REGENERATIVE SCHOOLS

A MANUAL FOR MALAWI EDUCATORS

Ecovillage and Permaculture approaches
to inspire holistic education

GLOBAL
ECOVILLAGE
NETWORK

SCOPE MALAWI

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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INTRODUCTION & GOALS OF THE MANUAL

This manual is created for the valuable members of a community who care for, steward, and inspire the next generation: teachers.

It is intended to be accessible for teachers in Malawi who may or may not have heard of ecovillages or permaculture, yet who are open to bringing inspiration from wider networks into their teaching.

Schools are an invaluable resource in community development, and working with schools presents massive opportunities for shaping the future. As this manual and our work with schools aims to show, schools can be pivotal in creating community cohesion and resilience, building intergenerational links, promoting lifelong learning, and helping to bring about ecological and socio-economic transformation.

The goals of this manual are to respond to the needs of Malawi's schools and to support Malawi´s educators in integrating innovative approaches to education while addressing the needs of their students, schools and communities (especially around nutrition, food security, water management and climate adaptation).

Schools are naturally at the heart of many communities, and places through which communities can be engaged, united, and transformed. Schools are, of course, places of learning and socialisation, where young people spend a majority of their time, and can in addition to that act as hubs for creating links between adult community members, host regular extracurricular activities for all ages, provide venues for community events, and more.

When operating at their full potential, schools enable communication, learning, and potentially new practices and paradigms to flow into the community, through the children and youth as well as the adult community members engaged with school activities.

In this perspective, the educators have a key role. However, most of the time, they do not have enough support in developing new skills, and integrating holistic approaches into education, which would enable them to address crucial topics of our times, such as food security or climate adaptation.

This manual aims to support educators in their learning journey, and also in engaging children, youth, and communities in project-based and collaborative learning as well as participatory and design-based community development.

We hope and believe that this manual can be of use and inspiration for educators in Malawian schools and diverse learning environments, as well as for those interested in teaching in a holistic way and supporting schools to become hubs for regenerative community development.

WHAT ARE REGENERATIVE SCHOOLS AND WHY DO WE NEED THEM?

While sustainability strives to minimize our collective harm to the planet, regenerative action seeks to heal and repair that, both socially and ecologically. It works through deep transformation to explore how we as a species make our planet better by being here, through practices that add to the health and abundance of our communities and the natural world.

Regenerative Education takes this lens into the learning environment, creating a new paradigm of knowledge and practices that empower the next generation to lead that proactive transformation. By allowing the innate capacities of learners to flourish, we tap into their unique potentials to better serve their communities, the planet, and, in the process, themselves.

Regenerative Schools balance traditional and innovative practices, respecting and creatively weaving the history of local culture into the needs for the future. These diverse places of learning serve the learners by igniting their senses and channelling their natural curiosity. When children are allowed to learn by doing and through relationships with each other and the adults that support them, this sets the foundation for thriving communities.

Regenerative Schools

- Reconnect children and communities to their own cultures, ecosystems, and history

- Support communities in their own pathways to sustainable development

- Transform schools into living examples of local resilience and abundance

- Utilise the full potential of schools as intergenerational centres of collaboration

- Counter cultural erosion caused by colonialism and globalisation

- Provide an alternative to unsustainable models of land use and global development

- Spread collaborative, project-based education for sustainable development

- Equip the next generation and their parents with hands-on skills for locally appropriate regeneration, climate change adaptation, and social entrepreneurship

- Strengthen resilience and food security where undernourishment is rampant

Regenerative Education aims to:

- Progressively improve the whole individual (body, mind, and spirit)

- Express the essence of the individual and the learner's innate potential embedded in the larger reality they inhabit

- Continually cultivate just and reciprocal relationships with other individuals, communities and nature

- Honor the interconnected and mutually influential relationship between people and the ecosystem where they live

- Promote justice, equity, compassion and cooperation

- Honor the uniqueness and expression of each person

- Look to the past and the future, our elders and our youth, for wisdom in order to bridge the inter-generational gap

- Look to uplift every person in order to create conditions for "peace and prosperity" for everyone.

- Reward diversity, inclusivity, generosity, creativity, innovation and the fruits of our collective intelligence

- Understand that life is iterative and ever-changing, that change is the only constant, that evolution has gotten us where we are today

(Articulated by Gaia Education)

WHY WORK WITH SCHOOLS?

At the centre of a community is a school - serving as a meeting point and demonstration site for the kind of future the community wants to create.

Children are much more adaptive learners than adults and schools cam serve as unique interfaces between generations. They are agents of socialisation and present massive opportunities for shaping the future.

The way children are encouraged to enquire, to collaborate with each other, and to apply their knowledge to real-world situations, impact how they will interact with the realities ahead of them. This approach facilitates connection with local history, culture, and nature where children find meaning in their learning and purpose and belonging in their community.

