

# UNITED NATIONS SUMMER ACADEMY 2017

## Localising the 2030 Agenda

21 – 25 August 2017, Bonn, Germany

Report of proceedings



## Contents

Programme .....	ii
Schedule of AppLabs .....	iv
Day One: Setting the Stage.....	1
Welcome Speech .....	1
Introduction .....	1
The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda.....	3
The Agreements behind the 2030 Agenda .....	6
Localising the 2030 Agenda .....	6
UN Bonn: The contribution to the 2030 Agenda.....	9
Day Two.....	13
AppLabs .....	13
The German Sustainable Development Council: From Agenda 21 to Agenda 2030 .....	17
Climate Action in the context of sustainable development: The role of the UN Climate Secretariat and the Paris Agreement.....	20
Day Three: From Fossil to Renewable energy – Managing the Transition.....	23
Background .....	23
The Excursion .....	24
Day Four .....	27
Transferring Knowledge .....	27
Launch of UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative .....	29
Share Fair .....	30
AppLabs .....	33
Day Five.....	38
Catalysing Systemic Change: The concept of Positive Peace .....	38
Catalysing Local Sustainability: Lessons learnt .....	40
Partners for Review: A transnational multi-stakeholder network for a robust review process .....	43
Walk the Talk: Action Planning and Next Steps.....	45
An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development.....	46
Closing .....	49
About the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC).....	51
About the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development.....	51
Approach to Learning at the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development .....	51
Learning Opportunities at the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development.....	52

## Programme

### Monday, 21 August 2017

#### Day One: Setting the Scene

- 9am Welcome Speech  
by Patrick van Weerelt, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development  
Introduction  
by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
- 10.30am Group Photograph and Tea and Coffee Break
- 11am The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda: Where are we coming from and what is new?  
Presentation by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
- 12.30pm Lunch
- 2pm The Agreements behind the Agenda  
Group discussions led by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
- 2.30pm Localising the 2030 Agenda  
Panel discussion with Yunus Arikon, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability; Johannes Krassnitzer, UNDP, ART Initiative; and Ilcheong Yi, UNRISD  
Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
- 3.45pm Tea and Coffee Break
- 4pm UN Bonn: The Contribution to the 2030 Agenda  
Panel discussion with Pradeep Monga, UNCCD; Olivier Adam, UNV; Juan Carlos Villagran de León, UN-SPIDER, UNOOSA; and Shyamal Majumdar, UNESCO-UNEVOC  
Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

6pm Reception at Bonn Town Hall

Hosted by the Lord Mayor Ashok Sridharan

### Tuesday, 22 August 2017

#### Day Two

- 9am Exploring the Network  
Energiser led by Ugo Caruso and Daniela Cepeda Cuadrado, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
- 9.30am AppLab Session 1 (10 parallel workshops)
- 10.45am Tea and Coffee Break
- 11am AppLab Session 2 (8 parallel workshops)
- 12.30pm Lunch
- 2.15pm The German Sustainable Development Council: From Agenda 21 to Agenda 2030  
Presentation by Günther Bachmann, German Sustainable Development Council
- 3.15pm Tea and Coffee Break
- 3.30pm Climate Action in the Context of Sustainable Development: The role of the UN Climate Change Secretariat and the Paris Agreement – the 'what' and the 'how'  
Panel discussion with Sergey Kononov, Marcela Main Sancha, Bernd Hackmann, and Alejandro Kilpatrick (UNFCCC)  
Moderated by Natalia Galat, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

### Wednesday, 23 August 2017

#### Day Three: Managing the Transition

- From Fossil to Renewable Energy – Managing the Transition  
Excursion to Eschweiler

**Thursday, 24 August 2017**

11am Tea and Coffee Break

**Day Four**

9am	Transferring Knowledge  Energiser led by Angela Wagner and Samant Kakkar, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development  Excursion debrief led by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development	11.15am	Review Processes for the 2030 Agenda at National and Sub-National Level  Presentation by Cormac Ebken, BMZ; and Thomas Wollnik, GIZ
10am	Launch of UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative  Share Fair	12.15pm	Walk the Talk: Action Planning and Next Steps  Led by Simona Costanzo Sow, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development
12.30pm	Lunch	1pm	Lunch
2pm	AppLab Session 3 (10 parallel workshops)	2pm	An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development
3.15pm	Tea and Coffee Break		Keynote address by Patricia Espinosa, Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the UN Climate Change Secretariat, UNFCCC
3.45pm	AppLab Session 4 (9 parallel workshops)	3pm	Closing  Farewell speech by Ambassador Ingrid Jung, Ambassador of Germany to the United Nations
6pm	Boat Ride and Dinner on the Rhine		Remarks by Patrick van Weerelt, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

**Friday, 25 August 2017****Day Five**

9am	Energiser led by Angela Wagner and Samant Kakkar, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development  Catalysing Systemic Change: The Concept of Positive Peace  Presentation by David Hammond, Institute for Economics and Peace
9.45am	Local Sustainability: Lessons Learnt  Panel discussion with Jessica Baier, Engagement Global; Verena Schwarte, City of Bonn; and Mary Suzan Abbo, CREEC Uganda  Moderated by Ugo Caruso, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

## Schedule of AppLabs

Tuesday, 22 August 2017	
9.30am – 10.45am	11am – 12.15pm
<p>Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation</p> <p><i>Sven Gabbert, Susanne Illemann, Ilya Kompassov (Simpleshow Foundation)</i></p>	<p>Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation</p> <p><i>Sven Gabbert, Susanne Illemann, Ilya Kompassov (Simpleshow Foundation)</i></p>
<p>Communicating Sustainable Development Goals with Good Storytelling</p> <p><i>Heike Janssen (ARD)</i></p>	<p>Communicating Sustainable Development Goals with Good Storytelling</p> <p><i>Heike Janssen (ARD)</i></p>
<p>A Step Ahead – The Contribution of Early Warning Systems to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</p> <p><i>Juan Carlos Villagrán de León (UN-SPIDER)</i></p>	<p>A Step Ahead – The Contribution of Early Warning Systems to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</p> <p><i>Juan Carlos Villagrán de León (UN-SPIDER)</i></p>
<p>Localising the SDGs – Tools and Examples</p> <p><i>Johannes Krassnitzer (UNDP)</i></p>	<p>Localising the SDGs – Tools and Examples</p> <p><i>Johannes Krassnitzer (UNDP)</i></p>
<p>Localisation of SDGs and the Social and Solidarity Economy</p> <p><i>Ilcheong Yi (UNRISD)</i></p>	<p>The Energy Trilemma</p> <p><i>Ahmed Ibraheem (Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs)</i></p>
<p>Transition Towns – A Social Movement to Reimagine and Rebuild Our World – Anywhere and also in Bonn</p> <p><i>Gesa Maschkowski (Bonn im Wandel)</i></p>	<p>Transition Towns – A Social Movement to Reimagine and Rebuild Our World – Anywhere and also in Bonn</p> <p><i>Gesa Maschkowski (Bonn im Wandel)</i></p>
<p>Community Management of Beach Sand Mining in Cape Coast, Ghana</p> <p><i>Fredrick Ekow Jonah (University of Cape Coast)</i></p>	<p>Managing Change</p> <p><i>Sabine Bhanot (UNSSC)</i></p>
<p>Sustainable Energy for All Design Approach</p> <p><i>Mary Suzan Abbo (CREEC)</i></p>	<p>SDGs – Tools Offered by the UN SDG Action Campaign</p> <p><i>Susanne Salz, Laura Hildebrandt (SDG Action Campaign)</i></p>
<p>Creative Communication for Results: Engaging Youth to Advance the SDGs through Comics</p> <p><i>José Ignacio Martín Galán (UN RCO Office, Haiti)</i></p>	
<p>SDGs – Tools Offered by the UN SDG Action Campaign</p> <p><i>Susanne Salz, Laura Hildebrandt (SDG Action Campaign)</i></p>	

Thursday, 24 August 2017	
12.30pm-1pm	
Corporate Volunteering in the Context of Sustainable Development <i>Alexandra van der Ploeg (SAP SE)</i>	
2pm – 3.15pm	3.45pm – 5pm
Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation <i>Sven Gabbert, Susanne Illemann, Ilya Kompasov (Simpleshow Foundation)</i>	Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation <i>Sven Gabbert, Susanne Illemann, Ilya Kompasov (Simpleshow Foundation)</i>
Communicating Sustainable Development Goals with Good Storytelling <i>Heike Janssen (ARD)</i>	Communicating Sustainable Development Goals with Good Storytelling <i>Heike Janssen (ARD)</i>
A Step Ahead – The Contribution of Early Warning Systems to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development <i>Juan Carlos Villagrán de León (UN-SPIDER)</i>	
Saudi Vision 2030 <i>Ali Albajjan, Amani Al Shehri, Nesma Hassan, Ayat Al Barakati (Direction)</i>	City to City Learning <i>Michael Woodbridge (ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability)</i>
Positive Peace – Factors that Create and Sustain Peaceful Societies <i>David Hammond (Institute for Economics and Peace)</i>	Managing Change <i>Sabine Bhanot (UNSSC)</i>
How to Get Support from UN Online Volunteers for your SDG-Related Projects <i>Annika Diederich (UNV)</i>	Rolling Out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ethiopia <i>Kiros Hintsu (UN RCO Office, Ethiopia)</i>
How to Measure the Results and Impact of the SDGs at Local Level <i>Edgar Adolfo Pacheco Teran (Autonomous Municipal Government of La Paz)</i>	Sustainable Energy for All Design Approach <i>Mary Suzan Abbo (CREEC)</i>
Can Cooperation Management Serve as a Theory of Change to Operationalise the SDGs in a City Context? <i>Günter Meinert (GIZ)</i>	Design of Green and Healthy Buildings in Asia <i>Henry Tsang (Green Architect; Keimyung University)</i>
Creative Communication for Results: Engaging Youth to Advance the SDGs through Comics <i>José Ignacio Martín Galán (UN RCO Office, Haiti)</i>	SDGs – Tools Offered by the UN SDG Action Campaign <i>Susanne Salz, Laura Hildebrandt (SDG Action Campaign)</i>
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# Report of Proceedings

## Day One: Setting the Stage

### Welcome Speech

by Patrick van Weerelt (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

Mr. Patrick van Weerelt, Head of Office of the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development, welcomed participants to the sixth edition of the UN Summer Academy.

Mr. van Weerelt stressed the importance of thinking holistically to realise the 2030 Agenda and to overcome the complexity of meeting challenges in all three pillars of sustainable development—“ensuring sustainable and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection, and to do so in partnership and peace”.

In this respect, the UN Summer Academy is one of the Knowledge Centre’s key initiatives to foster such an approach, creating a unique space for cross-sectoral dialogue and knowledge sharing.

He added that the Summer Academy is not organised in a vacuum. In fact, the city of Bonn provides the ideal backdrop and setting for this year’s Summer Academy. Firstly, Bonn is known nation-wide, as a “powerhouse” for sustainable development. Secondly, Bonn actively works through global partnerships in initiatives to localise sustainable development. One example of which is their partnership projects with partner cities across the world including Chengdu (China), Cape Coast (Ghana), La Paz (Bolivia), Bukhara (Uzbekistan), Minsk (Belarus), and Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia).

Mr. van Weerelt concluded by mentioning some programme highlights such as the Virtual Reality set-up by the SDG Action Campaign, the excursion to Eschweiler on Wednesday, and the Share Fair with around 30 organisations, among others. He then thanked the Federal Government of Germany and the State of North Rhine Westphalia for their kind contributions to the UN Summer Academy, the City of Bonn, Engagement Global, and the German Diplomatic Academy. Finally, he also thanked Ms. Simona Costanzo Sow and the organising team, and wished participants a “wonderful week of learning, networking, and fun”.

### Introduction

by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

Dr. Simona Costanzo Sow, overseeing Policy Support at the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development, introduced the organising team and the volunteers to participants. She shared that the Knowledge Centre in Bonn, while relatively young, has continued to “push the envelope” in experimenting with new and interactive formats to address learning and training needs demanded by the 2030 Agenda. These include online and face-to-face courses, and online webinars like the Sustainable Development Talks (SD Talks) covering a range of topics including data for sustainable development and climate action.

