



सत्यमेव जयते
Government of India

INDIA

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT

2025



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Government of India

INDIA

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT



2025

Message



Government of India

Shri Suman Bery Vice Chairman

*National Institution for Transforming India
(NITI Aayog), Government of India*



In 2015, India did not merely adopt the Sustainable Development Goals, it made a bold promise to its people and the world. A promise to drive inclusive and equitable sustainable development at scale, and fully respectful of the country's diversity. India's commitment embodies a resolute dedication to address poverty, inequality and environmental challenges directly and effectively.

India's journey is set against a global backdrop where the stakes are high. The 2023 G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration commended the efforts of the Indian Presidency to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. At the 2024 Summit of the Future, world leaders reaffirmed their belief in a brighter future for all humanity by adopting the Pact for the Future, pledging to accelerate progress on the SDGs through renewed multilateralism and strengthened international cooperation. The world stands at a crossroads today, progress towards the SDGs remains slow, and in some areas, has even regressed. Globally, the call for urgent, collective action is louder than ever.

As the world's largest democracy and a fast-growing economy, India shoulders a unique responsibility. Our third Voluntary National Review, presented to the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, builds on the momentum of our previous reports in 2017 and 2020. This 2025 review is a reflection of progress and an honest assessment of what remains to be done. The process has galvanised voices from every sector including national and sub-national governments, civil society, and the private sector, ensuring that our strategies are not only ambitious but also grounded in reality and partnership.

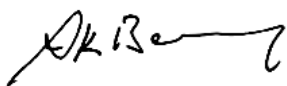
The results are tangible. Millions have gained access to affordable healthcare, secure housing, and financial inclusion. Flagship programmes like Ayushman Bharat, Poshan Abhiyan, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Skill India, and PM Gati Shakti are not just policies, they are pathways out of poverty and towards dignity and self-reliance. As confirmed by UNDP, an estimated 135 million people have escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21. Digital Public Infrastructure is enabling seamless access to essential services and opportunities, while robust data systems are ensuring that interventions are targeted, effective, and equitable. Through a relentless focus on last-mile delivery and the synergy of schemes through initiatives such

as the Aspirational District and Block Programmes, we are determined that the benefits of growth and progress reach every corner, leaving no one behind.

At the heart of this journey is our guiding principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' (Together for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust and effort). True and lasting development can only be achieved when all partners and stakeholders work together and that is why India's SDG Localisation model involves a 'whole-of Government' and 'whole-of society' approach. Over the years, India has taken this model to the most granular levels and districts, blocks and villages have been engaged to enable them to adopt the SDG framework. This includes the development of monitoring frameworks, creating awareness, undertaking capacity-building activities, and partnering with academic institutions, think tanks, and civil society organisations.

With just five years left to achieve the SDGs, we believe that India's story deserves attention to what is possible when innovation, resilience, and inclusive governance come together. Our progress is powered by data and technology, but its true strength lies in the lived experiences of our people. India is not just focused on 2030, but laying the foundation for Viksit Bharat, a fully developed India, by 2047.

Advancing the SDGs is not just an Indian imperative, it is a global public good. Our commitment is unwavering, to leave no one behind, to mobilise resources where they matter most and to lead by example.



Shri Suman Bery

11th June, 2025
New Delhi, India

Message



Government of India

Shri B.V.R. Subrahmanyam **Chief Executive Officer**

*National Institution for Transforming India
(NITI Aayog), Government of India*



India's implementation journey of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development has been one of progress and resilience while navigating global challenges. Recognised as one of the largest and fastest growing economies worldwide, India has made steady progress in delivering development and resilience at scale. This includes transforming India's social welfare system and safety nets, investing in renewable energy, focusing on digital inclusion, and developing infrastructure through various national and sub-national initiatives. These achievements have been broad-based and inclusive, ensuring that vulnerable sections of society also reap the benefits of the country's progress, thereby validating the clarion call of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' (Together with All, Development for All, Trust of All, and Effort by All).

The complexity of today's problems demands new innovative solutions. India has responded by leveraging Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) to bring essential services to every doorstep and launching initiatives that ensure convergence of schemes to reach marginalised communities. India is prioritising data-driven governance, using indicators, dashboards and indexes to track progress and ensure transparency and accountability. The SDG India Index has become an important tool to monitor progress and encouraging sub-national Governments to learn from each other.

The country's SDG Localisation model demonstrates our belief in cooperative and competitive federalism, enabling tailored solutions to diverse challenges. In collaboration with the national Government, sub-national Governments across the country have taken leadership at the local level, set up institutional frameworks, prepared SDG vision documents, undertaken capacity-building and carried the importance of

SDGs down to the district and local levels. While we acknowledge our accomplishments, we are aware that important areas such as rapid urbanisation and climate change require our continuous attention and effort.

India's commitment to Agenda 2030 also integrates seamlessly with its long-term vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, making India a developed nation in the centenary year of its independence; where economic growth is shared, and all citizens can contribute to and benefit from the nation's progress. The country's vision is firmly inclusive, with a focus on reducing inequality of access, investing in youth and women, and building pathways out of poverty. As India moves forward, the SDGs will remain a cornerstone of our growth strategy, guiding the nation towards building a just, equitable and resilient future for all and leaving no one behind.

With a focus on collaboration, we are proud to present India's third Voluntary National Review to the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This effort documents the experiences of institutionalising the SDGs in the country, including both achievements and challenges, to share with the global community and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future for all. By sharing our journey, we reaffirm our belief that together, we can transform challenges into opportunities and enhance efforts to advancing Agenda 2030.



Shri B.V.R. Subrahmanyam

11th June, 2025
New Delhi, India

Acknowledgement



Government of India

Shri Rajib Kumar Sen Programme Director (SDG)

*National Institution for Transforming India
(NITI Aayog), Government of India*



The journey towards sustainable development is a dynamic, ever-evolving pursuit that demands resilience, innovation and unwavering commitment. A decade ago, when the global community rallied behind Agenda 2030, India recognised that its actions would not only shape its own future, but also contribute to the collective progress of humanity. Today, as we reflect on our progress, we are reminded that the context in which we operate has grown more complex, the challenges more urgent and the stakes higher than ever before.

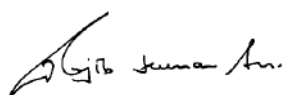
India's development story is one of transformation at scale. As a result of bold policies and targeted interventions, millions have gained access to basic services like clean water and sanitation, skilling, housing, and food security. This inclusive model has enabled us to foster partnerships across sectors, levels of Government and regions, amplifying the impact of our efforts.

We are honoured to submit our third Voluntary National Review (VNR) to the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Spanning more than nine months, the VNR process involved comprehensive consultations across the nation, drawing upon the insights and experiences of a diverse array of stakeholders including national and sub-national Governments (28 States and 8 Union Territories) and by engaging over a thousand civil society organisations, think tanks, the private sector and local communities. Our sincere thanks also go to the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office and other United Nations agencies in India for their crucial role in facilitating structured dialogue with civil society organisations and business representatives.

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Shri Suman Bery, Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog. His encouragement and deep inspiration have played a crucial role in motivating our efforts. We are also grateful to Shri B.V.R Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog, whose leadership and steadfast dedication has been central to the successful development of the VNR. We are also thankful to the Hon'ble Members and Programme Directors of NITI Aayog for their valuable support and contributions.

Last but not the least, I would also like to commend the efforts of the SDG Team which has been instrumental in bringing this ambitious initiative to fruition.

The VNR serves both as a record of our accomplishments and as a compelling call to action. It reflects the progress made through determination and collaboration, guided by a commitment to sustainability and inclusion.



Shri Rajib Kumar Sen

11th June, 2025
New Delhi, India



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CHAPTER 01



**A decade of progress
on the Path to Agenda 2030**



CHAPTER 1: A DECADE OF PROGRESS ON THE PATH TO AGENDA 2030

India, with its population of over 1.4 billion and a vibrant tapestry of culture, language and tradition, stands as one of the world's fastest-growing economies. This diversity, coupled with a blend of ancient wisdom and modern aspirations, has shaped a nation that is continuously evolving and adapting to new challenges. India has sought to ensure that growth and development are not just rapid, but also sustainable, resilient, broad-based and inclusive, reaching all sections of society, especially the most marginalised.

WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT AND WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO ACHIEVING THE SDGs

India has demonstrated its consistent commitment to Agenda 2030 from the outset, by embracing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at all levels of the Government. Recognising the interconnectedness of various issues such as poverty, inequality, health, innovation and climate change, the Government has made consistent efforts to put in place structures and create policies that can contribute towards the achievement of development priorities. India's approach anchored in the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas' (Together with All, Development for All, Trust of All, and Efforts by All) underscores India's commitment to human-centric sustainable development that leaves no one behind.

India has deepened its commitment to cooperative federalism, with collaboration as 'Team India' extending from the Centre, State and Union Territory (UT) levels all the way down to Districts, Blocks and Municipal or Gram Panchayats (village) levels. This 'whole-of-government' approach has advanced the development agenda by implementing process and governance reforms, reducing compliance burdens, and simplifying and digitising processes.

The resulting shift is enhancing the investment climate, fostering participative governance, and improving the quality of life by strengthening the delivery mechanisms of government interventions.

Today, the Indian SDG Localisation model has evolved into a decentralised, data-driven, and participatory approach, with enhanced monitoring tools, and a greater emphasis on partnerships and adaptive governance. The model has been taken to the most granular levels with an increase in levels of engagement with States, UTs, Districts and institutional structures beyond, to enable them to adopt the SDG framework. To foster cooperative and competitive federalism, the SDG India Index has been developed as a tool for measuring progress in achieving the SDGs, accessible to all stakeholders. 27 States and 5 UTs (sub-national governments) have established indicator frameworks, 23 States and 4 UTs have prepared SDG vision documents and many have undertaken capacity-building to support SDG implementation. The 'whole-of-society' approach is complementing this by bringing together civil society, the private sector, academia, think tanks and media to promote citizen participation and mobilise resources for urgent SDG priorities.

The SDG India Index 2023-2024 has highlighted that the composite score for India has improved from 57 in 2018 to 71 in 2023-24. Various institutional and coordination mechanisms have supported India's efforts in its progress towards its Agenda 2030 goals.



1. Discussion forums at various levels

To facilitate the exchange of ideas, sharing of best practices and improved implementation, the Government has established various forums at the political, executive and ideation level to enhance coordination and policy execution. These platforms encourage idea generation, foster cross-learning, and provide opportunities for the development of new initiatives and innovations.

a. Governing Council

The Governing Council of NITI Aayog is a key political platform that embodies the principle of cooperative federalism. It comprises the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of all States and UTs and key Union ministers. This Council provides a platform to discuss inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues. The involvement of Chief Ministers enables the Governing Council to consider state-specific concerns and strategies while shaping national policies.

b. National Conference of Chief Secretaries

At the executive level, the National Conference of Chief Secretaries is organised annually under the leadership of the Cabinet Secretary and is driven by the Prime Minister's vision to enhance cooperative federalism and foster better coordination between the Centre and States. The conference chaired by the Prime Minister, is attended by representatives from all

States and Union Territories, along with officials from select Union Ministries. Each conference is preceded by discussions involving Union Ministries, States/UTs, and domain experts to identify best practices that could be shared among States/UTs to encourage cross-learning.

c. Chintan Shivirs (Strategic Brainstorming Sessions)

Chintan Shivirs (strategic brainstorming sessions) are conducted at different levels including the ministerial level to enhance governance, policy formulation and strategic planning. These sessions adopt an inclusive approach by engaging a wide range of stakeholders including ministers, secretaries, senior officials, industry leaders, academics and experts from various fields, ensuring diverse perspectives and insights that lead to more robust policy recommendations.

During the 2024 Chintan Shivar on Renewable Energy, India's ambitious goal of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 was extensively discussed. The event highlighted the necessity of collaborative efforts and strategic initiatives to meet this target, emphasising inter-ministerial coordination and stakeholder engagement to address sector challenges. Another outcome of these shivirs was the setting up a dedicated task force to achieve the goal of 500 GW by 2030.



2. State Support Mission

As the Prime Minister has emphasised, "When our states grow, India grows". The Union Government has introduced the State Support Mission (SSM) to enhance engagement with States and UTs in a structured and institutionalised manner. The SSM helps States/UTs develop a roadmap for achieving their socio-economic goals by aligning development strategies with national priorities and focusing on each State's core strengths. Interested states have established State Institutions for Transformation (SITs) which serve as multi-disciplinary resources to guide development strategies. These can be new or existing institutions, such as planning departments and boards, reimagined for this purpose. As of 2024, 26 SITs have been established under the SSM. The mission emphasises cross-sectoral partnerships and expertise, and States/UTs are encouraged to designate a Lead Knowledge Institution to support the SITs by partnering with universities or research organisations of excellence in their region.

3. Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

India is advancing the SDGs through partnerships across the Government, the private sector, civil society, academia, and think tanks through 'whole-of-society' approach. The private sector is playing a pivotal role by leveraging its financial resources, human capital and technological expertise to innovate and accelerate SDG implementation. This includes strategic investments in job creation, digital platforms, entrepreneurship support, and integrating SDGs into core business operations. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are instrumental in facilitating citizen-government dialogue, providing independent oversight, and mobilising essential networks that amplify government efforts. The research and analytical expertise of think tanks and academia further enrich these partnerships, helping to translate complex challenges into actionable solutions. This approach empowers communities, fosters local ownership, and supports sustainable, long-term progress toward the SDGs.

POLICIES EMPOWERING PROGRESS

The strategic discussions at various levels have led to establishment of initiatives and policies that are playing a catalytic role in empowering people and communities and addressing key challenges such as hunger, health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, energy and economic growth.

Efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition include the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, which has helped ensure food security for millions. Sustainable agriculture is supported through programmes like Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi and the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, while nutrition-focused initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan have driven progress in reducing child malnutrition. In healthcare, initiatives like Ayushman Bharat Yojana, the National Health Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission have expanded access and strengthened infrastructure, contributing to significant declines in maternal, infant and child mortality. Access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation has improved through the Jal Jeevan Mission, aiming to provide tap water to every rural household, and the Swachh Bharat Mission, which has expanded sanitation coverage nationwide. The transition to clean energy is supported by programmes like the National Green Hydrogen Mission and Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM), alongside efforts to increase renewable energy capacity and promote energy access through schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana. Economic recovery and job creation are being driven by initiatives like Startup India and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood, which focus on skill development, entrepreneurship, and support for micro, small and medium enterprises. Infrastructure and industrial capabilities are being enhanced through Make in India, PM Gati Shakti and the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme.

These efforts, combined with mobilising technology and increasing connectivity, are collectively contributing to India's comprehensive approach to sustainable and inclusive development.

Central to this progress has been India's remarkable achievements in poverty reduction. As per the discussion paper 'Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06' by NITI Aayog and UNDP, 248.2 million people have escaped multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23.¹ The World Bank's Spring Meetings 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief further notes that around 171 million people have been lifted out of extreme poverty, with the proportion of people living in extreme poverty on less than \$2.15 a day falling sharply from 16.2 percent in 2011-12 to just 2.3 percent in 2022-23.² These numbers reflect more than statistical progress; they represent real improvements in the lives of millions. Expanded access to healthcare, education, electricity, sanitation, and affordable housing has transformed the quality of life for millions.

Convergence of schemes at various levels and the saturation of essential government services are being advanced through initiatives such as the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) and the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP). ADP targets 112 underdeveloped districts, focusing on health, education, infrastructure and economic development through multi-sectoral interventions. Building on ADP's success, the ABP was launched in 2023 to improve governance and quality of life in 500 blocks across 27 states and 4 UTs. Both programmes emphasise data-driven governance, real-time monitoring and collaboration among Central, State and local bodies to meet district-specific needs and advance SDG localisation. These programmes empower local communities and ensure targeted, measurable interventions to bridge development gaps.

LAST-MILE DELIVERY

India's dedication to the SDGs is deeply connected to its efforts to ensure growth benefits reach marginalised and vulnerable communities. As the world's largest democracy, India faces the challenge of serving a diverse population, focusing on effective last-mile delivery of essential services like healthcare, education, housing, sanitation and energy. The Government recognises that reaching those most in need is crucial for equitable development. Initiatives such as the Aspirational District Programme,

Aspirational Block Programme and Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) are designed to accelerate progress in the most underdeveloped and disadvantaged areas. For instance, GPDPs enable villages to align their development strategies with SDG targets and foster accountability at the grassroots level. By concentrating resources and attention on these regions, India has been able to address persistent inequalities and bring development to previously underserved communities. Additionally, empowering local governments and communities to identify priorities and implement solutions has ensured that development is responsive to local needs.

Consultations with Leave No One Behind Groups (LNOB Groups), civil society and the private sector have been integral to India's SDG strategy. These participatory processes ensure that the perspectives of marginalised communities and key stakeholders are reflected in policy design and implementation.

DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) serves as a key enabler for economic growth and broader socio-economic objectives, demonstrating how well-designed digital infrastructure can support societal transformation, promote inclusion and improve governance and service delivery. By seamlessly integrating digital identity (Aadhaar), real-time payments (Unified Payments Interface) and consent-based data sharing frameworks, India has built a secure, interoperable and scalable digital backbone that serves over a billion people. This citizen-centric model rooted in open standards, public-private collaboration and digital inclusion not only enhances service delivery and transparency but also redefines how nations can bridge developmental gaps through innovation.

DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

India emphasises data-driven decision-making to accelerate SDG achievement, highlighting the need for high-quality data, robust statistical systems and equitable data governance. The country has enhanced its National Indicator Framework and encouraged States to develop their own frameworks, ensuring that both national and sub-national priorities

are effectively tracked. Tools and indices such as the SDG India Index, North-Eastern Region District SDG Index and the Multidimensional Poverty Index, School Education Quality Index, State Health Index and India Innovation Index are being used to monitor progress and inform policy decisions. These frameworks support data-driven decision-making, offer opportunities for States, UTs, Districts, and even Gram Panchayats (village councils) to identify priority areas for improvement, enhance targeting and optimise resource allocation. India's decentralised statistical system is undergoing reforms to improve data quality, interoperability and human capital. In addition, new technologies and alternative data sources are being integrated to further strengthen SDG monitoring.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

The country's focus on DPI, data for development, women-led development and empowering the Global

South has gained global importance. These themes were prominent during India's 2023 G20 Presidency and continue to drive momentum in UN processes, including the UN Summit of the Future, Financing for Development negotiations and the UN Environmental Assembly. Anchored in the vision of "One Earth, One Family, One Future", India's G20 Presidency culminated in an action-oriented New Delhi Declaration, resulting in unprecedented agreement among major economies on reforming multilateralism, accelerating SDGs, strengthening multilateral development finance and amplifying the Global South's voice by inviting the African Union as a permanent G20 member. Additionally, India, inspired by its Mission Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), which emphasises individual actions in combating climate change, has successfully advocated for a global resolution on sustainable lifestyles. India is a signatory to Pact of the Future to drive global acceleration of Agenda 2030 and strengthen sustainable development, digital cooperation, youth engagement and global governance transformation.



TOWARDS VIKSIT BHARAT@2047

While substantial progress has been made, opportunities for improvement remain, particularly in harnessing high-quality data for policymaking, empowering youth, enhancing skilling and employment opportunities and increasing women's participation in the workforce. With an estimated 590 million people expected to migrate to urban areas by 2030, preparing cities with robust infrastructure and services is essential. Identifying and developing new growth centres can help reduce regional inequalities. Persistent issues like climate change and environmental pollution also demand sustained attention. To address these, the Government is continuously monitoring and evaluating its programmes, and actively collaborating with civil society and the private sector, even during consultations, to foster all-round development and ensure efficient last-mile delivery.

India's steadfast commitment to the SDGs, extends beyond 2030, culminating in the ambitious vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, a developed India by the centenary of independence. This vision aligns with India's push to achieve the SDGs, demonstrating a dedication to fostering sustainable growth, empowering citizens and implementing strategies that enhance their capabilities to realise their aspirations, ultimately building the foundation for an inclusive and thriving India and the world.

The journey towards 2030 and beyond is characterised by a continuous interplay between national ambition and local action, global engagement and grassroots empowerment. Strengthening coordination and knowledge-sharing across stakeholders will continue to enhance Team India's resilience against future disruptions and aligning development efforts to be efficient, inclusive and globally relevant. As India moves forward, the SDGs will remain a cornerstone of its economic strategy, guiding the nation toward sustained growth, innovation and sustainability.

2025 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

Previous Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in 2017 and 2020 had documented India's innovative pathways to progress. For instance, the 2020 VNR consulted widely with stakeholders, setting a precedent for future reviews.

The 2025 VNR marks 10 years of collaborative federalism and SDG localisation, showcasing India's resilience in the face of global crises. It highlights the convergence of schemes at various levels and saturation of essential government services thereby promoting inclusive development and demonstrating sub-national and local ownership of progress. India's human centric digitally enabled safety nets and SDG localisation model demonstrate this ownership, testifying to the effectiveness of India's development strategies.

India's SDG journey over the past decade offers a unique opportunity to analyse and compile best practices. This VNR aims to share India's success story with the wider United Nations and other UN Member States, highlighting the role that India's development can play for the world as a whole. By documenting its progress and challenges, India seeks to share its experiences and lessons learned with the global community, contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future for all.





CHAPTER 02



India and the World



CHAPTER 2: INDIA AND THE WORLD

Agenda 2030 stands as a landmark goal, remarkable both for its universality and its integrity, demanding a comprehensive and inclusive approach. The SDGs form a universally agreed framework that seeks to balance the dignity of every individual with the imperative for sustainable behaviour, ensuring that the present generation fulfils its responsibilities to those yet to come. Progress on these goals is not only vital for global safety and stability, but also constitutes a global public good.

India holds a pivotal place in the global pursuit of the SDGs, and recognises that realising these ambitions requires international cooperation and a shared sense of responsibility. Emphasising the power of partnerships, especially through South-South Cooperation, India is focusing on knowledge-sharing, mutual support, and capacity-building among developing nations. By offering technical assistance, financial resources, and its own developmental experiences, India is seeking to foster collaboration, reinforcing the idea that sustainable development is best achieved through collective action and solidarity.

India's approach to sustainable development prioritises inclusive growth, and ensuring that economic benefits reach all sections of society, especially marginalised communities. Its commitment to the Paris Agreement highlights its focus on climate action, while its early and active membership in the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty demonstrates its ongoing efforts to achieve SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). India is actively contributing to the Alliance, through the National and Knowledge Pillars and is sharing the experience of its policies and large-scale social welfare programmes, such as the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), National Nutrition Mission (NNM) also known as POSHAN Abhiyan and the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) and Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP), with the world.

INDIA AS A VISHWA BANDHU (FRIEND OF THE WORLD)

India's development partnership is tailored to meet the needs of its partner countries, responding to as many requests as technically and financially feasible. The main instruments of India's development assistance include Lines-of-Credit (LoCs), High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs), technical consultancy, disaster relief and humanitarian aid, as well as capacity-building programmes under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC). As the flagship capacity-building programme of Government of India, ITEC has benefitted more than 160 countries and has contributed to the capacity enhancement of more than 225,000 professionals since its inception. Today, it has been expanded to include emerging fields like AI, nanotechnology, forensics, and cyber security.

Over the years, India has extended 308 LoCs aggregating more than USD 32.029 billion to various countries across different sectors. The portfolio LoCs has been diversified both geographically and sector wise, and now covers regions like the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Indo-Pacific, and encompasses sectors such as connectivity, ICT, health, and renewable energy.

India has been a strong advocate for amplifying the voices of the Global South by hosting three Voice of Global South Summits (VOGSS), which have seen participation from over 100 countries. These summits have provided a platform for developing countries to articulate their developmental concerns collectively. Feedback from the first two summits was reflected in global forums like the G20 Summit under India's Presidency. During the third VOGSS in 2024, the Indian Prime Minister proposed a Global Development Compact, focusing on trade for development, capacity building, technology sharing and project-specific concessional finance and grants. Additionally, India announced initiatives to advance its development partnership with Global South including a USD 2.5 million fund to boost trade promotion activities and a USD 1 million fund for capacity building in trade policy and trade negotiation.

INDIA-UN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FUND PROMOTING SHARED PROSPERITY IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

India's South-South cooperation activities also leverage the UN development system and its network of UN country teams worldwide. In 2017 India launched the India-UN Development Partnership Fund in collaboration with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) to help achieve the SDGs by implementing country-driven projects that aim to: reduce poverty and hunger; improve health, education and equality; and increase access to clean water, energy and livelihoods. The Fund's resources amount to \$150 million in funding that focus mainly on projects in least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing States (SIDS) and Commonwealth countries.

Figure 1: India-UN Partnership Fund projects financed by SDG most directly advanced (USD and number of projects)

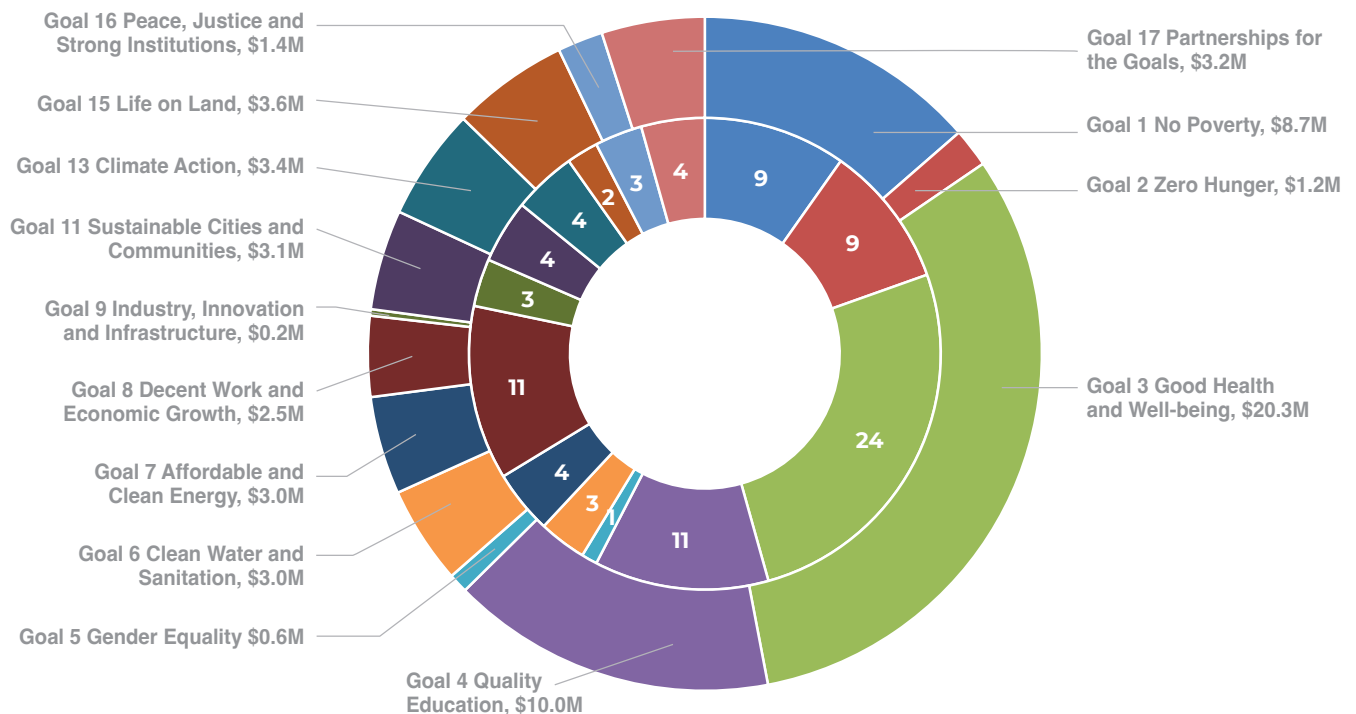
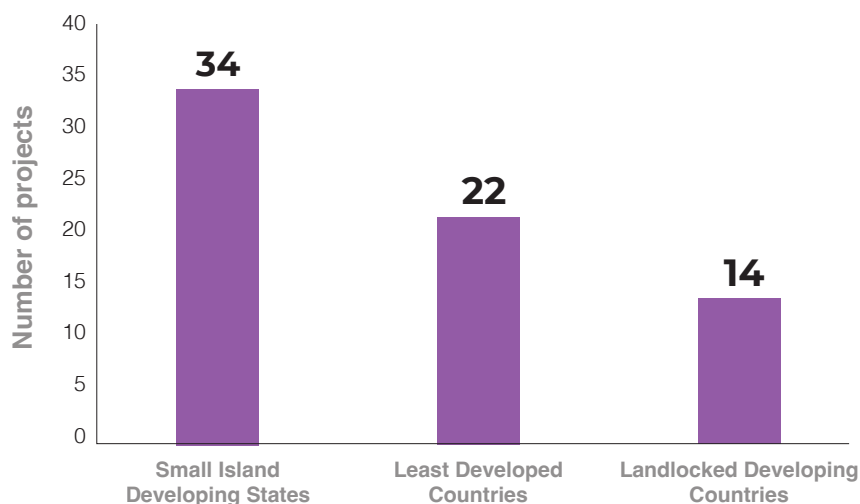


Figure 2: India-UN partnership Fund projects by country typology



Source: <https://unsouthsouth.org/indiaunfund/>

INDIA'S LEADERSHIP AT THE G20

During the Indian G20 Presidency, G20 Leaders adopted decisive and action-oriented outcomes to address global challenges, reflecting a commitment to sustainable development and support for the most vulnerable. A key achievement was the G20 2023 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the SDGs, an ambitious 7-year roadmap for coordinated G20 actions. This plan achieved a strong consensus on Financing for Development including addressing the bottlenecks in financing and highlighted the need for an internationally enabling environment to promote globally just transitions, ensuring no one is left behind. Additionally, it emphasised the potential of DPI and Data for Development (D4D) to achieve SDGs and

use AI responsibly for social empowerment. The G20 agreed on a 'Capacity Building Initiative on D4D' to support developing countries in achieving the SDGs, showcasing a commitment to inclusive development. Furthermore, the G20 agreed on women-led development with a focus on women empowerment and gender equality as one of the key outcomes of India's Presidency and established the G20 Working Group on the Empowerment of Women. The G20 also welcomed the reports of the Independent Expert Group on Strengthening Multilateral Development Banks, which formulated proposals for scaling up development and climate finance.

INDIA G20 PRESIDENCY'S INDEPENDENT EXPERT GROUP ON STRENGTHENING MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS

A significant deliverable of India's G20 Presidency was the release of recommendations by the G20 Independent Expert Group (IEG) on Strengthening Multilateral Development Banks, chaired by Shri. NK Singh (India) and Dr. Lawrence Summers (USA). The IEG, the first such expert group to be convened and deliver its report within the term of a G20 Presidency, highlighted the urgent need to scale up financing for climate and development goals globally, estimating that developing countries require an additional \$3 trillion annually, including \$1.8 trillion for climate finance and \$1.2 trillion for other SDGs, implying a fourfold increase in climate spending and a 75% rise in health and education funding.

To address this, the IEG proposed important reforms for the multilateral development banks to become both bigger but also better implementers of the SDGs. The three elements of this "triple agenda" are for MDBs to:

- (i) adopt a triple mandate of eliminating extreme poverty, boosting shared prosperity, and contributing to global public goods;
- (ii) triple sustainable lending levels by 2030 and
- (iii) create new funding mechanisms and coalitions which would permit flexible and innovative arrangements for purposefully engaging with investors willing to support elements of the MDB agenda.

India also spearheaded the adoption of policy priorities at the G20 to address global skill gaps, boosting cross-country skill comparability and international cooperation. This initiative will enhance mapping and mutual recognition of global skill gaps, strengthening partnerships with various actors, including the UN and other regional partners. Additionally, India supported the establishment of the Global Initiative on Digital Health to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and implement the One Health approach, ensuring equitable access to safe, effective, quality-assured and affordable vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and other medical countermeasures, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

The G20 emphasised human-centric action to address climate change through the LiFEstyles for Sustainable Development (LiFE) approach. This holistic approach strengthens interlinkages between development, climate and environment agendas, contributing to SDG 12, and will have a multiplier effect on SDGs 1 to 8 by focusing on the basic human needs and promoting sustainable consumption and production. In the spirit of shaping a new approach to our planet's future, the Prime Minister launched the Global Biofuel Alliance and proposed that G20 countries work on a "Green Credits Initiative."

INDIA'S ROLE IN HEALTHCARE

India has emerged as a pivotal actor in healthcare diplomacy, significantly contributing to the global health ecosystem. Known as the "pharmacy of the world," India is the largest producer of generic

medicines and vaccines, playing a central role in improving healthcare access for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and ensuring that essential medicines are affordable and available. Approximately 60% of the world's vaccines and 20% of generic medicines are produced in India, with the World Health Organization (WHO) noting that India manufactures over 60% of the global demand for vaccines, including critical ones for diseases like polio, hepatitis B and tuberculosis. In 2020, India supplied more than 60 million doses of the polio vaccine globally, ensuring that polio remains under control. Additionally, India is the largest supplier of ARVs (antiretroviral drugs) for HIV/AIDS, meeting 70% of global needs.

As one of the world's leading vaccine producers, India was a major contributor to the COVAX initiative, a global effort to ensure equitable vaccine distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially to LMICs. The Serum Institute of India (SII), the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, produced billions of doses of the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine, which were distributed globally through COVAX. India's involvement in COVAX was pivotal in ensuring that millions of doses reached countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. By mid-2021, India had exported over 250 million vaccine doses to more than 100 countries, with 40 million doses going to Africa alone. Additionally, India developed and deployed the Co-WIN platform, a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) that facilitated the smooth distribution of COVID-19 vaccines within India. The platform's success in managing vaccine rollouts domestically led India to offer it to other nations, helping them streamline their own vaccination efforts.



YOGA: INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL WELL-BEING

India's international promotion of Yoga has deepened global understanding of Indian culture and philosophy. Responding to India's initiative, the United Nations General Assembly declared 21 June as the International Day of Yoga on 11 December 2014, with broad support from member states. Since then, International Yoga Day has been celebrated worldwide through diverse activities promoting yoga and holistic well-being.

INDIA'S ROLE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

Through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA), its ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), advocacy for sustainable lifestyles and leadership in climate resilience efforts such as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), India has proven that it can take bold steps to address climate change while prioritising the needs of its people. India's role in global climate leadership is a balancing act between its developmental aspirations and environmental responsibilities.

Its commitment to the Paris Agreement is reflected in its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Under the NDCs, India has set ambitious targets to address climate change while simultaneously supporting economic growth. At the COP26 Summit in Glasgow in 2021, the Prime Minister presented the five nectar elements (Panchamrit) of India's climate action, which includes:

- i. Reaching 500GW non-fossil energy capacity by 2030;
- ii. Meeting 50 per cent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030;
- iii. Reduction of total projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes from now to 2030;
- iv. Reduction of the carbon intensity of the economy by 45 per cent by 2030, over 2005 levels;
- v. Achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2070.



These targets are in line with the global climate agenda and reflect India's determination to contribute to climate mitigation while balancing its economic growth aspirations. Prime Minister's leadership during COP26 also emphasised the need for developed nations to fulfil their financial commitments to developing countries and to ensure that climate action does not leave anyone behind. Most recently at COP29 Summit in Baku in 2024, India led the developing countries opposition to the insufficient outcome of discussions on the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, and highlighted that the lack of collaboration on climate change is a global challenge faced by all countries, but most of all by the developing countries that are not responsible for it.

INDIA SPONSORS HISTORIC RESOLUTION ON PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

In 2024, India, inspired by its national initiative - Lifestyles for Environment (LiFE) and its G20 Presidency deliverables, successfully advocated for a global resolution on sustainable lifestyles. The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) at its Sixth Session in Nairobi, Kenya, adopted this resolution on 1st March 2024. The resolution, co-sponsored by Sri Lanka and Bolivia, was supported by all participating Member States. It recognises the potential of behavioural changes toward sustainable lifestyles, in contributing to the achievement of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

India's dedication to promoting renewable energy globally is illustrated by its founding role in the International Solar Alliance (ISA), a coalition that aims to accelerate solar energy deployment worldwide, with a particular focus on developing nations that often face challenges in adopting clean energy technologies due to limited resources. India has played a pivotal leadership role in the ISA's creation and operationalisation, with the goal of enhancing solar energy adoption in developing countries.

The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), launched by the Prime Minister in 2019, is a

multi-stakeholder global partnership of National Governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks, the private sector and academia focused on enhancing the resilience of infrastructure systems against climate-related risks. CDRI supports the SDGs, Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework by promoting disaster-resilient infrastructure and facilitating knowledge exchange. It was during India's CDRI co-chairship with the United States of America (2022 to 2024) that the world's first Global Infrastructure Risk Model and Resilience Index was launched. The coalition's diverse and expanding membership includes both economically advanced and vulnerable countries, reflecting its global impact.







CHAPTER

03



Consultations with Stakeholders



CHAPTER 3: CONSULTATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

India adopted a systematic approach for preparing the VNR report, adhering to the Secretary-General's voluntary common reporting guidelines for VNRs and following a whole-of-society and consultative process, thereby ensuring that perspectives of and insights from a wide range of stakeholders are duly taken note of.

The process, led by the Government, with NITI Aayog as the key orchestrator, entailed a thorough review of the nation's progress in the SDG arena. This included recognising the key success factors and best practices, pinpointing gaps and challenges, outlining strategies to overcome them and addressing new and emerging issues. The approach also recognised the interconnections among the SDGs and the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental. It leveraged India's

existing institutional framework for SDG adoption, implementation, and monitoring, utilising official data from both national and/ or subnational levels, and insights from regional and national consultations with CSOs, NGOs, community organisations, private sector, and sub-national and local governments.

NITI Aayog initiated the VNR 2025 process in August 2024 by developing a roadmap of the VNR preparation process. The roadmap consisted of the various steps, engagements and stakeholders that would together lead to the development of the VNR report. The following section details the key engagements, with various stakeholders at the global, regional, national, subnational, and local levels that provided inputs for the report following a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach.

VNR 2025 ENGAGEMENTS

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL

- Global Sustainable Development Report 2023: Regional dissemination workshop for Asia and the Pacific
- Global VNR workshops by UNDESA
- South and South-West Asia workshop on evidence- based VNRs
- Engagements at Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2025

NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

- SDG Task Force
- Regional and state SDG workshops

CIVIL SOCIETY AND PRIVATE SECTOR

- Over 30 regional and national consultations with 13 LNOB groups
- National consultation with the private sector

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

In November 2024, India hosted the South and South-West Asia sub-regional workshop on Sustainable Development Goals, which presented an opportunity to learn from other countries in the region about evidence-based Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). This workshop was an associated event of the Eighth South and South-West Multi-stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It brought together representatives from the Governments in the sub-region, CSOs, think tanks international organisations and offered platforms for peer learning and knowledge exchange, especially for the countries in the sub-region presenting their VNR in 2025, including India.

NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) also participated in the global VNR workshops conducted by UNDESA which acted as platforms for sharing good practices and generating ideas for comprehensive and inclusive VNR reports.

The Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2025 held in Bangkok in February 2025, offered further opportunities to interact with countries in the region for knowledge exchange and experience sharing on VNRs.