Schools are generally an underutilised resource in community development as they are natural centres in the community where people gather for various reasons. sharing a general sense of respect and openness to engage, unite, and potentially transform.

When operating at their full potential, schools enable communication, learning, and potentially new practices and paradigms to flow into the community, through the children as well as the adult community members engaged with school activities.

SCOPE MALAWI

Scope Malawi aims to fight poor health, injustice, stigma and discrimination through working with schools in environmental education, natural resource management, sustainable agriculture, climate change adaptation and mitigation, school health and nutrition, and functional landscaping of school grounds.

By helping schools to re-design their bare lands. they can:

- Produce a diverse range of nutritious food and other useful products
- Provide countless learning possibilities for the curricula
- Serve as resource centers within communities
- Contribute to community resilience and developing the whole person.

SCOPE Malawi started in 2012 with 18 schools, building on the experiences of ReSCOPE driven by the belief that children need to be empowered for a brighter future. Working in 12 districts, they spread to 50 schools, developing an understanding of the different landscapes, communities, weather patterns and using a cluster approach, where schools to cross-pollinate their learnings.

With 80% of Malawi's population being rural and relying on subsistence farming, the focus of the work for the last few years has been mostly on Ecology and working with schools and communities to become ecovillages.

They apply the Integrated Land Use Design (ILUD) tool, a participatory design process for facilitating the planning and implementation of agro-ecology in schools. It is carried out by representatives of all stakeholders – learners, teachers, parents - and goes through five steps of grounding, analysing the dituation, visioning, designing, and creating a plan of action.

The Global Ecovillage Network (GEN)

Catalysing communities for a regenerative world.

As a growing network of regenerative communities and initiatives, GEN connects cultures, countries, and continents. It also builds bridges between policy-makers, governments, NGOs, academics, entrepreneurs, activists, community networks and ecologically-minded individuals across the globe in order to develop strategies for a global transition to resilient communities and cultures.

GEN is composed of 5 regional networks, and a youth arm, NextGEN, spanning the globe to include approximately 6000 communities and projects where people are living together in greater ecological harmony. This collective envisions a world of empowered citizens and communities, designing and implementing pathways to a regenerative future, while building bridges of hope and international solidarity.

With the goal to advance the education of individuals from all walks of life, GEN shares the experience and best practices gained from the networks of ecovillages and sustainable communities worldwide. Striving to advance human rights, conflict resolution, and reconciliation, the network empowers local communities to interact globally, while promoting a culture of mutual acceptance and respect, effective communications, and cross-cultural outreach.

To advance environmental protection globally, GEN also serves as a think tank, incubator, international partner organisation, and catalyst for projects that expedite the shift to sustainable and resilient lifestyles. It also advances citizen and community participation in local decision-making, influencing policy-makers, and educating the public, to accelerate the transition to sustainable living.

What are Ecovillages?

- Intentional, traditional, rural, or urban communities that are consciously designing pathways through locally owned, participatory processes, aiming to address the principles in 4 Areas of Regeneration (social, culture, ecology, economy) into a whole systems design.

- Living laboratories pioneering beautiful alternatives and innovative solutions. with vibrant social structures, vastly diverse, yet united in their actions for low-impact, high-quality lifestyles.

Because each ecovillage is designed by the people who live there, according to their vision, context, culture, and interests, no two are alike.

Still, there are three core practices shared by all:

- Being rooted in local participatory processes

- Actively restoring and regenerating their social and natural environments

- Working towards the 4 areas of regeneration - Integrating social, cultural, economic, and ecological practices into a whole systems approach. (*Learn more about this further on in this manual.)

SCOPE and GEN's Work with Schools

SCOPE Malawi is an active member of the Regional Schools and Colleges Permaculture (ReSCOPE), a Programme which since 1989 has worked with schools to create resilient local communities. In collboration with the Global Ecovillage Network, this became a key strategy to facilitate the transition of existing communities to become ecovillages, through the Greening Schools Programme.

So far,this Programme has reached over 200 schools in Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. It is now scaling and developing the approach, engaging community schools all over the world in taking the next steps towards education for sustainable development together.

The pedagogical, social, and physical contexts of the learning environment are important not only in terms of what children learn, but also in framing their understanding of their role in their community and the wider world - what they do with their knowledge.

GEN's Regenerative Schools Network

In addition to this close collaboration with SCOPE, GEN is currently expanding the focus on regenerative education to include 20 educators and schools across the globe, including Malawi and Zambia. Through facilitation and network weaving, this consortium will co-create further resources to support this work.

GEN has hosted a series of webinars to feature the above casecase studies and highlight best practices, common threads, and unique points. Building from that, GEN matched the case studies based on the needs, interests, and resources in the schools network. Scope Malawi was paired with PermaYouth, a global initiative with roots in Australia.

After identifying universal needs, such as curriculum support and a teacher training, the project is co-creating resources to share with the wider network, due for completion in December 2022.

