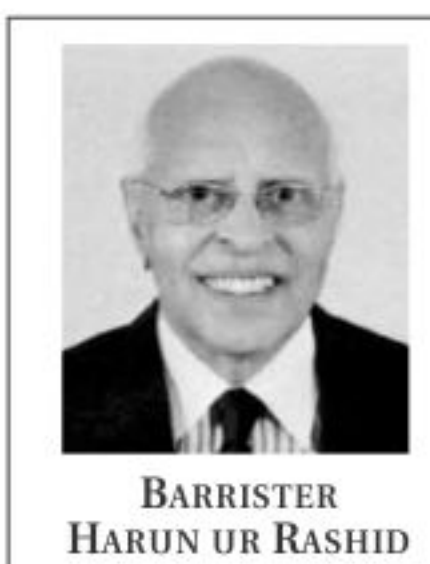


BOTTOM LINE

GLOBAL SOCIAL BUSINESS SUMMIT

Beacon of hope and empowerment



BARRISTER HARUN UR RASHID

THE 4th Global Social Business Summit was held from November 8 to 10 in Vienna. It was inaugurated by Queen Sofia of Spain. The conference is organised by Grameen Creative Lab (Germany) and Yunus Centre (Bangladesh).

The Summit is the leading forum for social business worldwide and brings together experts from corporations, civil society, governments and academia. It is reported that more than 600 experts from different backgrounds attended the Summit. Many young people are enthused with the concept because traditional institutions are failing them.

Relieved from the responsibility of managing director of Grameen Bank, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus has been able to invest more time and energy in popularising the social business concept, which has become an important component for capacity building in business as well as in employment.

This year, the focus will be on combining human creativity with the advantages of technological progress to foster innovative ideas for social business to serve society's most pressing needs. Companies such as Danone, Intel, Veolia Water, Renault and McCain shared their experiences in developing innovative technological solutions within the social business framework.

The conference was appropriately held in Vienna, as Europe has been suffering from

debt crisis, high unemployment and dwindled income of all people. A clarion call for creating jobs is reverberating all across Europe, and social business could be the mechanism for creating jobs for the unemployed.

Social Business is an innovative concept because it is not a charity. It is a no-loss, no-dividend business enterprise with social objectives. Social business has to generate social gain and maximise social returns like patients treated, houses built, or health insurance extended to poor people.

The blending of business approaches within a philanthropic model to help the poor and disadvantaged section of the community is innovative. The philosophical underpinnings of such activities are based on creating a community based on social justice and human rights. German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) defined such type of activities as "natural rights."

For social business entrepreneurs, the prime motivation is the altruistic attitude. It implies spirit of benevolence, compassion and empathy. They operate in the realm of the heart and mind. Heart which feels for the people and the mind which thinks for and with the people.

Nobel Peace Laureate and human rights activist Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) once said: "True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring." This implies that the causes of begging are to be addressed through innovative interventions.

Social businesses may cover reduction of poverty and diseases, combating global warming, or any issues that create a minimum standard of living and quality of life necessary

for human dignity. The investors can recoup their funds but may not take any profits.

What social entrepreneurs try to do is come up with ideas to solve a problem confronted by poor people. Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They offer new ideas for wide-scale change in thinking and action.

What sets social business entrepreneurs apart is that they have taken action to do something about it, namely, devise a solution for the need and follow through to take that solution to others through non-loss and non-profit businesses.

In other words, use of capital is focused on philanthropy, but with focus on development objectives. As a result, some charity foundations now carefully consider not just whether a project will benefit people, but whether it will achieve a greater impact than other potential social investments.

A charitable dollar can be used only once. A dollar invested in a self-sustaining social business is recycled endlessly. For example, you don't buy a fish for the poor but give a fishing rod to the poor to catch fish.

Social business entrepreneurs create new industries to meet the needs of the poor and disadvantaged people in the community. Social businesses are of two types:

- Businesses focused on social objectives. For example, Producing something for the benefit of the poor;
- Businesses owned by the poor who can receive benefits from investments. For example, a product produced by the poor but exported, with the net profit going to the poor.

The purpose of social business is solely to achieve one or more social objectives

through the operation of a business, and no personal gain is desired by investors. Social objectives include health care for the poor, housing for the poor, financial services for the poor, nutrition for malnourished children, providing safe drinking water and introducing renewable energy for the poor.

