

Call for Chapters: Sustainable Development Goals SDG18 Communication for All

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Abstracts expected by 10 June 2021.

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The 2030 agenda for development or what is known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is perhaps the most ambitious agenda collectively agreed by 193 countries in human history. In 2015, the UN Member States adopted the 17 SDGs as a framework that would help address the challenges being faced by humanity. From eradicating poverty, ending hunger, providing universal access to healthcare and education, addressing climate change; to the partnering of individuals, philanthropists and nation states to achieve the global goals.

Yet, the framers of the 2030 agenda for development comprising key stakeholders from all sectors of all life forgot to dedicate one goal on the role of communication in achieving the SDGs. Such an oversight has attracted the attention of media and communication scholars alike, journalists and policy makers who understand that it is nearly impossible to achieve the SDGs without the articulation and embrace of the role of communication in development.

The COVID-19 pandemic which struck in 2019 has shown why communication is essential to human survival. The Pandemic which started as a health crisis and later metamorphosed into a full-blown economic crisis is now having a direct and indirect impact on the possibility of achieving each of the SDGs. The Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2021 says the global economy has experienced the worst recession in 90 years, with the most vulnerable segments of societies disproportionately affected. An estimated 114 million jobs have been lost, and about 120 million people have been plunged back into extreme poverty:

<https://developmentfinance.un.org/>

A major lesson that came out of the COVID-19 pandemic was the role of communication in providing support for the survival of the global economy and society as a whole. The global community became more attached to the traditional and social media in order to understand the nature of the virus, how it spreads and measures needed to curtail the spread of the infection.

Social, economic and educational life moved from physical to a now universally accepted virtual life style. Key global industries resorted to working from home. Virtual meetings by heads of states are now normal and remote education from primary to tertiary levels are gaining ground by the day.

Following the global lockdown, the resilience needed to survive the pandemic largely rested on the shoulders of the available communication infrastructure. Zoom, which had an average of 19 million daily users in December 2019 now averages 300 million users per day. Teams, developed as a tool for remote work has 145 million daily users as announced by Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella in April 2021.

A study by the World Health Organization shows rapid increase in remote consultation in the healthcare industry especially in UK, France, Malta, Germany, Poland, Luxemburg and Austria. Between March and April 2020, 5.5 million people received consultation from 36,000-56,000 physicians in France (Richardson et al 2020). The pandemic also exposed major development challenges such as digital inequality. According to the UN, COVID-19 has forced the closure of schools in 191 countries affecting 1.5 billion students and 63 million primary and secondary school teachers (UN News 2020).

Essentially development has become a communication issue and communication is a development issue. How could such a vital pillar of life be missing in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals?

Therefore, we invite high-quality submissions from authors that would explore the notion of SDG18 (Communication for All).

Building on the works of Lee and Vargas (2020) and Yusha'u and Servaes (2021), we see SDG18 (Communication for all) as inevitable in

achieving the 2030 Agenda for Development. We welcome critical submissions and high-quality research that explore this topic in relation to, but not limited to the following:

- SDG18-Communication for all, targets and indicators.
- Role of SDG-18 in the realization of each of the 17 SDGs earlier agreed by the UN.
- Why the SDGs should be revisited to include SDG18-Communication for all.
- Why SDG-18 is essential in post-COVID-19 economic recovery.
- SDG18 and remote working (Work from Home).
- SDG18 and Communication for Development and Social Change.
- SDG18 and the new normal in post-COVID-19 World.
- SDG18 and the World in 2030.
- SDG18 and Fake News.
- SDG18 and the role of mass media in development.
- Role of SDG18 in containing future pandemics.
- SDG18, innovation, technology and entrepreneurship.
- SDG18 and the digital divide.
- SDG18, journalism and news reporting during COVID-19
- SDG18, virtual diplomacy and international relations in post COVID-19 world.
- SDG18 and vaccine hesitancy.

- SDG18, sports and development.
- SDG18 and the politics of COVID-19 vaccine development and distribution.
- SDG18 and the role of faith in development.
- SDG18 and 'building back better.'

The book is expected to be published as part of the Palgrave Macmillan's SDGs series. Authors should submit 300 words abstract to the editors: Jan Servaes (9freenet9@gmail.com) and Muhammad Jameel Yusha'u (mjyushau@gmail.com) by 10 June 2021. Authors whose abstract meet the high-quality criteria would be contacted by 10 July 2021. Full chapters are expected by 1st November 2021. All chapters will go through a peer review process. Submitted abstracts must contain the following information:

- Name of author(s).
- Affiliation.
- Email address.
- 150 words profile.
- Contact number.
- Corresponding author should be specified where there is more than one author.

References

Lee, P., Vargas, L. (2020). Expanding Shrinking Communication Spaces. Centre for Communication Rights. Penang, Malaysia. Southbound.

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