



HECHO POR NOSOTROS

animaná

NGO Hecho por Nosotros
B-Corp animaná

“Weaving Wisdom into Digital Metamorphosis: Fostering Inclusive Digital innovation, Growth and Regenerative Models”

62nd Session Of The Commission For Social
Development Hecho por Nosotros Side Event



Event focus:

A values-driven social economy

Exploring the intersection of digital transformation, indigenous wisdom, and grassroots innovation to drive inclusive growth and social justice in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Event Objectives

1. Foster dialogue and collaboration between digital innovators, business leaders, grassroots organizations, and indigenous communities to understand and harness the potential of digital transformation for inclusive development.
2. Highlight the importance of integrating ancestral wisdom and nature-connected practices into digital innovations to ensure sustainability and equity.
3. Empower marginalized communities, including artisans and MSMEs, by recognizing their pivotal role in driving meaningful change and promoting inclusive entrepreneurship.
4. Identify concrete steps and strategies to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge systems and modern technological advancements for holistic societal transformation.

Event Summary

The event aims to facilitate a paradigm shift towards inclusive growth and social justice by leveraging digital transformation while honoring indigenous wisdom and grassroots innovation. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, from digital pioneers to traditional artisans, we seek to catalyze collaborative efforts that prioritize sustainability, equity, and community empowerment. Through dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and action-oriented discussions, we envision forging a path towards a future where no one is left behind, and where the fusion of technology and ancestral knowledge propels us towards a more inclusive and regenerative society.

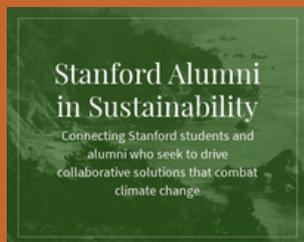
Co-converted by



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Radhika Shah
Stanford Angels
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Participants



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Juan Cruz Miranda
Minister of Digital Inclusion and Productive
Systems of the Province of Catamarca Argentina



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LAB: ACADEMIA



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Pilar Luna
Transform lives and fish skins in coastal
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LAB: Redefining the way we learn happiness: Digital Transformation for Sustainable Consumer Habits



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Participants

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Regenerative fashion designer and
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LAB: LEYENDAS



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Main Session Report

Can digital innovation serve as a catalyst for this transformation?” Perspectives from UN, Policy makers, Creative Industry leaders and more

The event was initiated by the founder of Hecho por Nosotros and animaná, Adriana Marina, who stressed how these open spaces of dialogue and collaboration are critical to creating solutions that will lead us to achieve this systemic change. Likewise, she encouraged us to change our mindsets and rethink our societal roles to sustainably embrace our resources and create a system where technology evolves in the hands of artisans. Adriana finished her speech by arguing that we need to use technology to improve our collaboration with artisans, as they are the base of society, possessing an enriching culture from which we can all benefit.

After completing her speech, Radhika Shah, Co-President of Stanford Angels & Entrepreneurs, explained to us how, in this session, we were going to examine whether digital innovation can catalyze this systemic change and how this change can foster equity and diversity. Moreover, she claimed it is a moment for a new wave, where we can change the traditional system and use the power of technology, media and market to combat the climate crisis and create opportunities for all. Radhika mentioned how, nowadays, more artisans are using technology to improve their living conditions, for instance, using cryptos to trade their goods. However, the amount of them using these tools is still low, and that is why she emphasized that we need to provide them with these digital techniques and training so they can innovate their products. She argued that these products will embody the spirit of connected humanity, our connectedness to our planet, and the beauty of our diversity, making us not lose our identity.

After both presenters introduced the event, the floor was given to the guest speakers who were going to participate in the panelist discussion based on the questions:

“How do you perceive the role of systemic change in fostering sustainability and diversity? Can digital innovation serve as a catalyst for this transformation?”

