

Women Empowerment: A major prerequisite for Sustainable Development

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The term ‘ Sustainable’ stands for sustainability and it represents an approach to development which is concerned with such fundamental human problems like poverty, environment, equality, democracy, development and peace. The 17 Goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which set out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals. Now only ten years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. So the world leaders at the SDG Summit in September 2019 called for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, and pledged to mobilize financing, enhance national implementation and strengthen institutions to achieve the Goals by the target date of 2030. In this context Women’s active participation is vital for ensuring sustainable development. Equality between men and women is also a precondition for sustainable development. In sustainable development it requires a strategic perspective to take into account what the next generation of women and men are leaving. Women’s contribution to sustainable development, and their knowledge and skills, must be recognized. Women have a strong role in educating and socializing their children, including teaching them how to take care and responsibility with regard to the use and protection of natural resources. Today, women are still underrepresented among those who take the decisions in legislation administration that will impact future generations. Without a more fair distribution of resources today and tomorrow, sustainable development can not be achieved: the predominant disparities are strongly gendered. A vital prerequisite for pursuing sustainable development is to recognize this and act upon it.

Key words

Sustainable development, women empowerment, gender equality, equal participation.

Sustainable development represents an opportunity to construct a new approach, and the success of these efforts has powerful implications for issues of peace security, stability in every society. The term ‘Sustainable’ stands for sustainability and development of all fundamental human concerns like poverty, environment, equality, democracy, development and peace. The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to initiate action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The 17 Goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and it sets out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals. With only ten years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, world leaders at the SDG Summit in September 2019 called for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, and pledged to mobilize financing, enhance national implementation and strengthen institutions to achieve the Goals by the target date of 2030, leaving no one behind. In this context world leaders have emphasised the role of women in active and full participation is vital for ensuring sustainable development. Equal rights, privileges and obligations for women and men are a matter of human rights and social justice. Greater equality between men and women is also a precondition for sustainable development focused on individuals. Women's and men's views, desires, wishes and preferences must be taken into account not only as a matter of social justice, but because they are important to improve developmental processes. In sustainable development it requires a strategic perspective to take into account what the next generation

of women and men are leaving. Women's contribution to sustainable development, and their knowledge and skills, must be recognized.

Women have a strong role in educating and socializing their children, including teaching them how to take care and responsibility with regard to the use and protection of natural resources. In almost all developing regions, women are often the primary users and managers of land, forest, water and other natural resources. Women in rural areas of developing regions spend major parts of their day growing food, gathering fuel wood, cooking and carrying water. Indigenous women have a special relationship to natural resources. Their cultures and practices promote a balanced, respectful use and preservation of natural resources so that future generations can meet their needs. Yet most development schemes today ignore the needs and practices of indigenous peoples.

Today, women are still underrepresented among those who take the decisions that will impact future generations. Achieving both intra-generational and inter-generational justice is a goal towards which there is joint responsibility between both women and men. Without a more fair distribution of resources today and tomorrow, sustainable development can not be achieved. A vital prerequisite for pursuing sustainable development is to recognize this and act upon it. Taking into account the desires, interests and expertise of women and their abilities can ensure a better view of society complexities

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without the full and equal participation of women. Women share the primary responsibility for nutrition, child care and household management in almost all countries. They are also active in environmental management. In most developing countries, women play a major role as farmers, animal tenders, and water and fuel collectors. Yet, despite their roles, women are not adequately represented in the decision-making processes related to the issues of environment and development at local, national or international levels.

When it comes to representation of women in legislative bodies, India is among the bottom group of nations in the world. Women's representation has always been less than 50% in Lok Sabha and in the State Assemblies. On the other hand, the situation is different in the case of local government bodies. As one-third of seats in local government bodies (panchayats and municipalities) is reserved for women, there are more than 10 lakh elected women representatives in rural and urban local bodies. In achieving sustainable development empowering women is a process that involves non-discriminatory environment for women and strengthening their capacity to take control of their own lives and contribute fully to bringing about the necessary progressive changes in societies for our future Generation. This mechanism must be followed by the Government and corporate sectors jointly by taking proactive action.

Women empowerment

Around 2005 and 2012, almost 20 million women have fallen out of the Indian workplace (equivalent to the entire population of Sri Lanka). Each of these women has lost opportunity, not only for their own economic prosperity, but also for their communities and their nations. Creating a dialogue on women's empowerment as necessary for the nation to accomplish any of its other sustainable development.

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It is an opportune time to revisit and reform outdated legislation and policies that act as deterrents to women entering or staying in the labor market. Fostering the creation of better jobs, providing support for child and elder care, and ensuring mobility to and from work can remove significant structural barriers for women to access employment.

Employers need to ensure equal participation of women and also commit to supporting diversity in the workplace by hiring women and paying them the same wages as men for similar jobs. We need safe transportation and zero tolerance of sexual harassment in the office. The private sector should take a leading role in expanding women's share of employment and firm ownership in emerging industries. By working together "

Conclusion

All forms of discrimination against all women and girls must be ended. violence against women and girls in the public and private sectors such as trafficking and sexual and other type of exploitation should be eliminated. Any harmful practices against child like early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation should be stopped. Also sufficient attempt must be made to identify and value unpaid care and domestic work by all female workers and provide them all necessities. Whether it is a public life or political life women's full participation must be ensured. Women must be given equal rights to economic resources. Women must be empowered by educating in recent advancement in information and communication technology. Gender equality must be promoted by legislating suitable laws empowering women in all facets of life.

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