Education for Sustainable Development
in Property Management & Security Industry (Environment, Society, Governance)

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Synopsis

The Property Management sector is highly fragmented with more than 127,000 property managers currently in China. The top 100 of those companies managed over 45% of the Gross Floor Area (GFA) across the country, whilst the market share of the top 10 managers was only 13.1%. As sizeable property managers look to solidify their positions and mid-size players rush to catch up with the rising demand for premium services after the coronavirus outbreak, it is believed that the industry is poised for rapid consolidation, with the top 10 players expected to double their GFA market share to 30% by 2025. With the contribution of the Property Management industry to the economics, the potential market in China is estimated to reach 443.2 billion USD by 2030.

In the midpoint of 2030 Agenda: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we are delighted to see that more companies in various industries have shown their interest in the achievement of SDGs. In the Property Management & Security Industry, large companies are keen on Environment, Society & Governance (ESG) reporting. Understandably, they have to comply with the mandatory ESG reporting requirements when they are listed companies. In contrast, other players in the industry also welcome the ESG reporting which may enhance their corporate image and show their commitments to Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) (Sou, 2006 & 2023a).

In Brazil (a developed economy but a developing country), the commitment of property management to the sustainable development (Fig. 1) has become obvious. In English, this Portuguese statement reads as follows:

> I am pleased to confirm that Property Management supports the ten principles of the Global Covenant on human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption. With this communication, we express our intention to implement those principles committed to United Nations Global Compact [UNGC]. Strategy, culture and day-to-day operations of our company and our cooperative projects shall promote the broader development goals of the United Nations, in particular SDGs.
> Property Management will make a clear statement of this commitment to stakeholders and the general public. We recognize that a requirement fundamental to participation in the UNGC is the annual submission of a Communication on Progress (COP), describing our efforts in implementing the ten principles, as well as our support for the UNGC specialized platform(s) which our company will join in store. We support public accountability and transparency and therefore we undertake to report on the progress within one year of joining the UNGC and annually thereafter in accordance with the COP policy. This includes:
> - A statement signed by the Executive Director, expressing continued support for the UNGC and renewing our continued commitment to the initiative and its principles. This document is separate from our initial commitment letter to join.
> - A description of the practical actions (i.e., the disclosure of any policies, relevant procedures and activities) that the company has carried out (or intends to perform) to

implement the principles of the UNGC in each of the four areas themes (human rights, labor, environment, fight against corruption).

- A measurement of the results (i.e., the degree to which the targets/indicators of performance were met, or other qualitative or quantitative measurements of results)

Figure 1: Letter from a Brazilian Property Management Co to UN Secretary General
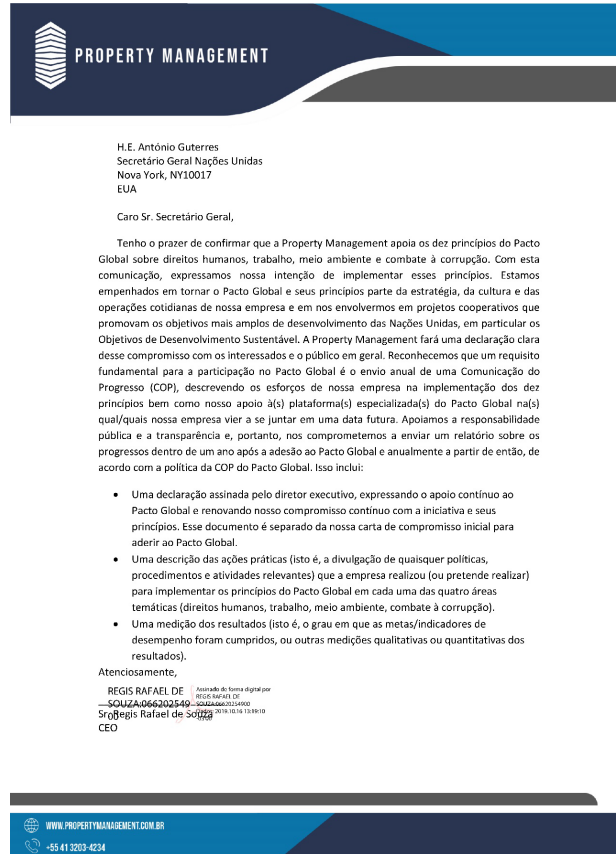

