



Magazine

**THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

THE DECEMBER ISSUE // 2020

The SDGs: Between hope and disillusion, what has to be done?



CLAIRE COVIAUX
EDITOR IN-CHIEF



JOSEFINE NILSSON
EDITOR IN-CHIEF

There are several obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Progress is being made, but not yet in the speed and scale needed. The question is if the challenges will be overcome in time.

The United Nations introduced the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 intending to address the most urgent human challenges until 2030. The main mantra of the SDGs, ensuring no one is left behind, demonstrates the direction towards a more inclusive and sustainable future.

This year marks five years of the 2030 Agenda and the beginning of the Decade of Action to speed up the process of reaching the goals.

With only ten years left to realise the SDGs, an estimated 150 million people are expected to be pushed into extreme poverty by 2021 due to covid-19 pandemic. In some regions, poverty could be back at the same level as 30 years ago. Even before the pandemic, global efforts have not been delivering the change needed and the world is not on track to meet the SDGs by 2030.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

EDITORIAL

Claire Coviaux is a Master's student in Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation (DRMCCA) at Lund University. Her main professional and academic areas are in Climate migrations, specifically in South-East Asia, and Humanitarian response to conflict and disaster.

Josefine Nilsson is a Master's student in International Development and Management (LUMID) at Lund University. She returned to Sweden after spending the past years travelling, working and studying abroad. India has a special place in her heart, partly due to the delicious veggie food.

In this FUF Magazine issue, the SDGs are covered from a variety of angles. Structural challenges are explored, relating to the progress, approach, universality and interconnectedness of the goals. The implementation of Agenda 2030 is also addressed concerning economic growth, climate change, frugal innovations, Human Rights cities, lack of water access, famine in warfare, waste management, and fossil fuels.

Ending poverty, tackling climate change and creating a peaceful world is urgently demanding a global commitment like the SDGs. But, as this issue illustrates, there is still a long way to go and the pressure is accelerating with 2030 getting closer.

To reach the SDGs, structural and operational limitations have to be solved.

Will the vision of the Agenda 2030 be realised? How far have we come on the journey? What opportunities do we see, and what obstacles have to be overcome? These are some of the burning questions which are explored in this SDGs issue where we are focusing on the global quest towards a better future for all.

Happy reading!

Claire Coviaux & Josefine Nilsson

THIS MAGAZINE AND ALL ARTICLES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.FUF.SE/EN/MAGAZINE

WANT TO GET INVOLVED? CONTACT US THROUGH LUND@FUF.SE
OR VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE: [@FUFLUND](https://www.facebook.com/FUFLUND). VISIT OUR INSTAGRAM: [@FUFLUND](https://www.instagram.com/FUFLUND)





Monitoring SDGs progress: old issues and new challenges

An article by Alexandru Mocanu

Monitoring development is a complex area and not without unsettled issues. Those include insufficient data and limited consensus on how to measure progress. This also reflects upon monitoring progress towards achieving SDGs.

Perhaps the primary issue with measuring development is unavailability of data. All measuring is confined to official data, but there is so much going on in the informal sectors. This is especially true for developing countries, where much of education is being carried out informally, a lot of energy is being consumed through firewood, and a lot of women labor never gets reported and so on. The poor data collection capacity in the developing world adds on to the issue.

According to the acclaimed Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report, measuring development is further complicated by the limited consensus on how to measure it. Ever since introducing the Human Development Index in 1990, which replaced the old language of growth with

the idea of development, the measuring systems proliferated a lot. They range from some mainly evidence-based rankings, such as Ease of Doing Business Index, to some of the more subjective approaches, such as World Happiness Report. Today there are all sorts of parallel measuring indices, metrics, and rankings. Some are currently being developed, such as Food Waste Index, for example.

There is probably no better context than Agenda 2030 for testing the various development measuring systems. Upon adopting the SDGs, an Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDGs Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) was created to develop a global indicator framework, taking also into consideration the methods and tools in place.



However, upon its launch in 2017, the framework was far from complete, reflecting the difficulties associated with monitoring development described above. As a preliminary solution, a system of tier classification has been introduced. Indicators with a clear and well-established methodology and data available in all regions were marked as Tier I, while the ones missing regularly produced data were classified as Tier II, The most problematic were Tier III indicators, as they would have no agreed methodology. Although IAEG-SDGs managed to eliminate all Tier III indicators by now, almost half of all indicators today are still Tier II, A quick glance reveals that some of the least measured goals are SDG5 on gender equality, SDG11 on sustainable settlements, and SDG16 on peace and justice.

2020 marks five years through the SDGs implementation, but measuring progress towards their achievement is still problematic. At the time of writing this article, IAEG-SDGs is holding its eleventh meeting to further refine the indicator framework.



2020 marks five years through the SDGs implementation, but measuring progress towards their achievement is still problematic.

