

---

BLUEPRINT

---



Generation <sup>SDG</sup>

EMPOWERING CANADIANS THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

NOVEMBER 2018

Elaine Ho  
Jeremy Runnalls

**Co-authors**

Elaine Ho, Jeremy Runnalls

**Editors**

Hayley Rutherford, Julie Wright

**Generation SDG Summit**

**Facilitator**

Dan Normandeau

**Strategic Advisor**

Margaret Biggs

**Lead Writer**

Jeremy Runnalls

**Lead Rapporteur**

Elaine Ho

**Rapporteurs**

Sara Ganowski, Chloé St. Amand, Dale Ross

**Events Volunteer**

Karen Cecile

**Working with Indigenous Peoples**

**Session Facilitator**

Suzanne Methot

**Waterloo Global Science Initiative**

Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSI) has been catalyzing collective action since 2009. The conversations we host bring people with diverse viewpoints together, prompting multi-disciplinary, inclusive collaboration to address sustainable development challenges. By combining the results of these cross-cutting conversations with the science and technology of today, our network takes answers from paper to the real world, addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in sectors such as energy, education, and beyond. WGSI proudly takes a generational outlook to problem solving.

**Board of Directors**

Dr. Feridun Hamdullahpur (Chair)  
*President and Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Waterloo*

Neil Turok (Vice-Chair)  
*Director,  
Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics*

Dr. Arthur Carty (Secretary & Treasurer)

Dr. Tom Brzustowski

Michael Duschenes  
*Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer,  
Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics*

**Staff**

Dana Bowman  
*Operations & Events Manager*

Kate Pearce  
*Community Relations Manager*

Hayley Rutherford  
*Research & Programming Manager*

Julie Wright  
*Executive Director*

**CC Creative Commons License**

Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0  
International (CC BY-NC 4.0)

*Licensees may copy, redistribute and make derivative works of this material in any medium or format for only non-commercial purposes and where the source, Waterloo Global Science Initiative, is attributed.*

Cover Photo Credits (front, back):

CC 2.0 VV Nincic <http://bit.ly/2FW6RaN>

CC 2.0 Ade Halford <http://bit.ly/2HAVguS>

**Design**

Intent

[forgoodintent.com](http://forgoodintent.com)

## Table of contents

<b>4</b>	<b>Acknowledgements</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>About Waterloo Global Science Initiative</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Foreword</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Executive summary</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
11	Background
11	A community-led strategy for SDG implementation across Canada
<b>14</b>	<b>Community ecosystems and planning</b>
15	Ensuring equity
19	Addressing the democratic deficit within Canada
21	Community planning using the SDGs
<b>25</b>	<b>Partnerships</b>
26	Determining intent
28	Building the partnership
30	Setting goals
30	Enabling conditions
31	Information sharing and education
36	SDG partnership outcomes
<b>37</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
38	Transparency and data
40	Communication and the media
44	Policy coherence and community engagement
44	Changes in the constitutional status of municipalities and Indigenous authorities
45	Responsive funding and alignment with local priorities
46	Mutual accountability
<b>49</b>	<b>Innovation, funding and finance</b>
50	Applying capital
59	Stimulating innovation
59	Barriers, gaps, and principles for successful innovation
<b>62</b>	<b>Call to collaborate</b>
<b>63</b>	<b>Appendix A: Partnership resources</b>
<b>64</b>	<b>Generation SDG Summit contributors</b>
<b>79</b>	<b>Generation SDG Summit team</b>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WGSi wishes to thank the following people for their invaluable contributions to the Generation SDG Summit (April 22–25, 2018 in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada) and this Blueprint:

**Taiwo Afolabi**

*PhD Candidate, University of Victoria*

**John Joseph Alho**

*President, Net Zero Decathlon Team,  
University of Calgary*

**Nalini Andrade**

*Manager, International Development Institute,  
Humber College*

**Jon Beale**

*Manager, Sustainable Development Solutions  
Network Canada*

**Brielle Beaudin-Reimer**

*Policy Analyst, Manitoba Metis Federation*

**JP Bervoets**

*Vice President, Community Foundations of Canada*

**Margaret Biggs**

*Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy School  
of Policy Studies and Department of Political Studies,  
Queen's University*

*Chairperson, International Development  
Research Centre (IDRC)*

**Amy Brierley**

*Coordinator, Martha Justice Ministry*

**Artemis Caine**

*MSc Student, University of Edinburgh*

**Karen Cecile**

*Events Volunteer, Generation SDG*

**Te Chen**

*Program Officer, Vanke Foundation*

**Amelia Clarke**

*Associate Professor, Associate Dean of Research and the  
Director of Master of Environment & Business (MEB) Program,  
University of Waterloo*

**Rumina Dhalla**

*Associate Professor and CSR Coordinator, University of Guelph*

**Alia Dharssi**

*Freelance Journalist*

**Liliana Diaz**

*Training and Research Coordinator, Université Laval*

**MacKenzie Downing**

*Research Analyst, Department of Tourism and Culture,  
Government of Yukon*

*Co-chair, Northern Council for Global Cooperation*

**Dolapo Fadare**

*Fellow, Cansbridge Fellowship*

**Karen Farbridge**

*President and Urban Connector, Karen Farbridge & Associates*

**Terralynn Forsyth**

*Researcher and Policy Analyst, Employment and Social  
Development Canada*

*Research Lead, Audacious Futures*

**Sophie Gallais**

*Communications Officer, Institut EDS, Université Laval*

**Sara Ganowski**

*Rapporteur, Generation SDG*

**Kimberly Gibbons**

*Executive Director, Ontario Council for International Cooperation*

**Ana F. Gonzalez Guerrero**

*Co-founder and Managing Director, Youth Climate Lab  
Project Officer, Innovation Funds, Federation of Canadian Municipalities*

**Elaine Ho**

*Lead Rapporteur, Generation SDG  
Principal, TRIECO Consulting*

**Uytae Lee**

*Founder, PLANifax  
Founder/Director, About Here*

**Francis Marleau Donais**

*PhD Candidate, Université Laval*

**Shelagh McCartney**

*Assistant Professor, Ryerson University  
Director, +city lab  
Director, +together design lab*

**Heather McPherson**

*Executive Director, Alberta Council for Global Cooperation*

**Suzanne Methot**

*Indigenous Education Consultant, Dragonfly Consulting*

**Emily Mills**

*Founder, How She Hustles*

**Ron Misewace**

*Housing Coordinator, Eabametoong First Nation*

**Gabrielle Morrill**

*Economic Development Officer, City of Iqaluit*

**Sara Muir-Owen**

*UBC Project Manager, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions*

**Afnan Naeem**

*Recent Graduate, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto*

**Robert Nolan**

*Chair, Happy City St. John's*

**Dan Normandeau**

*Facilitator, Generation SDG  
Partner, Conversart*

**Claire Reid**

*Director, Master's in Development Practice: Indigenous Development, University of Winnipeg*

**Fraser Reilly-King**

*Research and Policy Manager, Canadian Council for International Co-operation*

**Dale Ross**

*Rapporteur, Generation SDG*

**Jeremy Runnalls**

*Lead Writer, Generation SDG  
Communications Lead, Smart Prosperity Institute*

**Laura Schnurr**

*Policy Analyst, McConnell Foundation*

**Michael Simpson**

*Executive Director, British Columbia Council for International Co-operation*

**Rasheeda Slater**

*Environmental Engineering Student, Dalhousie University*

**Dominique Souris**

*Co-founder and Executive Director, Youth Climate Lab*

**Chloé St. Amand**

*Rapporteur, Generation SDG*

**Wanda Sugarhead**

*Band Councillor, Eabametoong First Nation*

**Kali Taylor**

*Project Officer, International Institute for Sustainable Development  
Co-founder, Student Energy*

**Tara Templin**

*Director of Innovation and Development, The Refugee Hub*

**Elizabeth Vickers-Drennan**

*Science Educator, Science East*

**Danielle Wendehorst**

*4th Year Nursing Student, Aurora College*

**Kyle Wiebe**

*Project Officer, International Institute for Sustainable Development*

**Elora Wilkinson**

*Planner, Halifax Regional Municipality*

**Joannes Paulus Yimbessalu**

*PhD Student, Lancaster University*

# ABOUT WATERLOO GLOBAL SCIENCE INITIATIVE



## Who we are

Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) has been catalyzing collective action since 2009. The conversations we host bring people with diverse viewpoints together, prompting multi-disciplinary, inclusive collaboration to address sustainable development challenges. By combining the results of these cross-cutting conversations with the science and technology of today, our network takes answers from paper to the real world, addressing the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in sectors such as energy, education and beyond. WGSi proudly takes a generational outlook to problem solving.

WGSi sits at the intersection of two global thought leaders: the University of Waterloo and Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics. WGSi was founded through a partnership between the two institutions, and while WGSi operates independently, they remain key collaborators in our mission.

## What we do

WGSi creates the conditions for collective global action through four main activities: convening Summits, publishing Blueprints, supporting partnerships and facilitating public discourse. WGSi's cornerstone conversations are our Summits, hosted in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada every two years.

Our Summits are not traditional conferences. For each Summit we bring together contributors that include the world's sharpest leaders, ideators and emerging minds to tackle a particular challenge. Of this group of approximately 40 people, half the room is under the age of 30. We believe in the importance of creating a level playing field where people can think outside the box. Through the space we create, we elevate the expertise, lived experiences and ideas of an unlikely group of collaborators. We facilitate open discourse that sparks real progress, and have the freedom to forge a unique mandate that adapts to our ever-changing world.

Our Blueprints support the recommendations made at each Summit by collating relevant research and case studies and by providing a clear roadmap to implementation. We also produce pre-Summit Briefs intended to set the stage for the Summit conversation and Communiqués which are released at each Summit closing to summarize the vision of the contributors.

WGSi generates impact by entering into and facilitating strategic partnerships which result in projects that align with Blueprint recommendations. Our collaborations weave lasting networks that touch every level, from individuals to our local community to global media partnerships.

These partnerships are even more impactful when fused with the potential of science and technology. We create a bridge between academia and real-world, practical solutions. The conversations we facilitate uncover the most effective ways to take meaningful action, bringing a sustainable future closer for people worldwide, from northern Ontario to sub-Saharan Africa.

Photo credit: CC 2.0 Samantha Saechao <http://bit.ly/2DukuiX>

## FOREWORD



Canadians were preoccupied with a general election in the fall of 2015 and not much attention was paid to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 193 countries at the UN. But the Government of Canada and numerous Canadian groups had been heavily involved in the development of the SDGs, and Canada's adoption of the SDGs committed us to the achievement of ambitious social, economic and environmental targets by 2030.

Despite Canada's enviable quality of life, the country's commitment to the SDGs is a much-needed acknowledgement that we still have much to learn and progress to make. Developed and developing economies across the globe are all struggling to join the pillars of economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. The SDGs provide a pathway for connecting these dots in a practical manner.

Three years into the process, several conclusions have grown increasingly apparent. In many countries, citizens are turning to easy-sounding solutions offered up by a resurgent form of populism. The need to champion an alternative vision of the future that is both optimistic, inclusive and sustainable has never been greater.

Implementing this vision, however, is not the sole purview of governments in Canada. Success will require action across all segments of Canadian society – Indigenous communities, scientists and researchers, business, youth and civil society. It will depend on efforts at the citizen and community level to take these Goals and localize them – best embodied by the amazing action that is already taking shape across Canada.

How best to support these community-based efforts at SDG implementation has been the impetus behind Waterloo Global Science Initiative's (WGSi) Generation SDG initiative. Over the past year, WGSi has convened leaders in sustainable development from across Canada. This culminated in the Generation SDG Summit, held in April 2018, where members from civil society, academia and private sector were invited to share their thoughts.

Contributors took a step back from implementation to first identify a series of frameworks that can be put into place to guide the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. This approach involved difficult conversations, an open mind and the belief that respect for both local and traditional knowledge is paramount in a land as diverse as Canada.

– Margaret Biggs

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the world set out in 2015 to address the greatest societal challenges facing us through the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 193 member states, including Canada, made the commitment to this ambitious and optimistic vision of the future.

Yet, it was auditing the federal government's preparedness to implement the SDGs that led Julie Gelfand, Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development for the Office of the Auditor General, to conclude on April 24, 2018 that at the current rate, "Canada will not be able to fulfill the commitments it made to its citizens, and to the United Nations."<sup>1</sup>

Three years in, it has become apparent that successfully addressing the numerous systemic issues holding Canadians back from broadly-shared prosperity can only be achieved through a society-wide transformation designed and led at the grassroots level. A comprehensive benchmarking report published in 2017 found Canada on track to meet none of the SDGs in their entirety.<sup>2</sup>

Contrary to the common belief that Canada has made steady progress towards sustainable development, the report found that the country has been falling behind on a range of indicators where it has reached near-universality. Whether it be a lack of access to clean water or food insecurity, Canada has placed a disproportionate amount of this burden on Indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities.

The most effective course of action, argue researchers John W. McArthur and Margaret Biggs, is to turn SDG planning in Canada into "an open-source exercise, with provinces, communities, universities, businesses and organizations of all types developing implementation plans in a collaborative, public manner."<sup>3</sup>

Such planning needs to situate the core principles of Agenda 2030 at the heart of the process. These include notions of universality and leaving no one behind, the complete

integration of the three pillars of sustainability (society, economy and environment) into the realization of the Goals, aiming to achieve positive outcomes across all 17 Goals, instituting a whole of society approach and ensuring that human rights and respect for the environment are properly accounted for. Above all, this must be transformative – business as usual is not an option.

Communities are the best qualified to speak to their own unique needs and design solutions according to local conditions. As such, putting communities at the centre of Agenda 2030 implementation is the recommended approach for Canada. Governments still have an integral role to play in setting communities up for success by providing the appropriate resources and other enabling conditions that collectively add up to the national attainment of Agenda 2030.

Grassroots momentum has been building throughout Canadian society to take action on the SDGs, a movement that Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) is looking to bolster through its Generation SDG initiative. Through this process, WGSi has developed this Blueprint for setting communities on a sustainable development path – beginning with the Generation SDG Workshop (November 14–16, 2017), Summit (April 22–25, 2018), media partnerships with TVO and The Discourse, and broader engagement with interested parties across Canada.

This Blueprint is a vision for a community-driven approach to the SDGs – a process that can be broken into four sections: community ecosystems and planning, partnerships, accountability, as well as financing and stimulating innovation for the SDGs.

1 Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2018. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development releases Spring Reports. Retrieved from: [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/mr\\_20180424\\_e\\_43008.html](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/mr_20180424_e_43008.html)

2 McArthur, J.W & Rasmussen, K. (2017). Who and what gets left behind? Assessing Canada's domestic status on the Sustainable Development Goals. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper\\_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs.pdf)

3 McArthur, J. W., & Biggs, M. (2016). Mobilizing Canadian leadership on global sustainable development. Policy Options. Retrieved from: <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/september-2016/mobilizing-canadian-leadership-on-global-sustainable-development/>





### Community ecosystems and planning

Communities are uniquely positioned to create synergy among initiatives and leverage them to address Agenda 2030. However, a locally-driven approach will only be successful if designed with the entire community in mind. Ecosystem mapping can help prepare communities for SDG planning by first identifying and describing the roles and capacities of each individual and organization within a community. Proper ecosystem mapping can also create collaborative dialogue for understanding challenges for achieving collective goals while pinpointing whose voices have been missing from the conversation.

True community empowerment involves communities voluntarily coming to the table to embark on their own SDG planning path. Prescriptive efforts from higher levels of government, even if well-meaning, will fail to inspire the same level of genuine community support and representation. Instead, a range of government and non-governmental incentives should be made available to indicate that support exists if they choose to begin planning around the SDGs.

Designing a community action plan around the SDGs doesn't necessarily require starting an entirely new process. Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) well-versed in the SDGs can work closely with communities to evaluate existing sustainability or other plans to see where both commonalities and differences lie in regards to Agenda 2030. They should also be granted the tools and resources necessary to foster stronger allyship, engagement and partnerships between distinct groups as this planning and consultation process begins.

The most successful community SDG indicator frameworks in Canada, such as IISD and United Way Winnipeg's yearly Peg report, have emerged out of a gradual, collaborative effort with community members from across the city. While a lengthier and more uncertain process, the reliance on community-generated indicators aligned with local priorities has ensured true community buy-in and ownership.

### Partnerships

The SDGs are too big a task for any one person or group to tackle alone, making partnerships crucial to their implementation. They demand transdisciplinary collaboration, cooperation and coordination between and across sectors and communities to define problems and generate solutions. A successful, cross-sectoral partnership can catalyze impactful, large-scale, sustained action in a way that's reflective of its stakeholders' values and vision. At the same time, it successfully avoids the duplication of effort and resources that often emerges when complex issues are tackled in silos.

Communities and civil society have the potential to advance innovative solutions to local, national and global SDG challenges without requiring senior levels of government to provide coordination across Canada. Nevertheless, each of these efforts will be suboptimal if the enabling conditions do not exist for partnerships to succeed.

Current barriers holding back SDG-related partnerships across Canada include a lack of national awareness on the SDGs, a dearth of capacity within communities to appropriately organize and consult, and reluctance by higher orders of government to acknowledge that contributions by local governments, communities and civil society are essential for achieving the SDGs.

Another essential enabling condition is the recognition of the rights and authority of Indigenous peoples in decision-making processes related to their communities and shared resources in traditional territories. Nation-to-nation partnerships begin by acknowledging, respecting and supporting Indigenous-led implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). UNDRIP provides the rights-based framework that is necessary for the implementation of the SDGs to truly advance equality for Indigenous peoples.

### Transparency and accountability

Each of us has a responsibility to the collective. It is not enough to demand transparency and accountability from our government institutions, though this is an important step. Each of us, and every organization, must reciprocate accountability to each other. As such, a community-centric ‘virtuous cycle’ of accountability allows for progress to be defined by the community itself.

Transparency of data and information is the foundation to ensuring accountability for SDG progress. Transparent data that are collected and owned collaboratively ensures that all members of the community – individuals, NGOs, companies and governments at all levels – are informed and able to track progress on commitments, SDGs and their targets.

The role of the media in transparency and accountability must also be recognized, especially as the industry finds itself in the midst of disruptive transition. Local media, able to act in a transparent and independent manner, is an essential part of making community-led progress towards Agenda 2030. It must not only hold citizens and institutions to account, but also hold itself accountable to the community. New frameworks that allow money to flow more easily into non-profit or trust structured local journalism outfits are an option, as is direct government investment into or support for local news.

There exists a fundamental tension between the national Goals inherent to Agenda 2030 and the need to foster community-led solutions to achieve breakthroughs in many of these areas. Governments and other funders such as the philanthropic sector have a greater ability to map or support mapping of how local community efforts can add up into a national strategy.

This support is often translated into a prescriptive form of funding that restricts more imaginative local solutions. Funders should consider structuring their programs to respond more to community priorities and measures of success rather than funder-directed outcomes.

### Finance and innovation

While they certainly have an indispensable role to play, governments at all levels across Canada do not have the resources themselves to reach Agenda 2030. Alternative forms of capital will need to be harnessed, with institutional investors, the private sector, the philanthropic world, individuals, governments and regulators all having a role

to play. A shift from shareholder to stakeholder capitalism is needed, with the broader aim of maximizing long-term value for Canadian society as a whole.

The past several decades have seen a marked transformation in how companies, institutional investors and governments alike view issues related to corporate social responsibility and sustainability. But it is also a movement that has, for the most part, been stunted by a reliance on voluntary disclosure. Passing mandatory disclosure requirements for pension funds and publicly-listed companies for indicators material to sustainable development are among the most impactful ways in which governments and regulators across Canada can contribute to Agenda 2030.

Addressing sustainable development in Canada will also require new levels of innovation, because current approaches have not proven sufficient for reaching Agenda 2030. This sense of urgency requires us to think and act in new and different ways, but doesn’t necessarily require a complete reinvention of the wheel. Innovations can often be achieved by removing institutional barriers to realize existing skills and knowledge – particularly when it comes to customary practice and traditional knowledge and values.

### Moving forward

Although the SDGs have not yet reached a place of prominence in many institutions in Canada, increasing efforts across sectors demonstrate the importance of the Agenda 2030 framework to the success of current and future generations. Local government and intersectoral collaboration (e.g., private-public partnerships, nation-to-nation co-management regimes) are two focus areas where implementation needs accelerated support.

#### **With community-centric action in mind, this Blueprint communicates three main takeaways:**

- Many efforts already exist to accelerate much-needed progress on the SDGs;
- Approaches to implementing Agenda 2030 should be adapted to any local context, as described throughout this Blueprint; and
- Each of us across every sector of society has a role to play in achieving the collective Global Goals.

WGSI is optimistically looking forward to working with many partners in order to see this vision implemented.

## Introduction

### Background

In 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations (UN) adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs are a set of goals, targets and indicators intended to frame global efforts to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030. While the precursor to the SDGs, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), focused on improving lives and livelihoods in developing states, the SDGs are intended for everyone, everywhere – including Canada.

The SDGs grew out of a high degree of interdisciplinarity and collaboration, and efforts to achieve them will too. Collaboration, cooperation and innovation have been highlighted as priorities for the next 15 years, with an emphasis on partnership as an integral driver.

While the SDGs are a powerful call to action on the multifaceted task of eradicating poverty, fighting inequality and tackling climate change, critics have simultaneously claimed that the Goals are not ambitious enough and are too sprawling. With 169 targets grouped into 17 Goals, the SDGs are a massive expansion of the MDGs and signatory states are in danger of wildly missing their mark without strategic planning.

### A community-led strategy for SDG implementation across Canada

Canada is consistently ranked as one of the most prosperous countries on the planet, celebrated for its enviable economic and social stability. At the same time, by committing to the SDGs in September 2015, this country acknowledged the hard truth that we are not currently on a path of sustainable development within our shores.

Achieving Agenda 2030 isn't simply a domestic challenge for Canadians, as the nation can and must help other countries adopt a model of sustainable development. In addition, Canada may benefit from adapting examples from abroad. But with Canada on track to meet none of the SDGs in their entirety, according to a comprehensive benchmarking effort in 2017 by researchers at the Brookings Institute, a greater focus on how to bring about the necessary society-wide transformation at home is essential for ensuring that no Canadians are left behind.<sup>4</sup>

The commitment to leave no one behind has been described by UN deputy secretary-general Jan Eliasso as the “underlying moral code” of Agenda 2030, and a foundational principle that appears in almost any discussion of the SDGs.<sup>5</sup>

The Brookings report found Canada falling behind on a range of indicators where it has reached near-universality (Table 1). Whether it be a lack of access to clean water or food insecurity, a disproportionate amount of this burden falls on marginalized communities. Marginalized demographics identified in Canada's 2018 Voluntary National Review (a voluntary UN process wherein member states conduct regular and inclusive reviews of domestic SDG progress at the annual High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development) include Indigenous peoples, women, youth, the elderly, the LGBTQ2 community, newcomers to Canada and persons with disabilities.<sup>6</sup>

- 4 McArthur, J.W and Rasmussen, K. (2017). Who and what gets left behind? Assessing Canada's domestic status on the Sustainable Development Goals. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper\\_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs1.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs1.pdf)
- 5 UN News Centre. (2016). 'No-one left behind' is ethical imperative of new development agenda – UN deputy chief. Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52992#.Wldz9ZM-f-Y>
- 6 Government of Canada. (2018). Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20033CanadasVoluntaryNationalReviewENV6.pdf>

**Table 1: Summary of Canada's domestic status on 73 SDG indicators<sup>7</sup>**

Sustainable Development Goal	Moving backwards	Breakthrough needed	Acceleration needed	On track
<b>1</b> Poverty		•	•	•••
<b>2</b> Hunger and food systems	•••			
<b>3</b> Good health and well-being	•	••	•••••	•••
<b>4</b> Quality education	••	•		•••
<b>5</b> Gender equality	•	•••••		
<b>6</b> Clean water and sanitation	••	••	•	
<b>7</b> Affordable and clean energy	•	•	•	•
<b>8</b> Decent work and economic growth		••	•	•
<b>9</b> Industry, innovation and infrastructure	•	••		
<b>10</b> Reduced inequalities	•	•		
<b>11</b> Sustainable cities and communities	•••			•
<b>12</b> Responsible consumption and production		•••		
<b>13</b> Climate action		•		
<b>14</b> Life below water	•		•	••
<b>15</b> Life on land		•••		•
<b>16</b> Peace, justice and strong institutions	••	••	•	••
	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>

Each dot represents a SDG target identified by McArthur & Rasmussen as an assessable domestic target for Canada.

<sup>7</sup> McArthur, J.W & Rasmussen, K. (2017). Who and what gets left behind? Assessing Canada's domestic status on the Sustainable Development Goals. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper\\_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs1.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/working-paper_assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sdgs1.pdf)

A more focused approach to sustainable development and Agenda 2030 at the federal and provincial government levels is sorely needed, but successfully addressing these systemic issues is an effort best designed in concert with the many diverse communities that comprise them. It is these communities, after all, that are the most qualified to speak to the needs and solutions within their contexts.

The good news is there is already a great deal of momentum building throughout Canadian society to take on the SDGs at the grassroots level. This rare opportunity allows us to take stock of what systemic barriers have inhibited progress in the past, and to enact much-needed reforms, including those recent and current efforts towards reconciliation.

A 2017 Abacus survey commissioned by the United Nations Association in Canada concluded that only 11 per cent of Canadian adults were aware of the SDGs, but broad support was expressed once the Goals were explained to the respondents.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, public consultations by the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) concluded that the SDGs provided a “common language” for connecting local issues to larger issues facing both British Columbia and Canada.<sup>9</sup>

It was in this spirit that Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) launched the Generation SDG initiative, to discuss how to set communities on a robust and holistic sustainable path rather than dictate what success looks like. Members from civil society, academia and the private sector, including a strong contingent of youth leaders, were invited to share their thoughts at the Generation SDG Summit from April 22–25, 2018.

Multiple media partnerships were also established for this project, designed to increase public engagement and awareness around the SDGs in Canada. A collaboration

between independent journalism company The Discourse and WGSi led to the creation of a year-long sustainable development beat,<sup>10</sup> while educational public service broadcaster TVO was also brought on as a media partner.<sup>11</sup>

Generation SDG Summit contributors took a step back from implementation to first identify a series of guiding frameworks that can be put into place as we make the SDGs more local and strategize in different contexts. This vision of a community-led transformation is not the easiest path, but we believe it to be both the most durable and equitable.

**This Blueprint is broken up into four sections: community ecosystems and planning, partnerships, accountability, as well as financing and stimulating innovation for the SDGs. This vision of a community-driven approach to the SDGs presents an incredibly ambitious view of the future that we wish to build, where local approaches add up to a transformative national agenda.**

The first step is to ensure that communities are properly equipped to begin implementing bottom-up approaches to the SDGs. This is followed by an exploration of successful partnerships for addressing the SDGs. We then delve into the success a community can have in building greater accountability to and for itself, capped by a discussion of unlocking innovation, funding and finance.

8 UNAC. (n.d.) Canadians as effectively engaged global citizens, Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <http://unac.org/canadians-as-effectively-engaged-global-citizens-sustainable-development-goals/>

9 BCCIC. (2016) The invisible mosaic: BC and the Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <http://bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/The-Invisible-Mosaic-BC-and-the-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf>

10 Lewis, K. (2017). Announcing Discourse Media's new sustainable development reporter. The Discourse. Retrieved from: <http://discoursemedia.org/announcements/new-hire-signals-commitment-to-sustainable-development-reporting>

11 TVO. (2017). Canada and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Agenda with Steve Paikin. Retrieved from: <https://tvo.org/video/programs/the-agenda-with-steve-paikin/canada-and-the-sustainable-development-goals>

# COMMUNITY ECOSYSTEMS AND PLANNING

As the 'boots on the ground,' communities are the first to notice challenges and the first to begin implementing solutions. Communities are uniquely positioned to create and leverage synergies among initiatives to address Agenda 2030. However, a locally-driven approach will only be successful if designed with the entire community in mind.

Ecosystem mapping is the process of understanding the 'lay of the land' in a community – its people, organizations, structures, processes, perspectives and other principle elements. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ecosystem mapping involves identifying, describing and understanding the roles and capacities of each individual and organization within a community as they relate to SDG implementation.

To put it simply, who is doing what and how are they connected? An entire community can't be expected to take ownership of SDG implementation and benefit from the processes when all voices are not thoroughly heard and considered. Ecosystem mapping creates collaborative dialogue for understanding challenges for achieving collective goals while pinpointing whose voices are missing.

Mapping a community ecosystem of initiatives, and continually developing and expanding it, enables connections among initiatives and recognizes expertise within communities to address their most pressing needs.

Different forms of ecosystem mapping have already been used to chart out Canada's approach to meeting Agenda 2030, and may be of use to those approaching it from a community perspective. Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) took a national approach to mapping the evolving SDG ecosystem in Canada at the November 2017 Generation SDG Workshop.<sup>12</sup> It focused on which leading actors and organizations are working, from a high-level implementation standpoint, on a Canadian plan for Agenda 2030.

BCCIC has created an interactive Movement Map to demonstrate the "invisible mosaic" of thousands of groups working toward the SDGs across British Columbia

and Canada's north.<sup>13</sup> The Map demonstrates how many organizations are working to address the SDGs, often unknowingly, through projects and initiatives they were already conducting.

Identifying with Agenda 2030 is not required for an organization or initiative to make progress towards achieving the SDGs (unless awareness of the SDGs is an intended outcome). This is important to recognize as the SDGs have not yet reached a place of prominence in many institutions across the country.

Communities are the best positioned to define their own community ecosystem, the players within it and the strategies and actions required to work toward the SDGs. Ecosystem mapping can be enhanced through inclusive and participatory dialogue, learning and knowledge sharing.

Effective community ecosystem mapping can enhance or challenge dominant frameworks currently in place. Every community is distinct, but each has fallen short when it comes to truly inclusive growth due to complex socio-political climates that create uneven power dynamics within the community. These broader systems of unequal power often reflect dominant Western or colonial values. This makes meaningful engagement, participation and co-creation of solutions extremely challenging.

Agenda 2030, with its emphasis on the interconnected nature of the barriers to sustainable development, provides a common language for understanding the impediments that hold back progress. Ecosystem mapping is the first step in identifying and starting to move past existing systems that have led to unequal outcomes.

