



Change Focus to Change

50 Years of
Inspiring Responsible
Leadership





Change Focus

We are living in a decisive moment in the history of humanity. The world is facing exponential change. Nothing less than the sum of our individual decisions as well as their societal, political, and economic context must be re-considered.

Looking back on the last 50 years of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, we strongly believe that individuals and organizations need to do more than merely aim to survive in this crucial era. How can we inspire and promote sustainable solutions for people and planet? How can we change focus and make progress toward the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations? How can we join forces for responsible leadership?

This 50th anniversary publication tells the story of our times through the eyes of leaders who are assuming responsibility. It shows how the BMW Foundation is achieving impact and enabling Responsible Leaders to make progress towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Although this book profiles only a small portion of the nearly 2,000 leaders in our global network, it does demonstrate one thing: to implement the 2030 Agenda, we must all pull together and turn this decade of action into a decade of achievements. New challenges await beyond 2030. Let us change focus to change.

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HOW RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

At the core of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt lies a unique theory of change. Oliver Zipse discusses the ways leadership affects hearts, minds, and the lives of future generations

B

BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt has a clear objective. It seeks to bring forth lasting and impactful change that contributes to the positive development of our society. In keeping with the spirit of the entrepreneur Herbert Quandt, it purposely focuses its attention on those who play a unique role in shaping our future. Three theses: Why is intelligent and far-sighted action by leaders so decisive right now?

Thesis 1:
The decisions leaders make have implications reaching far beyond the individuals themselves

Responsible leadership means always being aware of the impact one's own decisions have on the lives of others. Herbert Quandt is an excellent example of this. BMW would have ceased to exist a long time ago without the bold commitment of the man who gives his name to this foundation and who offered the company an opportunity to steer its own destiny. Back in the late 1950s, following an economically difficult period, BMW was on the verge of being taken over by Daimler-Benz. In a historic moment at the Annual General Meeting of December 9, 1959, small shareholders, retailers, Works Council members and employees loudly and vehemently opposed the takeover. They ultimately succeeded. Their determination, combined with Herbert Quandt's own strong belief in BMW's future viability, persuaded him to increase his stake – paving the way for a complete restructuring of the company. Herbert Quandt's entrepreneurial foresight and resolve have secured the company's existence to this day. Herbert Quandt was well

aware that his commitment to BMW would mean taking on a huge responsibility, but he did it all the same. He made a decision with far-reaching consequences – not just for himself, but for many individuals whose existence was directly tied to the company's well-being. Herbert Quandt was prepared to take on this overarching responsibility and begin the necessary structural change. For the past five decades, his long-term and forward-looking action has been reflected in the spirit of BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt: In its actions, the foundation connects politics, business, science and civil society. In doing so, it promotes and encourages an essential attribute of responsible leadership.

Because, thesis 2 reads:
Responsible leadership means looking ahead

As a global community, we are confronted with enormous challenges. At the beginning of this new decade, we need to introduce concrete measures to ensure we leave behind a just, peaceful, economically strong and liveable world for our children and future generations. We all share in this responsibility – companies, policy makers, corporate leaders, young leaders and, of course, individuals. This is why leaders in particular must think far beyond the immediate scope of their personal and professional duties. In September 2015, the member states of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By doing so, they committed to numerous social, economic and environmental goals: from the fight against hunger to sustainable production of goods, all the way to climate

protection. For these and other important tasks for the future, now, more than ever, we have to reach out across industries, sectors, cultures and nations, and work together. If we can break down barriers and overcome people's reluctance, we will be able to unleash the full intellectual, financial and material potential of our global community.

For this to happen, it is vital that those whose decisions have the greatest measurable impact demonstrate flexibility of thought and visionary thinking. It is particularly incumbent on leaders to think far beyond their immediate responsibilities and take overarching action. BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt supports this thinking by actively encouraging the exchange of ideas between leaders of all disciplines. It serves as a driving force and multiplier of progressive ideas that can help realise the goals of the United Nations step by step. In this way, it inspires those with a unique influence and a voice that will be heard, who can leverage their role to motivate and get people on board.

Because, thesis 3 reads:
Responsible leaders are motivation drivers

Individuals need to lead the way and persuade others to follow, so we can move forward as a community. Responsible and forward-looking leadership produces positive social change when it wins people's support for transformation. BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt's global network of responsible leaders is a trove of ideas, perspectives and experience we at the BMW Group can leverage and reflect on. I am a member of this network myself, so I know how

“Individuals must lead the way and persuade others to follow, so we can move forward as a community.”

— OLIVER ZIPSE

important this work is. The transparency and broad impact that accompanies the development of digital media focus public attention on individuals' views and assessments. This is an opportunity. Management responsibility garners leaders public attention. In turn, they have an obligation to use this purposefully and to set a positive example.

The same applies to the BMW Group as a company. The effects of entrepreneurial activity are relevant to public perception and social progress. That is why company management is considered in a much wider context these days. This calls for values that extend well beyond actual shareholder value. The BMW Group embraces its economic, environmental and social responsibility. Our long-term BMW Group strategy gives all three dimensions equal weighting and puts sustainability at the centre of our business paradigm.

This means: Sustainability is not just one thing we do. It is about all things we do at the BMW Group. This is only logical, because outstanding products and sustainability belong together, in my opinion. For this reason, we are taking a comprehensive and ambitious approach to sustainability at the BMW Group. By 2030, we will substantially reduce our carbon footprint throughout the entire value chain by at least a third from 2019 levels. This puts us right on track to meet the

goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. One thing is certain: No other car company takes such a holistic approach – from the supply chain through production of our vehicles to the end of the use phase.

Why did we pick 2030 as the date for our next targets? So that we, who have management responsibility for the BMW Group today, can oversee this time period and be personally accountable for it. For us, our goal has always been to improve on our efforts from one generation to the next. We set a clear example by continuously measuring our impact and benchmark ourselves within the automotive branch. This enables us to be at the forefront of our industry and beyond when it comes to sustainability. This is the BMW way.

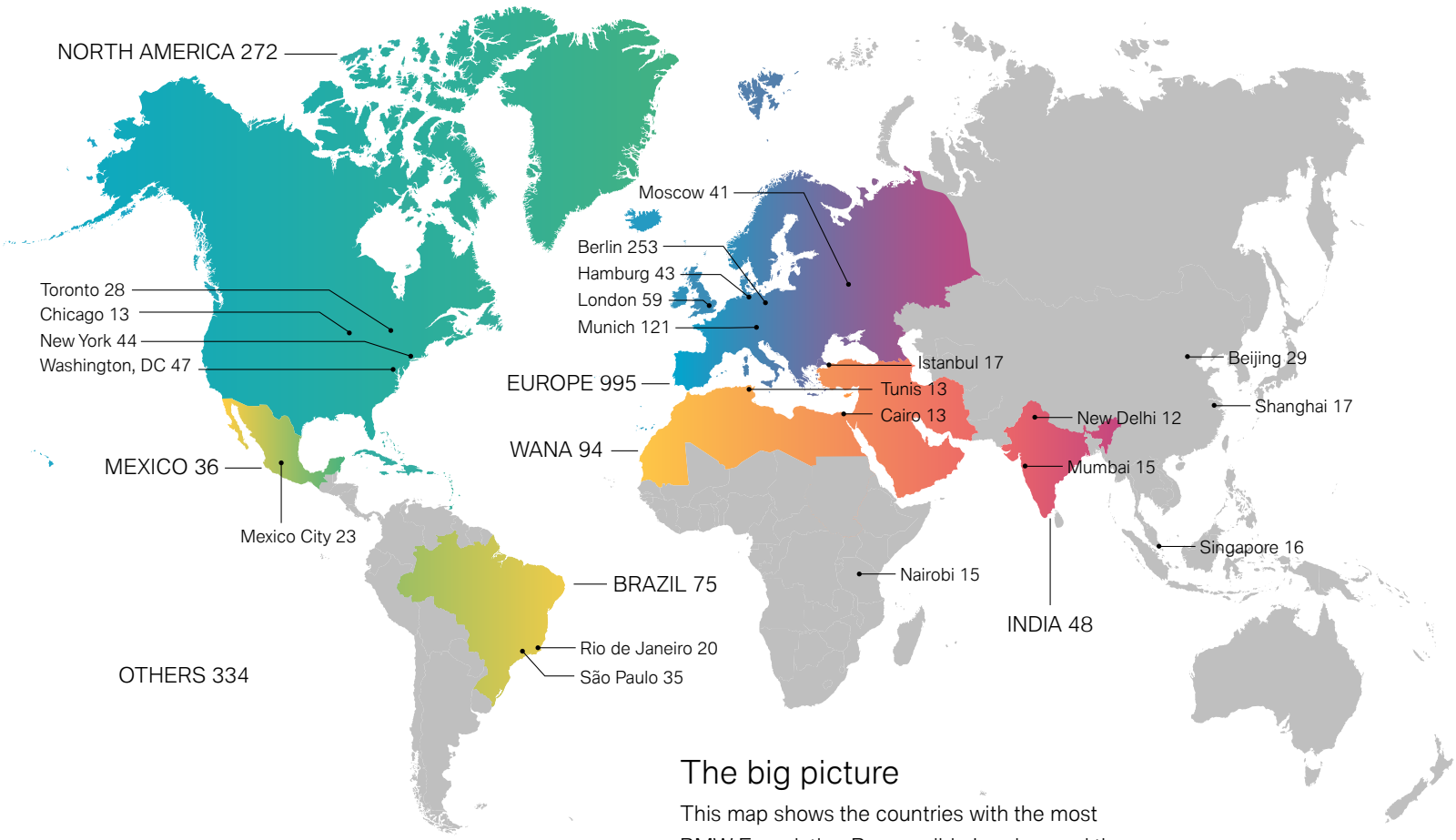
I am certain the BMW Foundation will remain at our company's side through the coming years and decades. The Foundation unites all the attributes that contribute to our common good: It asks the right questions and takes a stand, while bringing decision-makers together, creating a sense of identification and inspiring us and other managers to take forward-looking action. Not least, it highlights, and exemplifies itself, how corporate activity can help solve global challenges and contribute to the long-term well-being of society—because responsible leadership makes all the difference. ●



OLIVER ZIPSE
Following several management positions at BMW Group in Munich, South Africa and UK, as well as in Corporate Planning and Product Strategy he became Member of the Board of Management for Production in 2012. Since 2019, he is the Chairman of the Board of Management of BMW AG. Zipse has been a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader since 2014.

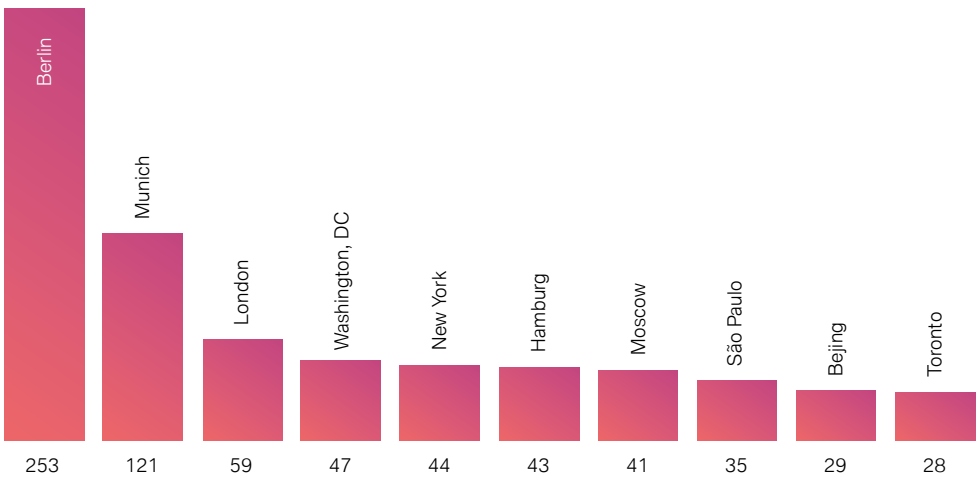
The nexus of the BMW Foundation

The Responsible Leaders Network is characterized by high diversity and a strong commitment to changing the world for the better

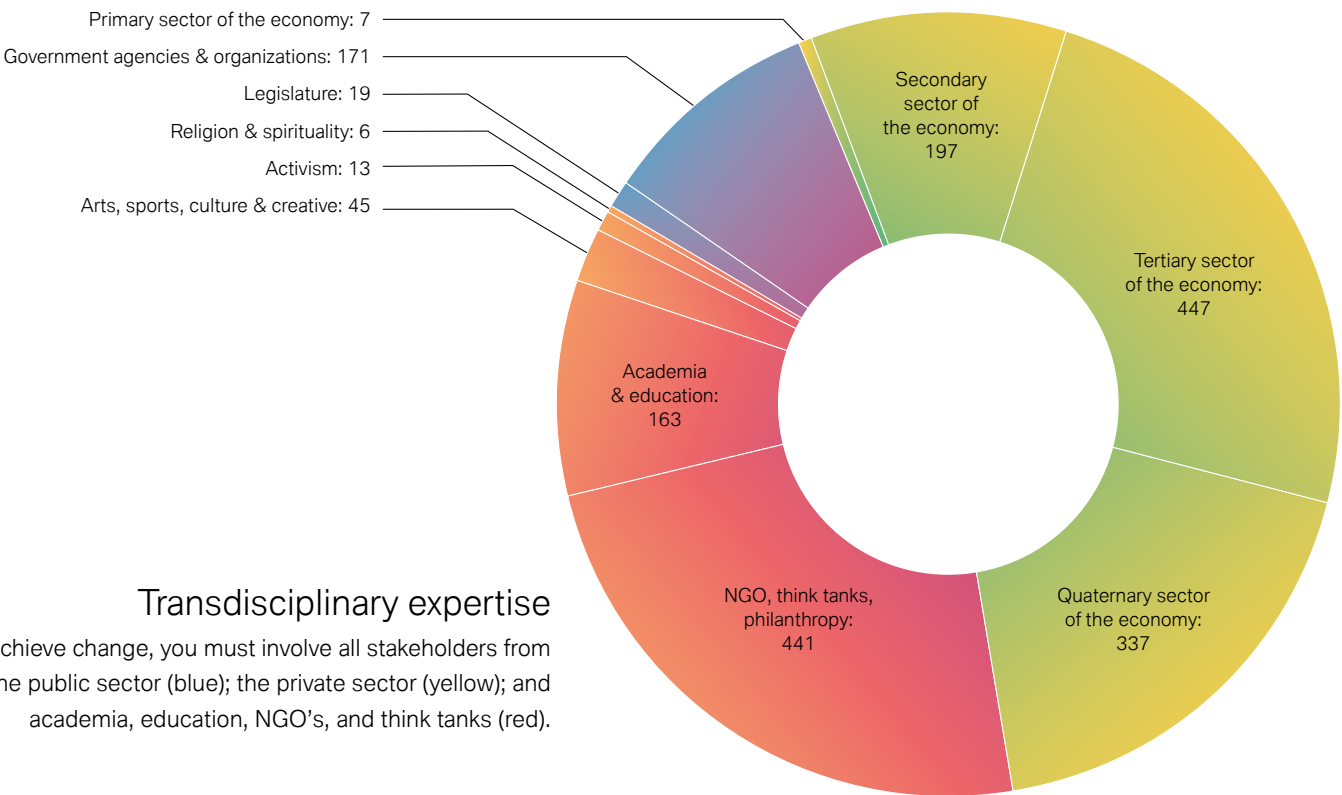


The big picture
This map shows the countries with the most BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders and the cities where the network thrives. In November 2020, we had **1,854 leaders in 109 countries**.

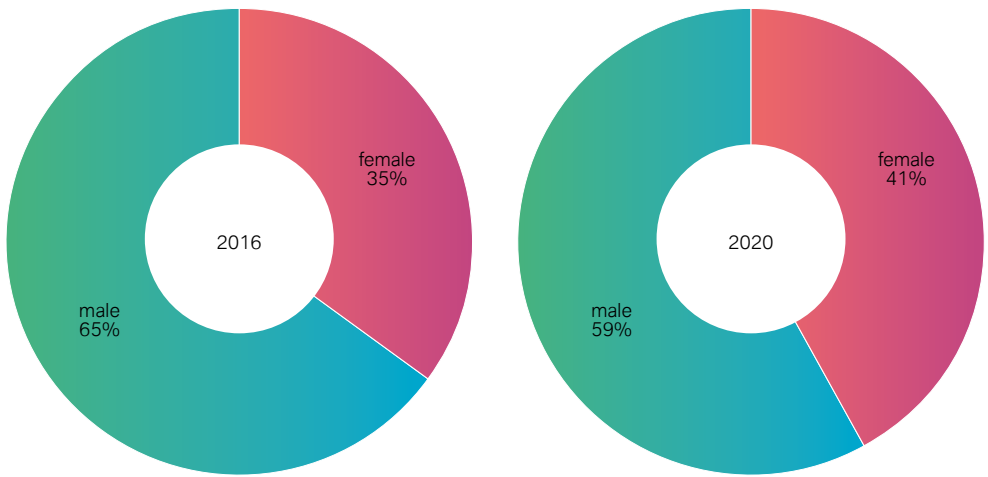
Network clusters
The BMW Foundation was founded in Germany. This heritage is visible when looking at **the cities with the most Responsible Leaders**—but you can also see our global approach.



SOURCE: BMW FOUNDATION HERBERT QUANDT, NOVEMBER 2020



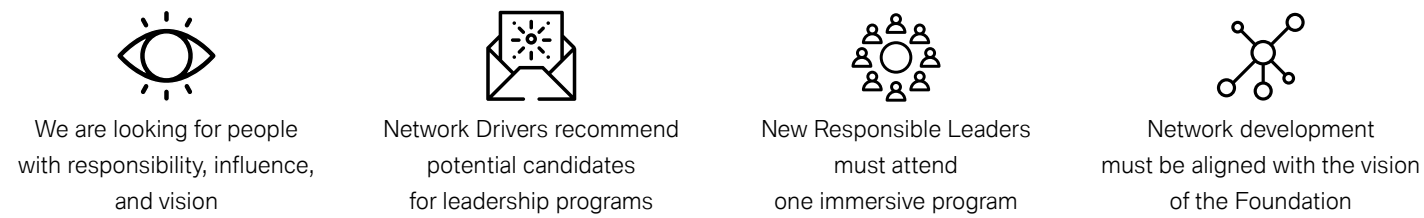
Transdisciplinary expertise
To achieve change, you must involve all stakeholders from the public sector (blue); the private sector (yellow); and academia, education, NGO's, and think tanks (red).

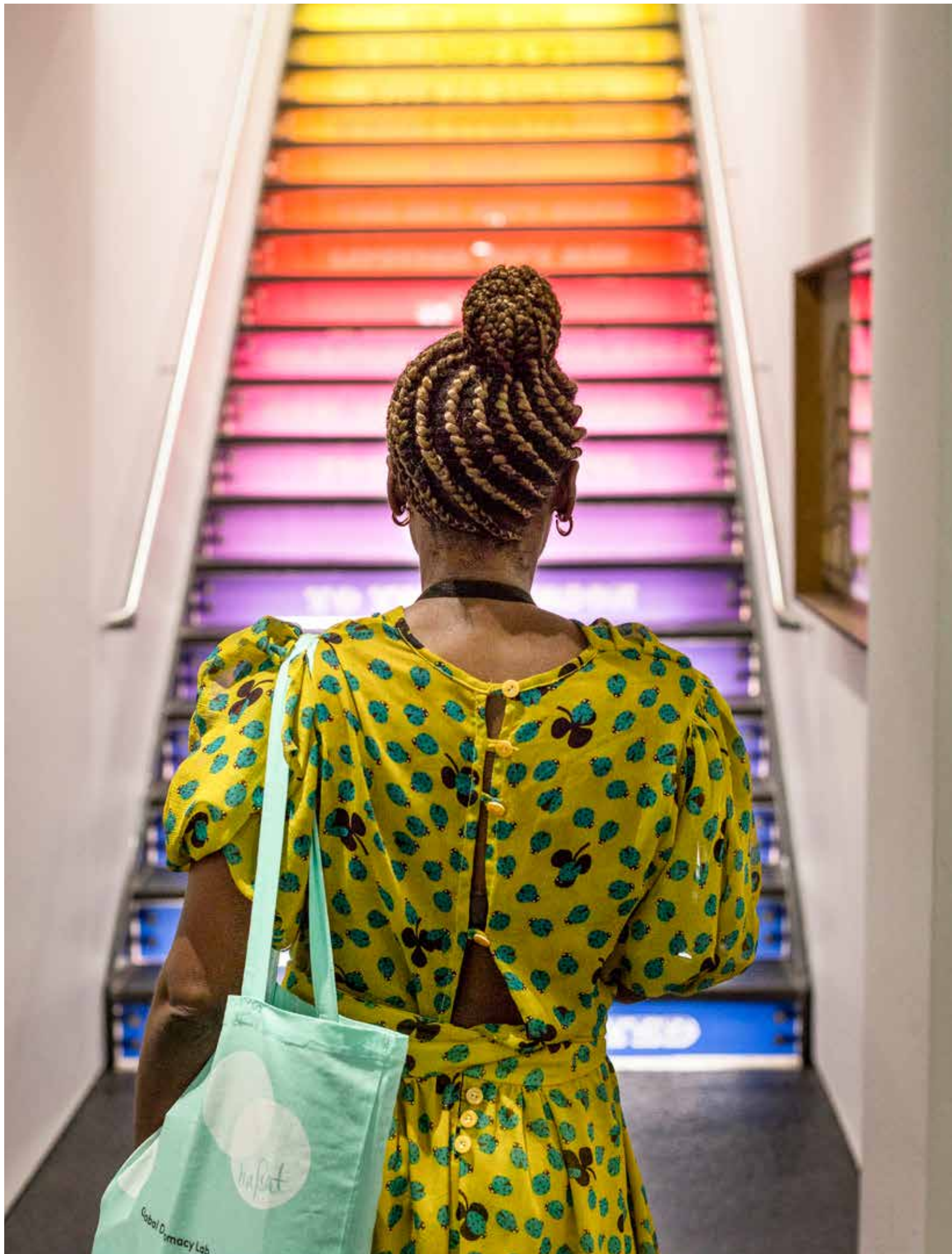


Demographic change
Over the last four years, we have increased the gender diversity of our network substantially.

How to become a member of the Responsible Leaders Network

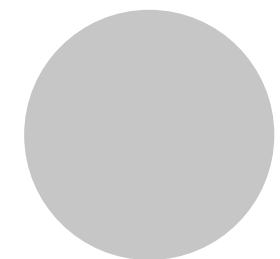
Because we want connections to be real and sustainable, the invitation to be part of the network is aligned with strategic objectives of the Foundation.





A turning point in history

In 2015, the United Nations agreed on the 2030 Agenda to address the challenges and inequalities of our time. The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt has made it its mission to inspire responsible leadership and advance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda



THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS OF THE UN 2030 AGENDA

These 17 goals and 169 associated targets are a global call for action. Achieving them will make our societies more just, peaceful, and sustainable



W

With less than ten years to go, the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda has reached a critical point in time. Adopted in 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals define a road map. As if the challenges were not tough enough already, the worldwide COVID-19 crisis has made the path to reaching these goals even rockier than before. In this “decade of action,” as the UN refers to the twenty-twenties, we must therefore implement sustainable solutions very rapidly. Because our many problems have suddenly become even more urgent. They include poverty, hunger, disease, gender bias, financial inequality, and climate change, which is exacerbating most of the others. The 2030 Agenda is a blueprint for humankind to turn the tide.

Over the next decade and well beyond, the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt will continue to play a small but meaningful role in transforming our world. The Foundation has organized its efforts around the 2030 Agenda. Responsible leadership must be founded in values—and the values laid out in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are essential if we are to succeed in making the world a better and fairer place.

“We invite people to reflect on specific contributions they can make in their personal and professional environments. But as an organization, we seek to connect with a wider ecosystem,” says Michael Schaefer, Chairman of the BMW Foundation’s Board. “Proactive collaboration between leaders participating in a network of networks will allow us to make a substantive contribution toward implementing the UN’s 2030 Agenda.”

The BMW Foundation is intensifying its efforts to bring politics, civil society, businesses, and individuals together. We must all fight with passion and persistence for a better world—as a community of purpose. The BMW Foundation promotes responsible leadership and inspires leaders worldwide to work towards a peaceful, just and sustainable future. Through our activities, we aim to advance the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. If Responsible Leaders are successful, so too will be the 2030 Agenda. Here are 17 of them paving the way. ●

SDG 1:
No Poverty



FRANNIE LÉAUTIER
CEO, SouthBridge Investments, Tanzania

How optimistic are you about the state of the world right now?
Seven out of ten.

How close are we to achieving SDG 1 by 2030?
The pandemic has diminished about 10 years’ worth of effort in reducing poverty, particularly in Africa, India, and Brazil.

“My goal is to raise funding for market solutions that serve the underserved. It forces businesses to be more innovative in the design and production cost of their product, and therefore makes them more financially sustainable. For example, the African tech sector is using new techniques to reach excluded, poor areas—and therefore leads innovation in mobile payment systems worldwide. The BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network has real benefits for my work: to be able to share ideas among the Responsible Leaders gets us much further than a single idea could.”

SDG 2:
Zero Hunger



ANDRÉA GOMIDES
Founder, Instituto Ekloos, Brazil

“Hunger is often invisible: when we started delivering food in the Providencia slum in Rio de Janeiro, even locals said they didn’t know how many people there were living in hunger. With our organizations, Luiza Serpa and me built one of the largest civil-society led movement in Brazil—during the pandemic we were able to help around 300,000 families, delivering roughly 4,000 tons of food.”

SDG 3:
Good Health and Well-Being



CHRISTIAN TIDONA
Founder and managing director of BioMed X Institute, Germany

“We need diversity to spark scientific breakthroughs. Talent is distributed evenly across the globe, opportunity is not. I want ‘innovation honeypots’ like BioMed X Institute to provide the world’s talent with with the best resources to develop the medicines of the future.”



SDG 4:
Quality Education



JOHN GILMOUR
Executive director at LEAP Science and Math Schools, South Africa

“Schools are at the center of any community and I think they are the key to a better future. This is especially true for unequal societies like South Africa. But: there is a genius in every child and we want to create a learning path for every student. Three of our six schools are currently led by former LEAP students.”

SDG 5:
Gender Equality

SHAHIRA AMIN
Independent journalist, Egypt

“Female role models inspired my fight for independence. For too long, their voices were muted. I try to change that with the news stories I write. The practice of female genital mutilation I reported on is now criminalized here in Egypt.”

SDG 6:
Clean Water and Sanitation



BENJAMIN ADRION
Founder of Viva con Agua, Germany

How optimistic are you about the state of the world right now?
10. Being fatalistic doesn’t serve anyone.

What gives you hope?
Technical innovation, Fridays for Future, and the ecosystem of social entrepreneurship.

“Since we started Viva con Agua 15 years ago, the situation of clean water and sanitation has changed a lot. Many people have gained access to clean drinking water. But at the same time, the global water crisis in terms of pollution got worse. Europe is not an island. We can’t just look at our own wealth and development and ignore the global picture. We are living in an interconnected world and our actions have an impact on many other people. People are starting to realize that. The speed of learning is increasing. In the future, we want to start more African branches of Viva con Agua. We want to use universal languages like music and arts to promote change instead of using shame and guilt.”

SDG 7:
Affordable and Clean Energy



RUBEN WALKER
Founder of African Clean Energy, the Netherlands and Lesotho

“Off-grid households in emerging economies like Africa emit clouds of black smoke when they cook with wood or charcoal—which causes deforestation and illness. They also spend a fortune on electricity replacements. Our clean, hybrid system deals with the entire energy needs of a household—lights, phone charging, cooking, and heating.”

SDG 8:
Decent Work and Economic Growth



ELIZABETH MALOBA
Cofounder of Nahari, Kenya

“In 2019, 22 percent of the world’s young people were not in employment, education or training. I work with business leaders, the civil society, and the government to help them coordinate initiatives that foster employment and economic growth. One of my favorite transformations was how over 120 female-owned agricultural enterprises from 16 countries across Africa developed as a result from training and mentorship.”

SDG 10:
Reduced Inequalities



LUANA GÉNOT
Founder and Executive Director at ID_BR, Brazil

How close are we to achieving SDG 10 by 2030?
When I look at racial equality, we are still very far away.

What gives you hope?
Micro-revolutions count: I want to see 100 black women as CEOs, but for now I’m content to see white people talking more about race.

“Many companies think they are already inclusive and deny racial disparities. At our institute ID_BR we developed the “Yes to Racial Equality” seal. It helps companies to evaluate their level of racial equality by answering a series of questions and providing data. We encourage companies to tackle racism as a structural problem that demands a structural strategy with goals, investments, and deadlines. It’s not only about employing black people; it’s about creating a more inclusive environment that makes black leadership possible and sustainable.”

SDG 9:
Industry, Innovation,
and Infrastructure



MEI WANG
Global Program Lead for China Bridge at Accenture Ventures, Germany

What gives you hope?
The power of technology.

What worries you the most?
The balance between global and individual interests.

“In order to tackle sustainable development, we have to work across national boundaries. Our focus at China Bridge is to find synergies between technology from West and East, specifically from China. Today, China is the number-one producer of plastics and pollution and will not reach the development goals if we do not collaborate. We need integrators that bring differences together and find a common ground. This is also what I gain through the Responsible Leaders Network: We get to swap ideas with other global experts, and they often provide me with a different perspective on issues like sustainability, politics and business. This community keeps me motivated and focussed.”

SDG 11:
Sustainable Cities and Communities



CHRISTIAN VANIZETTE
Cofounder MakeSense, France

How optimistic are you about the state of the world right now?
8 out of ten.

How close are we to achieving SDG 11 by 2030?
Progress is possible but not inevitable. 2020 is a setback. 2021 will be a comeback.

“It can be tough to be an optimist these days. But at MakeSense, an organization I co-founded ten years ago, the COVID-19 pandemic became a catalyst to show how strong communities can be when they collaborate: We created hundreds of mutual aid groups on messaging apps to organize volunteers. Thousands of strangers started hundreds of thousands of actions: collecting hygiene kits for homeless people, making courtesy calls to isolated elders or collecting food donations for informal workers.”

SDG 12:
Responsible Consumption and Production



ALICE GRINDHAMMER
Cofounder and Managing Director, CRCLR, Germany

“Social and environmental problems are closely interwoven. I co-founded CRCLR, a think tank for circular economy solutions and TRSNFRM, a circular construction cooperative. I support founders and activists working on social and ecological change. It will take endurance to transform our current economic system, but I don’t think it’s impossible if we set our hearts, minds, and hands to it.”

SDG 13:
Climate Action



GONZALO MUÑOZ
Chile's high-level climate champion for COP 25 and cofounder of TriCiclos, Chile

What gives you hope?
The scientific evidence and tools.

What worries you the most?
We don't have enough time to leave change to the next generation alone.

"Every action has an impact. Measuring that impact visualizes it and makes you more aware of possible solutions. When Pope Francis visited Chile in 2018, with a group of people we measured the environmental footprint, including the greenhouse gases of his trip. Using a moment like this, when massive audiences are paying attention, is key for the message to catch on. I'm very proud that at COP 25 we put the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C and the commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 at the center of the global discussion. When we work together as a global society, we can achieve goals that seemed unattainable just yesterday."



SDG 15:
Life on Land

TASSO AZEVEDO
Coordinator MapBiomas & System for Estimating Green House Gases Emissions (SEEG), Brazil

"Between 2005 and 2012, I was part of the national plan to combat deforestation in Brazil that reduced it by 80 percent. But lately, we've seen a dramatic rise again. I coordinate MapBiomas, a platform to track the change of land use. In some areas, a deforestation of 20 percent could turn rain forest into a savanna."

SDG 14:
Life Below Water



BENJAMIN MANDOS
Cofounder of GOT BAG, Germany

"We collaborate with 1,500 fishermen in Indonesia to collect plastic and recycle it for our bags. But it's not up to those communities to stop the pollution. Western countries export immense amounts of plastic to countries that are not equipped to deal with it. We are working towards reusing more types of plastic. The BMW Foundation's Responsible Leaders Network connected us to experts from research and development."

SDG 16:
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



GRETA RÍOS
Founder and President of Ollin, Mexico

How close are we to achieving SDG 16 by 2030?
Not very close, but we are advancing.

What gives you hope?
When I see justice done. When there is rule of law.

"The greatest threats to democracy are indifference and ignorance. For years, autocratic politicians have been trying to deactivate democracy by telling the people that their vote will not make a difference. But a single informed citizen can change the course of history. I often showcase Olimpia Melo, a young Mexican woman whose intimate pictures were shared online by her ex-partner. As a consequence, she became an activist and fought for better legislation against these kinds of offenses. Nowadays, people can face prison time for sharing intimate pictures without consent."

SDG 17:
Partnerships for the Goals



ANNETTE RICHARDSON
Founder and managing partner at Richardson Partners LLC, former senior advisor at the United Nations Office for Partnerships, United States

"The SDGs call for a collaborative effort. While the issues are too big to be solved by governments alone, the private sector, civil society, individual citizens really are stepping up. The magic is in the coordination."

Chapter One

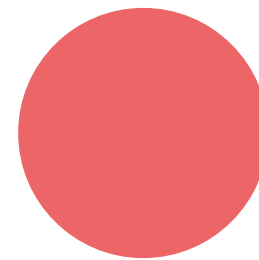
HISTORY

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“Many underestimate the need for change”

To achieve it, the greater good demands the same dedication as business objectives. Stefan Quandt offers insights into his roles on the supervisory board of BMW AG and the board of trustees at the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt



What kind of social responsibility do you see as arising from your father’s entrepreneurial legacy?

Social responsibility has always been an important issue for our family, as can be seen by the wide range of foundations and nonprofit organizations we are involved in. Having said that, I believe that social responsibility does not arise primarily from legacies—however important they may be for one’s self-image and actions. Responsibility is a very personal matter, which every entrepreneur needs to define for him or herself.

What kind of responsibility do you see as deriving from your inheritance?

My entrepreneurial inheritance includes interests and investments in important industries and companies, above all in

BMW. With over 800,000 employees in Germany, the automotive industry has a great social responsibility. I am very much aware of that. But there is also another level of responsibility: you do not inherit something just to own it but to develop it further, strengthen it, and make it fit for the future. It is precisely this objective of a value-creating transformation that I am pursuing strategically with regard to my companies.

You once said in an interview that entrepreneurial action must be based on a stable framework of values. What values guide your decisions and actions?

As an entrepreneur and citizen of this country, I am strongly and firmly committed to promoting civil society, for example through my nonprofit organi-

zation aqtivator, which supports a variety of educational projects and social enterprises. This way, I try to contribute to equality of opportunity in Germany. I want to motivate children and young people in particular to look to the future with confidence and self-confidence. In addition, I am doing everything I can within my power to make sure that Germany will not again experience the rise of movements that want to curtail people’s freedom through government measures. I also very much care about the ethical compass of the people who run my companies.

Your father cultivated the leadership principle of the “long leash,” which is also dear to your heart. What qualities do today’s leaders need to really make a difference



The jury is out
Stefan Quandt in Berlin
at a jury session for the
BMW Foundation
Responsible Leaders
Award in 2015.

“I am doing all I can to make sure that Germany will not again experience the rise of movements that want to curtail people’s freedom.” – **STEFAN QUANDT**

and to get people on board? Can you name a few examples that have made an impression on you?

Besides a fundamentally ethical attitude, there is a whole range of qualities that are important for people in positions of leadership: decisiveness, openness, positive thinking, the ability to reflect, and the ability to question yourself and your position and to admit opposing views. What seems especially important to me, in terms of showing appreciation for others, is to trust in the competencies of others. My father Herbert Quandt had this trust: Because of his severe eye disease, he had to be able to rely one hundred percent on many people. He knew that his decisions depended on the information he received from his employees and staff. I believe that if we are prepared to give each other this trust and to share competencies, then we will be able to meet even the biggest challenges.

How does your social responsibility differ with regard to the BMW Group and the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt? Where do you see overlaps and synergies?

With regard to both the BMW Group and the BMW Foundation, one part of my social responsibility is, for example, to make room for innovations. In my opinion, innovation and innova-

tive thinking ensure long-term entrepreneurial success and thus enable independence. Independence in turn creates a kind of reliability that I see as an indispensable prerequisite for innovation. This applies to both the BMW Group and the BMW Foundation.

Given the dramatic disruptions we are currently experiencing—in the automotive industry, but also politically, socially, and ecologically—how do you see your role as the single largest shareholder of the BMW Group?

As a member of the Supervisory Board, I am primarily a sparring partner and advisor to the management. I help to make sure that the decisions regarding the big challenges we are facing can be well-prepared. It is important to me that the consequences of a decision are considered and weighed holistically. For example, it is important to review the conditions of our industrial value creation in light of climate change. At the same time, we must not ignore societal needs such as people’s desire for individual mobility.

In this context, how do you define your role as responsible leader?

In my opinion, responsible leaders are people who work for the common good and social progress not only in

their personal lives but also in their professional capacities. I have met many people like that in the context of the global network of the BMW Foundation, which I am a member of. For me, responsible leadership means approaching problems and challenges not just from your own perspective but taking a 360-degree—a holistic—approach. A good example is the energy transition: the political climate targets are very ambitious. However, an approach that focuses solely on renewable energy production may result in a situation where aspects that are taken for granted today—for example, a sufficient and stable energy supply for the entire country—can no longer be guaranteed. We will not be able to secure our energy supply in the short term from renewable sources only, as long as we do not have, at the same time, solutions for the supra-regional transmission and storage of large amounts of energy. A Responsible Leader should approach this issue by looking at all of these aspects together.

