LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIA

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Introduction

In this fast moving society, globalization creates an opportunity to bring people together with a particular agenda in the forefront. No nation can afford to live in isolation from rest of the world. Media and ICT has shrunk the world into small global village at an alarming rate at the same time dramatically attempting to find answers to the most ardent questions of gap and gulf between rich and poor, cities and country side, industrialized and subsistence economies.

The entire universe is being transformed into global society, which has made issues of equity, access, participation and diversity central to the development of a global perspective. Community-focused programmes are more likely to refer to global perspectives in connection with quality of life, citizenship or interdependence issues. The task is definitely enormous as there is a need to reach every segment beginning from central to state, district, and organizational and individual levels. This requires finding ways for convergence of educational plans, policies and programmes with critical global understanding as a core objective of partnerships between government and literacy programme providers. In the entire process, the main clientele here is an individual on whom the complete concentration rests with a view to impart the best of everything (s) he does. But what is more critical in the global scenario is to examine where an individual stands in terms of social strata, equality and justice, health, environment, quality of life, intensity of education and literacy etc., in the global scenario, more particularly in the Indian settings.

Ground Realities

The State of Human Condition

(i) More than a quarter of the developing worlds people still live in poverty - about 1.3 billion people exist on an income of less than $1 a day

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(ii) South Asia has the most people affected by "human poverty" (HDR 2000) HDR 2002 reports progress in this region.

(iii) Sub Saharan Africa has the highest proportion in poverty. (HDR 2000) continues to show a set back (HDR 2002)

(iv) 110 million "income poor" in the Caribbean and Latin America. (HDR 2000 shows an increase in GDP Per Capita (HDR 2002)

(v) One third of the people of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (120 million) live below the poverty line of $4 per day. This does not even touch those in poverty in the developed, industrialized world.

(vi) Rapid growth in two largest countries China since 1970s and India since late 1980s—enabled to catch up to some extent with rich countries

Educational Access

- Literacy as a key factor for widening the gap between developing and least developed countries

- As per 1998 figures, combined primary, secondary and tertiary GER is 64% round the world, the developing countries stand at 60%, least developed countries show 37%.

Adult Literacy

- Adult literacy as key indicator for the emerging gap between developed and least developed countries

- With an overall 78.8% adult literacy scenario throughout the world, 72.3% is reported for developed countries and 50.7% for least developed countries.

(Human Development Report, 2000)

The message here is nothing less than a CRISIS for all of Society - a warning of a global community in peril. Human Development and Human Poverty Index endeavors to project the unheard voices of many millions who will never realize what global events have for them and to what extent are they expected to move or even how creative and imaginative use of education can lead to social, economic and political transformation. This is that section of society who cannot even think about how vision of education as a transformative, subversive activity

can be a primary means of liberation from the culture of silence that continues to guide despite geographic spread and diverse realities.

THE STATE OF ART : GLOBAL AND INDIAN

Amartya Sen observes *"The first - and perhaps the most basic issue (is) the fact that illiteracy and innumeracy are forms of insecurity in themselves. Not to be able to read or write or count or communicate is a tremendous deprivation"*. This is the age in which literacy has gone beyond pedagogy and comprehension to technological power, where on the one hand the notion of global village is no longer an abstraction with transactions taking place electronically through cyber space and in India with best of intentions for IT introduction is struggling to provide minimum facilities to the formal schools, four walls with a roof to non formal and alternative education centers and teaching relevant vocational skills at Jan Shikshan Sansthans or providing meaningful continuing education in the Continuing Education Centres as well as quality material production in State Resource Centres for Adult Education.

Based on the perceptions of Lankshear (1987) who talks much of proper and improper literacy, Bob Corbett speaks of four, not two, concepts of states which are at stake. These are:

- *Some people don't even learn to read, write or compute on a basic level. Such people lack both proper and improper literacy.*
- *Other people perhaps learn to read, write and compute, but cannot think critically or analytically about the world. This group has improper literacy, but does not have proper literacy.*
- *Some successful university students learn to think critically and analytically about standard academic issues in various disciplines, but do not seem to think about the structured political and social world with its injustices, and/or they don't learn to think and act upon their own political realities. Again, this group must also be said to have improper literacy.*
- *Finally, even the very few who might be educated toward proper literacy as described in # 3, will develop their critical skills and political sophistication to think structurally and biographically, but still err in arriving at the true knowledge of their own 'objective' states of oppression. Once again, such a group suffers improper literacy.*

