

THRIVABLE INSIGHTS FROM THE THRIVABILITY MATTERS WEBINAR

Hi, passionate thrivability enthusiast. We live in unprecedented times. The numbers prove that climate change is here to stay. Social injustices corrupt the very fabric of our society, and misinformation and false narratives clog our devices through mainstream and social media. It's important to have reliable information from people who stand to gain nothing from sharing it with you. A person's agenda defines their motivation. THRIVE's agenda is to assist others to build a thrivable future, while our passionate volunteers walk the talk to deliver an authenticity that is difficult to find elsewhere.

Every month, THRIVE delivers a knowledge-filled [webinar](#), straight to your screens, providing statistics, facts, tips, tricks, and hints on how we can solve the problems our world faces everyday. from new innovations and discoveries, to the actions that people and communities take every day to make our world just a little more thrivable.

Each month, a particular solution is unpacked, disseminated, and investigated, to see how it applies to us and how we can play as a global team, on the playing field of Earth, to reach these goals. It isn't enough for us to sit passively by and let governments and businesses make our decisions for us. After all, their motivation is driven by their agenda. What does that mean for us?

Our aim is to arm you with the knowledge to change from being simply sustainable to terrifically thrivable. Therefore, I'd like to introduce you to Valerie Itey. She was an esteemed guest for the April 2024 Thrivability Matters Webinar, who spoke to us on *SDG 13: Climate Action*. Valerie's focus was on values-based innovation and how it can be applied to climate change. The thrivable insights that follow are her precious pearls of wisdom that she was generous enough to share with us during the Q&A session that follows our every webinar.

INTRODUCING VALERIE ITEY



With over 25 years of experience in technology and international business development, Valerie Itey specialises in using design thinking and impact technology to harness innovations and to create a sustainable future for all. Her passion lies in developing strategies that combine business driven results with the circular economy, and impactful sustainable initiatives supported by the latest science and technology.

She believes that innovation thrives on collaboration. Her wealth of international experience in IT products, marketing and business innovations lead her to pivotal roles in ventures such as telco company Orange, Gemalto's acquisition of Netsize, and Index's acquisition of Haiku.

Q & A

As we discuss the importance of SDG #13 Climate Action, one of its targets is "To integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning." In your view, why has it been so difficult for the United Nations to make this an 'absolute' reality

among the other member nations?

- **Political Will:** Many nations face internal political challenges that hinder their ability to prioritise climate action. Politicians may prioritise short-term gains over long-term sustainability due to electoral cycles or pressure from influential industries.
- **Economic Concerns:** Transitioning to sustainable practices often requires significant investments and may disrupt existing industries. Developing countries, in particular, may struggle to balance economic growth with environmental considerations, fearing that stringent regulations could impede development.
- **Competing Priorities:** Nations must juggle multiple priorities, including poverty alleviation, healthcare, and education, alongside climate action. Limited resources and capacity may force governments to prioritise immediate needs over long-term sustainability.
- **Global Inequality:** The burden of climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, yet the responsibility for mitigation and adaptation often falls on those with fewer resources. Developing countries argue for historical responsibility, demanding that developed nations, historically the largest emitters, take greater action and provide financial support.
- **Complexity of Implementation:** Integrating climate change measures requires coordinated action across various sectors,

including energy, transportation, agriculture, and industry. This necessitates cross-government collaboration and long-term planning, which can be challenging to achieve.

- **Lack of Trust and Cooperation:** International climate negotiations often face stalemates due to disagreements over burden-sharing, accountability, and enforcement mechanisms. Trust deficits between nations, exacerbated by geopolitical tensions, hinder effective collaboration.
- **Policy Inertia and Resistance to Change:** Resistance from vested interests, such as fossil fuel industries, can stall progress towards sustainable policies. Additionally, inertia within bureaucratic systems may slow down the adoption of innovative solutions.



