

THE VOYAGE

THEORY TO PRACTICE | VOLUNTEERISM TO PROFESSIONALISM

Association of Professional Social Workers and Development Practitioners (APSWDP)

In Special Consultative Status with Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2019

Affiliated with Department of Global Communications (DGC) of the United Nations

Accreditation under United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Observer Status under

United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and UNFCCC

Affiliate Member UNESCO MIL Alliance

PROMOTING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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"The world is
changed by your
example, not by
your opinion"-

Paulo Coelho



PICTURE: FORBS INDIA ORGANIZED PANEL DISCUSSION ON EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

APSWDP NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE DESK OF EDITOR IN CHIEF

We are pleased to announce the release of Volume V, Issue 28 of our Quarterly Newsletter 'The Voyage'. This edition offers comprehensive coverage of our diverse programs and activities, including workshops, events, learning opportunities, and networking for professionals, as well as recent partnerships. Additionally, it features expert commentary and practitioner insights, along with a series on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15, Life On Land. We have also introduced a Know Your Member section to highlight our esteemed members.

EXPERT'S SPEAK

Dr. P.K. Kapoor, Former WHO and Global Public Health Consultant



It has been an honour to be associated with APSWDP, a vibrant organisation of committed social workers and development professionals encompassing varied societal fields such as doctors from medical and social fields and lawyers. The organization's proactive innovative efforts in spreading knowledge base, capacity building, and advocacy for social change are truly remarkable as reflected in the recent assessment in the fields at the grassroots levels. APSWDP's innovative initiatives and inclusive approach continue to make inroads to deliver, work collaboratively towards everlasting sustainable, participatory development and empowerment.

Sh. Jagan Thakur, HAS, Additional Director to Govt of H.P. Department of Urban Development

As I have been associated with APSWDP for a couple of years now.. I land myself in deep appreciation for the organization for the level of commitment and selfless social action endeavoured by it..and which must and can be the cause and reason for our inner fulfilment and bottom of the heart satisfaction. Best of wishes to all the esteemed members.



AN INTRODUCTION TO UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS - 15

(UN- SDG 15): LIFE ON LAND

- DR. SUMIT ARORA

Introduction

Sustainable Development Goal 15 (SDG 15), established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is dedicated to protecting, restoring, and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. Titled "Life on Land," SDG 15 addresses critical environmental challenges such as deforestation, desertification, land degradation, and biodiversity loss. It underscores the importance of healthy ecosystems for human well-being, economic stability, and resilience against climate change. Below is a comprehensive overview of SDG 15, its targets, significance, challenges, and progress.

SDG 15 aims to ensure the health of the planet's land-based ecosystems, which include forests, grasslands, wetlands, mountains, and drylands. These ecosystems provide essential services such as clean air, water, food, and climate regulation, while supporting millions of species and billions of people. The goal emphasizes sustainable land management practices and the reversal of human-induced damage to natural habitats. Key Targets of SDG 15: SDG 15 includes 12 specific targets and 14 associated indicators to measure progress by 2030.

Significance of SDG 15

a.Ecosystem Services: Terrestrial ecosystems regulate climate, store carbon, and purify water and air. Forests alone absorb about 2.6 billion tons of CO₂ annually, acting as a critical buffer against climate change.

b.Biodiversity: Over 80% of the world's terrestrial species depend on forests and other land ecosystems. Losing biodiversity weakens food chains and ecosystem resilience.

c.Human Livelihoods: Approximately 1.6 billion people, including many Indigenous communities, rely directly on forests and land resources for their livelihoods, food, and shelter.

d.Land Degradation: Around 1.5 billion people are affected by degraded land, which reduces agricultural yields and exacerbates poverty and migration.



Key Targets of SDG 15

SDG 15 includes 12 specific targets and 14 associated indicators to measure progress by 2030. Here's a detailed breakdown of the main targets:

1. 15.1 – Conservation of Terrestrial and Freshwater Ecosystems: By 2020 (extended to 2030 in practice), ensure the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, and mountains, in line with international agreements.

2. 15.2 – Sustainable Forest Management: By 2030, promote sustainable forest management, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests, and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

3. 15.3 – Combat Desertification and Land Degradation: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil (including land affected by drought and floods), and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

4. 15.4 – Mountain Ecosystems: By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, to enhance their capacity to provide benefits essential for sustainable development.

5. 15.5 – Halt Biodiversity Loss: Take urgent action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity, and, by 2020 (extended to 2030), protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

6. 15.6 – Fair Sharing of Genetic Resources: Promote fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, as per international agreements like the Nagoya Protocol.

7. 15.7 – End Poaching and Trafficking: Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both the demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

8. 15.8 – Control Invasive Species: By 2020 (extended to 2030), introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems.

9. 15.9 – Integrate Ecosystem Values into Planning: By 2020 (extended to 2030), integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies, and accounts.

10. 15.a – Mobilize Financial Resources: Increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.

11. 15.b – Finance Sustainable Forest Management: Mobilize significant resources to finance sustainable forest management and provide incentives for developing countries to advance such efforts.



