Sustainable development goals: Realities and illusions

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AREAS FOR SCIENTISTS AND EXPERTS OF BANGLADESH

Scientists from science, bio-medical backgrounds, social science and experts from various fields may take note of the following aspects for their research and actions: (i) Networks of professional and experts will have to provide the policy makers with data/information and analysis on some priority SDG goals which are to be addressed in Bangladesh immediately. Unfortunately, benchmark data and quality periodic data are not available in Bangladesh for the majority of 169 targets some of which are not even quantifiable. So, the challenge must be tackled primarily by the relevant government agencies which can be complemented by special focus studies by scientists and experts; (ii) Professional and experts should launch new research, action research and demonstrate models to promote innovative knowledge and practices for fulfilling SDG goals; (iii) The organisations and networks of organisations to which scientists, social scientists and experts are affiliated with should come up with measures to solve national as well as global problems; and (iv) The scientists and experts should come up with pragmatic design of projects and programmes as well as implementation processes for achieving SDG goals in Bangladesh and in other countries.

CONCLUSION

I would like to mention that there are several challenges before Bangladesh. We have to reduce percentage of poor from 25 percent now to much lower level by 2030. We have to reduce maternal mortality, child mortality rates and increase enrolment to primary school to by 2030. The quality of education in Bangladesh needs to be improved significantly. The poor in Bangladesh still suffer from nutritional deficiency which can be improved by increasing entitlement capacity of the poor to have balanced diet.

I shall not go into the various challenges and caveats we face, but will single out one of the most important challenges that are "institutional challenge". Impact of various efforts for improving the socio-economic conditions of the poor in the developing countries can be maximised through proper management and implementation of development projects. Effective project management and implementation are also crucial for sustainable development. Institutions, which encompass entities at the local level, community level, national level, and project management units, are integral parts of project management and implementation. However, despite strong statements and rhetoric from politicians and policy makers about the essential role of institutions, and the realisation of its potential contribution in development efforts; the issues of institutions have received relatively little attention by policy makers, planners and implementers of development projects.

Nobel laureate Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore about 89 years ago lamented in his poem about the ill effects of environmental degradation on human beings, "My voice is choked, my flute is tuneless. My world is dark, the air is poisonous, people who are responsible for these, cannot be pardoned."

In conclusion I would like to say, time has come for everyone to act now so that the commitment of SDG "Leaving no one behind" can be achieved throughout the world in the shortest possible time.

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