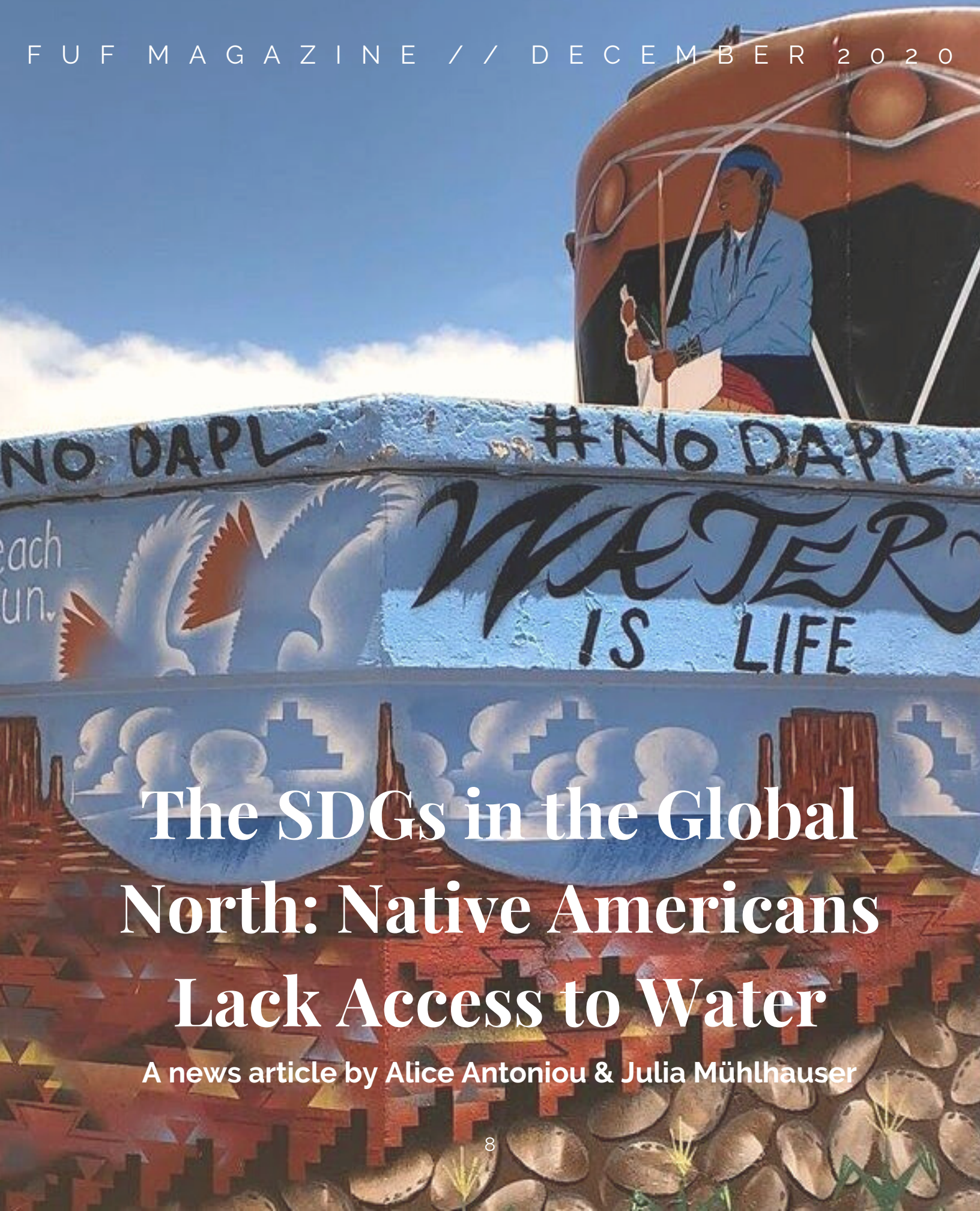
THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Given the Covid-19 pandemic it is also their first meeting held virtually which further challenges its work. It is hoped however that the Group will be able to address the gaps as soon as possible and reach stability of the indicators framework so that it serves its purpose of monitoring progress towards achieving SDGs in the decade left.



Alexandru Mocanu

Alexandru Mocanu is a graduate student of International Development and Management at Lund University. With a professional background in law, he is currently exploring the interlinkages between human rights, justice, and sustainable development.



The SDGs in the Global North: Native Americans Lack Access to Water

A news article by Alice Antoniou & Julia Mühlhauser

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Covid-19 has increased awareness of the importance of sanitation globally; however, many face challenges meeting hygiene needs due to difficulties accessing clean water. Native Americans in the United States are particularly hard hit by this issue.

In the Global North, most people do not think about how they will access clean water. It's as easy as turning on the tap. Many regard development as a concern of the Global South, yet even one of the most developed countries in the world, the United States, faces issues providing its population with essential commodities. The first report on water access in the United States was conducted by the nonprofit organizations Dig Deep and US Water Alliance and found that "Native American households are 19 times more likely than white households to lack indoor plumbing". Recently, as covid-19 aggravated sanitation problems, the issue of water access received more public interest.

The Navajo Nation, located in the Southwest of the United States, is particularly affected by the issue. About one third of households in the Navajo Nation lack indoor plumbing, and they have therefore endured one of the highest covid-19 infection rates in the United States.



