

# Building Resilience for Sustaining Development



*Madurai Symposium 2017*  
*Fostering Development Knowledge*

September 20-24, 2017



Development Stakeholders gather biennially at Madurai in a development market place, “Madurai Symposium” to share, learn from each other experience and practices and explore opportunities for collaboration. The symposium attracts diverse stakeholders in development: Community Organisations, Civil societies/NGOs, Government, Banks, Insurance Companies, CSR Foundations, Donors, Philanthropists and Academia. The previous edition of 2015 saw participation of 10000 stakeholders and deliberated on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals. Given the multifaceted development goals of SDGs, the Madurai Symposium 2017 would connect with the critical element of challenges in sustaining development processes towards achieving the goals.

Building resilience is one of the crucial Challenges and Madurai Symposium 2017 seeks to engage with the topical theme in the context SDGs.

### **Appreciating resilience in the development context**

Globally, it has been recognized that development process would not be sustained, nay, stalled or even retarded due to lack of resilience. Resilience is the ability/capacity of the people, households, communities, countries to cope up with Shocks and Stresses through mitigation, adaptation and quickly recover in order to reduce chronic vulnerability and enable sustained development, inclusive growth and learning and transformative capacity. Building resilience is a

progressive and long term process that goes beyond humanitarian relief and development investment by addressing a wider set of inherently connected challenges that collectively prevent communities from achieving and maintaining development gains. It is obvious sustaining Post SDGs hinges on inherent buildup of resilience.

Among the SDGs, from the perspective of resilience having larger impact in achieving the goals, the following themes rank high on the pecking order of priorities.

- Social Capital for building Resilience
- Resilience in Agriculture eco-systems

- Resilience to cope up with Climate Change
- Resilience in Disasters

These themes have been so closely inter-related in terms of cause and effect, the complementarities of resilience building among these interconnected themes presents interesting challenges and opportunities.

### **Social Capital for building Resilience**

It is quite evident through ages that communities getting organized and pulling together have demonstrated greater coping capacity to meet the challenges stemming from natural disasters, hazards, catastrophes, etc. In relative terms, among the communities those endowed well economically have



been able to show greater resilience to bounce back to normal. The poor being more vulnerable to shocks/ stresses, the imperative of being organized and building larger social capital base cannot be overemphasized. Self- Help Group movement of poor women, for instance, has shown greater resilience in coping with risks and vulnerabilities in so many different ways in different contexts. These experiences when shared in Madurai Symposium would enhance our understanding of the dynamics and nuances of how these communities prepare themselves and build resilience through collective action.

### **Resilience in Agriculture eco-systems**

Farming is faced with multifarious risks and vulnerabilities than any other economic activity and building resilience is an indispensable part of this activity to make it a viable proposition in sustainable way. In fact, the Goal-2 of SDG recognizes this critical importance and emphasizes promoting sustainable agriculture. In view of multiple dimensions of risk elements in agriculture, the challenge is greater as



resilience has to factor in many imponderables. Foremost among them is natural elements with erratic rainfalls, prolonged droughts, increasingly high incidence of pests and diseases, followed by cultivation practices such as excess application of essential inputs, nil /low diversity in cropping pattern etc, compounded by the market shocks. Building resilience is a sine-quo non for sustainable agriculture and each of the ecosystems in farming be it wet-land, rainfed or coastal etc. call for understanding and evolving unique resilient practices. Madurai Symposium sets the stage for showcasing successful resilient practices in different agriculture eco-systems.

### **Resilience to cope up with Climate Change**

Despite voices of climate skeptics, there is an overwhelming global acknowledgement that Climate Change is real and happening with its known and unknown consequences. It is widely acknowledged that human activity and excesses associated with that, particularly the energy sector, is the key trigger that induces climate change and its harmful consequences. On the other hand, Climate Change has widely disrupted the existing pattern of rainfall, temperature, etc. Green gas emissions induced through anthropogenic activities have been compounding the global problem. Communities and Countries have launched mitigation and adaptation practices to combat climate change and build resilience. Many communities have exemplary practices which compel the attention of policy makers, industries and governments. Effective and proven practices in coping with climate change challenges by different stakeholders including farming communities would be shared in the symposium.

## Resilience in Disasters

Disasters be it natural or man- made have frequent visitations than before leaving behind a trail of destruction and despondency. There have not been wider appreciation, of going beyond rescue and relief, reconstruction, about the critical importance of the resilience in disaster hot spots. In other words, building resilience has not been a deliberate process inherently woven with reconstruction and rebuilding lives. A global disaster response frame work namely “Sendai Framework” has been evolved by the United Nations which guides the process of building resilience.

