

Workshop February 1, 2017

Universities and the SDGs

This workshop is UiB's first concerted effort to promote the idea that universities must do more to meet the global challenges, by supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Date: February 1, 2017

Time: 09:00-16:00

Venue: Global Challenges, Jekteviksbakken 31, Bergen



Why this workshop?

In the process leading up to the SDGs, numerous actors throughout the world participated, also academics/experts from Norwegian universities. However, universities *as actors* within nation states and globally are now expected to play a more prominent role.

Several university networks have been created to promote the SDGs, and to reform universities in line with these. Old university networks are also taking the global challenges more serious. And some universities already consider themselves *SDG - transforming and transformed institutions*. But the role of the universities and the knowledge they mediate to society for achieving the SDGs needs to be more strongly advocated if we are to make the progress necessary. Politics decide, but knowledge gives directions - and we are not doing enough.

At the global conference on "Universities and SDGs" with the title "Higher Education: A catalyst for innovation and sustainable societies" arranged by International Association of Universities (Bangkok 13-17 of November 2016), it was argued that the universities have a commitment and a crucial role to play in the implementation of the goals, legitimized by goal 4 and its sub-goals (particularly 4.7). (Presentations accessible: <https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/index.php?eventid=142986&>)

Research based knowledge is crucial for all the 17 goals. In one important background document for our workshop called "Educating for people and planet: creating sustainable futures for all". (Global education monitoring report (2016) Paris: UNESCO) it is shown how research and research based knowledge, in interaction with other parts of our knowledge society, is a precondition for all of the goals to be realized.

The report, however, also argues that this inter-linkage between the different goals "through research and knowledge" has been poorly understood (pp. 10, 11)

Another document, with influence on the process leading up to the framing and formulation of the new goals argues even more firmly for the role of university based knowledge, particularly social science and the humanities ability to explaining why we continue to undermine our climate, also as universities, despite our knowledge of the problems! ("Changing Global Environments. World Social Science Report (2013). ISSC. Paris: UNESCO Publishing)

Universities and SDGs as a global commitment

This workshop is our first concerted step trying to promote the idea that universities must do more to meet the global challenges by supporting the implementation of the SDGs.

Universities in Norway generally, but in particular UiB with its commitment within the north-south research, should be leading in this process nationally as well as globally. The SDGs are given a universal validity differing from the previous MDGs. Thus national commitments within all countries

drive the process. Still, the primary goal is to contribute with knowledge about how we must interact across borders to reach these goals without leaving anybody behind, and by sharing the burden equally.

The University of Bergen has given top priority to three areas; **Marine, Climate and Global Challenges**. There is a strong overlap between these areas of priority as they all must focus on the SDGs to be relevant to our common discourse of change.

The focus of the Workshop

We ask the question: How can universities as part of a system of education and knowledge development contribute to the promotion of the SDGs generally and goal 4 more specifically?

Goal 4 and 4.7 should concern all levels of education and also research: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

And 4.7: *By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the 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*

From this basis we also want use the workshop to plan and to seek support for ideas for future activities. A suggestion about a conference during autumn 2017 has been suggested, but other ideas may emerge. What we want is, as suggested, is "Intensive discussion among participants to find the best way forward"

As a start, we want to concretize the general topic into three subthemes that we all relate to during the workshop, but without excluding others:

- 1) How to transform the knowledge base of the university to be in support of the SDGs in general and goal nr.4 in particular. From research to teaching and curriculum development.
- 2) How can UiB (but not alone) become a good example for other universities and a promoter of good practices within the Norwegian sector, be supportive of the transformation of the "knowledge society" by integrating SDGs. How can we learn from and utilize networks already established and work done nationally and internationally (for example from the PERL/UNITWIN with a base at Hedmark University College, the SIU/NORAD programs, and globally the International Association of Universities).
- 3) How can we contribute to the global promotion of justice and greater equality and solidarity by showing how universities must cooperate across border and north –south divides to make knowledge relevant for the SDGs (see in particular goal 17).

Evolving out of point 1) the focus will be on the link between the different SDGs.

