



## **ROLE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Introduction**

Education is seen as a big force, a force that not only contributes to national development, but also for sustainable development. Education promotes development of knowledge and skills required to achieve Sustainable Development (SD). It encourages promotion of economic well-being, social equity, democratic values and much more. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) enables people and citizens to learn as to how to preserve earth resources which are limited in availability. The E & D has the objective of empowering present and future generation to meet their needs using a balance and integrated approach to the economics social and environmental dimensions of SD.

The concept of SD has been broadly defined by the world commission on environment and development (1987) as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The definition acknowledges that while development may be necessary to meet human needs and improve the quality of life, it must happen without depleting the capacity of the earth’s resources meet the current and future needs.

Sustainable Development can be defined as those development activities that do not degrade the environment and can be carried on for a long period of time. One of the central principles of sustainable development must be defined in terms of sustainability in all countries, developed or developing, market oriented or centrally planned.

Education for Sustainable Development gives learners of all ages the knowledge, skills, and values to address interconnected global challenges including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources and inequality. It empowers learners of all ages to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action to change society and care for the planet. ESD is a lifelong learning process and an integral part of quality education. It enhances the cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning

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and encompasses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment itself. It empowers all the learners to make informed decisions and take responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations.

### **Vision on Education for Sustainable Development**

In the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century international community realized the value of education for sustainable development. It now strongly feels that we need to foster through education values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future. Education for sustainable development has an important role to play in our life styles and behavior. Education is seen as a process of learning as to how to make decisions that affect us. It is concerned with the future of the economy environment and social well-being of all the communities. Building the capacity for such future oriented thinking is a key task of education.

It enables them to address the complex problems of society and environment such as illiteracy, poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, gender inequality, health and violation of human rights that threaten our future. The vision of education stresses on a holistic, integrated and interdisciplinary approach to development of knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as changes in values, behavior and life styles. This requires us to reorient educational curricula to programmes, policies and practices in order to empower people (especially youth) to make decisions and act in culturally appropriate and locally relevant ways to address and redress the environmental problems that threaten our common future. This enables people of all ages to develop and evaluate an alternative vision of a sustainable future and fulfill this vision through working creatively with others.

Thus basic education is a key to nation's capacity to develop and achieve sustainability targets. The basic education can improve agricultural productivity, enhance the status of women. Reduce population growth rates increase environmental protection and generally raise the living standards. "The pandemic has firmly established the need to place sustainability towards the top of India Ine's Agenda, (The Economic Times, 2020).

### **Role of Education for Sustainable Development**

The complex modern world issues brought about by environmental deterioration and unstable conditions can be tackled through education only. Science education for sustainable development is essential for transforming attitudes, raising consciousness and giving people the information and abilities they need to understand the importance of embracing sustainable behaviors.

Education for sustainable development promotes research and provides information needed to solve sustainable developmental problems arising out of human-made decisions. Education as an investment in human resources plays an important role among the factors which contribute to sustainable development.

### **ESD Promotes and Encourages Sustainable Society**

Quality education is an important key for achieving a more sustainable society. This was vociferously emphasized at the UN World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, where the reorientation of current education systems was outlined as the key to SD. It may be noted that education for SD promotes the development of the knowledge skills, values and actions required to create sustainable society, which ensures environmental protection and conservation, promotes social equity and encourages economic well-being.

Traditionally, India has been a sustainable society. In order to promote the value of sustainable development in education, the Indian government has directed its various education departments to actively work out on an Environment Education (EE) component as a part of the curriculum.

### **ESD aims to Develop Knowledge about Environment**

The concept of ESD developed basically from environmental education, which has sought to develop the knowledge, skills, values and behavior in people to give more attention to protection of environment. The aim of ESD is to enable people to make decisions and carry out actions, without compromising the planet of earth. College, school and university closures have kept most of the students' world wide out of educational institutions. Online education facilities are not accessible to those who are without technological gadgets like computers, laptops and tablets. A majority of students are managing online teaching on their mobiles but most affected have been the object, poor and resource less. The aim of ESD is to enable people to make decisions and carry out actions without compromising the earth's resources.

### **The ESD Outlines Integration of Principles and Practices of Sustainable Development**

The goal of the decade (2005-2014) as outlined by UNESCO is to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects and dimensions of education. Thus it aims to encourage changes in behavior that will create a more sustainable future.

In his international implementation scheme for DESD, UNESCO states that ESD is fundamentally about behavior and values, particularly respect for others, including those of present and future generations, for the environment and for the earth's resources. (UNESCO 2006). Education enables us to understand ourselves and others. ESD aims to enable us to adopt behaviors and practices which will lead us to live a full life without being deprived of basic human needs and demands.

### **ESD Focuses on Environmental Themes and Concerns**

The ESD offers a beautiful vision of future with the dominant focus on environmental concerns. It also addresses themes such as poverty alleviation, citizenship, peace, ethics, governance, justice, human rights, gender equality, corporate responsibility, natural resources management and biological diversity.

The ESD shares the values and principles that underpin sustainable development. It in fact, promotes critical thinking, problem solving and action orientation, all of which develop confidence facing challenges related to sustainable development.

### **Conclusion**

The future can be sustainable if we prioritize education for it. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) provides the knowledge, skills and values required to tackle intricate global issues. Investing in education for sustainable development is still a crucial step towards a better and more sustainable future as we navigate an ever changing global landscape.

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