

2021 – A Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development

The year 2021 has been announced as the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development by the United Nations. The nations behind supporting this declaration include Indonesia, which was the main sponsor along with a global grouping of countries including India, Australia, China, Mongolia, Philippines and Thailand. The UN encourages all nations to observe 2021 for raising awareness, promoting cooperation, sharing best practices and promote an enabling environment for achieving a creative economy.

What Is Creative Economy?

The creative economy, sometimes also known as the *orange economy*, involves knowledge-based economic activities and the interplay between human creativity and ideas, knowledge and technology, as well as cultural values and heritage and other individual or collective creative expressions. Acknowledging that innovation is essential for harnessing economic potential of each nation, the Creative Economy is based on mass entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation all of which will usher in fresh momentum for economic growth and expanding opportunities for all, including women and youth.

The creative economy is the sum of all the parts of the creative industries, including trade, labour and production. The creative industries include advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, computer games, electronic publishing, and TV/radio. All of these are the lifeblood of the Creative Economy.

Importance of Creative Economy in 2021

Covid-19 Scenario: The most prominent occurrence of 2020 is the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this pandemic, several parts of world experienced lockdown which subsequently caused unemployment and economic decline. In such a scenario, there is need of fresh and innovative policy advice and technical assistance to governments. Under creative economy concept, artists, creators, academia and civil society can build a network to promote development through creativity as creative economy support government initiatives for the development of an integrated economy. Innovative public policies that work for all sections

of the society and all inclusive institution building are also critical outcomes of a Creative Economy that will help the prevailing situation.

We all have experienced the importance of digitization, and it was realized even more during COVID-19 in the form of studying online, working from home, online meetings and submitting work technically. Global citizens spent hours and hours on the Internet in 2020, and the subsequent year therefore becomes a great opportunity to optimize this behaviour. Optimizing what is already going on for economic, social and cultural benefits can easily be achieved by shifting to a Creative Economy. Development of digital technology, innovative and digital economy, e-commerce, building relevant digital infrastructure and connectivity for supporting sustainable development are some of the initial focus. Increased public and private sector investment in creative industries and development of relevant legal frameworks is but the need of the hour.

Energy Consumption: We are still dependent on conventional energy resources for transportation and industrial purposes even in 2021. This, despite the fact that there is now clear evidence and acceptance that our use of fossil fuel will soon destroy us. India has set up target of achieving 175 GW of Renewable Energy by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030. The pandemic has delayed some of these investments in renewable energy projects which can offset environmental gains. The current energy mix comprises 82% fossil fuels which needs a Creative Economy push to be reduced.

Initiating and boosting work towards clean energy also boost economics amid the COVID-19. Clean and green recovery will have much safer and a healthier footing and it will help societies become more resilient. It will create Green Jobs and will lead to sustainable growth. In this context, we have to innovate new technologies which are not dependent on coal, do not cause pollution and are eco-friendly. This is a direct way how Creative Economy and creative industrial growth can contribute to sustainable energy production and therefore sustainable development.

The creative economy can contribute to the triple-bottom line of sustainable development and help achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Creative Economy growth and innovation will certainly help eradicate poverty, provide employment and decent work for

all, improve quality of life and empower women and young people. It is with this motivation that the United Nations is encouraging all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other private sector, non-governmental organizations, academics and individuals to observe 2021 as the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development.

Reference:

1. <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-analysis/creative-economy-programme/2021-year-of-the-creative-economy#:~:text=Sustainable%20Development%2C%202021-,International%20Year%20of%20Creative%20Economy%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%2C%202021,Creative%20Economy%20for%20Sustainable%20Development.>
2. <https://creativeeconomy.britishcouncil.org/guide/what-creative-economy/>
3. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/rebuilding-more-resilient-cultural-and-creative-economy-after-covid-19>