

Presentation of Sr. Smitha Muthu, CJ on SDG 17 in Nepal

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I thank everyone listening to me, thank the organizing team specially Teresa for providing this platform to share and listen. What I am going to share is nothing new, it is as old as these mountains around us. I have chosen to speak on SDG 17. The one word I wish to emphasize and wish you would remember after my sharing it would be "Collaboration"

SDG 17 is the fundamental condition for achieving all other SDGs. Their implementation requires robust collaborations and partnerships - at global, regional, national, and local levels. These build on principles, values, a shared vision, and common goals that center on people and the planet. Many countries rely on official development aid. By 2030, a world without hunger will require an additional 40 billion euros of annual investment by the international community. More than ever, international cooperation is needed to achieve the SDGs.

Especially these days we are already witnessing, the entire country being trafficked, the whole nation being refugees, added to these realities are the natural calamities, like Earthquake, flood, landslides etc. These emergencies or crises, demand a rapid assistance which is essential for survival - this is where local organizations play a crucial role. However willing the outsider to help those in need we need to understand the connection between the both. The giver as well as the receiver. I recall the quote of **Lilla Watson** "If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

Today I like to share with you the SPIRITUAL WEALTH that I have experienced by being with the POOR as an Social Activist. I am more convinced now that the UN need to value and measure this wealth that is with the Poor. The concept of spiritual wealth in the context of poverty often highlights intangible assets that can significantly contribute to resilience, community, and well-being. Here are three major aspects of spiritual wealth often found among the poor:

1. Community and Social Bonds:

- **Solidarity and Mutual Support:** In many poor communities, strong social bonds and networks are crucial for survival and emotional support. People often rely on each other for help, sharing resources, and looking out for one another in times of need.
- **Collective Resilience:** The sense of belonging to a community can foster collective resilience. Facing hardships together strengthens relationships and creates a supportive environment where individuals can find comfort and assistance.

2. Faith and Spiritual Practices:

- **Religious Belief:** Many impoverished individuals find solace, purpose, and strength in their faith. Religious beliefs can provide hope, moral guidance, and a sense of meaning in difficult times.
- **Rituals and Traditions:** Spiritual practices and rituals can offer structure, continuity, and a way to cope with stress. They can also bring people together, reinforcing community ties and shared cultural heritage.

3. Inner Strength and Resilience:

- **Hope and Optimism:** Despite material hardships, many people living in poverty maintain a sense of hope and optimism for the future. This positive outlook can be a powerful motivator, helping them to endure and strive for better conditions.
- **Adaptability and Perseverance:** Spiritual wealth often includes a profound inner strength and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. This resilience allows individuals to navigate and overcome challenges with grace and determination.

These forms of spiritual wealth can be incredibly powerful, providing the poor with the emotional and psychological resources necessary to face and overcome adversity. They illustrate the richness of the human spirit and the profound ways in which people find meaning and strength beyond material wealth. The way the humans would discover new ways to face the following challenges.

- **Innovative Financing Mechanisms:** Developing new financial instruments and leveraging blended finance to combine public and private resources effectively.

- **Strengthening Domestic Resource Mobilization:** Enhancing the capacity of developing countries to generate revenue through improved tax systems and economic policies.
- **Enhancing Global Partnerships:** Fostering stronger collaboration between governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society to pool resources and share best practices.
- **Debt Relief and Restructuring:** Implementing mechanisms for debt relief and restructuring to free up resources for sustainable development investments.
- **Creating a Conducive Investment Environment:** Implementing policies and regulations that reduce risks and provide incentives for private sector investment in sustainable development.

By overcoming the financial challenges, the global community can make significant progress towards achieving SDG 17 and supporting the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.