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Design for Sustainability



Final Report

Programme
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Gaia Education
Ecovillage
Design Education
Programme



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Course Overview

Course Overview (150-300 words):

Brief explanation of the background of the organisation, host site. Diversity of participants and facilitators. Main highlights, key success factors and other relevant information that would describe what happened during the EDE. This text will appear at Gaia Education's web site to describe your programme.

The third Ecovillage Design Education LIVE Online Programme proved to be another inspiring life-changing experience. It was orchestrated and guided by two skillful EDE trainers, Taisa Mattos and Macaco Tamerice. This program also featured renowned guest trainers from the Ecovillage Movement, calling from 10 different countries, such as: Kosha Joubert, Albert Bates, Daniel Christian Wahl, John Croft, Daniel Greenberg, Jonathan Dawson, Ina Meyer-Stoll, Achim Ecker, Sarah Queblatin, Anna Kovasna, Andre Soares, Mugove Nyika, and Carlos Rojas, Helena Norberg-Hodge.

Given its online format, the EDE required a dedicated tech support team to help in crafting interactive sessions using a variety of online tools, including the use of Discord as a communication platform to create synergy.

This diverse group consisted of 35 participants hailing from 17 different countries, each bringing their unique backgrounds, and some navigating extreme time zones. People from various corners of the globe, spanning from the US west coast to Australia, as well as European and African countries and less frequently represented nations such as Vietnam, Turkey and Ukraine came together, representing both rural and urban settings.

This course emerged as a result of a synergic collaboration between Taisa Mattos, representing Conecta Ecosocial, Macaco Tamerice, representing Damanhur Education and Arca Tentyris, and GEN International, with the invaluable support of the GEN Online Learning Platform.



Highlights:

- The extraordinary team of trainers, coming from diverse corners of the globe, each contributing their unique expertise.
- The profound enrichment brought by the diversity of participants' backgrounds and countries of origin.
- The ability of the team to create community, even online.
- The transformative power of the EDE learning journey that was inspiring for some and life changing for others.
- The outcomes of the design group projects and the willingness to continue.

Key success factors: The exceptional quality of the facilitators and guest trainers, and the genuine synergy and camaraderie among them, which cultivated a warm and inspiring learning environment. In addition to their different backgrounds and their vast experience in the field, as well as in community living, made the course an unique experience.



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ONLINE

EDE

ECOVILLAGE DESIGN EDUCATION

Become a facilitator of transformative learning environments and collaborative action.

Facilitated by sixteen experienced EDE trainers lead by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos

ecovillage.org/ecovillage-design-course

Participants (50-150 words):

(Basic stats including numbers of participants, age range, gender ratio, countries, ethnicities and backgrounds)

Participants joined from 17 different countries, with 20 women and 15 men. Their ages spanned from 23 to 66 years, reflecting a wide age range. Additionally, their professional backgrounds were quite diverse, encompassing individuals with occupations such as musicians, journalists, yoga teachers, web designers, therapists, artists, teachers, businesspeople, project managers, students, consultants, urbanists, entrepreneurs, and even refugees, among others. Despite having participants coming from all over the world, compared to the previous years, there were more participants joining from the USA and less Latin Americans included.



Course rhythms (50-150 words):

A description of the times of daily activities, sessions, free time, social time, interaction with hosts, rest; how many hours in lectures & practical sessions, etc.

