



LIT – TIPPERARY
ITL-THIOBRAID ÁRANN

Report on Pyramid Workshop

LIT Tipperary, Thurles Campus

Co. Tipperary, Ireland



A Global Workshop Event

Building a Pyramid for Sustainable Development

9th February 2012

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Introduction:

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) is a third level education institute established and funded by the Government of Ireland. It is involved in delivering education and research ranging from apprentice certificates to doctorate degrees. The LIT Thurles campus has a number of degree programmes which contain a sustainable development stream which are taught in years one, two and four. These programmes are the;

- BSc (Honours) in Environment and Natural Resource Management
- BA (Honours) in Social and Community Studies
- BA (Honours) in Sustainable Rural Development

This combined fourth year group in conjunction with their lecturer decided to engage with the Global Workshop Event "Building a Pyramid for Sustainable Development - 2012" organised by the Atkisson Group (more details in appendix 1). This report summarised the results and recommendations of this workshop.

The "Pyramid Lite" workshop is a simplified version of the more sophisticated Pyramid workshop tool that has been used around the world by the Atkisson Group based on the ISIS methodology. ISIS stands for (I)ndicators , (S)ystems (I)nnovation (S)trategy. This tool has been used with companies, government agencies, UN training programs, cities and towns, schools and universities all over the world by the by the Atkisson Group. The simplified version is illustrated in figure 1 below.

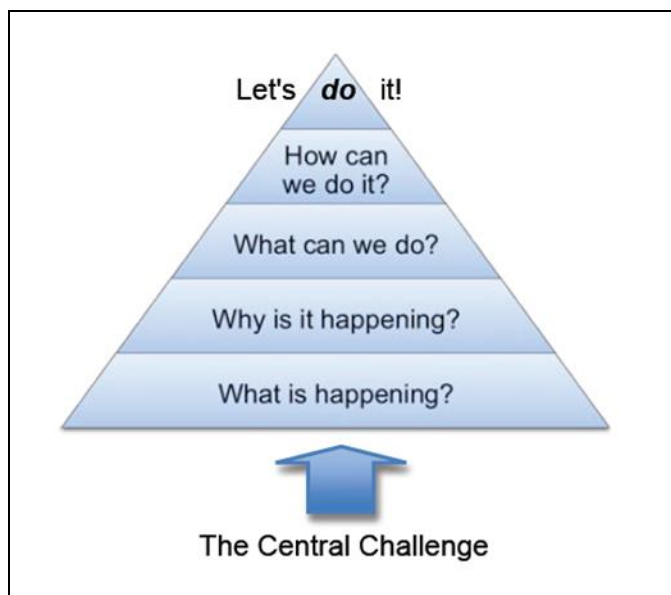


Figure 1: "Pyramid Lite" methodology (Atkisson, Inc. 2011)



Figure 2: Completed Pyramid by Students of LIT Tipperary

The Central Challenge

The group decided to identify the central challenge by listing headings from three different sources. These were: The headings from the “Pyramid Lite” manual, the United Nations WEHAB agenda (used for the Sustainable Development summit in Johannesburg, South Africa), and additional headings taken from suggestions by the group itself. These headings were written up on flip chart sheets and individuals were asked to place a mark beside the heading which they saw as the central challenge. The preferred choice was the heading “Human Well Being”.

Pyramid Lite Headings	Votes	UN WEHAB Agenda	Votes	Group Suggestions	Votes
Global Warming and Climate Change	1	Water & Sanitation	1	Conflict & Equity	0
Nature Conservation	1	Energy	4	Biophsiocycosocial	0
Population Wealth & Poverty	1	Health	0	Transport	0
Human Well Being	5	Agriculture & Food	2	Governance	1
		Biodiversity	2	Food Security	0
				Education in Sustainable Development	2
				Financial System	1

Table 1: Potential headings for the central challenge

The Pyramid

Construction of the Pyramid can be done by a variety of means. The “Pyramid Lite” manual illustrates an approach where a pyramid can be made out of lollipop sticks and tape. On suggestion from the group it was decided to use willow rods taken from a willow plantation, grown on the Thurles campus. This willow plantation was established to evaluate yield data, and act as a demonstration site of willow as a potential form of renewable energy. The willow was used for the frame while recycled cardboard and office supplies were used to cover the frame for the subsequent written headings.

