PIMA

Promoting, Interrogating and Mobilising
Adult Learning and Education

BULLETIN NO. 31 – JULY 2020
TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
GUEST EDITORS DEBBI LONG AND MARY JOHNSON RMIT UNIVERSITY

This edition of the PIMA Bulletin is guest-edited by researchers at RMIT University, Australia, and presents a snapshot of work being undertaken by members and associates of the European Union-funded Jean Monnet Network, which is based in the European Union Centre of Excellence at RMIT University. The Jean Monnet Network brings together researchers from the University of Glasgow, Australian National University, Nanyang Technical University in Singapore and the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, policy think-tanks and Non-Government Organisations who share a primary interest in enhancing the contribution of the European Union to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Asia Pacific.

Introduction to Special Issue

Sustainable Development, Partnerships and Transformation:
The EU and Asia-Pacific in an unpredictable world *Debbi Long & Mary Johnson*

This special issue brings together reports on current theory and practice from a global network of scholars whose work focuses on the engagement of the European Union in the Asia Pacific region and the implementation of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Transforming our World – the Sustainable Development Goals.

There are four sections in this special issue. In **SDGs: An Agenda for Transformation**, Bruce Wilson & Emma Shortis outline the theoretical framework that is guiding network scholars. Bringing attention to the SDGs as a whole (rather than as individual goals), and some of the inherent tensions and contradictions in between the overarching SDG agenda and the seventeen individual goals, Wilson & Shortis propose a framework that facilitates the possibility of the Sustainable Development Goals being truly transformational. Debbi Long picks up on the points of the inherent tension in 'sustainability' and 'development', and the potential for ethnocentrism in the SDGs. In the final piece in this section, Emma Shortis demonstrates how a historical understanding of past transformational successes can be applied to the SDG agenda.

The second section, **Place-Based Transformations**, highlights the strengths of place-based learning. Contributions from Roberto Guevara, Mary Johnson, Rachel England, Bruce Wilson, Chris Duke, Serena Kelly, Matthew Doidge, Joanne Neary, Renzo Mori Jnr and Joana Correia illustrate the strengths of this approach. Place-based learning builds on experience. It is not the transfer of knowledge and skills by the expert to the learner, rather it is an exchange of knowledge that respects local knowledge, cultural and societal norms. It is relational in practice and pursues equitable ways of engagement, social justice, and connectivity. Learning is viewed

from the needs of the individuals and communities, rather than technology transfer solutions. This requires individuals and communities to be involved as full partners in the design, delivery and evaluation of learning. Especially in light of our COVID-19 impacted world, we offer these explorations as alternatives to business-as-usual, arguing that the business models of the mechanized and centralized world need to be replaced by those driven from a distributed, networked, sustainable way of thinking. Fundamental to making a transition to a distributed more sustainable world is collaboration and knowledge sharing, and this section concludes with contributions from Chloe Ward and Sophie Di-Franceso Mayot exploring communication technologies that facilitate the intersection of local and global knowledge.

The third section, **Forthcoming Monographs**, offers PIMA members a sneak preview of publications-in-progress, and the final section, **Power: Impasses, Possibilities and Opportunities** specifically addresses the current global reality of the COVID-19 pandemic. Maren Klein, Campbell Hughes and Bradley Davidson explore varieties of authoritarian responses to COVID-19, while Chris Duke urges us to seize the opportunities for re-making a 'world undone' by this global cataclysmic event.

Throughout this special issue, we see the arguments for fully engaged partnerships, rather than top-down planning, priority setting and implementation. This requires new ways of thinking, new ways of working and new ways of learning from each other. In this special issue, we bring you a variety of perspectives on global partnerships working towards transformation.

References for individual pieces are combined in the bibliography at the end of the Bulletin.

The European Union Centre of Excellence at RMIT holds monthly seminars, with each seminar focussing on an individual SDG. As we go to press, there have been 14 SDG seminars. Accompanying Policy Briefs are produced for each seminar, and are available to be downloaded.

SDGs: An Agenda for Transformation

Global Transformation and the Sustainable Development Goals, July 2020
Bruce Wilson & Emma Shortis

Introduction

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted unanimously *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. With seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, 169 targets and their associated indicators, it represented the world's most ambitious initiative, aiming to eliminate the tyranny of poverty and to heal and secure the future of the planet. It sought to align People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership, acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, due to

meet in Paris in November 2015, was the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Slow Progress

In a review of progress in 2019, with a decade remaining, the Secretary-General declared that progress was lagging and that urgent action was needed if the international community was to be able to deliver on the targets by 2030:

> … progress has been slow on many Sustainable Development Goals, that the most vulnerable people and countries continue to suffer the most and that the global response thus far has not been ambitious enough… the extreme poverty rate is projected to be 6 per cent in 2030, missing the global target to eradicate extreme poverty; hunger is on the rise for the third consecutive year and little progress is being made in countering overweight and obesity among children under the age of 5; biodiversity is being lost at an alarming rate, with roughly 1 million species already facing extinction, many within decades; greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase; the required level of sustainable development financing and other means of implementation are not yet available, and institutions are not strong or effective enough to respond adequately to these massive interrelated and cross-border challenges… Globally, youth are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Children are overrepresented among the poorest people – one child in five lives in extreme poverty. Rural and urban differentials are also evident in such areas as education and health care. Persons with disabilities and those living with HIV/AIDS continue to face multiple disadvantages, denying them both life opportunities and fundamental human rights. Gender inequalities also persist. Women represent less than 40 per cent of those employed, occupy only about a quarter of managerial positions in the world and (according to data available from a limited set of countries) face a gender pay gap of 12 per cent. About a fifth of those aged 15 to 49 had experienced physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months.

This scorecard demonstrates the urgency of the need for action. The situation is particularly concerning in our region. According to the UN Economic and Social Committee Asia Pacific (ESCAP):

> … on its current trajectory, our region remains unlikely to meet any of the 17 Goals by 2030. While many countries are moving decisively to improve the quality of education and provide access to affordable and clean energy, progress in other areas is slow. Sustained economic growth is occurring in the absence of adequate measures to combat climate change, protect our ocean or preserve our forests. Uneven progress is being made to reduce inequalities, support the responsible consumption and production needed for a healthy planet, or achieve peace, justice and strong institutions. Progress towards gender equality and building sustainable cities and communities has been far too slow.

Unfortunately, this prospect of disappointing outcomes is typical of global agreements which seek to overcome, even just to limit, potentially calamitous circumstances. Whether to do with deforestation, fishing stocks, biodiversity, or security matters, the achievements are typically disappointing (see Cashore 2020), notwithstanding the occasional exception such as the ban on mining in the Antarctic (see Shortis 2019).

The 2030 Agenda is perhaps the most ambitious of these agreements, encompassing as it does not only the Paris Climate agreement (of November 2015) but also a broad range of social, economic and environmental issues. Indeed, one criticism of the Agenda is that it is too ambitious, leading to contradictory objectives in some respects, and at the very least, ambiguity about how the aspirations for economic growth can be reconciled with the challenge of climate action (just as one example).

This tension and ambiguity is not a surprise when one considers the process through which the UN came to adopt its global agenda. An Open Working Group with 30 members was appointed to facilitate a massive process of consultation with governments, business and civil society about the next steps following the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). When the scale of this endeavour is recognised, it's not a surprise that there is a great deal of compromise, as well as contradiction and repetition reflected in the final document that was submitted to the UN's General Assembly. This becomes even more apparent when attention turns to the Targets, which contain and even undermine the ambition of the text of the preamble which introduces the Goals.

Nevertheless, few would question the remarkable achievement of several years of global consultation leading to a comprehensive framework for transformation that was endorsed by 193 nations. In contemplating the enormity of delivering the Agenda by 2030, many issues arise. At the heart of the challenge, two distinct yet related questions emerge:

a) How to make sense of the complexity of a global agenda which embraced 17 Goals with multiple targets, and is at risk of fragmentation and of parallel realms in both analysis and in designing various programs of action?
b) How to comprehend the issues and processes necessary to engage government, business, education/research and civil society in framing and coordinating decision-making and action to address global challenges successfully?

These questions have both conceptual and very practical dimensions, as their resolution can guide efforts to link together the insights from established research and inquiry outcomes, as well as helping to shape work to act in one respect or another.

Making Sense of the Global Agenda

By comparison with their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs are considerably more ambitious in scope and the depth of ambition represented in the targets and indicators associated with each Goal (see Appendix 1). They encompass a comprehensive view of sustainable development as economic, social and environmental—much more extensive than the focus on poverty. Even more significantly, the SDGs apply to all nations, whereas the MDGs and Education For All Agenda were specifically concerned with developing nations. The scale of the 2030 Agenda, and its coincidence with the Paris Accords and the urgency of the threat of mass extinction, has meant that the UN itself has committed considerable resources, not least through each of its agencies, such as UNESCO (see the UN's online platform, supporting the overall framework for implementation: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/).

On the face of it, the scale of the Goals is impossibly ambitious. Their breadth and their targets, and the framing around specific issues, means that attention, activity and policy development have tended to focus on one or the other of the Goals and targets, undermining the challenge of transformation which is called for by the Agenda as a whole. While this narrowing of focus is understandable, it reduces that action to specific 'programs' and 'initiatives'—a technical response—at the expense of the political and intellectual conceptual work that is necessary to promote transformation.

In 2015, Jeffrey Sachs, in addressing the financial needs of the Agenda, suggested a way of framing the Agenda as a means of mobilising political will (see Sachs 2015). His 'sketch' of five categories of Goals was very useful in highlighting the differences nature of the Goals and Targets. More recently, he has returned to this question with other colleagues, now highlighting six 'transformations' necessary to the success of the Agenda. These six transformations cover all of the 17 SDGs and their associated targets. They are:

(1) education, gender and inequality;
(2) health, well-being and demography;
(3) energy decarbonization and sustainable industry;
(4) sustainable food, land, water and oceans;
(5) sustainable cities and communities; and
(6) digital revolution for sustainable development

These transformations will need to occur in every country, through collaboration amongst government, business and civil society. Sachs and his colleagues favour this approach as each 'transformation' presents a set of actions that can align relatively easily with already well-defined government structures working with business and civil society. Investment and regulatory priorities can be addressed in each area while maintaining a coordinated approach across the whole Agenda (see Sachs et al, 2019a). This approach facilitates a clear marking of the agenda as a technical problem, which can be supported by appropriate scientific investigation.

This framing of the UN Global Agenda as a technical challenge has significant limitations. There are two sets of issues which are immediately obvious. The first is the emphasis on financing, on the assumption that the main impediment to realising the impact of technical knowledge is the funding for research in the first place, and research translation in the second. Many global agreements which focus on financing have seen financial and market-driven mechanisms as the key mechanism for driving change, and for facilitating the leverage of corporate resources into the level of investment necessary to achieve the agreed outcomes.

The second issue is the presumption that an agenda such as 'Transforming our World' can be addressed through technical resources. Clearly, new knowledge in many fields is important, and part of the work necessary to deliver on the ambition for change. Procuring the funding necessary for all kinds of interventions (not least universal, essential services) is also clearly important. However, the emphasis on market-based approaches necessarily gives priority to economics rather than social and environmental objectives. This clearly draws attention to the importance of values, and the recognition that in some cases, it will be necessary to 'just say no'. As Australian Historian Katie Holmes recently argued,

'configuring climate change as a problem to be solved, which is a dominant way in which discussions about climate change progress, belies the human complexity at the core of the problem. It frames climate change as something 'outside' of us, and feeds discussions about technological 'solutions' that completely ignore questions of ethics, justice, power or values' (Holmes et al., 2020).

These questions led the Jean Monnet SDGs Network team to focus more on a four-fold framework that distinguishes more clearly the focus of each category, and the kinds of partnerships necessary to make progress, using Sachs' earlier work as a starting point. Taken together, the four dimensions outlined below offer a way of making meaningful sense of the scale and coherence of the Global Transformation Agenda, while at the same time accommodating the political and moral dimensions of the transforming process. Managing the climate challenge is not just a matter of generating the political will to accommodate a range of interests, it is necessary to recognise that according to all the technical knowledge, we now have to 'just say no' to fossil fuels, and we need to do so now. This is a question of values which relate to all of the SDGs, not least the challenge of protecting biodiversity.

1. *Provision of Essential Public Services*

This grouping focuses on the provision of essential public services for all citizens: health, education, utilities and infrastructure. In Sachs' reckoning, this refers to SDGs 3 (Health), 4 (Education), 6 (Water) and 7 (Energy). Each of these has an underlying commitment to a core of universal provision, and typically depends in part at least on public financing even though delivery of services in many countries is both a public and private sector (business and community) responsibility.

Two of these SDGs—Goals 3 and 4 — are concerned very much with human capacity and readiness for people to achieve a livelihood for themselves and possibly other members of their families and social groups. They require public design and regulation of institutions and programs that are accessible to individual citizens, and leadership and expertise to deliver services. They typically imply formal processes of accreditation and certification of people's status and achievement.

The other two are key aspects of physical infrastructure on which communities are utterly dependent. Again, publicly developed and managed systems are the crucial foundation for management of water and energy services, whether publicly or privately delivered. While not mentioned by Sachs in this context, the Goals focused on poverty, hunger and elimination of inequalities will only be achieved as the consequence of effective design and delivery of public services, together with the implementation of action on the 'complex intermediate' Goals.

2. *Complex 'Intermediate' Goals Involving Public-Private Collaboration*

The focus here is on the complex 'intermediate', perhaps less tangible, Goal of enabling sufficient economic activity to deliver 'decent work' for all who want or need it. This depends on close collaboration between public and private sectors, and civil society. SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, is the central focus of this category, albeit drawing heavily on public services to prepare people for opportunities to participate in the economy,

and to undertake 'decent' work (recognising that far too many current jobs involve either tasks or conditions which are demeaning, damaging or exploitative). Underpinning this focus is SDG 9, Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialisation, which promotes recognition of the importance of infrastructure, and the role of business in innovation and in supporting development in their region.

In this case, the role of public authorities at all levels of governance, from international to local, is central. Public authorities set out the standards and rules which are the minimum acceptable arrangements for people to work, typically in paid employment, but also in unpaid/voluntary environments.

Current experience suggests that regulated markets will be central to economic interconnectedness from local to global levels for at least the foreseeable future. The crucial question for the Global Agenda is how those markets, and the participants in them, will be governed and regulated. There are various movements, partly arising from the growing rejection of unfettered globalisation, that point to the importance of more locally-grounded, democratically-controlled entities as key participants in both local foundational economies, and in global trade. These entities will reflect business models committed to circular economic practices, and to strengthening livelihoods and diminishing inequalities. 'Decent work', fair livelihood and sufficient food, become key objectives for all organisations (business and otherwise) rather than incidental consequences of the pursuit of profit.

This raises questions about the capacity of public authorities to balance international expectations and local circumstances. The core issues at the heart of this work are workplace safely, terms and conditions of remuneration, and democratic control of enterprises. The last of these matters, as aspects of work environments which affect the quality of working life, such as organisational culture, are much harder to regulate. The International Labour Office, a tripartite organisation, is an important institution in shaping the conditions for advancing the objective of decent work.

The potential of this kind of transition was demonstrated by China under the MDGs. The significant impact on the scale of poverty under the MDGs was achieved through China's rapid economic growth, new employment opportunities and higher wages for workers particularly at middle levels, notwithstanding the continuing poor conditions in many workplaces.

Is this a feasible approach for the rest of the world? China, while reflecting many aspects of a capitalist economy deeply engaged in global trade, is governed by a one-party state which exercises significant control over most aspects of economic, social, environmental and political life. This kind of intervention more widely is unlikely to occur without significant conflict. The G20, for example, struggles to agree on global taxation policies, let alone the kind of direct intervention as occurs in China.

3. Transformational Goals

This category brings together the Transformation Agenda's focus on environmental sustainability, addressing specific topics such as climate change, carbon, urbanisation, food, energy and ecosystems. This encompasses SDG 2 again, with respect to food systems, but

also SDGs 11 (sustainable cities and communities), 12 (waste), 13 (low carbon), 14 (coastal eco-systems) and 15 (inland eco-systems). These are sometimes considered to be technological challenges; the assumption is that new technologies can enhance energy efficiencies, reduce carbon emissions and support continued economic growth that does not deplete resources.

