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“Sustainable development –Future for All”

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INTRODUCTION

“Sustainability is not a new subject- the security of human lives has always to some degree been understood to depend on the strength and resilience of the natural world we inhabit, throughout history people have tended to take for granted the robustness of nature and a secure place for us in it.”

Development can no longer be defined in economic terms, i.e. has a social and human face and has been understood from diverse perspectives, the practice of development has also undergone changes over the centuries as several new dimensions have been added while several old one continues to influence its form and directions, in contemporary world a development process is futile until and unless it is sustained there is growing awareness and activism relating to worsening environmental situation at the locals national and global levels the emerging environment concerns have once again led to the reconsideration of our conceptions, goals and strategies of development as a result of this our conception of development has experienced a paradigm shift and this has its expression in the concept of sustainable development which emerged in the 1980s and continue to dominate the development discourse at various levels.

Sustainable development : meaning and definition

Sustainable development (SD) is the buzzword amongst environmentalists, politicians and economists, in media and among elite masses. It is a process of developing (land, cities, natural resources, business, communities, etc.). It is widely used in speeches on environmental issues whenever needed.

The term “sustainable development” first appeared in the WCED’s report “Our Common Future” (*also known as the Brundtland Report*) in 1987 as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

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Sustainable development is that development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs

It contains two key concepts :

- The concept of “needs” in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor to which overriding priority should be given and
- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs.

In order to understand the meaning of the definition let us understand the core issues addressed in the above definition, **first** is the issue of economic growth. The economic growth not only considered essential for poverty reduction but also for meeting human needs and aspiration for better life. **Second** is the issue of limitation on the environmental ability to meet the needs of the present and future generations. Due to the pressures generated by growing societal needs, societies are using modern technologies for extracting and utilising natural resources, which are limited. If we continue to exploit existing limited natural resources, future generation will not be able to meet their own needs. Thus, environment’s ability to meet present and future generations’ needs has certain limits this is clearly reflected in the definition. Thus the concept of “sustainable development” is based on an integrated view of development and environment; it recommends pursuance development strategies in order to maximise economic growth from given ecological milieu on the one hand and to minimise the risks and hazards to the environment on the other ; for being able to meet the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability to meet those of the future generation.

In short the definition of “sustainable development” implies that

- We should direct our efforts towards redressing the damage already done to the environment by earlier unsustainable patterns of economic growth and
- We should follow such patters of development which avoids further damage to the planet’s ecosystem and ensures meeting of the needs of present as well as future generations.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION

The early roots of the concept can be traced back to the development –environment debate. The economic growth model of development, its adoption by most of the countries in the world and realisation of the consequences it produced in various forms of environmental degradation has provided the historical context for the rise of the development-environment debate. It is more important to note that the examination of the impact of the western model of development on the quality of the global environment has led to the critical reconsideration of this model of development it is realised that reckless pursuit of industrialisation and use of resources. Exploitative modern technology for development have resulted in environmental deterioration to such an extent that the very existence of all the species is endangered. while examining the consequences of the western model of development in the context of ecosystems and economies of developing nations, Sunita Narain [2002;13] comments that the ;western economic and technological model is highly material and energy intensive, it metabolises huge quantities of natural resources and leaves a trail of toxins, with highly degraded and transformed ecosystems in its wake it is this model that developing nations are also following for economic and social growth, leading to an extraordinary cocktail of poverty and inequality side by side with growing economies, pollution and large scale destruction.

In 1972 the United Nations conference on human environment took place in Stockholm, Sweden. The Stockholm conference was historical in the sense that environmental problems received a formal recognition for the first time at global level. The modern industrial societies could realise that here is only **one world** .it was also recognised that environmental problems are global problems requiring international solutions, then ,in the year 1981 the concept of sustainable development appeared for the first time it was enshrined in the title of key document –world conservation strategy; living resources conservation for sustainable development , published by the international union for conservation of nature and natural resources [IUCN] ,the world wildlife fund [WWF] and UN environment Programme [UNEP] in 1983 the United Nations set up the world commission on environment and development [WCED] headed by Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway as an independent body. Its objective was to re-examine the critical environment and development problems on the planet and to formulate realistic proposals to solve them, and to ensure that human progress will be sustained through development without bankrupting the resources of future generations. Another document ‘caring for the earth strategy for sustainable living published by IUCN, UNEP AND WWF IN 1991 has suggested a revised global strategy for the conservation of nature. In 1992 representative of over 150 countries met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. For the

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development popularly known as the 'Earth Summit' it produced the Earth Charter 'a code of conduct or plan of action for the 21st century'. i. e **Agenda 21**. Thus various international events and publications have contributed to the making of the concept of 'sustainable development'. Let us now understand the sustainable development goals and United Nations role.

