10

A GUIDE FOR ADVANCING THE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Laura Schnurr

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Goal #2: Zero Hunger - photo by Malkolm Boothroyd for the NCGC's SDGs photography project

FOREWORDS

The fabulous array of tools, resources, and stories captured in this guide could not arrive at a better time. Cities and local governments in Canada and across the world continue to demonstrate their leadership in responding to global crises, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the climate emergency. This is reflected in the explosive growth of city officials, and civil society leaders, using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for local priorities. Since New York submitted the first Voluntary Local Review (VLR) to the UN in 2019, over 130 VLRs have been completed and more than 300 local governments have signed on to a voluntary declaration of commitment.

Solutions to the world's interconnected problems will only be successful when different levels of governance move together to maximize their joint impact. For the first time ever, the member state declaration at this year's High Level Political Forum at the UN called out the importance of VLRs while affirming local leadership on the SDGs. This guide will enable the leadership of civil society and local governments in Canada while offering new opportunities to collaborate with their national government – for the benefit of their local citizens and the world at large.

TONY PIPA
Senior Fellow, Global Economy and Development, The Brookings Institution

Local and regional governments are at the heart of community development. Making our cities and communities inclusive, sustainable, safe, and resilient makes our countries inclusive, sustainable, safe and resilient. The best way for local governments to lead the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to recognize the importance of partnerships with local, regional, and global stakeholders. This guide provides a snapshot of the projects happening across Canada which contribute to the localization of the SDGs worldwide.

As the Mayor of a community that has integrated the SDGs into its strategic plan and in my role as Treasurer of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), I have seen firsthand how the SDGs have helped communities rally around a common goal and how relevant the alignment of the SDGs has helped us in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. As we enter the Decade of Action, we as local and regional governments must push for others to commit to the localization of the SDGs by learning from one another and working in partnership with civil society. Only through effective collaboration and the establishment of synergies, will we transform our commitments into actions toward a whole-of-society approach that leaves no one behind.

MAYOR BERRY VRBANOVIC *(City of Kitchener)*
Treasurer, United Cities and Local Governments

Goal # 17: Partnerships for the Goals - Photo by Caleb Little for the NCGC's SDGs photography project

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goals are a set of 17 interconnected Global Goals that serve as a shared vision for a more equitable and resilient future. Created in 2015 by the United Nations, they are universal goals for humanity to achieve by 2030. In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the document that lays out the SDGs, Canada and the international community committed to take action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure peace and prosperity for all people within a generation.

In early 2020, just as the 'Decade of Action' for the SDGs kicked off, COVID-19 transformed everything. The pandemic led to backsliding on progress toward many of the goals, while exposing cracks in the system as numerous inequities were brought to light. As we continue on the path from recovery to resilience, the SDGs are more urgent than ever before.

While Canada has shown leadership on the SDGs at the federal level, the role of cities and communities is vital. Fortunately, communities across the country and around the world are stepping up to the challenge and advancing the SDGs locally. Many more are keen to do so and are looking to learn how. This guide aims to be a practical tool for all those embarking on this journey – if you are a community leader, such as an elected official, staff within a city or regional government, a business leader, a community organizer, or a

concerned citizen, this guide was written for you. We created it to be practical and accessible, with five sections and links to resources throughout.

Section one provides an assessment tool to understand how prepared you are to advance the SDGs in your community. This is a great starting point as it can serve as a guidepost for exploring the Ideas.

Section two offers 10 Really Good Ideas for localizing the SDG framework and making progress toward the goals. There are many more ideas out there, but we tried to curate the 10 most promising.

Section three shares 10 Inspiring Stories that highlight examples of communities from coast to coast to coast, as well as two international ones, that have implemented ideas listed in our Really Good Ideas section.

Section four includes a list of 10 Useful Resources to explore as you take your learning deeper.

Section five provides 10 Ways to Get Started as you consider what initial steps your community might take.

On behalf of the Advisory Group that helped produce this guide, we hope that you find it helpful and inspiring.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SECTION 1

Assessing Your Readiness to Advance the SDGs Locally

Scale:

1 = Not yet   **2** = Just getting started   **3** = We are part way there   **4** = We are doing this   **5** = We are there!

Here are 10 questions to think about:

Assess your Readiness	Rank
1. Are you/your organization familiar with the SDGs and their potential as a shared vision and framework for action, both globally and locally? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
2. Are members of your community aware of the SDGs and how they are relevant locally? Has there been public engagement or other educational efforts related to the SDGs? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
3. Has your community developed a long-term vision – including shared, local goals for inclusive community wellbeing – that could be mapped to the SDGs? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
4. Do you have a strong, diverse network of people and organizations from across industries and sectors that can contribute to your long-term vision and form a coalition to advance this work? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
5. Do you know who in your community is most at risk of being 'left behind' and why? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
6. Have you developed the relationships and partnerships needed to welcome in and centre the voices of vulnerable communities? Have you invited them to join you on this work? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5

Assess your Readiness	Rank
7. Is there sufficient trust across sectors and between community members for people to have open and honest conversations about the future they want and the actions needed to achieve it? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
8. Does your community use data to track and report progress on local goals or other projects that align well with the SDGs? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
9. Are there regular opportunities in your community to participate in planning, monitoring and review? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5
10. Do you know who in your network might have access to resourcing (funding, human capital, data) and an interest in partnering/funding this work? **Notes:**	1 2 3 4 5

Add up your score to assess how well you are doing: _____

10-25 points – Do you see some ways that you could increase your score? Let us know how we can help!

25-40 points – You are doing well. Keep going!

40-50 points – We want to learn from you!

What have you learned by taking this assessment?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mapping local indicators - photo courtesy of Pillar Nonprofit Network

SECTION 2
10 Really Good Ideas

(1) Raise awareness through broad community engagement, connecting the SDGs to community issues to inspire and build momentum for change

(2) Consult on local priorities to develop a shared vision

(3) Understand your community's progress to celebrate success and galvanize action

(4) Align existing local plans with the Global Goals

(5) Develop a community plan for advancing priority goals, such as ending poverty and tackling climate change

(6) Invite diverse voices to lead, offering support to enable participation

(7) Identify meaningful indicators that resonate with your community to measure progress

(8) Conduct a Voluntary Local Review to affirm commitment to the SDGs and report on progress

(9) Track progress through an open and transparent approach

(10) Share stories from your community to inspire and connect with others

1 RAISE AWARENESS THROUGH BROAD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTING THE SDGS TO COMMUNITY ISSUES TO INSPIRE AND BUILD MOMENTUM FOR CHANGE

Organizing community engagement is a great place to start when exploring how the SDGs can support progress toward a community's vision for the future. Engagement activities can take many forms. It may be useful to do collaborative mapping and exercises that explore the interconnections between the Goals (e.g. how actions taken to address one goal could impact others). Tying engagement to existing work and values to show how the community is already contributing to the SDGs is a good way to have the framework resonate at the local level and to take an asset-based approach to the conversation. It is also useful to explore the limitations of the SDGs and tensions inherent in the framework (e.g. who and what the SDGs currently neglect), as well as any concerns or hesitations that community members may have.