The critical issue, then, is: Is proper literacy a skill of reading, writing and thinking, or is proper literacy those skills, plus proper thoughts and actions. The inference, which we can draw, is that we must see proper

literacy as skills, including, centrally, the skills of criticism and analysis. The scenario, which India depicts, is not different. Here also we can classify people who may be illiterate with different degrees as proposed by Bob Corbett and these are the most prized human resources who definitely need more attention to make India prosper. Every need is being felt to facilitate people in achieving a better quality of life, which would entail four objectives:

- *Social progress that recognizes the needs of everyone*
- *Effective protection of the environment*
- *Judicious use of natural resources*
- *Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment*

THE CHALLENGE OF THE PRESENT TIMES

The answer is simple: to ensure that all people have the knowledge and skills necessary for continuing human and economic development. To achieve this learning, education, literacy and awareness needs to reach all people for existence especially girls, women and poor, thereby improving quality of life for sustainable development of all.

AN AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

Education remains as one of the greatest concerns facing the developing world where despite enormous progress in primary schooling facilities and enrolment, fight against illiteracy continues. Efforts to improve quality of education remain a challenge right from school, college to university levels catering to different clientele from diverse socio-economic groups to rural and remote rural areas to towns, big cities and mega cities. Planning and policy formulation of education and literacy beyond the teaching-learning transactions within the four walls of a classroom to making the people more aware of their surroundings while expanding the spectrum of their learning is therefore a biggest challenge facing the global world, including India. There is every need to make them understand where they stand, what needs to be done to bring improvements in the quality of their lives.

Seen from this perspective, the kind of education today definitely needs to be different from that of the past. Job opportunities, working patterns and careers are constantly changing with economic changes. With knowledge growing faster with minimum expectations from people to make a critical understanding from it is posing another challenge for them when they are still bound by the shackles of provision of primary necessities to keep them alive and earn a descent living for the

generation to come. For them importance of education and learning is a secondary issue but earning a livelihood is for prime priority.

Now it is felt all over the world and India in particular that literacy and education is one such reinforcing agent which addresses the fundamental issue of human suffering – thereby straddling all variables—technical, political, social, economic, geographic, racial, ethnic and many others. Alternatively literacy for all, adult literacy in particular could be thought of as the engine to spearhead a revolutionary movement, which will address some of the fundamental issues affecting and shaping the world for our children of the coming generation. there is every need to tap this class of rich human resource who will bring changes in the future in the 'real' sense, and therefore this special class needs to be made more aware of themselves and their surroundings. They need to be made aware of the implications of their ignorance and the need for empowering them otherwise the entire generations will recede into the darkness of unawareness as it had been for the past many decades.

If education is to equip people for this changing world, it needs to make connections between people across the globe. Education needs to develop values and attitudes concerned with sustainable development, inter cultural understanding and empathy, even solidarity with people living in conditions of extreme poverty. Education needs to develop a basic understanding and knowledge of the world as an interdependent whole. It needs to offer people skills and knowledge of citizenship, so that they can influence the direction of their community if they wish. Without these elements, education will fail to equip people for the challenges emerging in global market. Every one involved in providing education and literacy are expected to make people aware of themselves, the surroundings and events to facilitate their existence and improve their quality of life to ensure better achievements. But relatively little is happening at the level of individual learner and education and literacy providers. All are expected to atleast ensure that 'the global dimension' of "learning for sustainable development" is delivered as a core element within their programmes wherein communities can be helped to interpret and discuss the news more critically, to form their own opinions and express themselves freely, while developing confidence, vocabulary and communication skills in the process. In this way, learners would develop basic skills through active learning, which incorporates the global dimension relevant to their own lives and livelihoods. The understanding of applications may vary but this kind of learning does hold prominence in developing an understanding of the need to maintain and improve quality of life, paving the way for benefiting future generations.

Amartya Sen in his address on International Literacy Day 2002 regards basic education as a critical component in helping people to get jobs and gainful employment. In his words:

