

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS BAROMETER 2019



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FOR A FAIR TRANSITION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

EDITORIAL

"End of the world, end of the month - same fight!", these words could be seen on the signs of the protestors during some of the yellow vest demonstrations in France. The recent social movements that marked the French political landscape encouraged the emergence of slogans whose clear-sightedness can only be welcomed. Climate and social causes are, in fact, closely related.

On top of the population's feeling of dissonance with authorities, social and climate struggles feel legit-

imized and united by one element: inequalities. This idea was embodied in the streets, during the demonstrations of the Yellow Vests as well as those of young people advocating for the climate.

And it would seem that the political world heard this call. G7 Summit, High Level Political Forum: this year, inequalities have indeed been placed at the centre of the international political agenda.

In the face of rising unemployment, increasing difficulty in accessing public services, rising taxes on the lowest incomes, it is important to emphasise that people are not so

much reluctant to adapt to climate measures and the environmental transition, but to be imposed unjust policies that stigmatise already vulnerable populations.

However, fair ecological policies are possible, as demonstrated by the numerous international examples presented in this Barometer. For them to emerge, the conciliation of climatic, economic, and social issues is crucial. It is also essential in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations under the 2030 Agenda.

Ecological transition, inclusion, fight against inequalities: all these issues

are interdependent and must be addressed simultaneously. The objective of this Sustainable Solutions Barometer is precisely to present analyses and transformative solutions that make it possible to envision paradigm shifts more as an opportunity to build a sustainable future for all than a threat.

The current period gives us a chance to build a new model of society that can only emerge if all economic, social and political forces converge and mobilise themselves. It is up to all of these stakeholders, and to us as citizens, to work together for a more united and sustainable world, now.

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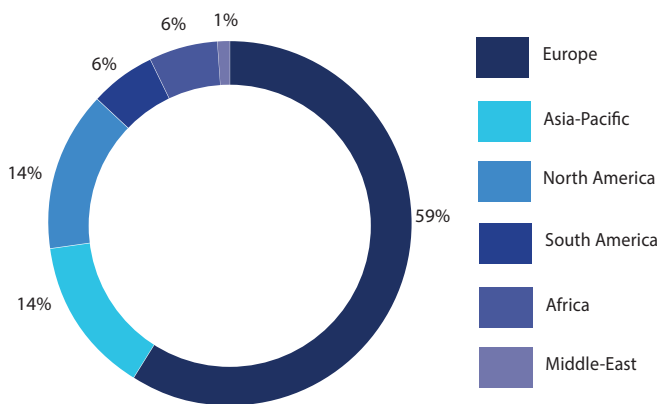
GLOBAL SURVEY: HEALTH, EDUCATION AND CLIMATE

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since then a lot has happened. But how satisfied are people around the world with the progress achieved? What is important to them when it comes to sustainability? For the first time, these questions are the focus of a worldwide survey called "Global Survey on Sustainability and the SDGs" ('Global Survey').

The overall objective of the Global Survey was to create awareness, to initiate and accelerate the necessary decisions to implement sustainable development. To do so, the survey aimed to reach as many people around the world as possible in order to inquire about their personal and professional perspective on the status of sustainability in their country, as well as their knowledge, acceptance and expectations of the SDGs.

FOCUS ON PARTICIPANTS

FIGURE 1 - RESPONDENTS BY REGION



In total, more than 26.000 people from all over the world participated in the Global Survey. The majority of survey respondents are female (almost 60%), between the ages of 20-39 (62%), and have pursued higher education (over 75%). Responses were collected from more than 175 countries, although distribution varies across regions, led by Europe (59%), followed by Asia Pacific and North America (both 14%). Professionals from the private, non-profit and public sectors, from academia and education, arts, culture and media as well as students are represented.

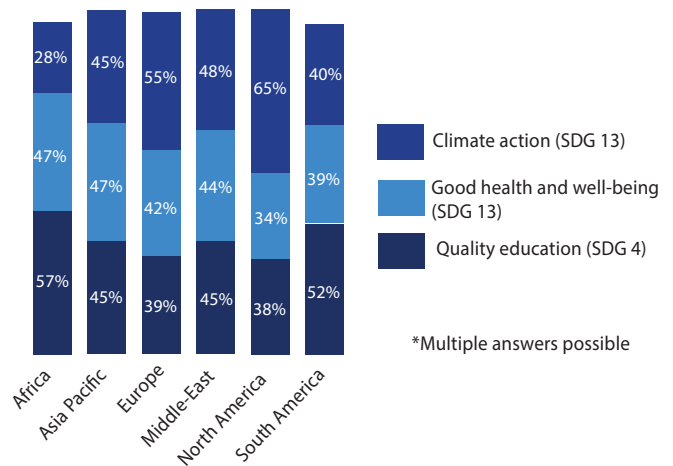
LESS THAN HALF OF THE RESPONDENTS ARE AWARE OF THE SDGS

The Global Survey results indicate that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework is not well recognized around the world. The average awareness of the SDGs across the entire survey group is just under 50%. The real level of awareness may be even much lower as our control group of randomly selected respondents show a level of only 16%.

On the other hand, however, there is an almost 98% awareness of the term 'sustainability'. The results clearly demonstrate that while people are largely aware of the issues described by the 17 SDGs, they are not familiar with the SDG framework itself.

QUALITY EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CLIMATE ACTION ARE RANKED AS TOP PRIORITIES

FIGURE 2 - TOP THREE SELECTED SDGS BY REGION*



When survey participants are asked which of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are of immediate concern to them and their family, the six most pressing are:

1. Quality education (SDG 4)
2. Good health and well-being (SDG 3)
3. Climate action (SDG 13)
4. Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)
5. Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6)
6. Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7)

Respondents consistently point to Quality Education and Health as their top priorities. Climate Change is also prevalent as a priority although the relative importance differed remarkably between regions. Climate change is a top priority but shows more regional variability than other prioritized SDGs.

RESPONDENTS CONSISTENTLY POINT TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND HEALTH AS THEIR TOP PRIORITIES. CLIMATE CHANGE IS ALSO PREVALENT AS A PRIORITY ALTHOUGH THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE DIFFERED REMARKABLY BETWEEN REGIONS

On a regional level, climate change shows the greatest variability of prioritization ranging from high in North America and Europe to relatively low in South America and Africa. In Africa only 28% of respondents are ranking climate change as one of their top six priorities. Poverty, in contrast is more commonly identified. This probably needs to be considered in the context of the region: despite declines in extreme poverty across most of the world, Sub-Saharan Africa is witnessing the opposite. According to forecasts by the World Bank, nearly 9 out of 10 extremely poor people will live in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030¹.



ACTION SELECTED AS TOP PRIORITIES

AN HYPOTHESIS IS THAT CONCERN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE CAN BE DEEMED A 'LUXURY' SURFACING ONLY WHEN MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERNS SUCH AS ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AND CLEAN WATER AND AIR ARE FULFILLED [...] COUNTRIES WITH HIGH GDP PER CAPITA PRIORITIZE "CLIMATE ACTION" WHILE COUNTRIES WITH LOW GDP PER CAPITA PRIORITIZE "QUALITY EDUCATION."

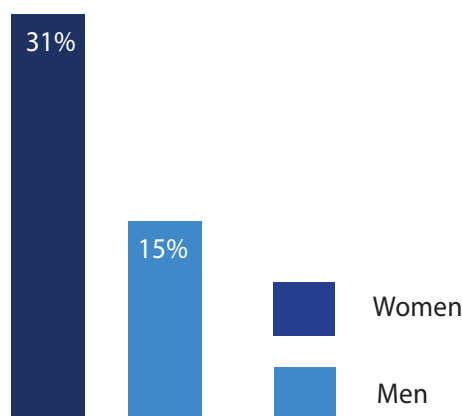
Europe and North America, in contrast show high levels of concern with climate change, i.e. 55% and 65% of respondents respectively identifying climate change as a top six priority. An hypothesis is that concern for climate change can be deemed a 'luxury' surfacing only when more immediate concerns such as economic well-being and clean water and air are fulfilled. A similar relationship emerges when setting a nation's GDP per capita against its SDGs of concern: countries with high GDP per capita prioritize "climate action" while countries with low GDP per capita prioritize "quality education."

The results have direct implications for governments seeking to address climate change. They suggest that building public support for climate change solutions may be more difficult if more direct environmental and socio-economic issues are not simultaneously addressed.

THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT DIVIDE ALONG GENDER AND REGIONAL LINES WHEN ASSESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER EQUALITY

One key finding of the report relates to SDG 5 "Gender Equality". This is one of only two SDGs that demonstrate significantly different responses between females and males (the other is SDG 7 "affordable and clean energy"). Globally, 31% of female respondents rank "gender equality" as an SDG of immediate concern compared to 15% of male respondents. The latter category also report a higher degree of improvement in this SDG than female respondents. These discrepant perceptions must be addressed given the role of gender parity in both economic and environmental wellbeing.

FIGURE 3 - PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN WHO RANK GENDER EQUALITY AS TOP 6 PRIORITY



There are also important regional variations concerning gender equality. Respondents (both male and female) from Australia, Europe, and North America include "gender equality" as one of the most important SDGs, ranking it among the top six in those regions. Comparatively "gender equality" is not prioritized among the top six SDGs for all other regions. This appears to reflect regional trends that identify gender disparity as a critical social issue.

Though, the Global Survey presents a range of global and regional findings exploring what people around the world prioritize in the SDGs and how they believe these goals might be achieved, much remains unknown. Of particular importance for further research are questions around the most effective collaboration models and the personal actions (i.e. what impact individuals can have in their daily lives) that lever the greatest change toward achieving the SDGs.

DISCLAIMER: This article shows preliminary results. Final results will be presented parallel to the UN SDG Summit in September in New York and publicly disclosed on the official Global Survey website (www.globalsurvey-sdg.com).

1 World Bank (2018): *Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2018: Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle*

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Methodology

The Global Survey is carried out by Schlange & Co. (S&C), a German consultancy for sustainability, and the Yale Center for Business and the Environment (CBEY). The project is financed by the German Federal Ministry for the Environmental, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. The survey was conducted online and in 18 languages between September 2018 and June 2019.

The target group of the Global Survey was private individuals and representatives of politics, business, academia, the media and civil society both at national and international levels. Given the voluntary nature of the survey, results are necessarily biased as individuals or people with interest in the SDGs mostly responded. A control group was therefore added to the study.

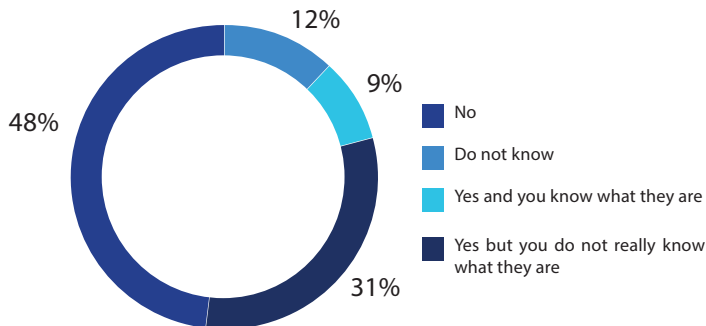
The control group consists out of a universe of people, who regularly participate at marketing surveys and have no particular interest in sustainability.

The survey was disseminated via more than 250 so called "multipliers", i.e. individuals, organizations and networks from all sectors and regions worldwide and via social media platforms as well as a corresponding social influencer campaign.

2030 AGENDA: THE UNKNOWN AGENDA OR THE ELITE AGENDA?



HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE UN SDGS ?



Four years after the day of the adoption of 2030 Agenda by the 193 Member States of the UN, Focus 2030 was created to survey the state of knowledge of the French people regarding the Sustainable Development Goals. An exclusive survey was therefore carried out on a sample of more than 6,000 people representative of the French population as part of the "Aid Attitudes Tracker" research project conducted jointly with UCL (University College London) and Birmingham University.

The conclusions are unequivocal: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remain largely unknown in France. Only 9% of our fellow citizens state that they are aware of them, while 31% state that they have heard of them without really knowing what they are. Similar results are also observed in the other countries where this comparative survey has been conducted: Germany (9%), United States (8%), United Kingdom (9%), as in France, the level of knowledge in these countries has remained stable over the past two years.

However, it can be seen that the greater the level of education of the respondent, the higher the reported level of knowledge of the SDGs, reaching 19% for post-graduates and 6% for non-graduates, a fact which likely correlates with the cultural practices of these groups and their exposure to international news in particular.

Quite unexpectedly however, the data suggests that traveling around the world brings a broader knowledge of the SDGs. Regardless of education, French people who have travelled outside France during the past three

years are one-third more likely to be aware of the SDGs than the average. This proportion increases even more significantly among those visiting a country considered to be a "developing" country.

When asked in detail about the nature of the SDGs, French people's lack of knowledge is confirmed: 8% know that there are 17 SDGs, 29% assume that it is the responsibility of all countries, North and South, to achieve them and only 12% know that the deadline for their achievement is 2030.

WHOSE FAULT IS THIS?

While governments are accountable to their citizens and the international community for the implementation of effective and consistent public policies aiming at the achievement of the SDGs, they remain largely absent from the political discourse. This is what shows the analysis of the number of references to the SDGs in the communication of each ministry and of the government.

With this in mind, all websites of the French government were examined. It is clear that, in practice, the results are highly unequal. Apart from the Ministry for Ecological and Solidarity Transition (1,140 references to the SDGs), Europe and Foreign Affairs (932 references) and Economy and Finance (669 references), the SDGs do not appear to be on the agenda. Other ministries are trailing far behind. First and foremost the Prime Minister Office and the Presidency, with only 18 and 23 SDGs references on their websites respectively.

At a time where multilateralism is threatened and confusions about the world are multiplying, neither citizens nor politicians seem to be aware of the only agenda aiming to solve the greatest global challenges as quickly as possible. Yet delivering the reforms needed to mainstream the SDGs in public policies by 2030 will require unprecedented levels of communication and mobilization. The stakeholders in civil society, the media, local authorities and decision-makers, must all play a role in bringing this agenda to life, and quickly.

*Fabrice Ferrier
CEO
Focus 2030*

THE ROADMAP OF THE 2030 AGENDA IMPLEMENTATION IN FRANCE: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH FOR COORDINATED ACTIONS BY ALL ACTORS IN FAVOUR OF THE SDGS

For over a year now, many public and private actors have been engaged in the collective development of a roadmap for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in France. This roadmap is placed under the joint supervision of Secretaries of State Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne (Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs - MEAE) and Brune Poirson (Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition - MTES). Around three hundred stakeholders from a hundred structures have already made contributions.

This open and collaborative process is unprecedented. It aims to engage all stakeholders, along with the government, to address the overall challenges of the 2030 Agenda. Regions, companies, unions, researchers, asso-

ciations, citizens, elected representatives, the ministries, media, etc. each has a role to play in building a shared and attractive roadmap. The State therefore encourages all actors to build coalitions on transversal themes such as inequality, which impacts almost all the SDGs. The blueprint must be drawn using the principles of participation and transparency and a multi-level approach.

One of the objectives of the roadmap is to ensure that France's policies and actions in favour of sustainable development are consistent, both nationally and internationally. The aim is to build relationships between the various objectives targeted by public policies, often pursued in parallel, in order to make them more effective and operational. Specif-

ically, this is a matter of seeking synergies and removing contradictions between policies by removing the obstacles that hamper a transformative change.

The need to change our practices and to adapt, while leaving no one behind, only reinforces the usefulness of this approach and the collective action taken by France. There is also a real resonance between the 2030 Agenda, with its inclusive ambitions, and the current issues facing French society, issues which are also intertwined with the national great debate, the roadmap of which must be taken into account.

*Magali Pinon-Leconte,
Director, Sustainable Development, MTES*

IMPACT MEASUREMENT: THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE OF COMPANIES AND ORGANIZATIONS?



The development of corporate social and environmental responsibility (CSR) can be broken down into three stages: the covering of risks, the extension of the scope of responsibility beyond the company's "walls" and eventually the search for a meaning and a new mission for the company in meeting the sustainable development challenges. The first initiatives to report on a company's CSR performance in the early 1990s had only one objective: to demonstrate that certain risks (environmental, occupational safety, etc.) were well managed.

Inevitably, performance optimization was then added to risk management. Once both were monitored and measured, the most advanced companies were able to identify, for example, that reducing their energy consumption or accidents at work had a direct impact on costs and benefits. In the second half of the 1990s, several cases involving poor consideration of CSR in the supply chain pointed to the need to move CSR beyond the company's walls. Hence, in the early 2000s, CSR strategies began assessing the performance of suppliers and customers.

Finally, the 2008 economic crisis, in addition to shaking the entire global economy, brought to the forefront of the debate the question of the very meaning of the economic activity.

