STRATEGIC PLAN
A Partnership Approach to Development Education in ITE
2016–2020
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list of acronyms

CPD  Continuing Professional Development
CoP  Community of Practice
DE  Development Education
DES  Department of Education and Skills
DICE  Development and Intercultural Education
ESD  Education for Sustainable Development
GENE  Global Education Network of Europe
HEA  Higher Education Authority
HEI  Higher Education Institution
ICT  Information and Communications Technology
IDEA  Irish Development Education Association
ISI  Institute for Scientific Information
ITE  Initial Teacher Education
JCT  Junior Cycle for Teachers
NCCA  National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NGO  Non-Governmental Organisation
PDE  Postgraduate Diploma in Education
PDST  Professional Development Services for Teachers
PLUS  Partnership in Learning between University and School
PME  Professional Master of Education
WWGS  World Wise Global Schools
YEA  Young Environmentalist Awards
1.1 introduction

The Ubuntu Network was established in 2006 to support the integration of Development Education into post primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland. It is made up of teacher educators from Higher Education Institutions (HEI), representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and Development Education organisations. All members share a commitment to education for social justice, equality and sustainability.

The Ubuntu Network thrives on the goodwill, enthusiasm and motivation of its members. As committed citizens and professional educators, its members are united by a common bond of collegiality and a mission to think globally while acting locally in a manner geared to making a difference for society.

The Network values the contribution that all organisations and educators make to integrate Development Education into formal and non-formal learning. Ubuntu Network members value and respect the distinguished Irish tradition of NGOs’ solidarity with and practical support for marginalised and oppressed peoples across the world.
The Ubuntu Network and Development Education

The Ubuntu Network views Development Education as an active and participatory educational process that supports the learner to:

- Build critical consciousness and an awareness of inequality, injustice and unsustainable practices both locally and globally,
- Develop the skills necessary to explore development issues – skills such as critical thinking, critical media literacy, information processing and communication,
- Feel a sense of responsibility and agency to be active citizens that work towards positive change.

The Ubuntu Network considers Development Education and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to be intrinsically linked and complementary, both considering issues through a variety of lenses including social, economic and environmental. Notwithstanding the difference in the origin of the movements, it considers their content, pedagogy and ideologies to be consistent. Other forms of education that complement Ubuntu Network’s approach to education include Human Rights Education, Intercultural Education, Citizenship Education and Global Education.

Vision:

Through Development Education, the Ubuntu Network contributes to building a world based on respect for human dignity and rights and is informed by values of justice, equality, inclusion, sustainability and social responsibility.

Mission:

The Ubuntu Network will support teacher educators to embed into their work a living understanding of and commitment to education for global citizenship, sustainable development and social justice. As a result graduate post primary teachers entering the workforce can integrate into their teaching, and into the schools where they work, perspectives that encourage active engagement to build a more just and sustainable world.
1.3 structure and operation

The Ubuntu Network structure has changed over time, particularly since 2013 with the establishment of the Ubuntu Management Committee and the realignment of the former Steering Committee to become the Ubuntu Assembly. This new structure ensures good governance and operating procedures while also allowing for collaboration and innovative thinking.

The Ubuntu Management Committee is responsible for governance of the Network. It oversees strategy, decision making and operational procedures. It also plays a role of advocacy for Development Education in formal education, both at curriculum and policy levels. It comprises nominees from the Ubuntu Assembly, independent consultants and an independent Chair.

The Ubuntu Assembly is at the heart of the Network, bringing together members involved in the integration of Development Education into post primary ITE programmes. It provides a forum through which teacher educators share insights and experiences of Development Education conducted in their institutions and discuss a range of topics including strategies, methodologies, resources, lessons learned and research as well as the work of the Network. NGOs represented at the Assembly are typically those involved in planning and delivery of Development Education in association with member HEI institutions. Partner organisations are those who work with the Ubuntu Network towards a set of mutually agreed goals and actions. Existing partners are World Wise Global Schools (WWGS) and 80:20. Development Education organisations such as IDEA and Suas also contribute to the Assembly. The dialogue and exchange that the Assembly facilitates serves to build both capacity and motivation of members while also allowing time for critical reflection on a range of themes and topics.

The Network has a full time Project Coordinator who is responsible for the operation of the Network, managing core activities, resource allocation, research and communications, as well as promotion and advocacy of Development Education and the Network. The Coordinator is based in the Department of Education and Professional Studies at the University of Limerick (UL). Also located within UL is the Ubuntu Network’s Academic Coordinator (a member of the Management Committee and Assembly) who is responsible for ensuring that the Network’s annual work plan is carried out in accordance with that which is agreed with funders, that the Ubuntu Network is central to the work of the Department and that it complies with policies and procedures of the University.