" Any country that neglects basic education tends to doom its illiterate people to inadequate access to the opportunities of global commerce. A person who cannot read instructions, understand the demands of accuracy, and follow the demands of specifications is at a great disadvantage in getting a job in today's globalizing world. Not surprisingly, all the cases of successful use of the opportunities of global commerce for the reduction of poverty have involved the route of basic education on a wide basis. Already in the mid-nineteenth century the task was seen with remarkable clarity in Japan. The Fundamental Code of Education, issued in 1872 (shortly after the Meiji Restoration in 1868), expressed the public commitment to make sure that there must be "no community with an illiterate family, nor a family with an illiterate person." By 1910, Japan was almost fully literate, at least for the young, and by 1913, though still very much poorer than Britain or America, Japan was publishing more books than Britain and more than twice as many as the United States. Later on, China, Taiwan, South Korea and other economies in East Asia followed similar routes and firmly focused on basic education. In explaining their rapid economic progress, their willingness to make good use of the global market economy is often praised, and rightly so. But that process was greatly helped by the achievements of these countries in basic education. When people are illiterate, their ability to understand and invoke their legal rights can be very limited. This can be a severe handicap for those whose rights are violated by others, and it tends to be a persistent problem for people at the bottom of the ladder, whose rights are often effectively alienated because of their inability to read and see what they are entitled to demand and how. This is a particularly important issue for women's security, since women are often deprived of their due, thanks to illiteracy. Indeed, not being able to read or write is a significant barrier for underprivileged women, since this can lead to their failure to make use even of the rather limited rights they may legally have (say, to own land, or other property, or to appeal against unfair judgment and unjust treatment)".

In this entire process, taking the case of India, it is felt that until literacy is integrated with social learning, no change can occur. If integrated dimension of literacy in the context of relational process of learning is expected to provide the key to this century, then we need to reinterpret globalization positively and creatively. For this, we need to understand the consequences of the global market

TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM

If one is serious about bringing changes in the quality of life among general masses along with sharpening of life skills, there is every need to bring resurgence in the situation we are placed in within the globalization framework. This can always work when policy and decision makers, along with practitioners at school, university, school, university levels and literacy workers can chalk out future agenda while relating the Indian with global scenario and translate successful global practices into practical situations with necessary alterations. Some indications could be:

Understanding of consequences of the Global Market for Education

Lack of awareness about global interdependence can have serious implications. Neglecting global dimension can lead to actions that increase poverty, instability and environmental damage and conflict in the world. It is increasingly becoming a matter of debate that the neo liberalism and globalization are eroding the capacity and will of states to interfere in the economic market place, the consequences of which, for access and equal opportunities in education may be serious. Communications technology is making teachers redundant to the learning process. Virtual campuses will spell the end of traditional sites and institutions of education from school to universities. Above all, the responsibility of individuals and organizations for their own learning in relation to employability and competition means that public forms of education seem increasingly incapable of meeting the needs of post-industrial, post-welfare and post-modern society. There has been a lot of thinking generated on the issue of educational privatization which is being felt as serious to access and equal opportunities in education leading to inequalities whereas only governments can redistribute in these directions. The World Trade Organization raised concerns for educational workers and public sector and has many implications which concern all those who believe that public education contributes to equal opportunities and is essential to social progress. It therefore seems appropriate at this stage to conduct an empirical research on this specific issue, as this is an unexplored area with a lot of confusion with theoretical clarity to some extent. The picture would however become clearer when the probable impact of globalization on education market will be conducted and the learning generated will have long term implications for India where lot of debate is taking place on this issue.

Understanding learning as Community-Context

There is a need to recognize that there is not one literacy but many literacies. As soon as we move away from seeing learning as simply a set of skills, to viewing it as practices that we are actively engaged with, it becomes obvious that there are many different ways in which reading and writing are used and that people are developing new literacies all the time. In his book "The Social Mind", James Gee talks about how literacies are linked to different discourse communities that we are all part of. These are made up of people, things, characteristic ways of talking, acting, thinking, believing, valuing, interpreting - and reading and writing are an integral part of these activities and ways of being in the world (Gee, 1990). Often, we are not very aware of the rules of the communities we are familiar with, but we become sharply aware of them when we move into a new group or institution that assumes a different set of rules and we may suddenly come to feel like a novice in this new situation.

Another implication of the shift in understanding literacy is that it places at centre stage people's own definitions of literacy because there is no one standard that is valid for everyone, for all time. This means exploring both as teachers our own starting points, and with students their starting points and assumptions about literacy. Applying new views of literacy within educational practice therefore also means introducing them into professional development, where teachers can address questions of the role of reading and writing in their own lives and how this affects their professional practice.

We can say that we need to go deeper into the community literacy, what it actually means to what kind of community, to be reflective about the everyday practices that we are all part of, to ask questions, rather than to assume that we already know what literacy is. This gives a new meaning to the application of learning, which considers each community as a separate entity with its own interpretation to the learning archetype. Learning cannot be universal to all, it has to be seen within a particular framework, which obviously is contextualized and localized—as per the requirements of a particular community. This approach advocates a broader understanding of what is included when we talk about literacy, suggesting that we should look beyond texts themselves includes the sociocultural practices associated with reading and writing. The essence of this approach is that literacy competence and need cannot be understood in terms of absolute levels of skill, but are *relational* concepts, defined by the social and communicative practices with which individuals engage in the various domains of their life world. It sees literacy as historically and socially situated.