RESTORING THE MEANING OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Today, the search for meaning is at the heart of all the shareholders expectations: those of the younger generations, employees, customers, and society as a whole. This quest now starts to define the strategic orientations of tomorrow's company. Larry Fink, President of BlackRock, one of the world's largest asset managers, speaks to business leaders about "Purpose and Profit". The French legislator provides in the "Loi Pacte" for a change in the historical corporate purpose of the company and opens up the possibility to acquire a "raison d'être". The latter is a direct expression of the new meaning that the company seeks to give and communicate to all its stakeholders.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015, provide a framework for this reflection. They enable all actors, States and companies to measure and direct their actions towards sustainable performance. Since their adoption, there has been



a strong and extremely rapid overall appropriation of SDGs in the private sphere¹: from the VSE to the multinational, SDGs are used to express the purpose that companies want to give to their action, or even to their mission. Many investors now share these objectives as a common language, which allows them both to guide their investment policy and to explain the meaning they give to the funds they use.

We are therefore entering a new era in which a successful company will define itself differently, and will need to combine economic and social performance, while understanding and managing all of its impacts, both positive and negative.

CREATE A COMMON REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR IMPACT MEASUREMENT

A global framework for impact analysis has grown exponentially in recent years: the Impact Management Project (IMP). The IMP is an international forum for exchange on impact and its measurement. It brings together more than 2000 organizations (companies, investors, analytical specialists, economists, experts, etc.) that share best practices in impact measurement. The SDGs are by far the major underpinning of this global framework, forming a common language of impact.

Today, impact is therefore a key performance criterion for an organization: it allows it to report on its ability to analyze the major issues that could disrupt its ecosystem and therefore its economic efficiency. It is analysed both in the short term, with regard to an organisation's resilience and its ability to understand and anticipate the risks, and in

the long term, with a focus on the ability of management teams to seize the right opportunities and guarantee a sustainable license to operate.

WHILE THE SOCIAL PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATIONS IS AT THE HEART OF THE PUBLIC DEBATE, SDGS CAN BE THE OPERATIONAL MEANS OF TRANSLATING THIS "RAISON D'ÊTRE" AND MEASURING THE COMPANIES' IMPACTS.

While the social purpose of organizations is at the heart of the public debate, SDGs can be the operational means of translating this "raison d'être" and measuring the companies' impacts. Of course, at the level of each organization, the efforts put in place to address such major societal issues can sometimes seem negligible and lead to giving up. But no single organization has the solutions on its own, and this is one of the principles of impact measurement.

Hence, the analysis of performance in terms of social and environmental impact must be understood, at the level of an organization, in a global way by taking into account all the effects, positive and negative, generated on its global ecosystem in the broadest sense, and no longer only by measuring solely the direct effects.

¹ <https://www.pwc.fr/fr/espace-presse/communiqués-de-presse/2018/decembre/vers-une-meilleure-integration-des-objectifs-de-developpement-durable.html>

Emilie Bobin
Partner
PwC

INSTITUTIONALISING DIGITAL PUBLIC GOODS: A KEY LEVER IN ACHIEVING THE SDGs BY 2030



When reflecting on the last decade, the change has been staggering – much of it because of the advent of digital technologies which are now at a tipping point.

Once a novelty, new technologies are now being implemented at a national scale to deliver better services to citizens. Countries, development actors (e.g., NGOs, donors) and the private sector use now digital technology as a key lever to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Long sidelined in development discussions as an issue relevant only to IT specialists, digital technology is now central to many SDG discussions¹.

TECHNOLOGIES PUT TO THE TEST

Countries are now seeing concrete results from embracing this digital technology. In South Africa, mobile messaging that provides essential information to new or expectant mothers has now scaled to cover 95% of the market. In India, Aadhaar, a national system that uses biometric and geographic data to generate a unique ID (an essential aspect for social, economic, and political inclusion), has registered 1.21 billion subscribers and achieved an estimated \$13 billion² in reduced transaction overhead. Rwanda is in year four of its Vision 2020 strategy to modernize to a cashless economy, which the government plans to achieve through ubiquitous phone penetration and high-speed internet access³. Senegal aims to generating 10% of its GDP from the digital economy by 2025, while Kenya, a pioneer in mobile money, is now actively exporting its model to other countries⁴.

Multilaterals donor consortiums are focusing on digital technology too. The World Bank's ID4D program is working to scale national identification platforms while tackling data privacy issues at the same time. Financial services companies, government regulators and others are using open source software like Mojaloop to take on the challenges of interoperability of financial systems to deepen financial inclusion and are looking to pool their investments in fewer, larger digital platforms. An example of this pooled investment is the 2018 launch of the Principles of Donor Alignment for Digital Health which align donor investments in digital systems at country and regional level to reduce system fragmentation⁵.

CREATING DIGITAL PUBLIC GOODS

Despite the progress we are seeing, there is still much work to be done to evolve from a world of sectoral digital building blocks to a connected system that leads to the routine use of digital technology. In the end, the goal should be to recognize such a system as a collective set of "digital public goods" to be shared by all for the benefit of everyone.

Digital public goods are appropriate digital platforms and service products, pricing and procurement mechanisms, training programs for people and supportive digital policy that protects private citizens. The Digital Impact Alliance for instance develops open source digital public goods that anyone can take and adapt (open-source). If carefully designed based on the four Ps – products, pricing, policy and people programs – these goods can be adapted to move from fragmented digital investments which do not

operate at scale to digital platforms and services that run national government infrastructure with services that can reach anyone.

If the SDGs are to be met by 2030, it will require a global cross-sector commitment to collaborate on investing in digital public goods such as reusable digital platforms and data algorithms; negotiated pricing and pooled procurement mechanisms; increased digital capabilities at the citizen and governmental level and a sincere focus on a responsible regulatory regime that protects citizens' rights, investments in peoples digital capabilities and stronger policy advocacy are required. Moving on these issues can move digital technology from novelty to an institutional lever to achieve the SDGs.

1. WorldBank and the UN have committed to major investment programs over the past two years focused on digital investment.

2. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2018-08-13/data-people>

3. Lessons from Rwanda: Harnessing public-private partnerships to drive payment digitization, United Nations Capital Development Fund, Better than Cash Alliance, by Oswell Kahonde and Juan Blanco, June 29, 2018, <https://www.betterthancash.org/news/blogs-stories/lessons-from-rwanda-harnessing-public-private-partnerships-to-drive-person-to-government-payment-digitization>

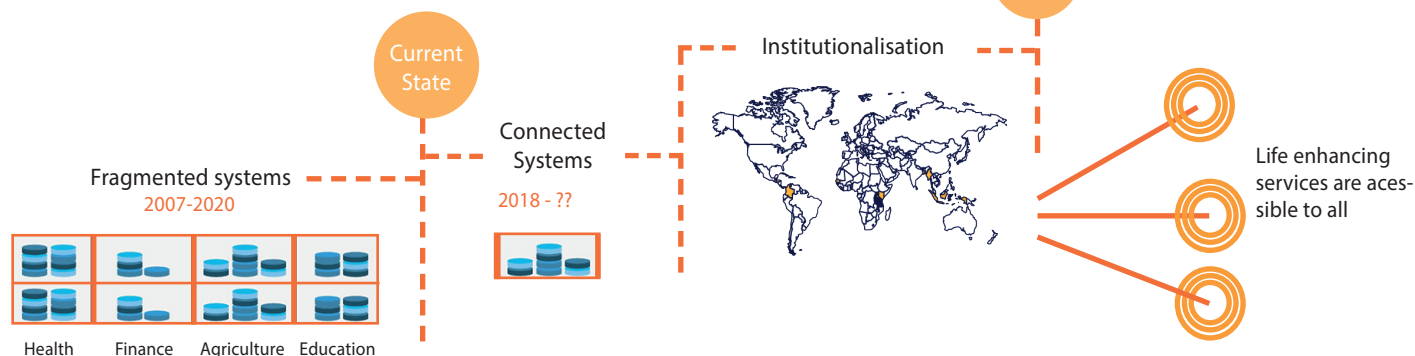
4. <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2015/03/02/why-does-kenya-lead-the-world-in-mobile-money>

5. <http://digitalinvestmentprinciples.org/>

Kate Wilson
Director
Digital Impact Alliance

ROADMAP TO GENERATE GREATER IMPACT

In order to achieve the SDGs, investments must contribute to the development of **digital public goods** to make them **accessible to all**



ORANGE DIGITAL CENTER: A NEW SPACE TO FOSTER DIGITAL INCLUSION AND PROMOTE YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY



In 2015, the UN recognized technology's crucial role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by naming it as one of the key means for their implementation. Since then, a growing number of companies have used their technological know-how to further development, making the private sector an important player in achieving SDGs. In this interview, **Asma Ennaifer**, CEO of **Orange Digital Center** in Africa and Middle East, explains how the Orange Digital Center initiative contributes to an inclusive and sustainable development.