How can businesses integrate values-based approaches into their innovation strategies to reduce their environmental impact? Can you help us understand with specific examples?

- **Circular Economy Practices:** Embrace the principles of the circular economy by designing products for longevity, reuse, and recyclability. For instance,

Patagonia encourages customers to repair and reuse their clothing through initiatives like the Worn Wear program, reducing the demand for new products and minimizing waste.

- **Renewable Energy Adoption:** Transition to renewable energy sources to power operations. Companies like Google have committed to using 100% renewable energy for their global operations. They invest in renewable energy projects and purchase renewable energy certificates to offset their carbon footprint.
- **Sustainable Sourcing:** Implement sustainable sourcing practices by sourcing materials from suppliers with responsible environmental and social practices. For example, Unilever aims to source all its agricultural raw materials sustainably by 2023, supporting farmers who adopt sustainable agricultural practices. climate farmers are doing really good as well, giving certificate to regenerative farmers and built a ecosystems for them. this may have a big effect
- **Product Innovation:** Innovate products with environmental benefits or reduced environmental footprints. Tesla's electric vehicles revolutionise the automotive industry by offering zero-emission transportation alternatives, reducing reliance on fossil fuels.
- **Waste Reduction and Management:** Implement waste reduction and management strategies across operations. Interface, a flooring company, developed

a program called "Mission Zero," aiming to eliminate its environmental footprint by 2020. They focus on reducing waste, water use, and greenhouse gas emissions. Clic Recycle is using human hair to reduce water in agriculture as well as reducing the use of plastic in farmland, using science and technology to build towards a circular economy.

- **Employee Engagement and Education:** Foster a culture of sustainability among employees through education, training, and engagement initiatives. Interface involves employees in sustainability efforts through programs like "Green Teams," empowering them to contribute ideas and implement sustainability initiatives in their workplaces.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Collaborate with stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, NGOs, and governments, to drive collective action towards environmental sustainability goals. IKEA partners with WWF and other organizations to promote responsible forestry practices and improve the sustainability of its supply chain. in Clic Recycle we have the 'Hairstylist for the future' initiative, where L'oreal is helping us in building a program with different stakeholders.
- **Transparency and Reporting:** Be transparent about environmental performance and progress towards sustainability goals. Companies like Patagonia and IKEA publish annual sustainability reports

detailing their environmental impacts, goals, and strategies for improvement, fostering accountability and trust among stakeholders. By integrating these values-based approaches into their innovation strategies, businesses can not only reduce their environmental impact but also enhance their brand reputation, attract environmentally conscious consumers, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Modern day slavery is a very big challenge in ensuring a sustainable supply chain. How can technology be leveraged to enhance transparency and traceability in supply chains to prevent this?

Technology can play a crucial role in enhancing transparency and traceability in supply chains to prevent modern-day slavery and ensure ethical sourcing practices. Here are several ways technology can be leveraged for this purpose:

- **Blockchain Technology:** Blockchain can provide an immutable and transparent ledger of transactions, allowing for secure and traceable recording of every step in the supply chain. By implementing blockchain, companies can track the movement of goods from raw material suppliers to end consumers, ensuring that products are sourced ethically and produced without exploitation.
- **Supply Chain Transparency Platforms:** Various platforms leverage technology to enable companies to map their supply chains, identify high-risk areas, and track suppliers' compliance with ethical standards. These

platforms utilise data analytics, machine learning, and AI algorithms to analyse supply chain data and flag potential instances of modern-day slavery or human rights violations.