Engaging diverse community members and organizations is key. There are a number of things to consider when committing to inclusive and broad community engagement. Identify who is most at risk of being left behind and ensure they are invited to collaborate. Try to attend events they are hosting, learn from their work that is already in progress, and invite them to lead or co-lead community conversations with their network.

Look for ways to support youth and inter-generational leadership. Go beyond the urban centre and include surrounding suburban, rural or agricultural communities, Indigenous communities, etc. Cross-jurisdictional collaboration is important as decisions made in one place may affect neighbouring jurisdictions. It is also crucial to learn how to respectfully invite and engage these communities in a cross-cultural dialogue.

Using accessible language and engagement methods is essential. Exploring different engagement approaches, such as art-based methodologies and land-based education and tools, can be another way to ensure that engagement is accessible to everyone in your community.

Effective community engagement is demanding and will require capacity and resources, but it is foundational to future work.

2 CONSULT ON LOCAL PRIORITIES TO DEVELOP A SHARED VISION

Communities that effectively establish a shared vision for addressing the SDGs through engagement have stronger buy-in for action and will be more effective in their efforts.

The answer to the question "what matters to us?" is different in every community. Defining local priorities and developing aspirational goals for the community can be done through deep listening and creative exercises (e.g., future search, Vital

Conversations, 17 Rooms – see Resources section for additional information). Community-wide visioning sessions can be used to establish what matters, identify the most pressing local needs, and envision what a better shared future could look like. These processes can help determine which goals should be prioritized. Communities may want to focus on a few priority goals rather than putting an equal amount of effort into all 17 SDGs. Similarly, it is useful to take a flexible and responsive approach to the framework – it could be that one or more of the goals end up being reinterpreted in a different way. Exploring linkages between the goals can help identify actions that will be most effective, as it is often the case that advances on one goal will also support other goals.

As with every stage of the process, think about who is not at the table and be intentional about bringing them into the conversation. Use the visioning phase to build commitment and strengthen relationships with citizens, local organizations, decision makers, and other stakeholders. The trust built early on will be essential when developing a community plan and moving to action.

Participants chat during Tamarack's Community Engagement Kitchener conference in 2017

③ UNDERSTAND YOUR COMMUNITY'S PROGRESS TO CELEBRATE SUCCESS AND GALVANIZE ACTION

Diagnosing the local situation vis-à-vis each of the 17 goals can help provide a sense of how your community is doing. This can vary from a relatively straightforward task to a substantial undertaking, depending on the level of analysis. It will help to delve into the targets and indicators for each goal, while recognizing that many will not be applicable locally. Statistics Canada's SDG Data Hub and Canadian Indicator Framework identify relevant indicators with existing data in a Canadian context. At one end of the spectrum, the analysis is comprehensive enough that a Voluntary Local Review could be prepared (this is another of the 10 Ideas explored in this section). However, it is also possible to do a literature review to get a general sense of the current situation and trends. This can be done by reviewing local research and documents, such as Vital Signs reports (if your local community foundation produces them) or strategies and reports produced by the municipality that cover issues related to the SDGs.

Gaining an understanding of how your community is doing when it comes to SDG issue areas – such as health and wellbeing, gender equality, and clean water – will lay the foundation for developing a community action plan for addressing the goals. Reviewing existing literature will also help determine what research might be needed to fill knowledge gaps, and which local subject matter experts should be engaged in this process.

To ensure that 'no one is left behind', disaggregated data should be sought where possible and appropriate. Aggregate statistics (e.g. overall poverty or homelessness rate) tell only half the story – for the full picture, it is important to dig deeper and understand who may be missing or left behind. Yet careful attention must be paid to ensure data collection and use does not reinforce stigmatization but rather serves to reduce systemic racism and oppression, and achieve equity. This can be done during the engagement process with diverse groups and organizations.

④ ALIGN EXISTING LOCAL PLANS WITH THE GLOBAL GOALS

Most cities and communities have existing local plans that outline their strategic vision, priorities, goals, and planned actions for achieving their goals. These are typically developed by the municipality or local government in consultation with community members, but can also be spearheaded by cross-sector leadership groups outside of the municipality. They may cover specific themes such as ending poverty, creating jobs, or accelerating a climate transition, or be more broad by covering social, environmental and economic goals.

Mapping and aligning these plans to the SDGs is a good way to embed the framework into local policies and programs. Doing so will enable your community to speak the same language as other

Goal #4: Quality Education - photo by Angela Gzowski for the NCGC's SDGs photography project

communities around the world, as you jointly pursue a shared set of global goals. In addition to connecting the local to the global, aligning local plans to the 2030 Agenda can also connect the local to the regional, provincial/territorial, and national levels. Doing so can provide external validation of existing efforts while helping increase ambition (e.g. SDG 1 to *eradicate* poverty and SDG 2 to achieve *zero* hunger, by 2030).

Working with your local government to explore opportunities to do this can help build SDG awareness and capacity among municipal staff and other local actors. It can also be an effective way to break down silos between municipal departments and encourage greater collaboration between them.

⑤ DEVELOP A COMMUNITY PLAN FOR ADVANCING PRIORITY GOALS, SUCH AS ENDING POVERTY AND TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Each process is unique, but the best time to develop a local action plan for advancing the SDGs may be once a community has some familiarity with the goals, has a sense of where it is performing well and where there are opportunities for improvement, and has identified local priorities. Engage diverse community members and stakeholders to set goals and targets to advance the priorities, and co-create pathways for achieving them. Keep in mind that those 'living out' the challenges a community faces are best placed to propose solutions.

A screenshot from the Nogojiwanong/Peterborough Community SDG Forum on Zoom in March 2021.

Given the scale and urgency of the challenges we face, seeking ways to drive systemic change is crucial. This includes identifying and tackling the root causes of a problem, and creating a plan that seeks to make progress on multiple SDGs through single interventions – an approach known as multi-solving. Having ambitious flagship initiatives can help attract attention and support.

Including a clear timeline and set of milestones in the community plan will help with tracking progress and accountability. If possible, set the timeline beyond the current political term (e.g. to 2030 or 2050). The plan should also be iterative, recognizing that a lot can change in a short period of time – something that we were recently re-minded of when COVID-19 transformed our lives.

While developing a community plan, think ahead to the implementation phase. Identify what resources and capacity will be required to implement the actions outlined, and develop relationships with potential partners, decision makers, donors and advocates who may support the work.

