



**COLLABORATIVE ONLINE  
INTERNATIONAL LEARNING IN THE  
CONTEXT OF THE  
UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**

One hundred thirty one BBA students from University of Guelph (Canada), University of Navarra (Spain), IPMI International Business School and Dominican University (Chicago, USA) reached out to the corporate world who have implemented the flourishing business concept. Twenty-two highly reputable companies accept the opportunities to be interviewed by the group of students from four countries with one noble mission to promote the Flourishing Businesses supporting the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. This noble approach also helps as a mind-changing experiential learning process for the students and develops their commitment to always have a positive sustainable mindset.



**CRITICAL REFLECTION ON  
FLOURISHING BUSINESS**



***EDITORS:***

**Dr. Ir. Amelia Naim Indrajaya MBA**

**Prof Isabel Rodriguez Terjedo**

**Ruben Burga PhD**

**Prof Anjali Chaudhry**

# **Critical Reflections on Flourishing Businesses through Collaborative Online International Learning in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals**

*Collaborative Online International Learning of STM IPMI, University of Navarra (Spain),  
University of Guelph (Spain), Dominican University (Chicago, USA)*

**EDITORS: DR. IR. AMELIA NAIM INDRAJAYA MBA,  
PROF ISABEL RODRIGUEZ TEJEDO  
RUBEN BURGA PHD  
PROF ANJALI CHAUDHRY**

CONTRIBUTORS:  
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**Editor:**

**Dr. Ir. Amelia Naim Indrajaya, MBA**  
**Prof Isabel Rodriguez Tejedo**  
**Ruben Burga PhD**  
**Prof Anjali Chaudhry**

**Cover Designer:**

Ahmad Setia

**Layout:**

Ayom Bening I.S.  
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## **Dedication**

*For a successful BBA program, action-based and experiential learning is a must to get the greatest exposure. Every BBA subject in IPMI International Business School should be highly implementable and ready to support real flourishing businesses. This book is the IPMI BBA school's dedication to all the business players supporting the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations in Indonesia*

## **PREFACE**

This module is a prototype of **Critical Reflections on Flourishing Businesses through Collaborative Online International Learning in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals** course intended as an effort to provide more instructional material. This module is an accomplishment of subject matter lecturers of IPMI International Business School through selective and careful validation processes. Instructors may use this material in its present form, emphasizing certain sections considered most relevant to their students. It is equally possible to select certain lessons within the module and add their own materials to fulfill the semester requirements. The chapters were written by a collaboration between Sekolah Tinggi Manajemen IPMI, University of Guelph (Canada), University of Navarra (Spain) and Dominican University (Chicago, USA). It is based on the six weeks experiential learning of interactive weekly discussions amongst the four universities' students under the guidance of Dr. Ir. Amelia Naim Indrajaya, MBA (STM IPMI), Ruben Burga, PhD (University of Guelph, Canada), Prof Isabel Tejedo (University of Navarra, Spain) and Prof Anjali Chaudhry (Dominican University, Chicago, USA). The students in a group selected a company which supports at least one of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations as a competitive advantage. They interviewed the company and submitted their written work through the [aim2flourish.com](http://aim2flourish.com) platform.

Hopefully, this module can be used widely as the main course guideline in the Current Issue in Business and Management class at IPMI International Business School and facilitate the learning process resulting in improvement in students' learning experience.

February, 2023

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## CHAPTER 1

### 3D PRINTED ALTERNATIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Written by: Ayom Bening Imartya Srihendra, Noemi Arroyo, Alina Gaynullina, Hale Wash, Elisa Diego López, Kezia Felicia Minanga

#### **Introduction:**

The Collaborative Online International Learning program has permitted us, six students from four different countries, Indonesia, USA, Spain, and Canada to meet and discuss business practices that support SDGs. From six business stories, we have picked one that stands out the most due to its uniqueness. It is an innovation by a company located in Navarra, Spain, in the Biotechnology and Electrical Equipment industries. The company created innovative machines which have various aims. Their first innovation was their printers, which used mechatronic engineering and laser technology to engrave, decorate and print on food items, enabling the hospitality sector to display culinary creativity. Nowadays, the business model has changed a lot, focusing more on expanding the societal impact of the company by developing industrial solutions to produce plant/cell-based animal protein analogues (steaks, bacon, etc) and mimetic food for people with diseases. Throughout the four weeks program, we have interviewed the CEO of the company and have conducted six online meetings including the opening and closing session.

**What:** Our company's beginning starts with Patxi Larumbe, and Daniel Rico at a dinner in Pamplona. The two had expert experience in robotics pertaining to carving, painting, and industrial works. From this passion they used their knowledge and laboratory access to have a dinner for their friends that was "constructed" rather than cooked, this was the beginning of Cocuus. At the start, the company was selling robots they created and the formulas and processes to make them work. Later after all machines were assembled, tested, and put in production, the founders realized that there were more applications in the field of gastronomy that were not being used. Through a shift of business model due to the decline of profitability in the hospitality sector caused by COVID-19, the business found itself helping people with

dysphagia (a health issue where patients have trouble swallowing, it occurs with other severe illnesses or disorders). In our interview Patxi Larumbe said "Many of the patients with dysphagia are unable to move and the only delight they have is food". This quote resonated with me because the co-founders developed a way to make people happy through their innovation. Even though only 210 million people out of the 8 billion people in the world suffer from dysphagia, Larumbe and Rico found a way to add enjoyment through their passion for robotics.

Through later research and development, the company created more ways of producing their products using; cell cultivation, plant-based protein, and meat remains. This was the start of their mission towards sustainability, by creating a system of producing food less environmentally detrimental than conventional methods. Overall, the work that Cocuus is doing makes me feel very optimistic. Here is a company that took their passion for mechatronics and developed a way to help a specific group of people, then turned that into a way to help the environment. As a business student it made me think about how more businesses should operate with that kind of mindset. I am so used to seeing only huge companies focused purely on profits do well in their field and small micro-businesses often fizzle out and shut down. So, to see a dream of two passionate men become a reality that helps benefit the world, is truly inspiring.

**So what?:** When we started our research, one of the concepts that came to mind was a Triple Bottom Line, that stands for people, planet and prosperity. We studied it as a theory, never considering that this concept will appear in real life. Historically, firms operated serving only to their financial bottom line. Nevertheless, today some businesses begin to realize the connection among environmental health, social welfare and the organization's financial performance. Managing such an organization, Cocuus co-founders know that success is defined by their relationships with the environment, employees, customers and suppliers, community, and economy. This company is really sustainability oriented, as it aligns its short and long-term goals with SDGs and intends to improve people's lives using business as a force for good. Indeed, Michel Porter and Mark Kramer, who introduced the idea of "creating shared value," argue that businesses can generate economic value by identifying and addressing social problems that intersect with their business. Going back to the connection of this project to our academic knowledge, we learned a lot about managing the operations inside the company, reaching a greater efficiency. We found out that the quality of employees is much more



important than their quantity and that retaining the talent can be one of the major tasks for the CEO.

The vision, mission, and values of the company have revolutionized our ideas about how a company should be. We felt that sustainability was just a popular trend, a marketing strategy. However, we realized that there are businesses that fight for our prosperous future, actually making a difference. To be honest, some of us lacked knowledge about the variety of targets each SDG had, so it was a worthwhile experience to discuss it in our international group, sharing real-life examples. Also, we knew little about biotechnological processes (e.g. did not distinguish between additive and subtractive printing), therefore we reached out to our science-studying friends.

The deeper we dug, the more fascinated we were. Being a micro-business (according to the number of employees), the company succeeded in achieving international brand awareness. This is due to their innovation and quite an ambitious vision. Before doing this project most of us thought that an innovation was something that is brand new and had been never seen by the world. However, it turns out that 'to innovate' may mean to change the goal of using, to implement some tools in a different way, to significantly improve the existing.

**Now what?:** Exploring many new things by working with the teammates was really eye opening. It opens up insight not only about SDG's but also about how to work in a team, and knowing how a company could run and sustain the society. The AIM2Flourish project has improved our way of acting and thinking. As mentioned above, we learn many new things, even science, which upgrades our skills and knowledge. As well as motivating us to be a good businessperson in the future. We could know how to implement SDGs in our business and its maintenance. COCUUS made us learn that business can be inspired by anything, business can help a lot of people suffering out there. COCUUS creativity and innovation has helped people yet they gained profit. It was how real sustainable businesses work.

### **Conclusion:**

The COIL program has made us aware that it is possible to run a profitable business with core values, goals, and practices aligned to the SDGs. COCUUS' main goal is to ensure a sustainable future, especially in terms of meat production, by turning away from real animal farming with all

its dreadful impact on the environment and people. We have been inspired that in the future, not only will we do business for the profit, but also we are able and must flourish in society. The best way of making sure it is happening is by aligning our company's aim and process to the SDGs.

## **Reflection**

Our journey working as a team was characterized by continuous learning of our actions, in other words, we noticed what worked for us and started implementing different strategies on the go. Firstly, we introduced each other and said what time zone we were in, which was a key factor during the development of the project. In addition, we shared our WhatsApp numbers to facilitate communication and we all agreed on a day and a time to have our weekly meetings. Secondly, we took different roles, for instance, one person was responsible for creating and sending the zoom link every week, another one was in charge of creating the corresponding documents, another person was in charge of submitting the documents. For each document that we had to work on, we always divided to work evenly and asked each other questions on zoom as we worked on it together. Once our meeting time was over and if we still had work to do then we would work on it on our own time and text each other with any questions or missing information that needed to be added. Thirdly, each week we connected and discussed briefly the guiding questions and after that we divided them, so that we could all work at the same time without interrupting one another. Overall, this experience taught us all what it's like working on a project with an international team. We believe that it has taught us valuable skills in the sense of teamwork that we will carry with us in our education and future careers.

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## CHAPTER 2

### Paradise Lagoon

Written by: Sam Boddison, Joselyn Valentin, Arnol Jose Ordonez, Jose Antonio Hurtado, Aditya Djoyo Prasetyo

#### **Introduction:**

We have found it amazing how each of us introduced a different kind of businesses. For example, one suggested a restaurant, others suggested a bank and we even had to family companies. We did end up choosing Agroindustrial Los Prados, which is on creating access to adequate water. It shocked us to know that this business was regarding artificial lagoons. Almost all of us did not know of such innovation, which became new and interesting to learn and discover about. The main thing that interested us while drafting the story on the chosen business, was that bodies of water are being protected and secured for many groups to use, not only for human beings. That is, this business does not misuse water, but rather involves the protection of animals and the environment like number 14 of the sustainable development goal states. This made us think about how not only we need to protect life on earth, but also life below water. This SDG caught our attention, which made us think and track our intakes of water.

We were impressed with our AIM2Flourish company's commitment to water sustainability, including clean water and ecosystem protection, in alignment with UN SDG goals six and fourteen. Agroindustrial Los Prados' innovative artificial lagoons used in their business demonstrate that theory can be put into practice when it comes to the triple bottom line and considering people and planet along with profitability when measuring organizational success (Burga, 2020, p.66). Demonstrating leadership and standing apart from other companies operating in the same space by responsibly managing water supplies and mitigating against potential contamination from pesticides takes courage and commitment which is often pushed aside to focus on maximizing financial returns. We were inspired by Agroindustrial Los Prados' bold moves, and we hope other organizations will follow their lead.

In brief, Agroindustrial Los Prados is a current exponent in the non-naïf defense of the

environment from the business world. By managing to align the interests of the different economic agents (those of the company, in that it obtains competitive advantages thanks to the Rainforest Alliance quality seal and, above all, increases and makes production more efficient thanks to self-management of water; those of consumers, who receive melons nourished with quality water; and those of society, which gains in flora, fauna, fishing areas and availability of public water) under an eco-friendly production model, it demonstrates that the ingenuity and audacity of the private sector cannot be ignored or undervalued. Therefore, this story has convinced us that the main weapon against skepticism when it comes to policies against climate change and, by extension, favorable to the SDGs, is to support business models that are committed to a truly inclusive transition. This is a path, why not admit it, tortuous, uncertain and certainly not as simple as that of systematic prohibition and planning, but we believe that society can benefit from it even in the short term. And we know that we are not alone in this, since, as Maria Eugenia Clouet, an experienced doctoral, pointed out in a session to University of Navarre students, "I have tried to change society from all areas: the State, NGOs, civil society, ... but, among all of them, in the end I have realized that the one that really has the transforming power is the company" (Clouet, M., 2022). We will keep this in mind now, as university students with a critical spirit, and in the future, as potential entrepreneurs and those responsible for the development of the economy.

Completing this project and having the opportunity to understand better how Agroindustrial Los Prados is endeavoring to sustain and improve the natural environment in which they operate has increased our motivation to do better when we leave school and start our careers. In order to give the appearance that their company is committed to principles of CSR, many organizations make minimal and superficial commitments to sustainability, like packaging made from recycled material or corporate philanthropy. Agroindustrial Los Prados, on the other hand, has demonstrated triple-loop thinking by questioning the fundamentals of their business, leading to an innovative breakthrough in the creation, operationalization and embedding of sustainable water practices in their day-to-day activities (Kurucz et al., 2013). As a group, we felt motivated to find organizations with similar thinking to work for.

The entire group strongly agree that learning about all the seventeenth sustainable development goals became an important concept and made us become more aware of these goals. These goals

are set as different statements to guide us to a safer and healthy environment. In addition, these sustainable goals are important to keep in mind because both, our actions and decision making does affect the environment that we live in.

## **Reflection**

Being part of an international team of students completing the AIM2Flourish project proved to be both interesting and challenging. It took additional effort and a higher level of cooperation to manage language, time zone and other differences that would not normally be a consideration when completing a group project with others in your own university. For instance, one of the ways we facilitated communication and tackled any language barriers was to supplement verbal communication in meetings with written communication to clarify and assign work to be done so there would be no misunderstandings. However, despite best efforts, sometimes this still proved difficult. For instance, the interview for the company we chose, Agroindustrial Los Prados, was conducted in Spanish which placed an additional burden on our team member, who spoke Spanish. When it comes to translate team's document from Spanish to English, it has helped us to reflect on the importance of mastering languages other than English, especially to be able to communicate effectively with those who are not immersed in contemporary globalist dynamics. Overall, however, we did our best to come together and collaborate to ensure a high-quality experience and outcome.

We believe that our group did what we could as much as possible for this project to be accomplished. Communication was a struggle at the beginning, but we managed to make a group chat that all five of us had access to. However, finding the "perfect" time to meet was complicated because we were all in different time zones. Two of us have morning classes every day. They suggested to meet at afternoons, but for some of us it was too late. We all accommodated and had our team's meetings. There was this one time where due to changes in time some of us could not join on time to one of our last meetings.

Although this group work may have been somewhat demanding in terms of time and the inherent transaction costs (adjustment of schedules, coordination of work, etc.), we all think it has been an interesting and enriching experience, as it has confronted us with what will most likely be our reality in the future: working with unknown people and probably from different

parts of the world. All in all, it has been an experience in which the division of labor has not prevented us all from enjoying a common learning experience.

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## CHAPTER 3

### Explore Elegant Designs with Innovative Materials

Written by: Gretchen Hansen, Nicole Morales Mastellari, Casey Goss, Ivan Fadillah, Ariel Prasadha

#### Introduction

Permasteelisa was founded in 1973 with a simple goal; to create long lasting and visually appealing structures that enrich the communities around them. Throughout the years they have successfully completed this goal as well as adapted their values with the changing world around them. Architectural engineering companies are leaders when it comes to CO2 emissions and pollution because it is very hard to limit emissions from aspects like construction and transportation. Permasteelisa, however, actively tries to combat this in their day to day work.

Our team talked with Mike Kneeland, Regional CEO Permasteelisa North America, to learn more about their sustainability efforts. He talked about how the company mainly uses sustainable metals like aluminum and glass. These materials are primarily bought from ESG (environmental social government) companies who are trying to be more energy efficient and limit their CO2 emissions. “Once the manufacturing is done you look at the transportation - gas - looking at indirect emission...Extra materials all get recycled, even as small as aluminum shavings get recycled.” Mike says about how carefully Permasteelisa looks into their emissions. When learning about these initiatives, I was impressed at how carefully Permasteelisa focuses on their sustainability, it creates a huge impact on the environment.

As great as these initiatives are, the star of the show when it comes to innovative sustainability would be their facades. Permasteelisa has designed specific facades for specific scenarios that better their community. The PermasteelisaBlindTech Facade, one example, works as a climatically responsive filter for thermal, solar, and light transmittance, regardless of external environmental conditions. “It starts with a design and designing sustainable facades that are energy efficient that don’t need much mechanical work like heating” Mike says. The

dynamic facades were designed using an accurate software tool that assesses a building's energy usage to focus on the development of renewable energy. In Europe, where these types of facades are mainly used, it is very expensive to use energy so this type of energy efficient technology is beneficial to the company and the environment.

