



# THINK ABOUT TOMORROW.

SUSTAINABILITY NOW.



**GOETHE  
INSTITUT**

Sprache. Kultur. Deutschland.



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# SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS SOCIAL CHANGE ON A GLOBAL SCALE.



## A WORLDWIDE NETWORK FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability needs social change on a global scale. We can learn from each other and shape change just by sharing different experiences, just by engaging in dialogue between cultures. The outcome is that art, culture, education and language open up new perspectives on sustainability and provide direct inspiration towards society, politics and the economy.

The Goethe-Institut sees itself as a key partner in the change process aiming for a sustainable future: with 151 institutes in 98 countries and our international partner network, we deal with a variety of issues and solutions relating to sustainability. We facilitate encounters between people from different living environments and cultures. In close cooperation with civil society and the cultural scene at local level, we support the development of solutions in these communities and on a global scale. All of our work is oriented to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our activities include programmes for learning about sustainability that connect people across continents, likewise creative formats such as competitions for young people or art projects that focus on the climate, equal opportunities or diversity whilst helping them to understand complex sustainability questions. We organise all this with our partners around the world, based on a firm foundation of trust and a long-term working relationship with them.

But we don't just treat sustainability as a "heading", we align our own actions to these principles. For example the climate: it's our goal to be climate-neutral in Germany by 2030, and to reduce our international carbon footprint by at least one-third compared with 2019 – starting with the fields of transport and climate-friendly buildings, as well as resource-saving events and digital activities. In 2022 we compiled our first sustainability report in line with the German Sustainability Code (Deutscher Nachhaltigkeitskodex; DNK) for the institution as a whole. We regularly review developments and whether the defined goals are being achieved. In this respect we're aiming for an annual improvement on all levels – environmental, social and economic.

Our special thanks go to all our colleagues at home and abroad who are committed to sustainability at a local level. Some of our projects and activities are introduced in this brochure, which offers insight into our work relating to sustainability.

Munich, December 2023

Johannes Ebert | Secretary General

Rainer Pollack | Business Director



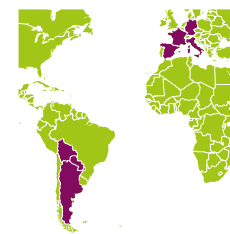
Johannes Ebert



Rainer Pollack

# INSTIGATING TRANSFORMATION: GLOBAL LEARNING.

Education puts people in a position to form their own robust opinions and take responsibility. And the best way to learn something is to do it yourself. With this in mind, the Goethe-Institut initiates campaigns, competitions and training programmes with a focus on sustainability, aimed at young people in particular – for instance under the banner of the "Schools: Partners for the Future" network. In this cross-border initiative, they look at experiences, challenges and solutions from other cultures to develop global and local ideas for an environmentally sustainable future.



## YOUNG INFLUENCERS FOR ECOLOGICAL CHANGE

### Set the mood for change

How can we persuade more people to become involved in the ecological transformation of society? How can we develop convincing cultural models and narratives? Thanks to an initiative run by the Goethe-Institut Barcelona, more than a hundred young environmental activists from Europe and South America received training in content communication and formed an international network. With the support of experts from different countries, they took part in workshops to deepen their knowledge in subjects such as environmental psychology, developed innovative communication formats, and launched national campaigns on social media. The training resources they created are currently being adapted for use in Spanish schools.

*"The best thing was the global connections we made. Together we developed inspiring suggestions and campaigns."*

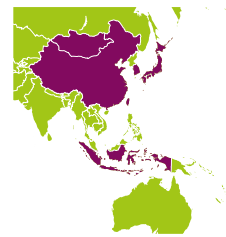
Analía Gomez, Paraguay

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION

**13** CLIMATE ACTION

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





## TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE

### Active in their own environment

The competition has been held three times, with one or more SDGs as a focus each year. It is targeted at school students in East Asia, last time there were young people from Indonesia there too. They worked in teams to explore the need for change in their own environment and implement sustainable solutions. To increase awareness of responsible resource use for example, students from a Chinese school developed a waste bin that complains if you throw food away. That's bad news, and not just for pupils disposing of their packed lunches.

