

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This education for sustainable development (ESD) template will assist teachers in the development of their own ESD activities by incorporating the ESD learning outcomes from the correlation charts (see [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/correlations/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/correlations/index.html)) or from curriculum documents.

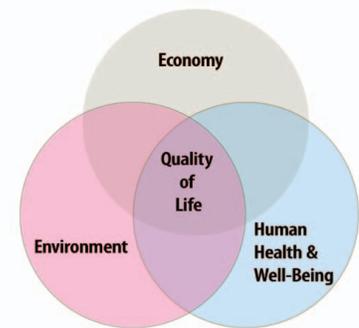
## Background Information

### *Definition: Education for Sustainable Development*

Education for sustainable development involves changing the way we live our lives by understanding and incorporating key themes of sustainable development—such as poverty alleviation, human rights, health and environmental stewardship, and climate change—into the education system. ESD is a complex and evolving concept that requires learning about key themes from a social, cultural, environmental, and economic perspective, and exploring how those factors are interrelated and interdependent. The Venn diagram below represents the interrelationship of the themes.

### *Manitoba Vision: Education for Sustainable Development*

Students will become informed and responsible decision makers, playing active roles as citizens of Canada and the world, and will contribute to social, environmental, and economic well-being and an equitable quality of life for all, now and in the future.



### *Key Characteristics: Education for Sustainable Development*

The *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014 – Draft International Implementation Scheme* identifies the following six main characteristics of ESD:

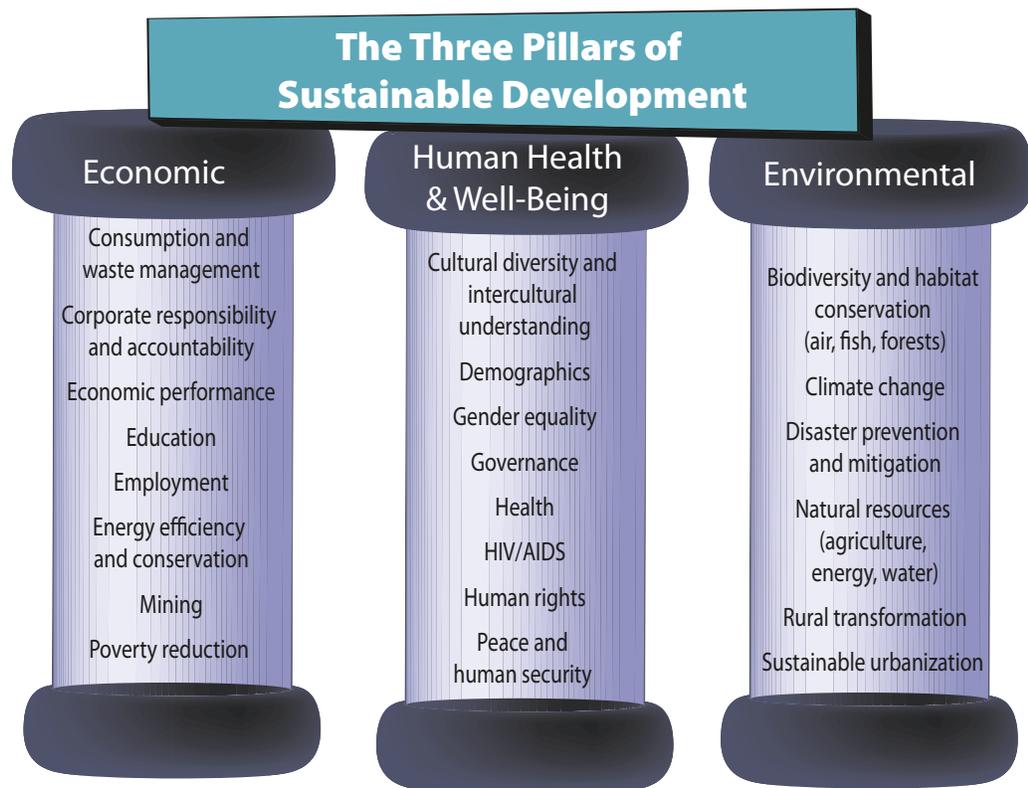
- Interdisciplinary and holistic: Learning for sustainable development is embedded in the whole curriculum, not as a separate subject.
- Values driven: It is critical that the assumed norms (i.e., the shared values and principles underpinning sustainable development) are made explicit so that they can be examined, debated, tested, and applied.
- Critical thinking and problem solving: Learning leads to confidence in addressing the dilemmas and challenges of sustainable development.
- Multi-methods: Words, art, drama, debate, experience—different pedagogies model the process. Teaching that is geared simply to passing on knowledge should be recast

into an approach in which teachers and learners work together to acquire knowledge and play a role in shaping the environment in their educational institutions.

