

**Project Report**

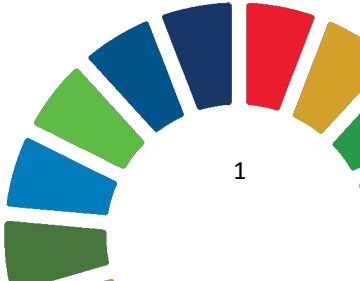
# SDGs

# @ G+PS

**Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals  
into the Graduate & Professional School  
- Challenges and Opportunities**

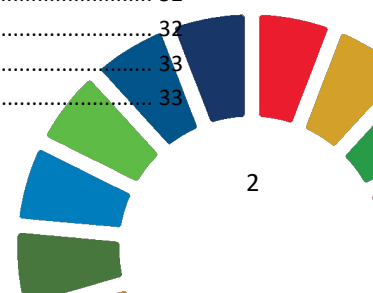
**Tim Goydke (ed.)**



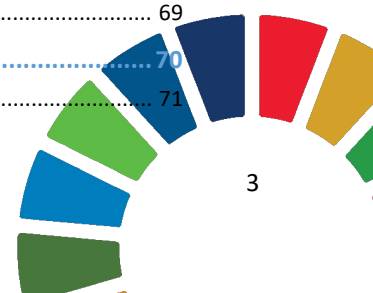


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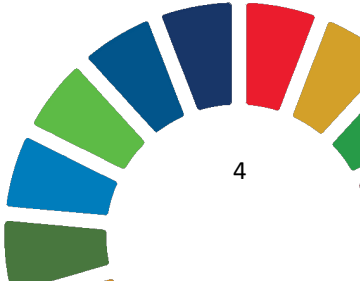
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## Preface

TIM GOYDKE

With the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development in 2015 adopted the resolution “Transforming our world: Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development” a new global sustainable development strategy based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) was framed, replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of 2000. With its 169 sub-goals and 232 monitoring indicators the SDG focus on a wide array of economic, social and environmental issues.

The actual involvement of the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) sector with the SDGs took off in 2002, when the concept of “Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)” was enacted at the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and the United Nation announced a UN Decade on ESD for 2005-2014 and was further triggered by the follow-up program, the UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development launched in 2014 at the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development. Publications on SDGs in higher education has significantly increased in recent years and there is evidence that SDGs have been integrated into higher education in a number of countries.

In order to assess to what extent the Graduate & Professional School already contributed to the SDGs and where is room for improvement, the editor of this publication involved the students of the MBA in Global Management in his course on “Business Ethics and Sustainability”. In teams of about five, the students worked on a group of SDGs. In order to identify practices that contribute towards SDG implementation and potential areas of improvement, data were collected through interviews with the case institution’s stakeholders, like the board of directors, program directors and managers, administrative staff, building management, employees, community representatives, partner universities etc. The data collection process was further supported by document analysis. Finally, the results were presented orally and in writing at a student conference in which representatives from various stakeholder groups took part.

The project brought results on different levels. On the one hand, there is the difficulty of transferring the SDGs to the university context. As only SDG4 explicitly refers to education, in all other cases own questions must be developed or indicators found. There is a number of efforts on how to translate the SDG to the HEI context but no commonly agreed set of questions and/or indicators exist – instead, all initiatives or reporting tools use their own sets.

Moreover, if it is a business school, as in our case study, SDGs which deal with technical or scientific topics, such as SDG14 and 15, are difficult to transfer. Only indirect questions can be formulated here, which are generally aimed at increasing awareness. While the research revealed a number of practices in teaching, research, community engagement and campus operations management that are already well aligned with the SDGs in some areas the case institution clearly lacks behind:

On the one hand, this is due to structural deficits. So far, neither the university as a whole nor the school has a comprehensive data management and clear responsibilities. The data and information required to review the SDGs were not collected centrally and not processed in a way that would have made them usable. Rather, they had to be obtained from a variety of documents and websites. Due to the unclear responsibilities, it proved to be extremely time-consuming to obtain them.

On the other hand, it can be seen that the systematic integration of sustainability topics into teaching has so far been the exception. Only a few programs have a corresponding course in the core curriculum, some programs have electives related to the topic. Otherwise it depended heavily on individual lecturers whether the topics are dealt with. The case institution has not yet its own master’s degree in the field of sustainability. In the field of research, too, there are individuals who have published on the subject. So far, there have been no institution-wide approaches or a platform for exchange, neither for teaching nor for research.

Furthermore, the SDGs are very present in public announcements - including those of the university - but a real discussion of the concrete implementation has not yet taken place. But since the ECG is already deeply rooted in the organization, we believe that this creates a good basis for a stronger integration of the SDG. However, additional measures are required in order to improve perception on the one hand and to develop concrete guidelines for action on the other hand.