The Moisture Free, Sustainable, Closed Cavity Facade (CCF) is a cost efficient facade system designed so that no contamination by dust or condensation makes its way into the internal cavity of the facade. This can be beneficial specifically in cities with high pollution rates or in ones with inconsistent weather patterns (snow, rain, dust, etc). The main goal is to help create long lasting buildings that can withstand the test of time. Communities should be able to enjoy and use these buildings, with the help of innovative technologies, for years to come. When I first talked with Mike, he strongly emphasized how the facades are focused on caring for and bettering the community around them, which is very admirable.

Permasteelisa's innovation considers the Triple Bottom Line concept of People, Profit & Planet (Miller, 2020). It innovates the interaction between people and buildings by introducing technology that considers climate and energy usage. By reshaping this relationship, the company adopts a double-loop solution to solve issues that arise during these interactions. Issues such as climate control within its buildings are confronted beyond the underlying patterns and behaviors of the architectural industry (Kurucz, 2013). Challenging the rules of the game by integrating its BlindTech innovation of climate control through solar shading pushes the company above single-loop solutions and answers the question of "Are we doing the right things." (Kurucz, 2013). In the context of Permasteelisa, the "right thing" involves developing ecologically sustainable buildings with exceptional designs (Burga, 2022).

Economic development with an ecological consideration is practiced through their innovations as they utilize resources extracted from the Earth to improve the welfare of society (Burga, 2022). Committing to improving society's welfare through its innovations can influence neighboring organizations to do the same using the scope of the tragedy of commons. In this scenario, a non-collaborative attitude toward profit growth while neglecting sustainable ecology negatively affects the planet/commons (Lozano, 2007). However, having similar companies engage in collective efforts to boost profits while practicing sustainability will benefit both the



business and the planet (Lozano, 2007). Permasteelisa has the opportunity to become an industry leader in the promotion of sustainable ecology. Without many known organizations in the architectural industry voicing strong opinions on sustainability, the company can market its innovations to attract more customers by proving sustainability can improve profits.

Exploring the AIM2Flourish story has changed my thought process. The way I think now of running a future business has changed. Before exploring the AIM2Flourish story I had no idea about the 17 SDGs, now with that knowledge for me personally it has helped me rethink the way I want to run my future business in a few years time, instead of focusing on profits I would consider on how to bring a change to the environment and the economy with my business, by doing so it will still give profits at the same time making it a flourishing business.

Not only will this change the way I approach the operations of my future business but also will change the way I support other businesses. As the consumer, I can do my part by diving deeper beyond the price tag of a business's service and take into consideration their environmental impacts. I now realize that even though it may be more expensive to patronize a business that focuses on the sustainability of their product or services, it can have immeasurable benefits on the world around me. In capitalistic societies, we are conditioned to prioritize monetary cost but if we shift our mindset to prioritize the cost to our environment, the world will be much better off.

## **Reflection**

Our team had a good dynamic overall. Since the beginning, we never really had any problem because everyone was always available and understanding. Once we met, we coordinated a time meeting that could benefit everyone's schedule despite the time zones we live in. It was crucial for us to meet every week in order to talk about the project and deliverables. We noticed that just texting and dividing the work wouldn't help us at all in the end. Furthermore, it was really important that in the weekly meeting we tackled everything we had to do for the upcoming week and review things we had to rearrange based on the feedback we received from the professor. We noticed that each of us have different speed and work methods (some of us get

things done as fast as we can, while others take some time to complete things), but it was beneficial since it allowed us to start things faster and improve while we go through it in the weekly meetings.

For some of us, it was difficult to speak up during the meeting since we were strangers and didn't know each other very well making this a little difficult at times. On the other hand, some of us were really extroverted and were always suggesting ideas. Even though we had both extremes, we always communicated really well via group chat. As for expectations, we discovered that we didn't have noticeable difference. We also got to know a little bit about each other's personal lives and felt that we could relate to some things.

In conclusion, the difference in time was the biggest challenge for everyone, even though we arranged a time that could benefit everyone, some week there were some unforeseen events that didn't allow some of us to meet. But even with this difficulty we managed to inform everyone what we saw in the meeting and what was next to do or how could they help.

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## CHAPTER 4

### From Oil and Gas to Offshore Wind

Written by: Natasha Cisecki, Maria Tapia, Vincente Alejandro Garrido Sanclaudi, Jose Fullaondo, Andalas Bintang Wijaya

#### **Abstract**

Over the past five weeks, our international team has been working to research an innovation that meets at least one of the sustainable development goals set out by the United Nations. In our first week together, we picked Havfram, a subsea and offshore wind contractor, to conduct an interview with and write an AIM2Flourish story on. Our group was particularly interested in their innovation as they are addressing a major environmental concern that needs to be acted upon immediately. After choosing to conduct a story on Havfram, we were able to interview an employee and gain more information about how the company operates and what they are doing. In our fourth week, we submitted our story to be published on AIM2Flourish.com. The reflection below is one of our final steps in the process where we, as a group, have reflected on what we have learned from creating the story, how it connects to what we have been learning this semester, how we can use this information in our futures, and how we worked as a cross-cultural group.

#### **Reflection on AIM2Flourish Story**

##### **What?**

Havfram is a subsea and offshore wind contractor based in Norway that has recently started the shift transition to the offshore wind industry. Their innovation was the creation and expansion of floating offshore wind farms. They are currently working in partnerships that will allow them to expand the usage of clean renewable energy to more people. This is a good thing because this innovation greatly reduces the rates of carbon emissions. This would positively reflect on their reputation and more people would be inclined to use their services. This helps increase the usage of renewable and clean energy around the world. Conducting the interview led to an insightful conversation that helped introduce us to some of the fascinating and innovative steps companies

are taking to make an impactful change on the world. The interview allowed us to get a deeper understanding of what is really going on within the company, information that we wouldn't have been able to find on the internet alone. The interviewer explained Havfram's history, future plans, processes, and goals on how they planned to be a part of the solution in making the world a better place for all people. The interview and this project as a whole helped us learn about different aspects it takes to run a business. Oftentimes the media portrays businesses as harmful and greedy. This project illustrated that this is not true about all corporations. Businesses have the ability to do something great for the world and many companies such as Havfram are doing their part. It helps give us a sense of inspiration and optimism that there are businesses that are making a real effort in reversing the damage that greenhouse gasses have caused the earth.

### **So What?**

When we were researching Havfram, we settled on four Sustainable Development Goals that their company was following. This was later confirmed when we had our interview with Ivan Sandra, the four being; 7-Affordable and Clean Energy, 9-Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, 11-Sustainable Cities and Communities, and 13-Climate Action. Out of those four goals, two of them, 9 and 13, related best to what Havfram is doing now. Affordable and Clean energy, as well as sustainable cities and communities are long-term goals. Making the switch to new infrastructure is not a small financial undertaking. However, in the future, offshore wind energy will be affordable therefore making cities and communities sustainable. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, as well as climate action, are being tackled in the now. As an engineering and installation company, Havfram is partnering with Oil and Gas companies such as Shell to help them make the switch to offshore wind energy by creating the necessary structures. As we know, oil and gas are a major cause of rising temperatures. Oil and gas release carbon dioxide into the air which is a greenhouse gas. Greenhouse gasses trap heat in the atmosphere causing it to heat up. Making the switch to offshore wind will slow the rising of temperature as it does not create any greenhouse gasses.

After outlining which SDG's Havfram follows and how their work and company goals relate to each, it is clear that Havfram is a triple bottom line company. The triple bottom line framework outlines three key focuses that a company should focus on: profit, people, and planet. Had

Havfram been working with companies to create offshore oil and gas vessels, they would most likely be a standard bottom line company, focusing purely on profit. This is not the case, Havfram is a for-profit company that specifically designs and builds infrastructure that can be used to combat climate change. Havfram is also a small company that values its employees' thoughts, experiences, and abilities. On their website, an entire page is dedicated to how much they value their employees and why somebody looking for a job would be a good fit for the company. As well, Havfram prides itself on the relationships it has with its partners and making new relationships with potential partners.

Connecting the triple bottom line framework to SDG's, the 5-P framework outlines where every SDG belongs in terms of what they achieve. The five P's are people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships. Havfram's goals and actions can be placed in almost all the 5-P's. Each SDG and triple bottom line can be placed in people, planet, and prosperity. Although only one SDG goes into the partnership category, and that is not one that Havfram follows, Havfram does rely heavily on partnerships with other companies. If Havfram had no partnership with Oil and Gas companies, their project to switch to offshore wind would not be successful as existing energy companies would continue to use oil and gas as it is profitable now.

After researching and hearing firsthand what Havfram does, we are surprised at how much of a role responsible management, ESG, and CSR, have on current companies, specifically Havfram. Havfram has designed their whole company around responsible management, meeting societal responsibilities as seen in Carroll's Pyramid, and focusing their outcomes on sustainability. Prior to taking this course and getting to work so closely with a company, most companies seemed to just be standard bottom line, only focusing on profit. Now that we understand what it looks like to follow SDG'S and to be focused on more sustainable outcomes, we can see that many current companies are working towards goals such as reducing carbon emissions, or putting their employees and customers as a priority.

### **Now What?**

Throughout the AIM2Flourish story, we have been able to see how many companies are able to maintain their profits by making their products and services in an eco-friendly and ethical way. Not only that, but many of them even generate greater returns in the long run. For us, it was

clear to see that the best way to help the green movement is through new technological discoveries that could help us humans, get a benefit from the resources that nature gives to us and also find a way to do it without hurting it (nature), but instead helping it. This project not only made us more conscious about the economic benefits that these ideas could bring but it also made us conscious about the impact such changes could have in the world (in a very positive way). So, the way we think and act will definitely change as time goes by (become more conscious about our actions and take care of the environment), but there is still a long way to go and a lot of work to do. Regardless, we hope for this movement to change the way many companies work in an exponential way as time goes by since it will also become more profitable.

### **Reflection on Cross-Cultural Team Work**

During our first meeting we managed to decide on how we were going to be working as a team. First we created a group chat for more efficient communication, there we agreed on some strategies to work together efficiently. Some of the strategies were: Dividing tasks in order to work faster, be responsible for assigned tasks in working independently to complete, provide input and opinions regardless of correct or incorrect, being respectful and professional, trying to bring up any issues well in advance, and many others. The strategies applied were very efficient and everybody managed to comply with them and follow them correctly, leading to a more organized way of working. However, as much as we followed the strategies, we also had some minor problems that we ultimately managed to solve. For example, we were not given a date for our interview until one day prior to our deadline. Which had us very nervous and looking for other options, but we put ourselves to work and managed to deliver it on time. When it comes to cross-cultural dynamics we didn't have any severe problems other than some language barriers that we managed to solve by either typing, or trying to pronounce things at a slower rate. Another limitation we encountered was the difficulty of everyone being available to join our weekly meetings due to the different time zones. Some group members had other things to do/attend during our meeting time. We resolved this issue by either moving our meeting to a time where everyone could join, or by letting our teammates know through our group chat what we did and what they needed to do. During the completion of this report as a team we did encounter some limitations, but by applying the strategies we agreed on and working as a group by sharing, communicating and being organized we managed to solve all of our issues and

completed a well written report.

## **Conclusion**

Havfram was founded in 2011, in Norway, as a subsea and offshore wind contractor. Since then, Havfram has partnered with oil and gas companies to make the transition from oil and gas to offshore wind. By doing this Havfram is contributing to four SDG's; affordable and clean energy, industry, innovation, and infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities, and climate action. All of these SDG's create a domino effect on what other aspects of responsible management, CSR, and ESG Havfram contributes to.

After researching and writing this AIM2Flourish story on Havfram, we have all become more aware of what companies are doing to aid in this environmental crisis we are in. In our futures, we will also be paying more attention to what potential jobs of ours contribute to SDG's and how we as individuals can contribute to them in our daily lives and also our work lives.

Working as an international team brought up some difficulties that none of us had encountered before. With all of us having different accents, we had to adjust the way we spoke and interacted so everybody was on the same page. Once we worked out the best way to communicate and divide work, we were very successful.

Overall, we gained valuable knowledge on Havfram, SDG's, and our current and future world of business. We have made great connections with each other and Havfram and look forward to what we can contribute to in the future.

## CHAPTER 5

### Do What's Right!

Written by: Lindsey Derlis, Hugo López Palomo, Nizerrat Gauthier Asmat, Fulviano Cahya Siringo-ringo, Reyhan Irsyad Susano

#### **Introduction:**

Our story focused on a small business located in Illinois, USA, called Certified Collision Center. This business is an auto repair shop that has decided to undergo changes in order to make some steps in their work a lot more sustainable. Our interviewee, Daniel Derlis, the production manager, explained that they do this for us, for the younger generations that need a cleaner world to live in. This, as a team, made us feel grateful for the efforts people like Daniel make in their daily lives as they could have perfectly skipped doing this instead of becoming more sustainable. Instead, he chose to follow a more difficult path just to make some beneficial change in our future.

Writing the Aim2Flourish story made all of us learn that building a more sustainable world is not just the task of big businessmen and politicians, but also a goal of smaller businesses such as Certified Collision Center and university students like us. Prior to starting this project and getting to know the SDGs, none of us had any actual experience related to working towards sustainability. Although we did come from this background, we managed to work together as a team quite efficiently and get to learn a lot about how businesses can become more sustainable. As we are all attending courses on sustainability, this assignment has been the perfect way to learn about how people and business can – in practice and not just in theory – build a more conscious society aimed at leaving a better planet for the future generations than the one we got from the older ones. Intrigued by what led our story hero, Daniel Derlis, to include more ecologically conscious steps in his work, we asked what was the reason that led him into making this innovation come true. We found out that Daniel's profound consciousness of the climate crisis and demand from an ecologically concerned clientele is what ultimately convinced him to shift his production chain from a regular one to a more sustainable process. Moreover, a feeling of accountability was pushing him to try and do his best from his position to act for the planet.



He claimed that if nobody acts now, it could end up being too late for our generation to live in a clean, healthy, flourishing and habitable Earth. Then, in a few but relevant words, he said:

- Do what 's right!

Which is exactly what everybody should be working on! There is no sense in just trying to obtain the biggest possible profit if, by doing so, you are forcing future generations to live on an inhabitable planet. Thanks to Daniel and the work we have done related to the SDGs we figured out that “doing what’s right” means that nobody is too young, too small or too inexperienced to make substantial changes in their lives in order to become a more sustainable person and help others live in a healthier, greener world. Of course, no learning comes without challenging previous knowledge. Given that the company we were interviewing is related to the automotive sector, we used to have a negative bias towards this industry before we got to know more about them. As everybody knows, greenhouse effect gas emissions account for a large share of the total pollution expelled by humanity. In fact, up to 15% of the total 70% of the contribution of CO<sub>2</sub> to GHG emissions are related to automotion (Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 2022, <https://www.c2es.org/content/international-emissions/>). In spite of this, Certified Collision Center has proven otherwise. Their example shows how a company that fully depends on cars for profit can actually promote responsible production and consumption in an industry where, according to what Daniel Derlis told us, most people just expect substantial margins. The innovations Certified Collision Center was putting into place have proven to us – and can prove to the whole world! – that even when you deal with such a polluting industry, you can still fight for sustainability.

Certainly, this experience has made us learn a lot about sustainability and what our role should be in our present and future. Learning about Certified Collision Center’s example has led us to try and act in coherence with our beliefs concerning people, the planet and prosperity. We live in an endangered world, not because governments and rival countries threaten to cause a world war, but rather because our lifestyle and consumption patterns are undermining our planet’s capacity to provide us with everything that is necessary. The situation is urgent, a good management of the resources the Earth provides and the use we make of them is crucial if we want humanity to prosper for more years to come. In order to help with this, we are willing to act as sustainably as we can in order to prevent a bigger climate catastrophe. This assignment has made us seriously

reconsider our role in society and has determined us to try and include more sustainable products in what we wear, what we eat, etc. Moreover, this exercise has made us reflect on what we would do as the business people of the future. Daniel's story is profoundly inspiring and it has planted on us a little seed: the seed of sustainability consciousness. A seed that, albeit small now, will grow into a tall, majestic tree: the project of building a more sustainable society for everybody, by everybody.