DIALOGUES WITH UNION MINISTRIES AND STATE (SUBNATIONAL) GOVERNMENTS

India created a “SDG Task Force” in the beginning of its SDG journey to bring the relevant Union Ministries, State Governments and think tanks together to guide the process of SDG adoption, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The Task Force had proven to be instrumental during the preparation of India’s previous two VNRs. In January 2025, a meeting of the Task Force was held in which Ministries, States, think tanks and international organisations participated. This platform enabled lively discussions on the efforts of the various stakeholders, especially the ministries and the states, in SDG implementation through the approaches of saturation, convergence and targeting. The discussions in the meeting provided valuable inputs to India’s VNR process and the contents of the VNR report, specifically the initiatives by the various levels of the governments, including their programmes and policies for SDG implementation.

SDG workshops organised by NITI Aayog in Jaipur, Rajasthan, in March 2024 and Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in February 2025, provided opportunities to all the States/UTs, who play an instrumental role in SDG implementation, to share good practices, and learn from each other. Presence of other stakeholders viz. the UN agencies, NGOs and private sector organisations enriched the discussions and learnings in these sessions.



CONSULTATIONS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and community groups are pivotal in advancing the SDG agenda in a participatory manner, thereby making their involvement extremely valuable in the VNR preparation process. Following the approach for VNR 2020, thirteen specific population groups were identified for focused consultations, adhering to the

core principle of “Leaving No One Behind”. Over a thousand CSOs participated in this consultation process, which was organised in phases across the country. In February and March 2025, these CSO networks led and conducted consultations at the regional/ state and national levels. This effort resulted in eliciting their issues, challenges, expectations and recommendations, providing valuable grassroots insights that strengthen the VNR report. A summary of the insights from each of the CSO consultations is outlined in the following section of this chapter.

LNOB GROUPS CONSULTED



People
living with
HIV/AIDS



Transgender
Persons



Senior
Citizens



Forced Labour
and Human
Trafficking



Migrants
and
Urban Poor



Scheduled
Tribes and
Adivasist



Children



Persons
with
Disabilities



Women



Farmers



Youth
and
Adolescents



Schedules
Castes



De-notified,
Nomadic
and Semi-
Nomadic Tribes

CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The achievement of the SDGs requires private sector contribution in a “whole-of-society” approach. Different sectors and actors can work together in an integrated manner pooling financial resources, knowledge and expertise. A one-day consultation on the “Role of the Private Sector in Accelerating SDG achievement and Towards Viksit Bharat 2047” was conducted in February 2025 which aimed to address the role of private sector in social impact spending, the corporate social responsibility mandate, philanthropy and start-up ecosystems, as well as the lens of responsible business practices. The consultation saw over 100 stakeholders gather, in-person and virtually, to provide comprehensive views. To ensure feedback from a wide range of industry stakeholders the consultation was also supported by surveys sent to various private sector stakeholders as well as one-on-one meetings to solicit additional views, which fed into the final analysis of the role of the private sector in accelerating SDG achievement. A summary of the learnings and recommendations from the private sector consultation is detailed in Chapter 6.

SUMMARIES OF CONSULTATIONS WITH 13 POPULATION GROUPS IDENTIFIED IN THE 2025 VNR

1. People Living with HIV/AIDS

As per the India HIV Estimations 2023 report the estimated number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in India is approximately 2.5 million, with concentration amongst certain subgroups referred to as key populations. Youth aged 15-29 account for a significant share of the AIDS burden, including marginalised subgroups such as adolescents, injecting drug users and migrant workers. There has been notable progress in the recent past in the fight against HIV/AIDS, with adult HIV prevalence recorded at 0.2 percent and annual new HIV infections estimated at 66,400, a 44 percent reduction since 2010, compared to the global reduction rate of 39 percent. The current situation for people living with HIV is positively influenced by the development of

progressive laws such as the HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017.

Challenges

Certain stigma and discrimination are faced by People Living with HIV/AIDS, which might occasionally result in exclusion from education, employment and other important avenues. The need for improved access to better health care, including Mental Health and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) was highlighted during the discussions. Issues such as bullying, exclusion and lack of support in schools, which can affect the right to quality education and personal development were also mentioned. In some workplaces, practices that negatively affect career progression, job security and access to stable employment were encountered by PLHIVs. Difficulties in accessing social welfare programmes due to lack of awareness among PLHIVs was cited as an area of concern.

Recommendations

The 2025 engagements reported that the provision of care and treatment has substantially improved, ensuring availability and coverage for most PLHIVs. Initiatives such as Community Systems Strengthening (CSS) and Community-Led Monitoring (CLM) support robust participation of community members, marking a positive shift from 2020, when district and state-level PLHIV networks lacked adequate support and faced restricted communication channels for community engagement.

Further, during the 2025 consultations the importance of having clearer guidelines and accountability mechanisms to enhance awareness among officials and within society were also highlighted. It was also noted that there is scope for increased awareness amongst PLHIV exists, enabling access to the benefits of welfare schemes. Comprehensive health care access including services related to NCDs, sexual and reproductive health and mental health, could be made more widely available to PLHIV, while youth-friendly services for young PLHIV could also be ensured. It was suggested that continued efforts to sensitise healthcare workers may help discrimination and stigma to be eliminated and enrolment processes to be simplified. Additionally, it was emphasised that the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and workplace protections should be strengthened so that job security and career progression for PLHIV can be ensured. For the economic empowerment of the community, the need for accelerating skill-building initiatives for PLHIV, particularly the youth was highlighted.

2. Transgender Persons

Among the LGBTQI+ community, the transgender population was formally recognised in the 2011 Census under a separate category of 'other' alongside male and female. Transgender persons often face discrimination, violence and atrocities, hence need special protection in society. To ensure their protection The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019 and Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019 were introduced.

Challenges

Access to healthcare services for the transgender community is often constrained by the limited capacities of health care providers, social stigma and discrimination. Additionally, national data collection methodologies could be further enhanced to ensure that LGBTQI+ gender segregation data is better captured for improved healthcare provisions. Stigma and bullying are often experienced by gender non-conforming students and employment opportunities outside corporate sectors are generally limited, indicating that targeted skill development programmes, non-discrimination policies and diversity hiring initiatives are needed. Development of specific legal protections can minimise discrimination and exclusion to a great extent. Greater stigma and fewer opportunities are experienced by LGBTQI+ individuals in rural areas compared to their urban counterparts. Requirement of adequate social support systems for elderly LGBTQI+ individuals was also underscored during the consultations.

Recommendations

Compared to 2020, communities reported progress in the recognition and inclusion of transgender individuals, particularly through the enactment of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act in 2019. Furthermore, the SMILE (Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise) Scheme has facilitated the establishment of Transgender Protection Cells at both State and District levels, along with a Transgender Welfare Board at the State level. Initiatives such as the National Portal for Transgender Persons and the SMILE Portal have been launched to facilitate self-identification and access to government services, including safe housing, counselling and skill development. These developments signal a shift towards legal and social inclusion addressing some of the issues highlighted in 2020.

The consultations highlighted that community's livelihoods in rural areas can be improved by leveraging schemes like MGNREGS. To enhance healthcare, the issues that limit access to health schemes like Ayushman Bharat may be addressed. Educational materials could be updated to ensure that diverse identities are reflected and comprehensive sex education could be incorporated into curricula so that awareness is raised, stigma is reduced and infections are prevented. To encourage attendance at educational institutions, better implementation of anti-bullying policies and creation of supportive spaces for gender non-conforming students were recommended during the consultations to support these students. The needs of gender non-conforming students can be addressed by providing specific training for educators and by establishing district-wise counselling systems. Awareness about Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) programmes and support mechanism for those affected by gender-based violence need to be spread among transgender community. Though the rights of the transgender community and its decriminalisation have been progressively recognised, there is still scope for further sensitisation. Comprehensive information about the social welfare schemes can be made available at various levels.

3. Senior Citizens

As per the Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections (July 2020) the number of senior citizens is likely to increase to 193.4 million by 2031. This dramatic increase from the 103.8 million senior citizens recorded in the 2011 Census highlights the urgency of addressing issues related to healthcare, economic security and social integration for older adults.

Challenges

Several issues are faced by the elderly community including last-mile issues in availing the benefits of various government schemes and a lack of awareness about new schemes. Loneliness is widely experienced, especially in rural areas where migration by the younger generation has occurred.

Cyber abuse is also faced by the elderly, necessitating that digital training be provided and user-friendly apps be created to safeguard against cybercrime. In some urban areas, lack of elderly-friendly transportation and infrastructure was cited as a significant challenge for mobility. The ability of many elderly to access healthcare and the benefits of social security schemes are constrained by limited digital literacy.

Recommendations

Since 2020, there has been notable improvements in their situation driven by government initiatives such as Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY), an umbrella scheme that has components like the State Action Plan for Senior Citizens and an Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens scheme that is helping in setting up of Homes to improve the quality of life of the Senior Citizens. Additionally, the establishment of Senior Able Citizens for Re-Employment in Dignity (SACRED) portal has enhanced access to re-employment

opportunities. The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana has also been expanded to provide health coverage to all the senior citizens aged 70 years and above, regardless of their income. The expansion is set to benefit around 45 million families, including 60 million senior citizens, by providing them with free health insurance coverage of up to ₹0.5 million per family.

Awareness campaigns to improve knowledge about social schemes would help in better access and utilisation of the schemes by the elderly. With the government's growing focus on geriatric care, especially for non-communicable diseases, there was a suggestion to provide specialised training and capacity building of health care providers, which would help in enhancing the quality of life of the elderly. Inclusion of elderly care in the school curricula may help ensure that greater care and respect for older persons are fostered.



4. Forced Labour and Human Trafficking

Article 23(1) of the Indian Constitution prohibits forced labour reinforced by the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000 (JJ Act) collectively strengthen India's legal framework against forced labour and human trafficking. Additionally, Section 143 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 provides penal provisions for strict punishment for any offence of human trafficking. Section 144(1) of the BNS provides for the strict punishment for the offence of sexual exploitation of trafficked children.

There have been proactive government measures to combat the challenges of forced labour and human trafficking. Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been established across the country. Collaboration with key institutions such as the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the National Human Rights Commission have further reinforced efforts to combat trafficking. Cooperation with neighbouring countries is being strengthened for tackling cross-border trafficking. Providing immediate support to rescued children and workers, increased collaboration among law enforcement agencies and long-term rehabilitation programmes are strengthening the overall response to human trafficking and reintegration.

Challenges

Recognising the support being provided, the stakeholders from CSOs mentioned that poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities and limited awareness of available job opportunities and safer migration pathways could push vulnerable groups, particularly women, children and refugees, into trafficking for exploitation including forced labour. The increasing use of digital platforms to lure and deceive victims has made trafficking less visible with many cases going undetected. Displacement due to climate-induced disasters and conflicts leave migrants exposed to trafficking networks as well as forced labour.

Recommendations

The stakeholders felt that further strengthening of strict enforcement of regulatory provisions is important so that agencies such as AHTUs continue to act swiftly in the identification and prosecution of trafficking cases with traffickers being penalised. Strengthening the District Task Forces (DTFs), which act as key mechanisms for coordinating inter-agency responses to forced and child labour could be considered. Additionally, better integrating efforts among different departments, child protection units, and law enforcement agencies may help to prevent trafficking and more effectively address related issues. Cases of forced labour and child trafficking are sometimes found to involve organised networks spanning across state borders, for which support at the national level may be required.

Raising awareness within communities along with providing economic and social protection for families who are at risk is important. Rehabilitation efforts that focus on sustainable livelihoods may further support the elimination of forced labour. Sensitisation of the private sector in enforcing due diligence within supply chains could be considered as it helps ensure that businesses do not engage in child or forced labour. Additionally, the regulation of placement agencies could be implemented to prevent fraudulent recruitment practices that can contribute to forced labour.

5. Migrants and Urban Poor

Migrants continue to contribute significantly to key sectors such as construction, manufacturing and domestic work. Post-COVID-19, there has been increased visibility of internal migration and government policy interventions aimed at addressing the needs of migrants. Despite these efforts, many migrants remain unregistered, resulting in the denial of labour rights and social security benefits. The consultation highlighted the need for a collaborative approach involving the government, civil society, businesses, and migrants themselves to build inclusive and resilient cities.

Challenges

Migrants sometimes face challenges such as inadequate housing with limited secure storage. The lack of accessible childcare can result in work responsibilities being taken on by older children.

Receiving fair wages in line with the Minimum Wages Act, excessive working hours, delayed payments and exploitative labour practices are issues that are sometimes faced by migrants. The growing complexity of employer-employee relationships including contract and subcontract arrangements can make it harder for migrants to assert their rights. In high-risk sectors, proper protective equipment and access to healthcare are sometimes not provided, indicating that sector-specific safety standards and regular medical check-ups could be considered.

Recommendations

Since 2020, the situation of migrants and the urban poor in India has improved. Earlier the lack of portability of government entitlements like the Public Distribution System (PDS) restricted migrants' access to food and rations. By 2025, this issue has been addressed. The One Nation One Ration Card scheme has enabled over 80 crore beneficiaries to access subsidised food grains from any PDS shop across India, ensuring food security regardless of location. Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) under PMAY have converted vacant government-funded housing into rental units and encouraged private sector involvement to build affordable housing near employment hubs. This has reduced commute burdens and improved living conditions, addressing the lack of affordable housing near workplaces. Additionally, the 2020 consultations also highlighted the lack of social security for informal workers. By 2025, the e-Shram Portal, with over 280 million registrations, has integrated unorganised workers into a national database, facilitating access to social security schemes, direct benefit transfers and insurance coverage, marking significant progress in addressing these vulnerabilities.

To promote effective coordination, the possibility of establishing a national mechanism to help oversee interstate collaborations has been proposed by stakeholders. It is also suggested that it might be beneficial to ensure that rental housing, dormitories and temporary shelters meet appropriate sanitation and safety standards. Partnerships with the private sector could be encouraged so that the availability of affordable rental accommodations is increased. The e-Shram Card initiative is recognised as a significant step towards ensuring social security for unorganised workers and it has been suggested by stakeholders that state-level welfare board schemes be strengthened and the portability of social protection

coverage be enhanced to improve effectiveness. Additionally, the development of sector-specific safety standards and the provision of free medical check-ups and health cards for migrant workers, as well as the extension of government healthcare services to migrants in destination cities could contribute positively to their health and well-being.

6. Scheduled Tribes and Adivasis

Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India constituting approximately 8.6 percent of the population have historically faced socio-economic issues including poverty, limited access to education and healthcare and social discrimination. Since 2020, there have been notable improvements in their situation driven by due to government initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri JANMAN Yojana which have enhanced access to basic amenities, healthcare and education for tribal communities. Significant progress has been made in recognising Adivasi rights through Scheduled Tribes and Other Tribal Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) and Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA), though implementation could be strengthened further. Increased awareness and advocacy efforts have led to better representation in some areas. Despite these advancements, issues in accessing basic services, natural resources and sustainable livelihoods persist. The erosion of traditional knowledge and cultural practices is a concern.

Challenges

Scheduled Tribes rely on traditional agriculture and forest-based activities for their livelihoods but face limited access to markets. Many migrate due to the lack of local employment opportunities at their native place. Although initiatives like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) address this issue, awareness about other government schemes pertaining to the skill and entrepreneurship development could help in better employment opportunities. Enhanced promotion of traditional livelihoods such as handicrafts and traditional medicine can help preserve their cultural heritage. In addition, preservation of indigenous food systems and ecological knowledge need to be strengthened.

Recommendations

To encourage the development and empowerment of Scheduled Tribe and Adivasi communities the integration of indigenous knowledge into educational curricula may be beneficial. Enhancing local healthcare centres, involving trained Adivasi health workers and extending the reach of mobile health units to remote villages could help improve access to healthcare. Further, the strengthening of rural roads, electricity and sanitation facilities may be undertaken to contribute to better infrastructure. Supporting agroforestry and afforestation initiatives and

promoting community-led water conservation efforts could help protect natural resources. Enterprises based on non-timber forest products could be strengthened, skill development programmes could be aligned with Adivasi knowledge systems, and welfare benefits for migrating families could be ensured to open up economic opportunities. Legal recognition for traditional knowledge, weaving indigenous knowledge into school curricula and helping establish market connections for crafts, food products and herbal medicines may also play a valuable role in preserving cultural heritage.



7. Children

According to UNICEF, India is home to 436.6 million children under 18. The core legislation for child protection in India is enshrined in four main laws: The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act (amended in 2021); the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006); the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (amended in 2019) and the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986, amended in 2016). Recent children-centric government policies and programmes include the National Education Policy, 2020, Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI), Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN), among others.

Challenges

Significant progress has been made in India on several child-related SDG targets, though some gaps can be observed. Indicators like anaemia among children, learning outcomes in education and crimes against children may benefit from renewed attention. The rural-urban disparities and differences across socio-economic groups are highlighted by some indicators and may require additional focus. Although laws and programmes aimed at child protection are in place further strengthening of implementation is required. In the case of POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) cases improved access to justice has been noted; however, overall systemic support for victims and their families can be further enhanced. While sexual abuse of girls is addressed under the POCSO Act, stigma and denial continue to be issues in cases involving boys. Cyber abuse among children is increasingly being recognised as a concern.

Mental health is being regarded as an increasingly important issue. Need for development of comprehensive data systems, particularly on child protection, and generation of data disaggregated by social groups were highlighted in the consultation.

Recommendations

It was felt by the stakeholders that data systems could be strengthened particularly through inclusion of more detailed information on socio-economic status and disability, which can help create more inclusive policies. The simplification of documentation is seen as having the potential to make access to education easier for children from vulnerable communities, including those who are on the move. Training on equity, inclusion and non-discrimination could be received by teachers to better support students, with special attention being given to children with HIV/AIDS. Inclusion of gender equality lessons in textbooks and integration of related themes into the curriculum can promote awareness. Early childhood development and balanced nutrition could also be regarded as important steps in addressing malnutrition.

The improvement of child protection laws and their enforcement is considered important for keeping children safe at school. The streamlining of child helplines and the timely reporting of trafficking cases can help ensure that timely support is provided. Simple and safe ways to report gender-based violence are likely to encourage help-seeking by victims. Continuous monitoring, building of skills among frontline workers and the involvement of children in planning and decision-making were seen as ways in which programme governance can be further strengthened.



8. Persons with Disabilities

India has adopted a rights-based approach for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPD) provides legal equality and protection against discrimination. RPD is a significant shift from the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 as it provides various rights and entitlements to persons with disabilities such as right to equality and non-discrimination, community life, protection from cruelty, abuse, violence and inhuman treatment, access to justice, home and family and reproductive rights, and creation of barrier free environment for PwDs. Other supportive legislative instruments include the Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992, the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999, the Mental Healthcare Act (MHCA), 2017, the Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Policies and schemes that focus on children with disabilities include the Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) scheme and the National Education Policy, 2020. The Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) aims to support PwDs below the poverty line. The Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) is a nationwide flagship initiative launched in 2015 and aimed at achieving universal accessibility. Additionally, in the last two decades the Supreme Court of India has passed significant judgments advancing the rights of PwDs on a range of issues.

Challenges

While a number of acts, policies and schemes are in place in support of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, it has been described by the Supreme Court of India that implementation could be strengthened. Some gaps are observed in public, healthcare and educational infrastructure, which may result in limitations on mobility and access to essential services. Requirement of sufficient number of trained special educators and skill development programmes have been cited to ensure better access of education and vocational training. Issues related to accessing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services are sometimes encountered by certain groups, such as women, girls and individuals with high support needs. It was mentioned by stakeholders that even when data is available, disaggregation by disability is often lacking.

Recommendations

The 2020 engagements highlighted the necessity to adequately address the specific needs of students with disabilities through the National Education Policy (NEP). The 2025 consultations noted positive progress, with the Supreme Court reaffirming the rights of persons with disabilities (PwDs) to a reasonable accommodation in education. This ruling struck down outdated exclusionary rules for medical admissions and emphasised functional assessment over rigid disability criteria. Additionally, compared to 2020 there have been improvements in inclusion within government schemes, with policies in States like Bihar and Uttarakhand providing increased support for startups and self-employment initiatives involving PwDs.

The need for strengthening the enforcement of disability rights and enhancement of data systems were underscored for shaping effective evidence based policies. Greater accessibility in public infrastructure and transport can be promoted to improve access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. The capacities of educators, healthcare providers, judiciary, and law enforcement may be built through training, and the extension of social protection to include rehabilitation can offer more comprehensive care. Giving special attention to girls and women with disabilities could help ensure safe access to services and protection from violence, with crisis centres being made more accessible and appropriate training being provided to staff. Additionally, the needs of PwDs may be incorporated into disaster preparedness to promote safety and well-being. Digital inclusion for PwDs could be increased and processes for obtaining Unique Disability ID (UDID) certification and Aadhaar may be streamlined, particularly by addressing accessibility features at enrolment centres. Finally, the ongoing sensitisation and training for law enforcement and judicial officials might help to ensure that disability-related cases receive appropriate attention.

9. Women

The Constitution of India establishes a clear mandate for equality, non-discrimination and social justice. India has also ratified multiple international conventions that have a bearing on gender equality viz. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948; Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979;

International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD-POA), 1994; The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995; and the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989.

Challenges

Despite affirmative action being undertaken by the government, deep-rooted patriarchal norms are still prevalent in various forms in the Indian society. In 2022, it was observed that 48.4 percent of women were not in education, employment, or training (NEET), compared to only 9.8 percent of young men. Mental health is being identified as an area of concern for women and requires attention. Non-communicable diseases and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) are regarded as other areas with significant gender implications. In formal sector organisations Internal Committees (IC) have been formed under the POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace) Act to address sexual harassment at the workplace; however, a proper understanding of the law is often not held by the committees. More focused attention is needed to curb crime against women. Legal and policy responses to cases of violence need to address the root causes of violence and the needs of the survivor. Increasing budgeting for women and generation of gender-disaggregated data are seen as cross-cutting measures that may influence progress on all SDGs.

Recommendations

Since the last VNR in 2020 a commitment towards improving women's representation in legislature has been demonstrated by India with the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill in 2023. Programmes for women's financial inclusion, credit access and entrepreneurship, housing and access to safe drinking water and cooking fuel have been prioritised. Through these initiatives, there has been a positive shift in addressing women's issues highlighted in 2020, such as the lack of recognition of discrimination and violence faced by women and the need for gender-responsive budgeting, has been observed.

Stakeholders noted that outcomes could be improved by enhancing the budget support for adolescent health, SRHR, mental health and gender-affirmative care. Gender sensitisation among healthcare personnel, judiciary and law enforcement is regarded as important. Prioritising access for vulnerable women, especially in remote areas, helps ensure inclusivity. Support for women in overcoming the digital divide and

the strengthening of barrier-free social protection for marginalised women and gender-diverse workers are considered important. Investment in sex-disaggregated data could offer valuable insights to address disparities.

Alternative approaches to implementing POSH for women in informal work, both rural and urban could be considered. Giving attention to the gendered impact of AI and new technologies on work could guide more equitable policies. Online gender-based violence, covering cyber grooming, sextortion and digital harassment are emerging concerns which need attention. The integration of health and livelihood concerns of migrant and vulnerable women into climate change policies might help address disproportionate risks. A rights-based and choice-based framework in gender equality laws, including equitable natal and marital property rights, may be adopted to benefit women and gender-diverse persons. Availability of care infrastructure could help support more women to shift toward employment generation activities promoting women-led development.

10. Farmers

Since 2020, there have been significant improvements driven by government initiatives such as the PM-KISAN scheme, which provides income support, and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, which offers crop insurance. Additionally, the enhancement of institutional credit and the growth in agricultural exports have contributed to better financial stability for farmers. Despite these advancements, persistent issues such as fragmented landholdings, water scarcity, market inefficiencies, inadequate storage and transportation facilities and soil degradation continue to hinder progress.

Challenges

The protection of common lands, water resources, and grazing lands are considered crucial for livelihood security of farmers. Issues with access to credit are experienced by small farmers and the expansion of microfinance and community-based credit systems might be a possible solution. Better infrastructure support, including roads, cold storage and processing units, was suggested for market linkages and value-chain enhancement. Pastoral communities that face fodder insecurity impressed upon the recognition of pastoralism in policy

frameworks. Issues related to legal protection, climate change impacts and illegal fishing practices are encountered by fishery community. Recognition of land ownership rights and access to women-friendly machinery were issues identified by women farmers.

Recommendations

The promotion of multi-cropping and traditional cropping systems, the improvement of access to climate-resilient farm technologies and the expansion of targeted credit programmes were recommended as policy priorities. The strengthening of market linkages can be supported through the development of infrastructure, encouragement of e-commerce and building of capacity for value addition. Water management practices need to further integrate local ecological knowledge.

The farmers felt that the expansion of microfinance through community-based credit systems like SHGs, the use of credit scoring models for borrowers with limited formal financial history and the continued encouragement of entrepreneurship through schemes such as Stand-Up India and Startup India could have an impact. Additionally, the financial empowerment of women farmers could be supported through targeted credit programmes and by assisting Farmer Producing Organisations (FPOs) in arranging working capital or interest-free loans. The promotion of innovation and gender-friendly post-harvest machinery is seen as a way to help reduce the burden on women and align with FPO marketing cycles. It was highlighted by farmers that the strengthening of supply chains for diverse grains and the establishment of community-managed seed banks, bio-input resource centres and custom hiring centres could further support the shift to climate-resilient agro-ecological practices.

11. Youth and Adolescents

India has the largest youth population in the world with about 65% of its people under the age of 35. The Government has aligned its adolescent and youth centric policies with the SDG framework. Key initiatives include the National Youth Policy, 2014, which aims to empower youth to achieve their full potential by focusing on education, employment, skill development and health. The National Education Policy, 2020, aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to 50 percent by 2035. Health initiatives

such as the National Health Policy, 2017, address adolescent health challenges including reproductive and sexual health, nutrition and psychological problems. Social protection laws like the Juvenile Justice Act, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act aim to safeguard young people. Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities are promoted through policies like the National Apprenticeship Policy, Atal Tinkering Labs and National Career Services Portal, while civic participation is encouraged through programmes like the National Service Scheme and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan. Other schemes like PM SHRI, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and various scholarship programmes focus on retaining young people in school, especially girls and marginalised groups.

Challenges

Comprehensive health interventions in schools help not only in ensuring healthy but also better health aware future citizens. This can be ensured both in government and private schools and colleges. Improvement of working conditions in the informal sector facilitating transition in work and aligning training programmes with the evolving job markets are some of the important steps for enhancing youth employability. Enhancing participation of women in the work force and mitigating impact of climate change on future prospects of youth are some of the other areas that could benefit from focused attention.

Recommendations

In 2020, vocational and skills-based training had limited reach with particularly low participation among marginalised communities and young women. By 2025, skill development programmes have been expanded significantly with targeted schemes for improving access for these marginalised groups. Similarly, youth mental health, which was not being adequately addressed in 2020 despite growing concerns saw notable progress by 2025 through the implementation of National and State initiatives such as helplines, school-based counselling programmes and peer-support networks, reflecting a positive institutional shift toward recognising and addressing the psychosocial needs of adolescents and young people.

School and higher education curriculum need to be updated regularly to promote holistic education including soft skills and global skills. Parent advisory groups are required to be mainstreamed across school administration systems. Efforts to build

evidence in sectors expected to create jobs in the future and the revision of the National Skill Development Corporation's (NSDC) skill gap analysis may be worth considering. Integration of Vocational training into the school curriculum and creation of career progression pathways for youth leaders will enhance entrepreneurship. Adolescent-responsive health services may be provided and helpline numbers may be made responsive and functional. Youth participation in local governance structures could be strengthened and peer educators could be empowered to advocate for change.

The strengthening of youth participation in local governance structures and the empowerment of peer educators to advocate for change may also be advantageous. Youth exposure to policymaking processes at the Panchayat and block levels may be facilitated and training in green jobs could be provided. In climate action initiatives, the enhancement of community awareness and communication regarding the relevant government schemes might be prioritised.

12. Scheduled Castes

Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India having been historically marginalised have faced socio-economic challenges. Persistent efforts have been made over the years to improve their social and economic conditions. Since 2020, there have been notable improvements in their position due to initiatives like the Development Action Plan for Scheduled Castes (DAPSC) and increased representation in government jobs. These efforts have led to better access to basic amenities, educational opportunities and economic upliftment.

Challenges

The challenges faced by the SC communities, inter-alia include lack of awareness about healthcare provisions and lack of access to clean water and sanitation. Education programmes like the PM-Poshan and scholarships for SC students aim to improve educational outcomes, but high dropout rates, especially among Dalit girls continue to be observed. Employment related challenges include low wages, poor working conditions and limited opportunities for skill development and entrepreneurship. Health risks such as manual scavenging might be faced by SC workers in informal sectors where social protection is often lacking.

Recommendations

The 2020 community engagements had emphasised the lack of disaggregated data for tracking SDG progress among SC subgroups which hindered targeted interventions. By 2025, the Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation has engaged civil society organisations to enhance data collection methodologies, focusing on SC-specific disaggregated data aligning with the 2020 recommendation for community-led data generation.

Need for promotion of awareness about health rights and government schemes have been highlighted to empower the community. Allowance of alternative access to healthcare schemes without primary documents might be considered. Continuing to strengthen access to financial institutions and improving banking infrastructure in rural areas may support livelihood development. Skill development and entrepreneurship programmes tailored to SC communities might be introduced to increase employment opportunities. Implementation of measurable targets within government schemes and ensuring that benefits reach marginalised groups could further strengthen economic inclusion and growth of these communities. Free sanitary pads and menstrual hygiene products might be provided to SC women and girls to help improve reproductive health and hygiene. The use of alternative energy and climate-resilient agricultural practices among SC communities can be promoted, and access to resources for climate adaptation may be facilitated to support their resilience and well-being.

13. De-notified, Nomadic, and Semi-nomadic Tribes

De-notified, Nomadic, and Semi-nomadic Tribes (DNTs) in India, marginalised and stigmatised as "criminals" under colonial laws struggle with issues such as lack of access to education, healthcare and secure livelihoods. Since 2020, there have been notable improvements in their situation, driven by initiatives like the Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNT Communities (SEED), which provides health insurance, livelihood support and educational opportunities.

Challenges

DNT communities face issues in accessing education, healthcare and legal services. Lack of

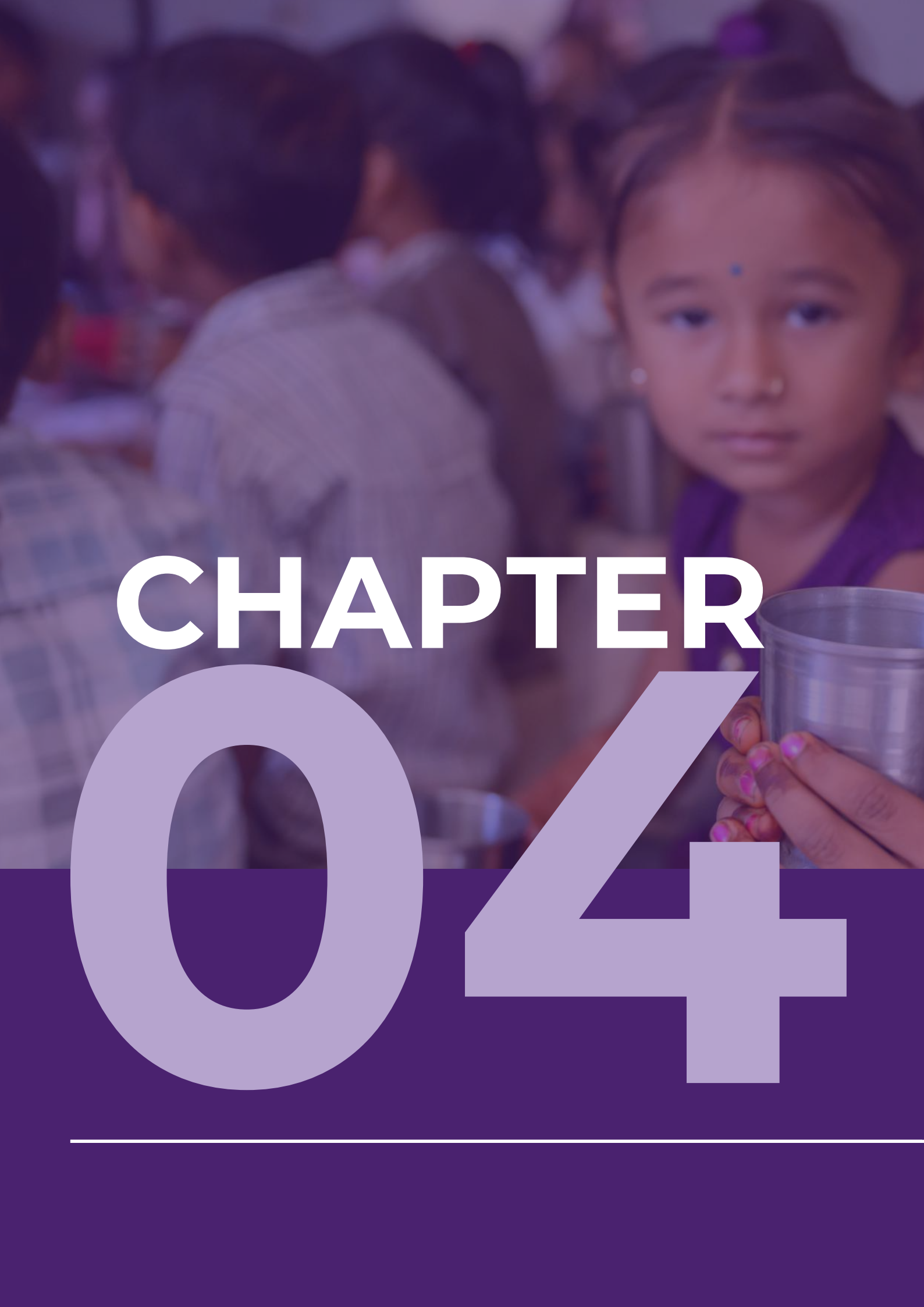
awareness about access to residential schools and reserved seats in existing schools for DNT children, especially girls, limit their educational opportunities. Additionally, the absence of essential identity documents such as caste and domicile certificates further marginalises DNT communities, making it difficult for them to access government schemes and services.

Recommendations

The 2025 consultations highlighted new initiatives such as Rajasthan's expanded MNREGA-linked folk artist employment model which aims to provide employment security and preserve cultural traditions, directly addressing the earlier VNR consultation concerns about recognising and supporting traditional skills and livelihoods. To enhance educational outcomes for DNT children providing access to DNT students in existing ashram schools up to class 10 may be considered. Such measures could improve access to quality education and create a supportive learning environment,

particularly for girls. Employment and skill training opportunities in traditional fields such as training stone workers in modern machinery for infrastructure projects or connecting Mahua (local alcohol) producers with pharmaceutical companies for medicinal purposes can be considered. Provisions for regular localised camps at the district level to issue essential documents, including caste and domicile certificates would facilitate DNT communities' access to government schemes and services. The stakeholders recommended expanding Rajasthan's MNREGA-linked folk artist employment model to national level and engaging DNT artists to perform in colleges, government offices, schools and hospitals to promote both employment security and cultural preservation. These initiatives might lead to more stable income opportunities while helping to maintain and celebrate cultural heritage.





CHAPTER

04



India on the Move: Progress on SDGs

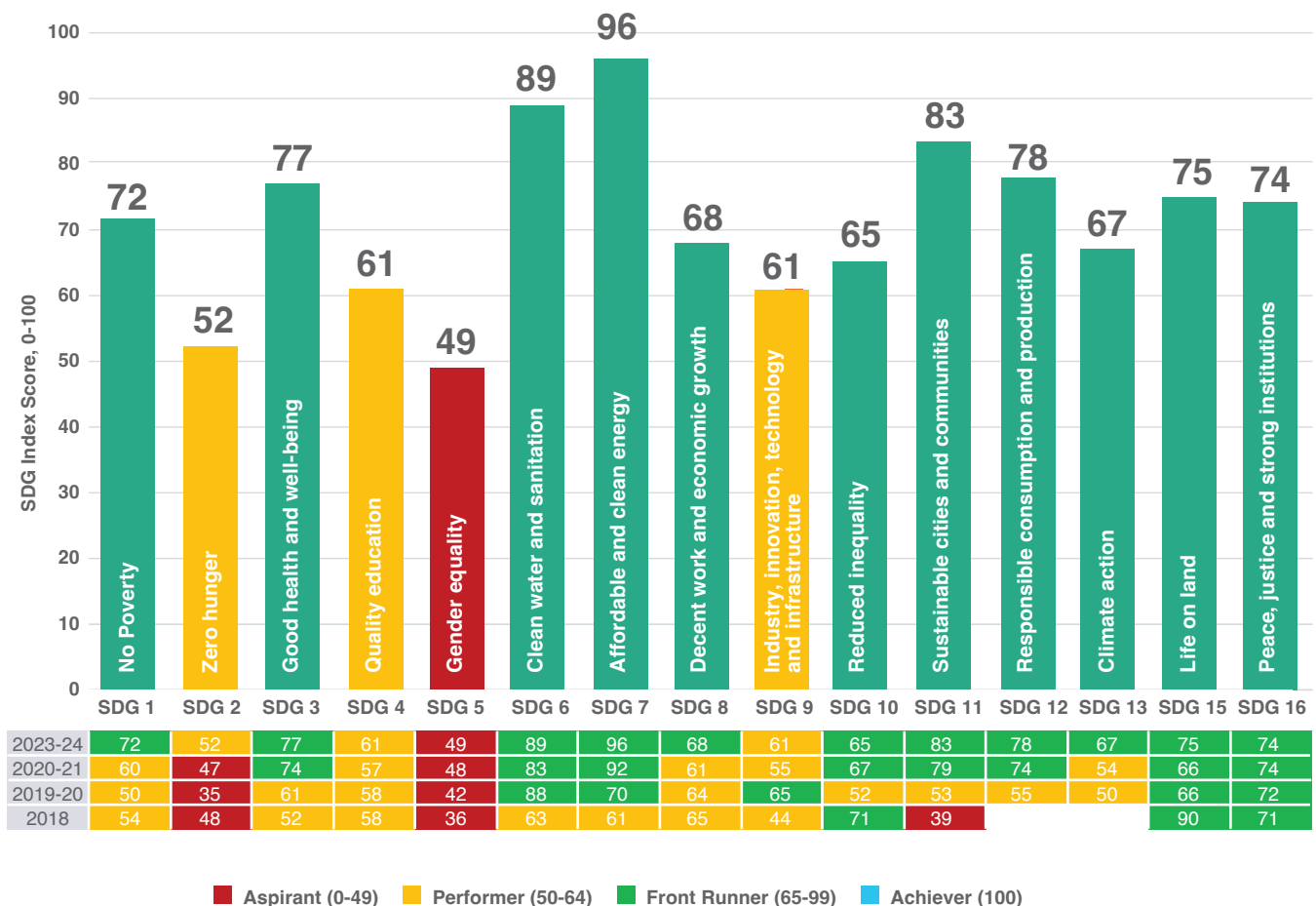
With worldwide progress on Agenda 2030 in jeopardy, India's resilience to global headwinds and its steadfast commitment to sustainable development has seen the country emerge as a major driver of SDGs progress both regionally and globally. Over the last five years since India's last Voluntary National Review in 2020, a series of overlapping and cascading crises have derailed SDG progress globally along a wide range of dimensions. The COVID-19 pandemic, rising geopolitical tensions, climate-related disruptions and economic headwinds have disrupted global development across multiple dimensions.