(Source: UN Archive, 2023)

Experience-Sharing, Modeling & Benchmarking

In Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (a developing country), the property management industry is thriving too though its population is only 7.49 million. There are about 200 property management companies in this small city. Each has 10% of job vacancies in property management on top of the other associated employees like hygiene workers and technicians. By 2028, the workforce of this industry will increase to 14,000. It is encouraging that employers are willing to invest in people to maintain the professionalism of the practitioners in all aspects.

As an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) expert of United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the author was invited by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) of Hong Kong Government to develop a first-ever Sustainable Development (SD) Course for the Property Management & Security Industry. The course lasts for 21 hours which introduces the correlation of three pillars of SD, namely Economics, Society and Environment (ESE) and ESG (Fig. 2).
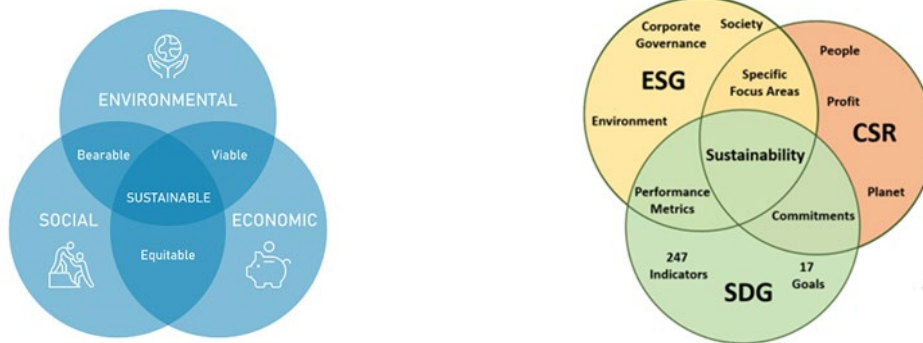
(Source: Sou, 2023a, 2023c, 2023d & 2023e)

SDGs are not law-binding but they are advocated by United Nations to support three pillars of Sustainable Development of its Member States. In the society, economics are influenced by its national policies. Therefore in private sector, business organizations are expected to show their commitment to good governance in order to support the 3 Ps (Planet, People & Profit) of CSR. Dependent on the nature of business, organizations can still commit themselves to special focus areas in respect of their industries. SDGs are known as a common language of sustainability (United Nations, 2022; Sou, 2023c-d). There are 17 goals comprising 247 indicators, mainly at the national level (United Nations, 2021b). However, the private sector can still make reference to the national indicators in their industrial development (United Nations, 2022a; Sou, 2023e-f).

In the industry-led course, Property Management Professionals are taught how to fulfil individual and corporate responsibilities of SD. They are shown ample local and overseas successful cases and contemporary SD planning tools (Sou, 2023f) for the transformation of their mindsets and upgrading of their skillsets. After training, they know how to map 17 SDGs with their profession and align them with ESE as well as ESG (Fig. 3) for global sustainability. Modeling on recognized standards and/or benchmarking the best practices in the industries can be the startpoint and checkpoints of organizational resonant and so forth sustainable development (Fig 4).

Figure 3: Possible Mapping of ESG with 17 SDGs in Property Management & Security Industry

(Source: Sou, 2023e)
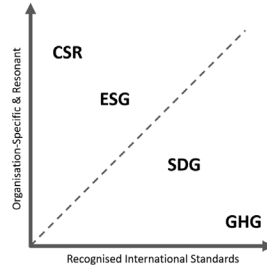
(Source: Sou, 2023e)

Local & Overseas Experiences

To name a few examples (Sou, 2023e) but not all, Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) is a global real estate services firm specializing in commercial property and investment management, providing services for real estate owners, occupiers and investors worldwide. JLL takes pride in doing things differently. JLL sees the built environment as a powerful medium with which to change the world for the better. By combining innovative technology and data intelligence with our world-renowned expertise, JLL is able to unveil untapped opportunities for success.