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION    **13** CLIMATE ACTION    **17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

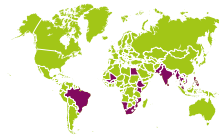


## GUAN EDEN

### Raising awareness from a young age

Iraq has to deal with huge environmental problems like air and water pollution, which are mostly caused by the intensive oil production. The Guan Eden project brings together Iraqi environmental activists, artists and representatives from the Ministry of Education. Together they develop strategies targeted at tomorrow's generation, children of pre-school age, to raise their awareness of environmental themes. The Goethe-Institut project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office within the framework of the Ta'ziz partnership.

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION    **13** CLIMATE ACTION



## SCIENCE FILM FESTIVAL

### A festival of science

Since it began in 2005, the Science Film Festival has evolved into the world's largest event of its kind: the annual festival in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America shows international films that address contemporary environmental, technological and research-related issues. The Science Film Festival uses experiments and interactive learning games to convey its message – that science can be fun – to a wide audience and in particular to young people. At the same time the films promote awareness of the environmental and technological challenges of our time. In 2023 the festival was the official partner of the "UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration" and attracted around a million viewers.

*"The Science Film Festival acts as a wake-up call because it shows viewers why they need to take care of the environment."*

(Students at school in the Philippines)

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION    **13** CLIMATE ACTION    **17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



# SEE, EXPERIENCE, CHANGE: AN ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVE.

Art can help to make complex and abstract themes easier to visualise, to imagine. It creates emotional pathways and can allow people to experience the phenomena, contexts and consequences of both negative and positive ecological actions at a sensory level. Especially if content is easily accessible, for instance in the public domain or online, it is possible to reach many people from different generations and social backgrounds, as well as with diverse life experiences. The Goethe-Institut can bring together people, perspectives and positions from different countries and create an international audience.



## TAKE ME TO THE RIVER

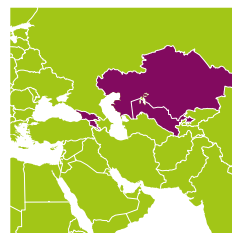
### Global perspectives on art and culture

The culture community, artists, architects and designers all over the world are tackling the impact of climate change. Their works open up creative spaces that highlight the need for changes in our environment and indicate possible approaches in the fight against the climate crisis. Some of these perspectives are being shown at a multimedia exhibition jointly financed by the Goethe-Institut and the Prince Claus Fund (Netherlands) and curated by Maya El Khalil. The selected works from Egypt, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Congo and other countries include film, photography, VR video, audiovisual archives and community radio stations.

13 CLIMATE  
ACTION







## GLACIER MUSIC

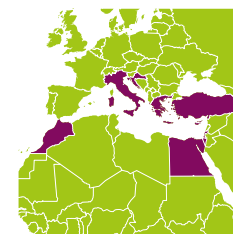
### The sound of melting giants

Glaciers say their goodbyes at first with a gurgle, and then with cracking and roaring noises. On an expedition in the Tian Shan glacial mountain range near Almaty, artists recorded the melting sounds by lowering highly sensitive microphones into crevasses. The project by the Goethe-Institutes in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Armenia uses the noises and powerful images of melting glaciers as a source of inspiration for concerts, video and sound installations. It draws attention to the environmental destruction caused by humans and combines science with art. The works by Robert Lippok, Lillevan, Askat Zhetigen, Anuschka Chkeheidze, Eto Gelashvili and Hayk Karoyi Karapetyan have been shown at numerous international festivals.



13 CLIMATE ACTION

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## ATLAS OF MEDITERRANEAN LIQUIDITY

### Water - our life source and cultural heritage

What endangers our waters, how can we protect them? How does water shortage influence the way we live together? Water plays the leading role in this international research project - from a scientific and ecological perspective, but also in terms of art and culture. The focus is on water as a cultural asset, as part of our living space from ancient times to the future. The project by Goethe-Institut Israel and the Centre of Digital Art Holon connects artists, scientists and communities from eight Mediterranean countries. The outcome of this collaboration is an interactive digital atlas, and more. Symposia, art exhibitions and installations, city walking tours, learning days and eco-weeks in the participating countries look at the issues surrounding water, culture, climate and the environment.