India's approach has been characterised by a deep commitment to inclusive growth, Cooperative and Competitive Federalism and environmental sustainability. A strong macroeconomic foundation, a robust digital public infrastructure and innovative

social protection systems have enabled the country to counter external shocks while maintaining steady progress towards the SDGs. Targeted national initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY, Ujjwala Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, PM-Mudra Yojana, Saubhagya and Start-up India have contributed to the improvements in basic services, livelihoods, health and financial inclusion.

SDG India Index Report 2024 reflects this trajectory as the country's composite score has steadily improved from 57 in 2018 to 71 in 2023–24. This progress is particularly visible in Goals such as No Poverty (Goal 1), Good Health and Well-being (Goal 3), Clean Water and Sanitation (Goal 6), Affordable and Clean Energy (Goal 7), Industry, innovation and Infrastructure (Goal 9) and Sustainable Cities and Communities (Goal 11).

Figure 3: SDG Goal Wise Performance

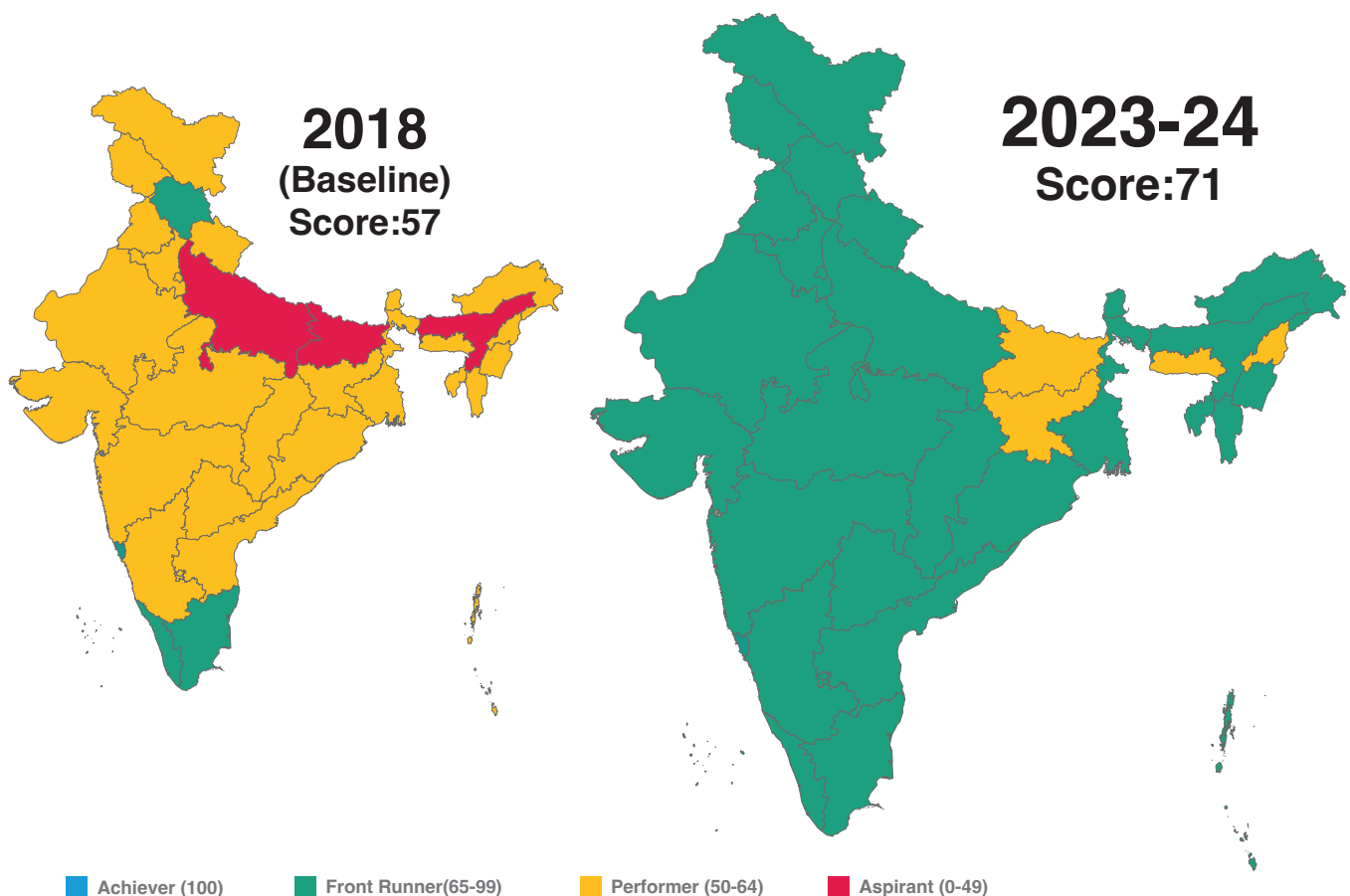


Source: SDG India Index 2023-24

Between 2018 and 2023–24, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and several North Eastern and Central States recorded the highest improvements in composite scores. This reflects not only policy effectiveness but also a competitive and enabling environment at the subnational level that fosters innovation, strengthens accountability and promotes results-oriented governance among States and Union Territories.

India remains committed to further deepening its engagement with the 2030 Agenda, both as a national priority and as part of its broader contribution to global development discourse. Through continuous innovation, strong collaboration and an emphasis on outcomes, India will continue to serve as a driver of SDG progress, both domestically and globally.

Figure 4: India's Index Score: State/UT Performance



Note: Results over the years are not strictly comparable owing to revision in the indicator.

Source: SDG India Index 2023-24



GOAL 01



No
Poverty

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of humanity's most daunting challenges. SDG1 encompasses the aim of eradicating poverty – not only in monetary terms but also in all forms and dimensions by 2030. The Government has adopted a strategic approach to address each dimension of poverty which involves targeting the most vulnerable, increasing basic resources and services and supporting communities. It calls for the continuous monitoring of progress in social protection and implementing robust social protection systems. The importance of mobilising resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation is also important for the success of SDG 1.

INDIA'S STEADY PROGRESS IN REDUCING POVERTY

Poverty is a multifaceted and complex issue encompassing multiple dimensions such as health, education and living standards. Global efforts to eradicate poverty have been hampered by significant setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and a series of major shocks. Yet in the face of global crisis India's contribution to global poverty reduction has remained steady and focused.

India's National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)³ is a valuable tool that captures these simultaneous deprivations across the 12 SDG-aligned indicators. The National MPI Report 2023 provides granular data on multidimensional poverty across 36 States/UTs and over 700 districts in India. The National MPI assesses progress towards SDG target 1.2 which aims at reducing "at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions".

The National MPI Report 2023 highlights that the incidence of multidimensional poverty reduced from 24.85% to 14.96% between 2015-16 and 2019-21, resulting in 135 million people escaping multidimensional poverty during this period. Deprivation significantly reduced in all the 12 indicators – nutrition, child and adolescent mortality, maternal health, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, housing, drinking water, electricity, assets and bank accounts.

The Government's multifaceted approach in critical sectors including education, nutrition, sanitation,

cooking fuel, electricity and housing have played a pivotal role in driving these positive outcomes.

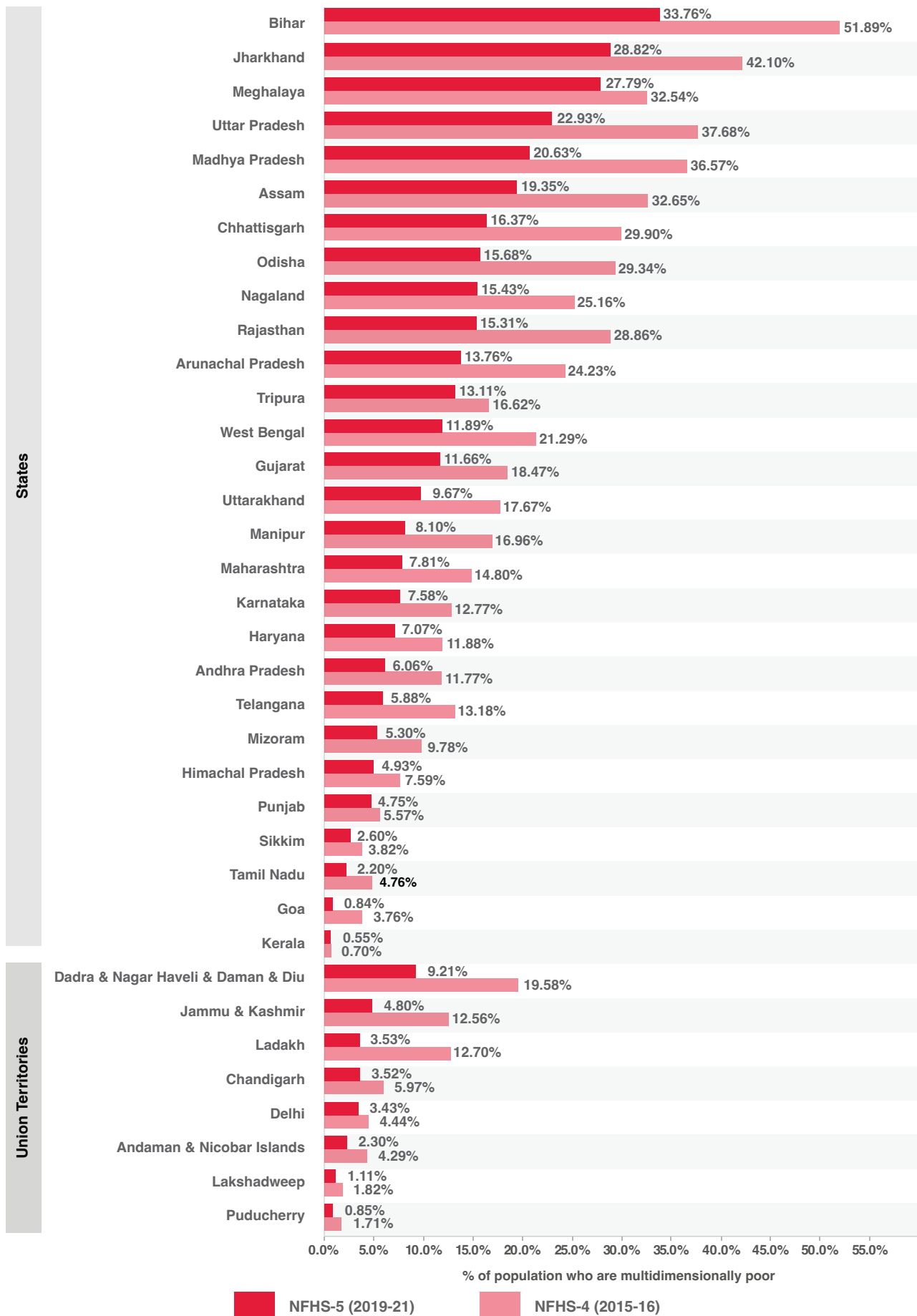
For instance, the PM Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) provides clean cooking fuel to rural women while PM POSHAN programme is the largest school feeding initiative globally, targets school enrolment and nutrition. Initiatives like the PM Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA), Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) have improved sanitation and water facilities along with ensuring widespread availability of electricity. Another critical dimension of the Government's efforts has been the improvement in living standards. Through schemes like the PM Awas Yojana (PMAY), millions have been empowered through access to secure and dignified housing. The Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), launched in 2014, transformed universal financial access by opening over 500 million bank accounts, with over half belonging to women. This initiative has been pivotal in promoting financial inclusion and empowering individuals across diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

The reduction in the MPI value has been pro-poor in absolute terms. The rural areas saw the fastest reduction in the MPI value, with the incidence of poverty falling from 32.59% to 19.28% compared to a reduction in the incidence of poverty from 8.65% to 5.27% in urban areas during the 2015-16 and 2019-21 period.

Bihar, the state with the highest proportion of multidimensional poverty in 2015-16, witnessed the largest absolute reduction in the incidence of multidimensional poverty from 51.89% to 33.76% between 2015-16 and 2019-21, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh (See Figure 5). However, Uttar Pradesh recorded the largest reduction in absolute number of MPI poor with 34.3 million escaping multidimensional poverty during this period.



Figure 5: Percentage of the total population who are multidimensionally poor in each State and UTs



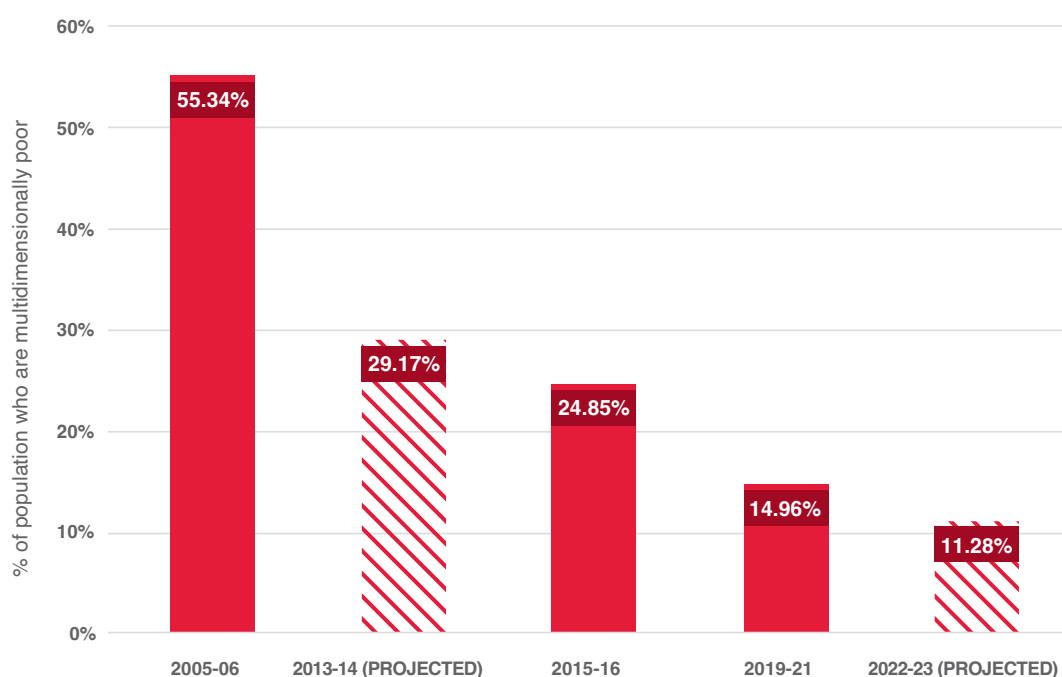
Source: National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023

Further, building on these results of the National MPI, the Government and UNDP released a discussion paper highlighting that multidimensional poverty is expected to have declined from 29.17% in 2013-14 to

11.28% in 2022-23, resulting in 248 million people escaping multidimensional poverty during this 9-year period in India (See Figure 6).

Figure 6: Proportion of population who are multidimensionally poor in India

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY, 2005-06 – 2019-21

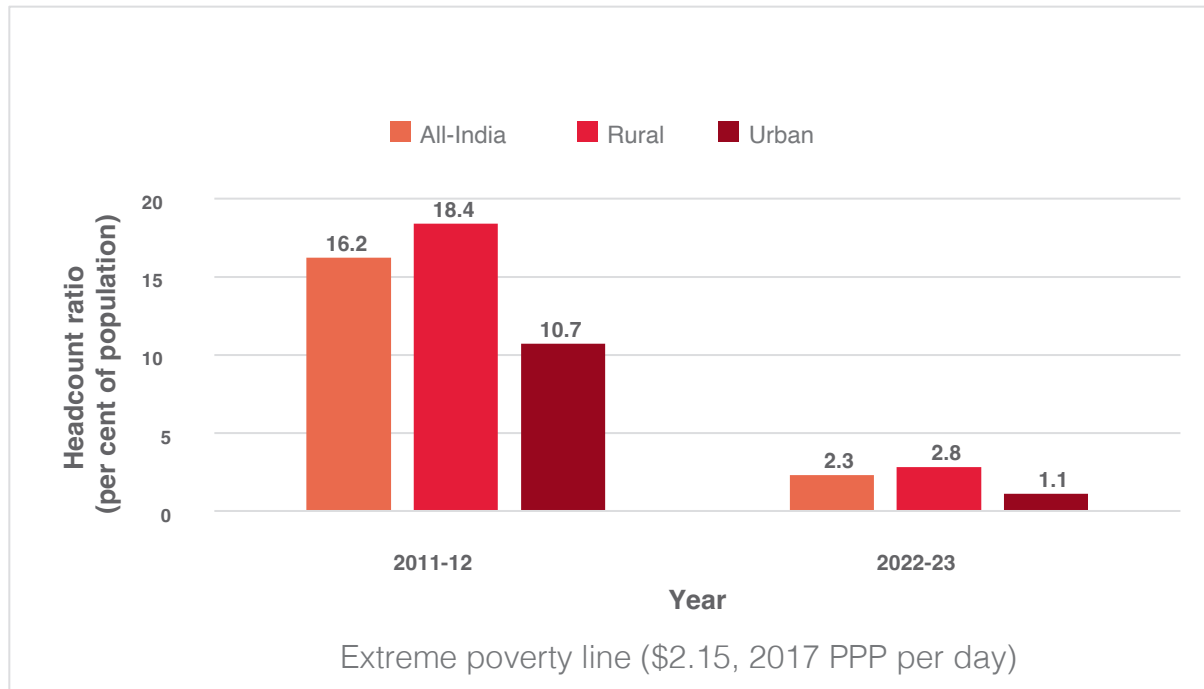


Source: Multidimensional Poverty in India since 2005-06 – Discussion Paper | NITI Aayog

These results highlight that India is much ahead in achieving SDG target 1.2 of halving multidimensional poverty by 2030. The substantial progress in all indicators of the National MPI which intersect across multiple SDGs demonstrates the concerted efforts made to achieve overall progress. This is attributable to a multi-faceted strategy focused on empowerment and inclusive growth. The Government's policy framework has been guided by the idea of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas", which mirrors the core principle of "Leaving No One Behind" (LNOB).

These results are mirrored in the World Bank's data showing a substantial decrease in India's extreme poverty rate (living on less than \$2.15 per day (2017 PPP)) from 16.2% in 2011-12 to 2.3% in 2022-23, lifting 171 million people above extreme poverty line over the decade⁴. Extreme poverty saw substantial reductions in both rural areas (from 18.4% to 2.8%) and urban areas (from 10.7% to 1.1%) during this period narrowing the rural-urban gap from 7.7 to 1.7 percentage points—a 16 percent annual decline. (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: World Bank's Extreme Poverty Headcount Ratios

EXTREME POVERTY, 2011-12 – 2022-23

Source: World Bank, India Poverty and Equity Brief, April 2025

While the global goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030 may not be reached with roughly 7 per cent of the world's population expected to remain in extreme poverty, primarily in fragile and conflict states in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia could stand as an exception. Driven by India's rapid economic recovery and targeted policy interventions, Southern Asia is on track to be virtually free of extreme poverty by the 2030 deadline.

EXPANDING SOCIAL PROTECTION

A key pillar of India's dramatic reduction of extreme poverty has been the extension of coverage by India's social protection system. ILO's World Social Protection Report 2024-26 has noted India's progress in enhancing social protection coverage, acknowledging the doubling of India's social protection coverage (cash benefit) from 24.4% in 2021 to 48.8% in 2024⁵. As per Ministry of Labour and Employment, nearly 920 million people, or 65% of the population, are now covered by at least one form of

social protection, whether in cash or in-kind, through the government schemes. This reflects a significant expansion of social assistance programmes targeting children and families.

Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS), India provides for at least one hundred days of unskilled manual work as a guaranteed employment in a financial year as per demand, resulting in creation of productive assets of prescribed quality and durability. It aims to strengthen the livelihood resource base of the poor and proactively ensure social inclusion. The total person days between FY 2014-15 to FY 2024-25 has been 30.29 billion which is 82% more than the decade before 2014.⁶ Additionally, participation of women has increased steadily from 48 % in 2013-14 to 58.01 % in 2024-25⁷. More than half of the permissible works taken up are related to agriculture and agriculture allied works which contribute to food security and around 40 % are related to natural resource management and rural infrastructure works.

To ensure old age protection, Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM), a pension scheme for unorganised workers, was launched in February 2019. Total gross enrolment under Atal Pension Yojana has crossed 70 million mark in October 2024.⁸ This is a flagship social security scheme of the Government that aims to create a universal social security system for all citizens, especially the poor, the underprivileged and the workers in the unorganised sector.

The Government is also implementing the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY – NRLM) across the country with the objective of organising women from rural poor households into Self Help Groups (SHGs) nurturing and supporting them to increase their incomes and escape abject poverty. As of February 2025, more than 100 million rural women households have been connected through the Mission to 9 million Self Help Groups.⁹

VILLAGE SARTHI: AN INITIATIVE IN MORADABAD, UTTAR PRADESH TO EMPOWER SELF-HELP GROUPS

Self-help Groups (SHGs) are the driving force behind rural development and women's empowerment. Despite continuous efforts few SHGs can sustain their operations profitably for a longer time. To address this as part of the Village Sarthi initiative in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh an e-marketplace has been developed where SHG-run e-stores are established at the village level. These stores are interconnected through a mobile app and a web-based platform facilitating convenient access for both seller and buyer “Didis” (SHG sisters). SHG Didi (Udyam Sakhi) initiates the ordering process by gathering demand from local SHG women and submitting it to the district through a web-based platform.

A central warehouse at the district level has been set up to store inventory sufficient for a four-month supply for the village e-stores. This inventory consists of 60% branded FMCG products and 40% locally sourced SHG products. Upon placement of an order the products are promptly delivered to the Mahila e-store within 24 hours. These products are delivered to local SHG women at a discounted rate leading to substantial savings for the members of the SHG.

INCREASING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

India has established ambitious and holistic goals for poverty alleviation, moving beyond the monetary poverty threshold. Recognising the multidimensional nature of poverty, the Government is implementing various welfare schemes focused on nutrition, health, education, housing, drinking water, sanitation, skill development and infrastructure like roads and utilities. Sustained economic growth has played a crucial role in reducing poverty over the years.

The universalisation of public healthcare has been significantly enhanced by the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

This scheme has effectively reduced Out-of-Pocket Expenditure (OOPE) by increasing social security measures and boosting primary health spending. In 2024, the Government expanded AB-PMJAY to provide free treatment benefits of up to ₹0.5 million per year to approximately 60 million senior citizens aged 70 years and above, belonging to 45 million families, irrespective of their socio-economic status. As of March 2025, more than 369 million Ayushman cards have been created under the scheme¹⁰ and flexibilities have been granted to States/UTs to use their own databases to expand the beneficiary base.

Global SDG target 1.4 aims to ensure that every person has access to basic services such as housing. The Government is committed to building and providing pucca (permanent) houses for the poor in rural areas. 40 million houses have been constructed in urban and rural areas under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, a National Housing Scheme for providing affordable housing. Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G), the Government has set an ambitious target to build 33.2 million more houses by March 2029, with 26.7 million houses completed, significantly improving the living conditions of millions of rural families. The scheme has also placed a special focus on women empowerment, with 74% of sanctioned houses owned by women solely or jointly.¹¹ Skilled employment has also been a priority, with almost 0.3 million rural masons trained in disaster-resilient construction, boosting their employability.

In order to reduce poverty of the Schedule Caste (SC) communities, the Government merged three erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes in 2021-2022, to create Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY) (Prime Minister's Scheduled Castes Upliftment Scheme). The focus is on reducing poverty of the Schedule Caste communities by generation of additional employment opportunities through skill development, income generating schemes and other initiatives and to improve socio-economic developmental indicators by ensuring adequate infrastructure and requisite services in the villages with a significant SC population. During 2024-25, 4,991 villages were declared as Adarsh Gram (model villages). The selected villages are saturated with 50 Socio-Economic developmental indicators under 10 domains namely Drinking Water and Sanitation, Education, Health and Nutrition, Social Security, Rural Roads and Housing, Electricity and Clean Fuel, Agricultural Practices, Financial Inclusion, Digitisation, Livelihood and Skill Development, which are the minimum requirements for any person residing in a village.

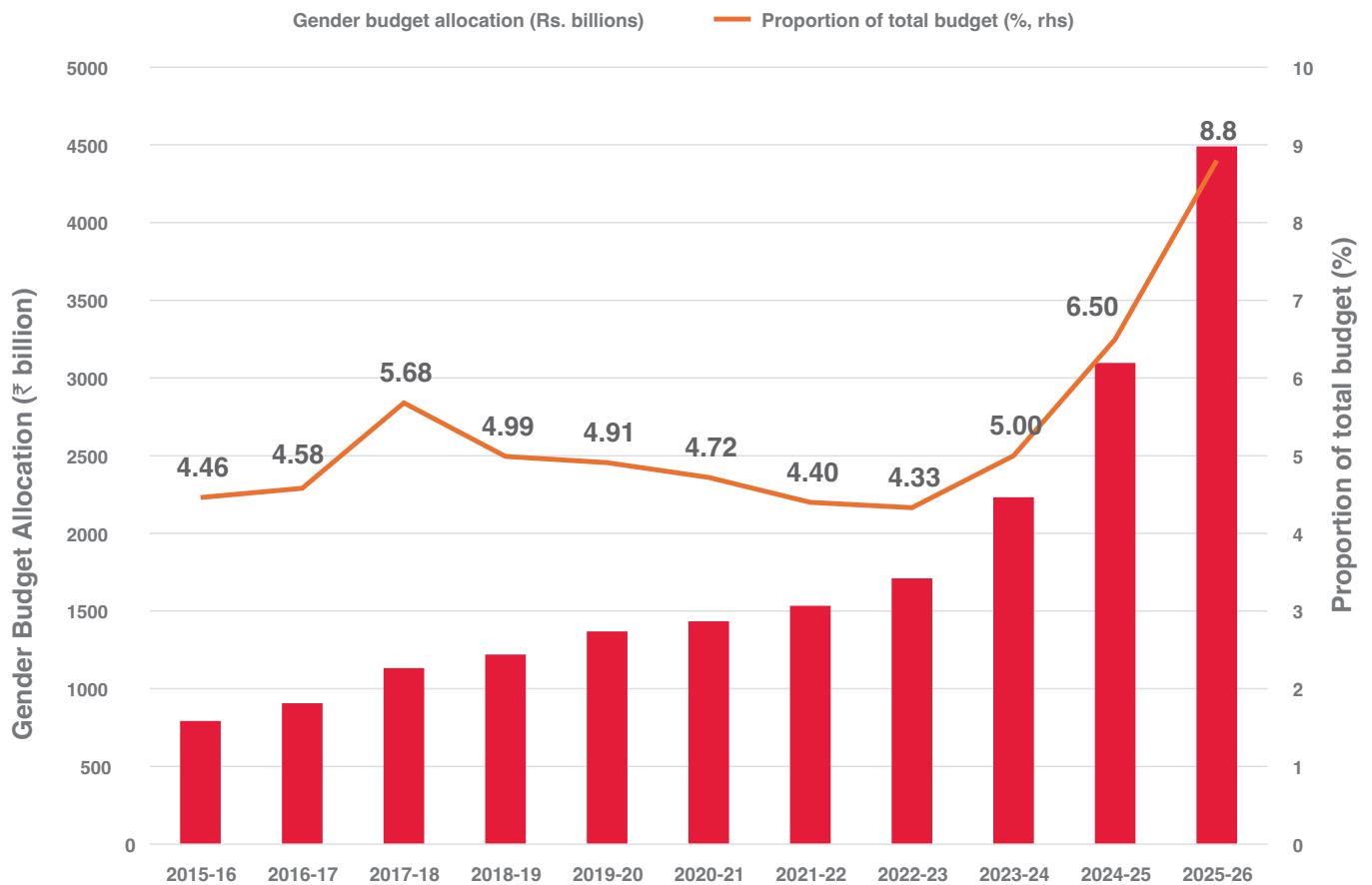
In 2024, the Government approved Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (Prime Minister's Tribal Inclusive Development Village Campaign) for improving the socio-economic condition of tribal communities by adopting saturation coverage for tribal families in tribal-majority villages and aspirational districts. The initiative aims to cover

around 63,000 villages benefitting more than 50 million tribal people across 549 districts and 2,740 blocks spread across all tribal majority villages across 30 States / UTs.

A paradigm shift in the public service delivery and the implementation of schemes has been accomplished by the Government through the promotion of digital and financial inclusion. This has been enabled by JAM trinity - Jan Dhan (financial inclusion), Aadhar (universal identification) and Mobile (internet penetration). JAM Trinity has enabled an extension of cash benefits to an increasingly wide group of citizens, removed intermediaries and led to direct transfer of benefits into an intended beneficiary's bank account. Under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) the unbanked have been brought into the formal financial system by expanding access to savings accounts, credit, remittance, insurance and pensions. It has helped open over 545.8 million accounts with deposits rising to ₹2,460 billion by January 2025.¹²

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN PUBLIC SPENDING

Gender budgeting has also emerged as an important channel of Government's targeting of fiscal policy to reduce poverty. Gender budgeting monitors expenditure and public service delivery from a gender perspective as a means of mainstreaming women's concerns in all activities and improving their access to public resources. Since the gender budget statement was introduced in 2005-06, more and more Ministries/Departments are reviewing the programmes and schemes to address the quantum of resources that have the budgetary potential to impact and address the development needs of women. The Union Budget 2025-26 reflects a significant rise in gender-focused allocations. The Gender Budget in FY 2025-26 constitutes 8.86% of the total budget, increasing from 4.72% in FY 2020-21 (See Figure 8). In 2025, a record allocation of ₹4.49 trillion has been designated for women's welfare reflecting a 37.25% increase from FY 2023-24.¹³

Figure 8: Proportion of budget earmarked under gender budget

Source: Expenditure Profile 2024-25 (Statement 1 and Statement 13), Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and Union Budget 2025-26

“Be it DBT, or plans to provide facilities like electricity, water, toilets to poor people, all these have brought a revolution at the grassroots level. These schemes have filled the poorest of the poor in the country with a sense of respect and security.”

-Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

WAY FORWARD

India is expected to achieve the SDG Target 1.2 (of reducing multidimensional poverty by at least half) much ahead of the stipulated timeline of 2030. It demonstrates the Government's strategic focus on ensuring sustainable and equitable development and eradicating poverty by 2030, thereby adhering to its commitment towards the SDGs. The Government is focused on addressing disparities in the poverty levels among States and managing the challenges arising from rapid urbanisation, notably reflected in the mismatch between demand and supply for housing, infrastructure, job opportunities and essential services.

Since climate change tends to impact vulnerable communities more, supporting resilient livelihoods through climate-smart agriculture, drought-proofing and green jobs is expected to become more important.

India will further enhance its role as a knowledge partner on poverty reduction, especially with the countries in the Global South through platforms like the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum, etc. In this context, sharing best practices in digital governance, rural development and DBT mechanisms will contribute to global progress.

Consistent implementation across a diverse set of programmes and initiatives that have strong inter-linkages will continue to lead to significant reduction in deprivations across multiple indicators. India will continue to prioritise the reduction of poverty, enhancement of incomes, improvement of living standards and the overall ease of living for all communities. This reflects the Government's unwavering commitment to improving citizen's lives and creating a brighter future for all.







GOAL

02



Zero
Hunger

SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) strives to eradicate hunger, achieve food security, enhance nutrition and foster sustainable agriculture. It not only addresses hunger itself but also tackles its root causes, including inequality, climate change and inefficient agricultural practices. The overarching goal of SDG 2 is to eliminate all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, ensuring that everyone, particularly those in vulnerable situations have access to sufficient nutritious food.

Moreover, it aims to double agricultural productivity by 2030, promote decent incomes, facilitate people-centred rural development, maintain genetic diversity of seeds, plants and farmed animals, strengthen the capacity for climate change adaptive agriculture and safeguard the environment. Key measures such as promoting sustainable agriculture, supporting small-scale farmers and ensuring equitable access to land, technology and markets are crucial for ending hunger and poverty. Achieving this goal also necessitates international cooperation to invest in infrastructure and technology for improving agricultural productivity.

INCREASING RESILIENCE OF FOOD-BASED SAFETY NETS

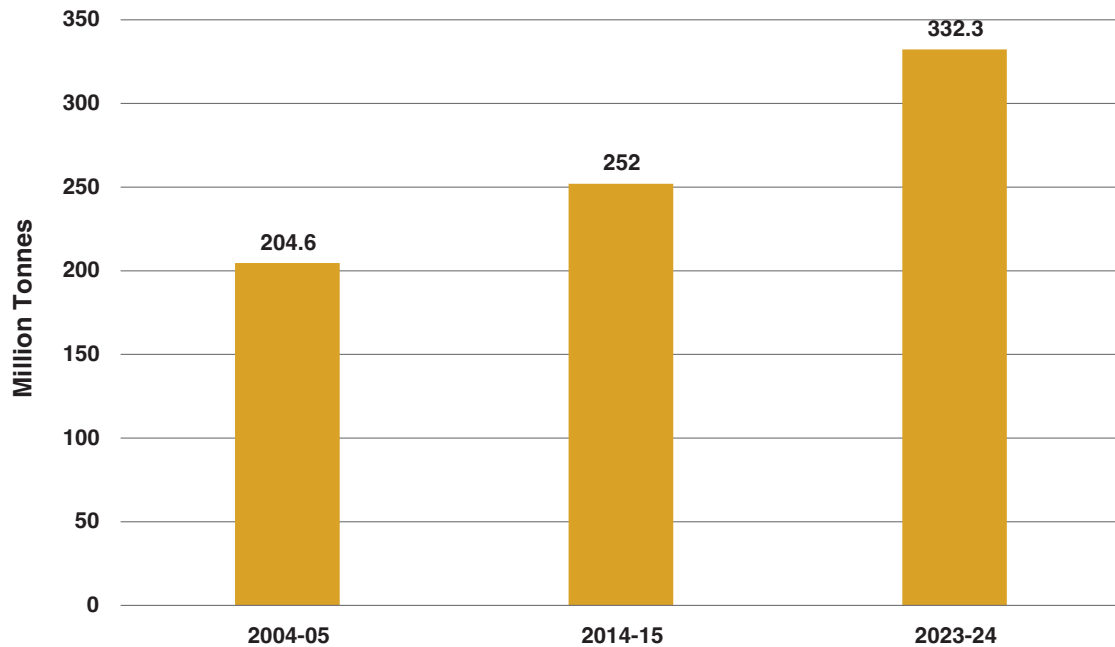
The Government of India has undertaken various initiatives to guarantee food for all, launching one of the world's largest food security programmes through the National Food Security Act, 2013. While many countries faced challenges to the availability and affordability of food both during the COVID-19 lockdowns (2020-21) and sharp rise in prices of food, fuels and fertilizers in 2022, India's human centric food-based safety net – the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) – was a source of resilience and stability for the country. Despite facing numerous obstacles during the COVID-19 lockdowns, the country launched the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), allocating free food grains in addition to regular TPDS, with the specific purpose of ameliorating the hardships faced by the poor and needy due to economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. In 2024, the Government decided to extend further the distribution of free of cost food grains for five additional years i.e. until 2029 and as of December 2024, 806.7 million people are receiving food grains free of cost.¹⁴

India has also implemented the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan for nation-wide portability of ration cards under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). Under this plan, any beneficiary can take delivery of food grains from any Fair Price Shop at uniform NFSA entitlement and price across the country. At the end of 2024, more than 25 million portability transactions were being recorded every month under PMGKAY foodgrain distribution.¹⁵

ENHANCING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVING FARMERS INCOME

Food grain production has surged from 204.6 million tonnes (2004-05) to an estimated 332.3 million tonnes (2023-24), with enhanced productivity and Minimum Support Price (MSP) revisions ensuring better farmer incomes (See Figure 9). India's foodgrain production has seen a steady rise over the years, reflecting improvements in agricultural productivity and policy support. In 2004-05, total foodgrain production stood at 204.6 million tonnes (4th advance estimates). This increased to 252 million tonnes in 2014-15 and further surged to an estimated 332.3 million tonnes in 2023-24.¹⁶

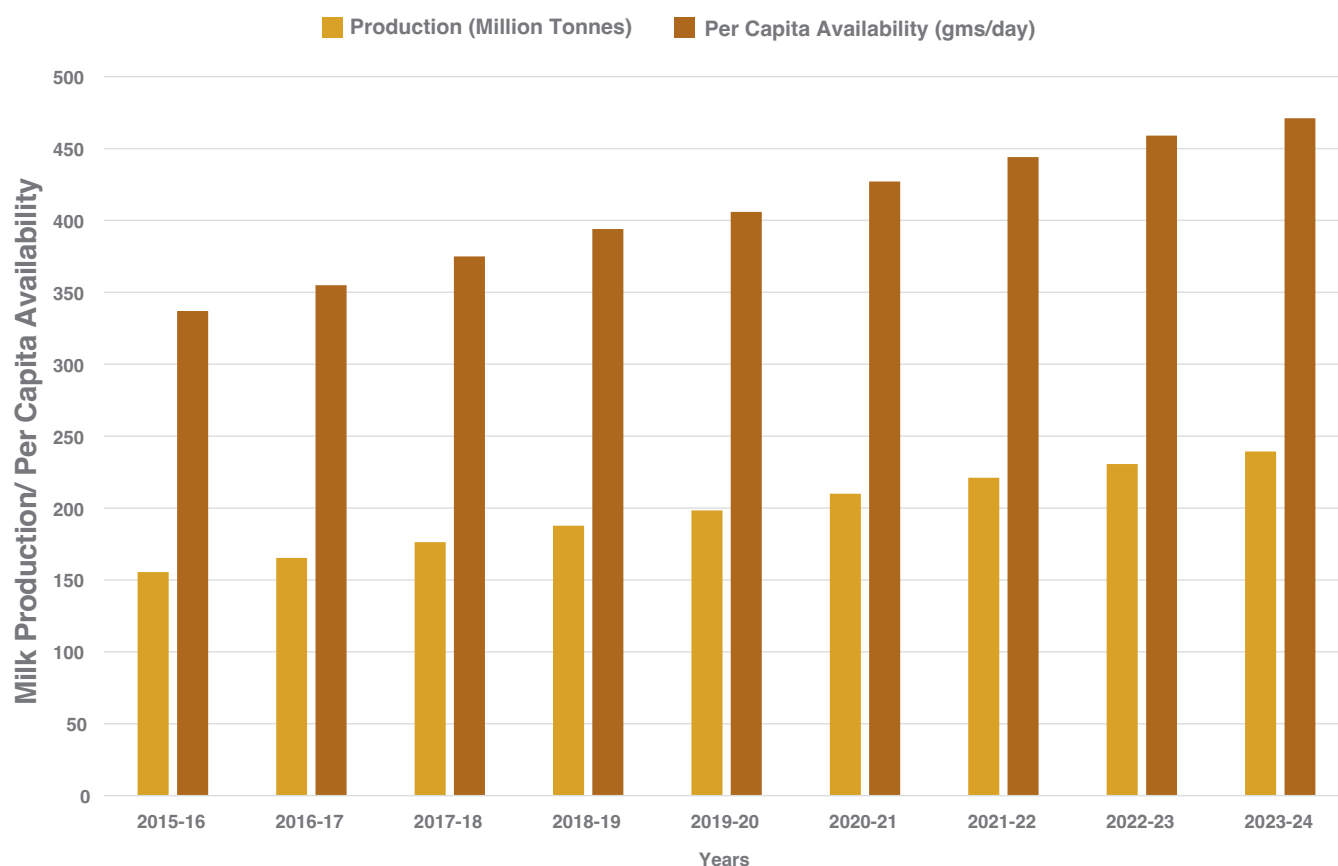


Figure 9: Production of Major Crops

Source: Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India

Additionally, the dairy sector has emerged as a crucial pillar of the rural economy, playing a key role in ensuring nutritional security, improving livelihoods and enabling inclusive economic growth. India has held the top position in global milk production since 1998 and now accounts for a quarter of the world's total milk output. Over the past decade, milk production in the country has surged by 63.56%, rising from 146.3 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 239.2 million tonnes in 2023-24, reflecting an average annual growth rate of 5.7%. In comparison, global milk production is increasing at a rate of 2% per year. Additionally, the per capita availability of milk in India has grown by 48% in the last ten years, reaching over 471 grams per person per day in 2023-24, compared to the global average of 322 grams per person per day (See Figure 10).¹⁷ These

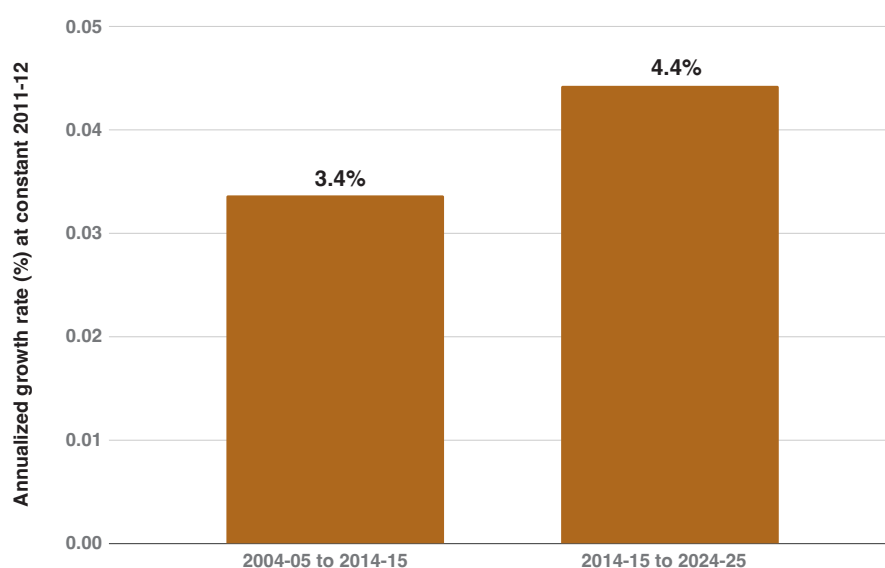
achievements have been made possible through the rollout of initiatives like the National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD), National Livestock Mission (NLM), Rashtriya Gokul Mission, Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) and Supporting Dairy Cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organisations involved in dairy activities (SDCFPO), among others. These initiatives support and enhance the efforts of the State Governments. Women are pivotal in India's dairy industry, making up nearly 69% of the workforce in the livestock and animal husbandry. Their significant involvement in the governance of dairy cooperatives, including leadership positions on management committees and milk unions, has contributed to the inclusive growth of dairy development throughout the country.

