

“SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A JOURNEY TO ACHIEVE BALANCE WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY”

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ABSTRACT:

The growth of cities and the process of urbanisation has spread through the length and breadth across India, leading to high migration from rural to urban areas and vice-versa. In India; during the 1970-80, there has been a great influx of population migration due to Industrialisation and modernisation through development in infrastructure, communication, transportation etc. The rapid growth has led to unplanned and haphazard development which has affected the place historically, its geography, demography and even the socio-economic profile of the natives. The development is the need of the hour but haphazard and unplanned one is more dangerous and therefore planned development is the need of the hour which also needs to be sustainable as it will be futuristic and take care of our natural resources, mother earth, environment and most important our health.

The paper discusses the various measures needed to save the earth and mankind by adopting sustainable development goals to undo the adverse effects done by humans in the last few centuries.

KEYWORDS:

Sustainable, Development, Protection, Harmony, Priority.....

INTRODUCTION:

“What is truth? A difficult question; but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the ‘Voice within’ tells you”; words of wisdom from Mahatma Gandhi; they not only tell you to introspect within but also search for answers in your surroundings. The lifestyle that we live in today is full of deadlines, stress, anxiety, pollution with climate change, adulterated food, water and even air; resulting in many diseases and deaths at young age; in turn leading to lot of introspection among the population for solutions and moving towards a sustainable world around. Today; there is a lot of awareness on tree plantation, organic food, decluttering the plastic waste, using natural and native things to live in harmony with nature. In the process we are trying to make and build our life by adopting the sustainable pattern so that we build a

lifestyle and infrastructure which will be in harmony with nature, be useful and good for generations to come. In this regard the term sustainable development was used and the agencies and governments world over took cognisance of it and framed rules to prevent the earth and life on it. Thus; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) also referred to as Global Goals as they are common all over and were framed by the United Nation in 2015. Today; we have some 17 goals which are very crucial to end poverty, protect our planet earth and to ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

OBJECTIVES:

- To get insights on the concept of Sustainable Development
- To explore the various SDG’s
- To evaluate the implementations of the SDG’s

METHODOLOGY:

This study is descriptive in nature and is based on secondary data available in various research journals, books, websites, articles and journals.

Sustainable Development:

Sustainable development dwells on two main concepts; first one specifically caters and prioritises to the basic needs of the poor worldwide and the second one is related to environment and its capacity for the present and future, which depends on the technology, innovation and social systems of nation. As per the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987:43); Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable means the ability of a society to achieve a balance between socio-economic and environment factors, thus the need of the hour is to protect our mother earth, planet, resources, flora and fauna and all that we have to be protected and preserved so that it can also be useful to the coming generations and hopefully be protected by them too through awareness.

The Pillars of Sustainability:

Sustainable word indicates action, programs, and initiatives that aim at the preservation of specific

resource and identifies Human, Social, Economic and Environment as the four pillars of sustainability. These pillars are very important to keep a balance and connection with each other for the final goal. The final goal is to preserve and protect all of them for future generations to connect, enjoy the fruits and maintain harmony in all aspects for a better life.

a). **Human Sustainability:**

One of the most prized things on the earth is the Human capital and there is an urgent need to maintain and improve the quality of life by investing in health, good nutrition, education, knowledge and skills to achieve sustainability.

b). **Social Sustainability:**

The aim is to preserve social capital by investing and creating services that will build a stronger social structure. It will accommodate the communities, culture and ideas through globalisation and make the world a global village, which will impact most of the community's world over and not limit to a few areas.

c). **Economic sustainability:**

The idea is to maintain the capita income intact and improve the standard of living of majority people worldwide. To use resources efficiently as well as responsibly to sustain them. UK Government Annual Report of 2000, Jan 2001 states that "Maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth is one of the key objectives of sustainable development. Abandoning economic growth is not an option but sustainable development is more than just economic growth. The quality of growth matters as well as the quantity".

d). **Environmental Sustainability:**

It aims to improve human welfare through protection of natural resources like land, air, water, minerals, flora and fauna etc. These resources are to be used for the needs of human population and also protected parallelly for future generations without the risk of over exploitation and in danger of being extinct.

