

Climate Change, Environmental Protection & Social Equity

Insights Gained

- Education around Sustainability, Environmental Protection, & Social Equity :
 - Insights gained :
 1. A large portion of an individual's career trajectory, well-being & quality of life is dependent on 3 factors over which the individual has no control :
 - a) Socio-Economic status of the individual's parents, particularly at the time of his/her birth
 - b) Gender
 - c) Whether the individual was born in an Advanced nation or a Developing nation or a War-torn nation
 2. The Climate Change crisis is as much as Psychological crisis, as much as it is an Environmental & Social crisis
 3. There is a huge gap between what is required from Sustainability Professionals in their day-to-day work, vs what the Educational Institutions teach.
 - a) Technical focus ... no focus on Business Models, Responsible Consumption, Law
 - b) Business focus ... do teach about Business Models & Strategy, Circular Economy, LCA, etc but there is little focus on Environmental & other laws, International Frameworks. No focus on Change Management, Psychology, Advocacy, etc
 - c) Law focus ... only focus on national & international law. No focus on other aspects
 - d) Industry body certifications (Green Building, Energy Auditor, sustainability reporting, etc) do provide practical tools that are needed. There is little to no mention of these in educational programs

The Key Issues

- Education around Sustainability, Environmental Protection, & Social Equity (continued) :
 - India is expected to be at the centre of disruption due to Climate Change. There is an added sense of urgency required, and proper messaging that is needed in order for Adaptation & Mitigation efforts to gain traction.
 - Given our bureaucracy and slow court processes, efforts need to be augmented through Advocacy, Policy Making and Public Engagement. These aspects are completely missing as of now, from the Educational Programs
 - The Psychology & Spirituality elements too need to be brought in. The denial of Climate Change & its impacts, the fact that the negative impacts of Climate Change are borne by the vulnerable population, by women & children is a pointer to the moral deficit that exists in society. Any discussion around Climate Change therefore also needs to include Social Equity. This too is missing in Curriculum taught in Educational Institutions today.
 - Elements of Change, beginning with Personal Change, and then expanding it to include Family & Friends, Local Community, & Society as a whole need to be made integral to any Curriculum.
 - Based on the insights developed through my experience in the Sustainability role, pursuit of various educational programs & interactions with various educational institutions; I am attempting to put together a multi-disciplinary program at the Beginner, Intermediate & Advanced levels covering the very diverse requirements required of Sustainability Professionals. In order to enhance knowledge of participants, they would be required to complete Projects in an area of their choice, and would be provided Mentoring support through a pool of Professionals. Field trips & presentations at conferences would be integral to the program. This would create a win-win situation through creation of original knowledge that is contextual & relevant, on one side; & by providing student with top-notch Mentoring support at a early stage of their careers it would help shape society in a positive way for the future. Other outcomes : development of eco-friendly products & their commercialization, reputation enhancement through presentations at conferences & seminars.

Summary

- Education around Sustainability, Environmental Protection, & Social Equity (continued) :
- In Summary, I am trying to create the next generation of Leaders & Professionals who are aware of the multi-disciplinary nature of the Sustainability related challenges that lie ahead; are not daunted by the scope of the challenge, but are equipped with the necessary knowledge & tools; and are inspired & energized to act in a manner that is consistent with the belief that it is possible to build a world that progresses in economic terms, while at the same time making sure that the coming generations inherit an Earth that is still life giving, and while doing so, helping build a society where no one is left behind.

Thank You