- Participatory decision making: Learners participate in decisions on how they are to learn.
- Locally relevant: ESD addresses local as well as global issues and uses the language(s) that learners most commonly use. The concept of sustainable development must be carefully expressed in other languages. Languages and cultures say things differently, and each language has creative ways of expressing new concepts. (UNESCO 16)

## The Three Pillars of Sustainable Development

ESD activities should include or relate to the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, human health and well-being, and environmental.

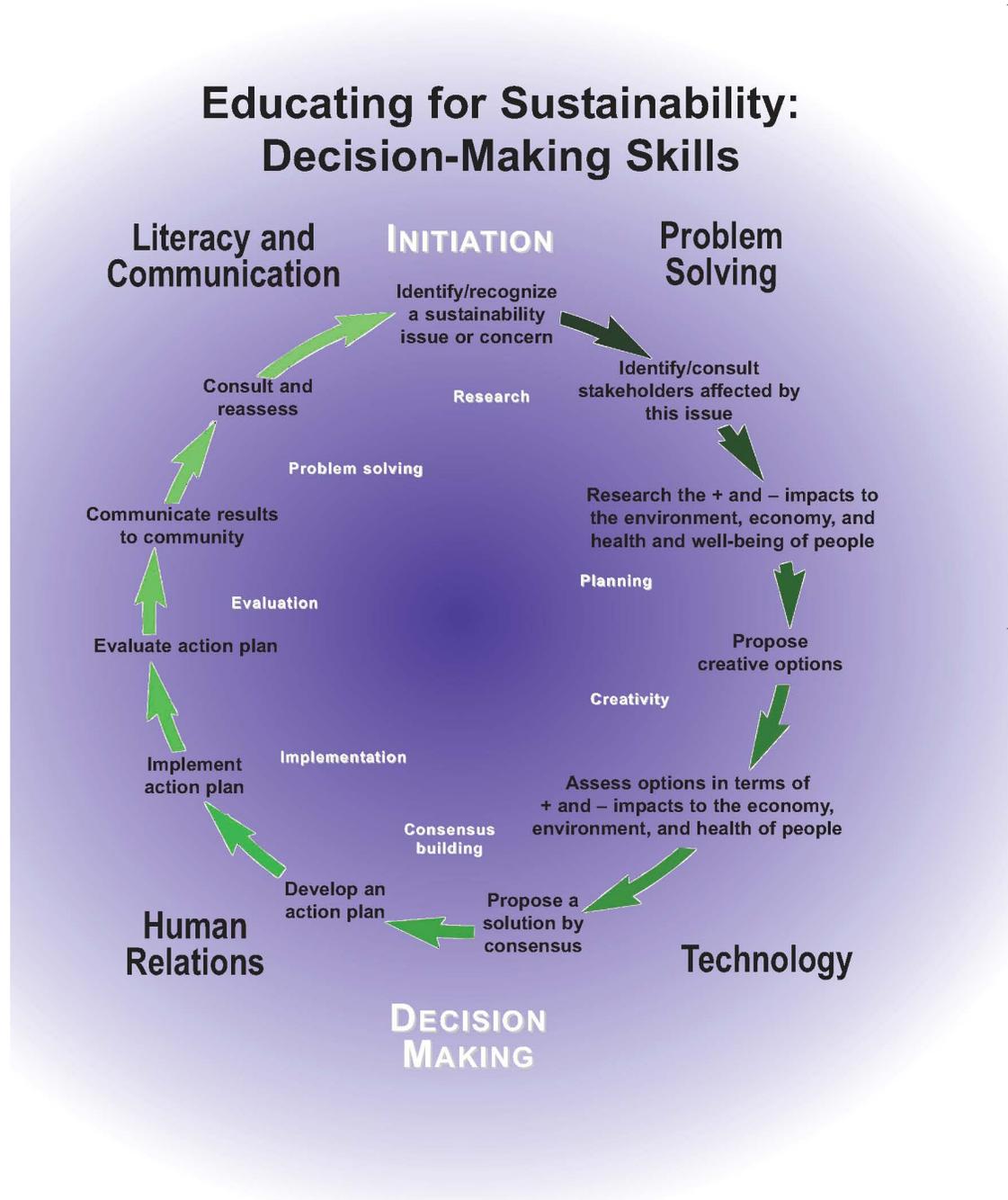


Dividing sustainable development into these three pillars helps us understand the breadth of the concept, but in reality these three categories are so interrelated that they cannot be so easily distinguished.

A definition for each of the themes is available at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/definitions.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/esd/definitions.html).

## Decision-Making Model: ESD\*

The ESD decision-making model is a useful tool to examine a sustainability problem.



\* Source: Manitoba Education and Training. *Education for a Sustainable Future: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators*. Available online at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/future/sustaineducation.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/future/sustaineducation.pdf).