

# SDG's: Global Goals - Local Action

## *PROJECT FORMAT FOR REGENERATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES ON THE BASIS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, USING AN ACTION LEARNING APPROACH*

The 21st century seems to be an epoch of interconnected crises - abrupt negative changes. Climate, economy, equity, energy, health, overpopulation, security, human rights, migration, terrorism, geopolitics are some of the themes that come to our minds. Paradoxically - or closely connected - the technological capacity of humanity has never been more advanced. It is possible to send automated remote controlled robots to Mars, it is possible to understand and manipulate dead and living matter on the molecular scale. The number of human beings is higher than ever, life expectancy is higher than ever, the average wealth of each human is higher than ever. The degree of impact of humans on earth has led to a proposal to the International Commission on Stratigraphy to name the current geological period Anthropocene - the epoch where the main source of geological sediments is human beings. The decision on this will be taken in 2021.



The Sustainable Development Goals are THE recognised integrated global agenda for action to address the interconnected crises. The 17 SDG's and their 169 targets were adopted in 2015 by all the worlds nations and by the UN General Assembly after 3 years of deliberation. They cover all the most important issues including climate change and biodiversity. The decision to adopt them was unanimous, the fact that every government in the world voted for them gives great legitimacy. The governments of the worlds 193 nations accepted the obligation to implement and monitor change in relation to each goal and target continuously until the end date in 2030. The

achievement of the goals by 2030 would be an extremely important contribution to a safer, more peaceful world with better lives for most people.

This will only have a chance of happening if local communities in all countries contribute to this - with the insights and knowledge related to local reality, with cooperation between civil society, enterprises and local government.

The specifics of the SDG's vary greatly in relation to the local conditions in relation to geography, economy, culture. An issue such as drinking water varies greatly from an arid climate where water comes from rivers that flow through many countries to a temperate climate with high rainfall where water is locally present. Even in the same geographical context there is enormous variation between a densely populated metropolitan area and a rural area with a dispersed population.



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For local communities the SDG's are an extremely important opportunity to initiate change towards a better and safer life with more local control of life conditions. Relating to the SDG's could help develop the concept of a common home, where we take care of people and nature - where we consider our impact on our planetary home as well. We are connected in terms of energy, economy, technology, climate, health, culture, arts, media and the SDG's have the great merit that they cover the needed broad interconnectedness of issues.

Here we describe our proposal for a long term change process that helps local communities enable participation to achieve their goals locally - and build sustainable and regenerative local communities. The ambition is to initiate parallel projects in all parts of the world. The thinking builds on the SDG's, the IAED SDG learning game with its concepts of the relationships between local, national, regional, global as well as an understanding of democracy as a relationship between collective challenges, institutions and public participation. We also are in debt to the methodologies developed by Sustainamatrix and BlueMarble evaluation in relation to work with bioregions. In the following this is described as a methodology and a toolkit for a geographical scope that is a larger local area such as a county or a bioregion - covering units smaller than the national or state level, but larger than one village, town or local area.

The philosophy of this project operates with a multitude of embedded relations: Human culture is embedded in nature, and that bioregions or local communities are embedded in a state or national context - which again are embedded in regions or federations - ultimately embedded in global economy, ecology, human culture.

We plan to do this first as a number of interconnected pilot projects in Europe (e.g. Denmark, Scotland, Germany, Serbia) North America (e.g. Maine ...) South America (e.g. Rio Grande del Sul ...) Africa, South East Asia. Then take stock of the results - and then make the experiences methodologies, tools available for a larger public.

## 1: AREA



Identify and decide upon the area of work and its demarcations. This could be a county, a bioregion - and needs to be an area large enough to be identified as separate from other areas, with distinct structures of ecology, economy, culture. An important prerequisite is local organisations in a broad range of fields that have an interest in and the capacity to engage in this kind of work. This could be local government, businesses, ngo's, educational institutions etc. This phase will start with a number of interviews and informational events that describe the purpose of the project. There will be a

general introduction to the SDG's and the relationship between goals, targets and indicators - and a reporting back on the preliminary results of the identification of actors in the area and their role. We will discuss the status of the national process, with a special focus on the national monitoring mechanisms and their results - and this projects relationship and contributions to the national and global process.

This phase will end with the establishment of a project organisation including a clear transparent governance structure.

## 2: Actors



Establishment and publication of local project website, available for the project and for the public. The work process will now go deeper into mapping and description of the area in terms of geography, nature, people, resources - using tools like gis and mapping of local contributors and potential contributors to the project, to be documented in database connected to the gis mapping. Discussions on interests, engagement and capacities. Mapping of initial perception of most important issues in the area. This will be an essential asset for the project, but also for the local

contributors and the broader community for all sorts of purposes. This information will also be of importance for cooperation and exchange of experience with parallel projects in other localities. Reporting of the results in different formats, including availability on the local project website. Stocktaking of the results in the local project organisation - that is published on the project website.