However, this also is essentially a political process. This aspect of the global transformation challenge also highlights the importance of existing economic structures and processes. How can the interests associated with these structures be challenged and broadened to be much more inclusive?

This is demonstrated most clearly concerning the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the necessity for governments to implement policy and programs to deliver on their commitments to reduce emissions. Very few countries are yet compliant with their obligations, notwithstanding the demonstrable effects of global heating and the growing concern amongst citizens about the implications of a failure to act not only for themselves but also for future generations.

Of all these dimensions of change, this has perhaps the strongest purchase in terms of a definable agenda for intervention. However, there continues to be some priority still on technological fixes rather than deep transformation of current economic and technological processes; it is telling that environmental goals are framed as particularly 'transformational' in contrast to the economic or social aspects of the Global Agenda. Accountability is shared by multiple actors, yet none are prepared to exercise the leadership necessary to deliver the outcomes sought by these Goals and the Paris Agreement. The failure of all stakeholders to act with sufficient intensity illustrates the significance of seeing this challenge as much more than technical. At some point, the moral dimension and the significance of values (do we want to preserve the Great Barrier Reef, for example) mean that it is important to 'just say no'.

4. Reconciliation

At the heart of the Global Agenda are social and moral objectives, related to gender equality, reducing violence and increasing inclusion, and promoting global citizenship. This refers to SDGs 5 (gender equality), 4 (concerning global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity), and 16 (peace, justice, strong institutions and reducing violence). SDG 17 is pertinent also with its focus on a shared partnership for the implementation of the transformation agenda.

While these are linked with the high-level and the transformational goals, this grouping highlights the importance of respectful social relationships and of learning in all aspects of the transformation agenda. Perhaps this is best understood as a 'cross-cutting' category of Goals, highlighting the importance of the processes of change, and their inclusivity. The 2030 Agenda is not only the objective process of identifying targets and developing new systems and technologies for implementation. It is ultimately about relationships in the Anthropocene, so that the means adopted for change in themselves are crucial to transformation.

Over the past two decades, there have been significant movements for reconciliation in diverse parts of the world: South Africa, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. This experience, and the achievements and failings of the processes to date, can support collective learning about the significance of reconciliation in the overall achievement of the Global Agenda. This learning serves as a basis for beginning to address a lack of recognition of Indigenous and First Nations people in the Transformation Agenda.

Of course, this framing of the Agenda is not rigid. Indeed, one of the important reasons for focusing on the integrity of an Agenda that aims to 'Transform our World' is that many Goals are necessary for the achievement of others. Climate, Education and Partnerships are just three examples; without progress on these, the Agenda cannot be delivered.

Can Governments Deliver?

How is it that the UN Secretary General's report card is so poor? Are the SDGs at risk of becoming just another example of a global effort to address the planetary crisis which fails?

Ben Cashore has suggested that it is widely assumed that good governance can and will emerge under certain conditions, including the availability of resources, effective law enforcement, and technical knowledge, which will then lead to government legitimacy, improved livelihoods, economic growth and better environmental outcomes. This logic underpins the adoption of the SDGs. Cashore argued that the overly sanguine assumption that these elements are synergistic is empirically false; often, these aspects are inherently contradictory.

He suggests that the heart of this issue is the way that problems and their possible solutions are understood and conceptualised – described as the 'good governance norm complex' (see an example of this approach as applied to Covid-19 interventions, in Cashore and Bernstein 2020). Indeed, he demonstrates how policy-makers seek out and encourage market-based solutions to 'super wicked' global problems, despite significant evidence that such solutions are artificial and inappropriate, thus rarely work--and often exacerbate existing problems. When it comes to the SDGs, there are inherent trade-offs in achieving economic, social and environmental goals where the good governance norm complex reinforces market-driven mechanisms that prioritise economic goals over social or environmental ones. Furthermore, the target and indicator system underpinning the SDGs purports to be able to shift inherently complex political and moral questions to the realm of the technical. However, this narrowing of ambitious Goals to tangible, perhaps measurable, objectives can in many ways be seen to undermine the moral dimension of the Agenda.

Cashore argued that this approach has arisen in part from the dominance of Ostram's 'cost/benefit' framing of policy problems, which in turn relies on a dramatic but widely held misinterpretation of the idea of the 'tragedy of the commons' (in Cashore's framing, 'Type 1' problems). In these circumstances, stakeholders continue, for example, to overharvest a finite resource on the assumption that if they do not, others will anyway. This is an apparently rational approach that has a completely irrational outcome.

This draws attention to the tendency, even where parties are negotiating to preserve a threatened resource, to seek out a path which accommodates all interests, despite the fact

that this can and often does still lead to the loss of that critical resource. These processes encompass his second and third problem types, 'optimisation' and 'compromise'. In these circumstances, a preoccupation with the process of negotiation and reconciliation of competing interests leads to the underlying prospect of threat being neglected. 'Process' tends to triumph over 'outcomes'. Economists tend to subscribe to the former, with a focus on rational use of resources, whereas social scientists group around the latter, focused on values.

The fourth problem type comprises those super-wicked problems which remain beyond the reach of current governance and problem–solving approaches, not least climate action. Concerning the UN Agenda and its Goals, the question becomes how can stakeholders, including governments, business, researchers and civil society, work together to recognise that the challenge is not only technical but also moral; the decision-making needs to prioritise the collective good rather than the sectoral interest. In that respect, the current approach of voluntary compliance and reporting, and global peer pressure, gives little confidence that the UN can escape the good governance norm complex.

For Cashore, the motivating question for all researchers engaged in the world's most pressing problems must be "*why* do we continue to go backwards?". How can global governance grow into structures and processes which deliver constructively on global ambitions? He provides a starting point in this endeavour from a case study in Peru. This example drew on the four problem concepts outline above and framed their implications as 'influence pathways':

a) A 'rules' pathway which focuses on rules and agreements in shaping policy responses;
b) A 'norms' pathway which relies on shared values and cultural practices as a means of engendering 'right' or appropriate responses;
c) A 'markets' pathways which presumes that economic incentives and disincentives will produce the necessary behavioural change; and
d) A 'direct access' pathway which seeks to influence action through capacity-building, both financially and technically, thus shifting power relations and leading to new coalitions (see Humphreys et al, 2017).

Cashore and his colleagues drew on this work to develop a policy learning protocol that can assist where there is broad agreement about policy outcomes, but uncertainty around appropriate or relevant interventions. The protocol assists stakeholders to focus on generating greater knowledge rather than being absorbed in interest-based, zero-sum approach to assessing collectively the likely impact of a particular policy instrument (see Humphreys et al, 2017).

Conclusion

How can this conceptual insight about good governance be addressed concerning the Global Transformation Agenda, and its key stakeholders? It points to the importance of understanding how the framing of each part of the Agenda around a particular Goal and its Targets presents a potential trap: a trap framed as focus on a specific issue or cluster of issues without sufficient attention to context and the systemic connections not only with

other aspects of a particular Goal, but with the wider agenda of change. How underlying assumptions are identified, issues and opportunities are understood, and attention to technical and moral aspects is framed, is crucial to the likelihood that constructive action can be developed.

Oxymorons and Ethnocentrisms: A Critical Gaze at the SDGs *Debbi Long*

This piece explores two key critiques of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - the oxymoron of sustainable development, and the ethnocentrism of the global goals - and offers suggestions as to how they could be addressed.

Beyond the Oxymoron of Sustainable Development

Brown (2015) suggests that Jeffery Sachs' framing of Sustainable Development, and hence the UN Sustainable Development goals, presents us with an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. Central to Sachs' framing of the SDGs development agenda is economic growth, which is supposedly the driver that has the potential to facilitate poverty alleviation, food security, health, education, infrastructure and the other transformations that the SDGs promise.

> Unfortunately, "sustainable development," as advocated by most natural, social, and environmental scientists, is an oxymoron. […] Economic development requires the increased use of energy and material resources to provide goods, services, and information technology. (2105:1028)

When examining the definitions of the key terms, Sustainability and Development, I suggest that the issue lies not with how we are defining Sustainability. The definition of sustainability is rarely contested: the use of resources in the present in ways that ensure the needs of future generations can be met. The problem, I suggest, is with how the SDGs define, conceptualise and operationalise Development.

As flagged by Brown (2015) above, development as it is defined within the SDGs is conflated with economic development. Compounding this, economic development is predicated upon a growth model. The SDGs are ideologically invested in the myth of the possibility of unlimited growth. The myth that economic growth will lift the world's poor out of poverty, that it will allow communities to provide the resources to ensure that everyone has their basic needs met with comfort, joy and dignity, has not proven to be true in the past, and there are no indicators that it is likely to succeed in the future. Although not as fashionable a phrase as it once was, 'trickle-down economics' remains central to neoliberal economic models. In the 1980s, when trickle-down economics was posited, many of us reacted with a shake of the head and a mutter of 'Nah, that'll never work'. Back then, it was merely an opinion. Now, forty years of wasted opportunity on, we have the data. Neoliberal economics, based on enthusiasm for unfettered growth, with now-muted-but-still-implied logic of trickle-down economics, doesn't work. It does not deliver people out of poverty, nor does it decrease economic inequity.

Ethnocentrism of the Global Goals

In attempting to solve global inequity through mechanisms and tools of the global North, we are, to paraphrase Audre Lorde, setting ourselves the impossible task of attempting to fix the master's house using the masters' tools. The much-lauded 'development' of the Global

North has been built on prosperity garnered from the unfettered looting of resources from the Global South during colonial expansionism, empire building, settler colonialism, the slave trade and other forms of ongoing resource and labour exploitation. An ugly irony of the SDGs is that the looters are now telling the victims of theft how they can lift themselves out of poverty, without acknowledging either the mechanisms that created the wealth of the global North or the impoverished conditions in the global South. While lip service is paid to cultural diversity within the SDGs, there is an inherent assumption that a 'developed' society is a western-style, wage-labouring industrialised society. I suggest that this is a limited, and limiting, way of understanding development.

As they are, the SDGs run the risk of re-inscribing structurally violent policies on to vulnerable communities, particularly already exploited, colonised communities. I suggest there is an urgent need to differentiate between common human values and culturally specific values, to make the SDGs both more valuable and less potentially harmful for all of us, but most particularly for vulnerable communities.

For example, the first target of the SDG 1 is to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere. The current indicator for 'poverty' is people living on below US$1.90 a day. Clinging to a reductionist, dollar-measurement indicator ignores and undervalues the contribution of subsistence farming to well-being. This continues the devaluation of subsistence farming, undermining it and making it vulnerable to the cash-crop annihilations that took place under the guise of the Structural Adjustment Programs of the 1980s and 90s. Despite the SAPs having been proven to have been deeply harmful to many in the Global South, the unholy lovechild of SAPs and late neoliberal capitalism, Economic Austerity Programs, are continuing to be incorporated into development strategies.

A reductionist numerical measurement of US$1.90 per day (or wherever the poverty line may be drawn) makes SDG 1.1 virtually meaningless for most of the world's indigenous communities, where poverty alleviation and wellbeing has been repeatedly shown to be linked to self-determination and land security. Similarly, conflation of SDG 8's 'decent livelihood' with targets and indicators focusing on 'decent work' is a deeply ethnocentric way of measuring a universal value. While 'decent livelihood' is a concept that can be applied to all human societies, to measure that through 'decent work' is to ignore ways in which communities who are not dependent on wage labour organise their resource sharing. It runs the risk of development programs introducing interventions that, like the SAPs, can cause harm to individuals and communities. Target 5 of SDG 4 "By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations" completely ignores the overwhelming research that mainstream education can be culturally, emotionally, psychologically, economically and/or physically unsafe for vulnerable groups, especially indigenous peoples. There is little room in the SDG metrics to explore ways in which education can offer equal access while respecting and fostering cultural safety and diversity.

A Note on Reconciliation

Current global inequities have been established through centuries of colonial expansionism, land theft and resource looting. This calls into question the use of the term 'reconciliation' as a way forward to resource equity. Reconciliation involves the mending of relationships between parties previously in conflict. Reconciliation as a process involves forgiveness for past wrongs. However, it does not involve making right of injustices, or making reparations

or compensation for losses. Reconciliation has the potential to absolve those who have benefitted from historical theft from full reparation, and does not contain the full expectation of socioeconomic restructuring to ensure just and equitable access to resources. Given that even the slightest gestures of reconciliation, such as the return of looted treasures from museums in the Global North, are so deeply contested, reconciliation feels like an already hollow term, and I would argue that if we are going to work towards a truly transformed planet, we need to be thinking in more radical terms than 'reconciliation' allows.

Moving beyond current epistemologies …

For the Global Goals to be truly global they have to be able to provide communities with sustainable solutions that are both environmentally and culturally appropriate. I suggest that while many of the goals and targets of the SDGs can be applied universally to all human societies, a number are specific to western-style industrialised societies. Given that the current climate crisis can be traced back to European-initiated industrialisation, and that current inequitable global resource distribution can be traced back to western expansionism and colonisation, I suggest that the epistemological framework from which the current crisis is descended is inadequate - on its own - to provide solutions which will take us into a transformed, equitable sustainable world.

Returning to the discussion of 'development', I suggest it is not possible for us to meet the SDG targets of sustainably lifting people out of poverty while development is linked to economic growth. I'd argue, moreover, that while poverty is centralised as the problem, we cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. However, when excessive wealth is centralised as the problem, then redistribution of resources can be centralised as a strategy. When fair and equitable distribution of the world's resources is placed central, when wealth is seen as the problem to be solved, then eradication of poverty and equitable access of food, water, shelter, health, education and infrastructure become possible.

History and the Possibilities for Global Transformation *Emma Shortis*

We are living, it seems, in unprecedented times. As the United States faces political and social unrest, and amid simultaneous global health and climate crises, it is easy to think that all of this is new. Some of it is, of course—when it comes to the climate crisis, we are indeed in uncharted waters. But when it comes to political and health crises, there are precedents. That is perhaps why, in popular discussions of the multiple calamities we face, we see a turn to attempts at comparative historical analysis. Are the protests currently sweeping the United States more or less serious than 1968? Is Trump the new Nixon, about to win an election on a platform of law and order, sweeping back into office on a wave of white backlash? Or is this time perhaps different? When it comes to a global pandemic—are we about to see a second wave much worse than the first, just as the world saw during the Spanish flu pandemic of the early twentieth century? Are we staring down a death toll similar to the catastrophic losses of 1918-19?

Underlying all of these questions is a fundamental concern about 'learning' from history. Historians are rightly reluctant to engage in this kind of simplistic moralising. History may not offer us any guide to what is happening now, and it certainly doesn't show us the road

out. That is true when it comes to dismantling systemic racism, dealing with a global pandemic, or attempting to tackle catastrophic climate change.

Taken together, these crises make clear that nothing short of a radical rethink of our place on this planet and our relationships with each other will suffice. Calls for such transformation are not new, but they are all the more urgent. In 2015, the United Nations offered an answer to that call in the form of the Sustainable Development Goals. Those Goals are far from perfect, but perhaps they are a start. Unlike anything else we have, the Goals are unanimously agreed upon project for making a better world for all of us.

Five years later, in a world transformed, the possibilities for achieving the UN Global Transformation Agenda seem incredibly slim. How can we imagine, let alone enact, a global political transformation so dramatic?

History does not offer us 'lessons'. But it can help us to remember that nothing is inevitable. Trajectories can change, and they can do so very quickly. The stories of those changes and how they came about do not offer us a guide, but they can offer us something else—hope. Hope for people, and hope for the planet.

My small source of historical hope lies not at the United Nations but the bottom of the world, in a place seemingly peripheral to global politics: Antarctica.

In the 1980s, it seemed inevitable that mining would begin in 'the last great wilderness', as the countries that governed Antarctica began negotiating an agreement that would open its oil and mineral reserves to mining. In Antarctica, the world seemed to be embarking on an all too familiar path of destruction in the name of unfettered economic growth.

Led by Greenpeace and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, outraged environmentalists immediately embarked on a campaign against that consensus. Those activists insisted that Antarctica was too fragile, too precious, and too important to open up to environmentally catastrophic mining. They secretly lobbied at international negotiations, staged 'penguin protests', and recruited the most famous Frenchman in the world—Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau—as well as the French and Australian Prime Ministers to the cause.

