

PREFACE

Youth constitute an important fraction in the society. It is difficult to imagine a holistic life without youthful vigor, energy, enthusiasm and bubbling with joy of life. Youths constitute a large percentage of India's population but despite their decisive role in nation building, it is often observed that the country has not invested seriously in them, thereby making them an army involved in unprofitable activities. The youth form the engine room of the labour force, channel of change and represent the future of any nation. A vision of prosperous, peaceful and technologically advanced society is therefore unrealizable in an environment where youth need to be shaped a properly groomed and positioned. This is because the energy, skills and aspirations of youths are invaluable assets that no country can afford to squander. However, the youth in India have been ignored by various administrations and segments of society.

Sustainable Development is a challenge with unique characteristics. It is global in nature and involves complex interaction between climate and environmental, economic, political, institutional, social and technological processes transcending national boundaries. The global community has been struggling with the issue of how to effectively and accurately respond to the threat of unsustainable development for several decades.

The relation between human beings and the ecology is a vital issue across the word in present times. The last few decades have raised the specter of environmental disaster on scale previous generations and scientists could barely have imagined. The entire world is bombarded with climate change, global warming, social malfunctioning, and economic instability and so on.

In this traumatic situation there is a ray of hope that is the youth. Empowerment is at the centre of this aforementioned paradigm shift and attempt to re-conceptualize. It concerns development strategies aimed at poverty alleviation too. Globally and nationally, there is a realization that the involvement and the empowerment of youths is the key to achieving growth and development, and therefore there is a need to discuss how development actors can engage with youth and translate priority areas into development programming and policies. What are some of the persistent challenges and positive experiences and lessons that can be learned from countries

that have empowered and engaged youth in finding sustainable development solutions? Should we be pursuing a sectoral approach to addressing youth exclusion or invest more in a cross-cutting and capacity development approach so that youths are equipped with the technical skills and leadership qualities to respond effectively to the development challenges in their communities?

Here, it is also important to give flight to our approach of training and empowering youth for these global challenges of sustainable development. The involvement of youth and engaging them at Non-governmental organization sector can bear fruits. The non-governmental organizations work at grass-root level understanding and responding to communities needs. Hence, placing our valuable assets ‘youth’ at the disposal of Non-governmental organization for training and empowerment to address to the global challenge of sustainable development.

Narendrakumar D. Vasava