"The Sustainable Development Goals {SDGs}" otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

The SDGs work in the spirit of partnership and pragmatism to make the right choices now to improve life, in a sustainable way, for future generations. They provide clear guidelines and targets for all countries to adopt in accordance with their own priorities and the environmental challenges of the world at large. The SDGs are an inclusive agenda. They tackle the root causes of poverty and unite us together to make a positive change for both people and planet. "Supporting the 2030 Agenda is a top priority for UNDP," said UNDP Administrator Helen Clark. "The SDGs provide us with a common plan and agenda to tackle some of the pressing challenges facing our world such as poverty, climate change and conflict. UNDP has the experience and expertise to drive progress and help support countries on the path to sustainable development."

The SDGs came into effect in January 2016, and they will continue to guide UNDP policy and funding for the next 15 years. As the lead UN development agency, UNDP is uniquely placed to help implement the Goals through our work in some 170 countries and territories.

Our strategic plan focuses on key areas including poverty alleviation, democratic governance and peace building, climate change and disaster risk, and economic inequality. UNDP provides support to governments to integrate the SDGs into their national development plans and policies. This work is already underway, as we support many countries in accelerating progress already achieved under the Millennium Development Goals.

Our track record working across multiple goals provides us with a valuable experience and proven policy expertise to ensure we all reach the targets set out in the SDGs by 2030. But we cannot do this alone.

Achieving the SDGs requires the partnership of governments, private sector, civil society and citizens alike to make sure we leave a better planet for future generations,

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT—GOALS

1. NO POVERTY

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity; globally more than 800 million people are lacking access to adequate food clean drinking water and sanitation. Rapid economic growth in developing countries has lifted millions out poverty but progress has been uneven , women are more likely to live in poverty than men due to unequal access to paid work, education and poverty progress has also been limited in other regions new threats brought on by climate change, conflict and food insecurity means even more work is needed to bring people out of poverty .the sustainable development goals are bold commitment to finish what we started and end poverty in all forms and dimensions by 2030.

2. ZERO HUNGER

Rapid economic growth and increased agricultural productivity over the past two decades have seen the number of undernourished people drop by almost half ,these are all huge achievements in line with the targets set out by the first millennium development goals ,unfortunately extreme hunger and malnutrition remain a huge barrier to development in many countries the sustainable development goals aim to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030 making sure all people especially children –have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round . this involves promoting sustainable agricultural practices supporting small scale farmers and allowing equal access to land, technology and markets. it also requires international co-operation to ensure investment in infrastructure and technology to improve agricultural productivity. Together with the other goals set out here we can end hunger by 2030.

3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

We have made huge strides in reducing child mortality improving maternal health and fighting HIV AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Since 1990 there has been an over 50% decline in preventable child deaths globally. Everyday thousands of women die during pregnancy and

from childbirth related complications in many rural areas, only 56% of births are attended by skilled professionals. AIDS is now leading cause of death among teenagers, these deaths can be avoided through prevention and treatment, education, immunization campaigns and sexual and reproductive health care. The sustainable development goals make a bold commitment to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030. The aim is to provide access to safe and affordable medicines and vaccines for all.

4. QUALITY EDUCATION

Since 2000 there has been enormous progress in achieving the target of universal primary education. The total enrolment rate in developing regions has reached 91% in 2015. There has also been dramatic increase in literacy rates and many more girls are there in schools than ever before these are remarkable successes. Progress has also been tough in some developing regions due to high levels of poverty, armed conflicts and other emergencies. Achieving inclusive and quality education for all reaffirms the belief that education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles of sustainable development, it also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training to eliminate gender and wealth disparities and achieve universal access to a quality higher education.