The first participant was Jose Salazar, who works at UNESCO Peru as a Strategic Partnerships Officer and technical secretary of Pact for Culture 2030. Jose commented to us, based on his experience at UNESCO, that this organization constantly promotes the use of digital innovations to reduce the global problems the world faces. He explained how UNESCO established measures to foster cultural diversity in digital environments and aided states in designing policies and projects that promote cultural expression and diversity in the digital space. For instance, a few of the measures they proposed were the adoption of digital strategies to invest in local cultural production and support for creative centers, incubators and associations to promote local content creation; the development of partnerships between private/public and civil society sectors; and the provision of digital literacy to ensure access to diverse content.

Jose explicitly portrayed how UNESCO believes digital innovation can catalyze this systemic change, which he further depicted when explaining his current experience in trying to solve one of the eleven challenges in Peru's cultural sector: enhancing and enabling the digital environment. In this case, UNESCO has been creating several projects to improve the e-commerce and digital capabilities of the actors within the cultural system. Moreover, Jose mentioned that UNESCO had created a multi-stakeholder platform named Pact for Culture 2030, which brings together the private sector, companies and civil society to develop cultural initiatives that contribute to sustainable development and citizens' exercise of cultural rights. This example illustrates how UNESCO uses technology to reduce local problems and make the world more sustainable and diverse.

The following guest speaker was Elaine Genser, who is responsible for engagement and partnership development at the United Nations Joint SDG FUND. Elaine started her participation by reflecting on the concept of metamorphosis and related to the session we were having. She indicated that a caterpillar that turns into a butterfly during metamorphosis will always have the same starting DNA, although their body completely changes. In this case, we are the DNA that will not change after transforming the traditional system into an inclusive and sustainable one.

After making this interesting connection, Elaine spoke about how the United Nations Joint SDG FUND is deploying digital transformation projects worth thirty-two million dollars to create this systematic change. It has three main objectives, which are to promote digital information as a catalytic opportuni-

-ty to accelerate sustainable development goals' impact, advance digital transformation informed by the principles of the UN and leverage the comparative advantage and the capacity of the UN to bring about integrated support and policies for inclusive digital transformation. Elaine also remarked that these projects will transform government service systems, including digital connectivity, digital finance and payments, e-commerce, market access, and trade. As can be seen, this organization also believes that digital innovation can catalyze this systematic change.

Finally, she wanted to point out that the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has not been included in these projects. This is because she argued that while AI can cause a positive transformation in this metamorphosis through aiding and educating people, it could also widen the social division. This is because AI can limit access to technology and skills, perpetuating algorithm biases, displacing jobs, raising privacy concerns, and causing other problems which may affect disproportionately marginalized communities, deepening existing inequalities. She ended her speech by claiming that technology has always been seen as a tool to leverage and speed transformation; however, it can cause the opposite effect. Therefore, she highlighted that we must pay attention to the benefits and consequences of the digital tools we try to include in policy.

Afterwards, Adriana thanked Elaine for her insightful commentary and introduced Juan Cruz Miranda, the next speaker. He is the Minister of Digital Inclusion and Productive Systems of the Catamarca Province, and his mission is to enhance local producers' competitiveness by integrating digital tools into their operations. Before Juan took the floor, Adriana made a brief introduction to the region of Catamarca, where camelids are an important part of the regional economy. She mentioned that the scarf she wore is made of vicuña's fiber, the finest fiber of the world, and was crafted in Catamarca, but that often, the artisans responsible for these creations live below the poverty line. Then, Juan began his intervention by mentioning that since Catamarca is located in the northwest region of Argentina, it is part of the lithium triangle, which has generated great interest from investors in the exploitation of lithium in the province. Nonetheless, for Juan, camelids such as llamas and vicuñas are the real treasure of Catamarca, and what the region needs is a comprehensive plan that would benefit the producers and artisans that make high-value garments. In this sense, it is crucial to generate a greater volume of fibers, since, currently the province has an important volume of animals but a slight production of fibers.

Additionally, Juan explained that in Catamarca, vicuñas are protected by the government, so it is essential for it to be involved in the investments made in the province. With regards to the initiatives that are already happening in the region, Juan mentioned that they are working with UNESCO in the empowerment of the root of telar, which is very important because as a whole, the entire artisanal process produces a garment of the highest quality which can generate a huge demand. Thus, local and international funding are crucial. On the other hand, in terms of technology, it is important to improve the business process and it must be used in order to train young people in non-formal education, so they can stay in their communities and become part of these artisanal processes. Lastly, Juan ended his comments by presenting their “New Fiber Optic Roots”, a project with which they aim to reach communities far from urban centers and incorporate them into the digital world, and that will need international cooperation in order to succeed.