Water access in the United States is deeply divided by race.

The lack of clean water leads to various challenges in the daily life of the Navajo Nation and affects their well-being. Due to contaminated ground water, many have to drive miles to purchase water. This increases costs due to gas usage and takes time away from other potential activities. Furthermore, residents without indoor plumbing consumed more processed foods and soda to save water. This leads to increased health issues. For example, living in the Navajo nation doubles to quadruples the risk of having type 2 diabetes compared to white Americans.

The Navajo Water Project aims to eliminate the issue by supplying water tanks that provide hot and cold running water. The tanks store up to 1200 gallons (4542.5 liters) of water which lasts about

one week and are then refilled by the project. This greatly increases the amount of water a household has available.



Many on the Navajo Reservation without running water had less than ten gallons (37.85 liters) of water at any given moment, 18 times less than what the average American uses in one day.

When the U.S. invested in water infrastructure, many Native American Nations were left out of the plans due to the structure of Native American reservations within the U.S. This led to the problems facing Native American Nations today. According to Dig Deep, it is possible for the U.S. to provide water access to all. However, those living in the reservations feel overlooked by the federal government, as illustrated by a quote by the Navajo Nation President, Jonathan Nez: “We are United States citizens but we’re not treated like that. You can hear the frustration, the tone of my voice. We once again have been forgotten by our own government”.



Alice Antoniou

Alice is pursuing a Master's in Development Studies at Lund University. She is particularly interested in migration, labor, and maternal health.

Julia Mühlhauser

Julia is currently doing her Master's in Development Studies at Lund University. She is particularly interested in questions of urban inequality, integration and sustainability.



THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM



F U F M A G A Z I N E / / D E C E M B E R 2 0 2 0

Why economic save the

A chronicle by Julian Dannef



THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

growth won't eliminate climate

ord & Alice Castensson

Photo: Andrew Taylor/Flickr

The United Nations envisions both increased economic growth and effective climate action by the end of this decade. The combination of these is not consistent in the current state of the world. To effectively combat the threat of climate change, we need a shift in the status quo and a different economic structure.

The Sustainable Development Goals target outcomes for both people and the planet. These include for example Goal 8, promoting economic growth and productivity, and Goal 13: Climate Action. But within these two specific goals, there is a problem: creating economic growth and at the same time combating climate change.

Arguments in favor of sustainable, or “green” growth, rely heavily on technical innovation and increased efficiency to reach zero carbon emissions. However, the sustainability and effectiveness of this approach within the current world structure is questionable. The urgency of the climate crisis also prevents it from being a reliable solution.

Historically, economic growth and increased carbon emissions have gone hand in hand. The concept of economic growth is also entirely based on capital accumulation and the availability of endless natural resources that do not exist.

Its logic does not respect our planet’s boundaries or its ecosystems. Even if we would use every innovation possible to boost productivity, resources must still be extracted, going further beyond a limit that has already been breached. The extractivist economic model is a main cause of climate change and will therefore not be the solution.



The conflict between economic growth and combating climate change calls for a system change.

Countries that have enjoyed economic prosperity while limiting their carbon footprints have been able to do so through overseas resource extraction and outsourcing of carbon offsets. The unjust systemic structures in the world do not allow for the opposite to happen.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Non-Western countries that recently have started to enjoy relative economic growth are often criticized for acting against climate targets. Compatibility between growth and climate action is in this sense built on unequal structures, which must be considered when discussing the possibility for different countries to reach both economic and environmental goals.

The conflict between economic growth and combating climate change calls for a system change.

The most sustainable act of all would be to look for long-term alternatives to the current economic model and the concept of constant growth. Rethinking structures and values, as well as finding bridges between the well-being of people and the planet is necessary to steer us in the right direction.



Julian Dannefjord

Julian Dannefjord studies Political Science at Lund University. He has previously taken courses in Human Rights Studies, studied Spanish in Cuba, and done an internship in Paraguay. Latin America is the part of the world closest to his heart.

Alice Castensson is a Master's student in International Development and Management at Lund University. She is currently based in Zambia, where she is conducting an internship on socioeconomic and environmental trade-offs

in nature forest reserves.



Alice Castensson

When SDGs Meet Human Rights Cities

An interview by Chiara D'Agni & Yi-Chia Chen

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Human rights cities, as Lund, is a new phenomenon and according to a recent report by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI) they can better contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FUF Magazine has interviewed the Director of the RWI, Morten Kjaerum, to talk about SDGs and human rights cities.

Under the efforts of the RWI and Lund's city council, in August 2018, Lund became the first human rights city in both Sweden and in Scandinavia. In general, cities are the social environment that is closest to the individual, which makes cities fundamental in localising Sustainable Development Goals. It is particularly true when it comes to human rights cities, which are concerned with individuals' human rights.

We asked Morten Kjaerum how a human rights city can better implement Sustainable Development Goals than other cities. He said, while working on the achievement of SDGs, a human rights city has to consistently focus on its citizens and explained:

- That is the difference between SDGs and human-rights based approach, while SDGs are directed towards states, institutions, municipalities and other government structures; a human-rights based approach adds in the individuals.

