

Civil20 - LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) Working Group

LiFE is our responsibility!

Concept Note

Civil20 is one of the Engagement groups of the G20 process. The purpose of Civil20 (C20) is to bring together voices, ideas and solutions from civil societies across the Globe. The C20 group leverages the diverse spectrum of our society and is expected to channelize the G20 process towards being inclusive, people-centric, democratic and better informed.

The C20 in Bharat has created 14 working groups covering various aspects that civil societies work on. For the past few years, Bharat has been highlighting 'Lifestyle' as one of the issues requiring global discussion. This is why, apart from Health, Culture, Women-Led Development etc., LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) has been identified as a significant working group. Dr. Gajanan Dange, YOJAK Center for Research and Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development is designated as National Coordinator of LiFE working group.

Bharat has a tradition of community driven decision making. During Bharat's Presidency, C20's role shall be vital in highlighting the participation of communities in decision making, especially about lifestyle. This note describes the thought process of the LiFE working group and proposes objectives, programmes etc. for the LiFE working group in the year of Bharat's presidency of G20.

LiFE(Lifestyle for Environment) working group: 'LiFE is our Responsibility!'

"Strength lies not in unrestrained behaviour but in well-regulated action."

– Ekatma Manav Darshan, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay

With "Sustainable Development" becoming a global action point, the modern world has the responsibility of inclusive growth. To grow as well as protect, is a challenge. If we take a step ahead from 'protection' and also add the concept of 'regeneration', this seems like an even bigger challenge. The challenge is bigger also because 'growth' may happen in one generation, but 'protection' and 'regeneration' have to be implemented over several generations.

Over Millennia, nature-worshipping communities have been systematically guided by 'gratitude,' than 'rights'. They have always inculcated universal well-being in their lifestyle. In human systems such as these, individuals consider kindness, service to others, being joyful, being creative, respecting nature as their '**responsibility**'. This responsibility is not some standalone action but an attitude towards environment and the life style shaped accordingly. Lifestyle is uniquely individual in practice but impacted strongly by Community Traditions. The community tradition is further protected and propelled by culture. Governments and Governing mechanisms, ideally become protectors and enablers of these sustainable human systems.

Bharat, in her history of several thousands of years, has overcome so many disasters, difficulties as well as the effects of foreign rule. Mother Bharat has not only survived, but thrived, due to the single reason that humans living here felt responsible for changing existing situations and made sustained efforts over several generations. Though being the epitome of diversity, Bharat has shown unity of purpose several times in her history. The recent pandemic where Bharatiya people gracefully vanquished the virus, showcases the leadership role played by communities and community service organisations, with apt support from the Government and Industry.

Our teachings do not consider humans to be the centre of the universe but a part and parcel of the universe. Every life and life form is sacred and reverential. Thus, diversity, even the diverse disposition of humans is an integral and essential aspect of life. Shri Dharmapal ji, well known Gandhian scholar and Bharatiya researcher said "Every community is an integral part of their surroundings and ecology - the 'parisar'. Living and Non-living components of the parisar and every human being living in it, have a strong impact on each other and are empathetically connected"

Through ancient times, Bhartiya people have conserved rivers, mountains, forests, birds, animals and bees, however, with development objectives centred around Growth, some of these ancient principles are eroding.

Communities and Individuals, traditional and modern are trying to bring these values in today's life. They are working on forest conservation, livelihood, traffic issues, minimalistic lifestyle, trying to reduce impact of industries and business on environment, innovating new products, technologies and processes.

Various programmes as part of LiFE, are a great opportunity to understand, evaluate and propagate the original Bhartiya Lifestyle which was centred around Environment. It will be an opportunity to showcase what today's communities and people are doing to assimilate this thinking into practice. Through every programme, we wish to establish the protection and regeneration of Environment as a **collective responsibility** rather than a **demand**. The programmes should help the participants, to adopt a lifestyle that is aligned with the environment, by articulating specific actionable. The process has the potential to draw the attention of the CSO across the world towards studying and synthesising the rich Bhartiya traditions into wisdom that is relevant for their unique situations and societies. Last, but not the least, the archives from this process would serve as a reference point for current and future Governments and society at large to drive fairness and justice in a truly sustainable manner.

Which are the sub-themes of the LiFE

Bharatiya "Jeevan Drishti" (Life Vision) and "Jeevan shaili" (Lifestyle) are at the core of LiFE. Sub-themes like grassroot innovation, food, fashion, habitat, education, water, industry, youth, waste management, nature-based solutions, higher education student engagement program are identified and being led by highly experienced, committed sub-theme coordinators.

What is the ONE message of the LiFE working group process?

"LiFE - is our responsibility!"

should be the message that is long remembered after the process.

What should the LiFE working group process achieve?

1. Create awareness about the key concept of aligning **"Lifestyle for Environment"**
2. Create confidence to take steps at an individual, community and organizational level in order to bring about the alignment.
3. Provide inputs at policy level to create conducive ecosystem for people to adopt LiFE

What should programmes showcase in order to deliver the objective and message?

- Bharatiya principles of Lifestyle i.e., Jeevanshaili which is guided on rutucharya and dincharya, i.e protocols guided by seasonal and diurnal cycles
- The programmes will showcase current and historical attempts, struggles and achievements of individuals, groups, communities who have considered LiFE as their responsibility
- The Bharatiya way of collective churning of thoughts, deliberations and discussions which leads to clarity, acceptability and harmony

We will showcase the following:

- **Individuals** who made it their mission to conserve traditions, art, nature, knowledge so that life on earth would be better.
- **Institutions and organizations** who are constantly striving to bring in the positive changes to make the living well aligned with environment
- **Disadvantaged Groups** that come together due to some disadvantage, however achieved a purpose beyond their own selfish interests, with or without the help of a facilitating CSO
- **Ecosystem communities** who have thrived and prospered in difficult terrains through an equally vibrant 'ecosystem culture'
- **Study, localization, replication and scaling up** of a best practice established by a community, where a facilitating CSO put in systematic efforts over multiple years.
- **A movement** that spread fast across a large geographical area because people were bonded with the common traditions and culture and believed in greater good

- The significant role of “**matru-shakti**”(Women) - how tremendous energy is generated when we think like a mother. thought leadership and crucial role of women in conservation and regeneration.
- Responsibility taken by **social/professional** setups like housing societies/ schools/ colleges/ or professional networks
- Responsibility taken by **Industries** as part of social commitment (changes in working patterns, resource use etc)

What are the possible outcomes?

- A policy brief which will be shared with G20 as part of Civil societies thinking of issues related to LiFE
- Mobilization of a large number of ‘responsible’ individuals and institutes who want to take up personal or community initiatives for LiFE

Some more positive ripples of the activities of C20 LiFE are expected to spread across globe which include

- Engaging with the Bharatiya diaspora across the world on Bhartiya Lifestyle for Environment
- Strengthening the mechanisms and methods to propagate the Bharatiya philosophy, terminology and practices of Lifestyle and sustainability
- Collaborations and partnerships, in the realm of responsible living and sustainability at a global level, spanning across geographies, cultures and nations

Who should participate? Who should be visible?

- Youth and children
- Senior citizens and their wisdom
- People from all walks of life, who have managed the small identities well to create harmony
- People from across cultures who believe in oneness
- Various sections of society who feel responsible towards environment and taking some action ranging from song, dance, food, dressing, lifestyle, etc

Proposed Programmes

- Curtain Raiser
- Main Conference (with multiple parallel themes)
- Sub Theme Conferences and programmes
- Lecture series