Course Schedule:

ONLINE LIVE EDE 3 - Schedule					
SOCIAL DIMENSION			ECONOMIC DIMENSION		
March 2023			May 2023		
Sessions	Facilitator	Day	Sessions	Facilitator	Day
Ecovillages: Living Laboratories for the Future (Intro session)	Taisa & Macaco	04/03	Shifting from Global Economy to Sustainability	Jonathan Dawson	20/05
Creating Community & Embracing Diversity	Taisa & Macaco	11/03	Strengthening Local Economies: The Importance of Localization	Helena Norberg-Hodge	27/05*
Dragon Dreaming: co-creating collaborative projects	John Croft	18/03*	Social Currencies, Community Banks & Exchange Trade Systems	Taisa & Macaco	03/06
Communication Skills & Conflict Management	Taisa & Macaco	25/03	Exploring Community Economies	Anna Kovasna	10/06
Social & Personal Transformation	Ina Meyer-Stoll	01/04			
Leadership & Participatory Decision Making Processes	Taisa & Macaco	08/04	WORLDVIEW DIMENSION		
			June/July 2023		
ECOLOGICAL DIMENSION			Sessions	Facilitator	Day
April 2023			Holistic Worldview & Reconnection with Nature	Macaco Tamerice	17/06
Sessions	Facilitator	Day	Transformation of Consciousness - Trauma Work	Kosha Joubert	24/06
Introduction to Permaculture Design	André Soares	15/04*	Designing Regenerative Cultures	Daniel Wahl	01/07
Renewable Energy; Water Management, Waste Management	Achim Ecker	22/04	Evolutionary approaches to Education	Daniel Greenberg & Mugove Nyika	08/07
Green Building	Carlos Rojas	29/04	Ecovillages and the Sustainable Development Goals	Taisa Mattos	15/07
Regenerative Farming & Food Security	Albert Bates	06/05			
Ecovillage Solutions to Climate Emergencies	Sarah Queblatin	13/05	Design Working Groups & Additional Hours		
			March-July 2023		
			Sessions		Day
	** different time (2pm CET/CEST)		Design Group Work: ~ 2 hours per week to be decided by the working groups		
			* Design Sessions (in Yellow, integrated to Social and		



			Ecology)	
			Design Group Presentations + Closing Session	22 & 23/0 7



The sessions were scheduled for every Saturday and one Sunday. Throughout the week, the Design groups convened for approximately 2 hours each time.

Typically, we initiated the sessions with a warm welcome and an outline of the day's agenda. Participants were encouraged to check in via the chat, and we often enjoyed hearing a few voices as we waited for the entire group to gather. Subsequently, we introduced any guest trainers, if applicable, or proceeded with the planned content.

While each session had its own unique character, we often followed a structured format, which typically included:

- A formal presentation featuring slides or videos.
- Practical exercises conducted in breakout groups.
- Group reflections in the plenary.
- Dedicated time for questions and discussions.

To infuse the true spirit of an EDE experience and create space for group contributions, we also incorporated a cultural moment during which participants were invited to showcase their talents, share aspects of their country or culture, or present something they were particularly passionate about.

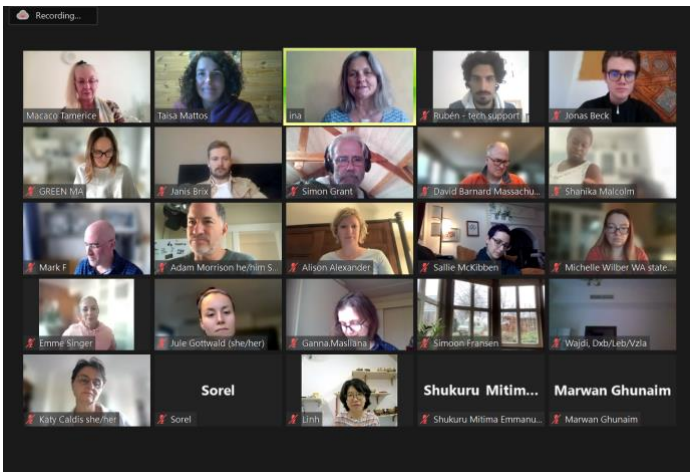
Highlights & challenges of each dimension

Social Dimension (150-250 words)

What happened in this dimension? What were the highlights? What subjects were covered? 1-2 participant quotes from the Gaia Education Evaluations or other sources. A sentence on each core faculty/facilitator.



