2023
A YEAR OF GROWTH & RESILIENCE
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Dear friends and colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the 2022-2023 SDG Academy Annual Report. The SDG Academy continues to be at the forefront of promoting education for sustainable development and empowering individuals and communities worldwide to achieve the SDGs. Our mission to educate, inspire, and mobilize global citizens toward achieving the SDGs continues to be the driving force of our endeavors.

Over the past year, the SDG Academy expanded its reach through the development of several new innovative online courses and interactive webinars, enabling even wider access to knowledge and fostering stronger collaborations among stakeholders. The SDG Academy also forged new strategic partnerships with renowned institutions and organizations, creating a robust global network of changemakers committed to sustainable development and the SDGs.

One notable achievement was the SDG Academy’s spotlight event at the 2022 U.N. Transforming Education Summit. That event demonstrated the importance of creating Open Educational Resources (OERs) that are hosted in Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable (FAIR) formats. The event deepened the discussion on Open Educational Resources Repositories (OERRs) as a method to deliver a wealth of high-quality learning material to all corners of the planet.

As we enter the second half of the 15-year period of the 2030 Agenda, the efforts of the SDG Academy have gained even greater significance. I am incredibly proud of the work of the SDG Academy team and all of the SDG Academy partners around the world. The dedication and unwavering commitment of the SDGs Academy team, partners, and supporters is a great inspiration for all of us.

The SDG Academy and the entire UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network worldwide family extends our heartfelt gratitude to our many partners, sponsors, and supporters. We wish you a Happy, Healthy, and we hope, Peaceful 2024, and look forward to working with you in the coming year. Together, we can continue to help build a sustainable future that leaves no one behind and that fosters trust, cooperation, and peace on our fragile planet.

With warm regards,

Jeffrey D. Sachs
President, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
Creativity & Direction, Inspiring Growth

Dear friends of the SDG Academy,

Welcome to the fourth edition of the SDG Academy Annual Report. Once again, we are delighted to share the breadth and depth of our work at the SDG Academy over the past year. This is a time of urgency to implement the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a pathway to peace and the Paris Agreement. At the SDG Academy, we believe education and professional training for all people across the globe are the necessary first steps to addressing our urgent global challenges.

I had the great privilege of taking over for Chandrika Bahadur as the Vice President of Education and Director of the SDG Academy in May 2022. One year on, the SDG Academy still seeks to fulfill Professor Jeffery Sachs’s vision of providing free online open educational resources (including curriculum, pedagogy, degree programs, and professional training initiatives) at all stages of education and lifelong learning, for everyone across the globe.

Our Common Agenda, a vision put forth by the UN Secretary-General in 2021, called for turbocharging multilateralism to get the world back on track with the Sustainable Development Goals. A key enabler was the Transforming Education Summit (TES), which was held in September 2022 alongside the UN General Assembly in New York. The SDG Academy was a proud lead organizer of a Solutions Day event at the TES, convened with the participation of many other esteemed partners.

The session, titled “Transforming ESD - Implementing the UNESCO Open Educational Resource (OER) Recommendation with Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships,” was co-sponsored by SDSN, UN Academic Impact, UNESCO, the UN Library, and the Permanent Missions of Ireland, Ghana, and Greece to the UN. The key outcomes of the session at the TES were announced at the ECOSOC Partnership Forum in 2023 during Spotlight Session 5, titled, “Enhancing capacities for transformation: Building partnerships to harness science, technology, and innovation” with SDSN as the lead organizer.

Outcomes included:
1) SDSN and UNESCO co-chairing a Joint Partnership Committee to support capacity building and policy development in the framework of the UNESCO Recommendation on OER 2019,
2) The establishment of an OER Overlay Repository that creates and hosts OERs that enhance sustainable development, which are
high-quality digital resources, linked to a common SDG taxonomy, with open licenses allowing for easily repurposed and uploaded material to any Learning Management System (LMS).

