

# Chapter 5

## Case Studies: Sustainability in Higher Education in the Global South

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### ABSTRACT

*With the world facing urgent environmental and social challenges, sustainability has become a key concentration across higher education. This chapter describes the shifting sustainability landscape internationally among institutions of higher education in the Global South, including universities that are adopting sustainability. It considers the means through which sustainability has been incorporated into curricula, research and governance structures in examples from West Africa, South Asia and Latin America, and the significance of community engagement. It demonstrates how these efforts contribute to social equity, environmental justice, economic development and resilience in communities. Furthermore, demonstrates technology's role in facilitating knowledge sharing and learning for application in sustainability concepts. Facilitating decolonial and inclusive sustainability pedagogy, the chapter seeks to inspire institutions of learning to develop educational offerings that reflect the many realities of the Global South to make an impact on the attainment of the SDGs.*

### INTRODUCTION

With the world confronting urgent environmental challenges and social injustices, sustainability has emerged as a hot topic for higher education, most notably in the Global South. Universities in these places have a special chance to contribute

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to sustainable development by incorporating environmental, social and economic aspects into their teaching and research and campuses. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide HEIs with a framework to support innovative approaches to local and global sustainability challenges (Ruíz-Mallén & Heras, 2020; Jing et al., 2022).

Various cases in this chapter illustrate how different institutions in the Global South are incorporating sustainability in their operations regarding the SDGs. In considering alternative models and strategies, the chapter attempts to discern lines of convergence and divergence in the way higher education becomes connected with sustainability. Comprehending how other institutions work to develop the culture of sustainability amongst students, staff, and society is an integral part of the research (Konst & Friman, 2021; Molokova, 2021).

Sustainability in higher education has repercussions institutionally since it encourages students to enter a process of generating more sustainable futures. The increasing number of programs with a focus on teaching (or learning) sustainability is indicative of a budding appreciation for the interconnectedness of ecological, social, and economic concerns. These curricula promote critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration to address complex sustainability problems that are further complicated in numerous instances in the developing world (Amador et al., 2015; Hamón et al., 2020).

Moreover, because HEIs are developing their practices in sustainability, they often have certain difficulties within their regional context, a lack of resources and institutional readiness (Wiek et al., 2011; Hamón et al., 2020; Lozano et al., 2015). Understanding these complexities is key to having norms that can be used elsewhere. Within this chapter, the case studies showcased offer insights into how different institutions are addressing these challenges as they aim to contribute to sustainability.

This chapter is fundamentally about doing more than showcasing best practice in sustainable higher education; it is about feeding into a conversation about the emerging contribution that institutions might make to the international movement for sustainability, in an environment of pronounced social and economic inequality. By measuring where they are succeeding in identifying areas for improvement, we can illuminate a trajectory that represents a truly cohesive integration, in the form of a leading model, of sustainability across higher education, to act as a beacon for change in society (Ruíz-Mallén & Heras, 2020; Jing et al., 2022; Pandowo et al., 2021).

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