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Chapter 11

Global leadership for sustainability (GLfS) and Inner Development Goals (IDGs): An integrated framework and roadmap to enhance leader and leadership development

Abstract: This chapter proposes an integrated framework and roadmap to enhance leader and leadership capacity in addressing sustainability challenges. By employing the first principles thinking approach, it delves into the fundamental assumptions that underpin sustainability solutions within the neoliberal paradigm, aiming to deconstruct and comprehend holistically how the system conditions leaders. Second, it reconceptualizes these building blocks to offer a novel, coherent perspective able to tackle the root causes of the sustainability crisis and identifies the leadership qualities necessary to shift this system. Third, it provides an integrated framework which integrates the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) within a model of global leadership for sustainability (GLfS) (Fry & Egel, 2021). The chapter concludes with reflections and questions regarding the shifting perspectives on sustainability, the evolving roles and responsibilities of leaders in this context, and the feasibility and implications of the suggested roadmap.

Keywords: GLfS, IDGs, first principles thinking, sustainability, triple bottom line, levels of being

Introduction

Trying to change the world without changing our mind is like trying to clean the dirty face we see in the mirror by rubbing the glass. However vigorously we clean it, our reflection will not improve. Only by washing our own face and combing our own unkempt hair can we alter the image. Similarly, if we want to help create conditions that foster peace and well-being in the world, we first need to reflect those qualities ourselves. (Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, 2003)

Most organizations, despite advocating for the triple bottom line (TBL), craft their main strategies solely around profit, relegating considerations for people and the planet to secondary operational roles. This profit-centric focus renders any real transformation towards genuine sustainability difficult, if not impossible. To be able as leaders and organizations to generate innovative solutions that enhance social and

environmental flourishing, it is essential to gain a deeper understanding of the complex phenomenon of sustainability. The first principles thinking approach used in innovation helps address current complex challenges, such as sustainability (Thiel & Masters, 2014). It is attributed to ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle and Socrates but, in our days, has been popularized by successful entrepreneurs like Peter Thiel and Elon Musk. It involves three stages of intervention. The first stage involves breaking down abstract concepts into their simplest forms, while eliminating unnecessary preconceptions and biases. Doing so allows one to delve into the essence of matters, avoiding superficial interpretations; to identify core truths and reveal hidden connections and dependencies. The second stage takes place once one returns to fundamentals. It encompasses reassembling insights into holistic understandings, synthesizing pieces into a coherent perspective. Ultimately, the third stage involves inventive approaches to solving a problem.

We followed the first principles thinking approach in our webinar held online via the Swiss IDG Hub on 25 January 2024. We began by examining the underlying assumptions underpinning sustainability solutions within the neoliberal paradigm and the types of leadership that emerge from this system (Stage A). We called this operational system Sustainability 1.0. To guide our analysis, we utilized a conceptualization of leadership by levels of being, as described by Fry and Kriger (2009). Then, we critically reconstructed these assumptions toward a holistic perspective (Stage B), which we called Sustainability 2.0. Finally, we provided a novel solution: a framework to implement this fresh perspective within organizations to foster leader and leadership capacity for sustainability. The integrated framework comprises the global leadership for sustainability (GLfS; Fry & Egel, 2021) and skills of the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) inherent in the GLfS. Together, they offer a synergistic, comprehensive approach towards leadership for sustainability (Stage C; see Figure 11.5).

Below we provide a detailed explanation of how we applied the three stages of the first principles thinking approach in our webinar to explore the necessary narrative shift to enable organizations to innovate to enhance social well-being and environmental sustainability. We examine the inner shift from the perspective of individual leaders, focusing on mindset and narrative, as well as from a cultural and collective standpoint in terms of leadership development.

First principles thinking

Stage A

Utilizing analytical thinking, we looked into the root causes behind the sustainability challenge (sometimes called primary drivers, fundamental principles, or basic blocks) in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the entire predicament. Our aim was

to comprehend how the basic assumptions of the system (the neoliberal paradigm) impact both sustainability efforts and leaders' personal and organizational decision making regarding sustainability issues (see Table 11.1).

Central to our query was the question: *Why do leaders struggle to implement the TBL even though they are passionate to do so?*

Stage B

After synthesizing our findings, we started searching for a solution from scratch. Our aim was to reshape the foundational assumptions of the system in order to legitimize the choice of sustainability over profit-driven alternatives as well as envision the leadership qualities required to realize this transformation.

During our quest we pondered: *How can we reshape and rearrange the basic blocks in order to provide a novel, coherent perspective conducive for sustainability?*

Stage C

Having devised a blueprint, we proposed a tailored toolkit intended to help implement this coherent perspective. Our aim was to provide a roadmap of transformation; a new system along with new attributes that can boost leader and leadership capacity for sustainability.

Considering our path forward, we asked ourselves: *How can we act on this novel, coherent perspective?*

Finally, we invited our participants to a collective exchange and deep reflection. Our aim was to provoke critical thinking and discussion about the future direction of sustainability efforts.

In the following sections we will look into each one of the three stages and will close with a discussion on the reflections and questions by the webinar participants.

Table 11.1: First principles thinking approach applied in the webinar.

First principles thinking	Core question	Modus operandi
Stage A	Why do leaders struggle to implement the TBL even though they are passionate to do so?	Sustainability 1.0
Stage B	How can we reshape and rearrange the basic blocks in order to provide a novel, coherent perspective conducive for sustainability?	Sustainability 2.0
Stage C	How can we act on this novel, coherent perspective?	Transition

Sustainability 1.0

First principles thinking – Stage A

At this stage we examined the root causes behind the sustainability challenge by analyzing the fundamental assumptions that underpin the system, including our worldview and the economy, as well as the leadership qualities that the system promotes and rewards. The core question we aimed to answer was: *Why do leaders struggle to implement the TBL even though they are passionate to do so?*

We live in an era where we acknowledge the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) nature of our world. In academic literature, over 3,000 papers including “sustainable” or “sustainability” in their titles or abstracts are published annually (Kajikawa et al., 2007). Furthermore, the asset value of European sustainability funds exceeds 5.5 trillion euros in 2024 (Mitra, 2024), while US-domiciled assets under management surpassed 8.4 trillion US dollars in 2021 (US SIF Foundation, 2022). Despite the engagement and resources committed, we have not made significant progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), except for transitioning from a VUCA to a BANI (brittle, anxious, nonlinear, incomprehensible) (Zakharov, 2022) understanding of the current global environment, which in addition to the fragility and unpredictability of modern systems, acknowledges their emotional and cognitive impacts of the world.

Our incapacity to find solutions despite our best intentions and willingness prompted us to examine the systemic barriers and leadership limitations that prevent leaders from effectively implementing the TBL within their organizations. In this pursuit, we used a widely accepted definition of sustainability which describes sustainability as a prerequisite for attaining the sustainability goals and as a constraint on sustainable development. This perspective views sustainable development as development that “meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987, p.54).

The system

We define our current phase as Sustainability 1.0. This phase is largely shaped by the neoliberal economic paradigm, which emphasizes market-driven approaches, individualism, and short-term profits. The neoliberal economic paradigm, central to Sustainability 1.0, prioritizes economic growth and efficiency over environmental and social considerations. This approach often leads to superficial sustainability efforts that do not address the root causes of environmental degradation and social inequality (see Figure 11.1).