## Executive Summary

ABDELBASSET BOUDJERDA

VALLABH KALGAONKAR

AMAR SHAM

### Dive into the present for a better future

IGC part of Graduate & Professional School G+PS of the Bremen University of Applied Sciences since 2004 embraces the idea of a participatory and socially responsible society and act as a role model in how to deal with the contribution to achieving the SDG where it is reflected in six pillar: Active involvement, engaging the staff members and the students with the concept of sustainability. Economy for the common good member, Focusing on the common good and on cooperation instead of profit-orientation and competition. Internationality and Diversity, having about 500 students from more than 60 nations and having several partner universities around the world. Corporate responsibility, fixing sustainability as a trademark of education system and a main strategic element and by being also the first college to prepare and publish a Common Good Matrix. Human dignity, where every employee and every student are precious and unique within the IGC.

While the IGC was doing immense efforts on the contribution to achieving the SDG's, the pandemic came and overturned the financial plans of the universities in the state of Bremen in general and IGC. The pandemic has also affected all the Sustainable Development Goals and was seeing as a big delaying obstacle to that, the poverty rate in Germany reached a new high in 2020 of 16.1 percent. In absolute figures, this means that 13.4 million Germans lived in poverty in the first year of the pandemic, 200,000 more than a year before, Bremen shows the highest rate, more than one in four people are officially afflicted by poverty. The unemployment rate increased from 5 to almost 6 percent in 2020, one in five people was affected by income losses. That's why if IGC want to keep going with the participatory and socially responsible society idea, it needs to start focusing first on the near circle (Bremen and Germany) and then looking out of the circle (the rest of the world).

IGC has been committed to the SDG, on the one hand, the topic of sustainability is considered in numerous projects and on the other hand, the actions of the IGC itself regarding the first five SDG need to be checked to see whether IGC is in harmony with sustainability or not. So how the IGC is contributing to the achieving of the first five SDG? what are the challenges? and what are the gaps to fulfil?

### A Better Tomorrow - General Recommendations

The following recommendations are applicable at a general level to the Graduate and Professional School notwithstanding any specific goals or sub-goals. It is the endeavor of these recommendations to help G+PS increase their alignment with the SDGs at a general level and bring about a process change that helps the institution in the long term. The recommendations are to be understood within the scope of G+PS as an institution imparting education in a specific field and limitations within the realm of practicality apply. These recommendations are also made with the understanding that the achievement of SDGs is only possible when the whole world makes significant efforts to realize them rather than some countries putting in a majority of the effort.

#### SDG Internships

We recommend that a program for mini-internships be introduced in the curriculum where the students are required to work with communities and bodies across the world to make valuable recommendations and support in the form of research and technical knowledge. The contribution of these students will help bring about a positive change aimed at greater alignment with the SDGs and help communities and bodies with valuable information that might have been out of their reach or missed out due to lack of availability of resources.

## Partnerships in LDCs

The G+PS can explore partnerships with other institutions in LDCs in areas that contribute directly towards SDGs. The support provided by out institution can be in the form of technical knowledge, research and support. Such partnerships can accelerate efforts at a larger level through a consortium of institutions.

## Reporting

We recommend that G+PS along with the entire Hochschule Bremen adopt and formally implement a reporting framework for SDGs. Such reporting will help make the actions measurable and sustained and well directed efforts can be organized in the future in line with the long-term vision of SDG alignment of G+PS.

## Prioritization

The G+PS is recommended to identify and subsequently prioritize SDGs that are most relevant to it within the mandate of being an educational institution. Since all the SDGs are not within the purview of an institution like G+PS, a strategy of prioritization will help focus efforts on the goals where the maximum amount of change can be implemented.

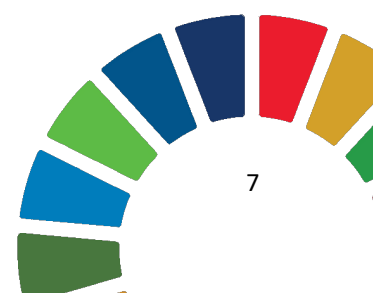
## Measurement and Reporting Framework

The IGC does not formally track or report its progress and contribution towards SDGs. Instead, it has an 'Economy for Common Good' (ECG) framework which outlines its commitment to sustainability and social responsibility. Reporting for the ECG framework is irregular. So far only the report has been published on the IGC website. As a conscientious and socially engaged institution, the IGC must formally declare its intent to support the SDGs by adapting and adopting a measurement and reporting framework. In the absence of a formal commitment to SDGs, it is difficult to outline the various SDGs where IGC plays a part, measure progress, or report any achievements. Therefore, formal adoption of a robust measuring and reporting framework is necessary to ensure institutional alignment with the SDGs.

