Taking action on the UN Sustainable Development Goals across communities and schools

Report of the event held on Monday November 6th 2017 in Edinburgh City Chambers, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ

1.	**Welcome and Introduction to the SDGs** (see presentation here) *Rehema White, Chair RCE Scotland and University of St Andrews and Betsy King LfS Scotland* In September 2015, 193 countries across the world agreed the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs set a challenge for every country to tackle poverty, inequality, climate change and sustainable development with Education, and learning as a central component. This event was organised by Learning for Sustainability Scotland 's SDGs and Communities Task Groups for anyone working in or with communities and schools to explore how to effectively embed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our work. The aims of the programme (see Appendix 1) were to: • Respond to needs of LfSS Task Groups and members • Share understanding and practice on LfS and the SDGs across communities and schools • Explore how to increase understanding and action on the SDGs in Scotland's schools and communities • Identify next steps In a participative introduction to the SDGs the group shared prior knowledge of the SDGs and identified the holistic and interrelated nature of the SDGs and their relevance to local, national and global contexts, focussing on planet, people, peace, prosperity and partnerships. Using Gaia's Training for multiplier cards participants shared their understanding of the need for each of the 17 SDGs. (https://gaiaeducation.org/shop/product/sdg-community-implementation-flash-cards/)

2.	**Communities, Schools and the SDGs** **SDGs in Communities and community networks in Scotland –**Rachel Green, CDAS **(see presentation here)** Community Development Alliance Scotland (CDAS) has 102 members working through partnerships. The SDGs can support CDAS's vision, drive and direct priorities and help inspire and raise awareness of these local and global imperatives. Scotland and CDAS members can contribute to meeting SDG targets and indicators. In Scotland SDG1 for example, no poverty, links to asset transfer and participatory budgeting. SDG 10 with its focus on reducing inequalities links to community development's focus on enabling everyone to have a voice and share experiences of lived lives with others. This links to gender equity, SDG5. SDG4, Quality Education, has a focus on education but learning is relevant across all sectors and is lifelong beyond the school gate. Strong connected communities are needed to deliver many of the SDGs, but how connected are we all to our communities individually and professionally? **SDGs in Schools working with communities -** Charlotte Dwyer, ScotDEC and IDEAS **(see presentation here)** The International Development Education of Scotland IDEAS is a membership network with a focus on global citizenship linking large organisations and small eg Oxfam, six Development Education Centres. IDEAS members are working across the SDGs raising awareness of how to link them to the school curriculum and producing resources. Activities include: Young Citizen Advocates; teacher seminars; resource packs that can be downloaded
3.	**Taking action on the SDGs across communities and schools Pecha Kucha -1-** **Royal Highland Education Trust -**Sara Smith **(see presentation here)** **SCDN Womens Strategy Group/ Scottish Refugee Council –** Fiona Ballantyne **(see presentation here)** **Nature Unlimited** – Scott Noble **(see presentation here)**
4.	**Using the SDGs to promote sustainability learning linking communities and schools – group discussion** **What are the benefits of using the SDGs to promote LfS links between schools and communities?** **For pupils** - Pupil engagement, ownership and personal responsibility - Pupils can lead their own learning and see action and impact - Broadening Learning Environment - new perspectives - Links with the curriculum and closing the attainment gap (literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing) - Links to innovation and problem solving on real life issues – they will lead the future - Helps early year students to be taken seriously **For Communities and schools** - Making connections, provides an opportunity to collaborate

- Strengthening partnerships, shared best practice
- Framework for action on local issues, linking to national and global
- Helps define wide nature of sustainability
- International, global context allows for potential for learning between schools & communities in different places / countries
- Raising awareness – in young people and new audiences
- Community advocates can help raise awareness eg experts in community? Free?

General

- Little steps can still have huge outcomes. We should all be asking how our actions help to achieve the SDGs
- Benefit of the framework (but need to know where the resources are)
- Important to involve business and commerce.
- Democratic engagement

What are the challenges (if any) of using the SDGs to promote LfS links between schools and communities?

For schools

- Getting senior management on board
- Fear – not enough knowledge / opening can of worms
- Secondary school – opportunity to make sure it relates to national qualifications requirements
- Interdisciplinary learning not fully addressed / holistic approach
- Eco-Schools – recycling milk cartons / local government links / logistical framework. Lots of disconnection
- Linking primary and secondary, bringing awareness to parents & engaging them with the SDGs

For Communities and schools

- Starting things – local, but need support and relationships
- Time (just start!)
- Lack of understanding of shared agenda re: social justice
- How to use 'school' community to reach wider communities
- Knowledge and resources, eg people, bringing goals to everyone at the right level
- Getting business involvement

General

- Lack of awareness of SDGs, volume of SDGs overwhelming and language / jargon intimidating
- Monitoring and self-evaluation of indicators & outcomes
- Including SDGs in Community Planning