Include 2-3 pictures.



Social Dimension:

During the Social Dimension, we delved into the realms of Ecovillages, community building, and the art of embracing diverse perspectives to co-create thriving communities and successful projects. Collectively, we delved into essential social themes such as shared leadership, participatory decision-making, effective communication, facilitation expertise, and the importance of establishing transparent group agreements and procedures, especially concerning conflict resolution and collaborative decision-making.

Topics and Trainers:



- Ecovillages: Living Laboratories for the Future - Facilitated by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos.
- Creating Community & Embracing Diversity - Presented by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos.
- Dragon Dreaming: Co-Creating Collaborative Projects - Led by John Croft (while primarily a design session, it was included in the social dimension to support the Design Groups).
- Communication Skills & Conflict Management - Skillfully guided by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos.
- Social and Personal Transformation - Delivered with depth by Ina Meyer-Stoll.
- Leadership & Participatory Decision-Making Processes- Expertly facilitated by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos.

In this dimension, we would like to highlight the excellent facilitation provided by Taisa and Macaco, the incredible diversity of participants from all continents, and the smooth coordination among the trainers that allowed for meaningful exploration even in the absence of face-to-face interactions.

The highlights centered around sharing and building a sense of community, whereas the difficulties stemmed from the diverse backgrounds and varied expectations of the participants. As an improvement we refined the course promotion for the next year, making our offering even clearer

Participant Quotes: (Quotes from participants can be included here to provide direct feedback and testimonials, if available.)

"Thank you. Many times I joined so exhausted and low and I left so inspired and energised."

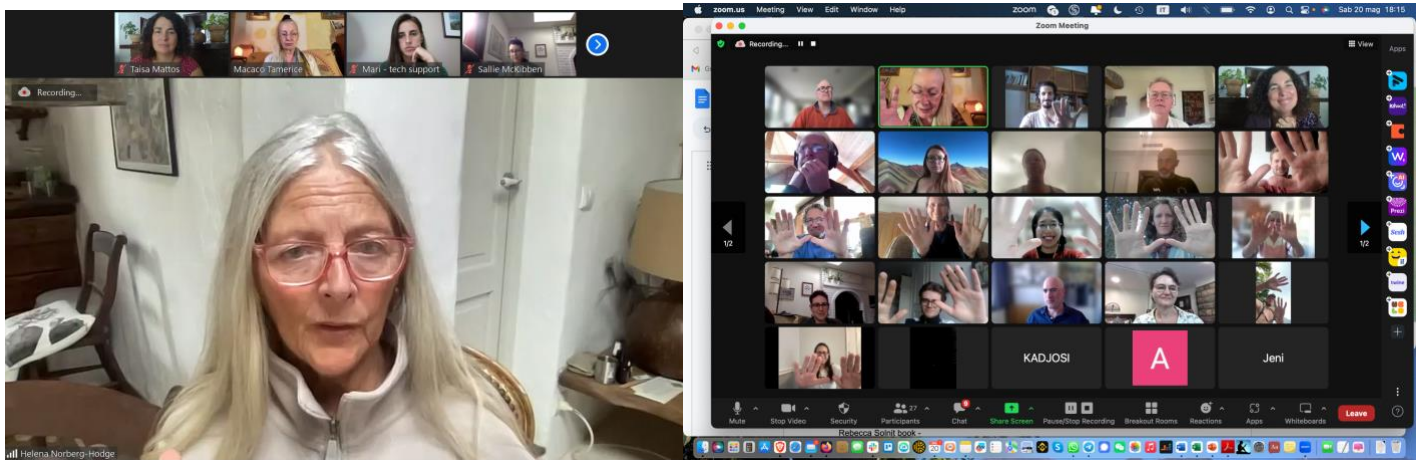
"Macaco and Taisa: Thank you bringing such palpable and powerful energy every week! You have created an amazing launching pad for introduction to the Global Ecovillage Eetwork".