### **Reflecting on how we worked as a cross-cultural team**

As for our experience working as a cross-cultural team, coming from such diverse countries and having to deal with different time zones, we must say that we have overcome most struggles related to these aspects. Fortunately, we were able to use two tools that proved very useful for our work: Zoom Meetings and a common language, English. On the other hand, we must admit that because of either a lack of proper English skills or a matter of cultural difference, not everybody has contributed equally to the project. After talking to other people in class we found out that this phenomenon tends to be present in all groups, as there are always people who are less willing to participate or feeling a bit overwhelmed by the cultural differences among peers. On the positive side of this, everything can be learnt from the experience of trial and error, and so is the case with this assignment. The – what seem to be – abysmal differences between cultures and nationalities can become the unifying and enriching aspects of our future projects. Today, we may struggle expressing ourselves in a commonly understood language, but tomorrow this same language can ensure effective communication. Going through this project we have realized that there are dynamics and initiatives that work and others that do not. For example, staying silent and passive because you do not understand what has to be done is not a good attitude. Relying on other people's work and expecting not to contribute much does not work at all. Conversely, trying to open up to what others think and say is the way to go. Trying to contribute as much as one can, is what should be done. A group is not a group if 3 of the 5 members work and a passive minority decides not to participate! Everybody should try to make an effort to show what they are made of and what they can bring to the enriching experience this assignment is.

## CHAPTER 6

### The Greatness of the Small

Written by: Maria Iranzu Telleria Martinez, Adrian Mascaraque Moreno, Neftali Diaz, Tasya Putri Sandi Akil, Isa VanEsveld, Muhammad Daani Ghufron

#### **Introduction**

The story behind Kaimana Brand starts with Marina Munoz. Marina is the founder and CEO of Kaimana Brand. Kaimana offers reasonable and affordable pieces of jewelry that are produced while respecting working conditions and the environment during the whole production process. Kaimana Brand uses recycled materials to transform them into jewelry such as earrings, necklaces, and rings. Their company manufactures its products and exports them throughout the Spanish Peninsula.

#### **Innovation**

Marina Munoz, who is the founder of Kaimana Brand is a student herself. We can all agree that knowing this, is a source of motivation to us. As young students, we may often feel like we don't have much control of what is going on around us but this is just one example of something we can do to be more environmentally sustainable. In Marina's interview, she described to us about what inspired her, she as most people was letting outside factors intimidate her. Her passion for fashion and wanting to help our environment pushed her to begin her business. We felt that this motivation from Marina could make people worry less about not having the right things and not being good enough to create a company. As a few of us were listening to her interview from an outside perspective it makes you feel as though anything is possible as long as you put in the work. Finding alternatives can also help you begin your project. Kaimana Brand uses steel as the main source of material for their jewelry. Not only is this business helping in a sustainable manner since you're reusing and recycling but it is also benefits you financially. The product is sold at a cheaper price but at the same time it is not reducing the quality of the jewelry. We felt like this is a good way to bring in caring and interested clientele. Marina's goal was taking something small and unique to turning it into something great.

## **Analysis**

Taking a deeper focus on the three pillars of sustainability according to the triple bottom line of social, economic, and environmental concerns. The “three Ps”: profit, people, and the planet generate all aspects that Kaimana Brand is covering. All three of these aspects come together to form a business. Kaimana's financial income depends on how well Marina can profit from her products. Marina has the power to effect a positive change in her business. By doing so, she adapts sustainable initiatives to gain success. By doing so, having a target audience allows you to bring in the right people. In Marina's case, this would be most likely young women, however, Kaimana is available to everyone. These people impact the social aspect of her business. Without the people, you would not have such success. A way Marina could implement strategic success in the future is to set up some sort of workshop. This allows the people to see the work that is put into place behind the scene as well as make their jewelry that is made with eco-friendly materials. This allows the consumers to see the work that is behind Kaimana Brand. The final component of the triple bottom line is making an impact on the planet. Kaimana Brand has the opportunity to make such a change in their industry. Its economic activity consists of buying eco-friendly materials, such as stainless steel, and turning them into unique jewelry. The story of Kaimana Brand has shown us that we have an impact on our society. We do not need thousands of dollars or hundreds of partners to begin something. Marina has shown us that we can start now.

We can connect Kaimana Brand to our own academic knowledge as we can focus on the issue of sustainable development. For Kaimana Brand, sustainable development means adapting to the changes and impact on the environment. Using our academic knowledge means having quality education is an important factor for achieving a sustainable world. We are all students, including Marina, and having a good understanding for sustainability gives us the values and skills we all want to create a more sustainable world. The knowledge of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that we learned in class as well as having some prior understanding to, these goals gave us a greater understanding on how to represent them in our lives.

One of the main ideas we discussed was obstacles that were faced during this story. It is true that on a daily basis we can be presented to deal and tackle different problems. However, the focus of our life shouldn't be the problem, but the solution. Challenges should encourage us to try to make the best we can. We believe that many times we are the ones who build our own obstacles. We see age as lack of experience, rather than a way of gaining that experience. We label scarcity of time as a continuous rush, when we should do it as an investment, as an opportunity. We consider challenges as impossible, as a synonym of failure, when the only failure consists of not trying. We agreed that this business, effects our actual situation which has demonstrated that the only obstacles are the ones we put to ourselves. The rest can be figured out during the way by doing so, we are able to transform problems into opportunities.

## **Conclusion**

The AIM2Flourish story can affect us all in a positive way. This story was a global initiative that aimed us to be future business leaders towards achieving sustainable goals. This project was a new experience that brought us great importance. We were given opportunities to work together as a group and face new challenges together. We were given the chance to conduct an interview and by doing so, we got to ask questions within a business and learn new skills that will help us towards our future. We also got to make new connections with each other. We got the chance to build new relationships with our group knowing that we always lend a hand within the future.

A connection can be made between AIM2Flourish and ourselves in a few years from now as this project has taught us to be more aware of what we consume or use. It has given us examples of the many different ways businesses and corporations around us are making a difference. We can all agree upon that in future time, we plan to act more sustainable. By changing a small thing within your business or even your personal life can make a impact.

## **Group Reflection**

Overall, we can all agree upon that we really enjoyed working on this project as a team with members from across the world. It was truly a unique experience, working and collaborating with students from different schools was something new for all of us. In the beginning, when this assignment was first introduced by our professors, we can all agree we

were a bit intimidated. This assignment sounded like it would be a lot of work, however we were all up for a challenge. A challenge we faced was having to communicate in different languages, different time tables and having different backgrounds and ideas sounded impressive, challenging and thrilling. As a team, we needed to figure out when we would be meeting. The only cross-cultural dynamic we faced was at the start of this assignment. It was difficult to find a time and day that worked for each of us individually. We all agreed upon that Fridays worked the best for us all. We faced a few minor issues with the time zone changes that happened across the world, however we managed to resolve the issue by communicating.

As a group, we can all say we had to all make a few minor sacrifices. A few of our group members had to wake up early, others had to postpone their lunches, and the rest had to put a pause on their plans with friends and family. We contributed by having unique ideas and having a new point of view of being more open-minded. We can now say we were given a new perspective. Without the dedication given by our group, we wouldn't have been able to complete the difficult tasks we were given. We all encouraged each other to succeed as a group as we were all eager to complete this project by also having to enjoy it at the same time. Through this project, we believe necessary and required attributes and characteristics daily have been reinforced. A meaningful quote Maria used to describe this assignment is a phrase from Victor Hugo, "*The future has many names: for the weak it is unattainable, for the fearful, the unknown. For the brave, the opportunity*". This project was a good experience for us all.

## CHAPTER 7

### TRANSPARENCY IN THE WOOD CHAIN

Written by: Timothy Immanuel, Anthony Renteria, Blanca Espejo, Johnric Lin, Carlos Abadía

#### **Introduction:**

ONESTA is a sustainable company that compromises the environment and seeks to have a positive impact on it by providing a constructing alternative. They are Committed to research, innovation and environmental protection as the basis for orderly and sustainable growth to advance in their mission, which consists of the transformation, modernization and development of the construction timber industry, seeking to positively impact the environment and also improving people's well-being.

First of all, working on this AIM2FLOURISH project made us realize the importance of taking into account environmental issues and working from a sustainable perspective. We learned about some environmental benefits that brings us wooden constructed buildings that we weren't aware of, such as, how the wood is hygroscopic and acts as a natural dehumidifier thanks to its capacity to absorb and expel water, how it is insulating, acting as an excellent thermal, acoustic and electrical insulator and moreover, its resistance, it has an elastic deformation capacity much higher than other materials such as concrete and the seismic forces to which a wooden building is subjected are less than those to which a normal foundation building is subjected. Nowadays we are experiencing conflicts and wars in some parts of the world, therefore we believe that the benefits that this construction alternative brings can be especially helpful for those places experiencing war situations, if a wooden constructed building is well designed, it is very difficult for it to collapse, by ensuring that the joints and not the parts of the material themselves are the ones that fail, therefore, constructing buildings with wood could potentially save lives in these conflicted areas. Furthermore, places like Japan or San Francisco are very susceptible to earthquakes, therefore could also prevent damages by making use of this resistance material.

ONESTA is also very keen on improving people's well-being, we were very surprised with the different positive impacts that being in an environment with wood brings on our health, such as

that exposure to wood is correlated with a drop in cortisol, the primary hormone linked to negative impacts of stress, also similar studies observed lower levels of blood pressure and heart rate in an environment where wood is present, compared with one where it is absent. In another study, participants' focus, and concentration improved when asked to perform a task in a room featuring exposed wood surfaces. Moreover, it favors our digestion. The coronavirus pandemic was an 'eye-opening' situation for society, it made us realize the importance of well-being, both mental and physical health, from our standpoint society might be suffering more stress now than years before because of the uncertain future that we have ahead caused mainly by the coronavirus pandemic, the climate change and international conflicts, among other things. Therefore, we believe that this purpose could benefit today's society's well-being significantly. We were also surprised about the potential benefits that constructing with wood could have in cities and countries, potentially resulting in a 'second forest effect', because when wood is used in construction, buildings continuously retain CO<sub>2</sub>. We were shocked with the fact that deforestation or 'cutting trees' and planting new ones is actually better for the environment (if trees are replanted) as young trees absorb more CO<sub>2</sub> than older trees and this idea has always been seen as damaging or bad for the environment, but the reality is that an active, sustainable and orderly forest management actually reduces a potential fire area by 90% and effectively controls the harvesting of timber, guaranteeing the life of trees and ensuring their renewal, Which is the best way to prevent big fires and fight against the climate crisis.

We believe that the purpose of ONESTA is very important for today's society and environment, due to the challenging situations we are experiencing in the world in the latests years, taking into consideration all of the information acquired doing this project and learning from the positive impact of ONESTA's purpose, it has fuelled our enthusiasm on making a positive impact in this world and society. Due to the different challenges that we have faced in the recent years and the possible impact of climate change, our future has become uncertain, but our reflection on this is that even if we don't know what is going to happen in the future we know that we can do something now to fight climate change, thinking and acting in a sustainable and environmentally-friendly way and therefore potentially reducing the negative possible future outcomes caused by this.



## **Group Reflection: managing cross-cultural differences**

I would describe this teamwork as an adventure, from which I think we all got a lot out of it. If I had been told that in college I would have the opportunity to work with people from Chicago, Indonesia, Canada, ... I would not have believed it. But, suddenly you find yourself in the situation, and you have to learn to balance schedules, get to know your team because there is an obvious cultural divide that if you don't understand it can cause problems. Our meetings were very funny, always starting by commenting on the time difference that separates us, one was talking at 8am, others at 14, and at 8pm in Indonesia. The first time was strange. But, then you realize that it is something you have to deal with, and it was already counted on that sometimes not all team members would be able to attend, or that some would have to leave the meeting earlier, ... So we decided that the most important thing was to divide and work. Assigning each one a task, and we all saw in a shared document how our work was evolving, so that everyone contributed their bit. Therefore, in light of the above, I will highlight the different aspects that make this teamwork a success.

- ❖ First, get to know each other, as it has been said before, the cross-cultural differences were vital to the development of this project, if you do not understand why the other person is behaving in such a way that can be uncomfortable for the other team members, an amount of dilemmas and team issues could happen.
- ❖ Secondly, adopt flexibility, this is one of the most important aspects as the timetables for each of us was so different that without flexibility this would not be possible, it was understandable if somebody could not assist to a meeting, as another day that could be you.
- ❖ Finally, developing a clear structure, dividing the work, giving to each of the team members a role to satisfy, and establishing a clear meeting timetable has been the key to success.

That is the story of how we manage the cross-cultural differences and we handle the problems that surged in the group during the project. It is a highly recommendable project and an amazing experience to have before entering into the workforce.

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## CHAPTER 8

### República del Cacao Story

Written by: Maria Camila Ramirez Perez, Martina Sanchez, Muhammad Hasan Adabi, Cavaari Taylor, Grace Larson

#### **Story Analysis:**

República del Cacao is a company that was born in Ecuador in 2005, with a purpose to change not only a country but a region. It was born by the idea of the Chiriboga brothers, who developed the idea when they visited the city of Paris in Europe, on a quest to taste the best chocolate Europe could produce, upon doing so they realised the chocolate was produced in their home country of Ecuador and believed that Ecuador was not only meant to export cacao, but it should also produce the best chocolate in the world as it already had premium raw materials available. We all agreed with the brother's decision as we all truly believe that smaller nations such as Ecuador can produce for themselves and develop their own sustainable products without the need of solely exporting raw materials to greater world powers. Thus, República del Cacao was born and developed with one clear mission "to locally produce the most authentic Latin American chocolate, by protecting sustainable fine cacao production.". It is what makes them different and unique from their competitors as they were forced to develop new methods and ideals to guide the company in order for them to fulfill their authenticity goal. They were able to source European machines to help them produce their cacao and allow it to be of the highest quality by incorporating these machines into their cacao production process which is another interesting aspect as it shows that the company was not afraid to use and implement foreign equipment into their production line instead of sticking to older and more archaic methods of production.

República del Cacao has been quite influential in Ecuador in three concrete aspects including environmental aspect, gender equality and human rights aspect and a sustainable economic aspect. These aspects are embodied into the organization from the directors and entrepreneurs to the suppliers. They have achieved this impact in these sectors with their main business strategy to eliminate intermediaries, and work hand to hand with the farmers of the raw materials they

use, while implementing codes and compacts which detail specific guidelines that their suppliers and employees must follow which deal with safe and specific working environment conditions. This was a great initiative as it not only helps improve the quality and standards of the business but also helps the country as a whole improve by setting a standard for others to follow, establishes trust amongst employees showing that they are a valid part of the company and establishes faith in customers as a reputation is built as a company that sticks to their ideals of authenticity but doing it the right way while caring for a nations people in the eye of the public.

In this exercise, we learned about how a good committed and sustainable business is built and also the fierce competition present in the modern economy places demands on business executives to maintain profitability and provide shareholders with a positive return. This pressure frequently causes people to do immoral actions in an effort to produce beneficial results and when this occurs it usually results in a pattern that gets passed down through the organisation. There was not any serious competition identified from the interview as República Del Cacao has been seriously established as a business in Ecuador and partner so well with the local farmers and suppliers.

Businesses with strong corporate ethics are more successful over the long term because they demonstrate a commitment to upholding standards of moral behavior. This indicates a commitment to society, clients, staff, and the company itself. A company's reputation is improved if it gains a reputation for being ethical, and this adds value to the organization. As leaders show unethical behaviour, and perhaps even justify such behaviour while knowing it to be wrong, this eventually becomes a part of organizational culture. People follow by example, and the lack of moral judgment will spread. It's easy to blame "the system", yet many fail to realize "the system" is comprised of decision-making individuals. The relationship between business and ethics is inherently linked, but there are some who fail to make this connection. So, to say "business is business" is not justified, as responsible (ethical) decision making is an important component of doing good business.

## **Conclusion:**

Our group worked extremely well together. After watching our individual videos and introducing ourselves during the initial zoom call, we immediately connected and communicated with each other. We shared all our contact information and created a WhatsApp group chat because it was the best option given our diverse geographical locations. Despite our different time zones, we met every week via Zoom to discuss assignments informally. Meeting with everyone every week did not feel like a chore. It was the absolute opposite. We distributed the workload very evenly. After picking República del Cacao as our company to research for the AIM2Flourish story, our member from Spain, began to lead our group because it was her company that we all agreed on. She did an excellent job of providing us with the resources and information we required to learn about the República del Cacao. Throughout the process of creating our story, submitting weekly guided questions, and now creating our poster and writing the reflection, we divided and conquered. Our group never experienced any conflicts or disruptions among its members. We all got along great, respected each other's opinions and ideas, and were able to successfully learn more about sustainability innovations together.

The cross-cultural dynamics between our members in meetings and interactions were not particularly profound, but they did have a positive impact on the overall process of the assignment. Uncertainty avoidance was usually demonstrated by our members in Spain, who led the group by ensuring that tasks were assigned evenly, completed properly, and submitted on time in order to avoid the consequences of poor group performance. As the cross-cultural dynamic of indulgence was demonstrated, our team member in Canada was optimistic and had a positive attitude throughout the entire process. The member who demonstrated collectivism is Indonesian. He worked hard to turn our group into a team, emphasizing the importance of working together to achieve the most. We were able to achieve a perfect balance because these cross-cultural dynamics were divided amongst each team member. We all did an excellent job of remaining patient and respectful of our cultural identities. It is safe to say that this team had a fantastic experience working together and on this project.