Dr. Costanzo Sow gave a snapshot of the range of expertise and knowledge that participants have brought to this year’s Summer Academy. She encouraged participants to take advantage of



this wealth of experience to form new connections with each other whether through the AppLabs (Application Labs) or throughout the week.



**Figure 1: Snapshot of existing knowledge and experience of participants at the UN Summer Academy in 2017 from “The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda”, Presentation by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)**

Following some administrative details on the week’s programme and activities, participants were encouraged to get to know each other with a game of Human Bingo.



**Figure 2: Participants engaging in a game of Human Bingo**

## The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda

Presentation by Simona Costanzo Sow

Dr. Costanzo Sow engaged participants in a discussion on the concept of sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda, and the idea of localisation.

Participants were first asked to define three terms namely, “sustainable development”, “the 2030 Agenda”, and “localising the 2030 Agenda”, and to discuss this within their respective groups. Five groups then took turns to share their understanding of the key notions behind these terms.



Figure 3: The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda – Group 1

The first group defined sustainable development as development that creates sustainable communities in the social, economic, and environmental areas, based on the 5P's (People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership, and Planet). They also shared that the key principles behind the 2030 Agenda and localising the Agenda are that of “leaving no one behind” and “putting the last first”.

The second group presented a sketch of Planet Earth to represent the different terms. They shared that a key notion of sustainable development is the idea of the 5P's, also illustrated in their sketch. In addition, they pointed out that as the 2030 Agenda outlines a timeline, they sought to represent this as a circle, indicating that sustainable development tackles the unfinished business of previous development efforts to reach an improved level of development. They also highlighted Bonn as one of the places where localisation of the 2030 Agenda is already taking place.



Figure 4: The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda – Group 2



Figure 5: The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda – Group 3

The third group represented sustainable development as a triangle with different segments to demonstrate its different dimensions. They then mapped sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda as a process where member states have pledged their commitment through the international system (the UN), which is then implemented to achieve impacts on people and society. They added that this process was also a cycle given that the 2030 Agenda was formulated based on a bottom-up approach and that localisation then requires efforts to flow from the top-down.

The fourth group felt that the notion of reaping what we sow (“what you plant is what you get”), could be an analogy for the implications behind the 2030 Agenda. As such, they represented the 2030 Agenda as a watering can and sustainable development as a tree, which needs to be watered regularly. Sustainable development does not refer to just one type development. Rather, it branches out and produces different “fruits”, which we all need to consume to get sufficient nourishment. This also represents localisation, which implies that we can implement the 2030 Agenda to achieve sustainable development through different means.



**Figure 6: The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda – Group 4**



**Figure 7: The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda – Group 5**

Finally, the fifth group shared that localising the 2030 Agenda requires empowering people to develop solutions while ensuring that there is a collective effort behind achieving sustainable development. Further, the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs could be visualised as a staircase or “stepping stone” to the level of development that we want to achieve in the future. They also emphasised that key ideas behind the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development were that of transformation and integrity. While the 2030 Agenda calls for new ideas and processes, it also

demands an integrated approach, in terms of addressing the different dimensions of sustainable development, while keeping with the integrity of its vision.

Dr. Costanzo Sow then provided an overview and background to the concept of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. She stressed that sustainable development encompasses a very broad definition. For instance, the definition of sustainable development mentioned in the Brundtland Commission’s report in 1987<sup>1</sup> is in fact, forward-looking in considering the needs of future generations. She added that sustainable development is therefore also characterised by long-term planning, as illustrated by the concrete example of Eschweiler, during the excursion on [Day Three](#).

<sup>1</sup> In the report, sustainable development is defined as “development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. (Source: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development – Our Common Future, Oslo, 20 March 1987)

Dr. Costanzo Sow highlighted the importance of using a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda—rather than just confining it to environmental issues for instance. Previously, social development actors and environmental groups often operated in separate spheres. Because of the 2030 Agenda, these actors are now seated at the same table and working collectively and collaboratively to achieve sustainable development. This has marked a new way in which the international system approaches development issues.

The 2030 Agenda is also significant for numerous reasons. These include firstly, the fact that it is universally applicable to both developed and developing countries. Secondly, it calls for a bottom-up approach where everyone—not just national governments—is responsible for achieving sustainable development. In this sense, fulfilling the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires multi-stakeholder engagement and adopting a cross-cutting approach, utilising the 5P’s—People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership, and Planet. Thirdly, it takes a broader view of financing beyond official development assistance (ODA) to include domestic resources and private financial flows.

Overall, the 2030 Agenda must be interpreted in a holistic way. In fact, the 2030 Agenda adopts a comprehensive and integrated vision, and considers challenges facing our planet across multiple dimensions. In order to fulfil this vision and the goals, it is important for actors to cultivate capacities to raise the “right partnerships”—meaningful partnerships that allow actors to leverage on the specific needs and knowledge of partners. Further, because everyone is accountable for meeting this vision at all levels, contextualising the goals at the local level is key.



Figure 8: The Dimensions of Sustainable Development from “The Concept of Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda”, Presentation by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

## The Agreements behind the 2030 Agenda

Group discussion led by Simona Costanzo Sow



Figure 9: Participants discuss the Agreements behind the 2030 Agenda

To contextualise the 2030 Agenda, participants were asked to identify different agreements that have influenced or been influenced by the evolution of the concept of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda. These agreements included the Stockholm Declaration (1972); Rio Declaration (1992); Millennium Declaration (2000); Johannesburg Declaration (2002); The Future We Want, resulting from the Rio+20 conference (2012); the Samoa Pathway (2014); the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015); the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (2015); the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015); the Paris Agreement (2015); and the New Urban Agenda (2016).

While the Stockholm Declaration was not the earliest agreement relating to sustainable development, it was certainly highly influential as the “stepping stone” to the 2030 Agenda. It was noted that this list was by no means comprehensive and that several important human rights declarations and agreements should obviously also be considered.

Participants also highlighted the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the founding declaration, articulating the need for people-centred development, focusing on ensuring a life in dignity for all.

## Localising the 2030 Agenda

Panel discussion with Yunus Arikian (ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability), Johannes Krassnitzer (UNDP, ART Initiative), and Ilcheong Yi (UNRISD)

Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

**Mr. Yunus Arikian**, Head of Global Policy and Advocacy with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, highlighted that the global arena has lagged behind in terms of implementing sustainable development initiatives, while such initiatives have already been embarked upon at the local level. He pointed out that the Rio+20 conference was significant because of the strong commitment of national governments to sustainable development.

Given that sustainable development has been elevated up in the global agenda, this presents an opportunity for local governments to share their experiences with national governments. This is why ICLEI focuses on strategies to “multiply, scale up [and] leap-frog” local efforts to the global level.

He added that localising is not new. Rather, it is now taking place at a much more collaborative scale. Localisation is also about building on and strengthening current efforts, and filling in the gaps.

He concluded by highlighting three pre-requisites or factors for success:

1. Sustainability needs to remain a guiding principle positioned even higher in the global agenda. This means that successive frameworks should not ignore the goals and commitments of the 2030 Agenda.
2. We need to recognise that the “world is an urban world now”. In fact, many national economies are driven by metropolitan activities and initiatives. This implies that we should view urban development policies as complementary to other national policies.
3. Empower “Coalitions of the Willing”—The UN development system and national governments should work more closely with institutions that are already undertaking localisation using innovative approaches and ideas.

**Mr. Johannes Krassnitzer**, Coordinator for the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Articulation of Territorial Networks (ART) Initiative spoke on efforts to localise the SDGs within the UN and with local and national governments.

He pointed out that the 2030 Agenda has been a “game-changer”. Firstly, in terms of the process through which the goals and the ideas to localise the Agenda were formulated. In fact, 10 million people came forward with their views through national consultation processes, as well as the MyWorld Survey. As part of these efforts, numerous dialogues discussing how to localise the Agenda were also conducted between the global task force, other UN agencies such as UN-Habitat and UNDP, and grassroots organisations “in close to 20 countries”. Localisation, in this sense, therefore means not only having both local and regional governments “in the centre”, but also gaining buy-in and commitment from all relevant actors. Secondly, the 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda that calls for new types of partnerships. It is also an agenda that concerns everyone, including both developed and developing countries. Thirdly, the 2030 Agenda implies that ownership of the concept behind sustainable development and the Agenda must reside at the local level.

Mr. Krassnitzer also highlighted how participatory processes engaged in localising the Agenda are a means to strengthen and deepen democratic mechanisms and processes, and are of value in and of themselves. In particular, he stressed the importance of working at the local level and with an integrated approach because of the far-reaching impact of the 2030 Agenda. For instance, UNDP works closely with local governments to change the misperception that the 2030 Agenda is merely a technical exercise to match SDGs with existing national development policies and goals. In particular, UNDP also works with national governments to strengthen review processes to improve accountability. As such, the quality of governance, especially democratic governance, can be a key enabler in transformative change.

Further, it is also crucial to leverage on multi-stakeholder partnerships and multi-level government networks to amplify and multiply localisation efforts. He added that one challenge faced in this respect is the lack of coordination between local and national governments.

In conclusion, he emphasised that localising the 2030 Agenda involves strengthening democratic processes and establishing multi-level structures that engage all stakeholders in society.

**Mr. Ilcheong Yi**, a Senior Research with the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), then qualified what localisation of the 2030 Agenda entails. He identified six key biases or pitfalls:

1. Interpretation bias: A mechanical interpretation and translation of global goals to local ones is highly problematic as this fails to reflect local realities.
2. Institutional bias: There is a risk that the ruling elite could capture good institutions. This can be harmful as it ignores underserved sectors.
3. Autarky bias: Cities should not design implementation plans within a vacuum. It is important to consider positive and negative spillover effects to other cities, towns, and villages.
4. “Subsidiarity implemented without solidarity” bias: It is important to coordinate local goals and targets, balancing sub-national, national, and regional needs and priorities.
5. Measurement bias: Measuring the impact of localisation requires going beyond national, aggregated indicators as unites of analysis.
6. Sectoral bias: Need to guard against “sectoral chauvinism”. This means striking a balance between all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Mr. Krassnitzer reflected that while the UN is often encouraged to provide contextualised support to local and national governments, localisation would be far more effective if national governments internalised the 2030 Agenda and recognised the efforts made by local and city-level governments.

Mr. Arikan agreed and stated that “change can only come from within”, rather than be imposed by others. He observed that this was an issue already apparent in Agenda 21. However, while encouraging self-motivated change within states has been one of the successes of the 2030 Agenda, he also pointed out that this could also be a weakness in terms of ensuring compliance. In addition, the 2030 Agenda implies that all countries are in fact, “developing countries” in terms of achieving sustainable development. As such, both governments and voters are responsible for ensuring that there is no backsliding in terms of the commitments made. We therefore need to engage in a collective effort at all levels to ensure accountability.

Participants then raised questions concerning challenges in collecting and standardising data when localising development goals, financial mechanisms for the local level, the role of local media in terms of raising awareness among the general public, and overcoming sectoral bias.

In response, panellists noted the need for innovative approaches to data in measuring development progress. There is also a need for a “new way of working” to catalyse development progress—one that is “more connected [and encourages] more sharing”.

**Key takeaways:**

1. We need a new and more democratic way of working to ensure accountability and prevent backsliding.

2. It is important to leverage partnerships and recognise interlinkages to implement the 2030 Agenda in a holistic way.
3. In terms of sustainable development, all countries can be considered “developing countries”. Therefore, for real transformation to happen, all countries must actively engage in knowledge transfer and exchanges at all levels and in all directions.

### UN Bonn: The contribution to the 2030 Agenda

Panel discussion with Pradeep Monga (UNCCD), Olivier Adam (UNV), Juan Carlos Villagran de León (UN-SPIDER Bonn Office, UNOOSA) and Shyamal Majumdar (UNESCO-UNEVOC Bonn)

Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

The Heads of UN entities in Bonn then shared on the many ways in which UN entities have been contributing towards sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local level, such as raising awareness of the impacts of desertification, tapping on and engaging volunteers, advising national governments on disaster risk reduction and education and vocational training.