The UN’s 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals are seen as the blueprint for turning the tide in the next ten years. Are there any points in the 2030 Agenda that you, as an entrepreneur, can directly relate to?

With the 2030 Agenda, the member states of the United Nations have set important goals for socially and ecologically sustainable development. But I do not see this as an act of desperation in the sense of “turning the tide.” As an entrepreneur, I see above all the opportunities that arise from this unanimous self-commitment of the world’s states—and I am optimistic that our form of industrial production and economic activity will be transformed with positive impact. For me as an entrepreneur, sustainability is also an important investment factor—for example, I would not buy a manufacturer of disposable packaging. And the companies I hold shares in are already strongly moving in the direction of the SDGs when it comes to production processes and supplier relations: together with

other companies, the BMW Group has publicly advocated for a European supply-chain law that is transparent and easy to implement.

Humankind is confronted with enormous challenges. To meet them, we all need to change our behavior. You once said that success is achieved not with pressure but with enthusiasm. How can we reach and inspire those who would rather not change their behavior in alignment with the 2030 Agenda?

That is a difficult question, and I believe there is no formula for guaranteed success. Many people underestimate the need for change and associate the status quo with security and stability. To be ready for change, you first need to have a positive and open attitude.

Up to a point, one can set an example. As a matter of principle, I am not a big fan of enforcing changes in behavior through ever-stricter regulations and prohibitions. On the other hand, it is not helpful when political leaders, political parties, or entire governments in some countries dispute the need for the 2030 Agenda or even fight against it. It is therefore up to leaders in particular to gauge the 2030 Agenda’s options for action and its conflicting goals. We must not leave this to populists and simplifiers.

What does sustainability mean for you personally?

For me, sustainability means reflecting on the consequences of my actions. It also means engaging with issues of renewable energy or the question of



Honoring a climate champion
Stefan Quandt presents Gonzalo Muñoz with the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Award at the World Responsible Leaders Forum in Munich.

“I welcome the fact that our society is increasingly embracing the principle of sustainability.” – **STEFAN QUANDT**

how to solve resource problems—for example, in the field of electromobility. In principle, I very much welcome the fact that our society is increasingly embracing the principle of sustainability. But I am also firmly convinced that individual sacrifice is not the only way to solve our problems; to do so, we also need innovations.

How do you seek to shape the work of the BMW Foundation from your position on its Board of Trustees in view of the tasks laid out by the 2030 Agenda for the next decade?

I think we should use the 50th anniversary of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt not only to look back at our—undoubtedly excellent—work over the last decades. It seems more important to me to look to the future and to ask ourselves again and again: Do we as a Foundation practice what we preach? Are we an “entrepreneurial and innovative foundation” in the spirit of Herbert Quandt and the BMW Group, or merely a nonprofit fig-leaf? What do we do to evaluate and measure the success of our projects? What about our claim to build bridges of understanding at a time when international relations are increasingly hardening? We should use this anniversary to look ahead and re-chart the course of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt in

the years to come. I personally look forward to helping shape this conceptual work of the Foundation from my position on the Board of Trustees.

What challenges in business and society will need our courage most?

Many see volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity—the well-known “VUCA” characteristics—as the key global challenges of our time. Because our old recipes no longer work in this new world, they conclude that even the leading elite is unable to cope, which in turn leads them to a negative vision of the future. But this is the wrong approach. There are many indications that all of those factors will, in fact, determine the future of our world. But if this is the case, it is quite simply our task to develop new recipes for alternative courses of action and decision-making that work under these changed conditions. Thus equipped, we will be able to meet the real challenges of climate change, migration, and population growth constructively and courageously.

If you could wish anything for the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt on its birthday, what would it be?

I wish the Foundation and its staff continued courage, optimism, and high spirits for everything they will tackle in the years to come. ●

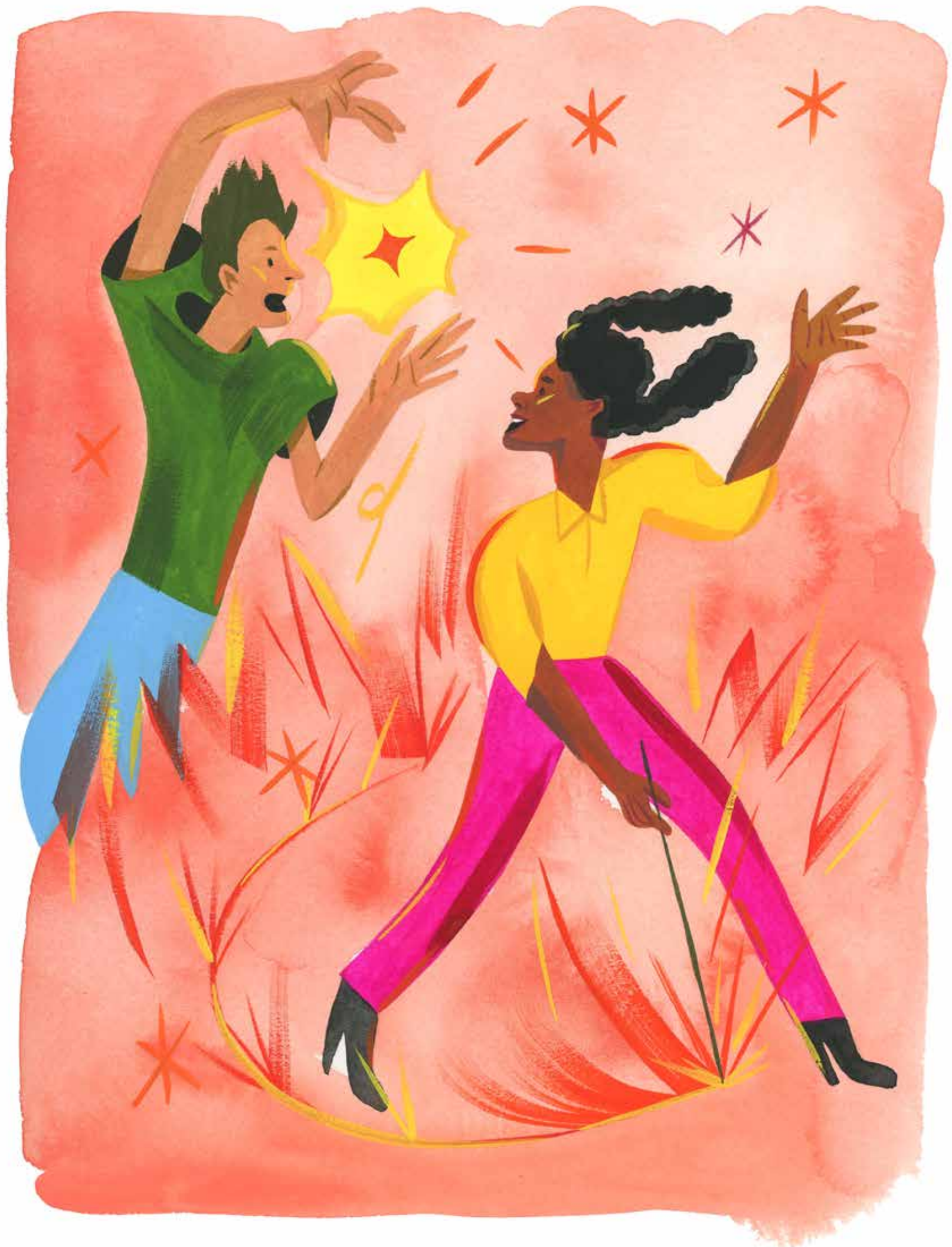


STEFAN QUANDT
Member of the Supervisory Board of BMW AG Stefan Quandt is the son of Herbert Quandt and serves on the Board of Trustees at the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, which was founded in his father’s honor.

THE SPARK OF THE UNEXPECTED

Serendipity as a
tool for innovation in
a changing world

by
CHRISTIAN BUSCH



Hi Christian, we don't know each other yet, but a mutual friend gave me your number. I would like to ask you for a favor." It was 2010, and I had received a call from a stranger who was stranded in London. He was on his way back from the Skoll World Forum, an annual conference for social entrepreneurs, along with hundreds of other attendees. But an ash cloud expelled by an Icelandic volcano had grounded thousands of flights. "So, why not organize an event to bring everyone together and make the best of it?"

The hidden force in our world

To my surprise, within 36 hours, the TEDx-Volcano conference was conjured up out of thin air. On a non-existent budget, it streamed live and was watched by over ten thousand people. All it took to create something magical was one person, a frustrating, unforeseen situation, and the ability to connect the dots.

This was serendipity in action—the way nearly half of all inventions and innovations emerge. Take, for example, the drug Sildenafil. British researchers seeking a way to treat heart problems such as angina never expected the drug to induce erections in the men participating in their clinical trial.

What would most people in their situation do? Accept it as an awkward side effect of the treatment? Develop another way to cure angina that eliminates this unintended response? The three researchers did none of these things. Instead, they saw the opportunity to develop a drug that might cure erectile dysfunction. Viagra, one of the most successful inventions of all time, was born.

Our rapidly changing world with its complex, multi-layered challenges makes it impossible to map everything out. Training a muscle to help turn the unexpected into positive outcomes ("smart luck") becomes crucial.

The French chemist Louis Pasteur knew that "chance favors the prepared mind." Roman philosopher and statesman Seneca called it "preparation meeting opportunity." Neither believed in blind luck. What they were talking about is smart, active luck. Through proactive decision-making, we

can turn unplanned moments into positive outcomes and cultivate serendipity. It is the hidden force in the world, inviting us to perceive the gestalt and turn coincidence into opportunity.

Based on research studies in the physical sciences, neuroscience, psychology, management, and the arts as well as my own research with colleagues from the London School of Economics, Harvard University, and the World Economic Forum, we have found that, not only is serendipity an observable and very real force in the world, we can learn to identify and nurture it, strengthening serendipity through exercise, like a muscle.

Based on existing research, we can identify three interrelated core characteristics of serendipity. First, the extraordinary, or unusual moment, presents itself. This could be a physical phenomenon, something that comes up in conversation, or one of many other possibilities. This is the serendipity trigger. Next, an individual bridges the serendipity trigger with something unrelated. We can call this linkage of events the bisociation—when patterns and connections are seen, and the potential value of the event unfolds. Finally, the crucial step is the realization of the event's value; the dots connect. Now the innovation,

How serendipity works as a methodology

According to Markus Hipp, member of the board, BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt

DANIEL MARTINEZ-VALLE (PAGE 74)
At the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders event in Chile, Martinez-Valle may have looked skeptical, but he was in fact taking everything in. All the social entrepreneurs doing great things touched him so deeply. Just days later, he became CEO of a 22,000-employees enterprise. He would go on to transform the business, rebranding it as Orbia—a purpose-led organization that balances people, planet and profit.

GLOBAL PRO BONO (PAGE 120)
During a workshop session, I ended up alone with a guy from New York called Aaron Hurst. He told me he was turning pro bono work into a real social force in the US. And then we suddenly became aware that we could do something better on a global scale. Everywhere in the world, small social enterprises were popping up, but they needed professional support. That is how the Global Pro Bono Network was born.

GENERATION BRIDGE GERMANY
A colleague suggested we invite Horst Krumbach to our Transatlantic Forum. I was wondering why we should invite the director of a nursing home, but it was a great decision. Krumbach made so many connections within our network, he started Generation Bridge Germany, which connects elderly people with children—the project went on to win broad recognition in the civil society and even Angela Merkel's support.

“Leaders who foster this learning culture understand that a company’s future viability is not only about innovation, it’s also about connecting the dots.” – CHRISTIAN BUSCH

the new method, or the new solution is perceived—and defies all expectations.

When tenacity sees things through, serendipity has been reached. We see it when TEDx talks get organized at the spur of the moment, unplanned scientific breakthroughs occur, or multinational corporations create bold solutions to daunting problems.

A larger shift in culture and values

Around a decade ago, while conducting research for my PhD on how people and businesses increase their social impact, I started to notice a pattern. Many of the most successful people and organizations I analyzed appeared to intuitively cultivate a "serendipity field." They attributed the more frequent positive outcomes they experienced compared to others in similar circumstances to this practice. These leaders explored possibility in the unexpected and turned uncertainty from a threat into an ally. They developed a serendipity mindset.

The serendipity mindset is part of a much larger shift in cultures and values at the world's largest corporations as well as the role their leaders play. In a world that has been running on a fight-or-flight "lizard brain," in which fear-mongering, populism, pandemics, and uncertainty have taken over, the mindsets and contexts that we have become accustomed to simply do not work anymore. We are seeing a transformation as businesses are being forced to face unprecedented social, political, and ecological

threats to humankind. In a world in which climate change and social inequalities are realities, developing the serendipitous mindset becomes an evolutionary necessity. For an organization to prepare for the future, leaders must guide by example, providing a vision and a sense of direction within their organization while developing a readiness for the unexpected. In doing so, they broaden the serendipity field.

Leaders who foster this learning culture understand that a company's future viability is not only about innovation or R&D, it's also about seeing and connecting the dots. But this requires a collective openness toward new ideas, too, and goes hand-in-hand with a de-risking of ideas. People who do not feel safe generate fewer new ideas.

For instance, if someone on your team has observed farmers unexpectedly using their washing machines to wash potatoes, instead of ignoring it or telling farmers not to do it, your company could build a dirt filter into a washing machine and market it as a potato washing machine, as one Chinese multinational did. The needs of farmers unexpectedly coincided with the company's ability to deliver a product that could help them. This is particularly important when it comes to leadership, given that solutions to many of our most pressing challenges will emerge unexpectedly—if we allow them to.

In a world that refuses to let us predict what will happen tomorrow, cultivating serendipity becomes an active approach to leadership.



CHRISTIAN BUSCH

As professor at New York University Christian Busch directs the CGA Global Economy Program and teaches purpose-driven leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He is a Visiting Fellow at the LSE Marshall Institute and author of *The Serendipity Mindset: The Art and Science of Creating Good Luck*.

50 things we have learned

For the 50th anniversary of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, our staff and leadership, members of the Responsible Leaders Network, partners, and friends share lessons learned and sound advice



All the way up
Herbert Quandt, Rolf Draeger, and Eberhard von Kuenheim
(from left to right) at the opening of the BMW Museum in 1973.

01 True entrepreneurial spirit has an effect far beyond the economy.

“By this I mean courage, innovative strength, and a strong sense of responsibility for employees and society. Herbert Quandt proved all this in 1959 when he secured BMW’s independence, saved many jobs, and laid the foundation for a great success story. Today, we would probably call this entrepreneurial achievement ‘Responsible Leadership.’ In 1970, we established the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt in his honor, which today works to spread these virtues in business, politics, and civil society worldwide.”

Eberhard von Kuehnheim, former CEO of BMW AG and initiator of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt

02 The United Nations 2030 Agenda is not the finish line, but our shared vision.

03 International understanding is hard work—but worth it.

The purpose of the Foundation, as stated in the statute, has always been to bring people of different cultures together, exchange ideas across borders, build mutual trust in the search for sustainable solutions to complex global challenges, and foster a non-profit spirit. How can societies emerge from violent conflict? How can we give marginalized communities a voice? Participants in our programs listen and learn, they argue and disagree, and they find common ground transcending regional, professional, ethnic, and cultural boundaries. It is the hard way, but it is the only way.

04 Tell a story that sticks.

Responsible Leadership will always be an abstract concept to a degree. We have learned to define the narrative and tell the right stories about the people bringing this concept to life.

05 Don't be afraid to reboot.

On the company's centenary in 2016, BMW AG expanded its commitment to corporate citizenship. Since then, the BMW Stiftung Herbert Quandt and the Eberhard von Kuenheim Stiftung have combined their activities and consolidated their staffs and operations in order to increase their impact. This global mission is reflected in the new name BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt.



06 Responsible leadership is more important than ever.

"It is not only about integrity, credibility, and transparency, but also increasingly about driving environmental sustainability and social engagement. Committing to a sustainable future is our responsibility for upcoming generations. Responsible leaders need to remain active and fully engaged in addressing challenging issues facing societies around the globe. Such engagement will further strengthen social cohesion and acceptance of a multi-cultural society. Over the course of the past 50 years, the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt has played a vital role in supporting responsible leaders—and will continue to do so in the future."

Nicolas Peter, Chief Financial Officer of BMW AG and chairman of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt Board of Trustees

07 Every investor should be able to make a difference.

The BMW Foundation is a founding member of Bundesinitiative Impact Investing, a competence platform that seeks to develop this new investing market throughout Germany and make it accessible to a broader public.

08 Most people want to be part of the solution. It is up to us to give them a chance to rise to the opportunity.

09 Join forces with kindred spirits.

We are one of the founding members of the F20 platform, a global group of foundations and philanthropic organizations calling for joint, transnational action towards sustainable development that leaves no one behind. F20 builds bridges between civil society, the business and financial communities, think tanks, and the public sector—within the G20 countries, between them, and beyond.

10 Visionaries who want to work for a better world need a global platform.

The BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network has been around since the 1990s. As of 2020, there are nearly 2,000 members in more than 100 countries.

11 We are in the people business.

Sometimes, what ideas or initiatives need most is the right person at the right time to take it to the next level. Our daily work is to make these critical introductions that allow projects to flourish and scale to a global level.

12 Experiment, prototype, evaluate. Repeat.

We embrace failure as part of the process. Leadership is also about vulnerability and asking for support when a project is stuck. As a circular organization with flat hierarchies, we evaluate every project—and share what we have learned to avoid repeating the same mistakes twice.

13 You have to change yourself to change the world.

An organization whose employees welcome and embrace change, can achieve anything. This may be difficult at times, but in the long run, both evolve to a higher level of wisdom and performance.

14 Put your money where the impact is.

The BMW Foundation invests its endowment according to clearly defined sustainability criteria. The asset allocation aligns with ESG (environmental, social, governmental) considerations as well as SRI (socially responsible investment) standards. By actively managing our portfolio and engaging with our partners, we are increasingly using the Foundation's endowment as a strategic instrument.

15 Zebras or unicorns? The most important factors are responsible founders.

Startups have the agility, creativity, and innovation to tackle our common challenges and achieve systemic change. Through the RESPOND accelerator, we aim to empower founders to build sustainable, impact-driven businesses.

16 Open markets can open minds.

In the early 2000s, we conducted our first programs in China and Southeast Asia, just a few years after China joined the World Trade Organization. It was a time of open markets and globalization. Interest in the European Union was huge. The leaders from Asia and Europe who participated in our bilateral programs were increasingly becoming global citizens. This remains true 20 years later.

17 Building sustainable peace requires trust and aligning interests.

"During my time as ambassador in China and as chairman of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, I have understood that two things are indispensable, if we want to find solutions for complex challenges in spite of systemic, political, and cultural differences: we need to build trust between personalities at all levels responsible for taking strategic decisions and we must identify areas in which interests between two or more societies are convergent. On this basis, negotiations are likely to produce sustainable solutions."

Michael Schaefer, chairman of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt

18 Take the long view on diversity and inclusion.

We believe diversity is a strength. We have increased diversity and inclusion in our Network. And we have also realized that the Foundation staff must reflect the network. This is why we are strengthening our efforts to establish a diverse team.

19 Always walk the walk.

We try to work in a sustainable way and lead by example. When we select providers, materials, vegetarian catering, and other items for our in-person and virtual activities, we try to reduce our footprint or compensate for it—between 2017 and 2020, we compensated for over 500 tons of CO₂ just for the main INSPIRE programs.



20 We are standing on the shoulders of giants.

"You never should take democracy for granted. Twenty four years ago, my mother was assassinated because she led a movement against military rule. My father, the elected president, was arrested by the military and died in custody under mysterious circumstances. Today, we have a democratic system and need to keep working. I like to think that I build on what they started: I was a member of a state cabinet in Nigeria, and I work with my NGO to foster an inclusive economy that benefits youth and women. It's really about making the democracy work."

Hafsat Abiola-Costello, president & CEO at Women in Africa Initiative, Responsible Leader



21 Without networking, there is no innovation.

“Innovations are crucial for our industrial society to advance. Developing ideas and successfully implementing them, that is what it is all about. This does not only apply to science and technology, but to society as a whole. Innovations are not created by a solo scientist working alone in his laboratory. Scientists work in teams, they are networked with adjacent disciplines, they need the right atmosphere. Research and development not only require individual performance, but also cooperation, collaboration, and agility in the network. This approach has accompanied me from the very beginning as my career alternated between science and business several times. And it is the same approach that I followed at the BMW Foundation.”

Joachim Milberg, former CEO of BMW AG and chairman of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt Board of Trustees from 2004 – 2020

22 Dream big in a lean team.

In 2020, the BMW Foundation has fewer than 60 employees. A lean team compared to other global nonprofits. We know our positive influence depends not only on the work of our team, but also on the contributions of partners, allies and, above all, Responsible Leaders all over the world.

23 Never stop re-inventing yourself.

“In the late 1980s, I was hired as a student researcher at the BMW Foundation’s original office in Munich’s Knorrstraße. The staff: two. After my studies at Yale and some years in the United States, I returned to Germany as a translator and editor and the Foundation again hired my services. Ever since, I have seen how the Foundation has evolved and reinvented itself, how it has moved and expanded offices and staff, and how it has branched out thematically and geographically. I have worked with almost all staff members (now almost too many to count) and have been amazed at their energy, dedication, and international outlook.”

Manuela Thurner, translator and editor for the BMW Foundation and its longest-serving freelancer

24 Empathy and the ability to listen deeply are among the most important skills in a global world.

25 Always try to be where things are happening.

In 2008, the BMW Foundation opened a new office in Germany’s capital right in the middle of the government quarter in Berlin with a view to chancellery.

26 But never forget your roots.

The BMW Foundation was founded in Munich in 1970 and now resides on Prater Island in the heart of the city.

27 Overcome barriers.

“In the last 50 years over 20,000 new foundations have been founded in Germany alone. Today we have higher diversity of actors und approaches in the sector. Foundations and other civil society organizations are an essential part of our democratic and pluralistic society and can address socio-political challenges as strong agents for change. The need for collective action to tackle global problems has increased. Foundations are building networks and establishing platforms for shared learning and collective action. Increasing cross-border cooperation within the EU is necessary and a single market for philanthropy is needed urgently. Such a legal framework would significantly strengthen cooperation, decrease barriers within the EU and help in finding joint solutions. Foundations need a more global, collaborative and digital approach.”

Kirsten Hommelhoff, general secretary of the Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftungen and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader



28 Even in a digital age, you need boots on the ground.

We have organized the Responsible Leaders Network into several regions covering, but not limited to, Europe, North America, India, Latin America, and West Asia and North Africa. Each region has a counterpart at the foundation: the Network Organizer. This is always a team member who has strong bonds with the region and its reality, needs, and culture.

29 You can’t have a global impact without local know-how.

The Network Organizers work closely with Network Drivers—these are local Responsible Leaders who help understand and share the voices and needs of their regions. Thus, they transform regional networks into self-empowered communities that engage in collaboration, exchange, and co-creation for positive change.

30 Latin America has a lot to teach us, and we want to learn.

When the BMW Foundation began its activities in South America in 2012, it was clear that Brazil would be the perfect base for us to make connections and work across the region. From there, we went on to support people and organizations in Mexico and Chile. Because we recognize Latin America’s enormous potential as one of the world’s most important centers of innovation, a region that is providing solutions to humanity’s key challenges.

31 Take a long, hard look at your own work. It will pay off.

We know that we must evaluate our work to advance our mission. We want to continue to learn, stay relevant, and tap into the collective intelligence of our network. In 2019, we started a pilot analysis in Brazil and North America. We studied the experiences of three strategic partners of the Foundation to obtain the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. In 2020, we started to implement frameworks in several programs, organizing a shared vision of the different aspects of our impact.



32 Unlearning is as important as learning new things.

“Racism has been a scourge on humankind for many years, but in 2020, a can of worms around this topic opened up and it can no longer be swept under the carpet. And that is a good thing. Together with BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders, we embarked on an unlearning journey. Noted when we experience racism in our everyday life, collected in a shared document, discussed what structures we need to get rid of, to have freedom to move in a new direction.”
Sylvia Mukasa, founder and CEO of GlobalX Investments and Innovation Labs, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader

33 Get to know your network—over and over again.

The 300 Responsible Leaders in North America joined between 1998 and 2020 through several programs. That is why we dedicated 2018 to listening to our network members there to understand the ecosystem and see who and what might be missing. The most important thing we learned is that we must continue to make our regional network more diverse regarding gender, ethnicity, and professional backgrounds. And that is exactly what we are doing—not only in North America.

34 Purposeful leadership and its power are tied to people.

“The BMW Foundation resists the permanent temptation to define itself by publishing expert knowledge or supporting research projects. Long before corporations began to think about agile environments and new leadership models, the Foundation brought together top social entrepreneurs from around the world. This approach of authentic ‘Servant Leadership’ must be lived in the community. But that also means: you have to find the right colleagues and leaders again and again. This will probably remain both a blessing and a challenge for the Foundation in the future.”
Bernd Kessel, coach and founder of Kessel & Kessel, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader

35 Shared experiences matter.

At our regional network meeting in 2019 in Beirut, a Responsible Leader gave a guided tour through a magnificent house that was located right on the Green Line during the Lebanese Civil War. The stories resonated with Responsible Leaders from Morocco to the United Arab Emirates. Such gatherings are also an invitation to have honest and difficult conversations on what divides and unites us. That’s especially important in a region that is a bridge between the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe.

36 Create many power centers.

Even though many countries in Latin America have been facing social, economic, political, and environmental challenges, Responsible Leaders in the region are very resilient and full of energy, which is how they drive innovation there. Having consolidated the two strong networks in Brazil and Mexico, we are now bringing together the whole Latin American community and have already seen collaborations and exchanges happening among countries.

37 Early adopters are the multipliers of trends.

Through the Responsible Leaders Network and our exchange with our main stakeholders, the BMW Foundation is constantly in contact with emerging trends and movements that are shaping the future. We see ourselves as a radar system: scouts and catalyzers of what is already changing the world. In the private sector, we provided seed support to the B Corps movement in Latin America and supported the spread of the Pro Bono movement in Europe, for example.



38 Personal contact is indispensable in the digital age.

Each year, we host a limited number of immersive leadership programs for selected leaders from different sectors, backgrounds, and countries to reflect on leadership and engage in conversations about their responsibilities. After these programs, participants are invited to join the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network.

39 Yes, there is an app for that.

Responsible Leaders have stated the need for a way to connect virtually. In 2019, we started developing the Connect.RL app, a mobile tool that allows users to discover more about the network and its members while creating new connections.

40 **Never underestimate the strength of the butterfly.**

“It is too often forgotten that the United Nations Charter begins with ‘We the peoples.’ It is in this spirit that the UN Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign works tirelessly to help governments, civil society, the private sector, and everyone around the world to to make transformation a reality and keep everyone engaged with the Goals. Partners such as the BMW Foundation are key to helping us test new approaches, connect with new networks, and shape new narratives of a world that is just and sustainable, where no one is left behind. Our network is helping us start a butterfly effect by inspiring, nurturing, and sustaining a community of change makers.”
Marina Ponti, director of the UN SDG Action Campaign



41 **Failure is an important part of funding.**

We have never seen ourselves as project funders, which is very common among German foundations, but rather as a venture philanthropy organization. In a truly entrepreneurial spirit, the BMW Foundation has always been willing to take calculated risks when it comes to early support of promising ideas and initiatives. Innovations carry the risk of the unknown. You have to accept that some ideas may not be successful. But one thing is clear: Those ideas that do ignite can change society for the better. So you have no choice but to dare to fail.

42 **Being successful means putting people first.**

“After years fighting for equal opportunities in my field with little effect, I learned to get in touch with the authentic me: I replaced the demanding, no-nonsense, bad-ass business self with one that nurtured, cared, put people first. I understood that imperfections and weaknesses of my teammates were actually strengths to be leveraged.”
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN Louise Blais, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader

43 **Gender equality is a gender-spanning effort.**

We proudly support the Gender Alliance, a network-driven initiative to bring feminists together and accelerate gender equality. Its members come from the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network, the Global Diplomacy Lab, the Bosch Alumni Network, and the Global Leadership Academy Community by the German Agency for International Cooperation. Together, they strive to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda on gender equity and equality within their respective organizations, communities, and spheres of influence.

44 **Cleantech innovation can put us on course for net-zero emissions.**

Over the coming decades, the world will need to reduce greenhouse emissions to zero if we want to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change. At its core will be clean technology innovations that must be massively scaled up. The private sector and civic society need to work closely with governments to achieve this goal. It's at this intersection where BMW Foundation has played an important and catalytic role over the years, in fostering a new generation of responsible leaders but also in other high-impact ventures that have left a lasting mark.
Ann Mettler, director Europe at Gates Ventures and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader

45 **If you build communities of purpose, good things will happen.**

This knowledge lets us sleep well at night: no matter what, the Foundation can rely on outstanding human beings in every corner of this planet. And they can rely on us.

46 **The power of our network can counter even the gravest threats.**

“Beirut, August 4th, 2020, 6:07 pm: the blast wipes away Beirut lives, homes, heritage, and hopes. Beirut, August 4th, 2020, 6:12 pm: messages and relief initiatives from the Responsible Leaders Network unleash the energy to rebuild our city, our lives, our homes, our heritage, and our hopes. More powerful than the blast is the power of the network!”
Carol Awad Bachour, strategic human resources & organizational consultant and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader

47 **Stories about Responsible Leaders can fill more than one book.**

On the BMW Foundation's own blog TwentyThirty.com, we shed light on the social, political, and environmental challenges we face and feature inspiring Responsible Leaders who are working to solve them. With our portraits, interviews, videos, and podcasts we hope to inspire others to play a part in shaping our future. If Responsible Leaders are successful, so will be the UN 2030 Agenda.

48 **Grow apart, grow together.**

The majority of our current Responsible Leaders (970 of the nearly 2,000) are based in Europe. As part of our efforts to deepen our commitment in Europe, we expanded our team of European Network Organizers and redesigned the network to include sub-regions. Now, Intereuropean collaboration flourishes—because we were able to cover more territory, build more connections, and detect more synergies.

49 **The future is glocal.**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we realized that convening does not necessarily have to mean crossing the ocean. Instead, we can gather locally and connect with people from other continents virtually.



50 **We need new types of collaboration.**

“Our partnership with the BMW Foundation has set an example for much needed new forms of collaboration and being entrepreneurial, reciprocal, and co-creative. We are entrepreneurial because the partnership focused not just on single projects, but on building sustainable organizational impact and viability. Reciprocal means that both sides kept learning from and with each other as peers, building shared learning infrastructures that helped both organizations and their related networks to evolve. We are co-creative because the main focus of our partnership was always on sensing and realizing emerging new opportunities and thus building something larger together that none of the individual partners could have done alone.”
Otto Scharmer, senior lecturer at the MIT Sloan School of Management and cofounder of the Presencing Institute

Chapter Two

ECONOMY

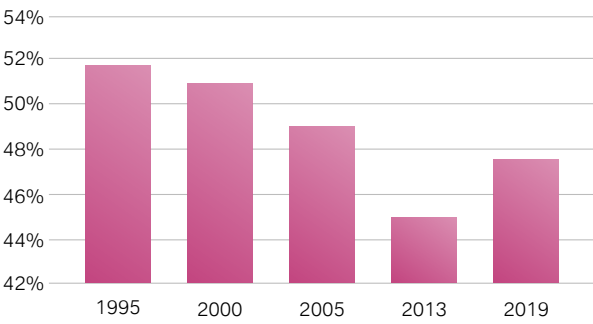
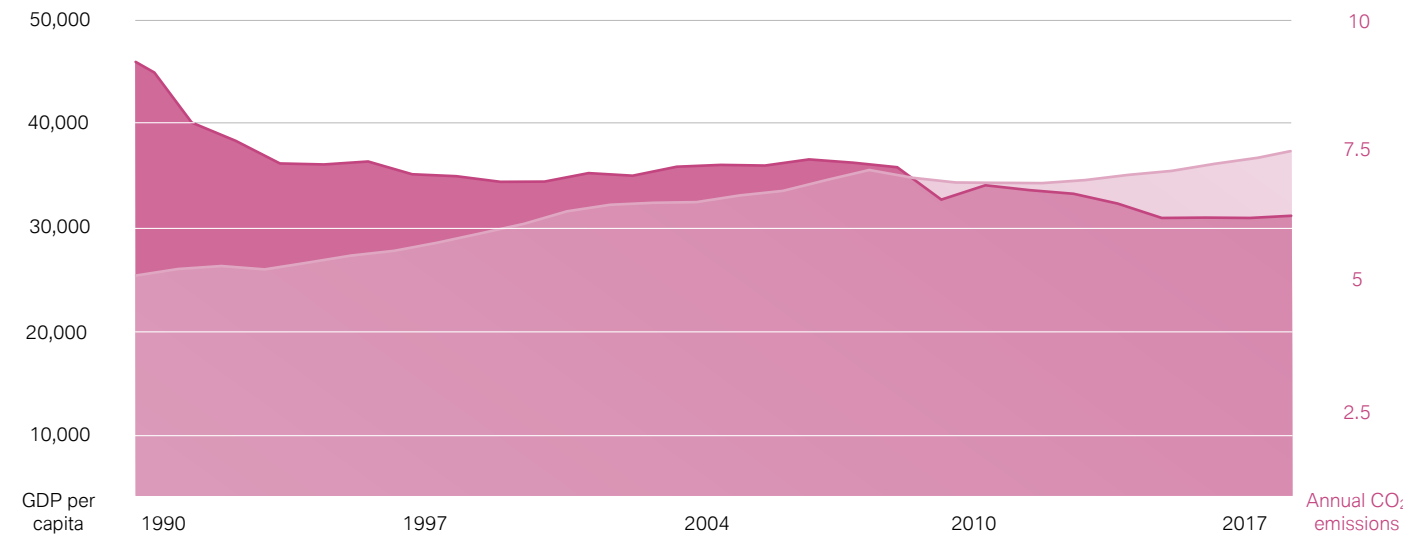
pp. 48–75

Big shifts and new developments

Trade, economic growth, and the way we work are all in flux. Some key metrics point to exponential change

Green growth is possible

In the first half of 2020, CO₂ emissions and GDP around the world decreased dramatically due to the pandemic. The hope is that GDP will climb faster than emissions in the future. Before 2017, Europe's GDP rose while emissions fell by nearly one third since 1990. Find out more about green growth in an essay by John Elkington on **page 52**.

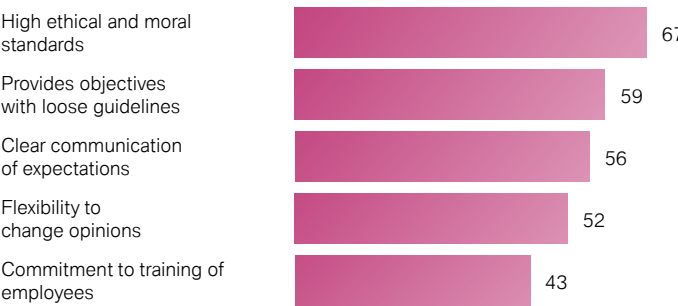


Going local

Intra-regional trade's share of global trade had been falling for many years but has been rising again since 2013. Economists predict the coronavirus pandemic may boost this trend even more.

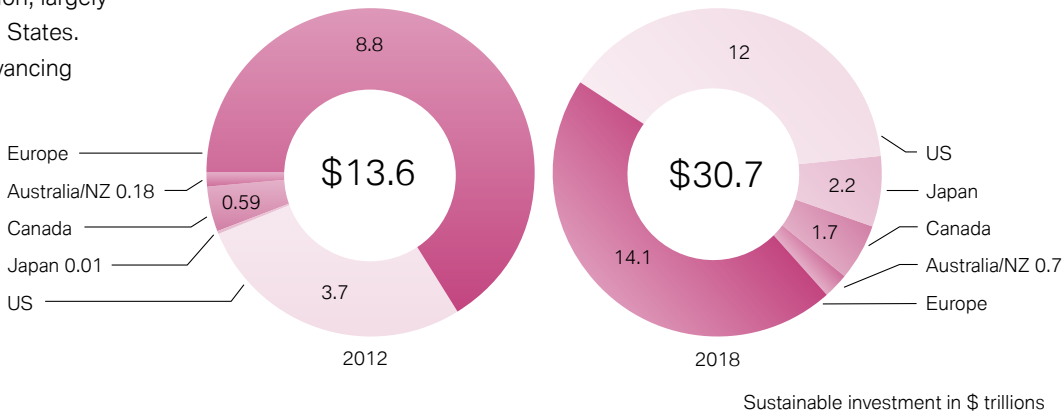
The top 5 leadership skills

In a survey of 195 global leaders cited in the Harvard Business Review, these skills rose to the top. Read a reflection by Responsible Leader Daniel Martinez-Valle on **page 74**.



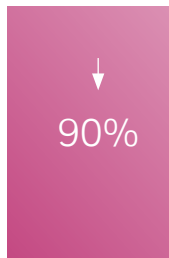
Morals and markets

Sustainable investment assets more than doubled between 2012 and 2018 to \$30.7 trillion, largely driven by EU countries and the United States. Read how the BMW Foundation is advancing impact investing on **page 62**.



