

ESA Website Content for Sessions (Sample Page Content for Approval)

Towards a Sustainable Model Village- Combating Climate Change

The session focused on the challenges posed by climate change in rural areas and explored strategies to engage village communities in developing a Model Village. Discussions highlighted the role of education in fostering awareness, behavioural change, and skill development necessary for sustainability.

Key aspects included:

- **Community Engagement:** Encouraging participatory approaches for villagers to take ownership of the model village concept.
- **Sustainable Resource Management:** Efficient use of water, soil, forests, and energy to ensure long-term ecological balance.
- **Education & Capacity Building:** Implementing formal and informal education programmes to empower villagers with knowledge and best practices.
- **Sustainable Rural Development:** Integrating eco-friendly farming, renewable energy, and livelihood opportunities to improve quality of life.

The session emphasised self-reliance, policy support, and continuous community participation as essential pillars for sustaining the model village approach.



Speakers

- Mr R K Sugoor, IFS, Chairman GBB, Director Geer Foundation, Government Of Gujarat
- Mr Lokendra Balasar, Founder, Treewalks, Ahmedabad
- Mr Bidhan Chandra Pal, Founder & MD- Probha Aurora, National Operator of Foundation for Environment Education, Bangladesh
- Mr Suresh Chhanga, Deputy Sarpanch- Kunariya Village, Bhuj , Gujarat
- Mr W G Prasannakuma- Senior Social Scientist, Telangana pollution control Board

Session Highlights

1. *Education for Sustainable Futures:* Education should encompass all aspects of village life, integrating traditional wisdom with modern knowledge. "Education for the village, education through the village, and education in the village" should be the guiding principles.

Knowledge and skill development must align with the needs of villagers to empower them. Education should foster sustainable mindsets, ensuring public asset ownership and environmental responsibility.

2. *Agriculture and Soil Ecology*: Agriculture remains the core of the village, and discussions should be conducted in agricultural language. Soil ecology and integrated water management should be key focus areas. Reducing environmental toxicity through sustainable farming practices is crucial. Afforestation, biochar, and soil carbon sequestration should be adopted to enhance soil health.
3. *Water Resource Management*: Water is a critical component of the model village. Discussions with water user groups and farmers should address groundwater conservation and water security plans. Rainwater harvesting, efficient irrigation methods, and water recycling should be implemented.
4. *Social Resilience and Governance*: Villagers exhibit high social resilience, making community participation essential for sustainable development. Strengthening the Panchayati Raj system with a sustainable approach is necessary. Village committees should be formed for education, agriculture, water management, disaster response, and community planning. Women's participation in decision-making should be prioritised.
5. *Green Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods*: Careers should be green-oriented, promoting eco-friendly industries and entrepreneurship. Green institutions should foster a mindset shift towards sustainability. Sustainable transportation, such as electric vehicles, should be encouraged.
6. *Carbon Emission Reduction*: Carbon emissions in villages stem from traditional cooking methods (chulhas), vehicles, and energy consumption. Renewable energy solutions, such as solar power and clean cookstoves, should be introduced. A bottom-to-top approach should be implemented to reduce carbon footprints at the village level.
7. *Traditional Knowledge and Natural Resource Management*: Traditional knowledge systems must be integrated into modern village development strategies. Efficient use and storage of natural resources should be prioritised for future generations. Sustainable village planning should focus on balancing ecological preservation with development.
8. *Community Engagement and Disaster Preparedness*: A disaster response team at the village level is necessary for climate resilience. Active community participation in Gram Panchayat development plans is essential. Villagers should be equipped with the knowledge and tools to address local issues effectively.

Key Recommendations from the Session

- Education is key to sustainable village development and for future generations.
- Agriculture and the environment must form the foundation of all developmental plans.
- Social resilience and traditional wisdom should be preserved and adapted for sustainability.
- Green institutions and eco-friendly livelihoods should be promoted.
- Water security and natural resource conservation are essential for future sustainability.
- Villages should be at the centre of national progress through a bottom-up approach.
- Women and the community must be active stakeholders in all developmental processes.

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- A model village isn't just about infrastructure; it's about creating a self-sustaining, environmentally responsible, and socially inclusive ecosystem that serves as a blueprint for future rural development.

Conclusion

A sustainable village is built on the pillars of education, agriculture, environmental stewardship, and community participation. Integrating traditional knowledge with modern innovations ensures long-term resilience and progress. Empowering villagers through sustainable livelihoods, water conservation, and governance strengthens rural ecosystems. A model village goes beyond infrastructure—it nurtures self-reliance, ecological balance, and social equity. By fostering sustainable mindsets, villages can become the foundation for a greener and more prosperous future.