

SDGs LOCALIZATION: From Recovery to Resilience

Key Takeaways and Resources

Over 100 people joined the workshop on August 24th, 2021 to talk about approaches to localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Speakers and participants from across Canada and the world shared their stories of SDG collaboration and implementation, as well as their reflections and advice on challenges that may come up in this work.

Thank you to all that could join and contribute to the workshop. If you are interested in continuing the conversation, you can sign up for the [new Community of Practice on SDG localization in Canada](#).

Here are 10 takeaways from the workshop conversations:

- **Focus on a specific project** or set of projects to ground the SDG framework locally. This will help build momentum and concrete **opportunities for collaboration** between municipal and community leaders as well as **community engagement** backed by municipal commitment toward scaling and structural sustainability. A guiding question throughout this process is *What can you offer to the city, and what are you asking of it?*
- Advancing the SDGs requires **strong relationships** to be built and maintained. **Relationship building** is about grounding ourselves on shared values, while **being intentional** in maintaining connections that we plan on keeping and considering **fundamental principles** to nurture them: **authenticity, humility, truth telling**.
- We must acknowledge our common history to truly understand what it means to **leave no one behind** and strengthen our relationships. A starting point is to read key reports such as the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Naming **common objectives** between the city and local stakeholders explicitly facilitates **data collection**, allows us to work toward a **common purpose**, and enables the emergence of more **impactful and integrated collaborations** to advance the SDGs, especially in the

context of COVID-19.

- Conducting **research on community champions** that are already working with residents helps develop a holistic understanding of the strengths and challenges that communities face in localizing the global goals.
- While **COVID-19** shed light on the structural and social inequalities of our time, it also **brought people together** in a way that we would not have seen otherwise. The pandemic demonstrated the **capacity of cities** to activate SDG localization in order to **tackle interconnected challenges** and **strengthen belonging** in times of social isolation.
- The SDGs are not an extra framework for communities to report on. The Global Goals contribute to **strengthening civic capacity** to **bridge the gap** between a global framework and existing local approaches, opening opportunities for **local solutions** to emerge. In this process, the interconnected and indivisible nature of the SDGs helps us integrate the dimensions of **ecological transition** and **diversity, equity and inclusion**, as well as the dimensions of **people, planet, and prosperity**.
- **Systemic challenges** cannot be solved quickly nor by one or two organizations. We need to think of our **intergenerational connections** and set out a **long-term vision** of how we want our communities to be that goes beyond shorter-term political cycles.
- Developing Community-City advisory committees that are working on common issues and engaging those committees into SDG work and planning is an example of **governance structures for collaboration**. These structures facilitate a common understanding of local priorities and support the development of a city plan that integrates SDG localization.
- Support from **city mayors** is **game-changing** in building impactful partnerships between local governments, communities, philanthropy and the private sector. Mayors are finding the SDGs **resonate** as a common language across sectors, while offering opportunities to connect with international partners and contribute to a shared global vision that goes far beyond their community.

Resources

Here also is a list of resources shared by participants during the workshop:

- Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in Nogojiwanong | Peterborough and the Kawarthas - <https://kwic.info/index.php/advancing%20sdgs>

- Centering Indigenous Knowledge and Leadership in Your Work, by Shaelyn Wabegijig - <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/latest/centering-indigenous-leadership-in-your-work>
- City of Bristol's One City Plan (page 57 provides a visual on the composition of the One City Approach Network and the integration of the Advisory Forums) - <https://www.bristolonecity.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Bristol-One-City-Plan-2021-2050.pdf>
- Etuaptmumk: Two-Eyed Seeing and Beyond - <https://www.waysofknowingforum.ca/dialogue-4>
- First Nations Information Governance Centre - <https://fnigc.ca/>
- Hacking the SDGs paper - <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/hacking-sustainable-development-goals>
- Indigenous Collaborative Programming Report - <https://kwic.info/sites/default/files/2021-05/KWIC-Report-Consultant-WEB.pdf>
- Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper - <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>
- Measuring Sustainable Development Goals: Impact in the Co-operative Sector - <https://www.smu.ca/academics/sobey/measuring-sdgs.html>
- Next generation urban planning: Enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs) - <https://www.brookings.edu/research/next-generation-urban-planning-enabling-sustainable-development-at-the-local-level-through-voluntary-local-reviews-vlrs/>
- Prioritizing Indigenous Leadership to Advance the SDGs in Nogojiwanong | Peterborough - <https://kwic.info/sites/default/files/2021-05/KWIC-Report-ILAT-WEB.pdf>
- Student-led research projects developed in partnership with City policy priorities to advance the SDGs - <https://sdg.lamayor.org/our-work/projects>
- VLR Briefs (summaries from LA, Bristol, and Pittsburgh) - <https://uwaterloo.ca/sustainable-development-solutions-network-canada/news/new-resource-voluntary-local-review-briefs>
- Willie Ermine: What is Ethical Space? - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85PPdUE8Mb0>