Figure 10: Milk production and per capita availability of milk in India

Source: Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics, MoFAHD, DAHD, GoI

The annual growth rate of real GVA in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector has shown fluctuations over the years. However, the sector had gained momentum over the last decade, with growth in real

GVA rising to an estimated 4.4% from 2014-15 to 2024-25 (See Figure 11). This reflects improved efficiency, mechanisation and diversification in agricultural activities.

Figure 11: Annualized Growth Rate of Real GVA in Agriculture in last two decades

Source: Calculations based on MoSPI National Accounts Division statistics.

The Government is pursuing initiatives such as Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) and various actions under the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). These measures include using alternative and organic fertilisers to enhance productivity and sustainability. Additionally, the Government provides income support to farmers through assured remunerative prices for their produce alongside programmes such as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN).

PM-KISAN is providing annual financial assistance to farmers. The aim is to increase production, reduce the cost of production, ensure fair prices for produce, compensate for crop losses, diversify agriculture and reduce costs. Today, PM KISAN is one of the largest direct benefit transfer schemes in the world. During the 19th instalment in February 2025, over 98 million farmers including 24.1 million female farmers received direct financial assistance exceeding ₹220 billion through DBT¹⁸. Over 85 % of the beneficiaries are small and marginal farmers and every fourth beneficiary is a woman. Farmer-centric digital infrastructure has ensured the PM-KISAN benefits reach all the farmers across the country without involvement of any intermediaries. Farmers can register grievances on a dedicated portal and take the help of a 24x7 call facility or use Kisan e-mitra, a voice-based AI Chatbot available in 12 languages. IFPRI conducted an independent study of PM-KISAN, which found that the funds received under this scheme have helped farmers overcome debt barriers and increased their risk-taking capacity. Additionally, Kisan Credit Card (KCC) provides farmers timely and affordable credit for purchasing agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers and pesticides, as well as for meeting cash requirements related to crop production and allied activities.

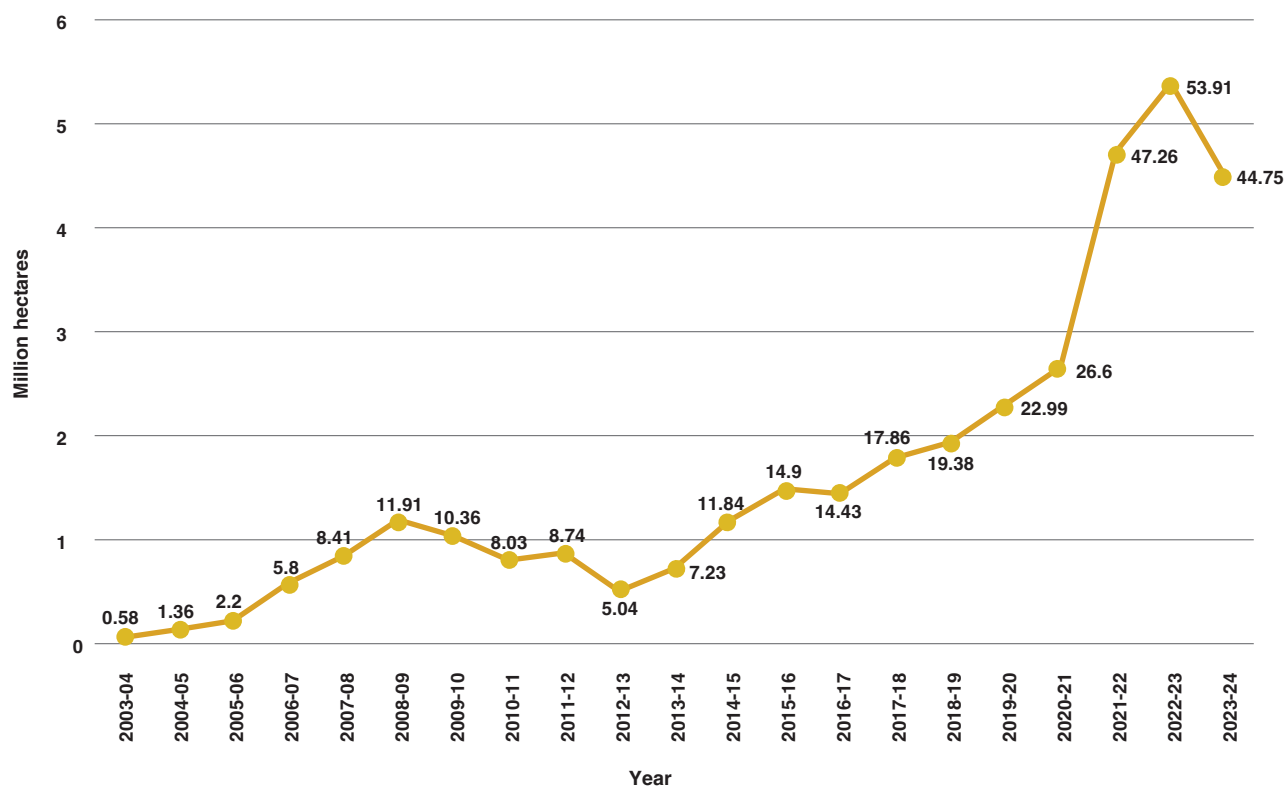
Digital initiatives like the Digital Agriculture Mission and the e-National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) have been launched to encourage the adoption of innovative agricultural technologies and improve price discovery mechanisms. Digital Agriculture Mission launched in 2024 facilitates a robust digital agriculture ecosystem in the country for driving innovative farmer-centric digital solutions and making available timely and reliable crop-related information to all the farmers in the country. The Mission creates Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture such as Agristack, Krishi Decision Support System, Comprehensive Soil Fertility and Profile Map and

other IT initiatives, in collaboration with State Governments, aiming to cover farmers and their lands within three years (2024-2027).

ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

India has made notable strides in ensuring food security, maintaining the availability of food and promoting sustainable agriculture. The emphasis on sustainable agriculture is evident through initiatives like the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), a part of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The NMSA aims to evolve and implement strategies to make Indian agriculture more resilient to the changing climate. Under NMSA, the Per Drop More Crop aims to improve on-farm water use efficiency, enhance the adoption of precision irrigation and other water saving technologies for which subsidy is being provided to the beneficiary to increase the area under micro irrigation.

In addition, the Government is promoting organic farming in the country since 2015-16 through the schemes of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER). This has led to an increase in the organic farming area in the country (See Figure 12). End-to-end support to farmers in all States/UTs engaged in organic farming is provided from production to processing, certification and marketing and post-harvest management. Farmers receive training and capacity building as well as incentives for producing and using organic fertilisers/manure. The scheme Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati Programme (BPKP) aims to promote traditional indigenous practices and to create awareness among farmers. Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Agroforestry and National Bamboo Mission also aim to increase climate resilience. The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) provides a fully insured amount on crop losses due to natural calamities. Today, it is the world's largest crop insurance scheme in terms of farmer enrolment and third largest scheme in terms of insurance premium collected. Farmer enrolment increased by 28 % in 2023-2024, compared to 2022-23, benefitting nearly 40 million farmers. Its success has meant that Governments of Jordan and Ecuador have requested India's technical assistance in developing similar crop insurance schemes in their own countries.

Figure 12: Organic Farming Area

Source: ICAR IIFSR Annual Report 2023-24

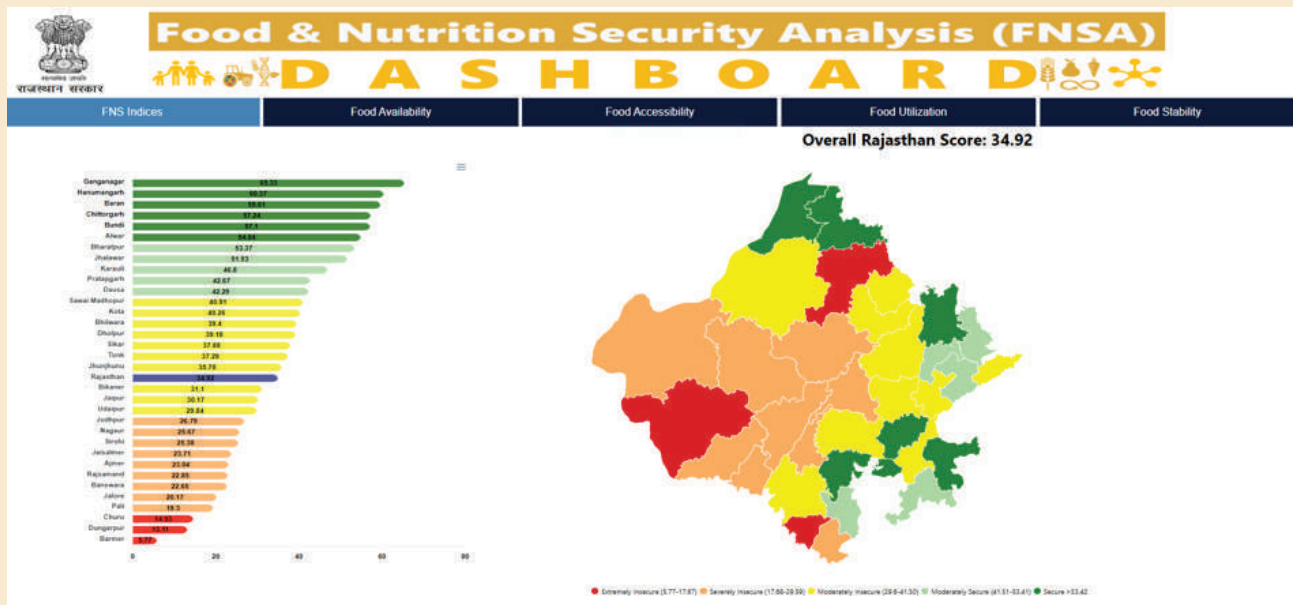
In 2024, the Government launched the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF). NMNF has been launched as a shift to scientifically revive and strengthen agriculture practices towards sustainability, climate resilience and healthy food for farmer families and consumers.

The Government has also conducted a comprehensive review of agricultural research infrastructure to enhance productivity. As part of this initiative, 109 new high-yielding and climate-resilient varieties have been introduced across 32 field and

horticultural crops for farmers. The Government plans to transition 10 million farmers to natural farming and provide support for certification and branding. Additionally, 10,000 bio-input resource centres are being set up to facilitate this transition. To achieve self-sufficiency in pulses and oilseeds, the Government is focusing on improving production, storage and marketing, with particular emphasis on oilseeds such as mustard, groundnut, sesame, soybean and sunflower.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY ANALYSIS

Rajasthan's Food and Nutrition Security Analysis dashboard, launched in 2024, serves as one stop platform to visualise and assess regional patterns of food insecurity and malnutrition in Rajasthan and identify the most food insecure geographies and population groups with regards to food security. The dashboard enables evidence-based monitoring and identification of vulnerable hot-spots for strategic planning and targeted action for achieving 'Zero Hunger' in the state of Rajasthan.



ENHANCING AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRADE

The government has prioritised agricultural infrastructure and trade as a key strategy to increase farmers' livelihoods. These efforts are intended not only to increase productivity but also to ensure long-term economic stability, improved living standards for farmers across the country and a sustainable and resilient agricultural ecosystem.

To improve storage facilities, the Government is implementing the Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) scheme, a component of the Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM). This scheme provides assistance for the construction or renovation of godowns and warehouses in rural areas to boost agricultural storage capacity. In 2020, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme was launched to enhance post-harvest management infrastructure, minimise losses, increase farmers' income and bring innovation to agriculture. The Government is also implementing the National

Agriculture Market (e-NAM), a virtual platform integrating physical wholesale mandis/ markets of different States/ UTs to facilitate online trading of agricultural commodities through transparent price discovery method to enable farmers to realise better remunerative prices for their produce.

Additionally, under the Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region, the Government is developing commodity specific, concentrated, certified organic production clusters. This is being developed in value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of the entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative. The mission will benefit Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura.

IMPROVEMENTS IN NUTRITION

Improving nutrition is also an important focus of governments' efforts to make progress towards Zero Hunger. With India no longer being a net food importing country, the rise in agricultural productivity and stronger food value chains are also helping improve diets and reduce hunger across the country. In addition to India's strong food-based safety nets, the country's nutrition programmes like Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Poshan Abhiyaan have been drivers in reducing the proportion of children under 5 years who are underweight, stunted and wasted between Round 4 (2015-16) and Round 5 (2019-21) of the National Family Health Survey (See Figure 13).

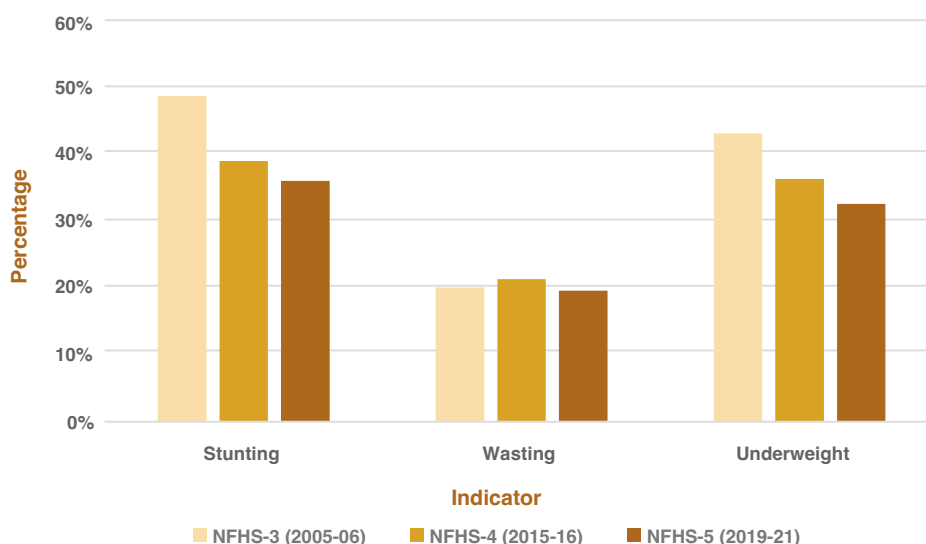
Launched in 2018, POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The acronym POSHAN (PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) spells out the government's strategy to tackle malnutrition. The programme aims to ensure service-delivery and interventions by using technology, behavioural change through convergence and setting specific targets to be achieved across different monitoring parameters. By integrating technology, cross-sectoral collaboration, and community-driven efforts, the programme has made significant strides in improving maternal and child nutrition.

For maximising the nutritional outcomes, the Government has launched 'Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0' (Mission Poshan 2.0), which subsumes POSHAN Abhiyaan, Supplementary Nutrition Programme under Anganwadi Services and Scheme for Adolescent Girls. The objectives of Mission Poshan 2.0 are to contribute to human capital development, address malnutrition, promote nutrition awareness, and good eating habits to address nutrition related deficiencies. Mission Poshan 2.0 is providing various benefits including supplementary nutrition in the form of hot cooked meals and take-home ration to approximately 100 million end beneficiaries (87 million children aged six and under, 10.6 million women, including pregnant women and lactating mothers and 2.3 million adolescent girls.) Additionally, growth monitoring of more than 85 million children under 6 years of age is being done regularly.¹⁹

Social and behavioural changes have been promoted by community-based events, Poshan Maah and Poshan Pakhwada in partnership with the various Ministries/ Departments and other stakeholders. Over 300 million community sensitisation activities were conducted in 2024.

A Poshan Tracker has been introduced to track real-time data collected by Anganwadi workers on stunting, wasting and under-weight prevalence among children. It tracks nutrition service delivery at Anganwadi Centres and uses Aadhaar to link beneficiaries for accurate tracking. This data aids in effective planning, monitoring and timely interventions, enabling the Mission Poshan 2.0 to assess programme impact and provide feedback and ensure targeted actions.

Figure 13: Select indicators of nutritional progress for children under 5 years old



Source: National Family Health Survey, Rounds 3, 4 and 5

IMPACT OF POSHAN ABHIYAAN

In 2021, the World Bank conducted a survey in 11 priority states (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh) with the highest rates of anaemia and stunting. The aim of this survey was to assess the program's delivery of nutrition services, whether the nutritional knowledge of beneficiaries had improved and if they had adopted more appropriate nutrition and feeding practices. The findings demonstrated that the services delivered through the Poshan Abhiyaan – the receipt of relevant messages, home visits by the Anganwadi worker, and attendance at community-based events – were associated with improved nutrition behaviours. The survey also found that the programme's nutrition messages reached more than 80% of women and that 81% of women practiced exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.

Project Sampurna in Bongaigaon, Assam introduced the concept of 'Buddy Mothers', wherein two mothers formed a pair, one with a healthy child and the other with a malnourished child. They exchanged best practices and worked on diet charts to monitor the daily food intake of their children.

Mission Sampurna Poshan in Asifabad, Telangana has enabled local production and consumption of millets to address challenges of nutritional deficiency. Under the programme Food Festivals, Millet recipe trainings etc. were conducted. To promote millets, subsidised seeds were distributed to 2500 households on a pilot basis and today, 80% of beneficiaries are now consuming millets.

The Mukhymantri Matrushakti Yojana in Gujarat offers nutrition kits to first-time pregnant women and mothers of children up to two years old, ensuring they receive essential commodities like groundnut oil, dal and chana, which promote healthy pregnancy and early childhood nutrition.

WAY FORWARD

India's comprehensive efforts to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture have laid a strong foundation for achieving SDG 2. Moving forward, the focus remains on consolidating gains and accelerating progress through an integrated, inclusive and technology-driven approach.

Integration of digital platforms like the Digital Agriculture Mission, e-NAM and PM-KISAN grievance redressal systems with real-time advisories, climate alerts and market intelligence are areas which need continuous focus. Expanding financial inclusion through Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), insurance coverage under PMFBY and women-centric extension services could also further improve farmer well-being and productivity.

Nutrition goes beyond eating; it requires proper digestion, absorption and metabolism which are influenced by factors like sanitation, education and access to safe drinking water. Tackling malnutrition requires a continued multi-sectoral approach involving dimensions of food, health, water, sanitation and education.

Recognising its role in addressing malnutrition and ensuring nutritional security, the Government has undertaken and will continue to strengthen initiatives to promote dietary diversity. For instance, Poshan Abhiyaan promotes dietary diversification through behaviour change communication, community-based events like "Poshan Maah" and "Poshan Pakhwada" and nutrition education. These campaigns emphasise the consumption of a variety of locally available foods, including fruits, vegetables, pulses, etc. Additionally, the mission works closely with Anganwadi centres to encourage kitchen gardens and use them as educational tools for promoting diverse food consumption at the household level. PM POSHAN has also been reoriented to include a more diverse food basket by incorporating millets, green leafy vegetables and seasonal fruits.





GOAL 03



Good
health
and
well-being

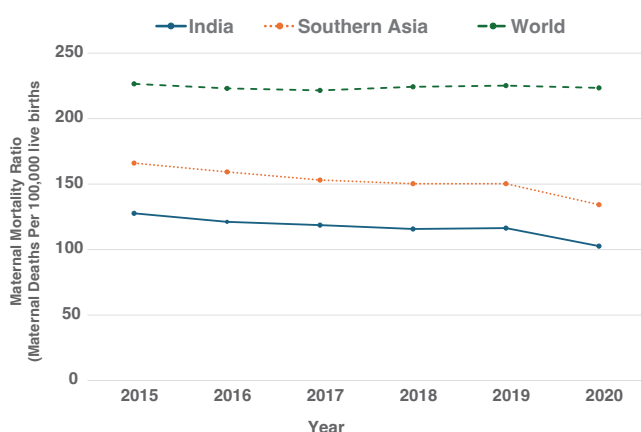
Good health is essential to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda reflects the complexity and interconnectedness of the two. It takes into account widening economic and social inequalities, rapid urbanisation, threats to the climate and the environment, the continuing burden of HIV, TB and other infectious diseases and the emerging challenges such as non-communicable diseases. It calls for a renewed focus on mental health issues as well. Universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines are integral to this goal. Changing demographics, particularly population aging and declining birth rates, significantly impact healthcare systems by increasing demand for chronic and specialised care while straining resources and workforce capacity.

SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) aims to guarantee healthy lives and promote well-being for people of all ages. This goal encompasses addressing all major health priorities, such as communicable, non-communicable and environmental diseases; reproductive, maternal and child health; universal health coverage, and ensuring access to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and vaccines. SDG 3 particularly targets reducing child mortality, enhancing maternal health and combating diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and others, which not only affect individual well-being but also strain family and public resources while weakening societies.

ON TRACK TO MEET MATERNAL, CHILD AND INFANT MORTALITY TARGETS WELL AHEAD OF 2030

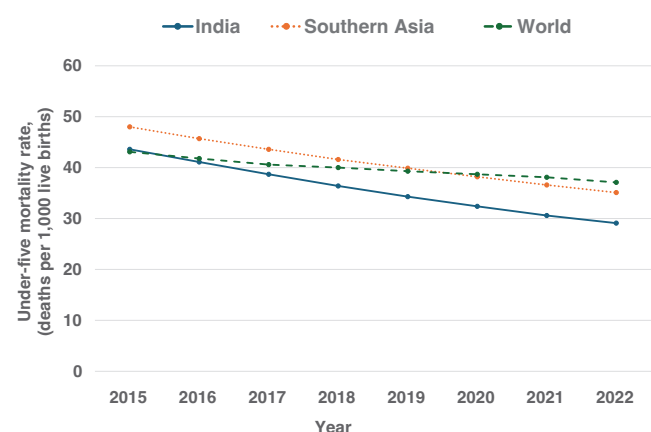
India has made impressive progress in key health indicators. The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has declined significantly from 130 per lakh live births in 2014-16 to 97 per lakh in 2018-20, marking a 25% reduction (See Figure 14). It has declined by 83% since 1990, which is higher than the global decline of 45%. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has fallen from 39 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 28 in 2020.²⁰ Institutional births have increased significantly from 79% (2015-16) to 89% (2019-21) at the national level.²¹ Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) has declined from 26 per 1000 live births in 2014 to 20 per 1000 live births in 2020 (See Figure 16).²² Similarly, the Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) has decreased from 45 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 32 in 2020 which demonstrates a higher decline of 75% in the reduction of mortality in comparison to the global reduction of 60% since 1990²³ (See Figure 15). These improvements indicate that India is on track to meet its SDG targets for maternal, child and infant mortality well ahead of 2030.

Figure 14: Maternal Mortality Ratio (Per 100,000 live births)

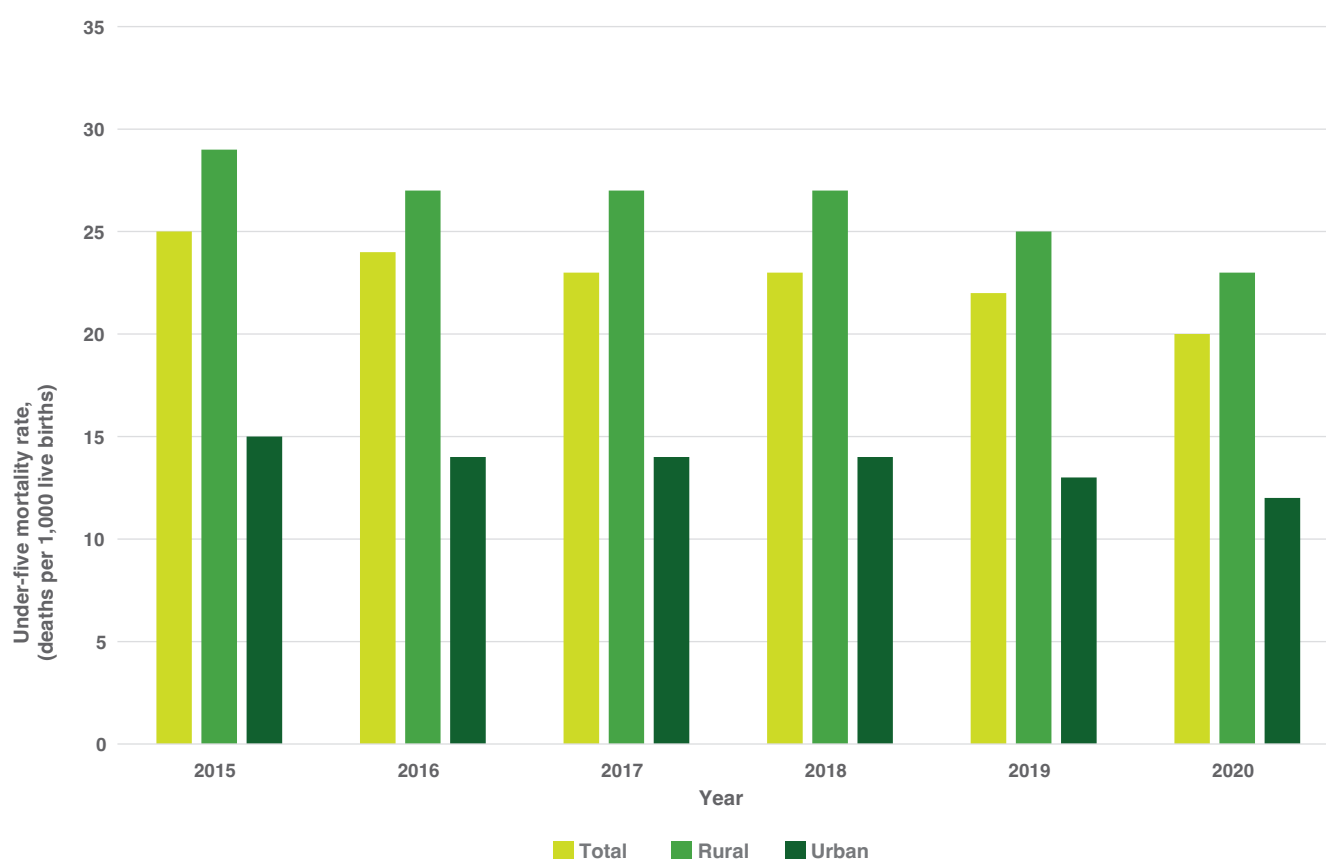


Source: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2023

Figure 15: Under-five mortality rate, (deaths per 1,000 live births)



Source: United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME), 2024.

Figure 16: Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)

Source: Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, Ministry of Home Affairs

Under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), India runs the world's largest vaccination programme for pregnant women and children – reaching out to 29 million pregnant women and 26 million newborns annually. This provides protection against 12 vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs) such as Polio, Measles, Rubella, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Rotavirus diarrhoea and Hepatitis B among others. In April 2025, Measles-Rubella elimination campaign 2025-26 was launched to achieve 100% immunisation coverage to provide high quality lifestyle to children by administering them with the two doses of Measles and Rubella vaccine.

Government has introduced the “Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan” (PMSMA) with an aim to provide fixed-day, free-of-cost, assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care on the 9th day of every month, universally to all pregnant women in their 2nd/ 3rd trimesters of pregnancy, at designated public health facilities by Obstetricians/Medical officers. Continuing with the efforts to ensure safe motherhood through PMSMA

and with the vision for further improvement, in 2024, an Extended Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (E-PMSMA) strategy was launched to ensure provision of quality ANC to pregnant women, for individual tracking of high-risk pregnancy and the provision of additional PMSMA sessions over and above 9th of every month.

STRENGTHENING UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

India's policies in the healthcare sector aim to deliver universal health services at affordable rates. Towards this objective initiatives such as the National Health Policy, the Ayushman Bharat Yojana – recognised as the world's largest health protection programme – and the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana, among others have played pivotal roles in achieving significant progress in this domain. These interventions have contributed to reductions in maternal and neonatal mortality rates as well as under-five mortality rates.

In the battle against COVID-19, technology-driven initiatives like the Aarogya Setu app proved immensely beneficial for contact tracing, syndromic mapping and self-assessment. A robust network of laboratories for managing epidemics and national calamities has been established to strengthen India's preparedness and response to epidemics and natural disasters by establishing advanced Viral Research & Diagnostic Laboratories.

The National Health Mission (NHM) has significantly contributed to improving India's public health outcomes through expanding human resources, addressing critical health issues and fostering an integrated response to health emergencies. A key achievement of NHM has been the significant increase in human resources within the healthcare sector. NHM engaged over 1.2 million additional healthcare workers between FY 2021-24.²⁴ NHM was pivotal in administering over 2.2 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses between January 2021 and March 2024.²⁵ Additionally, the India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Package (ECRP) was implemented under NHM in two phases and helped the healthcare system to effectively manage the pandemic.

The Government has also successfully established the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), the largest pan-India scheme for strengthening healthcare infrastructure across the country. The aim is developing capacities of health systems and institutions across the continuum of care at all levels responding effectively to future pandemics/disasters. PM-ABHIM is building an IT enabled disease surveillance system for effectively detecting, investigating, preventing and combating Public Health Emergencies and Disease Outbreaks.

To establish a holistic wellness model, the Government has operationalised Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs), now renamed as Ayushman Arogya Mandir. These centres aim to provide Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) by expanding and strengthening the existing Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and Communicable Diseases services. These also include services related to Non-Communicable Diseases, as well as health promotion and wellness activities like yoga.

USE OF DRONES TO DELIVER ESSENTIAL MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Launched in 2021, the i-DRONE initiative has demonstrated the successful use of drones to deliver essential medical supplies in states such as North East India (Covid-19 and UIP vaccines, medications and surgical), Himachal Pradesh (medications and samples in high altitude and sub-zero temperatures), Karnataka (intraoperative oncosurgical samples), Telangana (TB sputum samples) and the NCR (blood bags and its components). These efforts highlight the growing capability and promise of drones in bridging the last-mile healthcare gap.

INDIA AND ONE HEALTH

National One Health Mission for Pandemic Preparedness is an integrated approach to tackling diseases at the intersection of human, animal and environmental health. This mission is a crucial step toward building India's capacity to manage zoonotic diseases and pandemics.

In 2022, India established the National Institute of One Health to further expedite the country's efforts in enhancing health research to serve our vulnerable populations. The Institute's focus is on increasing preparedness and laboratory capabilities for identification of novel and unknown zoonotic agents. This dedicated institute is equipped with the Biosafety Level (BSL-IV) laboratory. The goal is to help in the investigation of outbreaks of emerging zoonotic agents concerned with public health and developing better control strategies.

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, India is also set to begin an ambitious, inter-ministerial scientific study aimed at detecting zoonotic diseases that could spill over from birds to humans, focusing on the critical intersection of human, bird and forest health.

EXPANSION IN HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), the largest publicly funded health assurance scheme in the world provides health cover of ₹0.5 million per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation. It has a comprehensive 1669 health benefit packages under 26 different specialities and in 2024, was expanded to provide health cover to approximately 550 million individual beneficiaries corresponding to 123.7 million families constituting economically vulnerable bottom 40% of India's population.²⁶ Many States/UTs implementing AB PM-JAY have further expanded the beneficiary base at their own cost. As of March 2025, more than 369 million Ayushman Cards have been created since the inception of the scheme. Women account for approximately 49% of the total Ayushman cards created and approximately 48% of total authorised hospital admissions.²⁷ In 2024, the Government expanded AB PM-JAY to include all senior citizens aged 70 years and above. Under the expansion, these senior citizens are receiving "Ayushman Vay Vandana Card" which helps them avail healthcare benefits, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Additionally, in order to boost health coverage, an Ayushman App has been introduced wherein self-verification feature for beneficiaries has been enabled.

Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana (AVYAY) is being implemented to take care of various needs of senior citizens including shelter, food, healthcare and human interaction / life of dignity. As part of its focus on health, the initiative provides senior citizens suffering from any of the age-related disability/infirmity with assisted living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions, overcoming disabilities/infirmities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and loco-motor disabilities. Another component is bridging the gap in supply and increasing demand in the field of geriatric caregivers so as to provide more professional services to the senior citizens and also to create a cadre of professional caregivers in the field of geriatrics.

AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Out of pocket expenditure (OOPE) on health as a percentage of Total Health Expenditure (THE) in the country has declined from 48.8% in 2017-18 to 39.4% in 2020-21.²⁸ The declining trend in OOPE as a percentage of THE reflects the increasing affordability of India's healthcare services. The economic output lost due to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) excluding mental conditions is estimated to be \$ 3.55 trillion for India for the period of 2012-2030.²⁹ To tackle this 770 District NCD Clinics, 372 District Day Care Centres, 233 Cardiac Care Units and 6410 Community Health Centre NCD Clinics have been set up under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.³⁰

HEALTHCARE AT PEOPLE'S DOORSTEP

"Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam" (MTM) scheme has been implemented in Tamil Nadu since 2021 to provide a holistic and comprehensive set of "Home Based Health Care Services" to ensure a continuum of care, sustainability of the services and meeting the health needs of beneficiaries. "MTM" scheme is conceptualised in such a way that a field-level team provides home-based health care services especially targeting non-communicable diseases (NCD). The scheme includes preventive and promotive services like screening for hypertension, diabetes, and providing counselling regarding lifestyle modification, and cancer screening. There are curative services such as Home-based Palliative Care and Physiotherapy services, the delivery of Hypertension/Diabetes Mellitus drugs for patients who are 45 years and above and those with restricted mobility, caring for End Stage Kidney Failure patients, and identification of children with congenital problems, among others.

FIT INDIA AND EAT RIGHT INDIA MOVEMENTS

The Fit India Movement encourages people to adopt a healthy lifestyle and has gained immense popularity across India, with a variety of initiatives and programmes being rolled out to promote physical activity and healthy habits. Fit India School Certification for schools incorporating physical activity in their curriculum and Fit India Sundays on Cycle initiative promoting cycling and walking in urban spaces are two key components of the Movement.

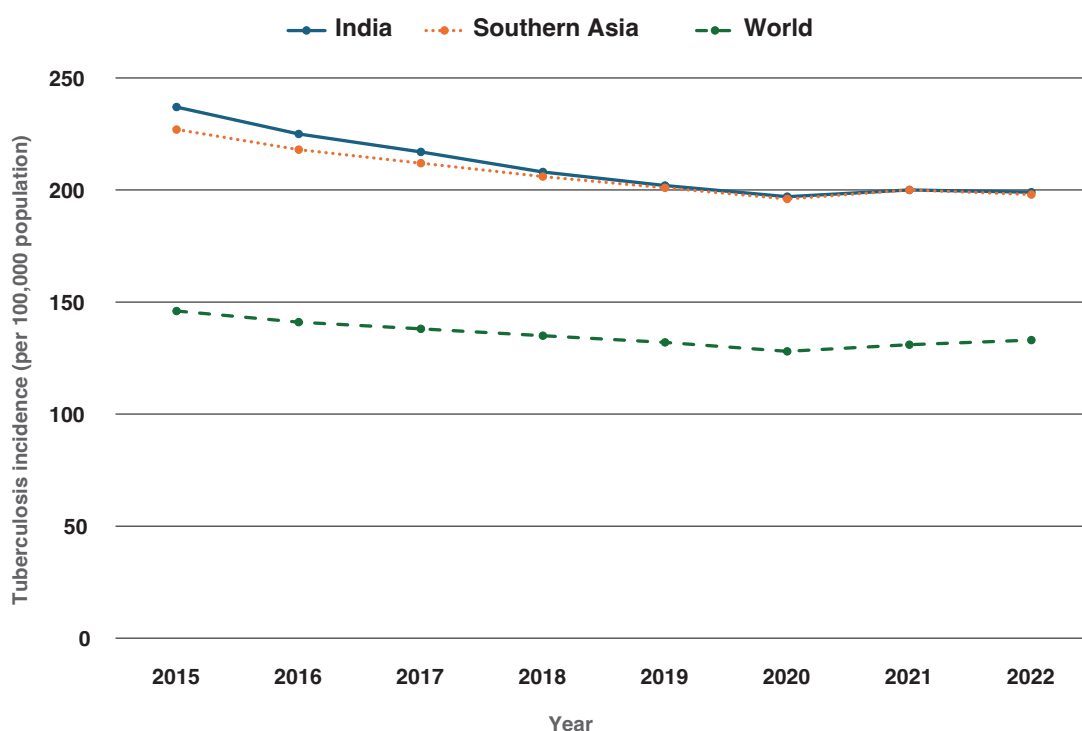
Safe, healthy, balanced and diverse diet is being promoted through the “Eat Right India movement”. This includes both supply and demand-side initiatives. For instance, the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations are being amended to empower consumers to better understand the nutritional values of the products they are consuming and make healthier decisions. Currently, they have been put in the public domain for consultations on the proposal to display nutritional information regarding Total Sugar, Salt and Saturated

Fat in bold letters and relatively increased font size on the labels of packaged food items. Initiatives like “Eat Right School” and “Eat Right Campus” have also been introduced to educate children and communities about the benefits of dietary diversity. Eat Right Station initiative is making significant strides in ensuring access to safe and healthy food within bustling hubs. 150 railway stations across the country have been certified as Eat Right Stations from FSSAI, marking a significant milestone, ensuring safe, hygienic and nutritious food options for millions of passengers who traverse the country's vast railway network.