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## CHAPTER 9

### Renewable energies investment platform for every pocket

Written by: Lucía Álvarez, Shavira Febryanti, Kameryn Fini, Max Stoddart, Erick Nikolas Vier Arizmendi

#### Introduction:

Thinking about it, this story is about opportunities for small businesses and anyone wanting to invest in the renewable energy sector. Fundeen gives them opportunities by providing a platform in which anyone can invest in those businesses from just 500 euros. This not only helps firms that usually would have trouble in financing to develop but also allows people to invest on a market that previously needed 250,000 euros for the initial investment.

This belief only got stronger after talking to the COO and co-founder of Fundeen, Adrián Bautista. In those 30 minutes, he generously gave us an insight that the company's main approach wasn't really about helping others. He described how they got the idea, how they developed it and how they selected the companies they wanted to work with, among others. This helped us to differ from the belief we knew before we entered the interview. Nonetheless, there were a few details in the interview, small phrases that he stated in some parts of it that showed deep care, and a deep will to create those opportunities. The example that resonated with us the most was when he expressed: "We believe that we were born with the intention of helping those small companies, and until now we believe that we do". Those are the words he said when we asked about the companies that Fundeen financed.

Another example of this care can be found in the 500 euros minimum they set. The phrase he said may not be the best quote for helping our belief, at least without a bit of context. Regarding the minimum, he said: "We want your pocket to hurt". A phrase that can easily be used on a TV series for a greedy business leader, but in this case, it fulfills the opposite idea. He used this phrase to explain that they want the consumer to think before investing. He wants people that really want to do it instead of people who only do so on a whim. Showing care about consumer

habits, about how nowadays society's actions are mainly decided in a second, and giving importance to taking time to think, leads to more satisfaction after the investor finishes this process.

With this, we aren't saying that the company is perfect, in many senses it isn't. For example, the 500 euros minimum can be seen as a bit too high or the approach that the company gives may differ from what we expect a social enterprise to have. Nonetheless, as we have researched and as we have experienced in the interview, we can state that this group of people cares about providing those opportunities. As it is stated on the web, when describing the ambition for which this company was created (Fundeen, 2022): "Was to do nothing more than useful things for the world and the future".

Having seen the importance and description of the story, we think that its crucial for this reflection to dig a bit deeper to analyze and compare this story and its meaning with our previous knowledge or understanding. For this, we would like to start with a word that many of us know, but thanks to this project, we got to expand our knowledge on it: crowdfunding. This term is present everywhere in the story, as Fundeen is a crowdfunding platform. As we advanced on the story, we began to research more about it, starting with its proper definition (Investopedia,2022): "Crowdfunding is the use of small amounts of capital from a large number of individuals to finance a new business venture." Of course, this definition was just the beginning; nonetheless, it serves as a perfect starting point to better understand the company.

In the end, we ended up searching for companies that use this method, if it can be applied to specific cases (e.g.: the renewable energies market), how it works, and a bit about its popularity. We even discussed this specific topic in one of our meetings, reaching the general conclusion that crowdfunding is and will remain crucial in the development of SMEs, especially sustainable SMEs.

Going a bit deeper in this regard, as Fundeen worked only with SMEs, we had to research about them. We learned that these companies could take advantage of 3 main aspects to succeed in the renewable energies market.



The knowledge of the local market and place, flexibility to answer a very specific need, and finally minor financial and technical obstacles (aside from the initial financing, the aspect that Fundeen helps with).

After learning this, we decided to give a look at the companies Fundeen works with and we saw some hints that go along with these 3 ideas. The clearest one, Piedrabuena, located their solar panels in one of the sunniest places within their community, also recognized as one of the sunniest in Spain. Also, if you notice, we used the term SMEs instead of the commonly used start-ups, this is due to something that we learned along the way. We discovered that start-ups and SMEs have entirely different goals, functions, expected duration, and risks. After comparing all these factors with the ones of the companies that Fundeen works with, we decided it was more accurate to use the term SMEs.

While doing the interview, we also heard about the border effect, as the firm told us that it was hard to expand due to other companies' regulations. This is a clear example of how borders can limit the trade of resources, in this case, the financial ones. They went along with what some of us learned in their respective classes. Also, we found out about a new EU regulation that will ease this border effect. This goes along with what was mentioned about FTAs.

Furthermore, we wanted to talk about how this story broke one of our assumptions. Before, we believed that for a company to achieve sustainability, meaning that it fulfills the 3Ps, it had to act in a specific way. Nonetheless, we couldn't find any strange behavior: it operates like any company we know while still believing in its goal of sustainability. Therefore, we are sure that achieving this has nothing to do with the functioning of a company. Instead, after doing this story and learning about Fundeen, we believe that for a company to achieve sustainability, it isn't about acting differently than a regular company. It is, in fact, related to the principles and values the business follows and operates.

First, it made us more aware of the people behind the businesses: even though they try to make a change, they are mostly faced by difficulties due to their small size. Hence, financing is crucial for their success.

Secondly, it worked as a reminder that actions that may seem small can actually make an impact. Those 500 euros that you invest in those companies are not only helping the environment but also the people involved in it.

Lastly, we wanted to end this reflection with the impacts we think it will have on society in the future. The easy and unrealistic solution would be to say that we will only invest in renewable energies only using this platform. However, as we mentioned, this would be an unworkable solution. The real impact that this project has had on the group is 2.

Regarding this topic, there is still a number said in the interview that resonates within our heads: 12,500 euros, which is the amount that you need to invest in renewable energies to nullify your carbon impact. We recognize that this number is not small when looked upon as a short-term goal; nonetheless, if we do it one month at a time, it is a much achievable action.

The point of this reflection is not to claim that we have achieved enlightenment that will change completely the way we act but to tell that this story has made us aware of something we didn't recognize, and that realization will affect the way we act. Once we become financially independent, we will try to invest in this sector. After all, having a chance to nullify our carbon impact is something that has called upon us. However, the most important thing this project left us with was the idea of providing opportunities and how helping others to grow is crucial. This story about opportunities may not be applicable to our day to day life, at least if we decide not to go into finance. However, the thought of giving and valuing opportunities is something that will impact our daytime.

## **REFLECTION AS CROSS-CULTURAL TEAM**

If we were to say that the interaction occurred without problems, nobody will believe us; however, this is true for most of them. Since the first meeting, we seemed to get along pretty well, making it easy to talk with each other and ask questions when we didn't agree or understand something, which generated a great environment for this project.

Nonetheless, as we previously stated, telling this story without speaking about the points we could improve on would not be believable. These points can be mainly summarized into two words: time difference. In the beginning, finding a meeting time was not hard, as we compared our schedules and decided on 2 possible times. The problem started when the hour change occurred. This messed up our schedule and made us confused. To solve this, we decided to be understanding with each other, trying to wait for 5 to 15 minutes for everyone to join before starting the meeting or even rescheduling it if anyone had an incident or issue due to the time change.

Finally, time also brought another problem: texting. We created a WhatsApp group to improve our communication. The difficulty was that we wrote messages as soon as each saw them, so we answered at strange hours or asked things from someone at that time. The solution we found to be the most efficient way is to be a bit more patient and understanding. Also, we learned that an "I'm sorry" was one of the best solutions to avoid any conflicts.

Leaving those small issues aside, let's talk a bit about our teamwork. We decided that giving roles to each one was not very productive, except for the case of the format (Lucía was amazing in that regard). For the first and third deliverables, we mostly used "the divide into small parts" method. In other words, assign some questions to each other. However, we implemented a twist to this method by making each of the members check the work and add some corrections to it if they thought they were needed.

After this, the deliverable underwent many changes until we arrived at the final product. For the rest of the work, the key terms were discussion, decision, and action. We discussed and decided what was important, how should we put it, etc. and after deciding about it we started to produce it. It is worth mentioning that even though these strategies are completely opposite, they worked

almost perfectly for the use we gave them, and the result of that can be seen in our deliverables and meeting minutes.

Finally, we would like to end by sharing an event we had during one of our meetings. After finishing the purpose of the meeting we decided to stay and speak about anything we wanted. We ended up asking questions that went from hobbies to cultural concerns. It was a moment that strengthened the relationship between us and that adds to the already excellent experience we had.

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## CHAPTER 10

### From the nest to your table

Written by: Fernando Cruz, Buenaventura Abad, Aulia Putra, Ningsi Selan, Jakhan Dixon, Blaze Vrozos

#### **Introduction:**

Working on the COIL task was easier than expected for everyone. We all got into a very respectful and cheering atmosphere that pushed us to work, being confident that we were all rowing in the right direction. It was an astonishing experience, not only for the nice environment we created but also for the collaborative attitude everyone adopted, and first and foremost the intrigue of the content we discussed. Grupo Catalana's story was a very different work from what we were used to since it demanded a very well-structured process at the same time that we were required to put into practice a higher-than-normal level of critical thinking. Being committed to specific deadlines and being asked to interview a professional in the food industry has put extra pressure on the team, something out of the ordinary in the University's courses. It was quite intriguing to dig deeper into the SDGs world and discover how strong the compromise of enterprises with the sustainability global objective is and how shrewdly they manage to make a profit from it, finding a very complete balance between goals. They were examples such as one of the uses of manure of chickens as an energy producer for the whole production of a plant that made us realize how far organic growth can go. In this same sense, we also noticed that working together in an eco-friendly world could be really achieved.

On the other hand, it was a pleasure to contact Mr. Cruz. We are glad and thankful for the kindness and confidence the CEO transmitted to the team. Something that surprised us, was that there was not any kind of problem with rapidly meeting him, despite the time difference across countries and the tightness of a CEO's schedule. The time and the knowledge he loaned are proof of the transparency base Grupo Catalana works on. On behalf of the team we congratulate them on their effort to build a healthier and more eco-friendly world. This collaborative learning experience is extremely insightful and inspiring for us as a group. With a lot of world-famous successful corporations such as Nike, Amazon, and Nestle getting caught for unethical or

destructive business practices like unlivable wages and terrible working conditions, it's a very good breath of fresh air to see a company doing its corporate social responsibility and applying sustainable practices.

As we all know too well, our earth's condition keeps getting worse by the year, and so all of us, especially leaders of governments and organizations, need to make an effort to preserve our planet. As students, we are taught to think critically and make the world a better place, that's why we were taught about global warming, SSCM, triple bottom line, leadership responsibility, accountability, etc. in hopes of ingraining these mindsets to us. That's why eventually, we will look at current businesses differently. Not only from how good their products are and how they market themselves, but we also look at how they achieve their success, how they treat their stakeholders, and how they run their supply chain. Therefore, it is very nice to see an example in Grupo Catalana and to see them still able to survive and even thrive for 60 years. Grupo Catalana is a good example of a perfectly organized and sustainably run business that checks all of the sustainability and management boxes. From doing their CSR, doing SDGs, treating their stakeholders well, and taking care of the environment and community, they know how businesses should be run, and we should expect nothing less from other businesses.

Before beginning to work on this collaborative experience we all believed that businesses around the world were not doing enough if anything for the world. We thought to ourselves "Where to begin?". It was only until we began to hear each other's proposals for which business to interview that we slowly began to realize that change is in fact taking place. We chose only one business to cover, however, all the other businesses that were proposed are doing so much for the world in different ways, despite still being university students, the passing of the torch is not far away, if the businessmen that came before us held themselves to high standards and carried such responsibility for the world, then there is no excuse for us not to do the same.

However, rather than just viewing the achievement of the SDGs as a responsibility we now view it as an exciting challenge that is in fact achievable. Starting today it is fascinating to delve deep into figuring out new innovative ways to help change the world for the better. With Grupo Catalana we realize that running a profitable business does not have to come at the expense of the

environment or community, both can go hand in hand, innovation is the key to success in this regard, however, it is not a one and done activity, it is a continuous effort that must be done, and we all will attempt to do so in the future.

## **BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Prior to our start of the project we all believed that much was not being done in the fight against climate change. We were used to seeing news coverage and articles of major corporations and powerful nations mistreating the environment or using unethical business practices, all in the name of economic growth. But once we did a bit of research into various companies we realized that there were plenty of people making strides in an effort to build innovations and obtain environmentally friendly sustainability.

We found the interview portion of the exercise very challenging yet insightful. Our need to find someone who was pretty knowledgeable about the company and was willing to do the interview was at first challenging because it was out of our comfort zones as university students. However, Mr. Cruz was very willing to do the interview and that showed that while it may be scary to go out of your comfort zone and can be very helpful and allow you to achieve new experiences that you wouldn't normally do.

Over the course of the exercise, some of our team members were instructed to use the website 'Hofstede Insights', which compares countries in different aspects that when analyzed might explain the dynamic of our international group. However, we found that our differing cultures play little to no role in how we worked together as a group. Everyone was respectful, cooperative, and willing to work together to finish the project.

After finishing the assignment we have a newfound outlook on the fight against climate change. We still see a long and brutal uphill battle to truly achieve the ideal world of sustainability that we all want, however that battle has more allies and we see it as an exciting challenge. We now have a newfound hope and interest in the future of our world.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

Our group worked very effectively since the beginning of the project. A strategy of ours was to prevent information hoarding and avoid conflict of leadership in the group. The team's dynamic saw Fernando become the leader as time went on and our group let him take on that role, not just because we chose his company from the Pre-Case Selection but due to his initiative and hard work throughout this assignment. We all agreed to meet at the same time every week since we first met each other. Keeping a scheduled time each week ensured all members would make time for this. Establishing those core hours really helped us stay on track. When we learned about how we students are in contrasting time zones and different parts of the world, we decided to use WhatsApp as a way to communicate outside of our weekly Zoom calls. Doing this ensured we held everyone accountable and could be there to support our new friends if they needed help. Thankfully for us, aside from the time zone issue, there were no cross-cultural issues. Everyone got along really well and communicated clearly and in a way in which we could understand one another. There were no language barriers to overcome which made it a lot easier to learn about each other's culture and how each of us operates in our day-to-day lives. All of us were very open in accepting one another; from the start, we treated each other respectfully. We immediately began to deploy empathy, give honest feedback, and be considerate of everyone's time. Doing this made our group move efficiently and helped us put trust in our friends to work together.

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## CHAPTER 11

### **The Icebear-Building - Redefining cost-effective energy solutions**

Written by: Ariadna Alemany Guiu, Kimberly Nava-Marquez, Pranav Ramesh Bhagwandas, Leticia Pacios Molina, Chrisoula Vergis

#### **Critical Reflection**

The COIL project began with our team picking Tao Group as our business. This company has innovations as its main way of doing business, specializing in founding and designing these. This actually spins around telecommunications and renewable energy. As a group we were interested in their work towards implementing renewable energies, as most energy used around the world is powered by fossil fuels and contributes to the climate crisis. During the interview we felt interested to learn as much as possible about the innovation and we received an equal reciprocation of eagerness to answer all of our questions from Regine C. Henschel, the director of the company Tao Group. Regine's excitement and easygoing personality allowed for continuous flow throughout the interview mimicking a conversation almost. The company had two main projects that we picked between: the Icebear-Building and the Sky Dragon. Ultimately, we chose to focus on the Icebear-Building, which focused on turning silica, a reusable material, into an energy conserver. The Icebear-Building was designed for weatherproof storage units but the infrastructure with time could be implemented into new housing designs that could heat themselves with the help of solar panels, another form of renewable energy. The building uses membrane technology, which makes it very lightweight and perfect for sheds or storage units. The material of the building is made from silica gel, which is able to absorb and store heat in the summer and release energy through heat in the winter.

When it comes to how the company satisfies sustainability objectives, this business definitely fulfills plenty of them. Firstly, it implies a big impact on how renewable energies are posed as of today. It combines the aim to spread a concerned thinking about climate change with using innovative materials in order to achieve this. For instance, the Icebear-Building uses silica beads, which is an ultimate invention that provides an increase in the storage of heat. The mechanism

provides a sustainable way in order to reassure that enough heat is stored in summer so that it can be used in the winter. It allows to provide with a new economic perspective when it comes to the way of doing business regarding renewable resources in a more efficient way, with its correlative social consequences, as it allows other companies to have another role model of business planning, and it is overall an invention that has the environment as its guiding point. In general, it can be stated that the triple bottom line criteria can be applied to this business, as social, economic and environmental objectives are met. Learning about this business has provided us with multiple facts about issues that we did not really know in depth. For instance, we did not know that although the design of an innovation is crucial, if it aims to reduce its impact on the environment, its materials are also a key part of the invention, so that it enables a sustainable design. Moreover, in regards to other topics related to sustainability and previous knowledge acquired in class, doing this story helped us to tailor in a more precise way and internalize the concept of SDG's. These were created as a participatory project which perfectly reflects how this firm has developed its business strategy, as it required many negotiations with the Ministry of Environment of Baden-Wurttemberg so that they could develop this innovation together, establishing a solid agenda, which is a reflection of how the company focuses on SDG 17, partnership for the goals.

