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Task Force 06

STRENGTHENING MULTILATERALISM AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Role of Community Engagement in Advancing Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The brief discusses a model of holistic sustainable development that extends the notion of sustainability beyond economic, social, and environmental spheres, acknowledging the pivotal role of values, beliefs, attitudes, and spiritual consciousness in shaping sustainable practices and attitudes. It explores the pivotal role of communities in fostering and sustaining this transformation. Community-led initiatives amplify the impact of global sustainability goals by addressing specific challenges at the grassroots level. We propose that attitudes, shaped by beliefs, values, norms, and knowledge, serve as the foundation influencing behavior. Facilitators encompass policies and resources encouraging sustainable practices, while infrastructure includes systems enabling behavior change. By integrating these elements, the Attitudes Facilitators- Infrastructure (AFI framework) guides effective interventions for holistic sustainable development. While several models of community organization and engagement exist, the model of Dayalbagh, situated in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India, stands out for its scientific foundation integrated with values, service, and sustainable practices. Examining various models of community engagement is crucial for the G20 as it offers insights into effective strategies for addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and sustainable development.

Keywords: Holistic Sustainable Development, Community Engagement, Attitudes-Facilitators-Infrastructure Framework, Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction: Diagnosing the Issue

The pursuit for sustainable development requires innovative approaches to accelerate progress and effectively address the pressing global challenges of our time. It is essential to broaden the concept of sustainability beyond its traditional focus on economic, social, and environmental aspects, acknowledging the pivotal role of values, beliefs, attitudes, and spiritual and intuitive consciousness and conscientiousness in shaping sustainable practices and attitudes (Dua et al., 2023). Communities can play a pivotal role in this endeavour by catalyzing transformative change through collective action, shared values, and localized solutions (United Nations, 1992 Agenda 21). Using the Attitudes-Facilitators-Infrastructure Framework (AFI framework), the brief analyses the case study of Dayalbagh in Agra, India to demonstrate the lifestyle for holistic sustainable development and help policymakers design targeted interventions to support it by understanding the attitudes, facilitating access, and enhancing infrastructure.

A holistic approach to sustainability is essential because it recognizes that sustainability is not merely a matter of implementing solutions or enacting policies; it involves fundamental shifts in values, attitudes, and behaviors across all aspects of society. Without addressing underlying values and attitudes that drive consumption patterns, production methods, and resource allocation, efforts to achieve sustainability are likely to fall short. Therefore, we propose a modification to the sustainable development model (Figure 1) to incorporate this inner dimension as the bedrock on which the external dimension (economic, social and environmental spheres) rests.

FIGURE 1. Holistic Sustainable Development

Source: Adapted from the https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2016-06-14-the-sdgs-wedding-cake.html

Using the widely recognized "wedding cake" analogy for sustainable development, we assert that the foundation of the cake providing support to sustainable development is characterized by attitudes, values, beliefs, and spiritual and intuitive consciousness and conscientiousness (inner dimension). The external dimension - environmental (encompassing objectives such as ensuring clean water and sanitation, taking action

against climate change, and preserving biodiversity on both land and in aquatic ecosystems), social (encompassing priorities such as eradicating poverty, fostering sustainable urban development, promoting peace and justice, ensuring access to clean energy and healthcare, providing quality education, advancing gender equality, and tackling hunger) and economic (focusing on objectives such as promoting decent work and economic growth, fostering innovation and infrastructure development, reducing inequalities, and encouraging responsible consumption and production practices) rest on this foundation.[1] In contrast to the traditional depiction, we argue that equality among the spheres is crucial for holistic sustainable development and that community engagement or partnerships can help achieve each of these layers. While the individual is a catalyst for change, their success depends on the support and involvement of communities. This requires a bottom-up approach that permeates through individuals, communities, and societies, at regional, national and global levels. Therefore, community engagement is crucial for the success of sustainable development initiatives.

1. Community Engagement: Meaning & Models

Community engagement is the process of building relationships with community members to address local needs, foster collaboration, and create positive social change. It enables sustainable lifestyles and supports region-specific environmental initiatives, ensuring a lasting contribution to sustainable development through understanding

[1] The traditional wedding cake model of sustainable development has environment as the foundational tier, followed by societal and then economic layers.

community practices and measuring collective impact over time. It can lead to a shift in demand (nudging individuals world-wide to practice environment friendly actions), supply (gradual adjustments in industries and markets), and policy (shifting the focus of policies and government action) by:

- leveraging community knowledge for contextually appropriate initiatives, fostering ownership and empowerment while promoting social cohesion, inclusivity, and consideration of marginalized perspectives and effectively utilizing local resources.
- respecting cultural sensitivities and facilitating behavioral change through dialogue and collective action.
- creating local benefits like job opportunities, and
- encouraging environmental stewardship and conservation efforts (Chavis et al., 1986).