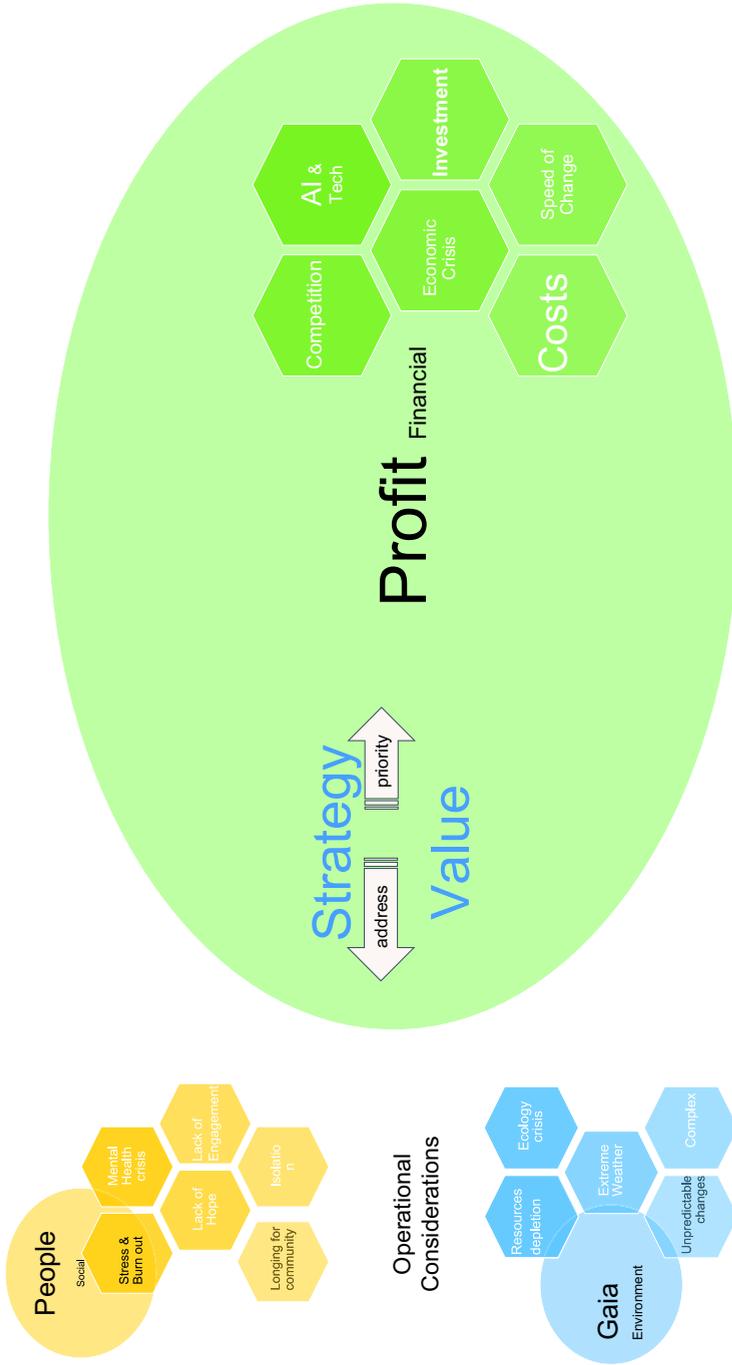


Figure 11.1: The Triple Bottom Line at Sustainability 1.0 (Source: Authors' own).

The Sustainability 1.0 context operates on two building blocks. First, that the physical world is the prevailing reality, and second, that the economy functions separately from society (see Table 11.2). These assumptions shape our worldview, the decisions we make, as well as the types of leadership we deem capable of achieving our vision both individually and collectively.

The first building block leads to materialism and consumption. Within this reality, our vision focuses on the pursuit of material possessions. This vision wants to maximize profit, desires, markets, instrumental use, and self-interest. It tends to build a world where “bigger is better” and “more is more”. Within this maximizing framework, freedom from want (and poverty) is achieved through incorporating effective market behavior in all aspects of one’s life and displacing other forms of rationality (McMurtry, 2009). This emphasis on fulfilling physical needs creates a disconnection between our own essence, which includes emotions and spirituality, and our relationship with others, which includes human beings who are distant, deceased, or yet to be born, as well as nonhuman entities, like animals and nature. This belief fosters our right to use and overuse the planet’s resources to satisfy our needs. Consequently, both our identity and our relationships with others become “commodified”, serving functional and instrumental purposes to meet our needs (Egel, 2020; Georgescu-Roegen, 1971). This dynamic can be summarized by the motto “What I can do for you in exchange for what you can do for me”.

The second building block, that the economy functions separately from society, is reflected in the concepts of unconstrained markets and free trade, where an “invisible hand” supposedly guides the allocation of resources efficiently without human intervention (Swedberg, 2009). A direct outcome of this belief is the personification of corporations, which grants them certain rights and responsibilities akin to those of natural persons.

Within this reality, our vision, as rational beings, centers on utility maximization: allocating resources as efficiently as possible to maximize their utility. The scarcity mindset fuels relentless competition, driving a perpetual quest for development where success is measured by outperforming others, often at their expense. Technological innovation and resource substitution are viewed as the means to disassociate economic growth from the planet’s limited capacity (Fligstein, 2018). It is worth noting, that in cost calculations, products or goods have no inherent value; their price is determined by the interplay of supply and demand (Hayek & Stelzer, 1960). Alternative development (e.g., emphasis on local efforts, promotion of community autonomy, etc.) proposes changes in the type and scope of growth, but does not challenge the concept of economic growth per se. Another trait of paternalism is arrogance, as the Global North decides on its own the means and ends of the assistance it offers to the Global South.

Table 11.2: Sustainability 1.0 First Principles Thinking – Stage A (Source: Authors' own).

BUILDING BLOCK 1	BUILDING BLOCK 2
The prevailing reality is the physical world	Economy is separate from society
IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS	IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS
<u>Human identity and relations</u>	<u>Homo lupus and neoliberalism</u>
Vision based on consumption leads to constant pursuit of material possessions and the constant desire for newer and better product (secularism)	There is an “invisible hand” that efficiently guides the allocation of resources without human intervention
Physical human needs are more important than other needs (e.g., emotional, spiritual). Focus on satisfying physical needs first (fragmented approach to human needs)	Human role is utility maximization. It is justified by utilitarian ethics
Our well-being (happiness and success) is an outcome of satisfying our physical needs (materiality/consumerism)	Competition is the driving force

Leadership within Sustainability 1.0

To explore how leaders perceive and respond to sustainability challenges, make decisions, and interact with others, we examine how their state of consciousness, reflected in their “being” (personal identity, beliefs, values, emotions, and subjective experiences) and their “knowing” (the cognitive process of acquiring, understanding, and applying information) shapes their reality and results in specific leadership actions and outcomes. We use as our guide Fry and Kriger’s (2009) seminal work “Towards a theory of being-centered leadership: Multiple levels of being as context for effective leadership”.

Being-centered leadership

The being-centered leadership (BCL) theory (see Figure 11.2; Fry & Kriger, 2009; Kriger & Seng, 2005) is based on the world’s major wisdom traditions. It illustrates a spiritual journey of transformation of leaders from ego-centered to other-centered states of knowing and being to guide leaders, facilitate clear vision, consciousness from moment to moment, and the ability to engage and enlist others. The levels of being are different states of consciousness, marked by the lower-order systems of knowledge and moving to progressively higher-order systems. When at a particular level of being, a person tends to experience psychological states and states of self-awareness that are appropriate to that level. In addition, an individual’s feelings, motivations,

ethics, values, learning system, and personal theories of what constitutes happiness are consistent with and appropriate to that level of being.