There are several easily accessible frameworks that IGC can adopt. These include the Times Higher Education impact ranking, the QS World University Ranking, the Green Metric World University Ranking, and the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The ranking systems serve as a guideline for contextualizing the SDGs in a university context. They also provide standardized templates which, in addition to simplifying the reporting of progress against SDG, also help in benchmarking the progress against peer institutions. (United Nations Academic Impact, 2021)

AASHE, on the other hand, is a network of socially conscious universities. Membership of this network will open numerous avenues for the IGC for collaboration and partnership with other institutions. The network also offers technical assistance to universities in becoming more sustainable and offers a vast repository of resources that can be used to increase alignment with SDGs.

Formally adopting measurement and reporting framework will also enhance IGC's institutional reputation while, simultaneously, improving its ability to create a greater positive impact.





## Summary of Recommendations



- Plan and implement local service-learning and engagement opportunities for empowering poor people
- Reduce vulnerability and increasing resilience by offering scholarship in partnership with private stakeholders
- Offer free access to some courses for refugees
- Create offers and framework conditions for students with physical disabilities
- Provide work opportunities to refugees
- Student's voluntary group focusing on reporting the IGC's contribution
- Publish awareness video on the IGC's social medias focusing on SDG's and how student and IGC's member are contributing



- Collect the partially opened food every week and prepare some food for poor people, and distributing them on weekends near Bahnhof or near Dohmsheide, Bremen
- Open a charity which will be dedicated to saving unused food



- Awareness campaign for substance abuse
- Promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- Focus on individuals' social health



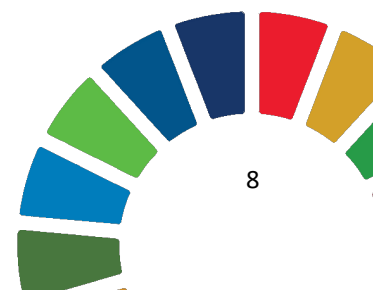
- Divert focus towards industry-oriented skill development certification and programs
- Inculcate teacher's exchange programs to developing countries Focus on planning to make the buildings and premises friendly for blind and deaf
- Set up a team to cater to the needs of these specially-abled students, making classrooms efficient for them so they have equal access to quality education
- Setting up a social group to discuss and spread awareness in the community
- Teach children of refugees to give them a better life and realize the importance of education
- Make scholarships available for students from developing countries through funding programs, partner with banks or private companies



- Provide facilities for young children of lecturers who are not able to find short- or long-term solutions for childcare
- Offer more full-time jobs to women in the institution
- Offer solutions of childcare
- Enforce and promote paternal leave for men as well



- Place drinking water and taps and bottle refilling stations around the campus
- Promote provision of safe and accessible hygiene facilities to other institutions and bodies across the world
- Increase efficiency in the use and reuse of the water from the campus
- Install slow flow manual taps for refilling of water bottles





- Shift to green energy alternatives
- Make energy saving top priority for employees and the whole campus
- Save energy with energy performance contracts



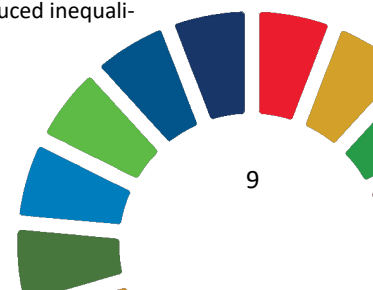
- Adopt a more direct approach by partnering with businesses in developing countries in an advisory capacity
- Work with state institutions in developing countries to establish and share best practices and devise action plans that can help these organizations grow
- Add a module dedicated to innovation in businesses
- Set up a social enterprise incubator that promotes and nurtures ideas for socially responsible startups and helps students turn these ideas into a reality
- Explore partnership possibilities with similar professional schools in developing countries and share experience and insights regarding efficient resource consumption
- Help students build their self-awareness through skills-development
- Provide online course for free
- Spread awareness by taking whole G+PS on tour in which they will take care of environment by avoiding plane, tram, bus and taxi
- Encourage students to include a research project in a developing country
- Creates an opportunity for a virtual internship in such way that it can create a big impact



- Create a Business Continuity Plan to be prepared for risks
- Set up an E-waste recycling drive
- Host a sustainability fair
- Set up sustainability short courses online
- Increase the options for students to obtain credit by involving private lenders
- Create a Financial Advisory Team that helps students and applicants on scholarship, student loans, various loan possibilities and with financial difficulties
- Create green laboratories adding sustainability in research and technology aspects
- Include more structured and research-oriented internships with industry partners
- Partner with institutions that share the same ethos in developing countries: offer courses that are co-taught, conduct collaborative graduate-level research and offer solutions to business challenges