3) Partnerships to transfer OERs for sustainable development across institutions globally that can be uploaded to LMSs in governments, corporations, NGOs and the education sector, to be used for education and professional training

4) Partnerships that link OERs to Science-Policy-Practice Interfaces in parliamentary libraries, including the UN Library.

Open Education Resources under a Creative Commons license that can be edited and translated for local needs will create the opportunity for extensive worldwide accredited academic degrees and professional training in sustainable development and knowledge with information integrity in Science-Policy Interfaces. Going forward, the work of this partnership will help expand the great work highlighted in this report on producing Content (edX MOOCs, SDG Academy Library, the Book Club with Jeffrey Sachs), Pedagogy & Training (Online Master's Degrees in Sustainable Development, edX Professional Certificates, and professional training programs), Community (support to the Global Association of Master's in Development Practice programs and Mission 4.7) and, finally, Thought Leadership (blogs, events, and publications). We are thankful for the professional support of Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation.

Last but not least, we are indebted to the committed learners and alumni associated with our Global Association of Master’s in Development Practice (MDP), e-learning platforms, degree programs at University College Dublin and Sunway University, and Professional Certificate Programs on edX, who are working hard for peace, justice, and sustainable development all across the world. You are the reason we get up each morning and dedicate ourselves to the work of the SDG Academy.

Sincerely,

Patrick Paul Walsh
Director, SDG Academy
VP of Education and Director, SDG Academy

and Ecosystem-based Adaptation: Working with nature to adapt to a changing climate with IUCN and IIID. The MOOCs are just one element of our work, but these and other elements highlighted in this report are only made possible by the wonderful SDG Academy staff in our New York, Dublin, and Kuala Lumpur offices, who literally work around the clock given our time zone coverage.

We are also delighted to welcome new staff members Jessica Crist and Sherlina Kaur, Education Managers, and Helen Perham, Communications Coordinator, to the SDG Academy team. The SDG Academy was able to continue to expand its broad range of activities thanks to the leadership and generous support of Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation.

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Sincerely,

Patrick Paul Walsh
Director, SDG Academy
VP of Education and Director, SDG Academy

Let us also highlight many of the partners that supported the creation of seven new Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) this year with us. These included Equity and Inclusion in Education and One Health in Practice: Solutions for healthy people in Biosphere reserves, both with UNESCO; Shaping Urban Futures with IIHS; Making Universal Social Protection a Reality with the ILO; Using the SDGs for Government Action with Apolitical; Changing Behaviour for Sustainable Development with BehaviourWorks Australia and Monash University;
Dear SDG Academy community,

In the coming year, the SDG Academy is ecstatic to pursue new programs of work and expand existing projects. For nearly a decade, the SDG Academy has produced foundational content to advance the field of sustainable development and the UN’s 2030 Agenda. In our next era of progress, we aim to grow our community of learners across the spectrum of education. Among our primary goals is the growth of professional training programs for lifelong learners. It has become evident that our global development agenda will not be met unless we undertake an ambitious intergenerational effort to achieve the SDGs. As such, the SDG Academy will prioritize upskilling of the current workforce, alongside educating the next generation of sustainable development practitioners. We aim to do this both at scale and with localized approaches, developing offerings on widely-used professional platforms and establishing partnerships for sector-specific training.

The SDG Academy also looks forward to enhancing dialogue and critical thought leadership around Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). A core feature of the SDG Academy’s ongoing work will be to drive forward truly transformative change. As leaders in the field of ESD, the SDG Academy will further engage its network of premier experts to advance knowledge via new reports, papers, and other thought-provoking publications. Enhancing the dialogue around ESD serves the entirety of the 2030 Agenda and is quite possibly our greatest tool for achieving our global goals.

Among the thought leadership expected of the SDG Academy in the coming year is a focus on transforming digital infrastructure to support open education and knowledge commons, and the promotion of critical perspectives on reorienting efforts to achieve the SDGs in the second half of the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, the SDG Academy is excited to continue enriching its existing portfolio of projects, including enhanced offerings in its graduate degree programs, online education platforms, and K-12 learning. We have many exciting things in store… onwards and upwards.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amber Webb
Managing Director, SDG Academy
2023 Annual Report

Uniting Talents, **Fueling Innovation**

Meet our dedicated team of experts who contribute their skill, passion, and collaboration to drive our success.

