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DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS IN INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is an increasingly important topic in a world with ever-increasing climate and humanitarian crises. With these issues mounting, we will have a growing need for new sustainability experts in the future. Sustainability needs to start from education and the campus itself so that current students can get hands-on experience on how sustainable environments are created. This means that it is crucial that educational organizations focus on creating and developing meaningful sustainability education.

The purpose of this report is to assist university teachers and administrative staff in planning and executing high-quality sustainability education and a sustainable campus. Structured as a step-by-step guide, the report starts from sustainable campus life and management and then proceeds to university-level commitment in developing sustainability teaching. To be able to create sustainable education, it is essential to raise awareness among teachers and have them participate in developing programs and courses. As the third step, the report delves into the planning of online education courses that can be offered internationally. Overall, the report is built upon the practice-proven Whole-of-society approach of the Ateneo de Manila University and complemented with lessons learned from various countries.

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SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

As mentioned above, to create an inspiring environment for sustainability initiatives, it is advisable to start from improving the campus environment both as a cooperative, active atmosphere and a sustainable physical environment serving as an inspiration and a model.

Implementing practical solutions for sustainability requires power, and often it is necessary to have the support of the university leaders. When planning projects, the limitations of bureaucracy need to be considered. University leadership and sustainability advocates often speak with different terms and have different objectives, but it is possible to recognize these needs and incorporate them into the project. For example, stakeholders may be interested in circular economy or resource efficiency, and sustainability projects can offer solutions in these fields. Showcasing these upsides of sustainable development may help secure the commitment of leadership. In this way, it is possible to collaborate with different actors who may not see themselves as sustainability advocates but whose goals still align with sustainability goals. It is recommended to start with the so-called low-hanging fruits or smaller, simpler projects that can then be developed into bigger ones.

One successful example of the utilization of these methods is the Ateneo de Manila University. In their opinion, sustainability should not be just a buzzword, but also deliberate action. The first initiatives were practically oriented attempts to improve the ecological environment of the campus, which eventually led to the establishment of the Ateneo Institute of Sustainability (AIS) and expanded to the whole university and beyond. It was deemed necessary to start from the campus level to slowly build into a bigger, more collaborative sustainability project. They started from gathering data on potential waste reduction targets and using this data to convince stakeholders of practical steps forward. Sustainability in action is shown through the implementation of measures such as composting, decentralized wastewater treatment, rainwater reuse, and using the campus as a living laboratory. The Loyola Heights campus developed into a living laboratory with more than twenty locations of various sustainability initiatives such as vermicomposting facilities, wildlife sanctuaries, and detention ponds.

Implementing sustainability projects on the campus required the support and investment of the university. Sustainability champions can lead by example to show how useful sustainability can be. It is also necessary to create systems that are convenient enough to make it easy to adopt sustainable solutions. One example of this is making reusable containers available at university cafeterias. It is also important to raise awareness of sustainability issues so people can make informed decisions about their actions. AIS

has utilized social media and events such as nature walks to bring the issue to light in the eyes of the public.

At the leadership level, a committee with members from academic units and offices issued sustainability policies and guidelines for the whole university. The process from the establishment of an environmental management committee to the launch of the Ateneo Sustainability Guidelines & Emergency Management Plan took eight years. A university-wide comprehensive approach cannot be planned and put into practice overnight, as it requires patience, realistic step-by-step actions, and long-term commitment.

The efforts of the university have now been expanded to reach the wider Southeast Asian region through the ASEAN University Network on Ecological Education and Culture (AUN-EEC) which is housed at AIS. The whole-of-society approach of Ateneo recognizes that the university cannot build a more sustainable future without engaging the global society in which it exists. Thus, AUN-EEC organizes workshops, conferences, and webinars that use multimodal means, such as poetry, photography, and creative writing to promote sustainability to the Southeast Asian youth.

Another example of sustainability progress can be seen at the University of Turku (UTU) in Finland, where sustainable development has been a central part of the university strategy. It has been mainstreamed through various sectors and activities of the campus and its users, covering mobility issues, use of venues, catering, and office practices, to mention a few.

UTU has decided on comprehensive plans for its sustainability agenda and has made its own sustainability steering group. The practical work is supported by sub-committees that lead the work on education, research, and sustainable campus life. Furthermore, there is a separate action group that focuses on the carbon footprint of the university. There is also an overarching grand plan to be carbon neutral by 2025, but focusing on carbon neutrality within a short time span was not necessarily a realistic approach.