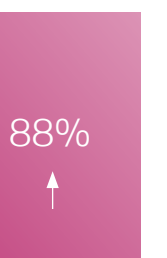
Cost of capital

90% of studies showed cost of capital decreasing through sound sustainability standards



Operational performance

88% of studies showed operational performance improving from ESG practices

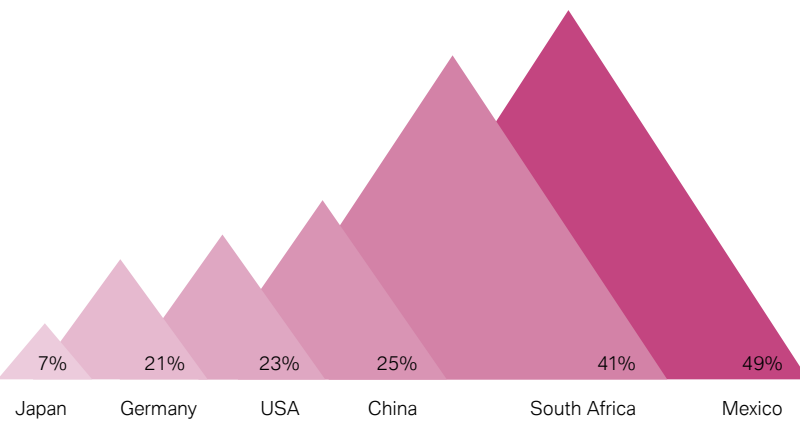


Sustainability and profit

A meta-study by Oxford University confirms: sustainability strategies and ESG practices correlate with enhanced performance.

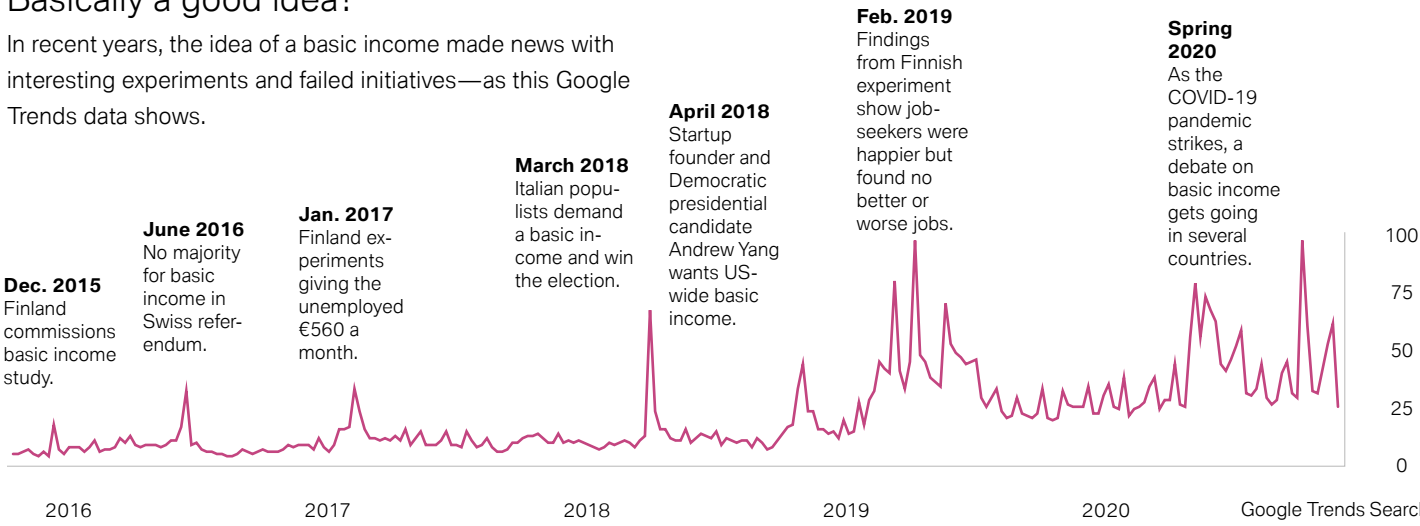
The start of something new

Almost 30 percent of the world's population say they have started a business in the past; another 30 percent say they have considered doing so. This chart shows the percentage of founders in the respective countries.



Basically a good idea?

In recent years, the idea of a basic income made news with interesting experiments and failed initiatives—as this Google Trends data shows.

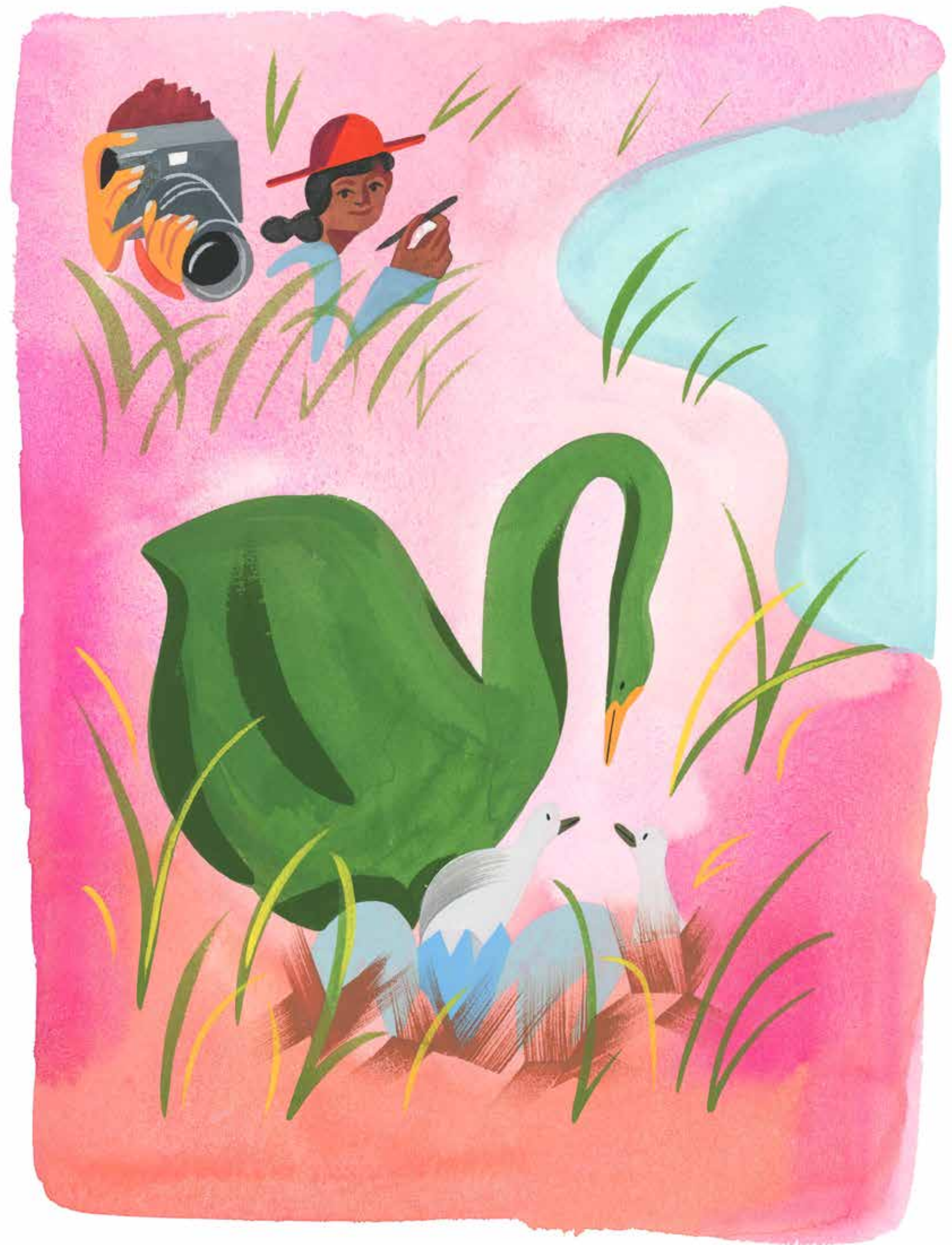


SOURCES: OUR WORLD IN DATA, WORLD BANK, MCKINSEY GLOBAL INSTITUTE: "GLOBALIZATION IN TRANSITION: THE FUTURE OF TRADE AND VALUE CHAINS," HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW: "THE MOST IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES, ACCORDING TO LEADERS AROUND THE WORLD," GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT ALLIANCE: "2012 GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT REVIEW" & "2020 GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT REVIEW," OXFORD UNIVERSITY: "FROM THE STOCKHOLDER TO THE STAKEHOLDER: HOW SUSTAINABILITY CAN DRIVE FINANCIAL OUTPERFORMANCE," IPSOS: "ENTREPRENEURIALISM," GOOGLE TRENDS SEARCH

HOW TO INVEST IN THE FUTURE

Business must transform to lead in exponential times

by
JOHN ELKINGTON



The World Wildlife Fund (WWF), where I have long served as an ambassador, has just launched the thirteenth edition of its flagship *Living Planet Report*—and has me questioning whether everything we have done over that last half century has been a complete waste of time.

A whole series of wicked problems have been intensifying at exponential rates. The report shows that there was an average 68 percent fall in almost 21,000 wildlife populations between 1970 and 2016. And this news comes in the same year as COVID-19, a pandemic linked to our interactions with wildlife. We've watched Amazonia, Australia, California, Oregon, and Siberia burst into flames. Other examples include: plastics in the ocean; the spread of obesity, chronic disease and, in particular, diabetes; and the climate emergency.

Are we deluding ourselves, then, believing that we are saving the world? I have often been tempted to think that my own work over the decades has been a failure when

it comes to driving the necessary system change. That's why I announced a "product recall" for the triple bottom line, almost 25 years after I coined the term through the Harvard Business Review in 2018. The basic idea of the triple bottom line is that any business or economy creates—or destroys—various combinations of economic, social and environmental value.

We are seeing the early stages of a shift from incremental, transactional change to increasingly exponential, systemic change. When I announced the recall of the triple bottom line in 2018, the *Harvard Business Review* editors told me this was the first time a management concept had ever been recalled. Well, it really shouldn't have been; Milton Friedman's creed should have been recalled ages ago.

Happily, in that spirit, on September 13, 2020, *The New York Times* published a full-page ad by the Allies for System Change calling for the recall of Friedmanism. Even Friedman had once declared, "There's no such thing as a free lunch." And, fueled by his ideology, recent decades have too often seen the world's elites dine out at the expense of both people and planet.

There have been warnings aplenty of a growing number of wicked problems

throughout the past 50 years. Intriguingly, the BMW Foundation was founded on August 26, 1970, four months after an even more important birthday: the first Earth Day took place on April 22, 1970.

The event inspired 20 million Americans, 10 percent of the country's population at the time, to take to the streets in demonstrations to protect the planet. Under founder Denis Hayes's stewardship, the global influence of the Earth Day movement has continued to blossom over time. Today, Earth Day encompasses more than 190 participating countries and is the biggest secular observance worldwide. That's why Volans, our think tank and advisory firm, picked Hayes as one of the first to receive the Green Swan Award in 2020.

So, what is a green swan?

As I researched my latest book, *Green Swans: The Coming Boom In Regenerative Capitalism*, I discovered that the swan has long been a symbol of transformation. Think of the tale of *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen. In the same spirit, the title of my new book is *Green Swans*. It is the tale of the accelerating transformation of capitalism, markets and business—a process reaching

How to spot green swans

Where to find tomorrow's positively exponential solutions

People often ask for real-world examples of green swan solutions. Technology drives many, including mass vaccination programs and renewable energy and battery technology. For example, BMW expects electrified vehicles to account for between 15-25 percent of sales by 2025. Or take Umicore, a former smelting company that today is a leading player in the circular economy, recycling waste metals. Denmark's Ørsted, formerly a big player in the coal-fired power market, has transformed itself into a green energy giant.

“Green swans are positive market developments once deemed highly unlikely – if not actually impossible. For most people, they arrive out of the blue.”

— JOHN ELKINGTON

a critical inflection point in the 2020s. The result will be a world either of black swan breakdowns, among them the climate emergency and species extinction, or of breakthrough green swan solutions. More likely, of course, it will be a shifting mix of both, challenging us to move the needle from black to green.

Astute readers will quickly spot that the green swan metaphor inverts the one Nassim Nicholas Taleb used in his 2007 book, *The Black Swan*. Its subtitle is *The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. A professor, risk analyst, and former hedge fund manager, Taleb explained how black swan events typically come as a complete surprise and can have a massive impact, generally for the worse. Then, they are often poorly analyzed with selective hindsight. As a result, we fail to understand what has just happened, setting ourselves up to be blindsided again and again.

Green swans, in contrast, are positive market developments once deemed highly unlikely—if not actually impossible. For most people, they also arrive more or less out of the blue. And they can have a profound positive impact across the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental value creation. At their best, they are simultaneously environmentally restorative, socially just, and economically inclusive.

Early on, many green swan innovators and entrepreneurs tend to be dismissed out of hand, very much like the ugly duckling in the fairy tale. Only later do critics and skeptics see what they have been blind to. The

ungainly cygnets (or startups) morph into something else entirely.

How to help lame duck industries

Happily, green swan solutions—including new mindsets, technologies, business models, and policy frameworks—are already at work solving some of today's seemingly impossible challenges. So, for example, it is now possible to monitor every greenhouse gas emission in the world, regardless of how emitters try to cover their tracks. Many such solutions, however, need help to reach the necessary pace and scale. Governments, including city administrations, have a crucial role to play in opening up the relevant markets.

We are also pondering how to help some of the world's lame duck industries to transform their mindsets and business models. Without that help, they are likely to make every effort to slow down the necessary changes. We are seeing major oil companies, including BP and Shell, writing down many billions of assets on the basis that COVID-19 has accelerated the shift away from carbon-intensive fossil fuels.

That's why we have set up the Green Swans Observatory: to scan for, identify, analyze, and, over time, support ugly ducklings that promise to advance green swan market trajectories. We very much hope to tap into the collective wisdom of the Responsible Leaders Network to this end. So let's look to a time when we rein in black swans and help green swans take flight.



JOHN ELKINGTON

As cofounder and chief pollinator at Volans, John Elkington is an authority on corporate responsibility and sustainable development. He also was a faculty member of the World Economic Forum and has served on over 70 boards. His 20th book, *Green Swans: The Coming Boom In Regenerative Capitalism*, was published in 2020.

THE BEST RETURN: IMPACT

Investors who can see beyond their own bottom lines have always existed. With the Coalition for Impact, a group of like-minded financial experts has joined forces to change the way people invest

“It was a bit of a serendipitous moment,” says Falko Paetzold. In a meeting in October 2017, during the Social Capital Markets (SOCAP) conference in San Francisco, a group of people from various sustainable finance and impact investing groups happened to find themselves in a room. “We all know of each other, we are big fans of each other, we’re friends, and we all pursue the same goal. But there was no institutionalized collaboration.” Paetzold, managing director of the Center for Sustainable Finance and Private Wealth (CSP) in Zurich, is explaining how a powerful new collaborative force within sustainable finance came to be. It was during that chance meeting that the seeds for the Coalition for Impact (C4i) were sown.

This group manages an enormous amount of capital – funds which could have significant impact as businesses, governments, and citizens rise to the challenge of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). With more than half of the world’s wealth concentrated in high-

net-worth families and investors, about \$140 trillion, the potential of C4i to effect change is vast. Indeed, if just 10–15 percent of global wealth were funneled into impact investments, according to one of the leaders of C4i, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Tharald Nustad, exponential forces would make this the new normal, putting the SDGs within reach. With an estimated \$5–7 trillion per year needed to finance the SDGs but total development assistance lagging behind at an astonishingly low \$142,6 billion, it’s clear there is work to be done for the C4i.

The Coalition for Impact is made up of a handful of network organizations, each occupying a different space within the impact investing ecosystem. Together, they are greater than the sum of their parts, with a joint goal of transforming the global financial system by mobilizing capital for a more sustainable planet. CSP, part of the University of Zurich, does research and training while Nexus is a network of young philanthropists and investors who aim to bring

THARALD NUSTAD

A serial entrepreneur and tech investor, Tharald Nustad is involved in impact investing in the Nordics. He is founder of Nordic Impact, which incubates and invests in social and environmental tech startups and impact funds. He co-founded Katapult Future Fest, Katapult Ocean, and the Katapult Accelerator. Tharald works with Ashoka helping social entrepreneurs, is an active member of Toniic, and is co-chair for Nexus.

Impact investing – a look at sectors

CSP’s Falko Paetzold shares his own insights about three interesting areas of impact investing

SOCIAL HOUSING

This sector receives the most capital. An estimated 828 million people worldwide live in slums, and their number continues to rise. Safe and affordable housing is a basic need for human well-being and health. Ensuring it is available to everyone is one of the central goals of the SDGs.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

This sector has the strongest interest and growth. The beef industry is one of the strongest contributors to climate change. Moving towards a plant-based diet will be crucial. Impact investors should look for opportunities in alternative proteins, organic foods, and new agricultural technologies.

WATER

This sector has the greatest interest with unmet need. High net worth families would like to invest more in water because water scarcity is a big issue, but it’s very hard to invest in. Why? Because people don’t want to pay more for water. It’s very difficult to build business models around that.





FALKO PAETZOLD
Originally from Berlin, Germany, Falko Paetzold is the founder and managing director of the Center for Sustainable Finance and Private Wealth, an academic research and teaching institution of the Department of Banking and Finance, University of Zurich. He is also assistant professor at EBS University, where he teaches social finance. Paetzold also works with the Initiative for Responsible Investment at the Harvard Kennedy School on a training and research program that enables members of wealthy families to engage in impact investing.

communities of wealth and social entrepreneurship together. Meanwhile, Katapult, which runs accelerator programs and the Katapult Future Fest, unites techies, founders, and investors to work on global challenges. Toniic is a membership community of high-net-worth private investors and finally, BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, which also is active as an impact investor, provides the strategic and organizational framework, and a platform for amplification.

Paetzold explains that C4i is a bit like a central hub for impact investors—that offers the information, network, and resources they need. “One of the big problems for investors, or anybody who wants to get engaged in this space,” he says, “is how to get an understanding of who all the different active organizations are, and how they’re connected. Now we have this single source of truth.”

Responsible investors

But what does this single source hope to provide to would-be impact investors? Was the field of sustainable finance not already going in the right direction?

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Charly Kleissner, cofounder of Toniic, explains a conundrum around funds ranked for environmental, social, and governance

(ESG) criteria, a metric which has come to be synonymous with sustainable finance. “Let’s assume you want to invest in an ESG fund. When you check out what they invest in, you may probably find that they invest in weapons. Some weapons manufacturers have a diversified board with lots of women, so they get a good score for governance.” They might even use “green” steel to make the weapons, he says, and thus get a decent environmental score. “But we could never invest in them from a values standpoint.”

Kleissner has decades of experience as both a private investor and as a cofounder of multiple organizations which work to advance the field of impact investing. His membership community, Toniic, helps high net worth private investors manage wealth in line with their values. It complements the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), which is set up for institutional capital.

“ESG is a good idea,” he continues. “It’s good to report on certain metrics that have to do with the environment, social issues, and governance. Impact investing is more than that.” That is, financial returns based on the extent to which the financing has a positive impact. Paetzold explains that sustainable finance has evolved through three stages. The first was about exclusion—being a responsible versus irresponsible investor—followed

Creating an ecosystem for impact
Under C4i, five organizations have formed a powerful coalition

The Coalition for Impact (C4i) is a global network of networks for impact investing officially launched at the 2019 Katapult Future Fest in Oslo. With member organizations from the impact investing ecosystem, C4i’s mission is to transform the global financial system to make it inclusive, working for both people and planet. Members include Nexus, Toniic, the Center for Sustainable Finance and Private Wealth, Katapult, and the BMW Foundation. They focus on private wealth, combining forces to achieve even greater impact and scale. An important part of the BMW Foundation’s work is to foster organizations that address environmental, social, and political challenges. This focus on the power of capital to move the needle makes C4i a natural fit for the foundation. Thus, as a founding member and host of the administrative office, the BMW Foundation plays a leading role in the organizational and strategic framework together with the C4i Board. The foundation also manages external and internal communications, facilitates dialog between members, and uses its own network to connect, inspire, and mobilize.

“We believe that you should get higher returns if you are solving problems.” – **THARALD NUSTAD**



CHARLY KLEISSNER
As deep impact investing leader with over 20 years in senior executive and engineering positions in the Silicon Valley tech scene, Charly Kleissner has worked for startup Ariba and alongside Steve Jobs at NeXT Computer. He has cofounded multiple organizations which work to increase the impact of social entrepreneurs. These include Toniic, KL Felicitas Foundation, and Social Impact International.

by a period of integrating sustainability data into investments, what we call ESG. “And right now, we’re moving to the third phase, which is all about impact,” he says.

Going deep

And what might such a financial product with impact look like? Kleissner offers an example. Back in 2010, his foundation, KL Felicitas, invested in the UK’s first Social Impact Bond, which sought to reduce re-offending rates among men incarcerated for short periods of time. According to figures from 2007, 60 percent of short-sentence offenders re-offend within a year. Foundations and trusts subsequently invested £5 million to tackle the issue. The higher the reduction in repeat offenders, the higher the returns would be for the investors.

“If, through our intervention, we could lower that recidivism rate by even 20 percent, then the county, the state, the UK government would save a ton of money,” he says. “And you could put a value on that savings just by seeing how much it costs the government to incarcerate one person. Not even measuring the secondary financial impacts on the families.” With interventions such as employment training and help with alcohol abuse and housing in place, the recidivism rate was lowered by nine percent. Investors saw a three percent return.

What sort of return should impact investors expect? Something lower than market rate? For serial entrepreneur and cofounder

of Katapult Future Fest Tharald Nustad, the answer is no. He explains that concessionary investing refers to lower rates of return through impact compared to purely profit oriented investing. What he does is non-concessionary. “We believe that you should get higher returns if you are solving problems,” he says, explaining that C4i is tilted towards this way of thinking as well.

“Problems” is putting it mildly when facing a perfect storm of inequalities, resource scarcity, the climate crisis, and now a global pandemic, especially since the 2030 Agenda clock is ticking. Will the collective capital being raised through this network of networks be enough to make a dent in achieving the SDGs? Nustad is unequivocal. “Absolutely. There’s more than enough money out there. And that’s our goal, to mobilize trillions of dollars for impact investing, and get to a tipping point where that is the standard of how capital is spent and business operates,” he says.

With less than one percent currently in such investments according to Tharald Nustad, there is quite some ground to cover. Approaching that journey in a coordinated, systematic way will be vital, agrees Paetzold: “If we team up, we can have so much more impact by running investments together, collaborating on research, and really aligning our activities.”

The protagonists of C4i stand ready—to galvanize, educate, and, above all else, raise capital. After all, money does make the world go round. And it just might save it, too. ●

INVESTING WITH LEVERAGE

To achieve the Agenda 2030 the UN has set, extensive investments are necessary.

The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt is working to make sustainable finance the new standard—and leverage capital for positive social change



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Shared vision

Nicolas Peter, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the BMW Foundation and Chief Financial Officer of the BMW AG, at the Responsible Leadership Days in Hohenaschau 2020.

Sustainable finance focusses on decisions of financial actors taking into account environmental, social, and governmental considerations. Besides the commitment to advance sustainable finance and impact investing, the BMW Foundation invests its endowment along clearly defined sustainability criteria. Furthermore, the BMW Foundation invests in impact opportunities through the Eberhard von Kuenheim Fund (EKF), a 20-million-euro vehicle dedicated to impact investing. This ensures that, alongside securing stable financial returns, the investment decisions are consistent with the BMW Foundation's values. "Sustainability and financial returns are not mutually exclusive, they belong closely together," says Nicolas Peter, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the BMW Foundation and Chief Financial Officer of BMW AG.

By actively managing the impact portfolio and engaging with its partners, the BMW Foundation is increasingly using its endowment as a strategic instrument. Representatives of the BMW Foundation are part of supervisory and shareholder bodies of several impact

investment vehicles such as Mustard Seed Maze, PG Impact Investments, and Purpose Foundation, which enables direct insights into the strategies of leading impact investors and makes it possible to contribute to important market trends in this area.

With this approach, the BMW Foundation has also influenced the BMW Group investment strategy. This resulted in a joint impact investment screening process and co-investments in impact opportunities. The BMW Foundation and the BMW Group, for instance, invested in a fund which provides targeted support to impact entrepreneurship in one of Europe's fastest-growing startups.

Nicolas Peter welcomes this approach: "In the last years, the BMW Foundation has been first in identifying key trends which has been of great interest to the investment strategy of the BMW Group." Something that Frank Niederländer, member of the Board at BMW Foundation, can emphasize: "The goal of our process model is to show the existing need for action."



BEING THE BEST FOR THE WORLD

B Corps are changing the way businesses interact with investors, customers, employees, and the environment. What happens when a business turns into a force for good?

The Body Shop has never been just an ordinary business. Founded in 1976 by human rights activist and environmental campaigner Dame Anita Roddick, it was one of the first cosmetics companies to ban the use of ingredients tested on animals and promote fair trade with developing countries. In 2006, The Body Shop was acquired by the French cosmetics giant L'Oréal. One and a half years later, Roddick died suddenly. The company suffered a crisis of confidence.

In 2017, The Body Shop became part of the Brazilian cosmetics company Natura &Co. Within hours of signing the deal, they decided to follow in the Natura &Co brand's footsteps and become a certified B Corporation. Certified B Corporations are businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. It's a commitment to better governance, employee relations, communities, and the environment.

Over the next year, Christopher Davis, the company's International Director of Corporate Social Responsibility and Campaigns, together with his team collected information from every corner of the company and answered hundreds of questions for their B

Impact Assessment, relating to things like worker compensation and vacation days, supplier management, what percent of management is from underrepresented populations or how much energy comes from renewable on-site production. When The Body Shop was certified as a B Corp in September 2019, most staff added the B Corps logo to their email signatures within a day. Davis saw this as an instant confidence boost. "Getting the certification is proof of our belief in business as a force for good and for change," he says. "It was also a really strong signal to people around the world that we are taking this seriously."

Creating a new economy

There's been growing frustration with the doctrine of shareholder primacy—the idea that the main objective of any business is to maximize profits. That feeling was palpable even at the 2020 World Economic Forum at



Davos. "This year's meeting highlighted disenchantment with the increasingly dominant model of shareholder-first, profit-maximizing firms," Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz wrote after the event.

This disenchantment explains the rapid rise of the B Corps movement. It all started in the US. In 2006, when Jay Coen Gilbert, Bart Houlahan and Andrew Kassoy founded the nonprofit B Lab and set out to develop a rigorous and detailed set of standards. They are still updated every three years and include questions about the wage gap, waste management, employee diversity, supplier selection and community development.

Nearly half of all B Corps are located in the US and Canada, but the fastest-growing region is Latin America. "We need more companies to join," says BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Juan Pablo Larenas, the executive director of B Lab Global, the organization behind the B Corporation movement. "But we also need to spread the word

MARCEL FUKAYAMA

For the cofounder of Sistema B Brazil, B Corps are a way of bridging the gap between a lack of governance and complex challenges.

The origins of B Corps

A timeline of the BMW Foundation's alliance with the movement

Certified B Corps must meet high standards for social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability. Jay Coen Gilbert, Bart Houlahan and Andrew Kassoy started the movement in the US in 2006. Today, nearly 3,600 B Corps in 74 countries exist. Roughly 80 percent of them are small or medium-sized businesses, but there are also a few multinationals such as Ben & Jerry's, Patagonia, Danone, and Natura &Co. The BMW Foundation's alliance with the B Corp movement began in 2013. Sandra Ortiz Diaz, the Foundation's Latin America representative at the time, helped get Sistema B Brazil and Sistema B Mexico launched. Several B Corps are run by Responsible Leaders. The BMW Foundation also supports other regional B Labs, resulting initiatives, and the international Encuentro+B gatherings to further connect the B Corps movement with Responsible Leaders and other global initiatives such as the League of Intrapreneurs.

“Every uncomfortable question is asked in the B Corps certification process. You’re really pushed out of your comfort zone.” – STEFAN SIEMER

around the world.” It is no surprise that the concept is so appealing in Latin America.

“People realize that, yes, we can use market-driven solutions to solve complex challenges and build an inclusive, equitable and regenerative system,” says Marcel Fukayama, who co-founded Sistema B in Brazil in 2013 and became executive director of Sistema B International in 2019. Also, having a higher purpose is often simply good

ARMIN STEUERNAGEL

As cofounder of Purpose, Armin Steuernagel helps companies transition to new ownership models.



business. When Natura &Co was certified as a B Corp in December 2014, it had \$1.7 billion in revenue and 7,000 employees in 14 countries. Six years later, Natura &Co has become a multinational group present in one hundred countries with 40,000 employees, reporting gross revenue of over \$10 billion.

Being a B Corp was good branding for the company. But Fukayama says the benefits go much further. For instance, Natura &Co was a pioneer in adopting the environmental profit and loss account, a company's monetary valuation and analysis of its environmental impacts.

“In the post-pandemic world, capital markets have realized that investments in portfolios with positive social and environmental impact were more stable in the long term than the traditional balances,” Fukayama believes. And indeed, B Corps are now receiving mainstream venture capital funding. Andreessen Horowitz, for instance, invested in Altschool, and Union Square Ventures funded Kickstarter. Some, like tech investor Foundry Group, are becoming certified B Corps themselves.

Fukayama admits that B Corps have the most impact in countries with lax business regulations. In some European countries with long-standing social market economies, business owners are going even further and setting up companies as a trust administered by employees. Profits are reinvested. The concept of steward-ownership is most widespread in Denmark. The Carlsberg brewery and pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk are set up this way. In Germany, Zeiss and Bosch are prominent examples. And the idea

is becoming ever more popular among start-up founders and family-owned businesses that lack a successor.

Pushed out of the comfort zone

“Steward-ownership seems like a radical concept because suddenly you can't sell property and it's not about shareholder value anymore,” says Armin Steuernagel, a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader who cofounded Purpose with the support of the BMW Foundation to help companies transition. “But it's actually an age-old tradition, it's how family-owned businesses in Germany have been operating for over a century—just hard-coded into the statutory framework.”

In nearby Switzerland, Weleda, an organic cosmetics and pharmaceuticals company, is currently pursuing B Corps certification. The company already adheres to dozens of voluntary regulations and is majority-owned by nonprofits.

The certification process has shown that becoming a B Corp can change even a company like Weleda. “Every uncomfortable question is being asked. You're really pushed out of your comfort zone,” says Stefan Siemer, Head of Corporate Sustainability. “And because we've had to set up our own formal reporting process, suddenly there's a growing sensibility for integrative sustainability issues on every level of management.” But what Siemer cherishes most is the B Corps network. “I've met some amazing people who have business appeal and a strong moral compass,” he says. ●

ONLY A GERMAN SONDERWEG?



The social market economy as a blueprint for growth

by Renate Köcher

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When Ludwig Erhard instituted the social market economy in Germany seventy years ago, it was primarily a matter of building trust. At a time when people were used to far-reaching state interventions in the economy, he wanted to encourage them to rely on market forces. He understood that faith in free enterprise would largely depend on the system's economic success and how broadly the different parts of society would share in the economic prosperity. To date, long-term analyses have shown again and again that the fundamental reason people appreciate the social market economy is not because it is a free-market system, but because it is successful—and people share in and benefit from its success. Skepticism about the economic system increases during a prolonged economic crisis, and fades when the economy recovers.

The concept of the social market economy combines a market-based system with social responsibility in the broadest sense. In other words, entrepreneurial decisions are not solely driven by profit maximization; the working population is sure of sharing in and benefiting from economic prosperity; and the fruits of a strong economy are partially invested in the development of an efficient welfare state.

This concept has become part of Germany's collective consciousness. One defining characteristic of the German people is a striving for social cohesion and a desire to not leave any part of society behind. This goal is even shared by the well-to-do upper strata of society, which support a mature welfare state and, in particular, promote measures to foster the development of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. German society does not aim to make everyone the same, and one facet of its notion of fairness is a considerable focus on achievement. Consequently, it also supports merit-based differences in income and old-age pensions. A social divide that leaves one class behind, however, is viewed critically and considered to be risky



RENATE KÖCHER

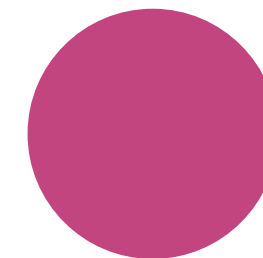
As managing director of the Allensbach Institute, Germany's oldest and best-known public opinion research institute, Renate Köcher enjoys unique insights into the findings of market, media, social and political opinion research in Germany. She has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt since 2016.

for society as a whole. This is what distinguishes Germany from many other countries, the United States and the United Kingdom in particular. It is becoming increasingly apparent that this German insistence on responsibility, particularly for the weaker members of society, is an important prerequisite of both an orderly society and a successful economy. An underprivileged lower class leads to social polarization, comes at a cost to society, and results in an inadequate development of the skilled labor pool. In many countries where scant regard is given to social equity and responsibility for society as a whole, the social and economic costs of this attitude are becoming increasingly evident.

The concept of linking a market-based system to the principle of social responsibility is therefore more modern than ever. Today, it is being broadened to also include environmental responsibility and sustainable resource management. In a very broad sense, the principle of responsibility promises the greatest success—economically, socially, and ecologically. ●

Change from within

While social entrepreneurs come up with new business ideas to solve problems, intrapreneurs operate from inside big organizations. How do you become one of them?
An eight-step guide



THE SUPPORT NETWORK

Intrapreneurs give each other guidance and a sense of community at the 2017 Social Intrapreneurship Summit in Berlin with cofounders Maggie De Pree (center) and Florencia Estrade (right).

1. Seeing size as an advantage

An intrapreneur, like a social entrepreneur, looks for scalable solutions to a bigger problem. But while entrepreneurs set up their own organizations, intrapreneurs work from within some of the world’s biggest institutions to make changes that benefit society at large—a slower and often unglamorous effort. Yet intrapreneurs regard their position as an advantage. BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Maggie De Pree, cofounder of the League of Intrapreneurs, innovator, speaker and writer, says they see “potential for reach and scale and influence through the platforms from which they are working.”



MAYA MEHTA
As senior legal counsel, Maya Mehta coordinates Sustainable Finance at BNP Paribas in London.

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader and lawyer Maya Mehta, who participated in the League’s Global Fellowship program in 2018, spent years doing pro bono work, helping survivors of domestic violence, and growing a microfinance group to help people lift themselves out of poverty. Yet, after the Paris Climate Agreement, environmental and social impact became enough of a concern in the business world that she was able to make her “purpose pile” central to her work at the bank BNP Paribas. She has since created a network of sustainable finance lawyers and focused her capital markets career on green and social bonds. “As every intrapreneur knows, it can take longer to navigate paths in a larger organization,” she says. “We have to learn to speak the language at every level of the corporate tower to influence. But the business world is where we can generate lasting positive impact at scale.”

2. Find a support network

Being an intrapreneur is a lonely and laborious affair—unless you connect with like-minded communities like the League of Intrapreneurs. “Ask yourself: Do I have safe spaces? Do I have the support network of people who have got my back, so I can go into that board meeting and drive this disruptive idea in a very conservative institution?”

A global community of silo-busters

How the BMW Foundation supports the League of Intrapreneurs

The BMW Foundation has always supported Responsible Leaders who, as intrapreneurs, drive forward positive change in the private and public sectors. In order to help the movement and concept spread globally, the BMW Foundation co-created the League of Intrapreneurs. The partnership involves support by curating and financing events such as the Global Intrapreneur Week, which brought together 2,800 intrapreneurs from 87 countries in 2020. Once a year, the League also opens nominations for highly accomplished intrapreneurs to join the League Global Fellowship. In collaboration with the BMW Foundation, 20 to 30 fellows are carefully selected and invited to join a program to deepen their leadership skills, expand their creative capacity, and build a global network of peers.

says Maggie De Pree. Having recognized the need for support, the League has published a book and has built a global community of intrapreneurs. Its over 350 global members meet regularly to learn from each other to advance their impact and together, they have co-created Global Intrapreneur Week, a global learning platform for intrapreneurs.

Hamzah Sarwar, a League Global Fellow in 2019 and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader, says working towards change from within a consumer goods company pushed him to the verge of burnout. It was not until after he completed the League’s fellowship that Hamzah Sarwar was finally able to make his desire to create change his day job as Global Purpose Director for the hygiene brand Dettol. “You get the know-how, the strategy and guidance on how you approach your intrapreneurial ventures. How do you go back and make it a reality?” Maya Mehta had a similar experience. Fellow intrapreneurs also taught her to avoid burnout by setting boundaries. “In the quest for sustainability, we have to remember to keep ourselves sustainable! One boundary I have drawn is not to talk about climate change on a Friday night.”

3. Work from a company, not for one

Intrapreneurs, says Florencia Estrade, the cofounder of the League of Intrapreneurs,

“The best intrapreneurs are the ones who are able to make a connection between their company’s goals and their own.” — **FLORENCIA ESTRADE**



HAMZAH SARWAR
In his role as global purpose director for Dettol, Hamzah Sarwar is working on accelerating the company’s social impact.

never say, “I work for a cosmetics company.” Instead, they view their organizations as platforms for change. Florencia Estrade teaches Purpose and Sustainable Leadership at the Brazilian business school Fundação Dom Cabral. She has also co-founded a social startup accelerator and a consulting firm. “The way they think is, ‘I am working from,’” she explains. At the same time, an intrapreneur is not a rebel. Intrapreneurs further the interests of their companies beyond quarterly profits towards a vision. “The best intrapreneurs are the ones that are able to make a connection between their company’s goals and their own,” says Florencia Estrade.