6 INVITE DIVERSE VOICES TO LEAD, OFFERING SUPPORT TO ENABLE PARTICIPATION

Centering equity and inclusion and being open to sharing power and decision making is crucial for creating meaningful change. This central and foundational idea must be pursued alongside

any other. Supporting diverse actors to lead and participate in collaborative decision making will strengthen your community plan and actions.

Explore partnership opportunities with racialized communities, youth, Elders and seniors, persons with disabilities, and other equity-deserving groups. It is especially important to engage and partner with Indigenous communities who are rights holders, and whose rights may be impacted by this work. Decision-making processes and governance structures should ensure that diverse voices are given an equitable platform and not tokenized. It is also important to recognize power imbalances that may be present and take action so that all voices are represented and heard.

Another model for promoting equity is to develop one or more leadership groups that inform and guide the overall project. One example is Peterborough's Indigenous Leadership Action Team explored later in this Guide, while another is the various Guide Groups (e.g. traditional knowledge keepers, parents, community leadership) that constitute the polycentric governance model that The Winnipeg Boldness Project exemplifies.

Ensuring inclusion means supporting the capacity for marginalized groups to lead, including through support for participation. Consider how you might be able to offer support to those with diverse lived/living experience, whether that may be through providing transportation costs, childcare, flexible meeting times, and/or compensation for participants' time.

⑦ IDENTIFY MEANINGFUL INDICATORS THAT RESONATE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY TO MEASURE PROGRESS

Communities cannot monitor progress on their goals and targets without a set of local indicators. The 232 unique indicators included in the 2030 Agenda and the 76 indicators outlined in the Canadian Indicator Framework developed by Statistics Canada are a good starting point. Ultimately though, each community will need to determine what indicators to use based on what matters to them and what local data are available.

Exploring what data sources exist locally, how often data is collected, and where there are data gaps will help with understanding the landscape and network of potential partners. A wide variety of organizations and institutions collect data that may be useful. These include various agencies and departments at all levels of government (municipal, provincial/territorial, federal, Indigenous), academic institutions and researchers, civil society organizations, and others. Developed by the First Nations Information Governance Centre, the OCAP principles (ownership, control, access, and possession) are a key resource when it comes to the relationship of First Nations to their cultural knowledge, data and information. This report on Indigenous Collaborative Programming is also helpful in outlining how to build relationships with Indigenous communities in a good way.

Determining the right indicators also requires input from the community on what matters and

Goal #12: Responsible consumption and production - photo by Robbie Dick for the NCGC's SDGs photography project

is worth measuring. If community members and other local stakeholders and rights holders have been engaged to determine local priorities, goals and targets, and/or actions to achieve them, input from that process will likely be relevant. Getting feedback on draft indicators from these same groups will be useful, as the process of determining how to measure success is an iterative one.

Finally, aligning local indicators to the SDGs and/or the Canadian Indicator Framework, to the extent possible, will support efforts to feed into national reporting on progress toward the SDGs.

(8) CONDUCT A VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW TO AFFIRM COMMITMENT TO THE SDGS AND REPORT ON PROGRESS

A key mechanism for monitoring global progress on the 2030 Agenda is Voluntary National Reviews. These reviews, which are country-led and country-driven, are designed to share successes, challenges and lessons learned, so we can collectively accelerate implementation of the SDGs. Individual countries share these on the global stage each year at the High-level Political Forum organized by the United Nations. In parallel, local and regional governments (and in some cases, non-governmental organizations and post-secondary institutions) have begun developing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) to voluntarily assess their progress toward specific local targets and affirm their commitment to the SDGs. To date, over 50 cities and regions around the world have published VLRs (counts vary widely across sources due to differing definitions), including one in Canada which is explored later in this Guide.

Producing a VLR is an excellent way to demonstrate local leadership on the SDGs, while highlighting local issues and the interconnections between them. It is a significant undertaking and involves considerable research, but the result is an in-depth analysis of a community or region's progress on the SDGs. This can help communities understand how they are doing so they can celebrate achievements and direct resources where they are most needed. Some VLRs also serve as future-oriented plans for achieving sustainable development, outlining strategies and actions that will be pursued.

There is no single approach or method to conducting a VLR. Many resources have been developed to support cities and communities with the process, some of which are included in the Resources section of this Guide.

Kelowna SDG roundtable 2016 - photo by Kareen Wong

Dan and Mary Lou Smoke at Maple Syrup Festival - photo by Molly Miksa

(9) TRACK PROGRESS THROUGH AN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT APPROACH

Developing a public, online data dashboard for tracking progress on local targets and indicators is an effective means of sharing information with the community. It is a way to continuously track how the community is doing on issues that are important to them, and share this information in a user-friendly way with policymakers, service providers, other local actors, and residents. This will typically be done after a community has identified local priorities and the SDG-aligned targets and indicators that matter to them.

An initial step is to identify which community partners have the capacity to host and manage a dashboard, while also considering who has the reputation of being a neutral broker of data and information. Groups exploring this idea may want to develop a local data partnership between several key players and appropriate governance mechanisms for overseeing the development and maintenance of the dashboard. A global example of a data dashboard is the Sustainable Development Report (formerly the SDG Index and Dashboards) which assesses where each country stands, while Winnipeg's Peg is a Canadian example explored later in this Guide.

(10) SHARE STORIES FROM YOUR COMMUNITY TO INSPIRE AND CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Storytelling has long had the power to energize, motivate and inspire. Capturing and sharing community stories can galvanize people and encourage action and progress. Some of the best stories are ones that are both data driven and include personal narratives. Tying these stories to the SDGs can provide a local perspective on the goals, showcase progress, and support awareness raising of the 2030 Agenda. Visual and other art forms can be particularly powerful tools for storytelling. For example, in July 2021, Future of Good launched the #My2030 collection of digital art tied to the SDGs and to the community solutions they profiled in their Top 100 Recovery Projects initiative during COVID-19.

Community stories can inspire locals and non-locals alike. A community may wish to share stories through local media, via a website, at forums and other events, or directly with other communities that have similar interests or characteristics. It can also integrate stories into Local or National Voluntary Reviews.

By sharing stories with others, communities will in turn have the opportunity to engage with and learn from other cities and communities. This peer learning and exchange is an essential ingredient for continued success.