ELIMINATING AND CONTROLLING DISEASES

Under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), the incidence of Tuberculosis (TB) has reduced from 237 per 1,00,000 population in 2015 to 195 in 2023 (See Figure 17).³¹ The mortality rate has decreased from 280 per million population to 220 per million population in the same period.³²

Figure 17: Tuberculosis incidence (per 100,000 population)



Source: WHO Global Tuberculosis Report 2023

The Fifth phase of the National AIDS and STD Control Programme (2021-2026) aims to reduce the annual new HIV infections and AIDS-related mortalities by 80% by 2025-26 and ensure the national commitment of achieving the end of the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

DIGITAL HEALTHCARE

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) launched in September 2021, is an initiative of the government that aims at building a citizen-centric interoperable digital health ecosystem. With ABDM citizens can securely store and access their medical records (e.g., prescriptions, diagnostic reports, discharge summaries) and share them with healthcare providers after their consent. Through these initiatives ABDM aims to make healthcare more accessible.

The Government is continuing to leverage technology and introduced the U-WIN (Universal Immunization Programme–WIN) in 2023, a digital platform for recording and tracking administration of 11 life-saving vaccines provided to Pregnant Women and Children (from birth to 16 years) under the Universal Immunization Programme. By the end of FY 2023-24, the platform had expanded to 65 districts across 36 States/UTs. The portal helps improve the efficiency of the immunisation campaign and reduce the number of children who are left out by allowing 'Anytime Access' and 'Anywhere' vaccination and offering flexible scheduling options for recipients. At the end of 2024, 79 million beneficiaries have been registered, 13.2 million vaccination sessions have been held and 292.2 million administered vaccine doses have been recorded on U-WIN.³³

WAY FORWARD

The rising burden of non-communicable diseases and mental health disorders is increasing healthcare demands and economic costs, while low birth rates combined with a growing elderly population have the potential to strain social protection and healthcare systems. These factors exacerbate inequalities and hinder progress toward reducing premature mortality, ensuring universal health coverage, and promoting inclusive, sustainable development by 2030. Thus, addressing these emerging health challenges is increasingly becoming a new area for focus.

In order to tackle shortages of healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses and paramedics under NHM in remote/rural regions, the government has undertaken a number of initiatives in the form of incentives and honorarium to the medical professionals. This is to encourage better service delivery in rural and remote areas in the country. This also includes non-monetary incentives such as preferential admission in post graduate courses for staff serving in difficult areas and improving accommodation arrangements in rural areas. Multi-skilling of doctors is supported under NHM to overcome the shortage of specialists. Skill upgradation of existing Human Resource is another major strategy under the National Rural Health Mission for achieving improvement in health outcomes.

Government has taken various steps to ensure that the benefits of the various initiatives reach every citizen, which continues to drive the country's expansion of its digital health ecosystem. Offline mode for many systems has also been enabled wherever internet connectivity might be poor or there would be unavailability of hardware or both. Further, to address the network connectivity issues, sub-national governments are collaborating with the telecom providers to extend the broadband coverage up to the Ayushman Arogya Mandir sub health centre level.







GOAL

04



Quality
Education

Achieving inclusive and quality education for all reaffirms the belief that education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable development. This goal is aimed at ensuring that all girls and boys complete primary and secondary schooling by 2030 and are provided equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate gender and wealth disparities and achieve universal access to a quality higher education. Additionally, it emphasises on lifelong learning opportunities, so as to achieve substantial adult literacy and numeracy, and on building and upgrading existing education facilities that are child, disability and gender-sensitive.

SDG 4 (Quality Education) encompasses an educational framework and methodology designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills and competencies vital for their personal growth, future endeavours and meaningful engagement in society. Access to quality education is fundamental for enhancing people's lives and fostering sustainable development. The objective of SDG 4 is to guarantee inclusive and fair access to high-quality education and to encourage lifelong learning opportunities for all. Furthermore, it strives to ensure equal access to affordable vocational training, eliminate gender and wealth disparities and achieve universal access to quality higher education.

India has made notable steps in enhancing school infrastructure, boosting student enrolment and advancing gender parity in education. The reach of education is continually expanding nationwide. Additionally, there is a strong focus on skill development and vocational education.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY AND SAMAGRA SHIKSHA

The Government has been striving to achieve the objectives of National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) through a range of programmes and schemes, including the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (along with its sub-schemes such as NISHTHA, Vidya Pravesh, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), DIKSHA, STARS, PARAKH, PM SHRI, ULLAS, and PM POSHAN, among others.

The NEP outlines a transformative roadmap for India's education system built on five guiding pillars: Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability. These principles aim to create an educational ecosystem where every learner, regardless of socio-economic status or geographical location has equal opportunities to receive high-quality and inclusive education.

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is supporting States and UTs in implementing the recommendations of the NEP. It ensures that all children, from pre-school to class 12, have access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment which should take care of their diverse background, multilingual needs, different academic abilities, and make them active participants in the learning process. Under this initiative, financial assistance is provided to States and UTs for implementation of various provisions including free uniform to eligible children at elementary level, free textbooks at elementary level, development of primers/textbooks for tribal language, transport/escort facility up to secondary level, seasonal hostels / residential camps, special training centers, support to Out of School Children (16 to 19 years) for completion of education, Holistic Progress Card, bilingual teaching material and books, among others. Furthermore, under the student-oriented component for the children with special needs, financial assistance is provided for identification and assessment of children with special needs, aids and appliances.

The integrated scheme of Samagra Shiksha has also been aligned with the NEP 2020 to focus on improving the quality of education through various measures such as introduction of new pedagogical and curricular structure, Early Childhood Care and Education, Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Transforming Assessment for Student Development, Experiential and Competency based Learning, etc.



PM SHRI SCHOOLS (PM SCHOOLS FOR RISING INDIA)

More than 14500 existing schools across the country are being developed as PM SHRI Schools to showcase all components of NEP 2020. The schools will deliver quality teaching for the cognitive development of students and will strive to create and nurture holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with key 21st century skills. These schools will be developed as green schools, incorporating environmentally friendly aspects like solar panels, LED lights, nutrition gardens with natural farming, waste management, plastic free, water conservation and harvesting. The schools will also host climate change related hackathons and generate awareness on adoption of sustainable lifestyle. The pedagogy being adopted in these schools is more experiential, holistic, integrated, play/toy-based (particularly, in the foundational years) inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible and enjoyable. Focus is on learning outcomes of every child in every grade. Assessment at all levels will be based on conceptual understanding and application of knowledge to real life situations and will be competency-based. A School Quality Assessment Framework (SQUAF) is being developed specifying the key performance indicators to measure outcomes. Quality evaluation of these schools at regular intervals will be undertaken to ensure the desired standards.

PM SHRI Scheme is being implemented by saturating components such as Bala feature and Jadui Pitara, Support at Pre-school Education, Child Friendly Furniture and Outdoor Play Materials, Fully equipped integrated Science Labs, Smart Classrooms, Computer Lab/ ICT Lab, Atal Tinkering Lab, Skill Lab, School Innovation Councils, among others.

ATTAINING 100% GROSS ENROLMENT BY 2030

NEP 2020 aims for a 100 % Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by 2030. The GER is near universal at the primary level (93 %) and the efforts are underway to bridge the gaps at the secondary (77.4 %) and higher

secondary level (56.2 %) driving the nation closer to its vision of inclusive and equitable education for all. School dropout rates have steadily declined in recent years, standing at 1.9 % for primary, 5.2 % for upper primary, and 14.1 % for secondary levels.³⁴ This has helped completion rates for primary and both lower and upper secondary school students to rise steadily over the past decade (See Figures 18, 19 and 20).

Figure 18: Completion rates for primary level (%)

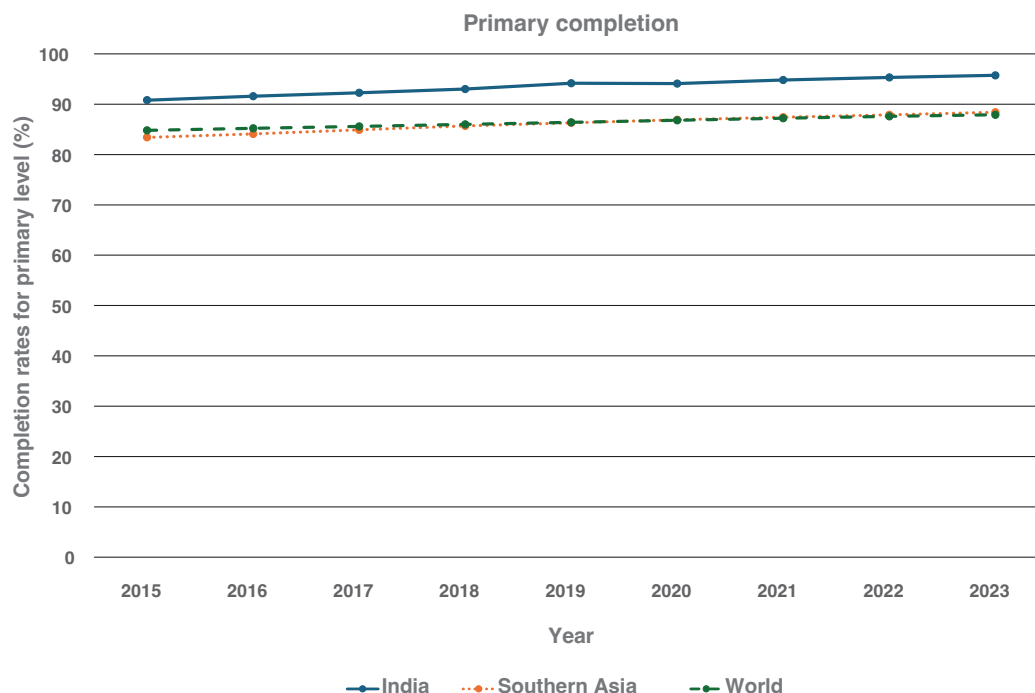
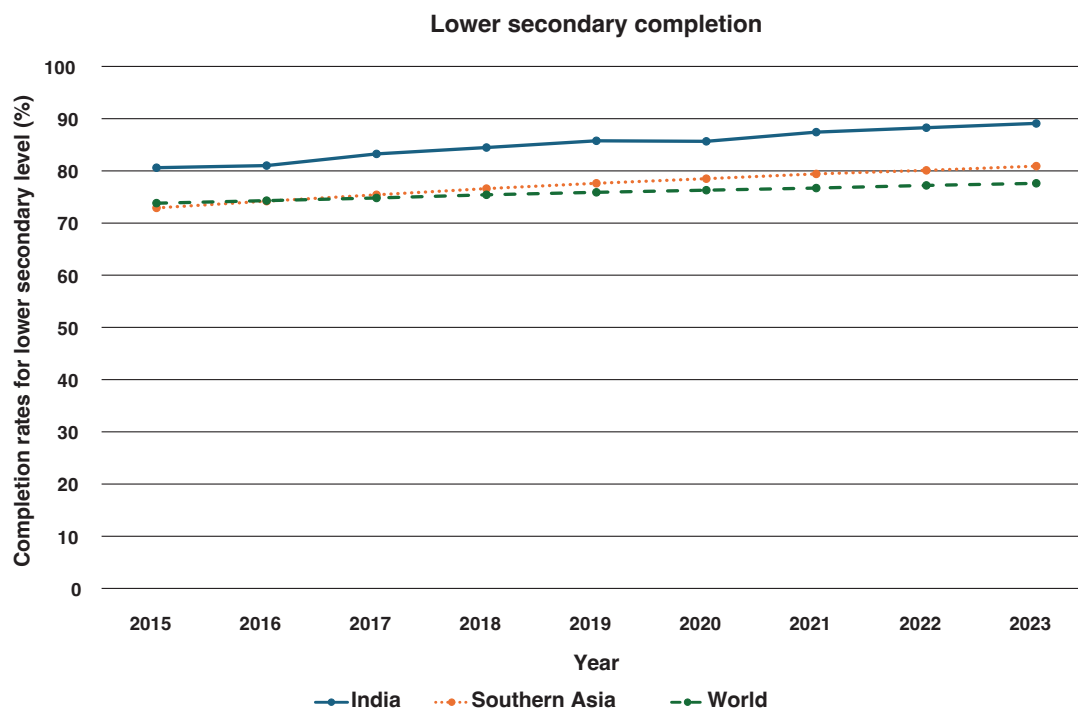
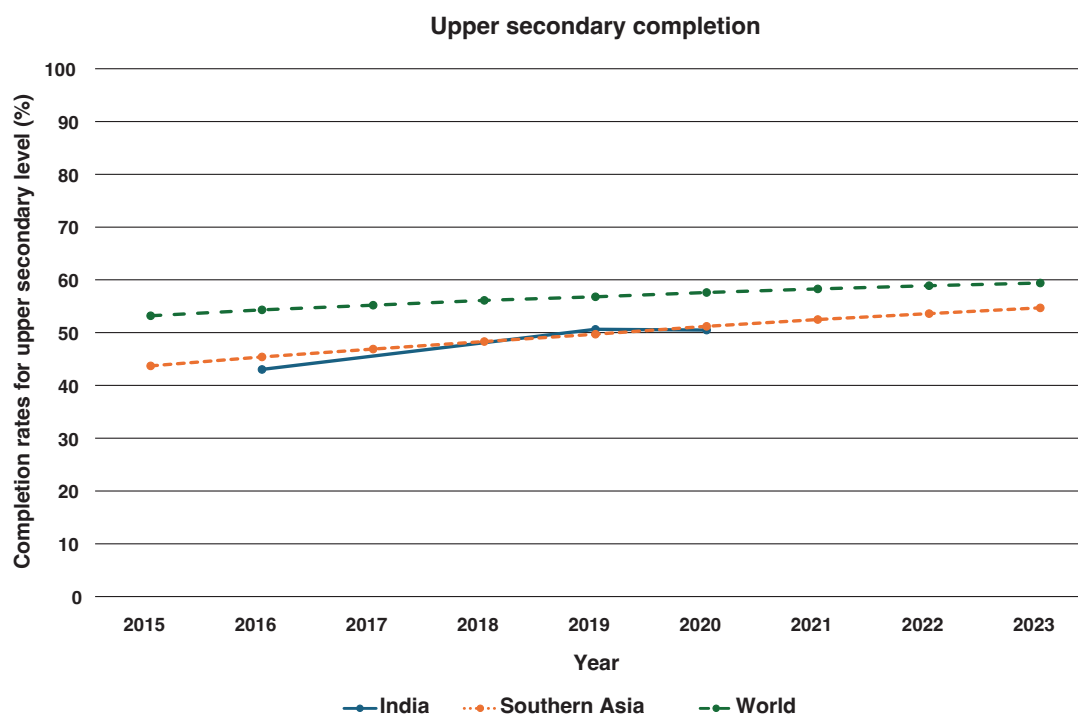


Figure 19: Completion rates for lower secondary level (%)**Figure 20: Completion rates for upper secondary level (%)**

Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2024, Global Education Monitoring Report (Adjusted Bayesian Completion Rates model) and National Family Health Survey data

Like in many other developing countries as enrolments have risen, the quality of education has become a more central concern of education policy. Poor quality education leads to poor learning outcomes and risks pushing children out of the education system and leaving them vulnerable. Government's focus on the National Education Policy (NEP) aims to address this state of affairs and is a critical pillar of the country's journey to become a developed nation by 2047.

IMPROVING SCHOOL FACILITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY TO THE DISADVANTAGED

Improvements in basic facilities, including sanitation and information and communication technologies (ICT) availability, reflect a positive trend in the school infrastructure development. As per Unified District Information System for Education+ (UDISE+) 2023-24 Report, the percentage of schools having computers increased from 38.5 % in 2019-20 to 57.2 % in 2023-2024. Similarly, the percentage of schools having internet facilities increased from 22.3 % in 2019-20 to 53.9 % in 2023-2024.³⁵

Under Samagra Shiksha, dedicated funds have been allocated to support Children with Special Needs through aids and appliances, assistive devices, allowances, Braille materials and therapeutic interventions including infrastructure strengthening. For early screening and identification of Children with Special Needs, Prashast, a Disability Screening Checklist for Schools' booklet and mobile app covering 21 disabilities including the benchmark disabilities has been developed. Schools are being made more disabled friendly by incorporating barrier free features in their designs. Another recent initiative has been to provide disabled friendly toilets. So far, 58.5% government schools have been equipped with ramps and handrails and 31.1% schools have Children with Special Needs friendly toilets.³⁶

NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no student loses the opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of the birth or background. It has taken into account the concerns of the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which inter-alia includes geographical identities such as students from villages, small towns and aspirational districts

and other categories. This policy aims at bridging the social category gaps in access, participation and learning outcomes.

The third phase of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) as Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USA) was launched in June 2023 to cater to needs of educationally unserved/ underserved areas. It funds specific State government universities and colleges, including in the rural areas, so as to improve their quality by ensuring their conformity to prescribed norms and standards. Priority is given to focus districts identified by the concerned States/UTs based on various criteria including low Gross Enrolment Ratio, Gender Parity, population proportion and enrolment proportion for females, transgenders, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, Aspirational/ Border Area/ Left Wing Extremism prone district, etc.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

To strengthen the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) landscape, the National Curriculum for ECCE, Aadharshila, and the National Framework for Early Childhood Stimulation, Navchetana, were launched in 2024. Navchetana focuses on holistic development for children from birth to 3 years. Aadharshila promotes play-based learning for children aged 3 to 6 years. In rural India, enrolment among children aged 3-5 years in some type of pre-primary institution (Anganwadi centre, government pre-primary class, or private LKG/UKG) has improved steadily between 2018 and 2024.³⁷

NEP 2020 stipulates that Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is critical for education and lifelong learning success. In this direction, the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) is being introduced to ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains FLN by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27. The education system is deploying innovative pedagogies and teaching methods to ensure that every child achieves FLN.

Today in rural India, children's basic arithmetic levels have also shown substantial improvement in both government and private schools, reaching the highest level in over a decade.³⁸

TEACH GAJAPATI: A JAN ANDOLAN FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

In a district plagued with teacher vacancies, Odisha launched the 'Teach Gajapati' campaign under the 'Mo School' Abhiyaan in Gajapati District. It is an initiative where the alumni of respective schools, interested public and community at large, participate in the overall development of schools. The volunteer-driven programme employs several methods to generate a bottom-up movement for social accountability including incentives such as contributing double the amount as a matching share to the 'donated amount', community awareness, plantation activities and cleanliness drives. Interested persons willing to teach voluntarily, in due consultation with the school can become part of this movement and render their services as 'voluntary teacher'. Such volunteer-driven programmes have significantly helped in improving the quality of education and making it more participative. Integrated Science Labs, Smart Classrooms, Computer Lab/ICT Lab, Atal Tinkering Lab, Skill Lab, School Innovation Councils, among others.

TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION

The National Education Policy calls for making 'India a global knowledge superpower'. Over the years, there has been a significant transformation in the higher education ecosystem. Total Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) increased by 13.8 percent from 51,534 in 2014-15 to 58,643 in 2022-23.³⁹ By 2040, all HEIs are to become multidisciplinary institutions. The measures to achieve this aim include greater opportunities for outstanding public education; scholarships by private/philanthropic universities for disadvantaged and underprivileged students; online education and Open Distance Learning (ODL); and all infrastructure and learning materials accessible and available to learners with disabilities. Various measures have been undertaken for the expansion of quality education such as providing much-needed flexibility, allowing creative combination of subjects, providing multiple pathways, establishing equivalence and mobility to students.

The One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) Scheme is democratising access to high-quality scholarly research in India. It provides access to over 13,000 e-journals from 30 leading international publishers to nearly 18 million students, faculty and researchers across 6,300 government-managed HEIs and Central Government R&D institutions, including numerous State Public Universities.⁴⁰ By offering centralised access to a vast array of international journals, ONOS aims to bridge existing knowledge gaps, particularly benefiting institutions in tier 2 and 3 cities.

National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme is being implemented with the objective to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage. One lakh fresh scholarships are awarded to selected students of class IX every year and their continuation/renewal in classes X to XII for study in State Government, Government-aided and Local body schools under the scheme.

21ST CENTURY SKILLS AND IMPROVING LEARNING QUALITY

The importance of skill education in schools has grown significantly with the advent of Industry 4.0, a highly dynamic and skill-intensive era defined by automation, artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of things (IoT), big data and robotics. In an effort to leverage technology towards enhancing the capabilities of educators and preparing them for the demands of the 21st century, the Government has launched TeacherApp, a cutting-edge digital platform.

The incorporation of technology presents cost-effective solutions, making quality education more accessible and inclusive for a broader population. To improve education systems, technology integration is focused on three key areas: using AI for teacher development and student tutoring, integrating industry-relevant skills and certifications and creating personalised learning software.

The NEP 2020 emphasises technology's role in improving education, removing barriers and ensuring inclusivity for Divyang students. Schemes like

DIKSHA, e-VIDYA, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) and e-content for Divyang are in place to achieve the objective of inclusive digital education. Additionally, the SWAYAM Plus platform launched in 2024 provides applied education and improves employability, entrepreneurship, job-centric and hands-on training for the youth through partnerships with corporates such as HCL Tech, Intel, Microsoft and Tata Consultancy Services. The portal offers courses such as Applied AI, App development, Data Science and Accounting, among 300 others.

BUILDING AWARENESS AMONGST STATES ON CLIMATE CHANGE & GLOBAL WARMING VIA ECO CLUBS FOR MISSION LIFE

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasises the critical importance of integrating environmental awareness and sustainability principles into school curricula. The Policy aims to sensitise students to environmental/ climate change concerns and inculcate among students the values, attitudes, behaviour and skills essential to address environmental challenges, thus preparing them to contribute to a sustainable future.

In alignment with this vision, Eco Clubs serve as a critical platform within schools, providing students with the opportunity to develop practical skills and knowledge for the responsible use of natural resources. Through participation in activities such as optimising water usage, minimising waste generation, recycling and conducting plantation drives, students learn sustainable practices that they can implement both within and beyond the school environment.

The activities of Eco Clubs have been integrated with Mission LiFE, leading to their renaming as “Eco Clubs for Mission LiFE.” All the activities of Eco Clubs have been aligned with the seven themes of Mission LiFE (Save Energy, Save Water, Say No to Single Use Plastic, Adopt Sustainable Food Systems, Reduce Waste, Adopt Healthy Lifestyles and Reduce E-waste). As part of this initiative, summer camps were organised starting on June 5, 2024 (World Environment Day), in recognition of World Environment Day, covering seven core themes of Mission LiFE. These camps saw active participation from over 110 million individuals, including students, teachers and community members. As a best practice, during the camps school teachers, students and community members from states like Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu engaged in seed ball preparation, later dispersing these seed balls over degraded lands during the monsoon season as a measure against desertification.

As of November 11, 2024, notable achievements of Eco Clubs for Mission LiFE Day are the establishment of 0.146 million new Eco Clubs for Mission LiFE, establishment of more than 0.1 million School Nutrition Gardens (also part of the 100 Days' Action Plan of DoSEL), the planting of 51.8 million saplings under the #EkPedMaaKeNaam initiative with a total participation of 67.5 million individuals, encompassing students, teachers and community members.⁴¹

ACHIEVING 100% LITERACY BY 2030

To achieve the target of 100% literacy by 2030, the Government of India is implementing Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram or New India Literacy Programme. It is popularly known as ULLAS: Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society, upholding the motto "Jan-Jan Sakshar". The scheme is targeted at all non-literates of age 15 years and above. It focuses on imparting Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) through critical life skills such as Digital Literacy, Financial Literacy, Legal Literacy, Environmental Literacy, Health & Hygiene etc. Implemented in a hybrid mode States/UTs have flexibility in offline, online or combined approaches.

ULLAS works under the inspiring vision of making Bharat 'Jan Jan Saakshar', driven by Kartavyabodh (a sense of duty), utilising school platforms and community engagement through volunteerism. The scheme aims to achieve universal literacy by encouraging community participation, inclusivity and leveraging technology, ultimately empowering every citizen with the ability to read, write and engage meaningfully in society. More than 20 million learners and 3.9 million volunteer teachers have been registered under ULLAS until the end of 2024.⁴²

WAY FORWARD

Effective implementation of NEP 2020 requires collaboration across the centre, States/ UTs, HEIs and regulatory bodies. Educational levels of parents of young children have changed substantially in the last decade. How to effectively leverage this substantial rise in human capital in the family is an important factor to consider.

In the last few years, there have been important milestones for building the system-wide base of the foundational stage. The National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) was released well before that of higher grades. A special assessment of Std III (Foundational Learning Study or FLS 2022) and the release of new kits for this age group (such as "Jadui Pitara") are all examples of the high priority that the foundational stage is being given by the Union and State Governments. This effort needs to be

maintained and strengthened so that every successive cohort that passes through the foundational stage emerges stronger by the time they reach Std III. At the same time, a similar high energy implementation seen in the first two grades in primary school needs to be connected with the early childhood section of the foundational stage in each State.

To identify infrastructure gaps particularly in rural areas, an audit of Samagra Shiksha is constantly being conducted. MIS portal i.e., PRABANDH has been created to track and monitor both physical and financial progress and audit of the various components of Samagra Shiksha including Smart Class rooms of the States/UTs in rural and urban areas.

The Government is implementing several strategic initiatives to enhance learning outcomes and competencies in schools across India. For instance, a key initiative of PARAKH is the development of the Holistic Progress Cards at the Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary stages to strengthen the implementation of a Competency Based Assessment Framework model. Another core initiative of PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), is conducting PARAKH Rashtriya Sarvekshan (earlier known as National Achievement Survey). The latest one in December 2024 covered approximately 2.3 million students in 87,619 schools across the country.⁴³ This nationwide survey is helping assess the learning competencies at the end of the foundational, preparatory and middle stages of schooling (i.e. students currently in Grades 3, 6, and 9). By gathering sample data on student achievement PARAKH can identify specific competencies where students may be struggling and design targeted interventions to support these learning needs.

Investments in skills, research, innovation ecosystems, government-academic partnerships and faculty development are pivotal for efficiently delivering education services and improving learning outcomes.



GOAL 05



Gender
Equality

Ending all discrimination against women and girls is a basic human right and is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Goal 5 calls for ending all forms of violence, trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls. Recognising and valuing unpaid care and domestic work is a key component of this goal, with emphasis on the importance of full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life for women.

Globally progress towards gender equality is lagging. Although the prevalence rates of harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation are decreasing worldwide, the progress remains uneven. Gender parity, especially in women's participation in public life and managerial roles remains distant. At the current rate achieving gender parity in managerial positions will take 176 years.⁴⁴ Furthermore, violence against women persists. Urgent action is needed to challenge biased social norms, eliminate harmful practices and change discriminatory laws. Increasing women's leadership roles and investments in gender equality are crucial at the national, regional and global levels.

SDG 5 (Gender Equality) aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. It ensures equal rights, opportunities and treatment for all individuals, irrespective of their gender. Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right but also crucial for the sustainable future of societies. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, healthcare, decent work and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will lead to sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. SDG 5 aims to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere. It is vital to ensure women have equal rights to land and property, sexual and reproductive health and access to technology and the internet.

Today in India the progress on SDG 5 is receiving renewed focus. Greater awareness across all segments of society of the importance that must be placed on achieving greater gender equality. The Government has also initiated several social protection and financial inclusion programmes focusing on women, increasing their participation. Initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) have raised awareness and improved the efficiency of welfare services for girls.

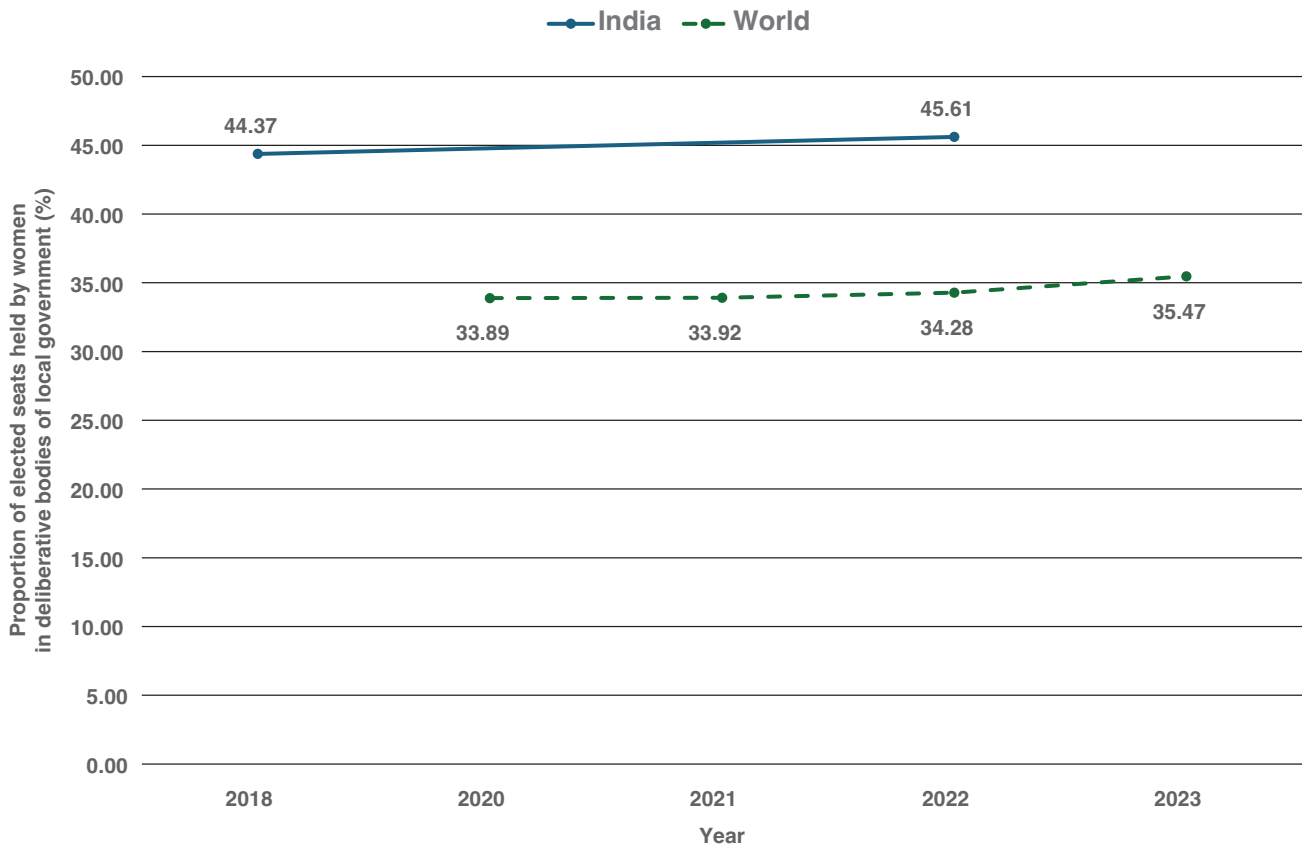
FROM WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT TO WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT

India's development journey is closely interlinked with the empowerment of its women. Recognising this critical connection, the Government has placed Nari Shakti at the forefront of its agenda. The Government understands that women's empowerment is not a one-time solution; it requires a comprehensive approach that addresses their needs throughout their lives. In this regard welfare programmes have been designed to support women at different stages enabling them to overcome socio-economic barriers and achieve wholesome empowerment. By shifting the narrative from women as recipients of welfare to agents of empowerment, the Government is addressing gender discrimination by promoting education, health, housing, entrepreneurship and safety for women. Today it is not just about women's development but women-led development.

India has over 1.45 million elected women representatives at grassroots level, a scale of representation unparalleled globally.⁴⁵ Envisioning Self Help Groups as vehicles of change, today 100 million women are transforming the rural landscape economically and taking greater leadership at grassroots level.⁴⁶

Although the proportion of women holding seats in legislative bodies at national level remains lower than in some other parts of the world, this number is growing steadily and India already has more women in local governments than the global average. In India more than 45% of representatives in deliberative local bodies of Government (e.g. Gram Panchayat (Village Council), Panchayat Samait (Block Council) and Zila Parishad (District Council) are women. This is far more than the global average of 35.47% (See Figure 21). A milestone in the journey to further expand women's representation in elected office has been achieved by the passing of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023, which seeks to reserve one-third of the total number of seats for women in Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and Delhi Assembly.

Figure 21: Proportion of elected seats held by women in deliberative bodies of local government (%)



Source: UN Women in collaboration with ESCAP Statistics Division, National Indicator Framework, MoSPI and Ministry of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Administrative data based on election results at the level of Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, and Zila Parishad.

‘Mission Shakti’ is an endeavour by the Government that includes interventions to ensure women’s safety, security and empowerment. Under the mission, One Stop Centres are providing integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence and those in distress, both in private and public spaces in a convergent and coordinated manner under one roof. Women Helplines (181-WHL) offer 24 x 7 x 365 toll free emergency/non-emergency response services.

This is also integrated with the national Emergency Response Support System (112) and other existing helplines/institutions. The Nari Adalat initiative is empowering women by offering services such as alternate dispute resolution, grievance redressal, counselling, evidence-based decision-making, pressure group tactics, negotiation, mediation and reconciliation.

PROVIDING INTEGRATED SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO WOMEN

A total of 888 One Stop Centres (OSCs) have been approved out of which 802 OSCs are operational in 785 districts and assisting over 1 million women.⁴⁷ These centres have been set-up to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence and in distress, both in private and public spaces under one roof; and to facilitate immediate, emergency and non-emergency access to a range of services to fight against any forms of violence against women.

Ujjwala and Swadhar Greh (renamed as Shakti Sadan) is an Integrated Relief and Rehabilitation Home for women in distress situations including trafficked women. Working Women Hostels (renamed as Sakhi Niwas) promote availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women in urban, semi-urban and also in rural areas where employment opportunities for women exist. The National Creche Scheme (renamed as Palna) aims to increase the participation of women in the workforce in the economy by providing quality crèche facilities in a safe and secure environment for children.

SANKALP: Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) facilitates intersectoral convergence of schemes and programmes meant for women and serves as a single window inter-sectoral convergence mechanism provided for all women to avail the benefits of government schemes. It disseminates information related to women empowerment, safety and security and to ensure that women have access to correct information as well as the means to access the

entitlements. Since its inception in 2022 till the end of 2024, a total of 25,56,243 women have been supported through the hub.

Other schemes/ projects implemented by the government to ensure women's safety include a cyber-crime reporting portal to report obscene content and establishment of State of Art DNA Laboratory to strengthen Forensic Science. In addition to this Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) have been established including exclusive POC SO (e-POC SO) Courts for speedy disposal of cases of rape and cases under POC SO Act. Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been set up and strengthened in all districts of the country. Women Help Desks (WHDs) have been set up and or strengthened at Police Stations. The Government has also put in place the Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences, an online analytic tool for tracking and monitoring of investigation. A National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO) has also been created.

SHAKTI SADAN – INTEGRATED RELIEF AND REHABILITATION HOME

404 Shakti Sadans have been established across the country to provide temporary shelter along with basic necessities to destitute women and women who are victims of trafficking. Specifically in Telangana, the State Government has signed a MoU with a technical university where the residents of Shakti Sadan are eligible to undergo short-term or medium-term vocational education that will assist them in employment after their time in Shakti Sadan.

A total of 8.438 million women have been assisted by the 181 Women Helpline across the country since inception till 31 January 2025.

Women's empowerment is contingent upon the economic empowerment of women. That is why the Government has taken steps to promote financial inclusion among women through initiatives like Stand-Up India and Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY). The Stand-Up India scheme focuses on providing support for the establishment of greenfield enterprises among women, Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). Similarly, PMMY aims to provide financial assistance to non-corporate,

non-farm, micro and small enterprises. Around 69% of the loans have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under PMMY and 84% of the beneficiaries under Stand-Up India are women.⁴⁸ Mahila Samman Savings Certificate was introduced as part of the Union Budget 2023-24, which is a small savings scheme exclusively for female investors. These initiatives have enabled women to chart their paths and contribute to the economic growth of the nation.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PLATFORM (WEP)

The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) is an aggregator platform launched in 2018 that transitioned into a public-private partnership (PPP) in 2022. WEP serves as an aggregator platform working on building a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem for women towards enabling the goal of the government to promote women-led development through entrepreneurship.

Premised on three foundational pillars of *ichcha shakti* (the power of motivation), *gyaan shakti* (the power of knowledge) and *karam shakti* (power of action), WEP endeavours to support women in setting up and scaling up enterprises by overcoming information asymmetry and providing hand-holding support by in six key ecosystem needs, viz. Access to Finance; Market Linkages; Training and Skilling; Mentoring and Networking; Compliance and Legal Assistance and Business Development Services.

In 2023, WEP launched its flagship Award-To-Reward (ATR) initiative in an attempt to formulate a framework to on-board partners to collaborate. ATR is a plug and play framework that enables entities – both individuals and organisations – from different fields to work in a programmatic approach seamlessly. Since the launch of the first ATR in October, 2023, so far 13 ATRs have been launched impacting 730 women and rewarding 65 best performers in diverse sectors like green tech, retail, hospitality etc.

WEP has a robust knowledge portal that houses information on 835 Government schemes, 500+ incubators and accelerators and 36 mentorship programmes. This helps overcome information asymmetry by providing seamless access to relevant information. Recognising the importance of mentorship, WEP has both digital and physical initiatives to promote. WEP has a specific portal that provides one-to-one mentorship to women and presently has more than 630 mentors on the platform.

WEP has achieved a major milestone of completing 7-years and reaching over 50,000 registered users, a number that is growing. It has more than 40 partner organisations to support its initiatives. WEP has mobilised a substantial number of volunteers who work pro bono to further its cause in varied ways. These partnerships drive knowledge sharing, funding opportunities, mentorship programmes and business growth strategies aimed specifically at women-led businesses.