Morten Kjaerum then explained that a core aspect of the human-rights based approach adopted by human rights cities is finding ways to engage citizens. This goes beyond listening to them when addressing the city's problems:

- It is about making citizens' voices heard but also going one step further: you need to sit down with them and not only let them know that you have heard them, but also engage with them in moving forward and finding solutions to their problems



***When they all sit together,
there is a chance of success***

Morten Kjaerum gave an example of how this can look in practice as he told us how some municipalities throughout Europe have succeeded in creating a good living environment by engaging Roma people

and their neighbours in a discussion on how to live together.

-When they all sit together, there is a chance of success, he said.

Compared to other human rights cities, Lund has a special focus on children. The City Council has decided that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be applied and considered in all municipal decisions. As an example of how the city engages children, Morten Kjaerum explained how the city has an open dialogue with children who drop out from school to understand them and involve them in a solution to the problem.

The motto of the Sustainable Development Goals is “leave no one behind”. Morten Kjaerum explained that a city that adopts a human-rights based approach can actually ensure that no one is left behind since it looks at the actual impact that policies or actions for achieving SDGs have on the individual.

- With the SDGs you can come a long way but you only make a qualitative difference if you add the human rights dimension to it, he said firmly and confidently.

Human rights cities, as Lund, is a new phenomenon and according to a recent report by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI) they can better contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FUF Magazine has interviewed the Director of the RWI, Morten Kjaerum, to talk about SDGs and human rights cities.

FACT BOX



Yi-Chia Chen

Yi-Chia is from Taiwan and studying a Master's Programme in Human Rights Studies at Lund University. She likes to explore the Global South, therefore she chose to spend her third semester in Egypt despite the pandemic.

Chiara is as well a Human Rights student at Lund University. She comes from Italy and she has a broad interest in social justice, gender equality and LGBTQI* rights.

Chiara D'Agni



THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM



SDGs: does one size really fit all?

A news article by Ghadeer Hussein

Five years ago the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations and since then they have become a roadmap for global development. But are they relevant on the local level? Are they as universal as they claim to be?

The 2030 agenda for sustainable development includes 17 goals and 169 targets with a diverse focus on a wide range of global issues such as poverty, education, health, and climate change. This makes them seem as a comprehensive and a universal framework that all countries can follow. However, they have been widely contested by various scholars.

To put it into context, the idea of development itself has always been subject to critique related to its universality and its relevance in various local communities.

The Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar argues that mainstream development is a top-down process done by experts who ignore the local contexts. Accordingly, the SDGs could also be perceived as a universal top-down plan prescribing how development should be done.

More recently, the pandemic has changed development priorities locally and internationally. Some sectors have been impacted more than other sectors in different countries and some countries have been impacted differently.



These local variances also poses the question of the universality of the goals.

The famous saying “think globally act locally” could offer an easy answer to this dilemma. However, social reality is much more complex and sometimes we need to think locally. To illustrate, take SDG4 on quality education. This year the pandemic has transformed education by heavily relying on digital platforms.

According to the UN, half of the world population are excluded from digitalization and they lack access to the internet. This means that the achievement of this goal is tied with other conditions that might differ locally. Thus, local communities need to adopt strategies suitable for their own context.



*Think globally,
act locally*

Is there a way out?

The UN has created an online platform called Local2030 that aims at localizing the SDGs. The platform offers tools to scale down the goals to be applicable and feasible on local levels. This initiative brings together other UN agencies,

donors, philanthropies and research think tanks. It also creates regional and national action hubs. Some hubs are created on the city level, targeting local needs such as Malmö Local Ocean Action Hub. This hub focuses solely on the coastal environment and marine life in Malmö.

Moreover, some countries have already created their own 2030 agendas to address local needs and aspirations. For example, Egypt has created the Egypt 2030 vision through a participatory approach that involved various stakeholders. The plan has three dimensions; economic, social, and environmental.

It includes eight objectives addressing pressing local needs such as justice, social inclusion, innovation and moving towards a diversified economy.

The SDGs could still be a useful global framework that inspires stakeholders, mobilizes resources and creates a sense of direction, but it is difficult to assume that all local communities will catch up and that all countries will have the same priorities following the exact same UN indicators.



Ghadeer Hussein

Ghadeer is an Egyptian development practitioner and researcher. She is currently a master's student in Development studies at Lund university. She is interested in exploring the intersections between culture and development.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM



Famine as a weapon in Yemen: A reportage on the world's biggest neglected Humanitarian Crisis

A reportage by Sofus Malte Rønberg & Leni Lindemann

Political conflict is driving Yemen into the world's biggest humanitarian crisis. Over half of the Yemeni population is acutely food insecure due to the deliberate targeting of food supply and infrastructure. In order to end hunger and achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, international attention on the political nature of the crisis is required.

