



DAY-2: Special Thematic Session 16

September 20, 2023 (Wednesday); Time: 14:00-15:30 hrs (GMT +5:30)

Theme: Intergenerational Dialogue on Re-imagining Education for a Climate Resilient Future

Venue: India Habitat Centre, Jacranda 1

Background

Climate change is one the most significant challenges of our times. Extreme weather events are now the new normal, increasing in scale, scope and frequency and affecting ecosystems, individuals, communities and economies. Since climate risks adversely impact diverse entities an effective and optimal response from various stakeholders embodying diverse roles and experiences is critical to develop a client-resilient future.

Youth, who hold innovative ideas and are the decision makers of tomorrow, will bear a larger brunt of the impacts of a warmer world. The older generations on the other hand have knowledge on historical contexts and lessons besides holding the power to shape development trajectories in the present. As stakeholders, both can leverage their strengths and deliver meaningful change when working collaboratively. As such, an intergenerational dialogue between different age groups that enables the articulation of perspectives for navigating climate uncertainties and charting course for climate action would benefit the current climate discourse.

The education sector is an important stakeholder in addressing climate change for its potential role in fostering environmental stewards - who understand the gravity of climate change, are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills and furthermore are inspired to take action. However, despite making major strides in the past few years, there are currently several challenges in integrating learning and skill building on climate resilience in school, youth and community programs- in ways that create meaningful and lasting impacts.

The education system today needs to adjust to a rapidly transforming, digitally advancing, sociologically complex, ecologically fragile, uncertain and turbulent world and its societal implications. As the sector acknowledges new climate realities, academic institutions must on one hand transform into environmentally friendly, climate smart hubs and on the other create

an ecosystem that nurtures climate leaders and prepares them for future needs, risks, opportunities and actions to cultivate climate resilience. Re-imagining the education system – from policy and planning; curriculum and teaching; capacity building; research, data collection; school infrastructure and governance; community engagement; inclusivity and equity and more – would be critical to enabling and deliver a future that is resilient to climate uncertainties.

To address this complex challenge, an intergenerational dialogue that taps into the collective opinions, knowledge and experiences of both young and older stakeholders, could be an effective approach to re-visit what needs to change and how. Whereas the older age groups bring with them experience, expertise and wisdom, youth contribute fresh perspectives, novel ideas and enthusiasm for problem solving. The exchange and cross-fertilization of viewpoints towards shared climate responsibility would facilitate mutual learning, emergence of valuable insights and innovative approaches and solutions to building climate resilience.

About the Session

The panel session on "Intergenerational Dialogue for Re-Imagining Education for a Climate-Resilient Future" will be a dynamic and interactive event held as part of the ICSE 2023.

This panel session will bring together diverse stakeholders, including students/youth representatives, educators, policymakers, community leaders, representing different age groups to discuss and debate the role of the present education system in cultivating climate resilience - the strengths, gaps, opportunities and risks.

Using a national lens, they will put forward their opinion on the ways our education system needs to move ahead at this critical junction – of rapid ecological degradation, increasing greenhouse emissions, extreme climate events, the adverse fallouts to ecosystems, communities and nations – to make a positive contribution locally and globally. This will include locating and learning from local, regional and international approaches, tools and best practices. They will also deliberate on the ways the education sector can build on climate literacy to empower students and institutions so that they engage with real world problems and develop solutions.

Additionally, the panel will focus on how an intergenerational/multistakeholder approach can enhance the effectiveness of such an undertaking as is the rethinking of the education sector to build climate resilience. As such they will reflect on their potential roles and of various other stakeholders within the education sector to achieve lower ecological footprints, foster sustainable lifestyles and improve environmental conservation. Particularly the panel will provide a platform for the voices of students and youth leaders who are the decision makers of the future.

Session Objectives

The objectives of this intergenerational panel discussion are:

- To facilitate an inclusive, empathetic and efficacious dialogue between stakeholders of different age groups on the role of the education sector in shaping a sustainable and climate resilient future.

- To constructively deliberate on the abilities of the current education system to address climate change issues effectively and the future avenues available in order to advance the contribution of the sector to building climate resilience.
- To identify and examine strategies and best practices across local, national and global platforms across stakeholder domains that can help enhance the role of academic institutions to nurture climate leaders and enable knowledge solutions and action for a more sustainable world.
- To provide opportunity for young people, students and youth to share their perspectives and ideas thereby recognizing their agency in contributing to climate adaptation and mitigation.

Outcomes

The panel session on "Intergenerational Dialogue for Re-Imagining Education for a Climate-Resilient Future" will harness the collective wisdom of diverse stakeholders across multiple age groups to explore the role of the education in catalysing climate resilience. The intergenerational approach to dialogue will allow for a democratic and holistic background that reiterates that every generation has a role to play in shaping a better world, and that collaboration is key to achieving that vision.

The specific anticipated outcomes from the session are as follows:

- Attendees will leave the session with an enhanced understanding of the ways in which the education system and its stakeholders will need to build on its strengths, address challenges and enhance capacities to create climate resilient futures. They might also be inspired to take proactive steps in their respective roles and spheres of influence.
- A list of actionable strategies for promoting effective climate literacy, climate engagement and climate action in the education sector will be compiled and documented.
- The panellists' insights, ideas and discussions will be developed to formulate a report with recommendations that can be circulated to policymakers, academic institutions and other stakeholders to enhance their efforts to shape a climate resilient world. By considering perspectives from multiple age groups, recommendations are more likely to be inclusive, robust and comprehensive.
- The session will facilitate networking opportunities between attendees, fostering potential mentorships, partnerships and collaborations to strengthen climate education initiatives.
- The session is an opportunity to empower youth to be climate ambassadors and active participants in the related decision-making processes. It encourages them to take ownership of their future and contribute meaningfully to society.

Programme Schedule

S. no.	Name	Role of the Speaker/Panelist	Affiliation
1.	Ms. Khanak Gupta	Panellist	Senior Secondary student, The Shriram Millennium School, Faridabad
2.	Ms. Saloni Kumari	Panellist	Senior Secondary student, Government Co-ed Senior Secondary School, Munirka
3.	Mr. Samarth Khanna	Panellist	Masters' student, Teri School of Advanced Studies, Vasant Kunj
4.	Mr. Vimlendu Jha	Panellist	Executive Director, Swechha: We For Change Foundation, Malviya Nagar
5.	Mr. Richard McDonald	Presenter and Panellist	Executive Director, R Futures Group, Switzerland
6.	Ms. Susan Thomas (via Zoom)	Panellist	Educator and Consultant, Climate Reality Project, New Delhi
7	Dr. Shilpanjali Deshpande Sarma	Session Moderator	Program Manager, Swechha: We For Change Foundation, Malviya Nagar