Various models of community organization and engagement exist globally, such as the Dayalbagh in India, Kibbutz in Israel, the Amish community in USA, Machizukuri in Japan, Hutterites in North America, etc. Examining various models of community engagement is crucial for the G20 as it offers insights into effective strategies for addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and sustainable development. The Kibbutz emphasizes collective living and sustainable practices, promoting communal ownership, cooperative decision-making, and environmental conservation (Cheng & Sun, 2015). Similarly, the Amish prioritize simplicity, traditional values, and self-sufficiency, emphasizing sustainable agriculture and minimal technology

use (Vonk, 2012). In contrast, the Machizukuri model fosters grassroots participation and collaboration in urban planning, advocating for inclusive and holistic approaches to creating sustainable cities (Kusakabe, 2013). Dayalbagh, situated in India, is a model and novel eco-village[2] and healthcare habitat and stands out for its spiritual community centered around the Ra Dha Sva Aa Mi Faith, integrating values, service, and sustainable practices into its holistic approach to sustainable development. The ideal followed here is 'Better Worldliness' and not 'un-worldliness' (Radhasoami Satsang Sabha, 2019). The way of life of the residents can be summarized using Sigma Six Qualities-Values-Attributes[3] model (Figure 2) which are the six qualities of Agriculture and Dairy, Education and Healthcare, Water Quality, Air Quality, Innovation and Human Values.

[2] Ecovillages are a communitarian phenomenon where members push for ecologically sustainable change and emphasise on living simply, sustainably, and symbiotically with their environment.

[3] The model Sigma Six Q-V-A represents a summation of six qualities that define the Dayalbagh Community. The summation of these six qualities is greater than the sum of its parts.

FIGURE 2. Sigma Six Q-V-A Model of Dayalbagh Way of Life

Source: Radhasoami Satsang Sabha, 2019

Sigma Six Q-V-A Model of the Dayalbagh community is a scientifically entrusted multidimensional model of socio-economic-technological-spiritual-climatic complex system that has proven to work for more than 100 years and is fundamentally seated in the scientific foundations of topological graph theory and systems theory[4] (Satsangi

[4] The field of study known as Abstract Mathematics of Topological Graph Theory has its roots in the 18th century. This scientific discipline, led globally by its pioneers, Rev. Prof. Prem Saran Satsangi, along with Prof. Jack Ellis and Prof. Peter Roe, has been put

2006; Satsangi et al., 2024). The scientific foundation and real-world implementation make it a good case for policy makers to review and take up its recommendations.

2. Attitudes-Facilitators-Infrastructure (AFI) Framework

Understanding the factors shaping individuals' consumption choices and behaviors, including the external contextual elements amenable to policy intervention, is crucial for optimizing the efficacy of sustainable development policies and practices. We modify and present the AFI framework (Akenji, 2014) as a tool for lifestyle for holistic sustainable development on a systemic scale. We propose that the attitudes are the foundation that determine the facilitators and infrastructure. Attitudes are defined by belief systems, personal values, social norms, knowledge, spiritual and intuitive consciousness and conscientiousness, resource conservation and environmental stewardship. Facilitators and infrastructure are determinants that refer to external factors or conditions that support behavior change, such as social support networks, policies, and resources. Laws, policies and administrative procedures that were created by governmental policy and business decision makers are included in the definition of facilitator, and they could provide incentives for promoting a lifestyle for holistic sustainable development. Facilitators provide incentives to encourage a particular pattern of behavior or course, or place constraints to discourage unwanted outcomes. Infrastructure includes the systems,

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into practical application at Dayalbagh. For more information on the implementation of the Systems Framework, refer to Autobiographical Retrospectives, Satsangi (2006).

structures, and resources that enable behavior change at the institutional, organizational, or community level. Community engagement is a tool that can help achieve holistic sustainable development by cultivating foundational attitudes and creating the necessary infrastructure and facilitators. These elements are crucial determinants for fostering a sustainable lifestyle.