Yemen is facing the world's biggest humanitarian crisis. In late October, the UN reported that nearly 100,000 Yemeni children under the age of five are at the risk of dying because of hunger. Around 80 percent of the population depends on foreign aid, while millions are at the brink of famine. Yet, hunger in Yemen is no coincidence. Instead, it is caused by an exacerbated political conflict, in which the deliberate targeting of food supply infrastructure is used as a means of warfare. The humanitarian crisis is driven by national and international actors, which compete for political gains in the Yemeni civil war. Despite the dire conditions, the crisis has been neglected by international media.

In 2015, world leaders came together and introduced the Sustainable Development Goals as a comprehensive effort to reduce poverty and improve global livelihoods. Yemen, which has been declared the "poorest country in the Middle East", was not on track to meet any of the SDGs and currently suffers severe development setbacks due to a devastating civil war. This war has caused the world's biggest humanitarian crisis, the biggest cholera outbreak in modern human history and a devastating famine. The conflict escalated when Shiite Houthi rebels took over Yemen's capital Sanaa in late 2014 and early 2015. This forced the government as well as the newly elected president Hadi to flee the capital.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

An international coalition led by Saudi Arabia formed and is supporting the Hadi-government. Ever since, the coalition has blocked essential supplies and has deliberately targeted farms, agricultural industries and transport infrastructure. A UNDP report stresses that it would require two to three generations to recover to pre-conflict levels in development.



The SDGs do not exist in a political vacuum, but rather, are fundamentally entwined with political agendas

SDG 2 aims to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”. In essence, this goal strives to promote food access, availability, use and stability in order to eradicate hunger. However, this can only be achieved if the fight against hunger is understood from a political perspective. The SDGs do not exist in a political vacuum, but rather, are fundamentally entwined with political agendas.

This is exactly the case in the Yemen conflict: the crisis is a humanitarian disaster created by political interests. Hunger and famine are not simply caused by the lack of food, they are caused by military and political strategies. To respond to the crisis, an understanding of the political nature of the conflict is required.

The countries neighbouring Yemen are not the only ones with interests in the conflict. This is rather a global issue where many countries are involved in various ways. Moreover, some countries lack coherence between their policies, which affect the conflict negatively.



For example, in 2019, Sweden donated 244 million krona for humanitarian aid in Yemen, making it among the biggest donors to the country. Paradoxically, Swedish arms are at the same time being used in the conflict. Since the beginning of the war, Swedish weapon companies have exported arms for 716 million krona to Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Jordan. All these are members of the international coalition. These arms are used to uphold the strategic naval and air blockades hindering access to food and essential goods.

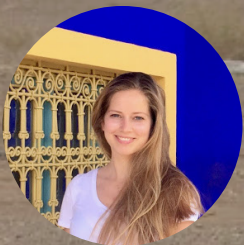
Therefore, international actors, including Sweden, are trying to alleviate civilian hardship through humanitarian aid at the same time as companies in their countries are contributing to the hardship in the first place. This further demonstrates that the issue of hunger cannot be isolated from political interests and that policy coherence is essential for reaching the goal. It shows an incoherence in the developmental policies.



THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Food insecurity and famine in Yemen are political issues which deserve greater international attention. As UN humanitarian coordinator for Yemen, Lise Grande states: “If the war doesn’t end now, we are nearing an irreversible situation and risk losing an entire generation of Yemen’s young children”. The food crisis in Yemen is part of a larger international system, in which the very same countries

that promote the Sustainable Development Goals, are also partially responsible for hindering or setting back development. Therefore, the SDG 2 “No Hunger” cannot be isolated from political interests or strategies. Hunger in Yemen is ultimately political and can only be solved by a change in the political structures.



Leni Lindemann

Leni Lindemann is a graduate student of Development Studies at Lund University. With a background in social anthropology and international relations, she has a broad interest in sustainable development and environmental justice..

Sofus Malte Rønberg is a student of Peace and Conflict Studies at LU. He focuses on civilian rights and civil society in conflict zones. He has a background as an organizer for Danish political youth organizations..



Sofus Malte Rønberg



Frugal Innovations: The Future of Development?

An article by Anne Eliassen Theys

Photo: Plantamer blog post.

Doing more with less. This is how the economist Navi Radjou defines frugal innovations. Although it is an old practice, it is only now resurfacing as a smart and sustainable approach to international development. As this economic approach rethinks consumerism and resource management, can we look at it as the future of development?

Access to clean water represents one of the main challenges faced by the population of Lima, Peru. The city's levels of humidity reach up to 98%. As a result, students came up with a crazy idea: create water out of thin air. In order to do so, they invented the water billboard. Its purpose is to absorb air humidity to provide clean drinking water to the people lacking such access.

Today, this billboard produces over 90 liters of water every day, providing for 600,000 citizens. This case has been used multiple times to exemplify the concept of frugality. What are frugal innovations?

"An Affair of Human Ingenuity"

The term "frugal" comes from the Hindi "jugaad", meaning "an improvised fix, a

clever solution born in adversity and achieved by simple means”. The economist Navi Radjou calls it a synonym for “doing more with less”.

In many parts of the world, people do not have access to resources like electricity nor basic services like health care or education. This state of precarity has led humans to dig into the most abundant resource in order to find smart ways to solve poverty related problems: human ingenuity and creativity.