By the end of the decade, the campaign had succeeded in creating an astounding political reversal. Mining was banned and the entire Antarctic continent permanently protected. The Environmental Protection Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty, adopted in 1991, is an unparalleled achievement in the history of international environmentalism. It stands almost entirely apart in a motley collection of international environmental agreements, even the best of which are collective responses to the damage already wrought, marked by their loopholes, lax enforcement, and general ineffectiveness.

The successful campaign to protect Antarctica was of one of the world's most significant but least understood environmental campaigns. It prompted us to rethink our relationship with nature for just a moment, and suggests that it might be possible to create such a moment again. Most importantly, the campaign shows that tremendous shifts in international environmental politics can be achieved. It shows that it is indeed possible to reach environmental outcomes that defy economic interests and big oil. And finally, it shows how we might rethink our place on this planet, providing a small glimmer of hope for what that new world could look like.

This article draws on the author's PhD thesis (Shortis 2019a). For more on the Antarctic campaign, see also Shortis 2015 and 2019b.

Place-Based Transformations

Relating, Learning & Measuring: The Propeller Model *Roberto Guevara, Mary Johnson & Rachel England*
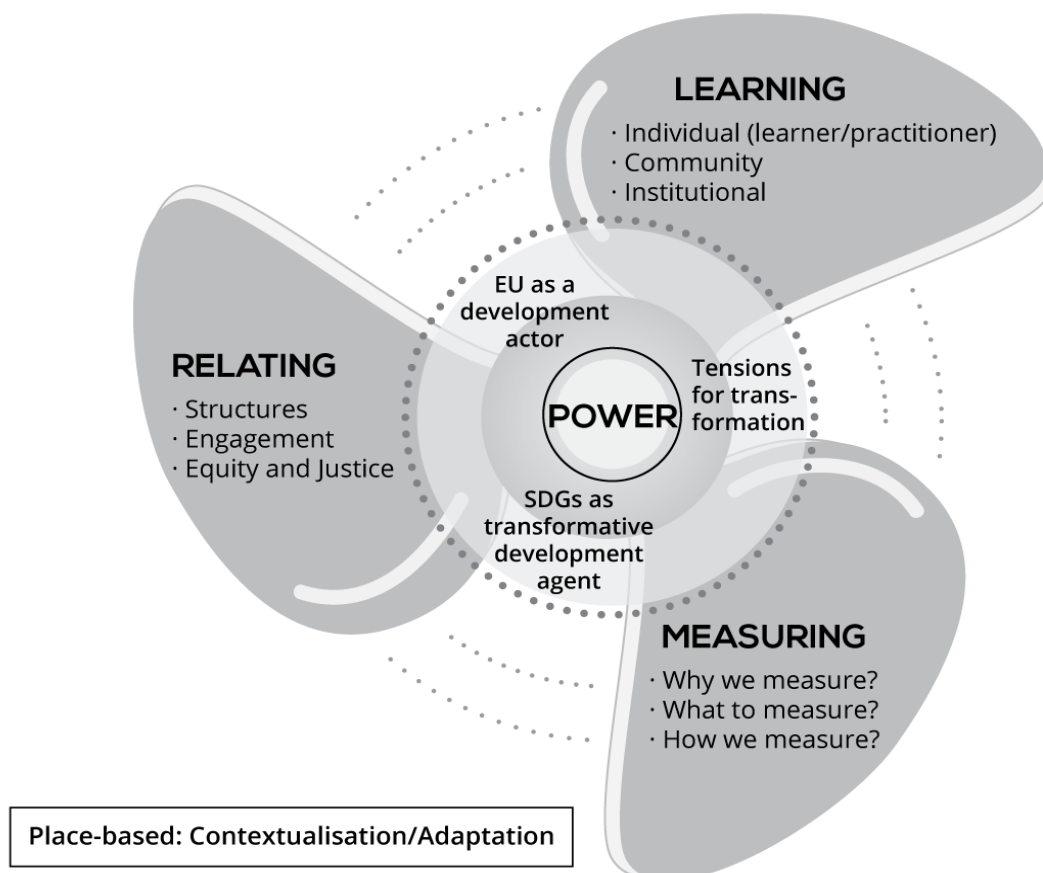
The propeller model is a lens through which we will examine the role and contribution of the EU as a development actor in the achievement of the UN SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region.

 The model is built upon our earlier decision to adapt the model of Sachs and our more recent conversations on the potential of Cashore's framework informing our analysis. The propeller model aims to ensure that we can examine the SDGs as an integrated and interconnected set of goals, rather than 17 separate goals. While Sachs has managed to cluster the goals into six categories, which we adapted to five, it still presents them as separate goals.

Cashore on the other hand, poses a challenge to the current approach of implementing the SDGs. He argues that the nature of the 'wicked' problems we are trying to solve requires that we change the dominant way of responding, currently mainly through technical solutions. But rather that we need to reframe how we view these problems and structure our responses recognizing that both have essentially political and moral dimensions.

The SDGs are indeed a transformational agenda, but we also recognize that transformation is not merely the end product of the SDGs, the conceptualization and implementation of projects must be in themselves transformational. So, we are all equally transformed as we contribute to transformation.

Aside from the examination of the role of the EU as a development actor in the achievement of an integrated UN SDG framework, we have wanted to situate the EU within the regional structure's response to a global framework, from a distinctly local and place-based context. The argument is that the achievement of the UN SDGs must be ultimately tangible within a specific place. This is the reason for also identifying and examining specific case studies to help to illustrate not just the role of the EU as a development actor but the actual outcomes of this proposed development initiatives.

At the same time, we recognize that this is not a one-way or top-down process but a dynamic and reciprocal one, as place-based realities equally influence both development actors and the very essence of these global goals.

There are three fins to the propeller that characterize the three dynamic elements in this transformational system. Power and its ubiquitous presence will also be examined, specifically the reach, proximity and presence of power in acts of relating, learning and measuring.

First, actors and structures are not static but are in a dynamic reciprocal relationship with each other, which we will examine as the relating element of the propeller.

Second, processes involved in the conceptualization, implementation and evaluation of the initiatives to achieve the SDGs must be viewed and conducted as essentially learning-based processes, that challenge the dominance of formal learning within the current SDGs.

And third, outcomes of these interventions must be 'measured' and valued differently if we truly believe in the truly transformational and transformative aims of the SDGs. As new development models are embraced i.e. social, environmental and relational development rather than continuous growth, new ways of measuring will be required.

These three elements of relating, learning and measuring are not separate but are held together and propelled by the EU as a development actor, the SDGs as an integrated and transformational agenda, and development as not just a technical problem but one with moral and political dimensions as well, that is not just located, but contextualized and adapted, within the place.

The Propeller Model in Action: Case Study of the EU and Australia funding BEQUAL *Bruce Wilson & Roberto Guevara*

Editors' note: This piece is the abstract for a chapter to be published in the forthcoming monograph

Laos PDR is a small land-locked country that is recognised as one of the poorest in the world. As a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Laos PDR is seen appropriately as a partner with other nations in working to achieve the global transformation that is foreshadowed by the 2030 Global Agenda, with its 17 Goals and 169 targets. In that spirit, several Governments work actively with the Laos PDR Government to support various development processes. Similarly, there are many International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) that also work with the Government and local communities and networks to improve Laos citizens' economic, social and environmental circumstances.

In that wider context, the EU and Australia are partners working with the Lao PDR Government. There is collaboration on specific actions as well as independent projects. The focus of this chapter will be on the implementation of SDG 4, particularly as it relates to BEQUAL (Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR) which is a program led by the Lao Government, with support from the Australian Government and the European Union.

For the **LEARNING** element, we will examine how BEQUAL has been clearly committed to focusing on primary education, specifically "on assisting the Ministry of Education and Sports with the development and implementation of the national new curriculum for grades 1–5, the improvement of teacher education and the strengthening of support systems such as planning, management and monitoring of teaching." However, there has been some recognition of the importance of the non-formal and community-based education resources in contributing to this the program objectives.

For the **MEASURING** element, we will examine how the mid-project review of BEQUAL conducted by DFAT, resulted in a major shift in the conduct of the project. Many of the innovative approaches, like the recognition of the importance of non-formal and community education to advance the core aim of the project, which then drew on a community of practice of non-formal educators, to train the teachers was cancelled. This clearly illustrates the power that certain forms of measuring have in current development projects.

For the **RELATING** element, we will examine the unique features of this EU- Australia partnership at different levels and dimensions as it relates to the context of place. We will also critically reflect on the cancellation of the innovative cross-sectoral work

However, the individuals who were involved from the non-formal and community education sector to train the teachers as part of the previous agreement were engaged individually, rather than as a collective.

This chapter will constitute the seed for the larger monograph on Laos that will examine in greater detail the nature and practice of the partnership (SDG 17) between the EU and the Australian Government to finance and manage BEQUAL, which is a contribution of EU, Australia and the Lao PDR to (SDG 4).

A collaborative approach to development: an example for EU work in Asia and the Pacific *Chris Duke*

Germany is a leading EU Member State. It carries the heaviest weight of the continent's dark shared 20th Century history. Yet in 2019 it celebrated a century of civic-led, government-supported nationally organised community-based ALE (adult learning and education): the Volkshochschule (vhs), and its national structure Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (DVV), more familiarly known as the German Adult Education Association and based in Bonn. DVV attracts government support via a special vote in the national budget for social structure associations and cooperatives in education, health or financing like Caritas or Kolping, working often also with different foundations like Friedrich-Naumann and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

In 2019 DVV also celebrated 50 years of history of its semi-autonomous Institute for International Cooperation, today DVV International (DVVI), as a channel for German

Development aid and voluntary endeavour, also headquartered in Bonn. DVVI staff work there and in DVV regional or country offices across the 'global south' (GS).

The DVV home ethos of locally driven vhs, whose work grows up within the context, needs and culture of that particular place and community, is recreated in the different, much more diverse, political, cultural, socio-economic and other contexts of partner countries. DVVI presents itself and behaves more as a learning partner than a charitable controlling donor. It works with local leaders and animateurs to build on or co-create such policies, laws, structures, partnerships and resources as are jointly agreed to be necessary for the effective development of community-based ALE. German Head Office DVVI staff take several-year postings to work alongside larger numbers of local staff across the GS, assisting their professional, political and maybe ethical development where this seems necessary and acceptable.

DVVI has a reputation and ethos of seeking out partner agencies, leaders and communities with ethical and business orientations akin to its own. It is not a 'soft touch'; its oversight of funds and programmes is conducted with stereotypical yet non-colonialist efficiency from which the EU might learn. DVV and DVVI continue to be led by active, highly professional, well-qualified staff who do research and publish in their own right, yet always with a leaning towards practicable good practice. 'South-South', as well as South-North collaboration and co-learning, are fostered, with a suspiciously watchful lookout for subtle forms of neo-colonialism: like theories and policy proposals written in the North but for use in the GS.

The Asian and Pacific region became, and remains, a multi-level beneficiary of DVVI partnership. Along with national and sub-national one-off and time-extended programmatic arrangements and events, from about the time that the EU itself emerged and evolved towards its current form, DVV (formalised as DVVI from 1969) worked collaboratively – sometimes alongside other INGOs like its Dutch VVV counterpart and different IGOs in the UN family of nations. These include UNESCO and what is now UIL which it supports in Hamburg; but also ILO, WHO, FAO, IBRD and others, in formal and informal collaboration. It partners and supports such ALE INGOs as ICAE and WEF, and regional agencies: European, African and Latin American regional ALE NGOs.

DVVI has enjoyed a continuing supportive partnership for over 40 years with an Asian-Pacific NGO founded in the sixties. This has proved very important for the huge Asian region which includes the world's two most populous nations, four of the top five and nine of the top twenty. The initially in-region partnership was started by efforts between Australian and Indian adult educators, from the recently formed Australian Association of Adult Education and its older Indian counterpart. An Australian and UNESCO-supported founding meeting in Sydney in 1964 was followed by a residential New Delhi Seminar funded by another German body, Friedrich-Naumann Stiftung.

The name given to the new regional association, built on the by then wobbly foundations of British Empire (transmuting into Commonwealth as UK PM Macmillan's winds of change blew), was also a bit old-fashioned: the B in ASPBAE stood for 'Bureau': the Asian-South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education. 25 years later the by then well-anchored regional NGO kept the 'acro-name' ASPBAE but B became Basic in 'Basic and Adult Education' – from bureau[cratic] to basic without fuss or bother! Most of the start-up members were from the old tradition: Hong Kong, New Zealand, Malaya>Malaysia and new Singapore, Bangladesh out of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, and Australia.

In the late seventies a partnership grew up between DVVI and ASPBAE, which had by then widened its membership and scope, the kernel shifting to SE and East Asia, with a loose public-civic melange of agencies spiced by strong and passionate individuals: Thai, Indonesian, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Singapore, Hong Kong and Filipino. The Sub-continent remained well represented mainly from India and Sri Lanka, also Bangladesh and Pakistan, with other smaller nations in progressively more active membership. An initial three-year ASPBAE-DVV agreement was followed by others within the umbrella regional body; nested within or growing up out of this were other country and country-group agreements, down to the sub-national level of the outstanding New Delhi-based catalyst NGO PRIA, for participatory research in Asia. The sparsely populated South Pacific was included, sometimes counting in Australia and New Zealand as Oceania. Aussies and Kiwis remained active partners and (partly for lingua franca reasons and old ALE organising traditions) often provided individually volunteered leadership.

As its membership expanded and its work diversified under continuous review and development, ASPBAE constituted itself into four sub-regions with democratic means of elective governance within a regionalised framework and a central office which moved from Singapore to Sri Lanka, to India and now the Philippines. DVV itself has small regional offices – in Vientiane mainly for the three 'Indochina' countries, and then also in Bishkek for several countries in what became the 5th ASPBAE sub-region of Central Asia. Democracy was strengthened as it evolved, rather than as is sadly common, to atrophy.

The lessons for the EU, in its commitment to balanced and democratically grounded human development of communities, individuals and nations, are evident. Many EU nations have trading or imperial legacies and familiarities within the huge region: the French in Indochina, the British as noted above, the Portuguese across trading posts from at least Goa to Macao and (now) Timor Leste; the Dutch in the Spice Islands, now Indonesia. With the onrush of globalisation from the eighties, the idea of mutual learning between West and East took hold, with shared suspicion of neo-colonialism alongside seemingly unstoppable global economic neoliberalism. Gradually, East and West came to meet on new terms. Culture and the older wisdoms of 'eastern' civilisations, with cinema and other art as well as technologies often new to 'the West', made exchange and mutuality of learning less implausible. In the mid-eighties DVVI and ASPBAE joined forces with ICAE and the national Chinese AE department to bring PRC China into global ALE membership by means of an international conference in Shanghai. There was influential input from Europe and worldwide. Somehow inter- and intra-regional political and hostilities were sidestepped and the work went on.

Today, despite huge stresses to internationalism, and anti-global tendencies conspicuous in some dominant old democracies of 'the West', the DVVI-Asian-Pacific partnership evolves and continues to bear fruit. This is not the place to document its successes, setbacks and 'outputs'; but the lessons for the EU in this twenties SDG decade pivot around trust, equity and the active practice of mutuality in learning and applying what can be learned from current practice and older legacies.

The EU has a unique identity and a reputable track-record among global regions and at top-table global influence, as it too steers through difficult political problems and damaging competitive thinking. DVV offers a good example: in its staffing policies and organisational practices, its, capacity to delegate fully in trust and in continuing willingness to learn from visiting ALE students, practitioners and leaders. Its diverse modes of supportive partnership can sidestep the discontents that globalisation and politicisation have inflicted; and the loss

of stature and support that starve and threatened to destroy many in the UN family of development agencies.

DVV's is able to choose good partners in places of special need, with confident willingness to start-up suites of programmes and projects with and through national bodies. It does this without German staff intruding and assessing uninvited, but joining as colleagues. Here are practical lessons showing how the EU can be a truly welcome, successful and thus also self-benefitting presence – soft diplomacy at its best. Here is practical working democratic collaboration across a huge and diverse region to mutual hard-nosed economic benefits, including East-to-West cultural and technical enrichment for EU Member States. The examples are there, the need is intense, and the way is open for confident bridge-building by a long-sighted EU.