SECTION 3
10 Inspiring Stories

(1) **Montreal** – Using the SDGs to galvanize action on food insecurity

(2) **Quebec City** – Aligning its Sustainable Development Strategy to the SDGs

(3) **Kitchener-Waterloo** – Incorporating the SDGs in city and regional plans

(4) **London** – Community engagement on the SDGs through an anti-poverty lens

(5) **Nogojiwanong/Peterborough** – Centering Indigenous leadership in the SDGs

(6) **Winnipeg** – A community indicator system that tracks progress and inspires action

(7) **Kelowna** – Leading the way with Canada's first Voluntary Local Review

(8) **Victoria** – Raising awareness and encouraging action on the SDGs through broad engagement and research

(9) **Northern Territories** – Harnessing the power of storytelling through photography

(10) **Bristol, UK** and **Shimokawa, Japan** – Two inspiring international VLR processes

① MONTREAL – USING THE SDGS TO GALVANIZE ACTION ON FOOD INSECURITY

Seeing an opportunity to position itself as part of a global movement, the Foundation of Greater Montreal became one of the first community foundations in Canada to align its *Vital Signs* report with the SDGs in 2017. It decided to focus

the entire report on children, exploring the unique issues that children face across 10 of the SDGs. The findings were illuminating: Montreal had one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the country, and the situation was particularly dire among

Foundation of Greater Montreal's Faim Zéro project at Bonne Bouffe markets - photo by Jimmy Chicaiza for Le Dépôt

children, youth and families. The rate of food insecurity in Montreal was found to be 11.3% – much higher than the average rate in Quebec (8.1%) or the rest of Canada (8.4%). Families with children accounted for 43% of food bank users in Quebec. Particularly disheartening was that reliance on food banks was found to be increasing.

Recognizing the need for collective solutions, the Foundation of Greater Montreal (FGM) partnered with Récolte, a social enterprise aimed at catalyzing solutions for local and sustainable food practices, to launch the *Faim Zéro* initiative in 2018. This initiative sought to better understand the challenges, opportunities and barriers facing a diversity of actors in the fight to reduce food insecurity in Montreal.

Over a two-year period, Récolte and FGM, in consultation with a task force of local stakeholders, prepared a summary of existing research on food security in Montreal, mapped the ecosystem through collective consultations, and summarized key action areas for collective intervention. They identified a need to strengthen the local food distribution systems (in particular for community organizations), ensure adequate and appropriate funding and financing mechanisms for impact-oriented projects, and strengthen collective governance mechanisms among key actors across the ecosystem. Local stakeholders with specific roles, responsibilities and resources were then attributed the lead on these areas of intervention. The work continues through projects such as the SALIM, supported by *Montréal en Commun* (with

funding from the federal Smart Cities Challenge) until 2024.

This ongoing collective work is informed and supported through the collaboration of diverse local stakeholders, and food insecurity is approached as interconnected with other sustainable development challenges, such as poverty, climate change, health and wellbeing.

The road to zero hunger remains long and challenging in Montreal – and elsewhere in Canada – especially given the additional challenges and weaknesses brought to light by COVID-19. Still, the collaboration between the Foundation of Greater Montreal, Récolte, and a host of local actors, sparked by the SDG-aligned *Vital Signs* report, has played a significant role in raising the profile of the issue and building momentum for collective and collaborative change in Montreal.

② QUEBEC CITY – ALIGNING ITS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO THE SDGS

Quebec City's Sustainable Development Strategy, released in June 2021, is a leading example of how cities and communities can align their own strategic planning with the global goals.

The City of Quebec partnered with University of Quebec in Chicoutimi (UQAC) to pilot a unique approach to prioritizing targets at the local level. Three criteria were established to prioritize which SDG targets were most relevant: 1) Performance – the degree to which progress had been made; 2) Importance – how essential it is to the community; and 3) Skills/competency – the level of responsibility and authority that the City holds over its achievement. Priority targets were those that scored low on performance, high on importance, and where the City had the authority and capacity to intervene. Representatives from 27 groups covering 23 administrative divisions within the City participated in the prioritization. The team also engaged the broader community to incorporate their input. The process led to 25 targets being prioritized for Quebec City, spanning 16 of the 17 SDGs. The Sustainable Development Strategy includes a detailed analysis of local sustainable development actions and initiatives related to the 16 SDGs that were retained.

The Sustainable Development Strategy also outlines five common, societal challenges faced in Quebec City and beyond: social cohesion,

health, decarbonization, resilience and transition. A Climate Action and Transition Plan and a Solidarity Action Plan were developed to address these challenges. Within the Strategy as a whole and each of the Action Plans, the SDGs are the guiding framework. Beyond simply aligning its overall vision with the 2030 Agenda, Quebec City's Strategy has gone much deeper than most in terms of integrating the SDGs into every element, from the vision and timeline to the targets and actions. Partnering with the research sector and benefitting from its academic rigour was a key factor contributing to Quebec City's comprehensive approach.

③ KITCHENER-WATERLOO – INCORPORATING THE SDGS IN CITY AND REGIONAL PLANS

The City of Kitchener's *2019-2022 Strategic Plan* recognizes the importance of the SDGs as a global agenda for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. It also acknowledges the responsibilities of local and regional governments in contributing towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda both in Canada and internationally. The Strategic Plan outlines five local goals related to the themes of people-friendly transportation, environmental leadership, vibrant economy, caring community, and great customer service, each with five corresponding action statements that connect to at least one of the SDGs.

Alongside its Strategic Plan, the City also developed a *Corporate Climate Action Plan* and publishes an annual *Sustainability Report*, both of which also align with the SDGs. The Corporate Climate Action Plan, which focuses on both climate adaptation and mitigation, supports 9 of the 17 SDGs and makes the connections explicit within each goal and set of actions. The Sustainability Report also uses the SDGs as a framework to embed equity and justice issues into the City's sustainability efforts, noting that climate change does not impact everyone equally and that those who contribute least to the problem are often those most affected by it.

To track progress on the SDGs and its sustainability goals, the City is developing an interactive online dashboard that aims to share data and stories in a way that helps the public and decision makers see how the community is doing. This tool will help raise awareness of the SDGs and make them more accessible. The City is also incorporating the SDGs into its governance and accountability structures.

(4) LONDON, ON – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ON THE SDGS THROUGH AN ANTI-POVERTY LENS

London has an ambitious community plan to end poverty in a generation, articulated in *London for All*. When the United Way Elgin Middlesex – the agency selected to lead on implementing the plan – was looking for a partner to develop a framework for measuring local wellbeing based on the SDGs, the London Poverty Research Centre (LPRC) at King's was a natural fit. LPRC had long viewed poverty as deeply interconnected to other issues such as gender equality, food security, affordable energy and climate. So began an intensive process to develop a set of localized SDG indicators that could be used to track progress on the social, environmental and economic challenges in London.

LPRC began the process by reviewing 13 local documents and mapping three of them to the SDGs. These were: the *London for All* report, the London Community Foundation's *Vital Signs* Report and City of London's *2019-2023 Strategic Plan*. It then gathered input from 69 individuals from 41 organizations that spanned a wide range of sectors (public, private, non-profit, academia) and focus areas (including health, economic development, employment, and environment).

