



# SDG 18

# Spirituality Values and Culture

for Humanising Sustainable Development  
A Future Worldview

*Edited by*

Abdelaziz Berghout | Khaliq Ahmad



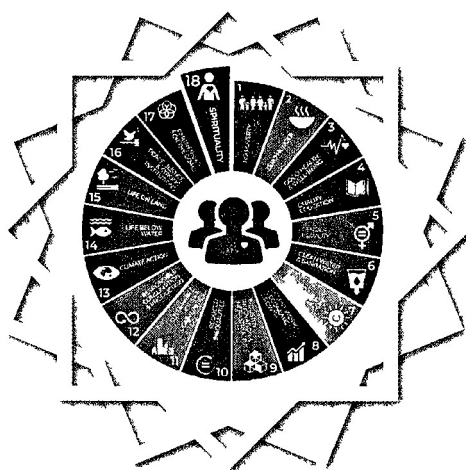
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The SDG18 can be an impetus for a new rejuvenated model of sustainable development capable of re-setting the SDGs agenda from power and material centered to values and ethics driven. Only in this way we can chart the new way forward where the human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

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

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

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

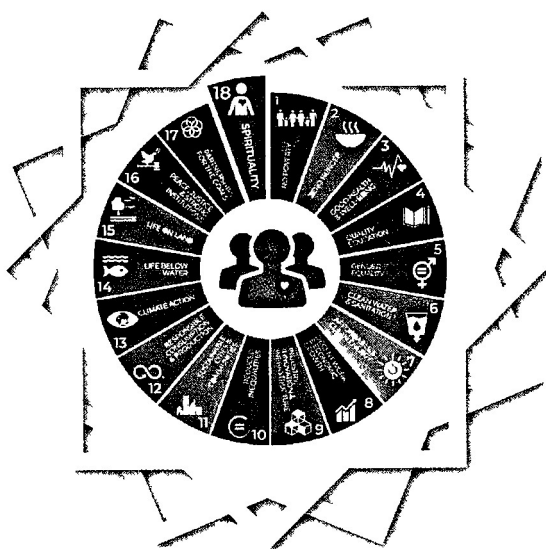


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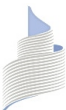
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# Abbreviations

- 4IR - Fourth Industrial Revolution
- 5Ps - People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership
- AEI - Asia-Europe Institute
- CE - Circular Economy
- CI - Cultural Intelligence
- EDR - Estimated Decomposition Rates
- ESCAP - Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- ESG - Environment, Social and Governance
- EU - European Union
- FPK - Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan (National Philosophy of Education)
- FWAAS - Fellow World Academy of Art and Science
- FWAIM - Fellow World Academy of Islamic Management
- GCC - Gulf Cooperation Council
- GIES - Global Islamic Economy Summit
- GNP - Gross National Product
- GNHI - Gross National Happiness Index
- HEGP - Higher Education Governance & Policy
- III&CE - Internationalisation, Integration, Islamisation & Comprehensive Excellence
- IUM - International Islamic University Malaysia
- ISTAC - International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation
- ISESCO - Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
- KPM - Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (Ministry of Education, Malaysia)
- LE - Linear Economy
- MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
- MoI - Means of Implementation
- OIC - Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
- OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- QHM - Quadruple Helix Model
- SD - Sustainable Development
- SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals



**SEL - Social and Emotional Learning**

**SPICES - Spiritual, Physiological, Intellectual, Cognitive, Emotional  
& Societal**

**THM - Triple Helix Model**

**UKIFC - The Islamic Finance Council UK**

**UN - United Nations**

**UNCBD - United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity**

**UNCCD - United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification**

**UNCHD - United Nation Conference on Human Development**

**UNDP - United Nations Development Plan**

**UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural  
Organisation**

**UNFCCC - United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change**

**WSSD - World Summit on Sustainable Development**

**WISER - Worldwide, Inclusive, Sustainable, Equitable, *Rahmatan lil  
`ālamīn***

# Preface

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DZULKIFLI ABDUL RAZAK,  
PROF. EMERITUS TAN SRI DATO'



# Acknowledgment

This book focuses on spirituality for sustainability agenda from the *Maqasid* perspective, a missing link from modern-day organisations, including the UN agenda of SDGs. Earlier on, the importance of IQ was overemphasised. In contrast, emotional intelligence (EQ) is currently said to be a better predictor of organisational performance, thus leading to organisational sustainability through institutional loyalty. Sustainable growth and development, as agreed upon by the United Nations Agenda 2030 for ensuring the future of millennials as prior to the SDGs, it was MDG (millennials Development goals), will only be possible with inculcating values inscribed by major organised faiths globally. Therefore, spirituality and its pursuit by adherents of faiths will be crucial to strive for a sustainable environment, respect for the scarce and naturally bestowed resources, avoiding wastage, and respecting the rights of others, especially future generations, to achieve not only gross national product (GNP) as an index of growth but also gross national happiness index (GNH) that will matter the most for our next generation.