Figure 10: (From left to right) Dr. Pradeep Monga (UNCCD), Mr. Olivier Adam (UNV), Mr. Juan Carlos Villagran de León (UN-SPIDER), and Mr. Shyamal Majumdar (UNESCO-UNEVOC)

**Dr. Pradeep Monga**, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), highlighted that 12 million hectares of productive land are degraded every year, which can have multi-sectoral impacts—from impacts on biodiversity to forced migration. As such, sustainable management of land use should be viewed as part of a “nexus between land, energy, water, and food security”.





Figure 11: Nexus between land, energy, water and food security from “Land Degradation Neutrality and SDGs”, presentation by Dr. Pradeep Monga (Deputy Executive Secretary, UNCCD).

In particular, the UNCCD focuses on three key areas namely, “sustainability, security, and stability”, which all have interlinkages with sustainable land management. In terms of sustainability, Dr. Monga pointed out that land is one of the scarcest natural resource, and can affect the availability, accessibility, and quality of other natural resources such as clean water and renewable energy, among others. In addition, it also affects food security and agricultural production, influencing efforts to eliminate hunger around the world. For example, the population on the African continent will grow to 2 billion people by 2050. Therefore, there is a need to consider how land can be used in a more sustainable and productive way. In terms of security and stability, land degradation in several parts of the world has pushed people to migrate to other regions such as Europe, and exerts pressure on the political and social systems of countries.

At the international level, several challenges remain in the area of efforts to prevent land degradation namely, fragmentation of efforts within the UN system, duplication of efforts among donors, and the need to “connect the dots” between the efforts of different UN agencies. It is therefore important to recognise these interlinkages and invest in a coordinated approach and strategy at the country level. Dr. Monga concluded by emphasising the need to strengthen partnerships to invest in efforts to combat land degradation, leading to a more sustainable future.

**Mr. Olivier Adam**, Executive Coordinator for the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme, spoke on how volunteerism is an important element in contributing to the 2030 Agenda as it is a testament of the level of ownership at the local level. He stressed that UN Volunteers have played a key role in the consultation process leading up to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

He said that UNV mobilises UN Volunteers with different UN entities to contribute to local-level implementation across different thematic areas, especially in peace and security in the global South where almost 80% of UN Volunteers originate from and currently work in. However, UNV’s work has also widened to include other regions and areas such as humanitarian efforts and support in Europe. UNV also supports localisation of the SDGs by working with national governments on coherent volunteer policies, and in reporting on the contributions of volunteers in implementing the SDGs. He also noted that UNV plays an important role in fostering volunteerism

globally through its support to global Volunteer-Involving Organisations such as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

**Mr. Juan Carlos Villagran de León**, Head of the UN-SPIDER (Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response) Bonn Office at the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), spoke on the benefits of investing in technology such as satellite technology including enabling governments to plan better, reduce disaster risk, improve land-use and become more resilient.

In this respect, UN-SPIDER works closely with local officials to develop step-by-step procedures accessible through open-source technology, as well as the private sector in developing space-mapping tools to improve land-use planning and risk management. For instance, in the area of climate change, satellite tools help to track the melting of ice caps and sea level rise, and their projected implications on countries. The satellite-generated maps can be used as a baseline to map progress in a number of areas corresponding with the SDGs.

**Mr. Shyamal Majumdar**, Head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNESCO-UNEVOC), stressed that the 2030 Agenda is not realisable without investments in education and skills-building through technical and vocational training (TVET).

UNESCO-UNEVOC supports member states in implementing the SDGs in three ways. Firstly, in working closely with national governments in targeting skills shortages and mismatches through a work-to-school and school-to-work programme. Secondly, in cultivating entrepreneurship and providing green TVET guidelines to promote environmentally responsible practices and tackle climate change. Thirdly, in focusing on more comprehensive metrics to measure development beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita.

Overall, UNESCO-UNEVOC also works to increase accessibility and quality of TVET, and focuses on cultivating inclusive partnerships and strategies between UN agencies and industry to overcome gaps in vocational training in developing countries.

Participants then raised several issues including addressing inequalities—whether as a result of land degradation or lack of access to training and lack of employment opportunities. One participant also asked about ways to strengthen synergies within the UN as a big bureaucracy.

### ***Key Takeaways***

1. Recognising interlinkages is key to developing a coordinated approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda at the local level.
2. It is important to integrate economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in relevant strategies to prevent a disconnect between initiatives and local realities.

### **Key Takeaways from Day One:**

1. Adopt a holistic approach to the 2030 Agenda, which constitutes an integrated vision. People, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace, also known as the 5P's, are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. In order to achieve genuine sustainability, we must consider these five dimensions when making decisions about development issues. Sustainable development takes into account the social, economic, and environmental consequences of all actions, and requires careful thinking about trade-offs and opportunities. Watch the UNSSC Knowledge Centre's explainer video [here](#) to find out more.
2. The universal nature of the 2030 Agenda forces all actors including the UN system to reposition their approaches and reach. The 2030 Agenda encourages policy-makers to consider domestic challenges, issues related to development cooperation, and international policy in a more interconnected way.
3. Localising the 2030 Agenda requires multi-stakeholder engagement and democratic processes to ensure that goals reflect local realities, to encourage local ownership, and improve accountability. The process of strengthening partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement in itself can strengthen democratic mechanisms and processes.
4. Recognising interlinkages and synergies is important. In particular, it is crucial that we cultivate the "right partnerships" to leverage on a wide range of expertise, experiences, and knowledge.

## Day Two

### AppLabs

To build on the discussions and reflections on the concept of sustainable development and localising the 2030 Agenda during [Day One](#), participants then split up for two rounds of AppLab sessions.

The AppLabs, short for Application Labs, are an opportunity for participants to dive deeper into different thematic content and engage in more hands-on practical experience with relevant tools for implanting the 2030 Agenda. The AppLabs also aim to create a safe space where participants can engage in a genuine and honest sharing of experiences, challenges, and best practices.

This year's UN Summer Academy featured a wide variety of AppLabs ranging from innovative communication and advocacy tools and skills, to community engagement, and thematic areas like sustainable urban planning, energy, and climate action.

#### Communication tools and skills

##### **Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation**



**Figure 12: Susanne Illemann from the Simpleshow Foundation during the AppLab on “Introduction to the Art of Simple Explanation”**

Led by Sven Gabbert, Susanne Illemann, and Ilya Kompasov from the Simpleshow Foundation, this AppLab focused on equipping participants in creating explainer videos, which are videos that explain a concept or topic in under three minutes. Held over two sessions during the week, the AppLab covered theoretical aspects on the science behind how the human brain processes information and what makes an explanation effective. Five general rules for effective explanations include changing one's

perspective, simplifying one's message, telling a story, using images, and inspiring trust. Participants then had the opportunity to experiment and gain practical, hands-on experience with the online video-maker, mysimpleshow, and the Explainer Engine—the core intelligence behind the mysimpleshow tool.

##### **Communicating Sustainable Development Goals with Good Storytelling**

Heike Janssen from ARD, Germany, addressed the challenge of advocating for sustainable development and its goals. In particular, the AppLab equipped participants with skills in good storytelling to communicate effectively through local media channels.

## **Creative Communication for Results: Engaging Youth to Advance the SDGs through Comics**

Building on a project implemented by UN Haiti, this AppLab was led by Jose Ignacio Martin Galan (UN RC Office, Haiti). Besides hearing about UN Haiti's experience in using comics as an advocacy tool to engage youths in advancing the SDGs, participants also had the opportunity to conceptualise their own projects.

### **SDGs - Tools Offered by the UN SDG Action Campaign**

Participants had the opportunity to experience the various tools offered by the UN SDG Action Campaign including UN Virtual Reality glasses, and the MyWorld 2030 survey – a tool to engage citizens around the world and bring citizen voices and citizen-generated data to leaders. Other tools featured during this AppLab included the Humans of My World, featuring the faces behind the data, emphasising that the 2030 Agenda is people-centred and is about leaving no one behind.

### *Partnerships, Community Engagement and Empowerment*

#### **Localising the SDGs - Tools and Examples**

Led by Johannes Krassnitzer (UNDP) who shared the tools available on the joint UN Development Programme (UNDP)/ UNHABITAT/ United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) platform on [localising the SDGs](#).

Participants also discussed multi-actor partnerships in terms of the various initiatives implemented in partnership between local and regional governments and the UN, as well as the process made in the localisation of SDGs.



Figure 13: Johannes Krassnitzer from UNDP leading the AppLab on “Localising the SDGs – Tools and Examples”

#### **Localisation of SDGs and the Social and Solidarity Economy**

Ilcheong Yi from UNRISD (UN Research Institute for Social Development) led this AppLab, focusing on approaching the localisation of SDGs and the 2030 Agenda through the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). An emerging form of economy that is an intersection between the private, public, and "popular" (i.e. informal, domestic economy) spheres, SSE can be a way to effectively balance economic considerations together with environmental and social considerations. One example of an SSE organisation would be social cooperatives.

Citing the rise of SSE in Seoul as an example, a key issue discussed was the need for governments to enable and be enabled to engage with a new form of participatory governance and democratic processes.

## Community Management of Beach Sand Mining in Cape Coast, Ghana

Frederick Ekow Jonah of the University of Cape Coast shared on the challenges related to coastal erosion due to beach sand mining in Ghana and the West African region, as well as on the work of the NGO, Seafont Environmental. Participants discussed how the local community has responded. It was noted that providing access to decent jobs and livelihood options to such coastal communities could encourage them to take ownership of managing their beaches and the protection of coastal areas.

### Climate Action and the Environment

## A Step Ahead - The Contribution of Early Warning Systems to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Figure 14 Juan Carlos Villagran de León from UN-SPIDER during his AppLab on “A Step Ahead – The Contribution of Early Warning Systems to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

Juan Carlos Villagran de León, Head of UN-SPIDER in Bonn, shared on early warning systems, the role of space-based information in risk assessments and early warning procedures, which focus on tsunamis and droughts, and how UN-SPIDER works with national stakeholders to promote the implementation of such systems. Participants learned about the different definitions of risk and vulnerability, and had the opportunity to engage with Early Warning Systems through Google Earth. With this tool, participants were able to determine areas of vulnerability—

allowing them to design targeted strategies in terms of promoting and implementing early warning systems. Participants also discussed that there is a need for clear instructions and communication channels to ensure that such information reaches those at risk.

## Sustainable Energy for All Design Approach

Mary Suzan Abbo from the Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (CREEC) shared on the centre's work in promoting knowledge and training in energy conservation and sustainable energy, especially in Uganda. Some challenges included conflicts of interest posed by government especially in a centralised system in terms of energy pricing for instance, as well as the lack of evidence-based policy-making. Participants then engaged in an exercise to propose new ideas to improve energy efficiency using an innovation roadmap and examples of six business models of small energy businesses in Uganda. It was noted that there is a need for a more participatory and multi-stakeholder approach to increase access to affordable energy, and that this is dependent on transparency of information on pricing of energy at the local level.

## The Energy Trilemma

Led by Ahmed Ibraheem from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participants engaged in a discussion on the concept of the energy trilemma—which involves three main trade-offs in terms of energy security, economic governance, and environmental sustainability—and the need to strike a balance between the three core areas of sustainability to holistically design energy policy. Participants also discussed the role of indicators and indexes. In addition, participants also noted the importance of recognising interlinkages in the design of inclusive energy policies.



Figure 15: Ahmed Ibraheem (Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) during his AppLab on “The Energy Trilemma”

## Urban Development

### Transition Towns - A Social Movement to Reimagine and Rebuild Our World - Anywhere and also in Bonn



Figure 16: Gesa Maschkowski (Bonn im Wandel) during her AppLab on “Transition Towns – A Social Movement to Reimagine and Rebuild Our World – Anywhere and also in Bonn”

Gesa Maschkowski from Bonn im Wandel led an AppLab on the Transition Initiative as a movement for people to "reclaim the economy, reimagine work, reskill themselves and weave webs of connection and support", focusing on this movement in Bonn. Participants discussed how transformative change could happen in communities. It was noted that this is a deceptively simple concept, and that individuals and communities need to be more aware of complexities in the process of change. The AppLab also discussed concrete examples of how marginalised groups and individuals can be included in such a movement through open and non-discriminatory initiatives. Overall, for transformative change to happen, we cannot continue "business as usual". Rather, we should "reimagine and rebuild the future we want".

