
FAMILY BUSINESSES ON A MISSION

ATTAINING THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL OF SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

EDITED BY

**NAOMI | ROB
BIRDTHISTLE | HALES**

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities

FAMILY BUSINESSES ON A MISSION



Series Editors:

Naomi Birdthistle
Rob Hales

The Family Businesses on Mission series examines how the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) can be applied in family businesses around the world, providing insights into cultural and societal differences and displaying innovative approaches to complex environmental and societal issues

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Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Table of Contents

List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	ix
About the Editors	xi
About the Contributors	xiii
Foreword From Professor Walter Leal Filho	xvii
Acknowledgements	xix
Chapter 1 The Sustainable Development Goals – SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	1
<i>Rob Hales and Naomi Birdthistle</i>	
Chapter 2 What It Means to Be a Family Business Today	11
<i>Naomi Birdthistle and Rob Hales</i>	
Chapter 3 IQUTECH – Ireland’s Largest Returns Management Company	23
<i>Ivona Ravlikj and Mark O’Sullivan</i>	
Chapter 4 Germany: DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, Strong in Regional Sustainability	37
<i>Markus Pillmayer</i>	
Chapter 5 USA: Wolf Connection and Inclusive, Safe Spaces for All	55
<i>Patrick Fuery and Kelli Fuery</i>	

Chapter 6 United Arab Emirates: The Family Business of the Shehada Brothers	79
<i>Jacinta Dsilva, Jasmina Locke and Poh Yen Ng</i>	
Chapter 7 Hickinbotham Group and Sustainable Cities and Communities	91
<i>Rob Hales</i>	
Index	107

List of Figures

Chapter 1

Figure 1.	17 Sustainable Development Goals.	2
-----------	-----------------------------------	---

Chapter 2

Figure 1.	Bullseye 2021 (Van Der Vliet, 2021).	14
Figure 2.	Percentage of Family Business Contribution to National GDP (Tharawat Magazine, 2014).	15

Chapter 3

Figure 1.	Mark's and John's Involvement in the Community.	25
Figure 2.	IQUTECH's Logo.	26
Figure 3.	John Kennedy With His Family.	27
Figure 4.	Mark O'Sullivan With His Family.	28
Figure 5.	Organisational Structure of IQUTECH.	29
Figure 6.	IQUTECH's Mission as Stated on Their Website.	31
Figure 7.	IQUTECH's New Logo.	31

Chapter 4

Figure 1.	Seal 'DINZLER Direkt Gehandelt'.	40
Figure 2.	Exterior View of the Existing Building With Guest Garden.	41
Figure 3.	Richter Family and Management (From Left to Right): Thomas Steinke, Katrin Richter, Florian Unterleitner, Isolde Richter, Franz Richter, Rolf Richter, Heike Richter and Matthias Richter.	43

Figure 4.	The Roastery.	45
Figure 5.	In-House Seal for Climate-Neutral Roasting.	48

Chapter 5

Figure 1.	One of Wolf Connection’s Wolves.	56
Figure 2.	Teo Alfero, Founder.	58
Figure 3.	Tala, Co-founder.	59
Figure 4.	Renee Alfero – Lead of Animal Behaviour.	60
Figure 5.	Dr Amanda Beer – Director of Programs.	61
Figure 6.	Ree Merrill – Director of Development.	62
Figure 7.	Wolf Connection Logo.	63
Figure 8.	Medicine Wheel at the Sanctuary.	65
Figure 9.	Ree Merrill With Theo.	66
Figure 10.	A Participant in the Student Programme, With Wolf.	67

Chapter 7

Figure 1.	Michael Hickinbotham (Hickinbotham Group, n.d.).	92
Figure 2.	Community Space is an Important Part of Hickinbotham Planned Communities.	96
Figure 3.	Promotion of Sustainability Initiatives by Hickinbotham Group.	101
Figure 4.	Hickinbotham Group Planned Community.	104

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Table 1.	SDG#11 Targets.	3
Table 2.	Key Aspects of the Case Study Template Used by Authors in This Book.	8

Chapter 2

Table 1.	Definitions of Family Businesses With a Structural or Process Lens Applied.	12
Table 2.	Top 10 Oldest Family Businesses in the World.	16

Chapter 3

Table 1.	Products/Services Offered by IQUTECH.	24
----------	---------------------------------------	----

Chapter 4

Table 1.	DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG Key Milestones.	42
----------	---	----

Chapter 7

Table 1.	SDG#11 Targets and How Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11.	96
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About the Editors

Professor Naomi Birdthistle has entrepreneurship and family business running through her veins. She tried to work in her family business when she was four but was told she was too small. She came back year after year asking to work and eventually her grandmother capitulated and left her work in the family business when she was seven. After years of working in the family business part-time and having completed her studies at Stirling University, Babson College, Harvard University, and the University of Limerick, Naomi established her own consulting business, consulting family businesses in her hometown. She is now a Professor of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation at Griffith University, teaching future family business leaders and researching family business issues as well. Naomi is an award-winning academic having received numerous awards for her teaching and her research.

Associate Professor Robert Hales is the discipline leader for Sustainable Business and Management in the Department of Business Strategy and Innovation. His research interests focus on the governance issues around the grand challenges of our time. Furthermore, his research focuses on SDGs in business and government, a business case for climate change, climate change policy, carbon management, sustainable tourism and working with First Peoples on consent processes and climate change. He was the first programme Director of Griffith University's Master of Global Development. He teaches in the Department of Business Strategy and Innovation and has convened master's level courses such as Leadership for Sustainable Business, Research Methods for Policy Makers and Sustainability and Systems Thinking. He supervises PhD students in the areas of collaborative governance, sustainability transitions and climate change.

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Dr Kelli Fuery is an Associate Professor of Film and Media at Chapman University, California. She is the author of five books and numerous chapters and articles. Her most recent book is *Ambiguous Cinema: From Simone de Beauvoir to Feminist Film Phenomenology* (University of Edinburgh Press). She has previously held posts in visual cultures and film at the University of London and Monash University, Melbourne.

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Dr Jasmina Locke in her current role, as a Chief Executive Officer and Academic Head of SEE Institute, Dubai, looks after all business verticals and the overall strategic direction of this sustainability research and education hub. She holds an MBA and a Master's Degree in Tourism Management holder, with a PhD in Sustainable Economic Development and Destination Competitiveness. Dr Locke has a proven track record in driving research and education initiatives with a number of UAE government departments and international organizations, most

notably the UN, UAE Ministry of Economy and Abu Dhabi DCT, to name a few. She was the main driver and instrumental in a groundbreaking sustainable tourism research project with EXPO 2020 and the UAE Tourism authorities. After a successful career in a range of industries, including aviation, tourism and education, Jasmina also provides advisory services that help other companies, government departments and executives to reach their full potential, create public policies, upskill their workforce and ultimately build human capital for a sustainable future. In her entrepreneurial journey, she has created some successful businesses.

Dr Poh Yen Ng is an Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Aberdeen Business School, Robert Gordon University. She holds a PhD in Management from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, and is currently a Senior Fellow of Advance HE in the United Kingdom. Poh Yen grew up in a family business and ran an education franchise with her husband in Malaysia back in the 2000s. She then ventured into academia to pass on her business experiences to university students. This later motivated her into developing a research passion for entrepreneurship, particularly the family business. Her research outputs cover many areas within the entrepreneurship and family business discipline including the following: influence of socioemotional wealth in the family business, empowerment process and social network dynamics of women entrepreneurs and environmental practices of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Prof Markus Pillmayer is a Professor of Destination Management and Destination Development at the Department of Tourism at the Munich University of Applied Sciences. His research focuses on spatial development which he has explored in several contexts including citizen participation, health, and sustainability. In the context of his PhD – funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) – he dealt with the internationalisation processes of the tourism industry in the Arab World. He can draw on many years of experience in the international tourism industry and tourism policy, which also benefits him in the context of his scientific activities. In addition, he is a fellow of various scientific associations such as International Geographic Union (IGU) and the German Association for Tourism Research (DGT), and in the latter he serves on the board.

Dr Ivona Ravlikj is a Lecturer in entrepreneurship and innovation for the UniLink business diploma and convenor of Critical thinking for Master qualifying students at Swinburne College. She is also involved in Higher Education teaching delivery in entrepreneurship, management and business innovation. Ivona holds a PhD in intrapreneurship from Swinburne University and is actively involved in research projects. Her research interests are in the area of women entrepreneurs and sustainability; gender identity in entrepreneurship; intrapreneurship and knowledge intensity; as well as the development of students' networking and employability skills. As part of her research engagement, Ivona is involved in a new unit development at Swinburne College that aims to advance the student's skills in networking and career development.

Mark O’Sullivan was born and raised in Tralee, Co. Kerry, Ireland. Mark is the oldest of five children. Mark played Gaelic Football, Soccer, Basketball and Athletics. Mark completed a City & Guilds in Electronic Engineering and Mark’s first Circular Economy role began in Dell Computers in 1994. This would form a very strong foundation in Returns Management. In this period, European Service & Logistics, Dell’s EMEA Service centre was based in Limerick, Ireland. Mark started as a line operator and moved to ESL after a couple of months. In the years that followed, Mark would move into various roles in ESL, eventually running the operation until he took VSP (Voluntary Separation Programme) from Dell. In September 2000, Mark would finish service with a 3-month notice period. Mark and Teresa (his now wife) took 6 months off and travelled the world, visiting Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. In 2001, Mark would take the first step towards self-employment and started working at Aaron PCB. In this same period Mark was brought into several large-scale product re-calls and it was in this period Mark started to create the first iteration of what would become IQUTECH. During these years, Mark first met with John Kennedy and his father Jack Kennedy, and they worked together on several projects. In 2009, John and Mark started working together eventually merging their two businesses to form IQUTECH. Since then, John’s wife Kay, three of their sons and two of Mark’s daughters have started working in IQUTECH.

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Foreword From Professor Walter Leal Filho

*Prof. Walter Leal Filho (PhD, DSc, DPhil, DTech, DEd)
Chair, Inter-University Sustainable Development Research
Programme*

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 provide a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

They also entail elements of importance towards a strategic business engagement with sustainability issues. These offer a framework which provides businesses with a systematic approach to identify new business opportunities while contributing to the solution of the grand sustainability challenges facing the world today, including climate change. Each SDG, if achieved, will have a direct and significant positive impact on millions of people's lives around the world and the environment in which they live. Businesses have an opportunity to widen the purpose of business through adopting the SDGs as targets for their operations. Thus, they can make a meaningful contribution to the greater good through achieving their operational objectives.

Family businesses are uniquely placed to contribute to SDGs for many reasons. Firstly, because family business models have longer time perspectives, and this allows the family business to link with the longer term SDG time frame – 2030. Second, family businesses often focus on aspects of business operation which do not have an immediate return on investment such as relationship building with stakeholder groups. Thirdly, family businesses tend to rate the importance of ethics higher than standard businesses and thus align well with the social dimensions of the SDGs. Lastly, family businesses have intergenerational perspectives which is a core principle of sustainability.

This book provides insights into how family business operationalises SDG#11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. This book uses a rigorous case study approach for family businesses to detail aspects of their business which help to advocate for sustainable cities and communities. The cases provided here are living proof that the family business that operate for the greater good actually work! Non-family businesses can take a leaf out of the family businesses portrayed in this book as they can provide different perspectives on how businesses can successfully align SDGs and business strategy.

Despite many businesses having adopted environmental social governance strategies and environmental management systems, the effect of this activity has not been reflected in a healthier planet. Many ‘state of the environment’ reports indicate that planetary health is decreasing, and planetary boundaries are being crossed or are about to be crossed. While the cause of this decline is not entirely the fault of business, there still needs to be a greater effort to address the decline. The challenge for family businesses is to use their unique characteristics and set ambitious programs of work that make a meaningful contribution to achieving global goals. This book provides insights into how family businesses can achieve such a mission and how non-family businesses can be inspired to do the same.

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The authors of USA: Wolf Connections and Inclusive, Safe Spaces for All would like to take this opportunity to thank Ree Merrill, Director of Development at Wolf Connections for her generous help in working with them on the case study. Also, the authors would like to thank Ali Davenport who is a journalism and creative and cultural industries student at Chapman University and Sophia Mall who is a psychology and creative and cultural industries student at Chapman University, who assisted with gathering research for the case.

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Chapter 1

The Sustainable Development Goals – SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

Rob Hales and Naomi Birdthistle


Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all member states of the United Nations in 2015, is a shared blueprint for people and the planet, with the aim to achieve peace and prosperity for all. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a call to action, to develop innovative solutions to some of the world's most complex, societal and environmental challenges. Businesses play a crucial role in forging this path, and since family businesses account for more than two-thirds of businesses worldwide and contribute to 70%–90% of the world's GDP, we believe it is important to showcase the role they play in facilitating the achievement of these SDGs.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a call to action for all countries to address the global challenges of poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. These challenges are identified by 17 SDGs as depicted in [Fig. 1](#), and within the SDGs are a total of 169 targets. These 17 SDGs acknowledge that ending poverty and other global challenges need strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests ([United Nations, 2021](#)).

This book makes an important contribution to research on family businesses by highlighting how businesses can make valuable contributions towards sustainable development. There are several streams of research emerging in the literature on family business and sustainability that are relevant to this book. [Ferreira et al. \(2021\)](#) identify four streams of research in family business and sustainability: family business capital, family business strategy, family business social responsibility and

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 1–9

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Fig. 1. 17 Sustainable Development Goals. *Source: United Nations (2021).*¹

family business succession. The case study approach of this book provides insights into how SDGs can be used to advance the family business's sustainability strategy and social responsibility. How a family's trans-generational sustainability intentions positively influence the strategy of the business and the family's concern for its reputation has been identified as a driver of sustainability in family businesses. Additionally, family businesses routinely combine innovation and tradition to achieve and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many family businesses have shown to be more resilient and operate more sustainably than standard businesses (such as the shareholder approach). The reason for this lies in family businesses generally taking a long-term perspective on stakeholder relationships and the real need for long-term continuity planning to sustain the people within their businesses. The people in their business are most likely to be family members. However, like all businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed financial pressures on family businesses. One needs to ask the question: *How then can family businesses extend their capacity to operate more sustainably and with more social impact during times of business stress?* Well, family businesses can offer unique insights into how sustainability and social impact can be part of the regenerative response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The idea for the book came from two observations. The first observation was that family businesses that had sustainability at their core were performing well despite the impacts of the pandemic. The second observation was that the SDGs were being used as a framework for regeneration after the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹The content of this publication has not been approved by the United Nations and does not reflect the views of the United Nations or its officials or member states.

The global pandemic of COVID-19 has presented challenges to those working towards achieving the goals. The social and economic impacts of COVID-19 are predicted to increase the divide between people living in rich and poor countries (UNEP, 2020). However, if there can be concerted action using the blueprint of the SDGs, then human development can exceed pre-COVID development trajectories (UNEP, 2021). What is needed is a combination of political commitment from all levels of government, investment in green economy initiatives, socially oriented innovation and a (re)focus on the purpose of business to align with SDGs.

Book Series Focus – SDG#11

This book focuses on SDG number 11 (SDG#11), which focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The main targets within SDG#11 are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. SDG#11 Targets.

Target 11.1	By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums
Target 11.2	By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons
Target 11.3	By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries
Target 11.4	Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage
Target 11.5	By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations
Target 11.6	By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management
Target 11.7	By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

Table 1. (*Continued*)

Target 11.a	Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning
Target 11.b	By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels
Target 11.c	Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials

Source: [United Nations \(n.d.\)](#).

Government and private enterprises have different realms of actions within their mission of making significant contributions to SDG#11. Private enterprise is primarily interested in providing transportation, housing and waste management services, while governments focus on addressing governing risk through planning, reducing pollution and the greening of public spaces (Asiamah & Sedegah, 2022). For private enterprises, the targets and indicators listed in Table 1 can be translated to business activity through the strategic alignment of the goals and actions of a particular business. The targets and indicators align with many sustainability-oriented initiatives and strategies in business. Some of the areas of focus include:

1. Focusing on implementing sustainable practices that have a wide impact in the places where a business operates: Businesses can reduce their environmental impact by adopting sustainable practices such as using renewable energy sources, minimising waste and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Investing in sustainable infrastructure: Businesses can invest in sustainable infrastructure such as public transport, green buildings and renewable energy to promote sustainable urbanisation.
3. Constructing sustainable infrastructure: When companies are part of infrastructure development, they can align their operation and outcomes with sustainability principles and SDG targets.
4. Collaborating with local communities to advance the SDG targets: Companies can work with local communities to understand their needs and develop solutions that meet their needs while promoting sustainability.
5. Support policy development: Businesses can support policy development and advocacy efforts aimed at promoting sustainable urbanisation and reducing environmental degradation.

6. Businesses focusing on risk reduction: Decreasing the vulnerability of communities to the impacts of climate change and other natural disasters means businesses can assist in risk reduction and resilience building.
7. Reporting on SDG#11 and sustainability to assist sustainable communities: Companies can report on their sustainability efforts, including their progress towards achieving SDG#11, to increase transparency and accountability.

The above list provides a framework for how family businesses can focus and potentially repurpose strategies to achieve sustainability actions that align with the SDGs. Progressive family businesses that have a focus on sustainability and social responsibility are likely to already be focusing on such priorities but may not realise they contribute to a country's SDG targets and in particular SDG#11.

Challenges facing businesses in the achievement of SDG#11 are many. Firstly, the rapid growth of cities is a major challenge for businesses making a significant contribution towards SDG#11. The growth of cities places significant pressure on essential services such as housing, water and sanitation. Business efforts to decrease these impacts can seem negligible when compared to the growing pressure and consequent overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure and environmental degradation. Not only is there a material issue in that gains made towards SDG#11 seem insurmountable, but there is also the issue of measurement. SDG#11 is a particularly difficult goal to measure through its somewhat nonspecific targets (Berisha et al., 2022).

Secondly, significant challenges are presented by climate change. The effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels, extreme weather events and heatwaves, can have a significant impact on cities and human settlements. Businesses that align with the target of SDG#11 need to implement strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change, such as building risk-informed – resilient infrastructure (Sharma & Soederberg, 2020).

Third, financing the infrastructure aligned with SDG#11 requires a significant focus on the materiality of benefits and the minimisation of negative impacts. This can be challenging for many countries that face development issues, and thus businesses within these countries are either not regulated to direct SDG outcomes or do not have the resources to voluntarily commit to SDGs and their outcomes. Mobilising adequate resources to support sustainable development is crucial to achieving SDG#11 (Zhan & Santos-Paulino, 2021).

Implementing SDG#11 requires a coordinated effort from governments, civil society and the private sector. Addressing these challenges will require innovative solutions and sustained commitment to promoting sustainable development.

The Book Chapters

The book series aims to contribute positively to providing evidence of the role of family businesses in effectively contributing to all SDGs. The case studies on a family business display support and embody the principles of an SDG in their operations, culture and/or business philosophy. The book is 1 of 17 vignette book series in which each book is comprised of a set of short, easy-to-read family business cases related to the unique SDG being discussed in the book. The format

of the book series allows the works to be accessible to those working in the field beyond academia, such as family business practitioners, family business owners, family business advisors, government and business policymakers, members of NGOs, business associations and philanthropic centres, as well as to those who have a general interest in entrepreneurship and business.

The chapters in this book focus on businesses that have prioritised SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities. Five businesses have been profiled in the book, and the first case profiles the company IQUTECH. It is Ireland's largest Returns Management Company. IQUTECH is a carbon-negative company that has grown to become one of Europe's leading Returns Management Consultancies providing solutions to Tier 1 manufacturing companies in sectors such as telecoms, consumer electronics, automotive and power. IQUTECH is a Circular Economy Enabler – by repairing and refurbishing returned electrical products and expanding their lifecycle on the market. IQUTECH has never set out to become a Circular Economy Enabler; the company has been only aiming to get the most out of all the materials that they were receiving. The family business doesn't label its business as an SDG-oriented business as it claims to have been doing sustainability for over 30 years. They are embarking on a process of measuring and publicly reporting on the SDG-aligned work. Having said this, IQUTECH has measured its impact and has managed to prevent approximately 240,000 electronic products from ending up in landfill or being left at customers' homes (IQUTECH, 2023). This is aligned with SDG#11.6.1 where IQUTECH contributes to reducing the amount of municipal solid waste collected through the repair of the products it receives. IQUTECH has future programs such as 'Take Back Schemes' and 'Food Banks' which have the purpose of giving products an alternative end use. The family business sees a bright future in 'urban mining', and they believe this will be a significant business growth area and a vital element of future sustainability.

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is a Bavarian family business with its headquarters in Irschenberg (located south of Munich). DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG specialises in the roasting and distribution of premium coffee and tea and the distribution of high-quality coffee machines. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is integrated into village structures in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps, and thus the SDG goals and their implications for entrepreneurial activities within these communities are also highly relevant. Some operational highlights of SDG#11 include returnable food packaging developed for major customers. Products are delivered in food-safe reusable containers that can be used many times and meet all hygienic standards through cleaning after each use. Another example includes the climate-neutral operation of coffee roasting in which an important part of this activity includes purchasing maximum-efficiency roasters that enable significant energy savings compared to the previous models by optimising the burner settings. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is also conscious of its potential pollution in local communities and thus has implemented strict controls on production. These actions stem from a mission and business purpose which prioritises people and place. The coffee roasting business attaches great importance to ensuring that both guests and employees feel comfortable. This also includes a responsible approach to the surrounding nature.