Economic Dimension (150-250 words)

What happened in this dimension? What were the highlights? What topics were covered? What practical activities were performed? 2-3 participant quotes from the Gaia Education Evaluations or other sources. A sentence on each core faculty/facilitator. Any other information that you consider relevant.

Include 2-3 pictures.



Economic Dimension:

In the Economic Dimension, participants embarked on an enlightening journey that left them with profound reflections about the current reality and the imperative need to redesign our economic system. Money, a universally resonant topic, garnered significant attention. Exploring how communities are pioneering innovative economic approaches and serving as laboratories for the future was particularly fascinating. The dimension illuminated the unsustainability of the current economic paradigm while presenting inspiring examples of alternative systems, igniting spirals of optimism and hope.

Topics and Trainers:



- Shifting from Global Economy to Sustainability - Guided by Jonathan Dawson.
- Exploring Community Economies - Presented by Anna Kovasna.
- Social Currencies, Community Banks, and Exchange Trade Systems - Facilitated by Macaco Tamerice and Taisa Mattos.
- Strengthening Local Economies: The Importance of Localization - Led by Helena Norberg Hodge.

Highlights:

We brought in Helena Norberg-Hodge, a truly experienced trainer in Local Economies to compose the team, adding on the crucial importance of localisation. We feel that now our economic dimension covers the most relevant aspects of a new economy.

In this dimension, there was an exploration of economics and money that encouraged participants to consider transitioning from a mindset of scarcity to one of abundance by adopting different perspectives. It prompted reflection on our role as consumers in a consumerist society and involved an investigation into economic models within ecovillages, encompassing ideas such as income sharing and complementary currencies.

In this dimension, hope was reignited, and a sense of agency was catalyzed among participants, underscoring the palpable potential for economic transformation within communities.

Participant Quotes:

"It is such a thrill to participate in this portion of the elevation of the collective consciousness of humanity. To be connected with so many like-hearted, like-minded people is such a privilege. Taisa and Macaco (with the strong support of Ruben and Mari) deliver such a powerful learning experience from different continents to a cohort from all over the planet! Bravo!"



“That there can be different perspectives on economics and questions that form the base of an economic system. More conscious about the non-existence of physical money in the system. Learned of different ways to create a community economy”

Ecological Dimension (150-250 words)

What happened in this dimension? What were the highlights? What topics were covered? what practical activities were performed? 2-3 participant quotes from the Gaia Education Evaluations or other sources. A sentence on each core faculty/facilitator. Any other information that you consider relevant.

Include 2-3 pictures.



Ecological Dimension:

In the Ecological Dimension, we had the privilege of hosting five esteemed guest trainers who brought their extensive expertise and practical examples in crucial areas, including renewable energy, food security, natural building, permaculture design, and climate adaptation. The group displayed an intense interest in all the sessions, and a prevailing awareness of the imperative need to transform our lifestyles and engage in environmental action was evident.

Our trainers, all seasoned permaculturists hailing from diverse countries and backgrounds, seamlessly connected participants to the topics, providing regional examples to enrich the discussions.



Topics and Trainers:

- Permaculture Design - Conducted by André Soares.
- Green Building - Led by Carlos Rojas.
- Renewable Energy; Water Management, Waste Management - Expertly guided by Achim Ecker.
- Sustainable Agriculture & Food Security - Presented by Albert Bates.
- Climate Change & How Ecovillages are Facing EmerGENcies - Delivered by Sarah Queblatin.

Highlights: Notable aspects of this dimension included the exceptional competency, knowledge, and diversity of the guest facilitators, creating a mosaic of rich experiences. It was especially crucial to include a session on climate adaptation and emergencies during a period of such global turbulence. Additionally, it's worth mentioning that one of the design groups chose to focus specifically on Permaculture, highlighting the practical application of the knowledge gained.