Footnote: I am grateful to my longstanding colleague Dr Heribert Hinzen, for many years the Director of DVVI, for checking on the accuracy of this article. The early history of ASPBAE was edited by its founding Chairman, S.C.Dutta, ASPBAE comes of age 1964-85 (1985) and published by ASPBAE in Canberra. For more information about ASPBAE see http://www.aspbae.org/

EU-Pacific engagement post Covid-19 and post-Brexit: What impact on the SDGs? *Serena Kelly & Matthew Doidge*

As the world's largest development actor, development policy and action is one of the key facets of the European Union's (EU) international identity. Due to historical reasons, much of the EU's international development policy has been directed through the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) grouping. Yet, out of the three regions, the Pacific component of the ACP arrangement has received the least attention for various reasons, including geographical distance from Europe and a relatively low population. The year 2020 is arguably an extremely important one for EU-Pacific relations: 1. The arrangement underpinning EU-ACP relations, the Cotonou Agreement, ends; 2. Britain, an important post-colonial power in the Pacific, has left the European Union; and 3. competing narratives between the West and China have escalated, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. On top of this, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are now 5 years old.

In light of this confluence of factors, our research is evaluating the potential impact of these three confluences on EU-Pacific relations in order to establish whether they may have an impact on the EU's approach to the SDGs in the Pacific. In April 2020, the European Union announced an aid package to Pacific valued at €119 million to assist the Pacific in dealing with the pandemic. As the EU Ambassador for the Pacific, Sujiro Seam has noted: "The COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest global challenge of our time. The EU recognizes that it requires a global response, based on international cooperation and partnership. As a part of the EU global response to the Covid-19 pandemic, I am proud to announce the mobilisation of €119 million of the Pacific". The pledged financial support for all partner countries is more than €15.6 billion and will come from "existing external action resources" (European Commission) meaning that resources may be diverted from key development areas such as the Sustainable Development Goal agenda. To conduct this research, we are looking at current EU efforts to help developing nations achieve the SDGs as well as the efforts of other countries in the region, including China.

Strengthening Urban Engagement in Universities in Asia and Africa *Joanne Neary*

Funded by the British Academy's Cities and Infrastructure programme (CI170271) The University of Glasgow worked in collaboration with Universities from Iran, Iraq, Philippines, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and South Africa to explore the role of Universities in civic life, and the ways in which the third mission was realised in these contexts. Our colleagues from the respective Universities interviewed key city and University stakeholders including city mayors, Vice-Chancellors, heads of municipalities, to explore their perceptions of University-City engagement.

The current short piece explores the barriers to long-term engagement as experienced in Manila, Philippines.

The need for long-term local political buy-in was identified as one of the barriers experienced both by University and City stakeholders. They discussed that politicians often used University community engagement for political gain, rather than collaborating on long-term sustainable planning:

"…local politicians do not do long-term projects with Universities because they would only think about their winning in the next election. The main criteria for doing projects is whether or not the projects will help them win…hence most of the projects are scholarship programmes or free medical and legal services" (City Planning Arch Lacuna, Manila)

"Whoever sits as mayor constructs and the successor deconstructs. Sometimes construction and deconstruction affect relations of the institution" (University FEU, Manila)

These two examples show a short-term and shallow approach by the City to development, producing short-term solutions rather than exploring how long-term meaningful collaboration could improve deep-rooted issues experienced by the population. It also speaks to the political need to 're-invent', rather than extending and building upon what progress has already been implemented. This suggests a wider issue of the mismatch between the agendas of key stakeholders, and what they believe the outcome of collaboration and community engagement to be.

In addition to political buy-in, participants also discussed the impact of "external factors" in creating difficult conditions for the continuation of collaboration:

"But sometimes there are external factors that are also uncontrollable like the pulling out of partners due to lack of funds, the resignation of the focal person and the regulations of the government. Sometimes they will reason out that there are amendments in the law and what we are practising are no longer applicable." (University FEU)

These macro-level factors, of financing, and national government policy, was seen to impact of the City and University side of collaboration. In this example, we see collaboration has dependent on the motivations of individuals, rather than being driven by wider policy. Where key stakeholders leave collaborative networks, it can have long-term damaging effects:

"There was a project between Manila and De La Salle University to help the traffic situation. This is an example of the city working in partnership with the university. However, it was discontinued since there was no one who followed up the project." (Director of Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau)

While these projects may offer short term gains and be shown to have a positive impact on civic life, there is a need for a continuous University presence in these projects to ensure the

lessons learned are not lost. This may prove challenging in Universities where projects are offered short term funding, and staff members are highly mobile. The need for legacy planning, to ensure that projects are implemented and evaluated, is key to the sustainability of both the relationship and of the projects. One way to ensure this is to create a key University intermediary, whose job it would be to drive the collaboration agenda, make strategic connections between supply-side (Universities) and demand-side (City side), and be able to look long-term to ensure that these collaborations move beyond individual projects.

To find out more about this project, please visit the SUEAUU website (www.sueuaa.org)

Teaching a University: Tertiary Institutions and the SDGs *Renzo Mori Jnr*

The SDGs provide a unique platform in which civil society, organisations and government representatives can partner and contribute to solve the biggest sustainable development challenges the world faces. In this context, tertiary institutions are essential to achieving the SDGs. Tertiary institutions have the potential to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through research, education, innovation and partnerships. These institutions can demonstrate leadership by ensuring that best practice sustainability is embedded in all aspects of their operations, and by using their expertise, resources and capabilities to partner and influence stakeholders to advance the sustainable development agenda.

Research and education also have a direct role in addressing the SDGs through knowledge and capacity building: education to prepare students to understand and tackle sustainability challenges and advance sustainable practices; and research to provide solutions and innovation to underpin the implementation and achievement of the SDGs.

It is crucial that the SDGs are not treated as merely a box-ticking exercise. The SDGs should be used as a genuine instrument to help organisations to improve their sustainability performance, and not (cynically) as a marketing instrument. The SDGs offer tertiary institutions a critical instrument for embedding sustainability into their strategies, processes, policies, and practices. For instance, in the research space, tertiary institutions can employ the SDGs to foster interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinary for impactful research addressing key global challenges. Capacity building can be fostered by research partnerships, and strategic partnerships can be underpinned by the SDGs.

SDG 4 – to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – is the SDG where tertiary institutions have the most obvious alignment. Although education is particularly at the core of the SDG4, it has also linkages with targets and indicators in other SDGs including: reducing poverty (indicator 1.a.2), health and well-being (target 3.7), gender equality (indicator 5.6.2), decent work (target 8.6), responsible consumption and growth (target 12.8) and climate change (target 13.3). Access to quality education is crucial for reducing inequalities and is a foundation for peaceful and fair societies. Education is also essential for sustainable development as it builds the knowledge needed to address our critical sustainability challenges.

In relation to education, the SDGs provide an opportunity for institutions to review their strategies and pedagogic approaches to better reflect the increasing demand for education for sustainable development, lifelong learning and careers of the future. Capacity building and partnership initiatives for students in the Global South and those in vulnerable

situations, as well as accessible, inclusive and affordable education should be promoted and sought.

From the governance and operations point of view, the SDGs represent an integrated business approach that offers tertiary institutions the opportunity to re-think their strategies to maximise positive outcomes and shared value for their organisation and the communities within which they operate. By embedding the SDGs into their relevant processes, policies, practices and decision-making, tertiary institutions have the potential to create long-term value and new opportunities. High-level commitment and strong governance structures are crucial to support SDG awareness, engage key stakeholders and support programs aligned with the sustainable development agenda.

Tertiary institutions have opportunities to play important leadership roles in influencing stakeholders and having direct involvement in local, regional and international dialogue and initiatives to promote and contribute to the sustainable development agenda. It is also important for these institutions to demonstrate leadership by example, which means demonstrating commitments to the SDGs, improving sustainability performance and outcomes, effectively contributing to the SDGs and being transparent and accountable about these contributions.

Editors' Note: For an example of how RMIT University in Melbourne is embedding the SDGs into all aspects of the organisation, see Mori Jnr et al (2019)

City Scan-VLR: A route for cities, regions and towns achieving the Sustainable Development Goals *Joana Correia*

UN Global Compact Cities Programme, RMIT University

Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is dependent upon action in our urban centres. With more than half of the world's population already living in urban areas and with experts estimating this will rise to 68% by 2050 (United Nations, 2019), urban areas are the epicentres of skills, economic activity, innovation and consumption. As the major sites responsible for greenhouse emissions, they are also inevitably places where sustainability is both a challenge and an opportunity. The development of an 'urban' SDG was preceded by recognition from the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the struggle for global sustainability will be won or lost in cities (UNDP et al., 2017). SDG 11 *Sustainable Cities and Communities* responded to the repeated calls from many urban scholars and city-focused organisations over many years, that addressing urbanisation and associated sustainability issues that arise in our cities is critical (Klopp and Petretta, 2017; Kaika, 2017; Fenton and Gustafsson, 2017; Parnell, 2016). Further relevance was then given to the role of urban centres by the adoption of city specific policy and governance frameworks, such as the New Urban Agenda (during Habitat III in Quito) and the Urban Agenda for the EU (through the Pact of Amsterdam), both in 2016 (Siragusa et al., 2020; Kaika, 2017).

Two immediate questions arise from the positioning of cities, regions and towns within the SDGs. First, the advent of SDG 11 might suggest at first glance that there is now a goal for cities and the other goals do not apply in cities. Nothing could be further from the case, as explained below. Second, despite the importance given in the SDGs for cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, since the UN Declaration was

signed by UN member States, it does not attribute specific responsibilities to cities and local governments (Pipa and Conroy, 2019; Graute, 2016). Hence there has been vigorous debate about how action in cities is coordinated and progressed under the UN Declaration.

In response to the challenges faced by nation-states generally in implementing the SDGs, increasing emphasis has been given to 'localising' the SDGs (Sachs et al., 2019b; Nhamo and Mjimba, 2020). Such calls seek to recognise that (a) cities can act even when the nation-state is lagging, and (b) the local, city-scale is a logical and important administrative and community unit for intervention on sustainable development. The 'localising' of the SDGs includes the setting of indicators, goals and targets by subnational and local governments, which can then be implemented locally, and progress monitored accordingly (Nhamo and Mjimba, 2020; UCLG, 2019; Pipa and Conroy, 2019).

The existence of SDG 11 does not mean that cities' importance is limited to the targets and indicators encompassed by this particular SDG. Rather, all goals apply in cities, and SDG 11 is just one of several lenses through which sustainable development might proceed. Indeed, progress on a single SDG, without the others, is potentially problematic. The interconnectedness and interdependencies of all 17 SDGs has been reinforced over the years. Links to the urban agenda, extend well beyond SDG 11 (Pipa, 2019; Graute, 2016) and an analysis of the SDGs reveals that further to its global and universal nature, all include targets that relate to the responsibilities and competencies of local and regional governments. To state some simple examples, cities are intrinsically connected to economic growth and the creation of decent jobs (SDG 8 *Decent work and economic growth*), as well as to urban infrastructure and innovation (SDG 9 *Industry, innovation and infrastructure*) and the provision and management of water and sanitation services and infrastructure (SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation). Similarly, as places of consumption, emitters of greenhouse gases and producers of waste urban centres are fundamental for the fulfilment of SDG 12 *Responsible consumption and production* and SDG 13 *Climate Action.*

Cities, regions and towns are therefore hubs for the implementation and localisation of all the SDGs. In the process of localising the SDGs, they often play two major roles. One is the local government's role as an implementer of the SDGs at a local level, aiming to embed them in their strategies and operations. This manifests, for example in local governments' roles in delivering basic services. The second is as an influencer, through development policies, and promoting inclusive, integrated and sustainable territorial development. Through their role as policymakers, local governments are often better placed than national government to link the SDGs with the community, thus enabling real change at the community level. Local governments thus have the ability to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at a national level through bottom-up action (UNDP et al., 2017). To fulfil the imperative to "leave no one behind", a transformation at the local level must speak to the spatial and social ordering of communities and this ordering is laid out in the world's growing cities. Local and regional governments, city and town officials and mayors around the world have taken on the role to translate the somewhat conceptual aspirations of the 2030 Agenda into local action with concrete actions at the community level (Pipa, 2019; Siragusa et al., 2020).

In addition to attending to their direct operations, local governments can catalyse much wider change; not so much through a focus on SDG 11, but through SDG 17 *Partnerships for the goals*. Indeed, At the core of the 2030 Agenda is the intention for a revitalised partnership for sustainable development based on active engagement of stakeholders throughout all stages of the Agenda (UN-DESA, 2019). The way in which the Agenda 2030

and the SDGs came about, through broad and inclusive participation and consultation, has contributed to a sense of ownership shared by all stakeholders. This sense of ownership should be kept and nurtured during implementation, reporting and monitoring of the SDGs.

City Scan-VLR

So; progressing the SDGs requires urban action, and this suggests a key role for local government and communities in identifying and then enacting their sustainable development priorities, across all the SDGs. A review exercise enables the analysis of existing frameworks and their alignment with the SDGs, allowing the identification of gaps (UN-DESA, 2019). In 2018, New York City presented the first report to demonstrate its progress on the SDGs to the United Nations, termed Voluntary Local Review (VLR) (Deininger et al., 2019). Similar to Voluntary National Reviews (the mechanism through which nations states communicate their progress on implementation of the SDGs to the UN), the VLRs' value rests not simply in the final report but in the processes of engagement and partnership forged through co-creation of review and action. This is a distinctive focus of the City Scan-VLR, developed by the UN Global Compact – Cities Programme at RMIT University and applicable to cities, regions and towns.

Producing a VLR enables cities, regions and towns to assess their progress on the SDGs while prioritising actions and raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda in their local community and administration. It also promotes citizen engagement and collaboration with peer cities and the broader community around the SDGs. The process for the creation of a VLR can foster a collaboration model that can have benefits beyond the report produced, by providing a common framework and language shared across different stakeholders (Deininger et al., 2019; Siragusa et al., 2020). Ultimately, a VLR provides a local perspective on the global conversation of the 2030 Agenda, allowing subnational action towards the implementation of the SDGs. By February 2020 the VLRs that have been published span a variety of countries and different sized local and regional governments, from the small town of Shimokawa in Japan with only 3,000 inhabitants, to the 8 million people in New York in the USA or the sparsely populated State of Oaxaca in Mexico (Ortiz-Moya et al., 2020).

The City Scan-VLR provides a framework, an initial diagnostic, and a process for enabling a comprehensive understanding of what is being done already and what should be prioritised for the future. First developed in 2014, the City Scan worked as a communication tool for city signatories to fulfil their reporting commitment to the UN Global Compact. It provides cities, regions or towns with an understanding of their urban and sustainability challenges while identifying opportunities for projects and policies to drive improvement around sustainable development.

Covering 157 issues focused on urban development, sustainability and governance, the City Scan was founded on the UN Global Compact Ten Principles. The engagement process of the City Scan with different stakeholder groups – private sector, civil society, academia and the broader community – enables subnational governments to take the findings and develop informed strategic plans and develop initiatives to tackle identified issues. The current City Scan-VLR takes advantage of the original City Scan framework, in which a mix of data includes input scores gathered through engagement with different groups across the community, combined with the more top-down, quantitative indicators that characterise the VLR approach.

Local governments often lack the capacity and the resources to develop the frameworks and tools to implement the SDGs in a way that applies to their local reality (Pipa and Bouchet, 2020). The City Scan-VLR is designed to provide this capacity, along with an independent, truthful and transparent reporting process through which cities and communities can acknowledge their challenges and weaknesses, and set out a shared agenda to tackle them.

New forms of communicating ideas are important for facilitating place-based work. Technologies that link-local with global and theory with practice provide the platform for creating an understanding - a rationale - of how we fit in the world. New forms of communication facilitate the collaborative relationships required to address radical transformations. The following two articles provide examples of the effectiveness of communicating, connecting and collaborating.

Communicating 2020: On Podcasting *Chloe Ward*

In her piece in this edition of the *PIMA Bulletin* my colleague Emma Shortis asks how history can help academics, policymakers and the public rethink the world at a time of multiple economic, health and political crises. In our podcast, *Barely Gettin' By*, supported and produced by RMIT University, Emma and I try to answer that question.