Evolving out of point 2) are the many links between the knowledge of the university and other levels and types of education, and users of university created knowledge. What responsibility do we have for transforming our common curriculum to be relevant for SDGs, for the general education of the population, and for the particular users of research based knowledge?

Evolving out of point 3) is the general issue about how SDGs which presupposes a practice in each and every country, also must improve the situation for all and thus give solutions to the global challenges generally. We will in particular focus on how own practice may be generalized as example for all.

Programme

09.00 – 09.15

Welcome and short orientation of purpose

Tor Halvorsen, Senior Researcher, UiB Global

Professor **Bente Moen**, Director for Centre for International Health, UiB

09.15 – 09.30

Why should university of Bergen and universities in Norway generally contribute to the realization of the SDGs

Professor **Anne Christine Johannessen**, Vice Rector for International Affairs

09.30 – 09.45

A role for education, knowledge and universities in the promotion of SDGs – and why and how should Norway in particular push goal 4?

Dankert Vedeler, Director, Ministry of Education and Research

09.45 – 10.00

The global perspective

Professor **Victoria W. Thoresen**, UNESCO Chair for Education about Sustainable Lifestyles and Director of PERL (Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living), Hedmark University of Applied Sciences

10.00 – 10.15

Health, education and how they interact within the SDGs

Bengt Skotheim, Project Manager, the Norwegian Directorate of Health

10.15 – 10.30 Break

10.30 – 10.45

How can the Humanities contribute?

Professor **Kjersti Fløttum**, Elected Member of the Board of UiB

10.45 – 11.00

How can the STEM disciplines contribute?

Professor **Finn Gunnar Nielsen**, Geophysical Institute, UiB

11.00 -11.15

Health and SDG

Professor **Thorkild Tylleskär**, Centre for International Health, UiB

11.15 – 12.00

Questions, comment and discussion

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch

13.00 – 13.15

The SDGs make out the framework for Norwegian development policy. How does this affect the way we work and do we have the right knowledge to make the right changes? Examples from education and health.

Kari Hauge Riisøen, Deputy Director for Section for Global Initiatives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

13.15 – 13.30

How are the SDGs guiding ideas about development and aid?

Jorun Nossun, Assistant Director, Department of Quality Assurance, NORAD

13.30 – 13.45

Internationalization and values; the SDGs and academic networking?

Gro Tjore, Deputy Director, Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU)

13.45– 14.45

Actors and networks (5 to 7 minutes each)

Swedish research priorities relevant for the SDGs

Professor **Kerstin Sahlin**, General Secretary for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Swedish Research Council

Global networks in water research – why relevant for SDGs?

Tore Sætersdal, Senior Researcher, Global Challenges, UiB

The NORHED program at UiB. New possibilities or missed opportunity? Relevance for SDG?

Kristin Svartveit, Administrative Coordinator, Global Challenges and Division of Research Administration, UiB

The Hedmark experience on networking relevant for SDGs

Professor **Victoria W. Toresen**, Hedmark University of Applied Sciences

The role of students in promoting SDG relevant knowledge; locally—globally

Johanne Vaagland, Student representative on the UiB Board

The World Wide University Network (WUN) and its (new) focus on SDGs

Bjørn Erik Andersen, Senior Adviser, Division of Research Administration, UiB

CROP and Sustainable Science

Alberto D. Cimadamore, Director CROP

14.45– 15.00 Coffee/tea

15.00 – 16.30

Discussions and ideas for future activities

Chair of session, **Dankert Vedeler**, Director, Ministry of Education and Research

- How can we cooperate across the “knowledge and politics divides” to make this possible?
- How can we make universities in Norway more relevant for the global debate about SDGs?

Note: Participation by invitation, but open to anyone interested in sitting in as observers.

[Please register](#) for the workshop by January 29.

Welcome!

Professor Anne Christine Johannessen, Rector for International Affairs, UiB

Tore Sætersdal, Deputy Director, Global Challenges, UiB

Professor Bente Moen, Director for Center for International Health, UiB