Challenges: We would love to be able to do hands-on in this dimension despite the really rich knowledge of our trainers.

Participants Quotes:

"I feel this is a tangible unit that underscores the need for a group effort and long range planning. It looks at the various elements that must be put in a plan in order for a village to thrive.
Great overview of the issues facing the earth and how to address climate change

"So many learnings. Having done two PDCs before I was so impressed by the quality of the speakers and how well they presented I was still able to learn so much more and that's the main lesson for me is that there is still a lifetime of learning ahead of me. Very inspiring content. Also learnt again how important context is".

Worldview Dimension (150-250 words)

What happened in this dimension? What were the highlights? What topics were covered? what practical activities were performed? 2-3 participant quotes from the Gaia Education Evaluations or other sources. A sentence on each core faculty/facilitator. Any other information that you consider relevant.

Include 2-3 pictures.



Worldview Dimension: In the Worldview Dimension, a remarkable team guided participants through a deeply moving yet practical exploration. Engaging in hands-on exercises helped reconnect participants to nature, occasionally resulting in mystical experiences. The dimension also delved into the complexities of trauma, addressing both individual and collective levels. Real-life experiences showcased integral approaches to education, prompting participants to contemplate aligning their work and projects with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, they developed a profound understanding of designing regenerative cultures.

Topics and Trainers:



- Holistic Worldview & Reconnection with Nature - Facilitated by Macaco Tamerice.
- Transformation of Consciousness and Trauma Work - Guided by Kosha Joubert.
- Designing Regenerative Cultures - Presented by Daniel Christian Wahl.
- Evolutionary Approaches to Education - Led by Daniel Greenberg and Mugove Nyika.
- Ecovillages and the Sustainable Development Goals - Taught by Taisa Mattos.

Highlights: This dimension stood out for its candid discussions about trauma, providing a safe space for deep sharing. The participants from Ukraine were deeply touched and the session felt very timely. Another notable highlight was the session on reconnecting with nature, enabling participants to forge profound connections with themselves and the natural world through their senses. The exploration of the SDGs demonstrated their natural implementation within communities and empowered participants to discern how they could contribute. Furthermore, the dimension underscored the pivotal role of education in the ecovillage movement, offering fresh insights.

Participant Quotes:

“I am highly impressed to having partaken to this program, thanks a lot for the organizers of this program”.

“I would recommend if this program can be extended for more duration since it has highly been beneficial to me, thanks a lot for the organisers....!!!”

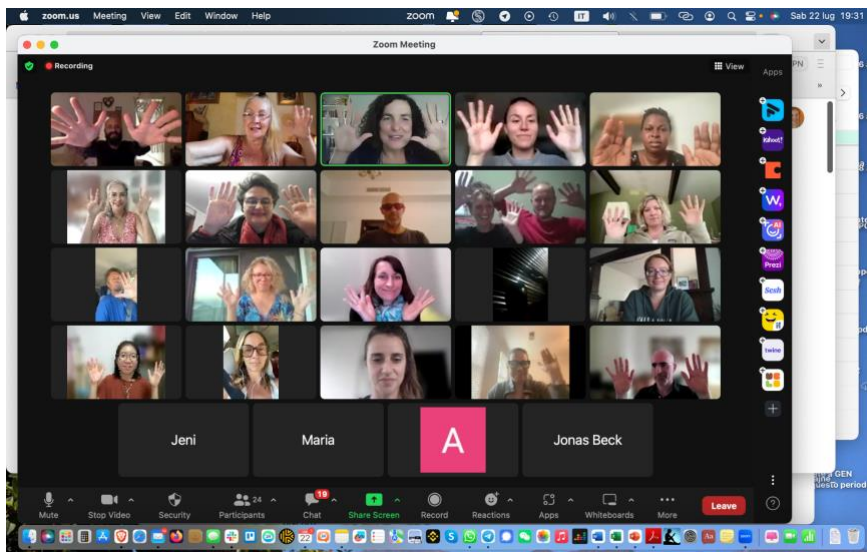
“As I have become accustomed to,...the lineup of guest hosts, talent, and commitment to the movement is awe-inspiring”.