SDG Academy staff work hybridly in New York, Dublin, and Kuala Lumpur.

Our four pillars of work:

- content
- pedagogy & training
- community
- thought leadership

SDG Academy
Courses

The cornerstone of the SDG Academy has long been our enriching portfolio of online courses and educational content, made available around the world via multiple open access platforms and repositories. Our courses are high-quality productions that capture some of the world's best available expertise.

Since July of 2022, the SDG Academy and its esteemed partners have produced an enriching array of new and innovative content. These new courses cover topics including collective behavior change, biosphere adaptation, and resiliency mindset, with embedded themes of sustainability. This year, we were delighted to embark on new partnerships that have resulted in an unprecedented amount of content production, including the creation and curation of seven new massive open online courses (MOOCs). In partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), we launched our best-performing new MOOC of the year, Ecosystem-based Adaption: Working with nature to adapt to a changing climate. Covering a range of topics, from conservation to science policy, the course boasted enrollments of 6,115 learners in its first run.

To grow the portfolio of courses, the SDG Academy is delighted to have worked again with UNESCO, the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and also to welcome new partners from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and Monash University. These partnerships have produced new content on subjects as diverse as urban development and equitable education, from the world's most renowned scientists and experts. The SDG Academy is grateful to grow our work by building strong partnerships with other interdisciplinary organizations that value collaboration and diverse approaches to problem solving.

New Content

Shaping Urban Futures: Designed by IIHS as a follow-up to their successful 2015 course Sustainable Cities, this course is for anyone interested in urban ecologies and compiles research from key regions of high urbanization, primarily in the Global South.

One Health in Practice: Designed with UNESCO, this course was made for policy influencers at all levels and teaches learners why countries should conserve biodiversity as a key environmental determinant of human health.
Using the SDGs for Government Action with Apolitical: In this course, created exclusively for Apolitical, policymakers and public servants learn how the SDGs can be used as tools for reframing and improving action for sustainable development in the public sector.

Ecosystem-based Adaptation: Working with nature to adapt to a changing climate with IISD, IUCN and GIZ. Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) is a popular response to climate change; however, there are gaps in knowledge about EbA design and implementation. This course offers tangible solutions.

Equity and Inclusion in Education with UNESCO. Equity and Inclusion in Education: Made for education experts and practitioners, this course covers the ten core aspects of equitable education.

Making Universal Social Protection a Reality with ILO. Designed in partnership with the International Labour Organization, this course offers learners insight into the design and implementation of social protection at the regional and national levels.

Changing Behaviour for Sustainable Development: Experts in behavioral science in this course that uncover the science behind the necessary human behavioral shifts we must make in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.
Top 5 courses
July 2022 - June 2023*

- Nature-based Solutions 54.8%
- Early Childhood Development 11.9%
- Climate Science 11%
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation 12.8%

Top 5 courses had the most learners in India, Canada, the U.S., and Nigeria

97,646† learners in FY23
46 total courses
855,263‡ total learners

Top 5 courses of all time, by enrollments

- Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience
- The Best Start in Life: Early Childhood Development for Sustainable Development
- Global Public Health
- Climate Change: The Science and Global Impact
- Sustainable Cities

* percentages represent proportion of enrollments across top five courses
† learners from edX only
‡ learners from all platforms
2023 year marked the beginning of Season 2 for the award-winning podcast, Book Club with Jeffrey Sachs. Throughout the past year, Professor Sachs delved into a captivating array of thought-provoking subjects, taking listeners on a journey that shed light on the often-overlooked stories of civil rights activists, investigating the complexities of social spending, and unraveling the challenges of achieving universal food security.