5.	**Taking action on the SDGs across communities and schools Pecha Kucha -2-**
	Architecture and Design Scotland – Diarmaid Lawler **(see presentation here)**
	Carse of Gowrie Sustainability Group – Fiona Ross and Coral Bell **(see presentation here)**
	Permaculture Association - Lusi Alderslowe **(see presentation here)**
6.	**Promoting action on linking communities and schools on the SDGs – group discussion**
	Where is action on linking schools and communities around SDGs already happening?
	o Parents interacting with students
	o Inviting community groups into schools, beyond parents
	o School Linking with other countries
	o Award schemes: Eco-Schools has SDGs in Green Flag award; Duke of Edinburgh; Forest Schools; Rights respecting schools
	o Professional development for teachers: Connecting Classrooms; Global Learning Programme
	o Health and wellbeing focus in schools
	o Fife Community Food/Greener Kirkaldy, local foodbanks, Social Bite
	o Forestry Commission – rural skills

o   Christian Aid

What's needed to enable us to use the SDGs to support our work or to drive more action?

Resources

o   Produce guidelines on making relevant resources
o   Awareness of organisations that can help with resources, knowledge etc
o   Inspiring video clips on what sustainability is from different perspectives
o   Simplification of complexity
o   Good stories of where it's happening
o   Communications are key eg with schools and local authorities
o   A Scottish MOOC about SDGs?

Policy changes

o   Embed in teacher training
o   CfE promotes community engagement
o   Government role in monitoring progress and HMIe inspecting schools
o   People first! community engagement and empowerment leading to equity of experience
o   Active citizens and democratic engagement with communities choosing to use SDGs

Events

o   Marketplace event for each goal supporting learners to take action
o   Facilitate networking between schools and communities

Other

o   Go beyond those already 'in the know', Tackle those with impact on consumption
o   Media involvement needed
o   Global Goals awards to acknowledge achievements in business
o   Build on what's already happening
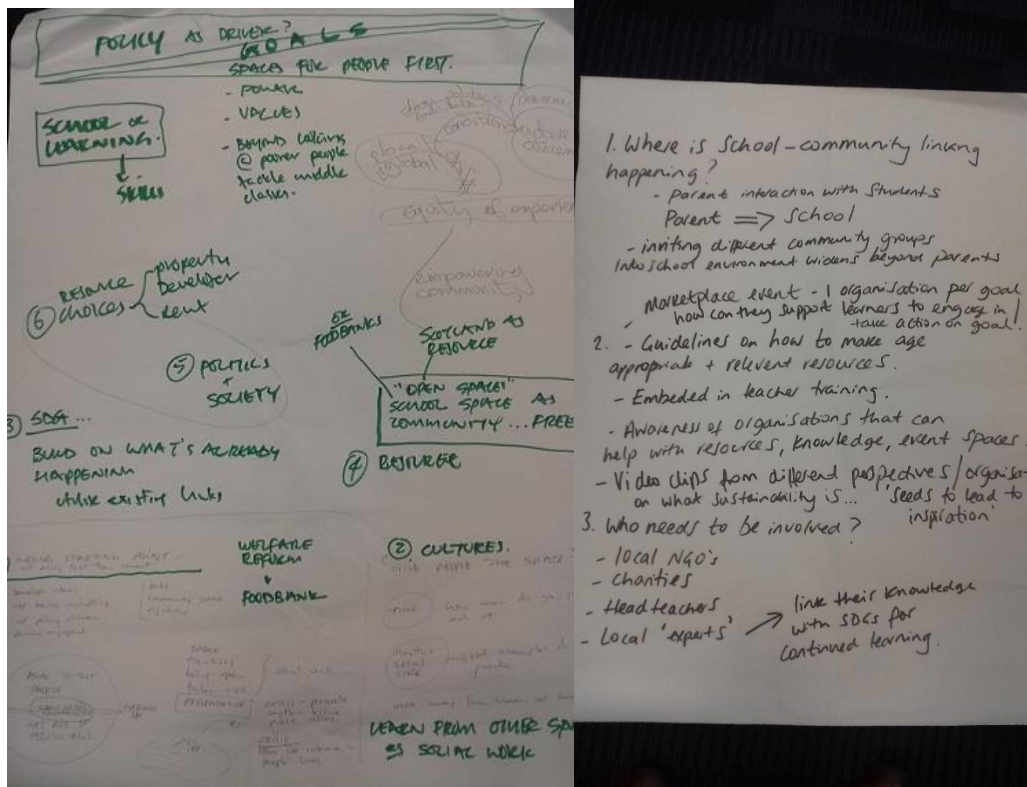
Who needs to be involved? Locally, at national level and with regards to international partnerships?