Each higher level is holonic in that it transcends and includes each of the lower levels. Moreover, each lower level can be activated or reactivated as individuals progress and then fall back to a lower level, even in a single day. Thus, each level can manifest in any particular activity depending on the level of self-awareness and spiritual development of the individual at that time. More important still, every individual has all of these levels potentially available, independent of their current stage of development. At each level, leaders find themselves concerned with questions such as: What is knowledge? What are the processes by which knowledge is acquired? What do people seek to know? How do we become more aware of both ourselves and the world around us?

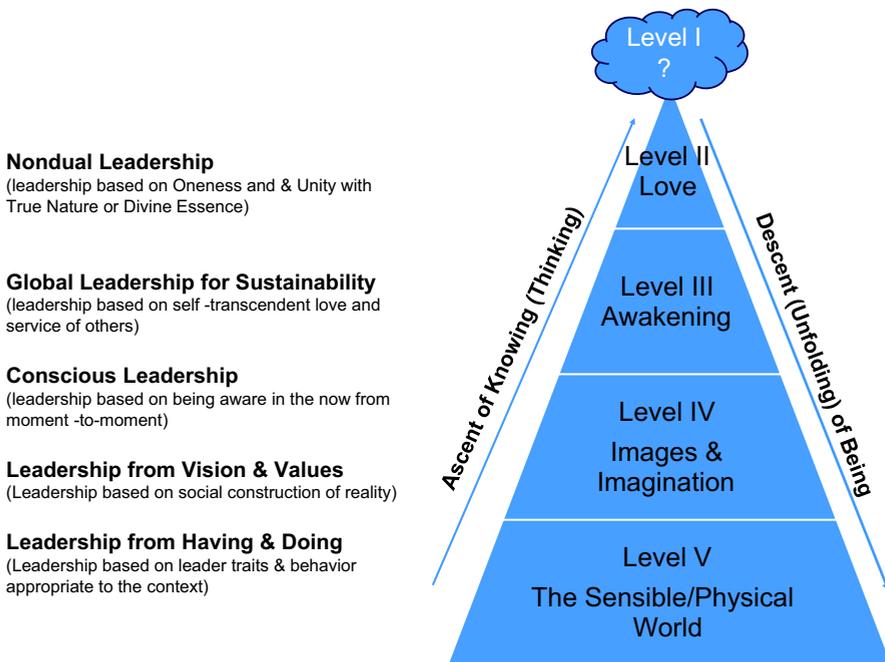


Figure 11.2: Levels of being (Source: Fry and Kriger, 2009).

Sustainability 1.0 argues for “heroic” leadership types. Leadership qualities promoted and valued include rationality, instrumentality, individualism, control, assertiveness, advocacy skills, domination, and a preference for hierarchical relationships. In Sustainability 1.0, leaders function at Levels V and IV. Below is a brief overview of Levels V and IV (see Table 11.4).

Level V way of knowing and being

The fifth level comprises the physical observable world which is based in the five senses, wherein a leader creates and transfers knowledge through an active engagement in worldly affairs. As a state of being, it is composed of individuals that are born into and still live within a social world where the major view of reality is based on the sensible/physical world. Effective leadership in the sensible/physical world requires developing appropriate diagnostic skills to discern the characteristics of tasks, subordinates, and the organization and then being flexible enough in one's leadership behavior to increase the likelihood of desired effectiveness outcomes. Leadership theories at this level include trait, behavior, and contingency theories of leadership (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; House, 1996).

Level IV way of knowing and being

The fourth level of being is where reality is socially constructed through the creation and maintenance of vision, cultural values, and images. At this level, leadership involves the use of images and imagination, the process of creating a compelling vision, and establishing strong cultural values. The main goal of leadership at this level is to create agreement on a socially constructed reality which motivates followers to high levels of organizational commitment and performance. The primary focus at this level is on the subjective experience of individuals and groups as they relate to the development of awareness and knowledge. Out of this level arises the legitimacy and appropriateness of a leader's vision, as well as the ethical and cultural values which individuals and groups should embrace or reject. Here the vision and values of the leader may be either self- or other-centered (e.g., Hitler vs. Mahatma Gandhi). Charismatic and transformational leadership theories characterize this level (DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Sustainability 2.0

First principles thinking – Stage B

At this stage, we reshaped and reorganized the foundational assumptions that underpin the system, including our worldview, the economy, as well as the leadership qualities that the system promotes and rewards. We provided a novel, coherent perspective conducive for sustainability. The core question that guided our inquiry was: *How can we reshape and rearrange the basic blocks in order to provide a novel, coherent perspective conducive for sustainability?*

The system

We define this phase as Sustainability 2.0. It is largely shaped by a shift from a dualistic to a holistic understanding of the relationship of people with people and people with nature. This shift is also described as “spiritual transformation” (Coates, 2003). Specifically, the two building blocks of Sustainability 1.0 as well as the type of leadership at the system are redefined (see Figure 11.3). First, the world is no longer seen primarily as a collection of physical matter to be exploited, but as a life-enhancing ecology which recognizes the interconnectedness and intrinsic value of all life forms and nature. Second, the economy is not viewed as an independent system operating separately from social concerns, but as one embedded within the broader context of society (see Table 11.3). As far as leadership is concerned, Sustainability 2.0 advocates leadership types that are at Levels III and II (see Table 11.4).

The first building block – that the world is a life-enhancing ecology which recognizes the interconnectedness and intrinsic value of all life forms and nature – calls humans to a new role in “solidarity with all other creatures of the earth” and to seek what Lyons et al. (2016) identifies as “mutually enhancing human-earth relationships” (p. 13). The consciousness of unity and interdependence can manifest itself in our reasoning, our personal attributes, and our ethics. At that level, human fulfillment is not limited to our own self-actualization (though this is indeed part of the process). It expands beyond self to incorporate compassion for the needs of all people and species on Earth, a willingness to act for the common good, and assuming responsibility for our conduct. Relationships are not egocentric and commodified; they become personal, egalitarian, and dialogic.

The second building block – that the economy is integrated in society – means that politics and culture are not external to the economic dynamic (Carruthers, 1999). From this perspective, social forces are crucial to the functioning of markets as the development of new markets requires extensive social organization (Podolny, 1993). The focus has shifted from “alternative development” to “alternatives to development”, where the economy respects planetary boundaries and promotes the harmonious coexistence of all lifeforms. Breaching these boundaries would mean destabilizing Earth’s systems on a planetary scale, threatening most life on earth. This approach emphasizes local efforts, community autonomy, grassroots movements, collaboration, local knowledge, and popular power to transform development. It rejects the former supremacy of global culture over local cultures and paternalism, promoting equity and collaboration. It also considers multiple types of rational action, including value rationality. Within the value rationality logic, social and ecological costs are not “externalities”. Instead, they are integral costs that must be included in the sale price (Stiglitz & Charlton, 2006).