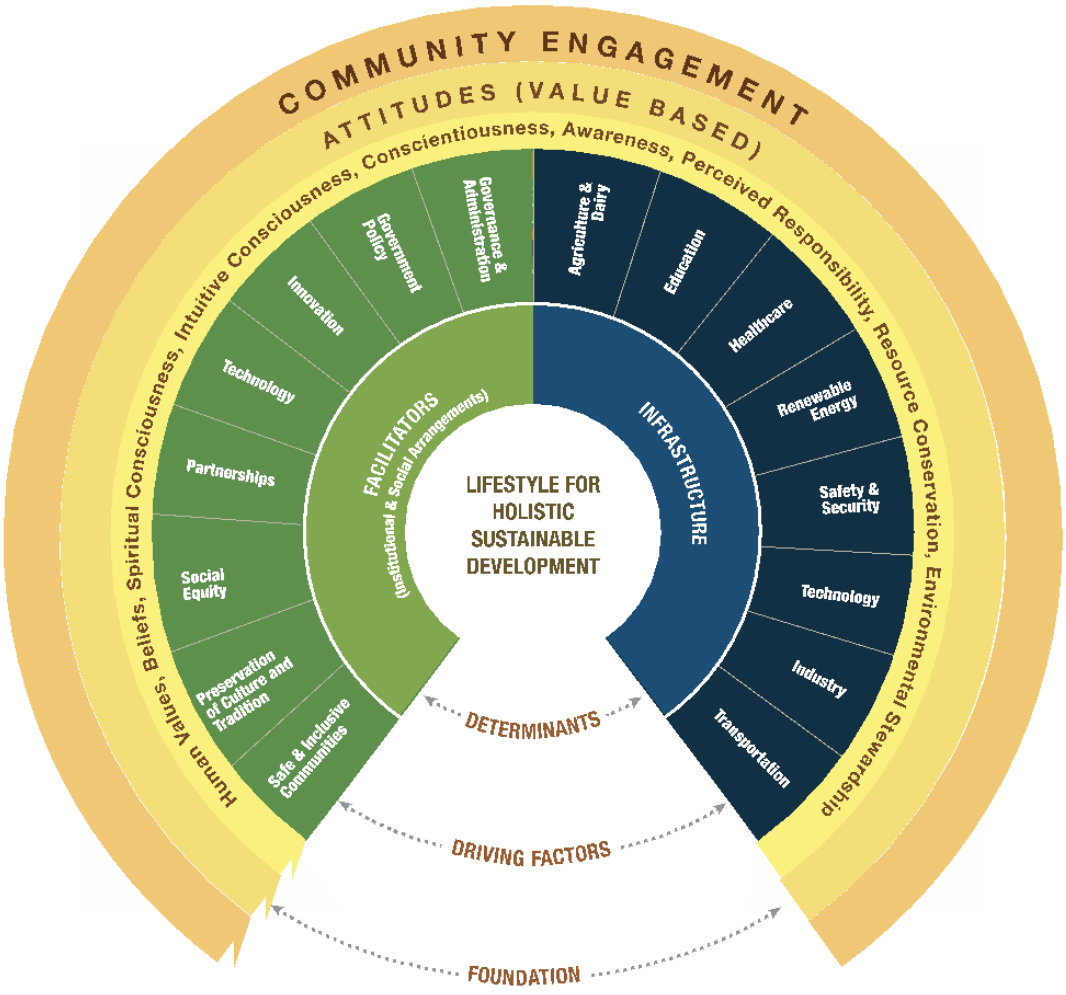

FIGURE 3. AFI Framework: Lifestyle for Holistic Sustainable Development 9

Source: Adapted from Akenji (2014)

By considering these three components holistically, the modified AFI framework provides a structured approach to designing effective interventions that address the complexities of human behavior and promote sustainable outcomes. We now discuss the case study of Dayalbagh as an application of the concept of holistic sustainable development and apply the modified AFI framework to understand the external contextual elements amenable to policy intervention.

3. Case Study of Dayalbagh

Unlike models focused solely on collective living or sustainable development, Dayalbagh places a strong emphasis on spiritual growth and service to mankind. Its residents integrate spiritual practices into daily life while engaging in social service projects, education, and community development initiatives. Sigma Six Q-V-A Model of Dayalbagh fosters a holistic approach to personal and collective well-being by elevating both individual consciousness and societal conscientiousness, promoting a harmonious balance between the spiritual and the ethical/moral. Table 1 gives details of features of the Sigma Six Q-V-A element: Human Values, inculcated at Dayalbagh, the facilitators and infrastructure and the value-based attitudes that lead to outcomes and promote achievement of SDGs.