Understanding Literacy as life long learning

Hamilton confirms from one of the ethnographic study of literacy, which argues that in order to further a sustainable Lifelong Learning strategy for literacy we need to pay serious attention to three areas of knowledge creation:

- the details of literacy learning and use in local communities
- the process of vernacular learning in community contexts
- the institutional processes that privilege certain kinds of knowing and expertise to the exclusion of others.

In doing this, we need to see learning as a social, relational process, where the individual is not isolated from others, and where issues of learning environment, process and resources are considered together as an integral part of a system's approach. The time has arrived when we need to create conditions for literacy drives to go beyond reading and writing and recognize and adapt life long learning as a vehicle for transformation in the area of culture, competitiveness and employability

Educating and Re educating ……

One has to see that the targets and objects of our education should not be poor and illiterate only—but equally the rich and the powerful. In the attempt to promote social progress and better standards of life, it is being increasingly realized that there is every need for educating and re educating the Educated, the Rich and the Powerful but the Poor, as Friere continually stresses 'must become the Subjects who must act upon and transform both the Word and the World'.

Formulation of Policy Directives

Application of global practices need comprehensive policy directions with strategies able to attend to the issues, particularly of education and literacy with the prime objective of reaching people and is marked with efficient management of implementation. Provision of well-planned serious exercise for addressing to the issue of social learning integrated with contextualized literacy ingredients is the need of today. In this context, there is a need to intertwine the formulation of policy within a framework, keeping view the following thrust issues:

- *Understanding social deprived opportunities*
- *Strengthening institutions*
- *Strengthening organization for education*

- *Building managerial capacities*
- *Increasing finances for sustained learning opportunities*

Within this framework, the education of people can be organized which may not be in the generic sense but the entire process has to be seen from local point of view. The policy has to be translated as per the situation and geographical demarcations of a particular village. Education of a remote area located in the plains has to be different from that placed in difficult terrains or near coastal areas and other hard to reach segments of society. Organization of education has to be made specific to the local conditions. Contextualising of education becomes more crucial here since one will find difference in everything; local topography, demography, environment, climate, culture, occupation, migratory trends, society composition (children, age-group old people) and the level of education of people, resources available and scope of tapping and mobilizing resources etc.

Escalation through Capacity Building

Ultimately all provision for learning depends upon the capacity building exercises for education providers who need to encourage learners to share experiences and become aware of the connections between their lives and the wider world, for which they themselves require to develop their own skills and understanding to learn about these issues. This calls for highly specialized training exercises. In India, with more emphasis on local governance and decentralization, which is a recent phenomenon, there is every need to provide training to key personnel to prepare them to take up challenges emerging from global perspectives. It has become essential at this stage to examine the arrangements of educational governance in different states of this country. Some states have gone a long way transferring not only powers but also substantial proportion of state funds to Panchayati Raj bodies, some others have chosen to keep considerable control in the hands of the bureaucracy at the decentralized levels. Some states, have gone for establishment of quasi-legal bodies such as Village Education Committees and School Management Committees to oversee governance of education at the local levels whereas several states have yet to move towards such decentralized management structures. In some cases, not much progress has been made beyond galvanizing Parent Teachers Associations take greater interest and participate in school related activities. Each of these models also imply varying perceptions of the policy makers and planners regarding the value of decentralization and local governance. Seen in this perspective, designing capacity building activities to suit such varying contexts present a big challenge.

Most of the innovative practices will flow from various structures when officially granted autonomy is granted to Cluster Resource Centre, Block Resource Centre, Village Education Committee, State Resource Centres for Adult Education, Jan Shikshan Sansthans for vocational training etc to take decisions about institutions and clientele for which they stand. The issue of devolving powers at the school level can also be taken up at a later phase where it is free to develop flexible curriculum based on the local needs of the people, which help them to enhance their learning.

Convergence of Government and Developmental Sectors

Looking into the disarray of poverty and ill health, it is felt that education alone can not do much. Education will have to be seen in convergence to other developmental sectors like health, sanitation, environment, agro industry etc. Similarly, time also demands fostering linkages with and between education and training sectors, which will facilitate people to accomplish realistic employment opportunities. In order to impart training for vocational skills to out of school adolescents and youth including adults pre and post literacy and continuing education phases Jan Shikshan Sansthans, Continuing Education Centres, could be approached and for school going children redesigning of curriculum for vocational education could take place.