Podcasting has been [heralded] as a new tool for academic communication, helping to break down barriers between scholars and the general public, and to communicate research in real-time. In devising *[Barely Gettin' By]*, Emma and I wanted to do all these things, and one more: we wanted to carve out a space for serious historical discussion, amidst a relentless news cycle that allows little opportunity for reflection and consideration.

The format is simple. In each episode, we look at an issue that's big news in the present, then consider its history. The first series was at once broad and selective: we would talk about a big theme ('Feminism', 'environmentalism', or 'fascism'), then focus on case studies that fit in with both our interests and our historical expertise. We are now in the middle of a second series, which has a much narrower scope: we are looking at the 1990s and its consequences for today.

We quickly learned that podcasting isn't as simple as getting in a studio and chatting to a friend. While, to make sure our conversations sound natural, we don't script the podcast, we do prepare detailed notes and discussion points. We also try to help our listener. In every episode, one of us takes the lead in researching and explaining the historical topic under discussion, while the other acts as a surrogate for the audience, taking the role of an interested, informed, but not expert interviewer.

Honest, constructive and critical feedback from our producers at RMIT, listeners, and friends has helped us refine this formula. Early on, a few people told us that a long podcast – 45 minutes plus – is tough for a casual listener trying to keep up with our detailed, rigorous historical discussions. Since then, we have experimented with breaking up episodes into multiple parts and structuring the podcast as small segments, rather than a single, long conversation.

Emma and I were lucky enough to get support from the RMIT Media and Communications team in producing and publicising the podcast. The team has been an invaluable support in

providing feedback and analytics on our performance, promoting the podcast on social media, and managing technical production. This was a huge challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to record from our homes.

This crisis, along with potentially catastrophic climate change, has only reinforced to us how important this kind of communication is. Universities and academics, within them, have a responsibility to engage and communicate. As the Sustainable Development Goals make clear, it is only through partnerships that the global transformation agenda will be achieved. This also means making academic research accessible and meaningful. Podcasting, and the method of communication that it involves is one way to do this.

Technological Innovation in Education to ensure lifelong learning post COVID-19 *Sophie Di-Francesco Mayot*

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about many challenges and is transforming societies. Governments and industries are having to innovate and reimagine their activities to circumvent the economic consequences (Dignan, 2020). Underpinning these developments has been a push to innovate diverse business activities. In the education industry, educators are prompted to reflect upon and devise innovative solutions which further integrates information communication technologies (ICT) to better adapt to the COVID-19 environment. Technological innovation in education has become imperative to ensure lifelong learning especially within the context of industry 4.0 which emphasises, smart cities, cloud computing, cognitive computing, internet of things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI) (Mok, 2020).

The concept of lifelong learning (LLL) '…refers to the activities [individuals] perform throughout their life to improve their knowledge, skills and competence in a [specific] field, given some personal, societal or employment motives' (Field, 2001). Longworth (2003) emphasises the importance of lifelong learning in the 21st century due to increasing societal uncertainties whether in global demographics, environmental imperatives, the pervasive access to information due to new technologies and the innovation speed in science and technology. Developing innovation with technologies in lifelong learning provides educators with the opportunity to reconceptualise teaching and learning in the 21st century. It is argued that innovation, education and technologies together, provide the foundational requirements necessary to ensure sustainable 21st-century economies (Moyle, 2010). In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the education industry has illustrated its resilience and ability to swiftly adapt to unpredictable circumstances. Stakeholders have been encouraged to be creative and adopt more agile ways to ensure learners are both equipped with the necessary ICT knowledge and skills, and have access to resources to engage in online collaboration and dialogue. The diverse forms of online interaction of innovative technologies brought about by industry 4.0 facilitate personalisation of learning paths (EC, 2008). Indeed, learners gradually become active stakeholders that are 'empowered to shape their own learning spaces and resources' and *collaborative learning* processes (Ala-Mutka, 2008).

Teachers and students have been able to transform challenges into opportunities and reinvent the *status quo* of learning (Dignan, 2020). Virtual learning environments have been made possible through a wide range of technological innovative platforms which have enabled governments, businesses and civil society to remain connected irrespective of time,

space and location. Video-conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Blackboard Collaborate, Google Meet and Skype for Business are prompting cooperation and collaboration amongst educators and learners. In addition, learning management systems such as Instructure's Canvas, Blackboard and Google Classroom provide learners with the opportunity to share information and collaborate with other users in real-time from any digital device (Dignan, 2020).

While the importance of technological innovation to lifelong learning has been part of public policy discourse over the past decade, COVID-19 has highlighted the issue of the digital divide which continues to pervade the global community (ATSE, 2020). To this day, numerous societies continue to lack access to ICT particularly in regional and remote households and are left disadvantaged by the limited and often unreliable internet connections. Likewise, societies that lack ICT skills and/or digital literacy find themselves excluded from the opportunities offered by technological innovative tools (ATSE, 2020). In other words, industry 4.0 has not only transformed the landscape of industries but of labour markets and our daily livelihoods (Mok, 2020).

It is estimated that by 2030, up to 375 million workers across the global workforce – 14% of all workers – may need to change occupations and learn new skills (Mok, 2020). This digital disparity is having unprecedented repercussion on the education system. It is estimated that half of the learners do not have access to a household computer while 43% have no internet at home (G.STIC, 2020). Underpinning this inequity, is the issue of digital literacy which is becoming central to the process of learning in educational institutions as they increasingly use technology in the delivery of most educational programs (ATSE, 2020). While the technical skills required to comprehend and use ICT has become fundamental elements in all levels of education, and essential for life-long learning, remote communities remain disadvantaged and are missing out on the opportunities proposed by technological innovation (ATSE, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed both the need for reform in the education sector to ensure learning sustainability and continuity in times of normalcy and crisis while simultaneously, bringing into sharper focus the digital inequities that permeate the education space. As Mok (2020) notes, education can be a great equaliser if inclusive, but in its current state, it widens gaps instead.

Monographs: Publications currently in progress

In this section, we offer a preview of work-in-progress among members of the EU Centre and Jean Monnet Network.

EU-Australian Collaboration in the Implementation of the SDGs in Asia Pacific: SDG4 in Laos PDR

This monograph explores the collaboration between the European Union (EU) and - Australia, including government and non-government organisations (NGOs), in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR).

Lao PDR is recognised as one of the poorest countries in the world. As such, it was an object of development under the Millennium Development Goals. The country is a member of ASEAN, shares the commitments of the ASEAN Charter and participates in the various

efforts of ASEAN to develop a coherent regional international partnership in south-east Asia. It is also a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, making it an appropriate partner for development projects. Several countries' governments, as well as a number of International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs), work actively with the Lao PDR Government, local communities, and networks on development projects in a number of different fields improve Lao PDR's citizens' economic, social and environmental circumstances.

The monograph tells the story of EU and Australian partnerships, governmental and NGO, and how they have become entwined, helping to forge wider partnerships.

The core focus is on the on partnerships in the implementation of SDG 4, "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all", in the context of BEQUAL (Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR), a program led by the Lao Government, with support from the Australian Government and the European Union. It will examine the unique features of this partnership from different perspectives and dimensions as it relates to the context of place.

Exploring the partnerships from different perspectives introduces the second focus of the monograph: while the implementation of BEQUAL as a program relates to SDG 4, partnerships as such relate to SDG 17. This is line with the Jean Monnet Network's conceptual framework which recognises the fact that an emphasis on any of the SDGs in isolation is not fruitful and thus adopted Sachs' (2015) cluster approach to the SDGs.

From a broader policy perspective, the monograph will describe and examine the nature and practice of the partnership between the EU and the Australian Government to finance BEQUAL. Issues will include the question of whether this is a unique partnership; whether this project is a manifestation of EU principles identified as central to its development practice; and whether this partnership may have influenced the approach that the Australian Government has taken in its development practice, at the country-level in Laos and perhaps in other countries as well.

At a more institutional level, the monograph will describe and examine the nature of the practice of institutional partnerships that developed amongst institutions which worked together on a Training of Master Trainers (ToMT) based on what was called Curriculum globALE (Global Adult Learning and Education). This involved a German INGO (the German Adult Education Association – DVV International), an Asia-Pacific regional network (Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education), an Australian university (RMIT), an inter-governmental body (UNESCO Bangkok) and an Australian development program (Australian Volunteers International) who all worked with the Lao PDR Government, specifically the DNFE, the NFEDC, and various communities throughout Laos to implement this project.

This partnership was recognised by the European Association for the Education of Adults and awarded the International Grundtvig Award for Partnerships in 2018.

From a curriculum perspective, the monograph will examine how the partnership also resulted in a contextualisation of the Curriculum globALE, to tailor it to the Lao participants' needs, thus demonstrating another of the Network's fundamental conceptual beliefs, the importance of place-based implementation. What will also be examined here is the need to find a way to include all facets in the contextualisation: for BEQUAL it was also a recognition that if this contextualisation, it needed to extend beyond curriculum development to develop a support mechanism for the Master Trainers during and after the training. The

idea was to develop a Community of Practice (CoP) to ensure that the curriculum globALE outcomes would take root in the practice of the Master Trainers.

From the broader education sector perspective, the monograph will examine the challenges of developing partnerships across formal and non-formal education sectors by drawing on a number of case studies.

Finally, from a sectoral perspective, the monograph will examine the challenges of developing partnerships across the different development sectors by again drawing on a number of case studies.

While the Lao Ministry of Education and Sport has been a principal local partner of these initiatives, many other Lao organisations have been involved also. Laotian perspectives and practices in some areas have much to contribute to international understanding about how education can contribute to wider processes of transformation. This is true particularly with reference to lifelong learning, and the commitment in SDG 4 to promote lifelong learning as an integral part of the Global Agenda.

To capture both the Laotian perspectives and the perspectives of the various partnerships that formed during the project, Laotian partners and partners from development agencies involved will contribute via case studies.

The Propeller Model: Relating, Learning & Measuring

As discussed in the piece earlier in this Bulletin, the propeller model is a lens through which we will examine the role and contribution of the EU as a development actor in the achievement of the UN SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region. The propeller model aims to ensure that we can examine the SDGs as an integrated and interconnected set of goals, rather than 17 separate goals. This monograph will outline the basics of the propeller model (see earlier in this Bulletin), and present several case studies which use the model as a framework for analysis.

Readymade Garments Industry in Bangladesh: Success, Agony and the Way Forward

Bangladesh is the 8th most populous country in the world. It is also one of the most densely populated least developed countries with 170 million people living in an area of less than 150,000 km². However, Bangladesh is one of the top 50 economies with one of the fastest GDP growth rates averaging more than 6% over the last 10 years.

A significant remittance income sent by Bangladeshis working abroad and rapid industrialisation prompted by foreign investment and export growth, especially in the readymade garment (RMG) and pharmaceutical sectors, have been driving such a spectacular growth since the 1980s. Bangladesh is now poised to become a middle-income country by 2021.

Within the industrial sector, Bangladesh is the world's second-largest RMG exporter after China, earning US$30.6 billion in 2017-2018 financial year. The industry had its humble beginning in the late 70s with its very first export consignment of 1 million shirts to South

Korea. With more than 4000 garment production factories, this industry now accounts for more than 80% of the country's export income and employs more than four million workers, 70% of whom are women (As-Saber, 2013; Mirdha, 2014; As-Saber 2018; BGMEA, 2019). According to the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (2020), "Bangladesh provides an ideal combination of cheap labour and quick turnaround for fast-fashion manufacturers that produce inexpensive clothing rapidly in response to the latest trends".

However, the industry has long been known for its decent work deficit and marred with issues such as appalling working condition, low wages, unsafe and unplanned infrastructure and lack of freedom of speech and right to a union. Incidents of fire and collapses happened to be a commonplace as well. The disastrous Rana Plaza incident of 2013 was a wake-up call for the country and its RMG industry to improve the situation.

There were efforts from the government and other stakeholders including international development agencies, NGOs, multilateral organisations and local as well as international labour unions to arrest the situation and improve it. The overall condition, as a result, improved with no major industrial accidents occurring since Rana Plaza. However, still, there is work to do to improve the situation further.

This book elaborates on the evolution of the RMG industry in Bangladesh and its successes and challenges while attempting to provide a set of guidelines based on the available facts, figures, experiences, trials and tribulations.

It starts with a brief historical account of the RMG industry in Bangladesh followed by an overview of its global value chain and controversies surrounding it. Ethical sourcing issues before and after the Rana Plaza incident are also discussed. The role of ACCOD and Alliance in improving the working environment as well as structural and fire safety are discussed as well which is followed by chapters on decent work, skill shortages and the role of sustainable development goals (SDGs), multilateral organisations, international development agencies (IDAs), NGOs, local and international labour unions and the European Union (EU). Final Chapter is dedicated to arriving at a set of conclusions outlining the way forward to make the sector a more sustainable and viable one. A number of cases are included in the book to provide practical insight into the issues raised in the book.

Trends and Trajectories in EU Development Policy (update of 2012 volume) *Martin Holland & Matthew Doidge*

European Union development policy has a history almost as long as the European project itself, a history in which its approach to development and the developing world has undergone a number of evolutions and transformations, leading up to the current focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. It is in the nature of those evolutions, and the influences that have shaped and defined them, that we are interested, providing as they do an important contextual framework, shorn of which the EU's approach to the developing world cannot be fully understood. At the core of this are the questions as to what development means to the European Union, and what is its place in the EU's policy architecture.

Arguably more than any other actor, the EU's development frameworks have mirrored changing debates on development and underdevelopment. From the Articles of Association of the Treaty of Rome (an important precursor to a formal EU development policy) through

to the present day we have seen EU policy frameworks evolve in response to external conceptual debates. From a focus on Modernisation in its early years (problematising underdevelopment as the product of a deviation from an ideal-type Western industrial modernity), the first Lomé Convention (entered into force in 1976) saw the Union, uniquely among Western development actors, reflecting the arguments of Dependency Theory and the associated demands for the establishment of a New International Economic Order. In essence, this amounted to a transition to a view of the global market system as the cause of, rather than solution to, the problem of underdevelopment. From the 1970s, however, as the neoliberal counterrevolution in development economics took shape, EU policy became increasingly normalised to the new mainstream. The pendulum had reversed, and open markets and integration into the global economy had returned to the fore. Subsequently, as the Human Development approach and global targets in the form of the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals were elaborated, the Union's policy frameworks continued to reflect this evolution.

On the surface, then, the Union's vision of development, shaped and framed by these conceptual debates, has undergone a significant transformation. At the core, however, a number of elements have remained constant. A Western-centric vision of what a developed state looks like has been evident throughout: Modernisation and Dependency, otherwise essentially contradictory frameworks, shared a vision of the endpoint of development, differing only on the path taken for its achievement. Economic growth has remained a focus, though with differences on how best to generate such growth (open vs protected markets etc.). And, the few short years of Dependency influence aside, a certain universalism has been evident, with no inherent contradiction in the role or position of developed versus developing countries envisaged.

The MDGs and now the SDGs are reflections of those underlying commonalities, and to an extent the logical endpoint of the evolution they represent. Systemic questions (for example on free trade versus protected markets) have been resolved through the 'victory' of neoliberalism, the SDGs constituting, in essence, a set of narrow targets built on the maintenance of a systemic *status quo*. In this respect, development seems no longer to be seen by the European Union or the broader Western development community as a contestation of big ideas, but rather as a technocratic process of finding solutions to suboptimal outcomes (poverty, hunger, gender inequality etc.) within a broadly accepted free-market framework.

For the European Union, this transformation to a more targeted/fragmented vision of development is increasingly also reflected in its development policy and structures. Development seems to be seen less as a coherent framework, and more as a set of tools which can be applied to support and achieve a range of outcomes in an array of policy fields, including stability and security, trade, migration and so on. This raises the obvious question as to whether it is possible to continue to talk about a European Union development policy as such. Perhaps indicatively, the new von der Leyen Commission, rather than having a 'Development' Commissioner, now has a Commissioner for 'International Partnerships.'

Asia, Europe and the Global Agenda for Transformation

Established in 1996, the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) is a unique institution. Now bringing together 53 members, ASEM is a globally significant forum for international dialogue and

cooperation. It is distinguished by its inclusion of most Asian and European nations, by its commitment to informal processes and dialogue, and by the space which is provided for small as well as large nations to play an important role.