- **IoT (Internet of Things) Devices:** IoT devices such as sensors and RFID tags can be used to track the movement and conditions of goods throughout the supply chain. These devices can provide real-time data on factors like temperature, humidity, and location, helping companies ensure that products are not produced under exploitative conditions or transported through unauthorised channels.
- **Digital Documentation and Verification Systems:** Digital documentation systems, coupled with technologies like digital signatures and encryption, can streamline the verification process for suppliers' compliance with ethical standards. Digital records of contracts, certifications, and audits can be securely stored and accessed, reducing the risk of fraud and ensuring transparency in supply chain relationships. For example, product passports are something we will see more and more of.
- **Machine Learning and Predictive Analytics:** Machine learning algorithms can analyse vast amounts of supply chain data to identify patterns and predict potential risks of modern-day slavery or human rights abuses. By analysing historical data, these algorithms can flag suppliers or regions with a higher

likelihood of ethical violations, enabling companies to take proactive measures to address these risks.

- **Collaborative Platforms and Information Sharing:** Collaborative platforms that facilitate information sharing and collaboration among supply chain stakeholders can help increase transparency and accountability. By enabling suppliers, NGOs, governments, and other stakeholders to share data and insights, these platforms can facilitate collective action to address modern-day slavery and other ethical challenges in supply chains.

By leveraging these technologies, companies can enhance transparency and traceability in their supply chains, mitigate the risk of modern-day slavery and human rights abuses, and ensure ethical sourcing practices. However, it's important to recognise that technology alone is not a panacea and must be complemented by robust policies, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms to effectively combat modern-day slavery and promote sustainable supply chains.



Touching upon education and awareness that you discussed, "Education is a critical agent in addressing the issue of climate"

change” as per United Nations. They found that many countries, who have committed to the Paris Agreement, have not yet introduced climate change in their national curriculum. How do you see this as a bigger problem for the future generations?

The absence of climate change education in national curricula is indeed a significant problem for future generations, with several far-reaching implications:

- Without education on climate change, future generations may lack the knowledge and skills needed to understand the causes, impacts, and solutions to climate change. This lack of preparedness could hinder their ability to adapt to the changing climate and mitigate its effects, leading to greater vulnerability to climate-related disasters and disruptions.
- Education plays a crucial role in empowering individuals to take action on climate change. Without a comprehensive understanding of the issue, future generations may miss opportunities to advocate for policy changes, adopt sustainable behaviours, and contribute to collective efforts to address climate change.
- Climate change disproportionately affects marginalised communities and vulnerable populations, exacerbating existing inequalities. The absence of climate change education in national curricula could perpetuate these inequalities by depriving certain groups of the knowledge and resources needed to protect

themselves from climate-related risks. but the UN is doing good in this task and we are seeing more and more African countries with a lot of solutions and sometime more advanced than others countries

- Climate change is interconnected with other global challenges such as poverty, food security, and biodiversity loss. Without education that emphasises the interconnected nature of these challenges, future generations may struggle to understand the holistic approach needed to address them effectively.
- Education plays a crucial role in shaping societal values, attitudes, and behaviours. Without education that fosters a sense of environmental stewardship and sustainability, future generations may be slower to transition to sustainable lifestyles and economies, prolonging the transition to a low-carbon, resilient society.
- Addressing climate change requires innovation, creativity, and leadership. By neglecting climate change education, societies risk stifling the potential of future generations to develop innovative solutions and lead efforts to address one of the most pressing challenges of our time.

Addressing the lack of climate change education in national curricula requires concerted efforts from governments, educators, civil society organizations, and international institutions. As I said, COOPERATION IS CRUCIAL. Integrating climate change into educational curricula, from primary schools to universities, can help

ensure that future generations are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to navigate a rapidly changing world and contribute to a sustainable future.

investment capital and secure favorable financing terms.

Having Transparency and Accountability to build trust in stakeholders. Do you think in today's World this can be possible without losing profits, incurring high costs and ultimately challenging the existence of the business itself?

Building transparency and accountability in today's business world is not only possible but increasingly necessary for long-term success. While there may be challenges and costs associated with implementing transparency and accountability measures, they can ultimately strengthen a business and enhance its reputation, leading to increased trust from stakeholders.