The purpose of such innovations is therefore to provide higher standards of living while offering goods and services that are cheap, optimised, robust and environmentally friendly. As they mostly target consumers living under the poverty line - \$1,25 a day - frugal innovations aim to provide access to basic needs.

The Art of Turning Adversity into Opportunity

In the West, companies generally pursue more for more: more complex technologies, more features, higher prices. However, this has immense negative consequences on resource management and global warming. On the other hand, frugal innovations are about creating



Frugal innovations are about creating more economic and social value from fewer resources.

more economic and social value from fewer resources. In a world where climate change is more and more integrated in development projects, this strategy greatly puts forward sustainability.

Frugal innovations are simple and target basic needs. But why deprive ourselves from high tech when it can provide more value at a lower cost? Turning thin air into clean water definitely requires high levels of engineering. However, frugal engineers have found a way to make it cost efficient and robust. As the billboard can be used for advertisement, there is no need for external investors. Moreover, it was constructed with strong materials, meaning it will not require fixing in a very long time, which is a great use of resources.

The Future of Development?

Frugal innovations enable us to innovate rapidly and efficiently. Rather than promoting mass consumption, such innovations have emerged as a response to specific basic needs,

calling for smart purchases. This economic approach represents a relevant strategy when tackling poverty reduction and climate change.



Anne Eliassen Theys

Anne Eliassen Theys is currently doing her Master's in Development Studies at Lund University. She is particularly interested in rural-urban inequalities, food security and frugal development.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM





The one solution connecting multiple SDGs in Nepal

A chronicle by Irina Martin

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Along with my classmates from Lund University, together we wrote a project proposal which, fictionally, has been approved by the European Commission as part of the course assignment.

After hours of discussion and reflections, the decision was to deal with the lack of menstrual health education and accessible menstrual products in the district of Chitwan in Nepal. We created a fictional NGO called Re(cycle) aiming to contribute to SDG 4 - Quality education, SDG 3 - Good Health and Well Being, and further SDG 5 - Gender Equality by setting a new record of school attendance for girls between the ages of 12 and 17.

The problem analysis indicated that these girls are missing school because of the lack of menstrual products and because of the taboo around it. The lack of awareness and knowledge on the issue contributes to challenges in breaking the harmful traditions against females in general, and practices around menstruation in particular.

An example - which is to be addressed by the project - is Chappaudi, a tradition which often causes sickness and death as the women are isolated in unsafe huts because they are seen as unclean.

Our solution stood in the creation of banana fiber pads at the local level and to involve the schoolgirls themselves in the production. Therefore, the most sustainable way was to collaborate with local banana plantation farmers who, according to the analysis, would be willing to sell the leaves as they would otherwise go to waste.

The sustainability of the project could be secured if the local and national government of Nepal include menstrual health and the production of environmental-friendly sanitary pads in the curriculum. Hence, the project includes a comprehensive advocacy plan and I and my classmates hope to proceed with the project once we enter the development working sector.



Irina Martin

Irina is an undergraduate student from Romania following three years of a Development Studies programme at Lund University. Having a solid background of national and international volunteering projects, she holds enormous interest in social change and inclusion.

Climate Action: Addressing Fossil Fuel Subsidies

An article by Ian Granit & Samantha Julien

Climate change threatens the world as we know it and the need for climate action is getting more pressing every day. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on oil prices opens the door to a green recovery without fossil fuel subsidies.

According to Sustainable Development Goal 13 - Climate Action, the global community must come together and respond to climate change urgently. This requires getting rid of old policies and establishing policy coherence which inhibit greener alternatives.

Climate change threatens to adversely impact our societies, while Covid-19 has given us an indication of how fragile our global world is today. Although climate change's negative impacts have grown over the past years, the urgent need to address the pandemic diverts attention away from climate initiatives.

To mitigate the climate crisis and address the pandemic, major organizations such as the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development (OECD) and the United Nations are calling for a green

Covid-19 recovery. This includes stopping fossil fuel subsidies, which governments use to support polluting industries. Continued subsidies will exacerbate the climate crisis and create even more disastrous problems for our societies.

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) working paper, estimates that global fossil-fuel subsidies amounted to a total of US\$ 4.7 trillion in 2015, which is 6.3% of the global GDP. According to the study, global carbon emissions would be 28% lower without the costly subsidies. In the European Union, fossil-fuel subsidies grew by 6% between 2015 and 2018. Combined, G20 countries provide at least US\$ 63.9 billion per year in government support solely for coal industries.

While the world focuses on Covid-19, G20 countries have continued the subsidy

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

trend. So far, they have committed US\$ 151 billion towards fossil-fuel industries as part of the Covid-19 economic recovery. This contradicts recommendations from leading international organizations.



Global carbon emissions would be 28% lower without the costly subsidies.

The pandemic's adverse impacts on the world's economy are clear. The fossil fuel industry is especially hard hit. The drop in demand for fossil fuels has lowered prices, whereas the International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts that the price for Brent crude oil prices will have gone down from US\$ 64 in 2019 to US\$ 41 in 2020.