Last April, Orange launched its first Orange Digital Center in Tunis. Can you explain what this new space is?

The Orange Digital Center is a new concept deployed by the Orange Group in Africa and the Middle East. It aims to promote digital training and to support youth employability by preparing young people for the jobs of tomorrow, as well as encouraging innovation and technological entrepreneurship.

To do this, the centre brings a number of programmes together in a single location. These range from training young people in digital technology, to accelerating start-ups, to providing support and investment for project owners. Specifically, the centre includes a coding school, a "Solidarity FabLab", a start-up accelerator known as "Orange Fab", and the Orange Group investment fund, Orange Digital Ventures Africa.

These four programmes are integrated within the same space to form a genuine "third place" for innovation. Each of the Orange Digital Centers' programmes is aimed at a specific audience. The coding school is an open access technology centre, and completely free of charge. It is aimed at students, young developers and project owners.

The Solidarity FabLab is a digital manufacturing workshop for designing and prototyping using digital equipment. It is aimed at a sim-

ilar audience, but also targets young people with no qualifications or jobs.

Orange Fab and Orange Digital Ventures Africa are programmes that target entrepreneurs. Orange Fab is a start-up accelerator that supports the most promising young people in their business ventures. It also helps them to build commercial partnerships with the Orange Group and the global Orange Fab network. Orange Digital Ventures Africa is an investment fund with a budget of €50 million. It finances innovative start-ups from countries in Africa and the Middle East.

Several stakeholders are involved in your project. What are the benefits of working in partnerships?

The Orange group's CSR strategy and the Group Foundation's policy are based mainly on a concerted approach to development aid, built in large part around public-private partnerships. The Orange Digital Center programmes are no exception, as they are deployed in close collaboration with several stakeholders, including governments, local and international NGOs and academia. The aim is to increase youth employability and encourage enterprise and innovation.

THE MAIN ADVANTAGE OF WORKING WITH ALL THESE STAKEHOLDERS IS BEING ABLE TO BEST MEET EVERYBODY'S EXPECTATIONS

The main advantage of working with all these stakeholders is being able to best meet everybody's expectations, of governments of young people, as well as those of the business sector. It allows the inclusion of as many people as possible.

For example, working with academia allows you to give a professional opinion on the training courses offered to students, to ensure that they are properly tailored to the demands of the labour market.

In fact, we position ourselves between the university and the labour market. We get young people to work on practical projects because

companies these days are looking for candidates with current operational experience.

How does this project contribute to the development of the countries in which you operate?

With Orange Digital Center, we hope ultimately to contribute to reducing youth unemployment, which is often very high in the region concerned. Strengthening young people's skills via digital technology will enable them to find a job or encourage them to start a business. It is also about preparing them for tomorrow's jobs.

The centre's added value lies mainly in creating synergies between the different programmes. Young people are called upon to work on real projects. At the coding school, they are trained in the latest technological trends, and they can build their prototypes in the Solidarity FabLab. The goal is to foster the creation of completed technological projects. Young people trained in this way will have the option to launch their own start-up or to make use of technology incubation. They can also look to the job market in which they will be directly operational.

Ultimately, our mission is to make digital technology an opportunity for all. This initiative is part of our goal of placing digital inclusion at the heart of our societal commitment. The Orange Digital Center aims to provide all young people, particularly girls and women, with high-quality training and support.

And what are the next steps of this programme?

To allow more young people to benefit from our programme, we are setting up similar structures in Senegal, Jordan and Cameroon. These should be in place by the end of the year. From 2020, Morocco, Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Mali and many countries in Africa and the Middle East will have their own Orange Digital Center.

*Interview by
Baptiste Fassin
Publication & communication officer
Convergences*

THE CLIMATE TRANSITION MUST BE SOCIAL TO BE ACCEPTED



Protests about the climate emergency are on the rise and are calling for a fair ecological transition. Young people are undertaking climate strikes and, in recent months, some yellow vests have even joined the movement asking for a green and yellow convergence, under the slogan: “End of the world, end of the month - same fight!”

This stance is interesting and even surprising, because the spark that triggered the yellow vest protest movement was the introduction of a carbon tax, a measure that is guided by environmental objectives. However, although the tax was environmentally-friendly, it was also anti-social. It disproportionately affected low-income households, while offering inadequate support to them. When combined, these elements have created strong resentments associated with social inequality.

PRIMUM NON-NOCERE: MAKING TRANSITION MECHANISMS ACCEPTABLE

Policy-makers must understand that not all are exposed evenly to the effects of measures addressing the ecological transition, and adapting them accordingly is essential to a more just and acceptable ecological transition. For example, the carbon tax, which has been reverted following the Yellow Vest protests, represents on average a cost of €340 per year for a French household and affects low-income households three times more severely.

While ecological transition policies cannot solve entirely social injustices, it is essential that they do not exacerbate existing inequalities. Redistributing part of the revenue from the carbon tax to low-income households could therefore be a way of maintaining a “climate price signal”, limiting the impact of this tax on purchasing power, but still increasing the cost of fossil fuels in order to reduce their attractiveness (editor’s note: for more information on this subject, see p.15). Promoting access to sustainable solutions for the most vulnerable, including access to energy-efficient housing, organic school canteens based on the family’s ability to pay, and efficient modes of transport with low greenhouse gas emissions, is another way of guaranteeing the acceptability of the ecological transition.

SUPPORTING CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTION

The ecological transition also raises concerns about employment and the changes it entails for many business sectors. This transition is sometimes even the main reason for the closure



of industrial facilities, leading to individuals being forced out of the market place against their will. This is the case with coal and nuclear power plants, for example.

In Germany, the government’s decision to withdraw entirely from nuclear and coal energy, highlights that support is needed for workers faced with the prospect of unemployment. Such closures must be anticipated and necessitate that social partners and local authorities work closely together. Supporting this process with a suitable budget will also be essential in finding acceptable settlements. The German “Coal Commission”, which issued its report last February, promised €40 billion in public funds to support both the regions and employees.

“THERE ARE NO JOBS ON A DEAD EARTH”. THIS SLOGAN, USED BY TRADE UNIONS AND NGOS AT COP 21 IN PARIS, CLEARLY ILLUSTRATES THE NEED TO TRANSFORM THE ECONOMY AND THE SYSTEMS OF PRODUCTION.

Other sectors are also facing very significant restructuring processes linked to the ecological transition. This is particularly true for the automobile sector, in which the closure of a site is often the result of several factors: changes in mobility, diesel car scandals concerning air pollution, and increased international competition. Ultimately, a multitude of activities have been and will be impacted on a more or less direct basis. These include transport operators, commercial flight crews, farmers, fishermen, as well as civil engineers in public works and subcontractors.

“There are no jobs on a dead earth”. This slogan, used by trade unions and NGOs at COP 21 in Paris, clearly illustrates the need to transform the economy and the systems of production. But this does not make the concerns of employees in transforming sectors any less real. A national framework that would make it possible to anticipate professional re-training for employees in sectors which will be impacted by the ecological transition is currently lacking. For these people to be able to find new jobs in greener sectors before their current ones disappear, they must now be given access to the training and support schemes normally provided after an economic layoff. This process must be given a public budget that is up to the challenge and should include sufficient investment to cover the development of new economic activities in the employment areas affected. The creation of a fund for a fair transition is therefore a priority.

Ecological transition and social justice go hand in hand. If it is not fair, the ecological transition will necessarily face legitimate opposition. Taking into account the impacts of the ecological transition on vulnerable people and offsetting them are therefore crucial aspects of any ecological policy, otherwise the equation between the end of the month and the end of the world may be impossible to solve.

*Meike Fink
Fair Ecological Transition Manager
Climate Action Network*

THE “CLIMATE GENERATION” IS WORKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE ON A LIVABLE PLANET



History will probably remember her as the initiator of a global revolution. When Greta Thunberg started her high school climate strike in August 2018 – every Friday, in front of Stockholm’s Parliament – she put climate issues on front page news. While alone at first, she was quickly joined by thousands of young people around the world.

2019 marks a turning point in the gradual organisation of young people taking action for the climate. On March 15 2019, the true extent of the “climate generation” was there for the whole world to see: more than two million young people in over 2,300 cities and 135 countries around the globe¹.