Graphic recording, SDG Leaders U Lab 2020 - photo by Emma Richard
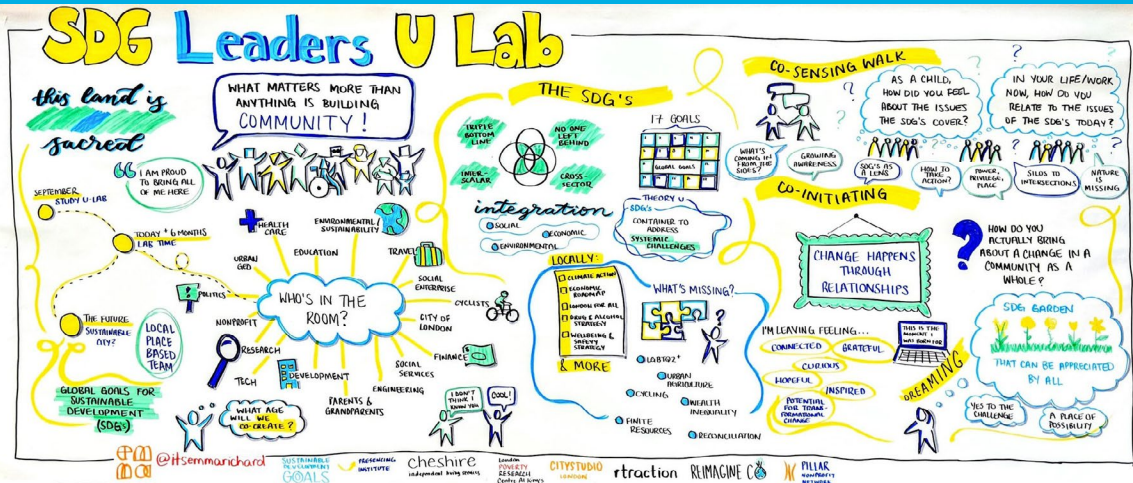
Following the mapping and community engagement, LPRC used a two-stage methodology to determine local indicators. The first stage was "Global to Local" and the second was "Local to Global". In the first stage, the team developed a decision tree to determine which indicators were potentially applicable in the local context. This encouraged reflection on if each indicator was applicable and relevant in the London context, if it was focused at the municipal level, if it could be adopted by changing the scale, if it was quantified and measurable, and if a proxy indicator could be established. Assessing each of the 232 SDG indicators using the decision tree helped sort them by category: maintain, localize, proxy, park and discard. A total of 98 indicators were found to be

relevant (maintain) and another 42 required modifications (localize + proxy). In the Local to Global stage, the local knowledge base was tapped to determine which of the 140 short-listed indicators were in fact relevant and what gaps needed to be filled. The result was a list of 116 local indicators that align with the global goals but are relevant and specific to London.

LPRC and its partners learned a lot from this experience. Some highlights include: integration is important, local context matters, shared ownership is essential, and there are trade-offs that need to be weighed (completeness vs. simplicity, relevance vs. comparability, static vs. adaptive, and bottom-up vs. top-down).

SDG Leaders U Lab 2020 - photo courtesy of Pillar Nonprofit Network

⑤ NOGOJIWANONG/PETERBOROUGH – CENTERING INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP IN THE SDGS

In March 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to transform our lives, Nogojiwanong/Peterborough launched a project to advance the SDGs locally. Five priority action areas had already been identified the prior year at a Community Forum hosted by Kawartha World Issues Centre, GreenUP, Fleming College, and Trent University, so the first step of the project was to create action teams for each area. The five teams, made up of around 60 local volunteers, were: Centering Indigenous Leadership, SDG #1 No Poverty, SDG #4 Quality Education, SDG #6 Clean Water and Sanitation, and SDG #13 Climate Action.

The Indigenous Leadership Action Team – which had 12 members primarily from local Michi Saagiig First Nations – was formed to ensure that Indigenous knowledge and experience guided the entire project. The Action Team explored how each of the four priority SDGs (poverty, education, clean water, and climate action) could be understood from a First Nations perspective, what culturally appropriate assets already exist locally to advance progress in each area, and who are being left behind and not given a voice in this work.

The very definition of poverty is one example of where Indigenous perspectives on the goals differ from a Western perspective. In their report, the Action Team states,

> *"Wealth to Indigenous Peoples means you have what you need physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually, and are in good relationship with your community, ancestors, future generations, and non-human relatives. For Indigenous Peoples, no poverty means the community is looking after each other and ensuring everyone has access to what they need to thrive in all aspects of our being."*

The Action Team also offered recommendations on how local Indigenous knowledge can support the implementation of the SDGs. Recognizing that Indigenous worldviews are sustainable and equitable at its core is an important first step. Creating meaningful space for Indigenous Peoples to share their perspectives is thus critical to supporting efforts to advance the SDGs. Improving conditions for Indigenous Peoples also needs to be done by and for Indigenous Peoples, which requires administering the inherent rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples and their Nations. The Action Team identified the need for Indigenous communities to define their own

goals and metrics for tracking progress, to ensure they are relevant and culturally appropriate. Finally, they pointed to a need for cross-cultural learning and collaboration.

Peterborough's experience in prioritizing Indigenous leadership in SDG implementation is inspiring and should be looked to as a model by other communities who are localizing the SDGs.

Hayley Goodchild of Peterborough GreenUP and Shaelyn Wabegijig of the Kawartha World Issues Centre, project coordinators for the project on Advancing the 2030 Agenda in Nogojiwanong/ Peterborough - photo by Genevieve Ramage, GreenUP

⑥ WINNIPEG – A COMMUNITY INDICATOR SYSTEM THAT TRACKS PROGRESS AND INSPIRES ACTION

Peg is a leading example of how communities can learn about how they are changing and evolving. Developed in 2013, Peg is a data dashboard that tracks and publicizes measures related to the well-being of the community. It measures diverse indicators that together tell a story about Winnipeg and its residents. These include: sense of belonging, housing needs, how people get around, and how much garbage gets recycled vs. how much goes to the landfill. Armed with facts and data about their city, residents can lead change to make Winnipeg an even better place to live.

The indicators that Peg tracks were chosen through an intensive community engagement process that involved more than 800 Winnipeggers, community groups and data experts. They are grouped into eight themes: Built Environment, Basic Needs, Economy, Education & Learning, Health, Natural Environment, Social Vitality & Governance, and Demographics. Peg integrates the SDGs by linking locally developed measures of success with global priorities.

Peg is used by diverse groups including nonprofits and community organizations, government and other decision-makers, business owners

wanting to give back to their community, students and researchers, and members of the public who want to learn about their city and neighbourhood. Peg also informs a range of municipal policy frameworks, including the City of Winnipeg's central planning mechanism, the Higher Needs Assessment, and the Climate Action Plan.

Built on International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)'s Tracking Progress platform, a customizable template for community data dashboards, Peg pulls indicators from a variety of sources (such as Statistics Canada, the City of Winnipeg, and the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy) into a single place. Using graphs, maps and other visualization techniques, Peg communicates how Winnipeg is doing and in what ways it is changing over time, based on what matters most to locals. Much of the data is disaggregated to show variations between neighborhoods.

