

## INDIA'S OBSTACLES IN ACCOMPLISHING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

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### **Abstract**

*The global economies are working together to accomplish the objectives of sustainable development. The previous strategies, when administrations looked for goals for the development and growth of their own economies, stand in stark contrast to this. The pursuit of excellence and growth has destroyed certain natural resources, thrown off the ecological balance, and caused imbalances in the economic development of different nations. Climate change and global warming are the effects of this that we are currently experiencing. A course to perform which would guarantee a secure ecosystem that will be used by the next generations has turned into imperative because the survival of humans on Earth is threatened by this. The phrase "sustainable development" was created to guarantee that growth occurs in a way that preserves natural resources and ensures they are unchanged for future generations.*

### **Keywords**

*Regional Government, State Policy, Urban Environment, Ecological Durability.*

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## Introduction

The worldwide society now uses the term “sustainable development” as a buzzword. The pursuit of expansion and perfection has thrown off the ecological balance, led to economic development imbalances between nations, and depleted some natural resources. An approach that would guarantee a secure The next generation’s habitat has evolved into imperative because This poses an alarm to humanity as we know it on Earth. To guarantee that development occurs in a way that preserves natural assets and passes them onto subsequent generations undamaged, the phrase “sustainable development” was created. By 2030, the world is expected to be more affluent, equitable, and secure thanks to the development of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They were included in the Sustainable Development schedule that 193 Member States adopted during the September 2015 UN General Assembly Summit. India, one of the summit signatories, is firmly in favor of the 2030 agenda. This report Trying to understand India’s obstacles in accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals at this point in time.<sup>1</sup>

## The Sustainable Development Goals

The enhancement of wellness indices for death and misery, and many environmental factors that contribute to ill health, however, was progressing slowly.<sup>2</sup>. These are the 17 SDGs:

<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</b>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</b>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.</b>
<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.</b>
<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.</b>
<b>Goal 6</b>	<b>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.</b>
<b>Goal 7</b>	<b>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.</b>
<b>Goal 8</b>	<b>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.</b>
<b>Goal 9</b>	<b>Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.</b>
<b>Goal 10</b>	<b>Reduce inequality within and among countries</b>
<b>Goal 11</b>	<b>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.</b>
<b>Goal 12</b>	<b>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.</b>

<b>Goal 13</b>	<b>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.</b>
<b>Goal 14</b>	<b>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.</b>
<b>Goal 15</b>	<b>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.</b>
<b>Goal 16</b>	<b>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.</b>
<b>Goal 17</b>	<b>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.</b>

The universal precept of “leave no one behind” served as the foundation for the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>3</sup> Regarding India, its national development goals align closely with the SDGs, and the country is anticipated to be a key factor in deciding the global success of the SDGs<sup>4</sup>.

#### **Initiatives implemented in India to carry out the SDGs**

The principal think tank for the Indian government, NITI Aayog, has been given the responsibility of organizing the SDGs. States, even those supported centrally, have also been urged to map out their programs in a similar manner. Also, efforts are being made to establish national indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)<sup>5</sup>. At the heart of the SDGs are numerous government flagship initiatives, including Made in India, Digital India, Swachh Bharat, and Skill India. Key roles in many of these projects are played by state and municipal governments.<sup>6</sup>

#### **United Nations backing for India's SDG projects**

During The United Nations in India invites think tanks, Indian media outlets, and civil society organizations to take part in side events and discussions at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa and during the General Assembly in New York.<sup>7</sup> The United Nations Country Team in India backs NITI Aayog's endeavors to tackle the goals of interdependence, guarantee no one is left behind, and promote sufficient funding to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>8</sup>. The United Nations, has led topic consultations on the Sustainable Development Goals in close collaboration with NITI Aayog and others (SDGs) to convene different state governments, central ministries, civil society organizations, and academia to discuss individual SDGs.<sup>9</sup>

### **Assistance for Regional Government**

At present, the UN in India assists the governments of five states (Odisha, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, and Haryana) in adapting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to their specific demands.<sup>10</sup> State and local governments must also develop effective policies to achieve this. To achieve this, the governmental apparatus ought to get heavily involved.<sup>11</sup> The following list of requirements is essential to accomplish this:

- **State Policy Framework**

To promote development without causing harm, the government has implemented various programs, including measures to reduce urban pollution, minimize deforestation, manage forests collaboratively, implement an environmental management system, harvest water to prevent groundwater depletion, conserve biodiversity, and more. A National Environmental Policy was even started by the government and is currently being closely examined by a number of state agencies and entities. The growth of local enterprises and infrastructure, the improvement of indigenous and technological knowledge via welfare programs and revenue-generating initiatives, and rural development projects have all received the attention they deserve from the government.