JLL helps buy, build, occupy and invest in a variety of assets including industrial, commercial, retail, residential and hotel real estate. From tech startups to global firms, its clients span industries including banking, energy, healthcare, law, life sciences, manufacturing, and technology. In sum, JLL is committed to serve its customers in six aspects:
1. Decarbonizing real estate portfolio
2. Deciding on office strategies
3. Shaping the real estates of tomorrow
4. Finding new offices
5. Participating in real estate conversations
6. Accelerating sustainable real estates

Using the common language of Sustainable Development, JLL adopts its strategical approach in the implementation of six prioritized SDGs (Figure 5).

Figure 5: JLL's Strategical Approach toward 6 SDGs

(Source: Sou, 2023e)

In Hong Kong, major players in this core industry also shows their sustainability efforts particularly in the low carbon initiatives (Fig. 6). Understandably, Climate Action is the only one of the 17 SDGs which calls for "urgent" action . Naturally, industrial support is indispensable in any way.

Figure 6: Major Players of the Core Industries supporting Low Carbon Future

(Source: Sou, 2023e)

In mainland China, Sunac China Holding Limited implements the concept of sustainable development and helps the country achieve the "Dual Carbon" goal (Carbon Emissions Peak before 2030 and Carbon Neutrality by 2060). In the design, construction and operation of buildings, Sunac has taken measures to reduce the impact of its business on the environment, achieved 100% green building requirements for new buildings, and becomes the only enterprise in China with full coverage of green building certification for cultural tourism and the first batch of enterprises in China to carry out cultural tourism green building and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) dual certification. Sunac is aggressive in its SD strategies towards 14 SDGs (Fig. 7).

Figure 7: Sustainable Development Strategies of Sunac China Holding Limited

(Source: Sou, 2023e)

In Japan, Aiken Japan Corporation (a renowned group company in the subject industry) even establishes SD Value Chain (Sou, 2023e) in terms of 9 SDGs (Fig. 8). Japan has been making strides in sustainable development in recent years. The Japanese government approved an energy policy in April 2014 to encourage Zero Net Energy Houses (ZEH) to become the standard for new house construction by 2030. ZEH is designed to consume as much energy as it can create using renewable energy on-site.

This is just one example of how Japan is working towards SDGs within the relevant industry (United Nations, 2022b).

Figure 8: Sustainability Efforts of Aiken Japan towards 9 SDGs

1. 努力打造安全舒適生活的家
2. 著力打造熱鬧繁華的城市
3. 有助於投資者穩固的資產形成
4. 努力營造員工可以安心長期工作的工作環境
5. 開展考慮地球環境的企業活動。

(Source: Sou, 2023e)

In addition, the tech industry in Japan has continued to serve domestically as a pivotal driving force; with the whole country being well known for its technological innovations in various industries. As of late, most industries and companies have begun to shift their focus to the topic of SD, with the inclusion of using these very technologies to work towards zero energy goals.

Professionals to become SD Practitioners

There are eight core competencies for sustainable development practitioners (Figure 9), namely (1) Collaboration Competency, (2) Critical Competency, (3) Self-Awareness Competency, (4) Integrated Problem-Solving Competency, (5) Systems Thinking Competency, (6) Anticipatory Competency, (7) Normative Competency, and (8) Strategic Competency (Sou, 2023b). These competencies are in common with generic competencies of various professionals (Sou, 2023f).

Figure 9: Key Competencies for Sustainability

Collaboration competency: the abilities to learn from others; to understand and respect the needs, perspectives and actions of others (empathy); to understand, relate to and be sensitive to others (empathic leadership); to deal with conflicts in a group; and to facilitate collaborative and participatory problem solving.

Critical thinking competency: the ability to question norms, practices and opinions; to reflect on own one's values, perceptions and actions; and to take a position in the sustainability discourse.