5. GENDER EQUALITY

Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right but it also crucial to accelerating sustainable development it has been time and again empowering women and girls has a multiplier effect and helps drive up economic growth and development across the board , there are still huge inequalities in the labour market in some regions with women systematically denied equal access to jobs violence and exploitations , the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work and discrimination in public office , all remains huge barriers affording woman equal right to economic resources such as land and property are vital targets to realizing this goal today there are more women in public office than never before but encouraging women leaders will help strengthen policies and legislation for greater gender equality

6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Water scarcity affects more than 40% people around the world, an alarming figure that is projected to increase with the rise of global temperature as a result of climate change. Although 2.1 billion people have gained dwindling supplies of safe drinking water is a major problem

impacting every continent ensuring universal access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030, requires we invest in adequate infrastructure, provide sanitation facilities and encourage hygiene at every level protecting and restoring water – related ecosystem such as forests mountains wetlands and rivers is essential if we are to mitigate water scarcity more intermittent co-operation is also needed to encourage water efficiency and support treatment technologies in developing countries

7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Between 1990 and 2010, the number of people with access to electricity has increased by 1.7 billion and all the global population continues to rise so will be the demand for cheap energy . A global economy relies on fossil fuels and the increase of greenhouse gas emission is creating drastic changes to our climatic systems. This is impacting every continent, ensuring universal access to affordable electricity by 2030 means investing in clean energy sources such as solar, wind and thermal, adopting cost effective standards for a wider range of technologies could reduce the global electricity consumption by buildings and industry by 1.4%. This means avoiding roughly avoiding 1,300 mid-size power plants. Expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology to provide clean energy in all developing country is a crucial goal that can be both encourage growth and help the environment

8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Over the past 25 years the number as workers living in extreme poverty has declined dramatically despite the lasting impact of the 2008 economic crises and global recession in developing countries the middle class now makes up more than 34% of total employment, a number that has almost tripled between 1991 and 2015. however, as the global economy continues to recover, we are seeing slower growth, widening inequalities and not enough jobs to keep up with a growing labour forte, according to the international labour organization more than 204 million people were unemployed in 2015 the sustainable development goals promote sustained economic growth higher levels of productivity technological innovation. encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation are key to this as are effective measures to eradicate ported labour, slavery and human trafficking with the targets in mind the goal is to always achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all men and women by 2030.

9. INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Investment in infrastructure and innovation are crucial drivers of economic growth and development. With over half the world population now living in cities, mass transport and renewable energy are becoming ever more important, as are the growth of new industries and information and communication technologies.

Technological progress is also key to finding lasting solutions to both economic and environmental challenges, such as providing new jobs and promoting energy efficiency. Promoting sustainable industries, and investing in scientific research and innovation, are all important ways to facilitate sustainable development.

More than 4 billion people still do not have access to the Internet, and 90 percent are from the developing world. Bridging this digital divide is crucial to ensure equal access to information and knowledge, as well as foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES

It is well documented that income inequality is on the rise, with the richest 10 percent earning up to 40 percent of total global income. The poorest 10 percent earn only between 2 percent and 7 percent of total global income. In developing countries, inequality has increased by 11 percent if we take into account the growth of population.

These widening disparities require the adoption of sound policies to empower the bottom percentile of income earners, and promote economic inclusion of all regardless of sex, race or ethnicity.

Income inequality is a global problem that requires global solutions. This involves improving the regulation and monitoring of financial markets and institutions, encouraging development assistance and foreign direct investment to regions where the need is greatest. Facilitating the safe migration and mobility of people is also key to bridging the widening divide

11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

More than half of the world's population now live in urban areas. By 2050, that figure will have risen to 6.5 billion people – two-thirds of all humanity. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces.

The rapid growth of cities in the developing world, coupled with increasing rural to urban migration, has led to a boom in mega-cities. In 1990, there were ten mega-cities with 10 million inhabitants or more. In 2014, there are 28 mega-cities, home to a total 453 million people.

Extreme poverty is often concentrated in urban spaces, and national and city governments struggle to accommodate the rising population in these areas. Making cities safe and sustainable means ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, and upgrading slum settlements. It also involves investment in public transport, creating green public spaces, and improving urban planning and management in a way that is both participatory and inclusive.

12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Achieving economic growth and sustainable development requires that we urgently reduce our ecological footprint by changing the way we produce and consume goods and resources. Agriculture is the biggest user of water worldwide, and irrigation now claims close to 70 percent of all freshwater for human use.

The efficient management of our shared natural resources, and the way we dispose of toxic waste and pollutants, are important targets to achieve this goal. Encouraging industries, businesses and consumers to recycle and reduce waste is equally important, as is supporting developing countries to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption by 2030.

A large share of the world population is still consuming far too little to meet even their basic needs. Halving the per capita of global food waste at the retailer and consumer levels is also important for creating more efficient production and supply chains. This can help with food security, and shift us towards a more resource efficient economy.