Then, Radhika thanked Juan and proceeded to present Claudia Thieme Cogut, Marketing Director of Mystery Diamonds and great champion for sustainability and conservation. Claudia began her intervention by contextualizing sustainability in the fashion industry, mentioning that it has become a growing imperative in the industry, given that it is responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions and is the second most water-polluting industry in the world. Because of this, it is clear that there’s an urgent need for a system-wide change, especially when the current retail model creates a giant supply and demand mismatch in which there’s approximately a 30% overproduction every season. Although there are efforts to sell the excess through sales, most of it ends up in landfills. Claudia then mentioned that consumers have become increasingly cognizant of the environmental impact of the fashion industry, but there is still a need to learn the full downstream impacts of the scale of pollution on human health, because as scientists have discovered, microplastics and nanoplastics have been found in every organ of the human body, including the heart and brain.

Referencing the possible solutions or actions that can be taken, Claudia talked about tackling the efficiency problem through demand manufactory: there needs to be systemic change so as to create a financially suitable model with a different setup for suppliers that allows to minimize inventory waste. Similarly, another opportunity that Claudia identified for regeneration in fashion is through new materials innovation. For example, there are promising new regenerative materials such as seaweed, vegan silks and banana leaves that allows the industry to give back to the soil instead of depleting it.

On the other hand, there are other opportunities in the area of circular economy that have shown that turning trash into treasures is possible, and that they can even create luxury items with them. For Claudia, technology and innovation are crucial, because elements such as blockchain verification can enable consumer transparency and education, as well as a new way to hold brands accountable and verify their compliance with sustainability and diversity goals.

Before going into the labs, Radhika introduced Jack Loveridge, the last speaker for the panelist's discussion. Jack is the CEO and Co-Founder of Panoculum, Inc., a digital startup focused on preserving oral stories. Precisely, what he expected to do with his intervention was reflect on the juncture between humanity, technology and the natural world. For Jack, large language models to share stories are compatible with the protection of the craft of the historians and the creations made by artisans, and digital innovation can contribute to systemic change by creating conditions for a richer and more meaningful human experience. Moreover, Jack mentioned his personal interest in this, since he has seen the meaningfulness of connections and communities through his own experience and life in El Paso, Texas. When thinking about the protection of oral stories and craftsmanship and its relationship with technology and innovation, Jack affirmed that international policy making is crucial, and he presented the European Union AI Act as an example that might be imperfect, but is a key starting point. Finally, Jack commented that some of the efforts that must be considered should be related to innovations in energy efficiency in AI and the craft of human creators.

Once Jack finished, Adriana invited everyone to participate in the labs, where the different areas of HXN would be taking into consideration a systemic point of view in embracing and co-creating solutions.

Labs/breakout rooms Summary

Following the primary session, the participants were separated into six lab sessions to delve further into the topics that had been discussed previously. Adriana introduced these rooms as a reflection of the work that HxN has done for 15 years: creating an open space of dialogue and collaboration that allows all of its participants to experience sustainability and circularity. All this considered, what the HxN community is trying to do through these discussions, debates and dialogues is a transition into a new kind of world where collaboration and integration are critical. That being said, during these sessions, the panelists who led the main discussion and other experts shared their experiences and knowledge on how to take advantage of the digital metamorphosis to foster inclusive digital innovation, growth, and regenerative models.

LAB 2 - Weaving Ancestral Wisdom with Technology

This group discussed how technology can be used to reconnect with our cultures and communities that try to preserve it. One of the key themes discussed was how to help indigenous communities preserve the traditions they are constantly losing due to globalization. How can we interact with them and let them know the importance of their culture? It was argued in the discussion that one condition to connect with these communities was to be respectful and committed to dialogue with them. To create a further impact and prevent the erosion of the communities' cultures, participants who worked with indigenous communities in the Amazon Rainforest explained how they taught these communities to make audiovisual content in their languages, presenting the problems they faced. This content was created with two aims: firstly, that the population can learn about the different cultures that their country has, and secondly, to encourage members of these communities to keep using their languages and preserve their cultures.