While the movement has been slow to take shape in France, it joined the movement in February 2019 and is only getting bigger. The actions in France on March 15 led by Youth For Climate France demonstrate this strong mobilisation: 168,000 young people were on the streets of France, including 50,000 in Paris, all marching to the chants of “climate justice”, “crimes against humanity” and “more threatening than the climate”².

These young people will strike for a second time on May 24 2019, this time by heading to the polling stations. This resulted in a historic turnout by 18-24 year olds in the European elections – the age group for which “green” candidates received the most votes³. With their climate strike, young people have elevated cli-

mate and environmental issues into the political and societal debate⁴.

The climate generation’s rational can be reduced to three major demands. First, inheriting from the wisdom of previous generations of environmental activists who have fought against hollow words, young people are now demanding concrete measures that are up to meet the environmental challenges. Likewise, radicalism is becoming a necessity – both in the demands themselves and in the actions chosen to create the necessary power relations to obtain them, including school strikes, civil disobedience, or even blockades. Politicians are asked to grasp the scale and scope of the crisis and to use all available political levers to respond to it, at the societal level and across all sectors.

One imperative, however, must guide this societal transformation: it must be fair, equitable, and must reflect on the society that we wish for. This is the second pillar of the young people’s message. While the movement’s starting point is the climate crisis, we all know the extent and complexity of the interconnected ecological and social crises that are currently unfolding. The strong social mobilization seen in France ahead of the youth climate movement has highlighted the need for a link between ecological and social issues. This raises questions about employment, the distribution of wealth, production and consumption dynamics, transport, etc.

Finally, to respond to this rapid and systemic transformation, young people are turning to those whom they identify as responsible for both the current crises and the lack of response to them. If, in playing their part, they recognize the importance of individual accountability, they also understand that this in itself will not be enough. While around 100 companies are responsible for 71% of greenhouse gas emissions⁵, young people point the finger at economic leaders and large companies that cause massive greenhouse gas emissions. They also oppose disengagement by governments that often place responsibility for climate action on the shoulders of citizens rather than on political and economic institutions.

The battle to preserve our planet is now only beginning. The climate generation is braced and ready to fight for its future.

1. <https://www.fridaysforfuture.org/events/list>
2. https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/live/2019/03/15/manifestations-pour-le-climat-suivez-endirect-la-greve-mondiale-des-jeunes_5436575_3244.html
3. https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2019/05/28/elections-europeennes-vague-verte-sur-leurope_5468494_3232.html
4. <https://www.france24.com/fr/20190524-climate-greve-elections-europeennes-enjeu-scrutinurgence>
5. https://www.sciencesetavenir.fr/nature-environnement/100-entreprises-responsables-deplus-de-70-des-emissions-mondiales-de-carbone_114773

Martial Breton
Vice Chairman
Climates

3 QUESTIONS TO ADÉLAÏDE CHARLIER, BELGIAN SPOKEWOMAN FOR THE YOUTH FOR CLIMATE MOVEMENT



Why did you initiate Youth for Climate with Anuna de Wever?

The youth is concerned about the significant gap between the climate crisis that experts around the world have been warning about for many years, and the relative inaction of the political sphere. The main reason for the existence of Youth for Climate is to bring climate issues into the heart of public and civic action.

Personally, I was first struck by Greta Thunberg’s speech at COP 24. Her words stuck in my head for several weeks. When I heard that Anuna De Wever was looking for a French speaker to develop and expand Youth for Climate in Brussels and Wallonia, it seemed an obvious next step for me, and I took the plunge.

End of the month, end of the world, same fight?

Let us be clear: there will be no transition to a carbon-free society without a social transition. One of our climate marches was organized alongside anti-poverty associations to remind people of the links between climate and social issues. In the end, the ecological transition is an opportunity for greater solidarity. For

example, by making public transport more efficient and accessible, by reducing heating bills thanks to more insulation, or by creating local jobs in the energy or agriculture sector.

World leaders are meeting in September for the High-level Political Forum to put SDGs into the global political agenda. What would you like to tell them?

Alongside the United Nations General Assembly in September, the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, is staging another summit : the Climate Youth Summit. Young people fighting for the climate will be there. We will remind political leaders of the need to listen to scientists and to make the climate crisis their priority. Climate change is not just an environmental issue. It is also an ethical and political issue.

We would also like to tell them that if young people are demonstrating in the streets today, it is because we have lost far too much time. We will remind them that while the transition is indeed expensive, the price of inaction will be much higher. But we will also tell them that solutions exist, and that these solutions represent an economic opportunity.

SDG 5, AN ACCELERATOR OF CHANGE



@Equipop

"Achieve gender equality" by 2030. This is the aim of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, which was adopted by the United Nations in 2015 alongside 16 other goals. However, many obstacles stand in its path. For this to happen by 2030, efforts must be stepped up, especially given that SDG 5 is particularly transversal. Here is why.

Gender equality, equality between women and men, the gender approach: all these terms, which are not perfectly synonymous but fall within the scope of SDG 5, have one thing in common: they cover both transversal and specific approaches.

First, SDG 5 is inextricably linked to the 16 other goals that make up the 2030 Agenda. The gender approach must therefore permeate all sectors. For example, an action in support of girls' schooling will bear very few results if girls are kept out of school for health reasons, money issues, because of specific social relations, etc.

This transversal feature is found in particular in the selection criteria of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, which approves projects that incorporate a gender dimension without making it the primary objective. That said, and to avoid a solution that is too broad to be useful, projects must be carried out that are aimed specifically at reducing gender inequalities and empowering women and girls.

Second, the universal nature of SDG 5 is particularly evident. Unlike the SDGs, which apply to all countries, their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), were limited to developing countries. The shift from MDGs to SDGs has been a major breakthrough in terms of coherence, as the mechanisms that lead to gender inequalities are the same in both so-called "developing countries" and in the richest countries.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, FORCED MARRIAGES, GIRLS DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL, WAGE INEQUALITY, WOMEN'S UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN POLITICAL PROCESSES ARE ALL VARIATIONS OF THE SAME PHENOMENON: THE INEQUAL SOCIAL STATUS OF WOMEN AND MEN ACROSS ALL SOCIETIES.

Sexual and gender-based violence, forced marriages, girls dropping out of school, women's lack of access to property ownership, a bank account or even an identity, wage inequality, women's under-representation in political processes are all variations of the same phenomenon: the unequal social status of women and men across all societies.

This discrimination also amplifies the consequences for women of phenomena affecting individuals without differentiation. A good example of this is climate change. While all individuals are affected, it exacerbates the vulnerable conditions in which women find themselves. As such, an external element worsens inequalities due to the way human societies are organised.

A GENUINELY TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH

The universal nature of the 2030 Agenda is fundamental to understand the importance of SDG 5 and, above all, to implement it. However, the gender approach is also transformative in ways that extend beyond sexual inequality for two reasons:

First, adopting a gender approach means making development aid policies more effective. Breaking down data by gender (a method that can be applied to other factors -age, income, etc.) in the same phase of a project or policy allows operators to identify

more accurately their target audience and to better meet its needs.

Secondly, and even more crucial, the gender approach is by definition a way of questioning power relation. It therefore makes an important contribution to the deconstruction of an unequal model – a prerequisite for any transition to a genuine sustainable development.

TRANSITIONS IN ALL AREAS (ECOLOGICAL, DIGITAL, ETC.) MUST BE MADE WITH THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS. THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WILL BE BOTH A SIGN THAT WE ARE GETTING CLOSER TO GENDER EQUALITY, AND ALSO A STRENGTHENING FACTOR IN ACHIEVING THE OTHER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

For these reasons, transitions in all areas (ecological, digital, etc.) must be made with the full participation of women and girls. Their involvement in the decision-making process will be both a sign that we are getting closer to gender equality, and also a strengthening factor in achieving the other SDGs.

A good example of that is provided by a recent study by the International Peace Institute linked SDG 5 to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) which demonstrated that peace processes which include women have a 35% greater chance of lasting more than 15 years!

However, achieving genuine equality would also require a rewording of SDG 5. "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls": this formulation makes women and girls passive! While the term "empowerment" can be interpreted in various ways, it is clear that such language reflects, unintentionally or not, a narrow conception of change. Instead, women and girls will build their futures through an active voice.

Nicolas Rainaud
Head of Advocacy
Equipop & Women 7

TEACHING WOMEN HOW TO CODE: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES



“Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) offer vast potential for women and girls; from ending poverty, to improving education and health, to agricultural productivity, and creating decent jobs”.

This quote from Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, executive director of UN Women captures particularly well the role that technology can play in achieving the sustainable development goal (SDG) 5 of ending gender inequality.