It is unbecoming for corporate organisations to ignore the importance of spirituality as a corporate imperative required of today's CEOs, Presidents, Directors, and Board Members, as well as the community per se. As we live in the changeover period, shifting from the ancient meaning of work as subsistence to the new meaning of work as a livelihood, novel management methods and new organisational systems are necessary to keep up with this emergent context. Spirituality in the workplace expects human beings to seek nourishment for both the extents, i.e., their vertical relationship with God and horizontal with fellow human beings, as well as the diagonal ecosystem.

This encompasses the scope and extent of their spirituality at work. It is about people and organisations perceiving work as a spiritual sojourn, a chance to cultivate and do something with compassion for the entire humanity. It is all about care, empathy, and sustenance of others, about truthfulness and being truthful to oneself and others, endeavouring to live their values more effusively while performing their work more effectively. The present book entitled "SDG 18 - Spirituality, Values and Culture for

Humanising Sustainable Development: A Future Worldview’ stresses spirituality’s impact in addressing frameworks, policies, strategies, plans, activities and performance issues in a sustainable and value driven way. The book concludes that for any sustainable development activities to run effectively and efficiently, spirituality is the core to attaining happiness, contentment, and success simultaneously.

This book is edited, and experts from an Islamic spirituality perspective write the different chapters. To us, it is an effort in the right direction to link sustainability with spirituality.

Congratulations to all the chapter contributors, Prof. Emeritus Tan Sri Dato’ Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, IIUM Rector, Prof. Dr. Abdelaziz Berghout, Prof. Dr. Khaliq Ahmad, Prof. Dr. Jasser Ouda, late Prof. Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan and Dr. Nur Jannah, Prof. Dr. Odeh Al-Jayyousi, Prof. Dr. Zainal Abidin and Idayu Mumtaz Iskandar, Dr Mohammad Ismath Ramzy, Datuk Prof. Dr. Azizan binti Baharuddin, Prof. Dr. Suhaimi Mhd Sarif and Yusof Ismail, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dzuljastri Abdul Razak and Md Siddique E Azam.

We thank all of them for their contribution and wish them grand success in their academic endeavour to realise a better and more equitable world order as a mercy to all, as this has been encapsulated in the IIUM song. We hope policymakers, academics, and students, including management practitioners entrusted to govern, will find this ISTAC - IIUM Publications, a handy companion in bringing back the soul to Sustainable Development Goals achievements by 2030 meaningful.

We thank the academic and administrative staff of IIUM in general and ISTAC in particular for their help and support in this publication. Not to forget the Graduate Research Assistant, the language editor, and others who have been patient in working on this project during the preparation of the draft of the manuscript till the end. We also appreciate our friends, well-wishers, and family members’ encouragement. Finally, our gratitude goes to Almighty Allah (SWT) for everything Who has alone blessed us with life and liveliness.

The editors believe this book will likely benefit various people, such as students and the academic community alike, including professionals and practitioners. This book could be used as a reference book and research material that depicts the fundamentals of Islamic faith and

knowledge for the rise and fall of future civilisations. Graduate Students will explore and understand their knowledge of sustainability as a subject matter in Islam and *Maqasid Shari'ah* to apply the same in the emerging world order and the broader global perspectives.

Editors



# Introduction

## The Book in Perspective

Abdelaziz Berghout and Khaliq Ahmad  
International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)  
International Islamic University Malaysia

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### Background

These days, global warming, climate changes, rising sea levels, and natural disasters enjoin the message from al-Qur'an that reminds humanity, '*whatever happens on the earth and sea are creations of our own hands*'. Scientists agree that the primary cause of global warming is the combustion of fossil fuels, which emits carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), and other poisonous particles into the environment (European Environment Agency, 2021). CO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> combined to form GHG, one of the primary causes of global warming (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2022). Since the world entered the industrial era, the primary causes of global warming can be divided into two primary sources: production and waste, both of which are involved in the supply chain.