Peg is led by IISD and United Way Winnipeg in collaboration with a cross-sectoral Advisory Group. The Advisory Group is responsible for the overall guidance and oversight of the project, recognizing that community ownership is critical to Peg's success.

Winnipeg Mayor Brian Bowman announcing the City of Winnipeg adopting the SDGs at The State of the City in 2020 - photo courtesy of The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce | Mike Sudoma

7 KELOWNA – LEADING THE WAY WITH CANADA'S FIRST VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW

When Kelowna published its Voluntary Local Review (VLR) in April 2021, it became the first Canadian community to do so—paving a way for other cities and communities to advance global goals. Kelowna's VLR, led by the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC) alongside the Global Empowerment Coalition of the Central Okanagan (GECCO), was developed through engagement with municipal, regional, provincial and federal government agencies; civil society organizations (CSOs); academics; and Indigenous organizations.

The VLR started with an extensive scan of local SDG initiatives underway community-wide, followed by a review of the City's sustainability agenda. Simultaneously, the team undertook a full review of subnational SDG data from a host of Canadian organizations, collecting applicable data and identifying established Canadian targets and indicators. Where data gaps existed, experts in the field were consulted and proxy indicators were developed. The team reviewed and aligned the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action(TRC) Calls to Action with the SDGs. The TRC documents the damaging impacts of Canada's colonial history and residential school system, and outlines a path towards

reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. Through consultation with the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, and insights and learnings from the First Nations Health Authority among other First Nations programs and initiatives, the team identified barriers in achieving the SDGs, alongside community-level support required to address them.

Through this intensive research and consultative VLR process, the team developed a set of 28 outcome-based, quantifiable city-level indicators localized to Kelowna's geographical and sociocultural context. Based on these indicators, trends are shown, and challenges and progress on achieving each SDG clearly outlined. Examples of effective programs underway within the City of Kelowna, the Regional District of the Central Okanagan, Province of British Columbia, Indigenous organizations, and CSOs are highlighted, alongside recommendations for improved success. Kelowna's VLR is comprehensive without being overwhelming. It tells Kelowna's SDG story through detailed data, while showcasing many successful and replicable programs and initiatives that are transforming the community. It connects the Global Goals to local action in a way that informs, inspires, and mobilizes other communities.

The name Kelowna originates from the word kiʔláwnaʔ from the Nsyilxcǝn language, spoken by the Syilx People, meaning grizzly bear - photo by Amanda Schaurete

8 VICTORIA – RAISING AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGING ACTION ON THE SDGS THROUGH BROAD ENGAGEMENT AND RESEARCH

Victoria was an early mover in Canada when it comes to advancing the SDGs, with the Victoria Foundation and several others playing leadership roles in promoting the 2030 Agenda through research, events, and partnerships with diverse stakeholders.

The Victoria Foundation has been aligning its Vital Signs reports to the SDGs since 2017, measuring the vitality of the region alongside shared global goals. It has also been using the 2030 Agenda to frame its Vital Conversations, which are community discussions hosted with residents and other diverse stakeholders to share and reflect

on findings from the Vital Signs research. In 2018, the Victoria Foundation partnered with the University of Victoria to research the social impact and economic contribution of the non-profit sector, mapping this to the SDGs to raise awareness of the goals.

Victoria has also been a hub for SDG events. In 2018, the Victoria Foundation partnered with the local chapter of BC Council for International Cooperation and the City of Victoria to host Greater Victoria BC2030, which brought together over 70 representatives to discuss local action on the SDGs. Lisa Helps, Victoria's mayor and a

prominent SDG champion, spoke at the event. In early 2020, NewCities, a global non-profit working to shape a better urban future, partnered with Victoria Foundation, the City, and others to host Leading by Example, a two-day conference on implementing the SDGs in Canada. SDG Leading by Example grants were awarded during the gathering to three organizations doing place-based work to activate the SDGs.

Donor engagement is another way the Victoria Foundation has increased awareness of the SDGs among diverse groups. It launched the Gadsden Initiative to bring together a group of GenX and Millennial donors and deepen their relationships with the community. The initiative is closely tied to the SDGs, helping encourage future granting and impact investing through this lens. Similarly,

its Vital Youth program, which introduces young people to philanthropy and local community development, asks participating teams to select one or two SDGs that resonate and use that to guide granting decisions. The Foundation also aligns its own granting with the SDGs (e.g., it is working to ensure a food secure region, tied to SDG 2), which has helped the community sector learn about the goals.

Advancing reconciliation has been central to Victoria's efforts to implement the SDGs. One example is the partnership between the University of Victoria, Victoria Native Friendship Centre and the Victoria Foundation to launch the Salish Sea Hub, which aims to build community-based research capacity and action towards decolonization and the SDGs.

Goal #10: Reduced Inequalities
(Raven Firth, Inuvik food bank volunteer) -
photo by Weronika Murray

(9) NORTHERN TERRITORIES – HARNESSING THE POWER OF STORYTELLING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

In 2019 the Northern Council for Global Cooperation (NCGC) asked nine photographers working across Canada's three northern territories to showcase the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals through photography and storytelling. The photographers profiled initiatives in their communities — from civil society, government, business, community organizations, and youth — that show some of the ways that Northerners are working together to achieve a more sustainable and just planet. The result is a powerful collection of images and narration directly from communities in Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

Each photographer worked with their community to determine how best to represent these goals from their unique perspective. "What do the SDGs mean to you?" elicits a wide range of responses, which differ greatly depending on who one asks. Northern perspectives on the SDGs are particularly unique, given the North's distinct realities, cultures, worldviews, and geography.

Storytelling is a powerful tool for change – it can educate, inspire, and galvanize action while shedding light on how the global goals are interpreted in a local context. NCGC's SDG Photography Project is a leading example of how storytelling can bring life to the SDGs and share insights on what the goals mean to specific communities in a language that is universal and accessible to all.

**Goal #15: Life on Land -
photo by Malkolm Boothroyd**

NCGC also developed an interactive SDG map with hundreds of organizations working on the SDGs across the territories, which helps paint a picture of how Northern communities are already contributing to the SDGs while also enabling new connections to be made. The SDG Photography Project and the Northern SDG Map are just the beginning of NCGC's work towards localizing the SDGs in the North. Building on the momentum of those projects, they are currently curating a global studies program for northerners with a core focus on Indigenous worldviews and the unique ways in which the North is connected to the world.

⑩ BRISTOL, UK AND SHIMOKAWA, JAPAN – TWO INSPIRING INTERNATIONAL VLR PROCESSES

There is no one right way to conduct a Voluntary Local Review. Of the 50+ VLRs that have been produced since cities started creating them in 2018, each one has taken a unique approach.