## Governance and Organisational Change

### Managing Change

Sabine Bhanot from UNSSC led this AppLab on change management. Participants discussed strategies on how to design change processes, how to get buy-in, and how to manage the human impact of change. Communication is key, especially in explaining the benefits and consequences of change, and providing a space for people to express their concerns. Proper assessment of the need for change is critical to develop sustainable solutions. Further, strong leadership is needed to moderate and drive change. It is therefore important to build a guiding coalition of influencers and key decision-makers to drive the vision for this change.



Figure 17: Sabine Bhanot (UNSSC) leading the AppLab on “Managing Change”

### The German Sustainable Development Council: From Agenda 21 to Agenda 2030

Presentation by Prof. Dr. Günther Bachmann (German Council for Sustainable Development)

Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

Prof. Dr. Günther Bachmann, General Secretary of the German Council for Sustainable Development presented on the work of the Council in localising the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in Germany.



Figure 18: Prof. Dr. Günther Bachmann from the German Council for Sustainable Development



He shared how Agenda 21 and lessons learned from that process have shaped the structure and mandate of the Council. In particular, he noted that while much enthusiasm was displayed at the time for the idea of Agenda 21, arising from the Rio Conference in 1992, there was a lack of political will and commitment to implement the Agenda at national level. He highlighted three key lessons from this process namely, the importance of forming partnerships especially with civil society, setting clear targets and timelines, and coordinating efforts at the regional and international level.



**Figure 19: Prof. Dr. Günther Bachmann from the German Council for Sustainable Development**

Against this backdrop, the Council was therefore established as an independent body that works directly with the public, private sector, and government bodies to implement Germany's strategies to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. He then highlighted several key challenges facing the Council including:

Firstly, challenges in convincing stakeholders of the importance of setting targets with clear timelines. Nonetheless, the Council succeeded by emphasising that such targets should be formulated to achieve a specific purpose, which is essential for effective management.

Secondly, contextualising the 2030 Agenda and sustainable development within a larger, longer-term narrative. While sustainable development is not a new concept, it will continue to feature heavily in national and international discourse in the years to come. As such, the Council has continued to emphasise the role of individuals in facilitating transformational change, or what Prof. Bachmann likened to "anthropoceny"—a state of the world where human beings are in a position to exert a "geological force" in shaping the world.

Thirdly, the lack of appropriate governance structures at the international and national level to ensure that effective action is taken to implement the Agenda. He highlighted the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) as an example where governments engage in "government selfies" or the process of self-reporting on their own implementation plans. He cited this as a missed opportunity in terms of leveraging the HLPF as a space for knowledge transfer and exchange. In terms of the international system, he highlighted the urgency for reform of the UN system. At the national level, many countries have also struggled with structural issues that have hampered efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda. In Germany, he shared that this was overcome by assigning a national goal to each of the 17 SDGs, ensuring coherence between national and international goals.

Fourthly, he cited the challenge of reporting of data on the SDGs and the issue of cherry-picking. He cautioned against reporting aggregated data such as through indexes and setting indicators where the data does not yet exist.

With this in mind, the Council works to localise the 2030 Agenda and SDGs through a three-pronged approach. This includes considering how international SDGs affect German domestic

policies, how SDGs affect development policy and how Germany distributes official development aid, and how Germany implements SDGs through its own existing policies.

The Council has also strongly advocated for sustainable development, bringing it into mainstream consciousness. In fact, 85% of the German population is now aware of the concept of sustainable development, compared to just 10% in 2000. However, this achievement has also come with new challenges. Specifically, there is now a need to advocate more clearly what sustainable development entails. As such, the Council has invested in broadening its "shareware" by organising forums such as its [Open SDGclub.Berlin](#), which offers an inclusive and collaborative platform for local actors and stakeholders, committed to sustainable development and the realisation of the 2030 Agenda, to exchange knowledge and best practices.



Prof. Bachmann concluded by emphasising the need to look beyond the SDGs when considering sustainable development. Rather, sustainable development cuts across many key sectors. Sustainable development is also not merely an international issue but has far-reaching impacts on our daily lives. To illustrate this, he cited how sustainable development is an integral issue in all 3C's of Germany's "soul"—Coal, Chemistry, and Cars.



Participants then raised several questions concerning issues such as prioritisation of indicators and SDGs, and how the Council engages in knowledge transfer and peer-to-peer learning between and within countries, among others.

On indicators, Prof. Bachmann shared that it is important to advocate for sound indicators especially among policy-makers. As for peer-to-peer learning and knowledge transfer, cross-sectoral partnerships and innovative technology fixes are crucial. However, in order to localise best practices effectively and in a sustainable way, local communities must develop their own innovative approaches and solutions. This means tapping on a wide range of perspectives from the arts to science.

**Figure 20: Participants ask questions on the work of the German Sustainable Development Council**

### **Key Takeaways**

1. Sustainable development must be seen within a much broader and long-term narrative. This implies that sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda must be integrated and ingrained into local policies.
2. Localising also calls for institutionalising a new way of working with more open and transparent governance structures, and adopting innovative approaches. More importantly, such approaches must also influence behavioural and cultural change within communities.
3. There also needs to be a greater degree of knowledge transfer and sharing of best practices at the local, regional and international level.

## Climate Action in the context of sustainable development: The role of the UN Climate Secretariat and the Paris Agreement

Panel discussion with Sergey Kononov, Marcela Main Sancha, Bernd Hackmann, and Alejandro Kilpatrick (UNFCCC)

Moderated by Natalia Galat (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

Speakers from the United Nations Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat then engaged participants with a panel discussion on climate action and sustainable development.



Figure 21: (From left to right) Sergey Kononov, Marcela Main Sancha, Bernd Hackmann, and Alejandro Kilpatrick (UNFCCC) on the panel discussing the role of the UN Climate Secretariat and the Paris Agreement

**Mr. Sergey Kononov** began with an overview of the evolution of the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Agreement, and the Paris Agreement. He shared that the UNFCCC was the first legal instrument addressing the issue of climate change and aimed to achieve a stabilisation of greenhouse gas emissions. It was instituted as a framework convention because countries were not yet ready to agree to specific targets. It also provided differentiated obligations for developed and developing countries where developed countries were urged to "take the first step". The Paris Agreement is therefore an important step in holding all countries responsible for meeting targets—regardless of level of economic development. It also promotes a more transparent process where all signatories are required to provide an emissions report. Through a global stock-take, countries can also collectively assess their progress towards meeting the targets.

**Ms. Marcela Main Sancha** added that implementation of plans under the UNFCCC requires multi-stakeholder engagement as governments alone cannot be solely responsible for meeting the targets. She cited the Marrakesh Partnership, which emphasises the need for climate action "on the ground". Further, climate action should not be viewed within a vacuum. Rather, it is important to consider other cross-cutting issues such as financing and governance.

Some issues raised during the discussion included how the definition of a developed and developing country continues to be a "stumbling block" even in conversations around the SDGs, and the issue of compliance. The panellists stressed that the Paris Agreement depends on the collective effort of all countries. However, it was also noted that even if national governments fail

to implement their plans under the Agreement, many initiatives that work towards meeting the targets already exist at the local level. In fact, cities are more committed to the global framework compared to national governments. This means that there is a need to work more closely with local governments.

In addressing the implementation of the Paris Agreement, **Mr. Bernd Hackmann** provided more insight into the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), or climate plans, under the Paris Agreement. He highlighted that the Paris Agreement can be characterised as constituting "progressional ambition". This means that it comprises an incremental process where each successive climate plan builds on past plans, setting even more ambitious targets than the last. Further, he stressed that these plans must also be viewed within the context of wider national development policies. In fact, he noted that many national climate plans also contained synergies with all 17 SDGs. He added that we need to "switch gears" in response to a new reality where climate action is integral to development practices and policies. The challenge now lies in bridging gaps in development pathways, and one way to do so is through resource mobilisation and financing.

**Mr. Alejandro Kilpatrick** then shared on the role of finance technology and capacity building for climate finance. In particular, he focused on the need to ensure consistency and coordination in financial flows. The Paris Agreement marks a "paradigm shift". A key challenge therefore lies in implementing NDCs at the national level and creating an enabling environment with resources that are channelled appropriately and effectively. In fact, we have committed to raising US\$100 billion per year as part of the Copenhagen Accord. This implies the need for collective and catalytic efforts in resource mobilisation across both public and private sectors. He concluded with emphasising that climate finance should be viewed as part of development finance, as well as the importance of instituting the right policies to create a conducive environment, incentivising behavioural change.

### ***Key Takeaways***

1. Climate action should not be viewed within a vacuum. In fact, it is an integral part of sustainable development.
2. Climate action requires collective action at the international, regional and local level to meet the ambition of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. In this sense, it is crucial that policies are coordinated and designed to create an environment that enables catalytic partnerships.

### **Key Takeaways from Day Two:**

1. Localisation requires adopting innovative tools, approaches, and partnerships to empower communities to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. In fact, many communities are already taking action in devising sustainable approaches to balance their economic, social, and environmental needs. National governments must design policies to provide an enabling and conducive environment for such innovations to flourish.
2. Translating the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to the local level goes beyond a technical exercise. Rather, it involves ensuring policy integration and coherence with national development goals.
3. Development policies should be viewed holistically, and not seen as separate from policies related to climate action or climate financing for instance, and must be coordinated at local, regional, and international levels.

## Day Three: From Fossil to Renewable energy – Managing the Transition

### Background



Figure 22: A coal-fired power plant (left) and a wind farm (right) in Eschweiler

Eschweiler and its surrounding areas have been dependent on their natural resources for the past few decades. In particular, for many years, Eschweiler has relied on coal production supplying the local Weisweiler power plant. As per the current plans, this power plant will be closed in 13 years. The city has thus put in place a plan on how it can accommodate this change.

**Mayor Rudi Bertram**, who has been in office since 1999, welcomed participants at Eschweiler's city hall.



Figure 23: Mayor Rudi Bertram welcoming participants to Eschweiler

He began with mentioning that these are “very interesting times”, as the city is in a process of managing a balance of coming together and creating a new future for itself.

Eschweiler has been powered by coal since 1955. However, this is set to end by 2030. Already, much thought has been put into the process of re-engineering Eschweiler's economy to ease this transition. Some of these plans include creating new jobs, allowing for sustainable economic progress, taking ecological considerations into account, and ultimately, a sustainable way of life. Mayor Bertram mentioned the importance of not only thinking about the

politics of such a transformation but also the responsibility to bring the citizens along in the process.

These developments have polarised the local community, as opinions diverge on the right course of action to take, in the context of managing the *Energiewende* or energy transition, which Germany is undergoing.

In the Mayor's words, this excursion was intended to show participants the past, present, and future of the city, alongside a detailed explanation of the process that the city has experienced. It is also important for the community to feel a part of the change and see it as an opportunity. Furthermore, the Mayor expressed his hope that participants will capitalise on the ideas behind this process and find the learning from this excursion useful in their own contexts.



Figure 24: Participants at the Eschweiler City Hall

## The Excursion

City officials took the participants to six stops throughout the day where they learned more about how Eschweiler has made space for new refugee accommodation and developed a formerly deprived neighbourhood—as part of the State's “social city” initiative. City officials also explained how wider repercussions of the energy transition are managed.



Figure 25: City officials leading participants on a tour of Eschweiler

Providing decent housing for new Eschweiler residents has been made a priority. Eschweiler has a history of receiving refugee populations and has greatly improved its capacity to do so over the years. Rather than putting new communities into a “corner” of the city, Eschweiler works to integrate the new residents into their neighbourhoods and the city’s community activities such as *Karneval*. True community sustainability comes from a cohesive network of residents that are able to take part in all the community can offer.

Eschweiler Ost, the social city, also showed us the importance of community integration. In this neighbourhood’s revival, it was important that residents not only had a say in the changes being made but also could stay in the community after the transformation.