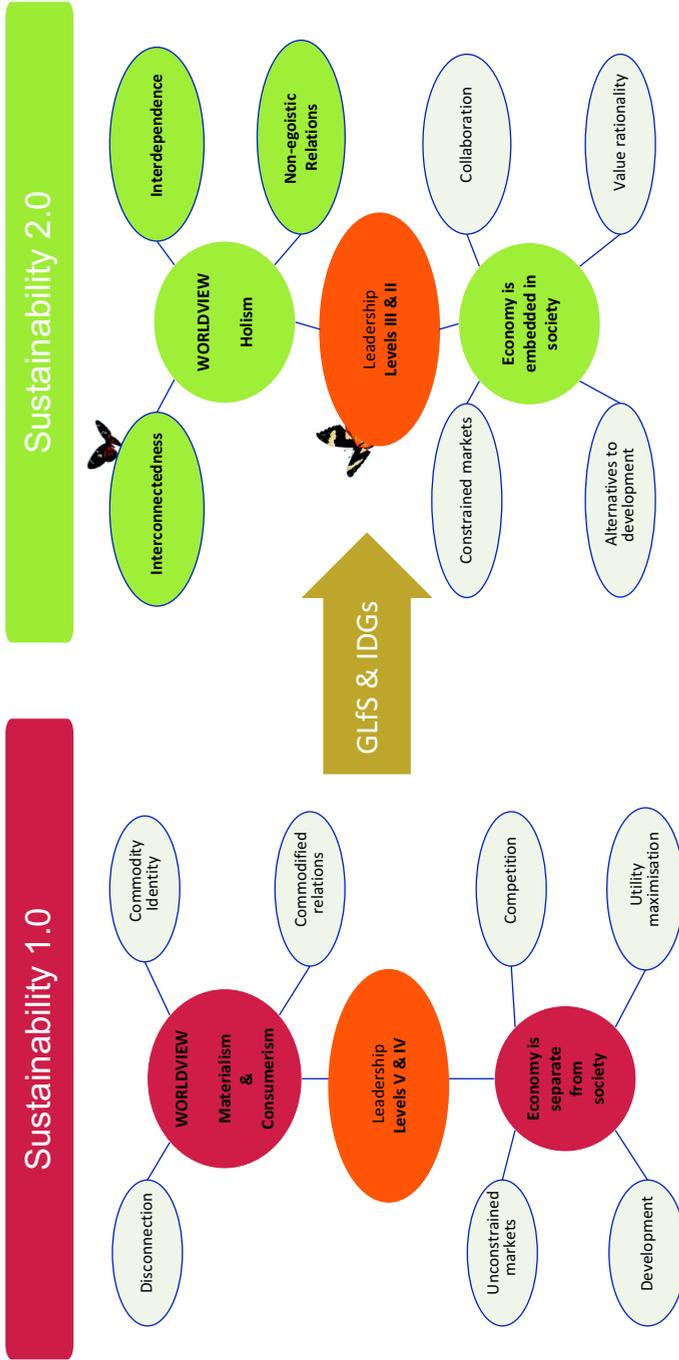


Figure 11.3: Shifting from Sustainability 1.0 to Sustainability 2.0 (Source: Authors' own, based on Egel, 2015).

Table 11.3: Sustainability 2.0 First Principles Thinking – Stage B (Source: Authors’ own, based on Egel, 2015).

BUILDING BLOCK 1	BUILDING BLOCK 2
The prevailing reality is life-enhancing ecology	Economy is embedded in society
IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS	IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS
<u>Human identity and relations</u>	<u>Homo socius and social economy</u>
Holistic vision of flourishing based on ecological awareness of our relationship with the full depth and mystery of the universe	Economy is there to solve societal problems. The allocation of resources is decided on ethical principles of equity
Nonphysical human needs (emotional, spiritual) and also the needs of nature and other living creatures are equally important. Material possessions are a means for meeting human needs and not a goal per se	Human role is stewardship
Our well-being is tied to the well-being of all (interconnectedness)	Collaboration is the driving force
We go beyond our illusion of taking our own environment of being the world itself (self-transcendence)	The price of a product has an innate value which includes social and ecological costs
Human relations are personal, egalitarian, and dialogic	No economic growth per se. Respect for planetary boundaries
	Equal power relations: emphasis is on local efforts, community autonomy, grassroots movements

Leadership at Sustainability 2.0

Sustainability 2.0 promotes and values leadership qualities that include empathy, helpfulness, caring, and nurturance, as well as a focus on community, vulnerability, and interpersonal sensitivity. Leaders are attentive to and accepting of others, responsive to their needs and motivations, and orientated towards collective interests and integrative goals such as group cohesiveness and stability. They prefer open, egalitarian, and collaborative relationships. In this paradigm, leaders primarily function at Level III, occasionally at Level II, and aspire to reach Level I. Below is a brief overview of Levels III, II, and I (see Table 11.4).

Level III way of knowing and being

This level of being is foundational for Sustainability 2.0. At this level, self-awareness and self-transcendence begin to emerge and become more dominant. To awaken or become conscious at Level III involves the capacity to be aware from moment to moment of all of our experiences, thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations. Without this felt experience in the current moment, a leader's thinking will tend to become focused on past memories based in anger and resentment, as well as future imaginings that produce worry and fear.

By committing to an inner life practice (e.g., meditation, prayer, yoga, journaling, walking in nature, etc.), a leader's individual and social identity are redefined through a discipline of constantly observing one's thought patterns and what one pays attention to in order to get the self-centered ego out of the way. It allows one to explore the often crippling emotional programs for happiness that are developed in early childhood based on needs for survival, security, affection, esteem, power, and control (Keating, 1999). It also requires exploring the over attachment or over identification with any particular group or culture to which one belongs. In doing so, questions or issues are addressed, such as: What is my agenda? What is my predisposition? What are my prejudices? What are my fears? What are my angers? Answering these questions requires one to develop the ability to stand away from themselves, listen and look with a calm, nonjudgmental objectivity.

Level II way of knowing and being

Level II builds upon the commitment to Level III to more consistently be able to love and serve others through self-transcendence and deepening connectedness with all things in the universe. Once one accepts the possibility that their view of the world is just one of many alternative interpretations of reality and can more consistently remain present in the now, which is devoid of feelings, thoughts, and emotions, one's ways of experiencing (existential being), knowing (cognitive), and behaving changes.

At Level II, leaders more readily and consistently seek to understand and empathize stakeholders' perspectives and respect their opinions and dignity as human beings. At this level, the focus is on leadership based on loving and serving others. Recognized examples of leadership at Level II include Mother Teresa, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela. Very few organizational leaders are consistently at Level II, though they can often lead from this level temporarily.

Level I way of knowing and being

Level I is the most inclusive level of being, characterized by a transcendent unity. Underlying this level is a central theme: the transcendence of all opposites and the realization of self-actualization. Level I thus incorporates all of the previous levels of being and is beyond all distinctions, including that of leader and follower. Level I leadership is an ideal stage of being that is more aspirational, rather than a current reality within human or organizational settings.

The awakening that occurs at Level III and above enables us to shift from the limited leadership types found at Levels IV and V, which are inherent in Sustainability 1.0, to the more evolved and integrated leadership types found at Levels III and II that are essential for achieving Sustainability 2.0 (Egel, 2020).

Table 11.4: Leadership at levels of being ((Source: Authors' own, based on Fry & Kriger, 2009).

