



**Visegrad Regional Conference on Global Development Education
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Key note speech by Johannes Krause, imPuls¹

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends. I would like to express my thanks to FoRS for inviting me to this conference. It is a great pleasure for me to be here in Prague and attend this meeting of the Global Education Community of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

I feel personally very attached to your countries for two reasons:

- One is that I grew up in GDR, German Democratic Republic – so during my childhood we were sitting in one boat, being the Eastern block in Europe. In 1990 GDR was very quickly added to West Germany and suddenly we were part of a Western country which felt a bit strange at the beginning. For me the 1st of May 2004 was a very happy day because I enjoyed the feeling of to be in one boat with you again, when your countries joined the European Union.
- The second reason why I have strong links to your countries is that from 2004 to 2009 I co-ordinated GLEN, the Global Education Network of Young Europeans. During that time I had the chance to witness the emergence of the Global Education sector in the New EU member states which was a fascinating experience.

So I am very honoured to give the key note speech in the beginning of this conference here in Prague.

Providing this input is also a pleasure to me because during the last year I was involved in two bigger research projects on Global Education across Europe:

- On behalf of the European Multi-Stakeholder Group on Development Education I wrote the **DE Watch** report, a desk study about policies, practices and trends in Development Education in the 27 EU member states and Norway.
- Furthermore I was part of the **DEAR Study** team, together with Harm-Jan Fricke, Pete Davis, Alessio Surian and Agnes Rajacic. As a team of five we worked on this year long project on behalf of the EC and wrote the Development Education and Awareness Raising Study which included interviews in all 27 EU member states.

So I had a lot of fascinating talks on Global Education and Development Education concepts and approaches, visions and challenges last year, including talks with some of you, and there were lots of interesting findings gathered in the two study projects. I am happy about today's opportunity to share and discuss some of these findings with you.

¹ I would like to thank Tobias Troll (DEEEP), Knut Hjelsetet (RORG Network, Norway), Helmut Hartmeyer (GENE and ADA, Austria), Matthias Fiedler (IDEA, Ireland), Benjamin Kafka and David Wagner (imPuls, Germany), Agnes Rajacic, Alessio Surian, Harm-Jan Fricke and Pete Davis (DEAR Study team) as well as the numerous people who provided input to the DEAR Study process for inspiring exchange of ideas which helped me develop the thoughts presented in this speech. The views expressed in this speech, however, are my own and cannot be attributed to my dialogue partners.



I will in the time that was allocated to my speech make one clarification, one proposition on show a few perspectives:

- The clarification is about what Global Education actually is: what are we talking about here?
- The proposition is that the very idea of development and development co-operation is not helpful anymore. I will provide a few arguments to support this proposition.
- The perspectives I want to show are about what this then means for Global Education which in my point of view should take a clearer distance from the development sector – and be reconceptualised as empowerment of citizens.

1. The clarification

I will start with the clarification and present **what Global Education is** or how I understand it after having reviewed a great number of definitions, concepts and practical approaches.

As far as the **terminology** is concerned, there are four basic terms used (in English language) which are to a large extent overlapping, often used as synonyms, but still carry different nuances:

- **Development Education (DE)** is the classic term used in order to describe what we are doing. It is still used by many actors, for example the European Commission and CONCORD. It indicates that what we are talking about is rooted in the community of development actors, focuses on North-South relations, and aims in the end of the day at improving the living situation of people in the global South.
- The term **Global Education (GE)** became popular in the last decade. It is used by the North South Centre of the Council of Europe, the Global Education Network Europe (GENE), GLEN, where I come from, and many others. The term Global Education draws attention to the context of globalisation and to the increasing global interdependency in the more complex world of today. It highlights the fact that today we are talking about more issues than just development, but also environment, migration, human rights, climate change etc.
- A third term used is **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**. It is promoted by UNESCO under the UN Decade Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2015. ESD is concerned with largely the same topics and similar methodological approaches as DE/GE. Its focus may be slightly more on environmental education and the concept is promoted more by actors from the environmental sphere (e.g. Ministries of Environment). One could say that in times of increasing global interdependency Global Education emerged as an extension of Development Education because one has to look beyond development issues in a narrow sense. In a similar way, Education for Sustainable Development is an extension of environmental education, adding a global development perspective to it. Although they are quite similar, both concepts Global/Development Education and ESD co-exist mostly unconnected. Often different actors are working on two parallel strategy processes for the two areas separately. We are here on a Global/Development Education conference and, to put it drastically, there might be a conference on ESD in the hotel next door and we would not necessarily know it.
- **Global Citizenship Education**, the fourth term, is popular mainly in the UK. It points to the citizen empowerment aspect of Global Education and to the ideas of participatory democracy and cosmopolitanism.
- In the Czech Republic the term Global Development Education is the most commonly used, and this is also the title of our Conference. All these terms signify very similar things anyway. I will in the following mostly use the term Global Education, but I am talking about the whole field of engagement.

Now, what is Global Education? The DEAR Study took stock of concepts, understandings and practices, particularly good practices, of Global Education across Europe and identified six **key characteristics** of Global Education:

- It enhances people's understanding of the globalised world.
- It is value-based and has an ethical foundation and goals.
- It facilitates participatory, transformative learning processes.
- It develops competencies of critical (self-)reflection.
- It supports active engagement.
- It adopts a perspective of global citizenship.²

It is important to note that Global Education or Development Education has changed its character significantly over the past decades. In a historical perspective one could say that three **different sub-concepts** of GE/DE have emerged:

1. When the first countries started to be donors in development co-operation, governments and also NGOs wanted to make their overseas development work known at home. They wanted to promote it, to gain public support for it – and funds. Development Education was first invented as a tool to promote aid and aid policies. This is the first sub-concept of GE/DE: **promotion of aid.**
2. After a while many people in the development sector and around realised that delivering aid in the South is not enough to overcome development problems as long as the global economic system we are part of produces the poverty. We need to change the system, and we need to change it here in the North. Production and consumption patterns and the way wealth is distributed globally must be challenged politically. The second sub-concept of GE/DE emerged: **Campaigning and Advocacy.**
3. Still a bit later it became clear to Global Education practitioners that fundamental changes need a long time and require carefully conceptualised long term learning processes. Furthermore, if global issues are not a far away thing but something every citizen should deal with, then every citizen should have access to Global Education. Global issues were more and more integrated into education systems, school curricula and the practice of formal education. The dialogue with pedagogues confronted Global Education with a more rigorous didactic thinking and made a third sub-concept of GE emerge: **Global Learning** which focuses on the development of the individual learner's capabilities to understand the globalised world society and to act in an informed and responsible way.³

These are the three sub-concepts of Global Education – or rather two and a half, because one of them, GE understood as promoting aid, does not really count:

- At European level, a big variety of actors, including GENE, the DARE Forum of CONCORD, the North-South Centre, the Multi-Stakeholder Group on Development Education and others have agreed at several occasions that **Public Relations work for aid is not a legitimate understanding of Global/Development Education.** PR is the business of fundraising and communication departments, but should not be mixed with education. The role of DE or GE is not to uncritically promote development policies but to critically discuss them.
- Theoretically the promotion of aid is not accepted as Global or Development Education. But the reality looks different. **Global Education is institutionally embedded in the development sector and financially depending on it.** In the view of many donors but also people in civil society, promoting development aid and increasing the number of people who reply in

² The full presentation of the essence of Global Education concepts across Europe can be found in the DEAR Study, Annex A, Chapter 9, pages 117f.

³ More encompassing accounts on the sub-concepts of Global Education can be found in the DE Watch report and in the DEAR Study Annex A, Chapter 9.

opinion surveys that they are supportive of spending money in overseas development, is still the bottom line argument for Global Education.

In the following I want to present a few arguments why I find this problematic. Global Education is about promoting global justice and sustainability by empowering citizens. Being embedded in the aid industry is often not helpful for reaching these goals of GE.