The Greening Schools approach is based on:

• **Experiential, Fun, and Collaborative Learning**
Creating opportunities for inner and outer transformation through hands-on projects and active collaboration where learners build real life-skills and experience themselves as valued contributors to their communities.

• **A Whole School Approach**
Bringing together learners, teachers, parents, and others in a genuinely inclusive way to co-create a rich learning environment inside and around the school. Engaging multiple stakeholders during the entire process to realise a common vision, using a blend of learning processes to bring about meaningful and responsible change.

• **Responding to Real Needs**
Promoting a needs-based approach that creatively weaves together the building of resilience within the ecosystem while moving communities towards key needs such as food sovereignty, nutrition, and income security.

• **Education for Sustainable Development**
Learning involves personal, social, and ecosystem regeneration and transforms local communities. It creatively uses local and indigenous resources and knowledge, rooted in local culture.

• **Deep Ecology**
Integrating thoughtful care for the environment and everything in it, based on the understanding the interconnections between all things

• **Uniqueness**
There is no one way. Each school comes up with its own unique design that best meets its own needs.

• **Start Small**
Ensure quality and grow organically

The process consists of five key steps:

1. GROUNDING

Supporting the children, youth and school community to become more aware of and feel connected to their particular ecosystem, culture and history; exploring and creating a stronger sense of place together.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Using the Ecovillage Map to identify locally available resources and developing a common understanding of these; mapping and analysing current community assets and needs together with the children, youth and community.

3. VISIONING

Thinking into the future and developing shared long-term goals for the school community; creating an ecovillage- based vision for the future ecological, social, economic, and cultural life of the whole community.

4. INTEGRAL DESIGN

Using participatory whole systems design to create a new role for the school and its grounds, turning the school into a multi-functional ecovillage demonstration site that contributes actively to the community vision while also meeting the needs of children, youth and their communities.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Developing a clear and participatory plan for implementation and evaluation; finding accessible and inclusive ways to evaluate, learn and improve together as the new school design becomes reality.

Permaculture

Permaculture is about creating and maintaining relationships.

It works with, rather than against nature.

It is a process of growing awareness.

The term Permaculture was coined in 1978 by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren and has been implemented worldwide. It originally came from "permanent agriculture", but was later adjusted to mean "permanent culture", incorporating social aspects. Today it has gained international visibility as an approach to land management, agricultural and settlement design and as a guiding life principle or philosophy.

Developing healthy communities, permaculture principles of Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share inspire us to live with an awareness of resources and how we can support each other to live in abundance. It includes plants and animals, buildings and resources and expands to human connections.

Permaculture is a set of design strategies which inform decisions to enable us to fulfill the needs of the things around us while having our own needs met. It is a continuous process.

"The aim of Permaculture is to create systems that are ecologically-sound and economically viable. It uses the inherent qualities of plants and animals combined with the natural characteristics of landscapes and structures to produce a life-supporting systems, using the smallest practical area."

Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, energy, shelter and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way. Without permanent agriculture there is no possibility of a stable social order."

- Bill Mollison, founder of Permaculture together with David Holmgren

The four areas of regeneration and the integral design are deeply interconnected. They fit together and complement each other, providing the foundation to work further with the ecovillage principles and the tools that enable us to navigate how these principles show up in our lives.

Through participatory processes, individuals and communities can redesign their living and working environments.

Ecovillages embrace this holistic approach, and have actively experimented for decades with community-led, participatory, and deeply democratic ways of living well together within the means of the planet. Whether a community, school or group starts with a focus on one particular Area of Regeneration or works on each of them together, over time, as the project matures, its impact will spread throughout all areas.

All of the areas are deeply interconnected, none can be achieved without bringing the other's forth as well.

Developing an ecovillage lifestyle is not an outcome, it is a process that we embark on.

The Map of Regeneration

The Ecovillage Design Cards are a flexible and creative way to explore the Map of Regeneration, a participatory tool for mapping, reflection, dialogue, learning, research and design - for communities, schools and organisations.

The 32 cards illustrate and distil years of experimentation and learning within communities in our global network, as well as current research on resilience, sustainability and participatory design. The cards are divided into five groups: four Areas of Regeneration (Ecology, Economy, Social and Culture) arranged around one central path of integration (Integral Design). In each area, you find six cards, and in Integral Design there are eight cards. Each one represents one of 32 Ecovillage Principles.

Using the Map of Regeneration, any community, school, organisation or project can embark on their unique journey towards more regenerative and community-based living. This Map provides a guide for communities to assess their own assets and needs, think systemically and holistically, and co-create a shared vision and ecovillage development plan in which the school and school grounds play a central role.

ECOLOGY:
Aims to meet human needs for food, water, shelter, and energy without damaging the capacity of others to do the same, supporting us to become a force for good in the ecosystems we are part of, contributing to ecological diversity and health as well as our own wellbeing.

SOCIAL:
Aims to cocreate just, caring, equal and diverse communities where people skillfully communicate, practice participatory governance and leadership, build trust, and achieve shared goals together.