Level of being	Leadership types	Key attributes of leadership	State of consciousness (being & knowing)	Goal of organizational leadership
Level V	Trait, situational, transactional Path-goal and contingency	Having and doing	It is shaped by the five senses	Acquire resources, be efficient and effective
Level IV	Charismatic/ narcissistic, transformational	Compelling vision and strong cultural values	It is shaped by the social and cultural context in which we live	Foster inclusive environments, effectively navigate complex social dynamics, achieve shared goals, promote organizational success
Level III	Conscious, responsible, ethical, authentic, relational	Self and other-awareness	It is rooted in our subjective felt experience of the present	Awaken leaders' capacity to lead more wisely and more lovingly
Level II	Spiritual, servant, global leadership for sustainability (GLfS)	Self-transcendence and interconnectedness	It is shaped by our connection to a deeper, more expansive self and our holistic understanding of the systemic, relational, and contextual aspects of reality	Make decisions that prioritize ethical considerations and long-term sustainability, and foster a culture of compassion, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
Level I	Non-dual	Oneness	It is rooted in inclusion of both pure emptiness and pure completeness	–

Paving the pathway from Sustainability 1.0 to Sustainability 2.0

First principles thinking – Stage C

At this stage, the core question we wanted to answer is: How can we act on this novel, coherent perspective? Referencing Figure 11.3, we proposed shifting successfully from Sustainability 1.0 to Sustainability 2.0 by employing the GLfS framework, supported at every step by the IDG framework. The skills outlined in the IDG framework are crucial for cultivating leaders and leadership that effectively support sustainability. These skills are also inherent in the GLfS. Highlighting them (see Figure 11.5) aids in the successful implementation of the GLfS.

An important element in this process is to remember that we are dealing with two levels of intervention. Based on Day et al.'s (2000) distinction between “leader and leadership development” (2014) we are targeting individual leaders and leadership which includes influencing others to achieve a shared goal. “Leader development” focuses on supporting individual leaders to overcome their industrial meaning making (see Table 11.2). In this category, leaders are defined as all change agents who seek sustainable change, regardless of role or position (Ferdig, 2007). Leadership development aims to create a comprehensive process that inherently involves multiple individuals (e.g., leaders and followers or among peers in a self-managed work team) and legitimizes the choice of sustainability over profit making. These two levels of intervention inform each other in an iterative way. If leaders do not expand their consciousness from Levels V and IV to Level III and beyond, they cannot effectively interact with others or make decisions at the level of Sustainability 2.0. Conversely, when leaders operate at Sustainability 2.0, they support the evolution of individual leaders.

In the following sections we will briefly introduce the GLfS and IDG frameworks. We will then present an integrated framework for sustainability that incorporates the IDG dimensions and skills within the GLfS (see Figure 11.5).

The global leadership for sustainability (GLfS) framework

GLfS is a model for organizational transformation to a learning organization designed to facilitate vision and value congruence across the individual, empowered team, organization, and stakeholder ecosystem levels. GLfS (see Figure 11.4) is grounded in being-centered leadership theory, spiritual leadership theory, and the spiritual leadership model, which has seen extensive research, validation, and application (Benefiel, Fry, & Geigle, 2014; Fry & Nisiewicz, 2020). GLfS requires the cultivation of a global mindset for sustainability (GMS), which fosters leadership for sustainability (LfS) through hope/faith in a vision for sustainability and sustainable development and an

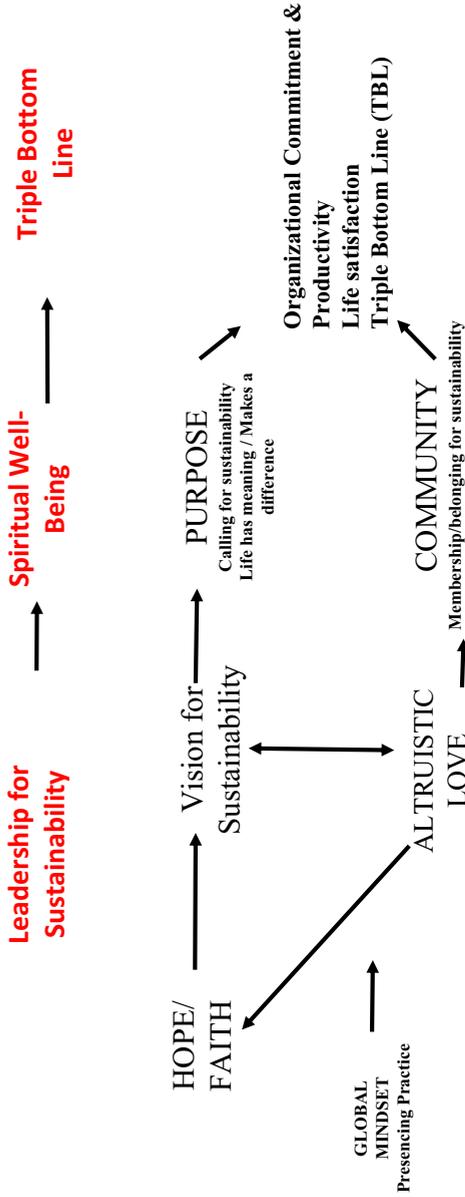


Figure 11.4: Global leadership for sustainability (GLfS) framework Source: Fry & Egel 2021.

organizational culture based on the values of altruistic love. LfS, then, satisfies the fundamental needs of both leaders and followers for spiritual well-being through a sense of (1) calling/purpose to be change agents for sustainability and (2) belonging or membership in a loving, supportive community for sustainable development. In turn, spiritual well-being positively influences the economic, social, and environmental outcomes for sustainability that are inherently represented through triple bottom line key performance indicators.

A global mindset for sustainability is the foundation for leader development and global leadership for sustainability. This mindset involves committing to the cultivation of Levels III and II of the levels of being, developing self-awareness and presence through an inner life practice, and moving beyond the stress-reduction focus of typical corporate mindfulness programs to a deeper consciousness. This interconnectedness and awareness enable leaders to have a more transparent lens through which to make better sense of the global world within which they operate (Rhinesmith, 1996), helping them build more meaningful relationships and realize the futility of Levels V and IV inherent to Sustainability 1.0. GMS fosters communication based on universal values that are common to the world's spiritual and religious traditions, transcending cultural and religious differences.

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) framework

The IDGs offer a scientifically informed approach to cultivate the inner qualities critical for developing leaders and leadership for sustainability. The IDG framework encompasses five key dimensions and 23 skills (Stålne & Greca, 2022). These skills are abilities that people can learn and improve over time through training, practice, and exposure to challenges, and they can be useful in both personal and professional life.

Below we will briefly describe the five dimensions and how the skills and qualities within each dimension relate.

Being dimension

This refers to our relationship with ourselves. Leaders cultivate self-awareness by being present (*self-awareness and presence*). This cultivation fosters curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable and embrace change and grow (*openness and a learning mindset*). Greater self-awareness leads to a clearer “inner-standing” of our motivations, values, and purpose (*integrity and authenticity*) and encourages action from that deeper state of being (*inner compass*).

Thinking dimension

This emphasizes systems thinking, which enables leaders to understand root causes and craft solutions that address the entire system, not just isolated symptoms (Meadows, 2008). Systems thinking involves analyzing and evaluating different components of a system and how they interact (*critical thinking*), considering the long-term implications and sustainability of actions within the system (*long-term orientation and visioning*), integrating knowledge and perspectives from various disciplines to better understand complex systems (*perspective skills*), gaining a comprehensive view of the system's overall dynamics (*sensemaking*), and identifying the interconnections and interdependencies within the system (*complexity awareness*).

