

Triggering Sustainability Consciousness among the youth through Colleges in India

Everybody experiences a gap between the kind of world they see and the kind they want. On a personal level, social conscience is what bridges this gap. By understanding our own social conscience, one can make more conscious choices to help shape society according to our values. Understanding social conscience, whether our own or others', helps to identify assumptions, values, and visions, making it an important element of sustainability literacy, and a useful tool for effective social and ecological transformation.

As society shapes us, we shape society. Being socially conscious helps one to motivate choices and behaviour, playing an important role in the maintenance and transformation of social norms. The triggering of social consciousness at a young age leads one to be a responsible member of the society and create opportunities for social contributions. Being socially conscious would further lead one to become environmentally conscious by adopting eco-friendly practices. This would in turn lead them to emulate Sustainable living, which is a practical philosophy that aims to reduce personal and societal environmental impact by making positive social changes which counteract climate change and other negative environmental concerns.

Understanding sustainable living is not a compromise anymore but a choice. Understanding this need, Centre for Social Initiative & Management, CSIM, has developed a user friendly, youth centric App, targeting college students, which would be the steppingstone for triggering the sustainability consciousness among them. CSIM has adopted a three-pronged approach for this –

1. Creating awareness on the Sustainable Development Goals and how one can contribute towards it as individuals
2. Tracking the positive attitude and actions taken by individuals that contribute to sustainable development
3. Report and acclaim the behaviour change of each individual over a period of one year.

Thus, sustainable actions lead to a positive attitude towards society and environment which in turn creates a behaviour change that helps practice sustainable living strategies for life.

About Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development means meeting the needs of the present without compromising those of the future. This begins with the respect for the future generation as an important stakeholder

The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, featuring the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, was unanimously adopted by world leaders at a historic UN summit in September 2015. The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. By aligning national priorities with the 2030 Agenda and working together with the private sector and civil society, governments have started mobilizing efforts to end poverty, address inequalities and tackle climate change by 2030.

Provided with the necessary skills and opportunities needed to reach their potential, young people can be a driving force for supporting development and contributing to peace and security. Therefore, youth need to be encouraged and empowered to participate in translating the 2030 Agenda into their daily lives. With commitment and adequate resources, young people have the potential to make the most effective transformation of the world into a better place for all.

Youth and SDGs

SDGs acknowledge the centrality of youth and their role in the path towards sustainable development. The young people of today will mature in the next 8 years alongside the SDGs target of 2030. They are the people who will experience the success or challenges of the 2030 Agenda. This is why it is particularly important to engage the youth and empower them for a more sustainable future. Their key roles are:

Critical thinkers: Youth have the capacity to identify and challenge existing power structures and barriers to change, and to expose contradictions and biases

Change-makers: Young people also have the power to act and mobilise others. Youth activism is on the rise the world over, augmented by broader connectivity and access to social media.

Innovators: In addition to bringing fresh perspectives, young people often have access to direct knowledge when compared to adults. They best understand the problems they face and can offer new ideas and alternative solutions.

Communicators: Young people can be partners in communicating the development agenda to their peers and communities at the local level, as well as across countries and regions.

Leaders: When young people are empowered with the knowledge of their rights and equipped with leadership skills, they can drive change in their communities and countries.

CSIMs SDG LAB App

CSIM's SDG LAB app, a youth centric app, highlights the Sustainable Development Goals and provides an action list for youth to end poverty, reduce inequalities and tackle climate change in small ways. It is a virtual platform for the youth to learn about the SDGs and engage in meaningful actions. *I cannot do all the good the world needs but the world needs all the good I do* is the underlying theme of this app.

This app is available in Google Play store

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.csim> as well as in App Store.

<https://apps.apple.com/in/app/sdg-lab/id6444224961>

Features of CSIMs SDG LAB App

- Information about 17 SDGs - Explanatory videos, Key facts and figures & Government's initiatives
- Suggested Actions on how you can achieve SDGs
- Update on Actions undertaken
- Weekly reminders for further actions
- Badges and reward points for actions undertaken
- Option to share in social media about actions and events.
- Consolidated report for the College on SDG actions undertaken by the students

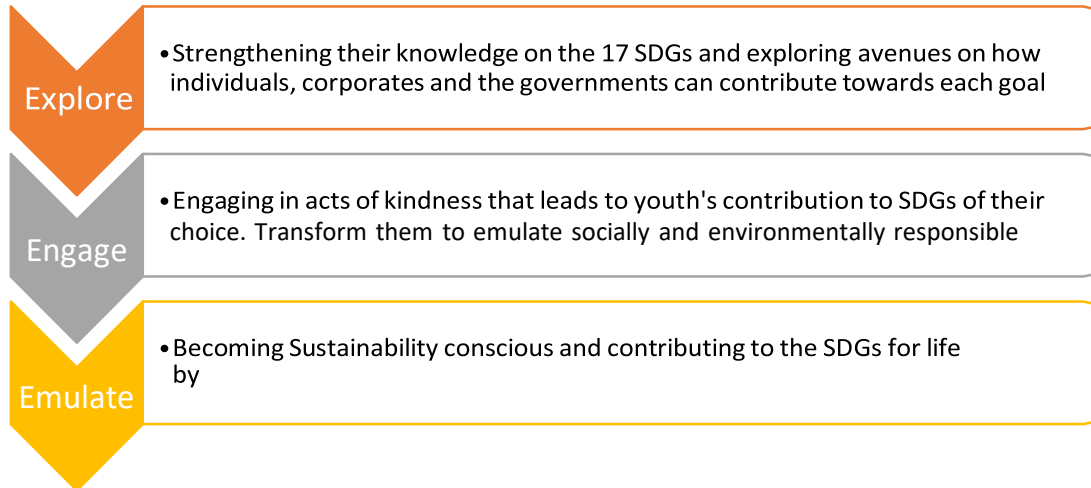
Process & Outcomes

- Colleges to register with CSIM
- CSIM would conduct an SDG awareness program for 30 minutes for the entire college
- Students to download the CSIM SDGs Power App and follow the instructions
- Students will get a monthly update on their sustainability behaviour pattern. They would be awarded virtual badges for their social performance
- Colleges will get a quarterly/annual report on the sustainability behaviour pattern of their students' department wise and SDG alignment pattern of the college.

This could be used as the social responsibility reporting of the institution and submitted for the NAAC process.

- A Certificate from CSIM on accomplishment of SDG Actions undertaken by the college would be provided every year.

Impact on students



Cost

This is a zero-cost initiative for the students. No charges will be levied on the students for use of the App.

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