The sustainability from the point of view of environment area is centred around three issues viz; to maintain essential ecological processes, to preserve genetic diversity and to secure sustainable utilisation of species and eco-systems.

Most of the nations are involved and committed to the global goals and have framed the laws and implemented the regulation to have sustainability in all areas of development. The SDGs are integrated in such a manner that action in one area would certainly affect other ones and the new development should be planned and incorporated in such a manner to be sustainable in social-economic as well

as environmental areas. It certainly requires funds, resources and technology and the knowhow with willingness and commitment of government and people. They have prioritized progress and are aiming to reach to the ones left behind by socio-cultural norms and restrictions. SDGs (17) are specifically designed to put an end to hunger, poverty, gender discrimination, AIDS, and many others and protect the planet against all odds.

The first goal aims to **Eradicate Poverty** in all forms and around half the number of people world over living in utter poverty has reduced by half during 1990-2015; while large number is still struggling to meet the basic needs of life. In 2015, around 736 million population lived on less than US \$1.90 a day with most lacking basic needs. Industrialisation and subsequent growth in India and China lifted millions out of poverty with uneven progress and lower position of women as they are denied education, rights in property and paid less than men. Although the regions like South Asia and Sub-Saharan African countries account for majority of poor in the world. Climate change, constant conflict and food insecurity are the areas where work is needed to eradicate poverty. In India we need the minimum wage standards to be implemented strictly to avoid exploitation of labour and manpower.

Second Goal Mentions **Zero Hunger** and it is being addressed by rapid economic growth and large agricultural productivity; many developing countries that suffered due to famines and hunger are doing well today due to larger agricultural outputs. Many African, East Asian and Latin American countries have overcome utter hunger. In 2017, there were 821 million people estimated to be chronically undernourished due to environmental degradation, droughts and loss of biodiversity. The SDGs aims to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, and our government has been providing nutritious food to all Municipal School children along with all essentials like school uniform, bag, books, etc. across India to address the issue. This has lowered the school drop-out rate and parents are willing to send children to school. There are several NGOs which have started an initiative across large cities in India called the Community Fridge which is like a food bank where families give the extra food or remaining food to be consumed or shared by the less fortunate ones. This initiative is immensely popular in Mumbai as most of the marriage and home parties, wedding reception etc. donate the remaining food to them.

The third goal is **Good Health and Well-being** and we have overcome challenges like maternal and

infant mortality with less deaths due to HIV, malaria and other infectious diseases. Climate change, social inequalities and rapid urbanisation have been threats to mankind, climate and environment giving rise to rapid TB and other viral infections. Slums in major cities show increasing number of TB patients. In terms of wellness, there is more awareness on mental health and issues related to it and Mental Health Day being celebrated to spread awareness on many issues. Several well-known personalities have been promoting and addressing these issues. Schools have adopted norms to make children feel loved, cared and promote inclusivity so that children do not feel neglected, lonely and make each child feel special. The fourth goal is **Quality Education** and since 2000, the target to bring all children to school has been achieved with enrolment up to 91 per cent in 2015 in developing regions with more enrolment of girls in schools and colleges. The goal ensures that by 2030 all children will have free schooling. The State-owned schools are providing gadgets and bicycles for better convenience of students with many other amenities attracting children to school and improving literacy rate across India. Skill development or Skill based programs and Vocational trainings have been the centre in education system and promoted by government to overcome unemployment. Although there is a large disparity in people; be it rich and poor or even between boys and girls, there is a need to have inclusivity in education as it is a powerful tool for sustainable development. In Mumbai, all municipal schools have been recently renamed as Mumbai Public Schools and are providing CBSE education. Goal 5 deals with **Gender Equality**, the basic human right and it has empowered women and girls with better education and jobs. Women are now focussed, dedicated and ambitious for better opportunities and making a mark gradually. Although women are exploited sexually, socio-economically and even emotionally they have been striving for better life for their families and opportunities for daughters. Patriarchy had restricted her to the four walls of the house with no voice, but legally; today, she has the rights to a share in her father's property which is a great relief to them.