Relating dimension

This pertains to our ability to care for others and the broader world. It involves valuing the worth of others (*appreciation*), recognizing and fostering the link between individuals and the interconnectedness of all life (*connectedness*), maintaining a grounded sense of self (*humility*), understanding the feelings of others and responding with kindness and support (*empathy and compassion*).

Collaborating dimension

This focuses on how we work together effectively. It is built on a foundation of psychological safety where individuals feel secure, valued, and respected (*trust*) and an appreciation of diversity (*inclusive mindset and intercultural competence*). It informs conveying ideas clearly and listening actively (*communication skills*) leading to generating innovative solutions and achieving common goals (*co-creation skills*) as well as activating others to collectively act (*mobilization skills*).

Action dimension

To drive meaningful change we need to generate novel solutions and approaches (*creativity*) and confront and overcome obstacles with bravery (*courage*). In case difficulties persist, we need to maintain positivity (*optimism*) and continue striving towards our goal (*perseverance*).

In the following section, we will examine how the IDG dimensions and skills are integrated within the GLfS framework. We will explore the synergistic approach of this integrated framework for global leadership for sustainability for leader and leadership

development, designed to facilitate the transition from Sustainability 1.0 to Sustainability 2.0, ultimately aiming to achieve the triple bottom line (TBL; see Figure 11.5).

The integrated framework for global leadership for sustainability

Figure 11.5 provides a framework for leader and leadership development, which represents a synergistic approach to achieving the TBL. This integrated framework, which includes both theoretical and conceptual elements as well as practical implementation components, serves as a comprehensive roadmap for developing leader and leadership capacity for sustainability.

Global mindset for sustainability and “being” dimension

Leaders cultivate a GMS when they commit to the spiritual journey of self-transcendence and interconnectedness and have developed the ability to more consistently lead from Levels III and II of being (Fry & Egel, 2021). One of the key things for leaders is to develop self-awareness through practices that help them stay focused and mindful moment to moment. This helps ensure that they can better discern their strengths and weaknesses and thus not be overly influenced by negative emotions and not fall blindly or unconsciously into selfish actions that are inappropriate, destructive, or self-contradictory (Mackey et al., 2021).

The *being* dimension of the IDGs supports leaders to develop and sustain a GMS by emphasizing personal growth and self-awareness as fundamental for driving sustainable development and positive societal change. When *being* skills, such as presence, inner compass, integrity, and self-awareness are cultivated, they enable individuals to navigate complexities with clarity and authenticity. This dimension advocates for mindfulness, emotional regulation, and a profound connection to one’s values and purpose, fostering a sense of responsibility and resilience.

Leadership for sustainability and “thinking”, “relating” and “acting” dimensions

A GMS is the source of leadership for sustainability (Lfs), and fosters it through hope/faith in a vision for sustainability and an organizational culture based on the values of altruistic love. The *acting*, *thinking*, and *relating* IDG skills are particularly important for developing leadership for sustainability.

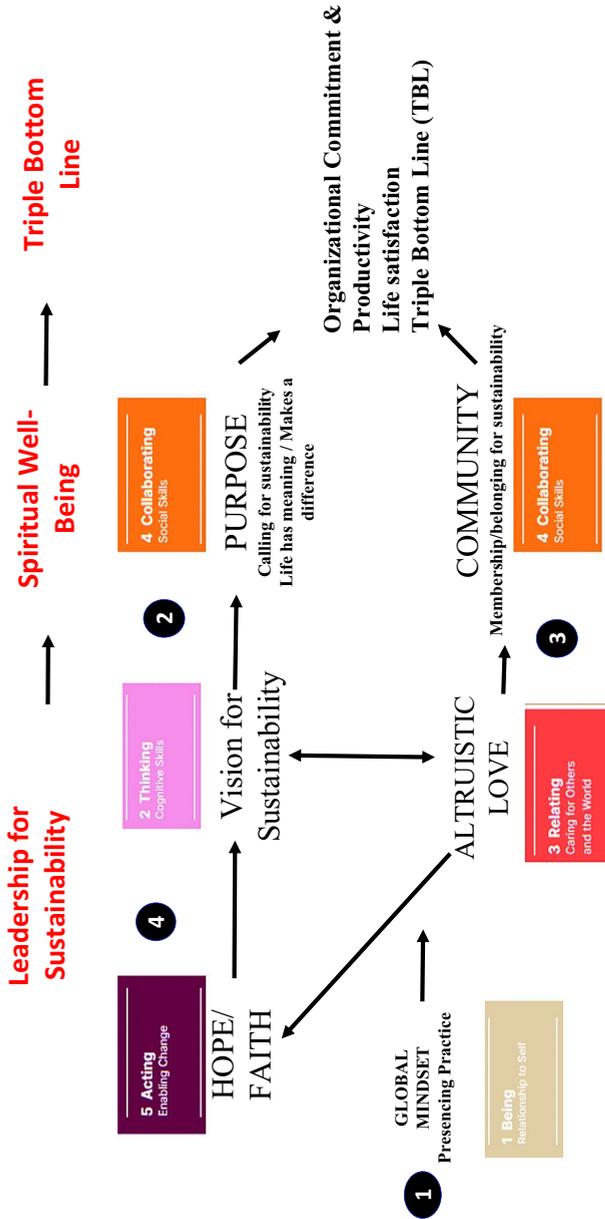


Figure 11.5: Integrated framework for global leadership for sustainability (Source: Authors' own).

Hope/faith and “acting” dimension

Hope/faith in the context of LfS involves inspiring trust in an organization’s vision and aligning this vision with broader sustainable development goals (Fry, 2003; Fry & Egel, 2021). Furthermore, hope/faith facilitates a leader’s capacity to inspire trust and confidence in a shared vision, motivating individuals to persevere through challenges and remain committed to their goals. This conviction fosters trust in the vision’s pursuit. MacArthur’s (1998) “vision quest” metaphor aptly compares this faith to preparing for and running a race, driven by hope for victory and the joy of the journey itself.

Similarly, the *acting* dimension of the IDGs focuses on the ability to initiate and drive change by translating intentions into concrete actions for sustainability. Like hope/faith, *acting* is based on the conviction that the vision holds value and requires proactive effort. Leaders must inspire trust and motivate change agents within the organization, even when immediate success is not evident. This dimension equips leaders and changemakers with essential skills – such as courage, creativity, optimism, and perseverance – that empower them to embody and convey hope/faith, effectively moving from intention to action. These skills support the development of true agency, the disruption of outdated patterns, the generation of original ideas, and the ability to persist in uncertain times.

Vision and “thinking” dimension

A compelling vision fuels organizational success by defining its aspirations and rallying leaders and followers (Collins & Porras, 1996). For a vision to mobilize effectively, it must be broadly appealing, chart a defined journey, inspire hope, uphold high ideals, and set a high benchmark for performance excellence. Collaborating with all partners actively in developing an inspiring and compelling vision for sustainability becomes essential, as it fosters a shared sense of purpose for sustainable development.