<sup>12</sup> Runnalls, J. (2018). WGSi Generation SDG brief. Retrieved from: [http://wgsi.org/sites/wgsi-live.pi.local/files/WGSi\\_GenerationSDG-Brief\\_2018.pdf](http://wgsi.org/sites/wgsi-live.pi.local/files/WGSi_GenerationSDG-Brief_2018.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> British Columbia Council for International Cooperation. (n.d.) Movement Map. Retrieved from: <https://www.bccic.ca/map/>

Taking an asset-based and appreciative approach that builds upon the valuable and positive work taking place within the community creates a constructive pathway. A community equipped with an accurate and forward-looking ecosystem map is much better positioned to begin an open and participatory SDG community planning process.

**A meaningful and inclusive mapping process should look to:**

1. Create opportunities for meaningful intergenerational, intercultural, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary dialogue, exchange and knowledge sharing, while being cognizant of groups who have not been engaged before.
2. Ensure that Canada's SDGs initiatives recognize, reflect and begin with the nation-to-nation relationship between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and the Government of Canada.
3. Identify and share models for more inclusive, participatory, and decolonized ecosystem convening, community dialogue and ecosystem mapping processes, as well as pathways for disseminating that information.
4. Develop open tools, resources, data and methodological frameworks to support and enhance locally-defined processes for ecosystem mapping.
5. Make available sustainable, long-term funding for convening and community dialogue, knowledge sharing and ecosystem mapping processes. This funding should have accessible application and reporting structures and be rooted in community decision-making.

## Ensuring equity

Canada performs well on many international rankings that assess averages of education quality, health outcomes and overall quality of life. However, a look at subnational and community-level data available for Canada shows that these outcomes are not uniform along demographic lines.<sup>14</sup> Remote

communities in Canada, many of which are home to majority Indigenous populations, often lack quality essential services, impacting their quality of life.<sup>15</sup> This is why the principle of leave no one behind and taking equity-based actions must sit at the forefront of every discussion on the SDGs.

Equity-based actions are no small task. In Canada, a country that is home to 20 per cent of the world's freshwater (seven per cent of which is classified as renewable freshwater),<sup>16</sup> access to clean drinking water is often taken for granted. However, hundreds of communities, a disproportionate number of which are Indigenous, remain without access to safe, reliable drinking water. The number of boil water advisories across the country increased from 2010 to 2017, with 77 per cent located in small communities with a population of 500 people or less.<sup>17</sup>

Neskantaga First Nation, a Northern Ontario community with a population of about 240, has had an ongoing drinking water advisory in place since 1995. This means that an entire generation has reached adulthood without access to safe drinking water. The people of Neskantaga achieved a victory in 2017 with the announcement of funding from the Government of Canada for a replacement water treatment plant, to be completed by October 2018. At the time of publication, whether funding for maintenance and operation of the plant, or infrastructure connecting the plant to the rest of the community will be provided is yet to be seen.<sup>18</sup>

Marginalized demographics identified in Canada's 2018 Voluntary National Review (a voluntary UN process wherein member states conduct regular and inclusive reviews of domestic SDG progress at the annual High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development) include Indigenous peoples, women, youth, the elderly, the LGBTQ2 community, newcomers to Canada and persons with disabilities.<sup>19</sup>

As the YWCA Calgary puts it, "focusing on equity means that we recognize the system in place is leaving many behind and we actively dedicated resources to ensure everyone can catch up and succeed at the same level, barrier free."<sup>20</sup>

- 14 McArthur, J.W., & Rasmussen, K. (2017). Who and what gets left behind? Assessing Canada's domestic status on the Sustainable Development Goals. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/who-and-what-gets-left-behind-assessing-canadas-domestic-status-on-the-sustainable-development-goals/>
- 15 Government of Canada. (2011). Status of remote/off-grid communities in Canada. Retrieved from: [https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/canmetenergy/files/pubs/2013-118\\_en.pdf](https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/canmetenergy/files/pubs/2013-118_en.pdf)
- 16 Government of Canada. (2018). Water: frequently asked questions. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/water-overview/frequently-asked-questions.html>
- 17 Government of Canada. (2018). Drinking water advisories. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/drinking-water-advisories.html>
- 18 Aiello, R. (2018). Can PM Trudeau keep drinkable water promise to First Nations? CTV News. Retrieved from: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/can-pm-trudeau-keep-drinkable-water-promise-to-first-nations-1.3736954>
- 19 Government of Canada. (2018). Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20033CanadasVoluntaryNationalReviewENV6.pdf>
- 20 YWCA Calgary. (n.d.). Equity vs. equality: What's the difference? Retrieved from: <https://www.ywcalgary.ca/news/equity-v-s-equality-whats-difference/>



## Plastic pollution is a social justice issue

[As The Discourse has delved deeper into the issue of plastic pollution], the numbers have been overwhelming – 8 million tonnes of plastic leaking into the ocean every year, 11.1 billion plastic pieces suffocating coral reefs in the Asia-Pacific region, more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2050... There's no shortage of alarming plastic statistics.

What comes up less often is how these numbers come about and what that means for people affected at a local level. That's why I was excited to learn about the Civic Lab for Environmental Action Research (CLEAR), a self-described "feminist, anti-colonial lab specializing in monitoring plastic pollution," at Memorial University of Newfoundland. It researches plastic pollution with social justice in mind.

The lab's approach is all about accessibility and equity, which has led them to produce devices such as BabyLegs, a contraption made from baby's tights and plastic bottles that citizen scientists can use as a trawl to gather samples of microplastics from the ocean's surface. At a cost of about \$12 (U.S.), BabyLegs is a fraction of the price of the \$3500 (U.S.) Manta Trawl, which scientists typically use to do the same thing. You can even make one in your kitchen.

Plastic pollution "is definitely one of those cases of a disproportionate burden of the world's pollution onto certain groups," says Jessica Melvin, a researcher at CLEAR who's studying plastic ingestion in cod consumed by communities in Newfoundland.

Indigenous peoples, as well as people from low-income and rural communities who depend on wild seafood for their diet, face greater risks from oceans plastics, which can be a million times more concentrated with chemicals than surrounding water. But the pollution in their food chain often comes from the world.

To get at the inequities, Jessica and other researchers at CLEAR hold consultations with the communities impacted by their work, and gather fish guts from fish that people are going to eat, rather than directly gathering samples from the ocean. "We sample freezers, essentially," says Max Liboiron, director of CLEAR. "Sampling the ocean means that you can't say things about the food webs and people eating it."

Learning about CLEAR's emphasis on equity served as an important reminder for me as a journalist. Even as plastic pollution threatens the whole world, it's critical to ask questions about how the same issue is affecting different people differently, and to think about how the answer to that question applies to my work.

*This article, written by Alia Dharssi, first appeared on The Discourse's Sustainability newsletter under the title Plastic Pollution is a Social Justice Issue in February 2018.<sup>21</sup> The Discourse is a media partner of WGSF's Generation SDG initiative.*



## Meaningful youth engagement

Young people are a demographic whose perspectives are often tokenized when it comes to crafting SDG strategies and solutions. Youth are sidelined during these processes due, in part, to inexperience. Yet there is substantial evidence that youth have been responsible for precipitating a variety of social changes – everything from influencing debates of national importance and leading consequential health sciences research to increasing access to post-secondary education.

When youth are engaged, particularly if development opportunities are provided, multiple benefits accrue for society. Not least of these is long-term vision resulting in vested interests for success and accountability for actions. Beyond influencing change by others, youth are capable of implementing change themselves. They can often be more impactful than society gives them credit for.

<sup>21</sup> Dharssi, A. (2018). Newsletter: Plastic pollution is a social justice issue. The Discourse. Retrieved from: <https://www.thediscourse.ca/sustainability/plastic-pollution-social-justice>



Internationally, the United Nations made a new commitment to youth in September 2018. The new strategy, Youth 2030: Working With and For Young People, will see young people engage more deeply and in a more coordinated way in all contexts in areas of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.<sup>22</sup> Promoting youth rights, education, meaningful employment and general capacity building are all priorities under Youth 2030. The goal is to ensure young people's views, insights and ideas are incorporated into UN work on youth issues moving forward.

In Canada, a comprehensive study found that youth were effective agents of change across society over the 35-year period observed, from 1978 to 2012.<sup>23</sup> Strategies used by youth to engage with others can be broken into four broad categories: socialization or awareness-raising, exerting influence, forming partnerships and exerting power directly. Examples from the research were categorized into two forms: action-based impacts and more passive impacts.

One action-based impact came from a unanimous vote registered by the executive of the Young Liberals in 1998 that pushed then-PC leader Jean Charest to lead the Quebec Liberal Party.<sup>24</sup> The Montreal Gazette reported that a third of delegates who selected the new leader were from the ranks of the Young Liberals.<sup>25</sup> Charest agreed to lead the party and did so for 15 years from 1998 to 2012, ultimately serving as Premier for nine years.

A more passive impact was the gradual waning of support by young Quebecers for Quebec sovereignty. Youth support was a cornerstone of the separatist movement when it was ascendent in the 1970s and 80s, according to a report by public opinion analyst Claire Durand examining trends from 1976-2014.<sup>26</sup>

Youth support for sovereignty was nearly 20 points higher than any other demographic in 1980, eventually peaking at 60 per cent in the aftermath of the 1995 referendum. But support among younger voters has steadily fallen since then, leading political commentator Martin Patriquin to note that “the enemies of the sovereignty movement aren't the Liberals, immigrants or any of the PQ's bogeymen: It's the march of time.”<sup>27</sup> An Ipsos poll taken in September 2018 found only 19 per cent support for independence among Quebecers aged 18 to 25. When asked by pollsters to rank a list of 14 major election issues, these same voters placed sovereignty last.<sup>28</sup>

Youth have used a variety of strategies to achieve differing levels of impact across society, but the most common topics identified by the youth-led social change researchers were equality, empowerment and social justice. These three issues directly align with the fundamental Agenda 2030 concept of leave no one behind.

While not led by youth, the Generation SDG Summit is an example of how intergenerational strategies of partnership and power can be facilitated. The Summit brought together equal cohorts of emerging leaders under the age of 30 and experienced professionals to build capacity and generate solutions. “Enabling Canada's youth to develop highly networked pathways for action on the [SDGs] “was a primary goal.”<sup>29</sup> Younger participants at the Summit drove many of the processes and steered discussions while more experienced professionals provided insights and guidance along the way.

Youth as a collective demographic have demonstrated decades of experience in actions that support implementation of Agenda 2030. This study and the many case studies it built upon testify to the idea that youth perspectives should be included when making decisions, identifying challenges and generating solutions for the SDGs.

22 Risse, N. (2018). UN Launches 2030 Strategy and Global Partnership Initiative for Youth. Retrieved from: <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/un-launches-2030-strategy-and-global-partnership-initiative-for-youth/>

23 Ho, E., Clarke, A. & Dougherty, I. (2015). Youth-led social change: Topics, engagement types, organizational types, strategies, and impacts. *Futures*. 67: 52-62.

24 Quebec young Liberals support Charest. (1998). CBC News. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.164780>

25 Youth wing issues appeal to Charest. (1998, March 7). Montréal Gazette.

26 Durand, C.. (2014). Générations, souveraineté, Parti Québécois. Retrieved from: <http://ahlessondages.blogspot.com/2014/06/generations-souverainete-parti-quebecois.html>

27 Patriquin, Martin. (2014). The epic collapse of Quebec separatism. Maclean's. Retrieved from: <https://www.macleans.ca/politics/the-epic-collapse-of-separatism/>

28 Ipsos & La Presse. (2018). Les jeunes et la campagne électorale. Retrieved from: [https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2018-09/rapport\\_-\\_les\\_jeunes\\_et\\_la\\_politique\\_-\\_ipsos\\_-\\_la\\_presse\\_13092018.pdf](https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2018-09/rapport_-_les_jeunes_et_la_politique_-_ipsos_-_la_presse_13092018.pdf)

29 Runnalls, J. (2018). WGSi Generation SDG Brief. Retrieved from: [http://wgsi.org/sites/wgsi-live.pi.local/files/WGSi\\_GenerationSDG-Brief\\_2018.pdf](http://wgsi.org/sites/wgsi-live.pi.local/files/WGSi_GenerationSDG-Brief_2018.pdf)

7

AFFORDABLE AND  
CLEAN ENERGY

Solution Spotlight:

## Youth leaders tackling energy challenges

On the local and regional scale, one example of a successful youth-led action is the Solar and Wind Initiatives Towards Change (SWITCH).<sup>30</sup> SWITCH started in the fall of 2006 as a school club with one goal: to generate renewable electricity on large, flat and unshaded school roofs.

SWITCH achieved its first goal in 2010, with a vision to see schools across Canada implement similar solutions. The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) adopted the SWITCH model into its Solar Schools Project, which currently provides electricity to hundreds of schools and nearly 2,000 Toronto homes from its rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems.<sup>31</sup>

### The SWITCH/Solar Schools model provides a variety of 'win-win' benefits:

- The community receives renewable electricity, as the clean electricity is fed directly into the grid;
- The partnered company (AMP Solar Group Inc. for Phase 1 from 2011–2014 and Schooltop Solar LP for Phase 2 from 2014–2016) earned income through Ontario's Feed-In Tariff program;
- The TDSB, which was behind in school repairs, began earning income from renting its roof space. This has been used to repair roofs and other structures as part of the conditions for housing a solar array; and
- Learning opportunities have arisen from the physical display of the PV array and monitors inside the school that demonstrate real-time production of electricity alongside dollars earned or saved through the project.

SWITCH provides an example of a youth-led energy initiative that was integrated into public education and community electricity systems at the local level. However, the notion that young people's views are important to consider as we plan for a clean energy future has also begun to manifest itself at the national level.

In 2017, Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) held a public consultation series called Generation Energy to determine a vision of what Canada's energy future should look like in 2050. A collaboration between CityHive, Student Energy and NRCAN engaged 287 youth through in-person dialogues, in addition to 7,000 people online, from 11 provinces and territories across Canada.

The vision, published in the 2017 Youth Voices Report, presents 14 key findings in addition to pathways for achieving the vision, guiding values and roles for youth moving forward. The key findings include "hav[ing] a zero-carbon thriving economy, be[ing] a world leader in clean technology, hav[ing] depoliticized, collaborative energy governance, and operat[ing] an equitable decolonized energy system that provides equal opportunities to all Canadians without negatively impacting our environment."<sup>32</sup>

The many youth-led community dialogues<sup>33</sup> also contributed to the national Generation Energy Council 2018 report, *Canada's Energy Transition: Getting to Our Energy Future, Together*.<sup>34</sup> The examples provided by SWITCH and Generation Energy show how youth-centric planning approaches can be adapted and applied across Canada to bring about a more inclusive vision of sustainable development.

30 Girard, D. (2007). Bright idea raises awareness. The Toronto Star. Retrieved from: [https://www.thestar.com/news/2007/04/18/bright\\_idea\\_raises\\_awareness.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/2007/04/18/bright_idea_raises_awareness.html)

31 Toronto District School Board. (n.d.). Solar schools project. Retrieved from: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Facility-Services/Solar-Schools-Project>

32 CityHive & Student Energy. (2017). Youth voices report: The pan-Canadian youth vision for energy in Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.studentenergy.org/posts/648-2017-youth-voices-report>

33 Government of Canada. (2018). Generation Energy dialogue summary. Retrieved from: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/2017#S1>

34 Generation Energy Council. (2018). Canada's energy transition: Getting to our energy future, together. Retrieved from: <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/20380>

## Addressing the democratic deficit within Canada

The successful adoption of Agenda 2030 will only come about through the dedication of an informed and active citizenry advocating for community-led change. This wholesale reimagining of society first requires the existence of a common civic bond, described by Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam in his book *Bowling Alone* as social capital – referring to “connections among individuals, social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.”<sup>35</sup>

The community mapping process, particularly by increasing dialogue between disparate members of the community, can help to create a basis for shared meaning and strengthened social cohesion. The Government of Canada’s Policy Research Sub-Committee on Social Cohesion described this as “the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians.”<sup>36</sup>

Social cohesion can overcome growing levels of individualism within society, foster awareness of and support for a common good, and provide a basis for shared concerns around fairness and justice. Particularly important to a multicultural society such as Canada, it can also enable greater acceptance of social

change and pluralism. Building up social capital leads to renewed social cohesion, which in turn prepares people to increase their level of civic engagement. At the core of most definitions of social cohesion is an acknowledgement that the members of a community are participating in the common life of that community.”<sup>37</sup>

There’s been rigorous discussion among scholars about the emergence of a significant democratic deficit within Canada,<sup>38</sup> best embodied by a persistent “gap between what Canadians expect of their political institutions in terms of democratic governance and what they perceive as reality.”<sup>39</sup> Declining levels of voter participation,<sup>40</sup> low political trust<sup>41</sup> and reduced engagement with the political system through formal mechanisms such as participation in political parties are all symptoms of a dissatisfied citizenry.

Efforts to stem this stagnated faith in our political institutions<sup>42</sup> often leads to calls for structural reforms (some of which are proposed on p. 44), but myriad other forms of civic engagement are available that provide for more grassroots empowerment and co-governance with the general public.

35 Putnam, R.D. (200). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster.

36 Government of Canada. (1997). *Social cohesion research workplan*. Retrieved from: [https://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/governance/sites/socialsciences.uottawa.ca/governance/files/social\\_cohesion\\_research\\_workplan.pdf](https://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/governance/sites/socialsciences.uottawa.ca/governance/files/social_cohesion_research_workplan.pdf)

37 Cameron, D. (2002). *The landscape of civic engagement in Ontario: A paper prepared for the Panel on the Role of Government*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/8000/244119.pdf>

38 Lenard, P.T., Simeon, R. (2013). *Imperfect democracies: The democratic deficit in Canada and the United States*. UBC Press.

39 Aucoin, P., and Turnbull, L. (2003). *The democratic deficit: Paul Martin and parliamentary reform*. *Canadian Public Administration*. 46(4): 436.

40 Morden, M., and Urban, M.C. (2017). *Low voter turnout tends to produce bad government, so how do we get more Canadians to the polls?* Retrieved from: <https://mowatcentre.ca/low-voter-turnout-tends-to-produce-bad-government-so-how-do-we-get-more-canadians-to-the-polls/>

41 Edelman Canada. (2018). *2018 Edelman trust barometer*. Retrieved from: [https://www.edelman.ca/sites/default/files/2018-02/2018-Edelman-Trust-Barometer-Canada\\_ENGLISH.PDF](https://www.edelman.ca/sites/default/files/2018-02/2018-Edelman-Trust-Barometer-Canada_ENGLISH.PDF)

42 Canadian Index of Wellbeing. (2010). *Canada suffering from huge democratic deficit, report says*. Retrieved from: <https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/news/canada-suffering-huge-democratic-deficit-report-says>

16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND  
STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Solution Spotlight:

## Mass LBP citizen reference panels

Public consultation firm Mass LBP is known for its creative approaches to public engagement and consultation around important, and often controversial, decisions involving local communities.

Its most popular method, Citizens' Reference Panels, involves the selection of a randomly chosen but representative group of interested citizens. They are then brought up to speed on the issue in question, given an extended period of time to conduct more research and deliberate before giving their input or providing feedback.<sup>43</sup>

"People certainly want the option [to be involved], and want other people like them to be involved," said Mass LBP managing director Alex Way in an interview with the Public Policy and Governance Review.<sup>44</sup> "Evidence across the Western world shows that there's declining trust and declining legitimacy of our public institutions, particularly our decision-making institutions, politicians and government. I think that if done well, this is a way to buttress against some of the deep challenges to the public legitimacy of these institutions."

Mass LBP co-founder Peter MacLeod was first exposed to the idea while working on the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. Beginning in 2007, the firm began refining the process and has now conducted thirty-four major reference panels, citizens' assemblies and commissions for governments involving more than 1000 Canadians. Projects have ranged from the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan Citizens' Assembly in Vancouver to the Residents' Reference Panel on Supervised Injection Services in Toronto.

There have been some notable success stories thus far, including securing community support for the restructuring of a hospital in Cobourg, ON. Faced with a string of operating deficits, the hospital was looking to decide on manageable service cuts that would align with the values of the community. The recommendations, put forth by a group chosen for its demographic similarity to the community as a whole, were adopted wholesale by the hospital. Way ascribes the lack of public protests and continued levels of volunteerism at the hospital, in part, to the hands-on community engagement strategy.<sup>45</sup>

43 Mass LBP. (n.d.). The reference panel playbook: Eight moves for designing a deliberative process. Retrieved from: <https://www.masslbp.com/the-reference-panel-playbook/>

44 Mesiano-Crookston, J. (2014). About public consultation: An interview with Mass LBP. The Public Policy and Governance Review. Retrieved from: <https://ppgreview.ca/2014/02/28/about-public-consultation-an-interview-with-mass-lbp/>

45 Doiron, M. (2011). The new citizens' panels: a powerful antidote to cynicism. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/the-new-citizens-panels-a-powerful-antidote-to-cynicism/article578195/>

## Community planning using the SDGs

There is significant potential to develop a Canada-wide framework that incentivizes and inspires communities to define their alignment with Agenda 2030, while providing them with the leverage and opportunities to freely create, act, monitor, measure and share their SDG experiences.

Generation SDG Summit contributors outlined a framework for Canada-wide community planning (Figure 1) around the SDGs that strives to enable holistic wellbeing at the individual, community and environmental levels.

**1. Inspire** – encourage communities to define their alignment with the SDGs and take further action to advance their own sustainability vision.

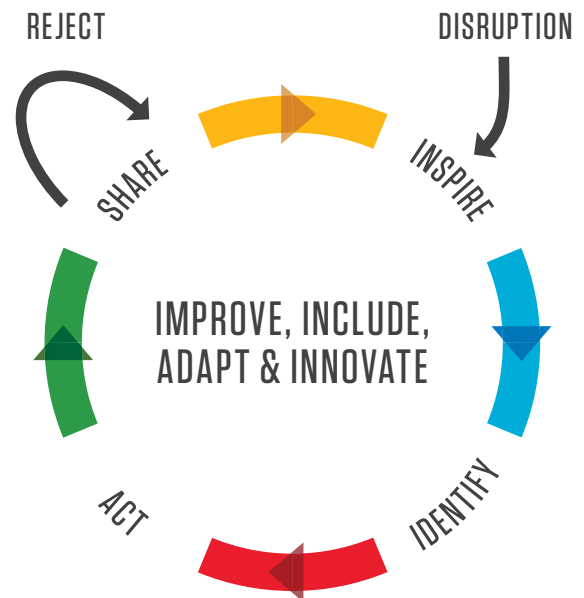
True community empowerment involves communities voluntarily coming to the table to embark on their own SDG planning path. Prescriptive efforts from higher levels of government, even if well-meaning, will fail to inspire the same level of genuine community support and representation.

Instead, a range of government and non-governmental incentives should be made available to indicate that support exists if they choose to begin planning around the SDGs. Non-profit organizations committed to catalyzing local SDG efforts, such as Alliance 2030 (see p. 36 for more) and BCCIC, have had early success engaging with stakeholders such as youth groups, Indigenous organizations and professional associations to promote Agenda 2030.

Other communication and messaging strategies can help to spread Agenda 2030 to different audiences as well. Together 2017: Alberta's Notebook for the Global Goals, a creative storytelling initiative produced by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation, uses beautiful artwork and storytelling to illustrate what Albertans are doing to contribute to the SDGs both here and abroad.<sup>46</sup>

Continuing to find other methods of storytelling and knowledge-sharing to connect the SDGs with local values and practices is vital. One example of this is The Onion Theatre Project, based in Victoria, B.C., which uses theatre to discuss and address social issues and human rights.<sup>47</sup>

Figure 1: Community planning cycle



**2. Identify & Act** – help enable communities to identify how their plans and actions already connect with SDGs, where further work is needed and provide communities with the tools and resources necessary to mobilize action.

Designing a community action plan around the SDGs doesn't necessarily require starting an entirely new process from the beginning. Thousands of community development strategies, sustainability plans and other relevant frameworks have already been designed by local governments and communities across the country.

Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) well-versed in the SDGs can work closely with communities to evaluate existing plans to see where both commonalities and differences lie in regards to Agenda 2030. For example, local sustainability plans often have a stronger environmental

46 Alberta Council for Global Cooperation. (2017). Together 2017: Alberta's notebook for the Global Goals. Retrieved from: <http://together.acgc.ca/>

47 The Onion Theatre Project. (n.d.). Homepage. Retrieved from: <http://oniontheatre.com>

emphasis. The Baltimore Community Indicator Alliance is in the midst of reviewing the City of Baltimore’s Sustainability plan and recommending adjustments to align it more closely with Agenda 2030.<sup>48</sup>

Sharing resources such as the Canadian Index of Wellbeing<sup>49</sup> can help communities begin to broaden out the scope of existing plans to capture a fuller version of sustainable development within their communities.

Some of the most innovative SDG-focused local plans released over the past several years are not wholly devoted to strict Agenda 2030 implementation, but instead represent the “productive tension” between the universality of the SDG and the context-specific nature of measuring progress in specific communities.<sup>50</sup> New York City’s OneNYC 2018 report, the city’s blueprint for the future, is one of the most high-profile examples of this approach.<sup>51</sup>

Provincial and federal governments should provide communities with the tools and resources necessary to foster stronger engagement, allyship and partnerships between diverse groups as this planning and consultation process begins. Peg, Winnipeg’s community indicator system, involved more than two years of consultations to ensure that local ownership and priorities stood at the heart of the initiative (see p. 23 for more on this).<sup>52</sup>

When it comes to offering support and knowledge-sharing in Indigenous communities, the SDG’s can serve as a common language for translating “the multiplicity of perspectives and priorities in measuring the quality of life” that are embedded into local values systems.<sup>53</sup> This can help to secure further funding and support to bolster decisions or policy at the local level.

**3. Share** – provide necessary resources and enabling conditions for communities to effectively track, monitor, report and meaningfully share their SDG progress within and between communities to scale progress up to the national level.

There is opportunity for communities to implement more comprehensive, radical but locally suitable reporting processes to mobilize transformative change.

The Vital Signs model, a national program coordinated by the Community Foundations of Canada but led by each individual community foundation, provides a roadmap for supporting local planning through partnerships. Local knowledge is leveraged to produce and release a yearly Community Report focused on wellbeing.<sup>54</sup> This high-profile document helps to steer political and community attention towards pressing local issues related to sustainable development.

Vital Signs reports for 2018 and 2019 have begun to integrate the SDGs into the framework in a more systematic way. The London Community Foundation, for example, SDG-coded its 2018 Vital Signs report.<sup>55</sup> “The grassroots approach of Vital Signs to collect data, spark conversation and inspire civic engagement offers a unique tool to benchmark the progress of wellbeing in our communities against a set of global targets,” explains Alison Sidney, coordinator of strategic initiatives at the Community Foundations of Canada.<sup>56</sup>

Tracking, monitoring and reporting on community progress towards Agenda 2030 is based, in large part, around data. Determining which datasets to consider provides a further problem for communities located in more rural areas, as most of the available indicator frameworks relate to urban environments. The World Council on City Data has been working to address this resource gap, granting its first ISO certification to Nova Scotia’s Annapolis Valley as the world’s first “Sustainable and Smart” rural region in April 2018.<sup>57</sup>

Initiatives run by BCCIC, Peg and others, are working to strike a balance between the use of community-generated indicators aligned with local priorities and the ability for those communities to both understand and compare indicators between communities. Peg, for example, has made repeated adjustments to its design to become more user friendly.

48 Iyer, S.D. (2017). Localizing the UN Sustainable Development Goals in Baltimore: Next steps towards implementation. Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Retrieved from: <http://unsdsn.org/news/2017/12/20/localizing-sdgs-in-baltimore-next-steps/>

49 Canadian Index of Wellbeing. (n.d.). About the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. Retrieved from: <https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/about-canadian-index-wellbeing>

50 Leone, F. (2018). Data dashboards, democracy and “cooper-tition” discussed at HLPF side event. Retrieved from: <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/data-dashboards-democracy-and-cooper-tition-discussed-at-hlpf-side-event/>

51 OneNYC. (2018). OneNYC 2018. Retrieved from: [https://onenyc.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/OneNYC\\_Progress\\_2018.pdf](https://onenyc.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/OneNYC_Progress_2018.pdf)

52 Peg. (n.d.) About community indicator systems. Retrieved from: <https://www.mypeg.ca/more-info/>

53 First Nations in BC Knowledge Network. (2011). Taking a ‘pulse’ on the quality of Indigenous community life. Retrieved from: <https://fnbc.info/resource/taking-pulse-quality-indigenous-community-life>

54 Community Foundations of Canada. (n.d.). Community reports. Retrieved from: <http://communityfoundations.ca/vitalsigns/reports/>

55 London Community Foundation. (2018) What London Can Be. Retrieved from: <http://www.lcf.on.ca/sites/default/files/LCF-VitalSigns-FINAL.pdf>

56 Community Foundations of Canada. (n.d.). Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <http://communityfoundations.ca/vitalsigns/sustainable-development-goals/>

57 World Council on City Data. (2018). WCCD partners with i-Valley to create world’s first Smart + Sustainable region. Retrieved from: <http://news.dataforcities.org/2018/04/wccd-partners-with-i-valley-to-create.html>

11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

## Solution Spotlight:

## Peg

Peg, a Winnipeg-specific community indicators system, first emerged in 2003 when the local United Way approached the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) about working together to measure the wellbeing and community vitality of the City of Winnipeg.

“The United Way contacted IISD because of their expertise in sustainable development research and their previous work on sustainability indicators,” according to an analysis of the project by two researchers at Royal Roads University.<sup>58</sup>

“As IISD brought the research expertise and knowledge to Peg, the United Way, a strongly networked organization, brought the necessary community contacts and experience in community engagement to build project partnerships and community collaboration.”

Over 800 people were engaged throughout the project, led by a steering committee comprising public sector, academic, business and NGO representatives. A mixture of diverse funding sources further reinforced the apolitical nature of the project. Although lengthy, this inclusivity ensured that Peg was truly developed by the community for the community.<sup>59</sup>

In 2013, Peg was publicly launched, tracking over 60 indicators. Since then, a yearly report has been released that both tracks progress and inspires action on pressing social issues across Winnipeg. After the release of Agenda 2030, IISD and the United Way Winnipeg began work on Peg 2.0 in order to connect the indicators with the SDGs.

Relaunched in June 2018, Peg is helping to tie progress in Winnipeg with what is happening in other communities, as well as provide a tool for localizing the SDGs.<sup>60</sup> “Winnipeg is one of the first cities in Canada to measure its [holistic] progress on sustainability, and to link our collective efforts to the global agenda,” said United Way Winnipeg president and CEO Connie Walker in a commentary.<sup>61</sup> “With the expertise of the [IISD], Peg will now be a model used by cities across Canada and around the world.”