II. The proposition

I even believe that **the very idea of development and development co-operation is not very useful anymore in the world of today**. I will provide 4 arguments supporting this proposition.

1. Development is out-dated.

- The idea of development, aid and development co-operation emerged in the time of **decolonisation** in the 1950s and 1960s. Some say that through Official Development Assistance (ODA) donor-recipient relationships were institutionalised which were to a great extent continuing a colonial relationship. Just the geopolitical framework was different: It was not anymore European imperialism but the **Cold War** that structured the world. Aid was an instrument of enforcing block alignment in the global competition between capitalism and communism. This was the context in which development co-operation was invented.
- Now the world has changed dramatically over the past 20 years. It is not shaped anymore by the Cold War but by **globalised capitalism**. Products are manufactured along global production chains, international trade connects producers and consumers all over the globe – and the border-transgressing environmental disasters produced by global capitalism make us feel what a small place the planet has become. The world became more differentiated than under Cold War conditions: Wealth and poverty are distributed more unequally than ever but it is not any longer the North that is rich and the South that is poor. There are billionaires in Russia and China and striking poverty in the US and France. Emerging powers like China, India, and Brazil are increasingly self-confident actors who do not fit into a North-South pattern anymore. Our societies are more and more multicultural... – and so on.
- **The world has changed.** The situation in which the concepts of development, underdevelopment, and development assistance were invented does not exist anymore. I would doubt that if the aid industry was not so well-established anybody would have the idea today to start something like development co-operation.

2. Development co-operation is irrelevant.

- Does anybody here in this room believe that development co-operation will solve the problem of global poverty? I find it irritating that most people I know, even those who are working in ODA and spending taxpayers' money in aid projects **do not believe that ODA solves the problems!**
- 1.5 years ago I attended a workshop at CONCORD with high level representatives of some of the most important European development NGOs (NGDOs). We were talking about visions and went through a fantasy journey into the year 2015. Imagine it is 2015 and imagine the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were fully achieved. Imagine the success is due to the work of NGDOs – how did this great success happen? We collected a whole lot of ideas, strategies, approaches how the European NGDOs would have achieved the MDGs: people mentioned campaigning, advocacy, citizens movements, the creation of a unified global civil society, the empowerment of citizens to change economic structures and political institutions – but nobody of these people said that it would have been through development co-operation, through “more and better aid” that the MDGs would be reached. Can you imagine

that? The leaders of the NGDO community do not believe in the success of development co-operation. And after the meeting they went back to their routine of lobbying the European Commission for higher development budgets so that everything can go on.

- What would change if all aid would be stopped within a year? Would it be dramatic? **What is the amount of ODA compared to debt payments** from South to North, compared to the huge resource transfers from poor to rich countries that are immoral but completely legal under the current **trade regime**? This trade regime is not a natural law! What if all our efforts we currently invest in promoting aid were spent in promoting a just trade regime?
- I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not blaming development co-operation actors for doing wrong. My point is that aid does not address the relevant questions. **The relevant questions of today** are: 1. How do we face climate change or, more generally, how do we develop an **environmentally sustainable way of living**, producing, consuming that allows human beings to live in peace and in harmony with nature. 2. How do we create **fair and just structures for the global political economy**? Development co-operation answers none of these questions. It is a drop on a hot stone which is still over the fire.

3. Development assistance is paternalistic.

- The idea of development co-operation is based on a **hierarchical relationship** between the developed, rich, skilled donor and the underdeveloped recipient. This creates a structural power gap which makes true partnership relations impossible. Some even argue development co-operation is built on a neo-colonial and implicitly racist relationship. There have been nice attempts to base the donor-recipient relations on more equal partnership, and I am aware that there are many great projects in which Northern and Southern partners co-operate as equals. However, the fundamental problem, the power gap that leads to a structural hierarchy remains inherent to the very concept of development co-operation.
- For 5 years I worked for GLEN. One of the main purposes of the programme was capacity building for NGOs in the new member states. InWEnt, the German agency I worked for, had a lot of experience and expertise in Global Education and we tried to support our partners in the new member states with it. Sometimes we were joking that we were providing a sort of development assistance to our partners in Poland, the Czech Republic etc. But we would not say this to our Polish or Czech partners. Conceptualising our relationship in terms of donors and recipients would have had a humiliating touch. If it is problematic to base the co-operation with our partners in Poland on a relationship between donor and recipient of assistance – we have the money, we have the expertise, we teach, you learn – this must also be problematic in co-operation with partners in let's say Uganda.

