

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUE

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The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a broad set of objectives that together represent an all-encompassing effort to tackle the issues we face as a global society.

They are a call to action. A critical imperative to drive advancement for all of humankind, fulfilling the needs of everyone on the planet in a way that cannot not impede future generations.

As a blueprint for sustainable progress, addressing inequality, climate prosperity, peace, justice and the alleviation of poverty and environmental degradation, the UN SDGs resonate deeply with the CEMS mission. In particular, they dovetail with our core values:

- The pursuit of excellence with high standards of performance and ethical conduct
- Understanding and drawing upon cultural diversity with respect and empathy
- Professional responsibility and accountability in relation to society as a whole.

Stefan Tschauko of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston is a researcher whose work focuses on branding within the UN System. As a CEMS graduate who has worked at CEMS social partner UN Alliance of Civilizations and subsequently conducted research within the UN's global communications department, he can also personally attest to the shared values that drive both organisations and undergird their activities across many spheres.

For him, the SDGs are an easy gateway into the complex and critically important work of the United Nations.

CEMS and other providers of business education have a responsibility, says Tschauko, to prioritise the debate on sustainability. "CEMS is a window onto the world and the biggest issues we face. Business programs have a duty to build awareness about the impact of business

activities and to shine a light on the complex web of social, economic, and environmental challenges; and to create opportunities for graduates – the business leaders of tomorrow – to find and to deliver sustainable solutions for all segments of society."

This issue of the CEMS Magazine honours that duty, and highlights the work of pioneering students, alumni and faculty around the world to advance the United National Sustainable Development Goals.

We look at the work of CEMS alumni who have started up their own enterprises; taking a very novel approach to environmental issues and human wellbeing while leveraging resources as diverse as artificial intelligence and potted plants. We hear from the Hungarian school that is serving up more than lessons in pursuit of sustainability. From Zambia and Kenya to Cambodia, we discover what enterprising CEMSies are doing to drive inclusion, from off-grid electricity generation to writing books for school curricula, from mould-breaking learning experiences to pro bono consultancy opportunities that deliver unique benefits to all. We explore the work of social entrepreneurs tackling the social and professional integration of refugees, and ask what more can be done to transform a crisis situation into a context that fosters learning and cooperation. And we look at the work of one "reluctant" social entrepreneur who is turning the forests of Borneo green in his fight against climate change.

As Stefan Tschauko says: "Businesses have a huge impact on society through the services they create, the clients they serve and the way that they operate. The challenge for businesses is to grow, operate and deliver products and services in a way that is not only compatible

with the SDGs, but also contributes to their achievement: the planet's resources must be protected, and people's rights and dignity preserved. The Sustainable Development Goals represent a way forward. They offer a roadmap toward a better future – a future in which no one is left behind. CEMS graduates have both an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute towards that future."

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CONTENTS



POINTING THE WAY TO A GREENER ECONOMY

CEMS students explore the impact of the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) on business leadership and the creation of radical new business models. Stephen Hoare investigates



10 CLIMATE CHANGE: THE *RELUCTANT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR* BRINGING AI TO THE FORESTS OF BORNEO

What do you get when you mix mobile phones, photographs and artificial intelligence (AI) with a rain forest in Borneo?

14 INCLUSIVENESS: GETTING OUT THERE AND DOING IT

There are many ways to build bridges and deliver much needed resources, know-how, skills and opportunities to underserved or marginalised communities. It's even possible to do so while driving profitability with purpose for yourself and your organisation.



22 REFUGEES: THE INTEGRATION GAME

Immigrant populations have been growing in virtually all OECD countries over the last decade. The challenges facing refugees in particular, are manifold, says Thomas Liebig from the International Migration Division of the OECD.

28 SUSTAINABILITY: CLOSING THE CIRCLE

What does it take to tackle the most pressing challenges to sustainability and sustainable development? Bridging the gap between government, science and business is the only way to create change at a pace and scale that matches the urgency of need in this field.