Self-awareness competency: the ability to reflect on one's own role in the local community and (global) society; to continually evaluate and further motivate one's actions; and to deal with one's feelings and desires.

Integrated problem-solving competency: the overarching ability to apply different problem-solving frameworks to complex sustainability problems and develop viable, inclusive and equitable solution options that promote sustainable development, integrating the above-mentioned competences.

Systems thinking competency: the abilities to recognize and understand relationships; to analyse complex systems; to think of how systems are embedded within different domains and different scales; and to deal with uncertainty.

Anticipatory competency: the abilities to understand and evaluate multiple futures – possible, probable and desirable; to create one's own visions for the future; to apply the precautionary principle; to assess the consequences of actions; and to deal with risks and changes.

Normative competency: the abilities to understand and reflect on the norms and values that underlie one's actions; and to negotiate sustainability values, principles, goals, and targets, in a context of conflicts of interests and trade-offs, uncertain knowledge and contradictions.

Strategic competency: the abilities to collectively develop and implement innovative actions that further sustainability at the local level and further afield.

(Source: Sou, 2023b)
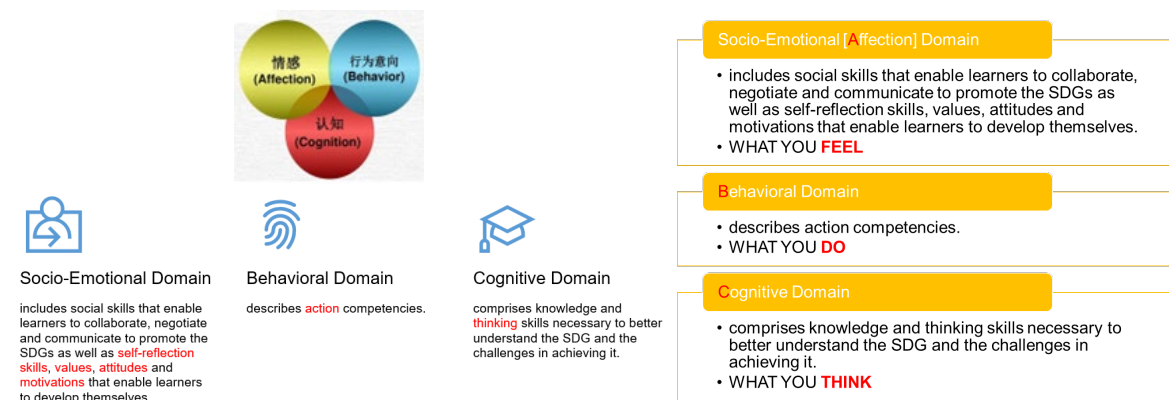
Application of Transformative Pedagogy

Professionals are always required to have Continued Professional Development (CPD) that is also regarded as retraining or uptraining (Sou, 2023e&g). When SD is vital to our world nowadays, we should incorporate SD training into the CPD of professionals. It adds value to the professionalism of an individual who wishes to be a Global Citizen (APCEIU, 2018, 2020 & 2022). Simultaneously through individual involvement in global sustainability as a global citizen, his or her company stands a better chance to become a corporate citizen in our sustainable world. To achieve such objectives of ESD, we could apply Transformative Pedagogy of Global Citizen Education (GCED) in the retraining or uptraining of professionals.

GCED aims to equip learners of all ages with those values, knowledge and skills that are based on and instill respect for human rights, social justice, diversity, gender equality and environmental sustainability and that empower learners to be responsible global citizens (Castillo, 2022; Hall, 2022, Klein, 2022; Nikolitsa-Winter, Mauch & Maalouf, 2019; United Nations, 2021a). 'Global Citizenship' is a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity. It emphasizes political, economic, social and cultural interdependency and interconnectedness between the local, the national and the global (Pun & Chen, 2017).