ECONOMY:
Aims to design and support economic systems that actively contribute to ecosystem health and community strength and wellbeing, creating vibrant local economies with meaningful livelihoods that turn making a living into a way of meeting the needs of all within the means of the planet.

CULTURE:
Aims to weave rich and life-sustaining cultures that honour indigenous wisdom and welcome positive innovation, and art, celebration, higher purpose and growing self-awareness create a fertile field for all of us to find our way back to a natural sense of self-worth and connectedness.

INTEGRAL DESIGN:
Shows a way to think, act, design lead from a whole systems perspective.
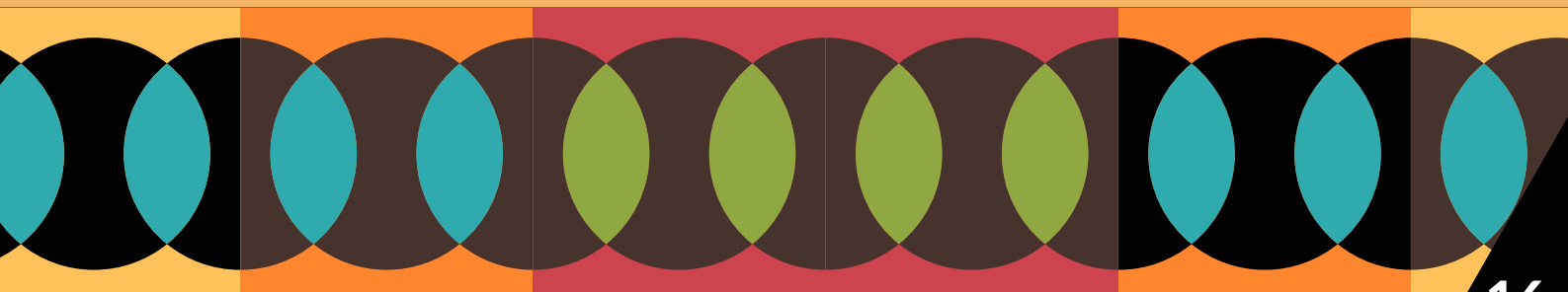
GIZ Project

Malawi has been affected by hunger, deforestation and climate change extremes which is why the project aimed to increase the climate resilience and food security in five school communities located in Southern Malawi, in Chikwawa and Thyolo districts, some of the most affected areas by cyclone Idai, seasonal flooding, dry spells and hunger.

The project followed three stages of implementation in order to increase the climate resilience and food security in five school communities:

- Training workshops in agroecological farming, water conservation methods and in the construction and use of fuel-efficient rocket stoves, to support the transition of these schools to so-called Eco-Schools and to act as inspiration hubs for the surrounding villages, allowing the upscaling of the measures implemented in the schools.

- The development of an online teacher training module and manuals on Eco-Schools in order to allow teachers of other schools to train others and to support their schools to transition to Eco-Schools.

- Engagement of the communities surrounding the five targeted schools to train and to integrate the Ecovillage and Permaculture approaches towards sustainability

This manual is based on the Regenerative Schools Online Teacher Training and its first pilot series of 3 online seminars that GEN and SCOPE offered to teachers in Malawi on the following themes:

1. Introduction to Regenerative Schools, examples from around the world

2. Regenerative school principles, transitioning to regenerative schools

3. Regenerative schools for the future, voices from children

We provided the frame of what makes schools regenerative and shared inspiring examples from around the world. From that foundation, we delved into the journey of transitioning. We concluded by hearing from children, particularly in Kenya and Australia, on their experience with permaculture, youth projects, and what they wish for the future of education.

The webinars which were primarily attended by teachers brought up a variety of discussions on themes such as including Permaculture in the curriculum, engaging parents while transitioning to regenerative schools.

In particular, the most fruitful were conversations around mindset and how to inspire their communities to integrate Permaculture principles and regenerative approaches.

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In order to facilitate these conversations GEN offered three additional consultancy sessions and integrated further questions, feedback and education sessions. These sessions also served as a deepening of the pilot series of online seminars, exploring the Map of Regeneration, Social Permaculture and the SDGs.

The project had to adapt to the changing times of travel restrictions during the COVID pandemic which made it impossible to provide in-person ecovillage design trainings for 50 households in communities surrounding the five targeted schools. But we applied one of the Permaculture Principles called "The problem is the solution" and transformed this limitation into an opportunity by engaging the teachers online, training them in the ecovillage and permaculture approach and inviting them to explore the methods learned with their schools and local communities while learning new online tools which enable them to collaborate globally.

At the beginning it was a challenge for local teachers and the school community to engage online. Internet connection is still very poor in many areas and they had no previous experience with online learning. However, throughout the process they became familiar with the Zoom platform and not only were able to engage but also gained new skills.