Logistics services lie significantly in the supply chain. Recently, the logistics sector has been at the central of societal and environmental discussions due to massive environmental pollution, social misconduct, and raising awareness to become 'lean and green,' especially for logistics transportation, storage, and packaging, which involve the usage of energy and non-renewable materials to operate, hence demand an alternative economic activities model. This necessitated discussing switching the economic model from a linear to a 'circular economy'. The former economic model, however, involves logistics services that have many unsustainable processes that must be addressed immediately in order to improve sustainability. Concerning logistics, one of the most

pressing issues that humanity will face in the coming years is lowering GHG emissions and reducing ecological footprint. Demand for energy and power is increasing daily for transportation and electricity, both for logistics and public use. However, this introductory chapter focuses on the concerns of unchecked human economic activities destroying the ecological balance due to the exploitation of natural habitats and developing a human-friendly logistics sector, which includes modes of logistics transportation such as road, sea, air, and railway, as well as storage and polythene-based packaging system which gets generations time for decomposition. These logistics services are primarily responsible for high GHG emissions and landfill pollution. Therefore, there is an urgent need to move away from the existing to the spiritually charged and Islamically proven ecosystem of ESG. The figure below highlights the phenomenon and suggests an Islamic and spiritually loaded economic system.

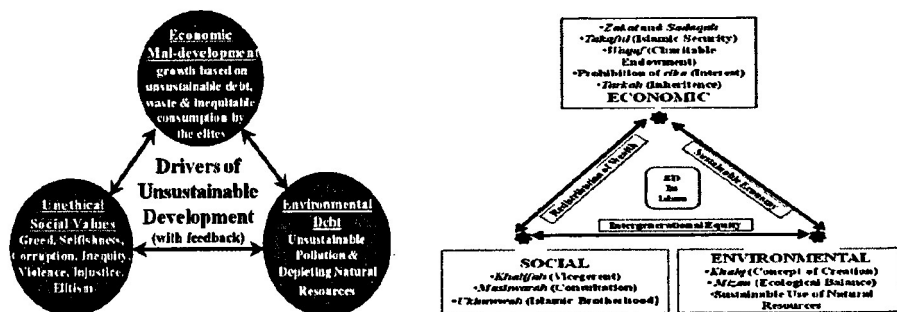


Figure 1: Shift from Unsustainable to Spiritual and Sustainable System

Source: <https://www.maricopa.edu/about/sustainability>

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development notes that a circular economy has been identified as a significant commercial opportunity worth up to USD 4.5 trillion that could encourage the development of new industries, generate jobs, reduce GHG emissions, and enhance natural resource efficiency. In recent years, the industrial sector has embraced the advancement of a circular economy. The circular economy is now necessary to promote SDGs, which is a promising concept for achieving SDGs. Developing a sustainable society requires

paradigm breaks to shift to a new mindset or mental attitude. The circular economy can help achieve sustainable development only if implemented based explicitly on its ecosystem and holistic dimensions that together work for the same purpose: SDGs, as in figure below.

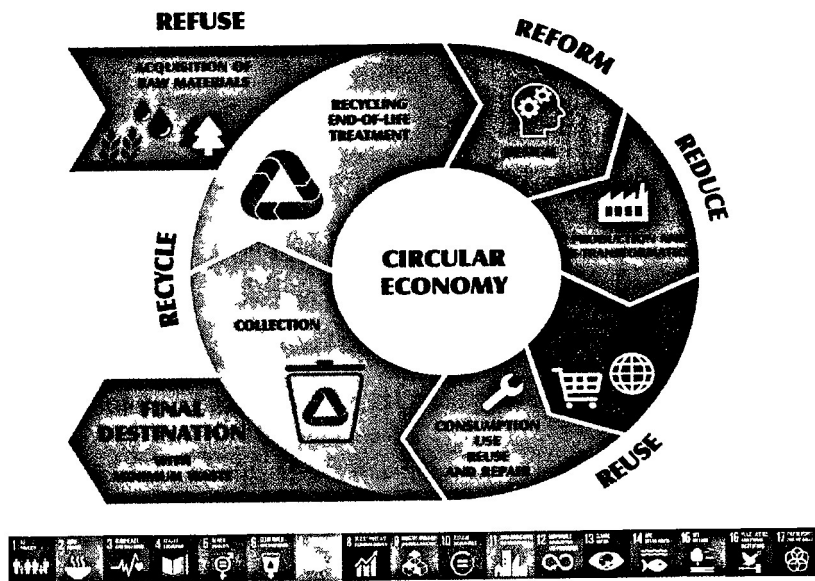


Figure ii: System of the Circular Economy

Source: <https://www.maricopa.edu/about/sustainability>

The book's initial chapter as an introduction underlines the significance of formulating a new sustainable development goal that incorporates Spirituality, Values, and Culture into the 17 SDGs model. It can be regarded as a stand-alone SDG 18 or integrated into the present SDGs to reflect and advance the cause of balancing spiritual and material aspects in the sustainability model of development. The present 17 SDGs outline adopted by the United Nations and 193 members makes it a global development initiative par excellence.