PROMOTING THE VALUE OF THE GIRL CHILD

One of the key initiatives for women's empowerment in the country has been the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme which has generated significant mass mobilisation to combat gender discrimination and

promote the value of the girl child. At every level the scheme has worked diligently to raise awareness about the rights of girl children through community engagement and advocating against sex selection at birth. Over the years, there has been a commendable improvement in the sex ratio at birth, with a net change of 12 points from 918 (2014-15) to 930 (2023-24).⁴⁸

KANYA JANMOTSAV: A GOOD PRACTICE UNDER BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO IN UTTAR PRADESH

Kanya Janmotsav is a flagship initiative under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) in Uttar Pradesh aimed at transforming societal mindsets. The initiative celebrates the birth of girl children, challenges patriarchal norms and reinforces the importance of gender equality. It seeks to create a society where girls are born, nurtured and educated as equals, empowered to become future leaders. This programme is organised on the first and third Monday of every month so that a continuous and sustained message about the value of girl child is spread in the society.

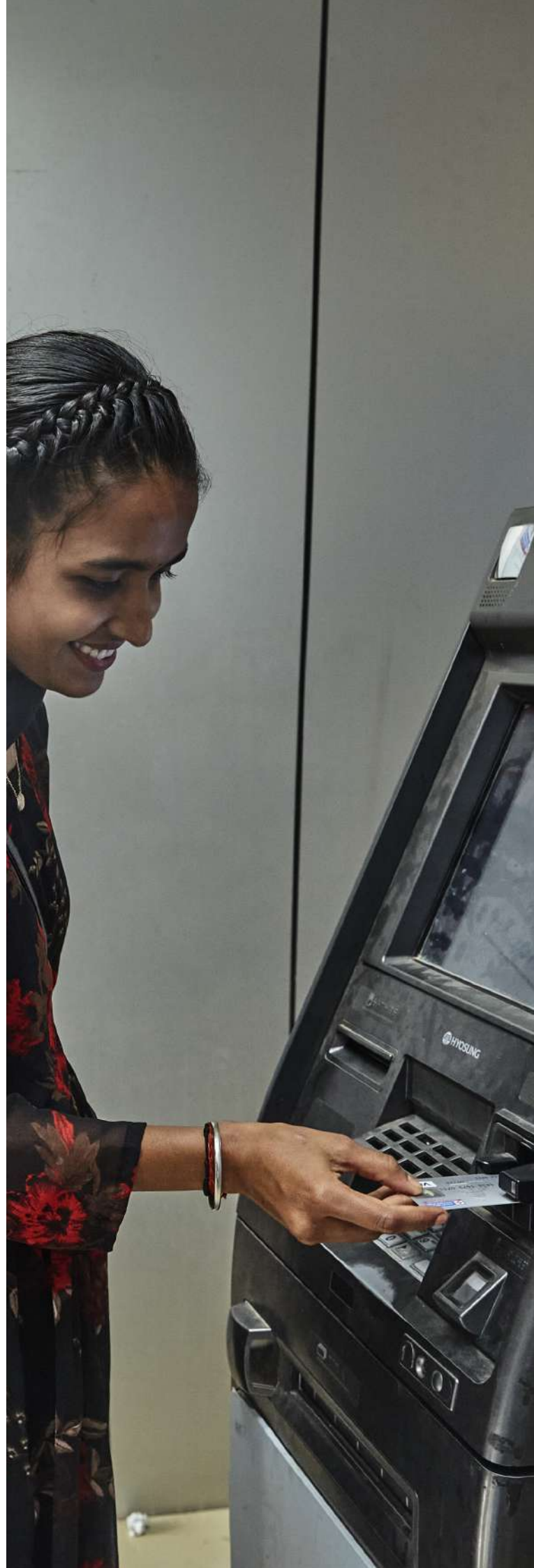
WAY FORWARD

India will continue its policy efforts and leadership at national, state, district, block and village levels to monitor and advance progress on gender equality and ensure the empowerment of women and girls.

In India, as per the Periodic Labour Force Survey, 43.04% of women identified childcare and homemaking responsibilities as barriers, underscoring the need for societal and policy interventions to balance work and family.

As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) 23.3% of women aged 20- 24 years were married before the age of 18 years in 2019-21. This shows that prevalence of child marriage, which was approximately 47% reported under NFHS-3 in 2005-06, has declined by more than half since enactment of the 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006' (PCMA). Government enacted PCMA to curb child marriages and to take punitive action against those associated with child marriages. Further progress can be supported through initiatives like 'Child Helpline' which provide emergency outreach service for children in crisis, with suitable interventions for children who call for any form of assistance which they may require, including for prevention of child marriages. These issues are addressed in coordination with different stakeholders such as police, CMPOs, and the District Child Protection Units.

As women persist in overcoming obstacles and breaking down barriers, their advancement fuels empowerment, generates employment opportunities and lays the groundwork for more inclusive economic development, an effort that will continue to be supported by various government initiatives aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment.





GOAL

06



Clean
Water and
Sanitation

Goal 6 calls for access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation facilities, water resource management and hygiene for all by 2030. Water resources are also critical for agriculture and industrial use and therefore protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems is essential. The goal is aimed at improving water quality by reducing pollution, substantially increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors and strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

Clean water and sanitation are essential for promoting good health, preventing the spread of diseases and ensuring overall well-being. Access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities is a fundamental human right and a crucial aspect of sustainable development. Clean water and sanitation protect people from disease and enhance their economic productivity. Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate hygiene negatively impact food security, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for low-income families worldwide. The 2030 Agenda recognises that social development and economic prosperity depend on the sustainable management of freshwater resources and ecosystems.

ENSURING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER

Despite facing substantial demand and limited water resources, India is committed to providing safe and potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on a regular and long-term basis to all rural households in the country. The Jal Jeevan Mission has been instrumental in ensuring the provision of sufficient water and sanitation infrastructure. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched in 2019 with the ambitious goal of providing portable tap water in adequate quantity to every rural household by 2024. At the time of its inception, only 32.3 million (17%) of rural households had tap water connections. By March 2025, out of 193.6 million rural households in the country, more than 155.4 million (80.26%) households are reported to have tap water supply in their homes.⁵⁰ This initiative is not only delivering clean water to all but also reducing the rural-urban divide and enhancing public health.

Jal Jeevan Mission operates on a decentralised and community-driven model, prioritising the active involvement of local communities. By encouraging community participation in planning, implementation and management, the Mission not only ensures the sustainability of water supply systems but also instil a sense of ownership and empowerment among the rural communities. Ensuring water quality is one of the main objectives of the Jal Jeevan Mission. To ensure that the supplied water is of adequate quality the programme promotes regular testing of water samples at source and delivery points.

Since 2012, India has been organising India Water Week, a pivotal event in global water diplomacy, offering a platform for dialogue, innovation and knowledge sharing. Each edition focuses on a specific water-related issue, providing policymakers, experts and industry leaders the opportunity to present solutions and explore cooperative strategies. The 8th edition was held in 2024 under the theme "Partnerships and Cooperation for Inclusive Water Development and Management."

The implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission has brought significant improvements in rural life as highlighted by several national and international institutions. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that achieving saturation under JJM will result in savings of more than 55 million hours of time every day, of which approximately 75% of the burden is borne by women. WHO has also estimated that ensuring safely managed drinking water for all households in the country could prevent nearly 4,00,000 deaths caused by diarrheal diseases leading to savings of approximately 14 million Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs), resulting in economic savings of around US \$101 billion. The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore in partnership with ILO has estimated that implementation of the JJM shall result in 5.99 million person-years of direct and 22 million person-years of indirect employment during the capex phase of JJM in the country through manpower engaged in production of the materials such as pipes, valves, pumps etc.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JAL JEEVAN MISSION (JJM)

Technology is enabling efficient, transparent and sustainable water supply management in rural areas. States/UTs have leveraged innovative technologies to improve service delivery, accountability and real time decision making.

- “Jhar-Jal” Digital Platform in Jharkhand uses GIS mapping for effective scheme and asset monitoring, integrates water quality assessments and grievance redressal mechanisms and ensures equitable and safe drinking water supply.
- Smart Water Management in Goa implements digital water meters and a digital payment system and has an IoT-based smart water management for real-time monitoring. It enhances user charge collection and ensures equitable water distribution.
- “JJM BRAIN” (Building Reliant and Analytical Information Network) in Assam is a comprehensive digital platform designed to streamline and centralise the implementation and operation of Pipe Water Supply Schemes (PWSS). It features a Contractor Task Submission System and an integrated Public Grievance Redressal System (PGRS), both linked to a unique QR code-based identifier called Jal Kosh which captures static and dynamic scheme data. JJM BRAIN enhances project tracking, performance guarantee management and incorporates GIS mapping for spatial analysis, enabling efficient, transparent and data-driven decision-making across all levels of scheme execution.

UNIVERSAL SANITATION

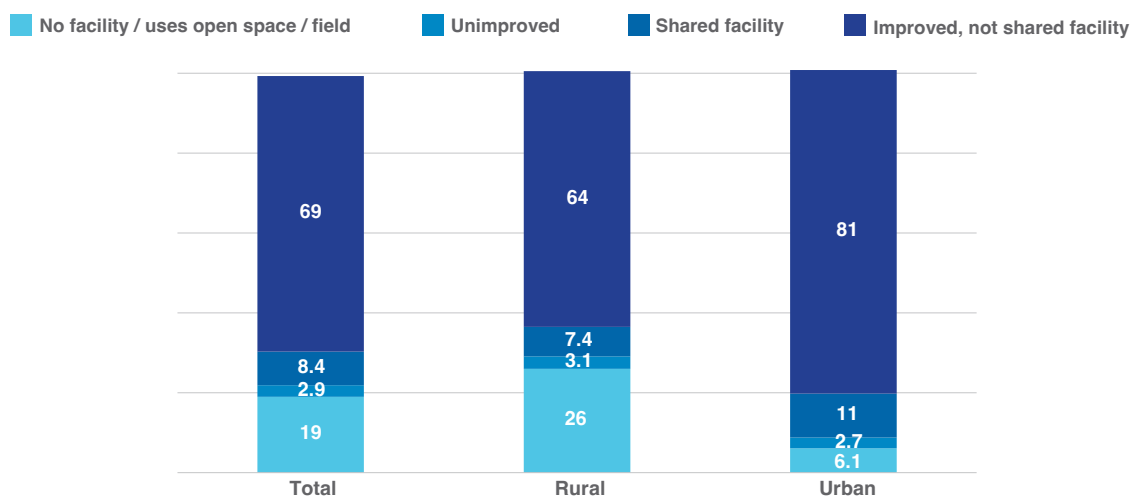
To accelerate the efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage, the Swachh Bharat Mission was implemented as nation-wide campaign/Janandolan aimed at eliminating open defecation in rural areas during the period 2014 to 2019 (Phase I) through mass scale behaviour change, construction of household-owned and community-owned toilets and establishing mechanisms for monitoring toilet construction and usage. Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) Phase I was the world's largest sanitation drive that led to the construction of over 100 million individual household toilets over a five-year period. The population living in households that use an improved sanitation facility has increased to 70.2% (NFHS-5 2019-21) from 48.5% (NFHS-4 2015-16).⁵¹ More than 6 lakh villages declared themselves Open Defecation Free (ODF) by 2nd October 2019. Building on this success, SBM-G Phase II aims to achieve Sampurn Swachhata with a continued emphasis on sustaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status, while also focusing on: sustaining ODF status, promotion of twin pit (in-situ treatment), managing solid and liquid waste, achieving visual cleanliness in rural areas and transforming villages into ODF Plus models. As reported by UNICEF, this initiative has reduced groundwater

contamination by 12.7 times in ODF villages. Additionally, women in ODF villages have reported feeling 93% safer after access to household toilets.⁵²

Toilet facilities in India have improved substantially, with both access and quality of sanitation infrastructure showing significant gains, especially in rural areas. According to NFHS-5 (2019-21), 69% of households have access to improved sanitation facilities, 64% of rural households and 81% of urban households have access to improved, not shared facilities (See Figure 22).



Figure 22: Household Toilet Facilities by Residence, 2019-2021 (Percent of population)



Source: National Family Health Survey, Round 5

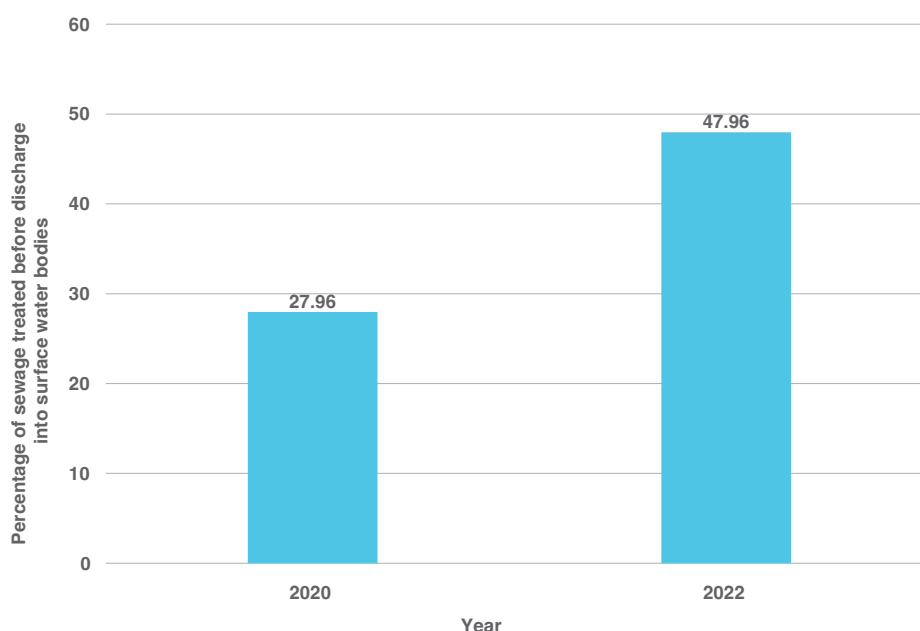


Simultaneously, SBM-Urban 2.0, launched in 2021 has a vision of achieving Garbage Free Status for all cities through 100% source segregation, door to door collection and scientific management of all fractions of waste including safe disposal in scientific landfills. The aim is to ensure that no untreated faecal sludge or used water is discharged into the environment, and all used water (including sewerage and septage, greywater and black water) is safely contained, transported and treated. It also aims at remediation of all legacy dumpsites and converting them into green zones. Various municipal solid waste management plants such as Waste-to-Compost (WtC), Waste-to-Energy (WtE), Bio-methanation, Material

Recovery Facilities (MRF) and legacy waste dumpsites remediation have been established. Technology-driven initiatives such as the Swachhata App and Google toilet locator have enhanced citizen engagement and strengthened governance, in the process ensuring timely grievance redressal and improved access to sanitation facilities.

These efforts mark a significant step towards sustained sanitation and inclusive hygiene practices across rural and urban India. For instance, there has been a substantial increase in the percentage of sewage treated before discharge into surface water bodies (See Figure 23).

Figure 23: Percentage of sewage treated before discharge into surface water bodies

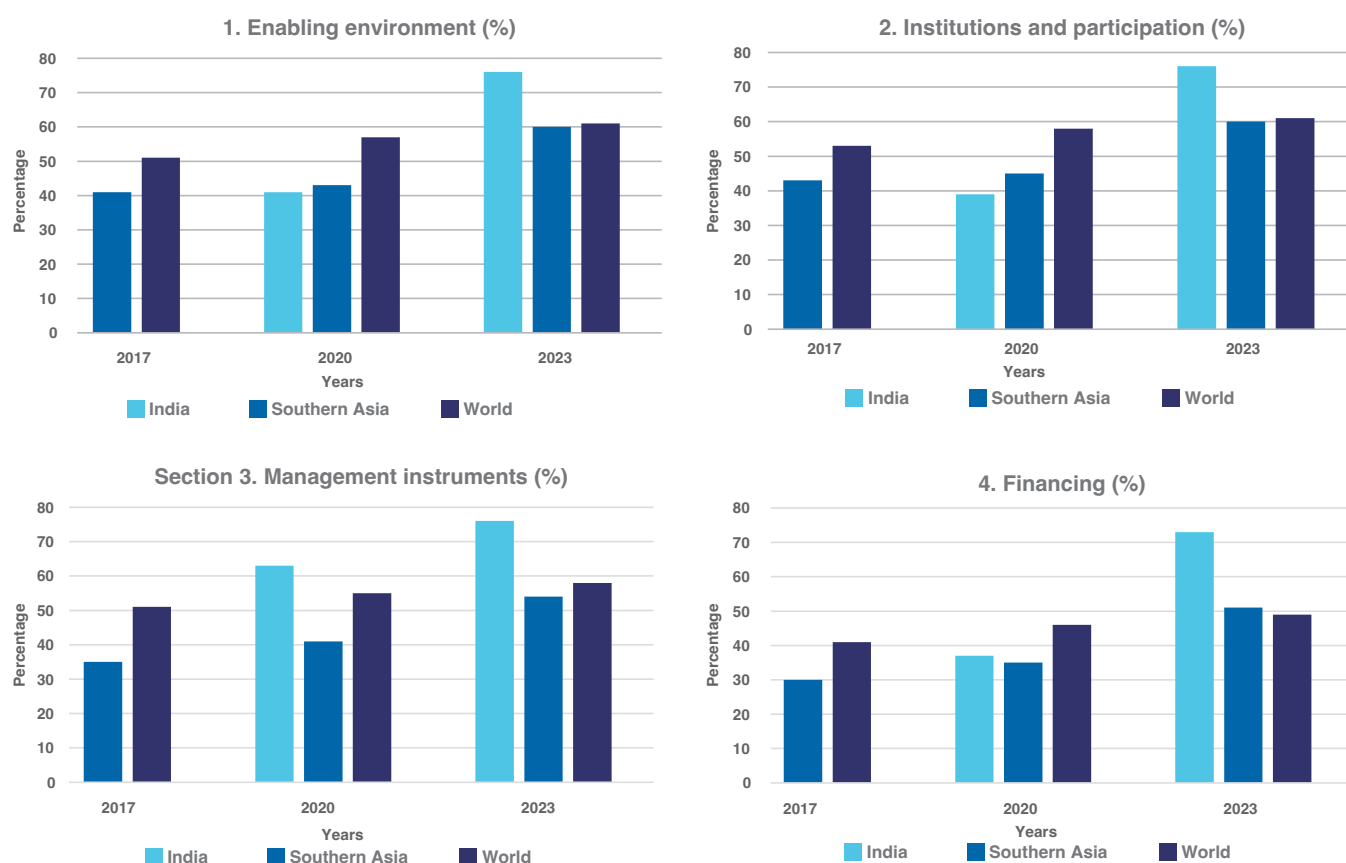


Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

IMPROVED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

In addition to Jal Jeevan, the Government of India has initiated a number of steps and launched various schemes/ programmes for making availability of water, its conservation and distribution, which have led to steady improvement in India's degree of

integrated water resources management. This is reflected in improvement across all four dimensions: enabling environment, institutions and participation, management instruments, and financing, between 2020 and 2023 (See Figure 24).

Figure 24: Degree of integrated water resources management implementation

Source: IWRM Data Portal, UNEP and Central Water Commission, Ministry of Jal Shakti

National Water Mission has been launched with the objective of conservation of water, minimising wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management. Under this mission a campaign namely "SahiFasal" has also been initiated to nudge farmers to favour agricultural crops which consume less water and to use water more efficiently in agriculture, as a part of demand side management. Also, to promote dialogue and information sharing among participants on a variety of water related topics, a monthly seminar series - "Water Talk" has been initiated with intent to create awareness, build capacities of stakeholders and to encourage people to become active participants in the conservation and saving of water.

The Government is also implementing the Atal Bhujal Yojana, in 8,213 water stressed Gram Panchayats (GPs) in 80 districts of 7 States, viz., Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The scheme marks a paradigm shift from groundwater development to groundwater management. Various water related works such as check dams, farm ponds, community ponds, irrigation

open wells etc. have also been taken up under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The Government's continued thrust on water conservation is yielding remarkable results, evident in the form of significant reduction in the number of water-stressed rural blocks from 2264 to 1456 (35% reduction).⁵³

Jal Shakti Abhiyan-I (JSA-I) was launched in 2019 in 256 water stressed districts to promote water conservation and water resource management by focusing on accelerated implementation of five target interventions, viz., water conservation and rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies/ tanks, reuse and recharge of bore wells, watershed development and intensive afforestation. In 2021, "Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain" (JSA: CTR) was initiated with the theme "Catch the Rain - Where it Falls When it Falls" to cover all the blocks of all districts (rural as well as urban areas) across the country. One of the major interventions undertaken under the campaign includes construction and repair of rainwater harvesting structures including rooftop and water harvesting structures.

A Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Groundwater - 2020 in consultation with States/UTs has been prepared. It is a macro level plan indicating various structures for the different terrain conditions of the country including estimated cost. The Master Plan has provisions for construction of about 14.2 million Rain water harvesting and Artificial Recharge structures in the country to harness 185 billion Cubic Metre (BCM) of monsoon rainfall.

The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) focuses on the development of basic urban infrastructure in the Mission cities in the sectors of water supply, sewerage and septage management, storm water drainage, green spaces and parks and non-motorised urban transport. AMRUT 2.0 has provisions for harvesting the rainwater through storm water drains into the water body (which is not receiving sewage/effluent). Through preparation of the 'Aquifer Management Plan' cities aim to strategise groundwater recharge augmentation by developing a roadmap for improving rain water harvesting within city limits. Through the IEC campaign awareness is created about practices for water conservation like rainwater harvesting.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) is being implemented to enhance physical access of water on farms and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve on farm water use efficiency, introduce sustainable water conservation practices etc. One of PMKSY's components 'Har Khet Ko Pani' is reviving irrigation potential by improvement and restoration of water bodies by enhancing the tank storage capacity, along with other multiple objectives such as ground water recharge, increased availability of drinking water, improvement of catchment of tank commands etc.

MISSION AMRIT SAROVAR

Mission Amrit Sarovar was launched in April 2022 to construct or rejuvenate 75 Amrit Sarovars (ponds) in each district, totalling 50,000 across the country. This initiative has made significant progress in addressing the critical issue of water scarcity. As of January 2025, over 68,000 Sarovars have been completed, enhancing surface and groundwater availability across various regions.⁵⁴ These Sarovars have not only addressed immediate water needs but also established sustainable water sources, symbolising the government's commitment to long-term environmental sustainability and community well-being. Phase II of Mission Amrit Sarovar is envisaged to continue with a renewed focus on ensuring water availability, with community participation (Jan Bhagidaari) at its core, and aims to strengthen climate resilience, foster ecological balance, and deliver lasting benefits for future generations.

WAY FORWARD

While India has made significant strides under SDG 6, particularly in improving water supply and sanitation coverage, issues related to water scarcity, infrastructure gaps and quality of service delivery needs attention. Natural disasters, particularly floods and droughts, frequently disrupt water and sanitation systems affecting the most vulnerable communities and highlighting the need for resilient infrastructure. These disruptions disproportionately impact women and girls, who face unique health and safety risks due to inadequate access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities. Additionally, geographical challenges in remote and ecologically sensitive areas along with institutional gaps in planning and implementation hinder sustained access to clean water.

Ensuring community participation, promoting gender-sensitive policies and strengthening monitoring and governance mechanisms are essential to address these challenges. Active participation from both individuals and communities is required, which can be challenging in areas where traditional practices are deeply entrenched.

Establishing comprehensive monitoring systems is equally vital for accurately assessing progress and identifying gaps, though this often entails significant resource and capacity requirements. Advancing towards the targets of SDG 6 will require a holistic and inclusive strategy that ensures sustainable water resource management and equitable access for all.





GOAL 07



**Affordable
and Clean
Energy**

Energy security is a prerequisite for socio- economic development. Access to energy enables people to augment their income and productivity, enhance access to healthcare, water and education and improve their overall well- being. Goal 7 is aimed at ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and efficient energy services by 2030. Expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology to provide clean and efficient energy is critical to this endeavour.

India, the world's third-largest energy consumer, is poised for the highest energy demand growth. India's energy security is a critical component of its economic growth and sustainability goals. The Union and State Governments have launched various schemes aimed at promoting renewable energy, enhancing grid stability and reducing carbon emissions. Guided by a “remove, target and shift” strategy, India has steadily whittled down its fossil fuel support, opening doors to new investments in solar power, electric vehicles and a stronger energy grid.

ACCESS TO ENERGY

The Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana - Saubhagya was launched to achieve universal household electrification for providing electricity connections to all willing un-electrified households in rural areas and all willing poor households in urban

areas in the country. A total of 28.6 million households of the country were provided with electricity connection.⁵⁵ Currently the Government is further supporting States under the ongoing Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) for electrification of those un-electrified households which were left out under SAUBHAGYA. RDSS was initiated in 2021 to support Distribution utilities i.e. DISCOMs/Power Departments (PDs) to improve the operational efficiencies and financial sustainability of the distribution sector so as to provide quality and reliable supply of power.

Energy Policies having a multi-fold impact are being introduced. One such policy is Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) which provides energy and water security to farmers and enhances their income, de-dieselise the farm sector, and reduces environmental pollution. As of December 2024, over 610 thousand solar pumps have been installed nationwide, as compared to 330 thousand solar pumps installed by December 2021. Additionally, 3.5 million grid-connected agriculture pumps have been solarised.⁵⁶ One of the most impactful benefits of the scheme is the provision of assured daytime power for irrigation. This reliable power supply allows farmers to irrigate their fields efficiently and without interruptions. As a result farmers can optimise water usage, reduce crop spoilage and increase yield.



New renewable energy sources are transforming India's energy landscape (See Figures 25, 26 and 27). This progress aligns with India's commitment to achieving its 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy as part of its 'Panchamrit' commitments made by the country at COP26 in Glasgow in 2023. India's 2022 Nationally Determined Contributions include the target to reduce emissions intensity of its GDP and has been enhanced to 45 percent by 2030 from 2005 level, and the target on cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources has been enhanced to 50% by 2030. In FY 2024-2025, the country added 25 GW of renewable energy capacity, marking an increase of nearly 35% over the previous year's addition of 18.57 GW. India's solar power sector led the renewable energy growth, with capacity additions soaring from 15 GW in FY24 to nearly 21 GW in FY25, a remarkable 38% increase.⁵⁷ The country also achieved the significant milestone of surpassing 100 GW of installed solar capacity this year.⁵⁸ Key initiatives such as the National Bio Energy Mission, National Green Hydrogen Mission, PM-KUSUM and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana,

reflect the nation's commitment to a cleaner and self-reliant energy future. As of January 2025, India's total non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity has reached 217.62 GW.⁵⁹

In 2024, the Government launched the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, the world's largest domestic rooftop solar initiative, designed to promote rooftop solar energy adoption in residential areas. By providing financial incentives and subsidies for solar panel installation the scheme enables households to generate their own electricity, reducing dependence on the national grid and lowering electricity bills. The initiative targets installation of rooftop solar in 10 million households by March 2027 by providing up to 300 units of free electricity every month. As of March 2025, over 1 million households have benefitted from the scheme.⁶⁰ Operational guidelines for the 'Model Solar Village' scheme have also been issued, granting ₹10 million to the winning village in each district to promote solar energy adoption and make villages self-reliant in energy.

GOOD PRACTICES

Uttar Pradesh is pioneering a solar-powered drinking water initiative across 67,013 villages, generating 900 MW of solar energy to operate water schemes directly at the source. This eliminates electricity costs, reduces carbon emissions and ensures sustainable access to clean drinking water. The 33,157 schemes are projected to generate 1.3 million carbon credits annually contributing to India's goal of reaching net zero by 2070.

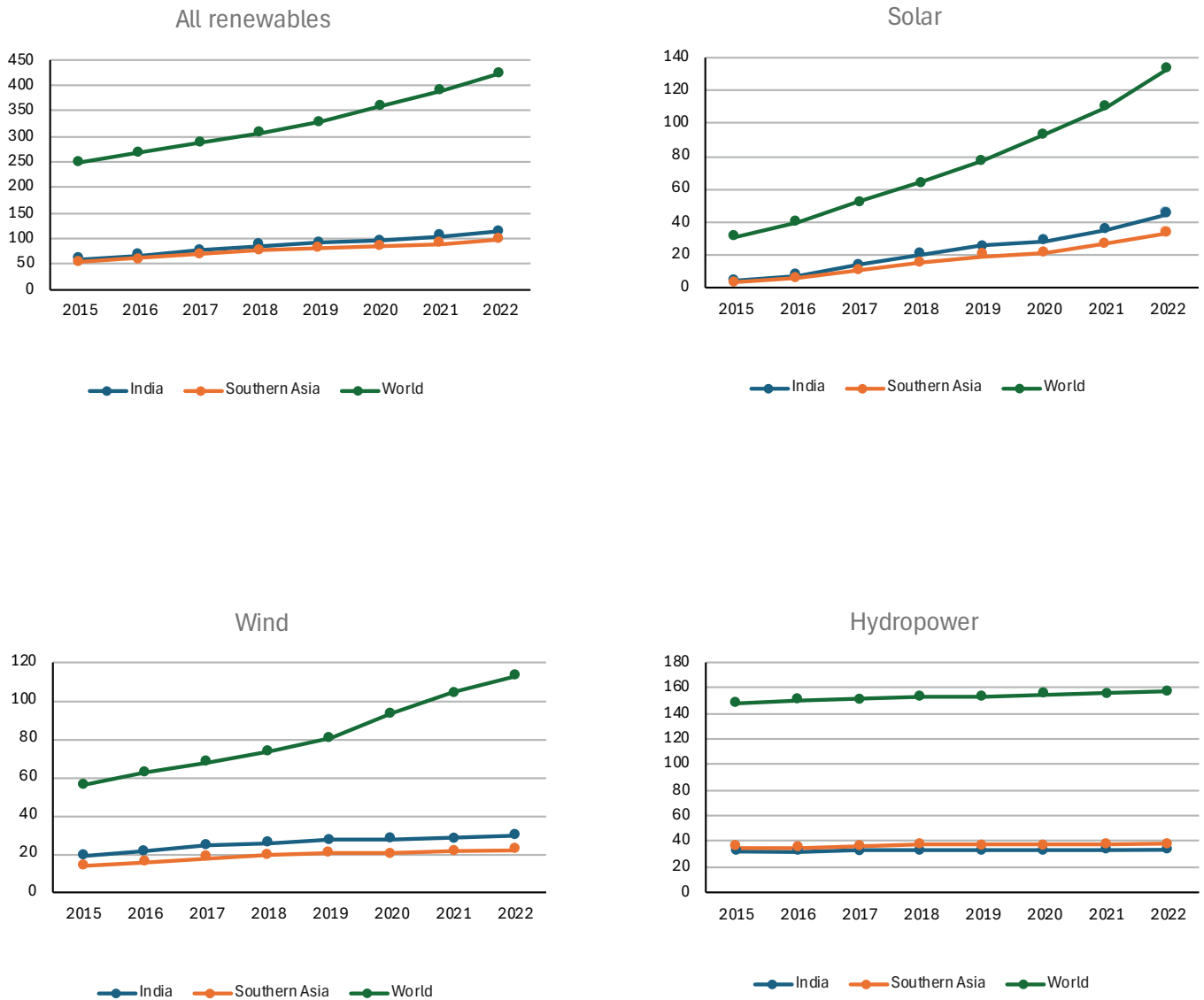
- In Meghalaya, over 530 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and 305 food processing units are now solar-powered, ensuring uninterrupted services even in hard-to-reach areas. The commissioning of the 22.5 MW Ganol Small Hydro Project in 2023 and the identification of 20 additional small hydro sites reflect Meghalaya's shift toward clean energy and job creation in the green sector.
- In rooftop solar Gujarat accounts for nearly 30 percent of India's total installations. By April 2025, over 0.962 million customers have installed rooftop solar systems with a capacity of 5378 MW. Over the past 5 years, these systems have produced nearly 9.933 million units of electricity, resulting in saving of ₹48.84 billion on electricity. Additionally, the Hybrid RE Park in Kacchh is set to become Asia's largest with 37.35 GW capacity.

To accelerate the growth of the biofuels sector and achieve the enhanced ethanol blending by 2025, the Government has taken several measures. The National Bioenergy Programme (NBP) focuses on promoting the use of bioenergy and waste-to-energy technologies to support clean energy solutions to enhance energy security and support sustainable development in India. This National policy as amended in 2022, inter-alia advanced the target of

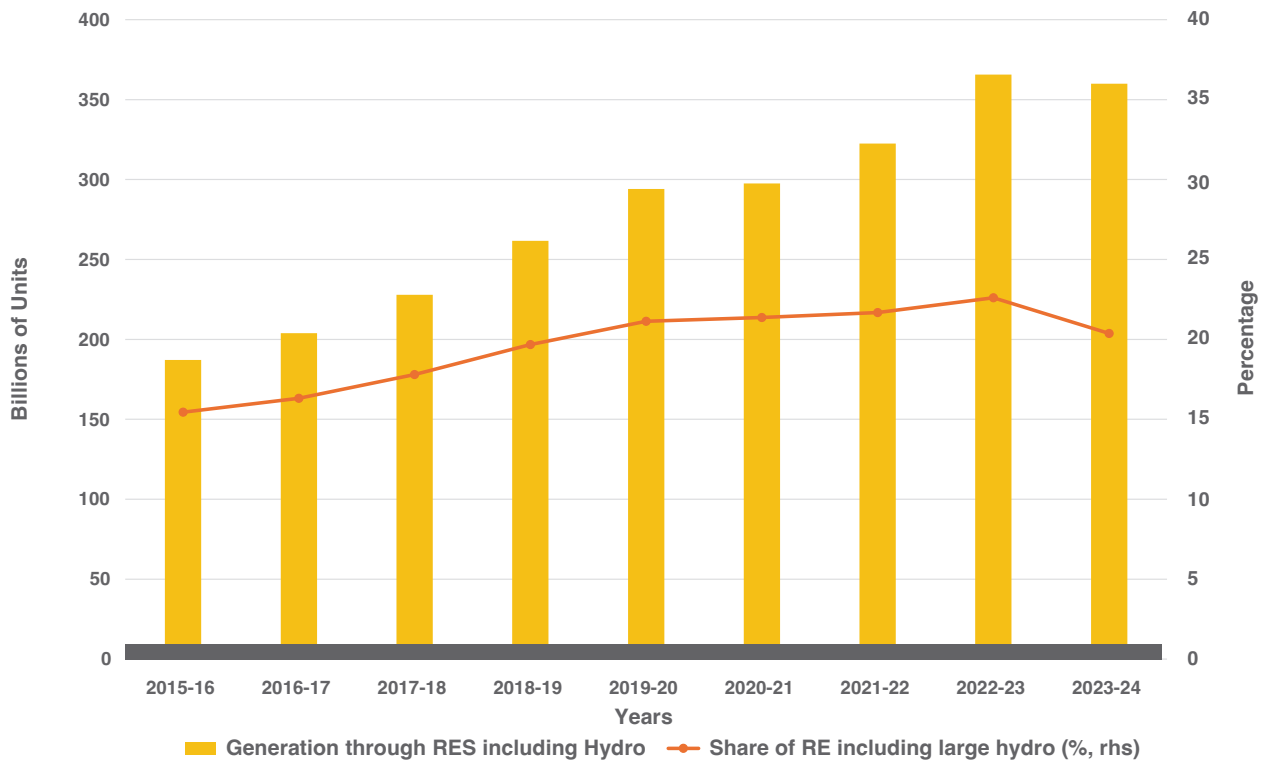
20% blending of ethanol in petrol to Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26 from 2030. Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) achieved the target of 10% ethanol blending in petrol in June 2022 i.e. five months ahead of the target during ESY 2021-22.⁶¹ Over the last 10 years ethanol blending in petrol by Public Sector OMCs has helped reduce approximately 557 lakh metric tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPACITY

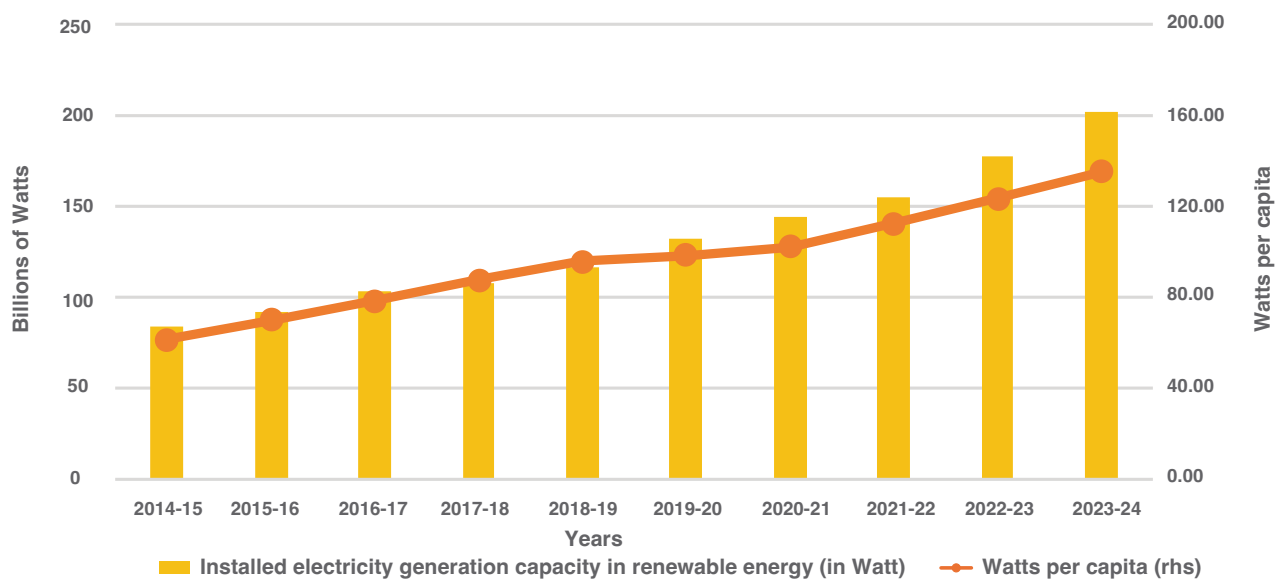
Figure 25: Installed renewable electricity-generating capacity (watts per capita)



Source: Renewable electricity generating capacity from IRENA's electricity capacity database.
Population data from the United Nations World Population Prospects.

Figure 26: Renewable energy share in the total installed electricity generation

Source: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

Figure 27: Installed renewable energy generating capacity in the country (in watts per capita)

Source: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

The programme also covers setting up biogas plants for clean cooking fuel, lighting, meeting thermal and small power needs of users which results in GHG reduction. The programme has also improved sanitation, women empowerment and creation of rural employment and production of organic enriched Bio-manure from the digested slurry from biogas plants.

In 2023, India launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission to make India a Global Hub for production, utilisation and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives. The Mission is driving significant decarbonisation of the economy and reduced dependence on fossil fuel imports and is expected to cut carbon emissions by 5 MMT by 2030, create 6,00,000 jobs by 2030 and add renewable energy capacity of 125 GW. Incentives have been awarded for Green Hydrogen production of 4,12,000 tons per annum. Projects are being piloted for the use of hydrogen in various sectors such as steel and transport. A key achievement is the establishment of 3 hydrogen production hubs across the country.

