My Experience at the HLPF 2018

Introduction:

The HLPF for Sustainable Development was from 9th to 18th July 2018. Its theme was “Transformation towards Sustainable and resilient societies”, which focussed on SDG nos. 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, & 17.

The Orientation given prior to HLPF on the 8th July was helpful, as it gave an idea, of what HLPF is all about and how it fits into 2030 agenda. It is an evolution of the outcome of Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. High Level Political forum is the Review mechanism for the implementation of the 2030 agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals where the member states voluntarily report on the progress they have made. Civil society participation is through the Major Groups and Other stakeholders who continuously worked with the UN DESA and engaged with the civil society participants.

The opening sessions were interesting and the speakers were very good. The statement made by one of the speakers Prof. Jeffrey Sachs was that we should aim at environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive development in society which looks for well being of all its citizens.

Week 1

During the first week we had a number of thematic panel discussions after which the speakers from various member states reported their progress towards the thematic goals. Most of them felt that SDGs are achievable, but not yet achieved and the biggest obstacle seems to be greed. The rich want to become richer at the cost of the poor and the Government seems to be always on the side of the big company owners from whom they get lot of benefits. This does not help in achieving the SDGs at all. It looks like, if any change has to happen, it can happen only through the NGOs. It gave me an impression that only a few countries have taken seriously actions to achieve the goals. Many are making progress, but still are far behind. Sweden seems to be the highest in rank in achieving the SDGs with most of its policies put in place. The young people as well as the public agencies have agreed intently on implementation of the SDGs.

The side event on “Cities for CEDAW training and exchange was helpful as they talked about how they are working towards elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and how it provides basis for realizing equality between women and men by ensuring that women get equal opportunity in political and public life.

The presentations on “Water and Sanitation” were mostly general and stressed on the importance of water and nothing much was said about sanitation.
It was disheartening to listen to the Indigenous groups who were deprived of their rights and specially the group from Manipur in India who felt that the Government invests so much money on arms and ammunitions and nothing for their welfare.

**SDG no.12 Responsible consumption and production.**

After listening to the speakers I felt that a need for equal treatment at all levels is a must in order to leave no one behind. The gap between the rich and the poor is still very wide. After three years of SDG implementation, the results are not very satisfactory. It is clear that sustainable development cannot be achieved without sustainable production and sustainable consumption. In comparison to many other countries, Indonesia seems to have really worked towards sustainable living, by making policy change. Many countries are making an effort, but many others are working in the interest of profits.

The **VNR sessions** during the second week were very educative, because it gave an idea of what it is all about. I have realised that just talking about SDGs will not help in achieving SDGs, our life patterns need to be changed. Also, if we want a change to take place in our society, investing in our youth is very important. If they are serious about something they will make sure to achieve it.

The **Review session** we had with Srs .Elsa & Joyce were helpful, because it gave an opportunity to listen and to learn from one another and to know what are the expectations and also to know where we are and what needs to be done to move ahead in future. Though I was not so keen on coming here, I am happy I came and gained so much. It was a good experience. Thank you Sr.Elsa for taking so much trouble to make all the necessary arrangements

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