CITY UNIVERSITY LONDON

The SDG Accord

The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Global Goals

Integration of SDGs in

- ☒ Institutional governance/strategic level
- ☐ SDGs in research
- ☐ SDGs in campus operations
- ☐ SDGs in curriculum development
- ☐ SDGs in student engagement activities
- ☐ SDGs into community activities
- ☐ SDGs at a whole-institution level

Focus on

- ☐ Goal 1 - No poverty
- ☐ Goal 2 - Zero hunger
- ☐ Goal 3 - Good health and wellbeing
- ☐ Goal 4 - Quality education
- ☐ Goal 5 - Gender equality
- ☐ Goal 6 - Clean water and sanitation
- ☐ Goal 7 - Affordable and clean energy
- ☐ Goal 8 - Decent work and economic growth
- ☐ Goal 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- ☐ Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities
- ☐ Goal 11 - Sustainable cities and communities
- ☐ Goal 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- ☐ Goal 13 - Climate action
- ☐ Goal 14 - Life below water
- ☐ Goal 15 - Life on land
- ☐ Goal 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions
- ☐ Goal 17 - Partnerships for the goals

The Global Goals Report

As part of our work to introduce the Global Goals at a strategic level, City published its first Global Goals report in 2020, illustrating how we are aligning activities across the institution to the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development. The report addresses each of the 17 Goals, featuring case studies reflecting the breadth of work undertaken by colleagues and students.

Having previously published annual sustainability reports focused primarily on our operational response, this document is the first to evidence the institution's commitment to education and research for sustainable development, demonstrating how our work contributes to the Global Goals. The report features case studies highlighting innovative activities and positive impacts taking place across City's schools, research centres and professional service departments and are presented across five themes; Research, Education, Engagement, On Campus and Governance.

The case studies were gathered and selected by a cross-institutional Task and Finish Group, and the compilation process demonstrated a collaborative approach which will provide lasting benefits to the University beyond the production of this first report.

Both the production process and the report itself is helping communicate the essential message of sustainability and demonstrate to our students, colleagues and wider stakeholders City's deep commitment and contribution to supporting the delivery of the Global Goals.

"The publication of this report marks a very important shift in the way we think about sustainability at City. For the first time the report aims to capture not only our mitigative efforts but also the positive contributions of the university, as a whole." – Jason Clarke, Head of Sustainability at City, University of London

City, University of London -Global Goals report 2020 -
https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/598465/Global-Goals-report-2020-Web.pdf

BENEFITS

1. Developing this theme and the report improved collaboration across the University around strategic sustainability issues. The framework of the Global Goals helped to ensure that we were working to a common goal and enabled all areas to develop a connection to the work.

2. Through the project a greater understanding of the Global Goals and their applicability across our operations and activities was cultivated. Further work will help us to embed the Goals throughout our key activities.

3. As well as the process of the work delivering benefits, the output of this particular strand of work (the Global Goals report 2020) is an invaluable resource for engagement with both internal and external stakeholders and is an opportunity for us to monitor and share progress.

BARRIERS

1. Attitude of internal stakeholders – An initial lack of understanding of the Global Goals and the purpose of the report, i.e. How does this relate to my area of work? We overcame this initial barrier through creating an effective Task and Finish Group which carried both seniority and authority. Through this forum we were able to articulate the relevance and importance of the issues at a strategic level to a wide range of departments. We also used the Group to share examples and best practice of case studies and reports from internal and external sources to demonstrate the positive impact the work could achieve.

2. Time and resource limitations (some imposed due to Covid-19 lockdown) – We managed to maintain this as an important issue while the operational focus of the institution was shifting, primarily through maintaining our deadline for delivery, providing clarity regarding our audience and their expectations and developing a targeted sub-group for delivery of some aspects.

CONCLUSIONS

Our experience showed that the process of developing this strategic level reporting was as important as the output in terms of creating a shift in approach and understanding within the organisation. Collaboration and working outside the existing structures was incredibly important and allowed new partnerships across the institution to form.

The main enabler of this shift was to create and demonstrate a shared goal with clarity of purpose. Articulating the drivers at the highest level and demonstrating a sector wide shift provided meaning for senior leaders.