

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

HESI Learning session
&
Responsibility Roulette

Side event and workshop
at the United Nations High Level Political Forum

11-13th July 2018

New York City
USA



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INLAND NORWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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Organised by:

Centre for Collaborative Learning for Sustainable Development at
Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences



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Education for Sustainable Lifestyles



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Description of the United Nations High Level Political Forum 2018

The U.N. High Level Political Forum (HLPF) has been organized annually since 2015. The purpose is to assess progress on the Sustainability Development Goals (SDG's) globally and nationally. The focus in 2018 was on SDG # 6 (clean water and sanitation), # 7 (affordable and clean energy), #11 (sustainable cities and communities), #12 (responsible consumption and production), #15 (life on land) and #17 (partnerships for the goals).

A selection of 46 countries submitted national reports. A ministerial declaration was adopted at the end of the HLPF by a vote of 164 in favor and 2 against (USA and Israel) in which the governments reconfirmed their commitment to effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for all people, everywhere.

U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres said in his closing remarks that while much progress has been made, the world has also backtracked in areas that are fundamental to the shared pledge to leave no one behind. For the first time in a decade, the number of people who are undernourished has increased, gender inequality continues to deprive women of basic rights, and investment in sustainable infrastructure remains “entirely inadequate” — all amid runaway climate change, eroding human rights and persistent pockets of poverty. Greenhouse gas emissions must be brought under control, countries must do everything to mobilize internal resources, and drivers of conflict must be addressed.

Two themes were of special relevance at the HLPF 2018 for the activities PERL carried out. Sustainable lifestyles which are dependent on responsible consumption and production and education. Additionally, partnerships are central to the overall pursuit of education for sustainable lifestyles.

Summary of PERL contributions to the HLPF

PERL, a part of the Centre for Collaborative Learning for Sustainable Development at Inland University of Applied Sciences, was chosen to participate in a panel dealing with the topic of “*Leveraging innovative partnerships with higher education institutions towards sustainable and resilient societies*”. The panel was organized by the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative and the event took place in the United Nations Building 11th July, 2018 from 10:00 am-11:45 am.

On the 12th of July 2018 from 09:00 am-13 pm, PERL held a public workshop at the Scandinavian House on Park Avenue, New York City, This workshop was entitled “Responsibility Roulette” and was organized as an interactive game in which everyone participated including the panel of invited international experts. The session explored what a happier, healthier and more sustainable lifestyle is and who has what responsibility for making sustainable lifestyles the norm and not the exception. A poster exhibition showing initiatives from around the world was also mounted as a part of the workshop.

The workshop was organized as contribution to the Sustainable Lifestyle and Education programme of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes (10 YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production by the PERL Network, the Centre for Collaborative Learning for Sustainable Development (at Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences). The workshop was made possible by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy of the Government of Sweden and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Several PERL partners also contributed to the workshop arranged by the 10-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Lifestyles and Education coordination office entitled “*Our Lifestyles in 2030—The futures we want!*” The workshop was held at the Scandinavian House on July 13th, 2018 from 13:30-16.30 pm.

Description of HESI panel

The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative is a partnership between the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNESCO, United Nations Environment, UN Global Compact’s PRME initiative, United Nations University (UNU), UN-Habitat, UNCTAD and UNITAR). It was created in 2012 in the run-up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). With commitments from over 300 universities from around the world, HESI accounted for more than one-third of all the voluntary commitments that were launched at Rio+20. HESI’s learning sessions at the HLPF were held in order to showcase how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is being integrated into sustainability strategies, research, teaching, pedagogy and campus practices and to position higher education institutions as key drivers for achieving the SDG’s.

Chosen from a large number of applicants, PERL was invited along with six other universities to present the work they had done towards the SDG’s that were under review. (One institution’s representatives did not arrive). The session was lead by Ms. Chantal Line Capentier, Chief UNCTAD, New York Office. Victoria W. Thoresen, UNESCO Chair for Education about Sustainable Lifestyles and Director of the Centre for Collaborative Learning for Sustainable Development, made a presentation which focused on how higher education can collaborate with other institutions to promote knowledge and activities related to sustainable lifestyles. She referred to the work done by PERL over the past 20 years and the importance of building trust and having frank consultation. About 130 people were present at this event. This was the total capacity of the room and about 20 individuals were not allowed to enter and stood outside listening.