Design Dimension (150-200 words)

What happened in this dimension? What were the highlights? What topics were covered? what practical activities were performed? 2-3 participant quotes from the Gaia Education Evaluations or other sources. A sentence on each core faculty/facilitator. Any other information that you consider relevant.

Include 2-3 pictures.



Design Approaches:

In this course, two pivotal design approaches, Dragon Dreaming and Permaculture Design, played a significant role. While some groups took longer than others to synchronize and make project decisions, the facilitators' small interventions during their meetings helped align and facilitate the co-creation of meaningful outcomes.

Highlights: The creativity and adaptation of the design projects, i.e one very global group created a project where every participant could implement the blueprint in their environments; John Croft's In-Person Session: The presence of John Croft in person for the Dragon Dreaming session on co-creating win-win projects;



Learning through Diverse Collaboration: The experience of co-creating projects with such a diverse group hailing from various parts of the world was a profound learning journey, showcasing the power of collaborative efforts.

Challenges: The process of forming and nurturing design groups in an online environment triggers many emotions, as it takes some time and patience to get the groups going. It is a totally different process than in face-to-face programmes. We were more flexible this year with the groups in terms of the size of the groups but we realised that the number of participants impacts the work. Small groups have an easier flow while bigger groups are richer in terms of perspectives and diversity. Better to keep them in similar sizes.

Participant Quotes:

“Dragon Dreaming stands as the most remarkable thing because of its radical approach and both motivated and structured presentation. Deep listening exercises was profound”.

Design Studio Case Studies

Brief description of the case studies developed during the programme if applicable.

1. **Education Design group:** A framework for the education we would have liked to receive, from traditional schooling to participatory learning environments..
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1v1eyfWdQmwQEqj78drA6IWhVtTz_pvN0XTaZO_hDyWk/edit#slide=id.g257b4448389_0_0