- Transparency and accountability build trust with consumers, investors, employees, and other stakeholders. A business known for ethical practices and openness is likely to attract loyal customers who value sustainability and social responsibility. In the future, people will buy or like a brand because of these factors. Transparency can drive efficiency and innovation by fostering collaboration or cooperation, and knowledge sharing.
- Investors are increasingly considering Environmental Social Governance factors when making investment decisions.
- Businesses that can demonstrate strong transparency and accountability practices are more likely to attract



Please can you share a few examples of clean water technologies for treating Wastewater to remove pollutants? How costly is it to scale it up for countries with huge populations?

Several clean water technologies exist for treating wastewater to remove pollutants, ranging from traditional methods to advanced technologies. These include:

- **Activated Sludge Process:** This is a common biological treatment method where microorganisms break down organic matter in wastewater. It involves aerating the wastewater to promote microbial growth, followed by settling to separate the biomass from the treated water.
- **Membrane Bioreactors (MBRs):** MBRs combine biological treatment with membrane filtration to remove solids and pathogens from wastewater. The membrane acts as a physical barrier, allowing clean water to pass through while retaining suspended solids and bacteria.
- **Constructed Wetlands:** Constructed wetlands mimic natural wetland ecosystems to treat wastewater.

Wastewater flows through a bed of aquatic plants, gravel, and soil, where physical, chemical, and biological processes remove pollutants.

- Reverse Osmosis (RO): RO is a membrane-based technology that removes dissolved solids, salts, and contaminants from wastewater by applying pressure to force water molecules through a semi-permeable membrane. It is effective for desalination and treating brackish water.

Clic Recycle's initiative to recover hair for cleaning water in the Port of Barcelona is an innovative approach to water purification.

Human hair, being rich in keratin, has been explored as a potential material for use in water filtration and remediation processes. The Port of Barcelona's collaboration with Clic Recycle to utilise human hair for cleaning water reflects a creative and sustainable solution to environmental challenges.

The keratin in human hair has the ability to absorb heavy metals and other pollutants from water, effectively removing them from the water column.

The treated water, having passed through the hair-based filtration system, undergoes further treatment processes as necessary to ensure that it meets water quality standards and is suitable for discharge into a port or surrounding environment.

By harnessing the natural properties of human hair for water purification, Clic Recycle's initiative in collaboration with the Port of Barcelona demonstrates a commitment to sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions for water management. This innovative approach not only contributes to cleaner water in the

port but also highlights the potential of unconventional materials for addressing environmental challenges.

What can we do to influence consumer behaviour and encourage them towards more sustainable consumption?

Please consider price-sensitivity while answering this question.

- Provide consumers with information about the environmental and social impacts of their purchasing decisions. This can be done through labelling schemes, informational campaigns, and educational initiatives that highlight the benefits of sustainable products and practices. prefer the quality over the quantity.
- Offer price incentives such as discounts, rebates, or loyalty rewards for purchasing sustainable products. Price promotions can help mitigate the perceived financial barrier of sustainable products and make them more attractive to price-sensitive consumers. Ensure visibility highlighting their benefits (Patagonia).
- Opt for eco-friendly packaging that communicates the product's sustainability credentials and appeals to environmentally conscious consumers. Minimalist packaging, recycled materials, and recyclable packaging can signal a commitment to sustainability and attract consumers' attention.
- Collaboration with Retailers: Partner with retailers to integrate sustainable products into their offerings and promote them through marketing campaigns and in-store promotions. Retailers can leverage their influence to

drive consumer awareness and demand for sustainable products.

- **Consumer Engagement:** Engage consumers in sustainability initiatives through interactive experiences, gamification, and community-building activities. Encourage consumers to share their sustainable choices and experiences on social media platforms to inspire others and foster a sense of community around sustainability.
- **Transparency Certification:** Provide transparent information about the sustainability credentials of products, including certifications, eco-labels, and third-party verification. Trustworthy certification schemes can help consumers make informed decisions and build confidence in the sustainability of products.



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We can't wait to see you there. Keep on thriving!