



**GOALS AND CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

Prof. Sunita L. Thakkar

Department of Economics

D.N.P. Arts & Commerce College, Deesa.

Abstract

On 1st January 2016, the world officially began implementation of a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the period 2015-2030. SDGs are the road map for people and planet, which is based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ensure sustainable social, economic and environmental progress. Sustainable development is an overview of its goals and available data shows the most significant gaps and challenges. Sustainable development is an integrated concept which embraces three dimensional issues – economic, social and environmental. Sustainable development does not stop the use of limited natural resources but requires that it should be used properly. But many developing countries are blindly running for growth and development only. Such countries are not agreed with this concept. These countries want economic growth at any cost as they know without economic growth sustainable development is not possible.

Key words: Sustainable Development Goals, Millennium Development Goals, United Nations Development Programme, Economic Development

Introduction

“The day will come when nations will be judged not by their military or economic strength, not by the splendour of their capital cities and public buildings; but by the wellbeing of their people, by their level of health, nutrition and education, by their facilities to earn and fair reward for them, protection for vulnerable and disadvantaged, and women and their children.”

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

(UNICEF, NY, 1998, Progress of Nations)

India was considered as a stagnant economy having low per capita income, consumption, production and saving rate. Traditional agricultural structure was existing. So the standard of living was very low and poverty appeared everywhere. Industrial development was very low. Half the population belonged to poverty group and inequality seen in the distribution of income and wealth.

But now a day, India is emerging as an economic superpower. In India around 17% of the world's population is there among which 35% is poor and almost 40% is illiterate in the world. After economic reforms it has been found that there is improvement in economic growth, foreign exchange rate, technological revolution, import-export structure, agricultural sector, industrial sector etc. Income distribution has become more unequal. Agricultural sector is considered as one of the most important sectors in Indian economy as it provides livelihood to 67% of the population. Agricultural sector share in GDP has been reduced now a day. Because of illiteracy and some social reasons, sex ratio is very low. All such reasons make more distance economically and socially.

In rural areas, most of the population is dependent on primary sectors i.e. agriculture, forests, fisheries etc. and natural resources i.e. water, biodiversity, coastal areas, green areas etc. for their livelihoods. Air, water and soil are the most important natural sources for life. But now a day these sources have been shrinking. In many states of India and in the world people are getting insufficient water. Water crisis is increasing as demand of water is increasing and unequal distribution of water. There are limited natural resources and people are not having sufficient knowledge for its usage. Water level has been going down because of climate change, water pollution, degradation of forests etc. As population in India is increasing rapidly, the limited natural resources availability per capita is decreasing.

1. Meaning of Sustainable Development

The World Commission on Environment and Development (The Brundtland Commission) define many definitions about sustainable development. Among all these, the

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

simplest one is, “Sustainable Development is the development which meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In 1992 the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro where the International Community had adopted Agenda 21. In Agenda 21 social, environmental and economic concerns were integrated in a one single policy framework. Three components of sustainable development (social development, economic development and environmental sustainability) were recognized as interdependent and mutually enforcing pillars in it. In 21st century, Agenda 21 and the Rio principles are the blue print for sustainable development. Sustainable development focuses area of energy, water, education, food security, health, technology, environment, sanitation etc. For strengthening commitment and enhancing delivery, civil society, government and the business sector needs to be mobilized for sustainable development. Such partnerships will be succeed if they are SMART means Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound. For sustainable development equality, stability and balanced global economic system having production and consumption with sustainability is the priority.

2. The Sustainable Development Goals

189 countries of the world met in 2000 to discuss about the future. They saw some problems of the world. These problems were found in their cities, towns and villages also. They came to know that billions of people all over the world also want a better future for them, so leaders of these countries made a plan having 8 goals called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals are imaginations of a future after 15 years having rid of poverty and hunger. That’s why it is known as an ambitious plan.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is one of the leading organizations which is working to achieve these MDGs. UNDP funded those projects which help to fulfil the goals. Through various programmes UNDP tries to spread awareness among the people and give their contribution in them.

Due to such programmes progress has been achieved at somewhat. Hunger, poverty, illiteracy, mortality rate has been declined. These countries want to go further more so the new set of goals known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

declared. End of poverty and hunger by 2030 has been decided in SDGs. People and planet are co-related so leaders of the world have focused on the land, oceans, environment etc. to set goals.