- **District-Level Initiatives and the Function of Panchayat**

The District Government apparatus is typically engaged in the exploration of various regions' potential as well as the growth of regional enterprises to create employment possibilities. It is necessary to start development projects in underdeveloped areas as well as in places affected by natural disasters. To seek upward growth from the base, panchayat plays a crucial role in overall development. They provide the community the opportunity to participate in a range of development initiatives and give them a voice in establishing conditions that will best serve their needs.

- **Controlling the Urban Environment**

The nation's rapidly urbanizing population is currently creating significant issues for urban environment management. Urban population health, productivity, and the economy are all at risk due to multi-center settlements, expansive malls, population growth, limited assets, ineffective urban facilities, subpar living expenses, trash, and pollution of the air, land, and water collection issues, lack of access to safe drinking water. The environmental problems that already exist were made worse by careless design, planning, and administration. Large-scale migrations to urban centers in search of new sources of income were caused by the development process's

disregard for rural communities. This resulted in even more unfavorable living conditions, job shortages, and work insecurity. One of the most important functions of decentralized government is the preservation of urban areas' standard of living. The local authorities bear the primary responsibility for preserving the urban environment. The lack of effective cooperation as well as administration among these municipal entities and government agencies is one of the main causes of the decline in urban quality.

- **Local Communities**

Adopting sensible and strict penal policies is necessary to safeguard the planet's resources from overuse by humans. Creating sustainable and self-sufficient communities requires the participation of women, Panchayat, local communities, and cooperative societies. This strategy ought to be supported in a way that articulates the voices of the local communities. They must be involved in development initiatives from the outset all the way through to the completion stage since their culture and means of subsistence rely on the local natural resources. It also gives them the ability and authority to categorize, organize, maintain, and distribute the shared advantages. This strategy guarantees their position as partners and stakeholders in the development process.

The local population depends on these rural enterprises for their income, thus development plans should include effective participatory management techniques to boost income and productivity. The role of women should be stressed, even though the potential of youth may be used to speed up the process. The National Human Development Report states that "It has frequently been shown that one of the key ways to create opposing forces in society to stop the decline in governance standards and personal exploitation by others is through enhancing the status of women, the marginalized, and the excluded." This means that their empowerment is drawing near. Nurturing their families and the environment has been a role undertaken by women.<sup>12</sup>

### **Obstacles to Achieving the SDGs in Indian**

- **Specifying Indicators**

India's past performance shows it has found it difficult to establish meaningful measures to gauge results. With hand pumps and tube wells readily available, the meaning of "safe" consuming water is often misunderstood. Because they have access to pure drinking water, 86% of Indians remained "on track" to fulfill the MDG target for drinking water, based on government records. Still, diarrhea-related mortality and the frequency of waterborne illnesses are both rather high in India.<sup>13</sup>

- **Funding the SDGs**

India continues to have the largest percentage of its population being poorer than the universal starvation threshold, despite its best efforts to reduce deprivation. In 2013, one-third of the population fell below the \$1.90 per day poverty line, according to a World Bank report.<sup>14</sup> Approximately \$2.5 trillion in financing shortfalls are expected between 2015 and 2030 given the current level of public and corporate funding in SDG- associated sectors in developing nations.<sup>15</sup> Increased private sector investments are the only way to close this gap, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, food security, and climate change mitigation. According to a recent analysis, India will need to spend over \$14.4 billion US by 2030 to accomplish the SDGs. A sizable financing deficit is anticipated in light of the recent reduction in India's social sector programs.<sup>16</sup>

- **The Clearing of Forests**

The world's forest resources, including those in India, are rapidly diminishing and possibly going extinct. The sources of this threat include people, businesses, governmental organizations, and others. Tree-cutting operations are being carried out under the guise of development initiatives, disregarding the objectives of human advancement and sustainable development. Biodiversity loss is the most significant issue caused by deforestation. Along with numerous plant kinds that have enormous therapeutic value, the loss of forests contributes to the extinction of endangered animal species. To a large extent, it is also the cause of global warming.

- **Endangering Biodiversity:**

Biodiversity survival is severely impacted by widespread habitat degradation and contamination of the land, water, and soil. Because of careless use, biological resources are in danger of disappearing. Even while the issue can be resolved by imposing rigorous limitations on excessive consumption, the path of sustainable development as a whole has been severely impeded by a lack of collective will.

- **Elevating the Level of Pollution**

Pollution, particularly in metropolitan areas, is commonly acknowledged to be largely caused by declining air quality. Transportation, interior environments, and industry are the main causes of air pollution. There are several companies in urban areas that release smoke and other chemicals into the atmosphere, which contributes to pollution. A further factor to this is the growing annual increase in vehicle pollution. Massive traffic jams are a result of the vehicle sales, which are growing at an unprecedented rate. Asthma, respiratory issues, hearing damage, and other major health hazards have all been brought on by this.

- **Deprivation and Inequality**

Many people in India are impoverished and live in substandard conditions. One major obstacle to reaching the SDGs is continuing to address poverty and reduce inequality. Progress in a number of sectors, including as employment, health, and education, is hampered by economic and social inequality.