The SDGs 2030 agenda marked another unprecedented human effort on a global scale, engaging the member countries and related bodies and organisations. At the global level, this initiative has put

human consciousness in the face of big human problems and crises of global nature, such as environmental, economic, political, social, cultural, moral, and ethical. The sustainable development goals plan has, somehow, brought to the fore of human civilisation issues of poverty and hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice, and strong institutions and partnerships for the achievement of goals.

Such global issues become institutionalised as part and parcel of the policies of international and global bodies such as the United Nations who bear heavily on sustainable development at the local and country levels. Accordingly, the SDG agenda has become more prevalent and dominating in local, regional, and international forums and platforms, urging all humanity to act and respond as efficiently as possible to achieve the goals, targets, and key performance indicators set by the world body.

The philosophy and narrative underpinning the 17 SDG model must be analysed and evaluated regularly to ensure the model's effectiveness and achievement of the goals outlined in the agenda. According to current studies and data, there is a distinct gap in accomplishing several goals by 2030 since statistics show that many countries need to catch up in numerous goals, targets, and indicators. The main question is whether the 17 SDG model can address human needs beyond human development's marital and tangible aspects. Are 'Spirituality, Values and Culture' well considered and given due place in the structure and implementation of the 17 SDGs?

The main objective of this chapter is to analyse and introduce the SDG 18 as a missing component that must be addressed if humanity is to rebalance civilisation and regain ecological equilibrium because of inflating the material and worldly perspectives of development while undermining the spiritual, moral, ethical, and value-driven cultural components in the mainstream development model.

This chapter uses library research, textual and content analysis of the existing works of literature, policies, legislations, strategies, action plans, projects, statistics, and programs on sustainability and sustainable development goals. The chapter is subdivided into four interrelated sections: introduction, literature analysis, rationale and justifications, and the proposed SDG 18 framework.

## Purpose of the Book

Our purpose in this intellectual discourse and discussion in this form of the book publication is to understand the spiritual needs of development for future sustainability. If one allows us, our discussion focuses on the book's potential readers in the right socio-economic, historical, political, and religious perspectives that may have guidance for this discussion. Our university, IIUM has established what we would call SDG 18 involving spirituality. It has been mandated to the Sustainability Centre established by the university to spearhead this journey of intellectual discourse. Hence, this book, 'Spirituality & Values for Sustainable Development and Balanced Civilisation', attempts to integrate values into development to balance human life and liveliness.

The guideline as an outline for this book writing project was developed based upon the following:

- a. The conceptualisation of the publication of an edited book with a title that reflects the theme of the articles that discuss the issues of Spirituality & Sustainability. Hence, there are a few chapters, such as Spirituality & Values for Sustainable Development; *Maqasid* and Ethics of Sustainability: An Integrated Framework for Development, Islam, Spirituality and Sustainable Development; Islamic View of Spirituality and Sustainability, address the matter from the worldview of Islam and *Maqāṣid al-Šari'ah*.

- b. The book's overall structure, urgency, and timeline to introduce a value laden education system that should develop talents while pursuing higher education was inevitable. Hence, these chapters: Humanising Education to Develop SDG 18 and a Model of a University the World Needs in the Post Normal Era; Towards Spirituality-Conscious Higher Education: Case Study of International Islamic University Malaysia and Civilisational Dialogue for Peace with Human; and, the Environment Towards an Integrated Balanced Framework, are written by experts with years of experience in education.
- c. The suggested format of articles in this edited book must have theories and their applications to avoid being accused of rhetoric. Thus, these chapters, Humanising Governance and Management: Spirituality and Management Putting into Practice, and Shared Values (Vision) for Good Governance in the Pursuit of Sustainable Economic Growth and Humanising Economy: Spirituality and Sustainability for a Green Financing and Circular Economy, address the theoretical application and to solving problems being contained in this book.