13 CLIMATE ACTION

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



# FACILITATING ACCESS: SUSTAINABLE CULTURE AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES.

Culture and the creative industries make a highly practical contribution towards positive social transformation: Goethe-Institut initiatives fund new job opportunities aimed at marginalised groups, support environmentally-friendly innovation, improve access to culture and education, and facilitate the qualification of committed culture creatives and entrepreneurs. In this way they encourage sustainable production structures and creativity.



## MONUMEN ANTROPOSEN

### Monetising plastic

The Monumen Antroposen (Anthropocene Monument) in Yogyakarta is a bold architectural and social design initiated by the Indonesian Upcycle Forum and the Goethe-Institut Jakarta and supported with funds from the German Federal Foreign Office creative industries fund. An upcycling factory with a makerspace, sociocultural centre and multifunctional central monument has been created near a giant landfill. The construction material is plastic waste that has been shredded and compressed into blocks. The culture centre provides space for events. Upcyclers, entrepreneurs and artists develop international labels for sustainably manufactured products in the makerspace.

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH

**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION





## CAV' TOWNSHIPS – JOHANNESBURG

### Perspectives through technology\*

With Cav' Townships, the Goethe-Institut Johannesburg implements an enabling strategy to get young people into employment - in places where perspectives on life and careers are in short supply. The training programme "Drone Divas" for example targeted women from Mabopane and surrounding area. Drones are essential in art, photography and film production nowadays. Participants received training in drone operation and programming, as well as an introduction to entrepreneurship. Ten of them also embarked on a new chapter of their lives, beginning with a three-month industry placement. Five women were offered permanent jobs in their placement company.

**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



### \*About the "Culture and Creative Industries" programme

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation GIZ) implemented the cross-border programme "Culture and Creative Industries" in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut GmbH on behalf of the Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development BMZ), which ran from the end of 2018 to the end of 2023. Its goal was to improve employment and income opportunities for people working in the creative industries in Africa and the Middle East.



## SUSTAINABILITY IN DESIGN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### Increasing sustainability, creating opportunities\*

Sustainable development of their business models and a positive ecological and social impact - this was the focus of a training programme for Lebanese designers. The curriculum included almost a hundred hours of training on environmental sustainability, circular economy and business development. Additional aspects were mentoring and subject-specific coaching. The programme was part of the "Fantasmeem" project initiated by the Goethe-Institut to promote creative entrepreneurship with an emphasis on social and ecological sustainability, develop networks, and teach new and advanced skills to the Lebanese designers.