The next chapter profiles a family business called Wolf Connection, which is a wolf sanctuary located on the outskirts of Acton, California, a rural town nestled

in the Angeles National Forest. Wolf Connection is an exemplary model of the UN's SDG#11, offering a sustained and long-term commitment to a number of the key aspects, notably SDG#11.a, which aims to provide a 'positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas'; SDG#11.4 which is to 'strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage'; and SDG#11.7 which is to 'provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities'. The wolf sanctuary offers a range of diverse programs centred on different sections of the community, engaging with strategies for mental well-being and recovery. For example, there are therapy programs for at-risk youths and social integration and empowerment programs for women. The family business aligns with SDG#11 indicators 11.4.1 Protecting cultural heritage, SDG indicators 11.7.1 Open spaces in cities, and SDG indicators 11.7.1 Safe spaces in cities.

The second last chapter profiles the Shehada brothers. This family business owns several ventures in different sectors in the UAE. At present, the brothers run several businesses together. The businesses are spread in different sectors and include businesses focusing on events and entertainment, management consultancy, financial services and advisory, complete solutions for start-ups and small to medium enterprises (SMEs), corporate consultancy, strategy and research, property management and a construction company. This family business focuses on SDG#11 through a mentorship programme for young generations on sustainable and healthy living, aligning with SDG#11.7. They also support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning, and the Shehada brothers are working to provide this support to the SMEs in the UAE. Specifically, they provide access to quality housing and basic services such as support in waste management, better air quality, structured transport system at the same time minimum harmful impact on the environment and residents. The chapter provides examples of how the business constructs inclusive developments by internalising energy costs, for the residents, of installing solar panels to reduce residents' reliance on grid electricity. The brothers believe that they are playing a part in achieving UAE's vision of developing sustainable cities and communities.

The last chapter is Hickinbotham Homes from Australia. This family business is a construction company that specialises in building new homes for customers. The company has an increased focus on sustainable building practices which are aligned with SDG#11. Hickinbotham Homes promote sustainability by offering sustainable features in their homes as standard products. These include solar panels, rainwater tanks and energy-efficient appliances which reduce energy and water usage and a smaller environmental footprint. The company has also expanded into larger sustainable developments and makes a locally significant contribution to SDG#11 targets ensuring access to affordable and sustainable urbanisation as well as reducing the environmental footprint of urbanisation. As part of SDG#11, there is a focus on minimising waste in the construction and development of urban areas. Hickinbotham Homes use recycled materials where possible and have implemented a waste management system that minimises waste and maximises recycling. The company also supports initiatives aimed at achieving greater sustainability and the SDGs, including education and awareness-raising campaigns.

The Methodological Approach Adopted for the Book

The book used a case study method to gain insights into the practices of businesses using SDGs. The summary outline of the case study template is shown in Table 2. The editors approached a range of potential authors to develop the case studies. They approached early career researchers, PhD students, family business academics, family business consultants, managers of family business centres and

Table 2. Key Aspects of the Case Study Template Used by Authors in This Book.

<p><i>Vision and mission, services offered by the organisation</i></p> <p><i>Background to the company</i></p> <p><i>Historical development</i></p> <p>A. Founding date</p> <p>B. Founder details</p> <p>C. Human interest angle of the founder</p> <p>D. Quotes from the founder or key people</p> <p>E. Size of organisation</p>	<p><i>How do the vision mission and background of the organisation relate to the particular SDG?</i></p> <p>A. When did the SDG become important to the organisation?</p> <p>B. Was there a person who championed the SDG?</p> <p>C. Are the SDGs explicitly talked about by staff?</p>
<p><i>How do key stakeholders relate to the SDG championed by the organisation?</i></p> <p>A. What stakeholders influence the organisation?</p> <p>B. Has the adoption of the SDG in the organisation had an impact on stakeholders?</p> <p>C. Have stakeholders influenced the actions of the organisation related to the SDG?</p>	<p><i>Outline the business model of the organisation and add how SDG is important.</i></p> <p>A. Outline key elements</p> <p>B. An outline structure of the organisation is needed.</p> <p>C. Provide a diagram of the business model</p> <p>D. Identify key activities and return on investment</p> <p>E. How does the SDG relate to return on investment?</p> <p>F. How do businesses monitor impacts?</p>
<p><i>What are the challenges facing the organisation in implementing the SDGs?</i></p> <p><i>How does the business measure and report on sustainability and SDG activities?</i></p>	<p><i>How does the organisation see itself in relation to providing benefits outside the organisation? What next for the organisation?</i></p>

family business practitioners to consider submitting a case for the book. Interested authors were asked to choose the SDGs that best matched the family business of their choice and use a case study template provided by the editors of the book series to craft a case study on how the family business advanced the particular SDG. A truly global response was received for the book series with participants from all over the globe.

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Chapter 2

What It Means to Be a Family Business Today

Naomi Birdthistle and Rob Hales

The Meaning of a Family Business in the Twenty-First Century

The study of family businesses, as a discipline, can be considered to be still in its infancy. There exists a challenge within the academic and business community because they have yet to uniformly define what exactly constitutes a family business. A leading expert in family businesses, Professor John Davis, has reviewed an abundance of definitions that can be found in the literature pertaining to family businesses. As a result of his analysis, he has clustered the varying definitions into two major categories: structural definitions and process definitions (Davis, 2001). The main thrust behind the structural definition is that it focuses on the ownership or management arrangements within the family business, for example, ‘51% or more ownership by members of the family’. The process definition of a family business centres on the amount of involvement the ‘family’ has in the business. Davis (2001, p. 1) provides an example of the process definition based on how much influence the family has on the policy of the business, and the desire to perpetuate the family in terms of its control in the business. Table 1 provides definitions posed in the literature by some of the world’s leading researchers on family business, and we have applied Davis’s (2001) principles of structural versus process lens to them.

The European Commission has provided a definition of what a family business is and uses that as the basis to measure the contribution of family businesses to the EU economy. Family businesses are important to the European economy because it is the backbone of its economy. Findings from *European Family Businesses (2020)* indicate that between 65% and 80% of all European companies are family businesses, and they contribute on average more than 40%–50% of all jobs in the European Union. Within the EU definition, you will notice that it leans more

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Table 1. Definitions of Family Businesses With a Structural or Process Lens Applied.

Family Business Definition	Author	Structural or Process Lens Applied
Members of one family own enough voting equity to control strategy, policy, and tactical implementation	Miller and Rice (1967)	Process definition
Ownership control by a single family or individual	Barnes and Hershon (1976)	Structural definition
Two or more family members influence the direction of the business through the exercise of management roles, kinship ties or ownership rights	Davis and Tagiuri (1982)	Process definition
Family influence over business decisions	Dyer (1986)	Process definition
Ownership and operation by members of one or two families	Stern (1986)	Structural definition
Legal control over the business by family members	Lansberg et al. (1988)	Structural definition
Closely identified with at least two generations of a family, the link has had a mutual influence on the company policy and the interests and objectives of the family	Donnelley (1964)	Process definition
Expectation or actuality of succession by a family member	Churchill and Hatten (1987)	Process definition
Single-family effectively controls the firm through the ownership of greater than 50% of the voting shares and a significant portion of the firm's senior management team is drawn from the same family	Leach et al. (1990)	A mix of structural and process definitions

towards the process definition as identified by Davis (2001). The European Commission (n.d., para. 2) proposes that a firm, of any size, is a family business, if:

- Most decision-making rights are in the possession of the natural person(s) who established the firm, or in the possession of the natural person(s) who has/have acquired the share capital of the firm, or in the possession of their spouses, parents, child or children's direct heirs.
- Most decision-making rights are indirect or direct.
- At least one representative of the family or kin is formally involved in the governance of the firm.
- Listed companies meet the definition of family enterprise if the person who established or acquired the firm (share capital) or their families or descendants possess 25% of the decision-making rights mandated by their share capital.

Astrachan and Shanker (2003, p. 211) clearly state in their work that because there is no 'concise, measurable, agreed-upon definition of a family business', this leads to a 'challenge in quantifying their collective impact'. Emanating from their research, they created a spectrum on which one could define a family business, from a broad to a narrow definition. Key to their understanding of the term family business is the 'degree of family involvement in the business'. They depicted this spectrum as a 'bullseye' with a broad definition in the outer sphere. From a broad definitional perspective, Astrachan and Shanker (2003) propose that to be a family business only requires input from some family members in the business, and the strategic direction of the business is controlled by the family. They also pose a 'middle ground' definition which is the intention to pass the business on to a family member, with the incumbent still involved in the running and operations of the family business. In the 'nucleus' of the bull's eye, Astrachan and Shanker (2003) propose a narrow definition where the management and operation of the family business include representatives from different generations of the family, with siblings in different management roles and up-and-coming family members (possibly cousins) joining the family business at entry level. Van Der Vliet (2021) provides an expanded version of Astrachan and Shanker's (2003) bullseye as per Fig. 1.

Van Der Vliet (2021) has applied the broad, middle and narrow definitions to family businesses in the United States at two points in time: 2003 and 2021, and has observed the sheer growth in the volume of family businesses by evaluating them based on the revised bullseye approach.

As is evident from the various definitions posed here, writers tend to vary in how much family control of a company is needed to call the business a family business. Writers often disagree on how much the family must want to perpetuate the family control of the business to qualify as a family business. Cano-Rubio et al. (2017, p. 132) advocate that if there was a single general criterion used to conceptualise the term 'family business', this would 'ensure that the concept used in the different studies of these companies does not condition the results obtained'. The lack of agreement on a definition is troubling because it reflects the lack of conversations in the field on this subject. More troubling still is the many writers in the field who use the term family business to identify their subject, without defining the term at all. Writers also frequently confuse the family and other kinds of business, e.g. small business. The two are decidedly distinct, given

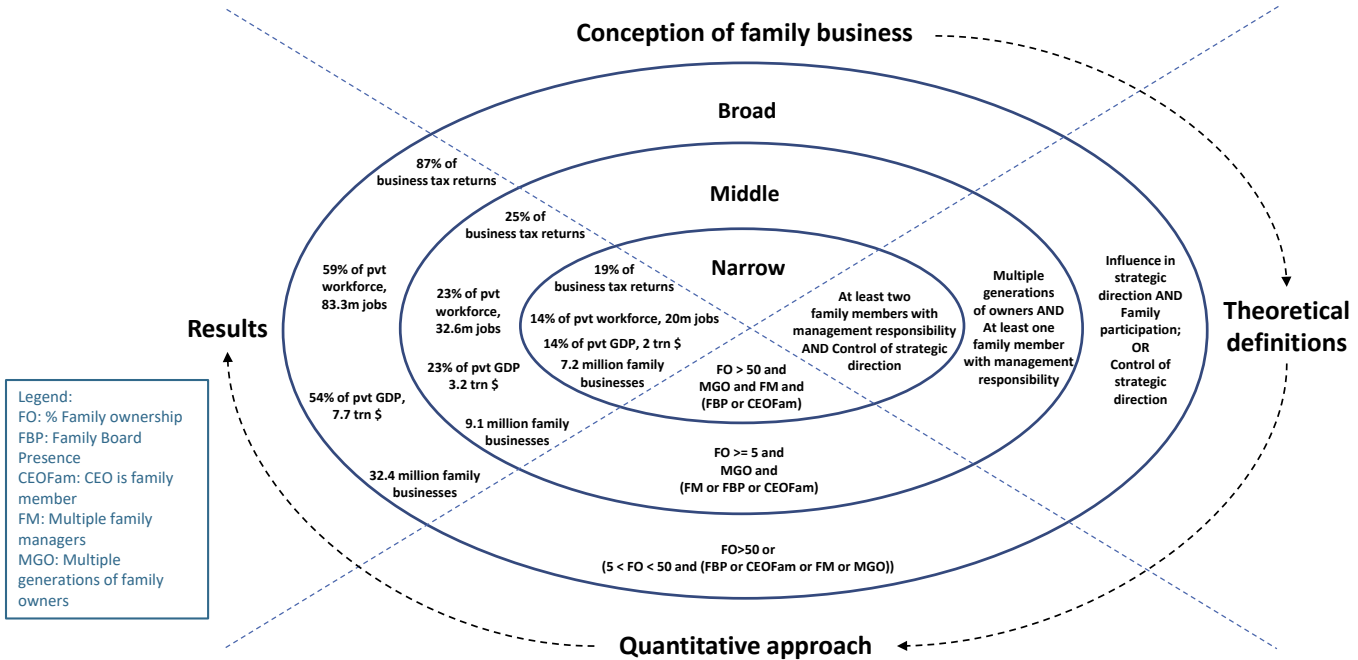


Fig. 1. Bullseye 2021 (Van Der Vliet, 2021).

the large size of many family businesses, i.e. Samsung, WalMart and the non-family ownership of many small businesses. Another often-made mistake is to assume that family companies are private companies. Most are but over half of all publicly traded companies in the United States, for example, are family owned.

In choosing the respondents for this book, we asked each case study author to ask the family business if they thought they were a family business, and if so then they could be included in the book. On further analysis of each of the family businesses portrayed here, they fitted into either the structural or process definitional categories.

Family Businesses Around the World

Are family businesses an enigma or a reality? They are very much the latter as they are the most frequently encountered ownership model in the world, and their impact on the global economy is tremendous. *Tharawat Magazine* (2014) produced a report that showcased the contributions that family businesses make to the global gross domestic product (GDP) as per Fig. 2.

Just shy of 10 years later, we can see from the research that in that length of time family businesses have made an even bigger stamp on a nation's GDP. For example, in 2021, Van Der Vliet (2021) reported that in 2021 family businesses in the United States contributed to 64% of the US GDP, a 7% increase. In the Netherlands, it is estimated that over 276,000 of its businesses are family businesses (*European Family Businesses*, 2017), and Finnigan (2016) found that in Argentina family businesses contributed just shy of 1 trillion to the nation's GDP.

Most of the world's wealth is created by family-owned businesses. In a joint piece of research, the University of St. Gallen along with Ernst and Young found that in 2023 family businesses they studied generated \$US8.02 trillion in revenue, which was a 10% increase on their previous findings in 2021 (Robertsson, 2023). Many of today's well-known brands stem from family-owned businesses such as WalMart, owned by the Waltons with revenues of \$572.8 billion (Ozbun, 2022) and employing 2.3 million people worldwide in 2022 (Walmart, 2023) to the Porsche family who owns Volkswagen with total revenues of US\$18.8 billion



Fig. 2. Percentage of Family Business Contribution to National GDP (*Tharawat Magazine*, 2014).

worldwide and with total market revenue amounting to US\$1.8 trillion in 2021 (Statista Mobility Market Insights, 2022). In some countries, family businesses have a long history in the fabric of the economy. Up to 2006, the oldest family business in the world was the Osaka temple-builder Kongo Gumi which was established in 578. When it succumbed in 2006, it was replaced by Hoshi Onsen, which is in the Ishikawa Prefecture in Japan. Started by the Hoshi family in 718, it is currently being led by the 46th generation of the Hoshi family. Table 2 identifies the 10 oldest family firms according to Kristie (2021).

Table 2. Top 10 Oldest Family Businesses in the World.

Family Business Name	Year of Establishment	Country
Hoshi Onsen	718	Japan
Stiftskeller St. Peter	803	Austria
Chateau de Goulaine	1000	France
Founderia Pontificia Marinelli	1000	Italy
Barone Ricasoli	1141	Italy
Barovier & Toso	1295	Italy
Hotel Pilgrim Haus	1304	Germany
Richard de Bas	1326	France
Gmachl	1334	Austria
Torrini Firenze	1369	Italy

Countries Represented in This Book

The family businesses portrayed in this book come from the Republic of Ireland, Germany, the United States, the United Arab Emirates and Australia.

Ireland as a nation has a plethora of family businesses. For such a small country, i.e. less than five million inhabitants, it has over 170,000 family businesses (Deacon et al., 2020). These businesses straddle all industry sectors within the marketplace and employ nearly a million people, i.e. nearly one in five people in the Republic of Ireland (Deacon et al., 2020). The Republic of Ireland is still a young nation. It has had its troubles for many years with its closest neighbour: the United Kingdom. The Republic of Ireland gained its independence in 1932, but many of Ireland's oldest family businesses have seen through many key phases in life, for example, famines, wars, pandemics, recessions etc. Many of Ireland's oldest family businesses can be found within the hospitality sector. For example, Carey's Pub in Carlow which was established in 1542 is still being run by a member of the founding family, and Morahan's of County Roscommon is still been operated and managed by the Morahan family since 1641. Avoca, which is

one of the world's oldest surviving clothing manufacturers, was established in 1723 and is still run by members of the original founders.

It has only come to light recently that Germany's oldest family business is that of the Coatinc Company, which was founded in 1502 having started as blacksmiths in the town of Siegen (Welle, 2023). Coming a close second is the William Prym Holding Ltd. family business which was founded in 1530. It originally produced rolled plates and wires but changed its business model in 1903 to sewing kits and snap fasteners. It currently has a global workforce of 3,300 employees (Prym n.d.). According to the Foundation for Family Business (Schultz, 2019), 90% of all businesses in Germany are family businesses and include icon brands like Volkswagen, ALDI, Bosch and the Merck Group. The Merck Group is one of the oldest pharmaceutical companies in the world and was founded in 1668, with the descendants of Emanuel Merck's three sons managing the business as general partners (Simon, 2005). These businesses are key employers as they employ 58% of all employees in Germany. In Germany, most family businesses are small in that 90% of all family businesses generate less than one million in sales revenue (Schultz, 2019), but conversely, the number of very big family businesses, like BMW and Porsche, is extraordinarily high when Germany is compared to other industrial nations. Schultz (2019) found that 43% of German companies with sales revenues of more than €50 million are family-owned businesses. Family Capital (2021) has found that Germany's top 500 family businesses employed over 6.4 million people globally in 2019, generating over \$1.8 trillion in revenues, which accounted for nearly 43% of the country's GDP.

Family businesses in the United States are outstanding contributors to the nation's economic engine. Evidence indicates that they contribute greatly to GDP and employment. For example, Van Der Vliet (2021) reported that family businesses account for 64% of US GDP and that 62% of the US workforce are employed by family businesses. There are approximately 24.2 million family businesses in the United States. Though the United States is a fairly 'new' country when compared to other nations, family businesses can still be found pre the 'Declaration of Independence'. The Shirley Plantation, established by Edward Hill in 1638, whose great-granddaughter married Jon Carter and whose descendants are managing the family business, still is considered to be the US's oldest farming family business (Spector, 2021). A close second to the Shirley Plantation is another farm-based family business, and that is the Little Farm, established by the Little family between 1640 and 1650, which is being overseen by his direct descendent who still lives on the farm (Spector, 2021). A family of note in the United States is the Zildjian family. Their family business was established in Constantinople in 1623 and celebrates its 400th anniversary this year. In 1928 members of the Zildjian family began manufacturing cymbals in the US. Now based in Massachusetts, the world renowned manufacturer of musical instruments sells its products under the Zildjian, Vic Firth and Balter brand names. Other members of the Zildjian family are involved in the business with Debbie Zildjian, a member of the board of directors, who has two daughters, both of which are 15th generation shareholders. One of Debbie's daughters, Cady Zildjian, is the Vice Chair of the board of directors (Zildjian, 2023).

According to [Puri-Mirza \(2021\)](#), there are approximately 343,000 private sector businesses in the United Arab Emirates. Within those private enterprises are family businesses and, like elsewhere around the world, they also contribute greatly to the national economy. [Abbas \(2022\)](#) reports that in the United Arab Emirates, family-owned businesses contributed to 70% of the UAE's GDP. [The National \(2023, para 6\)](#) is quoted as saying that up to '90% of private companies in the country are family businesses, employing more than 70% of the sector's workforce'. According to *Forbes Middle East*, 21 UAE families were ranked among the Arab world's 100 most powerful family businesses – second highest in the region after Saudi Arabia ([Varghese, 2021](#)). At the highest level in the country, family businesses have also been identified as being important for the future of the United Arab Emirates. The Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, is supporting the advancement of family businesses in the United Arab Emirates. He has assisted in the establishment of a new centre with the remit of scaling and supporting family businesses. [Cabral \(2022\)](#) reports that the programme aims to double the number of family businesses in the United Arab Emirates, which would lead to an increase in the GDP to \$320 billion by 2032.

Australia's landscape for family businesses is quite extensive. Evidence indicates that family businesses make up around 70% of all businesses in Australia ([CoSpedia, 2022](#)). According to [Family Business Australia \(n.d.\)](#), family businesses contribute more than AUS\$4.3 trillion to the economy with average turnover being AUS\$12 million per annum. Family businesses make up a significant portion of the top 500 private companies in Australia ([IBISWorld, 2022](#)). On examining the companies listed, the author of this chapter found that within the top 26 companies, 10 are family-owned businesses with three out of the top five being family owned. Australia has a number of old family businesses, with the oldest being founded in 1808, Summerville farm in Tasmania's Derwent Valley, and is being led by the seventh generation of the family. Other old businesses that are still being run by members of the founding family include: Lionel Samson & Son which was founded in 1829 by two brothers who came to the Swan River Colony on one of the first settlement vessels. In the 1880s, Lionel Samson and Son was the single largest importer of beers and spirits into Australia. Coopers Beer is a family run business which was established in Adelaide in 1862, and they are still pouring pints around the country. Another brewery that is family owned is J. Furphy & Sons, which is a 5th generation, family owned manufacturing business based in Shepparton, Northern Victoria and with operations in Albury NSW and Geelong Victoria. Phillip Blashki migrated from England and established the firm P. Blashki & Sons around 1875. The family business still operates in the twenty-first century, making regalia including academic gowns, judges' wigs, chains of office, medals, badges, epaulettes and swords. Peacock Bros. was established on Collins Street in Melbourne, 1888. Brothers Ernest and Charles Peacock founded the small general printing business together, quickly developing a reputation for exceptional quality and outstanding service.

During COVID, family businesses globally managed to survive the pandemic somewhat. [Bajpai et al. \(2021\)](#) found that, on a global scale, family businesses laid

off fewer staff (8.5%) when compared to non-family businesses (10.2%). Family businesses displayed resilience during COVID more than other companies, and Bajpai et al. (2021, p. 2) advocate that it is that resilience that will lead family businesses to be the ‘engine of the global economic recovery from COVID-19’.