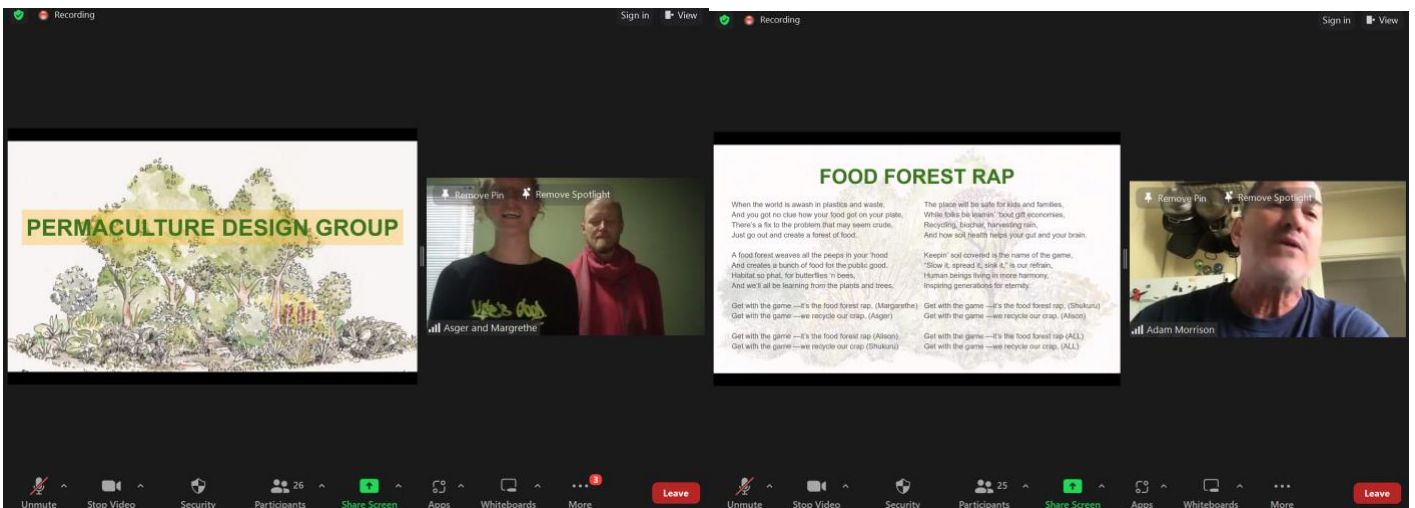


2. Permaculture Design Group:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/10D5eE6iaJpNc6qp9kRrfKpMiP6YfKk7f>

Manual: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/10D5eE6iaJpNc6qp9kRrfKpMiP6YfKk7f>

Presentation: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/10D5eE6iaJpNc6qp9kRrfKpMiP6YfKk7f>



3. Ava: A framework to design a rural fully fledged Ecovillage

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/13wA1d5ERHg5eM-UHqoQRqbqXPGPhRsW3>

Timeline: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/13wA1d5ERHg5eM-UHqoQRqbqXPGPhRsW3>



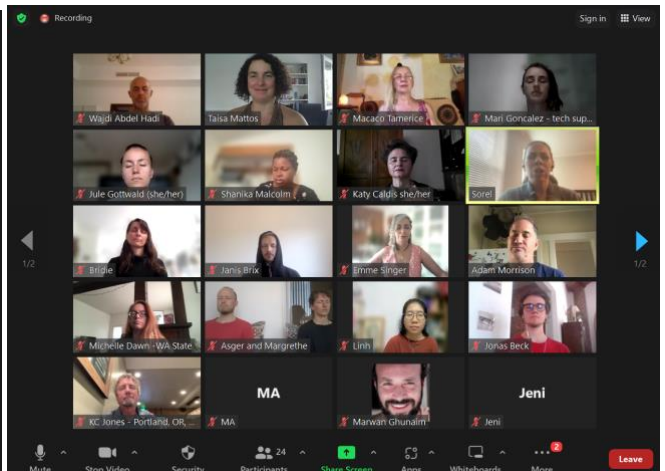
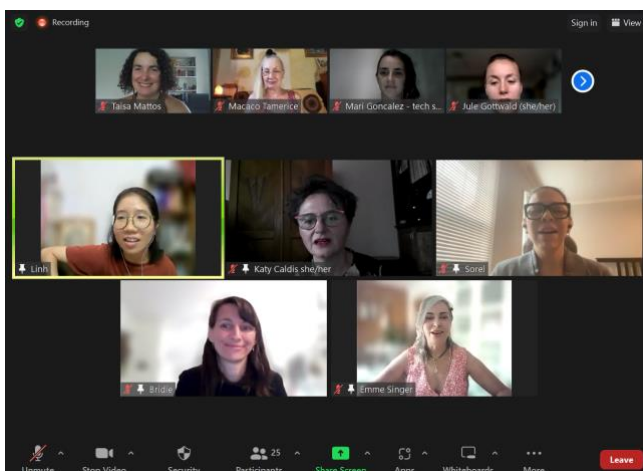
4. **Proyecto Efecto Mariposa: Overview: An Urban Ecovillage:** *To promote health, healing and wellbeing for all:* A holistic view of health, healing and wellbeing is embedded in our day-to-day community life and decisions. We share a sense of belonging and have plenty of opportunities to celebrate achieving our shared goals together.

One objective of the community butterfly urban sanctuary project is to promote health, healing and well-being for all. This involves taking a holistic view that is embedded in our day-to-day choices and community lifestyle. It also involves sharing a sense of belonging and having plenty of opportunities to celebrate achieving our shared goals together.

