



Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development (CALP) as a flagship ESD initiative empowering youth to promote sustainable development (SD) in Central Asia

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

five countries of the Central Asian sub-region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

The Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC)

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

The Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development (CALP) is a regional capacity-building initiative undertaken since 2010, designed to equip young leaders of Central Asian (CA) region with cutting-edge knowledge and innovative leadership methodologies in responding to global, regional and national environmental challenges. CALP is organized annually and involves young leaders in age of 25-40 y.o. from governmental, academic, private and NGO sectors. CALP improves capacity of "new generation" managers for promoting a role of youth in strengthening regional cooperation. CALP alumni tackle global and regional environmental challenges such as climate change, water management, gender equity, green economy, as well as post-COVID-2019 development, with their high qualifications and skills for SD.

6. What makes it a best practice? *

According to the Agenda-2030 and SDGs , it is assumed that by 2030, young people will be provided with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for SD. The Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development (CALP) builds on achievements and lessons of the CAREC Young Leaders Programme of 2006-2008 and UNEP Leadership Program implemented in Tongji University, Shanghai, China . In 2010 1st CALP was designed for mid-level officials, and comprised of three dimensions - human, environment and SD . Nowadays, CALP became one of the successful examples of multi-pair partnership, cross-sectoral capacity building initiative the region of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. After 12 years CALP remains a recognized platform for youth' regional cooperation.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

CALP responds to global challenges and presents a comprehensive understanding of interlinkages of environment and development challenges at the global, regional, sub-regional, national and local levels. In addition to that, CALP meets needs of CA governments and stakeholders' groups covering various SD themes depending on global and national priorities. CALP is organised annually in CAREC HQs, Almaty, Kazakhstan and covers five countries of the CA sub-region: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Additionally, participants from Afghanistan joined CALP in 2013 and participated until 2021.

The overall goal of the CALP is to improve leadership capacity of mid-level managers and promote connectivity of the CA youth by providing a neutral regional youth dialogue platform for discussing various Sustainable Development (SD) challenges. CALP introduced the following innovative approaches : transparency provided through the use of electronic system of application and selection of participants; eco-friendliness – paperless approach through the use of special CALP Appl.: <http://calp.carececo.org/mobile/>; online learning – welcome notes made by international experts via video-conferencing, and starting from 2020 during the COVID-2019 pandemic – most of the presentations made online via ZOOM platform; openness – partners from international organizations, civil and private sectors could moderate CALP sessions; innovativeness: CALP' lecturers from UN and other international, regional and national organisations and NGOs provide latest innovative solutions to environmental challenges on national, regional, and global levels. Inputs of partners give an opportunity to bring and replicate innovative practices, approaches and methods to the CA region.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

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According to the UN data , "in 2015-2030 number of young people is expected to grow. Given the high digital interconnectivity, young people are capable to contribute to the resilience of their communities, among others, by proposing innovative solutions to societal challenges and driving social progress...". Based on this, CALP was developed as a platform for leadership, which promotes participation of young leaders in environmental decision-making by using their leadership skills and increasing their knowledge .

In the context of globalization, it is important that young people can make a significant contribution to solving complex socio-economic and environmental problems. CA countries face a number of similar environmental and socio-economic challenges transition towards a market economy. For strengthening regional cooperation, it is necessary to use the energy, willingness to change, creativity and innovative ways of thinking of the youth. Alumni of the CALP could be considered as agents of change, "new generation" managers and promoters of the regional cooperation on environmental and SD issues.

Young people represent a key stakeholder group that CAREC engages to help drive environmental transformations towards sustainability through collective leadership across the borders of Central Asia, with the understanding of collective leadership as "the capacity of a collective to catalyze change for the common good" .

Over a period of 12 years, more than 370 young people from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan graduated from the CALP. The group "CALP alumni network" was established in 2017 and is moderated by CAREC on Facebook. CALP alumni demonstrate inspiring examples of volunteering and leadership, as personal, so collective. CAREC cooperates with the Collective Leadership Institute (CLI) , which shared with the CALP' participants a modern theory of "Collective Leadership".

The CALP methodology is based on a multi-stakeholder, multi-national and cross-sectoral approaches, which help to ensure a comprehensive understanding of environmental and SD issues from a regional perspective. CAREC is responsible for organizing, fundraising, coordination with partners and conducting CALP. CALPs' success became possible due to close cooperation between partners on the issues: joint resource mobilisation, preparation of concept, programme, collection of applications and nominations, selection of participants and conducting thematic sessions.