Furthermore, it has provided us with a clearer view about the meaning of the SDG's and how they make an impact on society in a more practical way. This company is specially focused in climate action (SDG 13) and affordable and clean energy (SDG 7). In the first place, we could see how this business cares about future generations, specially speaking with CEO Regine Henschel, as she stated that overall the Icebear-Building is aimed to be reused for many years. This is where the key concept that we learnt about, why materials are especially important when planning an innovation, takes most part in. In the second place, we were able to transform our theoretical knowledge of renewable energies and the typical facts that spin around the benefits of these into a more practical one. Everything from the design of the building to its function has an objective of storing energy, not obtained by a harmful way but by a way that is in perfect harmony with nature: the storage of solar energy.

Although the innovation is a prototype, this company often challenged our knowledge in regards to sustainability. Prior to doing this project, some of us had the idea that businesses that design sustainable innovations are only sustainable in their ends but not in their means. This implies that there was the thought that sustainable businesses did not care as much on how they were getting to put in practice the innovation as they were keen on the actual performance. This company completely vanished this idea from our minds, as we could precisely see how a company can be sustainable in their origins, the materials they use and the design of their products and not only in how they are executing the innovation. As the CEO of TAO says, the money that they make with this innovation is invested in research in renewable energy. With this in mind, the business has as its main focus not only their sustainable execution process but rather having a sustainability-inspired company.

In terms of comparing the Internet website with other ones, this company had the ability to express all its visions and values in a very precise way. When looking at companies that perform in similar areas, such as other technology businesses, the vision and values were not as developed. Moreover, TAO expresses in a very precise way all the accomplishments it has made throughout the years. For instance, in its website it is able to show all the appearances that the company has made in journals, prizes and the number of awards. Furthermore, there is an extensive list of all its partnerships. It is important that the company expresses this area, as it is a big part of TAO's performance in the market. Most websites do not show the philosophy of the business, which is crucial when talking about renewable resources, as their activities have a transcendental meaning. However, TAO addresses this in a correct way, having an area of the website specialized in this particular part of the company.

We are grateful to have had this opportunity to work as a cross cultural team on this Aim2Flourish project because there are plenty of takeaways for us. This experience has collectively taught all of us about the difference between just being sustainable and being a flourishing business. With markets becoming more saturated, and barriers to entry being minimized in this modern digital era, making sustainability a core business value and being able to stand out will be key to any of us starting our own businesses in the future.

After conducting this project, it gets us thinking that a key factor to be successful in the future would involve addressing the current pain points of society and being able to offer innovative solutions to these challenging problems. For example, the Sustainable Development Goals would serve as the basic starting point for any new business that wants to enter the competition. This means that it's not about business as usual anymore to just earn profits for a living to satisfy shareholders and the current business environment is always dynamic and continuously evolving.

There is a global awakening, especially in terms of climate change awareness and people are really stepping up to promote these issues. Climate change is a real problem that affects everyone on this planet and now it's the time that businesses have to become more involved to tackle this. The interview with TAO group showed us a perfect example of how we could run our own businesses that could change the world.

Our work as a team has been a joyful experience! We have had the chance to learn from each other. We were lucky enough to have a team full of very compassionate, understanding as well as flexible people. For instance, one of the members of the group once had a cultural activity and was not able to meet during our normal meeting time. We managed to find a new meeting date that worked for all five of us, while working around other priorities such as work, school, and family responsibilities. It has been a pleasure to have a group like this, for we all were eager to learn and excited to work at every meeting we had. We were disciplined and organized in order to meet the deadlines.

However, we also encountered some difficulties. Regarding the interview, unfortunately, the interviewee got sick the day we had planned to do the interview. That was a really unexpected turn of events, which resulted in a delay of the submission of the story. Thinking back, we have learnt that having a plan B is never a bad idea. We all began to come up with alternate plans, and even contacted another business while waiting for the interviewee to respond. Luckily, we were able to quickly reschedule after the interviewee felt better, and everyone's flexibility allowed us to conduct a productive interview.

Another challenge we encountered was finding a time that worked for all of us, since we are all from very different parts of the world and thus, different time zones. We sometimes struggled, but eventually managed to meet every week at a time that was convenient for all of us. We all made an effort, but it is necessary to mention that many times, Pranav was willing to have the group meeting at late times when no other meeting time worked. Overall, it was an enriching experience where we learned about not just business, but also teamwork.

## CHAPTER 12

### **A sustainable stainless steel business**

Written by: Jaime Cenzano Alonso, Irene Vicuña Royo, Yanaira Nava, Cheryl Calista Jusuf

#### **CRITICAL REFLECTION**

The company that we chose is called Inoxcra, which is a private corporation. The location of Inoxcra is in Spain, Guipuzcoa, Poligono Industrial Asteasu. Inoxcra was founded in 2007 and it consists of between 11 to 50 employees. The person we interviewed was Ignacio Vicuña Royo. He told us that “the inspiration for this innovation is mainly shown in this business culture and working force”. He also told us that their mission is to contribute to global sustainability by recovering and recycling materials through innovation and their continuous improvement culture. Inoxcra creates value for the society and environment overall which is what mainly inspired the leader from the beginning. While interviewing Ignacio we noticed that he enjoyed talking about this company and what Inoxcra has to bring and what is accomplishing with its focus on both sustainable goals 7 and 9. He was professional when answering the questions we had for him and he explained everything well enough to be able to understand him.

Our first meeting with Ignacio was over zoom, so even if he transmitted the story and inspiration through a screen, we all agreed that he believed in the innovation that the business is going through. It was the week after that Irene and Jaime visited him and got to know him in person and we visited the business (Yanaira and Cheryl could not because they are not in Spain). At that moment we truly understood the reasons for the innovation and why it was so important to achieve the company’s values of sustainability. We already knew that the project of solar panels and more efficient machinery was very important, but we didn’t feel it until we actually talked with the people working in the company and told us how it could improve their job, the business productivity, and sustainability.

During our studies, we have all been learning about sustainability, its concept, and what businesses do in a more or less sustainable way. We all know the theory and are capable of finding realistic solutions. But what we did not study are real cases, taking a real business and

questioning everything they do. Such as their strengths, weaknesses, ways of improvement, or what else could be done. We were able to understand what they do to run a business which is not an easy task, as well as their struggles. In addition, we do not need to go far away from our cities or environment to find companies that are innovating in many different ways. Huge companies are not the only ones, and that can just be understood when going out and asking the employees of a business (INOXCRA in this case), what things are being done or in mind.

During this assignment, there were things we already knew and others that we didn't. Something that I learned was the challenges a business faces to make a change to help the environment. Most people think that it's just about making plans and having them done, but to make them happen the company has to have the money and the help to realize them. A business should try to do something for the environment by having at least one of the sustainable goals because this way their business will bring in more consumers knowing they are doing something good. These goals provide clear goals, targets, measurements, and allow for performance monitoring. This is why some businesses are bringing in more people because they know they are working with the needs of the environment without damage. Nevertheless, the biggest issues for this sustainability development are the instability that can cause the business (for instance economic) and the implementation and governance of it (which means that maybe it is not enough, or what was looked for in the long run). In addition to all the pressure that the government is putting into a lot of businesses (not always beneficial for them, as in this company) with all the regulations and demand changes in their new products and processes.

All this learning is very related to the triple bottom line, in which this term relates the impact of a business in its social, economic, and environmental aspects. Finding an equilibrium will lead to sustainability. In the last minute meeting, we discussed in what stage it would be and agreed that the business has reached sustainability in the triple bottom line. It is committed to improving its environmental impact (zero waste policy and circular economy), to people and the community (improve working conditions and sponsor sport teams), and increase profitability of the business while creating all this value for society. In the end, the main goal of a company is to create value to society which means to create jobs, opportunities, and flourish its environment. And as said,

not everybody thinks the same, and something that did not meet our assumptions of what a business should do is the discussion the company has about expanding.

We all thought that expanding to more materials is essential for a business to grow. Nevertheless, Ignacio gave us another view about the situation, and told us that expanding isn't always the best option. There are a lot of ways to improve profits, and sustainability, and being introduced to new markets isn't always the best option. Being able to work on this story with our team members was a fun experience because even though we were working on an assignment at the same time we were learning the different ways a company can help with sustainable goals. We learned that there isn't just one way we can help with these goals but different ways a company can do this. In the future, we will be able to use this story and talk about it with others so they know the different ways we can make a change and what challenges there are to run a company that will help these goals. So this means that there is never a correct answer or way, there are a lot of paths and opinions along the way. Not only inside a business but also while working as a group. This has flourished all of us while working together as businesspeople, or working partners. Each of us had different views and opinions that started from the first-minute meeting in which we had to choose a business, until the last one in which we had to decide the theme and colors of the poster or what opinions we had for the final reflection.

We have all agreed that what we have learned is to be more flexible, and more open-minded to listen and consider other people's opinions and proposals more. What we think is the best can't always be the best, so being open to other options or considering other ideas is the most powerful way to find inspiration, learn and create a successful project (university or working one). This is the clearest connection between the exercise and how we need to act in the close future to be more successful. The leaders of tomorrow have to listen, accept new ideas, and try to flourish them with others' help. That is why projects such as this one are so important, to acquiring these skills. Nevertheless, not everything is as nice as it seems, because obstacles arise all the time, and more with a cross-cultural team. The biggest challenge was getting along, getting to know each other, and finding time to meet all of us. A good job can't be done without a good working atmosphere or knowing how each person works. This is a process and it is impossible to begin having all achieved. But during this month, we have strengthened our relationship and that can be shown in our communication and work. In addition, every one of us has to have our vision



and criteria for the project, and not just assume what others say. What I mean by this is that everybody has to think, and be critical of what is done and said, so that learning is achieved.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

We all worked very well together as a team. We were able to understand the differences we had, like the time zone, and we set meetings based on the time we were all available. The first meeting we had was at 8 am (US), 3 pm (Spain), and 8 pm (Indonesia). The assignments were completed with the help of everyone, each of us did a part or shared ideas as to what we should do for the assignment. If one of us couldn't meet the day set, we would change it so that we can all be in the meeting, that way no one will miss information. On each assignment, we would each start on it before the due date and text each other that we completed something and to look over it to see if it looked good and if it didn't, they could change anything.

The first week's minutes were the most decisive because we had to choose the business on which the story was going to be based. Every teammate wanted their story to be selected, so each member had to prepare a presentation of the business including all the pros and cons, to try to select the business preferred. One of the skills that we have learned is to be able to develop a serious and safe previous work so that later, our business is chosen based on our solid arguments. In this way, we elaborated a convincing speech so that the other team members thought that our idea could be better than the rest. We believe that this is a very relevant skill when working in a group and for our future work (being persistent), to know how to make convincing speeches where our idea will always be the best because we have chosen what we think will be the best for our later work (in this case, the writing of the story). We never had a problem with one of the team members not helping or not showing up to the meeting times. We were always on time and very communicative about what we were going to do with each assignment. We were always communicating with each other about every change we made in the assignment as well as if we had questions, we would ask them. We would split the work on each assignment so that we would all do a part of it, and so that no one was left out. I feel like these strategies helped us a lot because we were never too stressed on the assignments because we all had help if we didn't understand something or if we wanted to add new ideas. We think that having the weekly minutes helped us a lot to upload every week the work we were doing and share it with our

teammates. In the end, the organization is key and all of us contributed to making this happen. Which made us enjoy and learn a lot more by not feeling stressed or anxious about the deliveries in this project.

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## CHAPTER 13

### A carbon wake up call

Written by: Torin, Daffa Abrari, Ana Fernández Urdiales, María Paz Esposito

#### Group Reflection

Humpier's focal point is to try to be as socially responsible and sustainable as possible while maintaining profitability. Since 2020, it has been a Carbon Neutral company. I learned they are able to do this by firstly, paying UN carbon credits to offset or avoid carbon emissions. Before learning about this company, I didn't know what Carbon Credits even were, not to mention what they do. Humpier uses these credits because in the world we live in right now, they cannot completely discard all of the CO2 emissions that they use, so to compensate, they pay for these credits which go towards bettering the planet and the environment. For example, we learned from the interview that the credits Humpier purchases go towards wind-powering turbines in South America, so that not only can more families have electricity to power their homes, but it is also clean energy that will help reduce pollution in these countries.

On top of paying for these UN carbon credits, another act that Humpier does with their company that I believe is very important is how they produce, make, and send out their products. Unlike most companies that ship worldwide and still use products such as Styrofoam and heavy plastics, Humpier uses 70% recycled materials for their packaging.

When deciding which company to pick for this project, I was a little nervous about picking a company out of the fashion industry, as they are known to not be very socially and environmentally responsible, though after learning more about Humpier, I was surprised by the methods they use to avoid being like these other companies. Trying to become as emission friendly as possible in the fashion industry is a huge step for their company and the whole industry, allowing Humpier access to take on a leadership role in their industry. Humpier has made it clear through their interview and their social media pages that they are aware of the very negative impacts of the fashion industry, as well they do not want to be another company in this industry that only focuses on profit and does not care if they have to destroy the whole world to

achieve it. I believe that because Humpier has put itself in this position before most of the companies in its industry, it will be able to profit from this too.

As seen in other industries, such as the automotive industry, the world is changing to become more environmentally friendly and socially responsible, and laws are even beginning to be placed around the globe to speed up the process of achieving these goals. Though, Humpier will not have to worry about laws being placed or changes happening in their industry because they have already made these changes and will benefit as some companies will not be able to keep up with these drastic, and often expensive transitions.

Furthermore, another positive aspect and concept I like about Humpier are how they express its brand. If you go to their website, you will see all the models doing ‘cool’ things, whether that is surfing, or hanging out outside. You will also see that usually right beside these ‘cool’ pictures, they are also explaining their company’s sustainability and even have quotes such as “Make conscious shopping the new cool” (Humpier, 2022). I like how they are trying to push sustainable living to be the new cool trend globally.

After informing myself more and more about Humpier and taking all of the ideas and innovations into consideration, I can honestly say I have a new view of the possibilities for entrepreneurs and businesses all around the globe. Though, some of these views are not as positive. Even in such a polluting and socially irresponsible industry like fashion, I have learned that it is not that companies cannot physically change to be more responsible, it is that they choose to not change, and this is a problem. Even if companies were able to make a change half as positively as Humpier, such as recyclable bags or eco-friendly products used in the products, I believe our world would be able to change and regain its well-being substantially. After a conversation with some of my group, we decided if we were to create a business in the fashion industry, we would go down the same path as Humpier. It just seems to be more economical, as well as sustainable. We believe that in such a competitive industry, we could stay afloat and compete with these other companies, as we would have many of the advantages that I have mentioned earlier.

### **Reflection, cross-cultural**

Our group, like I'm sure many groups, decided we would meet on zoom once a week. This strategy worked well for the first little while, as all we had to do as a group was our weekly minutes and talk about a few questions. Though, as the semester continued to fly by, we were faced with bigger assignments in both this project and other classes. This made it tougher to find the best time to meet and communicate with each other. By this week, our scheduling was much messier, as we would just pick random times to meet and hoped everyone was able to make it. Some weeks we would even have more meetings to make sure everyone was caught up with how we were going to split up our group work and accomplish our tasks. Like any group no matter the distance, there were a few hiccups due to miscommunication at times when work was due, and one of our group members was even absent very frequently from our meetings as well as put the effort in to help finish projects, but the rest of the team was able to manage and pick up the slack for that member. My group and I are very grateful we were able to do this project, not just to learn about a wonderful business like Humpier, but also to work on a project in a way we have never done before. Sure, doing the project with members of our own class would have made it easier, but we believe that we learned more about each other's cultures as we shared ideas and solutions on the task at hand and the problems we faced.

## CHAPTER 14

### Slow Fashion in A Fast World

Written by: Yuliana Camacho, Jorge Alasia, Adrian Soriano, Suci Nandita Putri, Cameron Whalen, Wibianzo Joaquel

#### Group Reflection

The story focuses on Akitania Society, a small business from Spain committed to producing leather boots in a completely artisanal and handcrafted process, with ethical sourcing of material and labor on a local scale. The production practices which the company employs strongly contrast the current trends found in the global fashion industry, as many companies both small and large currently employ a model known as “fast-fashion”. This model is primarily concerned with rapid production in order to capitalize on current trends of the fashion industry; it streamlines the entire production process in order to go from the design, to the factory, to the consumer, in as little time as possible. This model, in turn, has made the fashion industry become one of the most polluting and waste generating industries worldwide (being responsible for 4% of all greenhouse gasses emissions worldwide in the year 2018). This pollution comes not only from the dyes used and the microplastics generated by the textile production process, but also from the huge volume of clothing -typically produced very cheaply due to the outsourcing of labor to countries with more relaxed laws, and from the sourcing of poor quality raw materials from those same countries, and employment of synthetic fibers which are not biodegradable- which end up producing a huge amount of waste, going into landfills and charity shops and saturating not only the environment, but also the consumer experience.