- **Rise in Population**

Achieving sustainable development is hampered by India's rapid expansion, the country having the second-largest population in the world. Everybody's equitable access to basic services is hampered by the strain that an expanding population places on infrastructure, services, and resources.

- **Environmental Deterioration**

India has serious environmental problems, such as deforestation, water and air pollution, and resource depletion. These problems put the nation's citizens' health in danger and hinder the nation's ability to achieve sustainable development.

- **The Changing Climate**

The achievement of the SDGs is hampered by the need for significant investments and coordinated efforts across sectors to adjust to mitigate the consequences of global warming. The severe modifications to the climate variations have left the earth's resources and people in bad health. The social and environmental facets of society have also suffered greatly as a result of these. Increased crop failures, a rise in droughts, a shortage of food, infectious diseases, environmental degradation, an increase in floods, and other negative consequences were caused by rising temperatures and carbon emissions. The vulnerability to natural and man-made catastrophes has increased due to a insufficient crisis-handling techniques and the methodical exclusion of nearby communities in the creation of policies.

- **Depletion of Ground Water**

The scarcity of water persists, but wasteful water usage is a preventable issue that could cause disparities in the techniques used for managing it. Beyond this, the fact that significant organic and bacterial pollution remains untreated has made access to clean drinking water a pressing concern. Rivers are being used as disposal sites for untreated municipal trash and sewage in many places. Since they lack sufficient sewage treatment systems, urban areas are particularly vulnerable to this kind of contamination.

- **Building Infrastructure**

To promote sustainable growth, India must make large investments in the development of its infrastructure. Achieving several SDGs depends on developing

and improving the energy, transportation, and sanitary infrastructure; yet, implementation is frequently hampered by a lack of funding and proper planning.

- **Education and the Development of Skills**

Education is a fundamental and crucial element of development. In particular, for those who are not included in any societal norms, it is a vitally important invasive tool for promoting social, economic, and political inclusion as well as long-lasting integration. Considering the benefits to people's well-being and the synergies it creates, it is the best social investment. Gender, caste, economic, and urban/rural differences frequently obscure the gains made in female literacy rates, which remain persistently low. The fertility, newborn, and child death rates have significantly decreased in areas with greater rates of female literacy. Rural women now feel more confident to work and support themselves by joining women's development and self-help groups.

- **Institutional Capacity and Governance**

To effectively implement and monitor the SDGs, it is imperative that governance structures and institutions be strengthened. Overcoming implementation obstacles requires improving accountability, openness, and collaboration amongst many stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels.

- **Accessibility and Surveillance of Data**

Monitoring the SDGs' progress requires timely and accurate data. Data collection, monitoring, and reporting are difficult in India, especially in rural and underserved areas. For evidence-based policymaking and progress tracking, data infrastructure must be strengthened and statistical competence must be increased.

- **Funding**

India faces a formidable task in raising sufficient financial resources to support the SDGs' implementation. Sustainable development requires striking a balance between conflicting agendas, drawing in investments, and utilizing creative finance solutions. Although these obstacles still remain, it is crucial to remember that India has achieved great strides in a number of sustainable development-related areas and is still working to meet the SDGs.

### **Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles**

By creating a unique model for putting into practice, overseeing, evaluating, and reporting SDG-related courses of action, the difficulties mentioned above can be addressed. While there are reputable organizations in India, like the CSO, that can supply statistics data, frequently they are generic and do not meet demands. Because of a dearth of data, India was unable to measure its progress towards the



MDGs precisely either. Consequently, it is crucial to create appropriate metrics for evaluating the SDGs' development as well as a system that can provide the necessary data to enable this process. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) can serve as the foundation for the development of a different index that tracks the advancement or accomplishment of the SDGs.

### **The Obligation to carry out the SDGs**

Since NITI Aayog expressed doubts about how far it would be able to achieve this difficult mission, it is imperative that the Indian government decentralize this responsibility. However, it is important to remember that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) strive to protect and distribute natural resources to upcoming generations. Without the participation of society, this cannot be accomplished. Using its natural resources in an environmentally responsible manner is nearly impossible for a culture to have such information. New demands will be placed on the base of natural resources by shifting social, political, cultural, technological, and ecological factors, and there will always be a chance that they will be abused or used excessively.

### **Conclusion**

The world's most populous country is India. The world is very interested in the actions that India is taking to attain the SDGs. A greater portion of the world would have attained the SDGs if India had been successful in achieving them. Thus, India needs to come up with efficient ways to carry out, track, and evaluate the SDGs' advancement. It appears that the creation of appropriate indicators is India's largest challenge. Thoroughly figuring out how to accomplish sustainable development in line with national policy requires significant work not only on a national level but also on a local and regional one. In India, it is a continuous process.

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