The 2018 Peg report was also the first platform to use Tracking Progress, IISD’s “easy-to-use, open source web-based tool allowing municipalities, community foundations or other host organizations to easily upload and visualize indicator data from different sources.”<sup>62</sup> Three Canadian communities (Bridgewater, NS, Cumberland, NS and Peterborough, ON) are currently using the tool to develop their own indicator platforms and will be launching their sites by the end of 2018.<sup>63</sup>

**Fifteen years into the project, IISD has listed three major recommendations for other jurisdictions looking to develop their own community indicator frameworks:**

- We need to engage and consult with community actors in order to leave no one behind and ensure there is ownership by the community;
- Community indicator systems should be part of the community infrastructure, there as a service to help inform decision-making;
- These systems must maintain a reputation as a neutral body that provides the data as a tool to inform decisions and next steps.<sup>64</sup>

58 Newell, R., and Dale, A. (2013). Community indicators: Winnipeg, Canada (Peg). Retrieved from: <https://www.crcresearch.org/community-research-connections/crc-case-studies/community-indicators-winnipeg-canada-peg>

59 International Institute for Sustainable Development. (n.d.) Peg. Retrieved from: <https://iisd.org/project/peg>

60 Peg. (2018). 2018 Our City. Retrieved from: <https://www.mypeg.ca/peg-report-2018/>

61 Walker, C. (2018). Opinion: New Peg site tracks progress, inspires action. The Winnipeg Free Press. Retrieved from: <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/opinion/analysis/new-peg-site-tracks-progress-inspires-action-486911851.html>

62 International Institute for Sustainable Development. (2018). Community indicator systems training workshop. Retrieved from: <https://www.iisd.org/event/community-indicator-systems-training-workshop>

63 Tracking Progress. (n.d). About this tool. Retrieved from: <https://www.tracking-progress.org/about-this-tool/>

64 Temmer, J. (2018). Four ways cities are localizing the SDGs. International Institute for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from: <https://www.iisd.org/blog/four-ways-cities-are-localizing-sdgs>

BCCIC has designed BC2030, an online scorecard for easily measuring progress in certain B.C. municipalities.<sup>65</sup> The scorecards were developed by analysing existing official community plans and supporting municipal strategies such as affordable housing strategies to align their specific targets and indicators with Agenda 2030.

Users are able to view a scorecard measuring overall progress by each of the six municipalities measured, as well as click on each SDG to see indicator-specific scores. A comprehensive breakdown is also available for parties interested in a deeper dive. BCCIC is currently working with IISD to potentially integrate the BC2030 Scorecard with Tracking Progress.<sup>66</sup>

Another promising indicator framework has emerged at the subnational level in the U.S., focused on monitoring SDG progress across the state of Hawaii. Hawaii Green Growth is a public-private partnership (PPP) leading the Aloha+ Challenge and the development of its dashboard of sustainable development indicators. This bottom-up approach, led by a group of over 100 private sector and civil society partners, identified locally relevant indicators for which data is available and continues to track them on a database maintained by the PPP.

Aloha+ data is drawn from county, state, private sector and civil society sources, with the indicator selection process occurring during a two-year consultation process that combined grassroots outreach with expert engagement. The project is designed to add community-level transparency and accountability into the Agenda 2030 process, and by operating independent from government is able to maintain forward momentum regardless of political changes. The next step, as described by the Global Island Partnership's Kate Brown, is to open up the dashboard to allow for the inclusion of more community-generated indicators onto the dashboard.<sup>67</sup>

The gathering of community-level indicators is an essential method for localizing the SDGs, but incorporating more qualitative and non-technical information sharing allows members of the general public to connect what are often abstract datasets with lived experiences. This has become a crucial tool used by journalists such as Robyn Doolittle, whose award-winning Unfounded series for The Globe and Mail combined painstakingly assembled local police data from across Canada showing that sexual-assault complaints are twice as likely to be dismissed as unfounded (baseless) as complaints in other assault cases with stories of individual experiences with the system.<sup>68</sup>

**4. Reject** – allow flexibility for rejecting, revising, rescaling and reinventing approaches and solutions to pursuing SDGs by embracing disruption and transformative change within existing systems.

The ability to revisit and change direction of SDG community planning is absolutely essential for ensuring the longevity of community-driven SDG implementation and appropriate channels of accountability (see p. 37 for more on this). Various mechanisms for 'off-boarding' should exist for aspects of the project seen to be failing or in need of improvement.

Building regular reviews and audits into the program is one approach, as is consistent community consultation and engagement to see how the project is being received at the grassroots level. Changes may relate to the focus of the SDG community plans themselves, but may also be linked to developments such as new sources of data or innovative partnerships.

65 BC 2030. (n.d.) What is BC 2030? Retrieved from: <https://www.bc2030.ca/whatisBC2030.htm>

66 BCCIC. (2018). Where Canada stands vol. II - A Sustainable Development Goals shadow report. Retrieved from: <https://www.bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/bccic-2018-report-preview-pages.pdf>

67 IISD (Producer). (2018). Webinar: Localizing the SDGs. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ft7XCXoEVIE&feature=youtu.be>

68 Doolittle, R. (2017). The Unfounded effect. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/investigations/unfounded-37272-sexual-assault-cases-being-reviewed-402-unfounded-cases-reopened-so-far/article37245525/>



## PARTNERSHIPS



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are ambitious targets. They are too big a task for any one person or group to tackle alone, making partnerships crucial to their implementation. This is explicitly laid out as Goal 17 – strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

The SDGs are human challenges. They demand transdisciplinary collaboration, cooperation and coordination between and across sectors and communities to define problems and generate solutions. Forming partnerships means working outside of ‘silos.’ A good partnership incorporates diversity, is usable, flexible, actionable, and is financially sustainable. It functions with a strong backbone that optimizes its efficiencies and takes advantage of strengths while building upon weaknesses in its networks.

The spaces between the SDGs, represented by the overlaps, gaps and coordination opportunities within the framework, are illustrated by the many partnerships that already exist for advancing Agenda 2030. The types of partnerships, their roles and goals give insight into current capacities and the state of enabling conditions.

The SDGs are not only a series of targets to be achieved, but also provide a framework to start new partnerships or improve upon existing ones. For instance, the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), created in 2011, helps guide the worldwide architecture required for effective development cooperation and provides a specific theory of change and guidelines for partnership on the SDGs.<sup>69</sup>

It focuses on two key spheres of activity: evaluation and accountability tools to support evidence-based improvements in development practice, and capacity-building for cross-sectoral partnerships between development actors (including funders and the development assistance community, civil society, private sector actors and the local agents in program implementation).

A successful, cross-sectoral partnership can catalyze impactful, large-scale, sustained action in a way that is reflective of its stakeholders’ values and vision. At the same time, it successfully avoids the duplication of effort and resources that often emerges when complex issues are tackled alone or in silos. Thorough preparation is critical.

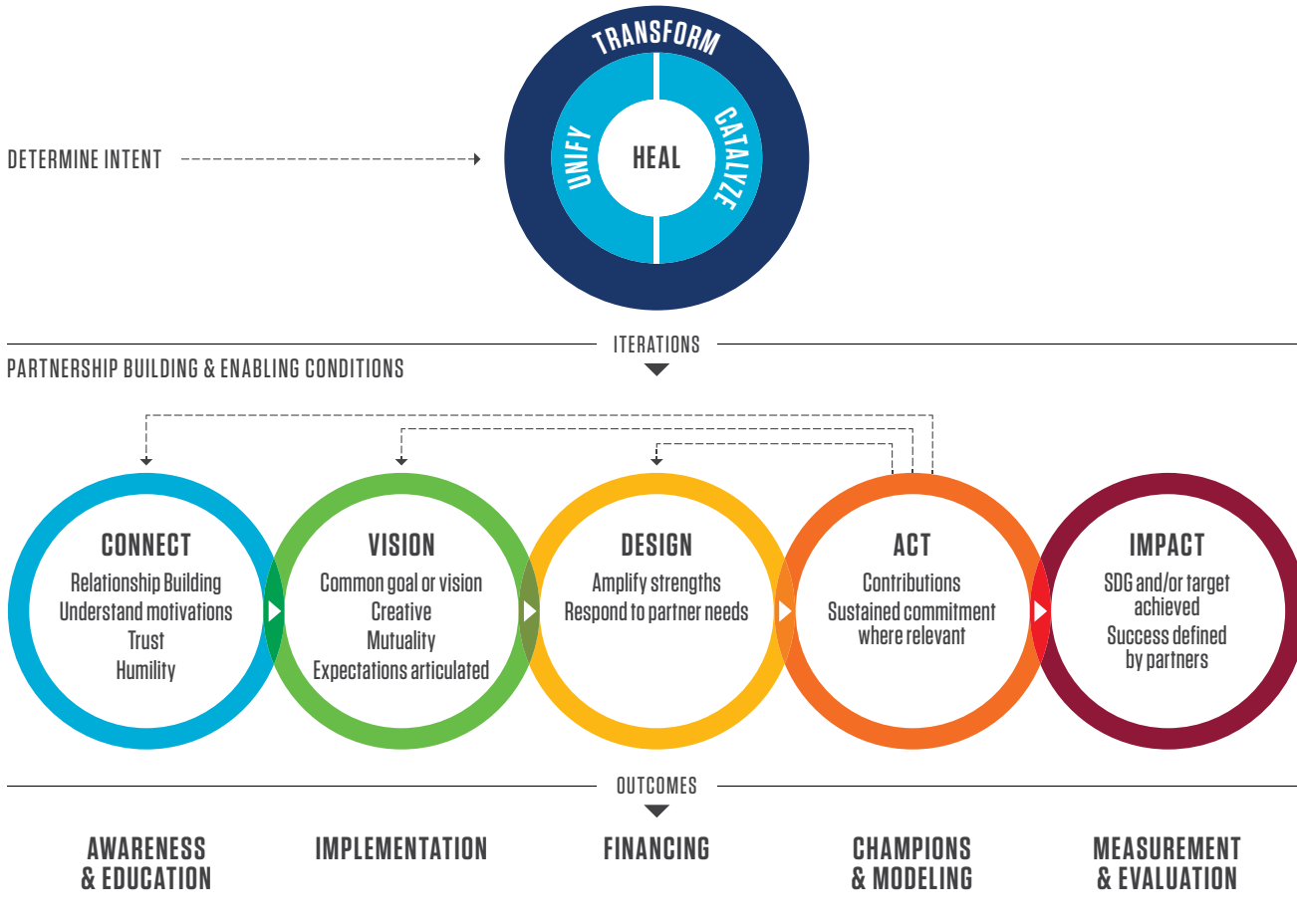
Early in the Generation SDG Summit, contributors began discussing the challenges of creating a successful partnership. Some common challenges emerged – too much competition, not enough collaboration or coordination, too little value placed on shared goals and a lack of open and transparent discussion. Taking inspiration from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Community Economic Development Initiative partnership framework,<sup>70</sup> participants developed an adaptive partnership framework (Figure 2).

69 Global Partnership for Development Co-operation. (n.d.). Supporting the SDGs. Retrieved from: <http://effectivecooperation.org/about/supporting-the-sdgs-goals/>

70 Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2015). Stronger together. Retrieved from: [https://fcm.ca/Documents/reports/CEDI/cedi\\_toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://fcm.ca/Documents/reports/CEDI/cedi_toolkit_EN.pdf)

**Figure 2: Adaptive partnership framework**

This framework outlines the following steps to partnership development:



## Determining intent

Understanding why the partnership is being formed is a crucial first step to ensuring its success, as it determines which approaches are appropriate. While this may seem obvious, the purpose of the partnership is often understood differently between individuals within partner networks or over time. This framework identifies four partnership intents: to heal, unify, catalyze and/or transform.

To set the stage for success, potential partners can first evaluate where their partnership would be intentional, strategic and purposeful. Openly identifying potential conflicts and challenges can reveal common ground and mutual benefits. How impact or success will be measured is an important aspect of partnerships that is often omitted in the early planning

stages, but which can provide a useful starting point for future discussion.

Ideally, partners should first strive to heal any damaged relationships and rebuild trust. On a foundation of trust, partners can unify their goals and catalyze progress. Ultimately, partnerships aim to transform an approach to a problem, project, program or community and may require a thorough examination of who has been left out of partnership conversations in the past and why. Failure to identify historic inequities may result in ongoing weaknesses in the project and a culture of mistrust. Frequent check-ins are also a good way to continue open dialogue with the added benefit of proactively understanding challenges that may emerge.



## Truth and reconciliation

Historically and currently, Indigenous peoples have been placed in a position by Canadian institutions and state authorities where their own needs and interests have been either secondary, ignored, or strategically inhibited for assimilation and control over land. The reserve system, residential schools, the Indian Act and resource exploitation that continues today have been the vehicles for this disenfranchisement.

As a result, many Canadian-Indigenous relationships are built on a history of distrust due to intentional disengagement and systemic abuse. Discrepancies between what is said and what is meant must be addressed, and the breadth of perspectives that exist – men, women, youth, elders, knowledge keepers and pre- and post-colonial governments – truly recognized.

We must work together to build a future that upholds shared values including respect, responsibility and reciprocity.<sup>71</sup>

Moving towards this future means following a path guided by the work and recommendations of Indigenous people and increasingly supported by legal precedent and legislation. In 2006, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which calls for existing human rights protections to be implemented for Indigenous peoples and provides a framework for justice and reconciliation.<sup>72</sup>

In 2016, Canada formally removed its objector status to UNDRIP<sup>73</sup> and in May 2018, a private member's bill designed to ensure that Canada's laws conform with UNDRIP (Bill C-262) passed the House of Commons.<sup>74</sup>

Canada is known as a strong promoter of human rights on a global scale, especially related to women and children, but there remains a lack of action within Canada's borders on reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. Generation SDG Summit contributors asked: what do nation-to-nation relationships require of us and how do we respect the differences without exacerbating the level of separation?

UNDRIP, coupled with the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC),<sup>75</sup> provides guidance for building nation-to-nation partnerships. This includes recognizing and following the cultural teachings and protocols of Indigenous communities. A report by the Centre for International Governance Innovation provides many insights into the idea of braiding Indigenous human rights with existing legal frameworks.<sup>76</sup> Decolonization of institutions as fundamental as our justice system is likely to be a long and arduous process, but a necessary one.

We can begin this process by acknowledging, respecting and supporting Indigenous-led implementation of UNDRIP.

71 Kirkenes, V. J. & Barnhardt, R. (2001). First Nations and higher education: The four R's - Respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. In: Knowledge Across Cultures: A Contribution to Dialogue Among Civilizations. Retrieved from: <https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education2/the4rs.pdf>

72 UN. (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>

73 Fontaine, T. (2016). Canada removing objector status to UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. CBC News. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/canada-position-un-declaration-indigenous-peoples-1.3572777>

74 Canadian Press. (2018). Romeo Saganash's Indigenous rights bill passes in the House of Commons Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/saganash-undrip-bill-passes-1.4684889>

75 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Calls to action. Retrieved from: [http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

76 Centre for International Governance Innovation. (2017). UNDRIP Implementation: Braiding international, domestic and Indigenous laws. Retrieved from: <https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/UNDRIP%20Implementation%20Special%20Report%20WEB.pdf>

## Building the partnership

Existing partnership frameworks, toolkits, guiding principles and partnership checklists are numerous and well-documented (see Appendix A on p. 63). The following considerations draw from this literature and contribute to a robust partnership foundation:

- **Partnerships should strive to institutionalize a cultural energy that inspires current and future champions.** Recognizing power structures and privilege amongst partner networks is a critical aspect of building spaces for individuals to grow, communicate openly and contribute meaningfully. What drives participation is the level of identification each partner has with the project's goals and objectives.
- **Clarity and communication are critical.** The potential benefits to and values of partners should be explicitly stated from the start. Benefits should be mutual and may even be designed co-dependently (all partners must benefit, or no one does). The latter approach is one way to design vested interest into a partnership, increasing motivation from all parties to collaborate and act. Another approach might be to tie partnership goals to existing mechanisms and projects. Alignment with current priorities can lead to easy, early wins for the collaborators.
- **Define roles and responsibilities for actors within the network.** Every partnership benefits from backbone leadership and organizational capacity, facilitators who can communicate effectively to hard-to-reach stakeholders and champions who can help both within and outside the collaboration to efficiently move it forward and overcome barriers. The partnership should have a succession plan so that it will survive and flourish beyond the initiators' involvement.
- **Partnership frameworks should be capable of stretching or shrinking according to context and changing needs.** Processes, expectations and capacity should be able to handle large and small geography, as well as different interests across partner networks. Resilient partnerships require not only effective organization and financing, but also flexible and dynamic human dimensions. Ensuring diversity and active engagement throughout the partnership's time in action may contribute to building this resilience, and may also support increased motivation towards action.
- **Transparency and knowledge sharing leads to trust.** Cultivating a learning culture and meaningfully engaging 'knowledge brokers' like journalists and educators is essential to creating the free flow of information that is foundational to our ability to effectively work together. Further, connecting 'do-ers' with communicators allows others to observe, evaluate and share the story of the partnership's successes.
- **Monitor partnership objectives, targets and the working plan on a periodic basis.** Complex issues are constantly evolving, with new contexts and experiences contributing to new insights, relationships and design elements. Field catalysts,<sup>77</sup> like Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi), can review this existing landscape and provide a vital function by identifying exactly where implementation gaps are and what kind of partnerships are needed to fill them. Online forums and communities dedicated to partnerships and collective impact are repositories for case studies, resources, discussions and webinars that can help an existing partnership fine-tune its approach.<sup>78</sup>

77 Hussein, T., Plummer, M. & Breen, B. (2018). How field catalysts galvanize social change. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Retrieved from: [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/field\\_catalysts](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/field_catalysts)

78 United Nations Partnerships for the SDGs. (n.d). UN Partnerships for the SDGs platform. Retrieved from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/>

17

PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS

Solution Spotlight:

## Meet Me at the Bell Tower

In 2011, tired of feeling like they were only being drawn together by loss and grief, young Indigenous people from the north end of Winnipeg started to meet every Friday evening, no matter the weather, at the Bell Tower at the corner of Selkirk and Powers streets. Now formalized as Meet Me at the Bell Tower (MMBT), these weekly gatherings are facilitated by Aboriginal Youth Opportunities (AYO) and provide a time and space for community members and organizations to meet, form relationships and identify issues that need to be addressed.<sup>79</sup>

A partnership with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) led to a MMBT focused on breaking down damaging preconceived notions held by newcomers and the Indigenous community about each other. “We’re trying to build that relationship and make sure that community members understand first-hand... [that] these are our neighbours, these are our community members, and help them break down stereotypes from both sides,” said Mandela Kuet of IRCOM about the initiative.<sup>80</sup>



Photo credit: CC BY SA 4.0 <https://bit.ly/2lZjTmV>

79 Abusaleh, Q. (2017). Meet Me at the Bell Tower celebrates six years. *The Manitoban*. Retrieved from: <http://www.themanitoban.com/2017/11/meet-bell-tower-celebrates-six-years/32964/>

80 Jetelina, M. (2015). The connection between immigrants and Aboriginal people in Canada's mosaic. *Canadian Immigrant*. Retrieved from: <http://canadianimmigrant.ca/living/community/the-connection-between-immigrants-and-aboriginal-people-in-canadas-mosaic>

## Setting goals

Building successful partnerships may be difficult without an idea of what success looks like. Establishing reasonable expectations for change and choosing partnership goals that are actionable and measurable is a crucial first step.

Conventional goal-setting usually means assessing current capacity and committing to a certain level of improvement. The problem with this approach is that it automatically limits the partnership to its current capacities, practices and vision and stifles the potential for innovation.

Bold vision and innovation are essential to achieving the ambitious Agenda 2030 targets, especially since closing the gap on many indicators requires a complete departure from ‘business-as-usual.’ Backcasting is an approach developed by The Natural Step that suits the SDGs framework well as it is based in sustainability principles.<sup>81</sup> It follows four simple steps: visioning the goal, assessing the current state, generating creative solutions and prioritizing these solutions.

Backcasting can be applied to the process of creating partnerships for SDG implementation by first defining the goal(s) of the partnership, then assessing existing and future capacity, followed by identifying partners that address known needs. This is different from finding an entity to work with first, then deciding what is possible, followed by finalizing a goal.

## Enabling conditions

Communities and civil society have the potential to advance innovative solutions to local, national and global SDG challenges and do not need to wait for senior levels of government to provide coordination across Canada. They can and will organize themselves, forge partnerships and develop their own plans of action. Nevertheless, each of these efforts will be suboptimal, and Canada’s national efforts will suffer, if the enabling conditions do not exist for partnerships to succeed.

Generation SDG Summit contributors identified notable barriers including a lack of national awareness on the SDGs, a dearth of capacity within communities to appropriately organize and consult, and resistance by higher orders of government to acknowledge that contributions by communities and civil society are essential for achieving the SDGs.

Some federal support for SDG implementation began to emerge in 2017 and 2018, including funds that can be leveraged for international public-private partnerships (PPP) through the Development Finance Institution of Canada.<sup>82</sup>



<sup>81</sup> The Natural Step. (n.d.). Backcasting. Retrieved from: <http://www.naturalstep.ca/backcasting>

<sup>82</sup> Government of Canada. (2017). Canada’s Development Finance Institution. Retrieved from: [http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international\\_relations-relations\\_internationales/multilateral-multilateraux/dfi-ifd.aspx?lang=eng](http://international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/multilateral-multilateraux/dfi-ifd.aspx?lang=eng)

In Canada's 2018 Voluntary National Review on SDG progress, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tasked eight Ministers to champion implementation of the SDGs in Canada:

**The Honourable Navdeep Bains**

*Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development*

**The Honourable Carolyn Bennett**

*Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs*

**The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau**

*Minister of International Development and La Francophonie*

**The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos**

*Minister of Families, Children and Social Development*

**The Honourable Patricia Hajdu**

*Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour*

**The Honourable Catherine McKenna**

*Minister of Environment and Climate Change*

**The Honourable Maryam Monsef**

*Minister of Status of Women*

**The Honourable Jane Philpott**

*Minister of Indigenous Services<sup>83</sup>*

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade and The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, were appointed in August 2018 and have a critical role to play in translating the Government of Canada's plans for the implementation of the SDGs to sub-national levels of government.<sup>84</sup>

Statistics Canada (StatsCan), Canada's primary monitoring organization for the SDGs, is in the midst of generating Canadian indicators for each of the 169 targets. The Ministers mentioned above, StatsCan and others will be coordinated by

a new SDG Unit within Employment and Social Development Canada.<sup>85</sup> The federal government promised \$50 million over 10 years in the 2018 federal budget to create and enable this unit to coordinate, monitor and report on national SDG activities.<sup>86</sup>

Despite these positive actions, a whole-of-government approach has yet to be implemented and a national call to action yet to be made. The continuing absence of a national narrative on the SDGs is a barrier to building awareness, coordinating efforts, achieving multiple benefits and leveraging resources.

Until enabling conditions related to partnerships for sustainable development are institutionalized, we cannot be truly effective in implementing the SDGs. Some key areas to evaluate and integrate are rethinking how we monitor social change, SDG education and awareness, human rights as a foundation for sustainable development, and risk-friendly funding and finance to support partnerships and SDG-related actions (financing is discussed in depth beginning on p. 49).

## Information sharing and education

Intentional efforts to localize the way Canada measures progress towards societal targets like the SDGs have been lagging, but organizations such as BCCIC and IISD are beginning to pilot community indicator frameworks in communities across Canada (see p. 22 for more).

Collaboration between communities and StatsCan would help to bolster these efforts in a cost-effective way since labour, skills and expertise would be distributed. By convening potentially diverse skill sets and connecting them with institutional capabilities, partnerships can be effective at marshalling skills and expertise for SDG implementation.

83 Government of Canada. (2018). Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20312Canada\\_ENGLISH\\_18122\\_Canadas\\_Voluntary\\_National\\_ReviewENv7.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20312Canada_ENGLISH_18122_Canadas_Voluntary_National_ReviewENv7.pdf)

84 Office of the Prime Minister. (2018). Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade mandate letter. Retrieved from: <https://pm.gc.ca/eng/minister-intergovernmental-and-northern-affairs-and-internal-trade-mandate-letter-august-28-2018>

85 Employment and Social Development Canada. (2018). Canada highlighted its commitment to the 2030 Agenda at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Retrieved from: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/canada-highlighted-its-commitment-to-the-2030-agenda-at-the-united-nations-high-level-political-forum-on-sustainable-development-688546871.html>

86 Government of Canada. (2018). Budget 2018: Chapter 4. Retrieved from: <https://www.budget.gc.ca/2018/docs/plan/chap-04-en.html>

17

PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS

Solution Spotlight:

## Data sharing partnerships

Building on public-private partnerships (PPPs), data collaboratives engage participants from different sectors in data exchanges to create public value. Data sharing processes, prediction and forecasting, impact assessment and evaluation, knowledge transfer and response mechanisms are some examples of data infrastructure needed to accelerate SDG implementation.<sup>87</sup>

The World Bank touts successful PPPs as a means for efficiently navigating procurement, life-cycle maintenance and consumer satisfaction, all while mitigating risk.<sup>88</sup> But the most valuable lesson they provide for data collaboratives is a framework for alliances with community stakeholders at the project start.<sup>89</sup>

A collaboration in Canada saw Philanthropic Foundations Canada pair up with Powered by Data, a Montréal-based non-profit data collective, to investigate how to support the growth of data-informed grantmaking. Their August 2018 report, *Effective Giving: Using data to inform philanthropy*, focuses on the kind of infrastructure grantees require, tracking the role it can have from pre-investment through post-investment. It points to the need for shared infrastructure that “allows data to flow through an ecosystem of diverse stakeholders.”<sup>90</sup>

A more grassroots approach is being taken by Data For Good, a chapter-based volunteer group that brings data professionals together with the non-profit sector in Calgary, Edmonton, Kitchener-Waterloo, Montreal, Ottawa, Regina, Toronto and Vancouver. They engage with potential clients to determine how best to leverage data and evaluate a data project’s value and feasibility.<sup>91</sup>

Waterloo-based Open Data Exchange (ODX) presents another example of how data collection can be leveraged by an ecosystem of actors to create economic value. A PPP initiative, ODX focuses on creating timely access to open data and aggregates public and private data sources to drive insights.<sup>92</sup> Its data concierge model, where ODX guides users in identifying relevant potential open and licensed data sources, could be a boon for an SDG-focused data ecosystem, especially for issues where data-driven problem articulation could help spur private sector innovations that solve deep-rooted community problems.

Another example of this type of partnership is the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). Created in 2012, SDSN strives to mobilize global expertise, accelerate joint learning and promote integrated approaches to addressing the social, economic and environmental challenges involved in the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the 2015 Paris Climate agreement.<sup>93</sup>

87 GovLab. (n.d.). Data collaboratives. Retrieved from: <http://datacollaboratives.org/>

88 World Bank Group. (2016). Government objectives: Benefits and risks of PPPs. Retrieved from: <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/overview/ppp-objectives>

89 Marques de , I. (2017). How do you build effective public-private partnerships? Yale Insights. Retrieved from: <https://insights.som.yale.edu/insights/how-do-you-build-effective-public-private-partnerships>

90 Philanthropic Foundations Canada. (2018). *Effective giving: Using data to inform philanthropy*. Retrieved from: <https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/english-pfc-data-infrastructure-brief-1-final.pdf>

91 Data for Good. (n.d.) About. Retrieved from: <https://dataforgood.ca/about-us/>

92 Canada’s Open Data Exchange. (n.d.) About us. Retrieved from: <https://codx.ca/about-us/>

93 SDSN. (n.d.) Vision and organization. Retrieved from: <http://unsdsn.org/about-us/vision-and-organization/>



---

From the international to the local, SDSN encourages multiple levels of partnerships via its more than 30 country-level and regional chapters. SDSN Canada was launched in May 2018, with the national network hosted at the University of Waterloo. During the launch event, members and attendees underlined the need for educational institutions to work towards the SDGs through teaching and research collaborations.<sup>94</sup>

Education plays a key role in partnerships, as it can empower individuals and help even out the playing field. Building an equitable foundation of education creates a space where each stakeholder's contributions are valued and respected. Education not only builds awareness of challenges to be addressed, but it also lays the foundation for broadening perspectives that make the consideration of partnerships possible. For example, education can lead to valuing different ways of knowing or doing. While multiple

efforts are underway to introduce SDG awareness through provincial public education systems,<sup>95</sup> it must take root in curricula and teacher training to be effective.

Efforts should be made to reduce redundancy and fill in gaps related to SDG implementation, something partnerships are well-positioned to help facilitate. Ensuring risks can be taken and supported by financing mechanisms is a decisive step in addressing these shortcomings. Watchdogs and similar overseers need to continue giving voice to those who don't have it, maintaining public accountability over more authoritative entities.

Finally, as this section highlights enabling conditions, it is important to recognize that enabling is often the goal of organizational 'champions.' Identification of these champions should be a goal of SDG endeavors, especially when partnerships are being formed.

---

94 University of Waterloo. (2018). SDSN Canada launch event Retrieved from: <https://uwaterloo.ca/sustainable-development-solutions-network-canada/about/sdsn-canada-launch-event>

95 MCIC. (2018). Sustainable Foundations: a guide for teaching the Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: [http://mcic.ca/pdf/SDG\\_Primer\\_FINAL.pdf](http://mcic.ca/pdf/SDG_Primer_FINAL.pdf)

14



LIFE BELOW WATER

Solution Spotlight:

## Restoring rights and building new partnerships

[Wígvíłba-Wákas Harvey] Humchitt is a *hemas*, a hereditary chief. Traditionally, the *hemas* and their right-hand men and women, *auuks*, oversaw the management of herring, guided by customary laws, teachings and beliefs known as *ǵvılás*.

So it was for thousands of years – until contact and the commencement, in the 1870s, of commercial fisheries, regulated under a fisheries act that robbed Indigenous people of their right to fish except for food, and even then under onerous restrictions, and ignored Indigenous management systems and fishing methods.

Non-Aboriginal fishermen got largely unfettered access to harvest herring, and harvest they did – especially with the advent of fleet mechanization and the introduction, in the 1930s, of a reduction fishery, which rendered herring into fishmeal or oil. By the 1960s, this huge “kill fishery” had taken billions of fish and pretty much wiped out stocks to the point that the entire fishery was closed in British Columbia between 1969 and 1972. Populations rebounded sufficiently, at least according to government and industry, to warrant reopening herring fishing in the 1970s.

[...]

The commercial fishery created “havoc on the water,” says Dúqváısla William Housty, a respected Heiltsuk cultural leader and natural resources manager. “It’s just like a hurricane, this foreign thing that causes disruption to everything.” Not least the health of herring stocks themselves.