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Chapter 3

IQUTECH – Ireland’s Largest Returns Management Company

Ivona Ravlikj and Mark O’Sullivan

The Company

IQUTECH is a carbon-negative company that has grown to become one of Europe’s leading Returns Management Consultancies providing solutions to Tier 1 manufacturing companies in sectors such as telecoms, consumer electronics, automotive and power. IQUTECH enables companies like Dell, HP, Eir, Apple and EMC to generate revenue, as well as impactful environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies to achieve their sustainable development goals within their manufacturing operations.

Introduction

In 2009, two companies came together, Partner in Excess (PIE) Screening and Screening and Testing Services (STS). These two companies later became IQUTECH. Mark O’Sullivan and three other shareholders owned STS, while Jack Kennedy and three other partners owned PIE. After Jack Kennedy passed away, a portion of the business, PIE Screening was sold and Jack’s family retained ownership of 25% of PIE Screening. In 2011, Mark O’Sullivan and Jack Kennedy’s son, John Kennedy, bought out all other shareholders, and they began trading as IQUTECH. In terms of the history of the companies, John’s father started PIE screening around 2005, while Mark O’Sullivan started STS in 2003, both companies working in parallel and sometimes in competition. In 2012, all this changed when IQUTECH started trading.

IQUTECH’s primary activities are in the repair and refurbishment of electronic products and are tightly related to effective waste management (which is aligned with SDG#11.6), which prevents those products from ending up in landfill (United Nations, 2023). Instead, IQUTECH aims to extend the life cycle

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 23–36



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of the returned products and bring them back to the market. This demonstrates IQUTECH's contribution towards SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities (United Nations, 2023).

Vision and Mission

At IQUTECH, their vision is to create a new mindset for modern companies by helping them to reconsider the life cycle of their products. Through their innovative solutions, they give technology a second chance on life and help to create a waste-free world.

IQUTECH does not see a difference between our sustainability vision and our company vision (IQUTECH, 2023).

Products and Services Offered by IQUTECH

IQUTECH offers a wide range of products and services to their customers. Table 1 provides information on their products and services offered including the description on the functionality for each product/service.

Table 1. Products/Services Offered by IQUTECH.

Product/Service	Functionality
Reverse Logistics	Returns Management – IQUTECH organises and manages the logistics of getting the product returned to the repair facility.
Triage	IQUTECH provides services where products that are in scope and out of scope are separated. Then IQUTECH disposes these products accordingly.
Cosmetic/Mechanical inspection	IQUTECH proposes cosmetic/mechanical inspection standards and then they implement these standards for their customers.
Refurbishment	IQUTECH puts together good parts of harvested material from products that fail mechanical or functional tests. IQUTECH uses these parts to supplement consumables that they can then use to refurbish products.
Test	IQUTECH designs and develops all their test scripts and test fixtures to test their customers' products. They functionally test all parts and their accessories in-house.

Table 1. (Continued)

Product/Service	Functionality
Pick Pack & Ship	IQUTECH then picks and packs kits and merges these with the unit and ships the parts into service stock or directly to a customer depending on the product.
Logistics	IQUTECH provides all reverse and forward distribution to both B2B and B2C markets.
Software	IQUTECH provides a fully turnkey software package from the initial customer contact to the distribution of replacement parts like what is described above.
Consultancy	IQUTECH provides advice and creates sophisticated reverse logistics solutions for their customers who wish to implement a solution themselves.

Background of IQUTECH

IQUTECH is owned and managed by John Kennedy and Mark O’Sullivan. Mark and John are very involved in their respective communities and sponsor several local clubs/teams (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Mark’s and John’s Involvement in the Community.

Jack Kennedy Snr was a co-founder of PIE and the father of John Kennedy. John's role in PIE Screening was in business development and operations. Jack, Mark and John worked together in PIE on several occasions. Soon after the passing of Jack, 75% of the business was sold, with John Kennedy taking ownership of 25% of the new entity PIE Screening. Mark was the founder of Complete Solutions (CMP). Mark and John had been working together since 2003 on and off but came together in 2009 to form IQUTECH, moving their respective customers from CMP and PIE to IQUTECH; this was in essence the merging of two separate family businesses into one dual-family business. John's current role in IQUTECH is in operations and finance, owning 50% of IQUTECH. Mark's role in IQUTECH is business development and account management, owning 50% of IQUTECH as well. Fig. 2 shows the front premises of IQUTECH in Limerick, Ireland.



Fig. 2. IQUTECH's Logo.

John Kennedy is married to Kay O'Connell and has five children, Jack Jnr, Conor, Aidan, Cian and Clara. Kay O'Connell started working at IQUTECH in 2020. Kay manages their account on a daily basis. Jack Kennedy Jnr is John's oldest child, who is currently working in IQUTECH while studying. Jack works in the production and logistics areas of IQUTECH. Conor Kennedy is John's second oldest and works in IQUTECH during school holidays. Conor works in

the production area at IQUTECH. Aidan, Cian and Clara are John's youngest children, and while they have accompanied John or Kay to work on several occasions, they do not have an active role in the company. On the occasions they do visit, they can be found drawing on the various whiteboards in the IQUTECH meeting rooms (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. John Kennedy With His Family.

Mark O'Sullivan is married to Teresa, and they have three children, Sorcha, Muireann and Aoife. Teresa Kelly was a director at CMP, and she resigned from this position when IQUTECH was formed. Sorcha O'Sullivan is Mark's oldest child and works in the production area and warehouse in IQUTECH. Sorcha is also studying at the moment and hopes to become a software engineer. Muireann O'Sullivan is Mark's second oldest child. Muireann has worked in IQUTECH during the school holidays. Aoife O'Sullivan is Mark's youngest daughter, and while she has accompanied Mark to work on several occasions, she has not worked in the company in any capacity except to raid the vending machine in the canteen (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Mark O'Sullivan With His Family.

Ownership

Mark O'Sullivan and John Kennedy are equal co-owners of IQUTECH, with facilities in Ireland, the Czech Republic and Poland. They have brought two partners in to manage the business operations in Poland (IQUTECH PL) and the Czech Republic (IQUTECH CZ).

Origins

In 2009, Dell closed its manufacturing operation in Ireland and opened operation manufacturing processes in Poland. STS followed Dell to Poland, where they were servicing tier-one vendors with Dell and tier-one suppliers. Soon after, STS followed those suppliers starting to service HP in the Czech Republic.

PIE Screening had an operation in the Netherlands, but in 2012, this operation closed when the service site for Dell was moved to Poland. PIE Screening moved its operations to Poland in response to this change.

IQUTECH continues to have a presence in the Netherlands, and they also have staff in Hungary.

Size

IQUTECH is considered a small company, with less than 50 employees. In Ireland, IQUTECH employs about 26 employees on a full-time basis with six part-time employees. In the Czech Republic, IQUTECH has full-time equivalent staff members of about 10 employees, and in Poland, it would be a similar number of 10 employees (see Fig. 5). In the Netherlands and Hungary, IQUTECH has one engineer at each location.

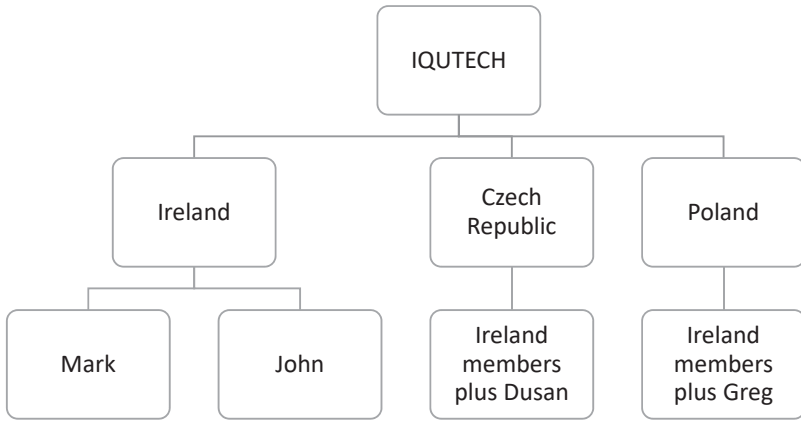


Fig. 5. Organisational Structure of IQUTECH.

Structure

The company structure is relatively flat as is evident by Fig. 5.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities and IQUTECH

The orientation around the Sustainable Development Goal number 11 (SDG#11), sustainable cities and communities, for IQUTECH has happened more by accident, rather than by design. Mark O’Sullivan’s background is in electronic repair, being an electronic engineer who worked in Dell Service. So since very early in his career, Mark’s background has been in repair, in particular PC repair.

IQUTECH has been a circular economy enabler not by design but just as part of their business, as Mark O’Sullivan has stated: ‘This is how we have carved out a business and how we make money’.

Mark's development as an employee at Dell, then afterwards in STS taught him the skills and gave him the knowledge of how to manage returns. It has been also called by many different names such as Reverse Logistics, RMA Management, Returns Management, Take Back Schemes, After Sales Service and now Circular Economy Enabler. IQUTECH has been doing the same work for over 30 years.

In Poland and the Czech Republic, IQUTECH does the screening, local testing and in some cases repair of electrical products. They would separate good from bad and then try to get as much of the bad repaired into good again. They are refurbishing the repairing manufacturing quality issues. By repairing and converting the bad products into useable stock, IQUTECH demonstrates its contribution to waste management as part of Target 11.6 within SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities (United Nations, 2023).

Some Quality issues would happen in tier 1 and 2 suppliers¹ in Asia. Then the final assembly/manufacturer (Dell, HP, Acer, Lenovo, Microsoft, Apple, etc.) would have an issue with the supplied materials and then it would be IQUTECH's job to screen and distinguish the good from bad and make good units available for use by the manufacturer and then resolve the remaining bad stock. This in most cases has been a repair – Mechanical, Cosmetic or Software. IQUTECH would complete the repair and again, return the material into good stock. As Mark O'Sullivan says: 'If we did not provide this service, in some cases, these units would be scrapped and could end up in landfill'.

Everything considered, it was the returns management that brought the origins of what IQUTECH is today – a Circular Economy Enabler – by repairing and refurbishing the returned electrical products and expanding their life cycle on the market. IQUTECH has never set out to become a Circular Economy Enabler, the company has been only aiming to get the most out of all the materials that they were receiving. Mark isn't too comfortable talking about the SDGs as he says: 'This is why I don't really like talking about SDGs and stuff like that because they never affected us before, but now people are talking about it. We've been doing it for 30 odd years, and maybe a bit longer, and it doesn't feel like that it's anything new to us, it has been there all the time'.

IQUTECH has failed to communicate internally or externally the focus on Sustainability. The company managers have been occupied with managing customers and managing requirements and have not had enough time to communicate their internal and external goals. However, in the last six months, they have started to take steps to remedy this.

IQUTECH's new website has now gone live and is very focused on the language of SDG#11 Sustainable cities and communities, in particular waste management, and their sustainable journey is being well documented. A case study shown on their website² demonstrates how the partnership between IQUTECH and Eir has resulted in less waste, where electronic products have been repaired

¹Tier 1 as direct suppliers and tier 2 as subcontractors to tier 1 suppliers.

²<https://iqutech.com/new-site/our-mission-2/>



Fig. 6. IQUTECH's Mission as Stated on Their Website.



Fig. 7. IQUTECH's New Logo.

instead of ending in landfill. Through this partnership, IQUTECH has managed to prevent approximately 240,000 electronic products from Eir from ending up in landfill or being left at customers' homes (IQUTECH, 2023). This is aligned with SDG#11.6.1 where IQUTECH contributes to reducing the amount of municipal solid waste collected through the repair of the products. The evidence shows that IQUTECH has repaired 90% of Eir's returned products, while in 50% of the cases, there has been no fault identified in the stock, therefore the products have been repackaged and sent to a new customer (IQUTECH, 2023). The achievement of SDG#11 is evidenced also in IQUTECH's mission statement which is given in Fig. 6.

IQUTECH has also looked at the ESGs as part of the review and they continue to develop their policies and plans for the next five years. The company is now talking a new language about something that they have been doing for 30 years. This has always been a challenge for IQUTECH; no matter how successful they have been, they have not talked openly about it.

IQUTECH has survived two recessions, a pandemic and now a war in Europe. IQUTECH is getting better at talking about themselves and their real impact towards the sustainable development goals. The website, the new SDG plans, IQUTECH's building's new interior design and their new logo (see Fig. 7) will reflect how they are sustainable for all to see, hear and hopefully experience the IQUTECH's contribution to waste management as part of Target 11.6 within the SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities (United Nations, 2023).

Business Model and SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

IQUTECH's unique value proposition is its customer service. Their customers have remained at the centre of their activities since the company began its operations. It has allowed IQUTECH to develop personal relationships with almost all their customers and fuelled its expansion into Europe. IQUTECH is receiving word-of-mouth referrals from department to department, from company to company and from country to country.

In addition to their customer service, IQUTECH has a huge amount of experience in returns management. Having a long history within the provision of returns management services, this shows the tight connection of IQUTECH's key activities with waste management as part of SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Mark has learnt how to trade in Dell, being taught everything from Assembly to People & Resource Management, warehousing and logistics, manufacturing and return models. Dell has been a great place to work and upon leaving, a great business case to learn from and model other return operations on.

IQUTECH's next value proposition is process management. The business model of Dell is very strong. It is a repair model that is effective for Apple and for other companies. Models are based on strong processes and IQUTECH prides itself on process controls, steps, rules, checks, and validation.

IQUTECH has invested very heavily in having the tools to manage its processes. In the very early days, they used Access Databases when no one had been using them. These databases have been a step up from Excel but a giant leap from paper. Once they got this technological edge, they did not let it go, and even today, they recognise that technology and automation are key to their success.

Next and maybe the most important decision IQUTECH has ever made has been investing in software. IQUTECH has always had some software package being developed or in the pipeline. They have known very early on that they could set themselves apart by reporting and providing an accurate recall of information for customer. In 2017, IQUTECH was successful in winning a huge tender in Ireland. There was a huge reporting aspect to the project, and IQUTECH knew that their system would not be up for the job. They met with their new business

partner Adrian DeCléir to discuss the project, and it was at that point, John, Adrian and Mark formed Devoltaire which would trade as Blocworx. Blocworx software helps IQUTECH to manage almost every part of their business, and their Digital Roadmap can be executed much easier than it would if they were depending on third-party providers. This customer-centric approach pushed IQUTECH to create Blocworx, and now they believe that Blocworx will open doors for them that allow the company to compete on a global scale. By creating the new software, IQUTECH is now more efficient in managing the reporting and recall of customer products, which in turn results in more electronic products being successfully repaired and brought back to the market.

Another key element of the business model for IQUTECH is revenue savings or revenue generating. In IQUTECH's case, sustainability and the circular economy drive their business. If companies did not want to be sustainable, then IQUTECH could be out of business. Nowadays, sustainability and the circular economy principles are not the driving forces for successful companies, but revenue savings or revenue-generating programs are. This is the reason why IQUTECH has existed for so long. As Mark O'Sullivan stated: 'There is a logical saving to be made if you design your products so they can easily be repaired and at the end of their lifecycle, you can use the same material for the next generation of product'. There is a logic in finding more than one source of material, and that material availability can be forecast for the required amount of time. Urban mining is another aspect of IQUTECH's key activities. It refers to the recovery of the materials from products that have been returned from the customer or are at the end of their life cycle.

IQUTECH provides revenue savings when they successfully manage the return of a product for their customers. The product can be tested, inspected, repaired or refurbished and placed into stock. This process supplements their supply chain and saves money on service stock. Therefore, IQUTECH provides a revenue saving opportunity for itself, its customers and society by aligning its business model with SDG#11.

IQUTECH provides revenue generation when they successfully manage the return of a product for their customer. The product may fail for whatever reason, but if IQUTECH can recover the plastic, the PCB, the metal and the cables, they can then liquidate it into their supply chain or bring it into a third-party supply chain, thus generating a revenue stream. This also prevents electronic products from ending up in landfill, which minimises waste, thus contributing to SDG#11.

This can be done for all companies – IT equipment has a lifetime. IQUTECH can extend IT equipment's lifetime, or they can liquidate it at the end of its lifetime to generate revenue or save revenue.

SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and IQUTECH

Traditionally, IQUTECH has always been customer-driven. In more recent times, the company has looked deeper into their stakeholders.

- Customers – IQUTECH is very customer-centric.
- Employees – IQUTECH sometimes makes their customers more important than their employees, but they are getting better at this.
- Networks – IQUTECH has always been part of one network or another. The passing of information and support from other companies is invaluable.
- Community – IQUTECH is involved in the community, but it is mostly an interest of John or Mark. John is very heavily involved in soccer, and Mark is very involved in Gaelic Football. Also, their kids and their interests influence what they get involved in.

Reporting and Measurement

IQUTECH is part of CirculÉire, the Irish circular economy platform. As part of its membership, IQUTECH completed a Baseline Assessment in 2019 and has been measuring its environmental impact since then. CirculÉire has provided them with metrics that can be used to calculate their performance.

IQUTECH plans on using these metrics to create a module in their software, Blocworx, to provide them with an automated/semi-automated method of constantly monitoring their performance. This allows IQUTECH to look at their requirements and inform its decisions that affect the company's carbon score.

Since IQUTECH has measured their activities, the results have shown that the company is carbon negative. Their repair and refurbishment activity has allowed IQUTECH to offset the carbon they generate. They have also installed solar panels in their building to reduce their electricity and heating consumption, further reducing their carbon output. As Mark O'Sullivan says, 'So, we're happy to say that we are in a good trajectory. The more we repair, the more negative we are'.

Challenges of Working With SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

IQUTECH has been in a little bit of a predicament in Ireland, the market is relatively small and their biggest success has been in Ireland. They have had a lot of success in Poland with Dell and in the Czech Republic with HP. These achievements have not grown as they have in Ireland. So IQUTECH has a challenge from a business development point of view or a marketing point of view, to get their name known in the market in Poland and the Czech Republic and get more business in those countries.

Furthermore, in Ireland IQUTECH has a diversity problem. They need more diversity in their offering, and the other big challenge for them is people and space. It is very expensive and difficult to locate the right people and space. So, IQUTECH is looking outside of its current region trying to find more space. In addition to these challenges, i.e. finding people and space, they also need better access to finance.

Business and Greater Good

Possibly the biggest benefit that IQUTECH sees in the long-term future is in the mobility of electricity and the electrification of transport, which is very close to IQUTECH. Because it can be seen all around us, IQUTECH has been repairing all kinds of electronic and mechanical items throughout their business life. So, for over 20 years IQUTECH has been screening or reworking or repairing or refurbishing parts.

The huge influx of electric bikes, electric scooters and electric cars will transform the requirement for repair, more importantly, the need for local repair. As European Waste Laws around the movement of waste from one jurisdiction to another are becoming more and more regulated, this will provide opportunities for IQUTECH to help the communities around them and how they consume. This can lead to cities being more sustainable, which is the basis of SDG#11. If IQUTECH can provide a service that extends the life of its products, then the purchasing of refurbished products will become the norm. People by their nature would still want the latest fashionable items; however, IQUTECH at least can provide a sustainable channel for their old products, therefore influencing waste management and consumption. IQUTECH is very well placed to meet the demands for refurbished products.

New technology does not stop IQUTECH's ability to repair and refurbish products; it only changes the way they do it, instead of what they do as part of their key business activities. IQUTECH has the staff and the software needed, and they can develop the hardware required to test the new technology. The logistics of returns are the same for all products from food to fashion and everything in between. If the manufacturer provides instructions, the process will flow very easily provided that dismantling a moped or a bike, or a battery pack that belongs to a bike, is very similar to dismantling a PC, a modem or a set-top box. It is within IQUTECH's core competency. IQUTECH could create an ecosystem for use and reuse of electrical products and thus encourage sustainable consumption. Therefore, consumers, e-mobility and products in general that are currently in the market will have a longer life cycle. It is expected that in the future, people will be looking to get more out of their products, and refurbishment will be the first choice for most people.

What Next for IQUTECH and SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

Circular Economy

IQUTECH will not move from their core competency, which is returns management – repair and refurbishment. Their plans for the repair and refurbishment of e-mobility products and the charging infrastructure will allow IQUTECH to make a substantial contribution to the Sustainable Cities SDG. IQUTECH just started looking at objectives and key results, and their North Star goal is to be the largest and best circular economy enabler in Ireland within two years and in

Europe within five years. These are ambitious North Star goals; however, if IQUTECH has the same engagement in their Czech Republic and Poland sites, then they would have three substantial operational sites in Europe. SDG#11 – making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – is something that IQUTECH can make a substantial contribution to.

Consumption

IQUTECH's services will allow people to choose to keep their products and extend their life cycle for as long as possible or to sell, recycle or upcycle these products so they can be purchased by another person. IQUTECH will influence people's habits when it comes to waste management (SDG#11) and responsible consumption (SDG#12).

If IQUTECH can facilitate 'Take Back Schemes' and 'Food Banks' and give products a new/alternative end use, then the company can minimise waste. IQUTECH also feels that 'urban mining'³ is going to be a large element of sustainability.

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³Retrieving and reusing raw materials from discarded electrical products.

Chapter 4

Germany: DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, Strong in Regional Sustainability

Markus Pillmayer

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, Strong in Regional Sustainability: Coffee Enjoyment at the Highest Quality Level, Supported by an Intergenerationally Understood Sustainability Claim

Introduction


DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG¹ is a Bavarian family business with its headquarters in Irschenberg (located south of Munich). DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG specialises in the roasting and distribution of premium coffee and tea and the distribution of high-quality coffee machines.