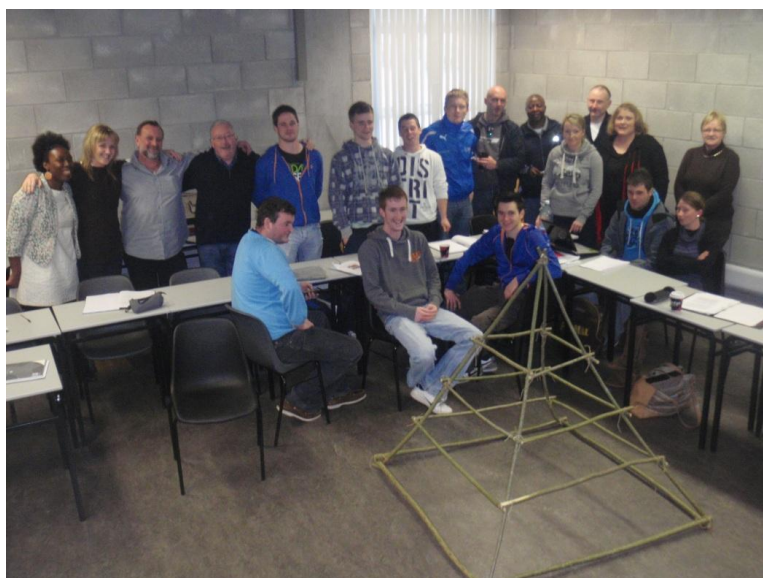


Figure 3: The Pyramid Frame and Fourth Year LIT Tipperary Students

Compass of Sustainability

The group got to work using the compass of sustainability, with roughly a quarter of the group focusing on each of the four compass points. These points are explained in figure 4 below.