This popular podcast series has found its way into the ears and hearts of listeners across 200+ countries and territories. Garnering praise from every corner, it proudly displays a stellar 4.9-star rating, a testament to its intellectual exploration and insightful discussions with featured authors. From July 2022 to June 2023, its popularity continued to trend upwards. Downloads doubled, with more than 77,000 total downloads across all seasons. The podcast was ranked in the Top 5 Book Club Podcasts of 2023 by FeedSpot, a social feed reader. Visit www.bookclubwithjeffreysachs.org or search for “Book Club with Jeffrey Sachs” on your podcast app to catch every episode.

Season 2

1. Until I’m Free, Keisha N. Blain
2. How the South Won the Civil War, Heather Cox Richardson
3. American Kleptocracy, Casey Michel
4. Making Social Spending Work, Peter H. Lindert
5. Being You, Anil Seth
6. Why We Fight, Chris Blattman
8. The Story of Russia, Orlando Figes
9. Universal Food Security: Universal Food Security: How to End Hunger While Protecting the Planet, Glenn Denning
10. In Search of Monsters to Destroy: The Folly of American Empire & the Paths to Peace, Christopher Coyne
11. The Ministry for the Future, Kim Stanley Robinson
12. The Korean War, Bruce Cumings
13. Wellbeing: Science and Policy, Lord Richard Layard and Jan-Emmanuel De Neve
14. The Human Consequences of Economic Sanctions, Francisco Rodriguez

Top Episode:
Season 2 Episode 6
4,647 downloads
The SDG Academy Library was established to meet the demand for easily searchable educational micro-content on sustainable development. The Library expands the reach of the SDG Academy’s vast array of high-quality open educational resources; distributes knowledge as a global public good; and aims to share, integrate, and contextualize lectures and case study videos. The Library is utilized by a variety of partners, including higher education institutions, government authorities, corporations, and more.

Trends in geolocation of Library users show a 36% increase in viewers from Malaysia between July 2022 and June 2023, likely due to the SDG Academy’s expanded presence in Asia via the opening of SDSN’s third global office in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia now accounts for nearly half of total viewership, followed by the United States and Canada.

The SDG Academy Library has also become a key tool in our efforts to expand professional development on the SDGs. Globally, private sector companies are using videos from our Library to educate their employees about sustainable development. These lectures provide a framework for further learning and encourage viewers to consider how their work and lived experiences fit inside the wider context of sustainable development.

### Top 3 Countries
- **Malaysia** - 29,802 plays
- **USA** - 7,260 plays
- **Canada** - 2,616 plays

### Most Played
**Why Sustainable Development is Important: Happiness and Wellbeing**
- 2,384 plays
- (10,922 all-time views)

### Jul 2022 - Jun 2023
- **459,090** minutes of video viewed
- **22.5%** increase in player impressions
Online Master’s Programs

The SDG Academy continues to support online Master’s programs at partner universities in order to expand access to quality accredited degrees, offered in a flexible format and at a competitive price. For the programs at University College Dublin and Sunway University in Malaysia, the majority of learners are mid- or even late-career professionals looking to upskill or change careers. In 2024, the SDG Academy plans to find new partners in other geographies, and eventually hopes to create a collaborative network of online Master’s programs where students can conduct “virtual exchanges” and learn from experts at each other’s institutions.

University College Dublin

In view of our world’s multiple challenges, crafting and implementing solutions requires skilled and dedicated professionals across fields and geographies. Now in its third year, the Online MSc. in Sustainable Development at University College Dublin has graduated a total of 60 students from around the world. The multidisciplinary program includes modules taught by four different schools inside of UCD: College of Science, College of Social Sciences and Law, College of Engineering and Architecture, and College of Health and Agricultural Sciences. At its core, the program blends flexibility and comprehensiveness, attracting students (most of them working professionals) from around the world.