UNDP is the leader of this global movement. SDGs are as follow

1. **No Poverty:** Poverty is one of the biggest threats for the world in all its forms. To end poverty is an ambitious goal. The world got success in 2000 in reducing the strength of people who live in extreme poverty by half during 15 years. But till now more than 800 million people are still living in extreme poverty around the world. Now it's time to walk together to end the poverty by 2030.
2. **Zero Hunger:** During last 20 years, hunger has declined by almost half. Many countries which were suffering from famine and hunger can now get nutritious food. Now it's time to go ahead and end hunger and mal-nutrition for all. We have to do something to promote sustainable agriculture and to achieve food security. We have to make the world where everyone has enough and nutritious food all year around. Let's go forward and make it a reality by 2030.
3. **Good Health and Well-being:** As said, "Health is said". This sentence shows the importance of health. Health affects each and every sphere of the life. So it's a goal to make everyone healthy, safe and effective medicines and vaccines should be available at any time.
4. **Quality Education:** Poverty is the biggest enemy of education. Poverty keeps a number of kids around the world out of school. Quality education means to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. It means education which can promote lifelong learning opportunity for all. Since 2000, changes have been found in primary education for children all over the world. But it's not enough. We should still need better grade.
5. **Gender Equality:** It means end of discrimination against women and girls everywhere. Still gender inequality is there in the world. In politics, social, economic sphere, everywhere discrimination has been found.

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

6. **Clean Water and Sanitation:** As water is a life, everybody on the earth needs it. But only need of water is not enough but everyone can easily have safe and pure water at affordable rate is one of the sustainable development goals for 2030. Many people are having clean drinking water and sanitation but around the world many people are not getting pure and clean drinking water. They are not having sanitation facilities also. In future it has been seen clearly that the world is going to face scarcity of water as sources of drinking water are limited and they are highly affected by climate change. By having international co-operation taking care for wetlands and rivers, sharing technologies of water treatment, we can accomplish this goal.
7. **Affordable and Clean Energy:** The world's population is increasing day by day. Each and every one needs not only electricity but electricity at the cheapest rate to light their homes, streets, for business etc. The ways we are getting energy are dangerous for environment i.e. fossil fuels, emission of greenhouse gases etc. For clean and cheap energy we can divert for solar and wind energy. Thus we can protect the environment on the earth.
8. **Decent Work and Economic Growth:** When people are having job with enough salary that support themselves and their families is one of the important parts of economic growth. Steps for promotion of policies should be taken which help to encourage entrepreneurship and create more jobs for men and women. By this traffic of human for jobs slavery can be eradicated. This goal means to promote sustained, inclusive economic growth and to provide full and productive employment to all who are capable and eligible for it.
9. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** Through technologies we all are connected all over the world. Due to technologies we come to challenge and overcome the global challenges. We are able to share our views about technology for innovations, industry and infrastructure. The more we invest the better we will get off from it. By all these ways we can facilitate sustainable development.

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

10. ***Reduce Inequalities:*** All over the world income inequality has become a great challenge. To minimize it, we must apply those policies which can provide equal opportunity to everyone without asking them from where they belong.
11. ***Sustainable Cities and Communities:*** Migration from rural area to urban area is rapidly increasing all over the world. So cities are getting bigger. People are highly attracted for cities for business, education, culture etc. All of these people are not rich. Poverty is also among them. To make sustainable cities and communities we can make houses at affordable rate. We can increase transportation facilities, green spaces etc.
12. ***Responsible Consumption and Production:*** In the world all people are not getting equal food stuff to consume. Some people are having a lot of and some having a very little. Among these, a major part of population does not even meet their basic needs also. We should use our natural resources in such a way that in present, as well as, in past everyone would be able to get it for consumption. But it's a difficult task to achieve. So we should not waste food and use our resources efficiently.
13. ***Climate Action:*** Drastic changes have been taken place in climate now a day in the world. Due to tsunamis, earthquakes, decreasing area of glaciers, cyclones, droughts, floods etc. loss of lives is increasing. Global warming has become a great challenge for the world. Climate is changing suddenly. Seasons do not remain regular. By technologies at somewhat we can control the temperature and thus can control climate at some level. By working together the world can meet this sustainable development goal.
14. ***Life under Water:*** Oceans are having great importance in human life as they absorb about 30% carbon dioxide created by them. Oceans give food and income to the people who depend upon marine and coastal diversity. But now a day oceans have become polluted. So many pieces under water are affected. So, to maintain and protect life below water has become a goal of sustainable development.

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

15. ***Life on Land:*** All human beings as well as millions of animal species etc. live on the earth and getting food, air and water from there. They all are combatting climate change. Plants give us food and many other useful things in one and other forms. Forests help us to keep earth's climate in balance and keep air clean. Millions of birds and animals are getting shelter over there. But now a day area of available land and forests are decreasing rapidly. Animals breeds are going disappeared. Sustainable development goals aim to conserve and restore forests, wet lands, mountains, dry lands etc.
16. ***Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions:*** Peace is an essential element in everybody's life. To maintain peace, justice, human rights, laws etc. are necessary. Some countries or regions in the world are enjoying peace and justice. While some are under pressure of crimes, terrorism, exploitation etc. which are obstacles in their development. This goal of sustainable development aims to keep and maintain peace and justice all over the world. Because these are the basic need for sustainable development.
17. ***Partnerships for the Goals:*** Countries are connected with each other in one or another form. So the international bond between countries becomes stronger. The world is now a day interconnected by internet, transportation, and many international institutions. So we can try to work together to achieve each and every goal of sustainable development even though these goals are not so small. 193 countries all over the world agreed for these goals.