And the problems are numerous. For instance, Senior Economist of the World Bank Kinnon Scott presented a report which shows that between the age of 20 and 34, women are more likely to be poorer than men. The result went further to state that children account for 44 percent of the global extreme poor and poverty rates are highest among children, particularly among girls. There are 105 girls for every 100 boys living in extreme poor households, across all ages.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

SDG 5 on gender equality and women empowerment clearly highlights these problems and clearly identify technology as a lever for reducing inequalities. Indeed, it includes a specific target on the importance of technology to achieve women's and girls' empowerment.

New technology brings new realities and the advent of digital technology allows the empowerment of those born into a place of fewer opportunities.

Technology has democratized how knowledge can be acquired and traded in the new market place. Just a decade ago a high school graduate in Africa was condemned to the lower rungs of a corporate ladder because they did not have the formal education to help them climb it.

TODAY, A 6-MONTH TRAINING IN FRONT END DESIGN CAN OPEN UP OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES

Today, a 6-month training in front end design can jumpstart a fledgling career in computer programming and open up opportunities across international boundaries. This kind of opportunity has brought African youth to the same starting line as their peers around the world.

A CLOSE LOOK AT GIRLSCODING

Digital technology based careers also have a lower barrier to entry. Thus it is a viable and less expensive approach to supporting young people who might have never been able to pursue more expensive (both in time and money) professional paths.

At GirlsCoding we have exploited and are still exploiting these opportunities with tangible evidence of success.

GirlsCoding is an intense program organized by Pearls Africa Foundation for young girls between the ages of 10 to 17 years, living in underserved communities in Nigeria. It is tailored to provide various technological skills

through trainings in areas such as robotics and web development with a learning process in basic programming language such as HTML, CSS, JavaScript and Python.

So far over 400 girls have successfully been trained to become problem solvers in their communities and some of them are already implementing what they learned to propose solutions to issues they came across in Nigeria.

MAKOKO FRESH is an ecommerce website that connects buyers of seafood to the fishermen who live in Makoko (a floating community in Yaba), thereby eliminating the middlemen who makes more money than the fishermen; hence helping the fishermen sell more at a better price and make a good living for their families.

HOPE BASKET is a project aiming to give a new life to unused materials to those in need, especially for the internally displaced persons from the areas troubled by insurgents, floods and natural disasters who are forced to live in camps in Nigeria.

These initiatives demonstrate powerfully that technology has a real transformative power. It is up to us to collectively give these promising young entrepreneurs access to appropriate training, to enable them to find solutions to contemporary problems.

*Abisoye Ajayi
Founder and CEO
Foundation Pearls for Africa*



WHAT IF SUSTAINABILITY WAS EQUALITY?



THE FIGHT AGAINST INEQUALITY: CORNERSTONE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA

While the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have achieved results, particularly in reducing extreme poverty¹, they have been widely criticised for turning the extremely poor into the “relatively poor”². Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations from 2007 to 2016, admits this willingly in his signed preface on page three of the MDG report³.

Between 2012 and 2015, the drafting of the 2030 Agenda was guided by the desire to guarantee social, environmental and economic equality between and within countries. This was the only true condition for the acceptability – and hence the sustainability – of our lifestyles, our organisations and our territories.

SDG 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries” is the embodiment of this desire for universal equality. Its targets seek to tackle the causes of inequality in all countries, not just in the so-called “southern countries”, because we are all, as countries, engaged in the process of sustainable development. These targets implicitly show that countries’ internal inequalities have increased. They also recognise that economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty if it is not inclusive and if it does not involve the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. With the 2030 Agenda, and in the name of the fight against poverty, the UN has finally reconciled the three pillars of sustainable development that were separated in Johannesburg⁴ in 2002.

Nevertheless, a fascinating tension has developed between equity and equality. As of 2015, for example, the Civil Society Think Tank on the Prospects for Global Development⁵ called for the differential treatment of responsibilities to be applied, in the name of equity, as a fundamental principle for the implementation of the SDGs. In real terms, this means “taking into account the real differences that characterise the international community”. This, in turn, has given rise to the curious concept of “targets for the rich”. These can be useful in countries such as France, for instance, where the richest 10% of households own 47% of the wealth, while the poorest 50% have just 8%⁶.

This is why France has made the fight against inequality one of the six priorities in its national roadmap for implementing the 2030



Agenda. However, the fact remains that the results of the SDG will surely be interpreted in light of the fight against poverty in poor countries.

Beyond SDG 10, the fight against inequality concerns all SDGs. This is evidenced by the fact that 69 of the 169 SDG targets address inequalities (i.e. well over one-third).

THE UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF INEQUALITIES

Beyond these direct targets, the example of adaptation to climate change - one of Committee 21's key programmes - clearly illustrates the transversal nature of inequalities.

The challenge of adaptation for developing countries has become a central issue at climate conferences, as all climate models show that the southern hemisphere will suffer more from global warming than the north. According to the World Bank, the cost for developing countries to adapt to a world that has warmed by 2°C by 2050 (compared to the pre-industrial era) is between \$75 billion and \$100 billion a year between 2010 and 2050.

This is a flagrant, additional and virtually unaddressed inequality between rich and poor countries. Ten years ago, however, rich countries promised to transfer \$ 100 billion a year to poorer countries to help them cope with the effects of global warming⁷. This inequality is also cruelly unfair given that industrialised countries, almost all of which are

located in the northern hemisphere, are responsible for the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming.

International comparisons aside, these climate inequalities are also found closer to home. France, for instance, has many different climates and already sees significant inequalities across its regions, particularly during heatwaves. However, the adaptation target – the first in SDG 13 on fighting climate change – is never taken into account when considering inequalities.

There is no doubt that, come 2030, the SDGs will be judged in light of the reduction in inequalities – an increasing concern for populations and individuals alike.

1. MDG progress report prepared by the UN in 2015: https://www.un.org/fr/millenniumgoals/reports/2015/pdf/rapport_2015.pdf

2. <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/fr/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-10-reduced-inequalities.html>

3. MDG progress report prepared by the UN in 2015: https://www.un.org/fr/millenniumgoals/reports/2015/pdf/rapport_2015.pdf

4. With Agenda 21, the 1992 Rio conference made sustainable development an integral part of the three economic, environmental and social pillars. However, the early 2000s separated the development sphere from that of the environment. This spirit is reflected in the MDGs conceived in 2000 but enacted at the 2002 Johannesburg Earth Conference.

5. Developing countries wanted target 10.a to be: “Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in accordance with the agreements of the World Trade Organisation”.

6. 2015 data from INSEE, quoted by Fonda.

7. Money sent to the Green Fund actually is the target of SDG 13 : 13a.

"NO MORE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES": EMPLOYMENT AS A RIGHT



No one is unemployable, there are many useful activities and money is not lacking.

These are the three premises on which the "no more long term unemployment in local communities" (TZCLD) experimentation is based. Initiated by Patrick Valentin, vice-president of the TZCLD association, and ATD Quart Monde, with the support of Emmaüs France, the Secours catholique, the Pact Civique and the Fédération des acteurs de la solidarité, this experimentation is aimed at reducing long-term unemployment by offering to all people permanently deprived of employment who volunteer an open-ended employment contract paid at the minimum wage and with suited working hours.

These new jobs are useful unfilled activities that have been identified in the local communities. They are therefore not competing with market jobs in any way.

These jobs are partly financed by the reallocation of expenses linked to the employment deprivation, which costs the local authority 43 billion euros each year¹. This estimate was produced by ATD Quart Monde in 2015 and takes into account social expenses such as Active Solidarity Income (RSA in French), expenses related to employment (ASS in French, support, etc.), shortfalls in taxes, and contributions and costs caused by unemployment (housing, health, etc.). The other portion is financed with the turnover generated by structures for employment purposes (EBE in French), created in the context of the "no more long term unemployment in local communities" project. These are companies

falling into the social and solidarity economy which have signed agreements to create additional jobs in their local communities.

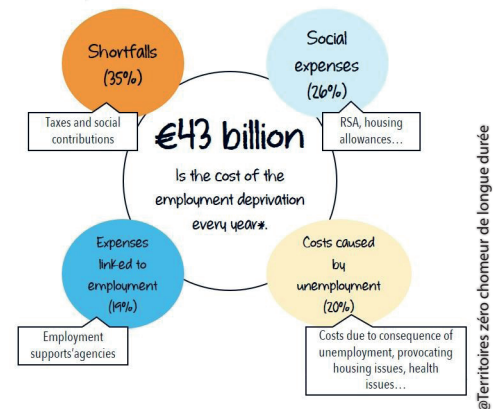
NEARLY 840 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HIRED SINCE THE START OF THE EXPERIMENTATION

The Territorial experimentation aimed at reducing long-term unemployment Act of 29 February 2016², unanimously adopted by the French Assembly and Senate, provides the implementation of this project for 10 local communities for 5 years. Since the start of the experimentation in early 2017, nearly 840 people have been hired in the 11 EBEs currently existing. The people permanently deprived of employment living in these local communities are involved and mobilised from the launch of the project (in the search for activities, the preliminary design of the EBE, etc.).

