

PARTNERING FOR THE SDGS

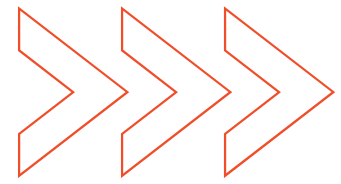
TRANSLATING LOCAL LEARNING
FOR PLANETARY HEALTH

NORTH WEST ENGLAND, UK



2020
-2023

Projects Overview



A partnering learning journey towards local implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

With funding from UKRI, four formal projects were completed between December 2020 and March 2023. Through partnership with local authorities, businesses and other organisations we pursued a broad agenda of policy support and knowledge exchange around contextualising the SDGs, and in particular SDG 17. Beginning in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic shifted meetings to virtual spaces, the work emerged and evolved as we collaborated on different projects with various actors, participants and partners. Our key finding supports advocating a more inclusive understanding of partnerships focusing on inter-personal connections and relationships as a basis for systemic change.

The work included nine university-based researchers and seven recognized community partners, for 16 co-researchers in total. Project activities included public events, targeted World Cafe workshops, development of localised online content, an web directory of local organisations mapped to the SDGs, a partnering skills course, Q Methodological Studies, and key informant interviews. Participants came from a broad swath of local contexts, including government (local authorities as well as NHS and law enforcement), the voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and academia.



Short term pilot projects engaging diverse actors. Co-creating activities through shared responsibility and inputs into design and capacity building.

Framed by UKRI Research England's policy support & knowledge exchange aims.

Local Partnering Constellations

Mult-year and multi-method pointed at collaboration

These UKRI Research England funded projects enhanced knowledge exchange and policy support towards contextualising the SDGs in North West, England, UK.



2020-2021

The lens of partnerships

We used surveys, interviews, & learnings from a short course on strategic collaboration to compare three formal partnerships and one less formal model.

Learnings from:

- Carlisle Partnership, Lake District National Park Partnership, Madrid Deep Demonstration, and Lancaster Community Conversations as models

Learnings from:

- Participating in quarterly zoom calls (and an in-person event) on topics such as Community Wealth Building and Social Value.
- Q-Methodological study on perspectives on local collaboration

2021-2022

Partnering through conversation

We did a 'deep dive' into the Lancaster and Morecambe-based Community Conversations model to explore its use by the Lancaster City Council and residents.



2022-2023

Digital tools and SME focus

We developed digital tools to contextualise the SDGs for North West England through education & a directory of local organisations. Micro, small & medium enterprises (MSMEs) participated in a learning event to further this work.

Learnings from:

- Gamification of the SDGs at in-person event focused on embedding the SDGs in local MSME practice.
- Developing local resources, images, and knowledge.



Learnings from:

- World Cafe in-person workshop that developed posters for potential community events for SDG implementation
- Q-Methodological study to understand how the SDGs resonate with VCFSE work

2023

Voluntary sector engagement

With the Lancaster District City Council & Lancaster District CVS, we engaged in action research to introduce local Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations to the SDGs.



Methods & Methodology



This research uncovered a complex kaleidoscope of work contributing to the SDGs, as well as surprising roadblocks in formal policy forums. In the SDG-related literature a 'human-centric' lens is increasingly interested in the relationships between humans, their connections to constructed social institutions, and to the ecological environment. Our findings support this framing with useful methodological and programmatic outcomes. We advocate for a deeper appreciation and recognition of the importance and value of interpersonal collaborative relationships and less formal deliberative approaches. We argue that a more inclusive emphasis on relational competencies, methods and dynamics (including reflective and integrative values) is needed for systemic transformation in localised diverse multi-stakeholder collaboration contexts.

Participant

Quotes

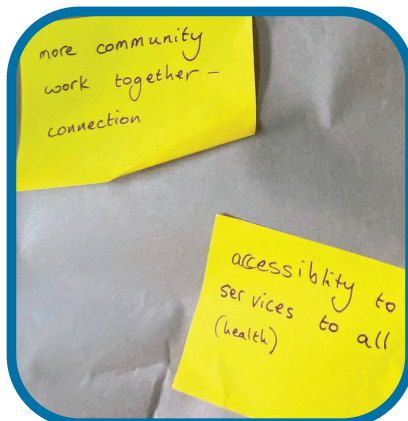
"Working in a partnership opens areas of knowledge in a complex world in which no one has the knowledge of everything, therefore the strength is the integration of different visions, different knowledge."

The main capability [I would add] would be empowerment of people beyond the 'usual suspects' to meaningfully engage. This needs the creation of open access spaces, resources to support people (admin, printing, digital), and a chance to learn and develop skills for collaboration.

Q Methodology



Dialogue, Interviews & World Cafe



Action Research



Partners



UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA DE MADRID



Passionate about people, place, and partnerships.



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