GCED gives learners the competencies and opportunities to realize their rights and obligations to promote a better world and future for all. Grounded in a lifelong learning perspective, it targets all learners of all ages – children, youth and adults (Sou, 2005). GCED can be delivered in all modes and venues, including formal, non-formal and informal education. In most countries, the formal education system will be the main mode of delivery of GCED. This will require the integration of GCED into education systems, either as a stand-alone subject, a component of existing programs and/or the ethos of a learning environment and system (Pun & Chen, 2017). Nonetheless, it does not hinder the integration of GCED into retraining or uptraining of professionals.

In short, Transformative Pedagogy (APCEIU, 2008 & Sou, 2023b-d) is represented by three domains that could be construed as an ABC Model. Affection symbolizes Socio-Emotional Domain whereas B and C respectively represent Behavior Domain and Cognition Domain (Fig. 10).

Figure 10: Three Domains in parallel with ABC Model

Socio-Emotional Domain

includes social skills that enable learners to collaborate, negotiate and communicate to promote the SDGs as well as self-reflection skills, values, attitudes and motivations that enable learners to develop themselves.

Behavioral Domain

describes action competencies.

Cognitive Domain

comprises knowledge and thinking skills necessary to better understand the SDG and the challenges in achieving it.

Socio-Emotional [Affection] Domain
• includes social skills that enable learners to collaborate, negotiate and communicate to promote the SDGs as well as self-reflection skills, values, attitudes and motivations that enable learners to develop themselves.
• WHAT YOU **FEEL**

Behavioral Domain
• describes action competencies.
• WHAT YOU **DO**

Cognitive Domain
• comprises knowledge and thinking skills necessary to better understand the SDG and the challenges in achieving it.
• WHAT YOU **THINK**

(Source: Sou, 2023b-d)

Socio-Emotional Domain

Learners experience a sense of belonging to a common humanity, sharing values and responsibilities, based on human rights. Learners develop attitudes of empathy, solidarity and respect for differences and diversity (Fig. 11).

Figure 11: Socio-Emotional Learning Objectives of Climate Action

Socio-emotional learning objectives	
	1. The learner is able to explain ecosystem dynamics and the environmental, social, economic and ethical impact of climate change.
	2. The learner is able to encourage others to protect the climate.
	3. The learner is able to collaborate with others and to develop commonly agreed-upon strategies to deal with climate change.
	4. The learner is able to understand their personal impact on the world's climate, from a local to a global perspective.
	5. The learner is able to recognize that the protection of the global climate is an essential task for everyone and that we need to completely re-evaluate our worldview and everyday behaviours in light of this.

(Source: Sou, 2023b)

Behavioral Domain

Learners act effectively and responsibly at local, national and global levels for a more peaceful and sustainable world. Learners develop motivation and willingness to take necessary actions (Fig. 12).

Figure 12: Behavioral Learning Objectives of Climate Action

Behavioural learning objectives	
	1. The learner is able to evaluate whether their private and job activities are climate friendly and – where not – to revise them.
	2. The learner is able to act in favour of people threatened by climate change.
	3. The learner is able to anticipate, estimate and assess the impact of personal, local and national decisions or activities on other people and world regions.
	4. The learner is able to promote climate-protecting public policies.
	5. The learner is able to support climate-friendly economic activities.

(Source: Sou, 2023b)

Cognitive Domain

Learners acquire knowledge and understanding of local, national and global issues and the interconnectedness and interdependency of different countries and populations. Learners develop skills for critical thinking and analysis (Fig. 13).

Figure 13: Cognitive Learning Objectives of Climate Action

| Cognitive learning objectives	
	1. The learner understands the greenhouse effect as a natural phenomenon caused by an insulating layer of greenhouse gases.
	2. The learner understands the current climate change as an anthropogenic phenomenon resulting from the increased greenhouse gas emissions.
	3. The learner knows which human activities – on a global, national, local and individual level – contribute most to climate change.
	4. The learner knows about the main ecological, social, cultural and economic consequences of climate change locally, nationally and globally and understands how these can themselves become catalysing, reinforcing factors for climate change.
	5. The learner knows about prevention, mitigation and adaptation strategies at different levels (global to individual) and for different contexts and their connections with disaster response and disaster risk reduction.

