming, music and dance		
 Environmental management	Waste Management System at Mzimundilinde CDSS	The Catholic University of Malawi	4 members of the community: Board of Governors; Community Development personnel; local artisans	Establishes a functional waste management system with labeled bins and a student-led "Zero Litter School" campaign.	Environmental Protection; Whole-Institution Initiatives	Links a clean and safe learning environment (a basic student right) to student and teacher leadership in environmental stewardship.
	Waste management	University of Zambia	7 members of staff at Charles Lwangwa institution and students	Keeps the environment clean and green as well as protecting land against degradation	Greening Initiative	Reduces and transforms waste to create a healthy surrounding
	Transforming Household and Agricultural Waste into Organic Fertilizer for Sustainable Food Production	University of Zambia	2 members from Natural Sciences. Others are yet to be recruited.	Helps learners and community members understand how organic waste can be converted into compost using simple, locally available materials.	Environmental protection, ESD and Community engagement	Encourages environmental responsibility, community participation, and practical learning, reflecting the principles of Education for Sustainable Development and contributing to Sustainable Development Goals.
	Transforming the Learning Environment at Mufulira College of Education Through Green Spaces, Litter	Copperbelt University	13 members: Technicians, Counsellors, M&E personnel, Student Representative	Establishes a structured and institutionally supported approach to environmental sustainability that enhances the learning	Environmental protection, Greening initiative	Develops and maintains green spaces, strengthening effective litter management systems and Promotion of recycling to generate teaching and learning resources



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 Environmental Protection	Management, and Recycling for Teaching and Learning Resources			environment and promotes responsible behaviour.		
	Food preservation and value addition to reduce post-harvest losses and improve food security	University of Namibia	Small scale farmers; Community members, Public health officials, Public health official,	Reduces the losses after harvest, increase the shelf life of food, increase incomes for producers and increase the availability of nutritious, affordable foods in local markets	Environmental protection, Waste management, community engagement	Supports SMEs to transform raw produce into safe, marketable products.
	Fish Farming	University of Zambia	5 Academic staff from Technology studies, Education and professional studies, Social studies, Expressive Arts); Technical support staff and students	Helps the institution to meet the nutritional requirements for feeding the students. The skill obtained fish farming will go a long way in protecting our environment through making use of wastes from the dinning which once embraced by everyone, would empower communities with something to do.	Environmental protection. Sustainability Education	Strengthens education for sustainable development as stipulated in SDG 4.7 and also respond to SDG 2.



Greening Initiatives

 Greening Initiatives	Kasika Combined School Garden	Rhodes University	Grade 7-9 learner, Environmental club member, School staff member.	Develops Kasika combined school garden to stop hunger goal policies zero huger in the sustainable development goal. To help the school and the community with vegetables to sustain and improve nutrition among learners and the school community at large	Greening initiative, ESD, Social Justice, Environmental protection	Empower students, teachers and the community to sustain themselves and improve nutrition among learners and community.
	Vegetable Gardening using waste materials as well as solid waste management at Mansa College of Education	Copperbelt University		Supplements and improves College nutrition as well as management of solid waste at the college.	Greening initiative, Environmental protection	Addresses SDG 2
	Food garden	Rhodes University	2 (1 male and 1 female); School community.	Promotes healthy living and sustainability education	ESD	Addresses SDG 2

Credits

Icons in Tab 1 are made by Nuricon from www.flaticon.com