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## Germany alumni sustainability presentations: Service to communities

BY TERESITA TANHUECO-TUMAPON ON DECEMBER 1, 2017

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ANALYSIS

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BACK at Kassel Universitat's Institute for Socio-cultural Studies (ISOS) while attending a course on staff development on a full scholarship from the then German Foundation for International Development (DSE), Prof. Dr. Dr. Ulrich Teichler of Kassel's INCHER (International Center for HE Research) delivered a lecture on the dawning phenomenon of international partnerships. (The academic rank of Dr. Teichler is "Professor" and his title is "Dr."; hence, referring to Dr. Teichler as Prof. Dr. is correct.) Globalization as a terminology, according to him, undergoes a shift in meanings where "initially it seemed to be defined as the totality of substantial changes in the context and

inner life of higher education, related to growing interrelationships between different parts of the world whereby national borders are blurred or even seem to vanish." <<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/B:HIGH.0000033771.69078.41>>. Considering shift in meanings would allow us to interpret internationalization using the social transformation model where alumni use their offshore learning gains "giving them the tools to work actively and critically towards social transformation." <<http://www.ses.unam.mx/docencia/2007II/Lecturas/Mod2Qiang.pdf>>. Referring to this model, there are socio-cultural benefits in updating the privileged experience of us alumni acquired from training and/or studies in Deutschland.

Collaborators for alumni sustainability talks. A fortnight ago this November, the German Embassy with full support of Ambassador Dr. Gordon Kricke organized the Alumni Sustainability Talks "to bring together Germany alumni following the Alumni Day held last year at the DoehleHaus." Dr. Roland Schissau, chargé d'affaires' invitation letter explained that the conference "is meant to inform, inspire and enable alumni to contribute to the sustainable development goals; provide a platform for a dialogue between (alumni) and other experts about emerging/burning issues of the Philippines" relative "to Agenda 2030." This socio-cultural activity falls

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appropriately under the office of the German Embassy's cultural attaché, Thorsten Werner Gottfried. Collaborating are the GIZ (German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH), active in over 130 countries worldwide, a German development agency headquartered in Bonn and Eschborn providing services in the field of international development cooperation. GIZ's Ronald Limbago coordinates such alumni association activities; the other is the German Academic Exchange Service or DAAD "which supports over 100,000 German and international students and researchers world-wide each year – making it the world's largest funding organization of its kind"; "promoting internationalization efforts at German universities, helps developing countries build their own systems of higher education, and supports German Studies and German language programs abroad." <<https://www.daad.de/der-daad/en/>>. Its representative to the Philippines is Katharina McGrath, assistant professor of German at UP Diliman's Department of European Languages. Assisting is the Goethe Institut Philippinen, Germany's cultural institute which, besides its cultural remit, is principally tasked to administer PASCH–Fit schools, conducting German language training and credentialing language proficiency. This latter service has a new head, Katharina Peiffer reporting to the GIPhilippinen boss Dr. Ulrich Nowak.

Alumni sustainability talks- Agenda 2030: SDG No. 4. I was one of two alumni who presented a sustainable development goal (SDG) each. Like the other SDGs, SDG 4 was based on the 2015 millennium goals. Its seven targets are envisioned achieved through quality education with no child left behind. Thus the word is inclusive for each SDG target, which are—that useful learning outcomes from primary to tertiary levels, both professional and technical vocational education for all, including both the healthy and disabled, indigenous groups, for either labor or entrepreneurship, are all met by 2030. So, too, are sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. Three specific means of implementation are effective learning environments, substantially expanded globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries and substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries— that all these are achieved by 2030.

Alumni sustainability talks – Agenda 2030: SDG No. 11. This SDG aspires to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Asst. Prof. Carmeli Marie C. Chaves of UP Diliman College of Urban and Regional Planning and coordinator of Spatial Planning for Regions in Growing Economies (SPRING)-Asia, aptly discussed the 10 targets of SDG 11 and the strategic plans to achieve these targets by 2030. These targets focus on adequate, safe and affordable housing, basic services, and upgraded slums; safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable inclusive transport systems; participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management; protected and safeguarded world's cultural and natural heritage; disaster risk reduction and management; reduced adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, with special attention to air quality and waste and wastewater management; universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces; strengthened links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning; integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters; and support to least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance for sustainable and resilient buildings using local materials. Concluding her presentation, she explained the Philippines new urban agenda—toward better, greener cities, which are environmentally sustainable, climate-resilient and safe; smarter cities connected physically, spatially, and digitally and, an inclusive Philippines—equitable, participatory and which provides universal access to quality basic services. Interactive discussion among some 50 alumni followed. They talked of possible community service projects.

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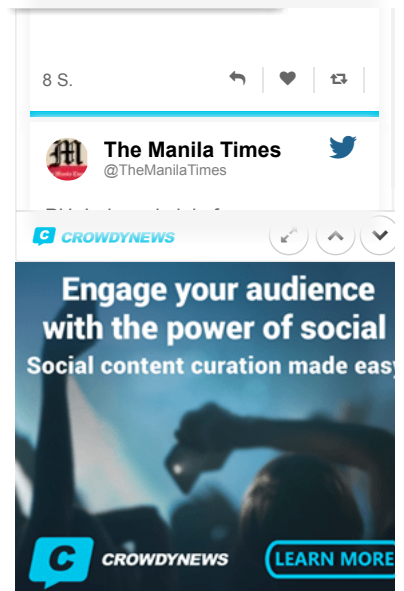
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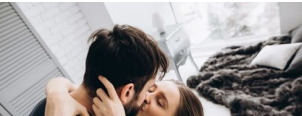
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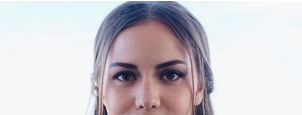
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