Associate members are informed of the Ubuntu Network’s undertakings and upcoming events. Associate membership is open to all educators with an interest or involvement in Development Education. Members are predominantly teacher educators, teachers, NGOs and academics from other disciplines.
1.4 key achievements to date

- Since 2006 the Network has supported 81 Development Education projects in 12 teacher education institutions, spanning both undergraduate and post graduate ITE programmes and using a variety of integration models and pedagogical approaches.

- Network members have published 21 Conference Papers, 14 academic papers, 3 books and 5 book chapters on Development Education in Initial Teacher Education.

- Development Education is recognised and valued by teacher education departments and included in the new Professional Master of Education (PME) as a result of Ubuntu Network members’ input.

- Network members developed the Ubuntu Network Framework for the Integration of Development Education into post primary Initial Teacher Education (see pg. 18) which ensures a coherent and sustainable approach to Development Education integration.

- The Network runs annual Dialogue Days to provide insights into national and international good practice on DE in ITE and beyond and has delivering customised Development Education capacity building workshops/seminars in a broad range of member ITE.
2.1 informing the strategy

Strategy 2016-2020 draws on the successes of the Ubuntu Network to date. Most notable it seeks to build upon the inclusion of Development Education in a broad range of ITE programmes, an expanded Network of teacher educators with a commitment to Development Education and emerging partnerships with critical stakeholders.

The strategy also reflects positive developments in ITE arising from the Teaching Council of Ireland’s revised criteria and guidelines for the professional accreditation of programmes, most notably:

- An increased emphasis on the School Placement element of ITE, giving rise to extended placement periods and as such greater opportunities for student teachers to experience and practice Development Education while in schools.

- An emphasis on the student teacher becoming a reflective practitioner and a researcher, and as such allowing them greater flexibility to conduct observations within the school environment, to work collaboratively with school staff, to engage in the wider school community, to conduct research and to reflect on their own professional development.

- Partnerships are emerging between schools and universities increasing opportunities for student teachers, teachers and HEI placement tutors to learn together on a continual and reciprocal basis.

- The coming together of ITE institutions to form Centres of Excellence arising from The Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland enhances opportunity for collaborative learning and research among teacher educators with a commitment to integrating Development Education into their practice.

A number of developments in the wider formal education sector have also influenced the shaping of this strategy, particularly

- The launch of the Department of Education and Skill’s National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the formation of the ESD Advisory Committee which places dialogue on sustainability at the heart of educational endeavours and curriculum change in Ireland.

- The new Junior Cycle Framework, with its focus on Statements of Learning and key skills, is very positively disposed to Development Education. Emerging subject specifications and short courses provide ample opportunities for teachers to explore concepts of justice, equity and sustainability within their teaching.

- The proposed framework for in-service teachers’ learning, Cosán, paves the way for engagement with practicing teachers in capacity building on Development Education related concepts and methodologies.

Within the Development Education sector,

- The sector has never been stronger with the expanding capacity of organisations such as Irish Development Education Association (IDEA), World Wise Global Schools (WWGS) and www.developmenteducation.ie.

2.2 strategic priority areas

Through a process of consultation led by the Ubuntu Management Committee, members have identified six areas of strategic importance that will shape the work of the Network in the coming years. Each of the priority areas plays an important role in strengthening Development Education within post primary ITE but also in formal education more broadly. They are interlinked and complementary; progress in any one area informs practice in other areas. The Ubuntu Network core staff coordinate, manage and communicate work in each area.

Figure 4 – Strategic Priority Areas for the Ubuntu Network 2016-2020
Delivery

The Ubuntu Network will ensure that a strong focus on Development Education permeates post primary Initial Teacher Education programmes. Interventions and approaches will be appropriate to the nature and structure of the programmes and reflect the five components of the Ubuntu Network Framework for the Integration of Development Education in ITE (Figure 5).

Figure 5 – The Ubuntu Network Framework for the Integration of Development Education into ITE

Underpinned by… Partnerships Research on DE in ITE Capacity Building for Teacher Educators

5 Components

1. Introduction to DE
   - Students are introduced to DE: theoretical underpinning, ideologies, relevant issues, challenges, perspectives, debates.

2. Subject-specific DE
   - Students explore how DE relates to their subject areas: curriculum, pedagogy, practice.

3. DE aligned with core ITE components (as stipulated by the Teaching Council)
   - Students experience DE through other core components in the programme, e.g. Philosophy of Ed, Teaching for Diversity, ICT & Education, Education Policy.