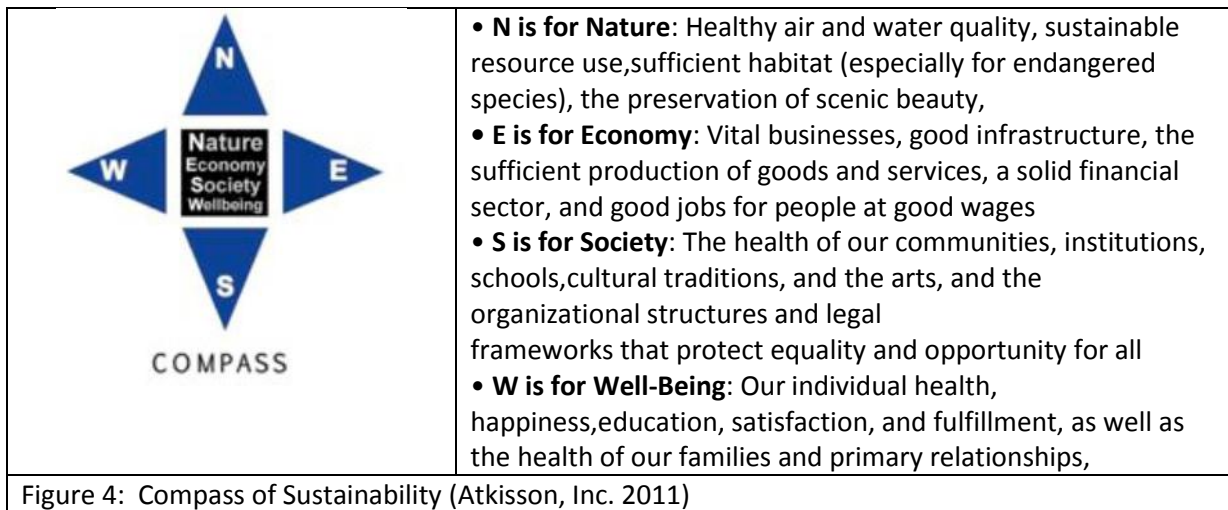



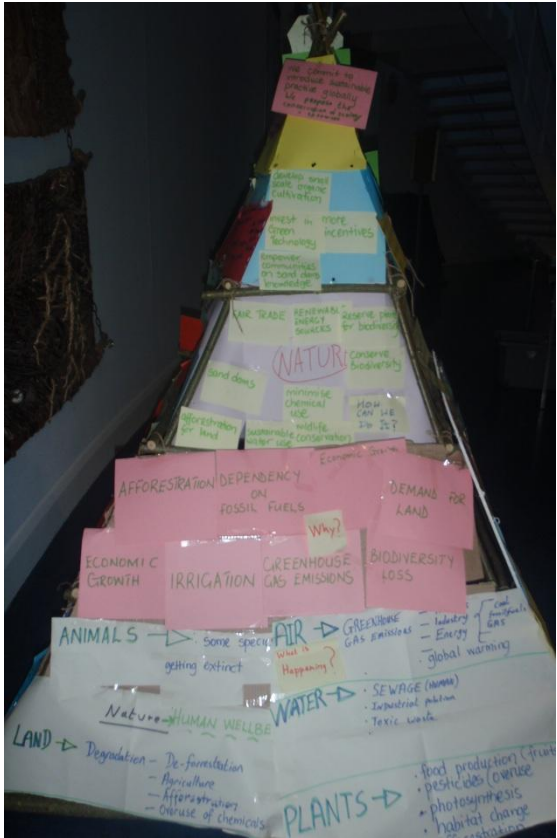
Figure 4: Compass of Sustainability (Atkisson, Inc. 2011)



Building a Pyramid for Sustainable Development!



Nature

Following is the analysis and recommendations from those working on the issue of human well-being as it relates to nature;

	
<p>Let's DO it!</p>	<p><i>"we commit to introduce sustainable practice globally – we propose the conservation of ecology & resources"</i></p>
<p>How Can We Do It?</p>	<p>Invest in green technology; Empower communities on sand dam knowledge; More incentives; Develop small scale organic cultivation</p>
<p>What Can We Do?</p>	<p>Fair trade; Sand dams; Sustainable water use; Minimise chemical use; Conserve biodiversity; Renewable energy sources; Wildlife conservation</p>
<p>Why is it Happening?</p>	<p>Economic growth; afforestation; irrigation; Dependency of fossil fuels; Demand for land</p>
<p>What is Happening?</p>	<p>Land degradation; Deforestation; Overuse of chemicals; Species becoming extinct; Greenhouse gas emissions; Global warming; Industrial pollution; Habitat change</p>

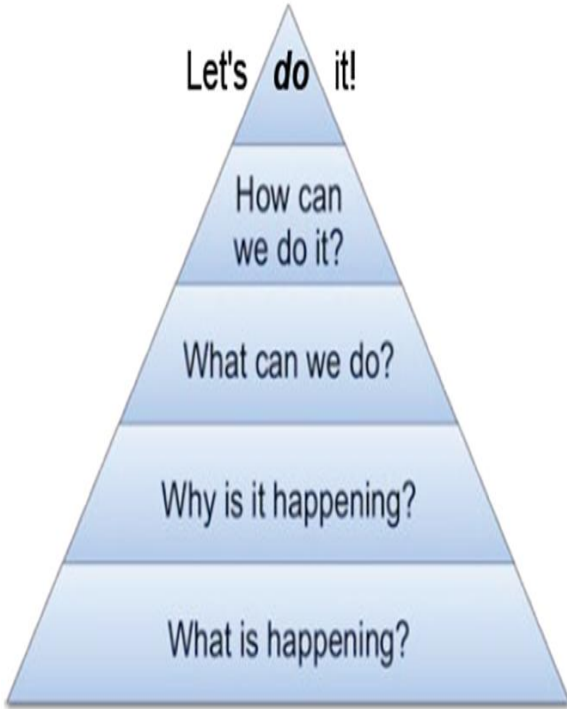

Economy

Following is the analysis and recommendations from those working on the issue of human well-being as it relates to the Economy;

	
<p>Let's DO it!</p>	<p><i>" We commit to attempt to effect change in current economic policies"</i></p>
<p>How Can We Do It?</p>	<p>Broad view of the problem; embrace transdisciplinary approach; UN review of Sustainable dev.; Review existing policies and create radical new policies; Population control; Sustainable development business audits; Sustainable economy; Identify leverage points</p>
<p>What Can We Do?</p>	<p>Education in sustainable dev., change mind-sets; Niche green markets; Localised markets; Development of gateways & hubs; Change to New environmental paradigm; See environment as the system with society and the economy as the subsystems</p>
<p>Why is it Happening?</p>	<p>Excessive borrowing and lending; linear systems instead of closed systems; Power of MNCs; Resource, stocks & allocation; Inequality of growth & development; Consumerism; Rich get richer, poor getting poorer</p>
<p>What is Happening?</p>	<p>Global recession; Dependence on fossil fuels; Globalisation; GDP & economic models out-dated; Cost benefit analysis & externalities; Growth in green economy and technology; Open economies</p>