3. **Challenges of Sustainable development**

After knowing the sustainable development goals we can easily note the challenges of sustainable development. They are as follow.

1. ***Population:*** The world's population is increasing rapidly. So it becomes a big challenge for the sustainable development. In the beginning of the 21st century the population of the world has reached 6 billion. It has been expected that by next 50 years it would be more than 10 billion.

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

2. ***Poverty and Hunger:*** Poverty is a great challenge for world. Almost 767 million people in the world are poor while 800 million do not have enough to eat. Due to poverty a number of people are suffering from undernourishment. Arable land is also decreasing.
3. ***Inequality:*** The poor has become poorer and the rich has become richer. Inequality is seen all over the world. Due to inequality exploitation has raised its arms and the distance between the rich and the poor is increasing. To reduce this distance has become a great challenge for the sustainable development.
4. ***Shortage of Drinking Water:*** Sources of clean and pure drinking water are limited. Pollution spread by the industries and other sources has created the shortage of drinking water. We are wasting too much pure water and lakes, ponds, wells, rivers etc. are not now full with water. So shortage of drinking water has become a big obstacle in sustainable development.
5. ***Human Health:*** In many developing countries there is scarcity of medicines. Many diseases in these countries are not curable. To reduce the death rate among children under five years and maternal mortality rate is the biggest challenge for sustainable development.
6. ***Consumption of Energy:*** It is a major challenge for the sustainable development. Consumption rate of energy is increasing while its production rate is low. So to produce energy without having adverse effect on environment is a challenge for the world.
7. ***Maintain Forests:*** Forests all over the world are decreasing due to one and another reason. So to increase and maintain forests has become a major barrier for the sustainable development.
8. ***To Save the Environment:*** In developed countries the limit of emissions of greenhouse gases is decided. In many countries emission of greenhouse gases is constantly rising. So to save the environment from such gases has become a great challenge for the sustainable development.

4. Strategies for Sustainable Development

Sustainable development doesn't mean to create a barrier in the process of development but it means how to use our limited resources so that in future our future generations can have them. It teaches us to establish a strong relation with the world. To achieve sustainable development goals there are many useful strategies. By innovations we can satisfy our maximum needs with a use of minimum resources, having a number of technologies we can use resources efficiently. By using solar and wind energy we can save the environment. Now a days our Indian government is giving more importance to solar energy for sustainable development. Government is providing subsidy for solar panel. The government should develop the rural areas and create employment over there so the migration from rural area to urban area can be reduced. By decreasing the usage of petrol, diesel and increasing the usage of LPG, CNG etc. we can minimize the greenhouse gas effect. By increasing agricultural productivity we can reduce the rate of these products and make them available to all.

5. Suggestions for Sustainable Development

- All stakeholders should participate to manage the effective usage of limited natural resources. In India, 73rd and 74th amendments have been done in the constitution to empower the women, to eradicate inequality at political level. Such steps should be taken all over the world to reduce the level of inequality at political, social and economic levels.
- We all are equally participants of sustainable development. We all should try our level best to make others aware and to participate in the process of sustainable development.
- All over the world, some social groups are eliminated in the process of development. We should try to empower such groups and make them to come in mainstream of development.

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

- Children are the assets of the nations. So it's our duty to provide them healthy, enriched environment for their development so they can develop the nations in future.
- Social and economic distance among the population is the biggest positive element for sustainable development. But when there is any quarrel among them then it becomes the biggest obstacle in the development process. So the government should try to eradicate this conflict among them.
- For sustainable development we should optimize our gains from different-different sources and not from only one source.
- By public and private partnership we can plan to achieve sustainable development.

6. Conclusion

Sustainable development does not mean to stop the usage of natural resources. But it tells us about the effective usage of these resources so that wastage can be eradicated. Many developing countries do not accept this concept as they want growth and development anyhow. Without this growth sustainable development cannot be achieved, as significant economic growth is the basic need for it. Sustainable development is a global concept. So it considers poverty, hunger, transboundary problems, environment, bio-diversity, technologies etc. So we all should try to walk together to achieve sustainable development.

7. References

1. Chakrabarthy, K.C. (2013). Financial Inclusion in India-Journey So Far and Way Forward, RBI Monthly Bulletin, October 2013.
2. Sukanya, N. (2016). Strategy and Sustainability of Financial Inclusion in India. Southern Economist. 55(16), 9-14.
3. Sawhney, H.K. (2006). Development, Sustainability, Equality & Women's Issues. New Delhi: Elite Publishing House Pvt Ltd

Samvid Multidisciplinary Research Journal

4. <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2016/The%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals%20Report%202016.pdf>