



Shaping Future SDG Leaders: Empowering Change-Makers for a Sustainable World

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of education in shaping future leaders committed to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It examines the essential qualities of an SDG leader, including visionary thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, empathy, and adaptability, and discusses methods to cultivate these skills in students. A key focus is the Global Schools Program (GSP), an initiative of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, which supports educators in integrating SDG-related topics into curricula. Through training, free educational resources, and experiential learning opportunities, GSP empowers young individuals to take meaningful action on global challenges. The presentation also highlights real-world examples of youth leadership in SDG initiatives, featuring figures such as Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai. Furthermore, it outlines actionable steps for educators, students, and communities to promote sustainability through skill-based learning, collaboration, and school-based projects. By emphasizing the transformative potential of education in fostering global citizenship and sustainable leadership, this session aims to inspire stakeholders to adopt effective, inclusive strategies for cultivating SDG leaders. Participants will gain insights into practical approaches for embedding sustainability education within their institutions, equipping the next generation with the tools needed to drive positive change.

Keywords: collaboration; education; leadership; sustainability; youth empowerment