Connecting Community Engagement to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals

Facilitators:

Beth Blissman, Ph.D.
UN Rep, Loretto Community
bblissman@lorettocommunity.org

Gail Robinson
Education Consultant
gail@gailrobinsonconsulting.com

Campus Compact National Conference * Indianapolis * March 27, 2018
International organization of 193 sovereign states founded in June 1945 (ratified Oct. 24, 1945) to ensure that there were no more world wars

- Maintains international peace and security
- Promotes social progress, better living standards, human rights and freedoms
UN Headquarters / Locations

Also locations in:

Geneva, Switzerland (1966)
Vienna, Austria (1979)
Nairobi, Kenya (1996)

United Nations Headquarters Complex in New York City (1948)
Purposes of the United Nations

1. “To maintain international peace and security, . . . take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace . . .”

2. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace.

3. “To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting . . . human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.”

4. To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.
2000–2015: Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Similar to a Strategic Plan, the MDGs were implemented in 129 countries to reduce poverty, promote good governance, address crises, and preserve the environment:

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. To achieve universal primary education
3. To promote gender equality and empower women
4. To reduce child mortality
5. To improve maternal health
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. To ensure environmental sustainability
8. To develop a global partnership for development

Achievements were impressive in some areas, yet spotty in others due to a variety of reasons including lack of grassroots input (especially from the Global South) and a lack of funding.
The Post-2015 development agenda and SDG process was an outcome from the Rio+20 conference (June 2012).

Many discussions, proposals, and meetings were held to develop the Post-2015 agenda:

- Meeting of High-level Political Forum (July 2014)
- Proposed Sustainable Development Goals, formulated by the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (August 2014)
- Report of Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (November 2014)
- Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda (December 2014)

“Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” was adopted by all 193 nation-states (September 2015).
“Behind the Scenes of the UN General Assembly”
September 2015

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvKpnRPosek
IDEA:
What if we aligned our efforts with this Global Strategic Plan (the SDGs) between now & 2030?

- https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs
Links to More Information about the SDGs:

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs
Click on each goal to find Progress/Information and Targets/Indicators.

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf
The annual High-level Political Forum is the UN’s central platform for follow-up and review of progress toward the 2030 SDGs.

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdinaction/hesi
The UN’s Higher Education Sustainability Initiative provides an interface among HE institutions, science, and policymaking.

https://www.worldwewant2030.org/
Learn about and visualize the SDGs, give feedback, and share visions of success.

http://ysa.org/briefing/youth-action-guide-on-the-sdgs/
Blogs and examples for youth. The UN defines youth as ages 18-35.
Australia, New Zealand, & Pacific edition (2017)

Ideas for college and university programming related to SDGs

Ask us for a PDF
Figure 1: The case for university engagement in the SDGs

**How do the SDGs help universities?**
- Create increased demand for SDG related education
- Provide a comprehensive and globally accepted definition of a responsible university
- Offer a framework for demonstrating impact
- Create new funding streams
- Support collaboration with new external and internal partners

**How do universities help the SDGs?**
- Provide knowledge, innovations and solutions to the SDGs
- Create current and future SDG implementers
- Demonstrate how to support, adopt and implement SDGs in governance, operations and culture
- Develop cross-sectoral leadership to guide the SDG response

**Knowledge**
**Learning**
**Demonstration**
**Impact**
**Collaboration**
Possible Levels of Engagement

• Projects and programs: student services, activities, educating people about the SDGs
• Classroom: community-based research, service learning, mapping your college or university’s efforts
• Study-Away: colleges/universities in other countries are leading the way with SDG education, collaborate on & integrate ideas and resources
• Institutional: Higher Education Sustainability Initiative
Discussion

• How do global perspectives connect to your campus’s vision and values (global learning outcomes, strategic plan, Civic Action Plan, etc.)?

• How might you envision integrating SDGs into your programming or your classes?

• With whom will you collaborate (on and off campus)?
Thank you!

Beth Blissman, Ph.D.
UN Rep, Loretto Community
bblissman@lorettocommunity.org

Gail Robinson
Education Consultant
gail@gailrobinsonconsulting.com