The Experimentation Fund, which oversees the project in authorised local communities, is seeing the return to employment of some long-term unemployed even before they are hired by the EBE. The activities developed in the regions are grouped into 3 main categories: local economic development, social cohesion and ecological transition (the latter representing 40% of them)³.

NEARLY 200 OTHER LOCAL COMMUNITIES ARE PREPARING FOR THE 2ND STAGE OF THE EXPERIMENTATION

In order to test the effectiveness of the experimentation in the authorised local communities and provide scaling and diversity - and therefore



greater credibility - to the project, it is necessary to prolong it the 10 pilot regions and even extend it to others.

The TZCLD association, the Experimentation Fund and the regions are therefore working to enact a second Law enabling the second stage of the experiment to go ahead. Today, nearly 200 emerging regions are preparing to integrate this initiative and make employment a right.

1. According to a study carried out by ATD Quart Monde in 2015 and updated in 2017.
2. Lookup Act no. 2016-231 of 29 February 2016 on regional experimentation aimed at reducing long-term unemployment.
3. According to the interim report by the Experimentation Fund.

Morgane Gillard
Partnership Manager
Territoires zéro chômeurs de longue durée

RECONCILING SOCIAL COHESION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSITION: FOCUS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSITION INCOME INITIATIVE



The fact that the issue of reducing inequality is a central concern for the ecological transition should not come as a surprise. Until recently, policy measures have focused either on social issues such as the fight against poverty, inequality and unemployment, or on environmental issues, often reduced to technical solutions to combat global warming. Few have sought to reconcile the two.

What if, conversely, the ecological transition also lead to a reduction in inequalities, whether they be social, environmental or regional? This conviction led us to develop the Environmental Transition Income (RTE in French)¹. This mechanism for public policies aims to revitalise French regions by creating a new economic model around people involved in activities with a strong social and environmental impacts (such as market gardening, the transfer of knowledge within fablabs, citizen energy,

local food sourcing, the functional economy, urban agriculture, soft mobility, etc.). While these activities demonstrate strong social and environmental impacts they tend to suffer from a lack of public recognition and financial profitability: like any business, initial capital and time are required.

To overcome these obstacles, the RTE combines three elements: monetary income conditional on activities respecting the earth limits, (i.e. a truly circular and non-linear economy); suitable support for project initiators; membership to democratic structures that allows the pooling of resources and skills by generating viable and sustainable economic activity in a given region.

The first experiment under this scheme, supported by the ZOEIN foundation, was announced in April 2019 by the former Mayor of Grande-Synthe, Damien Carême. In the RTE

system, social and environmental issues go hand in hand and bring together a number of partners including experts, companies and citizens.

The aim of RTE is therefore to support communities that are already committed to the implementing an ecological transition in their regions, without stigmatizing vulnerable people whose situations and knowledge are central to making the transition a vehicle for solidarity and social and environmental justice, while also generating positive externalities. This scheme has led to lower costs over time for the regions, as well as greater resilience and social cohesion.

¹ Pour un revenu de transition écologique, Puf, 2018..

Sophie Swaton
Founder
Fondation Zoein

ARE INVESTORS UP TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?



According to the United Nations, USD 5,000 to 7,000 billion of global investments are required annually by 2030 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including \$ 4,500 billion in emerging countries and markets¹. Official development assistance for the 30 member countries of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) reached \$153 billion² in 2018, covering only a thirtieth of the needs. In this context, the mobilisation of private capital for the SDGs is essential, especially as the achievement of the 17 Objectives would represent nearly \$12,000 billion in new market opportunities³. Article 69 of the 2030 Agenda emphasises the role of investors in financing innovation to make the transition to a sustainable economy a success.

Since the early 2000s, the increasing importance of environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria in investment choices has revealed the beginning of a paradigm shift in terms of investor social responsibility. Several practices, grouped under the name Socially Responsible Investment (SRI), have emerged: exclusion from investing in certain States and controversial sectors (weapons, tobacco, etc.), selection of issuers according to their ESG performance, impact finance, etc. The multitude of approaches makes them poorly visible to beneficiaries and unequally appropriated by investors: SRI remains a niche market.

In this context, the SDGs represent a three-fold opportunity for investors. Firstly, it is a strategic framework that makes it possible both to identify risky sectors in contexts of rapid transition (and therefore to avoid investing in future failed assets) and to seize new opportunities related to sustainable development (emerging markets).



The Principles for Positive Impact Finance, a UN initiative, aim to disseminate this approach among investors. It then becomes a common language which, through its transversal approach to partnerships, facilitates dialogue between all stakeholders (relationships between investors and issuers in particular). Coalitions of SDG investors have therefore formed in the Northern countries, such as the Dutch SDG Investing Agenda in the Netherlands.

In the end it is a holistic analytical grid which is adapted to assess and report on the contribution of investments to sustainable development, one which is used by an increasing number of asset management companies.

However, methodological obstacles persist: how can this new reference framework be reconciled with ESG analyses and with companies' practices?

The data and their analysis are also key: which impact assessments are required, along with which indicators and which methodologies? Not all national indicators can be transposed directly into investment language. However, harmonizing the analysis, evaluation and reporting of contributions to the SDGs is essential to avoid SDG-washing.

There are several levers that can be used to remove these brakes. At the international level, the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) are being used to harmonise reporting frameworks for issuers and investors. The taxonomy of the European Commission's sustainable assets intends to clarify the method used for assessing issuers.

In France, the 2030 Agenda roadmap aims to promote dialogue between companies, investors and other stakeholders in order to disseminate good practices, create synergies and coalitions and therefore accelerate

the mobilisation of stakeholders in favour of the SDGs. While more and more pioneer investors are grasping the SDGs, it is now a matter of consolidating momentum to up-scale sustainable investment.

¹ UNEP FI, "Rethinking impact to finance the SDGs", 2018

² <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/cedef/aide-publique-au-developpement>

³ Business Sustainable Development Commission (BSDC), "Better Business, Better World", January 2017

Rémi Rousselet
Investors mobilisation and SDGs officer &
Gwenaél Roudaut
Deputy chief
Department of Projects and strategic monitoring, MTES



KEY FIGURES OF IMPACT INVESTING IN 2019



502 BILLION
DOLLARS INVESTED



1 340 INVESTORS



62% MEASURE THE IMPACT OF
THEIR INVESTISSEMENTS



92% HAD BETTER FINANCIAL
AND IMPACT
RESULTS THAN EXPECTED

Source : 2019 Annual Impact Investor Survey, Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)

CLIMATE TAXES: FRANCE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES



Although the increase in the carbon tax in France was not the main reason for the upsurge in energy prices in 2018, it was nevertheless this tax that catalysed broad discontent and gave rise to the yellow vest movement. After being “frozen” at its 2018 level by the French government, the future of this tax remains uncertain. France is by no means the only country to have difficulties – this is an understatement – in introducing a carbon tax accepted by the public opinion. Nor is it the only one to have taken up the challenge of public policies leading to rising energy prices for households and companies. According to the World Bank, at the end of 2018, 29 countries or provinces had carbon taxes and there were 28 carbon markets worldwide. Not to mention the countries that have sharply reduced their fossil fuel subsidies.

The Institute of Climate Economics (I4CE) analysed ten countries in four different continents which have addressed the challenge of climate taxation and, more generally, that of increasing energy prices. While each country is different and it is difficult to draw universal recommendations from foreign experiences, we nevertheless believe that three lessons are relevant to France.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPARENCY

The most important thing is to be transparent about the use of the income generated from carbon taxes.