4. Start to build bridges

In their research on intrapreneurs, Maggie De Pree and Florencia Estrade have identified several character traits that set them

apart. For example, intrapreneurs are usually generative thinkers who are able to reconcile seemingly irreconcilable views. They are also silo-busters, ignoring traditional boundaries and working across divisions to make change happen. They are “masters at building bridges from today’s reality to tomorrow’s possibility,” Maggie De Pree and Florencia Estrade write in the 2018 report *The Intrapreneurship Ecosystem*. And they are collaborators, skilled at finding unlikely allies to bring their ideas to life.

5. Take on an insider-outsider mindset

In addition to the traits listed above, intrapreneurs stand out through a very specific attitude: they are comfortable existing within their organizations while thinking outside of it. The League of Intrapreneurs calls this “the insider-outsider mindset,” explains Maggie De Pree. “You can navigate the organization, you can talk the perfect language, but at the same time, you have a much wider perspective and relationship with the ecosystem beyond the organization.”

6. Foresee the many, many obstacles

The barriers intrapreneurs face can seem insurmountable. Finding sufficient time, overcoming short-term business strategies, and accomplishing collaboration where it is not wanted are not easy tasks. Waiting for, or bringing about, systemic shifts such as changes in consumer behavior can all pose considerable hurdles on the path to intrapreneurial success.

“Passion, perseverance, grit—that can get you through about six months to a year,” says Dettol’s Global Purpose Director Hamzah Sarwar. “But then you need to really start to strategize. How are you going to balance this? How are you going to create the trade-offs? Something always has to give.”

7. Keep your motives in mind

Becoming an intrapreneur is not a path to recognition or a promotion, at least not in the short term. “Fifty percent of the work is reminding us why we’re doing it, because that is where your resilience comes from,” says Florencia Estrade.

8. Never lose sight of the rewards

Florencia Estrade is the first to admit that “you are not going to change an elephant in ten years—it may take 20.” Even though the effect intrapreneurs have may not be visible right away, change is happening.

Hamzah Sarwar is now working on sustainable water and sanitation management from within Dettol. Mehta is fighting climate change through finance. And Maggie De Pree draws a straight line from Nike’s 1990 reuse-a-shoe program—developed by a “lovely guy plugging away in the basement on the circular-economy prototype”—to Philips’ commitment to generate a quarter of all revenue from circular products by 2025.

“Intrapreneurs were behind that every step of the way,” she says. “I think it is going to unlock a lot more. The barriers will still be there. But the framework has shifted.” ●

FROM ME TO WE



Three days that transformed a company of 22,000

A

Attending the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Forum changed Daniel Martinez-Valle's career trajectory and life for good. In this reflection, he recounts the repercussions of the 2017 event in Chile, which took place just a few days before he was asked to become CEO of Mexichem, a large Mexican plastic pipe and chemicals company, which he then transformed into Orbia.

"When I went to the Responsible Leaders Forum Latin America in Chile and everyone began introducing themselves, I asked myself what I was doing there. Almost everyone was from the social sector. Only me and one or two others were from the business community. For my first exercise, I was paired up with Renata Faria, a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader from Brazil with contagious energy. As we introduced ourselves, I told her I was figuring out what my next career years were going to look like. She said, "You guys from the business world think you can control your destiny. I think it's more determined by the universe."

During those three days, so many people at the Forum truly inspired me. Leonardo Maldonado, for example, the cofounder of Cities CAN B, who talked about the power of moving from a "me mentality" to a "we mentality" and mindset. He was talking about the power of communities and how, if you are a member, the community will take care of you and you will take care of it—in the best and worst of times. As the event went on, I began to connect the dots in terms of the different conversations I'd had.

A couple of weeks later, I hosted my first leadership meeting at Mexichem, as I had just taken over as CEO of the 22,000 employee company. There, Roger Martin, the former dean of the Rotman School of Management in Toronto, asked me on stage in front of 150 people, "What are you going to do with the company?" I had yet to figure that out. I paused, and then said, "We have the right assets. We need to work on a strategy to be one of the global companies that can effectively start to help solve a few of the world's biggest challenges. Let's look at our assets, our footprint, and explore how to focus more on our customers."

To work on a strategy, I wanted to engage as many people as possible. I included some of the Responsible Leaders I had met in Chile in our process. We had to ask ourselves four fundamental questions: what does winning look like for each of our businesses? What segments do we want to compete in and win? And most importantly, where do we not want to be active, and what are the tools, systems, capabilities, and processes we need to put in place?

I changed the organizational structure to be much more customer-centric, rebranded the company as Orbia, and split it into five distinct business groups: Precision Agriculture, Building & Infrastructure, Fluor, Data Communication, and Polymer Solutions. Also, all of our strategy decisions are now linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

I see those Responsible Leaders I met in Chile and others from the Responsible Leaders Network as my mentors. They are the engines that fuel my passion for the day-to-day business. This way, things don't remain at a mere conceptual level—instead, we are working on actually making a difference. As a community, we are aspiring to have more and more impact as we engage in this transformation journey in the upcoming months and years." ●



ORBIA: A PURPOSEFUL COMPANY

Daniel Martinez-Valle is CEO of Orbia with its more than 22,000 employees. The company addresses challenges such as food security, water scarcity, rapid urbanization, and more. Orbia focuses on twelve of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Chapter Three

GOVERNANCE

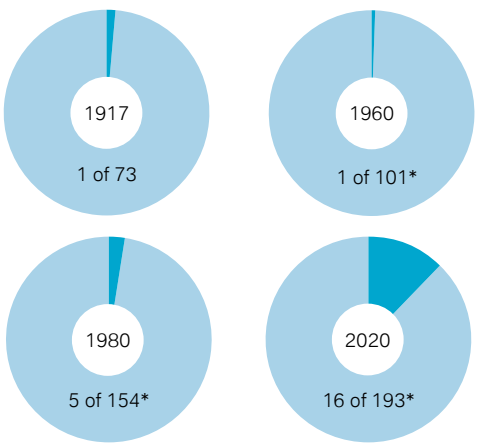
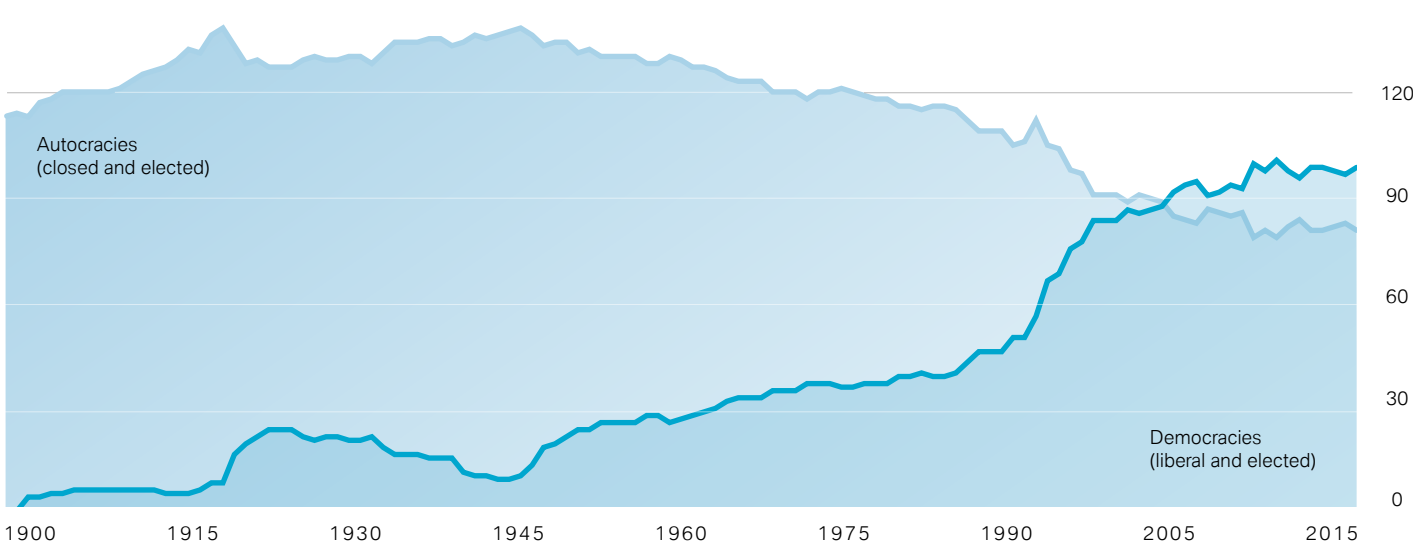
pp. 76–107

Democracy at risk

The moral arch of the universe does not naturally bend towards justice and equality for all. Pushing it in that direction takes time, resources, and responsible leadership

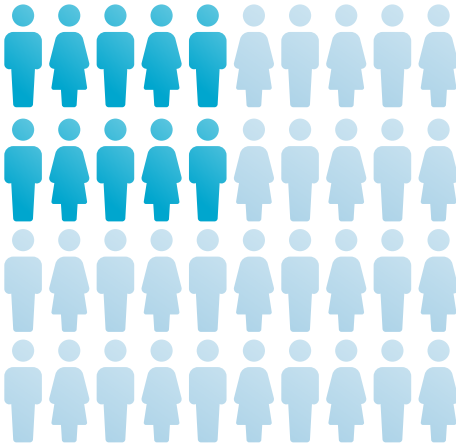
How democratic is our future?

By now, the majority of all countries in the world are democratically governed. In 2002, there were, for the first time, more democracies than autocracies. Since then, the democratic turn has slowed considerably. On **page 84** we explain how BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders work for strong, inclusive democratic institutions around the world.



Diversity at the highest levels

In 1917, Yevgenia Bosch served as the official head of the Soviet government in the Ukraine, earning her the title of first female head of state in modern times. Now, 100 years later, the share of countries with a woman at the top has only increased to eight percent.

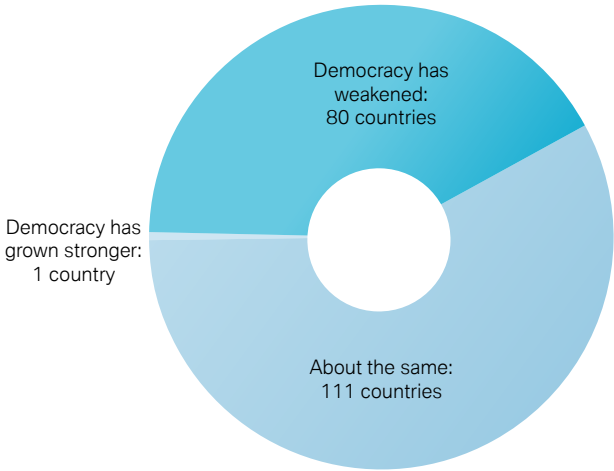
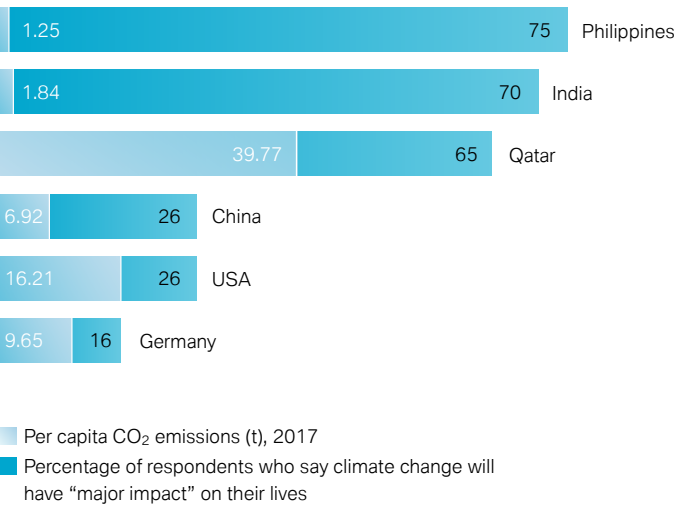


Corruption is persistent

One in four respondents in 119 countries said they had paid a bribe when accessing public services in the previous 12 months. Find out more about the BMW Foundation's impact for a more just world on **page 88**.

Beyond our own interests

The chart below compares national per capita CO₂ emissions with concern about climate change. The biggest polluters in industrial nations worry less than citizens of rising economies. How can we align our interests for the good of all?

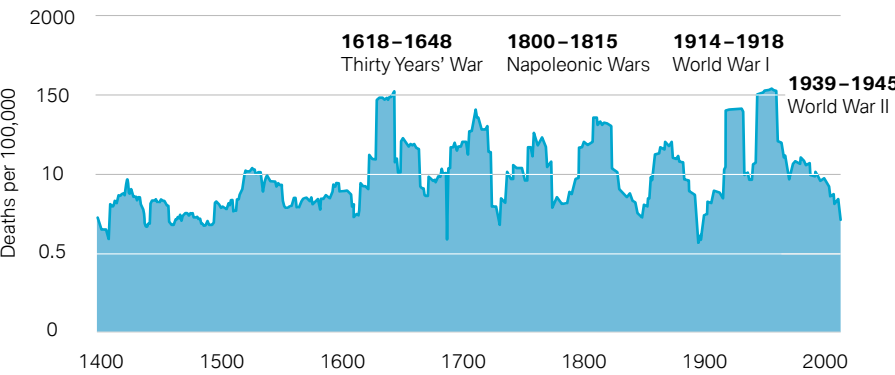
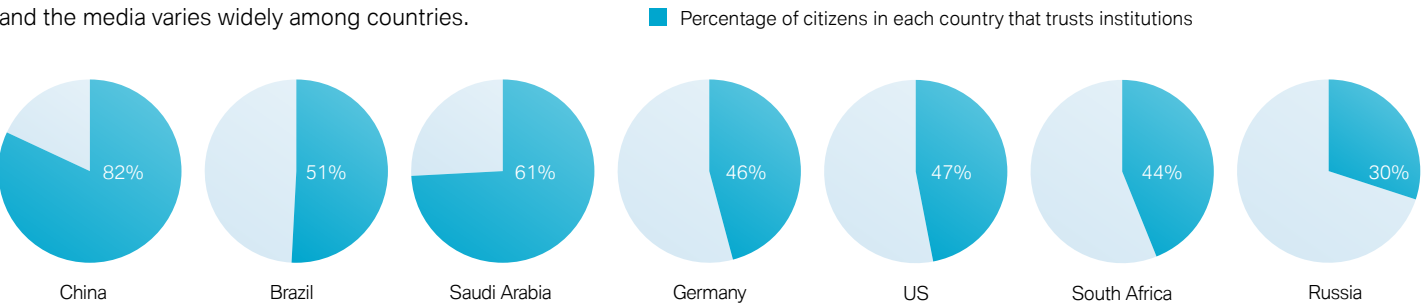


A virus infects politics

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a crisis of democracy around the world, reports Freedom House. Since the outbreak began, the condition of democracy and human rights has grown worse in 80 countries. Governments have committed abuses of power, silenced their critics, and weakened important public institutions. Observers only reported improvements in one country: Malawi.

Global Trust Index

Trust in corporations, governments, NGOs, and the media varies widely among countries.



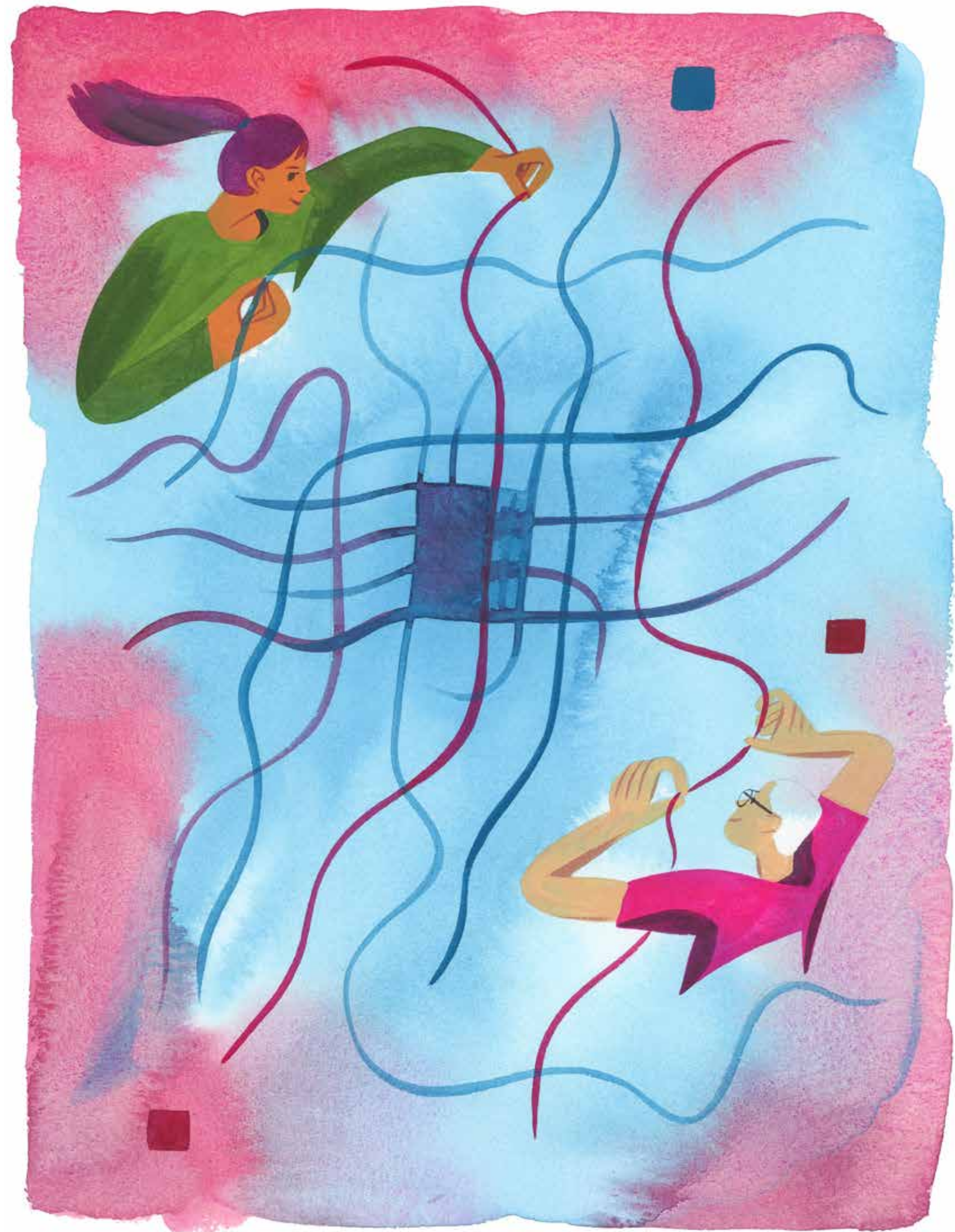
The end of conventional wars

The number of people who die each year as a result of war is at an all-time low. Sadly, many brutal, entrenched conflicts persist. Ensuring peace is a never-ending project. Read how the BMW Foundation is supporting leaders working to build peace on **page 96**.

THE END, OR A NEW BEGINNING?

The global order
is fraying at the
seams. This may
be a good thing

A conversation with
PARAG KHANNA



During a crisis, it’s hard to think of the long term—but that’s precisely when you must do so. What megatrends are shaping the global political system during and after the corona pandemic?

In general, I would emphasize continuity over the change. One example would be the regionalization of the world economy. Because of the US attempt at starting a trade war with China—and Asian trade integration in the last half decade—global trade becomes much more regional. The pandemic is accelerating something that was already underway. US trade with Canada is \$610 billion, with Mexico \$615 billion a year, US trade with China is only \$557 billion. Europe is already much more integrated than any other part of the world. And Asia trades more with Asia than with anyone else. In the coming years, supply chains, trade, investment, migration will be reinforced on a regional level. And that is a very good thing.

This is an interesting statement for someone who is usually identified as a champion of globalization.

Well, and I do believe that the globalization of knowledge, services, and communication is good. But for the hydrocarbon energy market it is terrible. Why should we drill oil in Peru, put it on tankers and send it to the other side of the world, when we have local nuclear or renewable power? Region-

alization of food production, commodities, and energy is a good thing. In the data of FutureMap, this will appear as deglobalization, and some people will say: “Look, COVID-19 is the end of the global era.” But why should we waste our natural resources to make things global that should not be global?

Apart from regionalization, what other megatrends should we watch?

Of course we need to talk about automation and digitalization of work, effects like productivity gains through remote work. That was already here before COVID-19—as was de-urbanization. The populations of New York, Los Angeles, and Tokyo have been shrinking or stagnating for years. Chinese Millennials are moving away from megacities such as Shanghai to places like Yunnan province. Studies suggest that telecommuting in high-tech countries could rise to 20 percent permanently, even after the pandemic.

In your opinion, what models of governance have proven themselves most successful during the pandemic?

I think even before COVID-19, the frustration with Trump and Brexit was leading to a realization that we need a balance between democracy and technocracy. One of the lessons of the pandemic has been an explicit appreciation of the fact that the most suc-

cessful regimes at managing COVID-19 have been Asian democracies. Singapore, Japan, Taiwan—why did they have more success than the US or France? In my opinion it is because their governments are focusing on outputs instead of inputs, on a strong civil service instead of electoral democracy. You know, technocracy can be traced back to ancient philosophers like Plato. It’s a Western idea that Asian countries are doing well with.

You wrote about the upcoming “Asian Century” and the re-emergence of the Asian system—will this trend survive the pandemic?

The 21st century is already the Asian century—the only question is if you’ve realized it or not. One of the very few countries in the world that will grow in 2020 is China. The only region that has any potential to grow in the near future without a staggering amount of new public debt is Asia. That has a lot to do with the size of the population and demographics.

What can Europe and Asia learn from each other?

Most Asians are young and think of Europe not as colonialists but as a social democratic, advanced region with the highest quality of life in the world. Europe is not a threat, it’s an aspiration. There is \$1.5 trillion in annual trade between Europe and Asia.

“The 21st century is already the Asian century—the only question is if you’ve realized it or not.”

— PARAG KHANNA

Europe has more to teach Asia than the other way around when it comes to building human-centric, smart cities; implementing recycling systems; designing laws like the General Data Protection Regulation; and building linkages between academia and businesses.

In a recent interview, you talked about “Asian optimism” and “Western cynicism.”

Most young people in the West don’t believe they live in democracies any longer, they know as a fact that they will not have the same savings rate that their parents had when they turn 40, and less job security—and that was before COVID-19. In Asia, there is more optimism about the future. In Europe, some believed we achieved the “end of history” in the 1990s—and you can only go downhill from there. Whereas in Asia, you had abject poverty for billions of people—which means you can only go up.

All over the world, we are witnessing rising nationalism and decreasing influence of international organizations like the United Nations. What are the chances of an open collaboration across borders that increases equity for all and brings us closer to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals?

Global governance to me is not the UN or the Western liberal international order. Those are temporary and contingent incarnations of global governance. For me, global governance as a principle is a multi-stakeholder framework: states, businesses and civil soci-

ety in various forms of cooperation. It should be bottom-up instead of top-down. It should have accountability mechanisms and be focused on functional goals like clean water, poverty, and climate action.

So you are not concerned by the US leaving the World Health Organization or the Paris Agreement?

You know, many people glorify the good old days of the Western rule-based international order. But I believe that they are not sufficiently attuned to the rise of civil society or the shift of power away from state governments. In the 21st century, Millennials, entrepreneurs and technologists all want a role—and they should have a role. I don’t care about institutions, I care about the goals being met.

How optimistic are you about establishing such a framework—and about achieving the goals?

The beauty and frustration of this approach is that you’ll never be able to say: last week, we achieved a global multi-stakeholder framework. It can be established piece by piece in various areas. Take public health: the World Health Organization doesn’t sit in the center of all things. In some years, 12 percent of its budget comes from the Gates Foundation. The truth is that we live in a fragmented world—and that is fine. We just need to figure out the best constellation of actors to solve our various challenges. Climate change, for instance, can only be addressed if 20 countries, 100 companies, and 200 cities sit together at one table. In this way, every local leader has global relevance.



PARAG KHANNA

The founder and managing partner of FutureMap—and “the most connected man alive” (New York Times)—is a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader. The global strategist and author lives with his family in Singapore. His latest book is *The Future is Asian: Global Order in the Twenty-First Century*.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

São Paulo, 2013

Riots and protests in several cities in Brazil call for change. The protests, sparked by opposition to rising bus fares, have spread rapidly to encompass a range of grievances.

Societies do not gravitate toward justice and democratic forms of government by default. That is why the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt supports movements and organizations that strengthen democracy. Here are three examples from Brazil, Europe, and the US

The rise of populism, the emergence of extremist political parties from the right, and a growing anti-establishment sentiment are a threat to many of the world’s democracies. More and more people around the world experience that their right to live freely, safely, and with access to food, education, and opportunities—whatever their gender, ethnicity, faith, or sexual orientation—is not a given. They are standing up for their rights and beliefs. The United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal 16—Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions—aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. The BMW Foundation supports individuals and institutions that are working to achieve this goal, and in particular, to strengthen democratic institutions. Three of these organizations have taken up different challenges. What their leaders all have in common is a burning desire to strengthen the structures of democratic civil society.



Latin America

How individuals become engaged citizens

Political inequality is rife in much of Latin America. In Brazil, for example, disadvantaged groups including women, blacks, and indigenous people have less access to political resources. In 2015, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader **Tulio Malaspina** founded the **Update Institute** together with fellow Responsible Leader Beatriz Pedreira, Caio Tendolini, and Rafael Poço to tackle political inequality in civil society. Update’s mission is to strengthen democracy in Latin America by bringing citizens, and particularly disadvantaged groups, closer to politics. In practice, that means removing the barriers they face in political campaigning and encouraging greater representation in positions of power.

Liane, an open-source tool that Update developed, is already in use in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Mexico. The software allows underrepresented groups to manage their electoral campaigns and mobilize activists—which opens the door to greater parliamentary representation. “In soccer, our favorite game, the barrier to entry is extremely low—all you need is a football and a bit of space. But in politics, the barrier is really high—the cost of electoral campaigning,” Malaspina points out. “That’s why most of Latin American politics is dominated by the privileged white class.” One day, Malaspina hopes, Latin America will produce a more diverse group of politically engaged citizens. Update Institute projects include a TV show that broadcasts straight talk about politics. The goal is to make people aware that voting is important and build trust in the representatives of disadvantaged groups. The outcome is an ecosystem of new actors and emerging political practices to advance the fight for political representation.

United States

In a strong democracy, leadership must reflect the people



Sayu Bhojwani was born in India, grew up in Belize, and moved to the United States to study. “As an immigrant, I am drawn to the promise of our democracy. Others like me also fought to come and stay here because we believe in the possibility of America. New American Leaders harnesses their optimism.” Bhojwani, a BMW Foundation Re-

sponsible Leader, founded **New American Leaders** in 2010 after Congress failed to open the door to citizenship for thousands of undocumented immigrants. “We are creating a political home for people like me who feel marginalized yet are still working to make America a place for all of us.”

New American Leaders (NAL) is striving to establish a more inclusive democracy by enabling first- and second-generation Americans to use their power and potential in elected offices. The work of New American Leaders is strengthening a nationwide movement to bring more diversity to leadership and, in time, create a more inclusive political order: “We empower New Americans to run, win, and lead.” Over the past decade, 90 NAL alumni have won office. “Many of them defeated long-term incumbents who are no longer effective or reflective of the communities they serve,” Bhojwani points out. But there is still a long way to go. “Of the 500,000 state and local offices in the US, 65 percent are held by white men,” she says.

Despite the current political climate, Bhojwani is optimistic: “Lots of Americans have been awakened by the crisis in our society and the systemic racism. We can’t go back from this awareness.”

Europe

Helping civil societies reclaim power



When **Omri Preiss** moved from Israel to Europe, he was struck by the openness and sense of security, and how democratic institutions were taken for granted. Then, authoritarian extremism increased in the 2010s. While working as a human rights lobbyist and for a Member of the European Parliament, the BMW Foundation Responsible

Leader felt a strong need for the EU to address the rise of right-wing populism. In 2019, he became managing director of **Alliance4Europe**, a platform that pools the strengths of pro-European initiatives to combat right-wing populism. It emerged during a BMW Foundation leadership program and has received Foundation support since its inception “We are the connecting thread between civil society organizations,” Preiss says.

Alliance4Europe has a Social Media Intelligence Unit that was designed by an ex-Scotland-Yard expert to counter hate speech. The organization is also part of the European Hub for Civic Engagement, which is building a digital platform to make it easier for civil society to share resources and work together. “We coordinate resources, capacities, and cooperation. We provide digital intelligence. We create campaigns to activate citizens to vote for a more democratic, sustainable Europe. And we develop new civic engagement resources.” By enhancing digital citizenship, the Alliance4Europe is helping to advance democracy, sustainability, and fundamental rights in Europe. “We’re bringing pro-European forces together to give them a louder voice,” Preiss adds. “This way, we can build a more resilient democracy.”

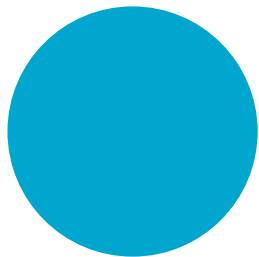
Bringing democratic engagement to life

The BMW Foundation helped these organizations right at the start

In helping these three organizations get off the ground, the BMW Foundation was instrumental. “It was their seed money and the fact that they opened doors for us,” says Tulio Malaspina. “Other foundations began supporting us after that.” Sayu Bhojwani is grateful for the financial support her organization received in its early days and the valuable contacts via the Responsible Leaders Network: “These people are all committed to building a better world and have been very supportive.” Omri Preiss points to the Foundation’s key role in the formation of the Alliance4Europe by bringing together pro-European organizations: “It was at the BMW Foundation’s Munich European Forum that the Alliance was launched in October 2018.”

“No one is above the law”

Around the world, organizations, institutions, and activists are fighting for justice, gender equality, accountability, and human rights



Fatou Bensouda
Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), The Hague

You are perpetually criticized by irresponsible leaders around the world who refuse to be held accountable.

How do you handle these—often very personal—attacks?

The short answer is a firm belief in the important mandate of the International Criminal Court (“ICC” or the “Court”) and the fight against impunity for the world’s gravest crimes. As I often say, the creation of the ICC must be one of humanity’s proudest moments and a major milestone in human progress. The Court does not do popularity contests but stands as a beacon of hope for victims of atrocity crimes who would otherwise have no recourse to justice. The criticisms levelled against us may appear personal, but of course criticism comes with the territory given the nature of our mandate. We are doing legitimate work within the strict confines of our legal mandate and judicial proceedings. We are doing this work dispassionately, and responsibly, and we must be allowed to do so without influence. The ICC will be criticized and it will be praised. That will always be the case. Where the strict boundaries of the law dictate we can and must intervene, the ICC Office of the Prosecutor should and will continue to seek justice around the world for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression. After all, any attacks we might face can’t be compared to the brutality of atrocity crimes, and it is for the victims of such crimes that we are here to do this crucial work. No matter the challenges, I say: never be deterred from pursuing the ICC’s critical mandate. Each one of us who works at the Court took an oath to serve that mandate, honorably and with professionalism and integrity. That is what we have done, and that is what we will continue to do.

How do these attacks influence your work and your team?

The most recent attacks, coercive measures, and threats directed against us are designed to deter us from fulfilling our mandate in the pursuit of justice. They are political attacks that seek to achieve political aims. As for impact, there is no doubt that they are serious, indeed shocking and have created challenges for those targeted, for my Office, the Court, and the Rome Statute system more broadly.

We are doing what we can to manage this latest challenge. We have a job to do, and it is to fight impunity for the world’s gravest crimes, wherever the law says we have jurisdiction and no one else is doing justice for the victims. I certainly had no illusions. We cannot abandon the victims of atrocity crimes. After all, the *raison d’être* of the ICC was to ensure there is no impunity gap. We cannot allow these coercive measures to distract us from the Court’s mission and mandate. I think it is true to say that some of the deliberate and unfounded attacks are beginning to wane—I can think for example of the years-long coordinated campaign to erroneously portray me, and the Court, as having some kind of bias against Africa. Even as we work for victims, from Georgia to the Rohingya in Bangladesh, even as we monitor and assess other situations from the Philippines to Colombia, from Venezuela to Palestine, false narratives are created. Even when our work in accordance with the Rome Statute is triggered at the request of many African states, or the United Nations Security Council, as we bring cases for the brutal crimes committed against children, women, and men—in Darfur, Sudan, for example, or the Democratic Republic of Congo, or Uganda—we have seen that detractors, at the same time, were clamoring to denounce these very efforts as biased or racist. But we are managing, and we will not lose sight of the value our contribution of justice can bring to protecting future generations and building a more just world. No single advance in hu-



Together for justice
Fatou Bensouda took part in the 2016 BMW Foundation Global Table in Santpoort, The Netherlands. Participants examined how to prevent violent conflict in fragile states.

man progress has travelled the path of least resistance. The ICC does crucial work both directly, but also indirectly in cultivating a culture of accountability for atrocity crimes.

What keeps you going and fighting for justice and peace?

The reasons to continue are many, and they are all too evident, alas. At this very moment, in every corner of the globe, families just like yours and mine are facing the catastrophic effects of war and conflict. In my work as prosecutor, I meet with victims, survivors of horrific crimes, and what strikes me always has been their dignity and their courage. Victims are the reason this Court exists, and they are our primary motivation. Their best interests are present—always—behind every decision and action of the Office of the Prosecutor. The appalling atrocity crimes committed in conflict zones devastate civilians. They also threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world. This is why the ICC exists, and it is what keeps me,

and so many others, going. This Court has staunch, indefectible supporters, across the globe. More than 120 states have ratified the Court’s founding treaty, the Rome Statute, and more will continue to join.

You have seen the reactions and support for the ICC and widespread rejection of the latest U.S. measures against the Court—from State Parties, international organizations and civil society organizations. We look to the Court’s State Parties to continue to stand firmly by the Court and its personnel. This, too, is a positive sign that ultimately, we are on the right path, even if it is not always an easy one.

Did you ever hesitate to take on the role of International Criminal Court’s chief prosecutor?

There was no hesitation. I came into this job with my eyes wide open and I knew exactly what I was taking on. Before my election as Prosecutor, I served the Court as its deputy prosecutor. At a personal level, respect for

“The Court does not do popularity contests but stands as a beacon of hope for victims of atrocity crimes.” – **FATOU BENSOU DA**

the dignity of human life was central in the way I was brought up. Since childhood in my native Gambia, I have wanted to do my part to ensure vulnerable groups in society and those whose rights have been trampled upon are protected and afforded a measure of justice. The role of everyone who works for and with the ICC has immense importance. The ICC is a crucial pillar of a ruled-based international order, and the international rule of law. It is there for the benefit of humanity, for the hope of a more just world.

Are there any female role models that inspired you to assume such a controversial position?

Like so many, I do not have to look far to see powerful and compassionate role models. My first thoughts are of my mother and the wonderful women of my family, who cared for, taught, and inspired me. Some of the pioneering African women who I continue to see as role models include the late Wangari Maathai, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Graça Machel, and Navi Pillay. I believe they are also an inspiration for a whole new generation of inspiring and courageous young women in Africa and around the world.

What personal and professional achievements are you most proud of?

Without doubt, I am most proud of my dedicated and professional team. Every one of them—from the prosecutors and investigators to the analysts, administrators, and translators; from the services staff to the human resources and technical specialists,

from our interns to our advisers and senior managers—is driven and motivated every day to do right by the victims of atrocity crimes. Together, we have strived to bring the Office of the Prosecutor to be more effective and efficient and to continuously produce positive results.

We have brought in many measures towards this end: a code of conduct for the Office; new and innovative strategic plans to respond to the challenges we face and help us do our work more effectively; and a number of policies that give clarity and guide our work in accordance with the Rome Statute in areas of crucial importance, such as on crimes against children, on sexual and gender-based crimes, and imminently, on the destruction of cultural heritage.

What are the biggest challenges and obstacles that you face in your everyday work?

It is true to say that all international criminal investigations face challenges. Yet we should not forget that the mere existence of the ICC is a major achievement in itself. It came into being only after many harsh lessons of conflict and tragic human loss through history led the international community to say “enough,” and significant challenges had to be overcome to finally bring it into existence. ICC investigations have to deal with different challenges than national investigations given that we operate in conflict areas. In general, such challenges can range from cooperation to security to resources. On top of that, we have an important stat-

utory duty to protect people who would be at risk due to their interaction with the Court.

Where do you feel most at home?

I feel most at home where I can make a positive contribution and where I am surrounded by people who have decency and integrity.

What’s your life motto?

Not so much a motto as a set of values: dedication, integrity, and respect are central to my professional and personal life. It is no coincidence that these are the core values of my Office. We have worked very hard to develop a common understanding of how these values translate into a myriad of attitudes and behaviors, permeating every aspect of our work and all our interactions. Through the principled and professional conduct of our work, embedded in these values, I hope our cases and situations serve as a deterrent for the commission of atrocity crimes, and reduce suffering during war and conflict.

Together with my Office, and the Court, my overarching dedication to advance the cause of international criminal justice remains unwavering. I won’t go where I’m told to go, or where observers say I should go. Acting in strict conformity with our mandate under the Rome Statute, and in full independence and impartiality, my duty as ICC Prosecutor for over 120 States Parties is to go where atrocity crimes are being committed and justice is not being done—without fear or favor. No one is above the law, and no one is below it. ●



Düzen Tekkal
Filmmaker, activist, and founder of HAWAR.help

To understand BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Düzen Tekkal’s passion and power, you need to know her background. Tekkal’s Yazidi-Kurdish parents fled from Turkey to Germany. That’s where she was born, went to school and university, and became a TV journalist. But the defining moment in her life came in 2014: “Yazidis were being imprisoned, sold into slavery, raped, and murdered in an ISIS-led genocide. They were my people. I had found my inner calling.” The outcome was a defining documentary on the fate of the Yazidis—*HAWAR: My Journey to Genocide*. This excruciating experience led to the founding of HAWAR.help, a non-profit dedicated to combating genocide and all forms of dehumanization.