As a coffee roasting business, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is dependent on green coffee as a preliminary product from the countries of the so-called coffee belt.² Coffee grows in countries that lie between the 25th parallel north and the 25th parallel south around the equator. These are primarily developing countries, which are often characterised by low social security and political instability. This also means long transport routes to the coffee roasting plant in Bavaria. Last but

¹According to German law, a public limited company (AG) is a trading company with its own legal personality (legal entity); only the company's assets are liable to its creditors for its debts. The partners (shareholders) usually have a share in the share capital through contributions. The AG has an important role in today's German economy.

²The term 'coffee belt' refers to the symbolic 'belt around the world' in whose area coffee plants grow. The total area under coffee cultivation is around 10 million hectares. Among the tropical-equatorial countries of the 'coffee belt', Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Uganda, Mexico and Guatemala are among the top 10 largest green coffee producing countries.

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 37–53

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not least, roasting coffee requires a not insignificant amount of energy. As a business with a sustainable and high-quality understanding of its product, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is committed to coffee farmers and the sustainable cultivation of green coffee.

In 1998, the Richter family acquired the DINZLER coffee roasting business from Klaus Dinzler in Bischofswiesen, a small town near the German–Austrian Border. At that time, no one could have guessed the quantum leap the business would make in the next few years. After a temporary move to Rosenheim (a town south-east of Munich), DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has been based at Irschenberg in the municipality of the same name in the Bavarian Alpine foothills since 2011.

Sustainable action has always been a central principle at DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, alongside the quality of the product. Sustainability is not a trend or marketing concept in the business, but is firmly anchored in the business behaviour. Throughout the entire value chain, every effort is made to translate sustainable action into measurable results under the premise of the best possible quality by aligning production with sustainability and supporting social projects from the countries of origin of the green coffees to regional projects around Irschenberg.

Vision and Mission

Every coffee moment should be a moment of pleasure. To fulfil this vision, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has relied on craftsmanship, precision and dedication for decades. For the business, it is a great honour that customers appreciate this promise. As a family-run coffee roasting business, the quality of its products has always been close to the business's heart. Therefore, the mission is to align all production steps from the coffee plantation to the coffee cup with one goal: perfect coffee enjoyment.

Products and/or Services Offered by DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG

“As a family-run business, passing on our values from generation to generation is particularly important to us. Only by acting sustainably will we and future generations have the opportunity to continue pursuing our passion in the future. That is why sustainability is not a trend or marketing concept for us at DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG but is firmly anchored in our behaviour. Throughout the entire value chain, we do our utmost to operate and work as sustainably as possible. In addition, we support social projects out of conviction, from the countries of origin of our green coffees to regional projects and around Irschenberg”. (Franz Richter)

The following offers are available to customers at DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG:

1. High-quality coffee blends and single-origin coffees and espressos, climate-neutral roasting
2. Seminars and events in state-of-the-art buildings
3. Professional coffee machines for business and private customers
4. Large restaurant and coffee bar space
5. Vinotheque with a wide range of wines from Germany, Austria and Italy

Background to DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG

The DINZLER coffee roasting business was founded in Bischofswiesen in 1950 by Otto Dinzler, who opened a grocery shop there and also roasted coffee. In 1970, the business was taken over by his son Klaus Dinzler. Klaus Dinzler concentrated exclusively on the coffee roasting business.

In 1980, Franz Richter was selling coffee machines throughout Germany and was searching intensively for a suitable high-quality product for his machines. Finally, he found the right partner in Klaus Dinzler. Klaus Dinzler and Franz Richter both had the same understanding of quality – together they then developed the so-called Bistro Blend, which is a special feature that works both in the fully automatic machine and in the espresso machine.

For some period of time, Klaus Dinzler was looking for a successor. The love of coffee and the fascination for the product then prompted members of the Richter family to buy the then small coffee roastery from Klaus Dinzler. Thanks to his decades of experience as a coffee machine dealer, Franz Richter had the knowledge and connections to quickly expand the roastery and adapt the range of products and services to the needs of the customers. Franz Richter's guiding principle was 'We can do it better!'

'We Can Do It Better'

It was quickly realised that by establishing direct supplier relationships, the highest quality could be obtained on the one hand, and on the other hand, the coffee farmers could be directly supported through a higher price for their product. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei has established partnerships with coffee farmers in Panama, Colombia, Tanzania and Kenya, among other countries, and is convinced of the quality of the cultivation either through its own visits or through trusted local partners. This special coffee is marketed under its own label 'DINZLER Direkt gehandelt', which translates to 'DINZLER directly traded' (see Fig. 1). In addition to the highest possible quality of the product, the clear focus of the local coffee farmers is on gentle and sustainable cultivation, preferably in mixed cultivation and under shady trees that also allow for a broad fauna.

In 2000, the coffee roasting plant moved from Bischofswiesen to Roseenheim, which enabled the concept of coffee roasting to be experienced by the customer. This was achieved by installing the roasting plant in a former



Fig. 1. Seal 'DINZLER Direkt Gehandelt'.

stonemason's workshop where guests could watch the roasting master at work while they enjoy freshly roasted coffee and homemade cakes from Isolde Richter, Franz Richter's wife. Afterwards, a packet of coffee could be bought in the bean shop. In 2004, however, the spatial capacities were exhausted. The historic industrial building 'Kunstmühle' in Rosenheim offered new possibilities: the coffee roasting shop, café and restaurant were optimised and enlarged and rooms for events were established.

In 2008, the business, which until then had been run as a GmbH³, became an AG.

The new building of the DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG at Irschenberg, which today serves as the business's headquarters, was built in 2009.

'Coffee Is Not Drunk to Quench Thirst or Satisfy Hunger. Coffee Is Something to Be Enjoyed'.

In 2011, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG moved again and opened its headquarters at Irschenberg to concentrate all activities in one place. Today, an architecturally award-winning building houses the coffee roasting plant, a classic coffee bar, a restaurant with kitchen and confectionery, seminar rooms and the business's own *crèche* on an area of 6,500 m² (see Fig. 2).

In 2014, the business was handed over to the next generation. Franz Richter handed over the business to his children Katrin and Matthias and his nephew Rolf Fischer. However, he remains active in the business as Chairman of the

³The limited liability company, abbreviated to GmbH or Gesellschaft mbH, is a legal form under German law for a legal entity under private law that belongs to the category of corporations. The German GmbH was one of the world's first forms of limited liability corporations. Similar corporate forms now exist in most countries of the world. The GmbH is by far the most common corporate form for corporations in Germany.



Fig. 2. Exterior View of the Existing Building With Guest Garden.

Board. In the context of sustainable measures, the involvement of businesses in urban development is becoming increasingly important. Businesses are increasingly recognising the importance of their regional and local environment for their success. Those businesses that are solely focused on maximising shareholder benefit no longer meet the current challenges and expectations of business. Sustainable development goals such as sustainable consumption and production, climate protection measures, affordable energy, etc. can be achieved if the responsibility for sustainable development is not delegated exclusively to politics and/or consumers, but if businesses also actively participate in being part of the solution. At the local level, on site, businesses are in an interrelationship with their region. Due to their resources, capacities and competences, businesses have a great potential to engage effectively for their region by getting involved in solving social or ecological problems and thus contributing to a positive regional development (Basco, 2015; Mayer et al., 2016; Pike et al., 2016). The entrepreneurial family identifies with this and with the region to a high degree.

In 2018, the business headquarters were expanded with the addition of the 'Otto' building, doubling the space once again. 'Otto' houses a coffee warehouse (storage space for roasted coffee), seminar rooms for customers and guests, an event space, a confectionery and ice cream laboratory⁴, as well as a vinotheque (a shop that sells wine

⁴The production room in which all the steps of ice cream production take place is called an ice cream laboratory. The comparison with a laboratory is obvious because anyone who makes and sells ice cream by hand has to comply with the strictest hygiene requirements.

and wine tasting is possible) with a daytime bar, a coffee machine exhibition and a coffee machine shop.

Since 2020, the production of DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has been completely climate neutral. Although emissions are produced during the roasting of coffee because the roasting machines are fired with natural gas, these are offset by high-quality emission certificates. These are made climate-neutral by means of high-quality emission certificates. The Pacajaj REDD project⁵ in the coffee-growing country of Brazil is supported for this purpose. The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS)⁶ certified project provides measurable benefits to the global climate by protecting valuable primary rainforest and biodiversity and improving the sustainable agricultural use of the forest ecosystem.

Table 1 reflects the key milestones of DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG:

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG employs around 200 people in all areas of the business in 2022. This includes the roastery, gastronomy, the bean shop and vinotheca as well as sales, administration and customer service.

Table 1. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG Key Milestones.

1950	Founding of the DINZLER Coffee Roasting Plant by Otto Dinzler in Bischofswiesen
1980	Franz Richter distributes coffee machines throughout Germany
1998	Klaus Dinzler finds no successor, takeover of the business by the Richter family
2000	Relocation of the coffee roasting plant from Bischofswiesen to Rosenheim
2004	Relocation to the historic industrial building ‘Kunstmühle’ in Rosenheim
2008	Change of the business’s legal form from a GmbH to an AG
2009	New construction of the DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG at Irschenberg
2011	Relocation to and opening of the new business headquarters at Irschenberg
2014	Handover to the children Katrin and Matthias and the nephew Rolf Fischer
2018	Extension ‘Otto’
2019	Expansion of the product range to include organic teas
2020	Conversion to climate-neutral production

⁵<https://www.natureoffice.com/en/carbon-offset-projects/forest-projects/pacajaj>

⁶The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), or Verra, formerly the Voluntary Carbon Standard, is a standard for certifying carbon emissions reductions.

Today, the business is managed by Franz Richter, his children Katrin and Matthias, his nephew Rolf Fischer and – as the longest serving DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG employee – Thomas Steinke (see Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Richter Family and Management (From Left to Right): Thomas Steinke, Katrin Richter, Florian Unterleitner, Isolde Richter, Franz Richter, Rolf Richter, Heike Richter and Matthias Richter.

SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG Promotes Regional Uniqueness, Stands for Waste Avoidance and Promotes Inclusion

The diverse challenges of our modern society also affect DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, and therefore creative and pragmatic solutions are found for many of the goals of SDG#11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Of the sub-goals of SDG#11, the following are considered particularly relevant for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG:

- since housing is scarce around Irschenberg, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG actively supports its employees in their search for accommodation (posts on internet forums, Facebook, etc.), guarantees landlords for employees or acts directly as a tenant (SDG#11.1).

- commissions regional craftsmen where possible (SDG#11.4).
- By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management (SDG#11.6). The roasting process is climate-neutral, and the waste from the roasting plant is separated and recycled optimally by the local waste management business.

Although DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is not located in the urban area of Bavaria's state capital Munich, it is integrated into village structures in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps, the SDG goals and their implications for entrepreneurial action are also highly relevant for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG.

Packaging and waste: Packaging usually means waste in the medium term and is often avoidable, even if not entirely. Since coffee has special requirements for a barrier against environmental influences, effective protection against excessive temperature, light, oxygen and moisture must be provided to ensure the long-term shelf life of this natural product. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has succeeded in achieving all these requirements with a minimum of packaging made of PE⁷ film and a thin barrier layer, while at the same time ensuring problem-free recycling of the material used. The PE used is 100% recyclable and is collected in Germany via the Dual System.⁸ In accordance with SDG#11, the goal in the area of waste is to increase the separate collection rate and to reduce the volume of waste in general. For packaging, the aim is to use as few resources as possible coupled with a high recycling rate. A deposit system has already been established for major customers, for example.

A returnable system has been developed for major customers. Here, the products are delivered in food-safe reusable containers that can be used many times and meet all hygienic standards through thorough cleaning after each use. The use of packaging films is completely eliminated here.

Emissions: Within SDG#11, emission-related environmental impacts are addressed through the indicator particulate matter in SDG#11.6. Since 2020, the entire production process at DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG at Irschenberg has been calculated to be climate neutral. To achieve the most energy-saving roasting possible, all roasting machines were exchanged and replaced with maximum-efficiency roasters that enable significant energy savings compared to

⁷The basic material for polyethylene – PE – is the crude petrol produced during the refining of crude oil. By splitting this intermediate product, a non-toxic, gaseous compound of carbon and hydrogen is produced: ethylene. PE films are produced without chlorine or sulphur and do not contain any plasticisers or heavy metals. They are groundwater-neutral and burn without toxic emissions.

⁸The Dual System refers to the household collection and disposal of used sales packaging in Germany. It follows the requirements of the German Packaging Act. The name 'Dual' is due to the fact that the privately organised company was introduced as a second system alongside the already existing public disposal system.

the previous models by optimising the burner settings. Thus, an actual reduction in natural gas consumption of 17% per kg of roasted coffee was achieved. In addition, the entire business exclusively purchases green electricity to achieve the goal of a resource-saving supply chain in the energy sector as well. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG sends orders climate neutrally with DHL GoGreen (DHL is a German logistics business offering courier, parcel delivery and express mail services). This means that the transport-related CO₂ emissions of the parcel quantities shipped are offset.

Our cities are growing: The number of inhabitants is increasing and vacant land is being built on more and more. A major problem here is air pollution and the associated impact on climate change. The reduction of air pollution is seen as a solution, and at the same time a challenge, in the sense of SDG#11. A roasting plant is also affected by this. To further reduce emissions for the neighbourhood of the roasting plant and to avoid odour pollution, investments were made in the plant's exhaust air purification system. To prevent odour nuisance to the neighbours, there is biological filtration of the roasting gases. The smelly smoke is pressed into a stainless steel container that is a good two metres in size. Inside it is bark mulch, i.e. crushed, unfermented tree bark. Bacteria live there and decompose the odour particles. The smoke that ultimately rises into the air is largely odourless (see Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. The Roastery.

Business Model and SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

The preservation of biodiversity is particularly important for a business that sources and processes natural products. Not only does it further secure the coffee roasting business's business model, it also ensures a liveable environment in the countries where the coffee bean is produced as well as at the business's location in Irschenberg.

In the countries of origin of the coffee plant, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG supports the cultivation of coffee on natural farms with a wide range of flora and fauna through its 'DINZLER Direkt gehandelt' coffees.

On site at Irschenberg, the possibilities are somewhat more limited, but it is still possible, for example, by only partially mowing the spacious guest garden (see [Fig. 1](#)) in summer, to leave a mixed natural meadow where bee colonies are established. The honey produced is used in the in-house gastronomy and complements the wide range of regionally produced and sourced food and goods.

Networks and Awards Regarding SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG's commitment to sustainability is also reflected in the large number of awards it has received:

2011

- Award for the new building in 'Europe's 1,000 most important works of architecture'.
- Leaders Club Germany: Silver Palm for the overall gastronomic concept. To promote innovation in the industry, Leaders Club Germany has presented the annual Leaders Club Award since 2002 for new gastronomic concepts that have the potential to become industry trends.

2013

- Bavarian State Prize for Equal Opportunities in the World of Work: The Bavarian State Government awards businesses that are committed to more equal opportunities in the world of work. The prize is awarded to one small, one medium-sized and one large business. They are looking for businesses that offer their employees a family-friendly working environment, e.g. by supporting childcare through a business childcare facility, financial subsidies or cooperation with childminders.

- Miesbach District Business Award: By awarding the Business Award, SMG Standortmarketing-Gesellschaft Landkreis Miesbach mbH⁹ recognises the great commitment and dedication of the entrepreneurs who are responsible for the economic success of the businesses in the district.

2014

- Winner of the Coffeeshop Award: Since 2006, Coffee Business magazine (a German-language, supra-regional trade magazine for the coffee industry) has presented the Coffeeshop Award, an entrepreneur and innovation prize for the coffee industry. With the Coffeeshop Award, the jury recognises businesses that are economically sound and operate an innovative concept in the coffee industry.

2016

- Hospitality HR Award, 1st place – ‘Employee Retention’ category: The Hospitality HR Award is the first and only award for human resources management in the hotel and catering industry, presented by the German Hotel Academy (GHA). The award recognises innovative strategies in the categories of training, recruiting and employee retention/development as well as the most convincing comprehensive overall HR strategies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

2019

- Falstaff selects DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG as Bavaria’s ‘most popular coffee bar & roastery’: Falstaff is an Austrian wine and gourmet magazine. It is the oldest and most widely circulated wine magazine in Austria and is published in German-speaking countries.

2020

- Award as ‘Blooming Business’ from the Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection (see below).

2021

- Recommended by ‘Gusto – der kulinarische Reiseführer’ (culinary travel guide) – The best restaurants and country inns in Germany 2021: a nationally acclaimed gourmet guide for restaurant and gourmet criticism.
- Hospitality HR Award (education) (see above).

⁹Regional organisation for economic development.

2022

- 2nd rank for Katrin Richter as Bavarian Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG also has the following seals:

- ‘DINZLER Direkt gehandelt’: in-house seal for small farmers who produce high-quality coffee for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG.
- Fairtrade: Fairtrade connects consumers, businesses and producer organisations and changes trade and commerce through better prices for smallholder families, as well as humane working conditions for employees on plantations in developing and emerging countries.
- EU organic label: The label identifies products that originate from organic farming and whose producers or processors comply with the criteria for organic farming as defined by EU law.
- Climate-neutral roasting: in-house seal (see Fig. 5) to draw attention to the fact that all DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG coffees are produced with the lowest possible CO₂ emissions. Any remaining emissions that can no longer be reduced are compensated for with high-quality CO₂ certificates (see above).

SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG

“The DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG coffee roasting plant attaches great importance to ensuring that both guests and employees feel comfortable. This also includes a responsible approach to the surrounding nature”. (Katrin Richter, member of the board)



Fig. 5. In-House Seal for Climate-Neutral Roasting.

Green and open spaces, which are reflected in SDG#11.7, have a proven positive effect on air quality and the climate. They serve local recreation, health care and are not least an important water reservoir and habitat for animals and plants. In addition, urban greenery makes our cities more resilient to heat waves and heavy rainfall events – this is important in view of climate change. Within the framework of the ‘Blühpakt Bayern’ (Bavarian Flowering Pact), the Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection would like to encourage businesses to make their areas flower- and bee-friendly ([Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz, 2022a](#)). This not only helps wild bees, but also the entire biodiversity of Bavaria. The term ‘blooming business’ is deliberately very broad, so that in addition to businesses, for example, authorities or other public institutions should also feel encouraged to apply ([Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Umwelt und Verbraucherschutz, 2022b](#)).

Award ‘Blühender Betrieb’ (=Flowering Business)

Businesses that meet the following criteria are eligible for the award:

- At least 20% of the open spaces on the business’s premises are designed to be close to nature. This means in particular – continuous flowering from spring to autumn, different habitats of native wildflowers, perennials, shrubs and woody plants. Green roofs are counted as part of the semi-natural open space.
- No extensive use of chemical pesticides.
- The flowering areas remain unmown over the winter (preservation of reproduction and overwintering sites for insects).
- No use of peaty substrates in the design and maintenance of open spaces.

‘Flowering Business’ Award for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG

When designing the open spaces of the DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG at Irschenberg, great attention was paid to a near-natural, varied design. The peripheral areas of the grounds are characterised by species-rich flower meadows and wild hedges made of native woody plants. The flower meadows were planted with autochthonous seeds on a low-nutrient, gravelly substrate and are mown only once a year, in late summer. During the extensive earthmoving, the exposed raw soil in slope areas was deliberately left to natural succession. In addition, gravel fills and dead wood were introduced. An extensive orchard and a cherry grove form the transition to the terraces near the buildings. In the shade of the trees are two bee colonies, which are looked after by a local beekeeper. The grounds are freely accessible. Flowering areas in the sense of SDG#11a are therefore so important, because the cultural landscape in Bavaria is significantly shaped by agriculture. However, the cultivated landscape, which has evolved over many millennia, has changed considerably in the meantime. The food supply for flower-seeking insects is becoming increasingly scarce, especially from June onwards, when the early flowers are gone. Flowering areas provide nectar and

pollen for flower-seeking insects and offer structure, cover and food for wildlife in open fields. Species-rich flowering areas provide a diverse habitat in every respect.

In 2020, this commitment was recognised with the corresponding award from the Bavarian State Ministry for the Environment and Consumer Protection. The efforts of the DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG in the context of SDG#11 are reflected, among other things, in the DNK Declaration 2020, which must be submitted for the German Sustainability Code.¹⁰

Reporting and Measurement

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG documents its actions in the context of sustainability in the so-called DNK declaration (last time in 2020).¹¹ The DNK declaration is submitted by companies at regular intervals as part of the German Sustainability Code (GSC). This code provides a framework for reporting non-financial performance that can be used by organisations and companies of all sizes and legal forms, including internationally. It was adopted by the German Council for Sustainable Development in 2011 following a stakeholder process. The Sustainability Code makes corporate sustainability performance visible and more comparable through standardisation. It thus broadens the basis for assessing sustainability and describes minimum requirements for reporting companies and organisations. In order to comply with the GSC, users prepare a declaration on 20 GSC criteria¹² on strategy, process management, environmental concerns, employee concerns and society as well as corporate governance. In addition, they report or declare selected performance indicators of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the European Federation of Financial Analysts Societies (EFFAS). The 28 GRI or 16 EFFAS performance indicators are either reported (comply) or the deviation is explained (explain). This is possible, for example, if data is not yet collected or the required information is not material for the business case. As a result, users describe the core of corporate sustainability in their specific business case. In addition, they receive new impulses for the

¹⁰The German Sustainability Code is a cross-sector transparency standard for reporting corporate sustainability performance and can be used by businesses and organisations of all sizes and legal forms. It was developed in 2011 by the German Council for Sustainable Development in a stakeholder process and has since been revised several times (last revision August 2017).

¹¹The declaration can be downloaded from the following address (in German): https://www.dinzler.de/downloads/DNK_2020_Dinzler%20Kaffeer%C3%B6sterei%20AG.pdf?1657609574.