TABLE 1. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Human Values)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Human Values at Dayalbagh • Simple Living • Minimalism, No Ostentatious Expenditure • Adherence to 'Golden Mean Path' • Zero Waste • Selfless Service • Fieldwork, Community Kitchen, Medical Care • Reaching the Last, the Least, the Lowest, and the Lost • No Ownership of Property • Similar Houses • Availability of essential goods and services to all • Women Empowerment ***Facilitators*** • Regional Associations with city / town / village level branches across the world with place for spiritual engagement • Alumni Associations ***Infrastructure*** • Residential Colonies at the Headquarters Dayalbagh and other parts of the world	• Work Is Worship • Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man • Better Worldliness • Optimal Utilization of Resources • Humility • Duty • Equality • Responsibility • Service to Mankind • Spiritual Consciousness • Intuitive Consciousness	• No Poverty • Zero Hunger • Better Health • Gender Equality • Reduced Inequalities • Peace, Justice • Safe & Resilient Cities & Communities **SDGs Impacted** All SDGs
Tool: Community Engagement		

Dayalbagh practices sustainable agroecological-cum-precision farming, optimizing resource use through a circular economy for efficient and sustainable use of resources, promoting a holistic approach to farming that minimizes waste and maximizes productivity. The voluntary selfless service (*seva*) performed by the members of the community instils the values of hard work, shared responsibility, optimal utilization of resources and zero waste which are the foundation of holistic sustainability. Meditative chants, prayers and hymns are played at the agroecology-cum-precision farming sites which contributes to the development of spiritual and intuitive consciousness and conscientiousness. Table 2 gives features of the agroecology-cum-precision farming and dairy activities at Dayalbagh, the values inculcated and the impact thereof along with the facilitators and infrastructure.

TABLE 2. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Agriculture & Dairy)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Agroecology-cum- Precision Farming Practices • Organic Farming • Co-existence of multiple Bio-ecosystems such as crop fields, vegetable gardens, fruit orchards, fodder fields, medicinal herb gardens, biodiversity parks • Crop Diversification including vertical, spatial and temporal diversity • Intercropping • Crop rotations, often including legumes • Use of Recycled Water for Irrigation • Dairy and Cattle Shed • Crop-Livestock Integration		• Reduced Poverty • Reduced Hunger • Good Health • Gender Equality • Reduced Inequality • Sustainable Cities & communities • Better Environment **SDGs Impacted** SDG1 SDG2 SDG3 SDG5 SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG13
Facilitators • Technological Interventions in agroecological farms and dairy • Innovation • Use of Technologies e.g. Smart Truck Tracking to increase efficiency • State of the Art Dairy Facility (FSSAI and HACCP Certified) • Collaboration with National and International Universities • Education- both formal and informal • Dissemination of technology without state involvement • Preservation of Culture & Traditions	• Hard Work • Shared Responsibility • Respect for One Another • Respect for Environment • Fostering Equality • Humane Treatment of Cattle • Voluntary Service	
Infrastructure • Community-owned Land • Sensors for Soil Temperature, Humidity, Wind Speed and Direction, Climatic Conditions and Rain • Renewable Energy • Multi-Land Use Model with Solar Agricultural Farms (Farming is done on land below Solar Modules)		
Tool: Community Engagement		

Dayalbagh's commitment to education spans from its inception as schools and colleges to its establishment as a full-fledged university in 1981. The Dayalbagh Educational Institute (DEI) offers inclusive education, catering to individuals from '*Maternity to*

Eternity'[5] (3 weeks to PhD to DSc to Purely Spiritual Education) through flexible curricula and vocational training. What sets DEI apart is its comprehensive approach to education, emphasizing "values-based and quality education" with a focus on reaching marginalized groups '*the last, the least, the lowest, and the lost*'. This holistic education system cultivates intuitive consciousness for a meaningful life path. Applying the systemic approach to education has earned DEI recognition, including numerous publications in refereed journals and patents. Table 3 and 4 give features of education and healthcare at Dayalbagh and its impact.