HAWAR.help’s projects include the Women’s Empowerment Center at a Northern Iraq refugee camp to help women rebuild their lives, a football project for refugee and migrant girls (Scoring Girls) and School Talks, an educational project to advance dialog on tolerance.

“My belief in the power of change is what drives me,” Tekkal explains. “That women can live their own lives and don’t have them determined by others is the value I work for.” The support of the BMW Foundation proved decisive. “I used to think we were unique and alone. But through the Responsible Leaders Network, I met people like us who’ve supported us since. The outcome has been a greater impact and a stronger voice.”

● SDG 16 — Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



Blair Glencorse
Founder and executive director, Accountability Lab

“The best thing you can do with power is to give it away,” says BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Blair Glencorse. “Accountability is all about making governance work for people by supporting active citizens, responsible leaders, and accountable institutions.” In founding the Accountability Lab in 2012, Glencorse was driven by a desire to build the right relationships between leaders and citizens and persuade young people to develop new ideas for transparency and open government. “It’s a generational issue,” he explains. “The global youth population is growing rapidly, but young people, women, and other minority groups are largely excluded from decision-making. We want to inspire youth to believe in change for the better.”

The Lab’s positive approach is different from other transparency NGOs. “We celebrate role models and promote constructive examples rather than pointing fingers—‘naming and faming,’ not ‘naming and shaming,’” Glencorse says. The NGO has reached some 25 million people in nine countries on three continents through campaigns and over 270,000 through programs while training and supporting 97 “accountapreneurs.” “Our work starts with listening, understanding, and acting as a sounding board. Integrity is vital in building trust. In everything we do, we try to live our values.” Collaboration with international networks such as the BMW Foundation has helped Glencorse connect the dots to ensure people’s voices are heard where it matters.



Kristina Lunz
Cofounder and co-executive director,
Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Kristina Lunz is passionate about building a society where gender equality, diversity, and educational justice reign. From campaigns in Germany against rape (“No Means No”) or sexism in one of Europe’s best-selling dailies, Lunz has switched her focus to the world of foreign policy. “Society is built on patriarchal values and an unfair distribution of resources,” she says. “I co-founded the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy to re-balance power and dismantle inequalities. There can be no peace without feminism.”

The values her work is based on are collaboration, integrity, and courage. For her, integrity means standing up with the courage to criticize even institutions that back her work—if their stance is not unequivocal. And behind these principles is the burning desire to lift women up to where they belong. The obstacles she faces include doors being slammed shut, online hatred, even rape threats. “They try to silence you because we are critical of hierarchical power structures. Those in power are not very fond of us,” she adds. But the biggest challenge in the male-dominated world of giving is funding. As Lunz points out, only 2.3 percent of venture capital in the US went to female entrepreneurs and startups in 2019. And to anyone who wants to change the world for the better, she has some really straightforward advice: “Don’t listen to the nay-sayers!” As a fighter for feminist goals, Kristina Lunz is an inspiration to women—and men.

Eirliani Abdul Rahman
Activist for children’s rights

Who would give up a career in the diplomatic service to become an activist for children’s rights? Eirliani Abdul Rahman did. At the age of 17, she watched a documentary on dowry burning. “It was seared into my memory,” she says. “Seeing a woman die at the hands of her in-laws just because her family could not afford to provide more dowry at her wedding.”

Abdul Rahman vowed to give a voice to the voiceless before she turned 40. True to her word, she resigned from the Singapore Foreign Service in 2015 and began fighting child trafficking and child sexual abuse. Abdul Rahman is currently one of 30 public health leaders selected by the National Council of Social Service over the past 6 years to strengthen Singapore’s healthcare sector. As program director at the Kailash Satyarthi Children’s Foundation (KSCF) US, she oversaw the effort to lobby 88 Nobel Laureates and world leaders to sign a joint statement in May, 2020, demanding 20 percent of COVID-19 relief funds go to the most marginalized. She was instrumental in securing WHO Director General Tedros Ghebreyesus and the Dalai Lama as speakers for the Fair Share for Children Summit in September, 2020.

In 2015, Abdul Rahman won the BMW Foundation’s Responsible Leaders Award. She co-wrote *Survivors: Breaking the Silence on Child Sexual Abuse*, which won joint second prize at the Golden Doors Award in September 2020. She also contributed to the textbook *Essentials of Global Health*, which won first prize in the Public Health category of the 2019 British Medical Association book awards.

As a founding member of the Global Diplomacy Lab, Abdul Rahman contributes to the evolution of a new and more inclusive diplomacy. The BMW Foundation’s support has been essential, she says. That is where the diplomat and activist become one.



WHEN PEOPLE CONNECT, PEACE BUILDS

Seventy-two years after it began, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict shows few signs of ending. Responsible Leaders from both sides of the divide are strongly dedicated to connecting these two peoples to build peace



Shared sanctuary
A bakery in the Arab quarter in the old city of Jerusalem.

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Summer 2014 was horrible for Netta Ahituv. The Haaretz journalist and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader spent most days sheltering from Hamas missiles, cradling her infant son. Meanwhile, Israeli strikes leveled Gaza. More than 2,000 people died in the armed conflict. Later that year, at a conference in India, she noticed a woman from Gaza. She recalls: “I hesitantly held out my hand and said, ‘Hi, I am Netta from Israel.’ Silence. She moved my hand, hugged me, and whispered: ‘I am so sorry for the summer you have been through’.” They wept, made friends and got acquainted. “We were so curious about the life of the Other,” Ahituv remembers.

Understanding and empathizing with the Other is Ahituv’s purpose in her writing on the conflict. Perhaps her most influential

article invited Palestinian children to narrate their arrest, detention, and abuse in Israeli jails. A pivotal moment for her came in 2012, when she covered the Bereaved Families Forum. This organization connects Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost loved ones. They share their experiences to promote healing and reconciliation.

“I expected them to be desperately sad but they were so optimistic which inspired me,” says Ahituv. Since then, she has been determined to highlight hopeful, constructive stories, writing extensively about people bridging the divide such as Combatants for Peace, which was established by former Israeli military and Palestinian fighters.

For Ahituv, BMW Foundation gatherings are similar opportunities to learn (and heal) through human connections.



NETTA AHITUV

The Tel-Aviv-based journalist writes about environmental and social issues and the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. She works as senior magazine correspondent and editor at Haaretz Newspaper. In 2014, she won the Pratt Prize for Environmental Journalism. Ahituv is a radio and TV presenter for current affairs.

At her first leadership program in Marseille in 2018, she met a Tunisian woman and found they both had sons called Adam, with the same birthday. “I felt this cosmic connection and was so impressed by this strong, feminist woman,” she recalls. She also met secular Israeli and fellow BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Anton Goodman and was deeply moved by “his amazing, open-minded Judaism.”

Strengthen the bond

Shared experiences enable healing, as Ahituv and her Gazan friend instinctively felt: “These are times to take care of yourself so you can take care of others, something I learned from Responsible Leaders events,” she says. Sadly for them it is illegal to meet at home, but they find ways to strengthen their bond, such as by exchanging photos of the Mediterranean Sea, which they both live close to, only a few kilometers apart from each other.

Several years before Netta Ahituv wrote about the Bereaved Families Forum, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Aziz Abu Sarah was chairing a Forum event when his father asked if the Holocaust really happened. “I wanted the earth to swallow me,” he remembers. “Nobody wanted to answer. Many Palestinians thought this but were afraid to ask. Many Israelis knew Palestinians thought this but did not want to confront it.”

Abu Sarah lost his elder brother Tayseer after he was beaten in an Israeli prison. He was 10 years old and spent years consumed with rage. That changed when he studied Hebrew with civilian Jews. As he learned about the life of the Other, he replaced hatred with the desire for reconciliation. He joined the Bereaved Families Forum and spoke at events with Rami Elhanan, whose daughter was killed in a suicide bombing.

ANTON GOODMAN

As community organizer and peace activist from Oxford, England, Anton Goodman emigrated to Israel and created a series of grass-roots social initiatives. He is also the Director of Development at The Abraham Initiatives, working towards Jewish-Arab solidarity and a shared Israeli society. He was previously the Jewish Agency’s senior emissary to Washington, DC.



“Martin Luther King said, people hate each other because they don’t know each other.” – **AZIZ ABU SARAH**

HEALING TO BUILD PEACE

The annual Global Peacebuilders Summit brings a group of 35 peace activists to Germany to share ideas, experiences and raw emotions. Founder and journalist Michael Gleich reflects on this unique community

What inspired you to found the Summit?

In 2003, we at the Culture Counts Foundation started the Peace Counts project, going to conflict regions to do ‘peace reporting’ on topics like trauma healing, reconciliation, inter-religious dialog. A ceasefire does not bring peace. When the weapons fall silent, the peace work starts. In 2015, we decided the brilliant people we portrayed should meet. Many are isolated as dissidents. I knew meeting like-minded people would be fruitful for them.

Who are the peacebuilders?

In Nigeria, there is the pastor and the imam. James Wuye and Muhammad Ashafa once fought on both sides as leaders of opposing militias. In the conflict, James lost his right arm, while two of Muhammad’s cousins died. But for the last 25 years, they have used their spirituality for peace and set up more pastor-imam partnerships. In Israel, Nava Sonnenschein has her School for Peace which uses a special method based on acceptance to train young Palestinians and Israelis to engage constructively.

What do you aim to achieve?

There are three aspects linked to the BMW Foundation’s mission of promoting responsible leadership across countries, cultures, and communities. First, we connect peacebuilders. They can cooperate across borders, network in Europe, and meet donors. We incorporate a session in the German parliament; we are an entry point to German politics. Then the Summit inspires, mostly through peer-to-peer learning, for example when South African peacebuilders introduced their Everyday Peace Indicators for monitoring peace. Third, they have a safe space to regenerate, to invest in themselves. There is such trust that they can share their pains, their tears and fears. That is unique. I remember a lady from Afghanistan lying on a sofa, totally broken, and four women holding and massaging her. That was a touching indicator of the solidarity.

The Summit went virtual this year. How did it go?

We did the full five-day Summit. You lose the uniqueness online, but the need to meet, share, and feel solidarity was immense. Trauma healing was a big issue. We had a therapist on board. Nearly all our members have suffered trauma, whether as perpetrator, victim, or both.

How does the BMW Foundation support the Summit?

They have played three roles: first by providing support, second by bringing me into the Responsible Leaders Network, and third by having Markus Hipp, board member of the BMW Foundation, help me develop our five-year strategy.

What are your strategic plans?

I see the benefits of staying small, but we would like to grow to cover all major conflict regions in the world. We are also starting to connect and train the next generation of leaders in peace organizations. My ultimate strategic goal is to step back and let the network take over.



MICHAEL GLEICH

Michael Gleich is a journalist specializing in reporting on peacebuilding and sustainable development in conflict zones. He co-founded the Culture Counts Foundation, which teaches and promotes constructive journalism. He is also a cofounder of the Global Peacebuilder Summit.

“At last, an Israeli member answered,” Abu Sarah continues. “His father, an Auschwitz survivor, would take my father to the Holocaust museum and tell his story.” In the end, 70 Palestinians went along. “By admitting his ignorance, my father led many people to learn the Other’s narrative,” he says. “This helped me understand the importance of narrative in peacebuilding.”

MEJDI Tours, which Abu Sarah co-founded in 2009 with a Jewish partner, embodies this insight. In Jerusalem, MEJDI (“honor and respect” in Arabic) uses two tour guides—one Israeli, one Palestinian—to present narratives of the city’s history, religion, and culture.

“Millions travel to Israel and Palestine, yet they only get one narrative...which solidifies who they like or hate. I decided this needs to change,” says Abu Sarah, who has launched MEJDI Tours in conflict zones from Colombia to Northern Ireland.

Looking for responsible leadership

The BMW Foundation provided a springboard in 2013 when Abu Sarah presented MEJDI Tours at the Arab European Young Leaders Forum in Tunis. “I got really good advice on how to grow,” he says. Since then, the Responsible Leader networks helped him to expand to countries such as Lebanon.

MEJDI Tours broke ground by having Israelis and Palestinians work side by side as equals, Abu Sarah explains: “The impact on locals of seeing the guides together, not fighting but friends, was profound. Like Mar-



AZIZ ABU SARAH

As Palestinian peace builder, cultural educator, entrepreneur, author and conflict resolution expert, Aziz Abu Sarah was awarded the Goldberg Prize for Peace in the Middle East. He is also cofounder of MEJDI Tours. In 2018 Abu Sarah withdrew his bid to become mayor of Jerusalem after threats of violence. His new book, *Crossing Boundaries – A Traveller’s Guide To World Peace* was released in July 2020.

tin Luther King said, people hate each other because they do not know each other. People do not know each other because they do not communicate. People do not communicate because they are separated.”

MEJDI Tours is a model of peaceful, productive coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians. “It is very important to create concrete examples,” says Anton Goodman, Director of Development at The Abraham Fund Initiatives, which works towards equality and shared society between Israel’s Jewish and Arab communities. “You have to approach peace-making pragmatically—show how it is in the best interests of society.”

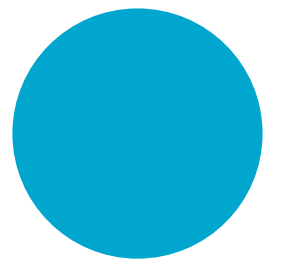
For example, during the COVID-19 lockdown, he connected Jews and Arabs digitally to help navigate the pandemic, build a shared experience, and nurture understanding. His goal is the kind of rapprochement he sees in local political partnerships in mixed cities such as Acre and Ramla. “They have put ideological differences aside without throwing them away and managed to work together,” says Goodman.

For him, Responsible Leaders gatherings enable meetings of minds. “I interact with citizens of countries I cannot visit and it is illegal to call. That is something for which I will forever be grateful,” he says. “It enables people to connect on a human level and use that as a basis for knowledge sharing.” The BMW Foundation also introduced Goodman to the Agenda 2030 and a multi-disciplinary approach to development. “That made an enormous impact on me. It is very important to take a holistic view,” he says, observing that NGO’s and activists must consider wider impacts. In this sense, peacebuilding is not a linear process.

Responsible leadership is sadly lacking in their homeland, agree Ahituv, Abu Sarah, and Goodman. They worry about the corrosive effects of stagnation, indifference, escalating hatred, and segregation. By contrast, their efforts to connect people to the Other offer a way forward. As Abu Sarah insists: “We know what they have been doing does not work. We need younger leaders and new strategies of peacebuilding.” ●

Building bridges

Diplomacy is no longer exclusive to governments and institutions. Trinidad Saona from Global Diplomacy Lab and Zukunftsbrücke fellow Rong Yang discuss the future of international understanding



TRINIDAD SAONA

A member of the Global Diplomacy Lab (GDL), Saona has been a diplomat in the Chilean Foreign Service since 2010. She is a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader.



RONG YANG

A fellow in the Zukunftsbrücke 2014, Yang worked for the Chinese Foreign Ministry earlier in his career. He is now vice president of Sales, Specialty, at Bayer and a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader.

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Are traditional modes of international relations and diplomacy outdated?

RONG YANG: There are definitely more players in international relations and diplomacy. First, governments no longer have a monopoly on setting the international agenda. The Fridays for Future movement gained momentum quickly, and crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic are all of a sudden determining everything. When such issues take hold in the public consciousness, there is no way for governments to ignore them. Second, it's much easier for people to organize these days. We are having this conversation now. We are on different continents but share an interest in the topic of "the future of democracy." We are a community of choice. Communication technologies make this possible.

In the past, your community was your neighborhood. Now, I may feel much more connected on certain topics to people who live thousands of miles away. At the same time, on other topics, we continue to rely on other members of our local communities. Lastly, ability to organize is one thing. Impact is another. You can build international networks as a private citizen, but that does not guarantee impact. Fridays for Future, a grassroots initiative, has become powerful—but there is no master plan on how you can achieve this level of success.

What new insights did participating in the Global Diplomacy Lab (GDL) and the Zukunftsbrücke give you?

TRINIDAD SAONA: An issue close to my heart is water scarcity. Chile has been affected by droughts for 10 years. This issue does not stop at borders, of course. But when I was in the diplomatic service, I noticed that it was difficult to get neighboring governments to

cooperate so everyone was pulling in the same direction. In the GDL program, I got to speak to people who suffer from drought in California and Australia. I realized that water scarcity is a global issue that cannot be solved by any one government on its own. Expertise needs to be pooled globally. One thing that is true in most countries is that NGOs often have better insights into the situation than central governments. One point we therefore brainstormed on in the GDL lab was: how can we get NGOs more involved in policy making and connected with each other internationally? When people from many nationalities and backgrounds look at issues together, you get a whole world of impulses. For instance, we formed a group to work on gender issues, which is still active. A problem that not only exists in Latin America is that the diplomatic service is dominated by males. In order to rise to the world's challenges, we cannot afford not to tap into the brainpower of half the global population.

New ways of cooperating

Both movements aim to improve international understanding in new settings

GLOBAL DIPLOMACY LAB (GDL)

The GDL is a member-driven platform for exploring new forms of more inclusive diplomacy. It was initiated by the BMW Foundation in cooperation with the German Federal Foreign Office and other organizations. The Foundation proposes participants for the Global Diplomacy Labs from its Responsible Leaders Network. The GDL organizes meetings worldwide to bring together academics, artists, entrepreneurs, and diplomats from different nations.

ZUKUNFTSBRÜCKE

The Chinese-German Young Professional Campus Zukunftsbrücke brings together young German and Chinese leaders from all sectors. Citizens from the political, economics, and scientific communities meet annually to have meaningful conversations on a range of issues surrounding German-Chinese relations. Zukunftsbrücke is a project organized by Stiftung Mercator and the BMW Foundation with the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF).



New collaboration formats

At the GDL Lab in Berlin in 2019, participants discussed more efficient forms of cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda.





“It is imperative to be open to input from people of all walks of life, and listen to them if they voice their views in terms that do not follow diplomatic rules.”

– TRINIDAD SAONA



Changing sides

Zukunftsbrücke meetings as in Paretz in 2019 are held alternately in Germany and China and seek to create a network of leaders who are committed to establishing sustainable partnerships.

RONG YANG: The Zukunftsbrücke class of 2014 comprised 30 young Chinese and German professionals. Many of us have kept in touch. We connect online or host in-person meetings. In recent months, alumni have been discussing Chinese government plans to make its currency more freely convertible. By chance, a German Zukunftsbrücke participant has been working on this topic, so others gained insights from her expertise.

And why did you get involved with the Global Diplomacy Lab and the Zukunftsbrücke?

TRINIDAD SAONA: I was interested in the GDL's innovative approach to diplomacy, involving actors from all sectors of society. Diplomats need to engage more with different stakeholders. It is important to draw on the skills and brainpower of experts from many fields. Too often, we see politicians brainstorming with other politicians and scientists brainstorming with other scientists. Moreover, solutions need to be multi-national. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic requires countries to agree on how to proceed. The pandemic does not respect borders, so the search for solutions cannot stop there, either. Regarding the international stage, it should be

more about exchanging ideas to get the best solution, not about governments being able to say, “We are the country that first came up with a solution!” such as a COVID-19 vaccine.

RONG YANG: I feel there is a lack of understanding between China and the rest of the world. Zukunftsbrücke is a way to change that. It is trying to replicate the Atlantik-Brücke, which did so much to facilitate relations between Germany and the United States after the Second World War. Germany has mastered a challenge that China is now facing—overcoming mistrust and strengthening international relations. “What is going on in China?” This question is asked in Western media nearly every day. Yet there are few channels that let people find out what China is really about through dialog. When Zukunftsbrücke approached me, I put myself forward. I felt that, yes, I can contribute to helping people understand China.

What did the GDL community enable you to do?

TRINIDAD SAONA: As part of the GDL network, I feel empowered to address issues I would not have addressed before. For instance, I am cofounder of the Gender Alliance. It was creat-

ed in 2019 at the BMW Foundation World Responsible Leaders Forum in Mexico. We are constructing momentum for gender equality, which is one of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. I am also part of the Care4Diplomacy project, which aims to introduce care and inclusiveness as core values of diplomacy. These are prerequisites if we want to move to a more equitable world.

What will foreign relations look like in the future?

TRINIDAD SAONA: A lot has changed in recent years. For instance, the way diplomats are recruited is less elitist. I believe programs such as the GDL played a part in making this possible. It is no longer enough for diplomats to be trained to relate to other diplomats, or to learn formal international diplomatic protocols for expressing disagreement. It is imperative to be open to input from people of all walks of life, and still listen even if they voice views without regard for diplomatic customs. People are starting to recognize this need. I was able to take leave of the Chilean diplomatic service for a year, work for a foundation, and come back with fresh insights—without harming my career. ●

Chapter Four

SOCIETY

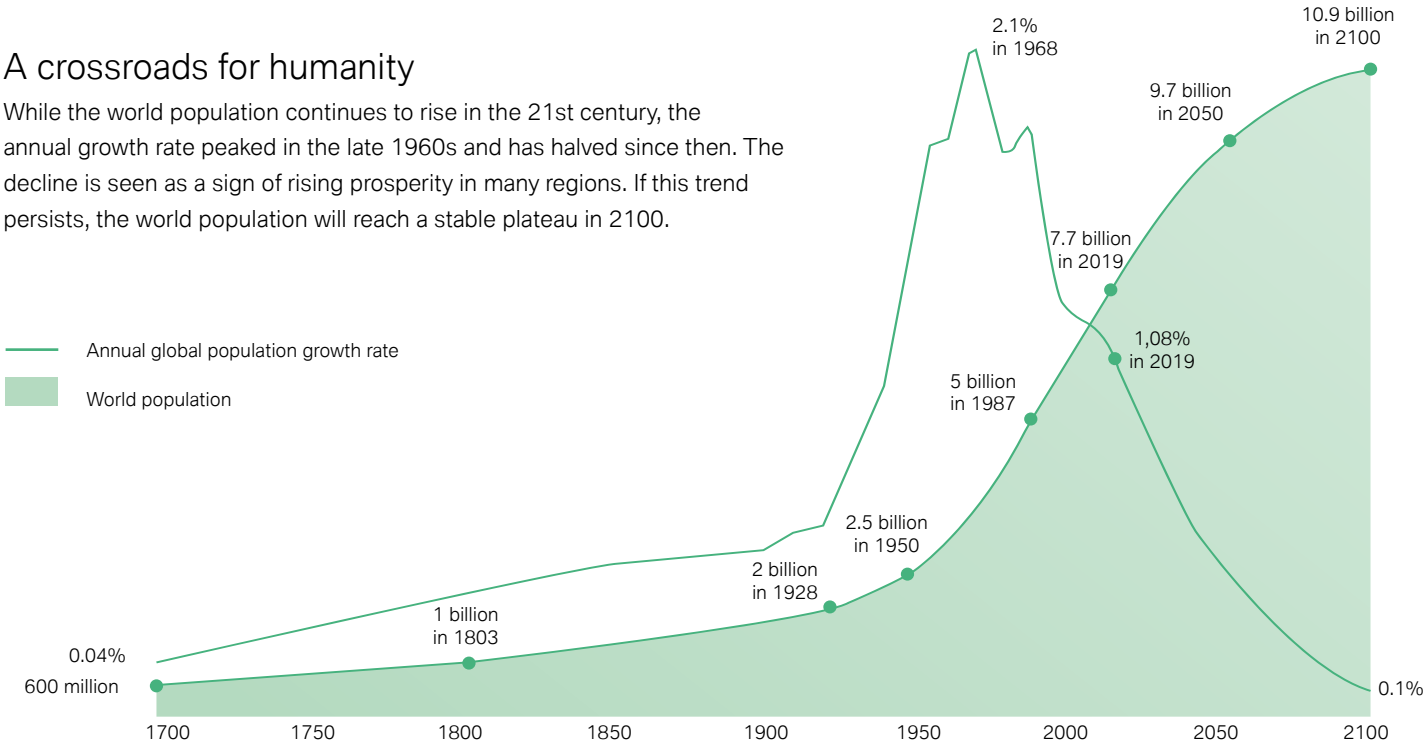
pp. 108–139

Social progress: a snapshot

The Sustainable Development Goals aim to improve the lives of billions of people: no poverty, zero hunger, quality education, gender equality, decent work and economic growth. But where do we stand?

A crossroads for humanity

While the world population continues to rise in the 21st century, the annual growth rate peaked in the late 1960s and has halved since then. The decline is seen as a sign of rising prosperity in many regions. If this trend persists, the world population will reach a stable plateau in 2100.



Just not fair

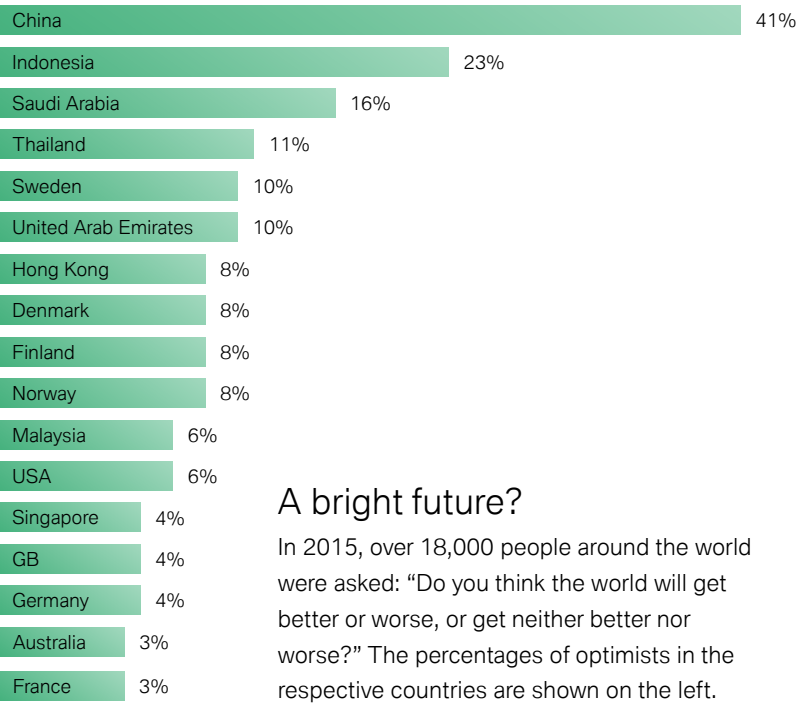
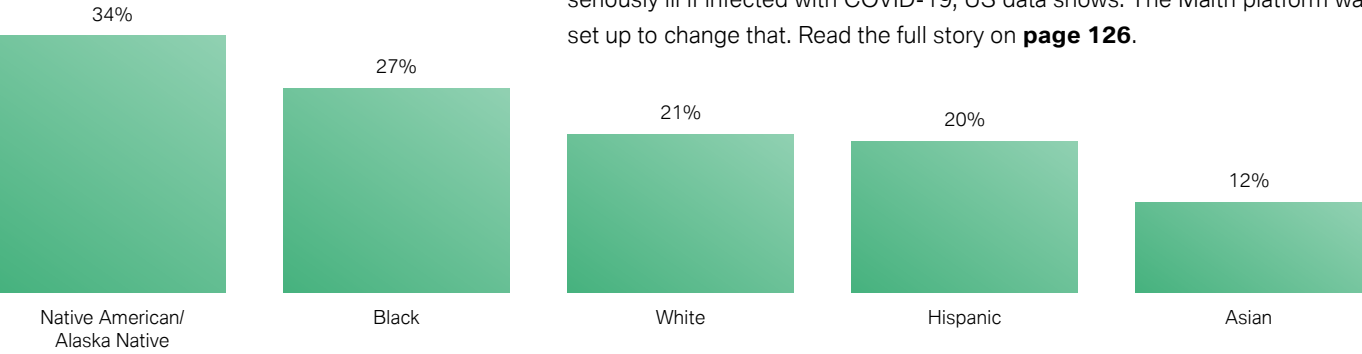
United Nations data shows that two children born in 2000 in countries with different development levels have vastly different prospects today. BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Gaurav Mehta works for more equality, especially for women in India. Read more on **page 112**.



SOURCES: OUR WORLD IN DATA, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2019, KAISER FAMILY FOUNDATION, YOUNG, IPSOS: "ENTREPRENEURIALISM," WORLD BANK: "WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW 2020"

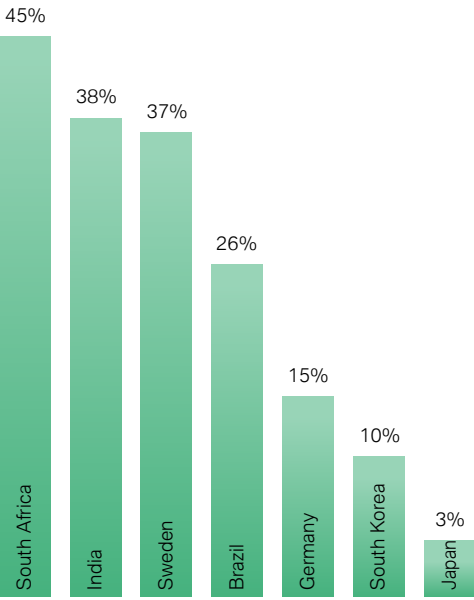
Uneven distribution of risk

Blacks, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives are at a higher risk of getting seriously ill if infected with COVID-19, US data shows. The Maitri platform was set up to change that. Read the full story on **page 126**.



A bright future?

In 2015, over 18,000 people around the world were asked: "Do you think the world will get better or worse, or get neither better nor worse?" The percentages of optimists in the respective countries are shown on the left.

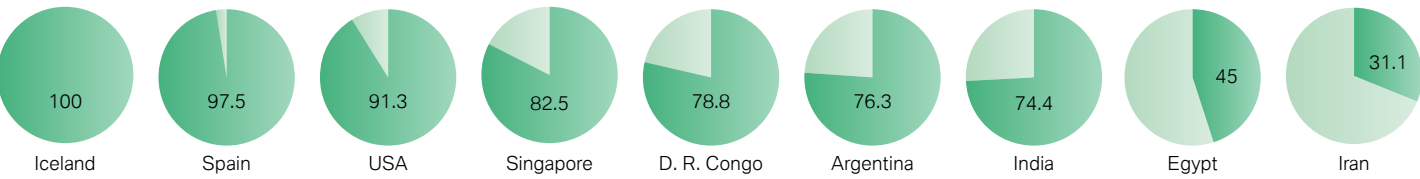


Engagement index

Demonstrate, debate, donate: an Ipsos Global Advisor Survey shows the percentages of people in various countries who said they were very socially engaged. Find out more about the Global Pro Bono movement on **page 120**.

Levelling the playing field

Women, Business and the Law is an index that measures inequality (with 100 the highest score) via indicators such as salary and mobility. The Safecity project is using technology and data to improve women's lives. Read more on **page 136**.



FOR THE GREATER GOOD

Gaurav Mehta is empowering women and addressing several Sustainable Development Goals. "I wanted to do something good," he says.

RISING TOWARD A NEW LIFE

Gaurav Mehta founded Dharma Life to improve the quality of life in rural India. Women make up 75 percent of this network, which includes over 16,000 entrepreneurs and has benefitted more than 10 million people



New skills

Digital literacy is an important part of Dharma Life. Thanks to internet access and Youtube tutorials, many women are picking up tailoring.

M

“My goal is to become a business-woman and a change-maker for my village,” says Rohini Shirke. A captivating woman from the little-known village of Adulpeth in Maharashtra, India, she speaks with the full conviction born from a vision of her future self.

As a Dharma Life Entrepreneur, Shirke is earning her livelihood by hosting awareness campaigns in and around her village and selling products that create social impact. To say that her life has changed dramatically since joining Dharma Life would be an understatement. Only a few years ago, Shirke’s day-to-day existence revolved around helping her father on his farm. She saw four to five other people a day at most.

Since then, she has become tightly interwoven into the fabric of village life. She earns her own income and has achieved standing in her community. Her newfound confidence since joining Dharma Life has inspired her to run for public office in local elections. She also participates in globally streamed panel discussions now. It is quite a

transformation. And the changes go beyond her own life, rippling across her village and beyond.

Impacting millions

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Gaurav Mehta founded Dharma Life in 2009. The organization is dedicated to improving the quality of life in India through entrepreneurship by providing the rural poor with livelihoods and access to socially impactful products and services. The resulting ecosystem engages entire communities and addresses several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals including ending poverty, clean water and sanitation, access to clean energy, gender equality, and climate action. A decade after its inception, Dharma Life has supported more than 16,000 rural entrepreneurs (75 percent of them women) who serve over 10 million beneficiaries across 40,000 communities in 13 Indian states.

Not bad for an idea born in a New York City hospital bed. After complications

from a surgery 14 years ago, Mehta found himself fighting for his life. The former investment banker thought to himself: “If I survive this, I am going to do something good.”

In 2011, when Dharma Life was in its early stages, Mehta was introduced to the BMW Foundation’s Responsible Leaders Network. And in the same year at a World Responsible Leaders Forum in Buenos Aires, Mehta facilitated a workshop on Dharma Life and was mentored by fellow Responsible Leader Matthew Spacie. Spacie is the founder of Magic Bus, an award-winning NGO that is moving millions of children and youth in India out of poverty. Mehta says, “At the time, we were struggling to decide—do we raise private equity, do we not? Speaking to Matthew Spacie reinforced my conviction to maintain a social purpose that goes far beyond just distributing goods.”

These experiences led to a major shift in Dharma Life’s business model. Instead of facilitating self-employment in rural India through marketing and dis-

Dharma Life: a timeline

The success of Gaurav Mehta and his team showcases the approach and impact of the BMW Foundation

2011

Gaurav Mehta is introduced to the BMW Foundation by Responsible Leader Mike D. Batra and invited to the World Responsible Leaders Forum in Buenos Aires. “It was really helpful to get feedback on our business model,” says Mehta.

2012

Mentoring by Matthew Spacie, Responsible Leader and Founder of the NGO Magic Bus, leads to a major shift in Dharma Life’s business model from promoting self-employment in rural India to behavioral change and progressing with a purpose.

2013

Mehta wins the BMW Foundation Young Leaders Award and attends the ceremony in Munich. Following the award, an increase in international media coverage creates more visibility and awareness. “The award helped significantly in building Dharma Life’s credibility,” Mehta says.

Creating opportunities
Before joining Dharma Life, Rohini Shirke was a local beekeeper. Through training, she can now sell her honey online.



Amplifying impact
Sisters Deepika Singh and Neelam Singh, both Dharma Life Entrepreneurs, pass on their knowledge to other women.



tribution, it would promote behavioral change and “progressing with a purpose” instead.

Fast-forward a decade, and progress is visible on many levels. Dharma Life Entrepreneurs are creating an ecosystem for community engagement, behavioral change, and collective participation.

Typically, Dharma Life goes to rural Indian villages of around 500 households. First, village leaders learn about the concept. Then, Dharma Life identifies potential female entrepreneurs, who interview for an opportunity to participate in a three-day training program. The training focuses on confidence, business skills, and topics related to Sustainable Development Goals.

From the moment women like Shirke join Dharma Life, they become change-makers in their villages. Whether by hosting a meeting on hygiene for women, teaching villagers how to use smartphones and the internet, or raising awareness of indoor air pollution, these entrepreneurs start making a difference almost immediately. At first, within their own village. Then, beyond, as their phones let them connect with people across other villages. Products the entrepreneurs commonly sell include solar lights, water purifiers, and induction cooking stoves (in India, air pollution is one of the leading causes of death).

Although all the products are carefully chosen for their social impact, persuading villagers to change their behavior and traditional ways is not always straightforward. Shirke says, “I try to help people from my village understand the benefits of certain products I am involved with. It is a bit tricky to convince rural people because they have less exposure to media, less education compared to urban people. But I try to lighten up the communication, to make it more colloquial.”

Leading the way

Fellow Dharma Life Entrepreneur Indra Devi from Chawandiyā, Rajasthan, noticed she could effect social change by leading the way. She says, “Instead of just talking, I started using the products myself, such as the induction cooking stove and the solar lights, and that is when other women’s behavior started to change, too. They saw the difference it was making, and that was more persuasive to them.”

The fact that Dharma Life is reaching entire communities is undeniable. But equally important is the effect the enterprise’s work is having on each individual member. Yasmin Pravin, who hails from Pater in Uttar Pradesh, suffered mental and physical harassment at the hands of her former husband before joining in 2018. She says, “The most important

mindset I was able to achieve is getting back my mental health. I am in a positive frame of mind and no longer battling depression.” What is more, Pravin now earns her own income, can support her child’s education, and is even encouraged by her formerly conservative parents to push the boundaries in terms of her work.

Much in the way these women are breaking from tradition, Mehta has adopted an agile approach to running his social enterprise. When contemplating what he has learned during this journey, Mehta says: “The only thing I have kept constant is the objective to uplift women. Everything else I have kept open, which has led to a lot of iterations of the model. Our complete agility, which is frustrating for a lot of people on my team, is what has allowed us to have the greatest impact. Without it, we would not have survived.”