Social business will have the following ingredients:

- Social objectives for helping the poor;
- Community ownership of social business;

and academic institutions may encourage the idea of social business among the community by organising workshops and seminars. The role of the media is very important to popularise innovative social business in the community.

Social business is not confined to any particular country as it embraces all countries. The main focus is to create jobs and banish poverty from the planet. The concept is



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ground-breaking, the purpose is noble, and its fulfillment is the cherished goal. It is a tool for empowerment and harnessing the potential of young people.

I am confident that given the pool of innovative and imaginative social entrepreneurs in the country, social business will attract many of them and

make Bangladesh a pioneer in the field of social business entrepreneurs to help poor and underprivileged in the country.

Next year's Social Business Summit will take place in Malaysia, followed by the sixth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

The writer is a former Bangladesh Ambassador to the UN, Geneva.

WORLD DIABETES DAY

Protect our future

MUHAMMAD ABDUL MAZID

DIABETES is a group of metabolic diseases, clinically known as Diabetes Mellitus, in which a person has high blood sugar, either because the body does not produce enough insulin, or because cells do not respond to the insulin that is produced. Glucose is vital to human health because it is the main source of energy for the cells that make up muscles and tissues. This high blood sugar produces the classical symptoms of urination, increased thirst and increased hunger. If anyone has diabetes, no matter what type, it means he has too much glucose in his blood -- although the reasons may differ -- which can lead to serious health problems.

There are three main types of diabetes: Type 1 diabetes -- insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) -- results from the body's failure to produce insulin, and presently requires the person to inject insulin. Type 2 diabetes results from insulin resistance, a condition in which cells fail to use insulin properly, sometimes combined with an absolute insulin deficiency. Gestational diabetes is when pregnant women, who have never had diabetes before, have high blood glucose level



attention to issues of paramount importance to the diabetes world and keep diabetes firmly in the public spotlight.

This year's World Diabetes Day campaign is a worldwide clarion call to action to protect the health of our future generations. The campaign aims to convey the urgency with which the diabetes epidemic must be approached. The WDD 2012 campaign marks the fourth year of the International Diabetes Federation's five-year focus on "Diabetes education and prevention."

Following the United Nations Summit on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) in 2011, governments must continue to strengthen the momentum generated by the event and widen the awareness of the factors responsible for the global diabetes and NCD epidemic. They must also identify solutions that are required to counter it. On this premise, the WDD focus has been placed on highlighting the importance of education -- for health professionals, people with diabetes and people at risk -- in reducing the impact of diabetes throughout the world. The campaign aims to educate, engage and empower youth and the general public on diabetes. The slogan chosen for the campaign is "Diabetes: Protect our Future."

The 2012 campaign puts special focus on children and young people as the driving force for the promotion of education and prevention messages. It has been revealed through recent researches that Type 2 diabetes can be prevented through healthy eating and physical activity. In this context, the young people should be inspired, local communities engaged, and governments should recognise the importance of early awareness of the risks and dangers of this serious and deadly disease. The three key messages of this year's campaign are: (a) Access to essential education for everyone; (b) The way of living is putting human health at risk; (c) People with diabetes face stigma and discrimination

Uniquely for a global campaign of any kind, WDD exposes and explains the links between the risk factors for diabetes and the worsening state of the planet's health. Even more importantly, WDD focuses on the ways in which health-protective behavioural changes, from the individual to the multinational/corporation level, will help protect the future of individuals, communities and, indeed, an entire species.

In the fight against discrimination, the International Diabetic Federation launched the first ever International Charter of Rights and Responsibilities of People with Diabetes in 2011: a balance between rights and duties to optimise health and quality of life; to enable as normal a life as possible; and to reduce/eliminate the barriers which deny realisation of full potential as members of the society. It is extremely frustrating to suffer blanket bans, and many examples exist, including insurance, driving licenses, getting a job, keeping a job and family affairs.

We must change the public's approach to food and dietary health, particularly among young people; transform the way people eat by educating children about food; give families the skills and knowledge they need to cook; and motivate people to "stand up for their right to better food." It's crucial for children to learn about food -- where it comes from, how it affects their bodies and how one can cook nutritious meals with fresh ingredients.