Society

Following is the analysis and recommendations from those working on the issue of human well-being as it relates to the Society;

	
<p>Let's DO it!</p>	<p><i>"Promote communities, be collaborative rather than authoritarian"</i></p>
<p>How Can We Do It?</p>	<p>Access to information; Reassess our values; Revalue food, charge & pay real cost of food and goods; Reassess our values; fair & equitable taxation; Encourage dialogue</p>
<p>What Can We Do?</p>	<p>Seeing people as human beings; build trust; Caring, sharing, reflection on value; Bring back Meitheal system; Reform communities (participation); Redefine our legal system; Moving from global level to local level; Build resilience & social capital</p>
<p>Why is it Happening?</p>	<p>Disconnect with individuals; Shopping fills a void (happiness); "sue" nation; state losing compassion, failing to provide for people; Time poor, urban sprawl; Spiritual leaders let us down; Economic security & arrogance; Exploitation; poverty trap</p>
<p>What is Happening?</p>	<p>Lack of altruism and compassion; Lack of sustainability education; Insecurity; Political correctness gone mad; Individualism & disconnection; Detachment form nature; Devalue nutrition; Rich poor divide; Lack of spirituality</p>

Well Being

Following is the analysis and recommendations from those working on the issue of human well-being as it relates to the Well Being;

	
<p>Let's DO it!</p>	<p><i>"Sustainable employment and the need to enforce basic human rights and healthcare."</i></p>
<p>How Can We Do It?</p>	<p>Needs not greed; Localisation; Sanctions & embargos; Taxation and reallocation</p>
<p>What Can We Do?</p>	<p>New global performance indicators; Fair policies; enforce not ignore; redistribution; neoclassical to ecological economics; universal health care</p>
<p>Why is it Happening?</p>	<p>Poverty equals lack of money & lack of opportunity; Lack of compliance to UN charter; Global recession; ineffective economic model; unequal societies more social problems; capitalism leads to individualism; unequal/unfair access to vaccines</p>
<p>What is Happening?</p>	<p>High level inequality worldwide, 80:20 divide; Violation of human rights; Increased levels of unemployment & social problems; Loss of community; 2 million children die every year</p>

Conclusion & Recommendations

The participants in the workshop recommend the following to ensure a move towards sustainability and more sustainable human well-being;

Nature: We should invest in green technology and empower communities. We need to see more incentives for the green economy and develop small scale organic cultivation, especially in the developing world.

Economy: We need to take a broader view of global problems and see the links between systems; this can be facilitated with a move towards a more transdisciplinary approach. We need to review existing policies and create radical new policies including a review on population control. There is a need for sustainable development business audits, a move towards a sustainable economy and the identification of leverage points to enable this transition. The Rio plus 20 review of Sustainable Development needs commitment to action to deliver on the many innovative ideas emerging from sustainability discourse.

Society: There is a need for greater access to information on the scale of the environmental, economic and social problems we face (and also the proposed solutions) for citizens and decision makers alike. There is a need to start paying for the real cost of food and other goods to incorporate the cost of negative environmental externalities. A society wide reassessment of the values which are dominant within our consumerist society is urgently required. There is a need for a fair & equitable taxation policy not only nationally but internationally. This should be carried out while encouraging dialogue among all stakeholders.

Well Being: Our societies need to move towards fulfilling basic needs while discouraging greed and conspicuous consumption. The globalisation model based on cheap fossil fuel is now redundant; we need to look at practical localisation and regionalisation models. For unsustainable goods that do not take into account environmental and social externalities, an international system of sanctions & embargos needs to be agreed. Taxation of systems that encourage unsustainable commerce and trade needs to be introduced with reallocation to the emerging green economy.

FINALLY: The workshop was a fun, informative and creative process. It summed up a lot of the material covered on the sustainable development stream at LIT Tipperary over the last four years. Participants had an opportunity to share their ideas with their colleagues in the context of a global workshop event. This added additional focus and creativity to the process. Thanks to the Atkisson Group for the opportunity to take part in a global initiative on sustainable development and to all the participants in LIT Tipperary for making it happen on the day. Special thanks to Brian McLaughlin for assistance in building the pyramid frame.