While Kelowna's VLR was initiated by a non-governmental organization, most VLRs to date have been produced by local and regional governments, including those in Bristol, United Kingdom, and Shimokawa, Japan. A central difference among VLRs is their scope; some cities have limited the process to reviewing how current strategies and policies align with the SDGs, while others have used it as a tool to plan for the future and develop pathways for achieving sustainable development. The latter approach holds the greatest promise in terms of achieving transformational change. Most cities that have produced a VLR used the process as an opportunity to socialize city staff and community leaders to the SDGs, though the level of community engagement has varied. The cities that saw the VLR as a long-term planning tool (going beyond merely aligning current activities to the SDGs) have also been the ones that have done deeper engagement with stakeholders outside of the local government.

Two exemplary VLR processes in this regard are those from Bristol and Shimokawa. Both cities used the process as a means of developing a shared local vision for the future and exploring what actions could support SDG implementation. They also both engaged the community throughout the process. In Bristol, the 'Bristol SDG Alliance' brought together key stakeholders to support local SDG efforts. The Alliance includes academics from Bristol's two main universities, Council officials, business leaders, and representatives from the community sector. With broad community input, Bristol created the One City Plan which set ambitious targets for the future of the city up to 2050, mapped to the SDGs. Meanwhile Shimokawa, a town of approximately 3,000 people in Northern Japan, undertook what was likely the most comprehensive engagement of any VLR process to date. The town formed a 'SDG FutureCity Subcommittee' to create the Shimokawa Vision 2030 – an SDG-aligned roadmap for achieving sustainable development – and organize activities to engage community members and a range of other stakeholders. The Committee, which comprised 10 citizens from diverse backgrounds and an external facilitator, held 13 awareness-raising activities that each focused on a different theme.

Goal #4: Quality Education - Photo by Caleb Little for the NCGC's SDGs photography project

SECTION 4
10 Useful Resources

(1) Brookings paper: Who and What Gets Left Behind? Assessing Canada's Domestic Status on the SDGs

(2) Statistics Canada's SDG Data Hub and Canadian Indicator Framework

(3) Alliance 2030 network and No Little Plans podcast

(4) Community Foundations of Canada's Vital Signs

(5) Indigenous Leadership Action Team final report

(6) Tracking Progress

(7) Local 2030: Platform on localizing the SDGs

(8) Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at the Subnational Level

(9) 17 Rooms: A tool for hosting SDG conversations

(10) Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews

1) BROOKINGS PAPER: WHO AND WHAT GETS LEFT BEHIND? ASSESSING CANADA'S DOMESTIC STATUS ON THE SDGS

This working paper published by the Brookings Institution in 2018 remains a key resource for understanding where Canada stands vis-à-vis the goals and targets outlined in Agenda 2030. It offers snapshots of how the country as a whole is performing across each of the goals, as well as the trends observed, while also presenting comparisons on select SDG targets in provinces, territories and among several cities. The paper explores the importance of disaggregating data by demographic to identify who is being left behind. It also provides a summary of various domestic strategies for achieving the SDGs at the national, provincial, and municipal levels.

2) STATISTICS CANADA'S SDG DATA HUB AND CANADIAN INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

Statistics Canada, the focal point for Canada's SDG data and reporting efforts, developed a Data Hub that explores all data available for the 169 targets and 232 indicators included in the 17 goals. For each indicator, it lists the latest data as well as the data provider, source, and other information. In June 2021, Statistics Canada released the Canadian Indicator Framework for the SDGs which outlines Canadian ambitions for each of the 17 goals and specific targets and indicators for those ambitions. Communities looking to localize SDG indicators can now begin from the 31 ambitions and 76 corresponding targets/indicators deemed relevant to Canada, rather than the entire global framework.

③ ALLIANCE 2030 NETWORK AND NO LITTLE PLANS PODCAST

Alliance 2030 is a national network of organizations, institutions, and individuals across Canada that are committed to achieving the SDGs by 2030. Initiated by Community Foundations of Canada and supported by a range of partners and members, Alliance 2030 offers a digital space for people to find and connect with one another and share learnings. The podcast series No Little Plans is an example of high-quality storytelling that brings the SDGs to life by exploring issues that matter and people that are driving change.

④ COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA'S VITAL SIGNS

With support from Community Foundations of Canada, community foundations across Canada, and around the world, regularly produce Vital Signs reports and host "Vital Conversations." These reports and conversations are used to examine wellbeing and quality of life at the community level. As a community-driven data program, Vital Signs combines national data sets with local knowledge mobilized through surveys, local research, partnerships, and community engagement. Community foundations have been aligning their Vital Signs reports to the SDGs since 2016, and CFC has been aligning the national data sets to the SDGs as of 2018. Some of the reports, such as Montreal's from 2020, look quite similar to a VLR. If your community foundation produces a Vital Signs report, this is an excellent starting point.

⑤ INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP ACTION TEAM FINAL REPORT

The Peterborough/Nogojiwanong SDG Project, led by Kawartha World Issues Centre and GreenUp, formed an Indigenous Leadership Action Team made up of 12 individuals from local First Nations to guide its work. Their final report provides an Indigenous perspective on several individual SDGs (Goals 1, 4, 6, 13) as well as general reflections on the linkages between advancing reconciliation and achieving the ambitious vision outlined in the 2030 Agenda.

⑥ TRACKING PROGRESS

Tracking Progress is a customizable template for data dashboards allowing communities of all sizes to easily track and visualize progress on issues that matter to them. The tool can scale to measure progress in any municipality, sub-national area, country, or region and allows linking locally developed indicators to the global SDGs framework. Tracking Progress platforms can be hosted by a range of community partners like local governments and administrations, colleges and universities, community organizations or groups of stakeholders. IISD provides training and support for communities interested in starting their own Tracking Progress platform.

⑦ LOCAL 2030: PLATFORM ON LOCALIZING THE SDGS

Local 2030: Localizing the SDGs aims to be a one-stop-shop for resources on SDG localization as well as a network connecting a wide range of actors both within and outside of government. The platform –available in English, French and Spanish– includes a library of publications on localizing the SDGs, a specific section on Voluntary Local Reviews, a list of events and training, and spaces for communities from around the world to connect with one another and share their stories and experiences. Its Toolbox is particularly useful, with practical, adaptable resources for communities at every stage of their journeys implementing the SDGs.

⑧ ROADMAP FOR LOCALIZING THE SDGS: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING AT THE SUBNATIONAL LEVEL

Developed by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, UN Habitat and UNDP, this roadmap for localizing the SDGs is particularly relevant for local and regional governments and their associations. It covers four stages of the process: raising awareness of the SDGs at the subnational level, advocacy for national SDG strategies to include subnational perspectives, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The roadmap includes a range of strategies that could be explored in a given city or region, drawing on inspiring examples from around the world.