The mining transformation, the main reason for the visit, was extensively addressed. Participants took a drive through the nice green spaces that had previously been open-cast mines but are now re-filled. They wandered around the edge of what is considered a “small mine”, producing 20 million tonnes of brown coal per year. This mine, along with others in the area, provides a majority of the energy needed for the area, servicing up to 8 million residents, along with businesses and industries, per year.



Figure 26: Participants overlooking a former mining area

While the coal economy has laid the foundation for this area, it has not come without its challenges. Many villages have been uprooted in the process of extracting natural resources. As a result, residents also recognised the importance of paying tribute to this complicated past. For that reason, one of our last stops was to visit the Memorial Chapel, placed in what seems like a park where a displaced town’s church had been decades ago. The Memorial Chapel reminds local residents of and shows visitors the grave impact that such land use can have on communities. Given its picturesque setting, one cannot imagine the extractive history that the area has experienced, as the large hole created from open-cast mines has been filled and the area now comprises agricultural fields, meadows, and forest.



Figure 27: Memorial Chapel in Eschweiler



It is important to note exactly how mining has provided thousands of jobs that are now gradually disappearing until 2030. For years, the city has been thinking about what the response should be and advertising its strategic location as a way to persuade innovative and new businesses to come into the area, while developing it into a recreational area through a landscape with lakes, among others.

For this reason, a “business park”, surrounded by green space, was installed. Already providing over 1,000 jobs from 30 businesses, they are hoping to expand this potential for future employment.

In figuring out what to do with the remnants of the city’s open-cast mines, the city has planned a number of solutions, including the construction of two lakes that will be surrounded by agricultural land and green space. One lake, the Blausteinsee, already exists and demonstrates the potential for what is to come. Along with these new recreation sites, the city intends to construct hotels, vacation homes, and restaurants to make Eschweiler a tourist destination.

Overall, participants seemed to take a lot away from this trip, as it showed that SDGs need to be implemented at the local level first and foremost, and gained some insights into the processes and tensions involved in implementing changes at the local level. The visit to Eschweiler also showed how difficult it is to reach political compromises, when the trade-offs of environmental, social, and economic policy choices are so vast. While some of the policy decisions affecting Eschweiler are made at state and federal levels, the municipality needs to take concrete decisions within the boundaries imposed on it. There is no right or wrong response, what matters is brokering spaces to foster a dialogue where all parties can voice their concerns and eventually agree on a compromise.

One participant mentioned that his main takeaway was how much love the people have for their city and noted the strong sense of belonging of the people encountered. The attachment to the city and its future was evident in the ways in which city officials introduced the different stops during the excursion and the great interest they showed with regards to the long-term plans for the city.

### **Key Takeaways from Day Three:**

1. Sustainable development is not just about being “green”. Rather, it is multi-dimensional and involves politics, economics, social systems, and is ultimately about bringing together different stakeholders, ensuring sound governance systems, and fostering social cohesion at the local level.
2. Sustainable development also calls for comprehensive and long-term planning. However, this is a complex process, requiring striking a delicate balance between the interests of different sectors. Open and transparent communication and consultation are therefore important in allowing individuals to voice their concerns and to feel that they are taken into consideration.
3. The SDGs are applicable at any scale, and local engagement in integrated decision-making is key for long-term behavioural changes.

## Day Four

### Transferring Knowledge

Excursion debrief by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

Dr. Simona Costanzo Sow led participants in a group exercise to reflect on their three key takeaways from Day Three's excursion.



Figure 28: Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development) leading participants in an exercise to reflect on their three key takeaways from the excursion to Eschweiler

Several participants were impressed with the long-term planning and forward-looking vision presented by the city of Eschweiler to transform its economy, society, and environment into one that is sustainable and liveable. They observed that this requires “strong commitment, willingness to take risks, and strong leadership”. More importantly, they noted that there needs to be strong political will behind such a long-term plan because the impact will only be felt by future generations. They also observed that openness and accountability to residents was necessary, and felt that overall, the process behind the formulation of this plan seemed very participatory.

Participants also shared that it was good that the social aspects and considerations behind Eschweiler's transition were taken into account. In particular, it was interesting how the city thought to integrate refugees or new migrants into the fabric of its society as well as plans to create new jobs for displaced workers. In addition, some participants brought up how the city approached the issue of resettling part of its population as a result of plans to restructure its industry.



**Figure 29: Participants sharing their takeaways and reflections on the excursion to Eschweiler**

There were also some reservations. For instance, some participants questioned whether plans for the city were environmentally sustainable. While they acknowledged that the creation of lakes from large holes created by past mining activities was a creative solution for these unused spaces, they felt that the ecological impacts of doing so should be considered more strongly. Such large lakes and other changes in the landscape can have implications on biodiversity and wildlife. They discussed that there is no perfect solution. The process of formulating any solution requires recognising both positive and negative multi-sectoral impacts. Participants also felt that it would have been useful to hear more voices and opinions from the community of Eschweiler itself as well as from the environmental activists campaigning for an accelerated closure of the mines, especially regarding how the various plans and changes will impact how residents identify themselves and the city.

Dr. Costanzo Sow added that the reason for selecting Eschweiler was to illustrate the various tensions involved in the process of achieving sustainable development in fairly extreme circumstances. One takeaway is that the outcome of such plans is “a political choice”. While the city of Eschweiler is one concrete example, the solution it has found is certainly not the only possible one. Rather, she encouraged participants to consider how the lessons learned from the excursion could be moderated and applied in their own contexts.

She felt that this also showed how working towards sustainable development requires a holistic and integrated approach. It is thus critical that relevant stakeholders from different sectors have a “stake in the political process”. She emphasised that one must “ensure that all groups involved are at the table” to contribute their knowledge and experiences, and voice their concerns to arrive at a nuanced solution based on compromise. This requires moderating and managing a political process, which requires skills in facilitation and brokering relationships between different partners with very different interests. Policy choices are based on political compromises; they cannot be solely informed through technical approaches. She reflected that this also requires the UN to reconsider its role in providing policy advice to governments.

## Launch of UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative

Following the de-brief on the excursion, the Share Fair was opened with the launch of the UNSSC-Simpleshow Initiative.



Figure 30: Patrick van Weerelt (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development) and Susanne Illemann (Simpleshow Foundation) at the launch of the UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative

### **Speech by Patrick van Weerelt (Head of Office, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)**

Mr. Patrick van Weerelt announced the launch of the UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative. The UNSSC-Simpleshow Volunteer Initiative is one of the many collaborations between the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development and the Simpleshow Foundation. Implementing a global vision like the 2030 Agenda requires translating this into local action, as discussed during this year's Summer Academy. Mr. van Weerelt noted that this initiative is an important effort in this area because "stakeholder engagement is key to fostering ownership at the local level". The initiative will provide a "guided framework" for people to create "simple and entertaining videos" to explain the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. This gives them an opportunity to contribute to UN efforts to address some of the world's biggest challenges. In this sense, this initiative is also crucial in not only raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda, but also in moving "people to action".

### **Speech by Susanne Illemann, Head of International Marketing, Simpleshow Foundation**

Ms. Susanne Illemann, Head of International Marketing for the Simpleshow Foundation added that the Volunteer Initiative is important in promoting knowledge around the 2030 Agenda because of its potential to bring this "awareness and participation to a new level". This initiative will make it easy for volunteers with different backgrounds and experiences to contribute towards achieving sustainable development under the 2030 Agenda. She stressed that "simplicity is the key to accessibility... a precondition to raise interest and involvement". In this sense, it is hoped that this initiative will motivate "many hands" to "push sustainable development forward".



Figure 31: Anke Rasper (Deutsche Welle) hosting the Share Fair

About 30 organisations came together to present on their work and role in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Anke Rasper, Senior Editor with Deutsche Welle, introduced the organisations to participants.

This year's Share Fair featured a wide range of organisations including grassroots and social cooperatives to UN entities and national and local government agencies. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the various initiatives of these organisations, including innovative digital tools to raise awareness, efforts to build knowledge, advocate and mobilise action, and efforts to support local governments in the co-development of solutions.

### Innovative digital tools to raise awareness

[Wertewandel](#), a local platform based in Bonn, promotes the purchase of sustainable products and brands both online and offline. Wertewandel also offers a smartphone app that informs consumers and aims to make sustainable consumption "more attractive and more doable for many people".

The [Bonn Sustainability Portal](#) is also another online and offline platform, facilitating networks among Bonn-based organisations to spread the word on sustainable projects and initiatives. Beyond platforms and apps, organisations also presented tools to raise awareness and promote participation including the [German Development Institute \(DIE\)](#), which presented their online toolbox to promote climate action and visualise the impacts of climate change in an accessible way. [UN-SPIDER](#) (Space based information on Disaster Management and Emergency Response) shared how they have developed open-source tools for local and national governments to raise awareness, build capacities, and strengthen institutions in disaster risk reduction. While the [United Nations Volunteer \(UNV\) Programme](#) shared on their online volunteer platform to empower people to contribute all over the world.

## Knowledge building to advocate and mobilise action

Several organisations also shared on their efforts to build knowledge around key issues such as climate change, peace, and clean energy. The [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\) Secretariat](#) shared on their activities to generate interest in climate action, including their current efforts leading up to the COP 23. The [Institute for Economics and Peace](#) shared their Positive Peace Framework, developed from research to measure peace and its other benefits, which go beyond just the absence of violence. While the [Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation \(CREEC\)](#) shared on efforts to enhance access to modern types of energy, for example in clean cooking, in East Africa through applied research, training, testing and consulting.



Figure 32: Mary Suzan Abbo from CREEC

While some organisations shared how they leverage on networks and exchanges, and employ new approaches to connect with people. For instance, [Bonnections](#) is a local grassroots initiative that brings new and old Bonners, including refugees, through various events like intercultural readings, among others. They shared on their new event series to spread the word about the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. [Impact 2030](#) also shared on how they raise awareness on sustainable development in the private sector, mobilising business to take action and adopt the SDGs. The [United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe \(UNRIC\)](#) shared how they engage and connect with people through various outreach activities to raise awareness on the SDGs, among others. While through [Netzwerk Weitblick](#), a network for journalists, young journalists are equipped with knowledge on sustainability and the SDGs. In addition, Heike Janssen and Robert Hoernig, also shared on how they seek to touch and move people to act on a complex topic such as sustainable development through photojournalism. [Munqu FM](#) also shared on how they hope to raise awareness on the SDGs through local radio.



Figure 33: Shahdi Fouad Khawandanah from Special Direction Business Consultancy House

[UN Women National Committee Germany](#) shared on how they raise awareness of sustainable development and advocate for women's empowerment through their networks and public awareness initiatives.

[Direction](#), the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of Special Direction – Business Consultancy House in Saudi Arabia also spoke on their efforts to empower youth especially in their knowledge of sustainable development and best practices through cultural exchange. They shared how they focus on both young men and women who are “leading the change from Saudi Arabia”.

The [Erasmus Sustainability Hub](#), a student initiative, shared how they work with students in their awareness campaign on sustainable development. The initiative provides a space for students to exercise creativity and add value to education institutions and beyond. While the [UN](#)

[Country Team in Haiti](#) shared their efforts in reaching out to teenagers in Haiti on sustainable development and the SDGs through different tools like comics, social media, and music. In terms of advocating the SDGs to the wider public, the [UN Resident Coordinator's Office \(RCO\) in Mozambique](#) also shared on their efforts to create dissemination channels to distribute information, build awareness and engage the local community on sustainable development.

### Supporting local governments through co-development of solutions



Figure 34: Günter Meinert from GIZ

Organisations also shared their initiatives to co-develop sustainable development projects with local governments. For instance, the [Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit \(GIZ\)](#) shared on their partnerships with local agencies to support SDG implementation in terms of decentralisation and urban development through a multi-level approach.

While the [UNESCO-UNEVOC](#) International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) shared on their programmes to assist member states in building capacities, and developing and sharing knowledge on TVET issues especially as countries transition to green economies and societies. [International Organization for Migration \(IOM\) in Bangladesh](#) also shared on how they work with different ministries on various projects including water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities and the provision of basic services.