Now that we already have an overview of the Ecovillage approach towards sustainability and the Permaculture approach, it is relevant to see where they **overlap and/or complement each other.**

Design plays a central role in both approaches, evidencing the need to observe, reflect and plan ahead in order to co-create regenerative systems. Ecovillage models of regenerative living are based on a holistic approach of social, cultural, economic and ecological sustainability and integral design. Permaculture uses creative design processes based on whole-systems thinking. It adopts arrangements observed in flourishing natural ecosystems in order to create 'permanent cultures'. While most of the time it is used to transform and manage the environment, the Permaculture approach also considers social and economic aspects. It includes an Ethic and Principles to design sustainable systems, which could be related to the culture area in the Ecovillage approach.

It is also relevant to mention that both approaches are based on Principles. The **Ecovillage Principles** are the essence of the Map of Regeneration, and include the main topics and practices we should consider in order to create regenerative communities. In short, they are:

Permaculture Principles:

Permaculture is based on the Ethics which guide the use of the 12 design principles, ensuring that they are used in appropriate ways. These principles are seen as universal, although the methods used to express them will vary according to the place and context.

The domains of Permaculture action, required to create a sustainable culture, are represented in the Permaculture Flower.

We can see that both the Permaculture and the Ecovillage approach are holistic and integrate all aspects of life such as education, health, agriculture and land stewardship, building and infrastructure, appropriate technologies and ways of doing things, economics, governance and so on. You can use one approach or the other while designing for sustainability or both together.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The current United Nations development agenda, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", was launched in 2015, aiming to give guidelines for global development and guide public policies until 2030. The Agenda is a plan of action for people, the planet, and prosperity. It consists of a declaration; 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets; the means of implementation and global partnerships, as well as a framework for monitoring and review.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are seen as an integrated and indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development, including measures relating to ecological, social and economic aspects of sustainability. The SDGs establish social goals, environmental boundaries and indicate critical levels to the use of natural resources.

The SDGs are not perfect and there are several critiques of them, yet they serve as a common language across countries and sectors remaining the best working compromise that we have towards sustainable development. They are thus very useful and should be integrated in our work as educators and the school curriculum. It can serve as another tool or framework to learn about and move towards sustainable development.

The SDGs promote, for example, health and education, climate action and renewable energy, life on land and in water, sustainable communities and decent work. Some people think that sustainability and regeneration are only about the environment—the SDGs show that we have to consider our systems as interconnected.

If we don't care for nature, we cannot have healthy, well fed, fulfilled communities. If we don't address social inequalities and provide dignity for all, we cannot protect the environment.

Several years after the SDGs were launched, we are now seeing some inspiring examples of how the SDGs can be implemented, from theory to practice, from international agreements to tangible reality in different areas and scales.

There are also different ways to teach and learn about them, as we will see in the session below. Schools are more often looking for sustainable education tools to integrate in their curriculums and this can definitely be one of them.
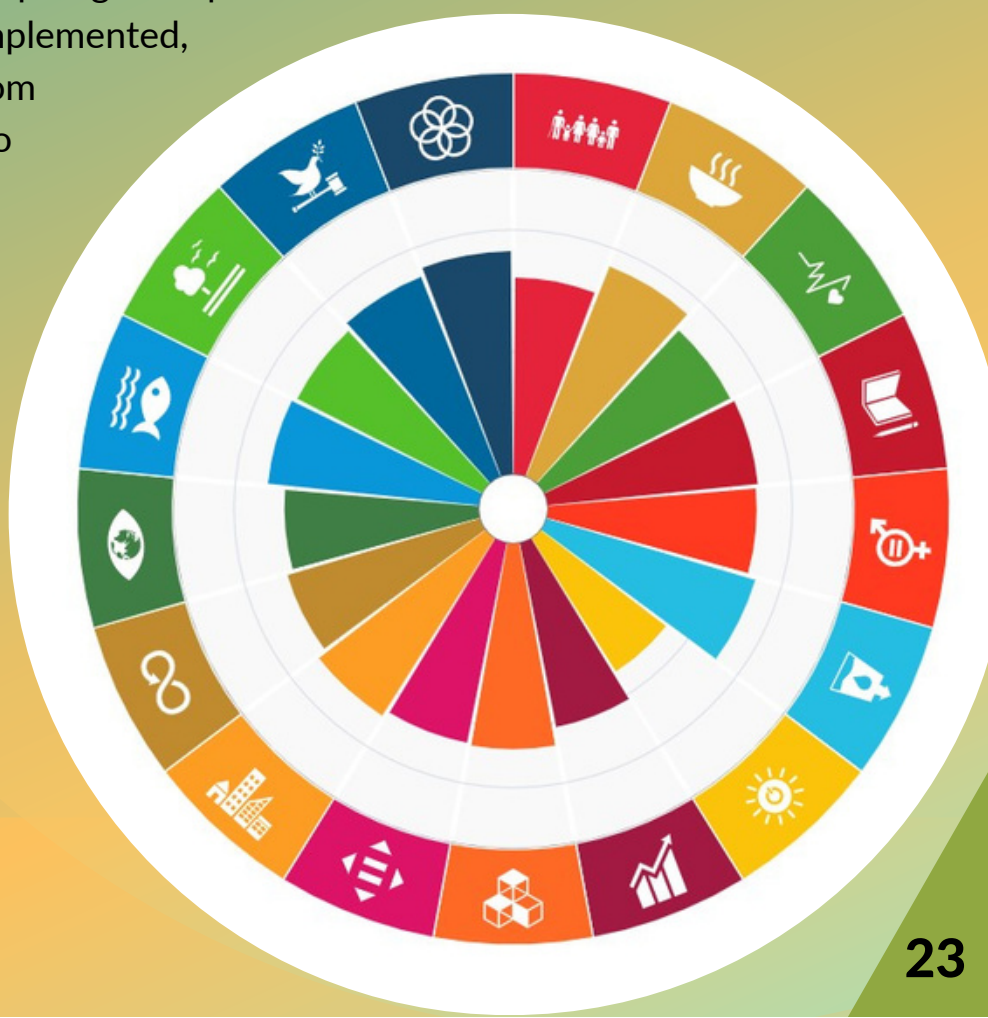
Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals with the Ecovillage and Permaculture Approaches