The Government is implementing the Renewable Energy Research and Technology Development (RETD) Programme to support R&D projects for technology development and demonstration in various areas of new and renewable energy such as solar photovoltaic systems, biogas systems, waste to energy systems, wind energy systems, hybrid systems, storage systems, hydrogen and fuels cells, geothermal, etc. The ultimate aim is to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix in the country. Under this programme, India's first hydrogen bus trial has been launched and high-efficiency perovskite solar cells of 25.8% efficiency and 30% efficient of perovskite-silicon tandem solar cells have been developed.

CLEAN COOKING FUEL

With the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) India has seen a substantial rise in the usage of LPG. PMUY was launched in 2016 to provide access to clean cooking through deposit free LPG connection to women from poor households in order to reduce the serious health hazards associated with use of conventional cooking fuel such as firewood, coal, cow dung etc. Use of LPG as cooking fuel frees women from the drudgery of collecting firewood,

reduces time spent on cooking and prevents deforestation. Transition from biomass and traditional fuels to LPG reduces the dependency on wood and other biomass for cooking purposes, leading to a decrease in deforestation and environmental degradation. This benefits not only the households but also contributes to broader environmental conservation efforts.

In September 2019, the target to release 80 million connections under PMUY was achieved. To cover the remaining poor households, Ujjwala 2.0 was launched in August 2021 with a target to release 10 million additional PMUY connections, which was achieved in January 2022. Subsequently, the Government decided to release more LPG connections under Ujjwala 2.0 and as of March 2025, the total number of active domestic LPG consumers in India stands at 329.4 million, including the 103.3 million beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana.⁶²

PROMOTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA)⁶³ set out to revolutionise household lighting by providing affordable energy-efficient LED bulbs, tube lights and fans to millions of Indian homes. UJALA has evolved into the world's largest zero-subsidy domestic lighting programme, exemplifying India's commitment to reducing energy consumption, enhancing environmental awareness and fostering economic efficiency. Since its inception in 2015, more than 368 million LED bulbs have been distributed across the country⁶⁴, making energy-saving technologies accessible to households while addressing challenges such as high electrification costs and carbon emissions. Its implementation across all states has reduced annual household electricity bills and enabled consumers to save money while improving their quality of life. The UJALA scheme has germinated the sale of 4.0792 billion LED bulbs in the Indian market.⁶⁵

Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS) 2024 was launched with an aim to provide further impetus to the green mobility and development of electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing ecosystem in the country. This is a fund limited scheme for faster adoption of electric two-wheelers (e-2W) and three-wheelers (e-3W) to provide further impetus to green mobility and

developing an electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing ecosystem in the country. Additionally, policies like PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement Scheme and PM-eBus Sewa Scheme are supporting the deployment of e-buses and incentivising sale of new emerging EV categories.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Government is spearheading various international initiatives to lead a clean energy transition. India was one of the founding members of the International Solar Alliance in November 2015 and the Global Biofuel Alliance during its G20 presidency in September 2023. In 2024, the country joined the International Energy Efficiency Hub (Hub), a global platform dedicated to fostering collaboration and promoting energy efficiency worldwide. During India Energy Week 2025, India hosted a Ministerial Roundtable on Clean Cooking to discuss ways to address challenges faced by the Global South and share lessons from India's Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY).

WAY FORWARD

India's energy landscape is undergoing a transformative shift as the nation strives to meet its ambitious targets under SDG 7. With electricity demand projected to increase four to five times by 2047 meticulous planning and strategic interventions are essential to navigate the challenges and opportunities in achieving this goal.

India has launched several flagship initiatives such as the National Green Hydrogen Mission, PM-KUSUM and production-linked incentive schemes to accelerate its clean energy transition. These programmes aim to foster a resilient and inclusive energy ecosystem while aligning with the nation's net-zero target by 2070. The government's proactive measures include substantial reductions in fossil fuel subsidies and innovative taxation policies that promote renewable energy projects. These efforts are critical not only for addressing climate change but also for stimulating economic growth and creating employment opportunities.

The focus on emerging technologies such as green hydrogen production, advanced battery storage solutions and pump storage facilities underscores the commitment to integrating variable renewable energy sources into the grid. These innovations are pivotal for ensuring 24/7 power availability and enhancing grid reliability amidst increasing urbanisation and industrialisation. However, India faces several challenges in its pursuit of SDG 7, including the high costs of emerging technologies, infrastructure limitations such as land acquisition and connectivity issues and the need for grid modernisation to integrate variable renewable sources.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that emphasises significant investment in renewable technologies, the development of new skills and regulatory frameworks aligned with evolving market dynamics. The transition towards a diverse and cleaner energy mix should be driven by ambitious sustainability targets while reimagining the entire energy landscape. Expanding grid infrastructure to accommodate growing power demand from rapid urbanisation, investing in advanced energy storage solutions, and developing a skilled workforce tailored to the demands of a 21st-century energy system are key priorities.

India's journey towards achieving SDG 7 is not just about increasing capacity but also about transforming its energy ecosystem into a catalyst for sustainable growth and development. By addressing these challenges, India can consolidate its position as a global leader in the clean energy transition while ensuring universal access to modern energy services. With continued policy support, increased investment and a focus on emerging technologies, India is well-positioned to achieve its ambitious renewable energy targets and contribute significantly to global efforts in addressing climate change.





GOAL

08



**Decent
Work and
Economic
Growth**

Goal 8 promotes sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological innovation. Encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation are crucial to this, as are effective measures to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. It also seeks to protect labour rights and promote policies which support decent job creation and safe and secure working environments. With these targets in mind the goal is to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men by 2030.

India's economic trajectory has been marked by a strong post-pandemic rebound followed by a phase of steady stabilisation. This robust performance has also been accompanied by an improvement in per capita growth, positioning India among the fastest growing major economies globally. This underscores India's concerted efforts to realign its economic framework with the targets of SDG 8, paving the way for sustainable and inclusive development.

Key achievements include the launch of the National Single Window System as a one-stop shop for investors for taking all the regulatory approvals and services related to investments. The digitisation of 20 years of land and property records, the establishment of transparency enablers in 2016 and the inception of the Central Inspection System (CIS) in 2017-18 are evidence of the Government's dedication to streamlining compliance inspections.

The Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialization Scheme (UNNATI, 2024) is aimed at fostering industrial development and generating employment in the North-East Region. Its primary objective is to create employment that drives overall socio-economic development in the area. By stimulating productive economic activity in both the manufacturing and service sectors the scheme seeks to reach even the most challenging regions in line with the principle of "Leave No One Behind".

The initiative, Startup India, aims to support innovation and entrepreneurship by providing regulatory support, funding opportunities and ease-of-doing-business reforms to Indian entrepreneurs, while the Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) facilitates access to collateral-free micro-credit for small and micro enterprises. Additionally, under NRLM, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) are providing

free skill training, credit assistance and mentorship to unemployed rural youth, aiming to promote self-employment among the rural poor and enhance their livelihood opportunities.

Numerous structural reforms have been implemented to foster sustainable economic growth and productive employment. These reforms have contributed to a consistent increase in the number of patents granted, reflecting a strengthening of intellectual property rights and innovation.

FASTEST GROWING MAJOR ECONOMY AND DECLINING UNEMPLOYMENT

India has pursued a comprehensive strategy to formalise its labour market and improve social protection while simultaneously accelerating its economic recovery. Digital financial inclusion initiatives driven by the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity and the proliferation of digital payment systems have significantly expanded banking access for the informal sector. Initiatives such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) have provided crucial employment security during periods of economic uncertainty. These measures have been complemented by a robust rebound in per capita growth, positioning India among the fastest growing major economies globally (See Figure 28). Furthermore, the labour market has exhibited a steady decline in unemployment rates—falling from 4.2% in 2020–21, to 4.1% in 2021–22, and reaching 3.2% in 2023–24 (See Figure 29).

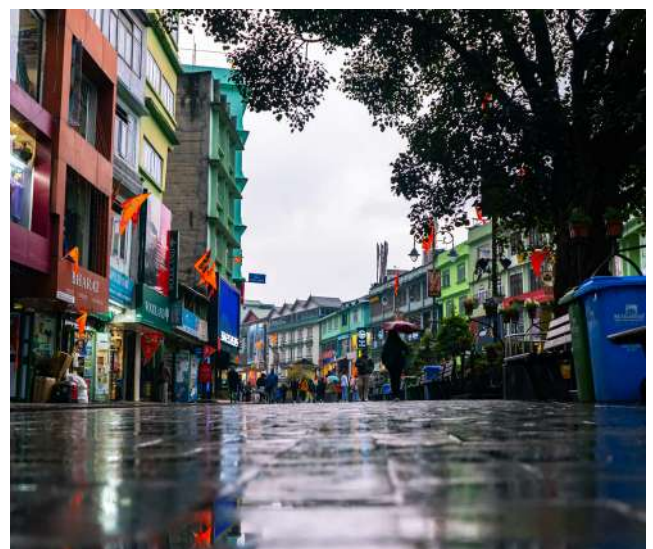
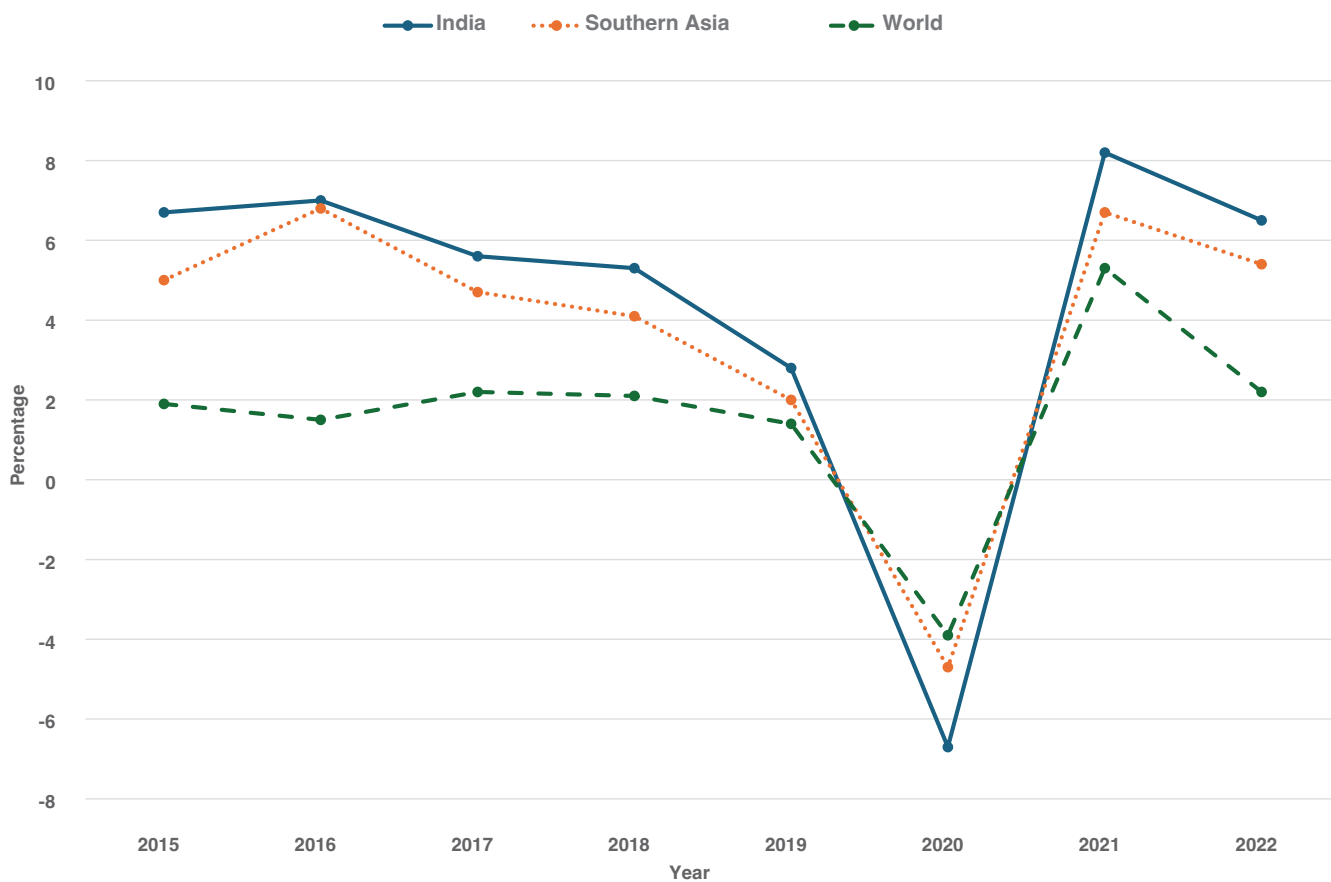
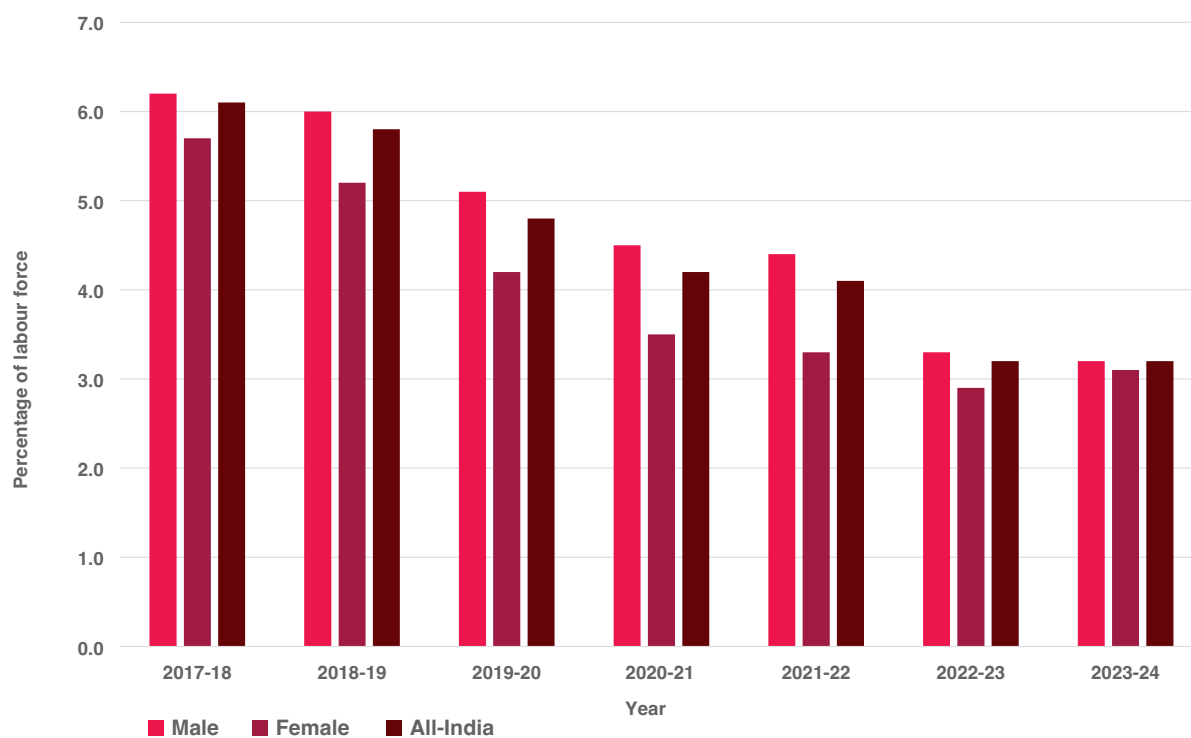


Figure 28: Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita (%)

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division

Figure 29: Unemployment rate

Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey, NSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

As per the latest available Annual PLFS reports the estimated Unemployment Rate (UR) on usual status for youth of age 15-29 years in the country in the year 2023-24 was 10.2% which is lower than global levels. Further, the Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for youth has increased from 31.4% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24. The Government is running the National Career Service (NCS) Portal which is a one-stop solution to provide career related services. In 2024, the Government also announced the Prime Minister's package of 5 schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for 41 million youth over a 5-year period. These schemes focus on the youth population entering the workforce in all formal sectors, job creation in manufacturing, support to employers, skilling youth and providing internships. The Union Budget 2025-2026 also aims to create multiple employment generation opportunities across various sectors such as tourism, manufacturing, fisheries, and also includes various measures to support entrepreneurship and skilling of youth.

India's vibrant startup ecosystem has surged to new heights. Government initiatives such as Startup India and supportive reforms have spurred a dramatic increase in recognised startups from 503 in 2015-16 to over 32,000 by 2020. About 48% of the recognised startups have at least one-woman director. This burgeoning landscape, characterised by enhanced access to credit, robust incubation programmes and streamlined regulatory frameworks, has not only fuelled innovation but also attracted record levels of venture capital investment, with cumulative funding reaching billions.

SKILLING FOR THE FUTURE

The Skill India Mission is equipping youth with essential industry-relevant skills through various programmes and initiatives focused on skill development, re-skilling and up-skilling in the process empowering millions with the tools needed for sustainable careers.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) enables delivery of skill training in a market-oriented and demand-driven manner by making the existing skilling ecosystem more flexible, swift and geared to meet the emerging demand along with emphasis on improving the employability of candidates. It also enhances access to skill development infrastructure in remote parts of the country. Since its

implementation in 2015, more than 16 million candidates have been trained under PMKVY till December 2024, including 7.237 million women. Under the current phase of PMKVY 4.0 the focus is on skilling in Industry 4.0 job roles such as AI – Data Engineer, Telecom Technician – IoT Devices/Systems, Drone Manufacturing and Assembly Technician, Additive Manufacturing (3D Printing).

Skill India Digital Hub platform launched in August 2023 is a convergence platform facilitating access to skilling, credit, employment and educational resources essential for vocational training through AI/ML technology. The platform seamlessly incorporates various government initiatives and services such as eShram/EPFO/NCS, Udyam, DigiLocker, GatiShakti, UMANG, AgriStack, PLI Schemes and ODOP, etc. Since its inception over 60 lakh learners have been registered and 8.4 lakh apps have been downloaded.

Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) was launched in 2018 to strengthen the institutional mechanisms for skill development and increase access to quality and market-relevant training for youth across the country. Unlike other skill development schemes SANKALP is not a training specific scheme but focuses on pilots/projects. It aims to increase quality in skill development programmes making them market-relevant and accessible in the context of short-term training.

By providing flexible and doorstep skill training in rural areas and marginalised urban communities with the help of local community support, Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) is imparting skill development training in non-formal mode to non-literates, neo-literates, persons with a rudimentary level of education and school drop-outs. This scheme addresses the skilling need of marginalised and ultra-poor populations ensuring their social inclusion and last mile coverage. It imparts vocational skills and also creates awareness among the rural masses on local issues, such as health, personal hygiene, education, financial literacy and environment issues. Building on the work of the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, NAPS-2 is promoting apprenticeship training in the country by providing partial stipend support to the apprentices, undertaking capacity building of the apprenticeship ecosystem and providing advocacy assistance to the stakeholders. From 2022 onwards till January 2025, 2.745 million apprentices had been successfully engaged.

Apart from focusing on domestic skill development, India is also aligning its workforce with international standards, reinforcing its vision of becoming the “Skill Capital of the World”. India's efforts in skilling at global standards are reflected through strategic initiatives such as the India International Skill Centres (IISCs) and partnerships facilitated through Government-to-Government (G2G) Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The establishment of 30 IISCs, as announced in the FY24 interim budget, marks a significant step towards enhancing India's global skilling footprint. Currently operational centres in Varanasi and Skill Development Institute (SDI)

Bhubaneswar exemplify this initiative's early success, with plans finalised for seven more centres in the first phase.

Additionally, India has forged MoUs with prominent countries including Australia, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Qatar, UAE and the UK for cooperation in information exchange, standard setting, mutual recognition of qualifications etc. Such partnerships not only promote the international mobility of skilled Indian workers, but also promote the global recognition and acceptance of Indian qualifications.

INITIATIVES FOR FUTURE SKILLS

The Government is driving skill development in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Green Energy and Semiconductors to prepare a future-ready workforce. AI and Robotics courses have been introduced at the school and higher education levels, alongside micro-credentials and National Occupational Standards (NOS). 498 futuristic qualifications in areas such as EV manufacturing, AI/ML, drone technology and health-tech have been developed. In 2023-24, 1027 qualifications, 66 standalone NOS and 42 micro-credentials were approved, while 3577 outdated qualifications were archived. As of March 2024, 4093 active qualifications exist, including 391 related to future skills.

The green energy sector is projected to see a 30% increase in employment by 2030. The Green Energy Skill Capacity Building Framework supports the transition to a sustainable energy economy. It focuses on advancements in renewable technologies (solar, wind, hydropower, bioenergy, geothermal), energy storage (lithium-ion, solid-state batteries, green hydrogen) and smart grids (Advanced Metering Infrastructure, microgrids, and EV infrastructure). The framework promotes blended learning and sector-specific skilling plans across various energy sectors. Key initiatives include Training of Trainers (ToT), Training of Assessors (ToA), industry-academia collaboration, apprenticeships, and standardised certification processes.

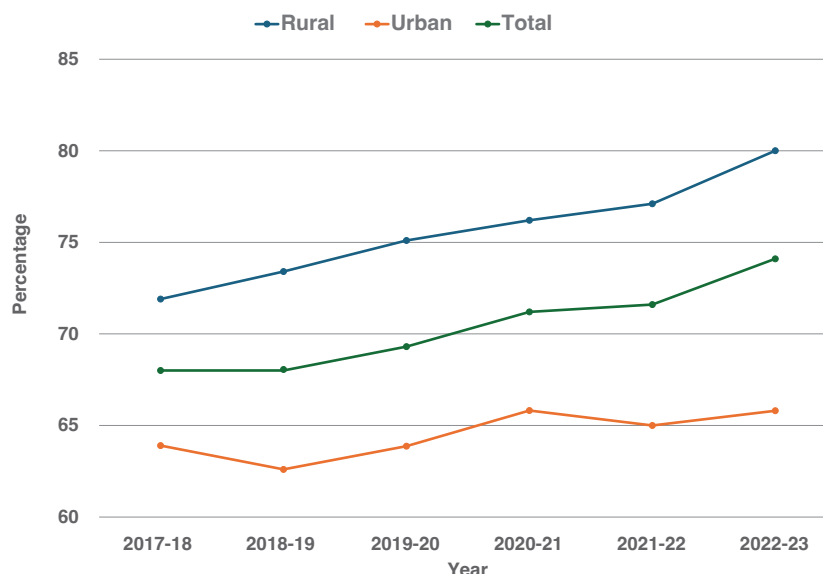
CHANGING CONTOURS OF INFORMAL SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Employment in India continues to be predominantly concentrated in the informal sector (See Figure 30). However, rapid digital penetration is reshaping this landscape. The Economic Survey 2023-24 underscores the need for India to generate on average 78.5 million non-farm jobs annually until 2030 to fully engage its expanding workforce, a critical step toward leveraging the demographic dividend and facilitating a structural shift from agriculture to non-farm employment. In this evolving environment traditional informal work is increasingly

complemented by digital-driven roles, such as those enabled by UPI payments, gig platforms and small vendors have been included in the formal banking through digital intermediation.

Recent statistics reveal that the informal sector contributed approximately 45% to the total GDP in FY 2022-23. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023-24 indicates that about 61% of women employed in the non-agriculture sector are engaged in informal enterprises.

Figure 30: Percentage of workers in informal sector among total workers engaged in non-agriculture sector



Source: Periodic Labour Force Survey, NSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

Various policy interventions of the Government are aimed at addressing the challenges associated with informality. The E-Shram Portal acts as a one stop solution providing easy access to Union and State Government welfare schemes for over 300 million workers in the unorganised sector. A Platform Workers module has been developed on e-Shram to facilitate verification of Platform Workers registered on the portal through aggregators. Platform Aggregators are being encouraged to register on e-Shram portal and also register the platform workers engaged with them. These steps are being taken in order to work towards extending full social security coverage to gig and platform workers. Government has conducted extensive stakeholder consultations with aggregators, knowledge partners, platform worker organisations and State Governments/UTs to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the Social Security Code, 2020. These consultations also aimed to develop collaborative approaches for a social security framework tailored to gig and platform workers. A collaborative study is being undertaken with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to comprehensively assess various factors related to platform workers and develop a roadmap for implementing a social security scheme for platform workers. In order to provide more support to gig workers the latest budget includes extending healthcare benefits under PM Jan Arogya Yojana to the platform workers and is projected to benefit approximately 10 million gig workers.

SUPPORTING MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSME)

With more than 63 million Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the country, the MSME sector has emerged as a highly vibrant and dynamic sector of the Indian economy, fostering entrepreneurship and generating employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital cost, next only to agriculture. MSMEs play a vital role as ancillary units, complementing large industries and significantly contributing to the country's inclusive industrial growth. These enterprises are continually expanding their presence across various sectors of the economy and offering a diverse array of products and services to meet both domestic and international market demands.

The Government has been focusing on formalisation of these enterprises to provide an identity to the MSME enterprises and ease of doing business. As of December 2024, as many as 57 million MSMEs, with an employment of 241.4 million are registered on Udyam Registration Portal and Udyam Assist Platform (UAP). The Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises is one of the flagship schemes of providing collateral free loans to Micro and Small Enterprises. This scheme was revamped in the year 2023, wherein ceiling limit of guarantee coverage was

enhanced from ₹20 million to ₹50 million; the annual guarantee fees reduced; and threshold limit for waiver of legal action was increased.

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) is providing employment opportunities through establishment of micro-enterprises in the non-farm sector by providing Margin Money (subsidy) to beneficiaries availing loan from banks for setting up new enterprises. It aims to provide employment opportunities to traditional artisans/ rural and urban unemployed youth at their doorstep. Since inception of the scheme from FY 2008-09, more than 987,000 micro enterprises have been assisted across the country, providing estimated employment to 8 million persons.

In order to facilitate MSMEs national and global reach the MSME Champions Scheme is playing a crucial

role in selecting clusters and enterprises and modernising their processes, reducing wastage and sharpening business competitiveness. The Scheme offers MSMEs certifications at three levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold) along three dimensions: 'MSME-Sustainable' (ZED), 'MSME-Competitive' (LEAN) and 'MSME-Innovative' (Incubation, Design, IPR). Financial assistance for multiple testing and certifications is also being introduced to provide comprehensive support to MSMEs.

Launched with the vision of "Funding the Unfunded" Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) extends collateral-free loans to small enterprises that face significant challenges in accessing formal institutional credit. Since 2015, ₹ 11.58 trillion worth of MUDRA loans have been sanctioned to marginalised communities including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs.

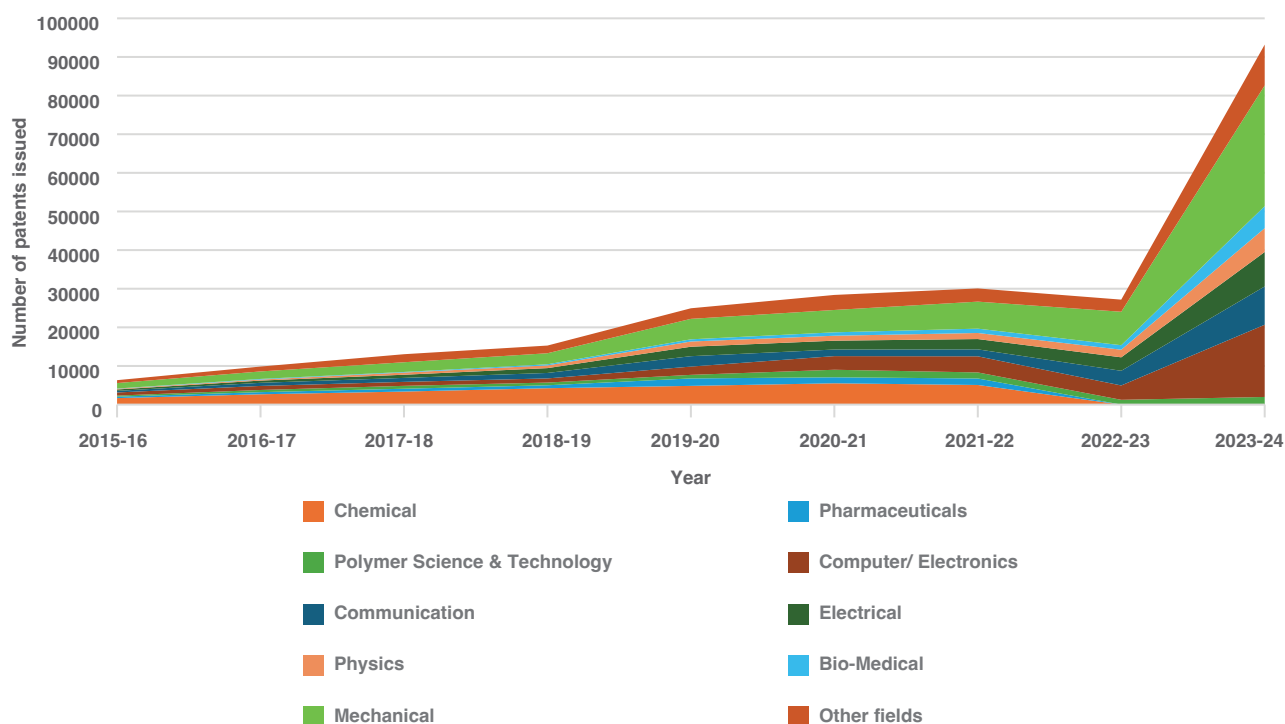
PROMOTION OF MSME AMONG SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

National SC-ST Hub is promoting entrepreneurship amongst the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This has positively impacted target beneficiaries by providing professional support in upgrading their skills, facilitating market linkages and holding support which resulted in a 17-fold increase in public procurement from SC/ST MSEs (in terms of value) i.e., ₹ 993.7 million in 2015-16 to ₹ 17.22 billion (approx) in 2023-24 as reported on the MSME Sambandh portal.

BOOSTING INNOVATION AND HARNESSING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The World Intellectual Property Indicators 2024 report highlights significant strides by India in fostering innovation through intellectual property (IP) initiatives. India is in the top 10 across the three main intellectual property (IP) rights included in the WIPI, with both patent and industrial design applications more than doubling between 2018 and 2023 and trademark applications increasing by 60%. Further, among the top 20 origins India recorded the fastest growth in patent applications (+15.7%) and industrial design applications (+36.4%) in 2023, marking the fifth consecutive year of double-digit growth. Moving up by one spot, India is in 10th position in industrial design applications (+36.4%) in 2023.

The Patent Office has granted 1,03,057 patents in FY 2023-24. Various steps taken by the Government to further strengthen the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) ecosystem in India have included modernisation of IP offices using IT enabled and advanced technologies so that all documents filed before the Patent Office are completely digitised and are made available online for proceedings leading to final disposal. As a result, applicants need not visit Patent and Trade Marks Offices for filing, processing and getting Patent and Trademark grant/registration certificates. Owing to fee concessions in patents applications there has been a significant increase in Patent filings by Startups, MSMEs and Educational Institutes (See Figure 31).

Figure 31: Total number of patents issued

Source: Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry

National Intellectual Property Awareness Mission (NIPAM) was launched in December 2021 to impart IP awareness and basic training in educational institutes across the country, and as a consequence more than 2 million persons have been trained about IPRs so far. Also, IP awards have been conferred every year to recognise and reward the top achievers and many among them were also invited as special guests to Government of India in the Republic Day Celebration 2024 to recognise their efforts. A dedicated “Start-Ups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) Scheme” was also introduced in 2016 to support Startups in securing their IP and encouraging innovation and creativity among them. The scheme has been facilitating startups in filing and processing of their patent, design or trademark application through the assistance of IP Facilitators, whose fee is borne by the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademark. Since the implementation of the scheme there has been a significant increase in IP applications by startups.

Over the past few years the country has seen an unprecedented surge in formal MSME registrations through digital platforms like the Udyam Portal (See Figure 32) and Udyam Assist Platform - marking a significant shift towards formalisation and ease of doing business. This growth has been matched by a substantial rise in credit flow (See Figure 33) to the sector, reflecting both improved access to finance and increasing institutional confidence in MSMEs. Simultaneously, India’s start-up landscape has undergone a remarkable transformation with thousands of ventures being officially recognised under the Start-up India initiative (See Figure 34), underscoring the success of enabling policies, entrepreneurial energy and a supportive innovation ecosystem. Collectively, these trends highlight how targeted reforms, digital infrastructure and grassroots enterprise are driving inclusive economic development, especially in non-metropolitan and underserved regions.

Figure 32: Number of MSME registered under the online Udyam registration Portal(including Udyam Assist Platform)

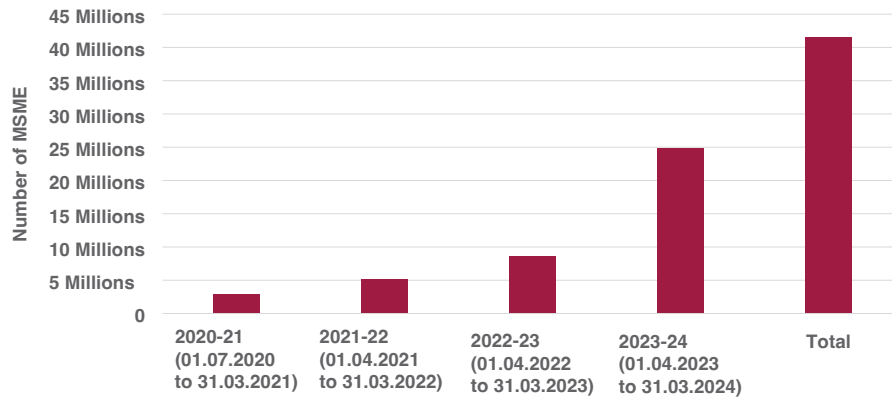


Figure 33: Outstanding Credit to MSME (in ₹ billions)

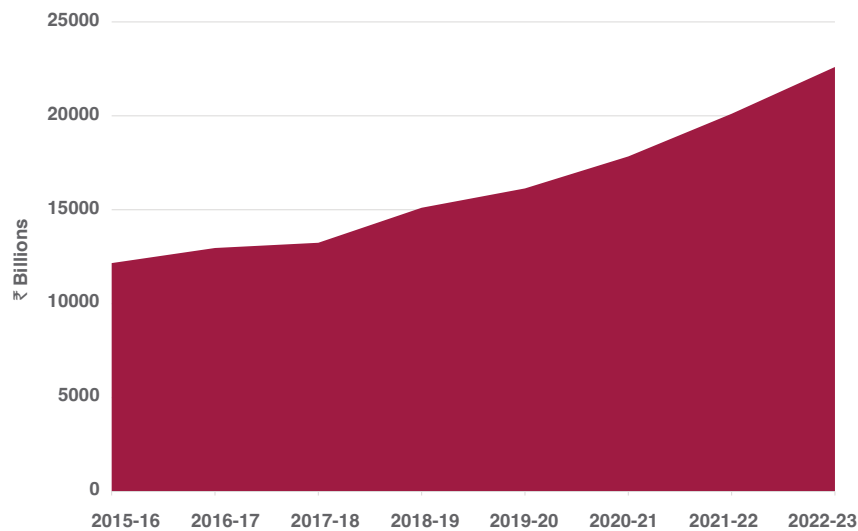
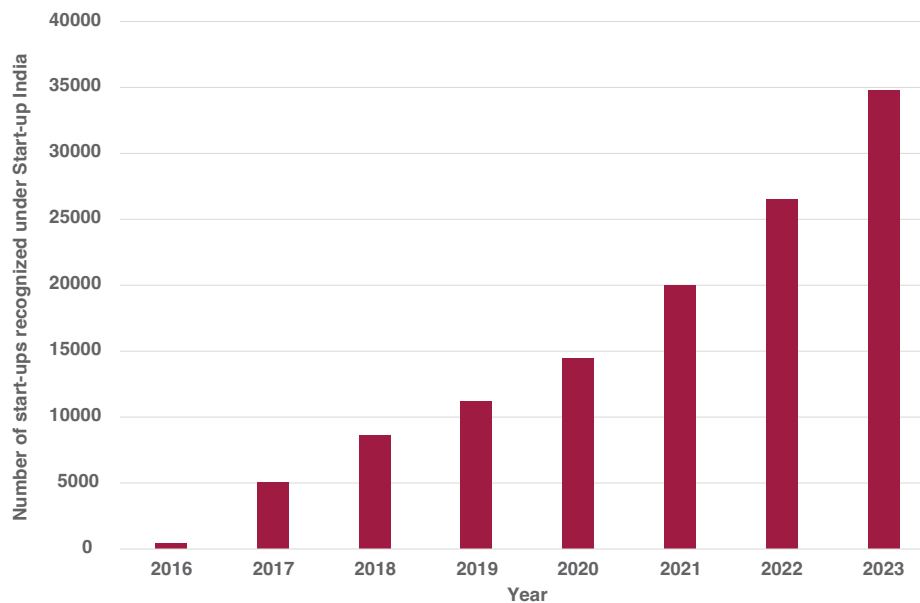


Figure 34: Number of start-ups recognized under Start-up India (in number)



Source: Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (8.3.3 & 8.3.4) and Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (8.3.5)

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

India's tourism sector rich in heritage, culture and diversity is a key driver of economic growth. The tourism sector created 76 million jobs in the financial year 2023 and its contribution to GDP regained the pre-pandemic level of 5% in the same time period.⁶⁶ Recognising its potential for employment-led development the Government has decided to allocate resources to enhance infrastructure, skill development and travel facilitation. Programmes such as Hunar Se Rozgar Tak, Entrepreneurship Programme, Skill Testing & Certification and Tourism Awareness Programme are being conducted through the government and empanelled private institute under the 'Capacity Building for Service Providers' (CBSP) Scheme to train and upgrade professionals to provide better service standards. Further, Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme has created an online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well-trained professional tourist facilitators across the country to support tourists.

WAY FORWARD

India's progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 8 which focuses on promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, reflects both significant advancements and persistent challenges. With the largest population of young people globally and a median age of 28, India has a unique opportunity to leverage its demographic dividend. With 65% of the population under the age of 35, India holds a demographic advantage; and is formulating programmes to equip people with industry-relevant skills needed in a modern economy. Additionally, the proportion of skilled workers has improved significantly from 34% to 51.3% over the past decade. Recognising the pivotal role of human capital in driving economic growth and innovation, the Government has actively implemented measures to enhance skilling and employment opportunities. These efforts are supported by improved intellectual property frameworks, policy reforms and initiatives empowering start-ups, MSMEs and academic institutions.

India's employment challenge lies not only in job creation but also in enhancing the overall quality and employability of its workforce. The Economic Survey 2023-2024 emphasises that labour and technology

must complement each other to ensure sustainable growth. History demonstrates that automation when carefully integrated with institutional support has historically increased employment-to-population ratios. In this context, the future of work in India revolves around 'Augmented Intelligence,' where human capabilities are enhanced by machine integration rather than replaced. Leveraging its young and tech-savvy population India has the potential to create a workforce that utilises AI to augment productivity and efficiency across sectors. However, building enabling institutions to support this transition requires mobilising substantial intellectual and financial resources which is a time-intensive process.