Workshop Participants

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Social and Community Studies: Michelle Brady; Catherine Donaghy; Yona Gwembe; John Kenehan; Maria Kirwisa; Brian McLaughlin; Eugene Walsh; Josephine Walsh; Madeline Kennedy.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Environment and Natural Resource Management: Fiona Cloherty; Fintan Collins; Michael Cooke; Mary Cripps; Gerard Cullen; Michael Fleming : Kevin Foley; Patrick Grogan; John Lalor: Denis Mc Grath; Aoife Murphy; Gearoid O Connor ;Barry Ó Nualláin; Finbarr Ryan.

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sustainable Rural Development: Gay-Caroline Bernal; Ciaran O Shea.

References

Atkisson, Inc. (2011), Pyramid Lite, A Simplified Version of the Pyramid Workshop Process — PYRAMID 2012 Special Edition. AtKisson Group, Available at www.AtKisson.com

Workshop facilitated and report compiled by Clifford Guest M.R.D., M.Sc.
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Welcome to Pyramid 2012!

A GLOBAL WORKSHOP EVENT - FEB-MAR 2012

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LATEST POST

Latest Orientation Update ...

POSTED BY ALAN - 2 JANUARY 2012

Happy New Year! Starting now, in January 2012, we will be adding more and more content and features to this website ... so please keep visiting, and telling us what you need to make your Pyramid 2012 experience truly wonderful and rewarding. More updates coming soon!

Welcome to the Pyramid 2012 planning website! Pyramid 2012 is a voluntary, global-scale workshop event that is linked (unofficially) to the "Rio+20" sustainability

SEEKING LOCAL COORDINATORS AND OUTREACH VOLUNTEERS!

Want to help us organize, do outreach, stay informed? Click [JOIN](#) for more info.

STATUS UPDATE:

GROUPS COMMITTED: 81!

COUNTRY COUNT: 27!

Bangladesh China (2) Colombia Costa Rica

Denmark Germany (3) Hungary Iceland India (3)

Indonesia (10) Japan (3) Jordan Kyrgyzstan

JOIN
PYRAMID
2012

Get a group together for a day on 17, 18, or 19 February 2012 and ...

BUILD A PYRAMID FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT!

Join thousands of people in a "global workshop" to generate new ideas for Rio+20



Here's how:

- Step 1** Go to the website and find out about Pyramid 2012. You can also find us on Facebook! www.pyramid2012.net
- Step 2** Download the free information kit. Get familiar with how to run a "Pyramid Lite" workshop yourself!
- Step 3** Find a group of friends, students, colleagues, neighbors, whoever! Make a plan for doing a Pyramid!
- Step 4** During the weekend of 17-19 February 2012, do your Pyramid ... wherever you are! Generate ideas for the Rio+20 summit!
- Step 5** Upload the results to the Pyramid 2012 website ... and send a message to the world!



What is PYRAMID?

PYRAMID is a fast-moving, high-energy workshop process that anyone can do. It is used all over the world, in schools, communities, and companies to **quickly learn** about sustainable development, to **generate ideas** about how to do sustainable development, and to **create motivation** to take action ... and make sustainability a reality.

The world needs new ideas ...

On 4-6 June 2012, the nations of the world will once again gather in Rio de Janeiro, 20 years after the original "Earth Summit" that launched the global movement for **sustainable development** -- which was the world's way of describing a better future for all. Stopping global warming, preserving biodiversity, ending poverty, improving the well-being of all people, without costing the Earth ... that was the dream.

Many wonderful ideas, initiatives, and programs have happened since then ... but we have a long way to go. What can we do? How can we really **accelerate** the change to a more sustainable way of life? The UN has called for new ideas ... and Pyramid 2012 will generate as many as possible. Ideas ... plus the energy and motivation to make them real. Join us ...

www.Pyramid2012.net

Pyramid 2012 is open to all and is sponsored by the AtKisson Group, the ISIS Academy, and Compass Education, providers of tools, training programs, consulting services, and inspiration for sustainability and change. For more information visit the following websites:

www.AtKisson.com

www.ISISAcademy.com

www.CompassEducation.org