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION

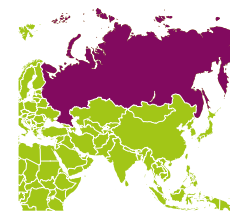
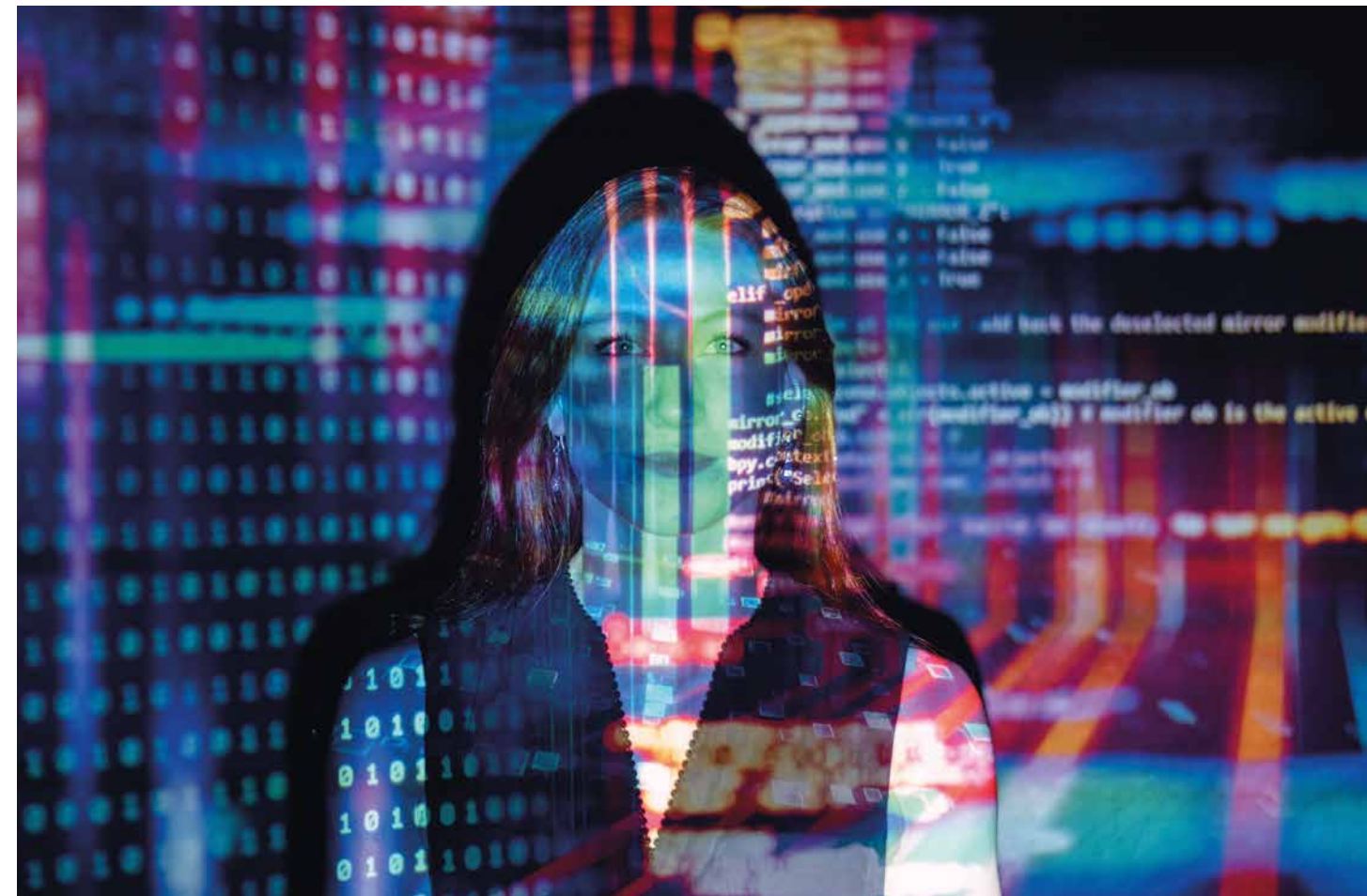
**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



# STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY: DEMOCRACY AND A COSMOPOLITAN ATTITUDE.

The Goethe-Institut campaigns on a global scale for coexistence within a framework of freedom, democracy and diversity – even in a context where illiberal developments limit the scope of civil society and the art scene. It supports critical actors from the culture industry and civil society by offering opportunities to exert influence, providing safe spaces in which to work and network, and establishing links with partner industries in Germany as well as internationally. With this approach, the Goethe-Institut also champions the power of culture: art that is both diverse and committed broadens perspectives and encourages critical discourse.



## THE EARTH IS FLAT

### How we read media

How do we behave online, how do we conduct discussions on the internet? How do we recognise fake news and disinformation? How do we protect our data? The project "The Earth is Flat" by the Goethe-Institut Moscow and funded by the European Union had toured around fifty locations in Russia by 2023, working with school and university students, teachers and parents to answer questions about digital media use. There were training sessions, discussions and a diverse media programme to share knowledge and get people talking to each other. Workshops for young people encouraged critical thinking and helped them to produce their own professional media content, such as podcasts and videos.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## HOUMTEK - NEIGHBOURHOOD INITIATIVES

### Involvement outside the capital

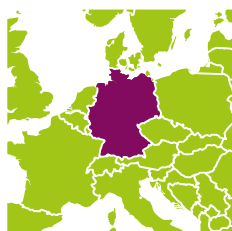
Democracy, civil society and participation begin in the neighbourhood. With "Houmtek", the Goethe-Institut Tunis also funds public initiatives and self-organisation in smaller communities. The focus is on qualification and networking of actors, financial help for local participative projects in the public space, and encouragement of cooperative partnerships between authorities and residents. The experiences gained from Houmtek are used to benefit new neighbourhood initiatives around the region. The projects are supported within the framework of the Ta'ziz Partnership by the Federal Foreign Office.