Outside of the United Nations, ASEM is arguably at the forefront of efforts to engage with and implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Global Transformation Agenda. As a unique forum for global governance and cooperation, ASEM presents unusual opportunities for genuine, transformative partnerships. Unconstrained by the traditional formality and great power domination that curb the effectiveness of other international organisations, ASEM offers an unusual platform for issues-based leadership.

Asia, Europe and the Global Agenda for Transformation interrogates the promise of ASEM as a transformative platform. It asks what contribution ASEM might make to efforts to understand global governance as a moral, rather than technical, problem. In the midst of a catastrophic global pandemic, how might member states use ASEM to push for transformation of the neoliberal economic model and challenge Anglo-Saxon dominance?

Drawing on the world's foremost experts on the European Union, Asian regional governance, and sustainable development, the volume reviews ASEM's engagement with the SDGs. It asks what progress has been made and provides an effective evidence-base for ASEM and its members to more deeply engage with and implement the SDGs. *Asia, Europe and the Global Agenda for Transformation* will be of interest to scholars of international relations, diplomacy, European and Asian studies, history, and sustainable development.

Power: Challenges, Impasses, Possibilities & Opportunities

Authoritarianism in Crises *Maren Klein, Campbell Hughes & Bradley Davidson*

Author attributions: Maren Klein authored the introduction to this piece. Campbell Hughes authored the section on Hungary, and Bradley Davidson the section on Vietnam.

As much of the world is moving into the next phase of co-existing with COVID-19, it is becoming increasingly clear that this is more than a health crisis; it has the potential to create social, economic and political problems globally (UNDP, 2020). It is also obvious that countries have been affected in different ways and to different degrees even though initially most countries implemented similar measures based on best expert advice as available at the time.

In the initial stages of the spread of COVID-19, once it became clear that unlike previous highly contagious diseases this one would not be contained in clearly defined regions, most nation states regardless of their political orientation responded with unprecedented restrictions on civil liberties. Invoking emergency powers enabled democratic countries to take drastic action, in some cases not only curtailing rights and freedoms considerably but initiating surveillance and coercive measures, giving law enforcement and the executive unprecedented powers with little overt oversight and/or scrutiny.

This has led to concern that democratic rights and civil liberties might be in danger not only in countries transitioning to democracy such as central and eastern European countries but also in established democracies (Bieber, 2020a, 2020b). A recent study from Spain (Amat et

al., 2020), one of Europe's most COVID-19 affected countries, seems to point in this direction. The study, based on survey responses, shows an increasing preference for technocratic and authoritarian style government in response to the pandemic. The authors conclude that this result may be an indication that if the crisis leads citizens to lose their trust in the efficacy of democracy to offer protection against a threat as encountered through COVID-19, there is a possibility that such a consideration might lead to a longer term preference change towards a more authoritarian style of government. A second implication as indicated by the authors is that the crisis offers any leader/regime with authoritarian style tendencies a window of opportunity to seize and centralise powers and to limit democratic checks and balances because of less resistance by the citizenry.

And indeed, history shows that (perceived) emergencies and emergency measures can serve as a step on the path to authoritarianism. The German Ermächtigungsgesetze (Enabling Laws) following the Reichtagsbrand in 1933 are one such example; Turkey and Hungary are more contemporary examples of countries shifting to authoritarian regimes in the name of combatting a crisis. Hungary in particular is an interesting case study (below) having reported low infection and death rates indicating that the country's early and severe restrictions have been effective. At the same time the country's prime minister, Victor Orban, engaged in what could be considered an authoritarian power grab.

It is worthwhile to offer a generalised definition of the concept of authoritarianism at this point as there are more general but also field-of-study specific definitions (e.g., psychological politics vs comparative politics) (Glasius, 2018, p. 516); further, modern authoritarian states have proved adaptable, engaging in what Ezrow (2018, p. 84) terms "cosmetic democratization", making it difficult to identify them as authoritarian with the consequence that citizens perceive themselves to be living in a democracy.

According to the (online) version of the Oxford Law Dictionary, the core meanings of the term authoritarianism are:

1. Modern authoritarianism, a form of government …, is multifaceted. As a broad term, authoritarianism refers to arbitrary governmental authority. The common feature of authoritarian states is the enforcement of obedience to a central authority at the expense of personal freedoms, rule of law and other constitutional values and principles … .
…
50. … an important stepping stone to authoritarianism seem to be broad and/or ill-defined powers, including emergency powers, of the executive, and the possibility of unlimited re-election of the chief executive, especially in presidential systems. In a constitutional democracy the emergency optimally provides only the temporary conditions for exercising otherwise legitimate power. … some constitutional rights are restricted, but the main purpose of the state of emergency is to restore the democratic legal order and the full enjoyment of human rights … . In a regime distancing itself from liberal democracy, the ruler's emergency claims institutionalize an arbitrary executive power unhampered by legal constraints thus creating a long-standing special power beyond the rule of law. … (Tóth, n.d.).

From the above definition, it could be inferred that the main indicators of a shift towards authoritarianism would include exercise of arbitrary authority and broad, ill-defined powers

for the executive with no sunset clause. Applying those criteria, it could be argued that while the enforcement of COVID-19 measures in many localities relied on the use of emergency powers and some of the measures employed by authorities severely curtailed personal freedoms, were/are intrusive and wide-ranging, it would need to be established that the measures were arbitrary, accrued further broad powers for the respective executive of a country, and did not give any indication of a point at which the measure would be wound back.

This differentiation will become more important in the context of living with the disease because until a treatment is available, it is highly likely nation states will retain/develop protocols to contain/live with the disease which may continue to curtail individual freedoms for the foreseeable future. But as long as these are not arbitrary, that is informed by the best available advice at the time and fit for purpose, targeted and well communicated; they would most likely not fulfil the criteria to be called authoritarian.

The second case study, Vietnam, is particularly pertinent in this context. Vietnam is one of a number of countries most successful in combatting the spread of the disease but hardly a democracy; given its human rights record and that it is one party state. Yet, as the case study shows, the way the government handled the crisis—early, fast, and with excellent communication strategies—could serve as model for effective emergency management everywhere.

The Rise of Orbán: Hungary's slide towards authoritarianism

Hungary's slide towards becoming an authoritarian "illiberal democracy" may seem on the surface an unexpected development as in many ways Hungary was the vanguard of the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact — and consequently became a role model for liberal constitutional democracies in Eastern Europe during the 1990s and early 2000s. Indeed, Viktor Orbán, Hungary's current Prime Minister who has been in power for fourteen years over two terms (1998-2002 and 2010-present) rose to political prominence for his 1989 speech in which he demanded free elections and the withdrawal of Soviet troops (Lyman and Smale, 2014). Orbán's first term as Prime Minister saw the nation steered towards membership of the European Union and NATO. Shifting from Soviet-style socialism to a constitutional democracy in the early 1990s as evidenced by the establishment of many democratic instruments such as a constitutional court, ombudsman, and an institutional system for the protection of human rights. Hungary decided to build its post-Soviet economy within a largely neoliberal framework. This meant that the new system of government was constitutionally strong, yet failed to address the social inequalities caused by neoliberal policies. Consequently, many people accustomed to state support under the socialist regime were left behind by the new and largely unfettered capitalist system. This led to anger and resentment within large parts of Hungarian society reaching its peak in the aftermath of the GFC as a result of increasing austerity measures. Orbán was able to tap into this frustration and run a populist campaign in the 2010 election based on an anti-establishment, eurosceptic, nationalist, and anti-IMF platform. He won in a landslide victory which delivered his right-wing party Fidesz a supermajority, with over two-thirds of the seats in the Hungarian Parliament (Antal, 2019). This supermajority gave Orbán's government a near unbridled ability to legislate, make constitutional amendments, and appoint a friendly judiciary. Orbán has used these powers over the past decade to consolidate his position and transform the country into what has been described as "a

political greenhouse for an odd kind of soft autocracy, combining crony capitalism and far-right rhetoric with a single-party political culture" (Kingsley, 2018)— a state which Orbán himself boastfully describes as an "illiberal democracy" (Dempsey, 2010; Karasz & Eddy, 2012; Kulish, 2011; Shattuck, 2019).

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided Orbán with the opportunity to further solidify his grip on power (Zerofsky, 2020). On 11 March 2020, Orbán's government declared a state of emergency which banned incoming travel from China, Italy, and Iran — a prudent step which was implemented by most countries to halt the spread of the virus — however, two weeks later the state of emergency was extended indefinitely after the passing of the "Draft Law on Protecting Against Coronavirus". The new law also includes a number of measures such as criminalising the spreading of "distorted truths" or breaking isolation orders; it also gave the Prime Minister new power to rule by decree (Serhan, 2020). These new powers have been heavily criticised by opposition political groups in Hungary and members of the European Parliament and even led a group of thirteen national leaders from the European People's Party to call for Orbán's Fidesz party to be expelled from the centre-right political group (De La Baume, 2020; Walshe, 2020).

Interestingly, it would appear Hungary has had a relatively low number of COVID-19 infections compared to other EU Member States, with a reported 4,077 cases, and 565 deaths as of 17 June (John Hopkins University Centre for Systems Science and Engineering, 2020). This is likely due to rapidly deployed and strictly maintained lockdown measures that have been gradually eased since early May. Indeed, Hungary's low reported a number of infections is in line with similarly low numbers reported out of a number of other Eastern European countries such as Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Greece who also reacted swiftly to implement lockdowns (Walker and Smith, 2020). It must be noted however that these figures are based on reported numbers of cases and it is unclear — due to limited press freedoms in Hungary, and the threat of jail time for ill-received reporting on the virus — what the true nature of the impact of COVID-19 had been.

Hungary's apparent success in minimising the impact of the pandemic led to the Hungarian Justice Minister's announcement on 26 May that the emergency powers would be lifted on 20 June (Dunai, 2020). Consequently, on 16 June, two bills were passed by the Hungarian Parliament: Bill T/10747 on Terminating the State of Danger, and Bill T/10748 on the Transitional Provisions related to the Termination of the State of Danger (Novak, 2020). According to the government, this means an end to the controversial emergency powers, however, a joint statement from the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Amnesty International, and the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union has denounced these bills as "nothing but an optical illusion". The joint statement argues that there are a number of inconsistencies between the Orbán government's rhetoric and the actual content of the bills, notably that the second bill (T/10748) gives the government the ability to continue to rule by decree indefinitely, while at the same time also removing a number of constitutional safeguards (Hungarian Civil Liberties Union et al., 2020; Hungarian Helsinki Committee, 2020).
Whether Orbán's power to rule by decree is stripped back or not, his government has been both strategic and prolific in its use of the emergency powers, having issued over 100 decrees since April (Tanacs & Huet, 2020; Zalan, 2020). These decrees have covered a broad range of areas and have resulted in further shifts towards an autocratic Hungary through such measure as stripping opposition-controlled municipalities of tax revenues, detaining or

fining government critics, taking away state subsidies from opposition political parties, and placing the military in charge of strategic businesses. All of these measures can be seen to solidify Orbán's position by removing legal impediments to his power, defunding his opposition, and empowering his allies. It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a fruitful period for Orbán and his ruling Fidesz party who have used the crisis as cover for their political manoeuvrings to much apparent success (Harangozó, 2020).

Authoritarianism and Vietnam

Authoritarianism in Vietnam has a long history with roots in post-colonial rule and Cold War proxy activities. The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) became the ruling party in North Vietnam in 1954, and the whole nation in 1976 following the collapse of the American-backed southern regime (Nguyen, 2016). Over the next few decades, the CVP installed a centrally planned economy, which was buoyed by an all-encompassing policy instrument *Đổi Mới* (renewal) propelling Vietnam into the lower-middle-income nations of the world (Nguyen, 2016). A combination of the CVP's internal security forces, control over natural resources, and strong economic performance has enforced the legitimacy of the CVP's authoritarian rule (Thayer, 2010).

Vietnam's integration into global systems and the success of the combination of communism within a market economy led by a one-party state has demonstrated the importance of performance legitimacy for authoritarian regimes (Thayer, 2010). Legitimacy is more important for authoritarian governments than democratic ones because the former often do not come to power through established means. Maintaining effective performance on a range of indicators, particularly the economy, enforces a moral authority and reduces questions about legal validity (Hiep, 2012).

Vietnam's success in managing the COVID-19 crisis is no different. Vietnam has punched considerably above its weight when managing the COVID-19 crisis, with only 55 cases and zero deaths on May 25. This is particularly impressive considering its relatively low GDP per capita of $2500 (13 times lower than Italy and 25 times less than the United States) and it shares a 1,444km-long border with China (Mazur, 2020). Vietnam was quick to react to the coronavirus pandemic.

Preparations had started before their first case was recorded on January 23 in Ho Chi Minh City, and with rapid information dissemination, there were only 16 confirmed cases (all recovered) by the end of February (Vu & Tran, 2020). After discovering new clusters, Vietnam suspended foreign entry on March 22 and implemented mandatory medical checks and 14-day quarantines for those entering the country (Vu & Tran, 2020). From April 1, the CVP banned large gatherings and encouraged staying home and closing internal borders. Additionally, forming part of a successful response, Vietnamese scientists developed an effective COVID-19 test with results within 80 minutes and 90% accuracy (Mazur, 2020), while Vietnamese nationalism and framing the virus as an enemy to Vietnam also played its part (Vu & Tran, 2020)

Vietnam has learnt from past crises such as the SARS epidemic in 2003, swine flu in 2009 and the ecological disaster in 2016, to act quickly and with transparency (Nguyen, 2020). Particularly with consideration to the latter, a slow, reactive and often misleading response led to street protests in some Vietnamese cities, and later the firing of various senior

officials. Elected as a result of this catastrophe, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc has learnt that to mitigate disaster, the public must have a level of trust in him and his officials (Nguyen, 2020).

Given the level of Internet access in Vietnam, it would have been unwise to hide information about the COVID-19 crisis from Vietnamese citizens. Prime Minister Nguyen has wanted to avoid a public relations disaster, partly for his political gain in ascending to the top position of the CVP (General Secretary of the Party and President of Vietnam held by Nguyen Phu Trong) (Nguyen, 2020), but also to retain party legitimacy.

Vietnam's three-pronged approach to fighting the virus; 1) forced screening and testing for anyone arriving in a major city as well numerous testing centres set up across the country, 2) targeted lockdowns, including cities and large communities where a positive test has been returned, and 3) constant communication from numerous sources providing up-to-date and accurate information has been very successful. While this approach may not be consistent with democratic ideals, it is effective (Klingerler-Vidra & Tran, 2020). The world has seen a tightening and restriction of civil liberties with mixed success in response to this global pandemic. Vietnam, with a long history of authoritarian rule, was able to quickly implement restrictions across the country more effectively than its neighbours and more technically and economically advanced Western counterparts. A proactive response was needed to ensure the legitimacy of the CVP and maintain the confidence of its people.

Central to global responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have been balancing the tension between freedoms and civil liberties on the one hand, and public health imperatives for population compliance, on the other. These have manifested in a variety of ways, from Sweden's individual rights approach to South Korea's early mass testing strategy. In the Asia-Pacific region, trust in government has emerged in some countries as creating a strong environment for compliance to public health initiatives, while concerns about authoritarianism-creep in others have been raised.

Cataclysmic opportunity *Chris Duke*

This EUC-funded RMIT-led project was launched into a 'global world', which was relatively stable but plagued by serious recognised needs - hence the SDGs. The world was perturbed for many people in most countries by the rising impact of climate change triggering drought, floods and other extreme 'weather events', notably in 2019 in Australia itself and elsewhere by huge fires; more massive than usual movements of people increased desperate and destabilising refugee and immigrant numbers. There were ever-grosser inequalities within and between countries; one of the deepening reasons for the SDGs and their predecessor MDGs.

It used to be said, for example apropos the global financial crisis (GFC) a decade earlier that a good crisis should not be let go to waste. Now a thoroughly excellent pandemic and economic crisis demands attention. There will be no 'back to the old normal', we are told. What renovation, rebuilding or new creation awaits this new world in crisis?