[...]

Eventually, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) couldn’t ignore the obvious. The commercial fishery was closed in three areas where populations had declined: Haida Gwaii, an archipelago off the Northern BC coast in 2005; on the west coast of Vancouver in 2006; and in Area 7, in Heiltsuk waters, in 2008. Even though they didn’t have to, the Heiltsuk voluntarily suspended their own herring harvest. For a while at least, herring were given a breather amid an uneasy standoff between the commercial fleet, DFO and First Nations.

And then along came 2015.

“We paddled over, mostly women and children,” Saul Brown recalls of the day the Heiltsuk took the matter of their herring fishery into their own hands.

“We made a decision to protect our rights,” says Núkva Kelly Brown, a long-time natural resources planner and negotiator for the Heiltsuk and, today, director of the Heiltsuk Integrated Resource Management Department (HIRMD). “To do that you have to go 100 per cent all in.”

[...]

[Following a four day occupation of the Denny Island DFO office], the DFO had capitulated. While its official coast-wide summary of the 2015 herring fishery records a gill net opening from noon until 8:00 p.m. on March 31, not a single herring was caught in Area 7. “Number of licences: 60. Quota: 600 tons. Catch: 0,” the summary says.

Slett was jubilant. “We did it! [The Spiller Channel] was our no-go zone, and nobody went there.”

Perhaps even more significant in the long run was DFO's promise to forthwith manage the herring fishery in Area 7 jointly with the Heiltsuk, formally incorporating Heiltsuk knowledge and priorities into stock forecasts and management plans for the first time. That means having Heiltsuk observers on test boats. It means having Heiltsuk scientists on technical committees and Heiltsuk hemaas providing advice on every aspect of the fishery. And it means joint sign-off on any decision to fish.

The agreement has teeth. In 2016, the first season after the occupation of the DFO office, the harvest rate was lowered from 10 to seven per cent of available stocks and there was a full closure of the sac roe fishery in Spiller Channel. In all, just 239 tonnes of herring were harvested on the central coast by seiners that year. The Heiltsuk, meanwhile, were allocated 109 tonnes of commercial roe on kelp (usually referred to as spawn on kelp [SOK] in regulations).

In 2017, the seine quota was set at 219 tonnes, but by agreement between DFO and the Heiltsuk, the commercial fishery never opened. Again, the Heiltsuk SOK quota was 109 tonnes that year.

This year, the commercial fleet was lobbying hard for permission to again drop its nets in Spiller, pushing for about 600 to 800 tonnes.

But the Heiltsuk's interpretation of the data they had collected with DFO was that the stocks still were too weak for that.

"This year, there was a lot of pressure from our guys to say no," says Kelly Brown. "Everybody said no, there's not enough herring, so no sac roe fishery."

That's what they told DFO this past February. On March 1, [2018] DFO announced it had agreed to suspend the

commercial roe herring fishery on the central coast for 2018 after the Heiltsuk and DFO had been "unable to reach a shared understanding of stock health" that would allow both a commercial and a Heiltsuk SOK fishery to proceed. The Heiltsuk's SOK quota was actually increased to more than 136 tonnes. The commercial fishery was shut down completely.

[...]

"It's the first time they've ever done that for any fishery anywhere," Brown says, "No commercial fishery, not even a token one."

How radical is that? When the federal Liberals came into power in 2015, they did so on a promise to honor the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with its requirement to seek Indigenous peoples' free, prior, and informed consent over resource decisions affecting them. The government seems impossibly conflicted about how to do that in practice, especially when it comes to big-ticket items like pipelines and hydroelectric dams.

When it comes to the central coast herring fishery, you have a First Nation that worked within a government-sanctioned collaborative process, insisted that their joint modeling did not satisfy the community that stocks could withstand a commercial fishery, told the government it did not have Indigenous consent to authorize an opening, and the government listened and acted accordingly.

[...]

*This is an excerpt from Of Roe, Rights and Reconciliation, written by Ian Gill, for Hakai Magazine, originally published in August 2018.<sup>96</sup>*

96 Gill, I. (2018) Of roe, rights and reconciliation. Hakai Magazine. Retrieved from: <https://www.hakaimagazine.com/features/of-roe-rights-and-reconciliation/>

## SDG partnership outcomes

The need for action on the SDGs has been clearly articulated here and by many others working to achieve Agenda 2030. Partnerships for SDG implementation may create impact through a variety of broad partnership outcomes, including:

- Raising awareness and building capacity to implement the SDGs;
- Implementing strategic actions to achieve targets within the SDGs;
- Financing those actions and partnerships;
- Identifying SDG champions;
- Monitoring, assessing and reporting the state and effectiveness of partnerships.

At the time of publication, formal efforts to achieve the SDGs are just over three years in. Partnerships built on SDG collaboration are already contributing to more meaningfully-engaged stakeholders of more diverse backgrounds, as evidenced by the solution spotlights throughout this Blueprint.

We also acknowledge that while the SDGs provide a globally recognized framework and common language, not everyone has yet identified their work within this context. All of that work is still contributing to Agenda 2030 and should be acknowledged and celebrated.

17

PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS

Solution Spotlight:

### Alliance 2030

Alliance 2030 is a Canadian network of organizations and individuals who collectively aim to achieve Agenda 2030. It emerged from Alliance 150, a program incubated by the Community Foundations of Canada during Canada's sesquicentennial in 2017. Alliance 2030 was officially launched at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2018 coinciding with Canada's first Voluntary National Review.

A principal belief held by Alliance 2030 is that the SDGs can be achieved by 2030 in Canada and abroad by working creatively and collaboratively at all levels, local to global. The network functions as a convener and facilitator to enhance the work being done by all members across Canada.

Goals of Alliance 2030 for the coming months and years include directing attention to Canadian priorities such as Indigenous reconciliation, gender equality, inclusive growth, climate, oceans and others; generating actionable knowledge for SDG implementation; ensuring this knowledge is accessible; collaborating to generate robust data; profiling key research; pooling and leveraging funds across the network; and fostering support for Agenda 2030 (including awareness of the SDGs) to help build a whole of Canada approach to realizing the Agenda's Goals.

Alliance 2030 has identified one fundamental enabling condition: identification and empowerment of catalysts that can facilitate the network's goals. This is the reason a cross-sector approach that includes governments, public philanthropy and the private sector is taken.<sup>97</sup>

Other like-minded initiatives are similarly demonstrating that collective action and the fostering of SDG-focused networks is the best way to implement Agenda 2030. The Geneva 2030 Ecosystem is the network created to coordinate and enhance the collective actions of hundreds of Geneva-based actors, a group that includes UN agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities and academic institutions.<sup>98</sup> It is co-convened by IISD and SDG Lab, a Swiss NGO.

The UN Global Compact, launched by Kofi Annan in 2000, is another example. The world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, it comprises 9,819 companies from 164 countries.<sup>99</sup> It is a framework based on ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. The Canadian network, Global Compact Network Canada, launched in June 2013. It works to unify and build the capacity of the Canadian private sector and advancing the ten principles for Agenda 2030.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Alliance 2030.0 (2018). Alliance 2030 formally launches at High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Retrieved from: <https://alliance2030.ca/alliance-2030-formally-launches-high-level-political-forum-sustainable-development/>

<sup>98</sup> Geneva 2030. (n.d.) Ecosystem. Retrieved from: <http://geneva2030.org/en/ecosystem/>

<sup>99</sup> UN Global Compact. (n.d.) What is Global Compact? Retrieved from: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/participants>

<sup>100</sup> Global Compact Canada. (n.d.) About. Retrieved from: <https://www.globalcompact.ca/about/gcnc/>

# ACCOUNTABILITY

Agenda 2030 is a massive undertaking, which is why 193 countries collectively agreed to tackle these sustainable development challenges together. However, when so many other active entities are involved, complacency is easy. Such diffusion of responsibility can imperil the entire project.<sup>101</sup>

For this reason, mechanisms to track accountability for progress down to specific individuals and organizations are necessary. Accountability should not be utilized primarily to penalize those who are making a genuine effort but are struggling to make headway. Instead, accountability mechanisms can strive to identify areas in which other stakeholders are able to contribute to success through collaboration or capacity building.

Localizing Agenda 2030 begins with the recognition that communities are the most effective and credible voice for seeking solutions to their specific needs. In this section, a ‘virtuous cycle’ (Figure 3) of planning, implementation/action, reporting and evaluation, learning and making sense is presented as a potential framework for placing communities at the heart of planning, implementation and accountability. A foundational tenet of this framework is that progress is defined by the community itself.

**Figure 3: The ‘virtuous cycle’ of accountability**



101 Kassir, S., Fein, S., Markus, H., & Burke, T. (2013). *Social Psychology*. Toronto: Nelson Education

Each phase outlines how communities can foster respect, promote individual and collective responsibility, build relationships within and between communities and other actors at different levels of government, and encourage reciprocity – with a view to advancing broader accountability for making progress.

If done right, projects start with community-driven solutions and community-defined measures of success, identify and evaluate progress, and see outcomes and change that work for the community. The process itself may result in community members engaging in the process, because they see value in being part of the community.

By documenting this shift and the positive change it brings to the community, a strong evidence base can be slowly built up. This will reinforce calls for the provincial and federal governments to delegate greater authority to communities on the right trajectory, further enabling conditions for community-led action (see p. 44 for more).

The success a community has in building greater accountability to and for itself may be determined by the following enabling conditions: radical transparency, open and accessible data, a change in the constitutional status of municipalities and Indigenous authorities, improving nation-to-nation relationships, policy coherence among and between levels of government, alignment with local priorities, responsive funding, local media that are transparent, independent and investigative, and accessible community engagement mechanisms.

## Transparency and data

Radical transparency focuses on reporting at all levels (community, funders, public) on progress, gaps and failures. Transparency is about how things are produced – where data comes from, what processes went into turning data into information, who was involved, why others weren't involved and what was learned for future processes.

The idea is to demystify processes and intentions so trust can be built. Building trust requires recognition that people often respond more to emotion than objective facts. Sensemaking theory offers insight into this phenomenon, including that

people generally favor plausibility rather than fact (e.g. “I distrust this because I could be harmed by this organization, despite the organization’s explicit mandate being to help”). Emotional attachments to past experiences may overrule the reality of a current experience.<sup>102</sup>

Consider this example: a decision-making organization, let’s call it Organization X, wants to engage with a marginalized community to better understand how it can play a role in removing institutional barriers to success for that community. This community may have experiences with other similar organizations that wanted to pursue a development for others’ gain, but were required to provide some benefits to this community too. Community members may have attempted to cooperate with that organization, but perhaps felt ignored due to a lack of communication and the likelihood that the organization was simply there to ‘check a box.’ These experiences weigh heavily on any future interactions with similar organizations despite genuine intentions to improve a situation.

In this example, the Organization X would need to be proactive about acknowledging and validating past experiences, ensuring it strives to avoid triggers it can control and being transparent about how it intends to move forward in a more positive manner. When a certain approach or strategy is promised, it must be carried out as discussed with the community, or the community must be engaged in and informed early of any changes. The positive experience this would create could open doors to the same or similar organization(s) later on. In this way, emotional connections bridge gaps.

Building positive experiences in these scenarios starts with promoting a sense of value for the stakeholders and their perspectives. One way to achieve this is to openly share information as it is being created and engage stakeholders in the process of knowledge and/or solution creation. On a small scale, an organization would guide stakeholders through its processes, building their capacity to contribute along the way. On a broader scale, open and accessible data involves the sharing of national, provincial and local/community data through easily comprehensible platforms.

<sup>102</sup> Weick, K.E. (1995). Sensemaking in organizations. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.

The reasons for honing in on data as part of accountability are many. Growing interest in societal improvement over the past few decades has resulted in more data being collected. Much of this data has barely been tapped into, as ‘big data’ management is an emerging practice. Privacy issues and intentionally-skewed data (e.g. misinformation, ‘alternative facts,’ social media memes, entrenched interests) are more prominent in the public mind than ever before.

We regularly don’t recognize how much of our personal data is collected on a daily basis,<sup>103</sup> often through the use of applications or by accessing certain websites. But high-profile data breaches such as the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica scandal, where the raw data from up to 87 million Facebook profiles was illegally harvested by a third party without user consent, serves to showcase how cavalierly our data is handled.<sup>104</sup> This vulnerability of our sensitive data leads to an overall skepticism with data collection in general. Good data is essential for making progress on the SDGs, but maintaining public trust through data transparency is just as important.

The adoption of Agenda 2030 also shifted global thinking and discussions of priorities. Implementers have recognized that the data needed to measure indicators of success is often not available. When data does exist, it is often privately owned or scattered among actors – requiring substantial standardization/harmonization efforts to be rendered useful. Fortunately, some governments and private entities (see p. 32) are working to ensure data and information are more transparent, accessible and understandable.

The Public Sector Digest Open Cities Index is a collaboration between municipalities (68 municipalities as of 2017) to assess the level of accessibility for databases highlighted by participants.<sup>105</sup> Results are returned to all participating municipalities, who can then work towards improving access to the databases considered. In essence, each municipality is voluntarily kept in-check by its municipal peers. Improving each municipality’s dataset and providing access to others’ data means participants in the Index end up with more robust information.

Similarly, Ontario’s Provincial (Stream) Water Quality Monitoring Network is a publicly accessible repository where water quality monitoring data from dozens of monitoring partners across the province are organized and stored.<sup>106</sup> When a member of the public downloads datasheets, there are tabs that explain what each parameter is and what the codes mean; no scientific background is required. Anyone is free to view and use the data for their own purpose, as long as the data records are attributed to the Network.

The practices represented in these examples – data sharing, peer review/transparency, ability to keep and use data independently – are reflected in the Principles of OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) established by the First Nations Information Governance Centre to set standards for how First Nations data should be collected, protected, used or shared. **Ownership** refers to the community’s collective relationship with data/information, similar to an individual’s ‘ownership’ of personal information. **Control** refers to the collection, disclosure, use and destruction of data. Community **Access** to data and information, regardless of where they are held, underpins the third principle. The final pillar, **Possession**, addresses the state of stewardship through data maintenance and jurisdiction to protect control.<sup>107</sup>

Transparency of data and information is relevant to processes across society. Stakeholders in multiple sectors, not just government, play integral roles when measuring and reporting on actions and resulting impacts. Also worth noting is that effective metrics for evaluating SDG impacts are still being developed including Statistics Canada indicators for each of the 169 targets, as well as through an SDSN report to the UN Secretary-General.<sup>108</sup>

Often the owner of data did not collect or analyze it. Data can be produced and shared through partnerships between researchers and organizations. Multiple parties can be engaged at different stages. For example, a monitoring organization might generate data for a government agency (the data owner). A researcher might analyze the data and write a report for a community group that uses the information to influence government decisions.

103 Tomlinson, A. (2017). ‘We’re paying with our data’: Why privacy can be a problem with apps. CBC The Marketplace. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/marketplace-apps-privacy-smartphone-1.3919832>

104 Chang, A. (2018). The Facebook and Cambridge Analytica scandal, explained with a simple diagram. Vox. Retrieved from: <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/3/23/17151916/facebook-cambridge-analytica-trump-diagram>

105 Public Sector Digest. (n.d.) Open Cities Index. Retrieved from: <https://publicsectordigest.com/open-cities-index-oci>

106 Government of Ontario. (n.d.). Provincial (Stream) Water Quality Monitoring Network. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/data/provincial-stream-water-quality-monitoring-network>

107 First Nations Information Governance Centre. (n.d.). OCAP®. Retrieved from: <https://fnigc.ca/ocapr.html>

108 SDSN. (2015). Indicators and a monitoring framework for the Sustainable Development Goals: A data revolution. Retrieved from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2013150612-FINAL-SDSN-Indicator-Report1.pdf>

In these cases, transparency from data/information producers – not just the owners and users of information – is also necessary. In the example described here, that would mean understanding how monitoring data was collected and analyzed.

There are existing approaches to the transparent creation of data, information and solutions. Co-creation is an approach that emerged from business practices, but which has been adapted across society in everything from research and governance to social services and crisis response. Co-creation involves purposeful interaction in which the service provider, decision maker or other authority collectively generates a mutually-beneficial solution to a problem with the customer, impacted community or other similar stakeholder.<sup>109</sup> The agenda, production of knowledge and dissemination of the results are done collaboratively.<sup>110</sup>

**When generating data or information, Community-based Research (CBR) is a framework used across social sciences, and includes the following eight principles of practice:**

1. Community is a unit of identity defined by members of that community;
2. CBR builds on and makes use of strengths and resources within the community;
3. Collaborative partnerships throughout the research must be facilitated;
4. Knowledge and action are integrated for the mutual benefit of all partners;
5. CBR promotes co-learning and empowerment that addresses social inequities;
6. The process is cyclical and iterative;
7. Positive approaches (e.g., physical, mental, and social health and wellbeing) and ecological approaches (e.g., considering biomedical, economic, cultural, and other factors to health) are used; and
8. Disseminate results and knowledge to all partners.<sup>111</sup>

A defining feature of CBR is that the community is defined as more than a place or setting. Its social and cultural identities are recognized. Like co-creation, research participants are involved in all aspects of knowledge creation. Citizen science, where volunteers from the public are trained and given the tools to monitor certain aspects of the environment such as reporting invasive species or conducting their own water sampling using kits, is an example of the co-creation of data.

Beyond reporting, examples like Peg (see p. 23) demonstrate the ability of community members to make valuable contributions to different stages of the process. In fact, Peg's process of co-creating indicators of city wellbeing engages the community in the most critical aspect of accountability for SDG implementation: how to measure progress.

## Communication and the media

Canada's media landscape is in the midst of unprecedented disruption, with serious implications for the civic function of journalism and media. According to *The Shattered Mirror*, a sobering 2017 report on Canada's news ecosystem written by the Public Policy Institute, around one-third of Canadian journalism jobs have been lost since 2010. Shrinking print circulation numbers, falling print revenues and an online ad market dominated by Google and Facebook have all contributed to the continued decline of the industry.<sup>112</sup>

The problem is even more acute when it comes to local publications, where 250 news outlets across 180 communities have closed since 2008 (Figure 4).<sup>113</sup> Publications have sometimes managed to stave off bankruptcy through mergers, often leading to a steady decline of local news coverage and an increase in syndicated content (see p. 43 for more).

109 Grönroos, C. and Voima, P. (2013). Critical service logic: making sense of value creation and co-creation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. 41(2): 133-150. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256395545\\_Critical\\_Service\\_Logic\\_Making\\_Sense\\_of\\_Value\\_Creation\\_and\\_Co-Creation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256395545_Critical_Service_Logic_Making_Sense_of_Value_Creation_and_Co-Creation)

110 Mauser, W., Klepper, G., Rice, M., Schmalzbauer, B. S., Hackmann, H., & Moore, H. (2013). Transdisciplinary global change research: the co-creation of knowledge for sustainability. *Current Opinion on Environmental Sustainability*. 5:420-431. Retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877343513000808>

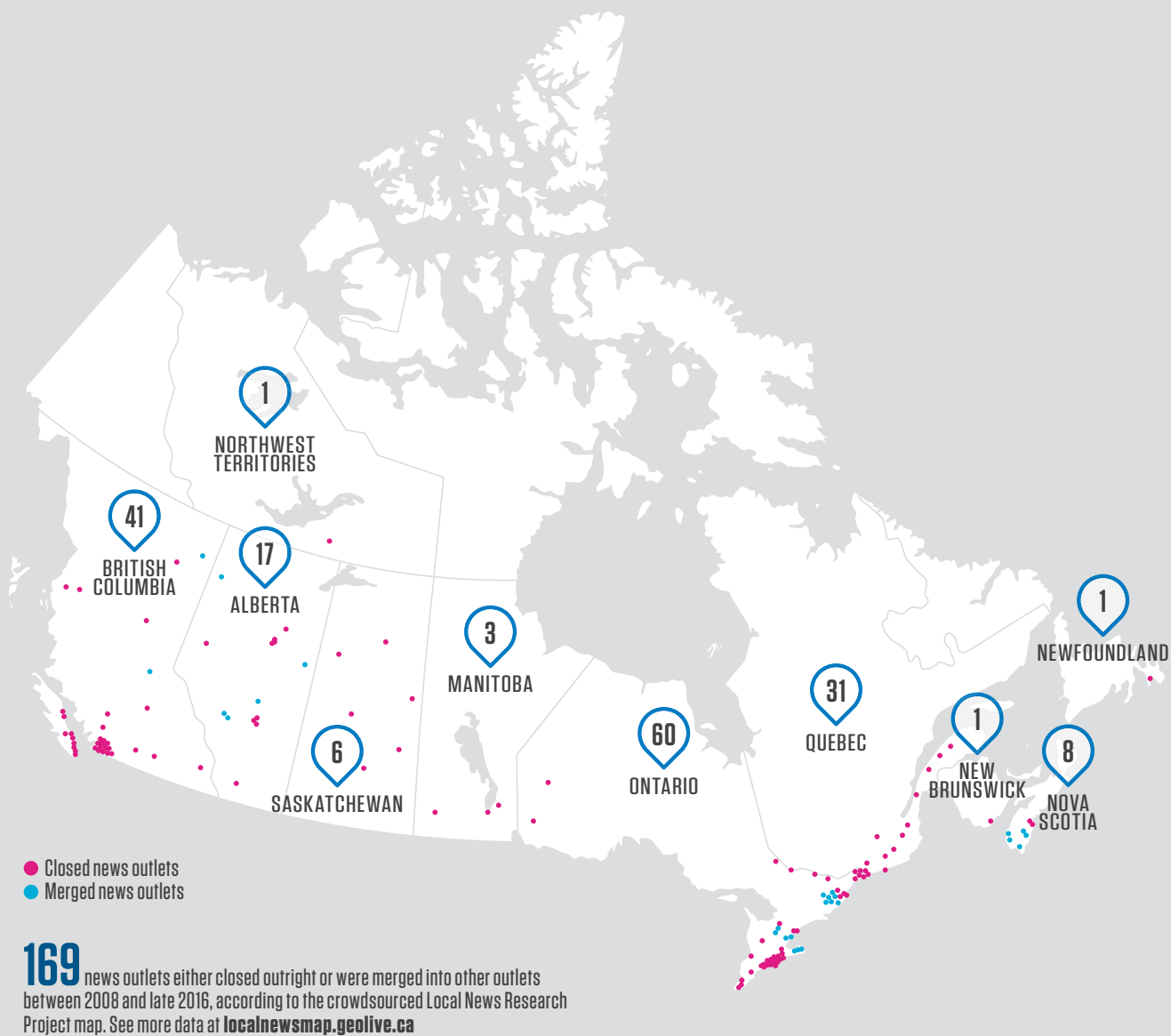
111 Israel, B. A., Schulz, A. J., Parker, E. A., & Becker, A. B. (1998). Review of community-based research: Assessing partnership approaches to improve public health. *Annual Review of Public Health*. 19: 173-302. Retrieved from: [https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.19.1.173?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2003&rft\\_id=ori%3Arid%3Acrossref.org&rft\\_dat=cr\\_pub%3Dpubmed](https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.19.1.173?url_ver=Z39.88-2003&rft_id=ori%3Arid%3Acrossref.org&rft_dat=cr_pub%3Dpubmed)

112 Public Policy Forum. (2017). *The Shattered Mirror: News, democracy and trust in the digital age*. Retrieved from: <https://shatteredmirror.ca/wp-content/uploads/theShatteredMirror.pdf>

113 Local News Project (Ryerson) . (n.d.). *The Local News Map*. Retrieved from: <https://localnewsmap.geolive.ca/>



Figure 4: Canadian news outlet closures since 2008<sup>114</sup>



114 Ibid

Researchers studying the connection between a local media presence and civic engagement have found a lack of coverage associated with lower voter turnouts<sup>115</sup> and poorly informed voters.<sup>116</sup> This reduction in scrutiny itself leads to disengaged local politicians,<sup>117</sup> who become less effective at ensuring that public funds are well-managed.<sup>118</sup>

*The Shattered Mirror* report proposes 12 ways that Canada could go about strengthening its struggling news ecosystem, including through the creation of an independent Future of Journalism and Democracy Fund to support local and indigenous digital news startups. The federal government allocated \$50 million for supporting local news over the next five years in the 2018 budget, although details have yet to emerge about what form this funding will take.<sup>119</sup>

One way to boost the health of local news, argues David Beers, the founding editor of the independent west coast publication *The Tyee*, is through greater local ownership. “[We need] a new framework allowing money to flow more easily into non-profit or trust structured local journalism outfits,” said Beers in a February 2018 interview on CBC Radio’s *The Current*.<sup>120</sup>

Organizations like *The Tyee*, *The Discourse*<sup>121</sup> (an independent journalism company dedicated to in-depth reporting on complex issues facing Canada and the world) and *Ku’ku’kwes News*<sup>122</sup> (which reports on Indigenous affairs in Atlantic Canada) are contributing to a small but flourishing media startup landscape, largely reliant on a subscriber model built on a stronger relationship of trust with their audience.

*The Discourse* chose three local news fellows for 2018, supported financially by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the Catherine Donnelly Foundation, dedicated to reviving local news. After polling readers about what stories they thought were the most neglected in their community, local Cowichan Valley fellow Jacqueline Ronson launched an investigation into a racetrack controversy that’s

been brewing for years.<sup>123</sup> She uncovered convincing evidence that coverage of the Vancouver Island Motorsport Circuit had been systematically inhibited by local Black Press papers fearful of losing advertising revenue.<sup>124</sup>

A local media able to act in a transparent and independent manner is an essential part of making community-led progress towards Agenda 2030. It must not only hold its citizens and institutions to account, but also hold itself accountable to the community.

*The Shattered Mirror* report found that 75 per cent of Canadians still support the notion that journalism is necessary to “keep the powerful honest,” demonstrating that there still remains a healthy appetite for rigorous journalism. Part of the goal of new media start-ups, and particularly those targeting more local issues, is that a greater level of engagement and dialogue with readers can be harnessed to focus ‘solutions journalism’ on the most pressing issues facing individual communities.

The Solutions Journalism Network (SJN), founded by two writers for the *Fixes* column in *The New York Times*’ Opinionator section, describes solutions journalism as “rigorous and compelling reporting about responses to social problems.” The SJN has collaborated with over 140 newsrooms to cross-pollinate discussions among communities tackling similar issues.<sup>125</sup>

Equipping citizens with a more complete view of these issues can help to drive more effective understanding of the interconnected nature of many of the challenges and opportunities exemplified by the SDGs. It can also play an important role in bringing greater awareness of the SDGs themselves by using it as a common language to both discuss complex problems and establish a more aspirational vision for the future.

115 Gentzkow, M., Shapiro, J.M. & Sinkinson, M. (2014). Competition and ideological diversity: Historical evidence from US newspapers. *American Economic Review*. 104(10): 3073-3114. Retrieved from: <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.104.10.3073>

116 Mondak, J. (1996). Nothing to read: Newspapers and elections in a social experiment. *Bibliovault OAI Repository*, the University of Chicago Press.

117 Snyder (Jr.), J.M. & Strömberg, D. (2010). Press coverage and political accountability. Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w13878.pdf>

118 Murphy, D. (2018). When local papers close, costs rise for local governments. *Columbia Journalism Review*. Retrieved from: [https://www.cjr.org/united\\_states\\_project/public-finance-local-news.php](https://www.cjr.org/united_states_project/public-finance-local-news.php)

119 Government of Canada. (2018). Budget 2018: Chapter 4. Retrieved from: <https://www.budget.gc.ca/2018/docs/plan/chap-04-en.html>

120 “How to save local news without massive government bailouts.” (2018). *The Current* with Anna Maria Tremonte. CBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-february-27-2018-1.4552703/how-to-save-local-news-without-massive-government-bailouts-1.4553452>

121 *The Discourse*. (n.d.) About. Retrieved from: <https://www.thediscourse.ca/about>

122 *Ku’ku’kwes News*. (n.d.) About. Retrieved from: <http://kukukwes.com/about/>

123 Ronson, J. (2018). Newsletter: Cowichan Valley, we have a winner! *The Discourse*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thediscourse.ca/cowichan-valley/newsletter-cowichan-valley-winner>

124 Ronson, J. (2018). Trust in local news shaken over racetrack controversy in B.C.’s Cowichan valley. *The Discourse*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thediscourse.ca/cowichan-valley/trust-in-local-news-shaken>

125 Solutions Journalism Network. (n.d.). Homepage. Retrieved from: <https://www.solutionsjournalism.org>



## Local newspapers in crisis across Ontario

Postmedia owns nearly half of the daily newspapers in Canada, including the major papers in Ottawa and three provincial capitals (Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg). It owns all the daily newspapers in several large cities including Calgary and Vancouver. And Postmedia's dwindling finances mean that it could have to shutter completely or sell off assets in the near future.

But more worrying than the fate of those major papers is the future for local news if Postmedia fails. The company owns most of the small dailies published in Ontario – 27, to be exact, in places like Chatham, Cornwall and North Bay. In some of these communities, there is no other source of news, so Postmedia's potential demise will affect those communities even more.

Northumberland Today is published weekdays in Cobourg and Port Hope, and since Postmedia took it over in 2014, the amount of local news coverage has dropped at an alarming rate. In 2008, 89 per cent of all its content – counting news, photographs and commentary – was local. Today, more than three-quarters of content is syndicated from wire news services like the Associated Press and The Canadian Press, and distributed to all Postmedia papers.

The change is so dramatic it would be incorrect to call Northumberland Today a local paper.

In 2009, Northumberland Today was created out of a merger of two long-standing local dailies, the Port Hope Evening Guide and Cobourg Daily Star, with the weekly Colborne Chronicle. The combined circulation of those papers was about 8000 at the time. But by 2015, Northumberland Today's circulation was just 2696, making it one of the smallest of Postmedia's Ontario dailies. It boasts that it is "Northumberland County's No. 1 news source." There is a weekly paper, owned by Metroland but no local commercial radio or television station.

The most dramatic change is on the paper's editorial page. Before Postmedia owned it, the editorial, columnists, editorial cartoon and letters to the editor were 100 per cent local. Today,

the whole page is syndicated material. Most days there are no letters to the editor suggesting that the readership has drawn away from Northumberland Today.

A comparison of a week's worth of Northumberland Today 2017 issues, and that of the Port Hope Evening Guide, one of its predecessors, in 2008 (when it was owned by Sun Media), and 1996 (when it was published by Southam), also shows huge declines in local reporting.

The percentage of Port Hope news declined from 41 per cent in 1996 to just six per cent in 2017. Local photographs have declined even more sharply – from 69 per cent to just nine per cent.