(Source: Sou, 2023b)

The Way Forward

The pilot course for the Property Management & Security Industry was launched successfully in March 2023 and aroused the interest of other major players of the industry. The subsequent course in July 2023 has been run when the employers are willing to fund their staff for 3-day block-release retraining (uptraining). In fact, either developed economies or developing countries need industrial support for national sustainability. Fortunately, business organizations are willing to support the governments in the achievement of SDGs in the light of 3Ps (Profit, People & Planet).

Transformative pedagogy of GCED is compatible with the CPD of professionals. Cultivating professionals to be Global Citizens invariably leads to favorable learning outcomes. They are guided how to feel, to think and to do in their profession for global sustainability. Furthermore, they could know how to work in the focus areas specific to their industry and how to flexibly map ESG with 17 SDGs (Fig. 14). When there are more global citizens, their business organizations are more likely to be exemplary Corporate Citizens which are striving for CSR in the light of ESG.

Figure 14: Flexible Mapping of ESG with 17 SDGs

SDG	E	S	G
1		✋	
2		✋	
3	✋	✋	
4		✋	✋
5		✋	✋
6	✋	✋	
7	✋	✋	
8	✋	✋	✋
9	✋	✋	
10		✋	✋
11	✋	✋	
12	✋	✋	✋
13	✋		✋
14	✋		
15	✋		
16		✋	✋
17			✋
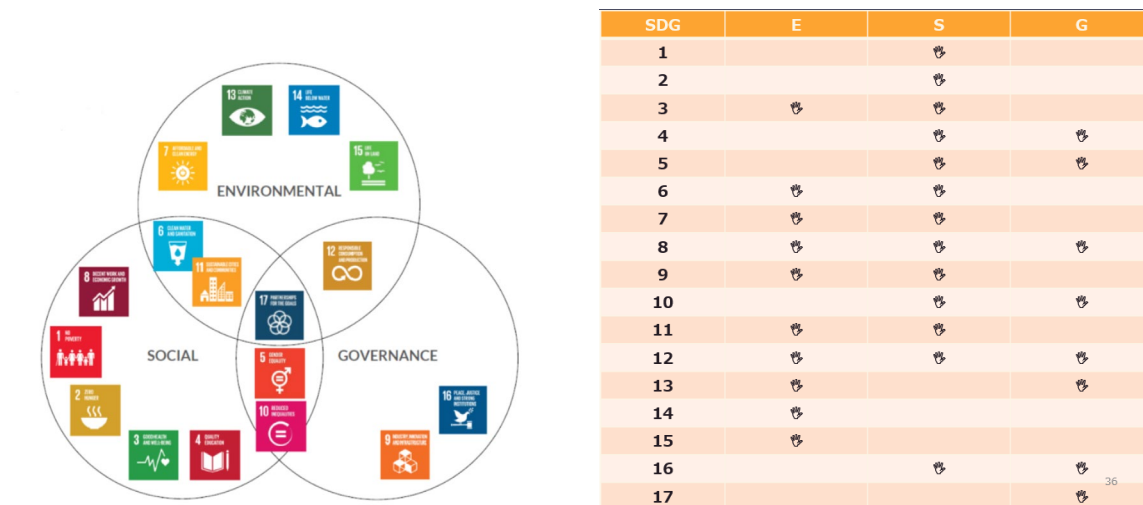
(Source: Sou, 2023)

Initially, individuals may be perplexed with 17 SDGs and wonder what they could do in their capacity. When they are abreast of the applicability of SD planning skills in their capacity as professionals, they can find the way out. They shall critically analyze the root causes of inequalities, discrimination, hatred, violence, and ecological destruction, to enhance interpersonal, social, and ecological empathy, and to engage in the act of solidarity and cooperation to tackle different SD problems.

Individual and corporate obligations are mutually supported. Simultaneously, national sustainability is not exclusive to industrial support, in particular unyielding support of core industries. In store, SDGs can be readily realized with ESD such as GCED and concerted efforts of the core industry comprising individual as well as corporate obligation of a Member State. With the industrial support, it is anticipated that SDGs could be actualized in a Member State more swiftly.

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