The three frameworks are based on the sustainability tripode, that weaves together Social, Environment and Economic to foster sustainable development. In order to be sustainable a project, community or system should be: socially inclusive, environmentally sustainable and economically efficient. Permaculture includes these three main areas as its Ethics, calling them: Social Care, Earth Care and Fair Share as we have previously seen.

The Ecovillage approach adds culture as the 4th pillar of sustainability and also integral design as a pathway. It includes the subjective aspects of sustainability (such as vision and purpose) and the relevance of the local context, traditional wisdom and other cultural aspects.

The '5 P's are the five key elements that led to the development of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. They stand for: People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership and Peace, as we can see in the figure below. People relate the social aspects in the Ecovillage approach and 'People care' in the Permaculture approach. Planet links to Ecology (Ecovillage) and 'Earth care' (Permaculture). Prosperity is connected to the Economy and 'Fair share'.

People relate the social aspects in the Ecovillage approach and 'People care' in the Permaculture approach. Planet links to Ecology (Ecovillage) and 'Earth care' (Permaculture). Prosperity is connected to the Economy and 'Fair share'.

Now that we are more familiar with the three frameworks, it is easier to connect them with the disciplines and local curriculum. They can add a different perspective to teaching and learning and can serve as practical and theoretical tools to engage the students and communities in re-thinking and re-designing their schools towards sustainability and regeneration.

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

In the following section, we provide a few examples of activities that teachers and enjoy with their learners. They are offered only as inspiration and along with full creativity to adapt to your local culture and particular curriculum topics... remember, YOU know your learners best!

These activities could be done in one hour or one day, depending on the depth to which you wish to go. They are meant to be a basis for you to build from. And we invite you to play with them, experiment, seek feedback from your learners, and share with us!

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

1. Mapping Exercise, using the GEN Map of Regeneration

This activity uses the Ecovillage Design Cards to give a quick visual image of assets and needs in the school, community or region. It can be used as the beginning of a SWOT analysis, a collaborative design exercise, setting up peer-to-peer learning and more. It can be done once, or regularly as a way to keep track of how the school, a project or community develops. It is not a strictly scientific method, but more closely related to Systemic Constellations. We read from the field where the energy for change is in a specific area or project - and follow this, rather than mental concepts about what is important.

Preparing the exercise:

The Mapping requires two different kinds of objects that students or participants use to indicate whether a card represents an asset or a need in their school or region. Examples can be black and white stones, green and red leaves, a stone and a seed, papers of different colours, etc. We tend to find an abundance of such objects in nature around us once we start looking. Each participant needs a set number of each kind, usually, we work with three of each.

We clarify our intention for the Mapping (energy follows intention) - is it an exercise to better understand a concrete project, the skills and knowledge gaps in a group, or where our school is in terms of sustainability, for example. Another way to talk about assets and needs is as things we do well and things that could improve or are missing, or simply strengths and weaknesses. Use the most meaninfuls terms for your students or specific audience.

Start by laying out the Map of Regeneration on the floor or table by placing the cards face up, grouped in areas (social, ecology, economy and culture) with integral design in the middle. Once it is ready, you can invite the group and start the mapping exercise.

Getting started:
You can welcome the group and invite them to gather around the Map of Regeneration in a big circle. You can then distribute the objects (leaves and stones, for exemple. Three of each for each participant). Then you explain the exercise.

Participants will walk around in silence and place their objects that indicate 'asset' or 'need' respectively on the cards/principles that to them illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the school, project, or community. When everyone is done, gather around the cards to observe and reflect on the result.

One way of reflecting on the cards and what they show in the Mapping, is to make and fill in this small table of assets and needs together. In each field, simply indicate how many markers for assets and needs respectively there are in each area.