GLOSSARY

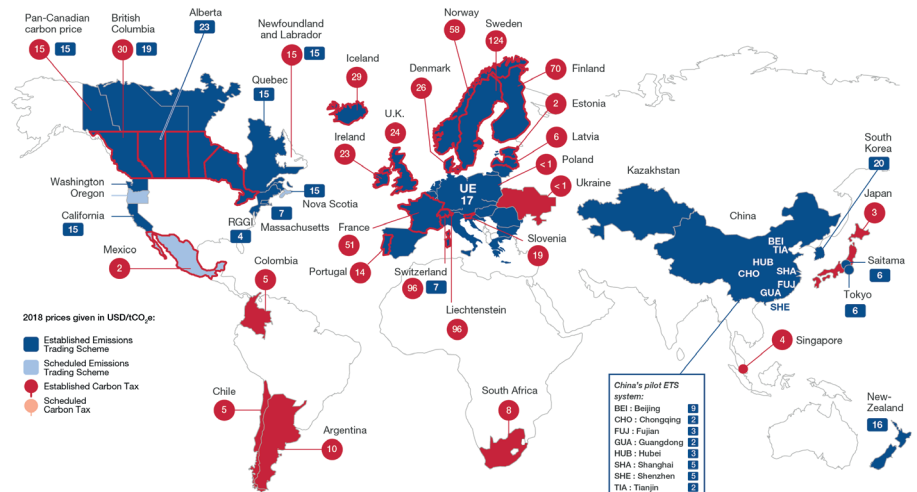
CARBON TAX

The carbon tax is levied on fossil fuels, and is proportional to the amount of carbon emitted during their combustion. A tax of € 44 per ton of CO₂ - the amount currently in force in France - means an increase of 0.10 €/l for gas oil and 0.11 €/l for diesel fuel whose combustion emits more CO₂.

CARBON CREDIT MARKET

In a carbon market, the legislator allocates emission permits or “allowances” to companies. These allowances can be distributed free of charge, but they can also be auctioned and thus provide income to the State. A company that has issued less than its starting allowance may sell its surplus to another company that has issued too much. With such a system, the State is sure to respect the emission ceiling set; on the other hand, the price of allowances is very uncertain, as is the income it can earn from them.

Map of explicit carbon prices around the world 2019



* The pan-Canadian carbon price applies on provinces that do not have their own pricing scheme.

Source: I4CE - Institute for Climate Economics with data from ICAP, World Bank, government officials and public information, Mai 2019.

The use of income is key to the acceptability of the reform and must be discussed well in advance in order to prevent it from becoming a seed of discontent. That being said, whatever the use made of it – and countries that have successfully implemented reforms used very different choices – full transparency is required. This is what the province of British Columbia, Canada did. Each year, the Minister of Finance is required to report to the Parliament on compliance with the commitment to ensure the neutrality of mandatory contributions. The Parliament examines their report on the use of revenues over the previous two years, and approves a three-year plan on the use of tax revenues. Furthermore, the Minister made 15% of his salary conditional on the respect of this commitment to neutrality. The situation in this country shows that it is possible to be transparent about the use of the income generated from a carbon tax, to orient its use without allocating it to a fund separate from the State's general budget.

MAKE COUNTERPARTIES VISIBLE TO THE TAXPAYER

The second lesson is that the entities benefiting from rising energy prices must be made visible. Increase in these prices are highly visible, hence the beneficiaries must be equally so. The State of California played a role in enhancing the full transparency and visibility of beneficiaries. The Public Fund created from the carbon market revenues received clear objectives, as 60% of the money must go to mobility and housing. Each year, the Assembly decides which public programmes are to be funded, following a broad public consultation. All of the Fund's achievements are

mapped out on a website, projects on the ground are labelled and communication campaigns are launched to provide a very tangible overview of the Fund's impacts. A campaign to destroy old cars was organized at the Los Angeles City Hall Square in order to highlight the impacts of new subsidies for the purchase of cars that consume less energy.

ADAPT TAXES TAKING CRITICISMS INTO ACCOUNT

There is one final lesson to learn from foreign experience: you have to listen to criticism, adapt, and persevere. Indonesia experienced widespread riots when it began to cut its fossil fuel subsidies. It has learned from this, putting in place a large number of social programmes to protect the poorest. In the end, it took 25 years and several reversals to drastically reduce subsidies in this country. British Columbia also persevered. Four months after it was implemented, the carbon tax was rejected by the majority of the population. It now has two supporters for each opponent.

Increasing energy taxation is a necessary political challenge, and it takes time. By learning from mistakes and experience abroad, we hope that France, like other countries, will find a consensus to push through these necessary reforms.

1 “Carbon Pricing Dashboard : Up-to-date overview of carbon pricing initiatives” [Online]. https://carbonpricingdashboard.worldbank.org/map_data. Accessed: 29-Mar-2019.

2 « Fiscalité climat : la France peut apprendre des expériences étrangères ». Etude climat I4CE, Mai 2019.

Sebastien Postic
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SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE SOLIDARITY SECTOR FOR THE SUCCESS OF SDGS



Digital tools and sustainable development goals (SDGs), which synergies? In this interview, Antoine Bertout, Director of Famoco, fintechs specialized in payment systems, takes a look at this essential question for the achievement of SDGs.

To what extent do digital tools constitute a lever to achieve the SDGs?

Paul Polman, Unilever's CEO, says that the SDGs themselves are a "huge business plan". Everyone must be part of it and be an actor of change. As a result, the private sector and industries related to service technologies have a role to play. Famoco, as well as other actors on the ground, have seen very clearly that new technologies can meet the needs of civil society, particularly in countries with emerging economies in Africa and Asia. New technologies are thus a vector for accelerating the progress towards the SDGs.

Have private sector actors, and more specifically companies, really understood that they have an important role to play in achieving the SDGs?

Yes but we are only at the beginning of the movement. If it is not the industries that voluntarily embrace the SDGs, it is the consumers who push them to do so. The latter are interested in carbon footprint issues and working conditions, and are therefore encouraging industries to redesign their business model towards more transparency, and towards socially responsible commitment. We see SDGs appearing in specifications or calls for tenders, especially so in emerging countries that wishes to align their economic development on more sustainable paths. There is a willingness on the part of companies to ensure that the solutions to be provided are sustainable and do not have a negative impact on the planet. This is what the Global Compact, of which we are a part, is trying to promote.

The development field has historically been driven by actors from the public and solidarity sectors. Nevertheless, more and more companies are taking up these issues. What is their role in development? Do they have a fundamentally different approach from NGOs, despite their common development objective?

I think that NGOs and public funds have shed light on needs that the SDGs have quantified. Up until now, NGOs spontaneously responded to the specific needs of populations affected by drought or famine. Today, NGOs and their donors are ensuring that they maximize the impact of humanitarian actions on populations in need so that efforts and investments contributes, in the medium and long run, to economic self-sufficiency in those countries. It is this expertise that companies must draw from to introduce social and societal development aspects into their objectives that was previously mostly economic or commercial. However, achieving the SDGs is not just a matter of philanthropy; it is about rethinking economic and societal models. Economy and commerce therefore have a real place in this project.

The new role of companies is therefore to respond to societal problems. In this context, does the company not have a greater impact than that of the traditional solidarity sector, of which NGOs are part? What is the added value of a partnership with NGOs?

The participation of all to this multi-stakeholder project is the only way to achieve the SDGs in the next ten years. The private sector is therefore one of the necessary mechanisms in this enterprise.

Private actors need the humanitarian expertise of NGOs, which also have a crucial role to play as a safeguard. That said, NGOs need innovations and solutions from private partners to improve the efficiency of their actions with the populations concerned. For example, instead of trying to apply a model or solution that would work in Europe in a country where the economy or cultures are different, it is more a question of adapting services to the needs of local civil society and local economic actors. Partnerships are therefore essential because NGOs allow companies to adopt a more moderate and appropriate approach to different national and local contexts.

Famoco has already established partnerships of this type, notably with the World Food Program. How did it go? Was there a common language or reluctance to partner with private companies?

From the outset, we rejected all prejudices in both directions. They were very clear in the formulation of their needs (call for tenders), to which we thought we could provide our solutions. In turn, they found that we were potentially a technological accelerator. There was a real reflection, especially about the common values we should adopt in achieving this change. This has allowed us to rethink our values at Famoco and our commitments to our customers and also to our employees.

*Interview by
Baptiste Fassin
Publication & communication officer
Convergences*

SPECIAL THANKS



**ZERO EXCLUSION
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Launched in 2008, Convergences is the first platform for thought, advocacy and mobilisation in Europe to promote the Sustainable Development Goals and the development of a world "Zero Exclusion, Zero Carbon, Zero Poverty". Its mission is to organise debates, mobilise thoughts and actions, spread good practices and encourage the co-construction of partnerships and innovative solutions. Convergences relies on more than 200 partner organisations represented within its working groups to co-organise the Convergences World Forum, which gathered more than 5000 participants every year, to write studies and publications, and to organise events throughout the year. For further information: www.convergences.org

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