Research shows that those most engaged in civic life tend to also be the most tapped into local news. It affects education systems, community safety, water quality and even road repair. If we are not regularly and adequately informed, we lose our ability to hold institutions and officials to account.

Voter turnout in local elections is already critically low: According to the Association of Municipalities Ontario, average voter turnout in the 2014 municipal elections was just 43 per cent. 17 of the 389 jurisdictions returned their entire councils by acclamation.

With the decline of local news in papers like Northumberland Today, civic engagement is at under threat, and affected communities risk losing the ability to develop local solutions for their problems.

And that is not good for democracy.

*This article, written by Ryerson University School of Journalism professor emeritus John Miller, first appeared on TVO.org under the title Local news is disappearing in Ontario, and that's bad for democracy in July 2017.<sup>126</sup> TVO is a media partner of WGSJ's Generation SDG initiative.*

126 Miller, J. (2017). Opinion: Local news is disappearing in Ontario, and that's bad for democracy. The Next Ontario. TVO. Retrieved from: <https://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/-local-news-is-disappearing-in-ontario-and-thats-bad-for-democracy>

## Policy coherence and community engagement

With a series of Goals as sprawling as Agenda 2030, ensuring that there's a certain level of policy coherence within and between governments in Canada is an important step for maintaining forward momentum. From the community standpoint, this can help to provide greater predictability and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

In the lead-up to 2018's High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Canada's federal government took several promising steps to formalize the national SDG implementation strategy within the bureaucracy and assign roles to specific departments and agencies (see p. 31). This has also extended to Statistics Canada and the generation of appropriate metrics to measure progress, although "its contribution to the needed whole-of-government approach is yet to be seen."<sup>127</sup>

Several western countries have already embraced a whole-of-government approach, with Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet directing both SDG implementation and Voluntary National Review efforts.<sup>128</sup> The Prime Minister's Office is leading the planning and coordination of the national implementation of the SDGs in Finland. All Swedish ministries are responsible for SDG implementation in their respective portfolios, but the Minister for Public Administration is coordinating national implementation.<sup>129</sup>

With a federal structure in Canada that grants substantial authority to the provinces and territories on key SDG-related matters such as education and healthcare, policy coherence is needed to extend to the provinces as well.

The most effective course of action, argue researchers John W. McArthur and Margaret Biggs, is to turn SDG planning in Canada into "an open-source exercise, with provinces, communities, universities, businesses and organizations of all types developing implementation plans in a collaborative, public manner."<sup>130</sup> An ideal opportunity exists to utilize the common language of Agenda 2030 to develop a long-term, non-partisan policy agenda that runs far beyond short election cycles.

This model of engagement, while a painstaking process that takes up significant time and effort, provides for the most durable political outcomes, according to Dr. Don Lenihan, a senior associate in policy and engagement at the Ottawa-based think-tank Canada 2020. An internationally recognized expert on public engagement and open government, he describes this model as "community ownership," where the community is granted a larger role in designing a project or plan (see p. 21 for more).

"Strong community ownership makes such a project a far less attractive target to an opposition party looking to score political points," he wrote in an August 2018 commentary. "Attacking it amounts to attacking the community that owns it – and a party preparing for an election will think twice about that."<sup>131</sup>

## Changes in the constitutional status of municipalities and Indigenous authorities

The model of community ownership, detailed above, is partially hamstrung by the fact that municipalities are granted no constitutional authority under Canada's constitution. While Canadians vote for and are governed by elected officials at the local, provincial and national level, the Canadian Constitution only recognizes federal and provincial governments.<sup>132</sup> Local governments are commonly seen as "creatures of the province," as their responsibilities and authority are granted to them by provinces able to unilaterally restructure this relationship.

This Blueprint has repeatedly made the case as to why communities are best equipped to implement bottom-up approaches to the SDGs, but this ability is severely constrained by a lack of regulatory authority and financial clout. For example, local governments largely unable to raise revenues other than through property taxes only collect about 12 cents of every tax dollar paid in Canada.<sup>133</sup>

127 BCCIC. (2018). Where Canada stands vol. II: A Sustainable Development Goals shadow report. Retrieved from: <https://www.bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/bccic-2018-report-preview-pages.pdf>

128 Cornish, L. (2018). Australian senate inquiry asks what it takes to implement the SDGs. Devex. Retrieved from: <https://www.devex.com/news/australian-senate-inquiry-asks-what-it-takes-to-implement-the-sdgs-91872>

129 UNDESA. (2017). Overview of institutional arrangements for implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level. Retrieved from: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10735Updated\\_Issues\\_Brief\\_rev10\\_1\\_March\\_2017.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10735Updated_Issues_Brief_rev10_1_March_2017.pdf)

130 McArthur, J. W., & Biggs, M. (2016). Mobilizing Canadian leadership on global sustainable development. Retrieved from: <http://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/september-2016/mobilizing-canadian-leadership-on-global-sustainable-development/>

131 Lenihan, D. (2018). Are polarizing initiatives like a carbon tax doomed to fail? National Newswatch. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalnewswatch.com/2018/08/21/are-polarizing-initiatives-like-a-carbon-tax-doomed-to-fail/#.W4RO0i2ZP-Y>

132 Government of Canada. (2018). Constitution Acts: 1867 to 1982. Retrieved from: <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/>

133 Thompson, D., Flanagan, G., Gibson, D., Sinclair, L. & Thompson, A. Funding a better future: Progressive revenue sources for Canada's cities and towns. CUPE. Retrieved from: [https://cupe.ca/sites/cupe/files/funding\\_a\\_better\\_future\\_0.pdf](https://cupe.ca/sites/cupe/files/funding_a_better_future_0.pdf)

Successful legislative efforts over the past 15 years have managed to grant more authority to Canada's two largest cities through Ontario's 2006 City of Toronto Act and Quebec's 2017 Bill 121,<sup>134</sup> respectively. Yet as Ontario Premier Doug Ford's move to amend the City of Toronto Act to shrink the size of city council in Summer 2018 demonstrates, these advancements in local control can be quickly rolled back by future provincial governments.

As for Indigenous authorities, Aboriginal and treaty rights were further guaranteed under Section 35 of the 1982 Constitutional Act, but have never been properly defined (note that the term Aboriginal is used here to reference the terminology used in Canadian constitutional documents). Numerous Supreme Court rulings since then have expanded out Indigenous rights in certain areas, but more definitive language would provide much-needed clarity to the question.

In particular, whether the right to Indigenous self-government is included within Section 35 has never been explicitly determined by the Supreme Court. Since 1995 the Canadian government has recognized "the inherent right of self-government as an existing Aboriginal right under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982,"<sup>135</sup> but what that looks like in practice has been a source of wide disagreement.

Progress towards the re-establishment of Aboriginal self-government in Canada has been a lengthy and uneven process, with degrees of self-government established in certain areas negotiated through the land claims process. Notable examples include the 1990 Métis Settlements Act of Alberta<sup>136</sup> and the 2000 Nisga'a Final Agreement in British Columbia.<sup>137</sup> Passing constitutional amendments to address this question have been frequently discussed since 1982, including in the 1983 Special Parliamentary Committee's Report on Indian Self-Government,<sup>138</sup> language within the 1992 Charlottetown Accord itself<sup>139</sup> and by the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.<sup>140</sup>

Only a change in the constitutional status of municipalities and Indigenous authorities will ensure that these necessary steps are taken. This would include the recognition of local government and Indigenous authorities as an order of government in the constitution, and the reallocation of roles, responsibilities, authority and decision-making, and taxation powers to the level of government that is best able to assume accountability.

## Responsive funding and alignment with local priorities

There exists a fundamental tension between the national Goals inherent to Agenda 2030 and the need to foster community-led solutions to achieve breakthroughs in many of these areas. Governments and other funders such as the philanthropic sector have a greater ability to map or support mapping of how local community efforts can add up into a national strategy. This support is often translated into a prescriptive form of funding that restricts more imaginative local solutions.

"As Agenda 2030 really starts to land in Canada, we're very sensitive to the fact that there are [local] organizations that are doing incredible work that quite clearly fits within the SDGs," said Community Foundations of Canada vice president JP Bervoets in an April 2018 discussion on SDG financing.<sup>141</sup> "If we are, as funders, going to require individual organizations to understand specifically how they fit in [to the SDGs], we must also do the meaningful legwork to build capacity and create learning opportunities so organizations can plug into that."

134 Assemblée Nationale Québec. (2017). Bill No. 121: An Act to increase the autonomy and powers of Ville de Montreal, the metropolis of Quebec. Retrieved from: <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/travaux-parlementaires/projets-loi/projet-loi-121-41-1.html>

135 INAC. (2010). The Government of Canada's approach to implementation of the inherent right and the negotiation of Aboriginal self-government. Retrieved from: <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100031843/1100100031844>

136 Government of Alberta. (2000). Métis Settlements Act. Retrieved from: [http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=m14.cfm&leg\\_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779743704](http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=m14.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779743704)

137 Nisga'a Nation, Government of British Columbia & Government of Canada. (2000). Nisga'a Final Agreement. Retrieved from: <http://www.nnkn.ca/files/u28/nis-eng.pdf>

138 Special Committee on Indian Self-Government. (1983). Indian self-government in Canada: A report of the special committee. Retrieved from: <http://caid.ca/PennerRep1983.pdf>

139 First Ministers and Leader of Canada (1992). Consensus report of the Constitution: Final text, Charlottetown, August 28, 1992 (Charlottetown Accord). Retrieved from: [https://www.sqrc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/positions-historiques/positions-du-qc/part3/Document27\\_en.pdf](https://www.sqrc.gouv.qc.ca/documents/positions-historiques/positions-du-qc/part3/Document27_en.pdf)

140 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Retrieved from: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/royal-commission-aboriginal-peoples/Pages/final-report.aspx>

141 BCCIC (Producer). (2018). How to we fund the Global Goals?: Web panel. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVX3wMFcBCY>

Governments and funders are strongly encouraged to begin applying an SDG lens to both existing and new funding streams, but should also take steps to ensure that this does not present yet another barrier to entry for small, local organizations.

The burden of SDG translation should be lightened through support from the funders, to amplify the priorities identified by local communities and help bolster on-the-ground success stories and promising ideas in need of further resources. Funders can also help to enable critical infrastructure for community-led innovation (see p. 59 for more).

Pursuing a more responsive form of funding helps to seed local ideas that are contributing to Agenda 2030. The Law Foundation of Ontario, for example, uses its Responsive Grants Program to fund ideas generated by nonprofit community groups to improve access to justice. Funded programs include an outreach coordinator to better connect pro bono services to people with disabilities living in rural areas, as well as the design of a new wallet card explaining legal protections for people who contact emergency services during an illegal drug overdose.<sup>142</sup>



## Mutual accountability

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines mutual accountability as follows:

*“Mutual accountability is a process by which two (or multiple) partners agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other. It relies on trust and partnership around shared agendas, rather than on ‘hard’ sanctions for non-compliance, to encourage the behaviour change needed to meet commitments. It is supported by evidence that is collected and shared among all partners.”<sup>143</sup>*

Central aspects of the OECD’s mutual national-level accountability framework are generating a shared agenda, monitoring and reviewing mutual commitments, and providing space for dialogue and negotiation. In this Blueprint, mutual accountability implies that civil society, subject matter experts, managers, decision makers and government authorities are all made answerable to each other.

Civil society can increase government accountability through peer reviews of countries’ Voluntary National Reviews made at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), independent parallel reviews and shadow reports which are free to challenge government reporting.<sup>144</sup> It is important to note that accountability here refers not only to meeting the targets outlined in Agenda 2030. It also refers to accountability for consistent, appropriately-paced progress towards achieving the targets.

<sup>142</sup> The Law Foundation of Ontario. (n.d.). Responsive grant program. Retrieved from: <http://www.lawfoundation.on.ca/what-we-do/responsive-grants-programs/>

<sup>143</sup> OECD. (2008). Mutual accountability: Emerging good practice. Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49656340.pdf>

<sup>144</sup> Transparency International. (2018). Engaging civil society to tackle corruption: Three ideas for activists to capitalize on the Sustainable Development Goal framework. Retrieved from: <https://voices.transparency.org/engaging-civil-society-to-tackle-corruption-three-ideas-for-activists-to-capitalise-on-the-19fb75c6a3a>

However, beyond ensuring our government institutions are accountable, the rest of society must be as well. One way different members of society can maintain a watchdog role for each other is through the use of specific data and metrics. In 1996, for example, the Ontario government began publishing an annual “Sunshine” list of public sector employees who earned more than \$100,000 over the past year.<sup>145</sup>

Corporate sustainability reporting has been evolving since the late 1990s. According to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), “measurement” was the initial goal, which aimed to track non-financial resource use. However, “materiality” – the implications of measurement, or relevance to stakeholders – soon emerged as a way for corporate impacts to be described, compared and learned from. The current phase of reporting described by GRI is “moving beyond reports”, which involves applying the reported data to decision-making.<sup>146</sup>

Decision-making from reporting relates to internal company decisions as well as actions taken across other segments of society. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development reported in 2017 that 27 per cent of companies studied were tying a portion of executive pay to sustainability metrics<sup>147</sup> – a practice that uses reporting mechanisms as a way to ensure desired progress is made through the use of direct financial incentives.

Government action is rooted in its budget; no amount of reporting will be effective without influencing how the budget is allocated. Budget allocations are made according to what the elected government deems important, based partly on what constituents expect priorities to be. However, public participation and transparent participation processes are important facets of ensuring representative public priorities are determined.

This recognition requires an understanding of where we are now so that we may assess what should be done to improve in the future. The 2017 Open Budget Survey ranked Canada’s budgetary system 71st in the world for transparency, 39th for

public participation and 57th for oversight.<sup>148</sup> Great efforts and/or momentous actions are needed to improve our current systems. The “accountability revolution,” which would drive change through mutual accountability, could make use of investment data to promote progress, transparency and accountability at multiple levels (local to international).<sup>149</sup>

Data produced by communities can be used to drive action, monitor progress and demand accountability of not just institutions, but of each other. Innovative approaches will be needed, such as the use of technology to collect citizen monitoring data, engage communities in discussion and track collective progress towards SDG implementation (learn more about IISD’s open source SDG tool, Tracking Progress, on p.23).

Some innovative pathways from around the world include Promise Tracker in Brazil, FLOAT in Beijing or Project AWARE’s Dive Against Debris.<sup>®</sup> Promise Tracker enables community members to identify others looking to get engaged to gather, share resources, build capacity and mobilize key actors who can give the community a voice when promises by leaders are not being kept.<sup>150</sup>

FLOAT engages community members in dialogue through the use of specially-designed kites equipped with air quality data collectors. Community members educate others and collectively own the dataset they contribute to, which gives them credibility for demanding action from government.<sup>151</sup> Project AWARE engages scuba divers to collect and log underwater waste to improve oceanic health and inform policy change.<sup>152</sup>

An integral goal of Agenda 2030 implementation should be to recognize that each of us has a responsibility to the collective. It is not enough to demand transparency and accountability from our government institutions, though this is an important step. Each of us, and every organization, must reciprocate accountability to each other.

145 The Province of Ontario. (n.d.). Public sector salary disclosure. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/public-sector-salary-disclosure>

146 Global Reporting Initiative(2016). 20 years on: Is sustainability reporting actually making a difference? Retrieved from: <https://www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/20-years-on-Is-sustainability-reporting-actually-making-a-difference.aspx>

147 WBCSD. (2017). Reporting matters. Retrieved from: <https://www.wbcsd.org/Programs/Redefining-Value/External-Disclosure/Reporting-matters/News/Research-into-157-corporate-reports-from-top-companies>

148 International Budget Partnership. (2017). The Open Budget survey 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.internationalbudget.org/open-budget-survey/>

149 Sriskandarajah, D. (2018). Should not meeting the Sustainable Development Goals get you fired? Brookings Institution. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/07/17/should-not-meeting-the-sustainable-development-goals-get-you-fired/>

150 Promise Tracker. (n.d.) About. Retrieved from: <https://promisetracker.org/>

151 FLOAT. (n.d.) Homepage. Retrieved from: <http://f-i-o-a-t.com/>

152 Project AWARE. (n.d.) Dive Against Debris. Retrieved from: <https://www.projectaware.org/diveagainstdebris>

13



CLIMATE ACTION

Solution Spotlight:

## Dr. Richard Muller and Berkeley Earth

The Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature (BEST) project was co-founded in 2010 by physics professor Dr. Richard Muller and his daughter. Dr. Muller was one of the most prominent climate-change deniers in the United States prior to the BEST project. However, as a result of this study, Dr. Muller has become a leading supporter of anthropogenic climate change.

The BEST study is the most comprehensive analysis of temperature-based climate data to date. It was undertaken due to skepticism of the rigor behind existing climate science. Goals of the study were to observe long-term (years 1753–2011) temperature trends and to assess causal relationships between increasing global temperatures and potential predicting or contributing factors.<sup>153</sup>

Conclusions of the study were that climate change is real, prior studies were generally accurate and that humans are the main driver of rapid climate change today. To promote transparency, all raw data, analysis codes, papers, memos and graphics are freely accessible on the Berkeley Earth's website.<sup>154</sup>

In the spring of 2011, the science committee of the U.S. House of Representatives invited Dr. Muller to testify on the topic of climate change policy. More specifically, Republicans had invited him, expecting his reanalysis would challenge information that stated the earth had warmed 0.7°C since the 1880s. To their dismay, he supported prior studies.

The example demonstrated by Dr. Muller and his team illustrate multiple facets of mutual accountability.

First, providing the public with conclusions based in quality science reduces misinformation and builds capacity in communities. Second, allowing free access to all data and algorithms in an organized way builds trust through transparency, encourages healthy scientific debate and ensures other members of society can access a massive

dataset they may not otherwise have had the capacity to obtain. In these ways, Berkeley Earth demonstrated that they were answerable to the very public conclusions they shared and accountable for the process and outcomes of the research.

At the end of 2011, Dr. Muller wrote the following in an op-ed published in the Wall Street Journal: "When we began our study, we felt that skeptics had raised legitimate issues, and we didn't know what we'd find. Our results turned out to be close to those published by prior groups. We think that means that those groups had truly been very careful in their work, despite their inability to convince some skeptics of that. They managed to avoid bias in their data selection, homogenization and other corrections."<sup>155</sup>

This statement demonstrates personal and organizational accountability, as Dr. Muller did not allow potential political repercussions for his credentials or research, due to completely changing his public stance, affect the accurate dissemination of good science. Instead, he acknowledged his shift in stance as growth based on discovery. Not only did this increase trust in his work and others like it from those who were previously skeptical, but his credibility as an individual only improved.

What may be more significant is how this example affected general accountability of certain entities within society. Foreign Policy, an American daily news publication, rewarded Dr. Muller's bold move by featuring him as a 2012 FP Top 100 Global Thinker. Public discussants voiced their preparedness to change their stance given the good science and transparent process implemented by the BEST project.<sup>156</sup> Positive public recognition of examples that highlight transparency and accountability are critical to promoting these qualities across society.

153 Wickham, C., Rhode, R., Muller, R.A., Wurtele, J., Curry, J., Groom, D., Jacobsen, R., Perlmutter, S., Rosenfield, A. & Mosher, S., (2013). Influence of urban heading on the global temperature land average using rural sites identified from MODIS classifications. *Geoinformatics & Geostatistics: An overview*. 1(2). Retrieved from: <http://static.berkeleyearth.org/papers/UHI-GIGS-1-104.pdf>

154 Berkeley Earth. (2018). Data overview. Retrieved from: <http://berkeleyearth.org/data/>

155 Muller, R.A. (2011). The case against global-warming skepticism. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved from: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970204422404576594872796327348>

156 Watts, A. (2011). Briggs on Berkeley's forthcoming BEST surface temperature record, plus my thoughts from my visit there. *Watts Up With That?* Retrieved from: <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/03/06/briggs-on-berkeleys-best-plus-my-thoughts-from-my-visit-there/>





## INNOVATION, FUNDING AND FINANCE

The UN has calculated that an estimated capital gap of \$2.5 trillion (U.S.) exists between current global spending levels and what will be required for the world to reach the 2030 targets.<sup>157</sup> The good news, explained Global Canada Executive Chairman Robert Greenhill at the Generation SDG Summit in April 2018, is that Canada already has the capital to address these domestically. “We have trillions of dollars that are available to be invested,” he explained. “The question is where can you align those finances with the needs of the SDGs?”<sup>158</sup>

Governments at all three levels across Canada certainly have an indispensable role to play, both with the redirection of existing government expenditures as well as the introduction of new sources of funding. This section of the Blueprint looks to build upon existing work<sup>159</sup> (which explores in greater detail where government funding gaps currently exist) by focusing on how communities can go about harnessing these alternate forms of capital to bolster existing investments around Agenda 2030.

Advocates for deploying capital markets towards the SDGs have underscored the enormous potential market opportunities involved. A 2017 report from the Business and Sustainable Development Commission estimates that renewed attention to the SDGs could open up \$12 trillion (U.S.) of market opportunities in four key economic systems: food and agriculture, cities, energy and materials, and health and wellbeing.<sup>160</sup>

Just as the SDGs can serve as a roadmap for new investments, they also present as a long list of material risks set to grow in importance if left unaddressed. Rising concerns about income inequality, increased resource scarcity and the myriad risks presented by climate change are but a sampling of what lies in store for business leaders in the decades ahead.

These two factors, while each serving as powerful incentives unto themselves, have not been enough to bring about the necessary conditions for success. Institutional investors, the private sector, the philanthropic world, individuals, governments and regulators are all moving in the right direction, but with the clock ticking down to 2030 we are in need of a paradigm shift.

Capitalism will only be able to set itself upon the SDGs if it shifts from shareholder to stakeholder capitalism – with the broader aim of maximizing long-term value for Canadian society as a whole. Underlining the concepts behind this new, emerging economy, explained Carol Anne Hilton, CEO and founder of The Indigenomics Institute, at the Generation SDG Summit, “[is] really a return to human values.”<sup>161</sup>

157 UNCTAD. (2014). World Investment Report 2014: Investing in the SDGs, an action plan. Retrieved from: [http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wir2014\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wir2014_en.pdf)

158 WGSJ (Producer). (2018). Advancing financing for the SDGs. Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujI)

159 BCCIC. (2015). Keeping score: UN Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: [https://bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/SDG\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_WEB\\_v6-1.pdf](https://bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/SDG_Report_FINAL_WEB_v6-1.pdf)

160 BSDC. (2017). Better business better world. Retrieved from: [http://report.businesscommission.org/uploads/BetterBiz-BetterWorld\\_170215\\_012417.pdf](http://report.businesscommission.org/uploads/BetterBiz-BetterWorld_170215_012417.pdf)

161 WGSJ (Producer). (2018). Advancing financing for the SDGs. Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujI)

## Applying capital

### Private sector

SDG awareness is rapidly improving in the corporate community, slowly emerging as a common language for describing new sustainable market opportunities and retooling existing sustainability plans. A 2017 PwC reporting challenge found 62 per cent of the top 5000 global brands currently use the SDGs in their annual or sustainability reports. However, only 28 per cent set any quantitative targets and linked these back to forms of societal impact.<sup>162</sup>

According to the Global Compact Network Canada (GCNC) 2018 SDG Survey, a notable gap “still exists between awareness, implementation and accountability.”<sup>163</sup> Only 13 per cent of respondents were mapping, aligning and embedding their corporate strategies with the SDGs and publicly reporting on the impact of those SDG strategies, a figure the GCNC is working to improve on through reporting workshops with members.

Unlike with sustainability reporting, no gold standard has emerged to assist companies to begin measuring and disclosing progress on the SDGs. As a result, individual companies have adopted significantly different approaches.

- In its 2017 Sustainability Report, Canadian professional services company Stantec listed two examples per SDG explaining how the company is having a positive impact and creating a sustainable world.<sup>164</sup> Teck Resources featured a similar interactive list on its website.<sup>165</sup>
- Canadian agribusiness company Nutrien (formerly Agrium), only emphasized the eight SDGs where the company was having the greatest potential impact.<sup>166</sup>
- South of the border, Maryland-based spice and flavourings company McCormick & Company designed a new Purpose-led Performance framework,<sup>167</sup> comprising a series of commitments and clear performance targets out to 2025 that were tied explicitly to one or more of the SDGs.

The absence of definitive methods for measuring corporate performance regarding the SDGs opens the process up to ‘SDG-washing.’ Companies failing to report their progress on each of the 17 Goals also runs contrary to the interconnected nature of the Goals, where success in one affects success for others.

However, any attempt to include comprehensive SDG reporting will begin competing for space with the burgeoning field of sustainability reporting (of which there is substantial overlap). There is also the question of how small and medium-sized enterprises, with fewer resources at their disposal, can begin to incorporate the SDGs into their business planning.<sup>168</sup>

Adjusting a company’s mission to properly integrate principles of sustainable development into their business strategy is often a difficult sell internally that is best advocated for by a respected member (or members) of the management team. Accenture recommends emphasizing both the short-term and long-term benefits involved (Figure 5).<sup>169</sup>

162 PwC. (2017) SDG Reporting challenge 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/sustainability/sustainable-development-goals/sdg-reporting-challenge-2017.html>

163 Global Compact Network Canada. (2018). 2018 SDG survey. Retrieved from: <https://globalcompact.ca/wp-content/uploads/publications/2018%20SDG%20Survey%20Report%20Final.pdf>

164 Stantec. (2018). 2017 Sustainability report. Retrieved from: <https://www.stantec.com/content/dam/stantec/files/PDFAssets/2018/stn-2017-sustainability-report.pdf>

165 Teck. (n.d.) Responsibility: UN Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <https://www.teck.com/responsibility/global-citizenship/un-sustainable-development-goals/>

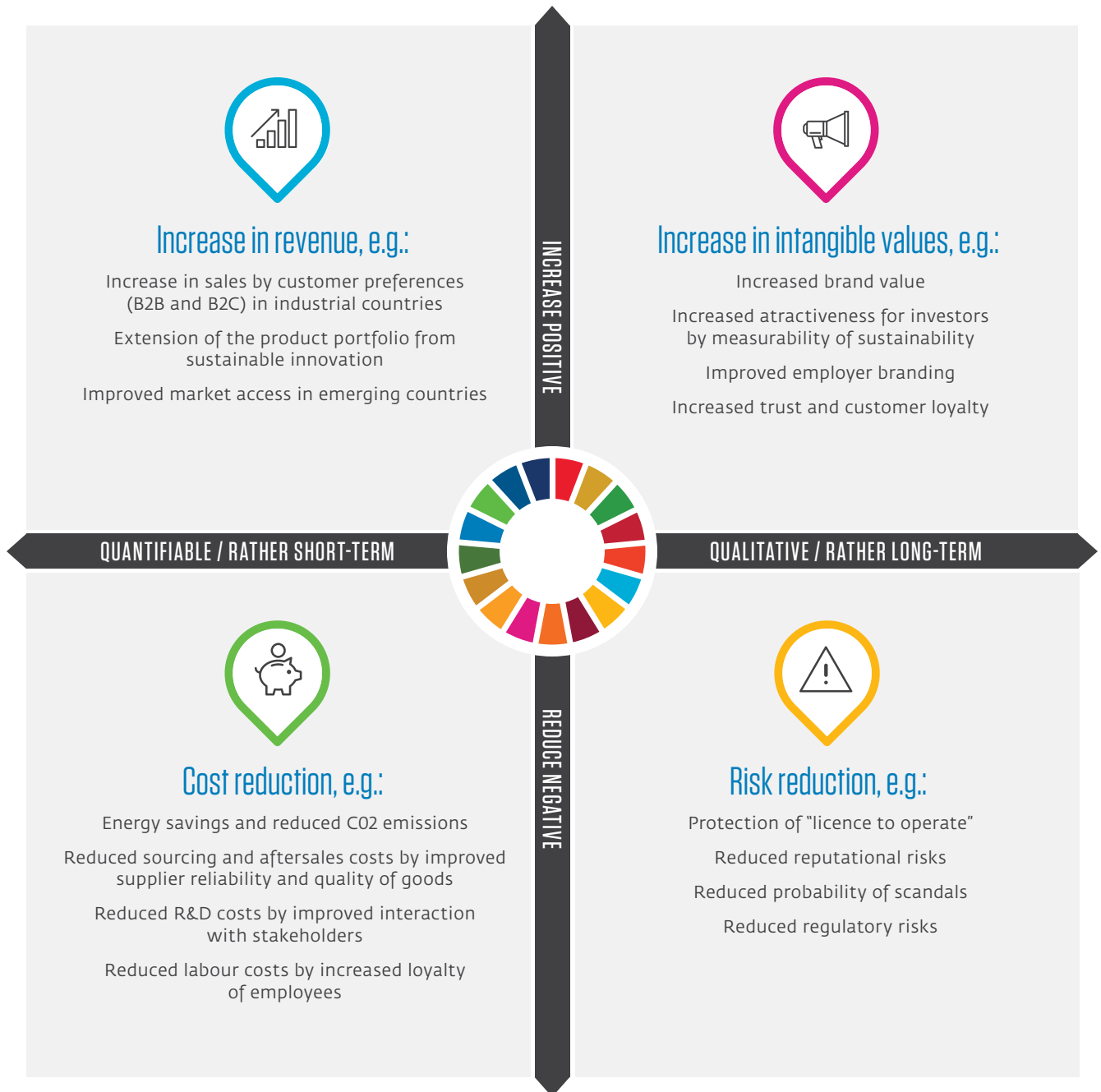
166 ACCG. (2017). SDGs 2+8: The role of the agricultural industry in attaining the SDGs. Retrieved from: <http://together.acgc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/agrium.pdf>

167 McCormick Corporation. (2017). Purpose-led performance report 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.mccormickcorporation.com/public/CORP/files/purpose-led-performance.pdf>

168 Kamal-Chaoui, L. (2017). Unlocking the potential of SMEs for the SDGs. Retrieved from: <https://oecd-development-matters.org/2017/04/03/unlocking-the-potential-of-smes-for-the-sdgs/>

169 Accenture Strategy. (2017). Companies for change - How companies can improve their impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and harness the power of digitalization: A practical handbook for managers. Retrieved from: [https://www.accenture.com/t00010101T000000Z\\_\\_w\\_\\_/de/de\\_acnmedia/PDF-64/Accenture\\_Strategy\\_CompaniesForChange\\_2017\\_Handbook\\_digital.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/t00010101T000000Z__w__/de/de_acnmedia/PDF-64/Accenture_Strategy_CompaniesForChange_2017_Handbook_digital.pdf)

Figure 5: Sustainability valuation framework<sup>170</sup>



170 Ibid

Beyond the GCNC, an extensive list of new resources has emerged to help companies begin navigating the SDGs. KPMG created the SDG Industry Matrix<sup>171</sup> to identify how different industries could contribute, while CPA Canada has published a snapshot of the accounting profession's contribution to the SDGs.<sup>172</sup> The Business and Sustainable Development Commission was launched in 2016 at the World Economic Forum explicitly to help companies maximize the economic opportunities presented by the SDGs.<sup>173</sup>

There's also a growing community of companies interested in making a more explicit commitment towards reorienting their businesses to address society's greatest challenges – the Benefit or B-Corp movement. Run by the non-profit B Lab, the goal is to commit companies to considering the impact of their decisions on their workers, customers, suppliers, community and the environment.<sup>174</sup>

More than 320 Canadian companies are now certified B-Corps, including the Business Development Bank of Canada, Optel Group and Beau's Brewery.<sup>175</sup> To earn certification, B-Corps must meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency.

