



SDG 18

Spirituality

Values and Culture

for Humanising Sustainable Development
A Future Worldview

Edited by
Abdelaziz Berghout | Khaliq Ahmad



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The SDG18 can be an impetus for a new rejuvenated model of sustainable development capable of re-setting the SDGs agenda from power and material centered to values and ethics driven. Only in this way we can chart the new way forward where the human being regains his humanity, the civilisation recuperates its balance and planet liberated from the corruption of wronged people.

The way forward today is to work seriously and collectively to achieve the eight thrusts advocated by SDG18 namely:

- 1) Strengthen humanised economy and politics,
- 2) Strengthen ethical leadership, governance, and management,
- 3) Strengthen values-driven society,
- 4) Nurture balanced human being (vicegerent),
- 5) Enhance ethical ecology and valorised nature,
- 6) Build balanced civilisation and culture,
- 7) Advocate integrated knowledge and values-driven education,
- 8) Responsible and values-driven science, technology, and innovation

Hence, before we can do that, we must regain our human conscience and wisdom so that we do not deepen our global ecological and ethical crises to the point of no return, where humans will cease developing sustainably and enter the phase of global selfdestruction due to selfishness, greed, and corruption of the soul, heart, mind, and human nature.

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Preface

Our experiences and ideas have led us to believe that spirituality is just one more dimension that we must be aware of when dealing with issues of sustainable development goals (SDGs). We recognise it and can make it work for *rahmaān lil `ālamīn*'s global *Ummah* as well as for the rest of humankind. It is therefore timely to examine spirituality in relation to its global applicability. This publication on SDG 18 is the first of its kind not only in our university but also in many other parts of the world. It is meant as a vehicle to advance the cause of spirituality, values, and culture in humanising sustainable development. More significantly, though, is to show that although this dimension is intangible, it is currently gaining relevance in global discourse, which is what our analysis of this edited book will focus on. This book highlights how urgent it is to come up with a new SDG namely SDG 18, that addresses the role of spirituality, values, and culture in not only humanising sustainable development but also maintaining the harmony needed to support both ecological and human civilisation in a complex and globalised world.

As the world moves towards chaos and post-normal complexities and dynamics, it is only prudent to rethink our concept of what sustainable development entails. As a result, it is critical that the taxonomy, structure, and function of development be critically examined in order to improve articulation and orientation. Any viable development viewpoint must contain a thorough and integrated understanding of who the human being is. The human being is defined not only by his body, mind, intellect, brain, and senses, but also by the forces of his soul and heart, values and character, culture, and social acts. Therefore, the human being is a synthesis of these physical, psychological, mental, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, moral, social, cultural, and civilisational forces, all of which must coexist in harmony and balance. Sustainable development must target holistically the entire human person as the driving force of growth and civilisation if it is to reclaim balance and efficacy.

Among other things, SDG 18 addresses the issue of balance and harmony in the formula for sustainable development. If one desires to see future-balanced growth, spirituality, values, and culture must be

reprioritised and institutionalised as part of the mainstream sustainable development narrative and worldview, as well as policies, strategies, and action plans.

The SDG 18 creates an exceptional chance to revisit the 17 SDGs and ensure that spirituality, values, and culture become inherent and influential in guiding people and policies towards balance and harmony in a conscious way. SDG 18 has a significant impact on overall sustainable development activities by promoting ethical leadership, values-driven governance and management, social-oriented activities, indigenous wisdom and culture, and civilisational-cultural engagement as well as exchange for the benefit of humanity and planet wellbeing.

The SDG18 framework and narrative aim to influence not only the tangible aspects of sustainable development, but also the intangible, in which the soul, heart, mindset, attitude, behaviours, and cultural understanding become central to SDGs and progress. Education has a significant role to play in nurturing the holistic and harmonious human being (*Insan Sejahtera*) and sustaining a balanced society and civilisation in this era and beyond. As a result, education must be transformed as the driving force for the betterment of human life and civilisation.

I am thankful to Prof. Abdelaziz and Prof. Khaliq for taking the noble initiative in producing this pioneering book, *SDG 18: Spirituality, Values, and Culture in Sustainable Development - A Future Worldview for the Future*. The book is not only timely and enlightening but also bold and courages! It offers insights and perspectives on SDG 18 as a much needed perspective to humanize the SDGs, and its manifestations in a variety of contexts for sustainable development.

I am also glad that many renowned scholars and experts have contributed to the book. I would like to thank the following authors: Prof. Jasser Ouda for his chapter, 'Maqasid and Ethics of Sustainability: An Integrated Framework for Development'; late Prof. Emeritus Tan Sri Mohd. Kamal Hassan and Dr. Nur Jannah on 'Islamic View of Spirituality and Sustainability'; Prof. Odeh Al-Jayyousi for his insights on 'Islam, Spirituality and Sustainable Development', Prof. Zainal Abidin Sanusi and Idayu Mumtaz Iskandar for their perspectives on 'Towards Spirituality - Conscious Higher Education: Case Study of International Islamic University Malaysia'; Dr. Mohammad Ismath Ramzy, 'Religiosity

as a Core Factor of Intercultural Competence (IC)'; Datuk Prof. Azizan binti Baharuddin, 'Civilisational Dialogue for Peace with Human and the Environment towards an Integrated Balanced Framework'; Prof. Suhaimi Mhd Sarif and Yusof Ismail, 'Humanising Governance and Management: Spirituality and Management Putting into Practice'; and Assoc. Prof. Dzuljastri Abdul Razak and Md. Siddique E. Azam for their views on 'Humanising Economy: Spirituality and Sustainability for Circular Economy'. Besides the above, there are two more chapters by the editors themselves, Prof. Abdelaziz Berghout: 'SDG 18: Spirituality, Values, Culture and Social Action for Sustainable Development and, 'Prof. Khaliq Ahmad: Shared Values (Vision) for Good Governance in the Pursuit of Sustainable Economic Growth'.

In my chapter titled 'SDG 18 and Humanising Education: Model of a University the World Needs in the Post-Normal Era,' I proposed the idea of SDG 18 standing for spirituality and its role and function in sustainable development. It explained how education can become an authentic change agent and how humanising is critical in any effort to balance sustainable development holistically. If one wishes to change the human being and society for the better, an integrated and value-driven educational model is a must. The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has adopted the 'communiversity' approach, in which the university and society collaborate seamlessly to transform individuals and communities through the whole-person and community approach. In addition to teaching and research, the university should act as a catalyst for social change.

In summary, a part from being a source of knowledge, innovation, and solutions for the advancement and betterment of civilisation, universities should act as agents of societal transformation. I fervently hope that this book will help to embrace on SDG 18 as a driver for balancing and humanising sustainable development as a whole. I am confident that the book will spark meaningful debates not only among intellectuals and academicians, but also among policymakers, social activists, leaders, and professionals on a local and international scale. Engaging all relevant stakeholders and partners is the first step towards success in this noble endeavour without spirituality remaining intact.

**DZULKIFLI ABDUL RAZAK,
PROF. EMERITUS TAN SRI DATO'**

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