4. Development destroys the planet.

- The idea of development has no future because it is built on the **ideal of economic growth**. The Western-industrial model of progress has always been closely related to development thought of as economic growth. Growth has since the 1950ies also been the key concern of development strategies for the South. EU Commissioner Piebalgs and the EU White Paper on Development reconfirm that growth is at the centre of European development policies. Growth and development are twin sisters.
- But: Growth means more consumption of resources this year than last year and more next year than this year. The growth-based social model and the related way of life are **not sustainable, neither in the North nor in the South**. Everybody knows that the growth-based model cannot apply for 7 billion people.
- **Climate change**, caused mainly by the industrialised countries, is a threat for humankind as a whole. It can only be solved in a global effort – and it can only be solved on the basis of global justice. Global justice means, in this context, that no country can claim for its citizens a greater right to produce emissions than any other global citizen can have. This is the revolutionary

justice-impact of climate change: It is the first global challenge that requires a solution based on the principle of equality between all human beings in their entitlement to resource consumption and the production of emissions. The poorer countries cannot follow the path of economic growth that the industrialised countries have gone at the expense of the planetary ecosystem's balance. And the rich – we – have to change fundamentally and radically the way we live. This is the only possible deal for the future of our children.

- Industrial disasters like the explosion of the oil platform **Deepwater Horizon** a year ago or the catastrophe in the Japanese nuclear plant in **Fukushima** give even more evidence of the fact that the old development model that requires an ever-increasing level of resource extraction, energy production and consumption is in no way sustainable – and even less compatible with global justice and equality.

To sum it up, development co-operation and development policy is a 20th century phenomenon – and will disappear in the close future. It deserves so, because it is ineffective, paternalistic and environmentally unsustainable.

III. The perspectives

Based on these reflections on the end of development, what are the **perspectives for Global Education**? Most of us here will agree that promoting ODA and development co-operation should not be the identity of GE. Many here in the audience, I assume, probably share at least partly my scepticism towards the very idea of development and development co-operation. What can then be the role of Global Education?

I believe there are **two opposed strategies**:

- (a) The first one is to re-position Global Education or Development Education as a progressive promoter of a paradigm shift inside the development community: **“from the margins at the centre of the development sector”** is the motto of this strategy. Its aim is to gain hegemony of the development discourse and to redefine development policies as instruments of empowerment, justice, transition towards sustainability. The problem with this strategy is that it tends to underestimate the conservatism of the development institutions and development NGOs which are placed in a quite comfortable position within the current aid business.
- (b) The opposed strategy for Global Education would be to move not into the centre of the development discourse but beyond it. If GE wants to be something different than a promotion appendix to the aid industry, it must **emancipate itself from the sector**, it must become more independent from the (conservative) development mainstream for which the bottom line argument for GE still is: promoting people's support for ODA. The problem with this strategy: most of our resources – our well-established organisations, our networks, our relations, our funding... – depend on our roots in the development sector. Wouldn't it be stupid to cut these links in order to... what? Die?

The dilemma is that these alternative strategies are incompatible with each other. Either we lobby for greater recognition of GE within the development community in order to have an influence on development debates and change the development paradigm. Or we move away from the development field and root the engagement for global solidarity, justice and globally sustainable ways of living somewhere else.

In spite of the difficulties and challenges involved with a potential move out of the development sector, I would like to conclude by giving some indications where Global Education might, after a decade or so of transition, find new roots outside the development sphere.

- Let's try to be progressive! And let's be a bit visionary. **Global Education is, conceptually, for many years already far beyond the development framework.** Only the institutional links and

financial dependency on ODA money has kept us inside the development sector. But does GE belong there?

