Sustainable Development
- A Gandhian Approach

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Gandhiji as a spiritual being

• Gandhiji was a spiritual being first. Other things were by-products of his spirituality.

• He realized from an early age the importance of a great body and mind. His experiments on food, brahmacharya and fasting came from this belief. Followed age old yogic tradition.

• A spiritual person becomes less interested in material things. This was the basis of Gandhi’s sustainability. He believed in simple living and high thinking.

• With little energy and very few needs he produced a very high quality of thought.

• His spirituality guided all his work in politics, rural development and non-violence.
Gandhiji’s Rural Development

• Gandhi focussed on rural development for last 30 years of his life.
• He felt intuitively that future of India is in decentralized rural development. This is Nature’s way.
• Hallmark of system evolution: size reduction; increase in complexity; increased efficiency and dynamic equilibrium with the surroundings.
• Gandhi was not anti technology or science. He was a prisoner of his time.
• He believed in local rural production and consumption. This was his concept of dream village.
• Modern high technology provides tools to bring his dream village to reality.
Decentralized Rural Development

- Rural development can take place with energy production.
- Energy is the basis of life. From it flow all affairs of humans.
- Decentralized resource like biomass, solar or wind.
- Biomass preferred source for rural areas and for NE.
- NARI’s Taluka energy strategy. All energy needs can be met by biomass resources. Generation of 30,000 jobs/taluka.
- National strategy adopted by MNES. 45 biomass power stations of 6-10 MW capacity installed.
- Taluka program can bring in Rs. 200 crores/yr. wealth.
- Economic power brings political power and democracy.
- Need for high technology in rural setting for sustainable development.
Philosophy of Sustainable development

• All the development efforts should also be accompanied by change in mindset.
• Curbing greed is the biggest challenge. Spirituality might help in creating a “contended” mindset.
• Gandhiji’s maxim of *Simple living and high thinking* can be a possible driving force.
• Very difficult to impose in a democratic society.
• However for sustainable future we have to do it.
• Need for continuous education of children and college students regarding sustainability and love for natural systems.
Thank You

- http://www.nariphaltan.org
- http://www.nariphaltan.org/criticalmass.htm
- http://www.nariphaltan.org/writings.htm (AKR’s writings)