The *thinking* dimension of IDGs aids in developing such a clear and compelling vision by equipping leaders with the cognitive skills and mental models necessary for navigating uncertainties and aligning efforts with sustainable development goals. This dimension emphasizes the development of critical thinking, systems thinking, and long-term orientation, which are essential for understanding interdependencies and the broader context of challenges. By fostering a shared understanding of root causes and potential solutions to societal and environmental challenges, it encourages collaborative problem solving and the formulation of well-informed strategies and effective solutions.

Altruistic love and “relating” dimension

Altruistic love in LfS fosters a strong sense of community and shared purpose for sustainability, which is critical for achieving sustainable organizational success. Altruistic love is “a sense of wholeness, harmony, and well-being produced through care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others” (Fry, 2003, p. 712). The practice of integrity, compassion, and kindness leads to developing a feeling of interconnectedness among those involved. It promotes a culture where employees feel genuinely valued and supported, increasing intrinsic motivation and engagement.

The *relating* dimension of the IDGs is rooted in the values of altruistic love, which prioritize caring for others and the broader world. Sourced from the heart, a humble leader appreciates the inner worth of others, listens empathetically, and acts compassionately to their concerns in a way that only those who feel the connectedness of all life can. Leaders who have developed a GMS through self-transcendence and interconnectedness are able to function with the *relating* skills and create a culture of acceptance which promotes genuine communication, fun, collaborative action, and bonding.

Spiritual well-being and “collaborating” dimension

Leadership for sustainability positively impacts spiritual well-being as leaders for sustainability exemplify altruistic love, fostering hope/faith in a shared vision for sustainability. Spiritual well-being comprises two aspects (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2020: (1) a sense of purpose and calling as a change agent for sustainability, providing meaning and impact; and (2) a sense of belonging to a loving community, where leaders and followers feel appreciated and supported in their commitment to the partnership.

Purpose and community

Inherent to the human experience is the universal yearning for a purpose or calling that makes a difference in the world. A strong purpose combats doubts and distractions, elevating one’s focus beyond personal circumstances (Fairholm, 1997). In sustainability, this purpose fosters intrinsic motivation, drawing on internal strength to serve others. Through it, leaders can influence the meaningfulness experienced by their followers, serving as a transformative force, driving individuals to channel their efforts toward positively impacting the world.

Membership embodies the universal need for belonging and community, where one is understood, appreciated, and accepted. This sense of membership is crucial as it nurtures compassionate identification with others, personal ethics, and conduct codes that recognize the universality of shared pain and suffering. In an organizational setting, it enhances employees’ sense of importance, value, and belonging, lead-

ing to enhanced collaboration and performance through open dialogue, increased engagement, and team cohesion.

The *collaborating* dimension is vital for both creating and sustaining a sense of purpose and community in GLfS. An inclusive mindset involves actively listening to diverse viewpoints and bridging cultural gaps. By encouraging open communication and fostering a safe environment where all team members can share their ideas and perspectives without judgment, it enhances cooperation, resilience, and the capacity to address complex challenges together.

In the following section, we provide a detailed process for implementing the integrated framework (see Figure 11.6) within an organization. This process is designed to enhance both leader and leadership capacity for sustainability, ensuring that they can effectively drive meaningful change and promote sustainable practices throughout the organization.

The journey of implementation

The first step in our method focuses on aligning a leader's inner capacity with the outer complexity. To develop the essential *being* and *relating* skills, we introduce what we call the **Leader Orientation Canvas**, a workshop designed to bridge this gap. Here, leaders from diverse backgrounds explore the core principles of IDGs and GLfS, fostering a common language for understanding the qualities of a sustainability champion. They grapple with questions like: How can I embody Sustainability 2.0 principles – collaboration, global mindset, and care – in my daily actions?

The next phase involves introspection through the **Leader Assessment**, a tool designed for purposeful self-reflection, developing the essential *thinking* skills. Aligned with the GLfS competencies, this assessment prompts leaders to reevaluate their impact, exploring their values, motivations, and the ripple effects of their actions within the organization and the wider world. They consider questions such as whether their decisions reflect a long-term perspective on systemic change (Meadows, 2008) and if their leadership practices foster a culture of shared responsibility and psychological safety within their teams (Goleman, 2006).

This introspection informs the creation of a personalized **Leader Action Plan**. Bridging the gap between self-discovery and action and enabling the essential *collaborating* skills, this plan outlines specific areas for growth aligned with both IDGs and GLfS dimensions. It includes concrete goals, targeted actions, and timelines for improvement. However, this development journey doesn't happen in isolation; the **Leadership Assessment** brings the broader organizational context into play. Leaders consider team dynamics and culture when designing their action plan, ensuring their efforts translate effectively within the team.

Empowered by this inner work, leaders are now prepared to co-create a shared vision for a sustainable future. Sustainability 2.0, with its emphasis on collaboration

Implement IDG through GLFS lenses

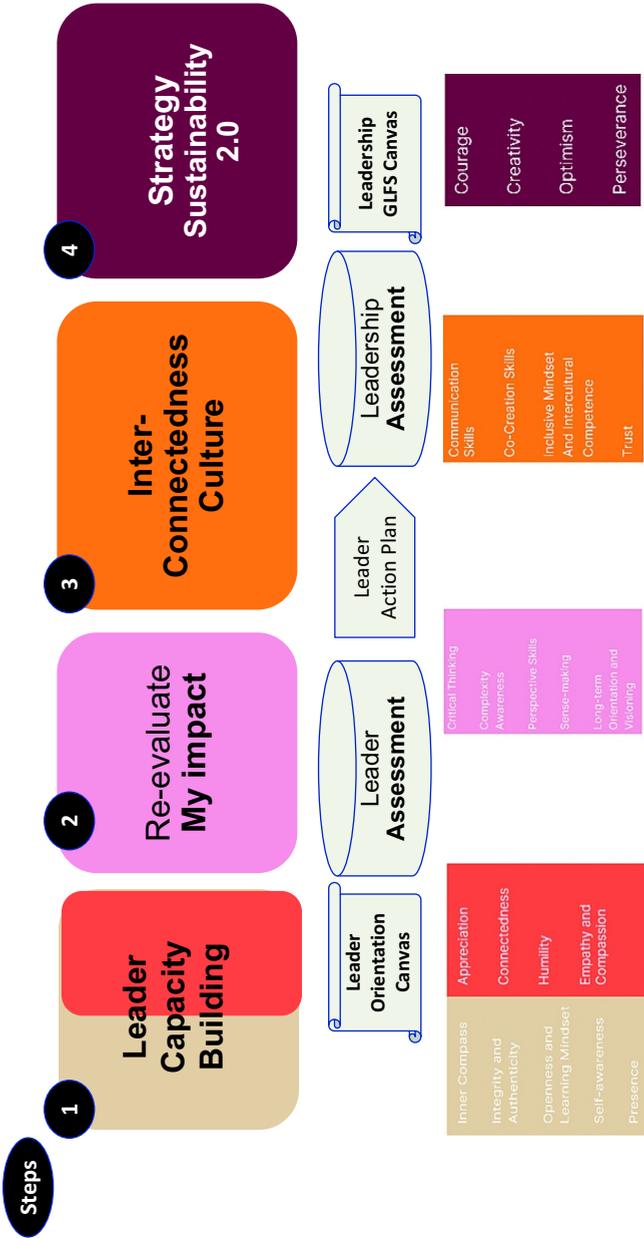


Figure 11.6: Steps to implement GLFS through IDG lenses (Source Authors' own).

and long-term vision, becomes the guiding light. The **Leadership GLfS Canvas** serves as a valuable tool in this stage. Rooted in the core qualities of courage, creativity, optimism, and perseverance, this canvas helps leaders translate their vision into actionable plans while fostering a spirit of innovation and resilience within the team.