Akitania’s vision couldn’t be further from fast fashion; the company talked very passionately about the current state of artisanal production and craftsmanship in Spain, and how they are very committed in delivering the customer with a very high quality, sustainable product at a competitive price. The innovators also mentioned some of the hardships and challenges which have arised from the business model -such as problems with finding and contacting factories that work at their desired modest production level- yet they still showed a lot of conviction and belief

regarding conducting business in a way which is true to them, and what they value in a product. This was very motivating for us, as it gave us an example of turning a passion into a business, and being resilient even when the current global economic climate may prove harsh.

The experience has connected to academic knowledge, as we have learned about the effects and current state of globalization, and how it affects business at different sizes and production scales. When interviewing the company, they mentioned their struggles with promotion and gaining recognition; our knowledge about the importance of implementing a precise and cohesive marketing strategy when trying to promote a product, was reinforced with real world accounts which showed that good products have to be backed by good strategies. On the other hand, the sustainable and ethical practices employed by the company relate with what we have learned regarding the importance of the stakeholder capitalism business model, where the interests of not only the shareholders are taken into account, but also different stakeholders such as customers, the environment, employees, and society at large. We were surprised by the story as previously we didn't know specifically how small the company was, but this was not discouraging; in fact it showed that it is possible to do great things with little people. It also showed that doing business takes a lot of work, as the people interviewed mentioned how they oversee each part of the production process in order to ensure the best quality, and how much work that must entail. Finally, it challenged the assumptions that businesses need to follow industry standards at all times, as the company's main innovation stems from the rejection of a massive, outsourced, cheap, and wasteful production process as seen in many brands of different sizes in the fashion industry, in favor of ethical, sustainable, handcrafted artisanal production.

Exploring the AIM2Flourish story will certainly shape the way we act and think from now on. It gave us an opportunity to have contact with a small business, and see how many of the things and abstract concepts that we are continually learning in class, are applied in a real-world setting. It showed us how current events -such as Covid-19 and the war between Russia and Ukraine- have real effects on small companies and may cause problems in different areas of the business, such as the supply chain -as the previously had trouble sourcing and transporting materials- and the demand from the customers due to the current inflation rate "...the war has brought problems regarding transportation; leather is getting more expensive, the wool used for lining is getting

more expensive, the Aurea model, the galvanized hooks they have are Italian and are getting incredibly more expensive. Everything has gone up so much you don't know to what extent people are willing to pay more". Even more so, the whole experience also showed us that it is important to find ways to circumvent and surpass the different challenges presented. Managing a business is about making choices; Akitania manages to do so without compromising brand integrity and vision.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

Looking back over the last five weeks, working together to complete our AIM2Flourish story, communication was crucial for the success of the story. It was extremely important for us to keep each other updated about weekly tasks and time changes for meetings. We had meetings between two dates depending on availability of our group members, Friday mornings as well as Saturday mornings. When there are six group members all in different parts of the world, it is very challenging to find a time where everyone is available. As we stated above, communication was very important for this reason. It was also very challenging trying to create connections with each other due to the fact we were split up between four different countries and in different time zones. Every week, our strategy was to meet together during our set meeting times and go over the task and at that point we would discuss the best method of approach for that task. We would go over what was required from us for that week and brainstorm ideas together until we found we had enough information and everyone was on board. After gathering ideas we would split the work up. Everyone was very flexible and worked together by reading over and editing each other's writeups to ensure we were producing the best quality work. We created an environment where every idea is a great idea and we would listen to the opinions of each group member.

Completing these tasks over the past five weeks was an experience none of us have had before. Although everyone was completing a group case like this for the first time, we were all supportive of each other. Even though we were spread across the globe in different countries, different cultures, different time-zones, everyone knew what was required of them and we all had faith in one another which was truly a unique experience for each and everyone of us.



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## CHAPTER 15

### The future of clean energy in Guelph

Written by: Carla Correa Curpián, Cut Azzahra Teuku Zuelkifara, Daniel Chaidez, Garrett Brown, Nur Rahmad, María del Puy Casado Echávarri

#### Group reflection

After a five-week exploration with teammates from different countries, we encountered some points of difference, pretty much exclusively in timing. Weekly basis, we had to optimize our different times and indeed a hectic schedule. The course has elevated our tolerance for the diversity that exists among different kinds of people. The course has further challenged us to be much more knowledgeable concerning businesses that have a significant impact on the world by incorporating the UN SDGs into our understanding of current business growth. The course greatly contributes to our comprehensive understanding of the incredible comparison purposes of one company that we've never noticed previously. The story inspires all of us to conduct business in a flourishing professional way, rather than just a profit-driven circumstance. A business with an impact on the surroundings is a fascinating and an amazed business.

Guelph Solar Company's innovation is truly astonishing to all of us. It motivates all of us to build a company that has the value of impact on the surrounding environment. The innovations brought by the Guelph Solar Company in terms of clean energy make many people aware of the importance of it for the sustainability of our world, and they jump on board. Clean energy is spreading in the Guelph Area and benefiting local residents right now. Guelph Solar Company's CEO is extremely passionate about the company's innovations. The workers there are also energetic and work hard to fulfill their responsibilities. "Yeah, we're developing and cleaning a clean energy economy. Steve is very passionate about it. Steve is very passionate about the clean energy economy. I don't know if you've looked him up at all, I don't know if you've researched him but he has also been involved in the green party, and so he's very passionate about clean energy. And the clean energy economy as are most of the people working at Guelph solar,

everyone is very passionate about green energy and creating a more sustainable future,” Michelle Gill said.

After we had concluded our interview with Michelle and compiled our work into one story, it was very interesting and insightful to see our group's key takeaways from this assignment as we were able to make many different connections to course content or just our general previous knowledge. One thing that Michelle harped on throughout the interview was how the company’s overall mission, leadership, and workplace environment all play crucial elements to talent recruitment and to the overall turnover rate of the company. As Michelle explained in the interview, she most likely would not have joined the company if it weren't for them being strong in these categories. This directly relates to course content as we learned that one of the benefits to being socially responsible include attracting more qualified personnel. Just like Michelle emphasized, company sustainability whether it is internal or external is driving factors in a potential employee’s decision to work at the company or not. While we had a brief understanding of the importance of sustainability in attracting new potential employees, we did not have a grasp of the sheer magnitude of it.

It was also interesting to hear about the Greener Homes grant which provides Canadian citizens with up to \$5000 towards retrofits costs on your house and other new regulations allowing customers to purchase and pay off the price of the solar panels and installation with no interest. This grant has provided Guelph Solar with an influx of new customers as there is a newfound incentive to be sustainable and use clean energy. This element was very eye opening to us from a business perspective as Michelle shared that prior to this grant being instituted; business was not nearly as profitable/successful. It shows us as a team that when an organization like Guelph Solar surrounds their business model with products such as solar panels that promote and improve social responsibility, they could receive that support from other companies or in this case the government as they see the value in your business.

The story itself was not surprising per say as our group had done a lot of extensive research prior to the interview but our group found it very insightful to hear about the background operations of a local business such as Guelph Solar. Even though Michelle was relatively new to the company, she had a lot of valuable information to share with us that opened our eyes to the reality and

benefits of working for a business centered on sustainability. From what Michelle told us, we did question some of our previous beliefs about what a business should focus on and how it should be run. It was very valuable to each member in the group as a whole as she explained the structure of the organization and how involved the CEO is in everyday activity and workplace life. She expressed how much this simple effort and passion by the CEO affects her and other employees' overall happiness and motivation while at work.

We gain new insights into the current state of the business after working together to complete the Aim2flourish story. We become more conscious of the true meaning of business that has a positive impact on the world. We combine our understanding of the theories we have and our experiences to create a vivid Aim2flourish story. It is very interesting for us to complete tasks, both weekly and greater tasks. This course has a significant impact on how we will act and think in the future. We are being more open to the emergence of a highly relevant business sector and thinking more rationally and innovatively about all of the opportunities for creating something new for the world. It inspires us to constantly improve ourselves. This activity made us more conscious of the necessity of acting flexibly in response to changing circumstances. We can learn a lot from the company representative's experiences that we interviewed her by learning more about the company in the story of Aim2flourish. The innovations they have, how they think ahead, how they find current challenges that can create opportunities for them, how their morale works, how they deal with and solve actual issues, as well as amazing teamwork, and so on. We gain tremendous experience from them. We can broaden our perspectives and ideas by observing their experiences without partaking in the company. Their experiences can provide immensely valuable learning opportunities. That is one of the most important things we learn in this course.

### **Reflection as cross-cultural team**

The success of each group largely depends on how effective communication between players takes place. Without effective communication among the members of a particular group, it is impossible to achieve our goals and unnecessary conflicts can arise. Group communication is one of the important lessons learned during group projects. Through this reflection, we want to talk about how we work as a team and how we handled and managed cross-cultural dynamics in

our meetings and interactions during the completion of this aim2flourish story project. In this project what we learned is the need to respect everyone's views even if they don't sound right based on what is already known. In addition, we also learned the importance of listening to each other. When more than one person is talking at the same time, the value of communication fades and everything becomes noisy. When people listen to each other, we can critically analyze why certain views are right or wrong at the same time. Mutual understanding was found to be the most important factor in ensuring teamwork in groups. In addition, For group work to be successful, members must interact with each other in a positive way. This implies that one should be able to relate to one another constructively through understanding and managing the personal and emotions of others. Most communication among group members is verbal, and one must ensure that the language used is formal and respectful.

Regarding challenges, of course there are some challenges that we face, especially the challenge of managing cross-cultural teams; such as different communication styles, different work styles, differences in motivational factors, differences in attitudes towards sharing information, and so on. We often get this challenge at the first group meeting. So what do we do to overcome this? Of course we've done some things to manage across cultures and when we did that proved successful. What we do is encourage open communication, be flexible because understanding the motivations and cultural priorities of team members allows us to be flexible and accommodate the differences of each team member, know each member of our team through sharing stories or whatever so we understand each other's personalities, then manage cross-cultural awareness such as greetings or communication styles, and finally overcome conflicts together. Doing so makes it easier for us to manage across cultures and build competitive and effective teams.

In conclusion, at the end of the project, what matters most is what we have learned from our group work experience. During the period of working together, situations arose and tested us on the scale of making decisions and handling pressure and it was there that our skills had to be trained on how to manage cross-cultural dynamics in our meetings and interactions during the completion of this report. Also teamwork is definitely one of the most important aspects of our project. We wouldn't have been able to achieve anything if we didn't work together. Even though the design process was broken up into several parts, we often consulted one another when having

difficulties with our work. As a result, we managed to achieve strong results and thereby enhancing our knowledge, competence and overall empowerment group.

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## CHAPTER 16

### Reducing the carbon footprint in the footwear industry

Written by: Napoleón Guzmán, Sergio López Ripoll, Ella Polgar, Quiroz, Corine Nicole, Alvaro Putra Ramadhan

#### Group Reflection

First of all, as people say, the most difficult thing to start a project is to begin. The first and maybe major problem was that we, as a team, didn't have any idea of what type of company we were going to choose to talk about. We made a deep dive in the AIM2Flourish web to see about what kind of companies were more likely to the requirements that AIM2Flourish looks for. We found out a common denominator on these companies: innovation and care with society. We found out that a story that is worth to write about was about a company that does things well, offers a goos product, brings new things to the industry and above all these aspects, to bring an added value to society. Because we have lots of companies that only care about making profit, so they just put their efforts on offer a product better than the one of their competition. And that's not bad, but we think that the good companies that differentiate from bad companies is because of that extra they offer to costumers and to society in general. In our team, we all had good options of companies that were aligned with this objective, but at the end we declined for the company, that since our point of view, was the one that best qualified to our two main factors for a good company that is worth to talk about: innovation and to give an added value to society, this company was INESCOP. INESCOP is an innovation and technology center established in 1971 as a private association. It works to provide technological services, and research on topics of general interest to the footwear sector. The mission of the company is to promote innovation in the footwear sector by offering solutions to meet the scientific and technical needs of companies.

Fortunately, we didn't have any trouble at the hour of contacting them to get the interview. So that second step (the first step was to choose the company), of getting the interview with a company's employee was achieved quite quickly. We had the interview with Vicente López Martín, who is the person in charge of computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing department, a job that follows very near erecting related with the innovation aspect that this company has. The interview was very clear and concrete, because before having the interview, we left very clear what we wanted to know about INESCOP: what the do as a business, why are them innovative and what is their contribution to society and how does gets related with the UN SDG goals, and Vicente (the interviwed), understood that since the first minute we met.

At the interview, as we said before, it was everything very clear and concrete about what we wanted to know of the company. The most interesting thing INESCOP has is their ambition for

sustainability. In the course of Economics and Society for Sustainable Environments (ESSE), a topic we have seen very deeply is sustainability. In ESSE, we saw that sustainability is “Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (Rodriguez, 2022). Briefly, in terms of what INESCOP does in sustainability subject, basically what they do is the definition of sustainability; INESCOP developed a software that locate the most polluting phases of the value chain of companies that belong to the footwear industry. In other words, they calculate the carbon footprint of every pair of shoes produced by their clients (footwear producers). And INESCOP is capable of detecting if there’s no need of producing a new pair of shoes until levels of CO2 are acceptable for the company and the market. With this information, we concluded that INESCOP is definitely a pioneer by this innovation side because a there’s no other company that does this. So they attacked a market niche, get profit, but they reinvest that profit to discover new innovations they can bring into the market, and in addition, they are offering a service that is a complete innovation and that contribute especially accomplishing a SDG goal, which is Climate Action, reducing the carbon footprint of footwear producers.

In the course of ESSE, we also had a class with PhD student María Eugenia Clouet (Clouet, M., 2022), which is specialized in terms of business sustainability, and we make now a lot of connections between what she said and what INESCOP is doing. They are very professional on what they do as business (investigation center to help footwear companies to improve their value chain reducing their carbon footprint), the service they offer is a very innovative alternative to be more eco-friendly and in addition their contribution to society accomplish several SDG goals such as 9. Industry innovation, and infrastructure, 13. Climate Action, and 12. Responsible Consumption and Production. So in general terms, we liked a lot the story we finally attained to write, because it is worth to be read and to discover how companies such INESCOP are doing a lot of good to the world in terms of innovation and sustainability. This affects ourselves in the way we now see businesses opportunities. We all agree in the team that the challenge now for entrepreneurs and to business men is to discover that product that needs the market but in addition, to contribute in some way to society. Maybe some times is better to stop gaining some euros but to contribute in some way to the problems we have nowadays in our communities, instead of wanting to get all the profit possible but not doing anything for society.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

First, it was a very unique and enriching experience to work in a project like AIM2Flourish, discovering companies that do a lot for our world. But mainly, we think this project serves us as training for the future when we will need to work with people all around the world. The fact of working with people from Indonesia, Canada, and Spain, and also having so many nationalities in the team, culturally, was very enriching knowing new people from other continents. But to be honests, it was a real challenge to agree in something, for example at the moment of choosing a



company for the story, or even to agree to meet at a determined day and hour, because we had all different time zones. But since the first meeting we all did the commitment to give it all for the team and to be committed and responsible for the project and to respect each others time, doing all tasks in time and form. Thanks to that commitment we attained to do all a great work and a great contribution from all in the team to get a great company's story for the AIM2Flourish. We all have the contact of each other in we think it can be useful in a future, you never know! But we conclude that we had a great team conformed of amazing people of different cultures and countries. And maybe we don't see it now, but for sure, this experience will be of help for the future at the hour of relating with people of other parts of the world. We really think this experience will make us better professionals to contribute to our future projects, to society, and to the entire world.

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## CHAPTER 17

### **Interconnection: The Breath of Impact of Insect Protein from Soil to Stomach**

Written by: Rivaldean Aldrich Adrien, Anayse Soto, Madeline Tesolin

#### **Introduction**

Completing the AIM2Flourish activity brought three people from different places together, to share our knowledge of business and sustainability, allowing us to analyze Biocycle. With early challenges like losing two group members, we struggled to stay on top of work and submitted late deliverables. However, we do collectively agree that Biocycle is a truly innovative business with a prominent ability to change agriculture for the better. As a group we worked hard to communicate clearly, dissolving cross-cultural barriers. Throughout this project we recognized how important data is to creating accountability and it being able to quantify sustainability. We also recognize the opportunity for Biocycle to improve the other businesses it collaborates with in different industries. Learning about Biocycle helped us create cases for better understanding of responsible management and sustainability. We were able to connect to the purpose of the business and its ability to enrich local agricultural practices and the lives of those respective communities. It helped us conceptualize how Responsible Management in a business can shine with a triple bottom line approach. It made us feel less cynical towards businesses that want to increase profit and yield, because Biocycle does it naturally and it wants to help other businesses in its industry. With that said, we are all inspired by this business and relate it back to class content as proof that good business can create profit and benefit the planet and its people.