Visionary corporate leadership that is successfully able to realign the company towards a more long-term, holistic approach to stakeholder engagement will play a vital role in embedding the SDGs into corporate Canada. But any efforts will be constrained by the numerous structural forces that push companies into maintaining short-term thinking. That brings us to the role that institutional investors and other actors can play in influencing corporate behaviour.



## Co-operatives

The co-operative (co-op) model offers an antidote to the shareholder-dominated way of running a business. Set up to operate as a social venture that serves the interests and purposes of multiple communities, it incorporates numerous principles of sustainable development. With 9000 co-ops, credit unions and mutuals in Canada, the movement is particularly prevalent in the banking, insurance and agricultural sectors.<sup>176</sup>

Co-operative businesses were the first group of enterprises worldwide to endorse the SDGs, doing so at the 2016 International Summit of Co-operatives in Quebec City. "I could not think of a better organisational structure than the co-op movement to make this happen," said Marc-André Blanchard, the UN's then-Canada ambassador at the event.<sup>177</sup>

Many of Canada's leading co-ops are industry leaders in sustainable development.<sup>178</sup> Vancity credit union is the country's largest private-sector Living Wage employer, while insurance co-op The Co-operators has integrated sustainable development into its core purpose.

The Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University has been holding annual symposia on improving co-op socio-economic transformation measurement through better reporting practices, with a strong focus placed on the SDGs.<sup>179</sup>

171 KPMG. (2017). SDG industry matrix. Retrieved from: <https://home.kpmg.com/xx/en/home/about/citizenship/global-goals-sustainable-development/sdgindustrymatrix.html>

172 IFAC. (2016). The 2030 agenda for sustainable development: A snapshot of the accountancy profession's contribution. Retrieved from: <https://www.ifac.org/publications-resources/2030-agenda-sustainable-development>

173 Business Commission. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from: <http://businesscommission.org/about>

174 B Corporation. (n.d.). About B Labs. Retrieved from: <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-lab>

175 B Corporation. (n.d.). Country partner: Canada. Retrieved from: <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-lab/country-partner/canada>

176 Co-operative Difference. (n.d.). Co-operatives in Canada. Retrieved from: <http://www.cooperativedifference.coop/co-operatives-in-canada/>

177 International Co-operative Alliance. (2016). Summit declaration commits to Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from: <https://www.ica.coop/en/media/news/summit-declaration-commits-to-sustainable-development-goals>

178 International Co-operative Alliance. (2017). Co-ops for 2030: A movement achieving sustainable development for all. Retrieved from: <http://base.socioeco.org/docs/co-ops-for-2030-1601269454.pdf>

179 Sobey School of Business. (n.d.) 2nd International symposium of accounting and reporting: Co-operative socio economic transformation. Retrieved from: <http://husky45.stmarys.ca/academics/sobey/international-symposium-2018.html>

### Institutional investors

“Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose,” wrote Blackrock CEO Larry Fink in a 2017 open letter to the CEOs of each corporation the world’s largest money manager (with \$6.3 trillion U.S. under management) invests in.<sup>180</sup> It served as further proof of the new activist role institutional investors have begun to play in pushing for a more just and sustainable future – a group that now encompasses some of the most conservative institutions on Wall Street and Bay Street alike.

Launched in 2006, the UN Principles of Responsible Investment has steadily expanded to now include signatories representing around \$70 trillion (U.S.) in investments.<sup>181</sup> Investors are pressuring companies on a range of topics, covering everything from board diversity to carbon footprint disclosure. Shareholder resolutions (often proposed and then withdrawn after earning concessions) have become one of the most important tools for this, as evidenced by the over 180 companies in Canada that have voluntarily submitted to non-binding ‘say on pay’ votes over executive compensation packages as a result of shareholder pressure.<sup>182</sup>

Shareholder action driven by a desire to reduce risks within their portfolio has picked up pace since the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.<sup>183</sup> Rising concerns that bolder action to combat climate change will eventually lead to a repricing of fossil fuel stocks, or ‘stranded assets,’ has led to pressure on Canadian energy and mining companies in particular to disclose their climate-related risks. For example, TransCanada Corp bowed to public pressure in April 2018 and endorsed a shareholder resolution requiring them to evaluate how its business model will be affected by a transition to a low-carbon economy.<sup>184</sup>

For those institutional investors interested in more aggressive action, divestment from companies that fail to meet ethical or environmental thresholds has grown in importance. The Norwegian sovereign wealth fund, the world’s largest, made waves last year by recommending that the Norwegian government divest itself fully from all oil and gas stocks.<sup>185</sup> Trillions of dollars around the world have already been divested, including a 2018 decision by Ireland to divest its national investment fund of fossil fuels.<sup>186</sup> Gradual decarbonization is a popular alternative as well, a policy adopted by Quebec’s CDPQ (see p. 54 for more).

Gone are the days when ethical investing is viewed as a risky bet that leads to sub-par returns. Massive market opportunities exist in clean energy, while an expanding body of research points to superior performance at companies which feature larger numbers of women on boards and in senior management.<sup>187</sup>

Canadian institutional investors have been slower to adjust to these trends than others. The Asset Owners Disclosure Project’s 2017 Global Climate Index only placed one Canadian pension plan in the top 20 per cent, with a third of its peers deemed to be taking no meaningful action at all.<sup>188</sup>

Encouragingly, Canadian pension funds and money managers have expressed increasing support for strengthening disclosure requirements around climate risks. In May 2018, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board chief executive Mark Machin pledged a “huge push” to better integrate climate change risk assessment into the pension giant’s decision-making process.<sup>189</sup>

180 Fink, L. (2017). Larry Fink’s annual letter to CEOs: A sense of purpose. Retrieved from: <https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/investor-relations/larry-fink-ceo-letter>

181 UNPRI. (n.d.) PRI signatories. Retrieved from: <https://www.unpri.org/signatories>

182 Share. (2018). Shareholders achieve say-on-pay at multiple companies. Retrieved from: <https://share.ca/say-on-pay-votes/>

183 Reguly, E. (2018). Adapt or die: How big-name investors are pushing Canadian companies on climate change. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/rob-magazine/article-adapt-or-die-are-canadian-companies-ready-for-climate-change/>

184 McCarthy, S., (2018). TransCanada endorses shareholders resolution for climate-risk analysis. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/transcanada-endorses-shareholders-resolution-for-climate-risk-analysis/article38284613/>

185 Norges Bank. (2017). Norges Bank recommends the removal of oil stocks from the benchmark index of the Government Pension Fund Global (GPF). Retrieved from: <https://www.nbim.no/en/transparency/news-list/2017/norges-bank-recommends-the-removal-of-oil-stocks-from-the-benchmark-index-of-the-government-pension-fund-global-gpfg/>

186 Department of Finance, Government of Ireland. (2018). Passing of Fossil Fuel Divestment Bill demonstrated global leadership on climate change agenda - D’Arcy. Retrieved from: <https://www.finance.gov.ie/updates/passing-of-fossil-fuel-divestment-bill-demonstrates-global-leadership-on-climate-change-agenda-darcy/>

187 UC Davis Graduate School of Management & Watermark. (2015). 2015-2015 UC Davis study of California women business leaders: A census of women directors and highest-paid executives. Retrieved from: <https://gsm.ucdavis.edu/uc-davis-annual-study-california-women-business-leaders>

188 Asset Owners Disclosure Project. (2017). Global climate index 2017: rating the world’s investors on climate related financial risk. Retrieved from: [https://aodproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/AODP-GLOBAL-INDEX-REPORT-2017\\_FINAL\\_VIEW.pdf](https://aodproject.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/AODP-GLOBAL-INDEX-REPORT-2017_FINAL_VIEW.pdf)

189 Shecter, B. (2018). CPPIB pledges ‘huge push’ on climate change risk assessment. The Financial Post. Retrieved from: <https://business.financialpost.com/news/cppib-pledges-huge-push-on-climate-change-risk-assessment>

The following month, a group of institutional investors (including six Canadian pension funds), with more than \$6 trillion in assets under management, announced a project to advance key G7 objectives. Conducted in collaboration with the Government of Canada, they pledged to commit resources and expertise to further three initiatives: enhancing expertise in infrastructure financing and development in emerging and frontier economies, opening opportunities for women in finance and investment worldwide, and speeding up the implementation of uniform and comparable climate-related disclosures.<sup>190</sup>

Also featured in the announcement was a call for partner institutions to begin discussing how to work the SDGs into

their investment process, “including by reference to the World Benchmarking Alliance’s goal of publishing public league tables measuring corporate performance on the SDGs.”

Few other concrete SDG-related commitments have been taken by Canadian institutional investors thus far. In contrast, Dutch pension fund managers APG and PGGM completed SDG taxonomies in 2017 in an attempt to bridge the gap between the UN’s targets and tangible investment opportunities.<sup>191</sup> They have begun sharing these and other SDG-related materials in hopes of wider adoption, inspiring CalPERS, the largest pension fund in the U.S., to begin investigating the SDGs further.<sup>192</sup>



#### Solution Spotlight:

## La Caisse’s push for decarbonization

La Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ), the second largest pension fund in Canada with around \$300 billion under management, has emerged as the most active institutional investor in Canada when it comes to transitioning to a low-carbon future.

Last October, the CDPQ announced plans to decarbonize its portfolio 25 per cent by 2025. The plan also included a 50 per cent increase in clean energy investments by 2020.<sup>193</sup> As part of this process, the CDPQ will begin measuring and publicly disclosing the carbon footprint of its portfolio. Internal compensation will be linked, in part, to attaining these targets.

“The world is changing, frankly, faster than most people expected,” Michael Sabia, chief executive officer of CDPQ, said when unveiling the policy. “We need to change the way we make investment decisions.”

The following week, the CDPQ joined with a group of 30 Canadian and international pension funds with a combined \$1.2 trillion under management to issue a letter supporting enhanced climate change risk disclosure for public companies across Canada.<sup>194</sup>

190 Shecter, B. (2018). Pension funds join Ottawa in bid to further G7’s diversity, climate risk efforts. The Financial Post. Retrieved from: <https://business.financialpost.com/news/fp-street/pension-funds-join-ottawa-in-bid-to-further-g7s-diversity-climate-risk-efforts>

191 Rust, S. (2017). APG, PGGM set out investment routes to UN development goals. Retrieved from: <https://www.ipe.com/news/esg/apg-pggm-set-out-investment-routes-to-un-development-goals/www.ipe.com/news/esg/apg-pggm-set-out-investment-routes-to-un-development-goals/10019777.fullarticle>

192 Diamond, R. (2018). CalPERS examines adopting SDGs. Retrieved from: <https://www.top1000funds.com/2018/01/calpers-examines-adopting-sdgs/>

193 CDPQ. (2017). CDPQ announces investment strategy to address climate change. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdpq.com/en/news/pressreleases/cdpq-announces-investment-strategy-to-address-climate-change>

194 Finance Montreal. (2017). Institutional investors release declaration on financial risks related to climate change. Retrieved from: <https://www.finance-montreal.com/en/news/institutional-investors-release-declaration-financial-risks-related-climate-change/>

### Governments and regulators

The past several decades have seen a marked transformation in how companies, institutional investors and governments alike view issues related to corporate social responsibility and sustainability. Once a niche subject, it has evolved to the point where 95 per cent of the largest 250 companies in the world produce a sustainability report.<sup>195</sup> The scope of issues viewed as material has also grown, with issues of gender diversity seen on the same level as providing greater supply chain transparency or carbon disclosure.

Yet it is also a movement that has, for the most part, been stunted by a reliance on voluntary disclosure. Reporting guidelines and standards such as the CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project),<sup>196</sup> the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board<sup>197</sup> and the Global Reporting Initiative<sup>198</sup> have helped to standardize practices, but the landscape remains fragmented, confusing to navigate and full of laggards.

A direct link can be drawn between mandatory disclosure requirements and greater participation. The *2017 Sustainable Stock Exchange Report* found that the top 10-ranked sustainable stock exchanges on the list were located in jurisdictions with “at least one mandatory, prescriptive and broad policy instrument designed to regulate sustainability disclosure.”<sup>199</sup> A 2017 global survey reported that 45 per cent of 368 institutional investors globally found that a lack of data comparability across firms was limiting their ability to use sustainability information in their investment decisions.<sup>200</sup>

Outside of increased funding for SDG-related government programs, passing mandatory disclosure requirements are among the most impactful ways in which governments and regulators across Canada can contribute to Agenda

2030. The 2011 Reference re Securities Act Supreme Court ruling reaffirmed provincial government supremacy over securities regulations,<sup>201</sup> leaving the task of instituting mandatory disclosure requirements largely in the hands of provincial authorities.

At the Paris climate conference in December 2015, Bank of England Governor Mark Carney announced that the international Financial Stability Board was establishing an industry-led Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFC) under the chairmanship of former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg.<sup>202</sup>

The final recommendations, released on June 2017, have done much to increase awareness of the materiality of climate change among Canadian companies.<sup>203</sup> The Royal Bank of Canada is among several Canadian companies participating in a UN pilot project to test out the requirements.<sup>204</sup>

Looking to build off of this work, the Canadian Securities Administrators soon launched a review of current practices across Canada. Although it concluded that further study is warranted before implementing any mandatory requirements,<sup>205</sup> the federal government created an Expert Panel on Sustainable Finance in April to look into similar issues.<sup>206</sup>

Numerous other jurisdictions have successfully adopted mandatory sustainability requirements with minimal disruption. A 2013 regulation requiring U.K.-incorporated companies listed on the London Stock Exchange, NYSE or Nasdaq to report their scope one (direct from controlled sources) and two (indirect from purchased energy) greenhouse gas emissions has seen compliance rates skyrocket from 50 per cent to 92 per cent.<sup>207</sup>

195 KPMG. (2017). The road ahead: The KPMG survey of corporate responsibility reporting 2017. Retrieved from: <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2017/10/kpmg-survey-of-corporate-responsibility-reporting-2017.pdf>

196 CDP. (n.d.). Companies discloser. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdp.net/en/companies-discloser>

197 Sustainability Accounting Standards Board. (n.d.) Resources. Retrieved from: <https://www.sasb.org/resources/>

198 Global Reporting Initiative. (n.d.) Standards. Retrieved from: <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards>

199 Yow, M. & Rubin, M. (2017). Measuring sustainability disclosure: Ranking the world's stock exchanges. Corporate Knights. Retrieved from: <http://www.corporateknights.com/reports/2017-world-stock-exchanges/>

200 Amel-Zadeh, A. & Serafeim, G., (2017). Why and how investors use ESG information: Evidence from a global survey. Retrieved from: <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/why-and-how-investors-use-esg-information-evidence-from-a-global-survey>

201 Supreme Court of Canada. (2011). Reference re Securities Act. Retrieved from: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/7984/index.do>

202 Financial Stability Board. (2015). FSB to establish task force on climate-related financial disclosures. Retrieved from: <https://www.fsb-tcfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/12-4-2015-Climate-change-task-force-press-release.pdf>

203 TCFD. (2017). Final report: Recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures. Retrieved from: <https://www.fsb-tcfd.org/publications/final-recommendations-report/>

204 UNEP Finance Initiative. (2017). Updated: UNEP FI member banks representing many trillions of dollars are first in industry to jointly pilot the TCFD recommendations. Retrieved from: <http://www.unepfi.org/news/industries/banking/eleven-unep-fi-member-banks-representing-over-7-trillion-are-first-in-industry-to-jointly-pilot-the-tcfd-recommendations/>

205 Canadian Securities Administrators. (2018). Canadian securities regulators report on climate change-related disclosure project. Retrieved from: <https://www.securities-administrators.ca/aboutcsa.aspx?id=1677>

206 Environment and Climate Change Canada. (2018). Government of Canada launches expert panel to help Canada tap into trillion-dollar opportunity from clean growth and climate action. Retrieved from: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/government-of-canada-launches-expert-panel-to-help-canada-tap-into-trillion-dollar-opportunity-from-clean-growth-and-climate-action-679544193.html>

207 Yow, M. & Rubin, M. (2017). Measuring sustainability disclosure: Ranking the world's stock exchanges. Corporate Knights. Retrieved from: <http://www.corporateknights.com/reports/2017-world-stock-exchanges/>

In France, an addition to the country's Energy Transition Law now requires that publicly traded companies, banks and credit providers, asset managers and institutional investors provide disclosure on climate change physical risks, as well as a justification of the disclosure methodology used.<sup>208</sup>

Only one comparable regulation has been adopted within Canada. Ontario passed legislation in 2016 that requires pension funds to annually disclose if and how environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors are addressed in the plan's investment policies.<sup>209</sup> While a step in the right direction, the regulation has also served to accentuate how far behind domestic pension funds are in adopting ESG principles. Only a third of filers in 2017 declared some form of meaningful ESG action.<sup>210</sup>

Non-profit organizations such as Shift have been formed in Canada to "bring together and educate pension fund savers, leaders and influencers with a goal to shift investment policies, priorities and practices to minimize climate risks and tap opportunities in the low-carbon economy."<sup>211</sup> Pensioners in large public pension funds have the power to get involved in this movement, something that's already occurring with divestment pushes at the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan and elsewhere.<sup>212</sup>

#### Philanthropic organizations

Philanthropy has an outsized role to play when it comes to achieving the SDGs within Canada. With over 10,000 public and private foundations, applying an SDG lense to granting activities and impact measurement systems can ensure that local impact on the ground is adding up to reaching broader regional and national targets.

This is particularly true when it comes to local foundations, who are dedicated to spurring community-level innovation. Community Foundations of Canada, a national network representing 191 community foundations across the country, have been particularly active connecting their Vital Signs Framework to the SDGs (see p. 22 for more).

With such an enormous capital gap in the SDG space, philanthropy is often best positioned to use its convening power to form cross-sectoral partnerships from a shared-values lense. One successful technique involves de-risking an investment opportunity so that other partners are able to see the true value of the investment.

"McConnell is using [its] granting to create the space for impact investing that we hope will demonstrate the viability and the opportunity to invest larger amounts of capital into these key areas," explained McConnell Foundation President and CEO Stephen Huddart at the Generation SDG Summit (see p. 57 for a successful example of this).<sup>213</sup>

#### Individual investors

Discussions about financing the SDGs tend to revolve around the role of the private sector and governments, but individual investors collectively hold the key to a more sustainable future. The 500 million wealthiest people around the world currently have tens of trillions of dollars invested, yet the idea of investing with one's values has only begun to reach the mainstream over the past several decades.

"This is a world of \$127 trillion (U.S.); one per cent of that – \$1.7 trillion dollars (U.S.) – could solve all the problems of poverty in the world," argues professor Jeffrey Sachs, U.S. economist and director of The Earth Institute at Columbia University. "Our failure to do so is a failure of moral imagination; it's a failure of will. Let's use some of those resources by taxation or by these wealth holders giving their funds so that we can actually get the job done."<sup>214</sup>

The responsible investing market in Canada reached \$1.5 trillion in 2016, according to research by the Responsible Investment Association (RIA). While the majority of this growth is due to institutional investors, individual investor assets almost doubled over the previous two years to reach \$118 billion.<sup>215</sup>

208 Forum Pour L'Investissement Responsable. (2016). Article 173-VI: Understanding the French regulation on investor climate reporting. Retrieved from: [https://www.frenchsif.org/isr-esg/wp-content/uploads/Understanding\\_article173-French\\_SIF\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.frenchsif.org/isr-esg/wp-content/uploads/Understanding_article173-French_SIF_Handbook.pdf)

209 Financial Services Commission of Ontario. (2016). Investment guidance notes: Environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors. Retrieved from: <https://www.fscs.gov.on.ca/en/pensions/policies/active/Documents/IGN-004-2017.pdf>

210 Melnitzer, J. (2017). Just 34% of Ontario pension plans report incorporating ESG factors: FSCO. Benefits Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.benefitscanada.com/investments/strategies/just-36-of-ontario-pension-plans-report-incorporating-esg-factors-fsco-101758>

211 Tides Canada. (n.d.). Shift. Retrieved from: <http://tidescanada.org/projects/shift/>

212 Sparks, R. (2017). Teachers urge \$175 billion pension fund to flex muscle on climate change. Canada's national Observer. Retrieved from: <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2017/04/06/news/teachers-urge-175-billion-pension-fund-send-climate-change-message>

213 WGSJ (Producer). (2018). Advancing financing for the SDGs. Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=699&v=eCj0uHmoujl)

214 Morgan, H. (2017). Q&A: Jeff Sachs on anti-poverty financing – a failure of moral imagination and will? Devex. Retrieved from: <https://www.devex.com/news/q-a-jeff-sachs-on-anti-poverty-financing-a-failure-of-moral-imagination-and-will-90469>

215 Responsible Investment Association. (2016). Canadian RI assets surpass \$1.5 trillion: Canadian RI trends report. Retrieved from: <https://www.riacanada.ca/trendsreport/>



11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

Solution Spotlight:

## Building affordable on-reserve housing

One cross-sector social investment, an affordable housing fund for low-income Indigenous peoples living on reserves in Canada, is being championed by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, a private Montreal-based grantor and impact investor.

Sixty per cent of on-reserve homes need repairs, and over the next 10 years there is a projected housing deficit of 80 000 units, according to Erica Barbosa Vargas, the McConnell Foundation's director of solutions finance. But since land on reserves is owned by the Crown and cannot be used as security for a loan, conventional banks have been reluctant to lend, she explains.

To tackle the problem in the Huron community of Wendake near Quebec City, the Aboriginal Savings Corporation of Canada (ABSCAN) offers residents loans to build, buy and sell their houses. Out of the 400 participants in ABSCAN's program over 10 years, the annual loss rate has never exceeded 2 per cent.

The McConnell Foundation has since partnered with the federal Ministry of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

to finance and expand ABSCAN's Wendake model to four communities across Quebec. And a commercial lender has come on board.

But the model can only scale nationwide by increasing the pool of capital from other impact and mainstream investors. "If we want to develop [Indigenous] communities, we need a huge amount of capital," said Jean Vincent, president and general manager of ABSCAN, to a parliamentary committee in 2015.<sup>216</sup> "This capital is available and it is in the hands of large investors, who want products offered to them that match their investment policies."

Roughly \$12 to \$13 billion is needed to address housing on reserves across Canada, according to Vargas. That scale exceeds government and philanthropic capacity, and requires financial vehicles that combine different capital sources, Vargas adds.

*A version of this article, written by Marcel Sangsari, first appeared in Corporate Knights Magazine under the title Social investments for the marginalized take off in North America in January 2017.<sup>217</sup>*

216 Indigenous and Northern Affairs Committee. (2015). Evidence of meeting #40 for Indigenous and Northern Affairs in the 41st Parliament, 2nd Session. Retrieved from: <https://openparliament.ca/committees/aboriginal-affairs/41-2/40/jean-vincent-6/?singlepage=1>

217 Sangsari, M. (2017). Social investments for the marginalized take off in North America. Corporate Knights. Retrieved from: <http://www.corporateknights.com/voices/marcel-sangsari/social-investments-marginalized-take-off-north-america-14842008/>

Much of this interest stems from a desire by the millennial generation to invest differently. In 2015, Morgan Stanley noted that over the coming decades \$30 trillion (U.S.) will be inherited by North American millennials.<sup>218</sup> Survey data conducted by Ipsos Reid in 2016 found that millennial investors are 65 per cent more likely than the boomer generation to consider ESG factors when making investment decisions. The findings are backed up by RBC<sup>219</sup> and other investors.<sup>220</sup>

Female investors are also set to play a catalytic role in this space, with Investor Economics estimating that women’s share of private wealth in Canada is expected to more than double to \$2.7 trillion by 2024.<sup>221</sup> Representing about 50 per cent of Canadian wealth, female investors

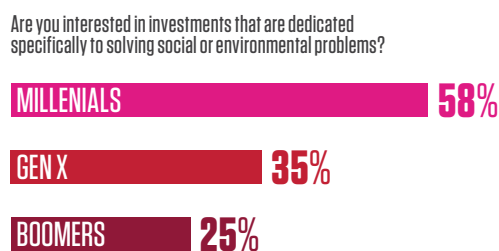
have shown a greater inclination to align their investments with their social and environmental values. The same 2015 Morgan Stanley study referenced above found that women “are nearly twice as likely as male investors to consider both rate of return and positive impact when making an investment.”<sup>222</sup>

As demand has grown, a diverse market for responsible investment has proliferated across Canada. Mutual funds and ETFs that target specific themes throughout the SDGs are the most common, such as environmentally-conscious products like the NEI Environmental Leaders Fund<sup>223</sup> or socially-minded ones such as the Bank of Montréal’s BMO Women in Leadership Fund.<sup>224</sup>

The market for impact investing has also grown exponentially, with over 200 products now available to investors.<sup>225</sup> Canadian fintech company CoPower, for example, allows investors to buy green bonds that finance individual clean energy and energy retrofit projects (see p. 61).

But an enormous gap remains between investors’ stated desire to pursue ethical investing (Figure 6)<sup>226</sup> and putting these ideas into practice. When Aon asked about factors holding responsible investing back, common concerns were voiced about a lack of consistent ESG data and a relative dearth of evidence demonstrating equal or superior concerns around performance.<sup>227</sup> Further polling by the RIA also pointed to a lack of knowledge and support from client-facing financial professionals.<sup>228</sup>

**Figure 6: Generational interest in ESG investing<sup>229</sup>**



Beyond an increase in responsible investing literacy among financial professions, other steps can be taken to shift investor dollars in a more SDG-oriented direction. Companies could begin shifting the default option on large private pension plans, typically adopted by nine out of 10 investors, to ethical investing (as the HSBC U.K. pension plan has already done).<sup>230</sup> Large institutional investors and individuals in Canada may also look to emulate the Netherlands, where 18 major financial institutions, managing €2.8 trillion in assets, issued a call in 2016 to “make SDG investment the ‘new normal’ by encouraging and enabling all Dutch retail investors to invest with impact.”<sup>231</sup>

218 Morgan Stanley. (2015). The \$30 trillion challenge. Retrieved from: <http://www.morganstanley.com/ideas/30-trillion-challenge>

219 RBC Social Finance Initiative. (2016). A growing appetite for impact investing: what wealth advisors need to know. Retrieved from: [http://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/\\_assets-custom/pdf/2016-Appetite%20for%20Impact\\_Handout.pdf](http://www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/_assets-custom/pdf/2016-Appetite%20for%20Impact_Handout.pdf)

220 King, G. (2016). Wealth managers take on the “connected generation.” Factset. Retrieved from: <https://insight.factset.com/wealth-managers-take-on-the-connected-generation>

221 Investor Economics. (2017). Investor Economics Household balance sheet report. Retrieved from: <http://investoreconomics.com/issue/household-balance-sheet-report-3>

222 Morgan Stanley. (2015). Morgan Stanley survey finds sustainable investing poised for growth. Retrieved from: [https://www.morganstanley.com/press-releases/morgan-stanley-survey-finds-sustainable-investing-poised-for-growth\\_06490ef0-a8b2-4a68-8864-64261a4decd0](https://www.morganstanley.com/press-releases/morgan-stanley-survey-finds-sustainable-investing-poised-for-growth_06490ef0-a8b2-4a68-8864-64261a4decd0)

223 NEI Investments. (2018). NEI Environmental Leaders Fund Performance: July 31, 2018 (F Series)I. Retrieved from: <https://www.neiinvestments.com/pages/landing/environmental-leaders/>

224 BMO. (2017). BMO Women in Leadership Fund. Retrieved from: [https://www.bmo.com/assets/pdfs/gam/a-mrfr/en/A\\_MRFP\\_912\\_EN.pdf](https://www.bmo.com/assets/pdfs/gam/a-mrfr/en/A_MRFP_912_EN.pdf)

225 Open Impact. (n.d.). Products - Full data table. Retrieved from: <http://www.openimpact.ca/products-table-view/>

226 Responsible Investment Association. (2016). Millennials, women and the future of responsible investment. Retrieved from: <https://www.riacanada.ca/millennials-women/>

227 AON. (2018). Global perspectives on responsible investing. Retrieved from: <http://www.aon.com/getmedia/8bd5172a-ab8b-4aee-aadc-10b59aba426a/Global-Perspectives-On-Responsible-Investing.aspx>

228 Responsible Investment Association. (2017). 2017 RIA investor opinion survey. Retrieved from: <https://www.riacanada.ca/investor-opinion-survey/>

229 Responsible Investment Association. (2016). Millennials, women and the future of responsible investment. Retrieved from: <https://www.riacanada.ca/millennials-women/>

230 Rust, S. (2016). HSBC UK pension scheme adopts climate ‘tilted’ fund as DC default. IPE. Retrieved from: <https://www.ipe.com/news/esg/hsbc-uk-pension-scheme-adopts-climate-tilted-fund-as-dc-default/10016045.fullarticle>

231 Dutch SDG Investing Initiative. (2016). Building highways to SDG investing: Invitation to collaborate on a Dutch sustainable development investing agenda. Retrieved from: <https://www.sdgi-nl.org/report/>

But the greatest power that retail investors have is to demand more ethical investment options from their money managers and other financial professionals. Either these institutions begin to adapt to changing consumer demands, or investors should be willing to move over to the expanding range of alternative investment options such as ESG-themed exchange-traded funds (ETFs) or a variety of other products developed by Canada's promising financial technology (fintech) scene.<sup>232</sup>

Deloitte calculates that over \$183 million was invested in fintech by Canada in 2016, with companies like CoPower specifically targeting underserved impact investing market demand. Websites like Open Impact, jointly run by Purpose Capital and The Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, provide a useful catalogue of available impact investing products.<sup>233</sup>

## Stimulating innovation

Innovation is a story of humanity – a story that can be defined as frustration mastered by creativity and imagination. When applied to the SDGs, the creative capacity of communities is the catalyst to positively disrupt a status quo that has not benefited all equally. Despite the common conception of innovation as largely technology-based, it can take many other forms, including scientific, social and civil innovation. It may refer to new products, services, processes, policies and types of organizations that address challenges more effectively than previous solutions.