The CALP concept is a starting point of the CALP preparatory process. CAREC, in cooperation with partners and based on global priorities and national needs, develops a concept paper, disseminates it among partners and defines duration and content of the CALP, thematic focuses and modules including theoretic, practical components, and field trips.

Collection of applications consists of two processes: self-applications and official nominations of civil servants by national partners. CAREC develops a special CALP Appl. - online mobile platform <http://calp.carececo.org/mobile/http://calp.carececo.org/>, which allows to use electronic application system. In addition, CAREC receives letters with official nominations of young civil servants. Selection is implemented by online selection committee consisted of representatives of CAREC branches from CA countries, programme managers and international partners. Selected applicants are informed in one month before the CALP start. All CALP documents – concept, agenda, list of applicants, and list of speakers with BIOs - are available at the CALP mobile platform.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

CALP is an example of the most sustainable training programs on environment and SD for Youth, which provides demanded knowledge and capacity to young leaders and facilitates regional dialogue for their switching to SD. CALP as a capacity-building initiative enabling young leaders to work cooperatively and comprehensively with different stakeholders.

CALP makes a valuable input into achieving the SDGs, covering different SD themes. A special focus of the CALP involves providing quality training to young professionals, linking directly to SDG 4 "Quality Education" targets. So, we can confirm that CALP is an example of successful instruments of multi-SDGs, multi-country, multi-partner, multi-sectoral and multi-national initiative targeted youth and opening of new professional horizons for the youth of Central Asia.

Leaders from Central Asia and Afghanistan use CALP as a neutral platform for dialogue, discussing advances and best practices in water, gender, climate change and other topics pertinent to SD. Publications "CALP Alumni in addressing environmental challenges: success stories" and "CALP Alumni leadership stories" drew public attention to environmental issues, personal responsibility, post-COVID-2019 development, facilitated outreach and awareness-raising as well as motivated a new generation of leaders .

In 2010-2021, 12 CALPs were organised by CAREC and supported by UNEP, Government of Norway, OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan, OSCE Secretariat, USAID, World Bank, European Union, and Switch Asia SCP programme. In Central Asia, a role of new generation managers with global thinking, regional vision, understanding of the importance meaningful youth participation in regional cooperation and ready to embrace innovative approaches is becoming increasingly important. By focusing on youth and gender equity in its leadership training, CALP has successfully managed to create an inclusive network. This approach of inclusive leadership is key to achieving the SDGs.

The programme has also improved dialogue in Central Asia and demonstrated the powerful role of leadership by equipping future decision-makers to understand complex environmental and sustainable development issues from a local, but also global, point of view. As part of the capacity-building programme, they have also become skilled in diplomacy and can negotiate and mediate in a gender-responsive manner.

From year to year, CAREC receives more nominations from state bodies of CA countries, NGOs, and regional organizations, which confirms recognition and relevance of the training programme by national partners. Graduates of the CALP from Central Asia and Afghanistan work in water, environmental and energy agencies of the region, NGOs and academia and promote the values and benefits of regional cooperation in their daily work. The additional value of the CALP is strengthening of young people's role, voice and significance in the regional cooperation and more sustainable decision-making process.

CALP shares European and Asian good practices on water, energy and other SD issues, scaling

up it in Central Asia and Afghanistan, envisaged replication mechanisms and established a base for the best practices sharing and exchange between and inside the CA countries and Afghanistan.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

CALP improved leadership capacity of young leaders, supported dialogue with stakeholders in Central Asia and Afghanistan; enhanced a policy dialogue on multiple SD challenges at the national and regional level, and strengthened the action-oriented regional platform for going beyond preparatory activities (studies, etc.) and testing new approaches.

CALP alumni are demanded by national partners with their high qualifications and skills for sustainable development, and after graduation from the CALP many of them received promotion in their ministers, agencies and NGOs. Many graduates have been appointed to key positions in the various sectors: one of the graduates of the CALP Mr. Idrees Malyar was on the position of Deputy General Director of the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) of Afghanistan; member of the first Organising Committee of the CALP network Ms. Nodira Dzhanibekova is Deputy of the Oliy Majlis Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan; Ms. Zulfiya Suleimenova is Deputy of the Mazhilis of Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan; Ms. Danara Saranova is National UN Youth Volunteer. CAREC is proud of them!

11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”. What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

A number of challenges have been identified through the implementation of the CALP Program:

Environmental challenges: lack of inter-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation at the national level; lack of inter-country cooperation at the regional level; lack of recognition of the youth’s role in strengthening regional cooperation and influence of youth on making more sustainable decisions.