*"In Jabbes we worked together with the children of the district to build a playground. As a group we learned to shape projects so that they are more participative and convincing."*

Hedi Khelil, project manager, Tunisia

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



## THE GOETHE-INSTITUT IN EXILE

### Space for discussion and exchange

In Syria, Afghanistan, Belarus, Ukraine and Sudan, the Goethe-Institut has had to cease or significantly curtail its activities locally because of war or censorship. For many artists and intellectuals, this meant the loss of above all physical spaces for dissent, dialogue and intercultural exchange. The project "Goethe-Institut in Exile" is a response to this: it provides a meeting place, safe space and platform in Berlin for culture professionals who can no longer work in their home country. This brings the culture scenes and discourse from these countries into the public eye in Germany too, and enables networking with the German culture scene.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



# ENABLING PARTICIPATION: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY.



The Goethe-Institut systematically empowers women and vulnerable groups, supporting their cultural and social involvement and their right to make decisions for themselves, and ensuring they are fairly represented. Cultural projects and networks generate spaces for a creative and substantive discourse involving diverse perspectives and issues. Other factors deserving of attention include coming to terms with colonialism and shaping memory. Thanks to an inclusive, feminist and anti-discriminatory cultural practice, the intention is to break down rigid structures and ensure access to existing resources (on an equal footing).



## DIVERSE AS WE ARE

### Festival for Inclusive Art

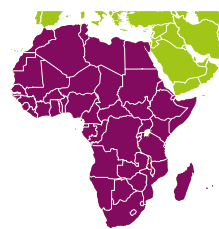
The Festival for Inclusive Art – the first international event of its kind in China – took place in Shanghai in 2022. Through this format, the Goethe-Institut and more than forty culture partners and institutions from Europe, China and all over the world provided a platform for creative artists with and without disability. They called for a stronger understanding of diversity and inclusion as an integral element of art and society. The festival was financed by EUNIC (EU National Institutes for Culture) and European Spaces of Culture.

*"I didn't know how to communicate with a deaf person. I found this a particularly valuable learning process, which showed me that diversity and inclusion are in fact a life outlook. I also noticed that I was defined as an artist with a disability, which I also find very interesting. To be honest, that's not really important to me. What matters is the art itself and also the awareness – changing the outlook."*

Liu Yi, artist, visual designer of DAWA and council member

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

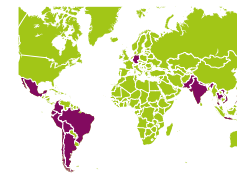


## HOUSE OF AFRICAN FEMINISMS (HoAF)

### A different perspective

Feminisms are a significant driver for political, social, cultural and ecological changes on the African continent – in history as much as today. As a digital platform, HoAF turns the spotlight on the achievements of female African scientists, artists and thinkers, engages with feminist themes through multimedia formats and creates networks of actors in Africa and worldwide. An inclusive approach that encompasses all genders and generations is crucial here. The Goethe-Institut has supported the platform right from the start. But not everything is taking place on a virtual stage: in 2023 the first "House of African Feminisms Festival" was held, with discussions, masterclasses, music and an exhibition in Abidjan.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



## MOVEMENTS AND MOMENTS – FEMINIST GENERATIONS

### Stories of indigenous and feminist resistance

From a group of female Bolivian trade unionists and an ethnic minority from the Vietnamese highlands to a spiritual healer from an indigenous community in Southern Chile: this project by the Goethe-Institut Jakarta sheds light on feminist activism from the Global South in the form of comics. More than two hundred comic artists applied, sixteen stories from fourteen countries were selected for development. The outcome is a collection of inspiring narratives about environmental activism, fair education and the struggle for LGBTIQ+ rights. The selected stories were published online, the comic book was released under the same title in 2022 in German and English.