Traditionally, fossil fuel subsidies have been justified to support ordinary citizens due to the high price of fossil fuel and its importance in people's everyday lives.



Ian Granit

Ian Granit is a Masters student in International Development and Management at Lund University with a passion for climate action.

Samantha Julien, originally from Canada, is a Masters student in International Development and Management at Lund University. She is particularly interested in climate change adaptation and sustainable development.

Samantha Julien



The recent drop in prices undermines the rationale behind why subsidies for fossil fuels are needed, while they limit the incentives of investing in new greener technologies. The pandemic's impact on oil prices instead offers an opportunity for countries to reform and embrace new climate-friendly solutions.

Countries are slowly opening up to the idea of green energy and improved emission targets. China recently committed to carbon-neutrality by 2060, Japan and South Korea pledge to reach it by 2050, while the European Union aims to be climate-neutral by 2050. To reach these emission targets nations must address fossil fuel subsidies.

Missing the opportunity of ending fossil-fuel subsidies will have disastrous impacts. The world failed to mitigate one crisis, continued government support for fossil fuels will fail to mitigate another.

Business as usual

An opinion piece by Sanna Honkanen & Klara Bengtsson



Photo: United Nations Photo/Flickr.

The world is not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and accomplish the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

The 17 goals claiming to be transformational are contradictory and insufficient. Poverty has not decreased, inequality is deepening and emissions keep rising. If the SDGs wish to be more than business as usual, structural change is needed.

The SDGs recently celebrated their five-year birthday, yet this five-year mark hardly calls for a celebration. Progress towards achieving the SDGs was off track even before current setbacks caused by the spread of coronavirus. Despite being an improvement from their forerunner, the Millennium Development Goals, the extent to which the SDGs can truly ‘transform our world’ is up for debate.

Many of the goals are blatantly contradictory. The goals call for more

economic growth yet simultaneously for protecting the planet and combating climate change. Since production and consumption levels are already overburdening the planet, disregard for the environmental impacts of economic growth is problematic to say the least.

In fact, economic growth is at the heart of the SDGs, seen as a solution to poverty and inequality. A recent report by Philip Alston,

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, criticises the SDGs. According to the report, the various.

The SDGs call for the eradication of extreme poverty, defined by the international poverty line at \$1.90 a day. Such an inhumanely low line is inadequate for accurately measuring global poverty levels. In fact, it has even led to the United Nations being able to portray a false narrative of decreasing poverty rates. A more ambitious poverty line of \$5.50 a day displays how poverty levels have more or less stayed the same during the past three decades. This has happened with unprecedented levels of global economic growth.

Inequality has risen immensely within countries but also between countries. By using data from the World Bank, the economic anthropologist Jason Hickel, has demonstrated how the income gap between the global North and South has quadrupled from 1960 to 2017.

A key reason for this widening gap is the international trade laws enforced by the World Trade Organisation, which the SDGs promote, contradicting themselves once again.

At the current rate the SDGs are nothing more than business as usual. Alston's report argues that what should be focused on are unjust structures within the global



What is needed is redistribution of wealth, tax justice, universal social protection and stopping emissions.

political economy such as fiscal policies that enable illicit financial outflows, tax avoidance and crippling debt. What is needed is redistribution of wealth, tax justice, universal social protection and stopping emissions.

Only if the targets are reformed to tackle root causes rather than mere symptoms, will the SDGs have the potential to be truly transformative.



Sanna Honkaniemi

Sanna is pursuing a Master's in Development Studies at Lund University. She is particularly interested in inequalities within the global political economy and social justice issues.

Klara Bengtsson

Klara is a first-year student in the LUMID-programme at Lund University. She has a bachelor's degree in Human Rights and has previously carried out an internship in India.



Waste Management is Key to Sustainable Development

An interview by Maria Malmsten

Photo: Alan Stanton / Flickr

Sustainable waste management is key for reaching many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Well planned waste management aims to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. I interviewed Tony Clark, CEO of Avfall Sverige, to discuss how to make waste management more sustainable.

The average Swede generates 467 kg of waste every year. Less than 1% of Swedish household waste goes to landfills. Globally landfill amounts to 40% of all household waste. In five years global dumpsites will contribute to 10% of the global greenhouse emissions. This alarming trend can be redirected by sustainable waste management planning and by changing the way we consume. Additionally, we need to develop the quality and safety of the products we consume. The trade organization for waste in Sweden, Avfall Sverige - The Swedish Waste Management Association, aims for zero waste. How can this be possible?

Sustainable Development Goals and Waste Management

Tony Clark, CEO of Avfall Sverige, explains the complex nature of waste management and its effects on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

– *Good waste management helps to meet several of the global SDGs. Naturally Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production is at the heart of things, Clark explains.*

He continues by explaining that well planned waste management reduces the spread of hazardous substances, which will help achieve Goal 3 Good Health and

Goal 14 Life Below Water. Moreover, Clark explains that Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy can be targeted by utilising the energy content of the waste. He further elaborates that the leakage of methane from landfills is a major contributing cause of greenhouse gases, which is connected with Goal 13 Climate Action.