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Video: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1HmSBcQfDoZT3Zqd-4ALn5kbm7_lhqx6

Project: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1HmSBcQfDoZT3Zqd-4ALn5kbm7_lhqx6





Lessons Learned (50-300 words)

What could help future EDE's from your experience? What were your biggest learnings? If a recertified EDE, also list & respond to lessons learnt from your previous EDE.

Describe your EDE in terms of the know-how and learning obtained, the stories and inspiration that happen to the participants and the organisers during the EDE or a good summary of a project or activity carried out during the program. Take into consideration that this will be circulated among the Gaia Education's community, so they wish to learn, get inspired and be empowered by your program and your participant's experiences. (200 - 400 words). Include 1 or 2 pictures.

Key trends from the Gaia Education Survey Monkey evaluations, using words and charts if possible.

Summary of projects/activities participants intend to engage in, inspired by their attendance in the course (50 - 150 words):

Concise financial information showing income/expenditure.

The third cohort demonstrated the feasibility of building a remote community, overcoming challenges presented by the virtual environment and embracing the diversity of the participants' backgrounds and living situations. It serves as an inspiring call to cultivate hope, extend invitations to take action, engage, and contribute to the positive change we aspire to witness.

Highlights:

Experienced Facilitation Team: The crucial role of a well-experienced facilitation team in maintaining engagement throughout the course was highlighted. The team's increased proficiency in online facilitation techniques contributed significantly to overall effectiveness.

Diverse Expert Trainers: The addition of experts from the ecovillage movement, with diverse backgrounds, not only provided valuable perspectives but also brought in global examples, enhancing the richness of the learning experience.

Inclusivity: The online format broadened access, accommodating participants who might have faced challenges attending an in-person EDE due to economic constraints, limited local opportunities, or travel restrictions.



Rhythm and Timing: Teaching online demands a distinct rhythm and timing compared to traditional face-to-face instruction. The experience revealed the importance of concentrating on essential content while allowing room for active participation.

Weekend Schedule: Conducting the course on weekends increased accessibility, facilitating the participation of a more extensive range of individuals.

Different Tech Proficiency: Acknowledging differing levels of online tools and technology proficiency among participants, initiatives were taken to simplify and cater to diverse skill sets.

Review - What could have gone better

- **Communication Platform:** The use of Discord as a communication platform works for part of the group, but was not used by all participants. On the one hand it was instrumental in posting useful material, sharing additional resources and facilitating meaningful discussions. On the other hand it created a different level of engagement.
- **Scholarship Fund:** It is extremely important to be considered yet it did not really take off this year. Needs more time and extra effort to enable individuals with limited financial resources to participate, connecting them with donors and funding opportunities.
- **Precise Course Promotion:** The experience highlighted the importance to be very precise with course promotional materials, clearly outlining what participants should expect in terms of time commitment, content and outcomes.

Re-Designs:

Adjustments in the Economy Dimension were made, introducing complementary perspectives, and refining the content even more. For this cohort, we brought in Helena Norberg-Hodge that emphasizes the importance of localization. Our economic dimension has been improving since the beginning and we are now happy with the results.

Course Outcomes:



The Online EDE once again demonstrated its success, providing a learning journey that was both inspiring and deeply experiential. The evident ability to nurture a strong online community highlighted a unique opportunity for global exchange, bringing together participants from diverse corners of the world. This achievement was made possible with the guidance of a dedicated and skilled team of trainers.

Furthermore, the impact of the course is set to endure beyond its immediate conclusion, as several projects initiated during the program are poised to continue and make a positive difference. It is heartening to witness the ripple effect of the Online EDE, and we remain grateful for the collaborative efforts that have contributed to its success and the ongoing initiatives inspired by the course.

Course Challenges:

The group was not so diverse as the previous cohorts. There were no Latin Americans. The group was more rational and focused on content rather than processes. As an example, the cultural moment was not fully leveraged to tap into the rich diversity of cultures and traditions among the participants.

Some participants were very critical and not easy to navigate.