- Commit to the elimination of discrimination ensuring that all employees have a voice in the decision-making process
- In order to measure inequality, statistical measures need to be specified
- Make efforts to reduce gender inequality and expand opportunities for women a necessary aspect of any effort to reduce overall inequality whether in income or access to other resources or services
- Appreciate the varied opinions and perspectives on disability and address disability discrimination, and form constructive attitudes
- Address disability discrimination at all levels, including the admissions process, assessment, didactic, and, in a wider sense, mobility
- Promote awareness of the different models of discrimination and promote the social model as the best way of overcoming discrimination against disabled students
- Providing a supportive, inclusive and safe working and learning environment for people from financially and socially disadvantaged backgrounds, people from rural and regional areas, people with disabilities, women in the workplace, people of diverse genders and sexualities and people from diverse cultural and faith communities
- Implement an equity agenda and plan that commits to equal opportunity and reduced inequalities in all processes and activities





- Build safe and affordable housing instead of giving only information
- Arrange seminars and conferences for integrated housing frameworks that support economic, social, and environmental policy
- Establish or collaborate with organizations that provide more affordable and sustainable transportation options, as well as high-quality and quick service
- Promote mobility and make it easier for people to commute
- Organize communal activities for their students, e.g. for planting the trees
- Organize cultural events and discussions for different people from different nationalities and culture
- Provide online webinars with the help of students and members for educating people from different nations
- Create partnerships with universities or professional schools in developing countries



- Actively invest and redirect resources in order to reach to the people that really matters
- Train more employees and students on this matter
- Provide more information in English
- Name contact persons and assign clear responsibilities
- Better practices, informing, teaching, giving the support that students, lecturers and scholars, might need



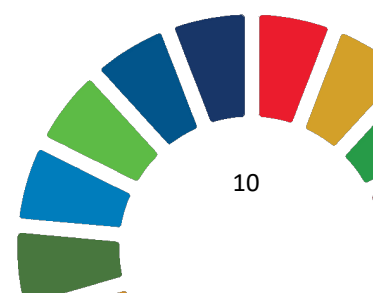
- Divert resources and research towards discovering more environment friendly source of energy
- Organize open science exhibition where students of any university can participate and show models related to sustainability and have some prize for the best model
- Campaign on social media to create more awareness
- Intergrade policies in code of conduct and staff and management, like use of public transport and sharing of cars, staff travel policy, use of more recyclable clothing
- Reduce consumption of paper to a minimum
- Create an introductory lecture regarding climate action to new admission students
- Invite researchers or company which are doing something for climate
- Set up one single website in which all information should be there also in English
- Sponsor trip to students and professors who are researching regarding climate action to non-developing countries & have awareness camp in their universities or cities



- Educate students, staff, and fellow colleagues through seminars, interviews, and collaboration conferences to take responsibility for sustainable development
- Improve existing research capacity and increase the importance of scientific knowledge to enhance ocean health and support marine biodiversity
- Create local and regional collaborations relating to the ocean and a multidisciplinary education program
- Monitor engagements on plastic pollution and its contributors and Operations: Designing efficient, ecologically friendly systems, business methods, and sustainable operations
- Join major international institutional associations working towards SDG-14 goals
- Built a virtual incubation center and collaborate with regional waste management and non-profit organization
- Implement a strong culture when it comes to banning the use of plastic-based items
- Adopt social media as a tool to educate, influence a larger audience, host webinars, virtual events, and online conferences at the national and international level



- Work closely with governments in drafting of policies and plan of action for sustainable future
- Adapt Environment Social Governance subject modules into the core learning of the subject modules
- Work on industry – institution support model, and provide consultancy to governments as well as industry to tackle reduction of wastage and air pollution
- Organize symposiums and seminars for the leading industries, governmental agencies and international policy makers for the benefits of students and society as a whole
- Strengthen alumni network so as to reached wider audience for spreading awareness into the society
- Ask for R&D grants from industry and governments for research into ESGs





- Use marketing in social media as a strategy to reach young people over the world with peace and justice messages
- Organize activities in sports, art or culture to promote topics like preventing children abuse
- Promote G+PS by selecting every year a theme to support for the example year 2022 the year of supporting children the next year prevent the abuse of childhood and so on
- Collaborate with private and public institutions, especially in developing countries, on one of the global issues and try to find solution by interacting, discuss or organize activities



- Strengthen global partnerships for sustainable development, reinforced by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and exchange knowledge, skills, technology, and financial resources
- Encourage and support effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, based on partnership experience and resource allocation methodologies
- Increase the availability of high-quality, timely, and reliable data
- Improve on existing initiatives to produce measures of progress on sustainable development
- Invest more in knowledge-sharing techniques and new advanced technology

