



## Youth leaders from across the world join hands to find sustainable safe water solutions for all

*The 7<sup>th</sup> YUVA Meet, held as a prelude to the DSDS 2015, helped connect the academia and students with governments, local communities and other stakeholders to evolve multi-disciplinary approaches to understand and solve water problems*

**New Delhi, February 2:** The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) today organized the two-day 'YUVA Meet 2015', where eminent experts, including youth in large numbers, deliberated on the theme 'Sustainable Solutions: Safe Water for All'. The YUVA (Youth Unite for Voluntary Action) Meet has been held annually since 2009, and has brought together young people from various parts of the world to find sustainable solutions to key developmental problems. Previous YUVA Meets have witnessed the participation of youth from not just states across India, but also from over 25 countries.

The YUVA Meet is a special event of the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS) and is held prior to DSDS so that the voices of the youth can be heard at this major international forum. The DSDS is the annual flagship event of TERI, and the landmark 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summit will be held in New Delhi from February 5 to 7, 2015. YUVA Meets have received the support from the Government of India, the Delhi Government, British Council, RCE Network, United Nations University IAS, Tetra Pak India Pvt. Ltd. and Dell Global Giving.

Speaking on the occasion, **Dr R K Pachauri**, Director General, TERI, said: "YUVA 2015 represents a unique opportunity to highlight two important issues. First, with the historically high number of people under the age of 25 years in this country today, it is essential that the priorities and concerns of the next generation be reflected in policies

and plans that we follow at the national level and actions that are taken across the country. This is something that the youth in India will have to articulate and get engaged in. Secondly, water is a subject which is at the top of challenges that India, and indeed the world, would be confronting in the years ahead. There are growing stresses on water resources in many parts of the world and these are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. YUVA 2015 will focus on this important resource and its management, and will have the youth of India define actions that need to be taken in hand to create a water secure future for humanity and this country.”

Said **Mr Rajeve Gupta**, Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India: “Water for all has many aspects – cleanliness of rivers requires development and management. We need a behavioral change to address the issue of waste disposal. The government is doing its bit, but society has a major role to play to achieve success. Enlightening the youth is a great mission to ensure safe water for all.”

Said **Mr Richard Everitt**, Director Education, British Council India: “Water security is a critical issue. India has one of the largest young populations in the world. We need to address the youth as leaders of the future. Social entrepreneurs are working in this area and they have the capacity to tackle the problem.”

Said **Ms Ranjana Saikia**, Director, Educating Youth for Sustainable Development Division, TERI: “The journey of YUVA has been fascinating... In 2010, we had the first group of international participants. And this year, we held a series of seminars across seven states in India focusing on water as a sustainable solution for all. The British Council and the Ministry of Urban Development have extended their support for this initiative.”

### **State Level Youth Seminars**

As part of the YUVA Meet 2015, a series of State Level Youth Seminars under the theme *‘Sustainable Solutions for Access to Safe Water: Promoting Innovation and Collaboration’* were held across seven states in India -- namely Assam (Guwahati), Bihar (Patna), Maharashtra (Pune), Uttar Pradesh (Noida), West Bengal (Kolkata), Karnataka (Bengaluru) and Punjab (Ludhiana). More than 150 youth from colleges, universities, NGOs, NSS, NYKS and youth groups from the respective states participated in these seminars. These seminars provided an opportunity for the youth to enhance their understanding on issues concerning safe water accessibility, youth engagement and sustainable development.

## **The objectives of the YUVA Meet 2015 are:**

- To generate awareness on issues of safe water accessibility and sustainability and encourage a systemic, multi-disciplinary approach to understand and solve water problems;
- To connect the academia and students with local communities, governments and other stakeholders in taking *suo moto* action on water management;
- To instill a sense of responsibility and engage youth in environmental stewardship so that they play a pro-active role in addressing issues related to sustainable development; and,
- To build a network of like-minded youth to ensure a collective voice.

## **About TERI:**

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is an independent, not-for-profit research organization deeply committed to every aspect of energy, environment, and sustainable development. From providing environment-friendly solutions to rural energy problems, to helping shape the development of the Indian oil and gas sector; from tackling global climate change issues across many continents to enhancing forest conservation efforts among local communities; from advancing solutions to growing urban transportation and air pollution problems to promoting energy efficiency in Indian industries, the emphasis has always been on finding innovative solutions to make the world a better place to live in. All activities at TERI move from formulating local and national-level strategies to suggesting global solutions tackling critical energy and environment related issues.

Headed by Dr R K Pachauri, also the chairperson of the Nobel Peace Prize winning climate change body, IPCC, TERI has emerged as an institution of excellence for its path-breaking research, and is a global brand widely respected by political leaders, policymakers, corporate entities as well as the civil society at large.

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