Clean water and Sanitation being the Goal 6 aims to provide safe and affordable water for all by 2030, it is very important as water scarcity has been an issue world wide due to industrialisation, urbanisation and climate change. Government has built free toilets in rural and semi urban areas with several sanitation facilities for maintaining good

hygiene. In India there are several drought prone areas where water needs have to be met through several government projects. Reuse, recycle and reduce are the need of the hour to save water and has been followed in new apartment buildings to save water wastage. In 2015, 4.5 billion people lacked safely managed sanitation services (with adequately disposed or treated excreta) and 2.3 billion lacked even basic sanitation. Sulabh Shauchalaya and others were started to provide sanitation for emergencies with paid service.

Goal 7 aims at **Affordable and Clean Energy** wherein the government provided electricity connections to reach 90 per cent households by 2018. There is a need for cheap electric power which can be addressed through solar energy. Many states like Gujrat have more solar energy consumers reducing their electricity bills to zero. Some states have been using wind energy and thermal power which are not enough. The aim is to provide electricity to all by 2030. Avoiding the use of fossil fuels and other natural resources like wood and coal have been harmful to our environment and should be banned.

Goal 8 is about **Decent work and Economic growth**, Goal 9; **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** and Goal 10 is **reduced inequalities** all three are interrelated as they stress on employment and economic growth with the help of new innovations, industries and added suitable infrastructure to have a decent lifestyle and reduce inequalities among population which has increased by 11 percent.

Goal 11 is about **Sustainable Cities and Communities** and as discussed above migration has led to making of mega cities and by 2050, two third of human population – 6.5 billion people will be city dwellers. Therefore; the need to plan the cities well so that we do not destroy the natural habitat.

Goal 12 **Responsible Consumption and Production** also deals with food production and consumption, agriculture and irrigation use 70 percent of fresh water and therefore consumption is important but wastage has to be controlled.

Goal 13 **Climate Action** is the most important goal as green house gas emissions have increased by 50 percent and global warming has started showing its effects through rise in temperatures, melting of glaciers any many others like Goal 14; **Life Below Water** mentioning the marine pollution and plastic waste a major threat to oceans and other water bodies. Around three billion people are dependent on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods and fish catch has reduced. Similarly;

Goal 15, **Life on Land** also stresses on flora and fauna on our earth which is our food with majority 80 percent coming from plants making agriculture an important resource. Although, the degradation of dry lands and fires destroying forest and resources need to be protected.

Goal 16 is **Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** are the most important needs of today. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace, stability, human rights and effective governance, based on the rule of law. Peace and Justice are requirement for mankind's growth and wellbeing and they differ from place to place and therefore human rights and international court plays a vital role.

Goal 17 is **Partnerships for the Goals** and it stresses that SDGs cannot be realized with mere talks, plans or thoughts, they will be possible only with global partnerships and assistance and Official Development Assistance remained steady but below target, at US\$147 billion in 2017. While humanitarian crises brought on by conflict or natural disasters continue to demand more financial resources and aid. Many countries also require Official Development Assistance to encourage growth and trade.

The seventeen goals are made by people for the people and are very relevant and need implementation to save our land and people from the dangers of the mistakes made by us and our ancestors.

CONCLUSION:

Sustainable development is the need of today for a better tomorrow for which lots of efforts, plans, programs are required and these seventeen SDGs are blueprints and guiding lights for saving our planet and all the resources which are damaged and on the verge of extinction. Our government has

taken several measures and work is on to implement all of them effectively, but the process is slow and progress will be seen gradually. Children in schools are taught about saving our resources and green house effects and certainly, there is a conscious effort to save our earth and resources. Each citizen has to contribute in this journey for himself and his future generations.

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