Area	Assets (number)	Needs (number)	Total (number)
Social			
Cultural			
Economy			
Ecology			
Design			

To see assets and needs (or strengths and weaknesses) in a table like this often brings unexpected insights, and clearly shows where there is more energy or interest in a group - no matter if it is expressed as an asset or as a need.

Once it is completed, you could reflect together as a group.

Here are some suggestions for what to ask or discuss with the group during or after mapping:

- What do you notice when you look at the cards now?

- How would you use this information to support the development of your school or community?

- Where do you see the most strengths/weaknesses in your school or community? These cards can be seen as points of interest or 'leverage points' in the system. Building on them, or bringing more attention to them, is important for the system to evolve.

- Where do you see large numbers of strengths and weaknesses on the same card? These represent topics which the school or community are currently very conscious about. Usually, many conversations will be taking place about this topic already.

- Are there any cards that have no markers at all? These 'blind spots' are of particular interest - they signify areas that are not yet conscious to the school or community.

- What would be a way to use these assets to address the weaknesses?

- What can we learn form this exercise?

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

2. Creating and Using the SDGs Cards

You can also create 1 'Card' for each 'P': People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership by simply writing each of these words in an A4 paper or printing them.

Once your card sets are created you can start to play with your students and community. You could spread the SDGs cards around the room, for example, and ask participants to walk to the card that represents the biggest challenge or the main opportunity for your school, community or regional development. Another possibility is to ask participants to pick one of the cards and talk in pairs or trios how it is represented in your region and context.

It is also possible to play around with the SDGs icons and the 5Ps cards. You could suggest participants to match each card with one of the Ps. For example, SDG 6 card (Water and Sanitation) could go along with 'Planet' and SDG 5 card (Gender balance) could go with 'Social'. And at some point you will notice that each card could be represented by different Ps as they are all interconnected. It would lead to a group reflection.

There are many possibilities to use the cards as learning tools. It is a fun and practical way to learn about the Sustainable Development Goals and reflect how they can be implemented in your region, community and school. Be creative and enjoy!

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

3. Feedback and Appreciation Rounds

Communication of feedback is important and will strengthen the flow and connections within groups when it is based on openness, kindness and honesty. Often we have to practice to give positive and constructive feedback in order to be able to offer clear, useful and motivating feedback to the people we work and live with and also ensure that they can offer it to us. This exercise can prepare others for receiving appreciation and their role in making this a positive and constructive experience.

1. Split team equally into 2 groups. Ask one of the groups to stand in a circle with their backs to each other, so they're facing outwards. Ask the second group to form a circle around the first group, and facing in, so that everyone is stood facing someone from the opposite group.
2. Explain that those on the inner circle will give positive feedback to those on the outer circle. Ask them to highlight a Positive, explain its Impact & Encourage them to do even more of it
3. Give them a time box of 2 minutes for the first round, and explain that the person on the outer circle cannot respond throughout – they are only allowed to show gratitude (thank you, I appreciate that) once the person giving the feedback has finished talking.
4. After round one, ask those on the outside circle to take one step to the left. They now should all have new partners.
5. This time, those on the outer circle give feedback for 2 minutes.
6. After this round, ask those on the outside to take one step to the left again so they have new partners.
7. This time, change the rules slightly so that those on the inside give feedback for 1 minute and then swap so that the person on the outside gives feedback in return for another minute.
8. You can repeat this a few more times depending on the group size.

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

4. Discovering Common Ground - deepening connection with all life

Adopted from Joanna Macy's workshops

Regeneration requires whole systems awareness, seeing the wider context and the web of relationships upon which all life depends. This exercise facilitates group bonding and focuses our whole attention (heart, body, mind) on our relationship with the rest of the world. It requires no additional materials.

Steps:

1. Put the group in pairs. Encourage teachers to participate as well.

2. Invite participants to take their partner's hand in theirs close their eyes.

3. Begin to explore this hand gently and with great sensitivity and innocence.

Imagine that this is the first time you have ever touched a human hand...Feel the skin (it's texture, warmth or coldness)... and now the structure of this hand (the nails, the knuckles, the bones, the flesh)...

What can this hand teach you about the person it belongs to? Is it used for physical labour, in the soil of the Earth, does it write a lot, or play a musical instrument?...

This hand can express deep feelings, perhaps it can make beautiful things.
*Perhaps this hand has comforted someone.*

Now let this hand take you back into its history. Can you feel the hand of the younger child this person once was, playing and exploring its surroundings? Much smaller, but somehow the same hand. Going back further still, can you feel the baby's hand, really tiny and reaching out into the world for the first time?

Now with the help of your imagination, go even further back into the history of this hand. Can you feel our ancient ancestors, the paw of the monkey with its strong thumb for swinging through branches and sensitive fingertips for judging the ripeness of fruit.