- What we call DE or GE today is concerned (a) with bringing about changes in social, political and economic structures and (b) with supporting communities and individuals to develop their full potentials and to become responsible agents of change. We should perhaps call these efforts “Global Citizenship Education for Change” or “People's Empowerment” or “Transformative Education”.

What would such a **re-conceptualisation of Global Education as something independent from aid** mean?

1. Global Education stakeholders should **link-up more with actors outside the development landscape**: with actors from the education sphere, the area of citizen empowerment, the transition movement, the climate justice networks, the human rights promoters.
2. A new approach in **global partnerships** is needed that goes beyond “including Southern perspectives” in an otherwise Euro-centric concept of Global Education in which Europeans are the subject and people from the South are the object. Global partnerships of today should leave the old North-South divide and the false distinction between one more developed and one less developed geographic macro-zone behind. Instead of implementing development assistance programmes in the South and Development Education programmes in the North, we need global communities of practice, non-hierarchical global multi-stakeholder coalitions which invent and design “civil society empowerment for change” programmes.
3. The core mission of Global Education (or whatever we will call it) is to facilitate change and empower citizens in North and South, as in East and West and in the middle. What would be the concrete issues we would be dealing with, if GE was independent from the development agenda? What would be **the change agenda**; what should citizens be empowerment for? For a transition towards a post-carbon economy, for renewable energies, for a society that gives pedestrians and playgrounds priority over cars and motorways, for a trade regime that does not exploit producers of raw materials and industry workers for the benefit of a small number of consumers, for taxes on financial transactions and on air flights, for fair and human immigration rules... There are so many issues of global justice and sustainability that deserve our engagement more than the increase of aid levels to 0.7% of GNI.
4. A last point: Our societies, in Europe and in other corners of the globe, are marked by an increasing gap between “winners” and “losers” of globalisation, between cosmopolitan elites and people who are left behind, left without work, without perspectives – and left to the populists who gather support by appealing to nationalist, xenophobic or other resentments. The role of Global Education today is not to promote aid. **The role of Global Education is to strive for an inclusive society where all citizens find a perspective**, understand their world, and have the capacities to live a meaningful life. Our role is to **make democracy real**, deep and meaningful in the conditions of the 21st century. We are here to empower people to play an active and responsible role in their local communities and as global citizens. *This* is the mission of Global Education.

I will conclude with an **anecdote from Norway**, where I presented findings of the DEAR Study this January together with the DEAR Study team leader Harm-Jan Fricke, upon invitation by the RORG Network. The Norwegian Global Education community wanted to learn from the trends and experiences in Global Education across the EU.

- During our presentation we told the Norwegians that we were impressed by the fact that in Norway there is a consensus between government, Parliament and civil society on the principle that **“the state must finance its own critics”**. The NGOs have a recognised watchdog role and are supposed to critically assess not only Norwegian aid policies, but also trade policies, immigration policies, all sorts of domestic policies with regard to their global justice impact. And the state is willingly financing them to criticise the government, because it is

believed that this is part of good democratic practice and that it improves the quality of the policies.

- We expressed our respect for this well-functioning principle, and then the representative of the government, an advisor to the President of Norway, replied saying: "You know, according to opinion surveys, 80% of the people in Norway support development aid. This is too much! Global Education must be even more critical so that people see our development co-operation policies more critically!"
- This was the government representative, a guy from the centre-left. But then the representative of the opposition on the panel, the conservative party's spokesperson on development policy replied: "I see it exactly the same way: tax-payers money shall contribute to a critically formed public opinion. But also the opposition should be criticised more, not only the government!"
- During the coffee break, I talked with a representative of Norad, the Norwegian development agency and confessed him my confusion. He told me: "Our surveys have shown: The more people know about development co-operation, the less they support it. So we at Norad are in the contradictory situation to finance, with ODA money, NGOs who fundamentally criticise our ODA."

The more people know about development co-operation the less they support it. I guess it is like that not only in Norway. I invite you to think about this, during this conference. Thank you very much.

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