⑨ 17 ROOMS: A TOOL FOR HOSTING SDG CONVERSATIONS

17 Rooms was launched by Brookings and the Rockefeller Foundation in September 2018 as an experiment for spurring new types of action for the SDGs. Participants from disparate specialist communities meet in their own "Rooms", one for each SDG, and identify high-impact actions that can be taken over the next 12-18 months. Ideas are then shared across rooms to spot opportunities for collaboration. Alongside an annual Global Flagship event, "17 Rooms-X" has emerged as a methodology for any community to organize their own SDG conversations. Several universities, including University of Toronto and Queen's University, have hosted "17 Rooms-U" events, and a range of cities, governments, and other organizations are members of a growing 17 Rooms-X community of practice.

⑩ GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEWS

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and UN Habitat joined forces to produce this comprehensive guide, published in 2020, for communities interested in developing Voluntary Local Reviews. It looks at the 39 VLRs that had been prepared at the time – according to their count – exploring who is involved in VLRs, where the VLR process is located within the larger institutional and policy context, what content is included, and the process for localizing data and indicators. UCLG also formed the Global Observatory on Local Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD) which has numerous resources, reports and guides on VLRs.

SECTION 5
10 Ways to Get Started

① MAP LOCAL ACTORS TO UNDERSTAND THE LANDSCAPE

There are likely a number of organizations and other actors in your community that are advancing the SDGs, regardless of whether or not they use that language. Identifying who they are is a great starting point. Focus on those that can be considered key stakeholders, including community members, potential partners, and Indigenous rights holders.

② FORM A DIVERSE GROUP WHO CAN LEAD THE WORK

Having a strong leadership group in place to move the work forward together is essential. This group should have individuals from across sectors and with different knowledge and experience, including traditional knowledge and lived/living experience grappling with the challenges outlined in the SDGs.

③ REACH OUT TO KEY ALLIES WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU

Reach out to potential allies and influencers who might be prepared to support your leadership group. These may include local politicians and government representatives, Indigenous communities, nonprofit organizations, business leaders, and media. Consider what funding partnerships might be explored to ensure sustainability of the work.

④ IDENTIFY WHO IS BEING LEFT BEHIND AND REACH OUT

Assess who is often left out of community conversations – and why – and be intentional about bringing those voices in, providing opportunities to co-host and lead. The leadership group should reflect on personal biases, power dynamics, and lack of knowledge or experience from the outset. Involve people with experience "living with the problem" and provide resources for participation.

5 LISTEN TO THE COMMUNITY

Engage in collective visioning with members of the community, inviting community organizations and individuals into conversation to share their priorities and local goals and to imagine what a more vibrant, sustainable and inclusive community could look like. Reflect on how this vision ties to the SDGs and can contribute to shared global goals.

6 EXPLORE EXISTING CONNECTIONS TO THE SDGS

Understand how your community is contributing to the SDGs and start capturing these stories. Map local initiatives, strategies, and other documents to the SDGs to identify linkages between the global goals and tangible local issues.

7 RESEARCH WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE

Remember that you are not alone on this journey. Look for examples of other cities that have worked to localize the SDGs and understand what their process was, how they started out, where they were successful and what lessons they learned. As a starting point, this guide provided 10 inspiring stories and the resources listed point to additional ones.

8 CONNECT WITH A MENTOR COMMUNITY

Peer learning is an excellent way to be supported through your process. Reach out to another community, in Canada or abroad, that you find inspiring and see whether they might consider acting as a mentor during your journey.

9 START THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT MONITOR PROGRESS

It's never too early to think about measuring success. Consider how to consult your community on measures that are meaningful to them and understand what data sources are available. Forming a working group on data and tracking progress is a good starting point.

10 TRY NOT TO GET OVERWHELMED BY THE SDG FRAMEWORK

The 17 goals, 169 targets, and 232 indicators included in the SDG framework can be daunting. Don't feel that you need to focus on all of the goals; rather, identify which are the top priorities locally and work to advance those in a way that drives overall progress, leveraging the synergies between the interconnected goals. Feel free to modify the language too – it needs to resonate with your community.

ABOUT
Tamarack & Vibrant Communities

Tamarack is a connected force for community change, building the capacity of changemakers in cities across Canada and around the world. Tamarack catalyzes collective action with diverse leaders to solve major community challenges including ending poverty, building youth futures, deepening community and addressing climate change. Our belief is that when we are effective in strengthening our collective capacity to engage citizens and lead collaboratively, our work contributes to building a more peaceful and equitable society.

Through our Learning Centre, we support over 38,000 active learners in the Tamarack community to engage in the interconnected practices of community change—Collective Impact, Community Engagement, Collaborative Leadership, Community Innovation, and Evaluating Impact.

Through Vibrant Communities, we apply lessons learned by supporting cities and local leaders to develop and implement large-scale community change initiatives through several learning networks organized around specific themes.

Tamarack currently supports four pan-Canadian networks through Vibrant Communities:

- **Communities Ending Poverty:** A national movement to reduce poverty.
- **Cities Deepening Community:** A national movement to create stronger neighbourhoods and deepen a sense of belonging and citizenship.
- **Communities Building Youth Futures:** A national initiative to re-engage young people to successfully navigate educational transitions from youth to adulthood.
- **Community Climate Transitions:** A national movement to advance a just and equitable climate transition, aligned with the SDGs.

These networks are active in nearly 400 cities and communities across Canada. They bring together diverse community members including municipal, community, faith, Indigenous, business and lived/living experience leaders to seek collective solutions.

ENDING POVERTY
DEEPENING COMMUNITY
BUILDING YOUTH FUTURES
CLIMATE TRANSITIONS

Vibrant Communities
TAMARACK   INSTITUTE

Community Climate Transitions

Community Climate Transitions is a Vibrant Communities network aimed at supporting cities, communities and organizations across Canada to localize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contribute to a just and equitable climate transition.

Cities and residents are already actively advancing equity and addressing climate change. This learning community serves to amplify existing work, by building capacity and connecting learners to one another.

This network is for those who:

- Have integrated the SDGs into their local plans or are looking to do so

- Want to develop climate transition action plans with a strong equity lens, to be implemented by a community collaborative

- Want to identify SDG-aligned local level priorities and metrics, and measure progress on their goals

- Are looking to learn more about community engagement and innovation, collective impact, collaborative leadership, and evaluation

- Hope to build back better following COVID-19 to ensure a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable society

We support members in 3 areas of impact:

1. Supporting members to identify local priorities through community engagement

2. Developing a community-wide common agenda and SDG Transition plan

3. Tracking and reporting on outcomes

We do so by offering 5 forms of supports:

1. Expert coaching

2. Peer learning (Communities of Practice and Peer-Input Process)

3. Online learning (website, blogs, newsletters and social media)

4. Events (webinars, workshops, conferences)

5. Publications (case studies, guides, papers)

tamarackcommunity.ca/ communityclimatetransitions

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

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