Financial challenges: lack of recognition, promotion and support of the CALP at the global and regional levels and very limited financial resources to continue this Youth Leadership initiative in Central Asia.

Challenges on capacity building: lack of innovative approaches and programs, modern databases in the field of environment and ESD, lack of capacity building activities through use of modern educational curricula, vocational trainings, development of ICT and digital learning skills and competences. Lack of certified teachers and trainers to improve the skills of specialists in sustainable development, including digital learning sphere.

COVID-2019 pandemic challenges: ongoing COVID-2019 pandemic from 2020 until now, and related with it challenges and limitations of offline participation of young leaders

To address these problems and through our experience with the CALP Program, several recommendations can be made:

Environmental recommendations:

To support regional dialogue on environmental and SD challenges in CA, promote role of youth in strengthening regional cooperation and making more sustainable decisions. To request UN and other international organisations to help in promotion of the CALP as a regional Youth initiative at the global and regional levels – via publications, case studies, good practices examples, networking, and success stories.

Financial recommendations:

To request international organisations, donor-countries, international funds to provide sustainable financial support of the CALP. To support organisation of a Regional Forum of the CALP Alumni network of 2010-2021 and show real examples of volunteering and leadership during the COVID-2019 pandemic, and discuss challenges and opportunities for regional and global networking and cooperation.

Recommendations on capacity building:

To introduce innovative approaches and programs, build capacity of a new generation through the use of modern educational curricula, vocational trainings, development of ICT- and digital learning skills and competences. To build capacity of certified teachers and trainers to improve the skills of specialists in SD, including digital learning sphere.

COVID-2019 pandemic recommendations:

Provide financial and expert support of the CALP, use opportunities of online and offline learning depending on situation with the COVID-2019 pandemic, provide participation of speakers from

UN agencies, international organisations and academia.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

<https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

UNESCO. (1997). Educating for a Sustainable Future: A Transdisciplinary Vision for Concerted Action. UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1998). World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty First Century.

UNESCO. (1998). Transforming our world: An Agenda for Sustainable Development for the period until 2030. Retrieved from International Law Website - Conventions.ru:

http://www.conventions.ru/view_base.php?id=1496

The UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, 2005.

Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives, UNESCO, 2017.

Global Education Monitoring (GEM) report, 2019, UNESCO, <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2019/migration>

A blueprint for the Future of AI - <https://www.brookings.edu/series/a-blueprint-for-the-future-of-ai/>

YOUTH REPORT Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls, UNESCO, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266274>

Issues and trends on Education for Sustainable Development, Education -2030, UNESCO, A.Leicht, J.Heiss and W.J. Byun, 2017. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000261445>

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4 AND REFUGEE EDUCATION, UNHCR, <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/59c368ed4.pdf>

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Wim Lambrechts / James Hindson (editors), Lifelong learning programme, Environment and School Initiatives - ENSI, ZVR-Zahl 408619713, Vienna, Austria, January 2016.

Applied educating systems, 21st Century skills are 12 abilities that today's students need to succeed in their careers during the Information Age,

<https://www.aeseducation.com/careercenter21/what-are-21st-century-skills>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/youth/>

<https://unep-iesd.tongji.edu.cn/iesden/33/44/c13757a144196/page.htm>

<http://calp.carececo.org/mobile/> - online CALP mobile platform for information, collection of application and selection of CALP participants

<https://carececo.org/en/main/> - main CAREC web-site with information on all thematic directions and programs

<https://carececo.org/en/main/search/index.php?q=CALP+reports> – CALP reports from 2016 to 2021

https://carececo.org/en/main/ckh/publications/otchet-o-10-y-yubileynoy-tsapl_2/– 10th Anniversary CALP report 2019

<https://carececo.org/en/main/ckh/publications/otchet-ob-11-y-innovatsionnoy-tsentralno-aziatskoy-programme-liderstva-po-okruzhayushchey-srede-dlya/> – 11th CALP report 2020 devoted to post-COVID development

<https://carececo.org/en/main/ckh/publications/otchet-o-12-y-tsentralno-aziatskoy-programme-liderstva-po-okruzhayushchey-srede-dlya-ustoychivogo-ra/> – 12th CALP report 2021 devoted to SCP, green economy and transition to circular economy

“CALP Alumni in addressing environmental challenges: success stories”

<https://carececo.org/en/main/ckh/publications/vypuskniki-tsapl-vnosyat-vklad-v-reshenie-ekologicheskikh-problem/>

<https://www.collectiveleadership.de/> - Collective Leadership Institute

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1706859609624642> - CALP alumni group 2010-2021 moderated by CAREC