[5]Education in Dayalbagh is a lifelong journey commencing with infancy at 3 weeks old, with children introduced to community service, harmony with nature, culture, and heritage through participation in healthcare and self-defense exercises and selfless service in agroecology-cum-precision farming operations in two shifts daily of 4 hours each. This fosters their relationship with nature for bio-socio-cognitive development from a very young age. This journey then transcends to conventional education, including school, university and advanced degrees like PhD and D.Sc.

TABLE 3. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Education)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Education System • Affordable and Accessible Education for All • Broad Based Core Courses Including Agriculture, Environmental Studies, Social Service, Etc. • Education From 'Maternity to Eternity' (3 Weeks to Phd to DSc to Spiritual Education) • Reaching the Last, Least, Lowest and Lost • Social Service-Based Village Adoption Programmes, • Skilling Rural Women and Youth • Skill Development, Vocational and Technical Training • Entrepreneurial Education Including Earn While You Learn, Life-Long Learning ***Facilitators*** • Advisory Committee on Education: a non-statutory body comprising eminent and experienced academicians and educationists that serves as a think tank • Research and Frugal Innovation • Distance Education Program / ICT in Teaching, Research and Outreach • Support from Sponsoring Body • Alumni Association • Collaboration With National and International Institutes ***Infrastructure*** • Physical • Technical / ICT • Research • Agricultural Field and Biodiversity parks • Lab on land • Renewable Energy • Distance Education Centres	• Honorary Service, including senior administration. • Hard Work • Integrity • Self-Reliance • Selfless Service • Cooperation • Honesty • Sincerity • Dignity of Labour • Humility	• Reduced Poverty • Reduced Hunger • Better Education • Gender Equality • Reduced Inequalities • Better Environment • Sustainable Cities and Communities • Skilled Workforce **SDGs Impacted** SDG1 SDG4 SDG5 SDG6 SDG7 SDG8 SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG13 SDG16 SDG17
Tool: Community Engagement		

Healthcare system at Dayalbagh, anchored by Saran Ashram Hospital, provides free, holistic care to residents and neighboring communities. By integrating diverse medical systems and emphasizing preventive measures, Dayalbagh promotes well-being from 'maternity to eternity.'

TABLE 4. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Healthcare)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Healthcare System *Holistic Healthcare Approach* • Affordable and Accessible Healthcare • Emphasis on Preventive Healthcare through promotion of physical fitness. • Environmental Monitoring: Regular assessment and monitoring of the air and water quality. • Integration of Traditional and Modern Medicines for treatment • Education and Awareness programs related to health. • Integrated Healthcare Services to address the diverse healthcare needs of the community. ***Facilitators*** • Availability of Affordable nutritious food for all through Community Kitchen • Traditional Nutritional Supplements like Chyavanprash, Millets • Subsidized Organic Milk • Nutritional Supplements to Children • Organic Fruits, Vegetables at Nominal Prices ***Infrastructure*** • Charitable Health and Medical Facilities (Allopathic, Homoeopathic and AYUSH) • Free Medical Camps • Renewable Energy	• Humility • Duty • Compassion • Universal Brotherhood and Sense of Shared Social Responsibility • Connection With Nature • Selfless Service	• Reduced Poverty • Good Health • Gender Equality • Reduced Inequalities • Better Environment **SDGs Impacted** SDG1 SDG2 SDG3 SDG10 SDG13
Tool: Community Engagement		

Conservation of resources, particularly water, is a fundamental principle embraced by the Dayalbagh community. This includes regular monitoring and treatment. Efforts to clean up the river Yamuna's banks and surroundings promote conservation and mitigate climate impact while raising awareness in neighboring rural communities about sustainable development. Organic farming practices minimize chemical runoff, while sewage treatment plant treated water is reused for irrigation, reflecting circular economy principles of reduce, reuse, recycle, reclaim, recover, and restore.