There is also a strong need for development of local area educational planning framework for government schools with enhanced opportunities to sharpen vocational skills to the extent of community requirements This requires development of a strategic plan involving planning, co-ordination negotiation between various departments. A system-wide initiative in education needs to be taken up as a serious effort.

Strengthening school-community relations

Lot of literature generated on global concerns for learning has depicted the need for taking a holistic view of the learner and learning. While recognizing the central role which a family has at the center of learning and the vital importance of encouraging relationships within families of mutual support for learning. Mukhopadhyay (2002) mentions that teachers have to break the tradition of keeping parents at a distance and learn to work in partnership with them. The Indian experience over the past 50 years has shown that the relationship that was intense and natural has weakened, as schools have become more professionalized and centralized. They have tended to distance themselves from their local communities more because of intense government intervention and centralization of educational administration, primarily out of enthusiasm for planned development of education (school mapping and micro

planning), quality concerns and evolution of a national system of education. In the report of Education Commission (1964-66), decentralization of educational governance has been recommended in view of ensuring better involvement of community in school education. The national policy on education 1986 gave a new lead in community-school partnership through setting up of Village Education Committees, further strengthened by 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments empowering local administration at district, block, cluster and institution (school) level in management of schools. Evidently, Indian experience and official efforts are far more on community involvement and local innovations but role of schools in community development is yet a professionally unexplored area. Still it can be said for certain that there are some initiatives, however small they may be, and they are successful models taken up by the government and non government sectors to address to this serious issue. The next step would be to identify people interested in carrying out community development programmes to give a ' feel' of small communities as an integral part of a larger global community.

Transforming Concept into Action

The most formidable task of government is to identify coalitions or interest groups for community development programmes. The plan of action could follow:

- *Work with the group to get information on needs and priorities in the various economic sectors like health, education, agriculture, tourism and the like.*

- *Evaluate the degree of awareness of education, health, sanitation etc.*

- *Investigate infrastructure facilities and resources and areas needs for the kind of general education and vocational education required by a specific group inhabiting in a particular area.*

- *Assist groups with planning and provide information and resources about application of knowledge to real life situations of people in remote areas.*

- *Develop links between local interest groups and statewide groups for providing resources and support.*

- *Arrange presentations and demonstrations to increase awareness.*

- *Identify partnerships for future collaboration and support in implementing community and economic development projects.*

- *Recognizing the change in the roles under Panchayati Raj Institutions, which clearly mentions some of the related education functions that could be taken up in convergence with other agencies in order to usher a holistic progress of rural areas.*

- *Finding ways for convergence of educational institutions under District Primary Education Programme for sustained quality improvement. This set up includes the Block Resource Centre (training teachers, enrichment programmes), the Cluster Resource Centre (awareness building exercises for Village Education Committee members), the Village Education Committee(encouraging children to go to school, monitoring school activities, mobilizing resources for the schools etc)*

In order to promote, encourage and enhance education for all and to chalk out practical approaches to address to the problems of communities, the decentralized planning process through which the country is going through calls for constitution of a management board to look after affairs of people in a particular geographical area. This board can be allotted all powers to infuse accountability and commitment for people for whom the members have been selected. The issues to which the board can address are as follows:

- *Listening to the ideas and concerns of communities*
- *Generating fresh perspectives on the employment opportunities available.*
- *Recommend ways for students, parents, teachers, schools, and educational leaders to participate further in an effective education strategy.*
- *Developing innovative solutions by consulting the communities.*
- *Report findings and recommendations to decision making authorities*

The board would constitute local educated people, local leaders, social activists, literacy workers, representatives from government, representatives from Panchayati Raj Institutions, Village Education Committees etc.