12. 15.c – Support Anti-Poaching Efforts: Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Challenges:

a. Deforestation: Despite global efforts, deforestation continues, with 10 million hectares lost annually (FAO, 2020), driven by agriculture, logging, and urbanization.

b. Climate Change: Rising temperatures and extreme weather events accelerate desertification and habitat loss.

c. Funding Gaps: Developing nations, which host much of the world's biodiversity, often lack the financial resources to implement conservation programs.

d. Illegal Activities: Poaching and wildlife trafficking remain rampant, fueled by demand for products like ivory, rhino horn, and exotic pets.

e. Policy Implementation: Integrating ecosystem values into national planning is slow, with many countries prioritizing short-term economic gains over long-term sustainability.

Progress (as of March 23, 2025)

a. Forests: Global deforestation rates have slightly declined, but progress is uneven. Reforestation efforts in countries like China and India show promise, yet tropical forest loss in the Amazon and Southeast Asia persists.

b. Biodiversity: The Red List Index (tracking extinction risk) continues to decline, with over 44,000 species threatened (IUCN, 2023).

c. Land Restoration: Initiatives like the Bonn Challenge have restored over 210 million hectares of degraded land by 2023, though the 2030 target of 350 million hectares remains ambitious.

d. International Cooperation: Funding for biodiversity has increased, with commitments like the Global Biodiversity Framework (post-2020) aiming to mobilize \$200 billion annually by 2030.

Interlinkages with Other SDGs:

a. SDG 13 (Climate Action): Forests and soils are vital carbon sinks.

b. SDG 2 (Zero Hunger): Sustainable land use supports agriculture and food security.



c.SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation): Healthy ecosystems regulate water cycles.

d.SDG 1 (No Poverty): Land-based livelihoods lift communities out of poverty.



Conclusion

SDG 15 is a cornerstone of global sustainability, recognizing that life on land underpins human survival and planetary health. While progress has been made in areas like reforestation and policy frameworks, urgent action is needed to meet 2030 targets. This requires collective efforts—governments, businesses, and communities must prioritize conservation, sustainable practices, and equitable resource use. Only through such collaboration can we safeguard terrestrial ecosystems for future generations.

References

1. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal15>
2. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
3. <https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/15-life-on-land/>

"The world's forests are a shared stolen treasure that we must put back for our children's future."

- Desmond Tutu, Noble Laureate



APSWDP PROGRAM & PROJECT ACTIVITY UPDATES

Commemoration of the Republic Day 2025 by organizing a Mainstreaming event with Transgender community.

The CTIP Project and Samta Nyay Kendra spearheaded by the Association of Professional Social Workers and Development Practitioners (APSWDP) in collaboration with Chandigarh State AIDS Control Society (CSACS), commemorated the Republic Day 2025 at Leisure Valley by unfurling the tricolour with Transgender community in addition to a city tour on Hop & Hop double-decker bus. The objective behind this initiative was to assess the spaces where transgender community feels safe for them with their community people. More than 50 TGs have participated in the programme, in addition to staff and members of the association.

Commemorating the World Social Work day 2025 by organizing a programme on Community Driven Development.

The Samta Nyay Kendra under the Association of Professional Social Workers and Development Practitioners (APSWDP) in collaboration with Chandigarh State AIDS Control Society (CSACS), organized World Social Work Day 2025 on 13th March, 2025 with community people with talks on community driven development. Dr. Sumit Arora, President, Mr. Ripudaman Chopra, Hon. Director CSR and Mr. Rajeev Choudhary, Hon. Director CBT were present and graced the occasion as guests. Approx. 45 HRGs and community members have participated the event.

APSWDP participation in 13th AIDSCON

APSWDP represented and participated in 13th AIDSCON hosted by Chandigarh State AIDS Control Society at Mount View Hotel from 10 to 11 Feb, 2025. APSWDP stood second in Poster Presentation by demonstrating on Samta Nyay Kendra. Dr. Sumit Aroro, also chaired a session in the AIDSCON.

We Serve India Awards 2025 and Panel Discussion hosted by Forbes India and Lions International.

APSWDP was invited at We Serve India Awards 2025 organized by Forbes India and Lions International on 8th March 2025 at JW Marriott. Dr. Vivek Trivedi, Founder APSWDP represented APSWDP and was invited to be a panelist in the panel discussion on Empowering Communities: Strategies for Sustainable Social Development. The discussion explored practical strategies for long-term social development, emphasized collaboration between policymakers, businesses, and grassroots organizations. By showcasing successful models, the panel aimed to inspire collective action for a more inclusive and resilient society. Dr. Trivedi's participation underscored APSWDP's commitment to fostering collaborative approaches for impactful social change. The showcasing of successful models aimed to provide tangible inspiration and practical pathways for others working towards similar goals of community empowerment and sustainable progress.