4. DE & school placement
   - Students teach DE in the classroom, observe DE in their school, engage in World Wise Global Schools project.

5. Student teacher research & reflection incorporates DE perspectives
   - Students are introduced to DE: theoretical underpinning, ideologies, relevant issues, challenges, perspectives, debates.

Particular areas for development in this area are component 4 (School Placement) and component 5 (Research and Reflection) arising from the Teaching Council’s reorientation of ITE programmes.

Teacher educators’ include lecturers, tutors and School Placement supervisors that operate on full time, part time or occasional basis in ITE. Capacity building will be achieved through ‘Dialogue Days’, Assembly meetings, customised workshops within ITE, working groups and research activities.

Research

The Ubuntu Network will support research on Development Education as it pertains to ITE and formal education more broadly. Research undertaken will inform practice and contribute to the knowledge base from which we work. Research methodologies will demand validity, reliability and a relevance to practice. Attention to research will ensure that Development Education practice is evidence based – that it is informed by significant and reliable evidence derived from well-conducted research studies. Interdisciplinary, cross institutional and cross programmatic research is of particular relevance given the nature of Development Education and the emergence of ITE Centres of Excellence.

Policy Reform

The Ubuntu Network will promote Development Education in education policy reform by engaging with stakeholders in the Department of Education and Skills, in particular with the Teaching Council of Ireland.

Curriculum Change

The Ubuntu Network will partake in curriculum change processes to promote the inclusion of Development Education principles and practices both within ITE and in post primary education.

Solidarity

The Ubuntu Network will act as a single supporting structure for all parties involved in the integration of Development Education in ITE, advocating for a quality, coherent and sustainable approach to integration through evidence-based practice, good governance and partnership.
In the period from 2016-2020 the Ubuntu Network will maintain its structure, expanding or refining it as appropriate. It will continue to support the integration of Development Education through funds allocation for projects, administrative support, research assistance and by providing opportunities for collaborative sharing and learning.

The Ubuntu Network, now in its 10th year, benefits from a wealth of experience and maturity. It is in a strong position to work with organisations to increase and improve Development Education provision, uptake and consistency across the sector. It will build partnerships and foster collaborative working relationships with appropriate organisations to further its work in each of the six strategic priority areas.

Table 1 below identifies potential opportunities for collaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Opportunities for Collaboration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>80:20</strong></td>
<td>• Appropriate provision of resources for student teachers and practicing teachers</td>
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<td><strong>DICE</strong></td>
<td>• Research on Development Education across primary and post primary ITE sectors</td>
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<td><strong>Educational Structures</strong></td>
<td>• Joint capacity building events for teacher educators</td>
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<td>(e.g. NCCA, Teaching Council, State Exams Commission, Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), HEIs.)</td>
<td>• Promotion of Development Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Advocacy for curriculum development to include Development Education perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ITE Departments</strong></td>
<td>• Supporting Development Education delivery and research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity building of teacher educators and student teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other NGOs</strong> (and individuals with development or development education expertise)</td>
<td>• Collaboration on the delivery of Development Education in ITE programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity building of student teachers and teacher educators</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Research on Development Education in practice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post Primary Schools</strong></td>
<td>• Reciprocal capacity building of teachers, teacher educators, student teachers, School Placement supervisors and principals in Development Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Developing school-university partnerships.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suas</strong></td>
<td>• Delivery of Development Education – linking Ubuntu’s work with Suas Development Education provision in Higher Education e.g. 8x8 festival, global issues courses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WWGS</strong></td>
<td>• Linking student teachers experiences in the university and school setting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research on Development Education in practice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – Potential partners and collaborators
University based actions

- The Ubuntu Network will allocate funds to member institutions to support delivery of Development Education. Project proposals will be reviewed against agreed criteria and funds awarded accordingly.

- Member institutions (with the support of NGOs and other partners) will deliver Development Education in ITE programmes in line with the Ubuntu Network 5 Component Framework for Integration.

- Teacher educator members will promote a culture of engagement with Development Education in their ITE departments, encouraging colleagues to engage in Development Education and with the Ubuntu Network.

- Appropriate resources will be made available to student teachers through the Ubuntu Network website and through collaboration with 80:20 and www.developmenteducation.ie.

- Teacher educators and student teachers will be made aware of WWGS initiatives, projects and participating schools.

School based actions

- Student teachers will teach Development Education in their subject areas and/or in Transition Year as part of their School Placement.