TABLE 5. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Water Quality)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Water Quality at Dayalbagh • Access: Clean and Safe Drinking Water for All • Monitoring of Water Quality • Treatment of Water • Recharging Old Dry Wells • Water Conservation	• Connection with Nature • Preserving the Water Quality • Conservation of all Resources Including Water • Duty • Responsibility	• Good Health • Gender Equality • Clean Water • Sustainable Cities & Communities • Reduced Inequalities • Responsible Consumption • Better Environment **SDGs Impacted** SDG3 SDG5 SDG6 SDG10 SDG11 SDG12 SDG13 SDG14 SDG15 SDG17
Facilitator • Technology • Innovation • Engaging in activities such as river clean-up initiatives to preserve cultural and traditional practices associated with the Yamuna River. • Collaboration with stakeholders • Water Quality Monitoring Teams		
Infrastructure • Water Testing Laboratories and Equipment • Water Treatment Plants • Sewage Treatment Facilities		
Tool: Community Engagement		

Dayalbagh places a high priority on maintaining air and water quality across all its activities. Continuous monitoring ensures that particulate matter levels (PM2.5 and PM10) remain within permissible limits. Various measures are implemented to mitigate air pollution, such as employing misting techniques to combat suspended pollutants and creating green canopies to minimize dust from agricultural activities. Restrictions on vehicle usage encourage active and eco-friendly transportation options. Development of green spaces and biodiversity parks aid in carbon sequestration and pollutant removal, further enhancing air quality in the vicinity. Table 6 provides a comprehensive overview of Dayalbagh's initiatives to maintain water and air quality and their alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

TABLE 6. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Air Quality)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Air Quality at Dayalbagh • Focus on Reducing Carbon Footprint • Regular Measurement and Reporting of Air Quality Index ***Facilitators*** • Air Quality Monitoring Teams • Cordoning-off dust generating activities • Economical Use of Energy and Resources • Misting & Spraying with fine water droplets • Planting Trees and pollution-absorbing Plants ***Infrastructure*** • Renewable Energy • Wind Augmentation Air Purifying Unit (WAYU) at various sites to reduce pollution by Trapping PM2.5 and PM10 • Electric Vehicles for Intra-Colony Travel • Solar Thermal Cooking in Community Kitchen • Piped Gas for Cooking	• Environmental Consciousness • Connection with Nature • Community Cooperation & Cohesion • Shared Core Values and Beliefs • Duty • Responsibility	• Better Environment • Resilient & Sustainable Cities and Communities **SDGs Impacted** SDG7 SDG11 SDG12 SDG13
Tool: Community Engagement		

Innovation is a hallmark of Dayalbagh and DEI and is present in each of the other Sigma Six Q-V-A elements: agroecology-cum-precision farming & dairy, education and health facilities, air and water quality measurement. It is an inseparable part of Dayalbagh way of life. Table 7 gives a few innovative aspects of community engagement at Dayalbagh and its impact on SDGs.

TABLE 7. Application of AFI Framework to Sigma Six Q-V-A (Innovation)

Determinants	Attitudes (Value Based)	Outcome
Features: Innovation • Consciousness Studies • Renewable Energy • Superman Evolutionary Scheme • Cottage Industries ***Facilitators*** • Technology • Partnerships • Teachers • Volunteers • Conferences / Workshops / Seminars / Publications • Preservation of Culture & Traditions ***Infrastructure*** • Agroecological-cum-Precision Farming Sites • Solar Power Installations • Physical / Technical	• Voluntary Service • Dignity of Labour • Service to Mankind • Community Cooperation & Cohesion • Environmental Consciousness • Intuitive Consciousness	• No Poverty • Zero Hunger • Better Health • Gender Equality • Reduced Inequalities • Peace, Justice • Safe & Resilient Cities & Communities **SDGs Impacted** All SDGs
Tool: Community Engagement		

Policy Recommendations

Using the AFI (Attitudes and Values, Facilitators, Infrastructure) framework, we present the policy recommendations based on the Dayalbagh Model to enable holistic sustainable development through community engagement.