The following modalities could be adapted:

- *Frequent visits and survey of availability and accessibility of both primary and secondary schooling located in different geographical locations, enrolment and attendance in such schools, climatic conditions, socio economic background of children coming to schools etc.*
- *Quality of educational services provided*
- *Whether education is available to children with disabilities, indigenous children and children from diverse cultural, religious and caste backgrounds.*
- *Examination of related issues like costs for families, social security, funding models, teachers availability and incentives for teachers in remote, rural, coastal and hilly habitations, and other details.*
- *Preparation of a development plan for education in the schools, Community centres, Jan Shikshan Kendras, Adult Education Centres, Non Formal and Alternative Education Centres based on the requirements priorities and needs of a particular school, while recognizing each institution as a separate entity requiring different planning.*

Investments for wider exposure

It is not possible to separate the individual from the context and resources implicated in their learning. It is felt that environments have to be made complacent to community resources and funds of knowledge. The educational demands of people keep changing as they experience different situations at different stages of their lives and offer convincing evidence of the need of learning at different points of time to which they are exposed at critical moments. At times, community resources and knowledge do exist but often they are unevenly distributed and can be supported by various kinds of educational response. From this perspective, formally structured learning opportunities may be present but are restricted to particular strata of society or to the most affluent and rich families. Such funds can also be mobilized to be used to increase the physical space available for people and groups to meet, exchange ideas, display, perform like strengthen access points for literacy and learning like libraries, cyber cafes, bookshops, counseling centers etc. to enable community to access information they are searching for through print, video, electronic forms etc, engage in virtual or actual; meeting with experts. The onset of recent addition of cyber Panchayat 'Shalas' for villages of India or NGO electronic networking program, Information technology taking the latest healthcare and modern education, available to city dwellers and the people of country's 6,00,000 odd villages, the launch of 'Edusat,' a dedicated satellite to be

used for spreading education, and 'Gramsat' that will be used to create a communication network at the village-level for development and training at the village-level—are some of the positive beginning points towards this move.

Expanding the spectrum for developing skills and capabilities

" If cities, in the global age, are to address the twin tasks of urban regeneration and social inclusion, they will require a renaissance in learning" (Ranson 1992) This calls for developing capabilities for people to become active participants in remaking the communities in which they live and work. It is now clear that 'a new education' is emerging for a new age. Now the new forms of governance are taking an active role in enhancing the awareness of communities. The government and non-governmental organizations alone with the international aid to education are forming new partnerships that can develop capabilities of communities. There have been several drives to help people to recognize each other as citizens who share a common status and equal rights and to express themselves in the public spheres. India has started taking strides towards this kind of arrangement to reach marginalized, the disadvantaged and poor, through local governance and decentralization of educational services. The most forgotten class, are becoming more active in empowering their positions. The present government set-up with active interventions of civil society in addition to international aid to education, have given people their voices back wherein the traditional models had excluded and silenced the voices of those who were more gender-class deprived. Now the next step would be 'a conception of citizenship' as Yeatman (1994) puts forward which acknowledges the contested nature of public purposes and enables the different voices to represent their interests (Coole 1996) in the public space in conditions of unconstrained dialogues. Such a society will enable its citizens to develop the capabilities to acquire resources and to express themselves in public places.

Taking the concept of "Learning Cities" most vibrant in Britain, it is felt that India can also pick up the practice as a model. The concept of Learning City believes that the key to regeneration lies in creating the conditions for reflexive and dialogic learning communities to emerge. Such communities are characterized by new forms of partnerships between sectors and ways of listening to and involving the public. To avoid potential tension between the two strands, Cara and Ranson (1998) and Cara et al.(1998) believes that partnerships need to become part of a broader public dialogue, the purpose of which is to clarify the future of the city, town or region in an era of global change. The transition from participation will lead to regeneration of communities. This understanding has been learned in a number of European communities.

Real learning communities will learn new kinds of engagements with their citizens to involve them in determining how their communities will be governed and changed. This process demands citizen who have the skills to articulate their needs and aspirations, which are the same skills needed for work, which is in a state of flux. It is the education system, which has a vital role to play in moving the society to such a culture of learning, which definitely is a viable instrument in renewing the quality of community life.

Concluding Remarks

One could say for certain that no individual, community and nation can survive in isolation from rest of the world. The contemporary era demands everyone to come under one umbrella" GLOBALISATION" with incorporation of a wide range of educational, social and welfare programmes, the purpose of which is improving quality of life and sharpening life skills for sustainable development, otherwise the entire race will recede into the darkness of ignorance. The formulation of policy would require fostering active partnerships between government and non governmental organizations, different sectors, different levels of personnel, into the world of teaching and learning, research, training and development, awareness drives etc. We need new processes, less oriented to instruction and more oriented to action for sustainability – and why there needs to be more emphasis on working with adults here and now to change how we go about our lives. This entails assurance for economic and social development for mankind, leading to improved quality of life, also benefiting the generation to come, thus making teams to contribute for sustainable development of a nation and its future generation.... towards which India has already began its journey through small initiatives and efforts.

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