Figure 35: Kenneth Barrientos from UNESCO-UNEVOC

[ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability](#) also shared on their efforts to build capacities for local governments to lead changes, especially in terms of developing more sustainable cities.

While the [City of Bonn](#) shared on their initiatives to cultivate global networks and partnerships with other cities through hands-on projects that directly benefit the communities in these partner cities. In addition, the [Chengdu Municipal Development and Reform Commission](#), in one of Bonn's partner cities, shared on their efforts to engage with the local government and community to promote sustainable development.



Figure 36: Participants networking during the Share Fair

Participants then attended two rounds of AppLabs. In addition to AppLabs on communication and advocacy tools as well as change management (see [Day Two](#)), Day Four's AppLabs also gave participants the opportunity to engage with topics ranging from how to maximise opportunities and measure impact as part of efforts to localise the 2030 Agenda, to the role of volunteerism, and thematic areas such as positive peace and sustainable cities.

### Localising the 2030 Agenda: Maximising opportunities and measuring impact

#### **Saudi Vision 2030**

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, a bold and ambitious blueprint outlining Saudi Arabia's transition to a sustainable and improved country. The Vision is structured according to three pillars namely, "thriving economy", "vibrant society", and "an ambitious nation". Led by a delegation from Direction, participants engaged in a discussion on the challenges and opportunities that Saudi Arabia faces in transitioning towards a more sustainable future that is less dependent on oil, driven by e-government, and maximises employment opportunities for young people, especially women, through its Vision 2030.



Figure 37: Delegation from Direction leading their AppLab on “Saudi Vision 2030”



## Rolling Out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ethiopia

Kiros Hintsu from the UN RCO Office in Ethiopia shared on the joint action plan to facilitate the roll-out of the SDGs in Ethiopia by the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the UN Country Team (UNCT).

The plan aims at guiding and supporting the Group of Experts (GoE), UN system agencies, civil society, private sector, academia, and all other development partners.

Activities under the plan include sensitisation and awareness raising, preparation of a baseline SDG Report, and undertaking SDGs financing needs assessment and strategic studies.



Figure 38: Kiros Hintsu from the UN RCO Office in Ethiopia leading the AppLab on “Rolling Out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ethiopia

## How to Measure the Results and Impact of the SDGs at Local Level

Edgar Adolfo Pacheco Teran from the Autonomous Municipal Government of La Paz shared on the challenges faced by local governments from Latin American cities in measuring the impact of SDGs. Participants discussed how the Bolivian government aligned municipal-level goals to the SDGs and the challenges in setting indicators, collecting municipal-level data, and measuring progress. For instance, the Municipality of La Paz developed six axes of development as part of aligning its municipal planning and programming with the SDGs. These included sustainable practices; protection, safety, and resilience; a dynamic and ordered life; a happy, intercultural and inclusive society; an entrepreneurial, innovative, and prosperous society; and autonomous, participatory, and co-responsible citizens. Overall, participants agreed on the importance of political will and commitment in translating the SDGs within local contexts. Further, in the area of measuring progress, it is also necessary to go beyond quantitative measurements and consider the qualitative aspects of development interventions.

## Can Cooperation Management Serve as a Theory of Change to Operationalise the SDGs in a City Context?

Professor Günter Meinert shared on GIZ's approaches in measuring sustainable development initiatives to drive change in the context of the city. Based on a Theory of Change, GIZ uses a results framework to determine which activities are needed to change the status quo. Participants also discussed the importance of generating commitment from stakeholders in order to change behaviour, as well as the need to build on existing dynamics and capabilities using a staggered approach to effect transformational change and results.

## Volunteerism

### How to Get Support from UN Online Volunteers for your SDG-Related Projects

Annika Diederich from the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme shared on UNV's Online Volunteering platform and how to mobilise the untapped potential of online volunteerism—allowing for different organisations and volunteers to connect with each other from across the

globe. Online volunteering allows people to contribute to solving global challenges anywhere in the world, using technology like smartphones, tablets or computers. This makes online volunteering fast, easy, and effective.

### **Corporate Volunteering in the Context of Sustainable Development**

Alexandra van der Ploeg from SAP SE led an AppLab on SAP's corporate volunteering programme, especially in connection with the SDGs. SAP's corporate volunteering programme has shifted from a traditional beneficiary approach towards skills development and pro-bono volunteering that enables non-profit organisations (NPOs). In particular, there is more emphasis on creating a "two-way street"—where both volunteers from SAP and partner organisations contribute and build on their respective strengths and expertise, which is a key feature of SAP's business case for corporate volunteering. Ms. van der Ploeg explained that SAP's corporate volunteering programme is also positioned as a skills and leadership programme, and matches motivated employees with NPOs so that SAP employees can help these organisations "scale their impact". Within the context of sustainable development, SAP's corporate volunteering programme focuses on creating access to the digital economy for young people (primarily SDGs 4 and 8).

Participants then raised questions on how the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs have been received within the business community. Ms. van der Ploeg noted that both the Agenda and the SDGs have been useful in moving towards a general understanding of sustainable development across different sectors and stakeholders. The SDGs have also provided a structured framework that can catalyse and accelerate progress of projects concerning sustainable development. For SAP, there are regular conversations between different employees from different departments and backgrounds on what the SDGs mean for SAP's business.

### Thematic areas

#### **Positive Peace – Factors that Create and Sustain Peaceful Societies**



Figure 39: Dr. David Hammond during his AppLab on Positive Peace

David Hammond from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) introduced the concept of Positive Peace and IEP's Positive Peace Framework—a conceptual and measurement framework, capturing the multi-dimensional "attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies". Participants then engaged in an interactive exercise to operationalise the framework by translating national-level issues into concrete actions that can strengthen peace-enhancing attitudes, institutions and structures, at the national, sub-national or community level. Participants also discussed the need to spread awareness and understanding of the concept of Positive Peace, and the importance of social networks.

## City to City Learning

Michael Woodbridge from ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability shared on the role of ICLEI in facilitating peer-to-peer cooperation and exchange, and the signing of commitments between local and regional governments around the world to promote sustainable cities. Participants also learned about some of the modalities and methods that ICLEI employs. They then discussed challenges and successes using a case study approach focusing on five groups namely, the private sector, national government, local government, civil society, and supporting organisations (i.e. academia and media).

## Design of Green and Healthy Buildings in Asia

Asia is the most densely populated continent on the planet and the world's greatest emitter of greenhouse gases (GHGs). One of the ways to reduce carbon emissions is to do so in the building sector, particularly by transforming the way buildings are designed, built, and operated. Led by Henry Tsang, Green Architect and Assistant Professor at Keimyung University Department of Architectural Engineering, participants engaged in a discussion on the problems and solutions in the development of green and healthy buildings in Asia especially in China, South Korea, and Japan.



Figure 40: Henry Tsang leading a discussion during his AppLab on “Design of Green and Healthy Buildings in Asia”

In fact, many buildings employed “green practices” in the past. For instance, traditional Chinese architecture is characterised by a “doughnut” shape, which facilitates natural air circulation and ventilation by integrating courtyards or sky wells in building designs. However, today’s building practices tend to ignore connections between climate and the environment, sacrificing climate and environmental protection for comfort using energy-intensive methods. One way to help reduce negative impacts on the climate and environment by the building industry is therefore through the strengthening of frameworks and networks between green building councils to set common goals, increase awareness, and exchange knowledge.

Certifications such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification can also help set standards. LEED looks at five main areas to determine if a building is “green” namely, site planning; water management; energy commissioning; use of materials; and quality of indoor environment.

Some concrete solutions were then also discussed including vertical gardens, green roofs, and other innovative solutions for logistics and transportation. Overall, to promote green and sustainable design of buildings, governments should incentivise green construction practices by integrating green building standards into construction law and building codes.

### **Key Takeaways from Day Four:**

1. Achieving transformational change through sustainable development at the local level is more than just a technical exercise of transferring best practices to local contexts. In fact, it is a nuanced and highly political process where different, and often, competing interests need to be carefully managed and moderated.
2. We need to engage and mobilise people in advocating for sustainable development. To do so, we must make our message accessible and build a deeper, more egalitarian connection with people.
3. Localisation requires thinking carefully about how to leverage on existing dynamics to maximise opportunities and drive change. This also implies the need to develop appropriate measurement and results frameworks to determine impact.

## Day Five

### Catalysing Systemic Change: The concept of Positive Peace

Presentation by David Hammond (Institute for Economics and Peace)



Figure 41: David Hammond (IEP) presenting on Positive Peace

Dr. David Hammond, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Economics and Peace, shared on the concept of Positive Peace and how the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) works to raise awareness of Positive Peace, reinforcing a common language in discourses on peace.

He shared that the idea of Positive Peace is more than just the absence of violence. Rather, it examines how peace can be sustained through institutions, attitudes, and governance and societal structures. This implies looking into the root causes of peace as opposed to the causes of conflict. He emphasised that peace and development are correlated in many ways, and that this aspect was not sufficiently considered by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

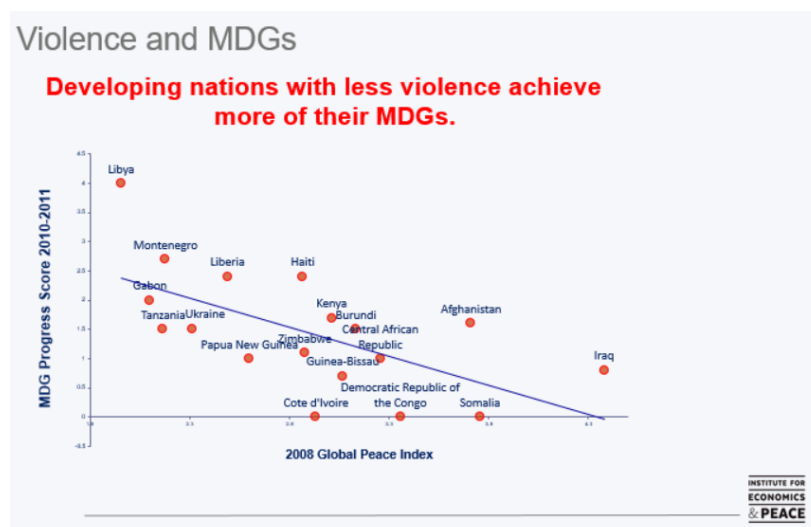
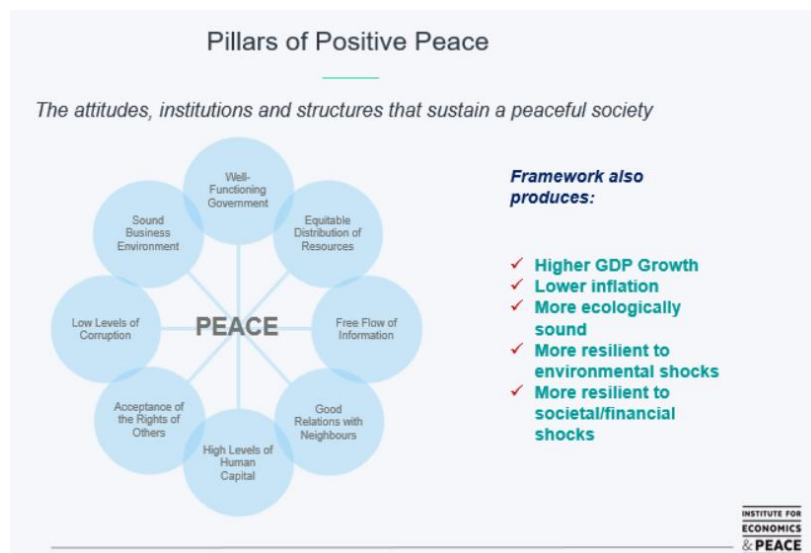


Figure 42: Correlation between peace and development from “Catalysing Systemic Change: The concept of Positive Peace”, presentation by David Hammond (Institute for Economics and Peace)

He added that IEP measures Positive Peace via a Positive Peace Index, based on a framework comprising the eight pillars of well-functioning government, good relationships with neighbours, low levels of corruption, acceptance of the rights of others, high level of human capital, sound business environment, free flow of information, and equitable distribution of resources.