SECURING FACULTY AND STAFF COMMITMENT

To be able to make sustainability a continuous part of higher education, there must be efforts to make sure teachers are also committed to it. It is not enough to simply let them know that sustainability is important, as there needs to be real knowledge-building on the topic. Sustainability is a big, complex subject, and it can be defined in many ways, so it is necessary to approach teachers with multi-faceted information on how they can implement sustainability in their own teaching.

At the University of Turku, concrete actions have included implementing a tag indicating sustainability education in the course descriptions. Also, teachers are encouraged to explain the ways that sustainability is present in course contents.

As mentioned earlier, UTU has gone through great efforts to bring sustainability into the forefront of their future plans. However, these efforts have so far not been entirely successful in bringing teachers into the project. Some staff members have felt that they would need training on how to concretely incorporate the sustainability approach into their courses. Sustainability may end up becoming a superimposed idea or an afterthought in courses that did not originally focus on it. This may stem from a lack of knowledge about the wide scope of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). From this example, it is clear that teachers need to be educated on what SDGs truly are and how to meaningfully identify sustainability issues in their topics. This way, sustainability can be incorporated in a meaningful way in many disciplines.

Sustainability is, by nature, a multidisciplinary topic. Many different disciplines contribute to the topic in their own way, whether it is theoretical or practical. These range from engineers to social scientists. It is thus important to define sustainability. It can mean many things, so it may be a good idea to have a

conversation about it at the start of any project. Another possible option is using a compilation of definitions that have been used in the past and finding a common ground there.

PLANNING AND EXECUTING SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION

How, then, should the planning and execution of sustainability education start? There are many different approaches, and we want to introduce a few key examples from our collaborators to give an idea on how education can be developed.

CONTACT TEACHING

One question regarding sustainability education is whether it should consist of smaller course units or bigger subject studies or perhaps even its own program. Also, should the studies cover a wide scope of sustainability issues or focus specifically on narrower topics? Sustainability is often talked about in the context of climate change, but sustainability also includes things like poverty reduction and labour conditions. In the Ateneo de Manila University, there are two mandatory sustainability courses for undergraduates, and they are integrated with each student's major. Additionally, there is an option to take a minor degree in sustainability or a master's degree in sustainability management or disaster risk reduction. There is no single correct way of doing sustainability education, and many approaches with different scopes and depth levels are needed. Whether the education is mandatory for all or an optional study module also needs to be considered.

University of Turku has developed a massive open online course (MOOC) that is available for every student, but there is also a minor subject specifically on sustainable development. It is necessary to have different depth levels to be able to develop good sustainability knowledge and awareness. Other Finnish universities also have or are developing their own sustainability MOOCs, but by making its own, UTU can use examples from its own environment and bring it closer to the experiences of the students.

To encourage students to take part in sustainability measures, it is important to go beyond courses and include projects that relate more tangibly to the students' lives. For example, AIS has organized nature walks to foster an emotional bond with nature, and there can be a wide variety of projects that include not just the students, but also the community around them. However, to be able to secure funding and support for these kinds of projects, it is necessary to have the right data and ability to demonstrate the urgency of the situation.

ONLINE TEACHING AND DIGITAL EDUCATION

After the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become much more commonplace to organize teaching online. Online courses enable learning across distances, and it is possible to communicate with people you may otherwise never have the chance to meet. Due to the environmental impact of traveling, it is important to consider whether meeting face-to-face is necessary. As far as education goes, online self-learning MOOC courses are good for basic, entry level topics, but a higher level of analysis requires communication. However, teachers are not inherently aware of how online teaching should be managed. Online course environments are different than physical learning environments, and there needs to be consideration of both the pedagogical and technological aspects of teaching. The Ateneo de Manila University had its own group just for creating an "adaptive design for learning environment" online.

In addition to websites, handheld tools can nowadays be used to gather and analyse data. Phones with higher technological capabilities are commonplace and can be used, for example, to gather data by mapping local environments.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Next, we would like to introduce three examples of what new sustainable, collaborative education can look like. The first example concerns the work of an international network called The European Campus of City-Universities (EC2U) that is funded by the European Union and consists of seven universities. Three of these universities (University of Turku in Finland, University of Coimbra in Portugal and University of Poitiers in France) have jointly launched a Master's Degree Programme in Sustainable Cities and Communities. The concept of the program is that each semester the students will be studying at a different university among the three, with the last semester being a free choice. The idea is that there are innovative studies related to sustainability in different cities, and students from all over can build their own networks through the program.