### 3: SDG's



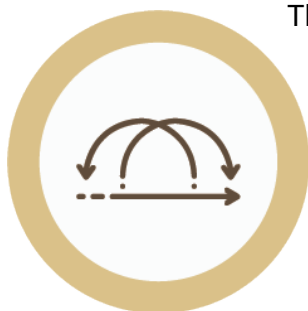
Deeper introduction of the SDG's related to the local context. A series of events using the SDG game and its concepts and methods to provide a deep understanding of the interrelatedness of the targets, an understanding of the local aspects of the SDG's. Main focus here on development of capacity among the local contributors.

Introduction of structured ways of describing issues and collect data in the local area. Building of capacity in relation to gis, database and reporting tools. Discussions on the general outline of local action agendas - using the

SDG game, the structuring of the SDG's from the Stockholm resilience centre, Kate Raworth's donut model etc.

Reporting of results and local events for the publishing of these.

### 4: Challenges



This phase starts with a close look at the state of the national baseline process - and a critical analysis of this related to the national level as well as the local level. Based on this the local contributing organisations will develop their own way to measure the indicators - and Cooperation with the contributors to map the local challenges related to the SDG goals, targets and indicators. Start of mapping of flows in and out of energy, economy, goods, people, ideas.

Open discussion on SDG status and linkages between issues, including flows in and out of area - of energy, people, economy, goods, ideas. Analysis of interconnectedness of basic issues in the area/bioregion/community (what applies).

Production of report on the local challenges and their interconnections - publishing on the website and local events, ending in the first local SDG festival with music, arts, local gastronomy ...

## 5: Baseline



What are the most important local challenges seen from the local point of view, and what is their status. Data collection from local contributors, quality control and entry in the database - including representation on dis-maps. The point of departure will be a status on the national baseline, and an introduction to the present content of the data from UN-stats and similar data from regional organisations (e.g. EU).

Based on the results of this work on the status in the area a localised version of the SDG-game will be produced for use in the process that will lead to action. Local learning events with a focus on the description of the issues in the area and the status related to the national context - and to other countries.

## 6: Linkages



What are the connections between different local challenges and targets.

Where do we find synergies and trade-offs. Use of e.g. the European Unions work on this. Analysis with the local partners, quality control, entry in database

Local discussion processes for how to relate to interconnected issues. Finding the most important priorities - making sure that the interventions are long term sustainable. Local decision processes on priorities and initial development of action strategies. Reporting on the action strategies - and

publication.

## 7: Events



Local large scale public events with representation of the results of the work. Focus on the main action points and the integrated thinking behind these. Use of the game process with the broader public, ending with citizens input to the ongoing work on change based on localised version of the dialogue game.

Democratic process that ensures legitimacy with the broader local public - involvement of local and national media, and involvement of local councils for political decisions on priorities.

## 8: Action



The local partners from the public, commercial and NGO side make action plans related to the various indicators - and initiate action. The results of these processes will be monitored by the partners and the local project organisation, registrations will be entered in the change database and represented in the gis system so it will be possible to follow the process over time. The results of this process will be quality controlled, and preserved in the database, to be compared with results in other places, locally and globally.

The local and the global project organisation will ensure annual structured reporting that is quality controlled. There will be established mechanisms for feeding into the national level progress reporting. The reporting will be represented in annual public events in the local area.

## 9: Analysis

Ongoing critical analysis of the results, local debates about next steps, exchange with experiences from parallel processes will be ensured by the global project organisation.



There will be a special focus on aggregation of change from the baseline over time - and an exchange of best practices with parallel local projects. The discussion on this will be exposed in regular online conferences and triennial festivals for the global community of parallel processes.

## 10: Future



Evaluation of these first steps towards a regenerative future with respect for nature, peoples, social equity and economy will take place after five years for the first time - and the year 2030 will be the endpoint of the process - and maybe the start of a new.

## Organisation

Organisation will be established at two levels:

A global project organisation that provides services and support such as databases, gis mapping, tools, methodologies and formats for the work. This level will go into fundraising for the infrastructure of the project, and into initial fundraising to support the establishment of the local project organisations and for part of the initial work. The publishing of the results of the work will be ensured through websites, social media, press work - and online and physical conferences for the local project organisation and other interested groups.

We need to work through the need for staff - and the different competencies needed to do this. To some degree it depends on the number of local projects.

Local project organisations that take on the task of running the local process. Local project organisations need to ensure broad representation of commercial, local government and NGO actors. The local project organisation is in charge of the process and it is responsible for fundraising and provision of resources for its own work from the local community. This is going to be supplemented by initial funding from the global project organisation (differentiating between high income countries and low income countries).

The local project organisation will probably be hosted in an existing local entity - but will need at least one full time dedicated staff.

## Funding

IAED will initiate fundraising for the development of the project, tools, materials etc. at the global level. Included in this must be seed funding for the start of local projects.

Local partners need to initiate fundraising for their own local needs at an early stage of the process. It is not foreseen that the local projects should contribute to the services of the global project organisation.