The global perfect storm is nowhere more obvious than in the USA, still the most powerful nation. The US leads the world in pandemic coronavirus victim numbers, triggering a health and then economic crisis matching the Great Depression. The concurrent social and political crisis it has re-ignited that nation's heavy legacy of slavery and ethnic oppression, which

rapidly went global. Black rights destabilisation spread fast, like the COVID-19 pandemic, threatening the very philosophy of globalisation and even democracy: neo-nativism threatens UN agencies like the WHO and UNESCO. The EU is not one of these, but it too is severely stressed by current global crises in health, economics and ecology.

Will the 'perfect storm of the triple whammy' consuming the US in a vicious election year sink the SDGs? Can the EU, generally a more harmonious community of nations, ride it out, and strengthen a mutually supportive Asia-Pacific SDG programme? Have we the clarity and courage to forge a more sustainable future? Is another road possible, as cultural counter-currents rise in support of the SDG value-system? Culture war seems to underpin and partly explain much of politics today. One near-certainty is that an outcome will be a resetting of a dominant culture, old or new, which will frame future policy and conduct for some years ahead.

When threat feels serious a strong, authoritarian leader, a 'man [usually] of action' is sought. Self-seeking extravert leaders attract popular support. Writing from the United States in the March 27 2020 *Sydney Morning Herald*, Matthew Knott marvelled at the President's then all-time high poll ratings early in the COVID-19 crisis; but went on to note that it was ever thus, in previous US crises and across Europe today. As COVID-19 spread, France's Macron, Germany's Merkel and Italy's Conte, Johnson's UK, experienced similar huge surges in opinion polls. Three volatile months later, and crises little abated, Trump trails the polls heavily, and Johnson has entirely lost his lead.

Talking loud and proud of the homeland on a road to recovery feeds nativism and xenophobia, with nostalgic memories of fantasised great days gone by. Set-backs and perils become national triumphs: Pearl Harbour; Gallipoli; Dunkirk, the Blitz; La Resistance in France. 'My country first' echoes as me first in politics: self-preserving individualism exacerbates an instinct for 'me and my family first'. By contrast, community solidarity and mutuality have created other-oriented community effort: a more local communitarian culture manifests the other side in as all-pervasive culture war.

Sustainability and long-sightedness require cultural and ethical underpinnings. The global predicament threatening the SDGs has been created less by COVID-19 than by persistent short-horizon political expediency –opinion-poll numbers, social media chatter dog-whistle politics: policy-making guided by domestic political expediency rather than rationally adopted knowledge, evidence and advice. A more scientific and rational approach must lead to be consistent and plausible execution of intelligence-based policy: decisive action that engenders trust. Consistency and clarity, evident deeds following authoritative words, generate trust and collective communities-based energies, the only sure foundations for getting things done, and in the process, cultures changed.

More serious even than sudden worldwide rallies against the virus of racism without precedent, and the panic and death caused by COVID-19, and economic effects penetrating every element of each SDG, is the ecological crisis of accelerated global warming. Now incontestable despite lobbying and disinformation, its unbearably deep and challenging implications are parked on the road ahead, beyond the remit of present Administrations, while old behaviours and benefits remain. The loss of wildlife is the next Great Extinction, as we enter the now-named 'Anthropocene'. However, an important side-effect of the 'perfect storm' crisis is unheard of high public spending by inherently 'dry' governments alarmed by economic collapse and dangerously soaring unemployment with social distress and civil unrest to follow. Sudden essential big spending betrays 'austerity' as ideology:

austerity in flight and a precedent for the SDG expenditure needed. Like women in wartime, the unthinkable becomes essential. For sustainability, however, there can be no resumption of business as was normal, no back to the kitchen or old-style austerity.

Nostalgic nativism is amplified when populist leaders amplify fear to retain power. Over-used and fed on by the media, this can lead to social breakdown and violence. Angry responses to the consequences of COVID-19 policy may become violent uprisings against a well-armed State? Fears are fuelled by memories of Arab Spring outcomes and ongoing disasters that followed. The green and communitarian alternatives to global economic liberalism called for by climate change activists mean a more interventionist public sector and State spending. Problematically, 'alternative' has been coopted as'Alt right': hard-line populism purposefully fed on fear and ethnocentrism, implying better-armed inequality.

Alternative scenarios?

'Alternative' can attach different scenarios: new paradigms, new ways of valuing, seeing, thinking, behaving and believing. A new dawn has been common to much scholarly writing, wishful analyses and predictions. There were almost utopian scenarios in the upbeat sixties mood into the early seventies - playfulness, a happiness index, more leisured living judged to be of higher quality using other criteria than GDP, individual income and wealth.

In the new century, the cultural and ideological change of the eighties came into full effect. We are into the second quinquennium of the optimistic 15-year global planning cycle of the SDGs. GFC was adjudged the last major globally shared 'event', the Millennium bug having died without fuss: lessons learned, security taken. We now look back a century to the Great Depression for analogy. No wider public search was shared about deeper causes and vulnerabilities: growth and wealth accumulation remained the expected norm for the more fortunate and powerful.

Public attention has however shifted to global warming, and a degrading ecosystem. Denigrated experts are being rehabilitated. More events became connect first of Africa and now India. Drought has triggered exodus worldwide; so the dispossessed encounter the wealthy North. Now it is Health and Security first with Finance, Poverty and also Education to follow. Things done by conservative free-market governments were inconceivable days earlier.

Has the ease of this leap from unthinkable to common sense shown that another world is indeed possible? Maybe, but not yet also probable until culture change becomes politically irresistible. Belief in the natural wisdom of the free market has been shattered. Neoliberal ideology triumphed in the eighties and spread global rapidly since. In time it undercut the personal freedoms of earlier individual and community liberalism.

Look in this light at the evolving 'European project' now the EU; and Europe-based agencies like the OECD, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe. The EU grew in a critically purposeful, quite participatory pre-social media environment; witness the outpouring of new ideas and scenarios from the late sixties about building a better future collaboratively across nations and sectors. But the language of 'balanced development', where it survived, was then gutted of meaning: sugar-coating competitive acquisitive ambition.

History has been rewritten in a new present tense. 'Me and my nation' predicated on unsustainable economic growth all but drowned out older discourse, which took a longer and wider view. We now see reassertion and rediscovery of older values: a quest for a fresh unifying philosophical narrative. This 'alternative' thread reaches back at least to Rachel

Carson, 1962 *Silent Spring* is credited with starting the environmental movement. The Club of Rome's 1972 *The Limits to Growth* led on to myriad 21st-century attempts to name and manage ecological catastrophe and extinction wisely and together. In the nongovernmental world of active citizenry, Greenpeace, of the same generation as the Club of Rome, combined eye-catching events with an ambition 'to change the way we humans relate to nature and to each other. We'll dismantle the broken systems and global power structures that have failed us'.

Much of this volume of voices for another possible world came from early seventies Europe. It has new acoustic properties in 2020 for two different reasons.

First, effective campaigning using the social media, and local grassroots concerns, have become more combined, sustained and swelling: what belonged to international governmental organisation (IGO) activities have become events like changed Davos: jousting venues invaded by civic bodies in a worldwide cultural shift. Hearts are contesting in new ways. The emotion-fed rhetoric of populist leaders is challenged by another heart-movement: what to do by way of sacred duty as custodians of our eco-heritage. What will we protect to pass on to those who follow?

There is a search for common values and a universal morality manoeuvring across ethnicities, regions and religions to change culture universally. Margaret Thatcher's great ambition and claim to success was to change the way people think, not just their behaviour as economic animals. A new globally created and owned culture displaces or is oddly supported by celebrity out of fashion-led competitive consumerism. This could be the foundation for building a more satisfying and optimistic future from the wreckage of me-first win-lose competition.

*Secon*d, COVID-19 exploded on an unprepared world under mean economic and politico-social management, inadvertently showing the unthinkable to be natural and inevitable.

This is experiential liberation away from a ruling ideology. Communitarianism within the new confines of 'lockdown' meant new awareness of dimensions of essentially *local* living out. *Togetherness*, sought and found in new ways, is valued anew. Next collective action through political intervention is demanded and Administrations run to keep up with change.

Vital dimensions of what has been forced on people may come to be valued again as the new normal'; then 'back to normal' no more. The 'old normal' – 'the market knows best' - austerity is essential – has for now become a source of fear. It is amplified by ever more frequent extreme 'weather events' everywhere. Pollutions of air and ocean are centre stage. There is a renewed respect for expert evidence of ecological collapse; and fear of unstoppable catastrophe without the global exercise of collective will.

What might these new possibilities be? They extend into all areas of life and work. They alter the nature and meaning of most of our keywords: *life, work, (un)employment, elderly, learning, leading, cultivation, conservation, materialism*.

So what for 2020s Europe? - what shared values, cultural norms and 'red lines'? What can it offer to the Asian-Pacific worlds to ensure another, sustainable and shared world? There is huge potential for Europe to own, name and demonstrate what some older beliefs and values were and could again be: to see and say where things went astray and how wisdom can be rediscovered and redeployed in the 2020s. Can the EU grasp a 'new normal' anchored in deeper shared European and universal values? Can Europe accept and value an uncompromising Swedish teenager as its symbol of sustainability and new health out of the

collapse of the old? - perhaps make this the year of Greta Thunberg, a purposeful young woman welcomed and heard in places where the most man is denied entry?

A footnote: SDG Goal 4

Take SDG Goal 4, on education: what might the experience of coronavirus mean? A common reaction has been for parents to withdraw children from school; then with lockdown to close schools until the crisis eases. Teachers had to become expert in distance or virtual education, keep regular contact with students, distance-assess work and assure progress. It was much the same in post-school education, with universities may be more familiar with distance modes of education. 'Doing school' while being based at home (hitherto all but proscribed as homeschooling in 'advanced' nations), suddenly became a requirement with lock-down. Parents may be totally unfitted to play the new teacher role, frustrated and embarrassed before their children. Back to 'normal' is met with sighs of relief all round.

Yet perhaps schools as we know them could soon seem an unnecessary extravagance: all those buildings; staff other than teachers, the latter and their managers on unaffordable payrolls. Why not dispense with schools as we know them altogether, severely curtailing what post-secondary students can attend a campus for, if at all.

Such a new normal might look dystopic indeed: to parents but also kids as temporary delight at new freedom fast palled and they missed the informal and hidden agenda where so much social life and behaviour is learned and gained. Teenager letters to the media made this movingly clear; teachers were admired and missed; missing school means losing one's social world. One has only to pose the question to realise what massive changed assumptions and arrangements must follow. And yet, many of these may be forced on us by other concurrent deeper changes, social, ecological, economic or technological.

The total COVID-19 experience could mean massively rethinking SDG 4 – meaning, in turn, its relationship to the other 16 Goals, with the fuller understanding of lifelong learning of a half-century ago. Then Council for Europe's *Education Permanente* joined OECD's *Recurrent Education*, and UNESCO's visionary Faure Report *Learning To Be*. The emergent EU took *Lifelong Learning* to the heart of its agenda for education in the decade that Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere held that his country must at once educate its adults: the need too urgent to wait for the children to grow up. A social, workplace and community agenda for learning throughout the life-cycle; in education-dedicated and other places for learning would yield no national curriculum but a multitude of 'curricula' and learning patterns adapted to real-world needs. Vigorously and effectively pursued, such a future could be realistic, restorative and realistically Utopian.

This footnote barely scratches the surface of changes that could flow in one SDG area. Think too about new ICT resources, and the changing culture, habits and potential of a media-savvy world. With a new sense of social, economic and then political crisis and urgency, adding pandemic to eco-anxiety, and a hungrier quest for decent treatment of often large minorities by diverse criteria: a culture-wars outcome far away from the old normal may make the hitherto unattainable essential.

Bibliography

Ala-Mutka, K. 2008, *Social Computing: Study on the Use and Impacts of Collaborative Content*

Allen, J. 2020, *How Technological Innovation In Education Is Taking On COVID-19*, Forbes

Antal, A. (2019). *The Rise of Hungarian Populism: State Autocracy and the Orbán Regime.* Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 75-141

Amat, F., Arenas, A., Falcó-Gimeno, A., & Muñoz, J. (2020). Pandemics meet democracy. Experimental evidence from the COVID-19 crisis in Spain

ATSE 2020, Investing in a post COVID-19 tech boom

Bieber, F. (2020a). Global Nationalism in Times of the COVID Pandemic. Nationalities Papers, Cambridge University Press, 1-19. doi:10.1017/nps.2020.35

Bieber, F. (2020b) Authoritarianism in the Time of the Coronavirus, *Foreign Policy*, 30 March 2020, Accessed 14 May 2020

Brown, J.H. 2105 The Oxymoron of Sustainable Development *Bioscience* 65(10): 1027-9

Cashore, B. and Bernstein, S. 2020 'Why Experts Disagree on How to Manage COVID-19: Four Problem Conceptions, Not One' *Global Governance* April

Deininger N, Lu Y, Griess J, et al. (2019) Cities Taking the Lead on the Sustainable Development Goals - A Voluntary Local Review Handbook for Cities. Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy

De La Baume, M. (2020, April 2). Leaders urge Europe's centre-right alliance to expel Orbán. *Politico.*

Dempsey, J. (2010, December 25). Hungary Waves off Criticism over Media Law. *The New York Times.*

Dignan, L. 2020, *Online learning gets its moment due to COVID-19 pandemic: Here's how education will change*

Dunai, M. (2020, May 26). Hungarian PM's power to rule by decree to end on June 20 - government. *Reuters.*

EC. (2008). Lifelong Learning for Creativity and Innovation. A Background Paper: Slovenian EU Council Presidency, Retrieved February

Ezrow, N., (2018). Authoritarianism in the 21st Century. *Politics and Governance*, 6(2), pp. 83–86.

European Institute of Innovation & Technology 2020, *Vision and mission* Fenton P and Gustafsson S. (2017) Moving from high-level words to local action—governance for urban sustainability in municipalities. Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability 26-27: 129-133.

Field, J. 2001, 'Lifelong education', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, vol.20 no.1/2, pp. 3-15

Gehrke, L. (2020, May 6). Hungary no longer a democracy: report. *Politico.*

Glasius, M. (2018). What authoritarianism is … and is not: a practice perspective, *International Affairs*, 94(3), pp. 515–533.

Graute U. (2016) Local Authorities Acting Globally for Sustainable Development. Regional Studies 50: 1931-1942

G.STIC 2020, *Challenges & Opportunities: Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education in a post-pandemic era*

Harangozó, A. (2020, June 16). With the Store of a Pen: Viktor Orbán and Emergency Rule-by-Decree in Hungary. *Visegrad Insight*

Harari, Y. 2018, *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*, Jonathan Cape, London

Hiep, LH. (2012). Performance-based legitimacy: The case of the Communist Party of Vietnam and Doi Moi. (Report). *Contemporary Southeast Asia, 34*(2), 145-172.

Holmes, K., Gaynor, A., and Morgan, R. 2020. "Doing environmental history in urgent times," *History Australia*, DOI: 10.1080/14490854.2020.1758579

Hughes, C. 2018, *Educating for the 21st Century: Seven Global Challenges,* Brill, Leiden

Hungarian Civil Liberties Union., Hungarian Helsinki Committee., & Amnesty International. (2020). Never-Ending Story? Rapid analysis of the Bills T/10747 és T/10748.

Hungarian Helsinki Committee. (2020). Explanatory Note For Bills T/10747 and T/10748 Pending Before the Hungarian Parliament

Humphreys, D.; Cashore, B.; Visseren-Hamakers, I.J.; De Jong, W.; McGinley, K.; Denvir, A.; Torres, P. Caro; Lupberger, S. 2017 Towards durable multistakeholder-generated solutions: The pilot application of a problem-oriented policy learning protocol to legality verification and community rights in Peru *International Forestry Review* 19(3): 278-293

Invitado, A. 2020, *Lifelong Learning During COVID-19 is Imperative*

John Hopkins University Centre for Systems Science and Engineering. (2020). Interactive Web-based dashboard to track COVID-19 in real-time*.*

Kaika M. (2017) 'Don't call me resilient again!': the New Urban Agenda as immunology … or … what happens when communities refuse to be vaccinated with 'smart cities' and indicators. Environment and Urbanization 29: 89-102.

Kalz, M. in press, 'Lifelong learning and its support with new technologies', in Smelser, N.J. & Baltes, P.B. (eds.) *International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, Pergamon, Oxford.