Shirke, Pravin, Devi, and all the other Dharma Life Entrepreneurs in India are making sure the organization’s strapline, Rising Together, is more than just an inspiring slogan. It is a tangible reality for their communities now. In the words of a true change-maker and Responsible Leader, Shirke says: “I would like to provide the platform to other women in my village so they can come forward and realize their potential and earn a livelihood for themselves.” And just like that, all rise together towards a new life. ●

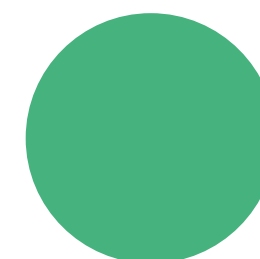
2013	2018	2019	2020
At the World Responsible Leaders Forum in Beijing Gaurav Mehta meets Andreas R. Kirchschläger, Responsible Leader and CEO of the elea Foundation. The meeting is instrumental for securing funding from elea.	Mehta attends the BMW Foundation Global Table in Udaipur, India, on Female Leadership for Resilient Societies. “It really made me think about Dharma Life as an instrument to address gender-specific challenges,” he says.	On recommendation of the BMW Foundation, Mehta joins the ReadyGo manager program of the BMW Group. Constant sparring with BMW managers provides helpful feedback on the business model from corporate professionals.	The BMW Foundation helps design and set up a new foundation as an entity for Dharma Life in Germany according to the steward ownership model, which secures an organization’s purpose-driven mission in its legal DNA.



Changing perspectives
At village meetings, community leaders share information about Dharma Life.

For the common good

Social sector organizations often lack the funds to access outside marketing or financial expertise. Intermediaries in the Global Pro Bono Network connect them with professionals seeking to volunteer their services



W

“What does the world need?” attendees at the 2013 BMW Foundation World Responsible Leaders Forum in Buenos Aires asked. The question helped a growing movement coalesce with support on multiple levels from the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt and the US-based Taproot Foundation. Dubbed the Global Pro Bono Network, the growing movement is now helping social-sector organizations receive services they need but often cannot afford.

Pro bono comes from the Latin “pro bono publico,” which translates to “for the public good.” In the modern context, it usually means professional work done on a volunteer basis. Until recently, the concept had limited reach.

“We wanted to distinguish between pro bono and volunteering,” says Markus Hipp, member of the board of the BMW Foundation. “Our first attempts in 2007 were a huge failure. We had early-stage social entrepreneurs and corporate leaders pitching to each other, but it just re-affirmed the clichés: the social entrepreneurs thought the businesspeople were corporate suits, and they thought the social side could

not articulate their business plans.” But then, at the 2013 Buenos Aires Forum, Hipp met BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Aaron Hurst from the Taproot Foundation, which had been working to evolve pro bono work in North America; from their serendipitous conversation, the Global Pro Bono Network was born.

A new understanding of pro bono

Hurst explains that, although pro bono work has long been common in the legal profession, “it really does not exist in marketing, technology, human resources, or finance. Having worked with NGOs, I realized they need support in these areas just as much as they need legal support.”

Social sector organizations frequently require branding, marketing, and management consultation. Because it takes the right people, better business practices, and improved visibility to grow and make the world a better place. But sometimes, NGOs fail to recognize the need. Professionals in fields beyond the ones that already have an established pro bono culture could provide these

valuable services. Increasingly, they are keen on doing so—to gain positive reputation, build teams, develop the soft skills of senior managers, or simply add purpose and meaning to their work.

Since its inception, the Global Pro Bono Network has provided structure to socially engaged leaders. The alliances have evolved through the BMW Foundation and its Responsible Leaders Network—and Taproot’s work within the US pro bono sector over the years. The network now has 52 member organizations in 34 countries with a decentralized structure. Members come together once a year at the Global Pro Bono Network Summit supported by the BMW Foundation to present and exchange ideas and set new goals; a member-elected Global Council oversees the network’s operations.

Regional events take place throughout the year. Here and on a global level, network members support one another; some, like Pro Bono Lab in France, even offer training programs. The network members who link service providers to social groups are referred to as intermediaries within the organization.

Global pioneers

Three trailblazing organizations from the Pro Bono Network

FUNDACIÓN TRASCENDER, CHILE

Founded in 2001 to enable professionals to work on social projects while retaining their full-time jobs, this foundation now has three offices in Chile and more than 4,000 projects with 1,600 different social organizations. The network comprises 2,800 volunteers.

SERVICE GRANT, JAPAN

This organization matches business professionals who possess skills such as project management, research, marketing, strategic planning, and graphic design with non-profits that have limited resources. Its 3,700 registered professionals work on more than 100 pro bono projects each year.

PASSERELLES ET COMPÉTENCES

This was the first pro bono group in France. It now completes 500 “missions” a year across 1,500 social organizations. The organization has now branched out to Germany and Canada. The value it has added to society since 2002 is estimated at around €15 million.

“We created a manufacturing model for professional services that let us reuse the process and make it highly reliable.” – **AARON HURST**



AARON HURST

As founder of the Taproot Foundation, Aaron Hurst catalyzed the \$15 billion pro bono service market. Now, he is CEO of B Corp Imperative, a peer coaching platform that uses the power of peers to support each other. He is also the author of *The Purpose Economy*.

The range of services, companies, and social organizations is broad, but a few strategies have become Pro Bono cornerstones. One of these is the service grant, a package of services that can include rebranding, nailing down key messages, and marketing. The grant comes with timelines, manuals, and accountability schedules tailored to the social organization or NGO.

“We basically created a manufacturing model for professional services that let us reuse the same process and make it highly reliable,” says Hurst. Taproot

developed this method for packaging the pro bono process years ago. It also quantifies the monetary value of a typical pro bono person hour; in 2019, the rate was \$195. After the service grant was introduced, pro bono projects went from 50 to 95 percent completion.

Then there is the “marathon.” In this lengthy meeting, a social organization with a problem meets with pro bono service providers and comes away with solutions at the end of a single session. Other methodologies are used in individual cases, but implementation is

always up to the organization receiving the service.

Investing talent, not capital

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Shalabh Sahai is the cofounder of iVolunteer, India’s leading volunteering platform and service. Beginning in 2001 as a purely online volunteering platform, it quickly morphed into a full service organization with presence across India. “Corporate volunteering did not exist in India in 2001, but it is common now,” he

“At Pro Bono Venture, we teach people to invest, but what you are investing is the talent of your people, not capital.” – **MINA LÓPEZLUGO**

says. Sahai currently works with about 1,000 pro bono providers per year, a number that has increased from around 200. iVolunteer engages a much larger number of volunteers, 17,000 each year, in hands-on activities. “Pro bono is in a very nascent stage” explains Sahai. “In India, we have millions of people in the workforce. We always think that the governments or NGOs should take care of the less privileged, but if everyone took responsibility, thinking it is my country, my society, my community, things would change drastically. I see this happening elsewhere, too.”

More recently, BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Mina Lópezlugo helped bring pro bono to Mexico. In 2016, Lópezlugo, who has worked in corporate philanthropy and for the Mexican government, found her career had reached an impasse. Attending the BMW Foundation World Responsible Leaders Forum in Munich that year inspired her. This is also where the Global Pro Bono Network was launched. She went on to train with Pro Bono Lab in France and later launch Pro Bono Venture in Mexico City. The organization has since completed projects with large corporations including 3M, Pfizer, and IBM. A primary goal is to help social organizations professionalize.

“We teach people to invest, but what you are investing is the talent of your people, not capital,” she explains. The Global Pro Bono Network’s know-how,

camaraderie, and collaborative spirit has been invaluable to her. “Network members opened a lot of doors and taught me methodologies,” she says.

The potential to expand the Global Pro Bono Network is huge, as is the scope of promoting the expansion of pro bono work in corporate cultures around the world. The pandemic may even have a positive effect on spreading the idea.

“A lot of companies still viewed most of their volunteerism as being the roll-up-your-sleeves, weed-the-school-playground activity, which has its place,” says Lindsay Firestone Gruber of the Taproot Foundation. “But in this forced virtual setting, service engagement can immediately demonstrate the impact of using what is a relatively small amount of time to make a big difference.”

Benefits for both sides

Recruiting for new Global Pro Bono Network intermediaries continues. Regional and local summits have become enriching gatherings of a growing movement. As it expands, the network is streamlining its structures.

“What we have brought to the world is greater knowledge of pro bono in fields where it has not been customary,” explains Markus Hipp, member of the board of the BMW Foundation. And as the world changes, many see giving back as a necessity. Employees now expect employers to be more responsi-



SHALABH SAHAI
The cofounder and director of iVolunteer, Shalabh Sahai pioneered professional volunteering in India, where he continues to expand pro bono.

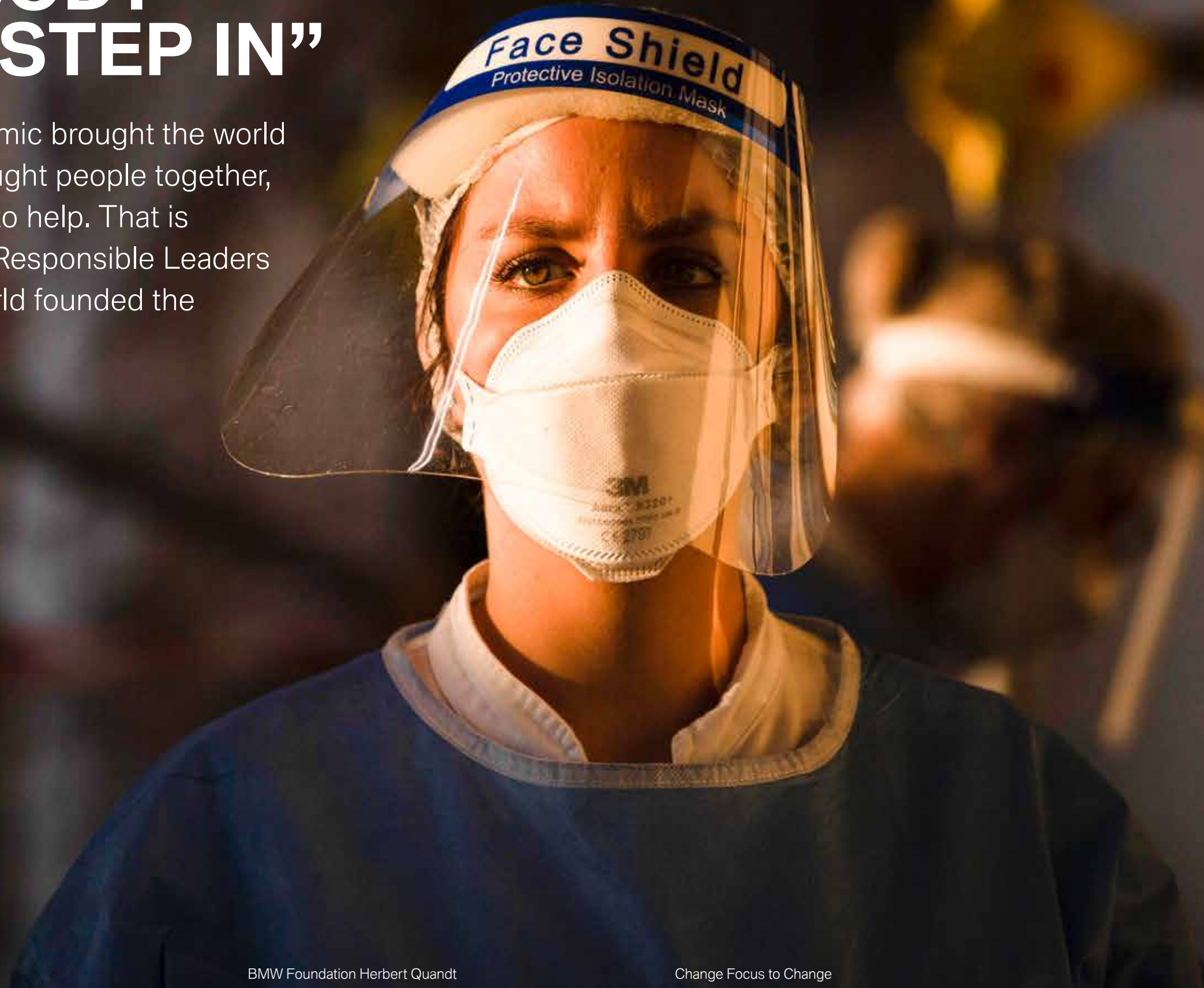
ble and contribute to their communities. CEOs, too, want to give back beyond the company walls.

Outside an office setting, problems become clearer and thinking is often more creative and agile. In one project involving Indian prison inmates, for instance, Sahai asked pro bono managers to hold their project meeting at the prison facility to broaden their perspective.

Lópezlugo tells the story of an early pro bono project she organized involving a manager in Mexico. On working with women from an NGO, he said, “For the first time in my life, I have a goal that makes a difference for people and is not my job, but something I believe in. I have never been so happy in my life.” One thing the world really needs are more win-win situations like this. ●

“SOMEBODY HAD TO STEP IN”

The coronavirus pandemic brought the world to its knees. It also brought people together, awakening their desire to help. That is why BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders from all parts of the world founded the Maitri platform



MARJORIE BRANS
Co-director of the School for Social Entrepreneurs in Canada Marjorie Brans used the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network to combat the shortage of essential PPE supplies. Ultimately, they delivered 60,000 masks to vulnerable communities in the US.



+++ December, 2019 +++
Reports from the Chinese Province of Hubei increasingly refer to a new kind of respiratory illness resulting in an above-average number of severe cases. Twenty-seven cases of viral pneumonia were reported by the end of the year.

+++ January 9, 2020 +++
After the World Health Organization speculated that the illness might be caused by a virus, Chinese scientists are the first to identify the new coronavirus.

+++ January 24, 2020 +++
The first cases are recorded in France. Two people are infected on a trip to China. A few days later, Germany’s first cluster of infections is recorded at a Bavarian automotive supplier.

This is the big one. Something that will change the lives of every human being on this planet. However, at this point, few realize it. Although the references to a “new kind of coronavirus” become more and more frequent in the news, the city where it was first discovered, Wuhan, is a very long way from London, New York, or Rio de Janeiro. Europe, the Americas, and Africa still feel safe. BMW Foundation Responsible

Leader Marjorie Brans, co-director of the School of Social Entrepreneurs, is alarmed. “I lived in Wuhan for two years,” she says. Then she moved with her family to Alaska but still has close contacts and learns firsthand about what is going on in China. As the virus was wreaking havoc in Wuhan, she sent them emails to express her solidarity. “What else can we do?” She often thinks about a university class she took years ago on “airplanes, viruses, and the cascading effects of systemic shocks.”

+++ Early February, 2020 +++
On February 11, the disease receives its official name: COVID-19, short for coronavirus disease 2019. The first reports of panic buying (pasta, toilet paper and disinfectant) surface in the U.S. and Europe. Demand for disinfectant is eight and a half times higher than a year before.

The incubation period is five to 14 days. That is how long it takes the pathogen to multiply in a host and cause symptoms. But almost overnight, the virus intrudes into the conversations and thoughts of people all over the world.

The many different WhatsApp groups in the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network are no exception. Normally, the group keeps in touch and chats about news and issues like divestment strategies, how to react to slash-and-burn activities in the Amazon rain forest, and their new projects and experiences. “Suddenly there was only one topic,” recalls Jerrold McGrath, a strategic designer and advisor from Toronto, Canada. At the time, no one knows what will come out of their heated conversations.

+++ Early March, 2020 +++
On March 11, the WHO officially classifies COVID-19 as a pandemic. The infection and mortality rates are rising fast in Europe and elsewhere. On March 8, the German government recommends canceling large-scale events. Countries aggressively compete for personal protective equipment (PPE).

“It is a flash mob humanitarian effort. New ideas emerge naturally from such an ecosystem.” – **MARJORIE BRANS**



JERROLD MCGRATH
Toronto-based strategic designer and advisor Jerrold McGrath administers the Maitri platform to help activists organize COVID-19 help.

Life as we know it changes beyond recognition—watching the news is like watching a bad movie, many observe. Stunned Responsible Leaders watch governments in Europe and elsewhere ban exports of PPE deliveries. France confiscates all protective gear and production plants. “First, we had this theoretical debate if this should be considered an act of war,” Brans says. They even organize a webinar with a former Canadian ambassador to understand the new rules.

Then she has a conversation with a member of Kawerak, an organization serving Alaskan Natives in the Bering Straits, about the 1918 pandemic and the massive loss of life in Native communities. She realizes that vulnerable communities are in danger. How could social capital bridge resource gaps? A contact in the Responsible Leaders Network offers her a chance to acquire \$100,000 worth of PPE masks, but there are only 12 hours to react. They try to get the necessary funds together, yet fail. Still, no one is considering giving up.

+++ March, 2020 +++
The world goes on lockdown. In Italy and Spain, only critical workers are permitted to leave their homes for any purpose other than grocery shopping. In India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi orders 1.3 billion citizens to stay at home while Germany’s federal and state governments agree on far-reaching contact restrictions to stop the virus from spreading. Worldwide, more than 750,000 people have already been infected.

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Jerrold McGrath is isolated in his Toronto flat for ten days: “We wanted to help our local community, but were afraid of spreading the virus.” So, he turns to his computer and becomes the de facto administrator of a new group, the Maitri platform. “Maitri” is a Sanskrit word meaning benevolence, loving kindness, and goodwill. Soon, over 100 activists and grassroots organizations are working to get COVID-19 help to underprivileged communities, self-organizing across multiple workstreams with Mohamed Ali, Xoan Fernandez Garcia, and Marjorie Brans coordinating in Africa, Latin America, and North America respectively. Cathie Carrigan leads outreach to the philanthropic sector.

Brans and her companions address the global shortage of PPE supplies in vulnerable communities. They ultimately deliver 60,000 N95 masks to indigenous US communities.

There is Rahul Chawla, a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader and entrepreneur from New Delhi who learns that millions of migrant workers are being forced to walk home to their villages, which are in some cases thousands of miles away, after the closure of factories and construction sites in New Delhi, Mumbai, and other big cities. These daily-wage workers have no shelter or money: “The government was losing control, somebody had to step in.” He decides to hand out meals to the workers—and scale the operation up with help from Responsible Leaders on the Maitri platform as well as others. He provides over one million meals across five states in India involving multiple NGOs and foundations.

And there is McGrath and his crew supporting indigenous communities in South Dakota by writing applications for Federal grants “to show them they are not alone.”

The website, email server, and pitch deck McGrath sets up never get used. “We did not want to waste resources on comms,” Brans says. “But it was also tactical.” When you are trying to get PPE across borders, you do not want to attract too much attention.

+++ Early April, 2020 +++
The situation in the Lombardy region in northern Italy seems out of control, with hundreds of people dying of COVID-19 every day. Intensive care beds are getting scarce. Healthcare workers complain about a dangerous lack of medical-quality face masks and PPE.

The whole world is watching Bergamo, Italy, as army trucks transport the dead out of

the city because its crematorium is overwhelmed. Scenes of stacked coffins and temporary morgues play out in New York City, too. With insufficient intensive-care beds at hospitals, doctors are forced to perform triage, deciding who will have a chance to survive and who will not. Around the world, governments and health care agencies scramble to ramp up production of ventilators and intensive care beds.

How can an ad hoc grassroots organization like the Maitri network have an impact when states fail? Brans explains the three-step Maitri method:

1. Use on-the-ground relationships to identify acute, unmet community needs.
2. Channel funding to interventions.



3. Tap into knowledge and strategic global relationships to amplify effective responses.

To address the ventilator shortage, Maitri members partner up with a team of engineers and pulmonologists to develop alternative oxygen therapy devices. In the US, the East-Coast-based Ventilator Project collects donated CPAP and BiPAP breathing machines normally used for sleep apnea and converts them into ventilators for COVID patients. With the support of the Maitri network, 500 ventilators are distributed and tested in Nigeria, the Philippines, Ghana, East Timor, and Ecuador.

To address the PPE shortage, Chawla in New Delhi decides to convert one of his Signet clothing company factories to produce isolation suits.

When Brans learns about the factory conversion during a weekly call, she envisions a “dedicated PPE supply chain for humanitarian works.” Both go into research mode. Chawla is trying to convert a factory in a country under lockdown. He is figuring out things like how to initially get about 300 workers to the factory and comply with social distancing rules.

Brans contacts the Responsible Leaders Network to learn about importing hazmat suits, regulations, trade licenses, tariffs, and taxes. She is “slowly chipping away at every

No contact allowed
In May 2020, nursing homes in Spain were locked down. Relatives could only visit through a window.



RAHUL CHAWLA
The founder and CEO of the Signet Corporation, a New Delhi clothing company, Rahul Chawla provided over one million meals to migrant workers in need.

“The government has lost the plot. We have to live with it and manage it.” – **RAHUL CHAWLA**

challenge.” On April 19, Chawla receives governmental approval. At the end of the month, his factories start producing between 2,000 and 3,000 suits a day.

+++ July, 2020 +++
New infections are decreasing nearly everywhere in Europe. Hospitals are slowly returning to normal and tackling the logjam of postponed operations. But in the US, Brazil, India, and South Africa, infection rates are still rising fast. The most deaths are reported by the United States and Brazil.

The reported infection statistics fluctuate, and so does the number of active Maitri volunteers. “I understand. It is draining,” says McGrath. “All these structural problems. No end in sight.”

While the shortage of masks, gloves, and goggles is not as dramatic as it was in the spring, the #PPE4Equity project has solved most of its legal issues. If a second wave empties the market again, they will be ready. That feels nice. Chawla’s factory is primarily working on large government contracts and has now started exporting to other countries under the brand name SigShield.

“In the beginning, everyone with a sewing machine got into the business using non-breathable raincoat material,” he says. “But that is changing.” He wants to produce a product that can compete on a global stage and has medical device approval from the EU or the US Food and Drug Administration. Who says business opportunities and doing the right thing cannot go hand-in-hand?

+++ Fall, 2020 +++
New infections are on the rise throughout Europe and the US again as the second wave of coronavirus infections strikes. Another round of lock-downs was implemented in November. Winter is coming in the Northern Hemisphere. Health professionals are making dire predictions.

Maitri is still up and running, even if it never sought to be a traditional business. “It is a flash mob humanitarian effort,” Brans says. “All talent, no overhead. New ideas emerge naturally from such an ecosystem.” Although no fundraising has been done, they have acquired sizable funds. To decide which new project proposal should be financed, they use a co-budgeting idea—members can allocate funds to projects that run anywhere from Kenya to the United States.

“It’s great, because it’s transparent,” McGrath says. “But it’s sad, because you have to decide which project gets your funding. We would like to help everyone.”

Not every project is COVID-19 centered. “The pandemic reveals all kinds of inequalities,” Brans points out. She is very much aware that she and the other professionals in Maitri “have the privilege of retreating into cyberspace and safety, but the people we want to help cannot escape the danger.” McGrath believes Maitri is, at its core, about fairness. And in India, Chawla says, “COVID-19 will not go away so quickly. We have to learn to live with it and manage it.”

The pandemic is changing. And so is Maitri. ●

Maitri in numbers

How Responsible Leaders from all over the world helped unattended communities fight COVID-19

500

ventilators distributed to Nigeria, the Philippines, Ghana, East Timor, and Ecuador as part of the VentilatorProject.org

60,000

NP65 masks made available to indigenous communities in the US

37

Responsible Leaders from the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt active on the platform

CATALYZING GLOBAL MOVEMENTS

How the Impact Hub has evolved from a coworking space into a global community providing social entrepreneurs the tools they need



S

MATTHIAS SCHEFFELMEIER
A member of Ashoka’s European leadership team, Matthias Scheffelmanier is also a cofounder of Chngemakexchange.



Since its beginnings as a coworking space in mid-2000s London, Impact Hub has expanded to become a network of physical spaces that spans the globe. Impact Hubs are still coworking spaces, but each also offers services to its social-entrepreneur members: acceleration programs, management training, conferences, and access to the local ecosystem are part of the package. Each Impact Hub acts independently and locally as a franchise within the global organization, which is registered in Vienna, Austria. There are currently more than one hundred Impact Hubs in over fifty countries from Mali to Kazakhstan. As Pablo Handl, a cofounder of an Impact Hub in São Paolo, Brazil and a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader says, “Impact Hub grasps what many social entrepreneurs are looking for, which is a home or a community—a tribe—for people who care about social transformation.” The two entities have influenced each other over the roughly 10 years the



PABLO HANDL
A cofounder of Impact Hub São Paulo, Pablo Handl is a board member of several Impact Hubs in Brazil as well.

BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt has been involved. “Impact Hub provided inspiration for the evolution of the BMW Foundation over the past few years. We learned a lot about social entrepreneurship from them,” says Markus Hipp, BMW Foundation board member. The Foundation has in turn committed (along with a handful of other foundations like the Siemens Stiftung) to helping Impact Hub in multiple ways and on many levels with both financial and non-financial support.

Fostering social innovation

Ashoka’s Matthias Scheffelmanier reflects on how the BMW Foundation helped his organization

“The BMW Foundation and Ashoka are like co-creators or collaborators,” says BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Matthias Scheffelmanier, partner at Ashoka Germany and member of Ashoka’s European Leadership Team. Ashoka, a network of social entrepreneurs founded in 1981 in India, is funded by patrons and foundations. It allocates support to social entrepreneurs. About ten years ago, when Ashoka Germany was being established, the BMW Foundation was one of the first organizations to recognize the potential of social entrepreneurship in the country. While other Ashoka patrons might work on a project-based basis, “the BMW Foundation became a part of our team,” says Scheffelmanier. “They asked how they can get involved without making it their own project.” A recent success story: for Ashoka’s response to the coronavirus pandemic, which dealt with issues such as domestic violence, Scheffelmanier turned to the BMW Foundation. “The relationship is very personal and authentic; working with the BMW Foundation is like having colleagues you can always count on.”

“Impact Hub grasps what many social entrepreneurs are looking for, which is a community for people who care about social transformation.” – **PABLO HANDL**

“Over the years, the BMW Foundation has also contributed to the evolution of Impact Hub’s strategy. We became the first impact investment of the BMW Foundation, which contributed to our strategic development financially as well as by participating in our Advisory Council,” says Petr Skvaril, a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader and Impact Hub’s Global Partnerships Director. In various cases, the Foundation also rents Impact Hub spaces, for example, and co-hosts an array of conferences and programs at their facilities.



PETR SKVARIL
Prague-based Petr Skvaril is director of Global Partnerships at Impact Hub.

Real connections

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Claudia Valladares, the cofounder of Impact Hub Caracas in Venezuela’s capital city, mentions access to the Responsible Leaders Network, but also “soft” support—in other words, empathy and personal connection. “It’s easy to feel isolated in a country that’s falling apart. We’re experiencing sanctions, and eighty percent of airlines and multinational companies have left the country. I can’t easily get a visa to travel,” she says. “But the people from the Foundation reached out to remind me that I’m never alone.” The Foundation also supported a crowdfunding initiative that ultimately helped 1,000 Venezuelan families with food and medicine in 2017. Her examples are evidence that the BMW Foundation has been a crucial player in Impact Hub’s evolution in emerging countries. Latin America’s Impact Hub network continues to expand. A team from the Foundation contacted Handl nearly a decade ago while mapping social innovators in South America. He has since worked with the Foundation on several projects like developing a course for the future of business, or supporting Brazil’s largest social investment conference. Handl values the Foundation’s ability to take leaps of faith. “The BMW Foun-

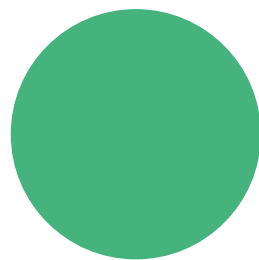


CLAUDIA VALLADARES
CEO of Impact Hub Caracas Claudia Valladares is also a cofounder.

ation is there when you need support: when you’re mature enough to present your idea, but not yet mature enough to show a track record. There are only a few organizations that have that sensitivity and long-term vision embedded in their culture.” In 2014, the BMW Foundation collaborated with Impact Hub and other foundations to catalyze the Africa Seed Program, which identified local social entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa. By 2017, there were workspaces and a myriad of programs. Eight teams have supported more than 1,100 local entrepreneurs in countries such as Sudan and Burundi. By 2020, eleven Impact Hubs were active on the continent. Even though the world seems to jump from crisis to crisis, there is reason to be optimistic, especially when you are committed to catalyzing change across the globe.

“When they see it on the map, it’s hard to deny it’s real”

The crowdsourced mapping platform Safecity collects and visualizes anonymized harassment data. Founder ElsaMarie D’Silva talks about how the data helps women and vulnerable groups reclaim the streets



PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

ElsaMarie D’Silva collaborated with fellow BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders to advance Safecity. “The network stretched my mind as a leader, and I really brought so much back to my own organization,” she says.





The public eye
On this wall in the Lal Kuan district in Delhi, women and girls drew and wrote messages like “stand up, speak up.”

W

Why did you start compiling reports of sexual violence?

In 2012, the gang rape of Jyoti Singh on a moving bus in Delhi jarred India. It was the moment many people finally started to realize that women were not safe in this country—and it sparked conversations about sexual violence. A lot of my friends opened up about what had happened to them, and I was reminded of my own experiences. I realized that I wanted to do everything I could to improve the life of women in India and abroad.

Why did you create, of all things, a harassment map?

My aviation background has led me to look at data in a very visual form and then deduct patterns and trends. So, when I decided to launch Safecity with a couple of friends, I knew that creating a map would be a lot more impactful than a list. We put up an

online platform and encouraged people to anonymously share their stories of sexual violence and link them to the place where it happened.

How did you feel when you saw those red circles appearing on your map?

I soon realized that just launching this website wouldn't solve the problem and asked myself: how can we use the data to facilitate real change? That's when we started our on-site work in the affected communities. We started to speak to people in and around threat hotspots in my hometown, Mumbai, collected oral stories, and uploaded them to the map. Soon, a group of students from Delhi who wanted to make the area around their college safer reached out to us. Today, we have several partner organizations who use our technology in their communities.

What can you do when a threat hotspot emerges on the map?

The first contact point is not necessarily the police. It could be parents and teachers if a school is nearby, or it could be community or religious leaders. Our partner organization

in Kenya noticed that there was a mosque close to a spot where a lot of groping was reported. So, they showed the reported stories to the imam. He was shocked and started preaching about harassment in his sermons. That had an immediate effect because imams or priests are authority figures. For me, it's important to always ask the community how they want to solve the situation. Often, we are surprised by the solutions they decide on.

Can you tell us an example of a surprising strategy?

One of the hotspots in Delhi was near a tea stall, which is a very male-dominated space in India. You would never see a woman standing there. The men gathered and stared at women passing by. We organized a workshop with the affected women and painted a big public wall next to the site with staring eyes and the message: “Look with your heart, not with your eyes. We won't be intimidated by your gaze. We will not stay silent.” That was powerful enough to make the harassment stop. The community was put on notice and the eyes on the wall worked

“We need to get rid of the taboo of speaking about harassment so more women can come forward.”

— ELSAMARIE D’SILVA

like a CCTV camera sign. We replicated that mural strategy in many places. It's easy, it's cheap, and it's therapeutic. These women couldn't say anything to the men because of the patriarchy, but they were saying it through these paintings. It made them feel really powerful.

In what way does reporting the abuse help the victims?

When I was 13 years old, I was groped on a train. It took me three decades to speak about the experience. And even then, recounting that incident was very stressful for me. I know firsthand that sharing a story like this is never easy. The women who want to speak out need a safe space. At Safecity they won't be judged and can report anonymously—either on our website or during our local workshops, where we help women who don't have the digital know-how to make a report. The idea is to build up their confidence—so they can at some point talk to the authorities or someone they trust. Right now, it is still very difficult in most places around the world to seek help after sexual harassment and abuse. We need to get rid of the taboo of speaking about harassment so more women can come forward.

How are the Safecity maps being used in everyday life?

I have been told by police officers that they frequently scan our maps. When more



Grueling numbers
India recorded 88 rape cases every day in 2019. Of those that go to trial, only 28 percent end in convictions.

stories appear, they act on it by increasing vigilance and patrols in the areas. And we have heard that many women use the maps almost like TripAdvisor—to help them make decisions about which areas to watch out for.

Isn't it problematic when women have to avoid certain areas to avoid being harassed?

We don't want them to avoid certain districts or streets, but to be better prepared when they have to navigate unsafe areas. Ending harassment should not be left to the women, it's a societal responsibility. In our on-site work, we always encourage men to become active in making a change. A lot of them actually look at our data and are shocked.

They tell us they never could have imagined those stories. When they see it on the map, it's hard to deny it's happening. That starts a conversation—in their homes, their groups of friends, or their workplace.

How will Safecity develop in the future?

At this moment, digital technology is more widely used than ever before. During the COVID-19 pandemic, new user groups started showing up. In order to improve, we use AI, data sets, and personal feedback from our female users. One thing we heard quite often was that, even though we are a crowd-based project, it still can be a lonely journey to put in a report. So, currently, we are reworking our mobile app to become more empathetic and intuitive.

Safecity in numbers

How the crowd maps are reducing gender inequality and improving the lives of women

13,000

abuses have been reported to the platform so far.

500

youth leaders have been trained by Safecity, and there have been 15 campaigns for safe spaces with partners on the ground.

8,000

people view the map every month. The mobile app D'Silva is currently refining has been downloaded thousands of times.

Chapter Five

TECHNOLOGY

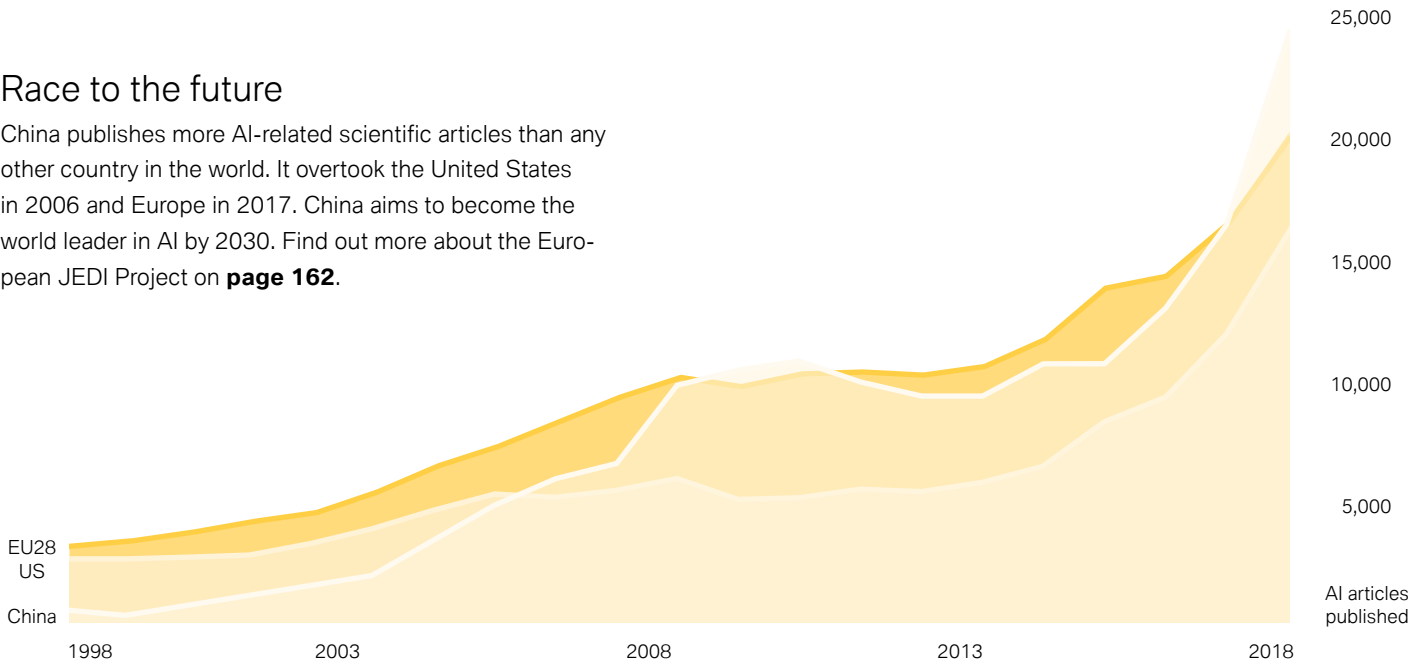
pp. 140–163

The trajectory of tech

Mobility, climate crisis, and innovations—the world of the 21st century is being shaped by new technologies. These numbers show some of the trends

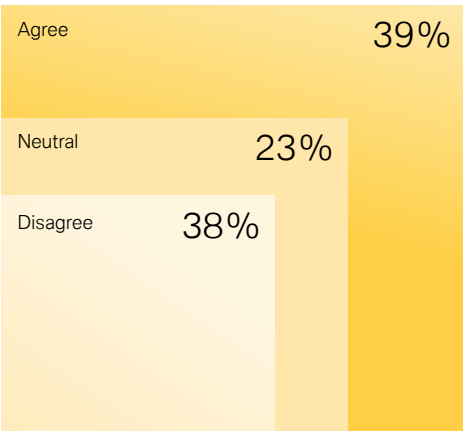
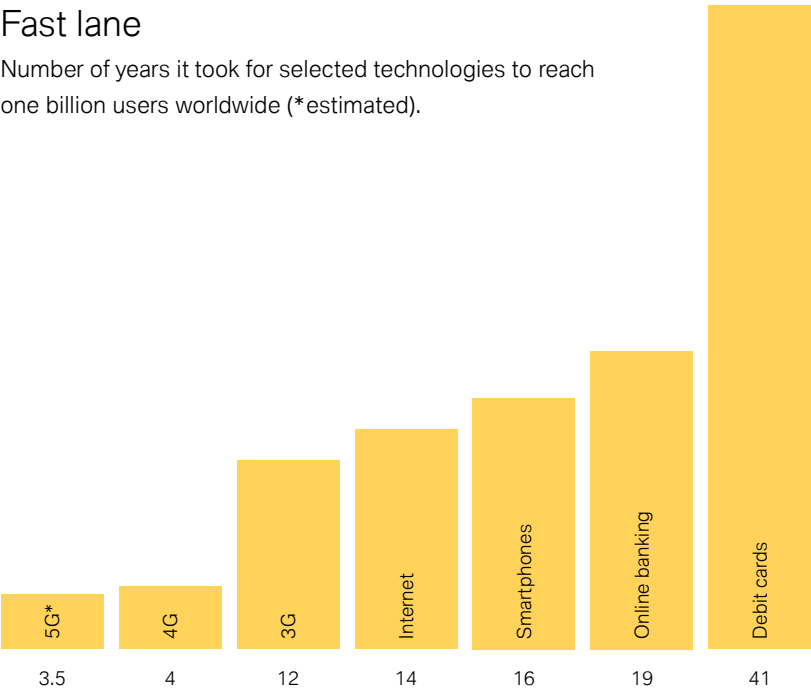
Race to the future

China publishes more AI-related scientific articles than any other country in the world. It overtook the United States in 2006 and Europe in 2017. China aims to become the world leader in AI by 2030. Find out more about the European JEDI Project on **page 162**.