NATIONAL SEMINAR ON INDIA'S ROADMAP TO 2030: ALIGNING NATIONAL POLICIES WITH THE UN SDGs

The National Seminar on India's Roadmap to 2030, a collaboration between RGNIYD, ICSSR NWRC, Panjab University, and in Knowledge partnership with APSWDP, served as a vital forum for discussing the alignment of national policies with the UN SDGs. Scholars, policymakers, and practitioners engaged in interdisciplinary dialogues, enriched by research and innovative strategies, to understand India's SDG implementation challenges and opportunities. APSWDP's emphasis on community-driven approaches contributed to shaping sustainable and equitable policy frameworks. This collective effort aimed to forge a strategic roadmap for India's sustainable future, highlighting the urgency of achieving the SDGs by 2030.



Know Your Members



DIKSHA MAKKAR
RESEARCH SCHOLAR

Diksha Makkar is a Research Scholar in the Department of Public Administration at Panjab University, Chandigarh. Her research focuses on the "Skill Development Ecosystem" in India, exploring its structure, implementation, and impact on youth employability and capacity building. She is also passionate about social work and actively engages in community-based initiatives that promote inclusive growth, education, and empowerment. With a strong interdisciplinary approach, she combines academic research with field-level engagement to contribute meaningfully to public policy and governance.



LALIT KUMAR DOGRA
PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKER

Lalit Kumar Dogra is a passionate social worker with a Master's in Social Work and over eight years of experience in community service. Currently serving as a Young Professional with MoYAS, he leads impactful grassroots initiatives. Skilled in leadership, disaster management, CSR, and proposal writing, he is committed to sustainable development. His accolades include the NSS President Award, Plan India Young Change Maker Award, and the Rastriya Prerana Doot Award, reflecting his dedication to social transformation and youth empowerment across Himachal Pradesh and India.



BHAVESH SWAMI
LEAD - CLEAN ENERGY POLICY

Bhavesh Swami, Lead - Clean Energy Policy, Engagements & Fundraising at The Climate Reality Project, is a clean energy and sustainability expert with 20 years of diverse experience. He spearheads mass tree plantation drives, air pollution reduction campaigns, and water rejuvenation projects across India through CSR collaborations. Previously, he served with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power, Govt. of India, leading clean energy programs for MSMEs supported by The World Bank and SIDBI, driving impactful policy-level changes.



MANEET SHARMA
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PSACS

Mr. Maneet Sharma, Assistant Director, Prevention Division, Punjab State AIDS Control Society (PSACS), holds an M.A. in Sociology, M.Ed., M.Phil. in Education, PGDHE, and DAFE. He is a dedicated professional leading HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives, with a focus on community engagement, awareness generation, and policy implementation. His efforts aim to strengthen public health responses and promote social well-being through inclusive and impactful interventions.

APSWDP AT AAHVAA 2025: CATALYZING COLLABORATIVE IMPACT



Mr. Karamveer Singh, CEO, and Mr. Ripudaman Chopra, Director (CSR), of the Association of Professional Social Workers and Development Practitioners (APSWDP), represented the organization at Aahvaan 2025—a national CSR-NGO Conclave—held on February 10-11 at Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, New Delhi. The event convened stakeholders to strategize on SDG-aligned initiatives, emphasizing cross-sector partnerships for scalable development solutions. APSWDP showcased its grassroots interventions in education, healthcare, and rural empowerment, engaging in dynamic panel discussions and networking forums. Aahvaan2025 highlighted the conclave's focus on innovation and inclusivity, aligning with APSWDP's mission to drive equitable progress through collaborative action.

APSWDP - E[CO]WORK JOINT WORKSHOP ON PARTNERSHIP & TEAM BUILDING AND FUTURE ROADMAP IN E-WASTE SECTOR



The Association of Professional Social Workers and Development Practitioners (APSWDP) and E[co]work co-hosted a pivotal workshop on Partnership & Team Building and Future Roadmap in E-Waste Management on 12 January 2025 in Chandigarh. Attended by 22 experts, the event aimed to foster collaboration, address e-waste challenges, and strategize sustainable solutions. Interactive sessions like the Marshmallow Challenge and Chinese Whispers emphasized teamwork and communication. E[co]work highlighted India's e-waste crisis, advocating safe recycling practices, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and formalizing informal sectors. APSWDP showcased its grassroots initiatives aligned with SDGs, including climate action and transgender empowerment. Key outcomes included a joint roadmap to establish a Tri-City e-waste facility, skill-training programs, and community-led startups. Plans for exposure visits to E[co]work's Ghaziabad facility and stakeholder mapping were finalized. The workshop reinforced commitments to SDGs, circular economy principles, and cross-sector partnerships, marking a significant step toward scalable, inclusive e-waste management in Chandigarh.

Job Opportunities

Multiple Vacancies

District Coordinator WaterAid India

Location: Bhadrak, Odisha

Apply by: 15 Apr 2025

Link:

https://www.devnetjobsindia.org/jobDescription.aspx?Job_Id=262677

Assistant Manager, NRM and Climate Change

Pragya

Location: Gurugram, Haryana

Apply by: 09 May 2025

Link:

https://www.devnetjobsindia.org/jobDescription.aspx?Job_Id=262669

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APSWDP Membership

Join APSWDP as Life
Associate/ Annual member/
Student member for
knowledge networking (terms
and conditions applied).



Write your intent to join at
apswdp@gmail.com



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