

## **Sustainable Development and Sri Lankan Youth**

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Today, sustainable development has become one of the key priorities of national policy making of any country. Sustainable development focuses on a wide array of aspects ranging from the most basic socio-cultural aspects to more sophisticated political, economic, technological and scientific elements. Understanding the importance of sustainable development, on September 25, 2015, the UN members adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. In the context of Sustainable Development Goals, where does the Sri Lankan youth stand? Development can be accelerated when the majority of youth in any country are able to make significant contributions to economic, social and political life in a way that lifts countries out of poverty, ensures greater stability and promotes healthier societies. (USAID, 2012). Against this backdrop, the study attempts to understand where Sri Lankan youth stand today and how can the youth be empowered in the context of attaining the following Sustainable Development Goals; 1) Ensure inclusive and quality education, 2) promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, 3) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and 4) promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Basically, this research is a case study that looks into the relationship between the youth in Sri Lanka and Sustainable Development Goals. This is a qualitative research and the main source of data collection would be secondary data collected from various reports, internet, internationally recognized indices, books and other sources. As far as the findings of the research are concerned, the study has found the interdependent relationship between sustainable development and youth. However, this relationship has not been properly understood by all parties of the society, leading to a marginalization of the youth. Thus, the study has identified what is simply identified as PI approach (P=Proactive and I= Independent) to get the youth directly involved in the process of sustainable development.

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