A. Develop a Comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy to create self-reliant communities

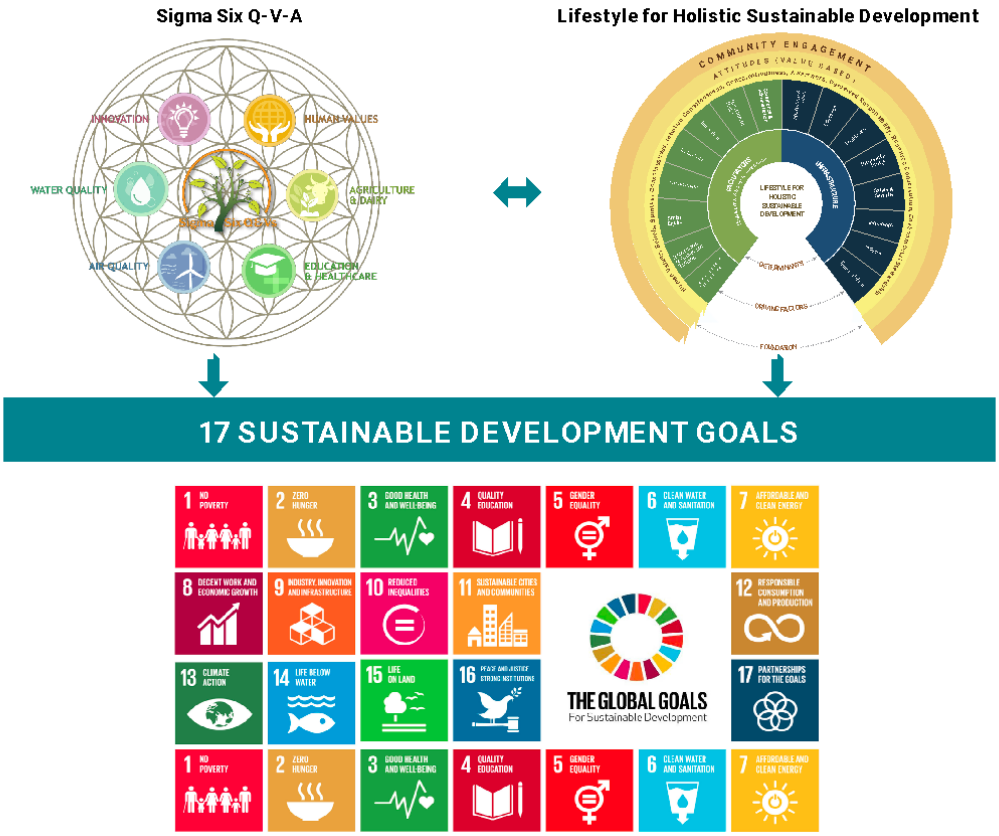

FIGURE 4. Relationship between Sigma Six Q-V-A Model and Lifestyle for Holistic Sustainable Development

A.1 Attitudes and Values: G20 member countries must strive to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for sustainable development within communities and encourage inclusive participation by valuing diverse perspectives and contributions.

- ***Promote lifestyle for sustainable development by advocating circular economy principles*** to minimize waste, promote resource efficiency, and create sustainable business models that consider long-term societal and environmental well-being.
- ***Integration of Holistic Education Practices***: Policy should focus on integrating spiritual, moral and intellectual practices into mainstream educational curricula by incorporating values-based education, community service, and character development programs into school curricula with a focus on environmental consciousness.
- ***Foster*** civic responsibility and environmental stewardship through community-driven efforts such as ***community clean-up programs including water bodies.***
- ***Implement*** community engagement initiatives to promote ***equality, respect, inclusivity, and fairness*** for all genders.

A.2 Facilitators: G20 member countries can facilitate community engagement through

- ***Establishment of Community-led Triangular Cooperation Platforms to*** create platforms at the community level that facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among community members, local governments, and external partners.
- ***Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms with Community Involvement*** for assessing progress towards holistic sustainability goals.
- ***Financial Support through allocation and creation of funding***, international grants

and recognitions for community-led sustainability projects in member countries.

● ***Capacity Building*** through training sessions, and conferences to share best practices in community engagement.

● ***Support research*** into effective community engagement strategies for sustainable development.

● ***Enhance community safety and security*** by strengthening resilience and improving disaster response capabilities.

● ***Support community-driven clean energy infrastructure and interconnected sustainable transport*** for reducing carbon footprint and promoting environmental stewardship.

A.3 Infrastructure: G20 member can create systems, structures, and resources that enable behavior change at the institutional, organizational, or community level.

● ***Promote local food production and strengthen community ties***, through the establishment and support of community agricultural farms, fostering biodiversity and enhancing social cohesion.

● ***Enhance*** community engagement and foster lifelong learning, through investing in accessible, ***high-quality education and literacy resources***.

● ***Promote Health Equity through Community-Based***

Interventions to ensure access to quality healthcare for all e.g. by organizing medical camps/health fairs through local community engagement to provide free or low-cost health services and education to residents.

● ***Promote Climate Action through Community Participation*** in climate change

mitigation and adaptation efforts ***by creating capacity to*** monitor environmental indicators at local community level.

- ***Engage communities*** in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of projects to ensure local relevance and ownership.

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