¹²The criteria cover the following 20 areas: strategy, materiality, objectives, depth of the value chain, responsibility, rules and processes, control, incentive schemes, stakeholder engagement, innovation and product management, usage of natural resources, resource management, climate-relevant emissions, employee rights, equal opportunities, qualifications, human rights, corporate citizenship, political influence and conduct that complies with the law and policy (German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE), 2022b).

integration of sustainability into the core business and thus gain a competitive advantage in the long term. The companies' declarations of conformity are published in a database on the DNK website ([German Council for Sustainable Development \(RNE\), 2022a](#)).

Challenges of Working With SDG#11

In a region with a high quality of life and high economic prosperity, there are challenges that are also found in urban areas. These include the high cost of living, scarce housing and the increasing difficulty of recruiting qualified workforce. In addition, there are the challenges of rural areas, such as longer transport routes, a sparse network of public transport and thus a high dependence on cars.

These challenges can only be compensated for to a very limited extent by DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG. This makes it possible for employees from abroad, in particular, to take up employment that would otherwise not be possible due to the difficulty of finding a place to live. There is competition for skilled workers, so employers need to position themselves attractively. In terms of SDG#11.1, this also includes affordable housing and a reasonable cost of living, which DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG tries to assist through being a guarantor for staff in their applications for rental accommodation.

Business and Greater Good

As a responsible employer and regional entrepreneur, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is committed in various ways:

- *Crèche* for employees as a basic service in sense of SDG#11.1, enabling a quick return to working life.
- Annual election of 'Employee of the Year' and awarding of the Golden Coffee Bean (prize: trip to the country of origin of coffee). The award is presented in three categories, including social competence.
- Cooperation with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (development of training programmes and further training opportunities).
- Annual election of the Coffee and Espresso of the Year by customers.
- Regular exchange with suppliers: here the product is discussed, but also the plantation. They also talk about new developments, innovations and projects.
- Staff appraisals take place at least once a year. Among other things, these discussions focus on the goals and wishes of the employees.
- Support for the election and formation of a works council.
- Regular offers of free health care for the employees.

Typical factors that contribute to the strengthening of the local community are the financial donations of local businesses. In addition to donations to local associations (volunteer fire brigade, cycling club, ski club, etc.), the coffee roasting

business has turned a necessity into a virtue to activate charitable commitment for support associations, hospices, hospitals, etc. The coffee roasting business has also made a contribution to the community. Since coffee beans of high quality are packed in jute sacks in the country of production, which are no longer used after roasting but are very popular with visitors to the roastery, e.g. as decorative objects or winter protection for plants, the idea was born to sell the sacks for one euro and to donate the entire proceeds to charitable projects. This way, recycling or upcycling of already existing and processed raw materials is achieved and social cohesion is strengthened at the same time. In 2020, the revenue was used to support the following institutions in the region, among others: *Gemeinnützige Lebenshilfe – Villa Kunterbunt Miesbach* (association of parents, relatives and friends of mentally and multiply disabled people), *RSV Irschenberg e.V. – Jugendsportförderung* (promotion of youth sports), *Behandlungszentrum der Kinderklinik Aschau* (children's hospital), *Bahnhofsmision München Obdachlosenverpflegung* (catering for the homeless), etc.

DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has also been associated with cycling for years. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG has supported the 'Maloja Pushbiker Futurestars' and the 'Oliver Blas Youngsters', two local cycling teams.

Cohesion is and has been called for again and again in the past. At DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, it was quickly understood that people who came to the region in need can and must be helped through meaningful activity, and that inclusion counteracts a possible social divide. Thus, from the beginning of the (European) refugee influx in the mid-2010s, the business has been committed to helping refugees get a work permit, organising housing and carpooling for the business, and making work possible for numerous refugees. Here, too, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG is committed to SDG#11.1 and SDG#11.5, in particular, to providing socially disadvantaged people with access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and to supporting people who have had to leave their homes due to disasters.

What Next for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG and SDG#11

Based on the challenges described, it is an important goal for DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG to secure high-quality and sustainable housing options for its employees and, if necessary, to build them by themselves. This is to avoid long travel times for employees and to create attractive housing options for families and individuals in the sense of SDG#11.1.

A further expansion of direct trade relations with coffee farmers is particularly important due to the high impact on producers and families in the producing countries. The resulting incentive to switch to a diversified cultivation method through higher purchase prices, instead of practising intensive agriculture under cost and revenue pressure, sustainably improves the living conditions in the growing countries. DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG places the highest value on this. For example, in the sense of SDG#11c, DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG sources its green coffee from the Vohora family in Tanzania, who have been running the

farm there for three generations. For over 90 years, the family has been striving to obtain the best green coffee from the fertile soil. In addition to growing Arabica coffee, one of the farm manager's goals (Mr Francis Mutavi) is to preserve and promote biodiversity: In addition to coffee trees and shrubs, beehives are also cultivated on the plantations.¹³

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Chapter 5

USA: Wolf Connection and Inclusive, Safe Spaces for All

Patrick Fuery and Kelli Fuery

USA: Wolf Connection and Inclusive, Safe Spaces for All

Wolf Connection is a wolf sanctuary located on the outskirts of a rural town, Acton, California, nestled in the Angeles National Forest. The sanctuary consists of 165 acres of stunning woodland and high desert mountains, including a year-round stream. It is located within a one-hour drive from Los Angeles. Wolf Connection runs a series of programmes based around issues of mental health, addressing social and economic inequality, and providing strategies for resilience and well-being. Wolf Connection identifies the following as its core business activities: Providing Animal Rescue and Wildlife Preservation; At-Risk Youth Education and Empowerment; Community Empowerment; and Environmental Awareness and Sustainability (see Fig. 1 for one of the wolves at Wolf Connection). This chapter examines these activities as they reflect the UN's SDG#11.

Introduction

Wolf Connection is an exemplary model of the UN's SDG#11, offering a sustained and long-term commitment to a number of the key aspects, notably SDG#11.a, which aims to provide a 'positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas'; SDG#11.4 which is to 'strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage'; and SDG#11.7 which is to 'provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities'. The philosophy of Wolf Connection, and in particular the ways in which it demonstrates the idea of a family business and its commitment to these issues, is best summed up in its statement on the relationship between its operations and projects to the natural world and

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 55–77

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Fig. 1. One of Wolf Connection's Wolves.

humanity: 'The wolves model a pack mentality and their stories of moving through trauma include support from the beings who surround them. Programme participants apply the wolves' teachings amongst their human pack at Wolf Connection as well as in their daily lives. They come to recognise the power of community and support amongst humans. We explore the ways in which we can protect and enjoy the wonders that the world provides us and recognise that we are connected to all that surrounds us' ([Wolf Connection Program FAQs](#), n.d.a).

Wolf Connection runs several programmes which align with these issues of empowerment, resilience and overcoming trauma, most notably the three distinct programmes for Women Veterans, At-Risk Youth and Women. This case study will focus on these activities and explain how they align with SDG#11. Our emphasis will be on two key aspects of this strategic development goal: how the preserving of cultural heritage and the natural environment is a core element of the physical location and dimensions of the sanctuary, and how the sanctuary utilises the natural environment and its compassionate programmes to foster safe and inclusive spaces for women and youth in particular. The geographical location (a natural space close to Los Angeles) and sociocultural positioning makes it a significant case study for the issues of accessible space between the urban, peri-urban and the natural environment. This case study examines how it is the

work of the family business of the founder Teo Alfero and his partner Renee Alfero, along with the staff of Wolf Connection that drives this unique project.

Vision and Mission

At one level, the core activity of Wolf Connection is the rescue and housing of wolves and wolf dogs that come from neglected and abusive backgrounds. The animals have suffered trauma at the hands of humans, often being at risk of euthanasia. The sanctuary rehabilitates the wolves, providing a vast natural expanse for them to heal. The bond between the animals and their human carers is palpable. What is remarkable is how the wolves are nurtured back from their traumatic past, living an existence between their own natural instincts and pack order, and the human environment. This parallels the participants in the programmes run by Wolf Connection, all having past experiences of trauma and abandonment and in search of a way to heal. These difficulties and distresses arise from different contexts but do share several features that are directly relevant to the issues here. What is particularly noteworthy is the interrelationship between trauma arising from urban-based environments and the therapeutic programmes located in the natural surroundings. It is the spaces of the forest, the sounds of the streams, the sensorial attachment to the natural environment and the immersion into the wolf world that aligns with the sustainable development goal of fostering safe and inclusive spaces. These tangible, physical connections of space and emotion are made even more powerful given the traumatised, neglected and socially isolated participants in the programmes. These programmes and activities are summed up in three of the mission statements of the institution, including the sanctuary's integrated processes of psychological therapeutic healing, the acts of rescue (for both humans and animals) and processes of empowerment. What is particularly noteworthy is how closely these policies and programmes align with the SDG addressing #11:

Wolf Therapy: We provide at-risk groups the education, character and skill-building resources in an emotionally, mentally, physically safe and supportive environment that will allow them to grow, thrive and become contributing community members.

Rescue: We improve the quality of life of large canines by providing rescue, sanctuary and behavioural enrichment in order to strengthen the bond and collaboration between humans and animals.

Empowerment: We integrate the animal/nature experience in education, workshops and retreats that build self-esteem, encourage personal growth and spiritual awareness, and help prepare for the future with positive values, realistic goals and the powerful life skills needed to achieve those goals.

(Wolf Connection, n.d.a)

Services Offered by Wolf Connection

The key services offered by Wolf Connection are listed below. This case study will explore how these align with SDG#11 both as individual actions as well as an integrated whole:

- A range of diverse programmes centred on different sections of the community, engaging with strategies for mental well-being and recovery.
- Therapy for at-risk youths and social integration.
- Empowerment programmes for women.
- Resilience strategies for women veterans.
- Care for abused and neglected wolves.
- Care for the natural environment.

Background to Wolf Connection

To better understand how Wolf Connection can be seen as a model for SDG#11, it is worthwhile articulating the organisational structure and the background stories of its founder and key staff. This section will examine the history, growth and development of the organisation, the underpinning philosophies of its founder and staff and how the sanctuary aligns its mission of rescue and healing with the natural environment.

Founders and Key People

Wolf Connection was founded in 2009 by Teo Alfero (see [Fig. 2](#)). Originally from Argentina, Teo moved to California in 1999. He comes from a family of



Fig. 2. Teo Alfero, Founder.

educators and legislators who have supported youth development in his native country. Embracing those values, Teo developed a passion to reach out to young people in need of mentoring and guidance. Over the years, he has been a court advocate with the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programme, a registered foster father, a trainer for the Safe School Ambassadors programme and a mentor and a life coach for adolescents and young adults. In his private coaching practice, Teo has specialised in working with boys from various social backgrounds, guiding them into a constructive dialogue to express themselves and find ways to deal with their personal life challenges.

Wolf Connection, being consistent with its values of the human–animal engagement, lists Tala (see Fig. 3) as the co-founder of Wolf Connection. We include her here to be true to the spirit of the organisation, as Teo describes her enduring presence: ‘Tala now rests at the Wolf Heart Ranch, overlooking the pack she created’.

Teo and Renee married in 2013 and have worked together in developing the wolf sanctuary and its interconnected programmes. As Lead of Animal Behaviour, Renee (see Fig. 4) oversees the socialisation of the rescued wolf dogs and

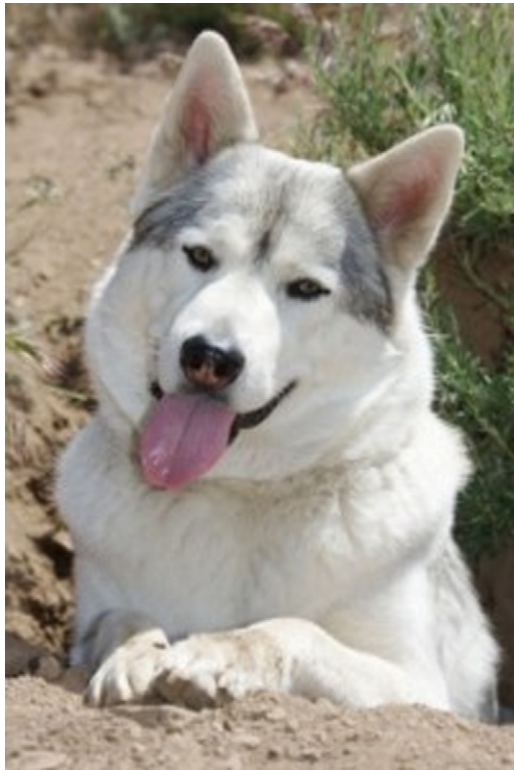


Fig. 3. Tala, Co-founder.



Fig. 4. Renee Alfero – Lead of Animal Behaviour.

general caretaking training for volunteers. Renee also works with the programmes team by facilitating the animal/human connection to maximise Wolf Connection’s programming. Renee trained at Moorpark College’s Exotic Animal Training and Management programme with continued hands-on medical experience as a veterinary technician.

Amanda is a licenced psychologist and educator, and at Wolf Connection she collaborates with the wolf pack and human programme team to facilitate powerful opportunities for awareness, connection, healing and growth. Amanda (see Fig. 5) earned her PhD in Counselling Psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and her clinical training and experience has focused on multicultural competence, group interventions and mindfulness-based approaches to wellness. At a postdoctoral level, she has engaged in intensive training focused on psychological trauma and healing. Consistent with her commitment to social justice as a therapist, she has presented and published several empirical studies focused on social, cultural and training issues (including inmates’ experiences, White privilege and multicultural learning environments).



Fig. 5. Dr Amanda Beer – Director of Programs.

Ree's (see Fig. 6) role at the sanctuary is multi-layered and, in many ways, exemplifies the multiplicity of roles taken up by the staff. She is also a testament to the healing efficacy of the programmes. Her primary role as Director of Development positions her as a lynchpin for many of the key activities of Wolf Connection. The sanctuary continually interconnects its operations with a non-profit status, which shapes several of its business strategies and processes. As such, there is extensive networking involved across a range of stakeholders, external agencies (both government and private) and the general public. Ree's background in the entertainment industry (for over 12 years in NYC as an actress and screenwriter) enables her to engage these different constituents as well as understand the uniqueness of the sanctuary as a business. A part of her personal history also aligns with Wolf Connection's core business of dealing with health and trauma. Just days before moving to California, she underwent a serious health issue involving extensive treatment. It was during her recovery that she decided to volunteer at Wolf Connection. Working with the wolves, she saw a strength in herself that she hadn't previously realised was there. She started working in the programmes and has witnessed the deep transformation in the youth participants in particular.

Organisational Structure and Description, Size of Organisation and Key Attributes of Organisation

Wolf Connection ranch is based on 165 acres in the mountains of the Angeles National Forest, an hour North of Los Angeles. This land was purchased in 2015



Fig. 6. Ree Merrill – Director of Development.

and subsequently occupied in 2016, expanding the original site threefold. Wolf Connection is financed by private donations, public admissions and by school districts and foster-care agencies that pay for the youth programmes. It has a total staff of 26, including the leadership team which is comprised of: the founder Teo Alfero; his wife/partner Renee Alfero, Lead of Animal Behaviour; Dr Amanda Beer, Director of Programs; Ree Merrill, Director of Development; Annette Golden, Director of Operations; Elena Albanese, Manager of Pack Services; and Claralynn Schnell, Executive Assistant. There are also nine staff members, covering areas of education, animal health, programming, podcasting, video and promotional materials and volunteering. There are also several volunteers, many of whom are previous participants in the programmes.

The organisation achieves remarkable efficiency through its structural processes, with specialised roles performing identified key processes (as one would expect). However, what is a somewhat unique attribute of the organisational system is the way in which staff will engage with other activities of the programmes and wolf care. For example, for the authors' visit, Ree Merrill led the hike with the wolves, explained the care of the animals and the role of the environment and spoke on the history of the sanctuary and its future plans. In short, she was able to articulate all facets of the sanctuary, from its business model to each wolf's story, from the therapeutic principles of the programmes to the way the natural environment is such an integral component of what is done. This deep

knowledge of the organisation is a significant aspect to the business model itself. The sanctuary itself would perhaps describe this as modelling a pack identity, just as each wolf in the pack has a specific role and responsibilities, they will also fill the other needs of the pack as required.

SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and Wolf Connection

In this case, we focus on a few of the key targets for SDG#11 in terms of Wolf Connection's organisational principles and activities, most notably the interconnections between building and supporting sustainable communities and the Wolf Connection programmes (see Fig. 7) and activities. The organisational underpinnings of all the programmes can be seen as stemming from the partnership of Teo and Renee's work with at-risk youth and the care for the animals. A central aspect of this analysis is how this business operates to develop and enact initiatives for communities at-risk, as well as the strategies based on bridging the alienating and traumatising existence many feel in their urban/city environments and the natural spaces of



Fig. 7. Wolf Connection Logo.

the sanctuary with its programmes of healing and empowerment. All of Wolf Connections' activities can be seen as a cogent and deliberate set of tactics on environmental sustainability and the spatial interactions between city life and the natural environment to create safe spaces. In this sense, Wolf Connection supports UN SDG#11 through its investment and development of programmes that will enable individuals to reintegrate into their communities as productive members. We wish to focus on three key indicators of SDG#11, notably: *SDG indicators 11.4.1 – Protecting cultural heritage*, *SDG indicators 11.7.1 – Open spaces in cities* and *SDG indicators 11.7.1 – Safe spaces in cities*.

SDG#11.4 – Protecting Cultural Heritage

This target aligns with actions on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage. Wolf Connection has a distinctive vision in this regard, recognising that natural heritage is inherently embedded in cultural heritage and that there is an inseparable bond between humanity and the natural world. Even more than this, Wolf Connection aligns all its programmes with the philosophy that the natural heritage is imperative to both mental and physical well-being. Of note in this regard is the efficacy of the at-risk youth programme which involves taking students from very difficult and challenging home and school environments and working with them in the natural environment. In doing so, they gain an appreciation of the natural world, and their role in preserving it. Many go on to engage with how cultural heritage can play a major role in social integration. One of the most striking spaces (and in many ways, metaphors) at the sanctuary that exemplifies this is the Medicine Wheel (see Fig. 8).

Participants stand in and alongside the wheel's directions, reflecting on past difficulties to move towards a stronger future. The Medicine Wheel itself is drawn from Native American culture and its presence at the sanctuary is an enacting of the protection of cultural heritage, particularly of the five tribes living in the region prior to European occupation, namely Tongva, Tataviam, Chumash, Kitanemuk and Serrano. As the National Library of Medicine summarises, the Medicine Wheel is ubiquitous to many Native American tribes:

The Medicine Wheel, sometimes known as the Sacred Hoop, has been used by generations of various Native American tribes for health and healing. It embodies the Four Directions, as well as Father Sky, Mother Earth, and Spirit Tree—all of which symbolize dimensions of health and the cycles of life. The Medicine Wheel can take many different forms. It can be an artwork such as artifact or painting, or it can be a physical construction on the land. Hundreds or even thousands of Medicine Wheels have been built on Native lands in North America over the last several centuries.

(National Library of Medicine, n.d.)



Fig. 8. Medicine Wheel at the Sanctuary.

Wolf Connection's creation and implementation of the Medicine Wheel both preserves cultural symbols and practices, as well as engages with traditional systems of thinking to empower individuals and groups.

SDG#11.7.1 – Open Spaces in Cities

This indicator measures how the relationship between a city and the open spaces in and around it is utilised and planned for public use for all, and in particular by sex, age and persons with disabilities. There is a strong link between the natural environment of Wolf Connection (see Fig. 9), with its open spaces, forested areas and trails, and the nearby city of Los Angeles, as well as peri-urban areas (such as Palmdale, Acton and Antelope Valley). Los Angeles is the primary originating location for the general public visitors, and as such the sanctuary creates open spaces for city dwellers; many of the programme participants (most notably the at-risk youths) come from the peri-urban, smaller cities and communities located in closer proximity to the sanctuary. The communities that visit the sanctuary do so in this context of shared open spaces and as an escape from the large city environs of L.A. What makes this somewhat distinctive is that the sanctuary works carefully and consistently to embed visitors in the wolves' natural environment. All programmes and visits are built around this idea that people are entering the wolves' 'home'. This is crucial to how the programmes operate, that is, as immersive ecosystems to enable people to experience the natural world so



Fig. 9. Ree Merrill With Theo¹.

close to the city. This connection and simultaneous distinction of the sanctuary's space(s) to the city is important as it foregrounds the necessity to preserve these natural, open environments.

Of particular note, the eight-week programme for at-risk youths foregrounds the natural ecosystem as one for healing and self-contemplation. The programme makes a direct connection between the natural world and the student's sense of belonging. This produces pro-environmental behaviour as well as an increased capacity to manage and control the travails of life back in the students' emotionally complex life in the city and urban areas. These students come from extremely challenging backgrounds, including expulsion schools, and face the prospect of being placed in a juvenile detention centre. The at-risk programme demonstrates not just intervention in these troubled lives, but also a high rate of preventing recidivism. By foregrounding the preservation of the natural world, the

¹This image is indicative of the significance of the immersive aspects of the natural environment at the sanctuary. To be at the sanctuary is to be embedded in a space that is removed from the urban. It is the placing of the self into the natural environment.

programme also instils in the participants the need to be environmentally aware and enact change to safeguard it.