And now back even further to the hand of the reptile, feel the claws in those fingernails and the strong knuckles for gripping the earth.

And now feel the fin of the fish, before this hand had crawled out onto land, feel this fin swimming through the waters of the ocean... And perhaps if you're really sensitive, you can feel the very dust of stars from which this hand is composed.

4. Without words and with your eyes still closed, say good-bye to this hand and without opening your eyes, turn away from this person.
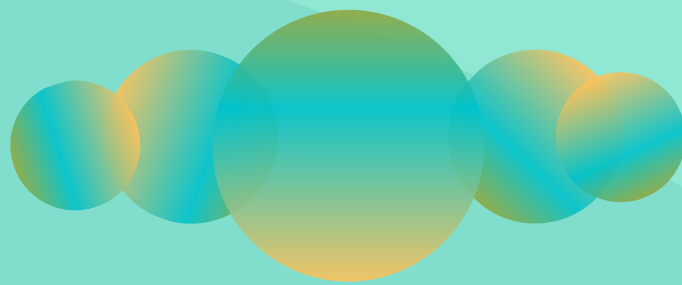
To debrief from this experience, first reflect in small groups to allow all voices to be heard, and then with the whole group to let everyone see the diversity of experiences.

Collectively summarize what came up, focus initially on identifying the various ways people value things and then opening a discussion for the experience of connecting.

Ask what was enjoyable. What did not work as it should have? How could it have been improved? Try to involve everyone by asking of each participant the same questions.

Learners: Ask what they observed and how they felt during this exercise.
What did they discover about the things that connect us as living beings?
How does this inform how they relate to the rest of the community and the world?
What was most important in what happened here today?

Teachers: What did you observe about this exercise? How well did learners take to it? Did they understand the directions? Did anything come up that called your attention to risks or unforeseen results? What, if anything, would you do differently?

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

5. The Great Web of Community

Life does not happen in isolation. We all depend on each other and on everything surrounding us in order to survive and thrive in our communities. Ignoring this basic truth causes us to live lonely lives of isolation and disconnected from the rest of life. There are many invisible threads that keep us connected if we take the time to look at them and make the connections.

This exercise, as a design process, enables us to see where the connections are highlighted. Learners will develop a deepening personal awareness of the value of inter-relationships of life. Materials needed: A big ball of yarn

Everyone stand in circle. Give each participant a role in the community.
For examples: farmer, health care provider, musician, local businesses, builder, chef, sports person, clothes maker... try to find as many different roles as there are participants and invite them to come up with some they find exciting. Write it on a piece of paper for others to see. Invite them to look around and think about how these are all interrelated.

Now give anyone in the circle the ball of yarn and ask them to toss it to someone across from them while hanging on to the end of the string so they stay connected (for younger children, you can gently wrap it around their wrist so they don't drop it). Ask them to describe the relationship based on their roles. For example, the chef gets food from the farmer; the builder creates a shed to store the farmer's tools; the businessman sells the builder materials.

Learners may need some assistance to make the connections, but essentially everyone needs everyone so each person will be able to throw the ball of yarn to another while holding the string.

Conclusion & Call to Action

As stated in the outset of this manual, to ensure a better future by guiding the next generation, we must invest in those who support them: teachers. We hope the information provided here empowers you to step (more) into your value, to lean on the resources with a sense of curiosity, and to remain open to the possibilities of the learners with which you engage.

Regenerative Education is not only teaching *about* the environment, it is engaging learners *for* their environments, both ecologically and socially. Learning is a lifelong process and has a rich potential to transform communities. Skills such as observation, listening to different perspectives, and understanding connections are essential for young people to make informed choices to have a better impact in their world.

*We **learn to know**, where we strive for a broad general knowledge and in depth understanding of a small number of subjects. We **learn to do**, as we apply skills in different situations. We **learn to live together,** aiming to understand other people and our interdependence. We **learn to be,** by developing prtdonslly to make better choices and become more responsible. And we **learn to transform oneself and society.** This is about individuals working separately and together to change the world. This means gaining the knowledge, values and skills needed for transforming attitudes and lifestyles.*

- UNESCO's Five Pillars of Learning.

This is an invitation to be creative in your diverse learning environments. While we have offered a lot of information, we also remind you to trust that "the knowledge is in the room," that is, to collaborate with your colleagues and your learners as you navigate our collective learning journey together.

We hope that you will try out the activities and share feedback with SCOPE as you are now members of this co-creation. What gave you joy and hope? Where where you challenged or needing more? How can we improve these activities? How can we cross-pollinate with more educators?

If we have sparked something in you, the invitation remains to keep an eye out for future resources from GEN and SCOPE. Browse our YouTube channel for more free content and let us know if you are interested in any of the courses on the ecovillage learning space (www.learn.ecovillage.org).

If you are interested in engaging more with the Global Ecovillage Network and our work with schools inside and outside of ecovillages, you are always welcome to get in touch with us at welcome@ecovillage.org