LAB 3 - Redefining the way we learn happiness: Digital Transformation for Sustainable Consumer Habits

In this lab, the dialogue focused on understanding happiness from the consumers' point of view. To do that, the speakers presented several questions: what do we consume? How do we consume it? Where do these products come from? When thinking about these issues in fashion and clothing, it is essential to consider the role of digital platforms in shaping consumers' behavior and their perception of happiness. This is important as these elements can determine what people buy and wear. Additionally, one of the key points made during the conversation was that fashion is a way to communicate who we are, as some kind of language, and it can represent different communities and lifestyles, which is why appearance is so important. After this first discussion, the participants reflected on how to create a collective thought on sufficiency, and the main conclusion was that this possibility still feels more like a dream. However, several steps can be taken to build a future where sufficiency becomes a collective thought. It is known that spreading information is insufficient and that showing what happens inside the fashion industry (what the processes are) is crucial for consumers to see beyond the price tag. Similarly, once consumers start being conscious of the environmental cost of their clothes, creating change becomes a reality.

LAB 4 - How to make Collaboration work: Bridging Research and Action

This fourth group discussed the crucial role of academia in bringing change, considering the key trial of research and the public and private sectors. Knowing both the theoretical frameworks of different issues and experience in developing public policy allows academics to co-create and move forward in the search for a different world. All participants agreed that multidisciplinary is essential to respond to today's problems since it creates a rich ecosystem of distinct perspectives on addressing an issue. Although multidisciplinary is not that easy to achieve, universities and institutions worldwide have started to take this approach and encourage these types of collaboration. Finally, the lab concurred that it is vital to work on the reach of investigation because it is crucial to reduce the gap between what is investigated and what is done, creating a bridge between policymakers and academics.

LAB 5 - Crafting Inclusive Policy for Sustainable Futures

The fifth Lab focused on the current weaknesses of the policies to ensure a sustainable future and how they can be improved. There was a consensus among the participants that most policies were made through a top-down approach, where policymakers do not consider the local people's perspectives on how to make a systemic change. They developed and implemented macro solutions that cannot be applied in local contexts as each place faces unique problems and involves different actors. Therefore, it was proposed that policy should be made from a bottom-up approach, where policymakers include communities in the policy-making processes, where rather than only talking with them, they will co-create solutions to ensure sustainable futures. Finally, it was discussed how digital tools could be included in the policies to facilitate systematic change, concluding that if more technology is available, there will be more available solutions that benefit society.

LAB 7 - CoCreation, Creativity, Technological Innovations and Inclusive Finances

This group shared different experiences on how to create a positive impact in artisan communities through technological innovations and creativity. Inclusive finances became a key talking point of the discussion because some of the experiences showed how artisans and their families achieved economic independence through their crafts. Likewise, one of the examples mentioned throughout the lab was a disruptive model in which artisans acquired loans through cryptocurrencies, which blends technological innovations and inclusive finances and shines a light on the importance of artisans being connected through the internet and smartphones.

LAB 8 - Circularity and Social Development Challenges for System Change in the Textile and Fashion Industry

The eighth group deliberated on how technology can increase circularity and sustainability in the textile and fashion industry. The participants agreed that more clothing brands are implementing sustainable practices. Nowadays, it is hard for a company not to have a sustainability manager or a corporate social responsibility department. To increase the sustainability practices in these companies, the participants claimed that workers and fashion students should be taught how to do fashion shows, prototyping, and creating samples virtually. Moreover, governments need to give businesses digitalisation strategies so they can understand how sustainability can be profitable and be further incentivised to make this systematic change. One participant illustrated how she used technology to convert waste into usable material, increasing circularity and sustainability in her business. She collected fish skin from coastal communities in Honduras and transformed them into purses. Likewise, she also sold the skins to furniture companies, helping increase the coastal community's income by 38%.



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A participant has enabled Closed Captioning [Who can see this transcript? Recording on](#) ×

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