- Student teachers will observe Development Education related themes in their schools, e.g. equality, cultural representation, democracy, fundraising initiatives, teacher attitudes to global citizenship. Scaffolds for Development Education observations will be provided.

- Student teachers will be supported to incorporate Development Education into their inquiry projects/action research projects.

- Student teachers will be supported to include Development Education in their reflections and portfolios.

- Development Education will be included in School Placement Assessment Criteria / feedback templates.

- Student teachers will be encouraged to become involved in Development Education initiatives while on School Placement, e.g. WWGS projects, Young Social Innovators (YSI).
Strategic Area 2:
Capacity Building of Teacher Educators in ITE

University based actions

- The Ubuntu Network, in association with partners, will provide appropriate and topical capacity building events for all teacher educators, for example:
  - An annual conference or Dialogue Day
  - Customised workshops for Schools of Education e.g. Introduction to Development Education, Dealing with Controversial Issues in Education
  - Subcommittees/working groups for specific tasks or areas of consideration.
- The Ubuntu Assembly will operate as a Community of Practice (CoP) for Development Education in post primary ITE, bringing together key stakeholders and allowing for open dialogue and debate.
- Each Assembly meeting will include a brief presentation by project leaders on the roll out of Development Education projects in their ITE institutions.
- Members of the Network will establish and share a repertoire of good practice in Development Education in ITE.
- In association with appropriate partners (e.g. WWGS, Subject Associations, IDEA), the Network will develop ‘Good Practice Guides’ for Development Education in selected subject areas.
- The Network’s Annual Reports and Impact Reports will be made available to all members – these will provide an overview of Ubuntu projects, lessons learned and exemplars of students’ work.

System level actions

- The Ubuntu Network will build collaborative working relationships with NGOs and Development Education organisations for enhanced delivery of Development Education in ITE.
- The Ubuntu Network, through its members, will provide concrete and transferable examples of good practice in Development Education for each of the five components of the Framework.
- The Ubuntu Network will extract and share good practice from parallel development/social justice focused projects e.g. YSI, Young Scientist (Development), Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA).
- The Ubuntu Network in partnership with WWGS will provide details of schools and teachers engaging in Development Education and an overview of project types – this will enable greater engagement of student teachers with Development Education while on School Placement.
- The Ubuntu Network will work with Suas to explore opportunities for collaborative Development Education initiatives in ITE, e.g. the provision of Film Festivals supported by student teacher workshops.
The Network will, through the Assembly, ensure that NGOs understand the context of DE in ITE and that the expertise of NGOs translates into ITE provision.

The Network will increase Associate membership to include a broader range of NGOs, academics, educators and professional organisations.

The Network will support the development of regional networks/working groups around member ITE institutions to include local schools, local NGOs and other relevant players.

School based actions

The Network will explore opportunities to offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for practising teachers in the area of Development Education/Civic, Social and Personal Education (CSPE)/Politics and Society.

A database of cooperating teachers with an interest in Development Education will be developed with a view to expanding the Ubuntu Network’s membership to include this target audience.

Opportunities within each institutions’ School – University partnerships for the enhancement of capacity of teacher educators (cooperating teachers, school placement supervisors) will be explored and built upon, e.g. UL’s Partnership in Learning between University and School (PLUS) project.

The Network will liaise with the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) support service tasked with CPD of in-service teachers to identify opportunities for Development Education.

System level actions

The Project Coordinator will maintain appropriate lines of communication on the Development Education sector/Ubuntu Network activities with all members.

The Network will establish (in partnerships with NGOs/IDEA/HEI depts.) a menu of capacity building workshops that can be offered to teacher educators.

The Network will explore opportunities to collaborate with other educational entities e.g. the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

The Network will seek to establish a relationship with the Professional Development Services for Teachers (PDST) and NGOs for provision of CPD to practicing teachers.

Media and resources will be made available through www.ubuntu.ie and through partnership with 80:20 and www.developmenteducation.ie.

The use of ICT and multimedia for communication and capacity building will be enhanced (Twitter, web, email, info-graphics, photographs, webinars, video) in line with the Ubuntu Network’s Communication Strategy.

Provision will be made for capacity building of Ubuntu staff to enhance the operation of the Network.
Strategic Area 3: Research (including Monitoring and Evaluation) on Development Education in ITE

University based actions

• The Network will increase research and publications as a means to enhance the theoretical and practical underpinnings of Development Education.

• The Network, in association with partners and Irish Aid, will identify a list of key research areas pertaining to Development Education in ITE, and work to address these areas.