In other words, the learning outcomes of developing successful global leaders with spiritual values are a competitive advantage for contemporary organisations. In addition to essential leadership competencies, global leaders face challenges that require additional competent leaders. This publication comes in response to the repeated calls and unremitting appeals for the inclusion of spirituality and values in sustainable development goals and activities to deliberate questions such as:

- Why are 'Spirituality and Sustainability' inseparable when it comes to balanced development models?
- What is the impact of 'Spirituality and Values' on achieving the SDG agenda?
- What are the approaches and ways of articulating 'Spirituality and Values' in the SDG agenda, frameworks, policies, and actions?

- How is 'Spirituality' influencing every one of the 17 SDGs? (objectives, policies, projects, activities, attitudes, mindsets, character, culture of work, strategies, action plans, and etc.)
- Should 'Spirituality' stand by itself as an SDG 18 or to be guiding all the 17 SDGs?
- What are the best examples and practices of 'Spirituality and Values' in enhancing the SDGs by governments, civil societies, communities, institutions, and the rest of the organisation?
- In what way can educational institutions play a role in advancing the cause of the purposed SDG 18 (Spirituality and Values)?

The book is conceptualised to discuss various issues on spirituality as above; and provides a proposed framework for exchanging ideas, experiences, knowledge, and good practices concerning spirituality and sustainability, and also, views and recommendations on advancing the cause of spirituality and values in sustainable development global agenda. Apart from that, some other highlights being discussed are as follows:

1. Shaping the concept of SDG 18 (Spirituality and Values for Sustainable Development).
2. Deliberate the best strategies and approaches to integrate 'Spirituality and Values' as a stand-alone new SDG. (definition, objectives, goals, targets, indicators).
3. Encourage cooperation between SDG stakeholders locally, regionally, and globally to advance the cause of the purposed SDG-18 (Spirituality).
4. Expand opportunities for research and scientific works in 'Spirituality and Sustainability' by involving universities, professors, researchers, experts, and practitioners.

The book eventually proposed the following themes and topics to cover, as these constitute a novelty of thought.

1. Spirituality and Values: Comparative Considerations;
2. Spirituality and Human Development;
3. Sustainable Development, Ethics, and Values;
4. Education for Sustainable Development;
5. Teaching Spirituality and Values for Sustainable Development in Educational Institutions;
6. Worldview, *Maqasid*, and Sustainable Development;
7. Spirituality, Values, and Preservation of the Environment;
8. The Application of Spirituality and Values for the 17 SDGs;
9. The World's Efforts towards Integrating SDG 18 (Spirituality and Values) for Sustainable Development;
10. Best Institutional Strategies and Plans to introduce SDG 18 (Spirituality and Values)

Some of the above issues are broadly covered in literature and are known as ESG. A brief description and the further details are provided in the following paragraphs. These worked out as our planning and operationalisation of this edited book project.

## Spirituality: Conceptualisation

(The focus areas might exceed more than one): concept, rationale, justification, objectives, principles, the urgency of spirituality in life and human existence, areas of spirituality impact, possible practices of spirituality, etc.)

## Spirituality: Operationalisation

Focus areas include: operational definitions, targets, indicators, measures, approaches to spirituality, indices, etc.

## Spirituality: Applications

Focus areas include: applications of spirituality in individual and social life, spirituality and development, spirituality and economy, spirituality and society and family, spirituality and environment, spirituality and sciences, spirituality and education, spirituality and religions, spirituality and technology, spirituality and knowledge creation and dissemination, spirituality and politics, spirituality, and governance, spirituality and languages and management, etc..

## Spirituality and Sustainability SDG 18: Integrating ‘Spirituality’ in the Present SDGs

Focus areas include: manifestation and existence of ‘Spirituality and Spiritual Values’ in the current SDG Model, application and impact of ‘Spirituality’ in SDG, best practices and successful examples of integrating ‘Spirituality’ in the SDG activities, approaches and ways of infusing ‘Spirituality’ into the SDG practice, visions, and strategies for introducing an integrated workable approach to the concept/element of ‘Spirituality-Sustainability’, should SDG 18 stand alone or be part and parcel of each of the 17 SDGs? and etc..).

## Sustainability

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are crucial for the multifaceted development of a society. The United Nations has described the 17 SDGs for the future of global sustainability as this will ensure the survival of the present and future world order, and the declaration has been agreed and signed by almost all the member nations of the UN. However, there

# SDG 18 Spirituality, Values and Culture

## for Humanising Sustainable Development: A Future Worldview

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

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

Among other things, SDG 18 addresses the issue of balance and harmony in the formula for sustainable development. If one desires to see future-balanced growth, spirituality, values, and culture must be reprioritised and institutionalised as part of the mainstream sustainable development narrative and worldview, as well as policies, strategies, and action plans.

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

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

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