



WORLD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT 2023

MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

February 22-24, 2023
New Delhi



A Tata Steel Foundation - TERI Initiative

Title: **Younger Collectives for Greener Future**

Date: 23rd February 2023

Time: 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Venue: Dr R K Pachauri Conference Hall, India Habitat Centre

Background

Article 12 of the Paris Agreement highlights the role of the people (esp. youth) in bringing about sustainable climate action. It is also amply clear that young people will be disproportionately vulnerable to adverse climate outcomes and responsible for navigating future climate scenarios. *They are agents of change, entrepreneurs, and innovators and can benefit science, technology, and innovation to address climate change.* India, the youngest nation globally, has a youth population of 25.1 crore people (2021) and exhibits maximum chances to lead the path to climate action for a greener future. Here education plays a critical role in empowering these young minds with the necessary skill sets to understand climate change, thus influencing their actions.

Considering the above, The Green School, a Tata Steel Foundation - TERI initiated the environment awareness initiative in an environmentally vulnerable area, i.e East India (Odisha & Jharkhand), engaging with the local people there with the least available resources for resilience but behold a treasure of knowledge regarding coexistence with nature.

'The Green School' engages the schools' fraternity in taking action towards environmental protection (at the individual level due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown). Students acted as 'Green Buddies', taking the lead in promoting environment-conscious behavior amongst other students &

community at large. These young minds took informal sessions on water, energy, forest & biodiversity, and waste management, engaging the school fraternity and mobilizing them to undertake mega awareness drive at school/ community levels. Through its year-long activities, The Green School reached 7097 students & teachers and 47401 students directly, while 30320 students engaged through social media platforms alone. The project has empowered these young minds, so they have started mobilizing communities to take pro-environmental initiatives like having motivated local shopkeepers to use cloth/ paper bags instead of single-use plastic bags.

Phase V of the initiative undertakes awareness and action projects at school/community levels to develop solutions to create a sustainable environment. To achieve this, a distinct pedagogy for different categories of schools (Early, Experienced, and Evolved) will be designed, tested, and replicated through project interventions. Further, the formation of the Environment Management Committee (EMC), which is an action group formed in each school to act as a change maker in the society and community to take action on environmental issues, is going to be the key focus for the effective implementation of the current phase.

Sharing such bold actions by adolescents and youth will cater to discussions on the importance of education in channeling their energy toward a greener future and framing educational policies.