	o Local NGOs, schools, parents, headteachers, local 'experts', local authorities o Businesses, accredited products aligned with the SDGs o Policy connection – needs to be embedded in legislation and with government support in Education o Community role linking cluster schools o Secondary schools working as part of clusters in neighbourhoods o Work with Regional Improvement Collaboratives
7.	**Summary and Next Steps** The following points were made in plenary discussion: **Cross sectoral working** • There are already some excellent initiatives linking communities and schools around the SDGs, but their links to current education agendas (eg the Attainment Challenge and Closing the Gap) need to be made more apparent • There is a role for LfS Scotland in linking schools, further and higher education and communities to promote collaboration • Community and school activities should be driven by the local context, with SDGs used to support action and to make the links to national and global imperatives • Parents can play an important role in linking school and community • Consideration needs to be given to framing of the SDGs for different audiences. It's hard to bring the SDGs to everyone at the right level. **Engaging with the Media** • More engagement with the media is required, promoting work on SDGs via good news stories and blogs • LfS Scotland could collaborate with other networks to promote the 'learning' aspect of SDGs to media • An event on how to engage with the media (with Fiona Ross?) would be useful **Involving the business community** • Consider how to provide support for business engagement with the SDGs **Engaging with Government** • Participation in the Sustainable Development Network Scotland (**www.globalgoals.scot**) **is** open to all, it's important to ensure the learning dimension is included • New National Outcomes are due December 2017, we need to ensure that the SDGs are embedded • The Community Empowerment Act has great potential, communities and schools will need to know how to engage with decision making processes. **Providing learning opportunities** • Key areas are understanding complexity and engagement with decision making processes **Resources** • Provide videos, flashcards (similar to Gaia cards) for all audiences, further events

With thanks to Scotland Malawi Partnership for the use of their SDGs display panels

Appendix 1

Programme

10.00	**Arrival and coffee/tea**
10.30	**Welcome and introduction** Rehema White, Chair of Learning for Sustainability Scotland and University of St Andrews
10:40	**Introduction to the UN Sustainable Development Goals** A practical activity facilitated by Betsy King, Learning for Sustainability Scotland
11:10	**Communities, Schools and the SDGs** **SDGs in Communities and community networks in Scotland** –Rachel Green, CDAS **SDGs in Schools working with communities -** Charlotte Dwyer, ScotDEC and IDEAS

11:40	**Taking action on the SDGs across communities and schools Pecha Kucha -1-**
	     Royal Highland Education Trust -Sara Smith
	     SCDN Womens Strategy Group/ Scottish Refugee Council – Fiona Ballantyne
	     Nature Unlimited – Scott Noble

12.00	**Using the SDGs to promote sustainability learning linking communities and schools** Group discussions
12.30	**LUNCH and networking/market place**

13.15	**Taking action on the SDGs across communities and schools Pecha Kucha -2-**
	     Architecture and Design Scotland – Diarmaid Lawler
	     Carse of Gowrie Sustainability Group – Fiona Ross and Coral Bell
	     Permaculture Association - Lusi Alderslowe

13.45	**Promoting action on linking communities and schools on the SDGs** Group discussions
14.45 - 15.00	**Summary and Next Steps** Rehema White

Participants

Name		Organisation (where supplied)
Abi	Cornwall	Learning for Sustainability Scotland
Allison	Geddes	
Andrew	Harthill	Westhill Academy
Andrew	Samuel	Abertay University
Angela	Mitchell	Changeworks
Anna	Danby	Dynamic Earth
Betsy	King	Learning for Sustainability Scotland
Brian	Wilkinson	Historic Environment Scotland
Annmarie	Robb	Keep Scotland Beautiful
Cecilia	Oram	Sustrans
charlotte	dwyer	Scotdec
Christina	Laing	Fife College
Claire	Reid	South Lanarkshire Council
Coral	Bell	Carse of Gowrie Sustainability Group
David	Watt	
Diane	Molyneux	St. Georges School for Girls
Diarmaid	Lawlor	Architecture & Design Scotland
Donna	Trimble	Primary School Teacher
Fiona	Ross	Carse of Gowrie Sustainability Group
Fiona	Ballantyne	CDAS
Ginny	Gegg	Gaia Education
Gordon	Branston	
Hannah	Bicheno	
Ingrid	Todd	Fife Council
Jackie	Kew	City of Edinburgh Council
Louisa	Habermann	Student
Lusi	Alderslowe	Permaculture Scotland
Lynn	Orchard	
Mairianne	Walker	Student
Maureen	Brown	
Monika	Wantoch	City of Edinburgh Council
Cara	Jones	Archaeology Scotland
Jennifer	Thoms	Archaeology Scotland
Rachel	Green	Rachel Green Consultancy
Rebecca	Boyde	Archaeology Scotland
Rehema	White	Learning for Sustainability Scotland
Rob	Crawford	UN House
Sara	Smith	Royal Highland Education Trust
Scott	Noble	Nature Unlimited