Presentations:

The institutions that presented at this session were:

- PERL, Partnership for Education and Research for Responsible Living, Inland University of Applied Sciences, Norway

- Harvard University, USA
- Oxford University, UK
- University of Sao Paulo, Brazil
- University of Bergen, Norway
- (Kazakh National Agrarian University, Kazakhstan)
- Pan African University Institute of Water and Energy Sciences

The PERL presentation at the HESI Learning Session explored what sustainable lifestyles might be and who has what responsibility to change existing unsustainable aspirations and systems into ones that promote sustainable development for all. It described the mission PERL has had and how it has over 20 years fostered innovative partnerships between institutions of higher education and civil society. t

Following the panel presentations, a discussion was held in which the challenges of partnerships between the HEI's and civil society were further considered. The need to develop vocabularies that all could understand was mentioned. The need was also highlighted to make research more easily available to the public at large. It was emphasized, in addition, that HEI's should increase their efforts to go out into the community rather than to expect citizens to join them at the university.

Networking:

The event provided opportunities for networking and there were many enquiries as to the Education for Sustainable Lifestyles Action Plan and what PERL was involved in doing that related directly to responsible consumption and production.

Evaluation:

The HESI learning session was considered by the attendees to be very useful. Their comments indicated that they found the content relevant, the presentations clarifying, and the references valuable. Interest in the topic of education for sustainable lifestyles was particularly noticeable.



Description of the Responsibility Roulette Workshop

Shifting towards more sustainable ways of living requires people individually and collectively to understand how their lifestyles and behaviours influence the global pursuit of sustainable development. Achieving this shift is a fundamental challenge for everyone whether we function in governments, business, advertising, civil society, education, or simply as individuals. This workshop was organized as an interactive game in which everyone participated including the panel of invited international experts. Those present explored what a happier, healthier and more sustainable lifestyle is and who has what responsibility for making sustainable lifestyles the norm and not the exception.

The game examined essential ingredients of living well: family and community, time as a resource, freedom and discovery, and balancing obligations and wishes. It stimulated reflection on relevant strategies for achieving sustainable lifestyles—strategies such as deciphering the systemic nature of lifestyles, taking advantage of life stages and transitions, accommodating diversity in lifestyles, and engaging in collective action.

The roulette wheel determined who got the first say, who had to answer the questions from the participants and who got the opportunity to share examples of solutions. The first wheel indicated who was to speak, the second on what issue related to sustainable lifestyles, and the third how the responsibilities of the speaker, in relation to the selected topic, also connected to the SDG which appeared after twirling the arrow on the third wheel.

The expert panel consisted of:

- Lewis Akenji (who took on the role of government representative)
- Vanessa Timmer (who took the role of advertisers)
- Erik Assadourian (who took the role of the individual consumer)
- Dorothy Marcic (who took the role of business)
- Arthur Lyon Dahl (who took on the role of representative of science and education)
- Victoria W. Thoresen: game facilitator

The responsibility roulette wheels resulted in the following combinations :

- 1) Individual +housing + SDG #8 (decent work)
- 2) Science and education + transport + SDG #14 (life on water)
- 3) Government + time + SDG#9 (industry, innovation, infrastructure)
- 4) Civil Society + energy + SDG# 15 (life on land)
- 5) Business + clothing + SDG # 3 (good health and well-being)

The game prompted extensive discussion on these and other topics. Everyone in the audience participated.

In addition, the main wall of the room was filled with posters about education for sustainable lifestyles from around the world.

Dissemination of invitations

The invitations to the workshop were spread widely. Over a thousand were disseminated to individuals with whom PERL has direct email communications. The event was also announced on the schedule of the UN Major Groups activities for the HLPF. It was advertised on numerous websites and listed in the program of side events and learning sessions at the HLPF. Unfortunately, the U.N. has stricter rules than in the past and it is no longer allowed to distribute invitations within the U.N. building itself. Several individuals indicated that they would have liked to attend the workshop but were unable to do so due to the distance from the U.N. building and the fact that they needed to be back at the U.N. building for other sessions.

Objectives

The intention of this workshop was twofold. On the one hand, it aimed to highlight the diverse aspects of sustainable lifestyles and their interrelatedness. On the other hand, the workshop tried to show by example an active learning methodology by which discussion about sustainable lifestyles could be stimulated in a deeper and more participatory manner than normal. By also including the third part of the exercise where the speaker had to consider how the topic related to their responsibilities but also to other SDG's, the interdependencies of the SDG's were emphasized.

The poster exhibition showcased examples of education for sustainable lifestyles from around the globe.

Andrea Hvistendahl from Mälardalens University in Sweden presented an art exhibition and a game about sustainable lifestyles at the end of the workshop. She explained how they had used artistic expression to help students understand the SDG's and sustainable lifestyles.



Evaluation

The participants' overall evaluation of the workshop was highly positive. Participants felt that this workshop clarified and addressed many important aspects of responsibilities connected to sustainable living. They also expressed that they had found the approach both entertaining and informative. Many indicated that felt that it was a successful way to engage all the individuals in the workshop. Several asked for permission to copy the game for use in their institutions or learning situations. Even before the HLPF, PERL was contacted by a company and an ngo requesting to be allowed to use the game with their 200 employees.





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