Sunway University

The Masters in Sustainable Development Management (MSDM) at Sunway University’s Jeffrey Sachs Center aims to create a new generation of multidisciplinary practitioners adept at management and problem-solving, using analytics and systems thinking guided by global concerns. Since the launch of MSDM’s online track, 28 students have graduated from the program. The program builds a strong foundation of leadership along with an interdisciplinary understanding of sustainable development using theoretical perspectives and practical applications. Students learn how to approach attaining the SDGs from all angles.
UCD Student Perspectives

The programme is a great career development opportunity for anyone working in a related field, but also for anyone who just loves learning. It addresses all the key social, economic, and environmental issues facing humankind, societies, and organisations. I would without hesitation recommend it to any aspiring student.

Gladstone Ogbonna
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications of Ireland

Recognizing that experienced professionals are frequently time-poor, the SDG Academy and UCD present pathways to obtain a MSc. in Sustainable Development and to acquire the knowledge to innovate and scale solutions to create a brighter, sustainable future for all.

Lorcan Hall
Global Head of Strategy and Innovation, SCOR, Switzerland
Sunway Student Perspectives

The program provided me with a network of peer students, with many working on the same goal. It gives me strength and determination to have these connections, as we have a job at hand that requires all of us to work together.

**Marjolijn Heslinga**
Sustainability and ESG Consultant, Indonesia

The incorporation of a unique hybrid session presented a noteworthy occasion to actively engage all participants, fostering a diverse and engaging educational interaction. This localised online learning approach, which I haven’t encountered in other schools locally or abroad, truly sets the program apart.

**Sarah Santiago**
Student Representative, MSDM Program, Malaysia
2023 marked an important new direction for the SDG Academy, with the incorporation of professional development and training programs. As leaders in the area of higher education and the SDGs, our mission expanded to take on the challenge of upskilling the current workforce to meet the UN’s 2030 Agenda. Over the last year, the SDG Academy has formulated an innovative strategy of outreach that includes both wide reaching initiatives and high impact local trainings. Though still in its nascent stages, the SDG Academy’s professional training portfolio has grown to successfully launch several initiatives, with more slated in 2024.

We continued to grow our Professional Training offerings to include larger audiences via online learning platforms such as edX, LinkedIn Learning, seekMAX, and others. These upskilling programs are applicable to a wide range of professionals, regardless of industry. The SDG Academy also creates customized content for our private sector partners and municipal governments. Business leaders, such as the Sunway Group in Malaysia, and policymakers, such as the government of Valencia in Spain, are upskilling their workforces using our high-quality accessible educational materials.

The SDG Academy launched two new edX Professional Certificates in FY23
The SDG Academy is a global network partner of an exciting new project funded by the European Commission: the BuildSkills Academy. This project aims to establish a pan-European framework and certification scheme for the construction sector. This scheme, through Vocational Educational and Training (VET) in Europe, will update the skills and competencies required by the industry to align with the EU’s twin transition (green and digital) and climate neutrality goals by 2050.

Ultimately, the project seeks to support VET centers to advance the transformation of the built sector with the twin transition needs while becoming a global benchmark for enhancing and certifying VET services. The SDG Academy will play a vital role in disseminating the project results and knowledge worldwide. The project kicked off in June 2023, with much in store for 2024.

SDSN Spain and the SDG Academy designed and executed four self-training courses for the National Institute of Public Administrations and for the Valencian Institute of Public Administrations.
SDG Academy Followers and Alumni

A growing network

Followers have increased an average of 12% across all platforms since July 2022.

Facebook: 55,000 (4% increase)  
LinkedIn: 24,500 (19% increase)  
Twitter: 15,500 (8% increase)  
Instagram: 8,200 (17% increase)  
Newsletter subscribers: 74.5k increase

Alumni Networks

Learners in SDG Academy courses are invited to participate in our digital alumni communities on Facebook and LinkedIn. Over 1,500 members of the SDG Academy Alumni LinkedIn group use the platform to share news and events related to sustainable development and to build professional networks. The SDG Academy Alumni Facebook Group reached 6,400 members in June 2023, growing by 500+ members in the past year.
MDP Program

Master’s in Development Practice

The Global Association of Master’s in Development Practice (MDP) program remained active in its delivery of high quality graduate education. The Global Association currently boasts 34 MDP programs across 20 countries. This year, there was increased enrollment and a new joint degree was launched between India’s Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Monash University.