SDG#11.7.1 Safe Spaces in Cities

This indicator engages with issues related to victims of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence. A key aspect of this is to measure and help support the provision of universal access to safe, inclusive and available, green and public spaces in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (see Fig. 10). This goal is particularly relevant to Wolf Connection, informing a range of strategies for the programmes it runs, the concepts and practices of empowerment for individuals and groups that have been disenfranchised, traumatised and/or alienated through events in their lives. Wolf Connection actively engages with creating a safe, healing environment, allowing people to regain strength after suffering from systemic prejudicial issues. This is demonstrated most tangibly in the programmes offered by the sanctuary, often in collaboration with outside agencies. By way of illustration, the following summarises programmes that demonstrate the safe spaces of the sanctuary created to counter the travails of the participants' lives:

The Resiliency Program for Women Veterans collaborates with Military Veteran Affairs Department to provide six weekly sessions for women veterans. The



Fig. 10. A Participant in the Student Programme, With Wolf. *Note:* This close, physical contact with the animals is one of the most powerful processes of the programs.

programme recognises that women in the armed forces are often subjected to potentially traumatising abuse within the system as well as the anxieties of deployment. Two statements from past participants speak to this:

From an explosive-disposal unit service member

The hardest part of coming back home was to be rejected by people because of the way I look. I gave everything for them and their families, and I never thought this would happen. Being unconditionally accepted and loved by Willow (one of the wolves) has literally changed my life. I feel a huge weight releasing off my chest, as if one of my lungs was missing too and now I have it back.

From a veteran battling depression and homelessness

As crazy and chaotic as the deployment was, I find civilian life a lot crazier. There is no ROE (rules of engagement) here. I am anxious all the time, more than I was in Afghanistan. But after a day here with the wolves, I feel like I have a pack again. I feel they understand me.

The Women and Wolves Program is a ten-week immersive programme that has a global dimension. Women from around the globe meet weekly to engage with ideas through lessons, culminating with an in-person retreat at Wolf Heart Ranch for women and wolves to connect in real-time. Previous participant's comments echo the intent of SDG#11 in terms of safe space and the natural environment:

This observation is mine and mine alone. Each wolf shares their stories in unique and individual ways to the humans who take the time to listen. What I have suffered and endured does not define me, but it is a part of me. It's in the scars, some visible and some not. I was afraid before. I was scared to lose what made me whole. What would I become when so much was taken from me? Am I half of the woman that I used to be? I see you, Annie [a wolf], brave... the warrior having lost a limb, but still rooted in your self-confidence. I see you, not less than because of your loss, but more. How do we know what we can conquer until we are faced with having to do it? The strength it took to overcome was inside of you all along... inside of me, too. I didn't have to think about it, it was there, inside, waiting to rise. It was waiting for the moment to show itself. Thank you, Annie, for the reminder that this survivor was a survivor all along. You are a beacon of light shining out showing us all what "being whole" really means". A breast cancer survivor on what she learned from Annie. (a three-legged wolf)

Other participants have said:

The Women and Wolves program promised an experience that will create a safe space to grow and find the magic and fire within us. My experience as a participant in Women and Wolves most definitely did exactly that. I left the retreat on the final day enchanted with the possibilities the future holds. The entire experience blessed me with more knowledge, peace, forgiveness, vision, self respect, friendship, curiosity, love, magic, fire, grace, and grit.

I sit here with tears in my eyes as I think about my experience in Women and Wolves. To say that this program is life-changing seems like an understatement. I feel like I will never be the same person again, in a good way.

I've developed the courage and confidence to step into new roles and move through deep blockages.

The following two comments are from the student researchers for this chapter, included here to reflect the impact of these stories and experiences on a new generation whose lives will be most directly impacted by the United Nations' sustainability goals:

The vulnerability shown by the wolves has been demonstrated through countless individuals, who have transformed their lives after visiting the sanctuary. The experience is life-changing, leaving many personalities unrecognizable after the challenging process. Not only are these people bettering themselves through a wolf connection, but this connection is reshaping the wolf narrative for this generation.

–Ali Davenport

Something that really stuck out to me was Ree's description of the therapy, when she explained that people with a history of trauma, abuse, or neglect were interacting with wolves that had also experienced trauma or neglect. A quote from our interview with Ree that I immediately wrote down was "If the wolves can get through the trauma, so can I;" I thought this was such a beautiful way to describe the therapy, as mutually beneficial between the two parties working together through their individual trauma.

–Sophia Mall

Business Model of Wolf Connection, Its Relationship to the Greater Good and SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

When the land, the wolves, and the humans come together . . . well, only amazing things can happen.

–Teo Alfero

Wolf Connection is classified as a non-profit organisation, holding a 501(c) (3) US tax status. This specific tax category is determined through a range of activities; the two most directly related to this organisation is the prevention of cruelty to animals and children and providing services to the community. The relevance here is that this tax status reflects the entwined processes of the organisation as a family-based business and the social issues articulated in the activities. As an example of the relationship between the organisational processes of the business and the programmes, we note how the At-Risk Youth Education and Empowerment activities are aligned with the business model in the following strategic implementations:

We empower youth to become authentic leaders and contributing community members. We accomplish this through facilitating experiential relationships with rescued wolves and the natural environment. We provide single-day programs, multi-day retreats and 8-week animal-encounter therapy, experiential education, trauma relief, and empowerment programs for at-risk youth and other at-risk populations. We serve contracts with LA Dept of Public Social Services, Dept of Children & Family Services, Antelope Valley Unified High School District, Palmdale School District, and other schools, youth organisations and community organisations.

([Wolf Connection, n.d.b](#))

Along with the leadership team, Wolf Connection has an Advisory Board, comprised of 10 voting members, which supports and sustains many of the developments of the sanctuary as a business. The constitution of this Board is indicative of some of the unique characteristics of the business model with its family-based origins and philosophy, and as such, it is worth summarising the key members, their backgrounds and roles in the sanctuary. The recurring attributes of the members are that they combine three to four disciplinary areas of expertise, namely: business (and investment strategies); medical and healthcare; working with disadvantaged people, particularly at-risk youth; animal care and rescue, mainly as it relates to environmental issues. There is also a common theme of global experience, and how the larger issues of how disadvantaged and traumatised members of a community can be helped in recovery through the programmes

of Wolf Connection. This is a somewhat unique combination and determines the work and support that is done as well as providing a financial capacity to enable this work. In other words, the viability of Wolf Connection to fulfil the strategic demands of the UN's SDG#11 stems from the business model of the organisation and the background and interests of its Board. Key Board members are listed in Appendix A following the case study.

The professional expertise of the Wolf Connection Board reflects the core philosophy of the family business, particularly in terms of engaging communities which have been marginalised, and individuals who have suffered traumas and hardship. The interaction between the natural world (of wolves and wilderness) and urban dwellers requires a unique set of skills, which is reflected in the combined backgrounds of the Board. This includes health care (both physical and mental), financial and business acumen, the capacity for businesses to engage in programmes to address social needs, knowledge of private and public institutions and their processes of governance, developing technologies and their capacity to engage groups at a national and international level and education, particularly within the context of communities with financial challenges. It is the manner in which Wolf Connection draws on its Board's diversity that presents a business model which reflects the significant challenges it faces, and innovative solutions it has developed.

What Next for Wolf Connection and SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

The future plans for Wolf Connection indicate even stronger alignment with the sustainable development goals, particularly as the family business expands its care of the environment, thus preserving green space for all. The sanctuary has doubled in size every year since 2010, strategically developing space that fosters the various programmes with people and wolves. The new developments (funded largely through donations) include:

- Overnight and weekly stays, to allow for more in-depth work in the programmes. This will significantly improve the efficacy of the programmes by developing more immersive activities. Building the levels of trust, and thus group identity, is a key process in community formation. This is particularly apposite to the individuals involved as they come from highly urbanised areas with little access to green space. One of the greatest challenges that Wolf Connection has faced is meeting the increased demand for places in its programmes.
- A residential facility for youth transitioning into independent living. This will be a core development for the programmes focused on at-risk youth, linking the participants to strategies for caring for the self by caring for their own, and wider, environment. Many of the participants in these particular programmes face the difficulties of uncertain housing. By providing residential facilities, these youth will gain skills for a more independent future.

- A retreat centre where youth and families from all walks of life can find healing and hope. Wolf Connection's programmes to provide support to participants by giving access to the natural world mirrors this core SDG#11 driver of care for healing the environment. Wolf Connection prioritises actions that enable those involved to make the link between their own conditions and backgrounds and the wider natural environment. This is a further aspect to Wolf Connection's commitment to healing through immersion.
- Gathering and creative rooms to foster awareness of sustainability issues. This will serve as a primary driver in the teaching and understanding of the imperative need for sustainability and living more sustainable lives. This philosophy is embedded in all aspects of Wolf Connection, and this initiative will serve to further develop initiatives and activities strongly tied to these SDGs.
- Outdoor teaching and gathering areas. All aspects of the programmes involve the immersion in the natural environment. This is an expansion of the activities that define Wolf Connection's unique interpretation of SDG#11. The family business maintains the philosophy that the participants of its programmes must spend all their time outside in the natural spaces of the sanctuary. This is where the strength of the programme lies – working within the green spaces so different from the urban world.
- Two more state-of-the-art wolf compounds in addition to the existing one. This can be seen as both an increase in numbers of participants and also further preservation of the natural environment and access to it. These additional wolf areas also reflect the need to care for more wolves. At the time of writing, Wolf Connection had taken in an additional 10 wolves.

These developments demonstrate how the sanctuary is effectively aligning its core business activities with environmental awareness and integrating sustainability goals into its programmes of well-being. This is particularly the case with issues of mental health, social justice and bettering the lives of those alienated and abandoned by much of society. This is where Wolf Connection demonstrates its unique vision of therapy and well-being through the human-wolf interaction.

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Appendix A: Board Members of Wolf Connections

Board Chair – Dr Steven J. Golightly	<p>Dr Golightly’s entire professional career focused on programmes and agencies that provided services to low-income children and families. He retired in February 2020 as Director of the Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department (CSSD), where he had responsibility for over 1,600 employees and 300,000 child support cases worldwide. CSSD is the largest local child support programme in the United States. Before working in Los Angeles County, Dr Golightly was the Regional Administrator (SES Career) for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, based in Atlanta, Georgia. There he was the senior federal official for all poverty programmes in the eight south eastern states. He also spent 12 years as Vice President for Human Service programmes at the National Alliance of Business in Washington, DC. He is the recipient of the California Child Support Director’s Association Truly B. Knox award for leadership in the California child support community, the Charles Dykstra Excellence in Government award from the American Society for Public Administration and the Los Angeles County Productivity and Quality Commission’s Excellence in Leadership award.</p>
Vice Chair – Jane Ross	<p>Jane Ross is currently a Managing Director in Investment Banking at Oppenheimer and Co. In addition to her financial industry responsibilities, she moderates podcasts entitled <i>Let’s Talk Future</i> about trends in technology, disruptive industries, sustainability and timely investment themes. Jane was the Managing Director and Head of High Yield Sales at Oppenheimer. Prior to Oppenheimer, Jane was a founding participant in a high yield investment bank called Argosy Securities and an Executive Director at Bear Stearns. Jane earned her MBA at the Columbia</p>

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Board Treasurer – Daniel Amir	<p>University Graduate School of Business and her BA from Stanford University.</p> <p>Daniel is a finance executive with over 15 years of experience in leading financial institutions including Lazard, Bear Stearns and JPMorgan, with a particular focus on technology. Earlier in his career he worked for the Department of Treasury in Israel. Daniel’s education includes an MBA from UCLA and a MA and BA in International Relations and Economics from the Hebrew University in Israel. Daniel during his life has assisted underprivileged children and education and has been involved both in Israel and the United States in organisations that support at-risk youth.</p>
Board Secretary – Scott Jarus	<p>Scott Jarus is a former chief executive of several private and public companies, serving on many Boards of Directors. He is currently the Executive Chairman at of EV Connect, a provider of electric vehicle (EV) charging station solutions and developer of the industry-leading platform for managing the entire EV charging eco-system.</p>
Stephen Bochner, MD	<p>Dr Bochner leads the Healthcare Private Capital and For-Profit Healthcare Sector. He is an established industry expert bringing years of experience recruiting senior healthcare executives and investors. He served as Vice President in the Venture Capital Group at Robertson, Stephens & Company where he focused on medical investments. Prior to joining RS & Co., he served as Vice President of Business Development at Fusion Medical Technologies. As a physician, Dr Bochner established a private medical practice affiliated with Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA, specialising in minimally invasive surgical procedures. During this time, he served on the Clinical Faculty at Stanford University Hospital. Previously he was a member of the full-time faculty at Stanford University Hospital in the Department of Gynaecology. Dr Bochner obtained his medical degree from the University</p>

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- of Ottawa and McGill University and performed his specialty training at Stanford University, serving as Chief Resident in 1987. He holds an MBA from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business and a B.A. in Biology from Colgate University.
- David Casselman is a lawyer and Co-founder of the Cambodia Wildlife Sanctuary, as well as the Founder of Ecoflix, a worldwide streaming video-on-demand service. Both are devoted exclusively to animal and habitat causes. In addition, David is also a member of the Whale Sanctuary Board, an Executive Producer of 'Love and Bananas, an Elephant Story' and a long-time legal advocate for animals of all kinds. As he entered the business world, he simultaneously began to explore his ever-evolving appreciation for the balance of nature, which ultimately shaped a large portion of his professional life. As an award-winning civil trial attorney, David represented animal causes, pro bono. He has been involved in the protection and saving of animals for over 40 years. He is now developing Ecoflix, to provide a worldwide platform for animal causes around the world, including direct financial support. He is also actively involved with the ongoing rescue of elephants, primates and other indigenous animals in Thailand and Cambodia while supporting myriad important animal causes around the globe.
- Mr Chatman is the Vice Principal of Phoenix High School in Lancaster, California. Mr Chatman has a long history in the Antelope Valley working with at-risk youth, as a coach and a pioneer in helping young students to improve their lot in life. Currently, Mr Chatman works with Phoenix High School as Vice Principal and has been responsible for many innovative programmes which include being involved in Wolf Connection.

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Gina Del Vecchio

Gina Del Vecchio is the CEO of SAGE Veterinary Centres, one of the largest advanced veterinary care concerns in the country. A recognised animal advocate, particularly in welfare and protection, Gina facilitated the founding of SAGE Compassion for Animals, a 501(c) (3) non-profit dedicated to providing financial assistance for veterinary care to help companion animals in crisis and end financial euthanasia due to the financial condition of the pet's human companion.

Steve McAndrew

Steve McAndrew is currently the Deputy Regional Director of the Americas for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). From 2012 until 2019, he was the Head of Emergency Operations for the IFRC. For his role in leading the Red Cross response to the 2015 Ebola outbreak in Africa, Steve was awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) medal by Queen Elizabeth II for Services to Humanity. Steve is one of a small group of Americans for whose special achievements have been recognised by the British government. Besides leading the effort to stop Ebola, in his work with the Red Cross, Steve has managed some of the largest and most challenging crisis facing the planet over the last decade, including the 2016 Syrian refugee crisis, the devastating earthquake in Nepal in 2015 and the 2010 Haitian earthquake, in which a quarter of a million people lost their lives. In 2017, Steve also served as Chief Executive Officer of Global Emergency Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction (GER), a newly formed US-based non-profit organisation that assists crisis-affected persons to rebuild following disasters with smart and efficient recovery projects. GER has carried out projects in Nepal, Puerto Rico, Barbuda, Haiti and Houston. Mr McAndrew has also worked in the United States Government Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) in Latin

(Continued)

Miguel Rivera	America and Africa and was also a founding partner of the Global Emergency Group consulting firm in 2008.
Errol Spiro	Miguel's Board affiliations include being a Board Member of 'Shade Tree', a mentoring group in Los Angeles since its inception in 1996, introducing at risk youth to traditional Native American ceremonies and ways of knowledge, he is a Board Member of 'Western Gate Roots and Wings Foundation', an organisation dedicated to bringing back rites of passage to youth, and a Board Member of 'Soldier's Heart', an organisation dedicated to working with Veterans. Growing up in South Africa, Errol witnessed extreme inequality in the era of apartheid which informed his commitment to mentoring young adults coming out of the Los Angeles child welfare system. Errol is a founding member of the Foster Alumni Co-Mentoring Experience, a programme founded in conjunction with Southern California Foster Family and Adoption Agency, that offers support to teenage foster youth as well as transition-aged youth who have very little or no family support, poor schooling and few life skills. Through his involvement with this programme since 2009, Errol has had the opportunity to work with and learn from the many young adults he has encountered.

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Chapter 6

United Arab Emirates: The Family Business of the Shehada Brothers

Jacinta Dsilva, Jasmina Locke and Poh Yen Ng

Topic Statement

The family business – Shehada Brothers – own several ventures in different sectors in the United Arab Emirates which will be discussed briefly in the case study; however, to mention one of the businesses, Trigono Developments is a business model that integrates different areas of expertise to ensure that all projects are not only time and cost-effective, but also end-user and investor friendly. This business follows SDG#11 in its developments.

Introduction

Sustainability focuses on three pillars, social, economic and environmental, which impact the present and future generations and all businesses should focus on evaluating and managing these pillars as crucial components of the business. Among all the businesses are family businesses since they are the most widespread type of business in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) contributing to around 60% of the country's GDP and providing 80% of employment (KPMG, 2022). It is necessary to define the term family business, 'as a business governed and/or managed to shape and/or pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family or a small number of families in a manner that is potentially sustainable across generations of the family or families' (Chua et al., 1999, p. 25). Every family business is unique, but it is a bit challenging to understand how some sustainability goals enter such businesses' strategic decision-making particularly due to the generations that are running the business might think differently regarding sustainability. Therefore, incorporating sustainability goals can become challenging due to generational gaps and barriers, however, one family business in the United Arab Emirates is working very hard to

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 79–89



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integrate sustainability in all its ventures keeping its family values in mind but focusing on the future. This family business was started by Mahmoud Shehada and his brother Ahmed Shehada; however, their businesses are not known by the same name, therefore, their family business will be termed ‘The Shehada’s Family business’ for ease of reference. Their businesses are spread across several sectors such as property management, capital management, real estate, business consultancy and others. The aim of this case is to highlight the contributions made by a young entrepreneur in the United Arab Emirates through his different ventures and to showcase how sustainability has been his driving force in the ventures he is investing in lately.

Philosophy of the Family Business

At present, the brothers run several businesses together and strongly believe in *doing the work, rather than waiting for the ‘golden moment’*. The brothers believe that it might be very difficult to take the first step, but selecting a path leads to all the changes that eventually lead to innovations and groundbreaking changes.

In my [Mahmoud Shehada] humble experience, golden moments are created, not served. Instead of making excuses, we should focus on solving the problems. They probably won’t get fixed right away, but if you are making improvements, you’ll eventually get there.

This philosophy has helped Mahmoud and his brother to have diverse imprints in the business sector and to have their presence and success stories in the real estate, entertainment, marketing and advertising, financial services and e-commerce sectors.

Along with the courage to go for new ideas, having a strong value system is equally important. Integrity, open mind, resilience and respect, I think these four words resonate with the values that I hold closer, no matter how far I go, Mahmoud said.

Integrity may mean a lot of things to different people. But for the Shehada family, it is the transparency, honesty and lessons that one has learned throughout their life that matters. An open mind, resilient nature and respect for the people are the founding beliefs of their business. Mahmoud also believes that entrepreneurship is not just about one person since nobody can fulfil their dreams without the help of other people. These are some of the values that the Shehada brothers always keep in mind and have kept them grounded and made them thankful for everything. Mahmoud says, ‘that is something I would love to see in my kids or the next generation. When they are following their dreams, they shouldn’t forget about the people who helped them to get there’.

Products and/or Services Offered by the Shehada Brothers

The businesses are spread in different sectors and therefore each business and its services will be mentioned here:

1. Divine Entertainment – Events and Entertainment
2. Allegoria Capital Ltd. – Management consultancy
3. Sadara Capital – Financial services and advisory
4. The Inner Circle – Complete solutions for start-ups and SMEs
5. ONEX – Corporate Consultancy, Strategy and Research
6. Mood Properties – Buying, Selling and Renting Properties
7. Trigono Developments – Construction of residential buildings

Background

Mahmoud Shehada was born in Dubai in 1992 but due to better prospects, his family moved to Canada in 1995. An unfortunate incident happened in his father's life, and due to the negligence of their bank, they lost all their savings. It was difficult for Dr Mohammed Radi Shehada (Mahmoud's father) and Wesam Elshourafa (Mahmoud's mother) to bring up five children. But Mahmoud and his brother remember that their father always made it a point to make them feel safe, secure and content with everything that would make them happy. Mahmoud's father is an ENT Specialist and has worked in several countries such as Palestine, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. His mother has always been empathetic towards the less fortunate and therefore has offered her services to the people of determination for more than 30 years in Dubai and Sharjah and is currently running the Dubai Centre for Special Needs. It was Mahmoud's curiosity and passion for starting new ventures that led him to become what he is today. Due to an 11-year age difference, Mahmoud and his brother Ahmed were not always close to each other. However, since becoming business partners in 2014, they have developed a strong bond and now collaborate closely in decision-making. At present, they run several businesses with partners in different sectors. Their bonding, passion to see things differently, knowledge and expertise in different sectors help them think outside the box and keep them ahead of the game.

After graduating high school, Mahmoud went to Michigan State University (Business Degree) for a year and then transferred to York University in Toronto (Business Economics Bilingual Degree). The programme at York was bilingual, and therefore he studied in English and French. Mahmoud graduated with his undergraduate degree from York University and then moved to Dubai to be with his family. Similarly, all his sisters and brother completed their education in Canada and moved to the United States or the United Kingdom to complete their Master's degrees and are successful in their chosen careers.

While his elder brother Ahmed had already ventured into some business ideas (due to his investment banking experience) before Mahmoud joined him, that's when both decided to work together. Mahmoud's first venture was during university with his brother (Ahmed) in the entertainment industry in Toronto and Dubai. It was so fascinating for Mahmoud that he started learning everything such as market trends, music production, writing, events, marketing and communications. The main aim of this business has been to promote a platform to the young generation through events, campaigns, distribution and influencer

outreach. The business also branched out into focusing on creating events for the young generation through e-sports and other sports-related events and making sure that they follow sustainability guidelines throughout all their events and activities. Importantly, they also have services where they provide mentorship to the young generation on sustainable and healthy living, aligning with SDG#11.7.