The next example is a course developed by the Centre for East Asian Studies at UTU and AIS at Ateneo de Manila University. This course, called "Socio-ecological Problem-solving in Southeast Asia and Europe", approaches sustainability issues from a practical perspective through case studies. These case studies include topics such as organizing second-hand clothing, and students are shown the kinds of differences there are between Finland and the Philippines in this context. Students from both universities participate in online sessions and form discussion groups, enabling them to socialize and establish possible later relationships. This way, students can also learn about real situations that are happening elsewhere in the world. In any course like this, it is of course necessary to consider the diversity of the students and the viewpoints they have.

The final example is a multifaceted project called the Resilience Academy. It was started by Tanzania Urban Resilience Program, a multi-partner initiative, together with UTU in Finland. It aims to provide online learning materials, data management education, and practical internships for students, and there are already eight different modules, over 40 courses, and information on how to manage and protect data. Much of the information is available for free through MOOCs. The tools offered by the Resilience Academy are practical, which makes them appealing to many actors around the world, and they are excellent for teaching.

One interesting aspect of the Resilience Academy is how students are given the opportunity to learn important skills for their future careers. The internship portion is essential for this, and the industrial placement program has great potential for the students who are able to participate. In addition to this, students participate in gathering data that can be used in actual research. As cities everywhere are changing so rapidly, there is no up-to-date data on them yet. Students go through their local environment gathering data and mapping areas, which helps them see current issues for which they can create solutions in the future. The students participating in the project are also active participants in developing it further, and they are able to share their thoughts on what they consider useful to learn.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

International collaboration can offer great opportunities for progress, but it also has its own unique difficulties that cannot be dismissed. In this chapter, the most pressing challenges are introduced and elaborated on, and there will be discussion on how best to approach these challenging features. Because there is value in coming together, uncertainty about solving problems occurring in multinational collaboration should not be an obstacle.

DIVERGENT UNDERSTANDING OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The first challenge is the fact that actors are from different parts of the world, living in different social contexts, which may cause issues in planning a project. For example, there may be different ideas on how projects should be managed and risks assessed, and even if the actors agree, the regulations in each country can limit them in different ways. It could be helpful to create overall guidelines, but they also need to be adjustable to different situations. It is important to remember that having these different viewpoints can be a great opportunity to learn from one another. In this regard, Area Studies as a discipline can offer valuable insights into the way things work in different parts of the world.

DIVERGENT EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS

The second topic is divergent education environments. On an *institutional level*, it may be challenging to fit together different administrative systems. Each country has different regulations when it comes to arranging teaching and certifying education programs, and universities themselves can have different types of hierarchies.

Being mindful of different cultures is essential in *multicultural education*, and great care needs to be taken so that students are not stereotyped based on their culture. Assumptions about things such as learning preferences should not be made based on background, and teachers should always be aware of their own expectations and prejudice. Education should be accessible and equitable to all students regardless of culture. This diversity of experiences must be respected and seen as a valuable resource.

Education must always be designed to be equal, fair, and inclusive in its practices. One way to bolster inclusivity is to make expectations transparent, accessible, and easy to understand for all participants. When students are given the necessary tools to participate in education on an equal footing with everyone else, they have the best chance to thrive. One should always aim to enhance and support students' self-efficacy and self-esteem.

Building the educational contents of a sustainability course starts with a pedagogical script in which the core contents and the key learning outcomes are defined. Based on the script, the core contents are divided into smaller units with their own sub-contents and sub-objectives. The idea is to consider what is the best order to teach different contents and which study methods are most suitable for each content and in what order. The script helps divide the content into smaller units, teaching the right issues at the right time with the best methods. Generally, it is good to move from general understanding to detailed information and from small and easy assignments to bigger and more demanding assignments as the course proceeds. First build overall understanding of the topic with easy assignments (e.g., multiple choice) and later move to more demanding contents and assignments that require skills such as analysis, interpretation and argumentation.

In independent online teaching, drop-out rates tend to be higher than in contact teaching, but this can be overcome by starting the course right-away with small, easy and engaging, even game-like assignments and moving forward with more demanding assignments as the students' understanding of the topic grows. A completion progress bar that is visible to the students and automatically updated after completing each assignment is also a good way to boost commitment to the course. Indicating the estimated workload and duration of completion of each assignment can help students manage their progress and time. Finally, frequent, friendly and encouraging written communication on the course site and in the (automated) communications is beneficial.

In online teaching, the key is to ensure that content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and technological knowledge intersect in the most beneficial way. This is called the "Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK)" scheme, which combines online teaching technology and the right pedagogical methods for teaching the content in an online context.