#### **Group Reflection**

In our perspective, Biocycle made the right decision to think outside the box when developing this risk-free, low-impact larval innovation that creates the protein Cytokine in fertilizer, helping to preserve soil health and promoting sustainable development of high-quality food. On their website, they further emphasize this fact by claiming that their innovation has a zero waste benefit, saying that, “Without a chemical process, production waste can be processed into other high-quality products not impact to environment.”(Language barrier in translation).

This supports the production of high-quality food in the area and the achievement of SDG 2's agricultural output targets. Deciding to do this so early on in their business is a great indicator of their ability to contribute to SDG's. Because larvae are used as fertilizer and no chemical waste is created, Biocycle is able to raise productivity and production without any unfavorable effects by improving soil quality, which reduces climate change and improves the health of the ecosystems it is utilized for. Further, the larger they grow, the bigger the capacity they have for impact. Enabling them to collaborate with other agricultural producers to make external operations sustainable and soil-friendly. Since our group had a cynical perspective on how many business-made discoveries or products served a function but also depleted the world's resources, learning that the larvae was a type of fertilizer with no chemical waste within it piqued our interest greatly. Our group was pleasantly impressed by Biocycle since it demonstrated that this company was capable of achieving all that most of us think a business should be able of.

After doing the interview and learning more about the dried Black Soldier Fly larvae that may be used as feed, which are said to be one of the world's most useful sources of sustainable ingredients. The development of insects as a feed in a variety of industries, including aquaculture, agriculture and animal husbandry. The idea of helping the globe without endangering other regions of the earth initially piqued the interest of the group. In truth, Biocycle is a good illustration of a company that can make money while also helping the environment and its inhabitants. With the aid of this activity, I'll be more likely to consider options as a future businessperson that are both enhancing our world and fulfilling its purpose. There are technologies or items on the market that have dangerous elements or chemicals in them yet nonetheless serve a useful purpose, like other pesticides and fertilizers used in agricultural practices. Often, these harsh products are used to increase yield and produce more perfect produce at the cost of soil health. It is time to exercise greater caution when creating items that the general public consume, as it is now our responsibility as business owners to prevent harm to both our customers and the environment in which we live. It is the ability to integrate SDG's into Biocycles business model and innovation that allows it to thrive and be an example to others in its field.

Biocycle is a great example of many things learned in class, and we personally enjoyed finding out for ourselves that our academic knowledge has real life applications. In Guelph's

Management class, it was suggested that sustainability is achieved through collaboration, using game theory to exemplify how maro-sustainability works (Lozano, 2007). This relates back to our interview, where Mr. Tanaka voiced to us that he wants other businesses to come to him, he wants to collaborate and share! The willingness to expand, share and collaborate is a great indication of CSR, whether it is chemical free production techniques or larval production tips. Infact, the nature of his innovation has the capacity to be used in various ways and can encourage others to pursue more natural based fertilizers. Collaboration with other fertilizer and feed producers could further impact our water cycle, soil cycle and the quality of what is grown and consumed. Thus, Mr. Tanakas willingness to grow the industry itself and not just his own business, is indicative of a positive future and should be an example for business leaders everywhere. One thing we wished as a group was for Biocycle to consider their product for human consumption, this is a collaboration we think would be the key to increasing their impact globally. Biocycle further exhibits Responsible Management through the triple bottom line approach. It is the way Biocycle impacts the local community they reside in and the benefit of their innovation to other consumers that creates a virtuous cycle. Their intangible factors of social and environmental goods are important to SDG's as is their ability to profit and expand. In relation to coursework, "Although a positive correlation between CSR and corporate financial performance (CFP) is not always clear from the perspective of individual organizations; on an aggregate basis the relationship is positive and may be an indirect relationship based on intangible factors linked to social and environmental progresses." (Burga, 2022). This emphasizes the understanding of why responsible managers could focus on their intangibles and that impact, even if indirectly, could affect their profit. This affects how we think we will act in the future in a consumer perspective. It is dire that we are able to recognize sustainable businesses and social and environmental outputs of businesses we chose to support if we wish to keep fighting for a sustainable world. Businesses that create a virtuous cycle are likely not ones that you will be able to find in a mall, but are ones that contribute to the production of agriculture. This is one of many examples of how a business can create a virtuous cycle, but the emphasis on agriculture is key for feeding our growing population.

## **Teamwork Reflection**

As a team, we worked together by splitting up larger portions of work according to deadlines and who was most available throughout the schedule of deliverables. We often spoke early in the week about how to divide up work and what our availability and strengths were for the task at hand. What didn't work for us was leaving too large amounts of work for one person to do per deliverable. At different points in this project, we experienced the stress of not being able to get responses from our teammates while we were working on the project, often causing us to fall behind schedule without the other person's input. We combated this by creating and sharing google docs ahead of time. One person would outline the document and contribute their part while others could work on it when they could, allowing us to take direction from the lead, see the theme and end goal for the story. The strategies that worked well were prepping documents ahead of time and using the chat to communicate what changes we want to make rather than editing someone else's work. As a team, we all picked up each other's slack. Everytime a task was being started or completed, we corresponded with each other on Discord. Cross cultural dynamics included different communication styles with peers, sometimes we found it challenging to identify the tone and meaning of our teammates messages. We managed this dynamic by asking each other for clarification when needed; being transparent with each other's vision for outcomes of the project and our respective capacities for work loads. Considering our different academic and cultural backgrounds, we communicated to the best of our abilities.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is evident that despite group challenges, we all learned a lot from the AIM2Flourish activity. Clearly, with the implementation of SDG's into the foundations of a business framework and through collaboration, real changes can happen. Biocycle is sure to have a positive impact on the local agriculture industry. As young academics, it is important to be able to understand the difference between a company that greenwashes for profit and companies that practice responsible management and have good social and environmental outputs. We are able to identify clear links between class work and Biocycle, encouraging us to look at businesses in a more hopeful light. We hope that Biocycle grows and collaborates

with other industries and look forward to how their innovation will continue to impact the future of agriculture.

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## CHAPTER 18

### Hydrogen is the Path to Sustainable and Reliable Energy

Written by: Lucía Nievas Molina, Andrea Cavero, Luthfi Hawari, Katlyn Espino

#### Critical Reflection

For our Aim2Flourish story we focused on the company LIFTE H2, which is a company that started only a year and a half ago, created with the intention to find ways to grow within the hydrogen industry through sustainable innovations. While working on the story, we attempted to understand the reasons and motivations behind their innovation. Also we attempted to understand how the team behind this innovation was able to find innovative solutions with the help of technology in order to provide clean energy in a reliable and accessible way. While on the interview, we were surprised by the fact that such a small company was able to accomplish this in a short amount of time. We were also inspired by our interviewee, Richard Zhang's passion for this company along with its values and mission. The way in which he mentioned what inspired the founders of the company, as well as how he talked about the products and services provided as a part of something bigger and not just an economic transaction, was truly inspiring.

First of all, Richard enlightened us about the main inspiration for the innovation. In the interview he told us the story about how he, as well as his team, saw a big opportunity in the growing hydrogen industry. They did not hesitate to make a move and make an effort to find a solution to the complexity of the hydrogen market with the use of innovative technology. While all this is a positive aspect of their company and the values behind it, he also talked about some difficulties within it. For instance, he discussed how it is hard, especially for small companies, to know how to innovate and do it successfully, since innovations are hard to adapt to, especially because there is usually a limited amount of knowledge within them. However, from his point of view, they sell more than merely products or services that generate profit, but rather part of something that is part of a bigger ecosystem. This view is what drives the company to do what it does even when it seems difficult, especially since LIFTE H2 is a small start-up company. Overall, working on the

story with this company as well as having the interview with Richard, was truly an enriching experience. It not only taught us facts about the company and their innovation, but rather inspired us to be a part of something bigger as well and apply this in our future businesses.

Regarding our academic knowledge we believe it is important to mention the relation between our work and what we learned through our experience with the concept of sustainability seen in class. LIFTE H2 accomplishes the definition of sustainability, as it focuses on the Triple Bottom Line by taking into account the people it works with, its clients, and the planet as a whole. All of this, while finding a way to make profit and keep growing as a company. In this way, it takes into consideration future generations without compromising their future needs. Furthermore, our interviewee mentioned how the company does not solely focus on short-term gains, as the company's mission goes further than that, instead it looks to create a positive long-term impact both inside and outside the company. Being able to have such insights of the company enabled us to have a deeper understanding of what we learned in class, as it made us reflect on how they are applied in real life situations. Furthermore, we understood the daily challenges companies are faced with in order to successfully carry them out, as in practice they can be harder to accomplish than in theory.

Individuals abuse the use of fossil fuels in order to provide themselves with energy, however this is negatively impacting the environment. As a group, we are highly concerned about the damage and contamination that fossil fuels are producing, therefore society needs to make a change. The world needs to be informed about the current situation and therefore, as a result, cause businesses, households, etc. to change to other energy sources. Hydrogen-produced energy is a sustainable and accessible energy source that society can rely on. The adaptation of this change is challenging for society since much of the equipment, machinery, etc. used by businesses run on fossil fuels. However, if individuals start little by little, the change will eventually be accomplished. An important factor that we, as a group, are cautious of is the fact that there are many countries where people are not informed of humans abusing the use of fossil fuels. However, in order to let people all around the world be informed about this issue, all of the members within our group decided that sending knowledgeable individuals would be a step forward in trying to solve this issue. Informing through social media would be extremely



important as well, especially for people in developed countries. This expansion of information would result in more individuals being cautious about the pollution and harm that fossil fuels are causing. Furthermore, they would be informed about the different ways of using sustainable energy and how businesses can participate in this transition. As a result, society would start changing to sustainable ways of acquiring energy. After our group's analysis of the company we have come to the conclusion that hydrogen-produced energy is an energy source that is reliable, green, economically acceptable, etc.

As business individuals in the future, all of our group members will apply this sustainable idea to our lives. We need and want to be a part of this change in order to ameliorate our environment and implement hydrogen-produced energy in the business world. Since we are aware of the current situation, we want to positively impact our world.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

Our team worked successfully together and in an organized manner since we always communicated our problems regarding each task in the COIL assignments. We were able to deliver all of our work on time since we always prepared ourselves in the weekly meetings. However, since it is an international team, the most difficult part was organizing the weekly meetings due to the differences in the time zones. For instance, there was one time where our teammate, Luthfi, missed a meeting due to a misunderstanding regarding the time that was previously established. He was an hour late since he thought that the difference between US time and his time was different, however, we were able to solve the problem by reuniting again and briefly explaining to him what was discussed in the meeting. During our meetings via zoom, we didn't have many conversations regarding our personal lives in order to get to know each other more, which we think was a limitation in order to get to know each other. Instead, we only discussed topics related to our assignments and the reports. Overall, we are delighted to have participated in this amazing experience and be involved in such an international and global project. This work has allowed us to better understand the dynamics of working with people from different countries and cultures. Throughout this project, we were able to adapt to different times, cultures, and behaviors which will benefit us in the future especially if we want to work in

a multinational company or if we want to expand businesses internationally and globally. Our group has been very content with performing in this project and has had an amazing experience.

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## CHAPTER 19

### DESTINATION: A BETTER TOMORROW

Written by: Elise MacLachlan, Natalia Pérez Robres, María Arroyo Capdet, Prisilya raj Kaur, Jasmine Mariah Santos

#### **Group reflection**

This Aim2Flourish project induced us to explore how the theory we learn in class is put in action in real-life companies. We were lucky to be able to establish contact with a person of a company as significant as Accenture and participate in some way in their daily programs during these past months, since our interviewee Silvia Pérez Robres told us all about them (except for the confidential information) and showed us pictures of her office and workplace surroundings. Starting with general work-place ethics and ending with our in-class-studied SDGs, all of it was surprisingly fully integrated in our chosen company, Accenture. We learned that contrary to common belief, business ethics and Sustainability Development Goals are not an utopia, at least not in this company, Accenture. We are very excited about the increase in companies taking them seriously and incorporating sustainable and diversity policies, because they will be our future workplaces. We all hope to work in a place as Accenture.

Informal coworkers 'reunions and new incorporations' introductory programs are part of their workers' daily to-dos. Furthermore, a strong bond between the worker and the company is promoted, by establishing vertical and horizontal personal relationships and providing employees with personalized merchandising items. Of these items, they can add more to their collection by participating in "extracurricular" activities, such as joining the firm's volleyball team or dance-classes. In conclusion, there exists a true working area welfare. From seen Economics' subjects, these friendly while efficient practices relate to the learning materials of Economy and Society for a Sustainable Environment. Sadly, there was no other subject which taught us about working-life dynamics nor about how a business environment is supposed to be nowadays. As they say, nothing prepares you for the day you are put in the real world and have to make a living for yourself, so neither were we prepared to be among those real-world employees and interact

with them on a professional environment, even though the “only” thing dependent on it was our grade and not our needed income.

Even though we have not seen Human Resources theory at all, we learned about the SDGs. They were new for us and soon we became familiar with them and acknowledged their transcendental role in society. However, as we were starting to learn about the SDGs in class during the time our interview was conducted, and since we had no prior knowledge, we complemented class materials with several reports and online resources. Another reason why we chose Accenture is that they followed all SDGs and, as mentioned before, not in an illusive way, but in a material tangible way. Constantly, this firm is organizing events to give minorities visibility, to empower black businesspeople, to break the gender gap and to make all workers in general and individually part of their goal, sharing one same vision. Also, it counts with a mailbox where all individuals are welcome to put their complaints, recommendations or feelings. At the end of the week, they may sit together and openly talk about them. For a company that large, it seemed hard to believe at first when Silvia Pérez Robres was telling us about it, but then she explained that even though it might sometimes seem a “loss of time”, the gains a company experiences from satisfied employees are double the efforts to fulfill their needs. The belonging bond they reach is beyond measure and made us listeners almost envy the people working there! The project was in general innovative, not only because of the fact that we were supposed to explain one of these business’ innovations, but also because it pushed us out of our comfort zone: mathematical calculations and by-heart learned laws; it actually meant going out to the real world and contact a businessperson to see what we were calculating and memorizing for. They do not value how much you can learn by heart in a day but how you get along with people during a team project or how many tasks you can manage to undertake on your own while helping others. There is a very different dynamic to which only this Economy and Society for a Sustainable Environment project has partly prepared us for. At the beginning, we noticed a lack of knowledge about how to address professionals and how to conduct an interview according to the Socratic method: asking questions and obtaining answers which lead to more questions. Also, since we chose a technological engineering project (transformation of Metro de Madrid subway ventilation system), we were afraid we would not understand the concepts, but that is what the Socratic

method was implemented in the interview for. Thanks to it, the Metro de Madrid project was clear and straightforward for us.

It was challenging to recall that the ideas we had were going to be seen by the interviewee and the Aim2Flourish web users, so that we had to get all ideas correctly and in the same way as the interviewee. Although sadly we were not granted the publication rights. All in a nutshell, this was a before and an after in our academic lives. We now realize what we are up to and why we are here, connecting with four students from all around the world and striving to find a passing schedule for the whole team. These are real-life challenges.

### **Reflection on cross-cultural team**

As a team, we divided the work among everyone in the group. We expected everyone to do their part and come prepared to meet weekly. During our weekly meetings, we would collaborate on the deliverables. Working as a team has taught us many things. We learned time management skills, problem-solving skills, and how to be flexible and maintain teamwork. Specifically, Jasmine was in charge of sending the weekly minutes throughout the month together with a brief description of the video call, she also helped in the deliverables. Elise corrected orthography and grammar before submitting the assignments and proposed ideas for the deliverables. Natalia established contact with the businessperson and conducted the interview, wrote down the answers of the first assignment and together with Jasmine and Elise did this last assignment, she also did the Poster. María helped put the results in the Poster and she and Pricilya were in most video calls. Throughout the weeks of this experience, we learned working as a team and being flexible is a challenge. In the aspect, of everyone juggling their busy schedules in work, school, and personal life and considering the different time zones. It was quite challenging to find a consistent time that worked for everyone to work on the assignments and meet up with one another. Where our busy schedules prevented this experience to not go as smoothly as anticipated. Where we would experience small predicaments along the way. We all found it difficult to balance out everything to make this experience operate well. Where some were busier than others, and other priorities like other alignments, exams, and work got in the way. This may have caused some groups member to carry the workload more, while others, not so much. But

regardless, we worked around all the hiccups and mixups that might have occurred. This was truly a unique and interesting experience that instilled valuable lifelong skills onto us.

