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In the 1930s, the Soka Gakkai's founder and educator Tsunesaburo Makiguchi based his radical teaching methods on close study of the relationships between people and their immediate environment. He stressed that individuals should be aware of three levels of citizenship: our local commitments; our national community; and the wider world. From these roots, the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) has developed wide-ranging activities to promote environmental protection and sustainable development. Education and awareness-raising are the main focus. All too often, the more people learn about the complex issues affecting humanity, the more powerless they feel. The kind of education provided by the SGI, in contrast, is designed not only to inform but to inspire hope and action.

To this end, the SGI, together with the Earth Charter International, created an awareness-raising exhibition titled the "Seeds of Hope: Visions of sustainability, steps toward change" exhibition. This has already been shown in 36 countries and territories. The exhibition aims to provide a positive message without glossing over difficult realities, showing that sustainability is holistic and not just about the environment. It is being shown at the the Intellectual center and Fundamental Library(ICFL) during this international conference.

For so long, education has been recognized as a change maker. In 1992 the United Nations identified "education, including formal education, public awareness and training should be recognized as a process by which human being and societies can reach their fullest potential". On the other hand, UNESCO's final report on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development points out, "Evidence remains limited on the links between awareness raised and changes made in people's behaviour and lifestyles."

The SGI collaborated with the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) based in India to measure impact of the non-formal education tool by using "Seeds of Hope" exhibition in 18 Indian schools (three Indian cities namely, Delhi, Hyderabad and Kolkata). The experiment involved viewing the exhibition with and without facilitated activities. The study was carried out taking two groups of students through a structured questionnaire following a scientific methodology. Findings from this project will be presented.