The Shehada brothers realised that the real estate market was bouncing back after a major recession and felt that they could expand their family business into another sector. Therefore, in 2014, the brothers decided to venture into Allegoria Capital Ltd. (ACL) which operates a diversified portfolio of entities mainly in the real estate, marketing and advertising, financial services, e-commerce and business services sectors, which is their forte. ACL has developed a consistent track record of successful investments and business operations, with management consultancy and business development at the core of ACL's forte. The business flourished since its inception due to the support provided to all the investors in the right direction. However, the Shehada brothers did not rest on their laurels, for example, Mahmoud enrolled in an executive education programme at Harvard for Private Equity and Venture Capital Degree and another one offered by MIT in the Dubai Land Department in Real Estate Disruption. The brothers believe that education helps them to remain updated and helps them to make critical and strategic decisions in their business which is why both are currently completing their MA in Law from a university in the United Kingdom.

The brothers have been vigilant of the changes in the market from the beginning of their business journey and realised that the United Arab Emirates was experiencing the 'Start-up Revolution'. This phenomenon began in the year 2000 but by 2014, the revolution was at its peak and many new start-ups were moving to the United Arab Emirates due to great business opportunities. In Dubai in particular, the economy was represented by 95% of SMEs, and approximately 42% of the employment was provided by the SMEs. However, Mahmoud noticed that the SMEs who come to the United Arab Emirates faced a lot of challenges in terms of the know-how of the business setup, UAE policies and various other challenges. They, therefore, started another company by the name of 'The Inner Circle' exclusively to support SMEs. This business focuses on providing a comprehensive solution for small and medium businesses (SMEs) from licensing to setting up office space. Once the clients' business has moved from the concept to the operational stage, the team at Inner Circle provides personalised service to each of their clients by providing them access to the market's best resources and expertise. This service helps in enhancing SME businesses from marketing and PR to content and web design, and even the financial arrangements of offshore bank accounts. The Inner Circle team helps with all the details to make their clients' businesses successful. While setting up clients' businesses, the team gives special attention to each of their clients since they are focused on providing them with solutions that are efficient, sustainable and most importantly hassle-free. SDG#11.a. mentions supporting positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning. This can be achieved if a good eco-system is created not only for the residents but also for the

businesses and the Shehada brothers are working very hard to provide this support to the SMEs in the United Arab Emirates.

The family business ventured into another business named Trigono Developments with a passionate commitment to providing modern-designed homes in the best locations in Dubai. The objective of this business is to provide quality over quantity at a reasonable price, with the target of satisfying the end consumer. The brothers have been involved in several related projects and believe that they are making a positive impact on the lives of people in the United Arab Emirates by providing employment and contributing to the United Arab Emirates' economic development, aligning with the *SDG#11.1* target.

Motivation for Starting a Business

It was Shehada's cultural and family background that shaped them into who they are today. It was not a natural choice or an easy option for the brothers to become entrepreneurs. As a teenager, Mahmoud saw his family go through difficult times and watched his father come close to bankruptcy due to the negligence of the bank and how his father bounced back. Mahmoud believes that even though his father did not build the family business but has been instrumental in teaching him to manage difficult situations and to look at the positive side. The Shehada family owes its current success to the investment made by their father – which was investing all his time, effort and money into his children. Having the support of his older brother (Ahmed) as a mentor and a business partner has been priceless in his journey. It paved the way for all their business ideas and most importantly, built Mahmoud's resilience and confidence.

The idea of constructing something new and building new hopes always attracted Mahmoud to enter the construction industry. He believed it is a direct contribution to a country's or region's development, and a signature for the future, 'through which we can make an impact'. The Shehada brothers have always been passionate about several industries and real estate as they believe that it is a unique industry that touches many lives.

In the words of Mahmoud, 'Seeing a building come together with the right team, the right process, and the right technology is very rewarding'. This dream was fulfilled when both brothers successfully built their first project 'The 50' by Trigono and then went on to collaborate with Diamond Developers.

'Being a part of Diamond today makes me see that change across a whole city! Seeing the smiles on the team's faces once the project is complete is priceless'. These things, as well as the potential impact that construction may have on the world and people, motivated the Shehada brothers to enter this field.

Aligning the Family Business With *SDG#11*: Sustainable Cities and Communities

The United Arab Emirates comprises seven emirates namely, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain. In total it has

a population of around 9.6 million of which approximately 8.2 million live in cities and suburbs, this number will grow further due to economic transition. The UAE government has been very active in diversifying its economy away from dependence on the oil industry and putting measures in place to become more sustainable. At present, the United Arab Emirates is quite an attractive country for investment since it is promoting its investment environment, providing greater incentives to investors and raising its rank on the Ease of Doing Business Index. At the same time, the UAE government wants to ensure sustainable development while preserving the environment and achieving a perfect balance between economic and social development. Consistent actions have been put in place in several sectors such as food, agriculture and real estate to realise the vision of making the United Arab Emirates a better place to live.

SDG#11 focuses on access to quality housing and basic services such as support in waste management, better air quality, structured transport system and at the same time minimum harmful impact on the environment on the residents living in urban communities and cities. Engaging all stakeholders at the community level ensures environmental protection and appreciation, leading to abundant benefits for each stakeholder group. Overall, SDG#11 is about making communities and urban environments safe, inclusive as well as resilient to disaster, and adaptable to challenges like climate change. The UAE government has been constantly emphasising improving urban cities and communities by allocating a higher budget for infrastructural development and other initiatives to enhance human lifestyle, making investments within the sector appealing to international investors. The United Arab Emirates is focused on making buildings greener to meet the demands of nature and working closely with all the stakeholders to decarbonise the built environment. Abu Dhabi and Dubai were ranked the most sustainable cities in the Middle East by the Sustainable Cities Index in 2016 and the development agenda for both cities in the form of Vision 2030 Abu Dhabi and Vision 2030 Dubai focus on incorporating inclusivity and sustainability as central themes. To achieve Vision 2030, each emirate is working in coordination, for example, Abu Dhabi introduced its sustainable building framework 'Estidama' which includes the Pearl Rating System, and all new buildings are expected to obtain at least one-pearl rating out of five. Expansion of efficient public transportation is another great example; the United Arab Emirates has been deploying cutting-edge technologies such as driverless trains, hyperloop and flying taxis which are managed and operated by Road and Transport Authority (RTA) in Dubai. There are several other initiatives such as producing clean energy, reducing pollution and rural and urban synergies.

From a business point of view, sustainability should be integrated into every business's overall business strategy and operations and is not just a one-time initiative. This will require collaboration and partnership across different sectors, such as urban planning, transportation, housing, environmental protection and conscious consumer behaviour. The United Arab Emirates officially chose sustainability as a theme for the year 2023 and will be hosting COP28 to create wider participation and awareness. This has set ambitious targets to achieve SDG11 goal, and the country's visionary leadership has been extending tremendous

support to including private partners towards achieving this goal. However, the Shehada brothers believe several obstacles may impede progress and that requires collective action.

One such obstacle is carbon emissions. The United Arab Emirates has one of the highest per capita carbon emissions in the world due to heavy reliance on fossil fuels. Reducing carbon emissions is essential to achieving sustainable cities and communities. The extensive effort from the government to reduce this impact needs more private and individual contributions. The goal can only be achieved if all stakeholders become part of, and work towards it.

Like other countries, the United Arab Emirates is also vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rises and increased frequency of extreme weather events. Adapting to these impacts will be essential for creating sustainable cities and communities.

That is one key area where the private sector partners need to play an active role. More efforts and initiatives like the sustainable city in Dubai and Sharjah would be required. It is still a fact that sustainability and community development initiatives often lack participation from the community.

From a business point of view, the brothers believe, sustainability should be integrated into overall business strategy and operations, and not just a one-time initiative. This will require collaboration and partnership across different sectors, such as urban planning, transportation, housing and environmental protection. With the United Arab Emirates officially choosing sustainability as a theme for the year 2023, there is hope for wider participation and awareness.

Allegoria Capital, Sadara Capital, ONEX, Divine Intervention Entertainment, Mood Properties and Trigono Developments are some of the businesses owned by the Shehada brothers under their holding company Forefront Investments and their passion for sustainable cities and communities is quite evident since they make sure that SDG#11 is kept intact in all their strategies. Recently, they completed 'The 50' building which is a good example of inclusivity and affordability. The building is in Dubai and has great access to all the major highways. The architectural style of the building is modern and while construction incorporated sustainability aspects. The property has a fitness centre, a children's play area as well as a swimming pool. The building is surrounded by all the facilities such as nurseries, shopping malls, medical facilities and other amenities. There are several transportation options for the residents which makes it convenient for all ages to travel within Dubai. The developers believe in inclusive developments and therefore, have made further investments such as all the maintenance and energy costs are covered for the residents and are planning to change to installing solar panels so that they reduce their reliance on grid electricity. The brothers feel proud that the building has 100% occupancy and believe that they are playing a part in achieving the United Arab Emirates' vision of developing sustainable cities and communities. In fact, after the completion of this project, they have invested around AED 22 million in other projects which promote sustainable real estate as Mahmoud stated, 'I truly believe that this is the way forward for real estate development'. He believes by investing in businesses or projects which support sustainable living is important because this is one way of mitigating climate issues.

As mentioned earlier, the brothers are working closely with Diamond Developers which developed The Sustainable City in Dubai, Sharjah and now expanding in Abu Dhabi and Oman, supporting SDG#11.3. The Sustainable City combines traditional and cutting-edge technologies to enhance the sustainability of the built environment, such as solar power generation, water recycling, passive design strategies and automated mobility. It is necessary to have a family business such as the Shehada brothers to set a better example in the United Arab Emirates among other family and private businesses.

Reporting and Measurement

The current corporate objectives focus on measuring and reporting on the company's sustainability performance regularly as well as making the information publicly available to the stakeholders. The brothers believe that transparency can bring revolutionary changes to the business outlook. The family is committed to sustainability. In Mahmoud's words, 'it is straight and simple – Incorporating sustainability considerations into all business decisions, including product design, sourcing, and operations, to reduce the overall environmental footprint'.

Therefore, the Shehada brothers are very keen on making an impact in all their business ventures. Just to take the story a little back to a couple of years when Mahmoud and Ahmed started their business, sustainability was not on their agenda. They started their business keeping in mind the trends in the market; however, as Mahmoud mentioned, 'I believe that we organically focused on including sustainability into our business and we will continue to do it'. The family business is focusing on moving from grid electricity to solar panels and many other such initiatives, as discussed earlier. Due to sustainable changes, businesses in the UAE are showing interest and are actively participating in measuring their carbon emissions and aligning with SDG goals. The businesses are also expected to provide a count of how they are implementing the SDGs; currently, there is no centralized authority overseeing this matter. However, certain businesses have taken the initiative to independently report their emissions and demonstrate how they are implementing some or all of the SDGs in their operations or business practices. Similarly, for the Shehada brothers, they are in the process of reporting their emissions, therefore, they are collecting data, and, in the future, they will be able to disclose their emissions as well as their contribution towards different SDGs.

The SDG Compass is a good start for family businesses such as the Shehada brothers; there are five steps in this process and each step takes the business closer to achieving its sustainability goals. The first step is to understand the SDGs, and this can be done by the strategic team of any business to look at their vision, mission and objectives and to align SDGs with their goals. Step two is to define priorities, for example, Mahmoud wants to reduce the carbon emission of his businesses by the end of 2024. Step three is to set goals and involve other stakeholders in the discussion; this is an important step since if the lower level management is not involved they will not be able to see the bigger picture. Step four is to integrate the SDGs into the policies

and processes of the organisation, and this is a challenging but important step. The final step is to report and communicate, the Shehada brothers are in the process of implementing, reporting and communicating. The family business understands the benefit of measuring SDG impact on their business and that it will help them not only to stay ahead of the competition but also to contribute to a greater cause of supporting the Paris agreement in achieving sustainable development goals.

Challenges of Working With SDG#11

During Mahmoud's school days, he had read an anonymous quote and it said, 'We don't grow when things are easy; we grow when we face challenges'. It did not make much sense to him back then, but once he began the entrepreneurial journey, it proved right.

Mahmoud and his brother faced a lot of challenges from lack of funding, and competition, to legal and regulatory challenges. It was those challenges that shaped many of their later decisions and ideas. Like investing in start-up companies and helping them with business development.

One strategy that helped Mahmoud was to carry on with the challenges and his passion for learning. He believes that learning should never stop. Over his entrepreneurial career and through his academic experiences at several universities – he has always tried to stick to that mantra. He is passionate about learning new things and therefore, seizes every opportunity that comes his way to further his knowledge and skills.

The construction industry contributes to a high carbon footprint; however, the challenge is that the suppliers and developers are still following the traditional styles and designs for construction activities and therefore, it is challenging to talk to suppliers about getting their raw materials from an environmentally friendly source and to have Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) for all their products. Another challenge is that there are still not many policies that strictly expect the developers to follow certain guidelines while developing cities and communities; therefore, project teams do focus on cost-effectiveness rather than being environmentally friendly processes. However, things are changing in the United Arab Emirates and several measures are already taking shape for some developers, for example, Trigono and Diamond Developers are taking serious steps to create awareness among the suppliers, developers and other stakeholders.

Business and Greater Good

The Shehada brothers intend to work towards making an impact by developing their businesses to provide wider support to the businesses they work with. For example, they do not charge any maintenance or service charges for all their tenants and that reduces the cost for people living in their building, 'The 50'. Mahmoud and Ahmed believe in belief in empowering the younger generation, recognizing their fresh ideas and better understanding of SDG goals. They actively hire young executives for key positions within their businesses, aiming to leverage their innovative thinking and contribute to making the businesses more sustainable. Another example is in their business called 'The Inner Circle'; they

focus on providing a complete solution to start-ups also speaks volumes about how they are contributing to support some of the SDGs and in supporting the United Arab Emirates in their economic growth journey.

Future of the Family Business

In the current phase that the world is evolving, it is challenging to predict exactly how the next generation will manage the family business; however, Mahmoud believes that potential trends like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation could shape how businesses will be managed and how the industries will develop in the future. Automation and artificial intelligence will play a larger role in business operations in the future, which could lead to increased efficiency and cost savings as well as sustainability.

The growth of green technologies and the internet has already had a significant impact on many industries, importantly, the construction and the real estate industry, and the trend is likely to continue in the future. Many businesses are adapting to changing consumer behaviours and preferences. This aspect has significantly supported the family business to stay focused and contribute to the growing consumer demands. The family does that by understanding their clients and customising their projects accordingly. For example, in the 'The 50' building they have made each apartment all-inclusive so that the residents are comfortable and living sustainably, supporting SDG#11.3. There is also a growing awareness and expectation for businesses to operate in a socially and environmentally responsible manner. As the world is very close to depleting many natural resources, and directly facing the after effects of climate change, the next generation of business leaders will need to prioritise sustainability and social responsibility in their strategies and operations. The Shehada brothers are focused on investing in businesses that prioritise sustainability as well as all their future investments will be in the same direction.

Overall, businesses of the future will need to be agile, adaptable and able to quickly respond to changes in the market and respective industries. They will need to be able to leverage technology and digitalisation, while also prioritising sustainability and social responsibility.

The family business has gone into several businesses already such as capital management, talent management and real estate but the brothers have always been close to each other and make sure that they continue to follow their family traditions and values in all their businesses. Mahmoud values his family time since that's where he gathers his strength. He dedicates his time to his young children and seizes opportunities to impart valuable life lessons to them. Currently, the family business is flourishing and looking into venturing into strategic sectors. As a family business, its long-term goal is to help develop sustainable communities by promoting social inclusion and education. They believe that it is not limited to a single industry, but across all the sectors in that, they have a footprint.

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Chapter 7

Hickinbotham Group and Sustainable Cities and Communities

Rob Hales

Introduction

The company showcased in this chapter is Hickinbotham Group, and they specialise in the design, construction, and sale of affordable and sustainable homes in South Australia. The company uses the branding of Hickinbotham Group on its websites and marketing information, and people generally know the company by this name. It is a family-owned company founded in Adelaide, South Australia, in 1954 by Alan Hickinbotham and has been a family-owned business for three generations. The company initially started as a small family-owned company that built homes for friends and family.

The company has a strong commitment to sustainable development and has been actively engaged in initiatives aimed at reducing its environmental footprint. This chapter aims to outline the family business that has championed affordable housing and provide insights into the progressive, sustainable building practices that align with the SDGs.

Vision and Mission

The mission of Hickinbotham Group is to design and build beautiful, functional and affordable homes. Hickinbotham Group is committed to sustainable building practices and minimising their footprint on the planet.

Products Offered by Hickinbotham Group

Hickinbotham Group is an Australian-based residential construction company that provides a wide range of products and services related to home building. Sustainability is a core feature of their products and is part of their branding of high-quality products.

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Sustainable Cities and Communities, 91–105



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Hickinbotham Group offers a variety of house and land packages, which include the land and the construction of a new home. They have a range of pre-designed homes. Hickinbotham Group also provides custom-designed homes for those who want to create a unique and personalised home. They work closely with their customers to design and build homes that meet their specific requirements and desires. Hickinbotham Group has a range of display homes that showcase their design and building capabilities. Customers can visit these display homes to see the quality of their workmanship and get inspiration for their home designs.

Background of Hickinbotham Group

Alan Hickinbotham founded Hickinbotham Group in 1954. Alan achieved a Bachelor of Science from Adelaide University and taught at Geelong Grammar School before moving into home construction. Alan Hickinbotham's life was notable in the local history of South Australia. He became a renowned sportsman, representing South Adelaide, South Australia and Geelong in football, and then became a successful businessman. Since the founding of the company, it has been taken over by Alan's son, Michael, who now serves as the Managing Director. The company has built thousands of homes across South Australia and has won numerous awards for design, innovation, and sustainability.

Michael Hickinbotham took over the family company in 2002. Before doing so, he completed his education in law specialising in corporate and commercial law. He did not immediately go into the family business but rather gained life experience working as a jackaroo, as a bartender and as a 'roughneck' on an oil rig. Upon joining the business, he held various positions in the company to gain an understanding of every aspect of the organisation, including home construction and land development. He took on the role of Managing Director in 2002. Michael Hickinbotham is active in the company's operations as shown in [Fig. 1](#).



Fig. 1. Michael Hickinbotham ([Hickinbotham Group, n.d.](#)).

Michael has received a Centenary Medal for his services to the Australian building industry and the community and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of South Australia for his contribution to South Australia and his commitment to education. He has also been awarded the Housing Industry Association's (HIA) most prestigious honour, the Sir Phillip Lynch Award of Excellence. The award recognises individuals who have provided innovative and valuable contributions to the housing industry and who demonstrate unflinching integrity and an exemplary attitude of excellence.

Michael's sister Ruth Vagnarelli has been an integral part of the family business for over 30 years. A former journalist, Ruth has qualifications in interior design. As Design Director for Hickinbotham's building operations, Ruth leads a team of the best architects and designers to create its housing ranges and is responsible for the company's award-winning display villages.

From the 1960s to the present day, Hickinbotham Group has expanded its operations to become the largest home-building company in South Australia. The company also began to diversify its business by developing land and housing communities. In the 1980s, Hickinbotham Group continued to expand its operations into other parts of Australia and started building homes in Queensland. The company also prioritised environmentally sustainable building practices using innovative materials and construction techniques to reduce its environmental impact.

Hickinbotham Group remains one of Australia's largest home-building companies, with a reputation for quality, affordability, and innovative design. The company has won numerous awards for its work, including the Housing Industry Association's South Australian Professional Major Builder award. The company is responsible for one in every four new homes built in greater Adelaide. In 2022 the company had \$2 billion of projects under development and employed more than 4,000 people, including its much-valued subcontractors. Hickinbotham Group is South Australia's largest and longest established building and development company and the 8th largest detached residential builder in Australia.

The Hickinbotham family is also involved in Australia's wine industry, with Michael's father, Alan, and brother, David, establishing vineyards at Clarendon in South Australia. The vineyards have been rated by wine doyen Robert Parker Jr. as one of the world's greatest wine estates. The family's wine business is managed by David A. Hickinbotham, and has been exporting wine for over 45 years and has produced internationally awarded premium wines.

Key Milestones in the Hickinbotham family business:

- 1954: Creation of Hickinbotham Group family business
- 1963: Foxfield Athelstone is released and becomes the first residential subdivision to win a Civic Trust award for protecting the natural environment and the first to use underground powerlines on a private estate (Hickinbotham, n.d.).

