The SDGs in Higher Education: Encouraging internal and cross-sector collaboration
Presentation Focus

• Role of SDGs in Queen’s and Tec’s institutional and global strategies.

• How SDGs can be implemented in highly decentralized contexts.

• Mechanisms for encouraging internal and sector-wide collaboration on the SDGs.

• Discussion: Learn from each other
Tecnológico de Monterrey

26 Campuses in Mexico

Academic agreements with 706 universities in 46 countries

Tec inaugurated the country’s first digital university library

Over 90,000 students enrolled in high-school, undergraduate, and graduate programs.

12,245 students participate in social service projects each semester

One of the most prestigious universities in Latin America
Located in Kingston, Canada and Herstmonceux, England

Member of the prestigious U15 Group in Canada

95% of students move to campus from outside of Kingston

Highest number of student clubs per capita in Canada

Home to 28,172 students from over 100 countries

Seven Faculties and Schools

7th in the world
2022 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings
What are the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?
Why use the SDGs as a framework?

- Impact and problem oriented.
- Transdisciplinary, collaborative.
- Most disciplines see themselves reflected (humanities?).
- Value “non-academic” partners.
- Address universally applicable and understood topics, disciplines, challenges and objectives.
- Linked to national and regional strategies (i.e. Agenda 2063 for Africa).
Operationalizing SDGs

- At Tec, five action areas carried out through multi-sectoral alliances:
  - Education
  - Research
  - Public Policies
  - Public–Private Partnerships
  - Coordination of SDSN Mexico.

- Centrality of partnership – at all levels.

- Emphasis on equity and mutual benefit.
Queen’s and THE Impact Rankings

- Mechanism for conducting an environmental scan of SDG activity at Queen’s.
- Cross-university collaborative project with representation from all major units and faculties.
- Steering committee consists of most senior leaders at the university – high university priority.
- Submitted evidence for all 17 SDGs.
2\textsuperscript{nd} Worldwide
SDG 1 (No Poverty)
SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)

3\textsuperscript{rd} Worldwide
SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)

Top 30 Worldwide
8/17 SDGs

Top 100 Worldwide
12/17 SDGs
THE Impact... Impact!

- Translated SDGs into concrete actions specific to our sector.
- Excellent environmental scan of SDG related activity across campus.
- Raised awareness of SDG action across campus.
- Encouraged alignment of central and faculty strategies and resources with SDGs.
- Raised Queen’s profile with global partners.
- Highlighted the importance of collaboration with “non-academic” institutions and partners in the Global South.
THE Impact Challenges

• Some faculty members concerned that THE Impact performance was sole driver of our SDG mission.
• Accelerated need to create SDG administrative infrastructure.
• May discourage collaboration between higher education institutions (in the same country) on the SDGs?
• Submitting to THE Impact is resource-intensive.
• Top 20 is still dominated by rich, western institutions
What is 17 Rooms?

- Method for convening people to identify concrete actions to advance the SDGs over 12 – 18 months.
- Brings people together into 17 small groups, each tasked with generating ideas to make progress towards a particular SDG.
- Various structures
  - Flash and deep dive models
  - Curated or open attendance (or both)
  - All SDGs or a subset.
- Queen’s chose virtual, semi-curated, flash model.
17 Rooms @ Queen’s

- Included more than 300 students, faculty members, staff and local and global partners.

**Benefits:**

- Raised the profile of the SDGs as a framework – greater SDG integration into faculty strategies.
- Generated many concrete actions and identified people to lead them.
- Broke down silos internally and externally.
- Identified partners for further collaboration through Community of Practice convened by Brookings Institution.
Building Partnerships in the Higher Education Sector for the SDGs

- Institute for the Future of Universities
- SDSN (and country branches)
- UGC – University Global Coalition
- Brookings Community of Practice
Discussion

• How is your university implementing the UN SDGs? What are your challenges?

• What are the most effective mechanisms that your institution uses for encouraging cross-campus and/or cross-sector partnership for the SDGs?
Discussion

• Have sustainability rankings advanced the SDGs on your campus? Have they impacted inter-university collaboration?

• How do you define equitable partnership and build internal capacity for partnership building?
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