The Global Association also expanded its community through speaking engagements and partnerships, including a joint project on global citizenship with Columbia University Global Centers and Columbia’s Center for Sustainable Development; and panels at the Comparative & International Education Society (CIES) conference and the US Summit on Transformative Education, organized by SDSN USA.

MDP Director Dr. Lucia Rodriguez speaks to MDP students at the University of Florida

The 15th annual MDP Summit in June 2023 at Trinity College Dublin showcased 17 participating programs, with plans for continued growth. The Global Classroom, a free 14-week online course, experienced record participation in exploring sustainable development issues.
MDP Program (continued)

Additionally, a book on sustainable development in education is set to release in 2024. Titled, Transforming Education for Sustainable Development: Global Perspectives from Classroom to Practice, the book is a collaborative effort across several MDP partner institutions.

Finally, many graduates remain involved in the MDP Student & Alumni Advisory Council (SAAC), an MDP student- and alumni-led network of over 50 current and former MDP students that plans monthly meetings and activities on a variety of topics and events.
Youth Engagement

WTTC Global Summit, Riyadh

In November 2022, the SDG Academy convened a delegation of nearly 100 youth for the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) Global Summit held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Students age 18 to 25 flew in from 27 different countries, all committed to learning the impact of tourism on sustainable development.

Under the theme of "Travel for a better future," the Summit engaged experts from around the world to discuss the future of travel and tourism with sustainability and resilience at its forefront. High-level speakers included Professor Jeffrey Sachs and former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.
Mission 4.7

Transformative Education

Mission 4.7 was founded by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network in partnership with the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens, UNESCO, and the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University. As members of the Mission 4.7 Secretariat, the SDG Academy team has hosted and participated in many events that champion innovative approaches to education for sustainable development and spur important conversations on how to best advance action on SDG Target 4.7.

Target 4.7

“By 2030, ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

Transforming Education Summit

Education is a fundamental pillar for peace, tolerance, human rights, and sustainable development. Recognizing this fundamental truth, UN Secretary-General António Guterres announced the Transforming Education Summit (TES), which took place in September 2022 alongside the UN General Assembly. The TES addressed two interconnected challenges: a global learning crisis, exacerbated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic posing a threat to education targets outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and a broader issue concerning conventional education systems’ ability to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills for success in a rapidly changing world. With the world recovering from the pandemic, the TES aimed to garner increased political ambition and commitments to reverse setbacks in SDG 4, envision a transformed education system, and expedite progress on education and the 2030 Agenda throughout the remainder of the Decade of Action. For more details on outcomes of the Transforming Education Summit and related events, visit the Transforming Education Knowledge Hub.
Mission 4.7 (continued)

UNESCO ESD-Net 2030 Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting, Bali, Indonesia:

In June 2023, SDG Academy Managing Director, Dr. Amber Webb, and Regional Team Lead for Asia, Shannon Kobran, were invited to participate in the UNESCO ESD-Net 2030 Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting, Bali, Indonesia. UNESCO launched ESD-Net 2030 in October 2022 as a global network to advance Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) policy and implementation. Following the Transforming Education Summit in September 2022, UNESCO organized sub-regional and regional meetings to advise countries on developing and implementing ESD initiatives. The ESD-Net 2030 Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting brought together stakeholders from the region to share ESD country initiatives and discuss priority action areas. Discussions included policy, transforming learning environments, building capacities of educators, empowering youth, and local action. Speaking on a panel about the Greening Education Partnership, Shannon urged attendees not to focus solely on primary and secondary education, but emphasized the importance of considering adult and professional learners in conversations about ESD.
The Transforming Education Pre-Summit took place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 30 June 2022. The SDG Academy convened speakers from government, the UN, academia, and the private sector to discuss the importance of open educational resources, with Director Patrick Paul Walsh leading a session on “Transforming Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) with FAIR OERRs, Digital Innovation, and Diamond Partnerships.” The event explored best practices and the possibilities that digital innovation can create for the transformation of education towards sustainable development. Engaging our partners from Mission 4.7 and beyond to help deliver on the TES Action Tracks and Roadmap to 2030, the session informed the Declaration on Transformative Education ahead of TES.
On September 17, 2022, at UN Headquarters in New York, the SDG Academy, the Permanent Missions of Ireland and Ghana to the UN, and United Nations Academic Impact co-hosted a session at the Transforming Education Summit, highlighting our advocacy for open educational resources and endeavors to adopt Creative Commons licenses to promote a learning environment which supports the development of all learners. The Summit provided an opportunity to prioritize and transform education on a global scale with a Vision Statement of the UN Secretary-General on "Transforming Education: an urgent political imperative for our collective future."
UN Partnership Forum