All of these pillars are “self-reinforcing”, meaning that it is necessary to meet all eight pillars in order to sustain a peaceful and more resilient society with a stable society, economy, and environment.



**Figure 43: The eight pillars of Positive Peace from “Catalysing Systemic Change: The concept of Positive Peace”, presentation by David Hammond (Institute for Economics and Peace)**

He therefore established a clear connection between a more holistic approach to sustainable development as per the 5P’s of the 2030 Agenda and the Positive Peace Index. He cautioned against pursuing only one or some pillars under Positive Peace, which could produce "structural inefficiencies" and "unintended consequences". This integrated approach to Positive Peace therefore closely parallels how we need to approach the SDGs, which should also be seen as interlinked and cannot be pursued individually.

One of the key areas of IEP's work includes measuring Positive Peace and focusing on how data can be used to best inform policy decisions and manage risks. He shared that the Positive Peace Index is helpful in identifying "structural fragility" and countries that are at risk. In this way, the Positive Peace Index also provides a simple explanation and narrative of this complex relationship between peace and development, which can then be communicated easily to policy-makers, and many others.

IEP also organises Positive Peace Workshops in several countries, especially with youth between the ages of 20 and 25, to spread awareness. Beyond promoting systemic peace, these workshops also aim to standardise discourses around the concept of peace. Using the eight pillars of the Positive Peace Framework as a basis, these workshops help develop a common language and understanding. This is important in facilitating coherent outcomes of development projects in different countries and contexts.

**Key takeaways**

1. Peace is intertwined with development and has implications for the resilience and stability of societies, economies, and the environment.
2. In close correlation with the integrated approach to sustainable development, as per the 5P’s of the 2030 Agenda, Positive Peace also calls for an integrated approach where all eight pillars must be pursued in a holistic way.

3. Positive Peace is a "powerful communication tool", allowing people to talk about peace in a tangible way.

### Catalysing Local Sustainability: Lessons learnt

Panel discussion with Jessica Baier (Engagement Global), Verena Schwarte (City of Bonn), and Mary Suzan Abbo (CREEC)

Moderated by Ugo Caruso (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)



Figure 44: (From right to left) Ugo Caruso (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development), Jessica Baier (Engagement Global), Verena Schwarte (City of Bonn), and Mary Suzan Abbo (CREEC)

**Ms. Jessica Baier**, Head of Department at Engagement Global, shared on Engagement Global's work with municipal partners to promote sustainable development and to localise the 2030 Agenda. She shared that Engagement Global uses a multi-stakeholder approach to strengthen capacities at the local level for government partners, civil society, academia, and others. Engagement Global also coordinates efforts within two policy fields—municipal development policies, which have their origins in the MDGs; and sustainability policies—based on the Local Agenda 21. The 2030 Agenda is therefore an opportunity to integrate these policy fields and to encourage governments to catalyse action in both fields at the local level. Further, Engagement Global also encourages local governments to perceive their policies and plans within the wider global context, integrating local, municipal-level strategies with national and international ones.

Engagement Global also brokers knowledge sharing and supports governments to localise the 2030 Agenda through their activities including raising awareness, networking, and providing consulting services in various areas such as sustainability strategies, and monitoring and evaluation, among others. One of the tools that Engagement Global has developed to encourage local governments to adopt the 2030 Agenda is the Municipal Declaration of German Cities Association for the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). To date, 57 German municipalities have signed this declaration, expressing their commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs. She felt that it is an important instrument to generate political commitment and awareness, motivating governments to take action.

In summary, garnering and recognising strong commitment among municipalities was key in getting them on-board to implement the 2030 Agenda. To gain buy-in, it was also important to

distil the complex message of the 2030 Agenda and explain the impacts of the Agenda to respective municipalities and their people, as well as how the Agenda aligns to priority areas in local government policies. However, localisation cannot be driven by policy-makers alone. Multi-stakeholder and broad citizen engagement, facilitated by local champions, is also needed.

**Ms. Verena Schwarte** from the Department of International Affairs and Global Sustainability in the City of Bonn then shared on how Bonn facilitates city-to-city learning through municipal partnerships. While these partnerships focused largely on cultural exchange in the past, the nature of cooperation has now shifted towards addressing pressing issues affecting the liveability of cities such as access to water, electricity, and others.

In this respect, the City of Bonn adopts a Framework for Municipal Partnerships, which involves working closely with individual city councils and engaging civil society organisations. She shared that the goal of such partnerships is not only to provide technical support to municipalities but to also strengthen global networks to equally address global dimensions of sustainable development. Some examples of Bonn's projects include the setting up of an early warning system in La Paz, addressing waste management in Cape Coast and La Paz, and approaches to sustainable tourism in Bukhara, among others.

Overall, Verena Schwarte shared that one of her main takeaways from these projects was the importance of adopting a tailored and contextual approach. This means taking into account the unique issues faced by partners, legislative environment, and available resources. These factors have implications on the replicability of different solutions, and on the sustainability of these collaborations. She also emphasised "getting to know each other", and taking small and incremental steps to gauge a partner's capacity to implement a project. She advised participants to remain patient because change is often gradual and rarely happens as a sudden, big "bang".

**Ms. Mary Suzan Abbo**, Managing Director of the Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (CREEC), shared on how the CREEC works closely with local actors to co-develop projects, especially in enhancing accessibility to modern energy in East Africa, to drive transformational change.

She shared CREEC's strategic approach, which involves firstly, assessing demand, followed by an assessment of the type of fuel and technology available, the application or mode of energy required, and the "human factor"—for instance, awareness or buy-in among users. Once these are ascertained, assessments are made on the technical, social, economic, and environmental feasibility of solutions before deciding on upscaling a solution. She highlighted that the "human factor" was in fact, the most important barrier.



## Approach

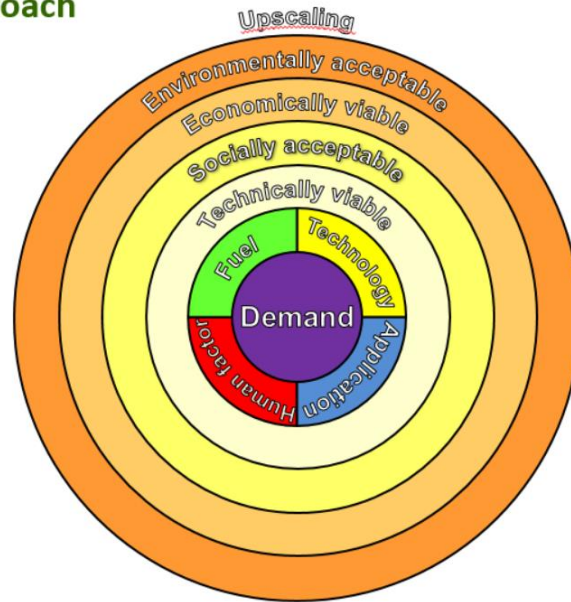


Figure 45: CREEC's strategic approach in implementing solutions for modern energy in East Africa from "Holistic approaches to lasting change: Managing transformation from the bottom up", presentation by Mary Suzan Abbo (CREEC)

Previously, CREEC focused on highly technical research and development of new technology. However, they found that many communities struggled to accept these new solutions. For example, one of CREEC's projects on cook-stoves, powered by biogas, required the input of faecal matter to produce energy for cooking. As such, it was necessary to invest in educating and spreading awareness of the benefits of this solution, while assuring communities that this was safe and hygienic.

This experience also demonstrated that it is not enough to rely solely on the development of technical solutions. She shared that working with a team of people from different backgrounds and expertise, such as economists and psychologists, in addition to engineers, was much more beneficial in ensuring the success of a project.

### **Key takeaways**

1. Political will and commitment are essential in driving localisation efforts at the municipal level.
2. Local development is contextual and must be tailored to concrete needs and opportunities. Local actors and policy-makers need to be systematically engaged in order to bring diverse perspectives together at the various stages of planning, implementation and monitoring.
3. Sustainable development requires changes in mind-sets and behaviour. It is therefore important to be patient, and take an incremental approach that is sensitive to local contexts and realities.

## Partners for Review: A transnational multi-stakeholder network for a robust review process

Presentation by Cormac Ebken (BMZ) and Thomas Wollnik (GIZ)

Moderated by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)



Figure 46: (From left to right) Cormac Ebken (BMZ), Thomas Wollnik (GIZ), and Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)

**Mr. Cormac Ebken**, Deputy Head 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the Federal Ministry for Economic cooperation and Development (BMZ), and **Mr. Thomas Wollnik**, Head of Programme P4R at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), presented on Partners for Review (P4)—a joint initiative promoted by the Federal Ministries for Cooperation (BMZ) and Environment (BMUB), which is implemented by GIZ to strengthen national SDG review processes. In particular, the initiative strengthens stakeholder engagement, exchanges, and peer learning to better equip national governments to report on progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

P4R's approach is driven by four focus areas:

Firstly, P4R adopts a whole-of-government approach, especially in involving parliamentarians in addition to different ministries. Mr. Ebken stressed the importance of working with State Chancelleries in particular, which are crucial in getting the line ministries on board.

Secondly, P4R focuses on stakeholder involvement. To ensure adequate representation of stakeholders, P4R works to institutionalise participation from all relevant sectors of civil society. In addition, they also facilitate and strengthen networks to ensure that civil society is organised efficiently.

Thirdly, P4R focuses on strengthening data and reporting architectures, especially in filling data gaps (like holes in "swiss cheese") to create a more comprehensive picture. This requires resourcefulness in compiling data from various sources, not just from official ones. They stressed

the importance of "shadow reporting", which draws on qualitative and quantitative data from the private sector and civil society in this respect.

Fourthly, P4R also focuses on the integration between global, regional, national and local review mechanisms. Within the context of Germany, coherence between local, national and regional policies at the European Union Level is crucial. A continuous follow-up and review mechanism between global, regional, national, and local levels therefore ensures that the 2030 Agenda is indeed reaching people on the ground.

Overall, P4R adds value to this review process by carving out creative and safe spaces for frank discussions and exchanges on challenges faced by different agencies. P4R also promotes new formats and ways of working to encourage different agencies and stakeholders to innovate their approaches and responses to the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda.

Some participants highlighted the risk of politicisation in the reporting of indicators. Mr. Wollnik emphasised that indicators themselves are political in nature because they translate national priorities. However, what must be avoided is the "cherry-picking" of indicators where certain indicators are selected only out of convenience.

In response to a question on how differences in capacities to report on the SDGs between countries could be mitigated, both speakers shared that P4R works closely with different countries to exchange review practices and tools. However, they cautioned against instituting an enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance as this may result in backlash. As such, efforts to support countries in their reporting process would need to be carefully moderated.

### Key Takeaways

1. The creation of networks has to be demand-driven in order to ensure that these networks are effective and can be sustained.
2. Safe spaces are important to de-politicise the dialogue—especially regarding sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.
3. Garnering buy-in is essential to facilitate the reporting process—both from the bottom-up through civil society engagement but also from the top-down, where the process also needs to be endorsed by high-level agencies.
4. Review processes themselves can enhance quality of implementation as they deepen trust among diverse stakeholders, provide a space for learning and can lead to new connections and initiatives, fostering new approaches to implementation.



Figure 47: The Data for Review Challenge: From Swiss Cheese to Data Cube from “Partners for Review: A Transnational Multi-Stakeholder Network for a Robust Review Process”, presentation by Cormac Ebken (BMZ) and Thomas Wollnik (GIZ)

## Walk the Talk: Action Planning and Next Steps

by Simona Costanzo Sow (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)



UNSSC, UN Summer Academy, 21-25 August 2017, Bonn

Dr. Simona Costanzo Sow then encouraged participants to reflect on the discussions that had taken place over the week and asked them to decide on some concrete next steps that they could take—as an individual or in the context of their organisations and entities.

Some participants mentioned that they are now even more motivated to dive deeper into the 2030 Agenda and its different dimensions.

Participants also said that they were now better equipped with a framework to implement the SDGs in their workplace. Others also noted how they would take action and continue contributing back to their own communities through existing and new initiatives. Participants noted concrete commitments on a piece of paper with an image of a footprint in order to be reminded of the concrete changes they must implement at their level.

