



## Sustainable Development: Three Pillars of Sustainability, Goals and Strategies

Dr. Md Umar Rayees\*

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Maulana Azad College, Ranchi University, Ranchi & Academic Counselor (Commerce), IGNOU Regional Centre, Ranchi.

\*Corresponding author: umarrayees786@gmail.com

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**Abstract:** Sustainable Development serves as a worldwide framework for advancement that harmonizes economic growth, social fairness, and environmental conservation to fulfill current requirements without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. Its fundamental elements consist of the three pillars: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations offer a comprehensive action plan comprising 17 interrelated goals and 169 targets aimed at achieving this equilibrium by the year 2030. Essential strategies encompass resource efficiency, climate action, social inclusion, responsible governance, and equitable progress distribution, all collaboratively contributing to the establishment of a balanced and enduring future. India has been instrumental in the development of the SDGs. This article will concentrate on identifies and contends that the overarching theme of sustainable development revolves around both intra- and intergenerational equity, fundamentally based on three distinct yet interconnected pillars: Environment, Economy, and Society along with associated strategies.

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### Introduction

In 1980, the IUCN published the World Conservation Strategy, which introduced the idea of "sustainable development." According to Our Shared Prospects, "Development must consider social and ecological factors, in addition to economic ones, to ensure sustainability."<sup>1</sup> It has become clear that we can no longer consider social and economic development in isolation from the environment. The UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio in June 1992, marked a significant milestone by drawing global attention to the environmental and developmental challenges faced by countries as a community. This summit brought together governments from various nations, representatives of international agencies, as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations, all united by the common objective of preparing the world to achieve long-term goals related to sustainable development.

The concept of the three pillars: social, environmental, and economic—as encapsulated by the summit motto "People, Planet, and Prosperity"—was established at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.<sup>2</sup>

### Review of Literature

There are many different origins and definitions of the term sustainable development:

- Brundtland Commission Report - "Our Common Future" – The report defines "Sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the current without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>3</sup>
- Sustainability can be defined as "using resources to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>4</sup>

### Objectives of Study

The document emphasizes critical matters associated with the principles of sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This comprehensive approach aims to fulfill the needs of the current generation without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satisfy their own requirements.

- **Economic Sustainability:** Guarantees that companies achieve profitability and expand while effectively utilizing resources and preserving economic viability.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Concentrates on reducing environmental impact by implementing practices that lower resource consumption, emissions, and waste generation.
- **Social Sustainability:** Advocates for fairness, equality, and inclusivity in business operations, ensuring that all stakeholders benefit from financial activities.

### Research Methodology

It is a descriptive study by nature basically it is based on secondary data which has been taken from case studies journals newspapers books and online database. We have kept the research study easy to understand.

### Sustainable Development

Sustainable development refers to "development that can be sustained either indefinitely or for a specified duration. Structurally, this concept can be viewed as a combination of two terms, "sustainable" and "development." Just as each of these two words that together create the notion of Sustainable development—"sustainable" and "development"—has been defined in multiple ways from different viewpoints.<sup>5</sup>

### Relationships among the Environment, Economy and Society

The notion of sustainability seems set to persist in shaping future discussions surrounding development science. According to Porter and van der Linde, the optimal choices are expected to be those that fulfill societal needs while being environmentally and economically sustainable, as well as socially equitable and environmentally acceptable. This perspective gives rise to three interrelated spheres or domains of sustainability that illustrate the connections between the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainable development.<sup>6</sup>

### Pillars of Sustainable Development

As a forward-thinking and visionary development framework, sustainable development (SD) highlights a constructive transformation path fundamentally rooted in social, economic, and environmental considerations. Taylor identifies three primary concerns of sustainable development: economic growth, environmental conservation, and social equity. Consequently, it can be asserted that the notion of SD is fundamentally based on three conceptual foundations. These pillars are "economic sustainability," "social sustainability," and "environmental sustainability."<sup>7</sup>

### Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability refers to a production system that meets current consumption demands without jeopardizing future requirements. Historically, economists, under the assumption of an unlimited supply of natural resources, placed excessive focus on the market's ability to allocate resources effectively. They also held the belief that economic growth would be paired with technological advancements capable of restoring natural resources depleted during production. However, it has become evident that natural resources are not boundless; furthermore, not all resources can be renewed or replenished. The expanding scale of the economic system has strained the natural resource base, necessitating a reevaluation of traditional economic theories.<sup>8</sup>

### Social Sustainability

Social sustainability includes concepts of equity, empowerment, accessibility, participation, cultural identity, and institutional stability. The idea suggests that individuals are significant, as development revolves around people. Essentially, social sustainability signifies a framework of social organization that reduces poverty. Nevertheless, on a more fundamental level, the term "social sustainability" pertains to the connection between social issues like poverty and environmental degradation. In this context, the theory of social sustainability asserts that poverty alleviation should not lead to unnecessary environmental harm or economic instability. It should strive to reduce poverty while remaining within the current environmental and economic resource limits of society.<sup>9</sup>

### Environmental Sustainability

The idea of environmental sustainability pertains to the natural environment and its ability to remain productive and resilient in order to support human existence. Environmental sustainability is connected to the integrity of ecosystems and the carrying capacity of the natural environment. It necessitates the sustainable use of natural capital as both a source of economic inputs and a sink for waste. The implication is that natural resources should be harvested at a rate that does not exceed their capacity for regeneration, while waste must be released at a rate that does not surpass the environment's ability to assimilate it. This is due to the fact that the earth's systems have limits or boundaries that must be respected to maintain equilibrium.<sup>10</sup>

### Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals were established by the United Nations in 2015 as a global call to action for individuals to tackle five essential areas of significance by the year 2030: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. Prior to delving into the primary challenges encountered in sustainable development, let us first examine the objectives of sustainable development, which are outlined as follows

- **No Poverty:** The goal of sustainable development is to remove poverty at all levels in any economy.
- **Zero Hunger:** To achieve food security improved nutrition and hunger and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Good Health and Well-being:** To ensure healthy life and promote well-being for all and at all ages.
- **Education:** To insure and provide inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **Gender Equality:** Empowering women and girls in order to achieve gender equality in the society.
- **Clean Water and Sanitation:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- **Clean and Affordable Energy:** To ensure the access of reliable affordable sustainable and modern energy for all.
- **Decent Work and Economic Growth:** To provide and create decent work promote sustained inclusive and sustainable economic growth full and productive employment to all.
- **Industry Innovation and Infrastructure:** To promote sustainable industrialization create and foster innovation and build resilient infrastructure.
- **Reduce Inequality:** Reduce inequality within among the countries.
- **Sustainable Cities and Communities:** In order to make cities sustainable and human settlement inclusive safe and reliable to all.
- **Responsible Consumption and Production:** Sustainable measures for production and consumption pattern should be ensured.
- **Climate Action:** In order to combat climate changes and its impact climate studies needs to be undertaken and implemented and act accordingly.
- **Life below Water:** The conservation of the ocean seas and Marine resources for the sustainable development.

- **Life on Land:** The conservation and sustainable use of territorial ecosystem in order to protect restore and promote forest and reserve land degradation and biodiversity loss.
- **Please Justice and Strong Institution:** In order to promote peace in the society for sustainable development justice for all effective building accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels is required for all.
- **Partnership to Achieve the Goals:** Global partnership to achieve strengthen implement and revitalize for sustainable development.

In 2015, the 193 nations comprising the United Nations (UN) reached a consensus to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This landmark agenda outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have been elaborated upon in our previous article, along with targets aimed at ensuring dignity, peace, and prosperity for both the planet and humanity, to be achieved by the year 2030. The agenda focuses on various areas for intervention, including poverty alleviation and sanitation, while also aiming to strengthen local economies and meet the social needs of individuals.<sup>11</sup>

### Strategies for Sustainable Development

The fundamental concept of sustainable development is not to hinder the development process, but rather to effectively utilize our resources in a manner that fosters a connection between the current and future generations. It is essential to consider what actions should be taken to achieve sustainable development that will ensure the well-being of future generations. To attain sustainable development, the following strategies may prove beneficial-

- **Advancing Environmental Education and Awareness:** Environmental education ought to be at the core of all learning processes, as it will significantly contribute to transforming individuals' mindsets and attitudes towards our planet and its natural environment.
- **Technology:** The appropriate technology is one that is locally accepted, resource-efficient, and environmentally friendly. Utilizing local resources and labor is the primary choice; indigenous technology is also beneficial. These technologies are cost-effective and sustainable by nature, often serving as a model that leverages the natural conditions of the region. By doing so, we can achieve sustainable development, a concept referred to as design with nature. The technology should minimize resource usage and generate minimal waste.
- **Resource Utilization According to Carrying Capacity:** Every system can support a limited number of organisms over an extended period, which is referred to as its carrying capacity. In the case of humans, the concept of carrying capacity becomes significantly more intricate. This complexity arises because, unlike other animals, humans require not only food for survival but also a variety of other necessities to uphold their quality of life. The sustainability of a system is largely contingent upon its carrying capacity.
- Enhancing the quality of life encompasses social, cultural, and economic dimensions. Development should not solely concentrate on a specific segment of already prosperous individuals. Instead, it must facilitate the equitable distribution of benefits between the wealthy and the underprivileged. Additionally, the preservation of tribal and ethnic communities along with their cultural heritage is essential. There should be robust community involvement in both policy formulation and implementation.
- The approach of reduce, reuse, and recycle emphasizes the importance of minimizing resource consumption by utilizing them repeatedly rather than discarding them as waste. This method involves recycling materials and reusing resources to attain sustainability objectives. It alleviates the strain on our resources while also decreasing waste generation and pollution.<sup>12</sup>

### Conclusion

The primary objective of sustainable development (SD) is to establish a balance among environmental, economic, and social sustainability, thereby positioning these as the foundational pillars of sustainable development (SD). While it does not take a definitive stance, the sustainability of society can be considered contingent upon the presence of adequate health systems, peace, and respect for human rights, decent employment, gender equality, quality education, and adherence to the rule of law. Conversely, the sustainability of the economy relies on the implementation of suitable production, distribution, and consumption practices, whereas environmental sustainability is influenced by effective

physical planning, land use, and the conservation of ecology and biodiversity. Despite the abundance of definitions and interpretations surrounding SD in the literature, a common thread in the various perspectives on the concept is the principle of intergenerational equity, which acknowledges both the immediate and long-term consequences of sustainability to meet the needs of present and future generations.

India will persist in its efforts to implement the SDG agenda by fostering close collaboration between national and sub-national governments, alongside the active involvement of all pertinent stakeholders. Bi-annual reviews will be carried out with state governments to identify effective practices and challenges, and to make necessary adjustments accordingly.

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