5 GENDER EQUALITY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



# SUSTAINABILITY AT THE GOETHE-INSTITUT.

Sustainability is something we have focused on in many of our projects worldwide. But it also serves as a compass for our own actions. For this, goals are needed: we want to increase the positive impact of our work - in other words blaze a trail for sustainable development on an international scale with our programmes and partnerships. At the same time we aim to significantly reduce the environmental footprint associated with our activities.

In 2022 the Goethe-Institut produced its first sustainability report in line with the German Sustainability Code standard (DNK), for which it received the quality seal. One focus of this first report is the formulation of specific and measurable goals for reduction of climate-relevant emissions. Alongside these, milestones for increased social and economic sustainability were defined.

**By 2030 we aim to become climate-neutral in Germany and to generate a third less CO2 internationally compared with 2019**

The central concerns are mobility, the 151 Goethe-Institut buildings, and our events and digital activities.



In 2023, the Goethe-Institut started a climate initiative. The goal is to improve our own environmental balance and advance the institutional learning process. Initial plans have a model format and are currently being implemented to reduce CO2 emissions. A slow-touring music act travelling through Europe for example does not depend on flights and incorporates train travel as part of the project. As well as that, institute buildings are having solar energy installations and receiving grants for environmentally sustainable renovations.

Concepts for more sustainable institutes already exist in Abidjan, Amman, Bangalore, Burkina Faso, Chennai, Dakar, Mexico, New Delhi, Ouagadougou, Santiago de Chile, Sao Paulo and Seoul. In these locations the Goethe-Instituts are generating electricity from renewable sources, undergoing energy efficiency optimisation,

creating Goethe gardens for exhibitions or art projects to encourage biodiversity, and building barrier-free libraries with public access.

A determining factor for climate protection in an organisation that operates globally is mobility (both the mobility of employees and the distance covered by people moving around the world on our behalf). Cultural exchange continues to thrive on face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to experience different places and living environments - the fact that people learn, work and achieve together through direct encounters. At the same time, new digital and hybrid spaces have become available to us in recent years. In future we will use this potential, in combination with additional creative tools, to shape international cultural exchange into a format that's kinder to the climate - approaching CO2 with the strategy: avoid - reduce - offset.



Sustainability report by the Goethe-Institut in line with the German Sustainability Code



## SUSTAINABLE BUILDING: GOETHE-INSTITUT DAKAR

Dakar offers a taste of how the future could look: Francis Kéré has designed a new institute building in the Senegalese capital. The internationally renowned architect, who was born in Burkina Faso and lives in Berlin, champions a pioneering style of architecture based on traditions dating back centuries. The use of local laterite bricks (a claylike mineral with a small amount of cement added) results in a building that is future-oriented in terms of environmental characteristics and climate technology. Solar panels meet a high percentage of its electricity and energy requirements. Rainwater is collected to irrigate the institute garden. The building is scheduled for completion in 2024.



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

**13** CLIMATE ACTION



## BORROWING INSTEAD OF BUYING: LIBRARIES OF THINGS

Sharing things is more sustainable than buying them. For this reason, several Goethe-Instituts have set up "Libraries of Things". In these libraries not only can you borrow books, but also tools and other items that are not needed all the time, or things you just want to test out. Items available to borrow include toolkits, sewing machines, drills, waffle-makers, projectors, cameras, VR headsets, bikes, popcorn-makers, ice-makers, badge machines and musical instruments such as guitars, keyboards and ukuleles. These spaces are also used for repair cafés, upcycling initiatives and themed events - this brings new target groups into the library and helps to develop networks.

**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

**13** CLIMATE ACTION

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

## PHOTO CREDITS

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## THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development



<sup>1</sup> All Pexels photos and videos can be downloaded and used free of charge.



# COMMUNICATING WITH THE WORLD. FOR DIVERSITY, UNDERSTANDING AND TRUST.

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