DECOLONIZATION OF EDUCATION CO-OPERATION

The third challenge that must be considered concerns the need for decolonization of education. While most former colonies are now independent nations, the effects of colonialism still affect global interaction today. Former colonies are distrustful of the colonizers, and they can sometimes feel that the so-called developed countries view collaboration as an opportunity for teaching instead of mutual learning and equality in partnerships. In addition, different regions have different practices for knowledge production and publication, and these differences must be understood and respected. Each country has its own unique history, and actors must always consider their and their country's role in the grand scheme of the world.

Ultimately, the decolonization of global collaboration is about pursuing an equal collaborative relationship in North-South relations. However, collaboration is only possible if there is trust between the collaborators. Building trust requires time, so long-term commitment to the project is needed. The project must also be sustainable in itself: a one-off field trip will not have long-term effects, but a long process of collaborative efforts can have a huge impact on the relationship between countries and institutions.

DIGITAL CHALLENGES

The fourth topic we want to bring up concerns difficulties related to the digital aspect of collaboration. Education by digital methods has great potential but also unique challenges. Some significant challenges relate to data management and sharing as well as the design of courses.

Despite these difficulties, digital education in a collaborative manner has excellent prospects for more varied collaborations. Open sources such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and online databases offer the opportunity to share information between actors across great distances. From a sustainability perspective, traveling is not very climate-friendly, so digitalisation can offer alternatives for international collaboration with virtual mobility. However, it is good to remember that real-life contact and seeing how others live are the best way to foster understanding between different people.

FUNDING

The final difficulty is related to funding. Most projects require some degree of funding, and with the competition for grants and other funding opportunities, getting the necessary money for a project may be challenging. In many places, funding from governments and universities is lacking. Especially in countries with top-down systems, projects can encounter struggles with the lack of support from higher-ups. This makes it necessary to rely on outside sources of funding, but this is not simple either. Attitudes towards different NGOs with funding schemes can be quite negative because of past experiences or the potential impact of the funder on the project.

Because lack of money is an especially grave issue for smaller countries and universities, collaborating with other, bigger actors can open new opportunities for them. Through collaboration, all kinds of resources can be shared, including but not limited to facilities, technology, funding, and manpower. Collaboration enables all participants to learn new things from one another, and the results can have more wide-reaching impacts, also helping the communities around universities. One example of a project that managed to positively affect vulnerable local communities is the EU-funded BuildERs project, in which, for example, the Universitas Indonesia participated. The project developed a disaster management app called SaveMyLife that helps people during times of crisis.

With all its difficulties, cooperation is still possible and encouraged. One way to meet new, likeminded actors is by utilizing larger networks such as the ASEAN University Network (AUN), which has helped Southeast Asian universities meet new people and create collaboration. There are large differences not only between countries but also between different areas and universities. However, cooperation brings some upsides. It may, for example, be possible to map out the expertise of each member so that these strengths can be better utilized by the entire network.

CONCLUSIONS

Sustainable development starts and ends with the community. The community must participate in the creation of a more sustainable future, and we must consider what is the best way to empower the community to participate actively in their own environment. Securing community commitment to projects requires a step-by-step approach, starting from raising awareness. A clear, practical agenda that can be developed into action is also needed. After the start of a project, its impact should be observed to assess its success and refine the steps taken to further improve its influence.

When it comes to sustainable development, a paradigm shift is needed. The concept needs to transform from a simple buzzword into tangible action. While sustainability is widely discussed and its importance highlighted, the practical aspects need to be improved to have a more sustainable future. We need a sustainability culture that enables everyone to easily take part in sustainability measures. Offering practical solutions and options creates an environment where sustainable actions are easily implemented by everyone.

As highlighted in this report, the potential offered by collaboration cannot be overstated. Being able to share responsibility can offer new possibilities, especially to smaller actors. Sharing resources can also include sharing materials and technology, creating opportunities for a wider impact of different methods. Of course, working together requires trust, which is not always easy to develop due to historical matters and power imbalances. Connecting with each other through different networks can help build the trust needed to eventually develop a collaborative relationship.

The need for resources and funding is a pressing matter in many projects. The difficulties in attaining university support and financing can make developing projects challenging, and external funding sources are not always easy to find either. Our suggestion is to go step by step and start from smaller projects to show the practicality and usefulness of sustainability. It must also be remembered that sustainability concerns everyone, and we must all take part in developing it. Through our conversations with sustainability advocates all over the world, it has become clear that sometimes things are done just because they are seen as important, no matter the lack of financial support. Sustainability is important and necessary, and many advocates have a sense of responsibility in being part of developing a more sustainable world.

AUTHOR NOTE

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