Fast lane

Number of years it took for selected technologies to reach one billion users worldwide (*estimated).

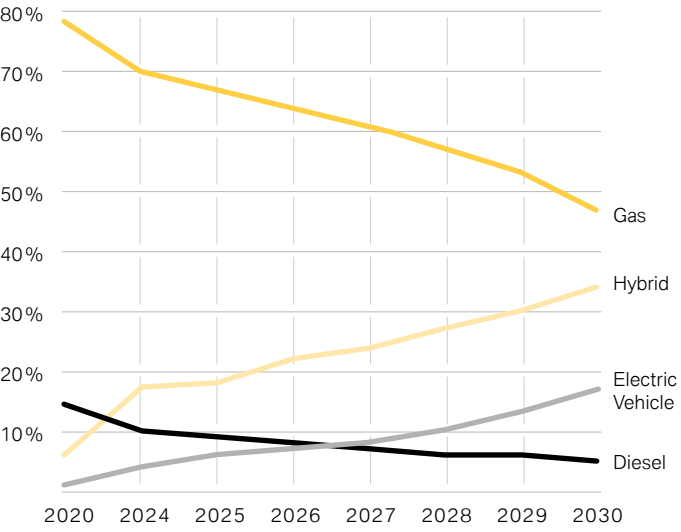
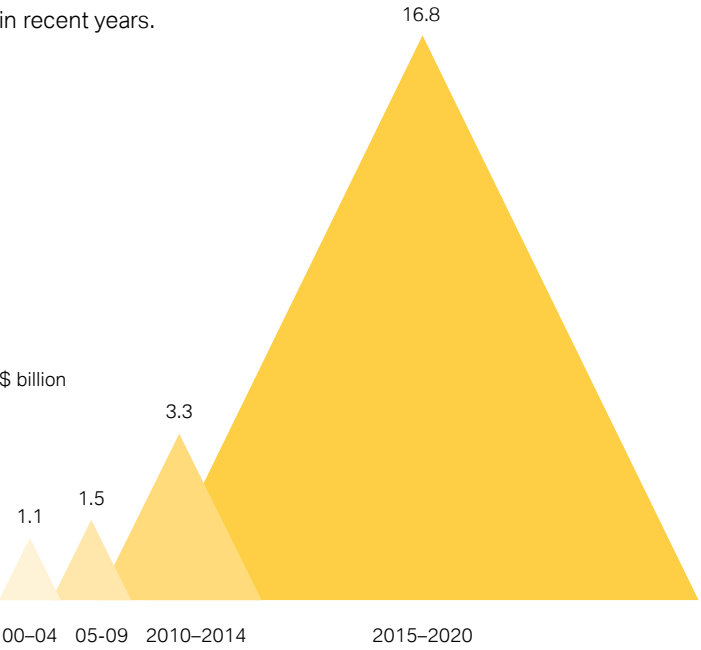


Overrun by new technologies

Percentage of people worldwide who agree that "technology is changing so quickly I am having a hard time keeping up."

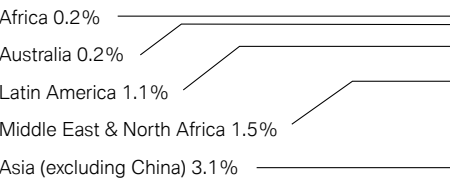
The final frontier

Global investment in space startups has increased rapidly in recent years.



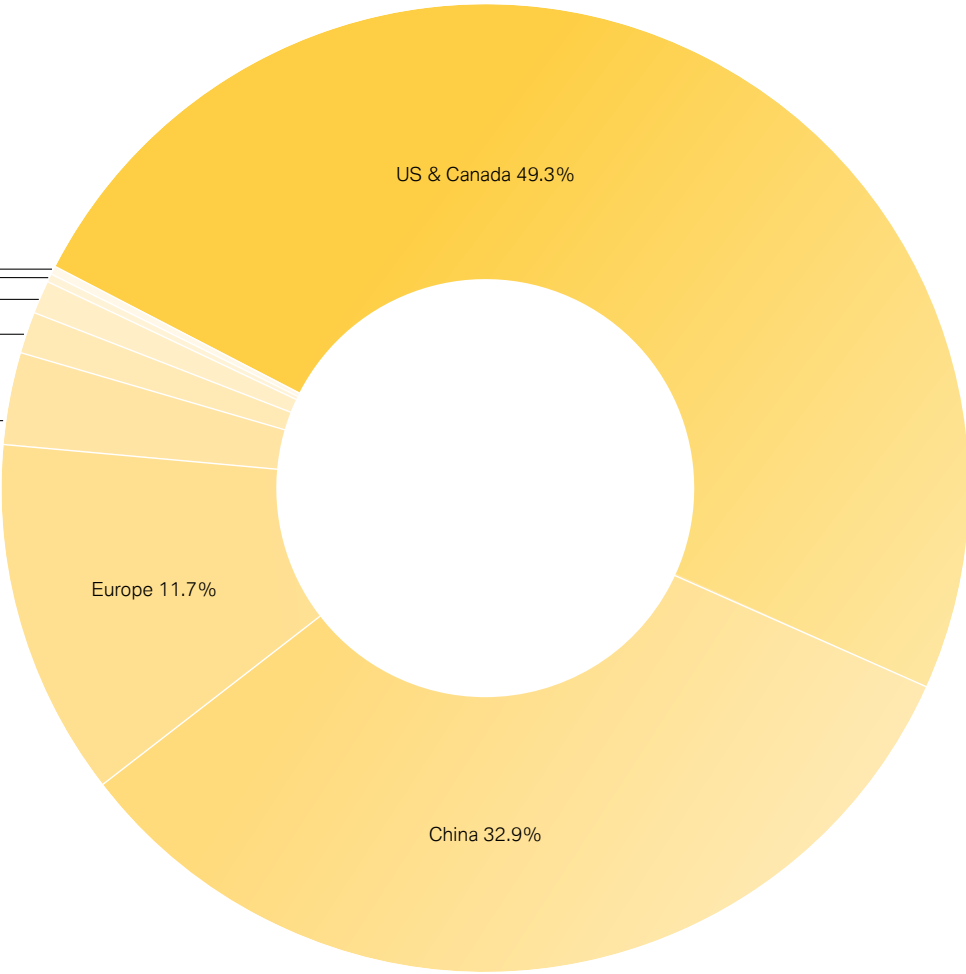
New mobility

What types of vehicles will be produced worldwide by 2030?



Green investments

This chart shows the distribution of global venture capital investments in climate technology startups focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions (2013–2019). Worldwide, green startups have raised \$60 billion. Find out more about the BMW Foundation RESPOND accelerator on **page 144**.



HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

The BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt accelerator program empowers startups that combine profit and purpose through responsible leadership

I



HEBA AGUIB
A mechanical engineer, Heba Aguib joined the BMW Foundation in 2019 and is Chief Executive of RESPOND.

“It’s really a step forward in terms of becoming global,” says Martin Schichtel, CEO of Kraftblock, a cleantech company. Schichtel is participating in the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt accelerator program RESPOND, which is operated by UnternehmerTUM. He is part of the first cohort that started in 2020 and is especially impressed by the focus on responsible leadership, impact, and sustainable business models.

RESPOND empowers leaders to take their business to the next level. The program supports entrepreneurs who contribute to a peaceful, just, and sustainable future in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda. What sets the program apart from other accelerators is that everything hinges on responsible leadership. Over the past year, the team has worked tirelessly. “We launched RESPOND because we see an urgent need to support sustainable business models for economic growth and profit but also for impact,” says Heba Aguib, program manager at the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, Responsible Leader, and chief executive of RESPOND.

Using tech for good

The businesses of today must balance purpose with profit, align their goals with social and environmental imperatives, and offer unwavering leadership in the face of adversity. If we are to leave a world fit for the next generations, these are the conditions. It sounds daunting, and it is, but the ten startups hand-picked for the first RESPOND cohort are up to the challenge.

“We see an urgent need to showcase sustainable business models for economic growth and profit but more importantly for impact.” – **HEBA AGUIB**

The products and services the startups offer are diverse—AI models to combat air pollution, backpacks made from ocean plastic, and water purification technology for emerging economies, for example. On a macro level, however, they have much in common.

In designing the accelerator, the BMW Foundation identified three United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for each startup to broadly align with. As an organization, they can use the SDGs as a framework, so this was a natural requirement.

The accelerator focuses on startups with positive social and environmental goals, but within the tech space, an intersection Aguib is well acquainted with. A mechanical engineer by training, she has experience applying her technical expertise to projects that benefit humanity, for instance in the healthcare sector.

Aligned with the BMW Foundation’s overall strategy, the accelerator focuses on three SDGs that a “tech for good” focus could sit comfortably beneath: 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). “A very important step which a lot of people neglect to do is to look into the sub-goals of the SDGs,” says Aguib. “These describe how to reach that main goal. For example, within the sustainable



AMIT PRADHAN
An expert in tech and one of the program’s mentors, Amit Pradhan knows how crucial partnerships are for impact in business.

cities goal, you have a lot of topics and subtopics which are relevant and critical—mobility, air quality, and so on.” Of course, the selection process was not an exact science, nor was assigning the companies to individual SDGs. “SDG 11—Sustainable Cities and Communities—is very integrative,” says RESPOND Program Director Bennet Barth. “You have all kinds of issues in cities including poverty, housing, mobility, and ecological challenges.”

Other criteria the accelerator program team looked for were diversity as a core value and a humble but ambitious outlook. They wanted the company’s products or services to be at an early stage, but available as a functioning prototype. Additionally, the companies were to have been founded within the last five years, have an equal balance of profit and purpose, and have positive impact objectives as part of their core business. Geographically, for the first cohort, the majority are European startups, however, this is going to change as the program is set up to be a global one. They also do not take equity from the startups, something that sets them apart from many other accelerators.

With over 400 applications received from 74 countries over only six weeks,

HOW TO FIGHT EMISSIONS WITH INNOVATION

A big part of fostering sustainability depends on reducing CO₂ emissions. Here are three RESPOND startups ready to take up the challenge.

1

KRAFTBLOCK

Martin Schichtel holds up a grey pellet about the size of a golf ball. “It can store large quantities of energy and it’s made of 85 percent recycled materials.” Schichtel is CEO of the cleantech startup Kraftblock. Susanne König is CFO.



Kraftblock developed the pellets as part of their thermal energy storage system. Steel mills, ceramic factories, and glassmaking facilities can benefit from the technology. With renewable energy capacity predicted to rise by 50 percent between 2019 and 2024, large-scale storage solutions are in high demand. The system does two things: it stores electricity from renewables as heat,

and captures waste heat from industry, both of which can be converted back into electricity. “There is tremendous energy loss just being blown into the atmosphere,” says Schichtel. This thermal energy could be used to warm the facility, heat various processes, or be sold back to the grid. If you were able to capture all of the waste heat generated from flare-gas-producing

industries, it would be enough to provide heat to every business in Germany for an entire year, says Schichtel. Among current key clients is Comet Schleiftechnik GmbH from the ceramics industry. Funding came with a round in 2018 from Freigeist Capital and in 2020 with an investment of €3 million from the Dutch clean energy company Koolen Industries.

the team was spoiled for choice. At the same time, such significant interest perhaps indicates a shifting landscape in terms of the support that new, sustainably minded businesses require. “We had so many applications from all over the world, which shows that there is such a big need for this type of accelerator program,” says Aguib.

The depths of impact

Oluwamayowa Salu is the founder of Brickify, a Nigerian business which collects plastic waste from the streets and businesses of Lagos and turns it into large, Lego-like bricks for constructing low-cost homes, roads, and furniture. “I have learned a whole lot of things which I never thought were important,” he says. “The RESPOND coaches take my business so seriously; they even contact me outside of the scheduled sessions to see how I am doing.”

The startup has a double aim of reducing plastic pollution and tackling the enormous housing crisis. Currently, there is a deficit of over 17 million units in Nigeria. It would require about 700,000 new units being built yearly—compared to the fewer than 100,000 that are the current status quo, according to a report by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Salu is working with engineers and architects to develop the bricks and structures, and plans to set up a network whereby individuals could exchange their waste plastic for vouchers. These credits could be exchanged for items such as soap or used to pay transport and school fees.

Brickify is the only participating business based outside of Europe, and Salu has not been able to attend any of the sessions in person yet since most of the world is staying put due to COVID-19. The first “sprint”—a week-long workshop filled with both group and one-to-one tutorials, presentations, and coaching sessions—was held virtually in

“We saw opportunities that we were not going to have otherwise.” – ALLISON DRING

June. A second sprint followed in July. In September, the startups gathered in person in Munich and the Bavarian Alps. A fourth and final sprint was held in October, concluding with a Demo Night at the Double Cone of BMW Welt in Munich. At this hybrid event, the startups pitched their businesses in front of potential clients, investors and journalists as well as virtual audience via Internet.

In terms of what is included in the sessions, coaches run modules on various topics. “Some of the content is linked to what you would expect from any accelerator program, including, for example, legal, HR, or business development,” says Barth. “And then there is a whole lot of content that focuses exclusively on impact. How do you measure impact? How do you manage and report it?” For those who do not run in sustainable business circles, the term impact does not conjure the clearest of pictures. What sort of impact are we talking about here?

While each of the startups have their business model, they also have a distinct impact model. In the case of GOT BAG, which sells backpacks made from recovered ocean plastic, their business model is B2C: online and retail sales.

Meanwhile, their impact model—essentially, goals related to net positive effect—is connected to how much ocean plastic they recover, their employ-

ment of local fishermen in Indonesia, and raising awareness in areas where responsible waste management is limited.

For Allison Dring, CEO of startup Made of Air, these sessions on impact have been enlightening. “Within the accelerator, we have talked a lot about the depths of impact, which is something you do not hear much about.”

She explains that companies can sometimes find themselves in a “warm space around the SDGs” but questions how meaningful and effective that engagement really is. “We actually had a session which went into questions such as how deep and for how long are you impacting? And are you impacting a region of the world or an economic zone that actually needs impact? Or are you in a place that is maybe over-served?”

It is a topic that RESPOND Chief Executive Aguib feels has always been a challenging one within the tech space. Startups tend to be very good at quantifying financial metrics but, when it comes to their impacts, “many founders do not have the support, education, or incentive to factor these in.”

One of the aims of the accelerator is to bring together the worlds of technology startups and social entrepreneurship, hence the partnership with UnternehmerTUM. “We are happy to partner with the BMW Foundation in working towards a more sustainable and



CRISTINA GALLEGOS

The founder of Skylark Strategies and RESPOND mentor Cristina Gallegos says that to her, coaching is a privilege.

2

MADE OF AIR

Attractive building cladding and furniture and fashion accessories that can reverse climate change? Sounds like something from a climate-conscious sci-fi flick, but these things are already a reality. The brainchild of Allison Dring and cofounder Daniel Schwaag, the startup Made of Air has created a material which is carbon-negative, multi-purpose, and made from natural materials. In a nutshell, what they do is bake biomass—think tree clippings or agricultural byproducts—to create carbon-rich biochar, which is then turned into a material that can be used for a variety of purposes. What makes it carbon-negative? In creating the biochar, CO₂ is taken out of the atmosphere similar to the way a tree filters



the air. “We started Made of Air as a provocation to the building industry, where high volumes of resources are spent and few decision makers are involved,” says Dring. “Our cities are only going to grow, and our current materials will worsen the climate crisis.” Developing something that can be produced at scale is a big motivator for Made of Air in order to affect system-wide change. They currently have pilot projects in place at Audi and a US furniture manufacturer. They are also creating fashion accessories with a large fashion retailer. “That is exciting, because it is an injection-molded part, so, big volumes,” says Dring. A carbon-negative bracelet or handbag may sound futuristic, but when it comes to the urgency of the climate crisis, futuristic may be precisely what is needed.

responsible economy,” says Miki Yokoyama, COO of RESPOND at UnternehmerTUM, who is also a Responsible Leader. “We support RESPOND with our expertise in startup acceleration and our international network of entrepreneurs, corporates, and investors.” While the BMW Foundation brings its expertise around leadership and social entrepreneurship, UnternehmerTUM, as one of the biggest innovation centers in Europe, contributes world-class accelerator program design.

Connecting and sharing expertise

At the end of September, following the third sprint, the startups attended a retreat in the Alps with a group of the BMW Foundation’s Responsible Leaders Network. The group was joined by Nicolas Peter, chief financial officer of BMW AG and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt. He provided a reality check from the corporate world. Being connected to the BMW Foundation’s network of leaders, as well as to the network surrounding UnternehmerTUM, is a strong draw for the startups. It is also an important component of the accelerator.

Dring says this was one of the aspects that attracted Made of Air to RESPOND. “We immediately realized that there was a scale of excellence that was very deep in all of the networks,” she says. “We saw opportunities that we were not going to have otherwise.”

As well as coaches, the startups are given the chance to connect with mentors, most of whom are part of the BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders Network. Amit Pradhan is one of them. Among other posts and accolades, Pradhan is the founder of the Silicon Valley Blockchain Society and Chairman of Zero.AI, which works on state-of-the-art AI tech. He has decades of experience in entrepreneurship and a wealth of knowledge and wisdom.

According to Pradhan, if you ask a startup what they really need at any given time, they will usually say money. “But most of the time it isn’t just ‘money’—it’s what those funds enable them to get access to and therein lies the challenge. Most early startups may not know what that is and how to even access it. One of the aspects of being a mentor is being able to dive into your experience in order to help them navigate through this.” He explains that partnerships are so crucial for early-stage businesses. “They are not at the stage where they can grow just by virtue of having a chief marketing officer. They need to find one or two key partners,” something a mentor can often facilitate.

Paving the way for change

Pradhan also says he feels very privileged to be a mentor, and Cristina Gallegos wholeheartedly agrees. Gallegos is a BMW Foundation Responsible Leader and business strategist based out of Colorado. She is also a fellow mentor.

“It’s not even a question,” she says. “I think people are mentors because they get as much out of it as the people being mentored. It’s about keeping your brain fresh; it’s very energizing.” She talks about being called upon to offer her skills and experience and her attitude about this. “My philosophy is always to respond to the call of the world. My ego is not attached to things. If the BMW Foundation says, “Are you interested in helping out?” my answer will always be yes, because yes is the only answer that will help us solve the big problems of the world.”

It has been said that out of global recessions and economic hardship, innovation, creativity, and new opportunity are often able to spring forth. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unmatched economic and social crises worldwide. Now more than ever, startups with positive change in mind are deeply needed.

3



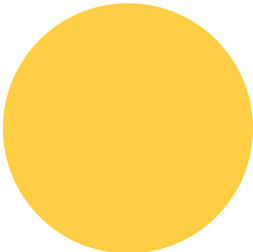
PLAN A

Over two million tons of CO₂ mitigated, 7.5 million trees planted, 150 new green jobs created. These are some of the stats from startup Plan A. The company’s emissions reduction software helps businesses manage and reduce their carbon and plastic footprints through offsetting options and sustainability action plans. Much more than an offsetting scheme, Plan A has a personalized approach. Lubomila Jordanova, CEO and founder, and Jan-Jaap Verhoeve, CCO, explain that the main goal is to put sustainability, reporting activities, and carbon monitoring under one roof. Many of their customers are large companies. Monitoring emissions for corporates can be a complicated process. “We automate this data collection and analysis, taking the company from status

quo analysis to action.” Clients have access to reports that help them really visualize their environmental impacts. Their software includes over 300,000 data points to help companies make informed decisions about their footprints. “We decided to build Plan A to both support the main emitters of this world—the private sector—to transition to the green economy and, at the same time, open up clear financing channels for the best projects across the planet,” she says. Some of those projects include helping to conserve panda habitat in China or providing solar cookers for Sudanese refugees in Chad. All their offsetting projects are certified under the Fairtrade Climate Standard.

Connecting the dots to the Arab future

By uniting digital, business, and civic innovators in MENA countries, the Digital Arabia Network is molding the region’s digital transformation to its societal and economic needs



BASSANT HELMI

International and business relations expert Bassant Helmi founded Global Project Partners (GPP) to support Arab businesswomen and provide vocational and educational training in emerging countries. She also founded MENA Business GmbH, which advises German companies on expanding to Middle Eastern & North African countries. Born and raised in Egypt, she is based in Berlin.



Transition
Between tradition and progress, digitization is leading to drastic changes in the Arab world.

D

Digitalization, from sewbots in textile factories to citizen journalism, is set to transform Arab societies. Less certain is what this revolution means for society as a whole, and who will control it.

The Digital Arabia Network (DAN) exists to develop digital transformation from the ground up. “We say our future is digital, but we have to shape it,” says Bassant Helmi, who founded DAN with Ayad Al-Ani, an expert on digital business transformation, change management, and also a fellow BMW Foundation Responsible Leader.

Harnessing digital transformation has huge potential in MENA (Middle East & North Africa) countries. The region has chronic youth unemployment, above 25 percent since 2012, and the digital skills gender gap is as high as 25 percent in Arab countries. Many Arab youth are, however, multilingual digital natives. “Their thinking and problem solving is purely digital,” Rania Reda observes. Because so many young people are digitally proficient, Helmi sees a “historic opportunity for partnerships of equals” between MENA and the West. “It is time we quit being recipients of technology and started co-creating.”



Democratizing Augmented Reality

Rania Reda, CEO of Augmania, aims to empower women and girls through digital skills

Rania Reda is an augmented reality (AR) expert, digital entrepreneur, and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader from Egypt. Her company, Augmania, provides a web-based, no-coding platform where clients create content from AR templates. Augmania aims to do for AR what WordPress did for website design. “I want to democratize AR, make it accessible to all, especially women,” she says. “My mission in life is empowering women and girls with digital skills.” Augmania has offices in San Francisco and Berlin, but its technical engineering hub is in Cairo. A Responsible Leader since 2016, Rada also participated in the BMW Ready Go program connecting senior BMW executives with entrepreneurs. Designed to help executives be prepared for future challenges while helping entrepreneurs grow their businesses, Ready Go helped Rada develop Augmania through a focused session on her company with more than 50 participants. “When you meet people outside your field of expertise, it makes you think differently,” she recalls. “That is what happens when you are part of a global network, and that will be reflected in how you work and how you lead.”

For this reason, DAN connects MENA talents not only within the region but also among the diaspora in Europe.

Altogether, DAN brings together more than 1,600 digital actors in the Arab World across five domains: arts and culture, business and the future of work, civic participation, gender equality and inclusion, and online media and journalism. It has a regional focus on Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. DAN is addressing challenges such as the impacts of digitalization on jobs, the spread of fake news, and digital exclusion of women. Current projects include developing digitalization strategies for civic participation in smart cities and restoring cultural heritage through technology.

A lab for the digital future

Helmi and Al-Ani developed DAN after a chance meeting on a bus while attending the BMW Foundation Global Table in Tunisia in 2016. They were alarmed by the narrow understanding of digitalization in MENA countries. “People were talking about digital transformation but reducing it to AI or fintech or startups,” Helmi recalls. “It is about more than business and industry 4.0. It is also about politics, society and culture.”

They adopted a holistic approach and, in January 2018, launched DAN as an online and offline platform connecting digital,

“It is about more than business and industry 4.0. It is also about politics, society, and culture.”

– BASSANT HELMI



civic, business, and academic actors. Their purpose: to build a lab for the digital future of the Arab world.

That lab has flourished thanks in part to BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt regional networks such as the one in Morocco. “I had no contacts there, but the Foundation introduced me to Tarik Nesh-Nash, who now works with us on civic participation in smart cities,” Helmi says, adding that the Responsible Leaders network provided 10 of the 30 speakers at DAN’s first online conference in June, 2020.

DAN showcases products of the Arab digital lab through its conferences, hackathons, and the MENA Innovation Challenge. Winners include Akhbar Meter, which evaluates online news by ethical and professional standards; Migport, a knowledge-sharing platform for refugees; and G-Beetle, which uses a small robot to monitor crop health.

This kind of outreach beyond the tech world is fundamental to the organization’s ethos. Its achievements include the region’s first online digital transformation training course for non-techies (by BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Hanae Beza) and a glossary of digital terminology in Arabic. DAN aims to equip the region for the coming economic, societal, and cultural upheavals.

The organizations’ holistic, inclusive, and interdisciplinary approach is a first for the region, says Helmi: “We are connecting the dots between sectors. This makes DAN different. We can learn from each other to have greater impact. I really believe in the power of networks.”



#WIRVSVIRUS

How Philipp von der Wippel got everyone to the table in the fight against COVID-19

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The #WirVsVirus hackathon took place on March 20–22, 2020—only ten days after Angela Merkel’s first press conference on the coronavirus and a week after the first lockdown measures were announced in Germany. What allowed you to react so fast?

The main answer is that ProjectTogether and the other organizers had done similar things before, mobilizing and organizing civil society in a digital space. We wouldn’t have been able to respond so quickly if there hadn’t been all this digital infrastructure. A week before the hackathon, we got the first pictures out of Italy and realized that things would get serious in Germany. Every single minute, new challenges arose. And because they affected all spheres of society, the government would not be able to respond to them on its own.

So, we realized that it was time to activate civil society. By the evening of Monday, March 16, we’d decided to collaborate with six other civil society organizations—Tech4Germany, Prototype Fund, Code for Germany, Initiative D21, Impact

Hub Berlin, Social Entrepreneurship Netzwerk Deutschland—and that we’d kick off with a hackathon, because we needed mobilizing momentum. A two-page draft of the concept was finished on Monday. That’s when things shifted into high gear. By Tuesday, we had the endorsement of Head of the Federal Chancellery Helge Braun.

How did you manage to get the federal government to respond so quickly?

I can’t fully explain it. But I think because everything was so up-in-the-air then, people like Helge Braun were willing to try new things. The stakes were so high, things that otherwise would have taken months, didn’t matter. They simply trusted us. I have huge respect for the Chancellery, because they were willing to take the risk.

You announced #WirvsVirus just two days before it started. Still, it was the world’s largest hackathon to date—43,000 people signed up and 28,000 actually participated. What factors do you think helped make the event so popular?

I think it’s threefold. One, people had time. Two, people felt numb. All their routines were interrupted and they couldn’t do anything about it. Psychologically, people wanted to do something, to feel they were influencing

PHILIPP VON DER WIPPEL

As cofounder of ProjectTogether, Philipp von der Wippel coaches startups and talent to help them find solutions for societal issues. Von der Wippel founded ProjectTogether while working as an intern at the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt.

Us Against the Virus

The world’s largest hackathon was a super-fast response to the challenges of the pandemic

Organized as a response to the many problems posed by the coronavirus pandemic, #WirVsVirus made headlines in March as the world’s largest hackathon to date. It was quickly organized by seven civil society organizations with the official backing of the German federal government, the BMW Foundation, and others. It was the six-month execution phase following the hackathon that made the biggest impact, however. During this time, 130 projects were prototyped, tested, and piloted in an unprecedented public-private collaboration. “In a crisis like this one, we have to take unconventional actions,” Head of the Federal Chancellery Helge Braun said at the closing ceremony on October 1, 2020. “In my view, this is the beginning of an important journey.” Chancellor Angela Merkel said about #WirVsVirus: “We can only effectively respond to a crisis of the scale of the coronavirus pandemic by joining the forces of government and civil society.”



ALL TOGETHER NOW

130 projects were developed in the second phase of #WirVsVirus (solution enabler) using a systematic approach. The three below attest to the impact they are having

IMIS

Creating an open-source tracking toolbox for institutions and laboratories

Having found each other through #WirVsVirus, the IMIS team took on a daunting task: to build a unified track-and-trace system that would replace the patchwork of Excel sheets, faxes, and phone calls used by Germany’s 400-odd independent public health departments to track COVID-19 infections. But soon they realized others were working on similar solutions. “Our software was adding to the problem by expanding the patchwork,” says David Baldsiefen, an IT student and IMIS project lead. The team decided to join forces with eight other organizations to offer an open-source tracking toolbox to institutions and laboratories. They also began working with the Helmholtz Center for Infection Research to adapt the SORMAS track-and-trace system, developed to combat Ebola in Africa, to European needs. By the fall of 2020, SORMAS was in use at 40 public health departments, and several more have signed up.

UDO

A chatbot that completes applications for short-time work benefits

As the scale of the coronavirus crisis became clear in March 2020, one of the German government’s first actions was to expand the availability of the federal short-time work program. Not only large corporations, but also small and medium-sized businesses could apply for their employee salaries to be subsidized by the government in order to avoid layoffs. “However, the bureaucratic process was not adapted, which created huge challenges especially for small businesses,” says Carsten Brenken. So, he and a team of 16 others created UDO, a chatbot asking simple questions and using the answers to fill out the Federal Employment Office’s application for short-time work. By early October 2020, over 3,000 businesses had used the free service and UDO was being recommended by organizations like the insurer Techniker Krankenkasse. “Our biggest contribution was simplifying the language,” says Bastian Ulke, another team member.

Corona School

Establishing a website connecting university students with school kids for free lessons

As soon as the coronavirus pandemic forced German schools and universities to close, three math and IT students set up a website that matches university students with younger children for free private lessons. “When the crisis hit, many of us wondered how we could help,” says Lukas Pin, one of the founders of Corona School. “We also suddenly had a lot of free time.” In the first six months, Corona School counted 8,000 matches of tutors and students, who meet through the site’s video tool—some do so several times a week, others, twice a month. A collaboration with the Department of Education also allows Corona School to offer digital internships to people pursuing a teaching certification. And there are plans for the future. “Post-corona, we want the site to target disadvantaged students,” Pin says.

“The stakes were so high, things that otherwise would have taken months, didn’t matter. They simply trusted us.” – **PHILIPP VON DER WIPPEL**

where things were heading. And three, many people were intrigued by the fact that, suddenly, the government was asking citizens to find solutions. Normally, politicians tell you what to do. They give answers. You’re not used to the state asking questions. This trust in citizens and the government’s commitment to implementing citizen solutions was a really powerful twist. Maybe #WirVsVirus was the beginning of a new relationship. Historically, the government has always had difficulties interacting with civil society. Now it’s possible to coordinate.

By using the framework of a hackathon to address all kinds of problems?

A hackathon is a good tool for mobilization, but the real magic happened in the six months that followed. We selected 130 teams and they collaborated with public institutions. Actually, some of them even set up joint ventures with public institutions. Suddenly, the government realized there’s so much creativity if you trust civil society to test things.

When it came to matching the projects of #WirVsVirus to public institutions, how did you overcome that issue?

One of our main activities was identifying the stakeholders a team had to work with to get their solution implemented. There was a lot of translation work to do. Just the language is so different. Teams think about the

impact. Public institutions think about regulations. My experience is that most institutions have people who are intrapreneurs. The key is having people in the administration who want to make things possible. So we introduced the concept of mentors. Hans-Josef Vogel, the district president of Arnsberg and a really entrepreneurial politician, became a mentor. So did the director of one of Germany’s biggest testing centers.

Did your relationship with the BMW Foundation and its Responsible Leaders Network help with that?

The BMW Foundation plays a central role in the success of the ProjectTogether, because the year I founded the organization, I was an intern there. That was 2014–2015, just after I finished high school. The BMW Foundation placed so much trust in me from day one. I learned a lot about how to think about stakeholders and networks. And some Responsible Leaders, especially Nadine Wachter, have invested hundreds of hours of their time helping to sharpen the theory of change and operating model of ProjectTogether. On top of all that, the BMW Foundation was the very first supporter of ProjectTogether. It also partnered with us on #WirVsVirus. They contributed financially, because we had to raise a lot of money so the teams could afford to work full-time on the execution phase. But even more importantly, they connected us with over 40 people from the Responsible

Leaders Network who then became mentors—people working in healthcare or in public administration. We had so much demand for really good experts and decision makers. The BMW Foundation introduced us to something like five people every day.

Despite the extraordinary circumstances, could #WirVsVirus serve as a blueprint for future projects?

My bet is that we’ve tapped into something most people could not have imagined would work out. And now that it’s been done, people believe it’s possible. The general concept is this: can you test multiple solutions concurrently to show that certain things are not crazy? Can you get stakeholders to the point where they at least commit to giving it a try? And does this let you broaden the conversation about what is possible? When we look at the solutions from #WirVsVirus, especially the ones being implemented now—what got public institutions on board was not an abstract idea, but the fact that you were already able to see something. People are so much more willing to change things if they can see where they’re going. This is where we can change how we make decisions as a society. Imagine a policymaking process that doesn’t start with a theoretical discussion, but with a prototyping phase. Why not test solutions and let the facts speak for themselves? You have to let people actually experience alternatives, not just understand them theoretically. ●

EUROPE COULD FALL BEHIND IN THE TECH RACE



but André Loesekrug-Pietri may have a solution

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Many scientists are currently working at a breakneck pace to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. You want to speed things up even more in Europe. What is your approach?

We launched a major competition through JEDI (Joint European Disruptive Initiative), an association of 4,100 technology leaders, that came together to put Europe in the lead on breakthrough technologies. All have technology or scientific backgrounds, they are from deeptech startups, large companies, research centers or academia. In March 2020, when the pandemic was declared, we brought together leading minds in healthcare to identify how we could make an impact. What would make a difference? What scientific development was needed? Very quickly, it became clear that the only way out of the crisis would be a vaccine or treatment. Since the pharma industry is very much focused on vaccines, we decided to launch a competition to identify completely new drugs against the virus.

What was your strategy?

We defined a clear goal. On the surface of SARS-Cov-2, there are many protein structures that each can be considered as a lock into the virus. If a molecule fits into one of these locks, the virus can be killed or rendered harmless. We specified that the molecules must fit very precisely—down to 100 nanomolar, and potentially reduce viral activity by 99%, or about 50 times better than the drug Remdesivir. The JEDI Billion Molecules Against COVID-19 Grand Challenge is one of the most ambitious attempts to radically disrupt the preclinical drug discovery process.

Who was involved?

That was the surprise. Modelling molecules is a very complex process. You need a transdisciplinary approach with top expertise in high-performance computing, AI, and epidemiology. We did have that in our scientific committee as well as some of the best brains in these fields including a winner of the 2019 Nobel Prize for medicine. We were expecting 30 teams to participate. But it ended up being 130 teams, from the very best public and private institutions in the world. JEDI is European, but we opened it up to the entire scientific community: researchers from the Max Planck Institute, ETH Zurich, Harvard, and Merck participated.

JEDI is modeled on the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which reports to the US Ministry of Defense. The agency organizes scientific challenges and key innovations. Why is it such a role model?

JEDI works in a purely civil capacity. What interested us about DARPA was its effectiveness and unique methodology of solving tough problems. For the technical competitions it organizes, the only things that count are speed and achieving breakthroughs. That you are reputed or not, public or private, in a consortium or alone is absolutely irrelevant, only excellence and results count. The effect is maximum agility. Europe is in danger of being left behind technologically. European researchers are among the best, but Europe hasn't been able to translate this into technological leadership and building global giants in most areas of the future: semiconductors, AI, space, quantum, storage, genomics, et cetera. This takes place today in authoritarian regimes, or in large private companies that increasingly have state-like powers.

What gives you hope?

We believe in Europe's capabilities: in this century where innovation shapes our societies, the continent can become the power that puts science and technology at the service of the people, of the planet, and of economic prosperity. But this requires that politicians and citizens regain control of their administrations which have bureaucratized research, and be highly strategic in shaping the world of tomorrow instead of fighting the battles of yesterday.

JEDI

BMW Foundation Responsible Leader André Loesekrug-Pietri is the founder of the Joint European Disruptive Initiative (JEDI). The initiative is solving major challenges to promote technological innovation in Europe. Its motto is "to bring Europe in a leadership position in breakthrough technologies"—technologies that benefit people and democracy. The BMW Foundation, together with foundations like the AXA Research fund, supported JEDI from the start. This helped expand the organization's network from 500 to more than 4,100 tech experts from the scientific, start-up, and corporate ecosystem and launch its first GrandChallenges.

Chapter Six

OUTLOOK

pp. 164–193

IMAGINE ALL THE PEOPLE

Our destiny
will be shaped by
inspiration

by ALEXANDRE
FERNANDES FILHO



The human species has roamed the Earth for roughly 300,000 years. Only in the last 200 years have we managed to transform the biosphere of our planet. The industrial revolution brought with it advances that have improved the health, longevity, and well-being of most. It has also, however, depleted resources, caused mass extinctions of flora and fauna, and destabilized our climate. With these developments in mind, the Museum of Tomorrow International (MOTI) is seeking answers to fundamental questions such as where we came from, where we are headed, and how to get there.