– Good waste management is key to meeting SDGs, Clark concludes.

Planning Waste Management

Clark further notes that waste management planning is the first step towards decreasing landfill waste. Following the steps to reduce, reuse, recycle and use remaining waste for energy will increase the circularity of our waste. Moreover, consumers can help reducing their own waste through active choices. Avfall Sverige's campaign, invisible waste, aims to guide consumers in this regard by demonstrating how production creates waste. One thing you can learn from the campaign is that a new laptop generates 1200kg of waste that is invisible for the consumer, and a new pair of cotton pants generates 25 kg of waste.

These are huge amounts of waste considering that every Swede buys 14 kg of clothes annually and throws away around 7kg.

Towards Zero Waste

The challenges of waste management are global.

– Using legislation by putting requirements on producers and products are some of the factors that have contributed to more sustainable waste management, Clark explains.

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

In Sweden the more sustainable waste management measures also include setting obligations on municipalities to develop waste management plans and introducing landfill taxes.

Clark continues that in the future, collection of recyclable waste by households will increase the recycling percentage further. However, a lot still remains to be done to reach SDGs.

– Companies will need to set new standards by introducing products that last longer and can be reused, repaired and recycled, Clark reflects.

New innovations and concepts are needed to create new ways of consuming. The individual citizen's role in consumption and managing personal waste, as well as in putting requirements for sustainability on products, are vital aspects in our efforts towards a more sustainable and circular future.

“ Good waste management helps to meet several of the global SDGs. Naturally Goal 12 Responsible Consumption and Production is at the heart of things, Clark explains.

Maria Malmsten graduated from Lund University with a Masters in Development Studies. Education, equality and sustainable development are topics she is enthusiastic about. Besides talking about these challenges, Maria enjoys nature walks and playing in parks with her two children.

Maria Malmsten





SDGs - an integrated approach?

An interview by Larissa Lachmann & Emily Elderfield

Professor Christine Wamsler's research includes the role of mindset in tackling sustainability issues, and how individuals and cities can better respond to challenges of the climate crisis. We spoke to her about scales of sustainability, questioned whether the SDGs are integrated enough, and explored the role of education and communication strategies on sustainability.

You investigate different scales for achieving sustainable outcomes, from individual outcomes to global outcomes. How do these scales relate to each other? Can one work without the other?

- In order to achieve sustainable change, it is crucial to work on all spheres and levels of transformation at the same time: the personal (or inner), the social/collective, and the political. The vast majority of sustainability scholarship, education and practice has only focused on the external world: ecosystems, wider socioeconomic structures, technology and governance dynamics. At the same time, a second aspect of reality has been vastly neglected: people's inner dimensions and capacities. This is a major shortcoming in

current approaches. Therefore, there is a clear need to also look at sustainability from the 'other end', and by this, I mean not only the large scale systems level, but also from the individual level. So in simple terms, it's about how we can unleash human potential to commit to, care for, and effect change for a better life.*



It is crucial to work on all spheres and levels of transformation at the same time: the personal (or inner), the social/collective, and the political.



Do you think making separate SDGs gives a false impression of how we can achieve sustainable development?

- The Goals are certainly interconnected and require an integrated approach that focuses on the root causes of the problems. Nevertheless, activities can have different entry points which can be related to specific Goals.

In your research you describe education as having a dual role in sustainable development, can you expand on this dual role?

- Education is both a means and an end. Since the sustainable development discourse began, calls have been made for

it to be used (as a means) to achieve sustainable development goals. Its potential to raise awareness of problems and to promote the skills, capacities, and motivation needed to address these problems makes it an obvious choice and approach to address any SDG. As an end, education is classically seen as a process that reveals the potential and talents of human beings in the pursuit of a good life and for the betterment of the common good. Ensuring that human beings have the opportunity to embark on this journey can be considered an SDG in its own right.

Lastly, how would you recommend these issues be translated into better communication strategies surrounding the complexity of the SDGs?

THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

The first thing I would say is that we should stop addressing and communicating sustainability challenges, such as climate change, as purely environmental or technological problems. Rather, we have to see them as a relationship problem, which is intrinsically linked to other social crises,

such as health, food, or poverty and, their root causes, such as consumerism, racism, and elitism. By its very nature, this view broadens our scope, and supports deeper approaches to communicate and address the issues.

* Part of this answer was originally stated for the Inner Green Deal podcast: "What role do mindsets play in sustainability and climate action?"



Larissa Lachmann & Emily Elderfield

Larissa and Emily are studying the Master's Programmes in International Development & Management (LUMID) and Sustainability Science (LUMES). Emily's development interests include reproductive justice and gender equity in vulnerable healthcare settings. Larissa is currently exploring creative ways to save our planet and to make great pottery (clearly the harder part).



Magazine

WRITTEN & EDITED BY FUF LUND: A PART OF THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Layout template by Fredrik Björkstén; Layout by Astrid Törling & Maria Malmsten