• The Network, teacher educators and partners (as appropriate) will publish research in Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) ranked journals and professional publications.

• Teacher educators will ensure that relevant Development Education texts are available through college libraries or through inter-library loans.

• The Project Coordinator, with support of the Assembly, will establish a database of PME theses with Development Education themes and provide opportunity for collective dialogue on this research.

• The Ubuntu Network, with support of the Assembly, will provide a comprehensive reading list for student teachers undertaking research in Development Education in the PME.

• The Ubuntu Network, with support of the Assembly Quorum, will bring together supervisors of students undertaking Development Education related research projects, with a view to supporting research methodology and publication.

• The Network will conduct a cross institutional evaluation of the impact of Development Education projects on student teachers’ capacity to teach Development Education. Outcomes and findings will be disseminated to Network members.

School based actions

• Teacher educators will support student teachers to conduct school-based research/inquiry projects.

• Case Studies of former student teachers (now practicing teachers) conducting Development Education as graduates will be compiled to demonstrate the applicability of Development Education to teaching.

• The Ubuntu Network will seek to link with practicing teachers interested in undertaking or being involved in research on Development Education (in association with WWGS).

System level actions

• The Network, driven by the Management Committee, will seek out additional funding opportunities with suitable partners to support research.

• The Network will explore opportunities to establish a Post Graduate Scholarship scheme e.g. by offering scholarships for suitably qualified individuals to pursue a Research Masters or a PhD (either traditional or structured) relating to the Development Education topic at a recognised HEI within Ireland, and/or in partnership and collaboration with the Irish Research Council provide a small number of targeted scholarships for the completion of a Research Masters or a PhD in particular areas of study.
Strategic Area 4: Policy Reform for Development Education

University based actions

- The Network and teacher educators will communicate how Development Education aligns with the Teaching Council policy requirements and stipulations for ITE.

- The Network will support implementation of the Irish Aid White Paper on Development and contribute to the 2016-2020 Irish Aid Development Education Strategy.

- The Network will identify and pursue appropriate routes of engagement with relevant agencies (e.g. Teaching Council, NCCA, JCT) to promote Development Education (or an equivalent term) as a recognised and essential element of formal education (particularly ITE, but also Induction and In-service education).

School based actions

- The Network and teacher educators will communicate to student teachers and/or schools how Development Education can contribute to meeting school policy.

System level actions

- The Ubuntu Network, in association with partners, will lobby for the inclusion of Development Education in Teaching Council documents and policies.

- The Network will contribute to initiatives related to the implementation of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Ireland’s response to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
Strategic Area 5: Curriculum Change for Development Education

**University based actions**

- Teacher educators will promote Development Education in ITE departments for its continued and expanded inclusion as part of ITE programmes.

- The Network will take steps to ensure that Development Education (or a related term) is considered core to formal education and named in future ITE education policy and documents as such.

- The Network will facilitate teacher educators to engage in NCCA consultations on curriculum reform.

- The Network will conduct consultations involving teacher educators on curriculum developments with a focus on Development Education perspectives e.g. roll out of Politics and Society as a Senior Cycle subject, Senior Cycle reforms.

**School based actions**

- Student teachers will consider the implementation of curriculum reform in schools from a Development Education perspective.

**System level actions**

- The Project Coordinator will engage with the Formal Education Working Group in IDEA to respond to calls for consultation on post primary subject specifications, ensuring a strong Development Education perspective in emerging subject areas.

- The Network will engage with the Department of Education and Skills on the importance of including Development Education and ESD in all aspects of curriculum (syllabi, pedagogy and assessment).
Strategic Area 6: 
Solidarity: Governance, Operations and Partnership

The Network will...

- Maintain the collaborative and supportive nature of the Network, building partnerships and strengthening relationships for the betterment of the Development Education sector.

- Consolidate the Ubuntu Assembly by ensuring the presence of two representatives from each HEI, NGOs involved in the delivery of Development Education in ITE and Development Education organisations who can contribute to the discourse and practice of Development Education in ITE and formal education.

- Develop meaningful partnerships with other Development Education organisations.

- Expand the Associate Membership.

- Ensure the Ubuntu website is regularly updated and maintained and new resources are made available in a timely manner.

- Ensure there is appropriate support for staff, including performance reviews.

- Administer funds to partner institutions in a manner that is fair and transparent.

- Publish and disseminate the Ubuntu Network’s Annual Report and Impact Report in July of each year.

- Publish research in appropriate outlets, both academic and professional.

- Continue to critique modes of operation and validity of processes.

- Continue to enhance governance policies and procedures in line with the Governance Code.