- The 1960s: Hickinbotham is the first company to offer architecturally designed villa and courtyard homes for smaller blocks. Offered at the company's Athelstone development in the late 1960s, this was a sustainable initiative to enable more housing on less land and provide options to home buyers who did not want the traditional home on a quarter-acre allotment. Unfortunately, it was too ahead of its time, and the market did not accept this new form of housing.
- The 1970s: Hickinbotham Group expands its operations, establishing a commercial building division, a land division, and a finance division. The company was the first to develop open plan homes and, in the 1970s, developed homes with moveable walls so as families grew and changed, the home could be easily adapted.
- 1970: Hickinbotham commissions award-winning architect Hank den Ouden to design the 'no gutter' house and builds it that year.
- The 1980s: The company expands into Queensland.
- The 1990s: Hickinbotham Group introduces a range of new house designs and establishes a design centre to help customers customise their homes. This includes a focus on sustainability.
- 1993: Hickinbotham partners with CSIRO, the South Australian Government and Playford Council (formerly Munno Para Council) to pioneer aquifer storage and recovery at the company's Andrews Farm development. This project received international recognition and set the national standards for aquifer recharge and recovery.
- 1994: Hickinbotham constructs the ground-breaking Renmark Water Reclamation Plant for the Renmark Council. This uses state-of-the-art technology to purify and filter the township's wastewater so it can be re-used. The project wins a number of environmental awards.
- 1995: In an Australian first, Hickinbotham finances and builds the first privately owned public school, Woodend Primary School, at its Woodend estate.
- 1997: The company endows and builds St Columba College at its Andrews Farm estate – Australia's first joint ecumenical Anglican-Catholic school – which soon becomes the second-largest school in the state.
- 2002: Michael Hickinbotham takes over the family business.
- Early 2000s: Hickinbotham partners with award-winning architect Max Pritchard on custom-designed, sustainable homes for the State Government's sustainable Lochiel Park project in Campbelltown. This results in the state's first 7.5-star energy rated homes.
- 2007: In working with Max Pritchard on high-end sustainable homes at Lochiel Park, Hickinbotham wanted to democratise sustainability and offer more affordable and sustainable housing to a larger market. Hickinbotham partners with Max to create the sustainable Affordable Architect series – an Australian first. The range of more than 40 homes was designed around a northern orientation to encourage passive heating and cooling and maximise cross-flow ventilation. The range was designed in such a way to enable the client to build the home they could afford at the time, and as their family grew they could add

on rooms. At the time, this was the only range in Australia that was designed to grow with the families who lived in them.

- 2008: Hickinbotham becomes the first volume builder to offer ‘Green Choice’ environmentally sustainable options to clients.
- The 2010s: Work begins on a \$1.2 billion master-planned community at Two Wells north of Adelaide, in a unique public private partnership between Adelaide Plains Council and the Hickinbotham Group. The Liberty and Eden residential precincts will house more than 3,000 families and already housing construction is growing in the precinct. Two Wells wins a Planning Institute of Australia Award (SA Chapter) for Planning Excellence.
- 2021: Hickinbotham endows Xavier College Two Wells campus. The school opens its doors with 80 students, growing to more than 550 students in 2023.
- The 2020s: The company celebrates its 70th anniversary and continues to be the largest builder and developer in South Australia.

Throughout its history, Hickinbotham Group have earned a reputation for building quality homes and delivering exceptional customer service. The company has won numerous awards for its designs and developments, and it remains committed to providing affordable, sustainable homes for families across South Australia.

SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and Hickinbotham Group

The vision and mission of Hickinbotham Group relate to SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities through a shift in philosophy when Michael and Alan took over the business. Sustainable design became a more important feature of all buildings from this time.

Recently under Michael Hickinbotham’s leadership, the company became the first South Australian builder to offer a range of sustainable housing for the volume building market. It created wastewater recycling for the township of Renmark, which was the first aquifer storage and recovery project in Australia. Projects such as wastewater recycling and aquifer storage are not the domain of the average residential builder but are a standard component of homes built by Hickinbotham Group.

All houses built by Hickinbotham Group include water-efficient showerheads and WELS-rated tapware as standard features. WELS is the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards scheme that gives a zero- to six-star rating to household plumbing components. The company also offer four-star, dual-flush toilet systems. Hickinbotham Group has always been an innovator in making better use of rainwater, and their homes come with the option of having a rainwater tank plumbed in for use in the toilet. The average South Australian home uses 600 litres of water a day. In a country that regularly experiences drought, the importance of water-saving devices in houses as standard features cannot be underemphasised.

While the company does not explicitly align their sustainability activities, it was chosen to be profiled in this book because of its long-standing commitment to affordable housing and sustainable housing design. The company communicates its environmental ethos and performance through its marketing material. An

example of this is Hickinbotham Group’s promotion of its design and construction of community infrastructure as shown in Fig. 2 below.



Fig. 2. Community Space is an Important Part of Hickinbotham Planned Communities.

An overview of how Hickinbotham Group address each of the SDG targets of SDG#11 is provided in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1. SDG#11 Targets and How Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11.

SDG#11 description	How Does Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11 Targets
Target 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	Hickinbotham Group has a purpose of delivering affordable, quality homes, developed in a sustainable way. Its master-planned community at Two Wells is one of Adelaide’s most affordable urban regions, providing a well-planned and

Table 1. (Continued)

SDG#11 description	How Does Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11 Targets
<p>Target 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons</p>	<p>sustainable environment for aspirational homeowners that is welcoming, safe and secure for their families. The Liberty and Eden residential precincts have created affordable housing, infrastructure, thousands of jobs and new economic opportunities for families who live and work in the region.</p> <p>Hickinbotham has established endowments for innovative school projects. It financed and built Australia’s first privately owned public school, Woodend Primary School, at its Woodend estate, endowed and built St Columba College at its Andrews Farm Estate and endowed the Xavier College Two Wells campus. Located within walking distance of its residential communities, this significantly reduces bus and commute transportation requirements.</p> <p>Hickinbotham Group seeks to create communities where families can thrive. This includes unique public private partnerships with local governments, investments in community infrastructure and working with industry on a range of initiatives to support planning reform.</p>
<p>Target 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory,</p>	<p>Hickinbotham envisions a future of communities built in a different and more holistic way.</p>

(Continued)

Table 1. (*Continued*)

SDG#11 description	How Does Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11 Targets
integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries	Named the Munno Para Arc, it consists of a series of nodal villages – sustainable communities that don't rely on car ownership. The Arc would have 10–15 villages with populations between 2000 and 5,000 living close to their place of work, with an old-style town square ringed by shops and high-quality, energy-efficient housing. Medium to high-density housing is key, with reserves and recreation areas, and the individual villages well-spaced. The town's wastewater would be reclaimed and re-used in homes, gardens and public spaces, beautifying the green belts scattered among and separating the villages. 'I feel this is an idea whose time will come', Michael says. 'We have to treat our environment with respect and create a better model for giving life to the communities we create'.
Target 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	<i>NA</i>
Target 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and	In one of the first public–private partnerships for South Australia, Hickinbotham Group built and

Table 1. (Continued)

SDG#11 description	How Does Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11 Targets
substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations	<p>owned the Country Fire Service (CFS) Regional Headquarters at Gawler.</p> <p>Hickinbotham pioneered, with the CSIRO and the City of Playford, the first aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) project in Australia at Andrews Farm, which established national standards for ASR.</p> <p>The company also partially responds to this target by using water savings and water-sensitive design features in their houses and also larger scale water saving schemes in their development.</p>
<p>Target 11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management</p>	<p>Hickinbotham Group constructed the Water Reclamation Plant for the Corporation of the Township of Renmark, which filters and purifies all of the township’s wastewater thereby enabling it to be reused.</p> <p>Hickinbotham Group has waste management features in their homes and also provides education on waste management for their new homeowners.</p>
<p>Target 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in</p>	<p>Hickinbotham’s vision of the Munno Para Arc aligns with this target.</p>

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

SDG#11 description	How Does Hickinbotham Group Address SDG#11 Targets
particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities	As part of the developments of planned communities, Hickinbotham Group pays particular attention to green space planning outcomes. Parks and playgrounds are at the heart of Hickinbotham Group’s residential communities. The company applies principles espoused by world leader in early childhood development, the late Dr Fraser Mustard, and his leading-edge concepts in sensory play. Supporting children to learn by making intelligent decisions and taking measured risks in a safe physical environment is a focus of all the company’s playground developments.

Hickinbotham’s Business Model and SDG#11

The company’s commitment to sustainability is a key differentiator in the competitive residential construction industry and has helped to build a strong reputation for the company among its customers. As Michael Hickinbotham describes below, at the heart of the business model of the company is that home buyers demand energy and environmental efficiency.

‘Increasingly, home buyers want reassurance that their homes will be energy efficient to support their hip pocket as well as the environment’.

The key features of the business that pertain to sustainability in the business model include:

- Energy-efficient design – Hickinbotham Group uses design principles that prioritise energy efficiency. This includes the placement of windows and doors to maximise natural light and ventilation, the use of insulation and sealing to reduce energy loss and the installation of energy-efficient appliances.

- Solar power – Many Hickinbotham Group homes come equipped with solar panels, which can generate electricity from sunlight and reduce reliance on the grid. They can also offer battery storage solutions to store excess solar energy for use when the sun isn't shining.
- Water conservation – Hickinbotham Group uses water-saving fixtures, such as low-flow showerheads and faucets, and dual-flush toilets. They also offer rainwater harvesting systems to collect and store rainwater for use in landscaping.
- Sustainable materials – Hickinbotham Group uses sustainable building materials wherever possible. This includes recycled or salvaged building materials, locally sourced materials to reduce transportation emissions and materials with low embodied carbon.
- Waste reduction – Hickinbotham Group prioritises waste reduction during the building process. This includes recycling construction waste, reducing unnecessary packaging and reusing materials where possible.

The company's website provides details of its green housing initiatives and developments. The website below typifies the articles on the website (See Fig. 3).

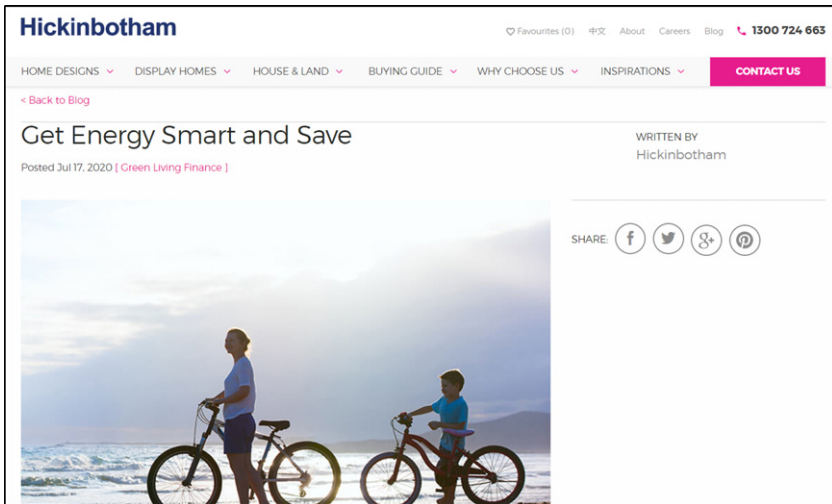


Fig. 3. Promotion of Sustainability Initiatives by Hickinbotham Group.

Additionally, the company is conscious of housing affordability, with Australia scoring low on international housing affordability indexes. Australia has been said to have a housing affordability crisis. In a keynote address at the Economic Times Global Business Summit in 2023, Michael Hickinbotham called

on countries around the world to make housing more affordable by ceasing policies of urban containment. Post-COVID, the fastest growing areas in Australian cities and in cities around the world are no longer the inner-city areas but the lifestyle communities attached to the urban fringe.

Hickinbotham Group has a focus on providing affordable land and housing developed sustainably. Land availability remains a key factor that continues to push up prices, and the company hopes to see more land become available over time. It is also pushing for skilled migration policy reviews to ensure the supply of workers for the housing construction sector. Although this is one of the policy responses needed for improving housing affordability, other policy options need to be implemented in tandem with this approach ([The Conversation, 2023](#)).

Hickinbotham Group Stakeholders and SDG#11

The stakeholders of Hickinbotham Group are similar to other companies in the construction industry. However, the long-standing nature of the business in the local community means that the family business has deep connections to the communities of South Australia. The stakeholder related to the SDGs is outlined below.

Customers who purchase homes from Hickinbotham Group indicate they want affordable quality homes. The marketing of sustainability through Hickinbotham Group business model means that quality and sustainability are inextricably tied. Customer review repeatedly mentions these aspects of the products and the service of Hickinbotham Group.

Employees who work for Hickinbotham Group are part of a supportive team of professionals and have opportunities to take part in professional development and community activities. These include:

- External training based on skill requirements
 - Applying for internal promotion and career development
 - Gaining experience in other areas within the organisation
 - Regular fundraising and charity days outside of working hours.
- [\(Hickinbotham Group, n.d.\)](#)

Hickinbotham Group also has an impact on the environment, economy and social well-being of the communities where their developments take place. The company has received many awards associated with its work. The Housing Industry Association has ranked Hickinbotham Group as South Australia's No. 1 builder for 18 years, ranked 8th across Australia. They are also a member of the Housing Institute of Australia (HIA). They have won countless awards for their display homes including the Affordable Architect Series was awarded the HIA Affordable Housing Award.

Reporting and Measurement

SDG#11 targets focus on sustainable cities and communities, and reporting on these targets are difficult for business. Hickinbotham Group while contributing significantly to the SDGs targets of SDG#11 don't report on their sustainability performance against their contribution to the SDGs. The challenges of all businesses in reporting on SDG#11 include:

- **Data Collection:** The availability and accuracy of data is a challenge for businesses. The actual contribution of a business such as urbanisation, air quality, waste management and transportation may be difficult to measure from a company perspective.
- **Integration:** Businesses need to consider multiple aspects of sustainability, and the measurement of such aspects needs to be comprehensive.
- **Resource Constraints:** Even larger businesses such as Hickinbotham Group are resource (finance) constrained.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Reporting on SDG#11 targets requires engagement with multiple stakeholders. This includes governments, local communities and NGOs. It is obvious through the stakeholder engagement activities of Hickinbotham Group that they do significant work in the community. However, there is little reporting of the significant amount of work they undertake.

Hickinbotham Group could improve on reporting on SDG#11 targets, and this will require a holistic approach that considers a range of social, environmental and economic factors. This can be challenging for businesses to navigate, but the benefits of such activities will make a significant contribution towards achieving the targets of SDG#11.

Challenges of Working With SDG#11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

Hickinbotham Group faces significant challenges after recent COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns and also floods. Add to this, the planning problem of restrictions on the supply of land for development means that the business faces financial pressure. As Michael, the Managing Director of Hickinbotham Group, highlights the problems as systemic:

Our industry continues to face many challenges, from restrictive land release practices, which limit supply and reduce affordability, to the recent shortages of building materials caused by the pandemic.

He also indicates that innovation is the solution to the pressures the company faces. Addressing housing affordability is a key policy issue for Hickinbotham Group. Addressing the supposed high levels of state and federal taxes on housing

limits the company's ability to supply more affordable housing. Innovation in design and building seeks to address this significant pressure. The region where Hickinbotham Group develops most of the housing is in and around Adelaide which rates very well on housing affordability indexes ([Urban Reform Institute, 2023](#)). Hickinbotham Group prides itself on delivering affordable quality houses and developments.



Fig. 4. Hickinbotham Group Planned Community.

Business and Greater Good

The company has developed more than 60 community estates, setting standards Australia-wide for innovative design, quality facilities and sound environmental management techniques. Fig. 4 provides an example of Hickinbotham Group planned community in South Australia. In line with Hickinbotham's commitment to building communities – not just homes – the company has also invested in the education of South Australian children. Michael Hickinbotham has established endowments for Xavier College at Two Wells and St Columba College at Andrews Farm, pioneered the establishment of Woodend School, funded academic scholarships for children from high-needs families and made significant contributions to the University of Adelaide and Hickinbotham Roseworthy Wine Science Laboratory. He also supports many cultural, sporting and community groups and charities ([Hickinbotham Group, n.d.](#)).

Michael is currently a member of the board of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (SA). He is a former Chairman of the Australian Population Institute of Australia (SA) and a former board member of Family Business Australia (SA) as well as the Economic Development Board of South Australia

which is the principal economic adviser to the Premier of South Australia (University of South Australia, n.d.).

What Next for Hickinbotham Group and SDG#11

Hickinbotham Group attempts to redress housing unaffordability while providing more sustainable housing. The company is set to grow beyond its current level in the housing sector and is likely to become one of the largest housing companies in Australia. The reason for this prediction is that housing affordability will be a challenge for societies of the future. Rising interest rates and inflation are set to be the norm for the foreseeable future, and thus, the core business model of Hickinbotham Group suits the future outlook of social challenges. Sustainability will be integral in housing affordability as the cost of living increases and sustainable housing can deliver savings for people and the planet.

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Index

- Adelaide Plains Council, 95
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 1
- Allegoria Capital Ltd. (ACL), 82, 85
- At-risk programme, 66–67

- Bavarian State Prize for Equal Opportunities, 46
- Bistro Blend, 39
- Blocworx software, 32–33
- Blühender Betrieb Award, 49
- BMW, 17
- Business model
 - DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, 46
 - Hickinbotham Group, 100–102
 - IQUTECH, 32–33
 - Wolf Connection, 70–72

- Carbon emissions, 85
- Circular economy, 35–36
- Climate-neutral roasting, 48
- Coatinc Company, 17
- Coffee roasting, 39–40
- Coffeeshop Award, 47
- Coopers Beer, 18
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), 58–59
- COVID-19 pandemic, 2
 - social and economic impacts, 3
- Cultural heritage, 64–65

- Digitalisation, 88
- DINZLER Direkt gehandelt, 48
- DINZLER Kaffeerösterei AG, 6, 37, 39, 43, 52–53
 - business and greater good, 51–52
 - business model and SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities, 46
 - businesses, 40–43
 - challenges of working with SDG#11, 51
 - coffee roasting, 39–40
 - key milestones, 42
 - networks and awards regarding SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities, 46–48
 - products and/or services, 38–39
 - regional uniqueness, 43–45
 - reporting and measurement, 50–51
 - SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities and, 43, 45, 48, 50
 - vision and mission, 38
- Divine Intervention Entertainment, 85
- DNK declaration, 50–51
- Dual System, 44

- E-commerce, 88
- Emissions, 44–45
- Empowerment, 57
- Energy-efficient design, 100
- Environmental, social and governance strategies (ESG strategies), 23
- Environmental Product Declaration (EPD), 87
- EU organic label, 48
- European Federation of Financial Analysts Societies (EFFAS), 50–51

- Fairtrade, 48
- Family business, 1–2, 11, 79–80
 - countries, 16–19
 - with structural or process lens applied, 12

- in twenty-first century, 11–15
 - world, 15–16
- Family's trans-generational
 - sustainability intentions, 1–2
- 'Flowering Business' Award, 49–50
- German Council for Sustainable Development, 50–51
- German Hotel Academy (GHA), 47
- German Sustainability Code (GSC), 50–51
- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), 50–51
- Government enterprises, 4–5
- Green Choice, 95
- Gross domestic product (GDP), 15
- Hickinbotham Group, 91–92, 95
 - business and greater good, 104–105
 - business model, 100–102
 - challenges of working, 103–104
 - products, 91–92
 - reporting and measurement, 102–103
 - SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities and, 95–96, 105
 - SDG#11 targets, 96–100
 - stakeholders, 102
 - vision and mission, 91
- Hickinbotham Homes, 7
- Hospitality HR Award, 47
- Housing affordability crisis, 101–102
- Housing Institute of Australia (HIA), 102
- IQUTECH, 6, 23, 25–27
 - business and greater good, 35
 - business model and SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities, 32–33
 - challenges of working with SDG#11, 34
 - circular economy, 35–36
 - consumption, 36
 - origins, 28–29
 - ownership, 28
 - primary activities, 23–24
 - products and services, 24–25
 - reporting and measurement, 34
 - size, 29
 - structure, 29
 - sustainable cities and communities and, 29–32
 - vision and mission, 24
- 'Kunstmühle' in Rosenheim, 39–40
- Land availability, 102
- Leaders Club Germany, 46
- Lochiel Park project, 94
- Los Angeles (L. A.), 65–66
- Medicine Wheel, 64
- Merck Group, 17
- Miesbach District Business Award, 46–47
- Mood Properties, 85
- ONEX, 85
- Open spaces in cities, 65–67
- Pacajaj REDD project, 42
- Packaging, 44
- Partner in Excess Screening (PIE Screening), 23
- Pearl Rating System, 84
- Playford Council, 94
- Porsche, 17
- Private enterprises, 4–5
- Renmark Water Reclamation Plant, 94
- Republic of Ireland, 16–17
- Rescue, 57
- Resiliency Program for Women Veterans, 67–68
- Road and Transport Authority (RTA), 84
- Rules of engagement (ROE), 68
- Sacred Hoop (*see* Medicine Wheel)
- Sadara Capital, 85

- Safe spaces in cities, 67–69
- Screening and Testing Services (STS), 23
- Shehada Brothers, 7, 79
 - aligning family business with SDG#11, 83–86
 - business and greater good, 87–88
 - challenges of working with SDG11, 87
 - future of family business, 88
 - motivation for starting business, 83
 - philosophy of family business, 80
 - products and/or services, 80–81
 - reporting and measurement, 86–87
- Shirley Plantation, 17
- Small and medium businesses (SMEs), 82–83
- Solar power, 100–101
- South Australian Government, 94
- Stakeholders of Hickinbotham Group, 102
- Start-up Revolution, 82–83
- Sustainability, 79–80, 84–85
- Sustainable City in Dubai, 86
- Sustainable Development Goal
 - number 11 (SDG#11), 3, 5, 29
 - challenges of working with, 34
 - sustainable cities and communities, 32–34
 - targets, 3–4
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 1
 - Compass, 86–87
 - key aspects of case study template, 8
 - methodological approach, 8–9
 - SDG#11, 3–5
- Sustainable materials, 101
- Trigono Developments, 79, 83, 85
- United Arab Emirates (UAE), 79–80
- Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), 42
- Waste, 44
 - reduction, 101
- Water conservation, 101
- Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards scheme (WELS), 95
- William Prym Holding Ltd., 17
- Wolf Connection, 6–7, 55, 58, 63
 - business model, 70–72
 - founders and key people, 58–61
 - and inclusive, safe spaces for all, 55
 - organisational structure and description, size of organisation and key attributes of organisation, 61–63
 - SDG#11 sustainable cities and communities and, 63, 69, 71–72
 - services offered by, 58
 - vision and mission, 57
- Wolf Therapy, 57
- Women and Wolves Program, 68
- Woodend Primary School, 94
- Zildjian family, 17

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