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## CHAPTER 20

### **Retrofitting for a Better Tomorrow**

Written by: Insanul Qisty Azzahara, Kevin Wullur, Laura, Luis, Emily Stacy, Idaly

#### **Group Reflection on Aim2Flourish Story**

Throughout our Aim2flourish journey we had the privilege of interviewing a large multinational automotive company. While interviewing the company our eyes were opened to “small” changes that can make such a large impact on our environment.

While interviewing Kent from Tenneco we learned about many sustainability initiatives the company is doing, though we could not choose all of them we selected the two that were implemented in the majority of their locations not only in North America but globally. The two innovations we chose to focus on were; LED light retrofitting as well as variable drive motor air compressors. Though we had no prior knowledge in air compressors and LED lighting we were able to learn a lot through our additional research. We were aware of the benefits of LED lights, however we didn't know that they could be so beneficial to the environment. Facts like their durability/ longevity in comparison to other sources of light or their economic benefits were things that we hadn't even heard of, and it made us reconsider our regular use of light.

The initiative that surprised us the most was the variable frequency air compressors. Though this innovation was the most challenging; mainly because most of us had never even heard of air compressors. We were able to supplement our knowledge by doing additional outside research to truly understand the role air compressors play in reducing energy use. Moreover, when comparing Tenneco to other automotive companies, it turns out most of them still run their air compressors at 110 psi. This surprised us as it was the moment we realized how big of an impact running the air compressors at a lower psi would have on our environment. This made us think about the bigger picture and how knowledge sharing between automotive companies could be implemented in many other facilities allowing for a larger overall energy reduction. We realized that profitability isn't always a business's main goal and while using a triple bottom line approach businesses can also positively impact the people and our planet. The work involved behind lowering the psi to 90 from 110 in almost every facility that Tenneco owns shows

commitment; commitment that goes beyond economic profits. Tenneco indeed used a triple bottom line approach to sustainability, meaning they considered all three aspects in the process of implementing the innovation the; plant, people and profit were all considered to ensure the innovation would be sustainable and able to last.

This links back to a term that us, future economists, have heard multiple times: profit. We live in an era today where not only profit, but economic profit is our main motivation, and margins are all investors talk about. But we believe profit can have a different meaning. As we have grown up the way we look at businesses has also shifted, from not only looking at numbers but also starting to look at the impact businesses are having. Climate change and global warming are some of society's greatest challenges; therefore, profit shouldn't be based on numbers, sales or earnings, it should be about working together so that we can all profit from sustainable and environmentally-driven actions. Only if we work together will we all profit from the things our planet has to offer.

Many times, we tend to view businesses as these big enterprises that will damage the environment and will only look for their own profitability and good. However, it is because of this reason that businesses have so much power when implementing policies that will help pursue our 2030 target. Since they have so much power to do damage, they can use that power to do good. On our first meeting, we brainstormed about how businesses could potentially help implement the UN SDGs, but none of us really understood what that entailed. For example, in order to make sure that the company is actually doing something, it is very important to align the business's long term goals with the SDG they want to target, just like Tenneco did. Moreover, Tenneco released reports where they reported on the progress that had been made so far. It is through consistency that both enterprises and governments can reach their objectives, and this is probably the most important factor that will help ensure a successful implementation of the 2030 agenda.

We think this concept also has a strong connection with globalization. In a way, Tenneco has made it possible to implement useful strategies that have managed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and electricity use. The good thing about globalization is that companies and national governments can collaborate to reach a common interest. In fact, globalization has been considered a potential solution to climate change. Globalization accelerates the diffusion of



climate-friendly technologies, and therefore increases climate change awareness all around the world ([KBC, 2019](#)). We thought it was interesting that globalization is not only about cross-border fashion trends.

We all agree that AIM2Flourish has been an amazing opportunity for us to collaborate with people from different backgrounds towards one goal. It has not only shown us that it is necessary to be environmentally and socially responsible, but it has also shown us that it is possible to work with people from all over the world thanks to the technology we have today. The AIM2Flourish story allowed us to hear the story of a very large company that is conscious of the importance of climate actions. Businesses should always look for profit, but we've learned that sometimes, that's not their only priority. It is possible to make an impact on society while still being profitable - implementation of LED lights, for instance -, which reinforces the role businesses play in successfully implementing the 2030 agenda. This experience highlighted that clean energy is extremely relevant in terms of sustainable growth. Moreover, the larger the company, the greater the responsibility, as they have the power to make a bigger impact on the environment.

### **Reflection on Teamwork and Collaboration**

Our team worked well together because we were aware of our responsibilities and we trusted each other. Everyone was excited about the project and enjoyed it every step of the way. We conducted an average of 2 meetings per week, sometimes a third one, because we wanted to make sure that we were all on the same page. The first meeting used to be at the beginning of the week and we would go over the things that we had already covered during the weekend. We would see where we'd be at and then would act accordingly. Towards the end of the week we would meet again to finalize that week's tasks and plan the following week. Although we did spend many hours on calls, it was extremely helpful because communication was a lot more direct. We didn't have to rely on emails or text messages that could not be read. We could simply say it in the moment and get it done in 10 minutes.

The main challenge that we faced was time differences. We all learned that given the situation, sometimes we had to make an extra effort so that we could have the calls, or maybe some of us had to wake up earlier, or go to bed later. In the end, it wasn't just one person working, it was all

of us, which meant that one person's work affected the whole team. In addition, when we were choosing the company we had a couple of incidents, mainly because we didn't hear back from the two main companies that we were considering. We were forced to think fast and choose the safest option, Tenneco. Those few days where the situation was completely out of our control were very stressful, but the best plan C (plan B didn't get back to us either) was to act fast and move on to a different company (we're all glad we did).

We struggled to correct the first deliverable because we sort of left it to the last minute, and that was stressful to say the least. We learned from that and decided to work on deliverables 2 and 3 in advance. We made a rough draft of the poster and then made changes throughout the week so that it was done and dusted before the deadline. That also gave room to a lot of discussions regarding possible changes and the best way to convey our message.

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## CHAPTER 21

### **Making Cleaning Products Clean**

Written by: Laras Dwi Putri Arianti, Leslie Ramirez, Paulo Gómez, Rafael Piccolo, Hailee Hoffman

#### **Group Reflection on the AIM2Flourish story**

Well, first of all, it all started when we began to investigate and we came to the conclusion that the business model of sustainable cleaning products is very interesting and, in turn, has a lot of potential to grow in the market. After being able to get an interview with the founder of the WeTKare brand, whose cleaning products are sustainable, we were able to have a good conversation with Javier, the CEO, and we found the information he offered us about his brand very interesting, as well as his attitude, which was very attentive and encouraging about the questions we asked, providing very complete answers and also demonstrating how much he cares about the world that we are leaving now. On our part, we believe that the interview and all the external information we obtained about WeTKare met our expectations and we enriched ourselves with knowledge about a market in which little by little it is growing more in importance. We also came to the conclusion that we need to start trying to do our part to generate a change in the way of thinking that our society has and likewise improve the resources we use to live in a better place.

About the knowledge that was gained from this project, academically speaking there were many things that we started to understand a lot better from varying aspects of our different education. Specifically, we can start with the SDG's which were something relatively new to all of us as we didn't know that the majority of the firms today base their visions on sustainable development goals. Furthermore, we gained a better view of the triple-bottom line as WeTKare is a profitable company that mainly cares for the planet but also for their people as their products are not chemically dangerous for the people. Finally, we learned how a green economic firm typically works as a green economy is an economy that aims to reduce environmental risks and ecological deprivations. Green firms allow for green economies which aim towards sustainable development without degrading the environment. It can be closely related to ecological

economics, but actually it has a more politically applied approach. Something that was gained from this project is that there are many actions we can take to reduce climate change. Before this project, we didn't know what SDGs truly were and how each one of them focus on different actions people can take. After learning more about them, we each realized that speaking about the actions we can do to reduce climate change isn't going to help and doesn't mean we care about them unless we actively search out how to solve these problems. In order to solve the challenges, we also need to be self motivated. We could tackle many difficulties countries are facing if we set a goal and act collaboratively. Indeed, it changed our ways of thinking in many ways as some of us personally learned that nowadays we are living in a world that is suffering from our actions and that climate change in fact is a serious topic that we should be focusing on from now on. The latest predictions confirm that the sustained increase in global temperature will continue. For each year between 2022 and 2026, the average annual temperature is projected to be between 1.1°C and 1.7°C higher than pre-industrial levels, which correspond to the average for the period 1850-1900. Making a difference is something that must be prioritized, whether your firm is technologically oriented or something else trying to fulfill the majority of the SDG's listed. We don't necessarily need to focus on the environment, each of us individually can start to focus on other SDGs that can be more related to social aims and other challenges that resonate with us. If each and everyone of us works towards a goal we are passionate about solving, then slowly but surely, we can begin to change the world for the better.

This project made us all see that we should take more accountability to the actions that we constantly do that worsens climate change. After working on our story, it reinforced the idea that we can do much more to help the world to be better. Although many actions can be taken to lower climate change, it takes time to do, and we need all the support we can get. This project also made us realize that there are businesses out there who want to be a force of good and want to promote a global good. In many ways, the corporate world and business in general tends to get a bad rap due to the belief that money and profits are the driving force for businesses to exist and succeed. However, this project has demonstrated to us that though that may be the case for some companies, there are many companies out there that want to and are being a force for good and actively helping the world in areas that need to be better.

Reflection on work as a distributed, cross-cultural team:

(Paulo)

Well first of all it was kind of challenging to start with, as we were living in different places all across the world and had some issues as there are different time zones and having to work with different things apart from the Aim2Flourish story. However, by the time we were starting to work in our Aim2Flourish, it was getting easier to communicate and work remotely as everyone was putting some effort on each of the tasks that were given to us. We would say that it was challenging but at the same time a very positive experience as we could work out through some of our cross-cultural dynamics, understanding that no matter the circumstances, working remotely can be as efficient as working presently with each other. Even though we managed to develop a great project, sometimes we were having troubles to be on the meetings as everyone were dealing with different situations like having classes at that hour or being asleep as the time zones were different.

(Leslie)

I think it was challenging and a good experience. It was a good experience because we were all able to incorporate our own ideas and develop them once shared with the whole group. We decided what would be the best for our Aim2Flourish story and who would do what part. The challenging thing was trying to meet up with each other since we are all from different time zones and we all had different obligations to handle. However, we would fill in the other group members who couldn't make it to the meeting and give them a little recap of what we would need to be done by the end of the week.

(Hailee)

During this collaborative international assignment, I learned about real challenges that people who work in a global setting need to tackle on a regular basis. The main challenge that I believe our entire group faced was the major time zone differences. I believe I can speak for my entire team when I say that it was difficult to meet with all of us present. There were many conflicts when trying to meet over zoom to thoroughly talk things out. Many of us had something else going on or were not even awake to meet. It was an invaluable experience because it allowed us to figure out ways to communicate and exchange ideas and information asynchronously, while still maintaining a good pace in regard to the project and deadlines.

## CHAPTER 22

### The Incinerators Solving Indonesia's Waste Problem

Written by: Alyna Bonilla Alvarez, Nike Franciska, Felipe Kopper, Alif Merchant, Aidan Timothy O'Shea, Prawira Rahmananda

#### Critical Reflection

Nearly all of Indonesia's regions are struggling with a serious garbage problem. The majority of city and district governments are uncertain about how to approach this problem. The lack of waste processing and disposal facilities, sustainable technology, and a lack of "care" from various parties to manage waste are some of the complex issues that may contribute to these conditions as well as the attitudes and behavior of individuals who are not used to handling waste effectively. Technology that can greatly eliminate waste is vital in the current waste crisis to prevent more garbage piles from appearing around the country. Thermal annihilation or incinerator is the most suitable technology for this case. PT Bumi Resik came up with an answer for this problem by designing and creating a steam-fueled incinerator that is far more effective than other incinerators. The machine is fitted with a drying system (rotary dryer) and air pollution control that meets international standards, making it naturally environmentally friendly. They call this technology, the "Hydrodrive Waste Destroyer" We chose PT Bumi Resik as our Aim2Flourish flourishing business because we believe our client can make a significant difference for the environment and bring new innovations to the industry. From the interview with the CEO and the Founder of PT Bumi Resik, Mr. Mr. Djaka Winarso, we can tell that the company cares about the environment and is eager to make their innovation beneficial for thenation and the regions. Employees of the organization are no stranger to SDGs, and are eager to achieve SDG goals 1, 3, 7, 9, and 13.

Profit maximization and wealth accumulation are some of the leading causes that have created multiple imbalances in our societies. Those include social, economic, and environmental imbalances. According to the US Census Bureau, Indonesia ranks as the fourth most populous country in the world, and with the world population reaching the 8 billion mark, its growth and individual human behaviors in the past decade have led our resource-limited planet to run out of

resources (Rees, 2002). The idea of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which emerged in the late '90s, plays a critical role in many organizations' day-to-day activities. Instead of focusing on what social responsibilities firms have, companies are putting more effort into creating value for society and stakeholders including our client, PT Bumi Resik. Stakeholders determine to what extent an organization is useful and have the power to decide whether the firm continues to exist (Burga, 2022) and sustainable management decisions made by our client are very likely to attract internal as well as external stakeholders (Chatterji, 2009).

According to Dr. Lozano (2007), acting in self-interest is in no one's best and that collaboration between companies and other silent actors, such as future generations and the environment, leads to achieving better outcomes. PT Bumi Resik is doing exactly that by partnering with local governments to install new incinerators across the country, it's hiring scavengers to work in their incinerator plant, and finally, working with the environment to prevent future impacts from waste landfills. Our client's decisions don't act as independent solutions, but they are, in fact, linked to other decisions and future strategies.

We were also very impressed to know that our client knew about UN global SDGs and was aware of which ones they were helping solve. SDGs provide a standard way for stakeholders to navigate an organization's responsibility towards the environment and can be used as nudging instruments to encourage responsible management (Burga, 2022). We were excited to know that PT Bumi Resik has, since its launch back in 2014, used SDGs to improve its relationship with internal stakeholders, such as company employees, and invested in activities that improve intangibles. Our client has created intangibles by researching better ways to dispose of non recyclable garbage, building technologies that facilitate innovation, and creating a positive reputation towards its stakeholders. These intangibles improve Corporate Financial Performance (CFP), giving rise to a "virtuous cycle" (Waddock and Graves, 1997) in which the profits are reinvested in CSR, creating more intangibles.

This group project was, for most of us, a new experience and put us in a situation that was out of the ordinary. It also made us realize that despite all the differences and cultural boundaries, we

are all very close and connected to each other now more than ever with the help of the internet, social media applications, and virtual meeting platforms. Our team was able to tackle different obstacles through communication and collaboration, just as they would working with local groups. During our meetings, the arguments and ideas brought forward by each of us generally matched and complemented one another, proving the positive impact of globalization in raising awareness of our impact on our planet.

### **Reflection on Cross-cultural team**

The way we worked as a team was crucial to the project's success. The strategy required each of us to do our best to attend every meeting despite the difference in time zones. We encouraged one another to be active during these meetings, meaning that each member would pitch in ideas and collaborate together to make the session more productive. Lastly, after the meeting was done, each member would be responsible for carrying out the part they were assigned to do before each deliverable deadline. Following this plan, our team was able to turn in everything on time, and besides made the experience more enjoyable.

Although this strategy was detailed and well planned out, sometimes things didn't go as planned and there were changes that needed to be made. For example, scheduling issues or lack of communication from members. However, we could solve these issues as a team by talking it out and finding a meeting time everyone could attend, or if a member had internet troubles for a video call we would chat via WhatsApp to inform the member of what he/she missed. There was also a case where one member might have had a few mistakes with the part they had to work on. One such issue was grammar mistakes. However, this was easily solved through communication and teamwork. Where other members would be able to pitch in feedback and help the others in improving their work. Therefore, each member could rely on the other for help if they needed it. This experience has been none like the others projects we have done throughout our academic career. The way in which we were able to manage to work as a team, be together in meetings, lead us to create a wonderful project, and bond with people across the globe despite our different cultures. We think this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and we will choose it again if we ever get the chance. Although there were times that we thought of doing other activities, instead of



being in the meeting, each of us remembered that we are part of a group, and if we want to make this project as good as we can, each of us opened up space for the weekly meeting. Now that we are at the end we look back over these past few weeks, full of memories that wouldn't happen if it wasn't for the Aim2flourish program.

One cross-cultural issue that stands out from the rest is that the interview made by our group member Praw was conducted in Indonesian, making it complicated for the rest of the group members to read the answers from Bumi Resik. This issue was quickly solved by our group member Nike. During the completion of this report, another cross-cultural issue had to do with the time zones and schedules. None of us could find a time when every group member was available, so we decided to discuss the questions and answers for delivery three throughout the week via Whatsapp.

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