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Partnership Forum was established as a forum to promote partnerships between governments, private sector entities, civil society organizations, and other key players. Through its annual gatherings, the ECOSOC Partnership Forum brings together diverse perspectives and expertise, contributing to the collective efforts aimed at building a more equitable, just, and sustainable world. With a focus on fostering inclusive and multi-stakeholder partnerships, this forum plays a crucial role in promoting the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by providing a space for shared insights, best practices, and strategic planning. The SDG Academy staff lead and participated in several events at the 2023 ECOSOC Partnerships Forum.

Enhancing capacities for transformation: Building partnerships to harness science, technology and innovation
In February 2023, the SDG Academy led a Spotlight Session at the ECOSOC Partnership Forum on enhancing Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). Moderated by SDG Academy Director Patrick Paul Walsh, the session included representatives from the UN Library, UN Academic Impact, and the UN Global Sustainable Development Report, who discussed the need for a global knowledge commons. It marked the launch of a proposed “overlay” of academic SDG resources, hosted in an open digital library and globally accessible to researchers, policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders.

#WeChampion Greening Education Systems through Partnerships
Mission 4.7 and the SDG Academy co-hosted a workshop at the UN ECOSOC Partnership Forum focused on integrating the SDGs into K-12 learning and higher education institutions. The event investigated pedagogical approaches and highlighted innovative practice in education. Speaking on university initiatives, the SDG Academy presented on the Global Master’s in Development Practice program and emphasized the critical importance of community based learning and problem solving in local contexts.

Pandemic pivots: How lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic can improve the future of education
This side event addressed the changes that were made in education due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from the rapid adoption of digital pedagogies to the greater attention to socio-emotional learning, and the partnerships that were necessary to achieve them. The event brought together representatives from policy, research, and practice, who concluded that the greatest “silver lining” from COVID was not technology adoption, but stakeholders’ improved flexibility, innovation, creativity, and collaboration; as well as the realization that, having been forced to pivot so quickly, the changes were actually easier than expected.
Launch of HLAC

High Level Advisory Council

The successor to our Academic Advisory Committee, the High Level Advisory Council (HLAC) provides strategic advice and guidance to the SDG Academy on our core mission, as well as feedback related to our annual work plan, flagship programs, and partnerships. The HLAC has an important mission to increase the visibility of education for sustainable development globally.
New Initiatives

Joint Committee on Open Education Resource Repositories (OERR)

The Joint Committee, a collaborative effort between SDSN and UNESCO, will work to promote and expand the use of open educational resources (OERs) and repositories.

Upskilling the workforce

Professional training programs are in progress to address the needs of upskilling at scale, while also ensuring local and contextualized approaches.

Special Issue Journals

The SDG Academy is partnering with academics worldwide to publish special issues that explore an array of critiques, best practices, and solutions related to progress toward the SDGs.

SDG Academy Fellows Program

The SDG Academy will launch a Fellows program to convene scholars in the field of education for sustainable development (ESD) to support our thought leadership and OER programs.
Thank you to the partners who contribute to our progress