

Asset Building for Community Development: The Vision of Vandana Shiva

Vandana Shiva is an environmental activist and food sovereignty advocate who has been working for over 40 years to promote sustainable and just food systems. In her work, she has emphasized the importance of asset building as a key strategy for community development.



Asset Building & Community Development by Vandana Shiva

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Asset building is the process of accumulating and maintaining assets, such as savings, property, and education. Assets can provide a foundation for economic security and well-being, and they can also be used to invest in community development projects.

Shiva believes that asset building is essential for creating sustainable and resilient communities. She argues that when people have assets, they are more likely to be able to withstand economic shocks, such as job loss or illness. They are also more likely to be able to invest in their children's

education and health, and to participate in community development activities.

Shiva's Asset Building Framework

Shiva has developed a comprehensive asset building framework that includes five key elements:

1. **Natural assets:** These assets include land, water, forests, and other natural resources. Shiva believes that natural assets are essential for sustainable development, and she advocates for their conservation and sustainable use. 2. **Financial assets:** These assets include savings, investments, and property. Shiva believes that financial assets can provide a foundation for economic security and well-being. 3. **Social assets:** These assets include networks, relationships, and social capital. Shiva believes that social assets are essential for building strong communities. 4. **Human assets:** These assets include education, skills, and knowledge. Shiva believes that human assets are essential for personal and community development. 5. **Cultural assets:** These assets include traditions, values, and beliefs. Shiva believes that cultural assets are essential for maintaining cultural identity and diversity.

Shiva argues that all five of these asset types are important for community development, and she emphasizes the need for an integrated approach that takes into account the interconnections between different types of assets.

Asset Building in Practice

Shiva's asset building framework has been used in a variety of community development projects around the world. One example is the Navdanya

movement, which Shiva founded in 1991. Navdanya is a network of seed banks and organic farms that promotes sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty.

Through the Navdanya movement, Shiva has worked to build natural, financial, social, human, and cultural assets in communities across India. For example, Navdanya has established seed banks to preserve traditional crop varieties, provided microfinance loans to farmers, and trained women in sustainable agriculture techniques.

The Navdanya movement has had a significant impact on the lives of communities in India. It has helped to increase food security, improve livelihoods, and empower women. It has also helped to preserve biodiversity and promote sustainable agriculture practices.

Vandana Shiva is a visionary leader who has dedicated her life to promoting sustainable and just food systems. Her asset building framework provides a valuable tool for community development practitioners and activists around the world. By building assets in all five of the categories identified by Shiva, communities can create a foundation for economic security, well-being, and resilience.

Navdanya



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