Figure 48: Walking the Talk



Figure 49: Participants penning down their commitments to “walk the talk”

## An Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development

Keynote address by Patricia Espinosa, Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary, UN Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC)



**Figure 50: Patricia Espinosa (Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the UN Climate Change Secretariat) and Patrick van Weerelt (UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development)**

Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the UN Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC), gave the keynote address.

She thanked the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development for inviting her to speak at the Summer Academy. She also thanked participants for addressing the issues and challenges related to the 2030 Agenda, which have demonstrated how multilateralism is now even more relevant "for communities and individuals".

Ms. Espinosa stated that although today's development challenges are becoming increasingly dire and more complex, we are better equipped to address them. For instance, the world community has come together on a number of agreements, frameworks, and instruments including the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These have shown "unprecedented consensus on the path forward", within such a short span of time.

This path, she added, "implies a deep transformation of societies, of how we grow and develop". In this respect, climate change action forms a core aspect of this transformation, requiring us to act now. She stressed that climate change action is integral to sustainable development and is interlinked with all 17 SDGs.

With this in mind, we need "action by all" to implement the change required by the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. Ms. Espinosa pointed out that countries must ensure alignment between global agreements and their policies and programmes. Beyond national governments, regional and municipal governments must also implement policies addressing climate change and sustainable development. Bonn, "with its electric buses and incentives for renewable energy", is one example of a city that is already putting in place climate change policies because it recognises how its residents can benefit from them.

Ms. Espinosa also pointed out that for the first time, non-State actors are also leading this transformation. In fact, the private sector is already a keen supporter of multilateral agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. For instance, businesses have moved towards more sustainable investments such as energy efficient buildings, corporate green bonds, and many others. People are also taking the initiative to lead more sustainable lifestyles. In this way, we can all take individual steps to make a difference.

Ms. Espinosa encouraged participants to build on the understanding and tools acquired during the Summer Academy to become strong advocates for sustainable development. This is how we can work towards a "stable, secure future where peace and prosperity flourish and opportunity is open to all."

Read the full address [here](#).

Participants then had the opportunity to raise questions. Several participants asked about mobilisation of resources and action at the local level. In terms of mobilising action at the local level, especially in cities, Ms. Espinosa stated that the groundwork has already been laid by the Paris Agreement and the Marrakesh Partnership in recognising the role of non-party stakeholders, including cities, regions, businesses, civil society, and individuals. In particular, the Paris Agreement has created the space for these stakeholders to play a bigger role as "champions". The UNFCCC will also work closely with ICLEI to organise a summit with mayors, and sub-national governments and regions to discuss the framework of the COP. Overall, Ms. Espinosa noted that conversations on how to bring such stakeholders closer to decision-making processes are already ongoing.

On mobilising resources, Ms. Espinosa shared that the development system's approach to this has shifted from funding towards financing, supported by investments and private funds. She noted that this was necessary in order to meet the immense challenge of raising US\$100 billion, as stated in the Paris Agreement. The private sector and pension fund investments have also evolved to support the need for financing for development, with many incorporating climate risks and making socially responsible investments. She added that financing would need to be "seen through a climate lens" as climate change has far-reaching impacts on infrastructure and societies.

In addition, countries would need to put in place policies to make their markets attractive for further investments. This includes instituting better processes and sharing best practices. Ms. Espinosa shared that the UN would be in the best position to facilitate this transfer of knowledge. However, it must break out of working in silos to come together in a more integrated way. She stressed that development policies and climate policies are not mutually exclusive—these policies must be integrated as they are interlinked and interdependent.



**Figure 51: Patricia Espinosa (Under-Secretary General, and Executive Secretary of the UN Climate Change Secretariat) explaining the UNFCCC's Climate Neutral Programme**

Mr. Patrick van Weerelt, Head of Office at the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development then asked how the UN could "walk the talk" and live up to the vision and goals outlined in the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. Ms. Espinosa gave the example of the UNFCCC's Climate Neutral Now programme, which encourages people and organisations to be as climate neutral as possible. The programme also provides the option to offset emissions with UN certified emissions reductions, where the sale of climate credits generates local income and supports economic growth in poor communities.

### Remarks by Ambassador Ingrid Jung, Ambassador of Germany to the United Nations



Figure 52: Ambassador Ingrid Jung (Ambassador of Germany to the United Nations)

Ambassador Ingrid Jung, Ambassador of Germany to the United Nations, thanked the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable for organising the UN Summer Academy and bid farewell to participants.

Amb. Jung mentioned how the city of Bonn and Germany will be reaching another significant "milestone in the road to sustainable development". For almost a year, the Ministry for the Environment (BMUB), the Ministry of Cooperation (BMZ), and the Federal Foreign Ministry have been working closely with the UNFCCC to organise the COP 23 in Bonn. The COP 23 will also be an important opportunity for Germany and Bonn to showcase initiatives under Germany's national sustainable development strategy.

As the second political centre in Germany, next to Berlin, Bonn is also a city where environmental and sustainable development policy-making takes place. This is why Bonn is an ideal setting to host the Summer Academy. Amb. Jung added that Bonn itself, has been active in localising the 2030 Agenda and pursuing partnerships. Here, UN agencies and other scientific, economic, and international institutions and agencies, all work together towards a common goal of "shaping a sustainable future".

Amb. Jung added that this idea of localising the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional or local level forms the "leitmotif" for many international organisations in Bonn, and challenges all actors to re-think their approach to sustainable development. In fact, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres has also announced his vision to reposition the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, underlining how "sustainable development has to become part of the DNA of UN officials". Amb. Jung noted that the Summer Academy is a "great example" of how the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development is responding to this need, especially by providing a safe space for different actors to come together through a unique format.

Amb. Jung welcomed "the lateral thinking which the Knowledge Centre has demonstrated in reaching out to a wide range of partners [...]. It has continued to identify ways to use the UN Summer Academy as a forum to create new connections across different sectors and strengthen



existing ones such as the alumni of the Diplomatic Academy. This makes the results of the Summer Academy much more sustainable in the real sense of the word."

Since its establishment in Bonn in 2016, the Knowledge Centre has formed many important connections and partnerships. It has also integrated itself into Bonn's *Karneval* scene through the UN Funken. Amb. Jung pointed out that the Knowledge Centre itself has demonstrated a core message of sustainable development—by realising the three pillars through partnership and peace. Amb. Jung commended the work of the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development in spearheading approaches to develop new skills and understanding of complex issues demanded by the 2030 Agenda. She called the Knowledge Centre a "strong partner" to the Federal Government of Germany, and warmly welcomed the "exciting work" that the Centre will continue to deliver. Amb. Jung closed by expressing her hope that participants would apply the knowledge gained here in Bonn, and wished them a safe journey home.

### **Remarks by Patrick van Weerelt, Head of Office, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development**

Mr. Patrick van Weerelt closed the sixth UN Summer Academy and presented participants with a Rubik's Cube to thank them for attending the Summer Academy. He shared that approaching sustainable development is like trying to solve a Rubik's Cube. Most of us would only be able to complete one or two sides of a Rubik's Cube. Similarly, we only have the knowledge and technical expertise to solve one aspect of development issues. This is why partnerships are important to addressing all dimensions of sustainable development together, while keeping true to the rights-based message of "leaving no one behind".

#### **Key Takeaways from Day Five:**

1. Communicating about and advocating for sustainable development is crucial. Based on the understanding of the 5P's and the dimensions of sustainable development, we can convey a common language and understanding of the concept of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.
2. Approaches to sustainable development are contextual and political. The purpose of a global development agenda is not to prescribe development strategies, but to provide guidance for priority setting at all levels.
3. Development strategies need to respect the five dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, promoting a sectoral and cross-sectoral balance among social development, sustained economic growth and the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, in order to achieve multiple benefits across sectors and areas, while fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies through partnerships with all relevant actors.
4. Governments will not achieve the 2030 Agenda alone. The rights-based principle of "Leaving no one behind" must guide efforts to reach a truly sustainable result, through dialogue spaces, which are as inclusive as possible and allow all relevant actors to be truly heard.

## About the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)

The United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) is the primary provider of inter-agency training and learning for staff of the United Nations system. Its overall objective is to promote and support UN inter-agency collaboration, increase the operational effectiveness of the UN system as a whole and provide UN staff with the required skills and competencies to face today's global challenges.

UNSSC conducts a variety of learning and training activities, in Turin, Bonn, and UN Headquarters, as well as at the regional and country levels. All such activities effectively respond to the cross-agency, far-reaching reform agenda of the United Nations.

## About the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

With the support from the Federal Government of Germany, the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), on 1 January 2016, opened the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development in Bonn to equip the UN and its partners with a vehicle to deliver on the learning agenda pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its mission is to respond to the comprehensive learning, training, and knowledge management needs of the UN staff and partners in the context of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development supports the policy and operational work of the United Nations through the development of learning tools, platforms for interaction and a mature set of learning offerings for UN Staff. It also serves as a catalyst and convener prompting dialogue and knowledge sharing on issues relevant to the vision and mission of the UN between UN staff and a diverse set of stakeholders from academia, the private sector, and civil society.

## Approach to Learning at the Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

The sustainable development agenda demands new approaches to knowledge and skills development for all actors. Development progress requires holistic thinking, moving beyond separate mandates and structures and exploring linkages between different thematic issues. The 2030 Agenda requires an issues-based operandi, fostering new partnerships to identify key problems and opportunities, leveraging diverse means of implementation, and facilitating joint action to ensure progress and maximise results. In this context, life-long learning must be seen as a key component of personal as well as organisational development.

To address the requirements of the 2030 Agenda, the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development integrates knowledge across UN agency mandates and thematic pillars of sustainable development. The Knowledge Centre fosters inter-agency coherence, and strengthens dialogue and networks within and beyond the UN system. It is committed to facilitating catalytic learning across the UN system and beyond in support of sustainable development results. Through its work, the Knowledge Centre contributes to enhancing coherence of development interventions and increasing operational and conceptual capacity of UN staff as well as a multitude of other partners.

The capacity approach of the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development is organised around six interdependent building blocks:

**EXAMINE:** We provide concrete learning opportunities where UN Staff and partners can learn and examine the sustainable development agenda.

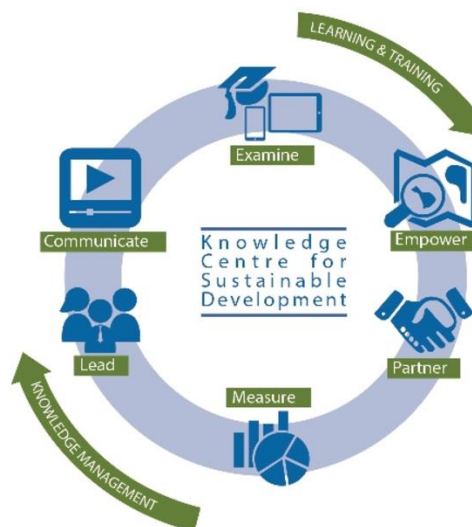
**EMPOWER:** We assist UN Country Teams in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda by identifying their learning needs and providing customised learning programmes.

**PARTNER:** We help the UN and partners to better engage in constructive partnerships to become genuine catalysts for sustainable development.

**MEASURE:** We recognise the importance of a coherent measurement language in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda, which is reflected in our learning offerings.

**LEAD:** We create a space where leaders across sectors can hone their craft, becoming more effective, strategic facilitators, implementers, and leaders of transformational change.

**COMMUNICATE:** We facilitate learning on effective communication and advocacy for sustainable development and engage alumni and the larger community in continuous discussions through diverse knowledge management platforms and training formats.



### Learning Opportunities at the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development

The UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development offers online and face-to-face courses. Face-to-face courses combine lecture-style sessions delivered by subject matter experts with interactive and participatory modules, leveraging the expertise of participants and enhancing their understanding of the realities of the respective entities represented in a course. Online courses combine live webinars with renowned experts on sustainable development with knowledge application to real-life and training scenarios, as well as group work and collaboration, thus strengthening cooperation among course participants from different entities.

To enrol in our courses, please click [here](#).

For further inquiries, please contact us at [sustainable-development@unssc.org](mailto:sustainable-development@unssc.org).