

From the Editor's Desk

By Dr. Neha Sharma

This special issue of *Vigyan Setu* refuses to settle for one definition of sustainability. It moves from the classroom to the laboratory, from the village stepwell to the satellite orbiting above it, from a school's Green Brigade to a gene-edited crop in a farmer's field. And yet a single thread runs through all eight contributions. Every article, in its own way, asks the same question: *who gets to walk these pathways?*

Where Pathways Begin

We open in the classroom, where sustainability is learned long before it is practised. Amol Sharma reminds us that progress does not have to mean endless consumption; the aim is better, not just bigger. Kuldeep Gupta shows how scientific temper turns a leaking tap or a pile of household waste into an investigation worth starting. Anurita Koul takes that idea to Army Public School, Damana, where the Brimming Minds Room and the Green Brigade give every child a role, whatever their ability. Dr. Dinesh Kumar then widens the frame, tracing the journey from a child's question to a national innovation. Teachers are the catalyst, and no child's potential should be limited by geography, gender or circumstance.

Innovation with a Conscience

Two articles ask what happens when science meets real lives. Poonam Rautela's essay, written in Hindi, is deeply felt. From biodegradable pads to cleaner cooking and safer water, she argues that protecting women's health and protecting nature are one and the same task. A healthy woman, she writes, builds healthy generations. Dr. Palvinder Kaur and Dr. Balwinder Singh Sooch map biotechnology onto the Sustainable Development Goals, from climate-resilient crops to bioremediation and biofuels. They are honest about the barriers of access, regulation and public trust. The organisms are small, they remind us; the implications are not.

The Bigger Picture

Dr. Wahied Khawar Balwan offers the framework that holds many of these pieces together. Science provides the knowledge, innovation turns it into solutions, and inclusive development ensures those solutions reach small farmers and rural communities, not only large enterprises. Technology alone is never the answer. If it is not affordable and accessible, it is not sustainable.

Roots and Remembering

My own article looks backward in order to look forward. India's stepwells, jaalis, courtyard houses and bamboo homes on stilts were climate-responsive engineering long before sustainability had a certification. Read through the lens of Science Tourism, an idea *Vigyan Setu Foundation* has long championed in India, they are not heritage motifs but a body of tested knowledge. Some of the best answers do not need inventing. They need remembering and then translating into the codes and specifications that shape what we build today.

Closing with a Bridge

Our cover says it better than any of us could. The Umshiang double-decker living root bridge in Meghalaya is grown, not built, by guiding the roots of a rubber tree over roughly 25 years. It gets stronger as the roots grow, can carry the weight of 50 people, and can last for centuries. It exists because generations chose to work with nature rather than against it. No one grows such a bridge alone, and no one grows it quickly. Sustainable futures are much the same: grown patiently, together, and for everyone who needs to cross.

**Sustainability is not a destination we reach.
It is a bridge we grow, together,
one generation at a time.**

We hope this issue leaves you asking more questions than it answers. That, after all, is what science is for.

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