Karasz, P., & Eddy, M. (2012, March 21). Hungary Pressed to Ease Judiciary and News Media Laws. *The New York Times.*

Kingsley, P. (2018, February 10). As West Fears the Rise of Autocrats, Hungary Shows What's Possible. *The New York Times.*

Klingler-Vida, R., and Tran, BL. (April 21, 2020). Vietnam has reported no coronavirus deaths – how? *The Conversation*.

Klopp JM and Petretta DL. (2017) The urban sustainable development goal: Indicators, complexity and the politics of measuring cities. Cities 63: 92-97

Kulish, N. (2011, December 21). Foes of Hungary's Government Fear 'Demolition of Democracy'. *The New York Times*

Longworth, N. 2003, *Lifelong learning in action transforming education in the 21st century*, Kogan Page, London

Lyman, R., & Smale, A. (2014, November 7). Defying Soviets, Then Pulling Hungary to Putin. *The New York Times.*

Makszimov, V. (2020, May 15) Orbán says prepared to hand back emergency powers at the end of May. *Euractiv.*

Mazur, M. (May 25, 2020). Vietnam's prudent, low-cost approach to combating Covid-19. *The Conversation*.

Mok, J. 2020, *Why a learning-integrated life is important amidst the COVID-19 pandemic*

Mori Jnr, R, J Fein & R Horne 2019 Implementing the UN SDGs in Universities: Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned *Sustainability* 12(2):129-133

Moyle, K. 2010, *Building Innovation: Learning with technologies*, Australian Education Reviewed

Nguyen, H. (2016). Resilience of the Communist Party of Vietnam's Authoritarian Regime since Đổi Mới. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 35*(2), 31-55.

Nguyen, VP. (April 24, 2020). The Domestic Politics of Vietnam's Coronavirus Fight: The particularities of domestic politics in Vietnam have led to surprisingly effective pandemic responses from the government and its people. *The Diplomat*.

Nhamo G and Mjimba V. (2020) Scaling Up SDGs Implementation: Down the Road to Fast Approaching 2030. In: Nhamo G, Odularu GOA and Mjimba V (eds) *Scaling up SDGs Implementation: Emerging Cases from State, Development and Private Sectors* Cham: Springer International Publishing, 3-19.

Novak, B. (2020, June 16). Hungary Moves to End Rule by Decree, but Orban's Powers May Stay. *The New Yorker*.

Ortiz-Moya F, Koike H, Ota J, et al. (2020) *State of the Voluntary Local Reviews 2020 - Local Action for Global Impact Achieving the SDGs* Japan: Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES).

Parnell S. (2016) Defining a Global Urban Development Agenda *World Development* 78: 529-540.

Pipa AF. (2019) Shaping the global agenda to maximize city leadership on the SDGs. The Brookings Institution.

Pipa AF and Bouchet M. (2020) *Next generation urban planning: Enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs)* Washington, D.C.: Brookings.

Pipa AF and Conroy C. (2019) The Importance of City Leadership in Leaving No One Behind. In: Kharas H, McArthur JW and Ohno I (eds) *Leave No One Behind: Time for Specifics on the Sustainable Development Goals* Brookings Institution Press, 281-293.

Sachs, J. S. 2015 'Goal-based development and the SDGs: implications for development finance' *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 31, No.s 3–4, pp. 268–278

Sachs J, Schmidt-Traub G, Kroll C, et al. 2019 *Sustainable Development Report 2019a - Transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung

Sachs, J. S., Schmidt-Traub, G., Mazzucato, M., Messner, D., Nakicenovic, N. and Rockström, J. 2019b 'Six Transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals' *Nature Sustainability* Vol. 2, September

Serhan, Y. (2020, April, 2). The EU Watches as Hungary Kills Democracy. *The Atlantic.*

Shattuck, J. (2019, January 12). How Viktor Orbán degraded Hungary's weak democracy. *The Conversation*

Shortis, E. 2019. "Saving the Last Continent: Environmentalists, celebrities and states in the campaign for a World Park Antarctica, 1978 – 1991," PhD Thesis. The University of Melbourne.

Shortis, E 2019 Lessons from the Last Continent: Science, emotion, and the relevance of history in Communicating the Climate: From Knowing Change to Changing Knowledge (Special Issue) *RCC Perspectives: Transformations in Environment and Society* (no. 4)

Shortis, E 'Who can resist this guy?' Jacques Cousteau, Celebrity Diplomacy, and the Environmental Protection of the Antarctic, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Volume 61, Number 3 (2015): pp.363-378

Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

Siragusa A, Vizcaino P, Proietti P, et al. (2020) European Handbook for SDG Voluntary Local Reviews. Luxembourg: European Commission Joint Research Centre.

Tam, G. 2020, *Reimagining workplace learning during COVID-19*, Chief Learning Officer

Tanacs, G., & Huet, N. (2020, June 16). Hungary ends emergency powers, but new law opens up potential to re-apply them. *Euronews*

Thayer, C. (2010). Political Legitimacy in Vietnam: Challenge and Response. *Politics & Policy, 38*(3), 423-444.

Tóth, G. A. (2017). Authoritarianism. Max Planck Encyclopedia of Comparative Constitutional Law. Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law.

UCLG. (2019) Local and Regional Governments' Report to the 2019 HLPF: Towards the Localization of the SDGs.

UN-DESA. (2019) Handbook for the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews.

UNDP, UN-Habitat, UCLG, et al. (2017) Learning Module 1: Localizing the SDGs/Introduction. The Trainer's Guide.

United Nations. 2019 World Urbanization Prospects - The 2018 Revision. New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

United Nations 2019   *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Report of the Secretary-General* Economic and Social Affairs Council, New York

Vu, M., and Tran, BT. (April 18, 2020). The Secret to Vietnam's COVID-19 Response Success: A review of Vietnam's response to COVID-19 and its implications. *The Diplomat*.

Walker, S., & Smith, H. (2020, May 5). Why has Eastern Europe suffered less from coronavirus than the west?. *The Guardian*.

Walshe, G. (2020, April 14). Viktor Orbán Can't Eradicate the Coronavirus by Decree. *Foreign Policy.*

Zerofsky, E. (2020, April 9). How Viktor Orbán Used the Coronavirus to Seize More Power. *The New Yorker.*

Zalan, E. (2020, June 17). Critics warn of 'optical illusion', as Hungary decree-powers to end. *EU Observer.*

PIMA Business

A message from Shirley Walters, President of PIMA

Several new PIMA members asked if it was possible to have a descriptive strapline beneath PIMA to help people understand what we stand for. The PIMA Executive Committee has acted on this and we present what we've come up below our logo (see above).

This coincides with an international move, led by the German Adult Education Association DVV, to develop and launch a generic logo for Adult Learning and Education (ALE), the culmination of work over three years that has been coordinated by DVV. PIMA has been part of the process and fully supports it.

Speaking metaphorically, we see ALE as an orchestra in which many musical instruments are played, and where musicians are encouraged to play off and with one another. The musical instruments represent community education, workplace learning, literacy, continuing professional development, popular education, social movement learning, ABE, adult learning in higher education, public education, lifelong learning for different age groups, genders and ethnicities, and more.

The global ALE brand helps the musicians and the audience to know they are part of the same orchestra, and that they can work and learn together. The launch of the logo was planned for mid-July 2020, but has now been postponed while some legal issues are sorted out. It is now planned for September.

We in PIMA, who understand ALE in the context of social solidarity, human development and socio-ecological justice, will wear the ALE logo with pride. PIMA's profile will incorporate it and we encourage you to think about doing the same for other ALE organisations of which you are part.

In the last few weeks, there has been a flurry of new applications to join PIMA. These new members are identified below. You will notice that the United States, hitherto much under-represented for its size and wealth, is playing fast catch-up! We are delighted to welcome you all and to invite you and all members to use the PIMA space and network to promote, interrogate and mobilise ALE in a range of creative ways – we look forward to your proposals.

Fifth PIMA Annual General Meeting 12th May, 2020 *Dorothy Lucardie, Secretary of PIMA*

The 5th Annual General Meeting was held in May by ZOOM with over 20 people participating online from across the world. At the meeting, the Annual Report was presented to the members and is available from the PIMA Website. President Shirley Walters spoke to the report that outlined the major activities of PIMA and the Committee. These included: continuation of the very successful Bulletin, development of the Website and commencement of Webinars. She acknowledged the commitment and energy of members of the Committee.

There was discussion of the impact of the Novel Corona Virus pandemic impact on individuals and organisations – with points made related to the meaning of 'knowledge' and 'truth'; questions relating to the future of work; the rise of nationalism; the importance of intergenerational learning. There was encouragement to send invitation for webinars through national associations; and to consider running joint events with other organisations. The draft minutes of the AGM are also available from the PIMA Website.

New Members

Aliki Nicolaides USA alikin@uga.edu
Dr Aliki Nicolaides is an Associate Professor at the University of Georgia of Adult Learning, Leadership and Adult Development. She seeks to optimize developmental conditions for adults, groups and systems to learn and grow, and has developed a philosophy of adult learning - *Learning: Becoming-Generative* - which highlights and explores how adults might learn with the complexity and ambiguity prevalent in this period of 'liquid' modernity. Her work suggests that under certain conditions and with intentional scaffolding, encounters with ambiguity and complexity can evoke deep learning and reveal hidden potential that generates response-ability, and timely and sustainable action.

Amy Rose USA arose@niu.edu
Professor Emerita Amy D. Rose is emeritus professor of adult education at Northern Illinois University, USA where she taught for over 25 years. She has studied and taught history and policy analyses in literacy, women and adults in higher education. She co-edited the Handbook of Adult Continuing Education: 2010 Edition. And is co-author of Professional Foundations of Adult and Continuing Education (2017. She served as co-editor of the Adult Education Quarterly 2010-2013 and the Journal of Research and Practice for Adult Literacy, Secondary, and Basic Education. She currently co-edits Adult Literacy Education: The International Journal of Literacy, Language, and Numeracy, In and has served as President of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) and on the Board, for 10 years. She currently serves on the board of the Int. Society for Comparative Adult Education (ISCAE).

Carol Kasworm USA cekaswor@ncsu.edu
Dr Carol E. Kasworm appreciates PIMA's work for leadership and voice to global needs. She is drawn to PIMA by growing emphasis on collective reflection and action of lifelong learning for individuals who work and advocate in adult and continuing education. "We need to find solidarity to heal the wounds in our world and its many fractures of people, places, and policies. Particularly within the USA, there is a strong need to join hands at a global level, breaking across border and boundaries, sharing and learning from one another's triumphs and setbacks." Carol is retired W. Dallas Herring Emerita Professor of Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, USA. Her career has included faculty and academic administrative roles in many US Universities, after degrees at Valparaiso, University, Michigan State and Georgia. Her focus has been on the adult undergraduate experience, including the nature of learning engagement and participation

patterns of adult students, and the situated influences of varied higher education contexts on adult learner served. She has served on many editorial boards and received many ALE honours. She has been a Fulbright specialist in Finland and a visiting scholar in Denmark, Korea, and Malaysia. Her professional contributions include leadership roles in the Commission of Professors of Adult Education, the AERC, and the AERA.

Chad Hoggan USA cdhoggan@ncsu.edu

Dr Hoggan is an Assistant Professor at North Carolina State University studying adults going through major life transitions: e.g. migrants, minority and low-income college students, military veterans, cancer survivors. All his work focuses on human flourishing and social and economic equity. Much of it bridges adult individual and societal learning between the U.S. and Germany in matters related to immigration.

Darlene Clover Canada clover@uvic.ca

Darlene Clover

Darlene E. Clover began working in the field of adult education with ICAE in 1987, as editor of the International Literacy Year Newsletter (1990), and coordinator of the Learning for Environmental Action Programme addressing environmental issues. She is currently Professor of adult education and leadership studies at the University of Victoria, Canada, teaching adult, feminist, cultural/arts-based and ecological adult education, leadership as activism and arts-based research. Her context is social solidarity, human development, and socio-ecological justice, and feminisms, gender justice and change, and currently Museums as pedagogical spaces of feminist epistemology and gender justice. She coordinates a new network of women working in museums and communities, using aesthetic and creative practices of teaching and/or research. Recent co-edited volumes include *Adult education and museums: Animating social, cultural and institutional change (2016), Feminist critique and the museum: Educating for a critical consciousness (2020), Feminist adult educators guide to aesthetic, creative and disruptive practice in museums and communities (2020) and Feminist creative pedagogies of critical possibility: Normative structures, imaginative responses (forthcoming 2021)*

Gabriele Strohschen USA gstrohsc@depaul.edu, gstrohschen@gmail.com

German-born Gabriele Strohschen is Professor Emerita at DePaul University Chicago and

Gabriele Strohschen

studied at Northern Illinois University. She worked in Chicago's historically disenfranchised communities. She has conducted action research, program design and evaluations, and teacher training in Afghanistan, Germany, Czech Republic, Kenya, China, Mexico, Thailand, and around the USA, and continues to collaborate with civic engagement projects in Black and Latin immigrant communities. With former students, she spearheads the development of an advocacy institute for the education of adults.

John Aitchison South Africa jjw@gmail.com

Professor Emeritus John Aitchison was previously Head of the School of Education, Training and Development and then of the School of Adult and Higher Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He has served in various ministerial advisory roles served on the Ministerial Committee on Literacy in 2006 and 2007, and was restricted for ten years under the apartheid regime.

Joshua.E.Long USA josh@joshuaelong.com

Dr Joshua Long graduated in adult education, band/wind ensemble conducting, music education, and euphonium performance with a PhD in Adult Education at Penn State focusing on adult learners in music settings. His identity is very much a music educator. He meets many music makers of all kinds and tries to help them find their voice to continue a craft and service they love. Adult education helped him sculpt lifelong learning experience. He has also online distance education with non-traditional students get a degree. He is a director of bands in higher education, music lecturer, virtual instructor, community band director, active clinician, and instrument repair technician. He has research interests in community music ensembles, nutrition for musicians, instrument repair, and historical bands (see also www.joshuaelong.com).

Joy O'Neil USA Joykponeil@thejoyofsustainability.com

Dr Joy O'Neill is a Professor of Educational Sustainability and Inaugural Director, Sustainability Education Doctoral Program, School of Education, University of Wisconsin. She sees PIMA's focus on a "context of social solidarity, human development, and socio-ecological justice" as exactly her life's work. Her background includes 18 years leading environmental and sustainability programs in higher education at adult learning institutions, with emphasis on adult transformative sustainability education, and sustainable food systems including water. She recently inaugurated a non-profit called The Dobry Institute which focuses on building a sustainable future through education and community engagement.

Niamh O'Reilly Ireland noreilly@aontas.com

Dr Niamh O'Reilly is the CEO of AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation for Ireland, with expertise in educational equality, learner voice, community education, policy analysis, organisational development and governance. She is keen to share learning and experience to further to share a common vision of a more equitable system of adult education, supported by a critical pedagogy; and be part of a broader international community of like-minded social justice advocates. She recently passed her PhD on the role of community education in contributing to higher education access policy, at Maynooth University. She chairs the Irish COVID-19 tertiary education task group on Mitigating Educational Disadvantage, serves on two Irish State Boards, and is the national coordinator of the European Agenda for Adult Learning in Ireland, served also as a Board Member of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) in 2011-2017.

Paul Rutter USA prutter@umo.edu / PRutter@Gmail.com
Dr Paul Rutter is Executive Director for Strategic Partnerships at the University of Mount Olive (NC). He wishes to learn and share in a capacity to expand the adult education aspects of his university and the field. He has for nine years led the University of Mount Olive's Evening College workforce program. Before that, he served for over ten years as the project manager, and education program developer for Outreach at Penn State. As a Veteran, Paul benefitted from adult programs, attending the Navy's nuclear power school followed by four years as an engineer on nuclear submarines. Then, he earned an associate of science degree using distance education while serving on a submarine in the Pacific Ocean. When not underwater, I enrolled in classes at local community colleges at night and on weekends knowing that credits would transfer to a four-year degree when Navy service had ended. He then had 13 years in as a commercial banker: an entrepreneurial leader and creative thinker also counselling clients in financial matters.

pimamembers.wixsite.com/network