

On September 2015, United Nations embarked on a bold, structured plan to revolutionise the world. This was the day when 193 member countries adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined as a unanimous commitment to end poverty, fight inequalities, tackle climate change while ensuring no one is left behind and more. The 193 countries' plan to make the world a better place has a deadline of 2030.

A case of mixed priorities: are some sdgs more important than others?

Lately, it has come into notice that the public has a tendency to support SDGs that seem to be more concerned with immediate human needs. SDGs that relate to provision of food, water, health, or energy fall under the category that receives more attention as they are easily understood and relatable by most. However, when it comes to goals that seem idealistic or utopian, like addressing income inequality, achieving gender equality or responsible consumption, people start to unplug from them. Add to this the fact that focus and funding for SDGs is heavily directed towards more well-known global issues like SDG 2 which is to end hunger and SDG 4 which aims for achieving quality education for all.

A commitment to end poverty

“Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilisation work.”

Vince Lombardi

If one tracks the progress towards achieving SDG 17, which is building partnerships for the goals, one realises that a vast majority of countries are falling short. As long as this continues to be the case, the prospect of achieving the supplemental 16 goals will remain difficult.

Solutions for the way forward

I believe all goals are of equal importance and therefore should be prioritised accordingly. In my opinion, globalisation has transformed the world into a global village.

Consequently there should be a salubrious and a thriving symbiotic relationship between governments; public and private bodies and institutions across the globe.

The way I see it, governments, world leaders and concerned authorities should share knowledge and cooperation for access to science, technology and innovation in the less and middle-income countries; enhance policy coherence for sustainable development; invest in collaborations and encourage effective partnerships to achieve our collective goals.

A powerful way to think about it is to realise that we won't achieve full equality by merely focusing on our own struggles and ignoring causes that don't involve us because none of us is free until all of us are free. As Nelson Mandela said, "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." Despite the challenge, achieving all SDG goals may liberate millions of people from a state of despair. The time has come when each of us should introspect and be willing to ask if we don't make a move now then who will and when?

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