We need innovation because current approaches are not sufficient to achieve the SDGs and this sense of urgency requires us to think and act in new and different ways. Such circumstances, however, do not require a complete reinvention of the wheel. Innovations can often be achieved by removing institutional barriers to realize existing skills and knowledge – particularly when it comes to customary practice and traditional knowledge and values.

Communities are rich sources of innovative solutions and their strengths, assets, knowledge and wisdom can be leveraged toward large-scale systems change. Innovation emerges from the communities and partnerships described throughout this Blueprint, and relies on various forms of accountability.

Every community is unique, but the deep principles that enable a community to innovate in its own way are often common. Innovation emerges out of situations desperate for some form of disruption, where the urgency of persistent challenges stimulates the process of creativity. Furthermore, communities may feel the latent frustration of not being able to do business as usual, or those groups that are disparately impacted by such 'business as usual' activities may seek to develop their own solutions to mitigate these impacts.

## Barriers, gaps, and principles for successful innovation

There are prominent challenges and obstacles to innovation in service of the SDGs. One of the biggest barriers is society's current overemphasis on 'heropreneurship,' or the myth of one person being able to change the world. The reasons for a lack of domestic progress on many of the SDGs has to do with a series of structural breakdowns that often require a systems approach to effectively address.

Another issue relates to the predominantly urban lens taken to discussions around stimulating innovation. Rural Canada employs 4.9 million Canadians and generates 30 per cent of the national GDP, according to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. It faces a series of unique challenges and opportunities, beginning with the acute crisis of poor rural broadband connection.<sup>234</sup> Thriving rural communities are needed to reach Agenda 2030, which involves nurturing rural creativity already on display.

Taking rural innovation seriously "means supporting and marketing the advancements and opportunities presented by agricultural technology, finding ways to support existing institutions and soft civic infrastructure in extending their reach through technology and youth engagement, and overcoming rural transportation hurdles," wrote award-winning rural innovator Ashleigh Weeden in a 2016 commentary.<sup>235</sup>

Other major obstacles include strong risk aversion and resistance to failure, legal and regulatory barriers, siloed structures and thinking, a dearth of data and evidence, lack of supports for innovation, scoping SDG-related innovation and leveraging technology for positive change. Leveraging government funds should be possible for potentially risky endeavors, despite government traditionally being risk-averse.

232 Pozadzki, A. (2016). Fintech firms try to appeal to millennials' sense of social responsibility. The Globe and Mail. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/globe-investor/personal-finance/genymoney/fintech-firms-try-to-appeal-to-millennials-sense-of-social-responsibility/article30912833/>

233 Open Impact. (n.d.) Homepage. Retrieved from: <http://www.openimpact.ca/>

234 Federation of Canadian Municipalities. (2018). Size of a non-metro economy. Retrieved from: <https://fcm.ca/home/issues/rural/rural-report-fact-sheets/size-of-non-metro-economy.htm>

235 Weeden, A. (2016). How Canada's rural communities can become innovation hubs. The Torontoist. Retrieved from: <https://torontoist.com/2016/10/how-canadas-rural-communities-can-become-innovation-hubs/>



## What is the cycle of innovation and what are the enabling conditions at each stage?

- **Alignment:** Communication, partnership, shared ownership, diversity of actors, trust
- **Lab (higher risk):** Access to existing knowledge and research, clear consensus of problem, space for failure, representative sample of people engaged in solution who are engaged in problem, access to right people and talent, open sourcing tools, transparency
- **Pilot (lower risk):** Consultation and collaboration in the current context, seeing it through, funding and resources, good baseline and evaluation mechanism, despite success or failure, extraction of learning, strong relationships with external partners, clear data capture for real time feedback
- **Programming – scaling up, out, deep:** Data, evidence and knowledge (from pilot), support and maintenance over time, transparency
- **Replication:** Cross-Sector fertilization, agility, framework, adapting based on context

Some early conditions for successful SDG-driven innovation:

- **Strengths-based:** No community is the same, and each offers their own unique characteristics. Strategies for enabling, capturing and propelling innovation should stem from the community itself, through inclusive engagement.
- **Co-creation:** The empowerment of diverse and fully representative stakeholders is necessary for success.
- **Evidence-based discovery:** Innovation is not about re-inventing the wheel. It should seek to leverage the wealth of existing knowledge and evidence (historical, traditional and empirical) around what works, through data capture, analysis, and the sharing of best practices across sectors and communities.
- **Supported experimentation:** Innovation requires that individuals, organizations, and ecosystems have the supports and knowledge they need in order to ideate, test and learn from their experiments in creating solutions. ‘Success’ should have a focus on what kind of value we can extract from experiential learning, outside of a narrow ‘pass or fail’ framework.
- **Holistic integration:** Innovation on the SDGs requires integration across scales, systems, services and facilities, sectors, and social relations and behaviours.<sup>236</sup> Holistic approaches in communities may involve new forms of finance, business models and partnership that need to be supported by integrated governance models.



236 UN SDSN. (2016). Chapter 3: Enabling conditions for sustainable development. In SDG Cities Guide. Retrieved from: <https://sdgcities.guide/chapter-3-enabling-conditions-for-sustainable-development-861a7bad0df0>

3

GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING

Solution Spotlight:

## Arctic Indigenous Wellness Project (AIWF)

The AIWF describes itself as “a self-determined traditional wellness initiative with the mandate of culturally reviving traditional and Indigenous-based healing services and practices in the north.”<sup>237</sup>

One of AIWF’s new projects, launched in April 2018 in the Northwest Territories, is an urban land-based healing program targeted at homeless Indigenous men and women at risk of suicide and/or incarceration. Over 90 per cent of the homeless population in the Northwest Territories is Indigenous.

The combination of Indigenous cultural education with traditional therapeutic interventions in a wilderness urban setting is designed with the goal of improving mental health

outcomes of at-risk Inuit, First Nation and Métis peoples through “collaborative, culture-specific, community supported programs.”<sup>238</sup>

### Enabling conditions:

- **Funding:** Received \$1 million from Arctic Inspiration Prize (private funding)
- **Community identified need:** A lack of culturally appropriate services for half of the Northwest Territories population
- **Motivation:** Improving health outcomes, expanding Indigenous cultural education

7

AFFORDABLE AND  
CLEAN ENERGY

Solution Spotlight:

## CoPower

CoPower is a Canadian investment platform that allows retail investors to finance specific clean energy and energy efficiency projects. Founded in 2013, The company’s mission is “to unlock capital for climate solutions by empowering individuals to participate in – and profit from – the low carbon transition.”<sup>239</sup>

The company is working to fill two main gaps in the marketplace. Community-scale clean energy projects in Canada have consistently struggled to secure enough financing from major banks and other financial institutions to pay for upfront costs due to the small project sizes, despite these projects often offering competitive rates of return.

At the same time, retail investors have had trouble finding enough opportunities to fund smaller impact investing projects that match their values. CoPower decided to begin selling five-year green bonds that offer a five per cent rate of return, essentially setting up a system to crowdfund each carefully-vetted project. This was helped by rapidly improving financial technology that allowed the company to largely operate online.

The company’s biggest breakthrough came in 2016, when several provincial securities regulators adopted a rule change allowing for a broader group of investors to participate in the exempt market. This authorized the company to begin offering its product to retail investors online, with the company issuing its first public green bonds shortly thereafter.

### Enabling conditions:

- **Funding:** Equity financing, retail green bonds.
- **Community identified need:** Addressing a funding gap for small-scale clean energy and energy retrofit projects, while also offering community-level impact investing opportunities for retail investors.
- **Regulatory changes:** Several provinces began allowing ordinary non-accredited investors to make direct investments online in private projects beginning in 2016, provided certain conditions were met.
- **Motivation:** Democratizing clean energy, energy retrofits and impact investing while making a profit.

237 Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation. (n.d.). Homepage. Retrieved from: <https://arcticindigenousewellness.org>

238 Arctic Inspiration Prize. (2017). 2017 Finalists. Retrieved from: <https://www.arcticinspirationprize.ca/finalists/2017finalists.php>

239 CoPower. (2018). FAQs. Retrieved from: <https://copower.me/en/faq>

# CALL TO COLLABORATE

At the time of publication, less than 12 years remain to achieve the Agenda 2030 targets, necessitating immediate action. It will not be possible to complete this task without unprecedented levels of cross-sectoral collaboration. Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi) has already brought together a multidisciplinary and multigenerational group of stakeholders, experts and advisors to develop an actionable framework for addressing this from a grassroots, community-driven perspective.

The conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the Generation SDG Summit are laid out in this Blueprint. WGSi is now embarking on a prolonged period of deeper studies of relevant literature and current practices, strategic implementation, network creation and other support activities.

One enabling condition highlighted by all Generation SDG Summit contributors was the need to create safe spaces for risk-taking and failure. Opportunities to test-drive solutions may make adopting much-needed innovative transformations an easier task. Also mentioned was developing approaches to, or criteria for identifying the 'do-ers' – people who can turn SDG-related ideas into action – and what they need to be successful.

While this Blueprint is not designed as a toolkit, we hope that many of the resources laid out here will help communities to orient themselves and begin determining their own path forward towards community SDG planning and partnership.

Community-driven approaches to the SDGs requires diverse collaboration across society. We are aware that in any grand challenge scenario, many efforts are unknowingly duplicated and valuable ideas can become isolated in the silos of disciplines. This is why we welcome further input to the current and future phases of our Generation SDG initiative. Various solutions spotlights and examples laid out in this Blueprint are provided as a catalyst to further innovation and networking.

This is only the beginning of our efforts to facilitate creative and effective partnerships with the rich ecosystem of actors mobilizing around the SDGs in Canada. We are actively seeking new organizations and individuals with whom we can collaborate to identify and implement the political, legal, technological, educational and other changes necessary for achievement of the SDGs. We look forward to hearing from you.



# APPENDIX A: PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES

OECD Successful Partnerships Guide

<http://www.oecd.org/regional/leed/36279186.pdf>

Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation's The Theory of Change

[http://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SCM11\\_ToC.pdf](http://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SCM11_ToC.pdf)

Collective Impact Readiness Assessment Tool

[https://collectiveimpactforum.org/sites/default/files/CI\\_Readiness\\_Assessment\\_Jan\\_7\\_2014.pdf](https://collectiveimpactforum.org/sites/default/files/CI_Readiness_Assessment_Jan_7_2014.pdf)

Sparc BC Partnership Toolkit

<http://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/the-partnership-toolkit.pdf>

NBCCEDP Partnership Development Toolkit - Engaging, Building, Expanding

[https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/pdf/toolkit/NBCCEDP_Toolkit.pdf)

Construction Research to Practice [r2p] Partnership Toolkit

<https://www.cpwr.com/sites/default/files/Complete%20r2p%20Partnership%20Toolkit%202-10-15.pdf>

Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research's Partnership Assessment Toolkit

[http://www.ccghr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/PAT\\_web\\_e.pdf](http://www.ccghr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/PAT_web_e.pdf)

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnerships Toolkit

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au\\_sujet/partnerships-partenariats/toolkit-trouse\\_d-information-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/partnerships-partenariats/toolkit-trouse_d-information-eng.aspx)

Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Stronger Together:

A Toolkit for First Nations-Municipal Community Economic Development Partnerships

[https://fcm.ca/Documents/reports/CEDI/cedi\\_toolkit\\_EN.pdf](https://fcm.ca/Documents/reports/CEDI/cedi_toolkit_EN.pdf)

Clear Impact's Collective Impact Toolkit

<https://clearimpact.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Collective-Impact-Toolkit-Clear-Impact.pdf>

# GENERATION SDG SUMMIT CONTRIBUTORS



**Taiwo Afolabi**

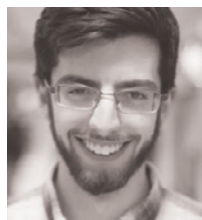
*PhD Candidate, University of Victoria*

Taiwo Afolabi is a PhD candidate, practitioner-researcher and an artist at the University of Victoria where he engages his artistic practice for social change. He is the founder of The Onion Theatre Project, an arts-

based organization that educates and creates positive social change while empowering local partners as collaborators in development processes. He facilitates safe and positive spaces through the use of arts-based methods for conversation on a variety of social justice issues.

“The lack of political will to invest in people specific understanding of what development means among different nations and communities in the country is the most challenging aspect of achieving development in Canada,” says Taiwo. “While the SDGs are laudable and well intentioned, it is important to foster a people-led approach in its definition and actualization. There has to be a truthful and honest relationship between the people and the government so that the SDGs can be achieved in Canada.”

As a Nigerian that grew up among many social injustices, Taiwo constantly questioned the idea of top-down development approaches. In his own work he has searched for ways to effectively engage communities. “I am excited that my work across different countries has been community focused,” he says. “In every project, I seek to encourage and empower my collaborators – individually and collectively.” In his downtime, he writes poetry, plays piano, drums and spends quality time with his family.



**John Joseph Alho**

*President, Net Zero Decathlon Team, University of Calgary*

John Joseph Alho is an undergraduate student at the University of Calgary where he serves as president of the Net Zero Decathlon Team. He is involved in bringing the SDGs to campus and

helped to organize the SDG Alliance Food Waste Week.

John has always been interested in conservation and protecting the environment. “As I grew older and started learning more about how people influence and are influenced by the environment, I became more interested in looking holistically at sustainable development,” he says. “Sustainable development will be essential not only to preserve the environment, but also to prevent humanitarian crises and social conflict.”

One of John’s biggest concerns about the successful implementation of the SDGs are the widespread effects of climate change. “Many Canadians are employed by the automobile and oil and gas industries,” he says. “These jobs are at risk due to the increasing pressures of automation and climate change. We will have to find new employment opportunities for these workers and their families.” John spends his spare time exploring new places and journeying into nature.





### Nalini Andrade

*Manager, International Development Institute, Humber College*

Nalini Andrade is an international development professional with over ten years of experience working in non-profits, public and post-secondary education settings in North America,

East Africa and South Asia. As manager of the International Development Institute at Humber College, Nalini is responsible for developing international collaborations and projects, and engaging faculty, staff and students in international development initiatives.

She is passionate about advancing the SDGs on campus and through her international work. Nalini obtained her masters in Social Policy and Development from the London School of Economics. She also holds a bachelors in Social Work and a diploma in Human Rights Law. Nalini is motivated by witnessing and being a part of the SDG movement that is growing everyday across Canada. She was previously part of an award-winning SDG team at the University of Calgary that co-hosted Together 2017, the first large pan-Canadian meeting on the SDGs.

“In order to move forward on the SDGs,” says Nalini, “we must address the marginalization and inequalities faced by Indigenous peoples, linking local to global, and realizing that advancing the SDGs begins at home.” Participatory development, stakeholder engagement and social justice are the values that drive her work. For fun she enjoying crafting, walking her dog and travelling.



### Jon Beale

*Manager, Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada*

Jon Beale is the manager of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada (SDSN Canada), mobilizing Canadian scientific and technological expertise to facilitate

learning and accelerate problem-solving for sustainable development. The network links Canadian experts to global discussions on a universal agenda for sustainable development and supports action-oriented research helping Canada adopt and implement policies and practices that provide international leadership in sustainability.

He has built his career around bringing stakeholders from multiple perspectives together for effective discussion and collaboration. This includes working with subsistence farmers

in Zambia, Inuit and Métis fishermen in Labrador, provincial deputy ministers and other senior government staff, founders and executives of non-profits and start-up companies, academic leaders and national media outlets. He values collaboration between all types of stakeholders to create meaningful solutions, and uses his skills as a leader and facilitator to help create change in people’s lives and communities.

“Connecting with people from throughout the country on SDG initiatives is crucial, I am always looking for partnership and collaboration opportunities,” says Jon. Outside of work, he can be found visiting local craft breweries, playing ultimate frisbee, hiking and enjoying board games.



### Brielle Beaudin-Reimer

*Policy Analyst, Manitoba Metis Federation*

Brielle Beaudin-Reimer is a citizen of the Métis Nation, a policy analyst at the Manitoba Metis Federation, a Métis cultural advocate, as well as board member for the Bell Tower Community

Café and member of the Indigenous-led Committee for the Red River Regional Seed Library. “Through local and traditional food-related research, advocacy, and development of evidence-based policy and programs,” says Brielle, “I hope to advance sustainable development in Canada and advocate for the participation of the Métis Nation and Indigenous peoples in this important field.”

After volunteering abroad in a rural community in South Africa, Brielle realized that local knowledge was key to sustainable development. Her focus in development shifted to taking a more local approach – one within her own community, the greater Métis Nation and with other Indigenous Nations in Canada. Brielle went on to complete a masters in Indigenous Governance at the University of Winnipeg, conducting community-based research that focused on promoting Métis food sovereignty by privileging Métis traditional food systems and Métis harvesters’ food-related knowledge and perspectives in Manitoba.

Brielle, as a Métis citizen, consistently advocates for the inclusion of diverse Indigenous perspectives, partnerships and Indigenous knowledge systems as important components to achieving sustainable development in the current era of reconciliation in Canada. In her spare time, Brielle loves spending time with her family and friends, reading, walking and being outdoors.



**JP Bervoets**

*Vice President,  
Community Foundations of Canada*

JP Bervoets is vice president of Community Foundations of Canada, where he explores opportunities to connect the local leadership, knowledge and resources of Canada's

191 community foundations with national partners from the public and private sectors, civil society and academia.

"The SDGs present a unique opportunity to speak a common language across sectors," he says. "We can begin to explore the issues that matter most at home and abroad through this common framework." To JP, this presents an opportunity to build new relationships and partnerships. "I'm particularly excited about the pending launch of Alliance 2030, a new national network of organizations, institutions, and individuals committed to achieving the 17 SDGs."

JP sees inequity, and all of the ways it is present within and perpetuated by institutions, as one of the most significant barriers to meeting the SDGs in Canada. "Individuals and institutions must reflect, change, and act to shift how we understand and engage community, design programs, and measure impact," he says.

JP was inspired to work in sustainable development by his father, an artist and the founder of the youth-focused organization Art for AIDS International. His work is driven by a desire to support local leadership, and foster a culture of collaboration, learning and entrepreneurialism across sectors. For fun he likes to get out of the city and into nature.



**Margaret Biggs**

*Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy  
School of Policy Studies and Department  
of Political Studies, Queen's University*

*Chairperson, International Development  
Research Centre (IDRC)*

Margaret Biggs is Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy at Queen's University and Chairperson of the Board of Governors for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). From 2008–2013 she was President of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) responsible for overseeing Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance efforts worldwide. Previously, Margaret served as deputy secretary to the Cabinet and Assistant Secretary, Priorities and Planning, in the Privy Council Office. Margaret has represented Canada in numerous

international fora including on the Board of Governors of the World Bank and as international executive co-chair for the China Council on International Cooperation on Environment and Development. She is currently chair of the International Advisory Committee of UNU's Institute on Water, Environment and Health and Chair of the Board of Directors of World University Services Canada.

Margaret, with John W McArthur, co-led Towards 2030: Building Canada's Engagement on Global Sustainable Development (Centre for International Policy Studies) and in 2018, co-authored A Canadian North Star: Crafting an Advanced Economy Approach to the Sustainable Development Goals in the Brookings Institution volume From Summits to Solutions: Innovations in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (2018).



**Amy Brierley**

*Coordinator, Martha Justice Ministry*

Amy Brierley is the coordinator of the Martha Justice Ministry of the Sisters of St. Martha in Antigonish, NS. She helps to coordinate efforts for social and ecological justice with the Sisters and the communities with whom they

are connected. The Martha Justice Ministry aims to build relationships of solidarity with people and groups doing advocacy work around various issues, deeply rooted in an understanding of the interconnectedness and sacredness of Mother Earth and the importance of the need to "leave no one behind."

While attending St. Francis Xavier University, Amy began organizing around the food justice movement. As an OceanPath Fellow, she supported an initiative that was working to develop a regional food hub in Antigonish.

She is particularly interested in the role that food plays in our individual lives and communities, and believes that in fostering creative, ecological and community-minded food systems, we lay the foundation for a more sustainable, just and vibrant future. "In having had the chance to work with women religious over the past year," she says, "I hope that I may be able to contribute some of my learnings as a 'non-religious' person who, over the past year, has had the opportunity to discover some of the beauty of understandings of sustainability and social justice through a lens of faith and spirituality."

Most of Amy's time is spent in her community, drawing positive energy from loving, thoughtful relationships with friends and family. She is actively involved in a Taekwondo club, both participating in and teaching classes several nights a week.



### Artemis Caine

*MSc Student, University of Edinburgh*

Artemis Caine is currently pursuing a masters in Biodiversity, Wildlife and Ecosystems Health at the University of Edinburgh. They were previously employed as the administrative and research assistant to the director

of the Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre at the University of Waterloo where they learned and used Indigenous research methodologies, philosophies and protocol.

Growing up with local wildlife fostered a strong connection and respect for living beings which developed throughout their childhood in rural Manitoba. “I believe that Canada faces many more hurdles to sustainable development than it is fully willing to admit,” says Artemis. “Not only is Canada a country that exploits the land, but it also has an ongoing history of exploiting the people of the land. In order for Canada to truly meet Agenda 2030, it first needs to be able to sit in the truth of what it has done and is still doing.”

They then quote Jane Goodall, “You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” Artemis’ current side project is growing a mealworm farm to break down Styrofoam. Outside of that, they spend their spare time with their pets, reading and playing video games.



### Te Chen

*Program Officer, Vanke Foundation*

Te Chen is a program officer at the Vanke Foundation in China, working to fund projects that change public perceptions around waste and build more sustainable communities. He previously conducted research at the University

of Toronto and founded QUAN Research, using holistic design methods to explore the severity of the global waste problem and the lack of systemic understanding of the waste system.

“Canada is highly dependant on imports from other countries, and its per capita consumption rate is among highest around the globe,” says Te. “My goal is to better understand what we waste, why we waste and how we can waste less.”

Growing up in Beijing and a little farming village in Henan, Te has noticed and experienced how China has been developing over the last 20 years. “It is incredible to go through this period of extreme creation and destruction,” he says. “I want to connect everyday experience in Canada with China’s transformation through the lens of waste.”



### Amelia Clarke

*Associate Professor, Associate Dean of Research and the Director of Master of Environment & Business (MEB) Program, University of Waterloo*

Amelia Clarke is an associate professor and the director of the MEB program at the University of Waterloo. She is also

the associate dean of research for the Faculty of Environment. Her research focuses on, among other areas, community sustainable development strategies, campus environmental management and youth-led social change.

Amelia has been working on sustainability issues since 1989. “I always had an interest in stakeholder engagement, especially youth engagement,” she explains, “I started to see solutions through campus environmental management, then sustainable cities, then sustainable business. Now I focus on cross-sector partnerships.” Amelia is the founder of the Sierra Youth Coalition, and launched its Sustainable Campus Project which ultimately supported the institutionalization of sustainability policies and positions on more than 80 Canadian campuses. More recently, she has been building and overseeing the MEB program. “Our students and alumni, an impressive network of about 170 sustainability professionals, are leveraging their expertise for sustainability progress,” she says.

Amelia notes reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, precarious employment (especially for newcomers), multi-level governance, coordination of cross-sector collective action, protecting biodiversity, creating a circular, low carbon economy, and climate change mitigation and adaptation as particular Canadian challenges to achieving the SDGs. Youth-led innovation and youth engagement are also critical for SDG implementation.

She finds motivation in staying solutions-oriented. “We have to celebrate the successes,” says Amelia. For fun she spends time sailing, snowboarding, hiking and swimming, and goes on adventures with her family.



**Rumina Dhalla**

*Associate Professor and CSR Coordinator,  
University of Guelph*

Rumina Dhalla is an associate professor at the College of Business and Economics (CBE) at the University of Guelph, as well as CBE's corporate social responsibility coordinator.

She is also the project lead for Guelph East Africa initiative, a multinational cross-disciplinary initiative led by the University of Guelph. Prior to embarking on her academic career, she accumulated over 20 years of industry experience, much of it in the Canadian banking industry. Her current research explores sustainability and sustainability certification in the wine industry, multi-stakeholder collaborations and the implications of social enterprise on food security.

She is proud of her involvement in the design and launch of the MBA in Sustainable Commerce offered by CBE.

"Our college is committed to being a leader for a sustainable world, and our MBA Sustainable Commerce attracts faculty and students with a social conscience, an environmental sensibility and a commitment to community involvement," says Rumina.

"Canada needs to find a more effective approach to link scholarly research, business education and business to the SDGs," says Rumina. "To brand Canada as leader on Agenda 2030, the challenges and opportunities presented by SDGs have to be made mainstream through education, cross disciplinary research and multi stakeholder collaborations that include academia, governments, industry, NGOs and communities. We also need incentives encourage business engagement in SDGs on a global scale."

Rumina's personal goals and intrinsic drive keep her motivated along with teaching (she received a teaching award from MBA students in 2017), research and her collegial network. Equity, inclusion, persistence and collaboration are at the heart of her work.



**Alia Dharssi**

*Freelance Journalist*

Alia Dharssi is a freelance journalist, editor and researcher based in Vancouver. Her writing and investigations on sustainability, global development, human rights and immigration have been published by a range of media

outlets, including the Guardian, Al Jazeera, the National Post, the Financial Post and Reuters.

She previously covered sustainable development for The Discourse, where she launched a newsletter on sustainable development in Canada, investigated Canada's policies on plastic pollution and worked on a toolkit to help improve the media's coverage of refugees. Alia earned a masters in Development Studies from the University of Oxford before launching her journalism career as a Global Journalism Fellow at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto in 2013.

As the 2016 Michelle Lang Fellow at the Calgary Herald and the National Post, she spent a year producing an investigative series on immigration policy and the Canadian economy. She has also worked on projects to improve urban policies in India as a William J. Clinton Fellow at the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy in Bangalore.



**Liliana Diaz**

*Training and Research Coordinator,  
Université Laval*

Liliana Diaz is a training and research coordinator at the Université Laval, designing and coordinating training courses on sustainability and research in international development, civil

society, international governance and public policy.

Since the end of her bachelor's degree in Law and Philosophy in her native Colombia, Liliana has been interested in emerging environmental standards and in particular the challenges of taking into account the diversity of issues, actors and disciplines involved. Her master's and doctoral studies in Development Studies at the Graduate Institute of International Studies and Development in Switzerland led her to delve deeper into international environmental policies and the role of Latin American environmental movements, particularly in Bolivia, Peru and Colombia.

“I want to motivate a Canadian population that is often quick to dismiss sustainable development as more of an issue in the developing world,” she says. Liliana enjoys playing guitar and going to the movies to relax in her spare time.



**MacKenzie Downing**  
*Research Analyst,  
 Department of Tourism and Culture,  
 Government of Yukon*  
*Co-chair, Northern Council  
 for Global Cooperation*

MacKenzie Downing is a research analyst at the Yukon Government’s Department of Tourism and Culture. She is also the co-chair of the Northern Council for Global Cooperation, a network of individuals, organizations and institutions based in Canada’s three Northern Territories who are committed to achieving a just and sustainable world.

A former member of the Canadian National Swim Team and butterfly stroke specialist, MacKenzie went on to completed her masters in Osteoarchaeology from the University of Edinburgh before joining the MacBride Museum of Yukon History as a collections technician and then communications and marketing coordinator. She has also volunteered at a women’s group that provides an opportunity to share, learn and be vulnerable together.

Passionate about leaving a more sustainable world in place for future generations, MacKenzie brings a Northern perspective and a tourism perspective to discussions of sustainable development in Canada. Yoga, dog training and reading are some of her favourite pursuits outside of the office.



**Dolapo Fadare**  
*Fellow, Cansbridge Fellowship*

Dolapo Fadare is a Cansbridge Fellow and student at the University of Saskatchewan studying Economics and Entrepreneurship. She also volunteers with organizations that assist newcomers in making

a successful transition to their lives in Canada.

At the Summit, Dolapo provided her versatile perspective on what sustainable development means for minority groups in Canada. “At 14, I had the opportunity to volunteer in Kenya,” she says, “As a person that identifies as African-Canadian,

this was a pivotal point in my life. I realized that I wanted to live a life where I can continually give back to my community.”

She wants to explore how technological tools can be leveraged to better meet the SDGs. “Future generations might be able to make policy decisions informed by artificial intelligence,” says Dolapo. “Today there are limitations to scientific approaches to measuring sustainable development.”

Dolapo stays motivated by reflecting on her parents and the privilege she has been afforded to pursue her interests. “I also think of all the great African ancestors that have come before me and realize that their DNA is a part of who I am,” she says. “Doing so reminds me that I possess the potential to accomplish any feat that I set my mind to.” For fun, she loves to dance to Afrobeat music and learn other African dances, write poems and read all kinds of books.



**Karen Farbridge**  
*President and Urban Connector,  
 Karen Farbridge & Associates*

Karen Farbridge is president and urban connector of Karen Farbridge & Associates, where she works with business, governments and organizations to build healthy and prosperous communities.

Karen is inspired by the work of people in her community and their ongoing persistence to make a difference. “I am proud of having provided opportunities for my community to engage in local decision making,” she says, “because, when given a voice, they always choose a sustainable path despite the tenacity of the status quo and harshness of the critics that come to its defense.”

She recognizes that sustainability is enormously disruptive to business as usual. Effective leadership for sustainability, in Karen’s view, must engage people in a way that helps them see the connection between their daily lives and global issues like poverty, hunger and climate change. “The solutions to these issues are beyond the direct control or influence any single sector or jurisdiction, and are best addressed where people live, work and play: our communities,” she says.

Karen hopes to communicate and hold a vision of a sustainable future that respects and engages the unique and indispensable roles of both the system and incremental thinkers that make up our communities as both of these perspectives are needed for success. In her downtime, she enjoys exploring new cultures through travel, cooking and literature.



**Terralynn Forsyth**

*Researcher and Policy Analyst, Employment and Social Development Canada*

*Research Lead, Audacious Futures*

Terralynn Forsyth is a researcher and policy analyst with a background in Economics and International

Relations working in predictive analytics and social policy at Employment and Social Development Canada. Her research interests centre on technology's impact on the changing nature of work, the social impacts for vulnerable populations and complexity economics, while advocating for "anti-disciplinary" approaches to problem solving.