In the recent past, wherever disaster struck, attempts are being made to make the resilience building among the disaster affected communities as a process of rebuilding the livelihoods like Phyllin disaster in Odisha, Hud-Hud in Andhra Pradesh. There have been similar experiences in different type of disasters and the symposium is the platform to present such experiences for sustaining development in disaster prone areas.

## Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

Highlighted in above the sections are few areas of building resilience in order to sustain the development and attaining some of the sustainable development goals from the varied ecosystems in Indian context. There exists an imperative need to understand the level of vulnerabilities and risks met by different social strata in different contexts, coping mechanisms practiced by them, necessities for preparedness, capacity building of bottom of the pyramid to make them resilient communities.



In the Madurai Symposium 2017, development stakeholders would get platforms and opportunities for deliberating on the issues of building resilience in many conferences, seminars and workshops. Needless to say, these knowledge events would provide a stage to facilitate cross learning through best practices, traditional coping mechanisms, veracity of impact of disasters and hazards on poor, research outcomes etc.

## People Conventions



As the resilience challenges are multifold and region as well as context specific, the organizers of Symposium intend to involve the major stakeholders in building resilience process viz. community of women Self-Help groups, small and marginal farmers representing different natural eco-systems, fisher folks, landless etc. The conventions aim to elicit the experiences of these community stakeholders through dialogues, round-table and Focus group discussions which ultimately result in greater learning that has to be taken out of those experiences for building relevant resilience for sustaining development.

### Events for Public



**Cultural evenings:** Reviving and preserving traditional folk and arts is need of the hour which is still relevant. The Symposium would create an opportunity for the folk and traditional

artists to perform variety of cultural programmes to exhibit their talents. This would facilitate the development stakeholders to find a way for promoting and preserving the traditional folks and arts which are the symbols of ancient Indian culture.

**Exhibition:** There is need for greater awareness of the public about the development sector and more particularly resilience in SDGs and its contribution for the country's growth and development. The Symposium 2017 would attract the public from the city to get exposed to the talents and creativity of the poor people/communities through exhibition of crafts and wares made by them.



**Development Films:** Screening development films for the development stakeholders including the public is important part of the Symposium. Exciting experiences of different development interventions would be displayed through this event to sensitize the stakeholders, communities and common public on various development initiatives and interventions. The best films would be recognized and suitably awarded.

**Rallies:** The members of micro finance groups, farmers associations, communities representing Panchayat





institutions would organize rallies to create awareness and sensitize the public in Madurai City about the importance of resilience in achieving SDGs.

**Date:** September 20-24, 2017

**Venue:** Tamukkam Grounds, Madurai

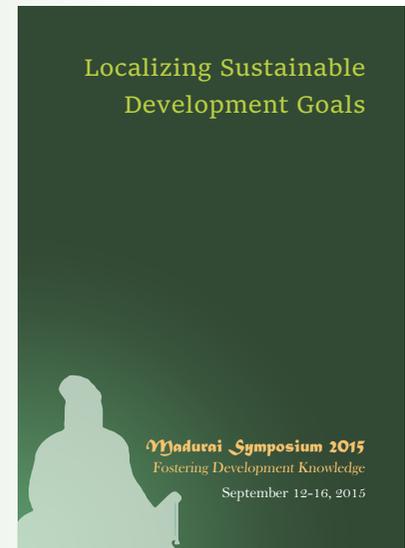
### **Nominations for Events**

The Facilitation Committee of the 2017 Madurai Symposium invites NGOs, academic and research institutions, Government Organizations, industries, banks, donor organizations, entrepreneurs, producer companies and cooperatives to host conventions, seminars, workshops and

conferences on topics relevant to the theme of the Symposium. The Committee would facilitate logistics and other needed support for the events organized by the host organizations.

### **Madurai Symposium so far**

- 2003 - Advancing Development
- 2005 - Advancing Development
- 2007 - Advancing Development towards Building Alliances
- 2009 - Advancing Development towards Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- 2011 - Advancing Development towards Sustainable Livelihoods
- 2013 - Governance for Advancing Development
- 2015 - Localizing Sustainable Development Goals





**Facilitation Committee of  
Madurai Symposium 2017**

**@**

**DHAN Foundation**

1A, Vaidyanathapuram East, Kennet Cross Road  
Madurai 625 016. Tamil Nadu, INDIA  
Tel: +91 452 2302500, 2610794 / 805, Fax: 2602247  
Email: [maduraisymposium@dhan.org](mailto:maduraisymposium@dhan.org)  
Website: <http://maduraisymposium.net/>  
<http://www.dhan.org>