We must change the public's approach to food and dietary health, transform the way people eat, give families the knowledge they need to cook, and motivate people to "stand up for their right to better food."

during pregnancy. It may precede development of Type 2 DM.

All forms of diabetes have been treatable since insulin became available in 1921, and Type 2 diabetes may be controlled with medication. Adequate treatment of diabetes is thus important, as well as blood pressure control and lifestyle factors such as smoking cessation and maintaining a healthy body weight.

People all over the world, especially in developing countries, have the impression that diabetes is a disease of the rich. That is not the case. Diabetes is rising faster in developing countries like Bangladesh. There are many reasons for the increase, but a key reason is that lifestyles are changing faster in developing countries.

This change is related to urbanisation and globalisation. One can't stop it, it is part of civilisation. What is of concern is that with this increased urbanisation people are getting less physical exercise. Even if they want to exercise, there's less space to do that. Workplaces, schools and colleges have few or no facilities for physical activity.

Diabetes has come a long way in terms of public awareness, particularly since the 2006 UN "World Diabetes Day" Resolution. World Diabetes Day became an official United Nations Day with the passage of United Nations Resolution 61/225 proposed by Bangladesh. Bangladesh Diabetic Samity (BADAS) backed the government of Bangladesh, and was instrumental in campaigning for this resolution to draw

The writer is Chief Coordinator, Diabetic Association of Bangladesh. E-mail: mazid1273@hotmail.com

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Adaptation plan



SALEEMUL HUQ

AS the 18th Conference of Parties (COP18) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) approaches (it is to be held in Doha, Qatar from November 26 until December 7), preparations are being made to discuss a number of items on the agenda.

One of the major items on the agenda is adaptation to climate change, on which some progress has been made already.

The Cancun Adaptation Framework adopted at COP16 in Cancun, Mexico in December 2010, agreed the broad programme on adaptation and set up a high level Adaptation Committee to oversee all the adaptation related activities. This was a significant breakthrough, as until then adaptation related topics were scattered across many different negotiating tracks.

At COP17 in Durban, South Africa in December 2011, countries further agreed to support the preparation of National Adaptation Plans (NAP) for developing countries, starting with the Least Developed Countries (LDC). They charged the LDC Expert Group (LEG) with responsibility to develop guidelines for preparing the NAPs, which are to be launched at COP18. The LEG recently carried out an expert consultation on the draft guidelines and these should be ready by Doha. I will describe some of the proposed elements below.

NAPs and NAPAs

The LDCs have already developed their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA), and most of them are being implemented already. There are four main differences between the NAPAs and the NAPs.

Firstly, the NAPAs were meant to identify "urgent and immediate" adaptation projects only, whereas the NAPs are meant to be much bigger and long-term planning exercises.

Secondly, the NAPAs were meant to be done by the LDCs only, whereas the NAPs will be for all developing countries and not just for LDCs (although they will also start with the LDCs).

Thirdly, the NAPAs were the first such exercise on adaptation planning anywhere, so all the countries started from the same level. This is no longer the case since many countries have already initiated adaptation plans and activities of various kinds. Hence the NAPs will start from different points in each country.

Finally, there is no longer any need to develop stand-alone adaptation plans, but rather to integrate (and ultimately mainstream) adaptation into national planning at all levels (including national, sectoral and local level development plans). Thus the NAP exercise is no longer about developing a "Plan" but about initiating a "planning process" to integrate adaptation within national development plans.

Bangladesh's role

Bangladesh has been playing a key role within the LDC Group on adaptation over the years and has a member on the high level Adaptation Committee.

At the same time, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), which Bangladesh did on its own after doing its initial NAPA, is a de facto NAP and hence Bangladesh is already ahead of other LDCs. This is an opportunity for Bangladesh to share its experience and knowledge with other LDCs as they prepare their NAPs in the coming years.

Conclusion

Over the last decade, as adaptation to climate change has been increasingly recognised as an essential strategy to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change, it has also been realised that it is not only the LDCs that will need to adapt but all countries, including developed countries (the recent experience with Hurricane Sandy in the United States of America has made even the US recognise this unavoidable fact). Thus the upcoming NAP exercise will now be relevant for all countries and indeed be an opportunity for South-South as well as South-North knowledge sharing.

The writer is Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Independent University, Bangladesh, and Senior Fellow at the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development.

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