Continuous learning and improvement

This journey is not linear but rather a continuous cycle of learning and improvement. Regular collective reflection and action sessions create a space for open dialogue and the sharing of experiences. These sessions, crucial for fostering a culture of continuous learning, allow teams to celebrate successes, identify challenges, and refine strategies for moving forward.

The narrative doesn't end here. The co-created vision must be translated into concrete action. Through a process of implementation of strategy changes, leaders identify necessary adjustments within the organization's strategy to embed the principles of sustainability, including the triple bottom line – people, planet, and profit.

Monitoring, evaluation, and ongoing development

Monitoring and evaluation is the compass that ensures the organization stays on track. Data and feedback from various stakeholders are used to continuously monitor progress towards goals and make adjustments as needed.

The journey within requires ongoing investment in capacity building and training. Leaders and teams are offered workshops, coaching programs, and access to resources that support their development in areas like self-awareness, relating well, and systems thinking (van der Waldt, 2020). Finally, the importance of celebration and recognition cannot be overstated. Acknowledging successes and milestones achieved along the sustainability journey motivates ongoing commitment and reinforces positive behaviors.

This narrative underscores the transformative potential of integrating IDGs and GLfS frameworks. By cultivating the inner qualities of leaders and providing a structured framework for action, this approach empowers organizations to bridge the gap between intention and action, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable future.

Discussion

Our discussion with the webinar participants centered on three main topics. First, we focused on a conceptual refinement and connection of some of the terms we used;

namely, leader and leadership development, social sustainability, and triple bottom line. Second, we discussed the existing overload of leadership frameworks and tools for sustainability and their deficiencies. Finally, we explored how the integrated framework of GLFs and IDGs addresses these deficiencies.

To start with, one of the participants commented that there is a lack of consensus on the definitions and scope of key terms such as leader development, leadership development, sustainability, and personal growth. These terms are frequently used in various contexts without a clear shared understanding, which can lead to miscommunication and misalignment in goals and strategies. To address this issue, we provided explicit definitions and scope (see Figure 11.3 and Table 11.4). We defined “leader development” as the process of guiding leaders from Levels IV and V of consciousness and cognition to Levels III and II. The desired outcome is for individual leaders to embody the qualities inherent in Levels III and II: self-awareness and self-transcendence. These qualities foster humility, recognition of the dignity of all human beings, acceptance of diverse perspectives, love, a vision to serve others, and a deepening connectedness with all things in the universe. These qualities, as illustrated in the integrated framework (see Figure 11.5), are also reflected in the skills included in the *being*, *thinking*, and *relating* dimensions of the IDGs.

We defined “leadership development” as a comprehensive process that inherently involves multiple team members with various degrees of decision-making power within an organization. The process aims to enhance collective leadership capacity while fostering a culture of collaboration. It involves embracing a broader and more advanced worldview termed Sustainability 2.0. Detailed in Figure 11.3 and Table 11.3, this concept outlines the conditions a system needs to meet to achieve a desired level of sustainability. Specifically, it promotes a collective vision that fosters a life-enhancing ecology recognizing the interconnectedness of human life with nature and other living beings, and emphasizes relationships based on collaboration. This new vision, as showcased in the integrated framework (see Figure 11.5), is also reflected in the skills included in the *collaborating* and *acting* dimensions of the IDGs.

Furthermore, this conceptualization underscores the critical role of social sustainability in achieving tangible sustainability outcomes and supporting long-term environmental impact and social well-being. Currently, sustainability interventions primarily focus on measurable outcomes, reflecting a Sustainability 1.0 mindset (see Table 11.2), where only quantifiable results are considered significant to drive action. This approach often leads to interventions that prioritize measured metrics, potentially overlooking vital social dimensions, such as community well-being, equity, and social cohesion. Our holistic approach highlights the importance of integrating social sustainability into sustainability interventions to address the root cause of the issues and consider the dynamic and context-specific nature of sustainability challenges.

As many of the participants were HR and leadership development professionals, they raised the second topic. Specifically, they talked about a prevalent issue in their organizations: leaders are increasingly overwhelmed by a proliferation of frame-

works and self-leadership tools. These tools and frameworks, although numerous and varied, often fail to deliver the anticipated impact. This disconnect stems from their introduction within existing paradigms and mindsets that do not support meaningful integration or application. Participants also shared that many of these frameworks and tools are implemented without sufficient consideration of the organizational culture or the specific challenges faced by leaders. As a result, these interventions often fall short of their intended outcomes. Leaders frequently find themselves grappling with a fragmented approach to development, where the tools and frameworks appear disconnected from their daily realities and strategic goals.

A key insight from the discussion was the recognition that to effectively address sustainability challenges, a more coherent and integrated approach is required. This approach should transcend the superficial application of disparate tools and instead focus on cultivating a mindset and culture that supports sustainable practices.

The third topic emerged as a natural continuation of the previous key insight. The question raised was: How does the integrated global leadership for sustainability framework offer a more coherent and integrated approach than those existing?

The GLfS fosters a leadership culture grounded in altruism, community purpose aligned with an organizational clear vision for sustainability, and a global perspective. It aids organizations to better equip their leaders to address the multifaceted challenges of sustainability and lead with greater effectiveness and coherence. By emphasizing these qualities, organizations can create a fertile environment for leaders to connect the dots and make sense of sustainability as a complex and evolving issue. A shift towards these values facilitates a more holistic understanding of sustainability, enabling leaders to integrate various frameworks and tools into a cohesive strategy. This alignment helps leaders not only to navigate the complexity of their roles but also to drive meaningful and impactful change within their organizations.

The five IDG dimensions organize and support the development of 23 specific skills essential for personal and collective growth (Stâlne & Greca, 2022). These dimensions provide a structure that helps individuals and organizations cultivate the inner capacities necessary to address complex global challenges and contribute to sustainable development. Each dimension serves as a guide for organizing and developing the 23 specific skills within the IDGs, helping individuals and organizations identify areas for growth, set goals for personal and collective development, and align their actions with the broader aim of contributing to sustainable and meaningful change.

As such, the five dimension and 23 skills add richness and focus to the GLfS framework as a model for leader and leadership development focused on sustainability and sustainable development. They provide examples of methods, practices, and activities that focus on the “how” of leader and leadership development necessary for the practice of GLfS. Taken together, these skills offer an integrated combination of knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and personal attributes necessary to perform tasks for each of the components of the GLfS model in order to achieve desired outcomes. They go beyond mere technical proficiency. This includes not only the capability to

execute tasks with precision but also the judgment, adaptability, and interpersonal effectiveness required to succeed in diverse situations.

Conclusion

This chapter looks into the type and qualities of leadership necessary for sustainability. Using a first principles thinking approach, it first deconstructs and understands how the current neoliberal system conditions leaders and leadership for sustainability. It then offers a new perspective that addresses the root causes of the sustainability crisis while identifying necessary leadership qualities. Finally, it provides an integrated framework that incorporates the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) within a model of global leadership for sustainability (GLFS). The chapter concludes with a discussion on the future of sustainability leadership and the practical application of the proposed ideas.

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