She also serves as research lead for Audacious Futures, a global launch pad for bold innovation, focused on venture projects looking at the future of work, education and the intersections of technology and humanity. She currently wears multiple hats in building out AudaciousYou, an AI-powered, future of work startup and "Top 25 Innovations" selected by the U.S. Department of Education that enables workers to discover and develop future-proof skills for the changing nature of work and connect with leading employers.

Terralynn is particularly interested in enabling labour programs and education transition from industrial form to accessible and intelligent platform models. "I am also passionate about seeing our exponential technology serve the needs of humanity, extend opportunity for positive social impact and enable a more developed collective intelligence," says Terralynn. "I believe that AI, specifically, serves as a game changer in terms of general purpose technologies and presents vast opportunities for sustainable development."



**Sophie Gallais**

*Communications Officer, Institut EDS, Université Laval*

Sophie Gallais is a communications officer for the Hydro-Québec Institute for Environment, Development and Society (Institut EDS) at Université Laval. Institut EDS contributes to

knowledge sharing and dialogue on sustainable development issues in university research and teaching through the EDS Forum, summer schools, and other events and initiatives.

Sophie was drawn to sustainable development through her interest in environmental protection, her studies in Biology

and previous work in an environmental non-governmental organization focused on conservation. "I'm proud to have been involved in successful efforts to protect Anticosti Island in Quebec, and look forward to seeing it on the World Heritage List in the near future," she says.

Hope of a better future keeps Sophie motivated. "Though Canada is a very large country with many cultural and socio-economical differences, through collaboration, communication and engagement we can increase awareness of sustainable development and improve well-being for all," she says. For fun, Sophie likes to meet with friends over a good selection of board games.



**Kimberly Gibbons**

*Executive Director, Ontario Council for International Cooperation*

Kimberly Gibbons is the executive director of the Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC), an expanding community of Ontario-based members working globally for social

justice. She is particularly proud of OCIC's Transformations initiative, an award-winning collaborative photojournalism project intended to increase dialogue and further understanding of international partnerships that address complex global challenges.

Kim is passionate about supporting capacity building and the enabling environment for civil society, and mobilizing Canadians on issues of sustainable development. Breaking down silos and making links between domestic and global priorities are a particular challenge for Canada to achieve the SDGs, as well as mobilizing adequate financing and inspiring necessary political will.

Kim was drawn to social change work through exposure to other cultures and social issues as a child. She has worked in disability inclusion and development education, areas that strengthened her belief in social justice, human dignity and participation for all. "Staying grounded as a mother, community member, professional and as an ally keeps me motivated," she says. "We have to work in solidarity and partnership with others." In her downtime, Kim seeks the perspectives of kids under 10, connects with friends and supports the development of a new community garden in her neighbourhood park.



**Ana F. Gonzalez Guerrero**  
Co-founder and Managing Director,  
Youth Climate Lab

Project Officer, Innovation Funds,  
Federation of Canadian Municipalities

Ana F. Gonzalez Guerrero is the co-founder and managing director at Youth

Climate Lab, a youth-for-youth organization dedicated to supporting and creating innovative projects for climate action. Ana also works as the innovation funds officer for the Partners for Municipal Innovation in Local Economic Development program at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, where she manages a fund for small-scale grants in seven countries to support inclusive economic development.

“I grew up in the coastal city of Cancún, Mexico where I saw first-hand some of the impacts of rising sea levels and climate change,” she says. “Seeing how climate change disproportionately impacts people depending on their social and economic circumstances has been a motivator to work towards a more just climate future.”

She wants to work towards a world where people and countries take responsibility for their environment-degrading actions and support those that are most affected by the consequences. She thinks that a good place to start making progress on these issues is at the local level in Canada. “Canada is a huge, diverse country, and each community has its own needs and priorities,” says Ana. “One-size-fits-all approaches won’t work.”

Ana stays motivated by surrounding herself with people who inspire her. “They are always a good reminder that if we work on this together, change can happen,” she says. For fun she enjoys doing yoga, reading and swimming.



**Uytae Lee**  
Founder/Director, About Here  
Founder, PLANifax

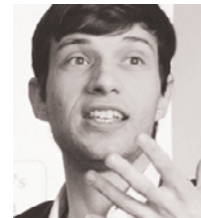
Uytae Lee is the founder and director of About Here, a Vancouver-based non-profit dedicated to making videos that engage the public on urban planning issues in Canada. He previously founded

PLANifax, a non-profit that began in Halifax, NS to empower citizens by making local issues exciting and accessible through video.

First introduced to the concept of sustainable development at Dalhousie University where he graduated with a double major in Sustainability and Community Design, Uytae later came across many specific issues of sustainable development, especially in the urban context, through his videography work covering topics including runoff from lawns causing weeds to grow out of control in local lakes in Dartmouth, NS and political challenges to establishing a nature reserve in Halifax, NS.

He sees communication and education as a hurdle to sustainable development. “Policy writers, advocacy groups and decision makers may have an acute understanding of the issues they are working on but, if the larger public is unaware of these issues, they run into resistance, or worse, apathy,” he says. “I think a particular challenge to Canada as it implements the SDGs is finding sustainability in its resource extraction based economy.”

Uytae values transparency, accessibility, objectiveness, nuance and humour. In his downtime he rock climbs and play songs on his ukulele.



**Francis Marleau Donais**  
PhD Candidate, Université Laval

Francis Marleau Donais is a PhD candidate in Land Management and Regional Planning at the Université Laval, specializing in sustainable transportation and multi-criteria decision aiding. As part of his PhD,

he is currently post-project tracking the Quebec City Complete Streets’ strategy (known locally as Stratégie de rues conviviales) to better understand the various perspectives and interactions that actors involved have with the strategy.

“What first drew me to work in sustainable development,” explains Francis, “is my desire to break up professional silos (engineering, planning, environment, etc.) in the field of both transportation and other fields, to improve project qualities and incorporate more principles of sustainability.” Francis is driven by his insatiable curiosity and capacity of be perpetually impressed by new concepts and ideas, an approach he plans on bringing to the Summit as well.

To have fun, Francis is known to organize dinners with friends and family that feature much debate and laughter around the table.



**Shelagh McCartney**

*Assistant Professor, Ryerson University  
Director, +city lab  
Director, +together design lab*

Shelagh McCartney is an architect, urban designer and urban and regional planner. She teaches at Ryerson University in the School of Urban

and Regional Planning and is the director of +city lab and the together design lab. Through the together design lab, she works in partnership with First Nations communities in Northern Ontario to improve housing and advocate for changing the metrics of housing. “For too long, top down approaches have removed the agency of First Nations to create their own dwelling spaces,” says Shelagh, “We aim to bring change to housing by working together and bringing wellness through housing to First Nations communities.”

She is currently partnering with Eabametoong First Nation and Nibinamik First Nation to better their housing by constructing new housing units with extensive community consultation and to initiate an innovative community process to housing policy creation. Further partnerships with Nishnabe Aski Nation, Windigo First Nations Council and Matawa First Nation Management will expand this housing policy process to more communities. “My partners are my motivation,” says Shelagh, “Real people with real lives, who are seeing community members suffer and struggle because of social problems caused by poor and culturally inappropriate housing.”

Proud that she has not taken the easy path but the right path, Shelagh finds escape in downhill skiing, canoeing, make pasta from scratch and swimming with her kids.



**Heather McPherson**

*Executive Director, Alberta Council  
for Global Cooperation*

Heather McPherson is the executive director of the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC), a coalition of over 70 voluntary sector organizations and individuals located in Alberta,

working locally and globally to achieve sustainable human development. ACGC builds capacity with the global education and international cooperation sector, networks people from with and without the sector, engages young people through

the formal education system and advocates for its members at the provincial, national and international level.

“The SDGs are a big part of ACGC’s work right now,” says Heather, “We hosted Together 2017: Collaboration, Innovation and the SDG Symposium in Calgary last year and are preparing for Together 2018 in November 2018. I want to continue to learn best practices and new ideas from others, and be part of the national conversation moving the SDGs forward in Canada and around the world.”

Heather is driven by respect, inclusiveness, equality, collaboration, sustainability and mutual learning. She stays motivated by doing new things. “Nothing kills my motivation like monotony or predictability,” explains Heather. Along with her partner, children and two giant dogs, she finds fun by taking full advantage of her proximity to mountains, forests and lakes. She’s happiest outside – preferably swimming.



**Emily Mills**

*Founder, How She Hustles*

Emily Mills is the founder of How She Hustles, a network that connects diverse women through social media and special events in Toronto. Since 2010, Emily has also served as a full-time senior communications professional

at the CBC. Last year, Emily was also named a CivicAction DiverseCity Fellow – one of 25 rising city leaders making an impact across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area – and was champion for female entrepreneurs through SheEO.

“I think the challenges presented by the SDGs are no different that any other major policy question in Canada,” says Emily. “How do you bring many perspectives and lived experiences to the table around these issues? How do you take big issues and make the solutions tangible? How do you cut through the clutter and invite people to become engaged, when there are so many pressing issues in the world?”

Above all else, Emily is driven by fitting authenticity, collaboration and equity into her work. In her spare time, Emily can be found exploring the city with her young sons and husband, holding family dance parties or building flashlight solar system simulations.





**Ron Misewace**  
*Housing Coordinator,  
Eabametoong First Nation*

Ron Misewace is the housing coordinator for Eabametoong First Nation (also known as Fort Hope), where he coordinates the development of housing projects to address the needs of community members. Overcrowding is an issue in his community of over 1,500 people in Northwestern Ontario.

Ron is driven by a deep commitment to his community and is exploring new strategies and partnerships to meet their needs. A partnership with the +together lab based out of Ryerson University has led to the construction of new housing units developed through extensive community consultation and the development of new community housing policies. “How will the SDGs assist my community in achieving their goals?” he asks. “Truly understanding the inherent needs of each group of people will be a challenge to achieving Agenda 2030.”

Ron is involved in Eabametoong First Nation’s thriving hockey program for remote youth. In his downtime you can find Ron singing and playing guitar for his grandchildren.



**Gabrielle Morrill**  
*Economic Development Officer,  
City of Iqaluit*

Gabrielle Morrill is an economic development officer for the City of Iqaluit. In this role she promotes economic development that benefits residents of the City of Iqaluit. This ranges from making it easier to start up a business, supporting partner organizations and governments in delivering and promoting their programs, advocating on behalf of the business community, and acting as a liaison between the business community and the municipal government. Gabby is also working on her thesis to receive a masters in Rural Development from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

An assets-based approach to development drives Gabby’s work. “This approach ensures that we focus on building up and capitalizing on community strengths to empower residents, rather than focusing on what we do not have,” she says. “Community-based research principles ensure that our local residents decide what they want done to benefit their community.”

“I do not believe that I have the privilege of being the voice for Nunavummiut or Inuit after only four years in the North,” she says, “I want to encourage Southern leaders and others working on the SDGs to seek them out, and be reminded that policies that may be good for the South could have disastrous socioeconomic impacts on Northerners.” Outside of work, Gabby likes to go out for walks on the land, go to the Iqaluit Aquatic Centre, read articles and discuss them with friends, and eat (preferably cheese) with her friends and family.



**Sara Muir-Owen**  
*UBC Project Manager, Pacific Institute  
for Climate Solutions*

Sara Muir Owen is a project manager at the University of British Columbia (UBC) for the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS). PICS supports multidisciplinary research on climate change solutions at B.C.’s four research intensive universities – University of Victoria, University of Northern British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and UBC.

Sara oversees the administration and management of PICS programs at UBC, including graduate student fellowships and internships, and faculty-led research. She also coordinates many climate change solutions seminars, panel sessions, events and outreach activities on campus and in Vancouver. In addition to her role with PICS, she works with the UBC Sustainability Initiative to advance sustainability at UBC and across the region.

A landscape architect by training and a registered planner by practice, Sara is driven by a desire for fairness, equity, justice and peace for a culturally rich world supported by a healthy environment. “I’m hoping to explore with cities across British Columbia the applicability of using the SDGs as a framework for local government planning and policy development,” says Sara. She is hopeful this will lead to the development of a standard set of targets and indicators for B.C. cities that tie into the SDGs.

Some of her favourite activities to do in and around the city include playing in the metro Vancouver women’s soccer league, long-distance running, ocean kayaking, and exploring the built and natural environment with her family.



**Afnan Naeem**

*Recent Graduate, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto*

Afnan Naeem is a recent graduate of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto, where she pursued her masters in Public Health. Her work aims to address

inequities and achieve health equity at both the community and systems levels, locally and globally. During her graduate studies she completed a practicum with the World Health Organization in Geneva, where she contributed to monitoring action on the social determinants of health – a tenet of the Rio Political Declaration.

She was also a research trainee with the Global Institute of Psychosocial, Palliative and End-of-Life Care in Toronto, exploring access to palliative care and its social, ethical and cultural components. Some other projects she has recently been involved with include work on refugee women’s health, ecological determinants of health, and advocacy around labour policy and decent working conditions.

Afnan feels a moral and ethical commitment to sustainable development and is driven by social justice, equity, critical thinking, empathy and interdisciplinarity. “I think we must translate the message of the SDGs,” says Afnan, “we must effectively engage with ordinary Canadians and in our own communities.” Seeking inspiration from her community, her parents, mentors, neighbours, and friends, Afnan is always willing to learn from others and partake in ally-ship with other communities and populations. In her downtime she enjoys outdoor activities, the arts, writing poetry and spending time with family.



**Robert Nolan**

*Chair, Happy City St. John’s*

Rob Nolan is the chair of Happy City St. John’s, a local non-profit focused on informing, encouraging and facilitating public dialogue around civic issues in the city of St. John’s. He is also an assistant registrar at Memorial University, where

he oversees enrollment and registration initiatives.

A province whose economy has traditionally relied upon volatile natural resources with the oldest and fastest-aging population in Canada, Newfoundland & Labrador is experiencing unique challenges in relation to sustainable development. Rob is interested in finding any workable solutions that can be developed at the community level.

“At Happy City St. John’s, we attempt to remain a neutral facilitator to provide a welcoming environment for community members to have an open dialogue toward finding creative solutions,” explains Rob. “I try to approach this with empathy and compassion, while aiming to support and empower community progress.” Rob brought his skills in consensus-building to the Summit, as well as representing a Newfoundland & Labrador perspective on sustainable development.



**Claire Reid**

*Director, Master’s in Development Practice: Indigenous Development, University of Winnipeg*

Claire Reid is the director of Master’s in Development Practice: Indigenous Development at the University of Winnipeg, a unique graduate

program whose vision is to reflect the depth and richness that Indigenous ways of knowing and experiences bring to sustainable development education.

Claire hopes to see a rights-based approach to the SDGs that will advance equality for Indigenous peoples in Canada and internationally. “The Canadian approach to the SDGs must reflect a nation-to-nation relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, says Claire. “Developing appropriate indicators that are reflective of Indigenous understandings of the goals is essential. The framework for understanding and implementing the SDGs must align with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).”



**Fraser Reilly-King**

*Research and Policy Manager, Canadian Council for International Co-operation*

Fraser is the research and policy manager at the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC). CCIC is Canada’s national coalition of civil society organizations working

globally to achieve sustainable human development. Fraser sits on Global Affairs Canada’s (GAC) Advisory Group on the implementation of GAC’s Civil Society Partnership Policy, has done analysis and presentations on GAC’s Feminist International Assistance Policy, and led the production of “Progressing National SDG Implementation,” the second in a series of independent assessments by civil society of the Voluntary National Reviews presented by governments in 2017 to the UN’s High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Prior to joining CCIC, Fraser worked for eight years at the Halifax Initiative Coalition, doing research and advocacy on international financial institutions and export credit agencies. In a volunteer capacity, he has sat on the boards of the Canary Research Institute on Mining, Environment and Health and UNIFEM Canada. He has a masters in Development Studies from the London School of Economics.

Having studied different SDG approaches from around the world, Fraser believes that Canada faces several unique challenges that it will need to tailor its approach around. “Undoing centuries of colonizing indigenous populations, and helping the public understand that everyone has something to gain in promoting a more sustainable approach to people and the planet,” says Fraser. He can be found running, road biking or hitting the road traveling with his family in his spare time.



#### Laura Schnurr

*Policy Analyst, McConnell Foundation*

Laura Schnurr is a policy analyst at the McConnell Foundation, where she supports the president and CEO with the foundation’s strategic priorities and with developing partnerships that will move the dial on entrenched social and environmental challenges. She is on a cross-sector assignment from the Social Innovation Division at Employment and Social Development Canada. She is also the co-author of *A United Nations Renaissance*, a new book on global governance and UN reform.

Through her work, Laura wants to leave the world in better shape than she found it. She stays motivated by surrounding herself with inspiring people and doing work she considers meaningful. She is proud of McConnell’s involvement with the federal government’s recently completed Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy. “Driving cross-sector collaboration to implement the SDGs is essential, particularly when it comes to innovative financing mechanisms, including blended finance and impact investing,” she says.

“Adapting the SDG framework to the Canadian context is challenging,” says Laura, “It offers an excellent starting point but we need nationally-relevant targets and indicators, disaggregated data and an integration of UNDRIP and TRC Calls to Action to adapt the goals to Canada’s reality.” Collaboration rooted in trust and respect and creative problem solving are the underlying values that drive Laura’s work. In her downtime she travels, does yoga, skis, reads and runs a social enterprise operating in Canada and Uganda.



#### Michael Simpson

*Executive Director, British Columbia Council for International Co-operation*

Michael Simpson is the executive director of the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC). Prior to working for BCCIC, Michael was the executive director of One Sky – The Canadian Institute for Sustainable Living. His work with One Sky varied from leading major bilateral projects in West Africa including Nigeria and Sierra Leone to working in Latin America on projects ranging from forest conservation to leadership development. Simpson was an active voice for Canadian civil society at international forums ranging from the World Summit on Sustainable Development to UN meetings on renewable energy. With a keen interest in integral theory, Simpson has been active in exploring the nexus between developmental psychology and social change.

Prior to his work with civil society groups, Simpson was an award-winning documentary producer who ran a video production company for 15 years specializing in programming on environment, development and human rights. He spent many years working in conflict and post-conflict areas of the world with a special focus on Latin America.

His most recent focus has been on leadership development within the context of social movements, including both the private sector and civil society. An avid networker, Simpson is a current director of the CCIC and currently manages, through BCCIC, the Inter-Council Network of eight Provincial and Regional Councils.



#### Rasheeda Slater

*Environmental Engineering Student, Dalhousie University*

Rasheeda Slater is in her final year as an Environmental Engineering student at Dalhousie University, enrolled in a co-op program which has allowed her to work with a variety of employers from governments to social enterprises. Beyond her coursework, she’s also involved in the Dalhousie Engineers Without Borders chapter. This includes various projects working towards addressing the root causes of poverty in Canada and Sub-Saharan Africa.

“As a young Canadian and a soon-to-be engineer, I am seeking ways to find new and innovative approaches to dealing with problems that are the result of ineffective systems,” says Rasheeda. “Like many young Canadians, I want to see change; in how we engage youth in the democratic process, how we listen to those affected climate change and how we create solutions.”

For Rasheeda, one main challenge facing the implementation of the SDGs in Canada is the lack of youth engagement in government. When not studying or travelling, Rasheeda enjoys biking through the hilly streets of Halifax and trying her hand at recipes from around the world.



**Dominique Souris**  
*Co-founder and Executive Director,  
Youth Climate Lab*

Dominique Souris is the co-founder and executive director of the Youth Climate Lab, working with a team of young climate leaders to accelerate climate action by amplifying youth-

led climate efforts and designing new initiatives to elevate the role of young people in climate policy. Dominique is on the advisory board of the Foundation for Environmental Stewardship and is a World Economic Forum Global Shaper. She has worked on climate change, adaptation finance, youth engagement and energy policy issues at both private and public sector organizations.

She is also a graduate student in the Global Governance program at the Balsillie School of International Affairs and was a Graduate Research Fellow at Centre for International Governance Innovation, conducting work on innovative financing for climate-related loss and damage and refugee responsibility sharing.

“Canada faces unique challenges to implementing the SDGs,” says Dominique. “How we promote reconciliation while we increase our focus on accelerating innovation? How do we achieve a just transition while we continue to expand natural resource extraction without introducing the necessary social complements?” Along with learning Spanish, Dominique spends her down time trying out new sports and enjoying delicious coffee.



**Wanda Sugarhead**  
*Band Councillor,  
Eabametoong First Nation*

Wanda Sugarhead is a band councillor for Eabametoong First Nation (also known as Fort Hope), a Northwest Ontario community of over 1,500 people, proud of its heritage and community values that have sustained its population and way of life for centuries through fishing, hunting and gathering food.

Wanda is an elected representative and dedicated community leader driven by caring for herself and others. “Everything I set my mind on, I have accomplished,” she says. “I’m proud to be involved with my community and to be a positive advocate for success.” By reading, exercising and reminding herself that tomorrow is another day she maintains her motivation. To recharge and relax she likes to get out on the land.



**Kali Taylor**  
*Project Officer, International Institute  
for Sustainable Development*

*Co-founder, Student Energy*

Kali Taylor leads the Geneva 2030 Ecosystem initiative under the International Institute for Sustainable Development’s (IISD) SDG Knowledge Program. This initiative promotes collaboration and innovation to accelerate SDG implementation. Kali is seconded part-time to the SDG Lab at the UN Office at Geneva, representing NGO viewpoints and providing expertise on systems change and innovation best practice.

“I spent a lot of time on farms growing up and have been closely connected to nature since I was very young,” says Kali. “But it wasn’t until I began working in the energy industry that I truly realized I was an environmentalist.” This prompted her to co-found an NGO called Student Energy focused on engaging youth in energy and climate issues. “The more I worked on energy issues the more I saw the integrated and multi-disciplinary nature of the issues which prompted me to look to sustainable development as a more holistic concept,” says Kali.

Kali is looking to bring an international perspective to Canada’s approach to the SDGs and demonstrate that economic, social and environmental priorities do not have to be in competition with one another. When Kali is not working or busy learning French, she enjoys hiking, theatre and learning about design and behavioural science.



### Tara Templin

*Director of Innovation and Development,  
The Refugee Hub*

Tara Templin is the director of innovation and development at The Refugee Hub an organization that works with citizens, political leaders, policy makers, and civil society to build opportunities and capacity to meet the protection needs of refugees through evidence-based policy and practice. She was formerly the senior director of planning and growth at the UN Association of Canada and executive director of EcoEquitable, a social enterprise providing training and employment for immigrant women with a triple bottom line approach (people, prosperity and planet).

She began working in sustainable development in Central America shortly after a stint at an international policy think tank in Washington D.C., when she realized that there was a real disconnect between policy-making and grassroots development efforts. “Simply put, I wanted to work closely with the people most affected by policies being made oceans away, both literally and figuratively,” explains Tara.

Tara strongly believes that there is a huge opportunity to tackle the SDGs through social enterprise and other innovative, collaborative models that combine business and social strategies to achieve impact. “I think the SDGs provide a framework that connects concrete action to theory, the local to the global and a sense of ownership and inspiration to practitioners,” says Tara. Outside of work, she can often be found chasing her three fun-loving children around.



### Elizabeth Vickers-Drennan

*Science Educator, Science East*

Elizabeth Vickers-Drennan is a graduate student of Science Communication at Laurentian University and current science educator at Science East in New Brunswick. “I’d like to begin addressing the challenge of building an informed, science-literate public to provide opportunities for youth and adults to engage with STEM content to better equip them to contribute to public discourse on sustainability,” says Liz. “This means shifting the way that we think about science education from one of silos and separate topics to that of interconnection.”

Drawn to the ways in which sustainable development acknowledges the complexities of the challenges that we face, Liz brings perspectives from science communication, science literacy and her own personal experiences in non-violent communication. When looking to get away, Liz turns to hiking and camping. She’s also been known to play the violin.



### Danielle Wendehorst

*4th Year Nursing Student, Aurora College*

Danielle Wendehorst is in her fourth year of undergraduate studies at Aurora College, where she is pursuing a degree in Nursing and serving as the president of the Aurora College Student Association. She also works as a supported independent living worker with people who have intellectual disabilities. After completing her undergrad, she plans to attend medical school.

As she prepares for her career, she is exploring how best to integrate sustainability into development and healthcare in the North. “Implementing the SDGs in the North will be a challenge,” says Danielle. “From ensuring it is culturally safe to addressing the already present health disparities, it will take creativity, hard work and a lot of resources.”

She is driven by a love of learning, creativity and the potential for growth. Danielle takes care of herself and stays motivated by doing things that make her happy. She enjoys spending time outside in the winter, watching the Northern lights, going for hikes and spending time with friends and family.



### Kyle Wiebe

*Project Officer, International Institute  
for Sustainable Development*

Kyle Wiebe is a project officer with IISD, tasked with developing and managing community indicator systems to inform policy and practice and localize the SDGs in order to derive community-based solutions.

An urban planner by training, Kyle seeks to operationalize complex urban issues and datasets into communicable opportunities. His past experience includes assessing the administration of geo-spatial addresses to informal settlements in Nairobi with UN Habitat, working with street food vendors to increase low-income consumers’ nutritional security in India, developing a Cycling Network Strategic Plan in Quebec City and contributing to and leading numerous research projects on food security and homelessness in Winnipeg.

“If the SDGs are going to be meaningfully achieved, interventions need to be made at the local level,” says Kyle. “However, we cannot expect communities to manage what they cannot measure. For this reason we need to work alongside communities to teach them how to use and interpret data available to them.” In the winter, Kyle can be found snowboarding or cross-country skiing.



**Elora Wilkinson**  
*Planner, Halifax Regional Municipality*

Elora Wilkinson is a planner for Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), where she works writing new policy and regulations to guide future growth and implement streetscaping projects around the municipality. For the past two years, she has been involved in bringing forward HRM's Centre Plan – a document that will substantially change how development occurs in Halifax's core and brings forward a new focus on sustainable development. Now, she is leading the redesign and reconstruction of one of Atlantic Canada's most prominent retail streets.

"I am drawn by the idea that there is a better way to shape our cities – a way that encourages the health of the planet, prioritizes people, and is more exciting and beautiful," says Elora. She surrounds herself with advocates, consultants and other big dreamers in Halifax to ensure that she stays focused on the bigger goals and avoids "getting bogged down" in government process.

Elora sees Canada's biggest challenge to achieving the SDGs as coordinating across such a large nation with many different cultures and environments. She feels that the most impactful change happens on a municipal level, but that finding ways to scale that change across the nation will be challenging.

Driven by respect and empathy for the public that she serves, Elora is working to design and build a world that encourages interaction, idea sharing, and an abundance of beauty and art. She seeks this in her own life, too, by learning new skills, painting and travelling.



**Joannes Paulus Yimbesalu**  
*PhD Student, Lancaster University*

Joannes Paulus Yimbesalu is currently pursuing a PhD in Health Economics and Policy at Lancaster University. His life and career has been driven by a strong passion to alleviate the suffering of disadvantaged and marginalized populations around the world, especially ensuring that their sexual and reproductive health rights are met. He co-founded HOPE for Children Cameroon in 2011, with the goal of ensuring that every child be provided equal opportunities to attend school and learn.

"I am very optimistic of the future of global development, but for us to be able to leave no one behind we must invest in the future of young people," says Joannes. As a Global Youth Ambassador for A World At School, Joannes continues to mobilize and organize other young people to stand up for education, and through the HeForShe UN Women initiative he engages young men and boys to advocate for gender equality. Joannes is a Women Deliver Young Leader and recently joined the board of the Women's Economic Imperative. Joannes has also advised governments on campaigns for globe education, as well as other youth policies.

"It's imperative that we make a business case for why corporations like private banking institutions are crucial in achieving the SDGs," says Joannes. "But for this to happen, there must be a major cultural shift among both small and large financial institutions – one that fosters collaboration rather than competition." In his free time, Joannes enjoys documenting the world through photography.

# GENERATION SDG SUMMIT TEAM



## **Elaine Ho**

*Lead Rapporteur, Generation SDG Principal, TRIECO Consulting*

Elaine is a PhD candidate in the University of Waterloo's Social and Ecological Sustainability program in Water (an institution-wide collaborative program/specialization), based in the

School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability. She is the founder and lead consultant at TRIECO Research & Consulting, and is the director of training & consulting at Waterloo Sustainable Development Group.

Through life-long learning and transdisciplinary approaches, Elaine has collaborated with people and teams from diverse disciplines in a variety of industries to engage multiple levels of stakeholders, educate and build teams in regards to corporate sustainability initiatives (social and environmental sustainability). Most recently, Elaine participated at the 2018 United Nations High-Level Political Forum. There, she contributed to policy recommendations for SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), represented the global collective of women during the opening session, and presented as a stakeholder on government accountability and transparency.

Elaine is a certified Project Management Professional and serial entrepreneur. She continues to be involved in various initiatives which she previously began in a remote Maasai community in Kenya, including a women's bead cooperative, school projects, microtourism and sustainability education. This led to her current position on the board of directors at Osim Le Maa (Maa People's Initiative), also in Kenya.



## **Dan Normandeau**

*Facilitator, Generation SDG Partner, Conversart*

Daniel Normandeau is a management consultant with over 30 years experience in the private and public sectors, featuring experience in change management, strategic planning, organizational

development, and organizational and individual learning. He holds a masters in Public Administration from Carleton

University, a diploma in Education from McGill University and a bachelors from Concordia University's Loyola College.

He has been engaged by leaders in private and public sectors at all levels who are facing strategic, operational, policy, program and regulatory challenges. He plays an integral role in the organizational and business improvement processes. His strengths include an ability to assist large as well as smaller groups, executive teams and their organizations to work effectively together to envision, plan, implement and sustain change. His objective for every group conversation is to create the right conditions for groups to create ideas that generate high impact results in any field of endeavour.



## **Jeremy Runnalls**

*Lead Writer, Generation SDG Communications Lead, Smart Prosperity Institute*

Jeremy Runnalls is the lead writer on WGSi's Generation SDG publications. He also works as the communications lead at the Smart Prosperity Leaders'

Initiative, a coalition of respected Canadian leaders from business, think tanks, labour, Indigenous Peoples, youth and NGO communities. He previously served as the editor-in-chief at Corporate Knights Magazine, a quarterly public policy publication focused on the intersection of business and society. In 2013, he was named a Mining Country Fellow by the Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources.

Jeremy is constantly looking for new ways to safeguard the continued prosperity of Canadians while ensuring that this opportunity is shared by all. "Achieving this will involve true and sustained collaboration between civil society and the public and private sectors, an opportunity the Generation SDG Initiative is well-positioned to help facilitate," says Jeremy. When he's not wrestling with sustainable development, Jeremy can be found singing in professional choirs, swimming as much as possible and getting lost exploring the beautiful built form of Montreal.

# CATALYSTS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