13. CLIMATE ACTION

There is no country in the world that is not experiencing first-hand the drastic effects of climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, and are now more than 50 percent higher than their 1990 level. Further, global warming is causing long-lasting changes to our climate system, which threatens irreversible consequences if we do not take action now.

The annual average losses from earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and flooding amount to hundreds of billions of dollars, requiring an investment of US\$6 billion annually in disaster risk management alone. The goal aims to mobilize \$100 billion annually by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries and help mitigate climate-related disasters.

Helping more vulnerable regions, such as land locked countries and island states, adapt to climate change must go hand in hand with efforts to integrate disaster risk measures into national strategies. It is still possible, with the political will and a wide array of technological measures, to limit the increase in global mean temperature to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. This requires urgent collective action.

14. LIFE BELOW WATER

The world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. How we manage this vital resource is essential for humanity as a whole, and to counter balance the effects of climate change.

Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. However, today we are seeing 30 percent of the world's fish stocks overexploited, reaching below the level at which they can produce sustainable yields.

Oceans also absorb about 30 percent of the carbon dioxide produced by humans, and we are seeing a 26 percent rise in ocean acidification since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Marine pollution, an overwhelming majority of which comes from land-based sources, is reaching alarming levels, with an average of 13,000 pieces of plastic litter to be found on every square kilometre of ocean.

The SDGs aim to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution, as well as address the impacts of ocean acidification. Enhancing conservation and the sustainable use of ocean-based resources through international law will also help mitigate some of the challenges facing our oceans.

15. LIFE ON LAND

Human life depends on the earth as much as the ocean for our sustenance and livelihoods. Plant life provides 80 percent of our human diet, and we rely on agriculture as an important economic resource and means of development. Forests account for 30 percent of the Earth's surface, providing vital habitats for millions of species and important sources for clean air and water; as well as being crucial for combating climate change.

Today we are seeing unprecedented land degradation, and the loss of arable land at 30 to 35 times the historical rate. Drought and desertification are also on the rise each year, amounting

to the loss of 12 million hectares and affects poor communities globally. Of the 8,300 animal breeds known, 8 percent are extinct and 22 percent are at risk of extinction.

The SDGs aim to conserve and restore the use of terrestrial ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, dry lands and mountains by 2020. Halting deforestation is also vital to mitigating the impact of climate change. Urgent action must be taken to reduce the loss of natural habitats and biodiversity which are part of our common heritage.

16. PEACE JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTION

Without peace, stability, human rights and effective governance, based on the rule of law - we cannot hope for sustainable development. We are living in a world that is increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace, security and prosperity, while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. This is by no means inevitable and must be addressed.

High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long standing grievances that can last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk.

The SDGs aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

17. PARTNERSHIP FOR THE GOALS

The SDGs can only be realized with a strong commitment to global partnership and cooperation. While official development assistance from developed countries increased by 66 percent between 2000 and 2014, 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 world today is more interconnected than ever before. Improving access to technology and knowledge is an important way to share ideas and foster innovation. Coordinating policies to

help developing countries manage their debt, as well as promoting investment for the least developed, is vital to achieve sustainable growth and development.

The goals aim to enhance North-South and South-South cooperation by supporting national plans to achieve all the targets. Promoting international trade, and helping developing countries increase their exports, is all part of achieving a universal rules-based and equitable trading system that is fair and open, and benefits all.

Conclusion:

There are broad vistas for the enhancement of the environmental quality and creation of good life what is needed is an enthusiastic and calm state of mind and intense but orderly work. For the purpose of attaining freedom in the world of nature, man must use knowledge to build, in collaboration with nature, a better environment. to defend and improve the human environment for present and future generations has become an imperative goal for mankind, a goal to be persuade together with, and in harmony with, the established and fundamental goals of peace and world-wide economic and social development

To achieve this environmental goal with demand the acceptance of responsibility by citizens and communities and by enterprises and institutions at every level, all sharing equitably in common efforts. Individuals in all walks of life as well as organisations in many fields, by their values and some of their actions will shape the world environment of the future. Local and national governments will bear the greatest burden for large scale environment policies and action within their jurisdiction. international cooperation is also needed in order to rise resources to support the developing countries in carrying out their responsibilities in this field .a growing class of environmental problems , because they are regional or global in extent or because they affect the common international realm , will require extensive cooperation among nations and actions by international organisations in the common interest the action calls upon governments and peoples to exert common effort for the preservation and improvement of the human environment for the benefit of all the people and for their prosperity.