We must examine these matters closely because of the extensive planetary changes humanity has set in motion. These developments have extended beyond our climate and ecosystems to include, remarkably, the very geology of the Earth. Geologists analyze the layers of the earth’s crust left behind during the planet’s long history. In this geologic record, they can see the result of



New experiences
Museums like the Museu do Amanhã in Rio de Janeiro offer visitors an opportunity to reflect on a preferable tomorrow.

cataclysmic events such as volcanic super-eruptions or large asteroid impacts.

Uncontrollable natural forces caused these cataclysms. The current era, however, is marked by the activities of our own species. If, in a million years, an alien spaceship were to land on our planet, it might uncover a geologic layer composed of cement, plastic, radioactive material, and more—the evidence of the short but intense period when we were the main force shaping the planet. We call this epoch the Anthropocene.

**New planetary narratives
in museums**

Right now, we are undergoing a phase shift. Yet we still have the power to change course. New narratives must emerge to help us make sense of things and imagine different, realistic, and more positive worlds.

We see the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as more than just an effective

way for governments, corporations, and institutions to evaluate and discuss the impact their actions have on people and the planet. They are also necessary to illuminate what we call “new planetary narratives.” Such narratives can stir the imagination of all citizens and spur action not just from the top down but also from the ground up. In a museum of tomorrow, the public can discover many possible futures and take part in open discussions. At the Futurium in Berlin, for instance, visitors can experiment, test, invent, and develop prototypes.

How to read the future

Every human being has the ability to envision the future. Whether we practice this ability or not, we need to be mindful to also cultivate images of futures that are more or less free from the biases of the assumptions we made. “Futures literacy” describes the skill of imagining the future. It lets us un-

Trips to Tomorrow

Museum Of Tomorrow International and the BMW Foundation collaborate on a community for future-oriented museums

The Museu do Amanhã in Rio de Janeiro opened its doors for the first time in 2015. Then, as a spinoff of the new museum, MOTI was founded in 2018 to explore the ways in which new, creative planetary narratives can help achieve the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda. Markus Hipp, member of the board of BMW Foundation is also on the MOTI supervisory board. In 2019, both organizations deepened their partnership, launching FORMS (Futures-Oriented Museum Synergies). The Foundation is supporting MOTI with expertise in the community-building process that MOTI uses to provide leadership, direction, and coordination for FORMS.

“We must begin to feel responsible for one another and connected with the planet at large.”

– ALEXANDRE FERNANDES FILHO

cover the sources of our hopes and fears. It also improves our ability to use different images of the future from probable or desirable futures. These images are often used in scenario planning. Being futures literate means one is better able to grasp the nature of uncertainty and complexity. This ability helps us understand and act on the present while shedding light on emerging opportunities. UNESCO calls futures literacy “a skill for the 21st century.”

We need to form synergies

Cultural leaders who work to facilitate new futures understand the need to practice futures literacy as a collective exercise of the imagination. MOTI and the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt have extended an invitation to create a community. An incredible group of people from forward-looking museums and initiatives around the world have accepted. The goal is to learn from one another by exchanging knowledge, sharing ideas, and seeding insights.

The mission of Futures-Oriented Museum Synergies (FORMS) is to promote social experiences, support personal leadership, and encourage best practices to inspire action for trust-driven, sustainable futures.

Globally, MOTI has identified around 35 new future-oriented museums. Among them are the Museu do Amanhã in Rio, Miraikan in Tokyo, Klimahaus in Bremerhaven, and the Futurium in Berlin. Museums under construction include the Museum for the United Nations (UN Live) in Copenhagen and Biotopia in Munich.

Asking for more

Amid the chaos of our times, it is necessary to find ways to nurture a sense of wonderment, curiosity, and discovery, to fall in love with this extraordinary planet and its infinite beauty. Only then can we hope to achieve positive action and a sense of purpose. We must begin to feel responsible for one another and connected with the planet at large.

The first step is to become aware of the underlying stories and narratives that guide us. Then, we can begin to rewrite the script and invent new narratives that are inclusive and enable prosperity for all. We believe this will be challenging, yet possible—an ethical duty we must relentlessly pursue. We have the tools to imagine different worlds for ourselves. The core of our mission consists of generating the spark that is necessary to drive constructive and positive action.



ALEXANDRE FERNANDES FILHO
A cofounder and the current director of MOTI (Museum of Tomorrow International) as well as former head of Marketing and Audience Development at the Museu do Amanhã in Rio de Janeiro, Alexandre Fernandes Filho is using MOTI to illuminate new planetary narratives and inspire people to start creating more sustainable futures.

HIGHER GROUND

The future depends on how we approach mobility, sustainability, and climate change where the majority of humankind lives. To create safe, equitable cities, we must RISE above

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Today, 55 percent of the world's population lives in cities. In Latin America, more than 80 percent live in urban areas. Cities are where global concerns such as climate change, poverty, housing, mobility, integration, and safety all converge and intensify. In 2020, the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt started a program to promote solutions for Resilient, Intelligent, Sustainable, and Equitable (RISE) cities.

The Foundation aims to use its expertise in community building and cross-sectoral knowledge exchange to establish a platform and engage all city actors—politicians, bureaucrats, scientists, executives, urbanists, architects, and civil society—to find and implement new strategies for sustainable urban development. In its first years, RISE will focus on mobility issues, understanding its influence on different aspects of the city: from health to inclusiveness and housing. In the development phase, citizens and Responsible Leaders will engage and work on new solutions so startups and other organizations can implement the most promising ideas.

In the scouting phase of the program, the Denkraum series on “Good Life and Sustainable Cities” started in 2020, with events taking place in Amsterdam, Athens, and Madrid. Organized by the BMW Foundation in collaboration with local Impact Hubs, it explores how cities can address environmental, economic, and social challenges. In 2021, several events, leadership programs, and cooperations are planned to build on this vision. In the early half of the year, the first RISE City Lab will start in Munich.

The goal is to have 10,000 citizens in 50 cities around the world participating in RISE activities by 2030. The stories on the following pages show, however, that positive impact can be achieved the fastest at the local level—by involving all the stakeholders to build RISE cities.



Better living
In Seville, Spain, a neighborhood was upgraded with the wooden Metropol Parasol, which provides shade over several buildings including a city market.

Resilient

Many mega-cities including New York, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, and Cairo are threatened by climate change and rising sea levels. Even if global temperatures do not rise more than 2°C by 2050, at least 570 cities worldwide and some 800 million people will be exposed to storm surges and rising seas. “For climate change adaptation, we need to reduce and re-imagine coastal construction, create resilient neighborhoods that allow us to evolve the city they are part of,” explains Rodrigo Bautista, a strategic designer and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader. His home town, New York City, was hit hard by Hurricane Sandy in 2012, causing damage totalling \$19 billion. According to Lisa Fisher, resilience & sustainability lead at the San Francisco Planning Department and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader, all the inhabitants of a city

need equal access to resources and services in order to cope with urban growth and the realities of the 21st century. In summer 2020, she recalls, the Bay Area experienced 31 Spare-the-Air days in a row from wildfire smoke. The air was so toxic on these days that people couldn’t open their windows, even though it was extremely hot. “Because of the insufficient utility grid, there were also planned power shut-offs and people could not have cold food or run air purifiers,” she adds. These challenges are often of even greater magnitude in tropical climates and underdeveloped countries. By 2100, up to 1.2 billion people could be regularly affected by heat stress. But there is still time to turn things around and create urban routines and structures that will help soften the blow and enable a safe, healthy life for all residents.



Original solutions
The Roosevelt Island Tramway in New York City runs every 7–15 minutes from 59th Street and Second Avenue to Roosevelt Island.

Intelligent

“Most people use the city like a hotel,” says Tomás de Lara, co-founder of Cities can B and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader from Rio de Janeiro. “We forget that our city is the result of what we do and how we do it.” Digital and technological innovations can re-design the physical, legal, and behavioral structures for the common good. Cities are already learning from the disruptions in the mobility sector caused by companies like Uber and Lyft. For instance by adopting Mobility Data Specifications, a framework for standardizing and sharing mobility data that agencies, operators, and passengers can use. “More robust and accessible data, and advanced software tools, are helping us monitor community conditions so we can expend effort and resources on the neighborhoods that need it most,” says Lisa Fisher.

The urban mobility of the future, de Lara points out, should be multi-modal and carbon-emission-free. “Only bikes and electric cars should be able to access all streets.” The way forward is the smart combination of proven concepts and high-tech innovations, adds BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Marcello Palazzi, cofounder of B Lab Europe and NOW Partners. “Many years ago, Curitiba in Brazil developed a public transport system with hop-on, hop-off buses.” It is still a great solution that can be amplified and enhanced by digital and mobile technology. Re-thinking the mobility of cities is central to urban life in the 21st century. As Fisher explains, “Transitioning our public spaces from car use to serve broader community uses amplifies the quality of life, public health, economic vitality, and climate resilience of our neighborhoods for all.”



Harvesting benefit
Students in Baltimore, US, plant bird-friendly flower beds.

Sustainable

In April 2020, Amsterdam became the first city worldwide to officially embrace Doughnut Economics. This post-growth framework was developed by Oxford University’s Environmental Change Institute. The central premise is that the goal of economic activity should be meeting everybody’s needs, but within the means of our planet. “The city of the future should be truly regenerative,” says Marcello Palazzi, who lives in Amsterdam himself. “That means net-zero, emission-zero, plastic-zero, waste-zero, and poverty-zero.” Innovative cities like Amsterdam and Seoul are already ranking high on the Sustainable City Index drawn up by the global design firm Arcadis and the Centre for Economics and Business Research. But a planet-people-profit equilibrium has yet to be reached. To build new affordable housing, new systems and methods need to be developed that

have a neutral or positive environmental impact. Right now, cities around the world are responsible for an estimated 75 percent of all carbon emissions, while 90 percent of people worldwide are affected by air pollution. “Regenerative cities symbiotically interact with their surrounding environments,” says Rodrigo Bautista. To develop a circular system, we need ideas large and small. Wind farms on high-rises. Natural cooling models. Urban farming. “Imagine if we provided more tax incentives to companies that made significant progress on the Sustainable Development Goals!” Bautista says. Palazzi envisions a city that is car-free, culture-rich, affordable, less congested, and more diverse: “We need public transport with renewables from outside the city—and district capillarity with sections of citizens living and working in proximity.”



Opening doors
Marseille, France, like many other cities, is aware of the challenge of being equally accessible to all residents.

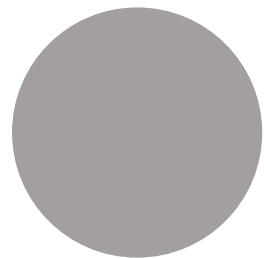
Equitable

“In Rio de Janeiro, Santiago de Chile, and most large cities in Latin America, social inequality is the root of all major problems,” Tomás de Lara points out. “Poor education, a lack of sanitation, poor health systems, insufficient urban planning, poor urban mobility, air and water pollution, violence, racial and ethnic segregation, and so on.” On paper, all citizens in democracies are equal, regardless of their background, gender, or sexual orientation. There are many ways to enhance the fairness of the urban sphere. On the policy and regulatory side, San Francisco—like many other cities—seeks “creative ways to transform its public right-of-way to benefit communities,” Lisa Fisher says. Financial instruments are equally important. “What about new residency rules requiring the wealthier to invest 10 to 20 percent of their assets in social investment products?” asks Palazzi.

These “social bonds” would finance education, health, green spaces, and civic services for the less-privileged while at the same time stimulating social entrepreneurship. But it is also important to give every resident of a city a voice. “Santiago Can B created the Usa tu Poder (Use your power) project which has used art to mobilize the citizens of Santiago de Chile to engage with the SDGs,” de Lara says. People received an invitation to write a message about the SDG that is most relevant to them. More than 1,000 inspirational messages were received. A jury of writers and poets then selected the best ones, which were passed on to Chilean artists, who translated the messages into drawings. Finally, these crowdsourced artworks appeared on several billboards, 250 buses, 1,000 bus stops, and 150,000 metro cards. That’s a powerful statement and an excellent start. ●

“A BUILDING CAN ONLY BE TRULY EFFICIENT IF PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE IN IT”

Affordability, participation, technology:
The world-renowned architect
Ole Scheeren on how to create
sustainable solutions to urban
challenges



Cities were always places for human interaction. But the megalopolis of the 21st century is often fragmented between different milieus. What can you as an architect do to reverse this trend?

It’s certainly true that fragmentation or individualization is occurring at very different cultural levels. Urban development is no exception. As architects, I believe we can counter this by developing connective and community-oriented spaces that serve as bridging structures that truly foster connections between seemingly isolated individuals.

That sounds good, but most new landmark projects and high-rises stand for just the opposite.

Indeed, we’re living in an age when architecture is almost exclusively defined by private capital and is not always working in the public interest. Most architectural projects solely pursue the interests of project developers, which generally involve privatization, commercialism, and return on investment. However, in our experience, dialogue with the client can help them to realize that returning space to the public realm can ultimately be extremely valuable and is by no means economically deleterious, much to the contrary, in fact.

Could you give us an example?

A few years ago, we finished the tallest tower in Thailand, the Mahanakhon. Back then, I wanted, first of all, to open up the mute shaft of the high-rise to demonstrate the scale of human activity and inhabitation within the building by breaking the building down into a pixel-like structure. Furthermore, at the top we created a kind of public square, completed with a glass-bottomed observation desk. At that time, none of this was required by the client, they simply wanted a tower with



High density
The Interlace in Singapore is one of Scheeren’s most famous buildings. It reunites the desire for individual privacy and living in a community.

a hotel and apartments. However, as we developed the concept, I was able to persuade the client that these maneuvers would have a huge positive impact on the project. Since then, Mahanakhon has become one of the most important buildings in Bangkok.

The focus on profit results in a lack of affordable housing. Across the globe, in San Francisco, Tokyo and Berlin, administrations and city councils are scrambling to find solutions to this challenge. What’s your perspective?

If we succeed in building affordable apartments, we will have solved one of the world’s biggest problems. But it’s not easy. The mechanisms of the construction industry have been reified to privilege a financial game where standardized solutions, geared towards profit maximization, seem to be the only outcome. So, on one hand, we will have to address and redefine these formulas; on the other hand, we need to consider how to develop new models and prototypes within those formulas themselves. For example, at The Interlace, our project in Singapore, we were able to optimize the spaces in terms of area and privacy and yet to make it more affordable, even according to the prevailing economic calculus. Despite what it may look like, The Interlace is not a luxury development. To achieve this, we had to rethink the organization of the entire project—to take

the originally planned vertical residential towers and stack them horizontally. Between and through these horizontal layers we created numerous courtyards, gardens, and rooftop terraces that, overall, generated a significant amount of generously sized, networked community spaces with gradations of privacy enabling lifestyles ranging between individual solitude to communal living and virtually everything in between. Ultimately, we managed to give the city 112 percent of its green space back—whereas ordinarily, buildings gobble up nature.

You’ve just touched on another urban development issue: How can we build more sustainably?

When architects and engineers discuss sustainability, the debate mostly focuses on a building’s energy footprint. However, I believe that we need to do much more. Of course, we have to treat the environment with great respect. But we also need to focus on the building itself—literally all the processes and materials we use must be taken into account. A building can only be truly efficient if people want to live in it. It won’t do any of us any good if we build horrible buildings that consume a little bit less energy. It’s never enough to simply “green up” a concrete wall. In my projects, I always see nature as space of life. The rooftop terraces in The Interlace aren’t just green for

“The city that has the greatest future ahead will be the one that gives people the space to create the lives they are looking for.” - **OLE SCHEEREN**

decorative reasons; they are spaces of life and of nature.

Besides the ecological issue, cities need to catch up with digitalization and new mobility concepts. What does this mean for your work?

One has to think about how our lives are being transformed by technologies and AI. What will be left of our habitual processes and daily lives? I believe that everything will ultimately be focused on the question of the quality of life. Space doesn’t just have physical qualities; it has emotional ones as well. Every space conveys a certain feeling—difficult to measure, but you can experience it. Our work is determined by the task to use our imagination, our experience, our knowledge, and our skills to create spaces for quality of life.

How do new technologies impact your work in concrete terms?

For example, we think that new vertical mobility technology, elevators, and even drones will play a greater role in the very near future. Many possible scenarios and tests are already being conducted to see how people and goods can be distributed in innovative ways.

As an architect, you have to anticipate the future. How difficult is that, especially during this pandemic?

It is critical that a certain degree of flexibility is designed into architecture to allow it to adapt to specific changes. For the Chinese tech conglomerate ZTE, for example, we recently designed a new office building where the central question was how we will be

working in the future and what requirements such a building has to fulfill. Our answer is the concept of an internal urbanism. Each floor is the size of 1.5 soccer fields. In addition to offices, a large section of the building serves as a mixture of natural environment and communal space. These “worksapes” will continue to develop and grow organically, just like a city itself.

How important is utopian thinking in your work?

To put it simply, if we don’t dare to think further and use our imaginations instead of simply accepting the existing rulebook, very little will change, perhaps nothing at all. In this respect, courage and utopian thinking play a very important role for me.

And what would the ideal city look like for you?

The great promise of the city is the social adventure of living with other people—and this desire will not disappear. The city that has the greatest future ahead will be the one that gives people the space to create the lives they are looking for, a city that nourishes structures that are flexible, sustainable, and future oriented. Finally, this great city will be able to incorporate the qualities we have already discussed into their future perspectives. To that end, it’s important to spend less time emphasizing problems and complaining—almost every city has positive potentials or qualities, but they are often overlooked. Perhaps we should turn to the positive side of things and be more thoughtful, perceptive, and open-minded also in addressing our cities.



OLE SCHEEREN
Born in Germany, Ole Scheeren is the principal of the architectural firm Büro Ole Scheeren with offices in Hong Kong, Beijing, Bangkok, New York, London, and Berlin. Scheeren has designed many groundbreaking buildings and won numerous awards, including World Building of the Year 2015 and the 2014 CTBUH Urban Habitat Award for The Interlace in Singapore. He has been a member of the Responsible Leaders Network since 2014.

NEW SKILLS FOR A NEW ERA

How do we manage and lead in the volatile and complex 21st-century world? BMW Foundation Responsible Leaders outline strategies for the future of work

1. Inner work and well-being

Very often, the workplace is a hot seat—and a very unhealthy place, too: pressure and overtime, rising rates of absenteeism, depression, burnouts. In a 2018 Deloitte survey of professionals in the US, 77 percent of respondents claimed to have experienced burnout in their current jobs. Among German employees, 69 percent have a low level of emotional engagement in their work. “Is this a society we want to live in—one in

which work makes us sick?” asks Joana Breidenbach, cofounder of the fundraising platform betterplace.org, founder of the digitalization think-tank betterplace lab and BMW Foundation Responsible Leader. In the 21st century, employees are confronted with a very dynamic work environment. Digitalization, automation, major environmental and societal problems—it all adds up. “When the outside world becomes so insecure, I need to find a certain sense of security within myself.

That is where inner work becomes very important,” Breidenbach says. For now, the most common place to start on inner work is therapy or coaching, she says. “But in the future, I hope working on ourselves becomes part of our general education.” The Wellbeing Project focuses on the mental health of people who work for social change—activists, social entrepreneurs, healthcare providers, and teachers. It was co-created by BMW Foundation Responsible Leader Aaron Pereira in 2012. Trying to change the world has a negative impact on many. Social activists often struggle with depression, burnout, or financial pressure. The project’s recent research has shown how much mental health and well-being affects not just workers, but also the workplace. “When people are healthier on the inside, they are better able to listen to other people’s ideas, to value and to trust them,” Pereira says.

Most people have a pretty clear understanding of productivity: you set a certain goal and when you reach it, you have been productive. “You are expected to have a plan and deliver against the results you promised,” says Pereira. “The space for discovering what is really needed is not present. But how can we bring about change, if we are not able to be adaptable, or able to listen deeply?” Furthermore, in a fast-paced environment like today’s, there are many disruptions that can change the process of getting there, or even the goal itself. “In this new paradigm, you have to constantly reflect,” Breidenbach says. Reaching a goal is a much more step-by-step process—something that reminds her of software development, where it is all about small changes along the way.

JOANA BREIDENBACH

Cofounder of betterplace.org and founder of the betterplace lab, Joana Breidenbach is the author of *The Future of Work Needs Inner Work*.



AARON PEREIRA
Co-creator of The Wellbeing Project, Aaron Pereira is fostering a culture of inner well-being for all changemakers.





NIHEL CHABRAK
A professor of accounting and finance, Nihel Chabrak is CEO of the UAEU Science and Innovation Park in Abu Dhabi.

2. Self-management and shared leadership

In 2014, it became clear to Breidenbach that betterplace lab was suffering from a problem a lot of organizations struggle with. “I thought about how there were all these intelligent people in my organization, but I was the one who was contributing most of the ideas and making all the decisions. I noticed how hierarchy was stifling innovation and creative potential.”

When she abolished her own leadership position, a lot of things went wrong. “We had a gap between our vision and the reality,” she explains, “we lacked the competencies for the fast change process we had initiated.” Today, Breidenbach says, she would start the process very differently, more slowly and integrative. “The team would analyze where the company is right now, how are we collaborating? How are we living leadership? What are our values?” From there, it should be easier to find the “natural next step in the evolution of the organization,” she points out. This could even be just a minor change, like giving employees more freedom in how they organize their work or establish new feedback loops.

Do not burn out while trying to change the world
The cooperation between the BMW Foundation and the new work movement

The first time Joana Breidenbach met Aaron Pereira was at a BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt panel—exactly the kind of inspiring meet-up of kindred spirits that our tables and programs aim to enable. Future of work, well-being, and new leadership are core topics of the BMW Foundation. They are important in all our work areas. Responsible Leaders such as Nihel Chabrak demonstrate how important purposeful work and shared leadership are to make an impact and change the world for the better. Also, Good Health and Well-being is one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. And for a good reason. Only if we take care of ourselves and our co-workers and collaborators will we be able to achieve these ambitious goals.

“In the future of work, decisions will be made not at the top, but wherever there is the most competency.”

— JOANA BREIDENBACH

“In the future of work, decisions will be made not at the top, but wherever there is the most competency,” Breidenbach says. This shared leadership comes with a whole new set of requirements—employees need to be empowered to develop more awareness for the company as a whole, and to know who they need to talk to and who is affected by a particular decision. If this succeeds, a company will not be led by one person anymore, but instead will lead itself.

3. Vulnerability, authenticity, and openness

When people talk about achieving a better work-life balance, they usually mean things like spending more time with friends or squeezing in a yoga class after work. For Breidenbach, this is not the right approach. “Work is life. The two are not opposed to each other,” she says.

For Robert Kegan, a Harvard developmental psychologist, the distinction comes down to a second, unpaid “job” most people in organizations are actually performing, as he and his co-author Lisa Laskow Lahey write in their book, *An Everyone Culture*: “Covering up their weaknesses (...) hiding their uncertainties, hiding their limitations.” This second “job” can take up a lot of energy.

To overcome this, Breidenbach thinks that organizations should become a place where people can show up more authentically. A first easy step could be a tool like the morning check-in, where everyone in

the team talks about how they are showing up that day. That kind of openness is also at the core of Aaron Pereira’s Wellbeing Project, which teaches leaders to perceive themselves as a whole person,”not the hero that funders or the media desire them to be. “Suddenly it seemed possible to talk about topics that were previously taboo, like vulnerability and people’s over-identification with their work,” says Pereira. Creating such a safe and caring space within an organization, Pereira observes, is also necessary to enable more diversity, equality and inclusion. And, of course, well-being.

4. Resilience

Nihel Chabrak, chief executive officer of the UAEU Science and Innovation Park at United Arab Emirates University in Abu Dhabi, knows all about being under pressure. “Twelve meetings a day, hundreds of emails and updates,” the BMW Foundation Responsible Leader says and laughs. She obviously has what it takes to manage a modern workload. But how did she acquire that skill? “My work is very much aligned with my purpose,” she says. “At our university, I see the outcome of the work, how our students develop, and that gives me energy. This is why leaders need to create work environments that give people a sense of agency. At the University of the Future in Abu Dhabi, purpose is part of the curriculum. The why is more important than the how.”

5. Speed

Times are changing. And that is not necessarily a bad thing. “In the 21st century, we live in a world of VUCA—volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity,” Chabrak points out. “That means we should not get too fixated on our goals. We must be quick on our feet.” Define the goals—and adjust in the process. “There is no need to educate students for jobs that will not be there in 20 years.” We need to teach students skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will transfer to the future of work.

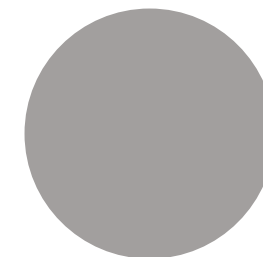
6. Transdisciplinary learning

In the 21st century, you can have the most brilliant of minds, but if you try to go it alone, you will not get anywhere. The multi-stakeholder study groups at the UAEU Science and Innovation Park are inspired by design thinking: “How can you address issues like climate change if you do not know anything about economics, geophysics, and the political game behind it.” It is all about connecting the right ideas with the right people: combining deep dives with a hands-on approach to understand both problem and solution spaces. That’s the key to the curriculum of the future. But it can only be done with the involvement of academic and external mentors. The focus must lie on the acquisition of cognitive and meta-cognitive survival skills—social, emotional, operational, and procedural skills.



Rallying the leaders of today and tomorrow

How can we spark far-reaching global change now, without knowing future constraints? An interview with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt board explores how responsible leadership can contribute to the achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda



Combined expertise

Decades of civic engagement, public service, and corporate leadership experience guide the board on its mission to achieve measurable results. From left to right: Markus Hipp, Michael Schaefer, and Frank Niederländer.

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Looking at the 2030 Agenda, it becomes clear we are at a historical crossroads. How optimistic are you that we have set realistic and achievable goals?

MICHAEL SCHAEFER: I'm an optimist at heart, but also a realist. The goals the United Nations set are always visionary. They seek to establish an ideal world. It's important to have an ambitious framework like the 2030 Agenda. And this was the first time since the UN charter that all UN member states signed a fundamental document unanimously.

MARKUS HIPPE: I'm fairly optimistic. The difficulty we face is, humans have been too good at solving problems. This problem-solving ability has created a dilemma: advances in medicine, sanitation, technology, and so forth have allowed the world population to double and triple. To me, the predicament we are in shows how great our species is at solving problems.

FRANK NIEDERLÄNDER: I would second that. My optimism stems from knowing the groundwork has been laid for this path, and that there is simply no alternative.

What do the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mean to the Foundation?

SCHAEFER: Building and nurturing a global network of Responsible Leaders has been one of the core ideas of the BMW Foundation for some time. We have, however, concluded that responsible leadership loses credibility if there is no clear direction of purpose. The 17 SDGs are a framework, a wide corridor of action. They define a broad range of changes to pursue within and between individual societies. This gives us considerable room to maneuver, allowing the many unique individuals in our network to interact on a personal level. They can also collaborate on their own respective goals and processes.

Where do you see evidence of initial successes?

NIEDERLÄNDER: The business and financial communities have not traditionally been among the pioneers of impact investing. In recent years, however, the winds of change have picked up here as well. Once the Foundation started to gain traction in promoting

impact investing, asset managers at the BMW Group took notice. Because of the ensuing conversation and the Foundation's work, the BMW Group is now on the map in the sustainable investing world.

SCHAEFER: As European societies, we must become more diverse if we are to overcome the challenges the future holds. We need to safeguard our liberal democratic system against anti-democratic forces from within. And we have to make Europe more resilient and autonomous, defending our values and our citizen's interests in a changing global system. One concrete contribution in this direction is the European Hub for Civic Engagement developed by some of our Responsible Leaders. By strengthening the role of citizens, we are contributing to re-thinking the European project. Citizens must help to make the upcoming Conference on the future of Europe a real success.

MARKUS HIPPE: Just weeks before the coronavirus outbreak, the World Responsible Leaders Forum took place in Mexico. There, we experienced together the power and impact a global community of leaders can have.

MICHAEL SCHAEFER

The chairman of the board of directors at the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt since 2013, Michael Schaefer holds a doctoral degree in law from the Max Planck Institute for International Law. His foreign service career includes posts at the United Nations and the German Embassy in Singapore. Later, he was head of the Western Balkans Task Force at Germany's Federal Foreign Office and special envoy for southeast Europe. He then served as political director of the Federal Foreign Office. Before joining the BMW Foundation, he was Germany's ambassador to the People's Republic of China. Michael Schaefer has authored monographs on foreign policy, holds an honorary professorship from the China University of Political Science and Law, and is a member of several boards of organizations.



MARKUS HIPPI

Markus Hipp has been a board member of the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt since 2006. He cofounded the association MitOst to foster cultural exchange and active citizenship in central, eastern, and southeastern Europe. After gaining experience in the fields of marketing and publishing, he became assistant to the executive director of the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Markus Hipp is involved in numerous organizations and social enterprises, for example on the supervisory board of Museum of Tomorrow International, on the advisory board of Generationsbrücke Deutschland, on Germany’s largest donation platform Betterplace.org, and on the Leadership Advisory Board of Quadriga University Berlin. In addition, he lectures at the European Business School (EBS) in the field of foundation management.



The event was a massive boost from our network, and it energized everyone. The Forum confirmed that, together, we’re truly making progress toward steering things in the right direction over the next 10 years. Now, in the fall of 2020, to think we could actually meet and celebrate is hard to imagine. Which points to the next challenge. How do we achieve similar results in the coming years if these types of events are not possible?

How do you plan to accomplish that?
How has the pandemic changed your work?

NIEDERLÄNDER: It’s paradoxical. The networking we do has become more difficult. Personal connections are so crucial for maintaining an effective network. On the other hand, the pandemic has strengthened the network tremendously. This has been such a forceful demonstration of how important unity, community, and the common good are to society. SCHAEFER: We have created interesting virtual event formats that allow us to interact. But we will need in-person meetings again soon so we can inspire new Leaders and recruit them into our network. You have to feel inspiration, it’s not something you can reproduce in a virtual space.

How has the Foundation changed since it was founded?

HIPP: In the beginning, it was a rather relatively small charitable foundation. But the first steps towards operationalization were in evidence as early as the 80s. In the 90s, the Foundation decided to work primarily with leaders. That remains a differentiator to this day. In a second phase, the network became more diverse, the approach more systematic. Initially, most participants came from the business, political, and scientific communities. Then other citizens such as social entrepreneurs, artists, and publishers joined.

SCHAEFER: There was an important juncture in 2016 in connection with the 100th anniversary of BMW. Our founding corporation decided to consolidate its social responsibility activities by bringing together the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt and the Eberhard von Kuenheim Foundation. We saw two options: we could merge the two foundations as they were, accepting that something would be lost, since this invariably happens when you combine two different cultures and groups of people. Or, we could turn the situation to our advantage and completely reinvent ourselves.

Which you did.

SCHAEFER: Yes, we took a step back to gain an understanding of where the true strengths of each organization lie. And we started to build something new. We combined a transactional with a transformational element: Responsible Leadership with the goal of contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This duality now defines our mission. It is our foundation’s goal to empower our global Responsible Leaders to achieve sustainable progress—within a local community, across a region, or around the globe.

And how independent are you now as a foundation?

SCHAEFER: I’m grateful for the trust our founding corporation places in us and for the independence it grants us. As in other foundations, the founding corporation welcomes it when our work results in sustainable impact in society. That includes the enterprise itself. In the best case, a foundation becomes an intrapreneur, a change agent impacting also the funding organization.

How can one measure this impact, particularly considering your systematic approach?

NIEDERLÄNDER: I think it would be naïve to look at the SDGs and their road map and then pick one to be your contribution. There is no all-encompassing model of the world that explains everything. But a viable network committed to working towards the SDGs definitely has an influence. We can in fact measure and operationalize the specific effect we’re having on impact investing. The systematic part involves gaining sufficient plausibility to ensure the various types of leverage we are exerting in specific areas work in concert to make us effective as an organization.

HIPP: That is the key question, of course. We’ve been wrestling with this for years now. What we do in our leadership programs, it’s actually a gift. We give people a three-to-four-day experience that motivates them to examine their own actions within the context of the common good. This applies to both personal behavior and their activities within their organizations. But how do you measure something like that? These are second-order effects. Sometimes you can see them, for instance when someone decides to restructure their company after attending one of our Forums. But things like that can take time. We want to get in and support new businesses, social startups, networks, and movements right from the start. Not just with money, but with a network, access, with co-funding, all as part of a truly systematic approach. NIEDERLÄNDER: We all believe in a happy, peaceful future based on cooperation, communication, and interaction more than ever now. And especially when very different stakeholders encounter one another. HIPP: The question is, how do you build a community? Besides pursuing a common objective (the SDGs), other factors have always been essential if you want people to develop a feeling of belonging. You eat to-

FRANK NIEDERLÄNDER

BMW Foundation Board Member Frank Niederländer holds both a Master of Business Administration from Germany and a degree from France’s Grand Ecole. After starting as a Trainee at BMW AG he completed his PhD in strategic management. Frank Niederländer held several management positions at BMW such as vice president of R&D Strategy, vice president of Innovation Management, vice president of BMW Brand and Product Strategy Worldwide, vice president of Product Architecture and Small Car Platform. He joined the board of the BMW Foundation in 2018.



gether. Drink, dance, sit around the campfire. Humankind has made narrative sense of the world this way for thousands of years. When we get together, that’s when connections happen. Our foundation is more than just an organization with around 50 employees in Munich and Berlin. We are a community with thousands of members around the globe.

What are the most important things that the Foundation will need to address, beyond the 2030 Agenda?

NIEDERLÄNDER: The Foundation must do better with international knowledge transfer and achieve a new level of maturity. Our positions on issues need to be clearer and easier to understand on the international stage. This requires new processes, structures, qualifications, and backgrounds.

SCHAEFER: We need to re-think issues such as climate change, digitization, and regional security from a citizen’s perspective. We must build an alliance of unlikely allies bringing together politics, business, science, culture and civil society to help put public policy on a track towards greater resilience. Only a resilient Europe will be able to handle what the 21st century is dishing out, including navigating the increasing complexities of relations between the United States, China, and Europe.

HIPP: I agree that foundations need to get more political. Not in the sense of party politics, but we need to stake out our positions and stand for something. We need to offer our perspective. And that’s quite a challenge. How can we position ourselves, yet remain inclusive?

What’s it like for you personally? How has your view of the world and your work changed since you joined the Foundation?

HIPP: I’ve always considered this one of the great privileges of my job: practically every week, I get to meet with people who are changing the world. What a privilege to con-

stantly be learning, even though it can be exhausting at times. But it is the only way I can continue to grow as a person.

SCHAEFER: As German Ambassador to China, I worked with people from all walks of life. I felt that, what we were doing at the embassy on a small scale, I would like to do in a much more systematic way on a global scale. I am convinced that it is insufficient to achieve change only within individual societies. The way they interact with one another, also societies with different political systems and cultural backgrounds, is crucial, too. Working for the foundation gives me an opportunity to do that.

NIEDERLÄNDER: Inspiring people, powerful visions, contentious views, exciting topics—working at the Foundation has truly broadened my horizon.

The three of you come from very different backgrounds. How does that affect your collaboration?

SCHAEFER: It’s not always easy, but an asset at the same time. Three people from completely different backgrounds naturally have very different starting points on the issues. Sometimes, we arrive at entirely different conclusions. But understanding that often helps us come up with innovative solutions, which is an enormous advantage. To make progress, you need debate. A passion for the issues. A sense for the right direction. I’m very grateful that the three of us were able to develop a coherent strategy together. Had any one of us attempted it alone, so much would be missing.

How do you define Responsible Leadership for yourself?

NIEDERLÄNDER: That’s easy: get outside your comfort zone! It’s the only way to grow. SCHAEFER: When you leave your comfort zone, you’re forced to either see things in a different light or cling to the same old story. Many people tend to stubbornly defend their opinions. What changed me most was

accepting that my own perspective was only one of many. That my ideas might be just one part of a very complex picture. It was a very enriching experience for me.

HIPP: I would also define my role as a Responsible Leader first from an internal perspective, namely, regarding the assignment I carry out for the founding company for a time. We have to set an example on the inside for what we are trying to achieve on the outside. For instance, by understanding the riches that diversity holds. The Foundation has become much more diverse over the last 15 years. We have employees from a number of international backgrounds now. This is a tremendous benefit to our team. We also have much better insight into what’s happening in the various regions of our global network, and why things are the way they are.

What you would wish the Foundation on its 50th birthday, and for the future?

SCHAEFER: I wish for the Foundation that in 2030—on its 60th anniversary—it will have become a recognized global leadership organization whose network is a community of purpose. I also hope it will have made a tangible contribution towards implementing the sustainability agenda.

NIEDERLÄNDER: The ability to innovate and the network should continue to grow as the international impact and significance increase. The work of the Foundation should evolve to become an international showcase for pioneering leadership responsibility across every industry.

HIPP: I wish that in 10 years, we will no longer define ourselves as an organization, but rather as a global organism. It is our collective duty to preserve this planet so we can all live and prosper. This understanding is so urgently needed in the Anthropocene era—a time during which humanity is the most critical factor in determining the fate of the planet. Perhaps a bit ambitious, my wish, but you can’t get anywhere without at least a little ambition.

Thank you!

Our sincere gratitude belongs to all team members, who helped shape, expand and reinvent the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt over the last 50 years. A special thank you to all the great people who have supported us in the creation of this anniversary publication.

Promoting Responsible Leadership is a collective effort

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