Despite these advancements, wage disparities persist across sectors, particularly in the informal economy. To address these vulnerabilities the focus continues to be on ensuring that skilling programs go beyond certifications and focus on equipping individuals with practical expertise tailored to dynamic industry demands and self-employment opportunities.

Female employment and women's contribution to the workforce will be critical. Female workforce participation has seen a positive trend over the past six years with increased economic engagement and declining unemployment rates among women. The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for women aged 15 years and above rose from 22.0% in 2017-18 to 40.3% in 2023-24, while their Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) increased from 23.3% to 41.7%. Female unemployment dropped significantly from 5.6% to 3.2%, reflecting greater inclusion in economic activities. Ensuring further equitable participation in the future workforce by both women and men will be critical. As India advances in AI and digital transformation, the Government is focusing on leveraging women's participation in digital employment platforms, enhancing women's digital literacy and expanding AI-driven skilling programmes for women. Ensuring sustainable workforce participation for women also requires addressing challenges such as wage disparities and access inequalities effectively. By nurturing a dynamic workforce equipped with employable skills through targeted interventions India can harness its demographic dividend to drive inclusive economic growth while preparing for the evolving demands of a globalised economy powered by technology integration.



GOAL

09



**Industry,
Innovation
and
Infrastructure**

SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) encompasses essential elements for economic growth and sustainable development. It focuses on building quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure that supports economic development and human well-being. Additionally, it aims to promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation among various targets. Investment in infrastructure sectors such as transport, irrigation, energy and others is crucial to ensure the sustainable development of many countries.

With a strong focus on enhancing industrial capabilities, creating world-class infrastructure and fostering innovation, India's signature "Make in India" initiative aims to position India as a key player in the global economy. Supported by major programmes like Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes, PM Gati Shakti, the National Logistics Policy and comprehensive tax reforms like the Goods and Services Tax (GST), "Make in India" continues to drive economic growth, job creation and global competitiveness.

In India, the enhanced infrastructure and new initiatives such as the Dedicated Freight Corridor and various Industrial Corridors have played a pivotal role in fostering sustainable industrialisation. Additionally, efforts directed towards innovation have propelled significant progress in the country's ranking on the Global Innovation Index from 48th in 2020 to 39th in 2024.⁶⁷

The Government has made considerable strides in creating an enabling environment for startups through landmark reforms aimed at improving the Ease of

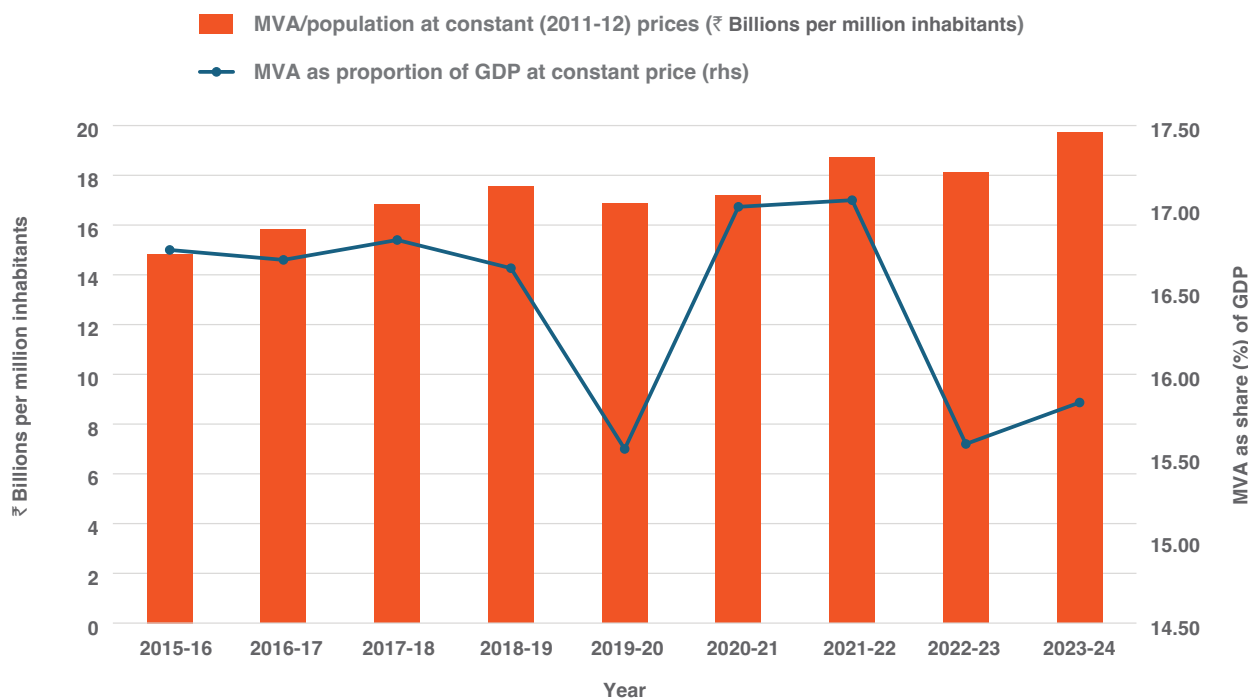
Doing Business. Over 40,000 compliances have been simplified or removed and numerous laws have been decriminalised to allow businesses to operate more freely and fairly. These measures are complemented by the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) which reserves a significant portion of its resources for Seed funding for small startups and supports deep-tech innovation with approval of initiatives, like the government's Second Fund of Funds for Startups. By mobilising patient capital the Government is seeking to foster indigenous technology solutions that address national priorities and position India as a global innovation leader.

PROMOTING MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRY

Significant progress has been made in manufacturing, investments and job creation, increasing the share of real manufacturing value added per capita. As seen in Figure 35, manufacturing, while steadily recovering, remains slightly below its pre-pandemic trajectory. These include improvements in ease of doing business, driven by digitisation and procedural simplifications and India's rise as the world's second-largest mobile phone manufacturer. These successes can be credited to zero tolerance for corruption and targeted sectoral efforts for attracting both domestic and international investments. Looking ahead, further growth in the manufacturing sector is expected which will create millions of jobs and expand manufacturing contribution to the economy.



Figure 35: Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and per capita



Source: National Accounts Division, NSO, MoSPI

India's manufacturing sector has gained momentum through flagship programmes like Make in India and the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, targeting sectors such as electronics, textiles, automobiles and pharmaceuticals. Today, 'Make in India' initiative is transforming India into a global hub for design and manufacturing. Its core objectives were to facilitate investment, encourage innovation and develop world-class infrastructure. The initiative's focus on developing a robust manufacturing sector promises to elevate India's economic trajectory and generate employment opportunities for its vast young workforce.

Now with the "Make in India 2.0" phase encompassing 27 sectors, the programme continues to drive forward with significant achievements and renewed vigour, reinforcing India's position as a major player in the global manufacturing landscape.

Keeping in view India's vision of becoming 'Atmanirbhar', Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes for 14 key sectors are under implementation to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities and exports. By targeting industries like electronics, textiles, pharmaceuticals and automobiles, the initiative offers financial incentives tied directly to measurable outcomes such as higher production and

incremental sales. Actual investment of around US\$ 18.72 billion has been reported till November 2024. These investments have already led to a remarkable boost in production and sales, amounting to around US\$ 162.84 billion, while directly and indirectly generating employment of over 1.15 million jobs.⁶⁸

ENHANCING INFRASTRUCTURE

India's infrastructure development has advanced significantly, especially in terms of improving transportation connectivity. Rural connectivity increased from 47.38% in 2017–18 to 99.70% in 2023–24 as a result of programmes like the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), which has linked almost all targeted habitations with all-weather roads.

The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan has been implemented at Centre, State and district level to assess last-mile connectivity gaps and ensure seamless movement of people and goods. It is a transformative approach for planning multimodal infrastructure connectivity to economic nodes, thereby bringing logistics efficiency. Till date, 44 Ministries (8 Infrastructure, 16 Social, 15 Economic, 5 other) have been boarded and 1652 data layers

(718 Ministry data layers and 934 State data layers) have been uploaded on the GIS-data based portal⁶⁹. The initiative has helped in addressing implementation challenges and environmental issues at the planning stage. Gaps in first and last mile connectivity are being identified along with planning of projects for taking up by the relevant authorities. The social sector Ministries that have been boarded on are planning their projects such as schools, health-care centres, anganwadi etc., on the initiative's portal, which is benefitting the vulnerable population of the country. And based on PM Gati Shakti area development approach principles the District Master Plan (DMP) Portal has been launched for 27 aspirational districts.

Complementing this initiative, schemes such as the Bharatmala Pariyojana, Sagarmala Programme, Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme and the development of Dedicated Freight Corridors are transforming national highways, ports, airports and rail freight corridors into modern and interconnected networks.

The Government is also promoting Industrial Infrastructure Parks through schemes like the

Modified Industrial Infrastructure Upgradation Scheme (MIUS) and PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) parks to attract private investment, ensure plug-and-play infrastructure and streamline regulatory approvals through the Single Window Clearance Systems. In the healthcare and life sciences sector the Promotion of Medical Device Parks Scheme supports the creation of specialised parks with common testing facilities, regulatory assistance and R&D infrastructure. These parks are strategically located near economic hubs and aligned with logistics frameworks under the National Logistics Policy, ensuring supply chain efficiency and cost competitiveness.

Recognising India's vulnerability to climate change the Government is increasingly prioritising sustainable and climate-resilient infrastructure. The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) places a stronger emphasis on green infrastructure, such as flood-resilient transportation systems, energy-efficient buildings and renewable energy grids. Projects are being assessed through a "green lens" to align with India's net-zero emissions target by 2070 and its commitments under the Paris Agreement.

INDIAN FOOTWEAR AND LEATHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This programme encourages development of infrastructure for the leather and footwear sector, addresses environmental concerns specific to the footwear and leather sector, facilitates additional investments, employment generation and increase in production. Till date 546 applications have been approved under Integrated Development of Leather Sector Scheme (IDLS) assistance of Rs 370.38 Crore. 4 projects under Sustainable Technology Environment Protection (STEP) sub-scheme are approved for setting up of Common Effluent Treatment Plans (CETP). The scheme provides employment to 4.42 million people out of which 40% are women and is also helpful in strengthening the Micro and Small units.⁷⁰

STRENGTHENING THE START-UP ECOSYSTEM TO DRIVE INNOVATION

To drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities, in 2016, India started Startup India, an initiative intended to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country. Its Action Plan is based on three pillars: Simplification and Handholding; Funding Support and Incentives; and Industry-Academia

Partnership and Incubation. By the end of 2024, 1,57,706 startup certificates had been issued which were reported to create over 1.728 million jobs. The number of States with dedicated start-up policies increased from 4 in 2016 to 31 State/UTs policies in 2024⁷¹.

INDIA – A STARTUP HUB

- 3rd largest start-up unicorn nation in the world with 118 unicorns that have a total valuation of over USD 354 Billion.
- 48% of the number of startup certificates have at least 1 woman Director.
- 51% of the number of startup certificates issued in non-metro cities.
- Startups are spread across 56 Industries and top 5 Industries are IT services, Healthcare and Lifesciences, Education, Agriculture and Construction.

A major success of the Startup India initiative has been funding support granted to startups at every stage of their startup journey. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) has been created to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialisation. This support enables startups to graduate to a level where they can raise investments from angel investors or venture capitalists or secure loans from commercial banks or financial institutions. A Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) has been formed to increase capital availability as well as to catalyse private investments and thereby accelerate the growth of the Indian startup ecosystem. Support has been created to provide guarantees through schemes like the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups

(CGSS) which aims to ease access to early-stage debt requirements for startups. The objective of CGSS is to provide guarantees up to a specified limit against credit instruments extended by Member Institutions for startup financing.

To encourage entrepreneurs the National Startup Awards are being conferred to selected startups that have demonstrated exceptional capabilities and have built innovative, scalable and impactful business solutions. The fourth and the most recent edition for the National Startup Awards launched in 2023 received applications from startups across 36 States/UTs, for 19 categories. 21 winners (20 unique startups) were selected and each of the winning startups were awarded a prize money of ₹ 10 million.



BHASKAR: A REVOLUTIONARY PLATFORM FOR INDIA'S STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

The Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR) initiative, launched in 2024 under the Startup India programme, is a platform to centralise, streamline and enhance collaboration among key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors, mentors, service providers and government bodies. By serving as a centralised registry, BHASKAR enables seamless access to a wide array of resources, tools and knowledge that helps fuel the entrepreneurial journey from ideation to execution and enable collaboration for all ecosystem stakeholders.

While building on the accomplishments of Atal Innovation Mission 1.0, such as Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) and Atal Incubation Centres (AIC), Atal Innovation Mission 2.0 has been significant in piloting new initiatives designed to fill gaps in the ecosystem and scaling successes. It aims to strengthen India's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem by supporting more innovators and entrepreneurs, helping more startups succeed and by encouraging entrepreneurs to create better jobs, products and services. The establishment of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) in 2023 has marked a pivotal moment in the country's efforts to promote innovation with initiatives like the Prime Minister's Early Career Research Grant and the EV-Mission programme promoting electric vehicle adoption.

WAY FORWARD

India's progress toward SDG 9, which focuses on promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, building resilient infrastructure and fostering innovation, reflects a combination of significant advancements and ongoing challenges. Manufacturing exports have slowed significantly due to weak demand from destination countries and aggressive trade policies in major economies. Additionally, while above-average monsoon activity has replenished reservoirs and supported agriculture, it has also disrupted sectors like mining, construction and manufacturing.

Infrastructure gaps remain a critical issue but the significant continued investments in expanding road networks, upgrading airports and advancing metro projects reflect a comprehensive strategy to enhance connectivity and mobility.

The government is working towards aligning India's regulatory framework with global business standards,

promoting investor confidence, facilitating smoother business operations, and enabling a greater ease of doing business environment in the country. The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 decriminalises minor offences and eliminates 183 criminal provisions across various Acts.

India's predominantly service-oriented economy presents another challenge as much of its workforce is engaged in low-value-added roles vulnerable to automation. To address, this fostering innovation through programmes like Startup India remains crucial for driving inclusive economic growth and creating a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. The focus on disruptive technologies through initiatives like the FFS (Fund of Funds for Startups) underscores the importance of integrating research and development with market strategies to scale prototypes and accelerate commercialisation.

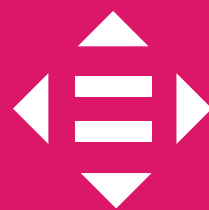
Looking ahead, addressing issues such as limited access to finance for small-scale industries, infrastructure bottlenecks and skill mismatches is essential. Strengthening institutional frameworks to support industrial diversification and innovation is equally important. By leveraging its demographic dividend and advancing technological capabilities, India has the potential to overcome these challenges and emerge as a global hub for sustainable industrialisation and innovation. Through sustained efforts in policy reform, financial support for startups and infrastructure development, India can ensure that its progress toward SDG 9 contributes meaningfully to broader economic growth and social equity goals.

Additionally, India may strive for high-quality and climate-resilient infrastructure development, encourage innovation with consistent funding (particularly in deep-tech areas) and establish an inclusive industrial base to fully realise the potential of SDG 9.



GOAL

10



Reduced
Inequalities

The goal calls for progressively reducing not only income inequalities but also inequalities-of-outcome by ensuring access to equal opportunities and promoting social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or any other status relevant within a society. It also aims at enhancing representation and voice for developing countries in decision making in international economic and financial institutions.

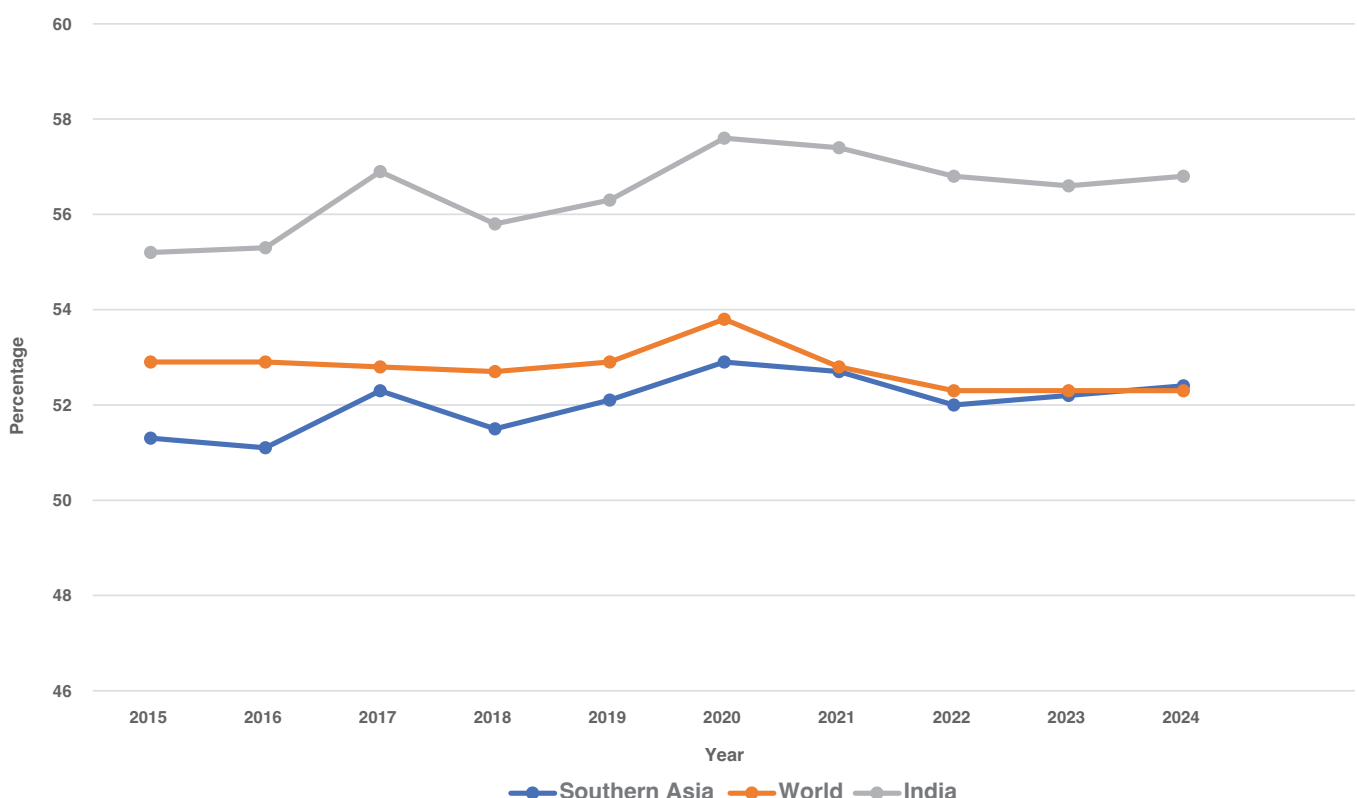
In India, contrary to much of the rest of the world, inequalities along many dimensions are narrowing, such as between the relative share of labour and capital in the country's economy as well as the gap between rural and urban consumption expenditure. Government efforts have aimed at reducing inequality primarily through the regulation and monitoring of financial markets and institutions, as well as by promoting development and investment in regions where needed. Expenditures on vulnerable segments of society have also yielded positive results. Many specific initiatives introduced by the government seek to share the country's prosperity more widely,

especially for groups that have been vulnerable and faced obstacles in the past. These include the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana which has revolutionised financial inclusion, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi which provides income support to farmers, as well as Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan and Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission which have targeted support to vulnerable tribal communities to further their social and economic empowerment.

ISING SHARE OF LABOUR INCOME IN THE ECONOMY AND NARROWING OF RURAL-URBAN GAPS

While the share of labour in GDP globally continued to decline due to the financialisation of the global economy and rising inequality worldwide, in India the reverse has been true as the growth in the labour force has increasingly played a stronger role in the economic growth of the nation (See Figure 36).

Figure 36: Labour share of GDP



Source: SDG Labour Market Indicators (ILOSDG)

At the same time, new household consumption expenditure data has confirmed that the urban-rural gap in consumption expenditure is narrowing. The urban-rural gap in average Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) has declined to 71% in 2022-23 from 84% in 2011-12. It has further come down to 70% in 2023-24, which confirms the sustained momentum of consumption growth in rural areas. The Gini coefficient has been declining in recent years. For rural areas it declined to 0.237 in 2023-24 from 0.266 in 2022-23, and in urban areas it fell to 0.284 in 2023-24 from 0.314 in 2022-23.⁷²

INCREASED GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON VULNERABLE REGIONS AND POPULATIONS

Budget expenditures on vulnerable regions and vulnerable populations have also been increased. Enhanced investment in infrastructure across the Northeast, particularly in the sectors of health, education, shelter, water and road access, will significantly improve living conditions. Strengthening access to essential services and livelihoods through their inclusion in government welfare schemes, such as the Public Distribution System (PDS), the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), the Jal Jeevan Mission and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) will contribute to their socio-economic well-being and integration. Expanding these interventions will ensure a more resilient and inclusive response.

The percentage of budget allocated for welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes stands at a combined 24 percent of the total budget allocated to the Union Government schemes. This has sharpened policy attention on reducing inequalities faced by these marginalised and vulnerable groups in line with SDG 10. Similarly, the Aspirational District Programme and Aspirational Block Programmes have sought to reduce inequalities in the most vulnerable districts and blocks in the country from the rest of the country as a whole.

ENSURING BENEFITS REACH EVERYONE AND TARGETING THE VULNERABLE

The Government through the implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) initiative has enabled real-time and transparent fund transfers for over 1,206 schemes in FY 2024-25, processing transactions worth ₹ 2.23 trillion. These schemes include Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojna, Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh, National Social Assistance Programme, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna Rural and PM-Surya-Ghar. Extensive integration with more than 100 external systems and seamless interfaces with major banks has enhanced efficiency and accountability.

Launched in 2023, the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PMJANMAN) focuses on uplifting Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). It aims to improve the quality of life for PVTG communities through targeted support in areas such as safe housing, clean drinking water, education, health, road and telecom connectivity, electrification and sustainable livelihoods. The Mission is aimed at targeted development of 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) residing in 18 States and 1 UT, who were unreached by earlier schemes.

Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Vikas Mission aims to foster tribal entrepreneurship and advance the "Vocal for Local by Tribal" initiative. It emphasises empowering tribal communities to harness natural resources effectively, including Minor Forest Products (MFPs) and non-MFPs, by supporting businesses centred around locally produced goods. Seeks to achieve livelihood-driven tribal development across the country by providing forward and backward linkages by setting up Van Dhan Vikas Kendras / Van Dhan Producer Enterprises.

A concerted effort is being made by the Government of India and various stakeholders to create a more inclusive and equitable society for persons with disabilities. Initiatives such as Sugamya Bharat Abhiyaan, the National Disability Information Helpline service, employability skills courses, and platforms that aggregate employment opportunities and provide vocational training with guaranteed

placements play a crucial role in this regard. These efforts are enhancing accessibility, promoting information dissemination, fostering skill development, creating employment opportunities, and supporting infrastructure development, laying a strong foundation for continued progress in empowering and integrating persons with disabilities. The subnational governments are also focused on fostering inclusivity, for instance, Nagaland has created the YouthNet Incubation Centre which is the first incubation space in the Northeast dedicated to Persons with Disabilities.

ENSURING SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR THE POOREST AND MOST VULNERABLE

As part of the government's efforts to provide financial assistance National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) continues to provide social security to senior citizens, widows, disabled persons and bereaved families on death of primary breadwinners belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in rural and urban areas.

With an aim to cover people in the unorganised sector, the Atal Pension Yojana is creating a universal social security system for all Indians, especially the poor, the underprivileged and the workers. It has been designed in such a way that it provides

Sampurna Suraksha Kavach (complete coverage) to not only the subscriber by providing a life-long defined and guaranteed pension amount but also to the spouse by providing the same pension amount after the demise of the subscriber and then to the family by returning the entire corpus (accumulated till the age of 60 years) to the nominee after the death of the subscriber and spouse. The programme has seen a surge in enrolments, reaching 73.3 million by January 2025, with more than 8.995 million new enrolments in FY 2024-25.⁷³

The Government has launched an umbrella scheme “SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise” which includes two sub-schemes - ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons’ and ‘Central Sector Scheme for Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’. This umbrella scheme covers several comprehensive measures including welfare measures for both transgender persons and persons who are engaged in the act of begging with focus extensively on rehabilitation, provision of medical facilities, counselling, education, skill development, economic linkages etc. with the support of State Governments/UTs/Local Urban Bodies, Voluntary Organizations, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and institutions and others. Currently, it is active in 81 cities and towns, including key pilgrimage, historical and tourist locations with plans to expand to 50 more cities in the next phase.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial inclusion remains a key government priority, striving to provide banking, credit and insurance services to the unbanked and underserved. Through initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana the Government is working to empower individuals, secure financial futures and promote entrepreneurship. The motto "From Jan Dhan to Jan Suraksha," encapsulates the vision of financial security and inclusive growth for all.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) ensures comprehensive financial inclusion of all households in the country by providing universal access to banking facilities with at least one basic bank account to every household, financial literacy and social security cover. To provide accidental death and disability coverage, the Government has implemented the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), a one-year personal accident insurance scheme, renewable from year to year, that offers coverage for death/disability due to an accident and is available to people in the age group of 18 to 70 years having a bank account who give their consent to join and enable auto-debit.

In order to provide the rural poor with a platform for mutual support, savings and credit access, the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) is focusing on developing community institutions like Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Village Organisations (VOs) and Cluster Level Federations (CLFs). These groups offer collective resources to overcome poverty. It also places women at the core of development by forming SHGs and federating them into VOs and CLFs. It fosters social capital by involving women in decision-making, strengthening trust and cooperation within rural communities. More than 0.6 million trained Community Resource Persons (CRPs) are involved in thematic areas such as livestock, agriculture and financial services. Under the same programme Lakhpati Didi Initiative is empowering women to become financially self-sufficient. The goal is to create 30 million "Lakhpati Didis" (women earning ₹ 100,000 or more annually) by helping women to

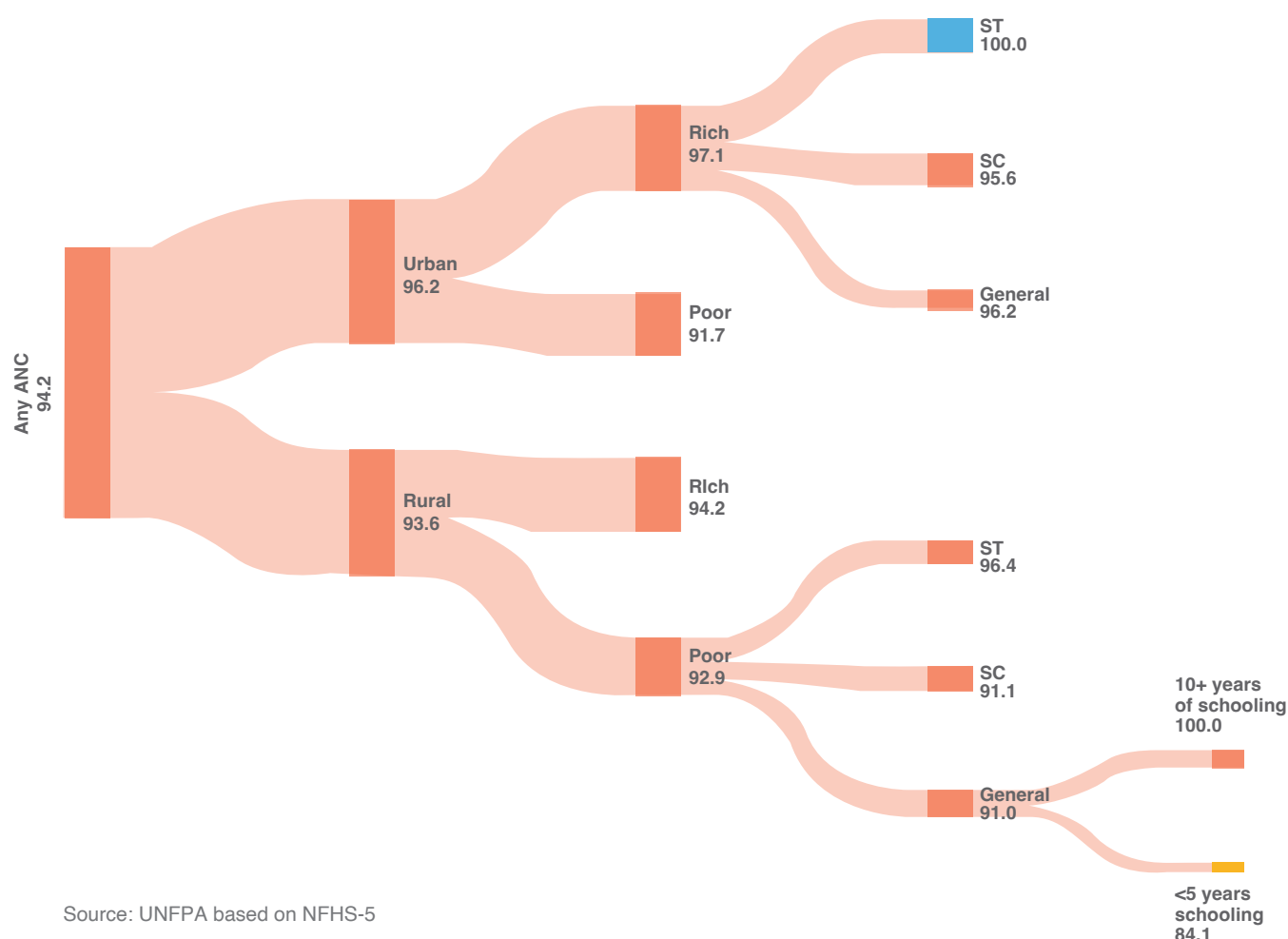
scale up businesses and contribute to sustainable development across rural India. So far, 11.5 million SHG women have become Lakhpati Didis in the country.

ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES OF OPPORTUNITY IN SDG PROGRESS

Reducing inequality requires understanding and addressing the barriers that hold back those left furthest behind by progress and closing the gaps between their achievements and those of society as a whole. Individuals or households facing these inequalities of opportunity often share a combination of overlapping socio-economic or demographic characteristics. For example, being both young and living in a rural area can mean you are less likely to have a bank account than either young people in general or rural inhabitants in general.

In 2024, a study was conducted to understand the inequalities in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and child health in Rajasthan, using an equity lens that focuses on marginalised subsections of the population.⁷⁴ To undertake a comprehensive analysis the UNFPA drew classification trees (See Figure 37) to show how the differences in access among groups of pregnant women can vary according to their socio-economic characteristics. This method deconstructs intersectionality by analysing the combined effects of various socioeconomic factors, such as wealth quintile, educational attainment, place of residence and caste categories. By stratifying the population across these dimensions the analysis highlights the most disadvantaged groups, helping to pinpoint those who are most marginalised in terms of access to services and outcomes. The furthest behind subpopulation that this tree shows are pregnant women in rural areas who are poor, non-ST/non-SC and who have received less than 5 years schooling. Among these women, just 84.1% received any antenatal care, compared with 94.2% for the state as a whole. This is useful information that can help the targeting of last mile delivery interventions towards the populations most at risk.

Figure 37: Classification tree of groups of women in Rajasthan (%) who received any type of antenatal care during pregnancy, 2019-21



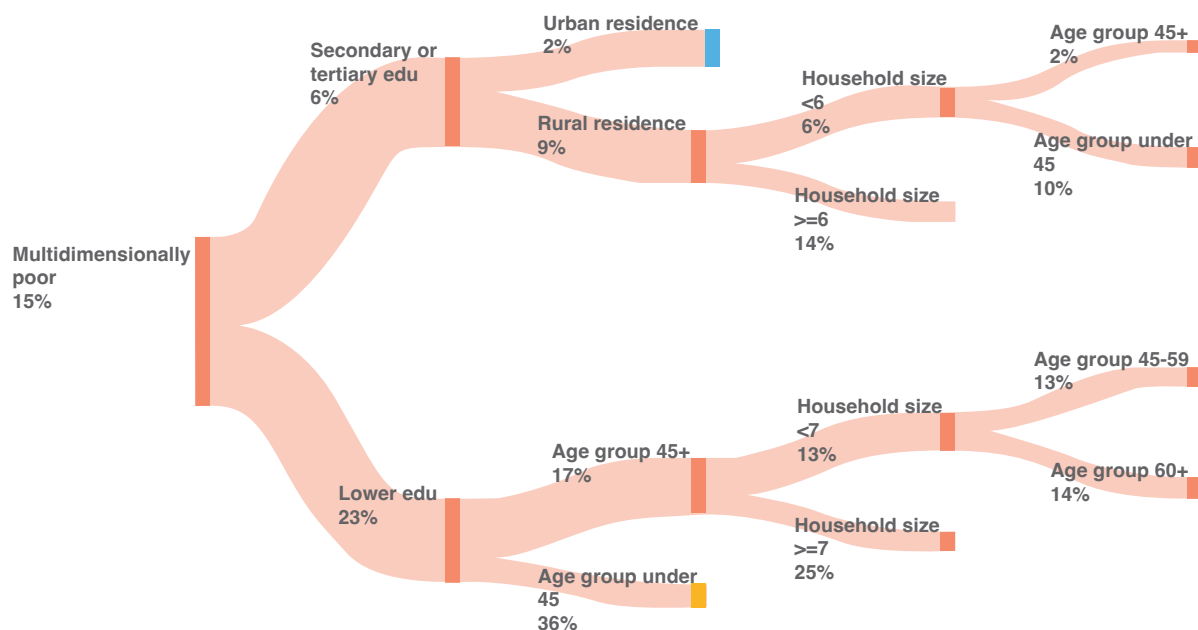
ESCAP's Leave No One Behind (LNOB) methodology of classification and regression tree (CART) analysis takes a similar approach to identify the socioeconomic characteristics that define groups of the population who are "furthest behind" and "furthest ahead" on various measures of SDG progress. The CART analysis is entirely data-driven and lets the partitioning of the data emerge from the underlying variation within household survey data sets, such as NFHS, PLFS, etc. CART uses a machine learning algorithm to draw predictive or decision "trees" through recursive binary splitting. The algorithm

calculates the differences in variance between all possible subsets of the data that can be constructed by stratifying the population across available categorical variables. The stratifying variable which produces the largest difference in variance between subpopulations defines the first branch in the tree. The algorithm then proceeds recursively to further subdivide the divided populations by the next most important source of variance, and so on, constructing the complete tree based on the underlying variation in the data.

This methodology can be applied to any SDG indicator calculated from a household survey dataset to identify the combination of categorical variables that define those who have been left furthest behind. It represents in a tree structure the mutually exclusive groups from the sample population with significantly different levels of access to an opportunity or

prevalence of a certain barrier. For example, Figure 38 draws the CART tree showing significant differences in prevalence of multidimensional poverty among subpopulations defined by available socio-economic and demographic variables available from the 2019-21 NFHS data.

Figure 38: Classification and Regression Tree Analysis for multidimensional poverty headcount ratio of different groups in India (%), 2019-21



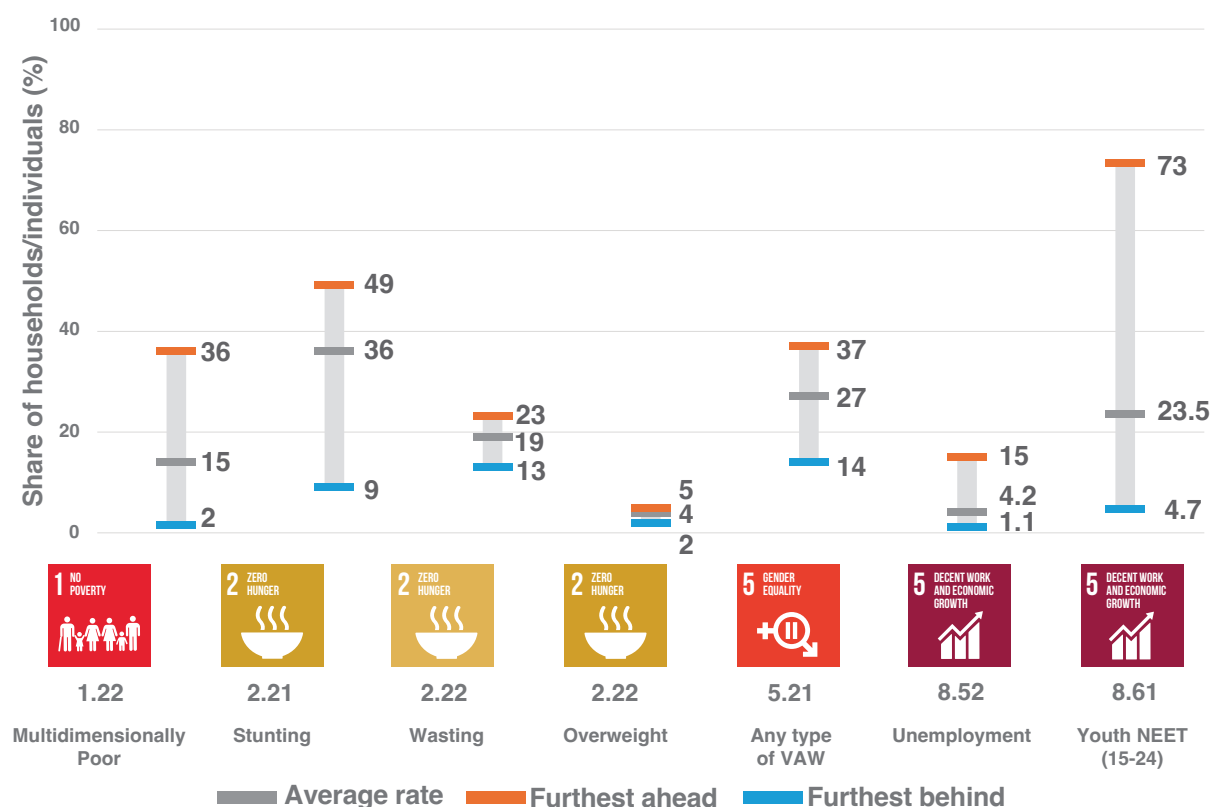
Source: ESCAP calculations based on NFHS-5

The root of the tree (14.96 percent, here rounded to 15 percent) shows the average prevalence of multidimensional poverty in the population. The orange “leaf” or “branch” of the tree shows that households where the family head is under age 45 and is educated only to primary level form the group within the population which is the “furthest behind” on progress reducing multidimensional poverty. 36% of this population is estimated to be multidimensionally poor. By contrast the “furthest ahead” group – depicted by the blue node – are households in urban areas that have a household head educated at secondary school level or higher. Just 2 among this

population are multidimensionally poor. The gap in achievement among identifiable groups within the population thus ranges from 2% to 36%, given the available data and the average value of 14.96%.

Figure 39 summarizes the gaps in SDG achievement that can be identified by CART analysis between furthest behind and furthest ahead groups that emerge from similar trees for other indicators. It shows the range of values between the furthest behind and furthest behind groups identified for each SDG indicator that are calculated from the NFHS and PLFS survey data and compares them with the national averages.

Figure 39: Gaps in SDG progress between furthest behind and furthest ahead groups identified by age, poverty, gender, rural/urban status, early 2020s



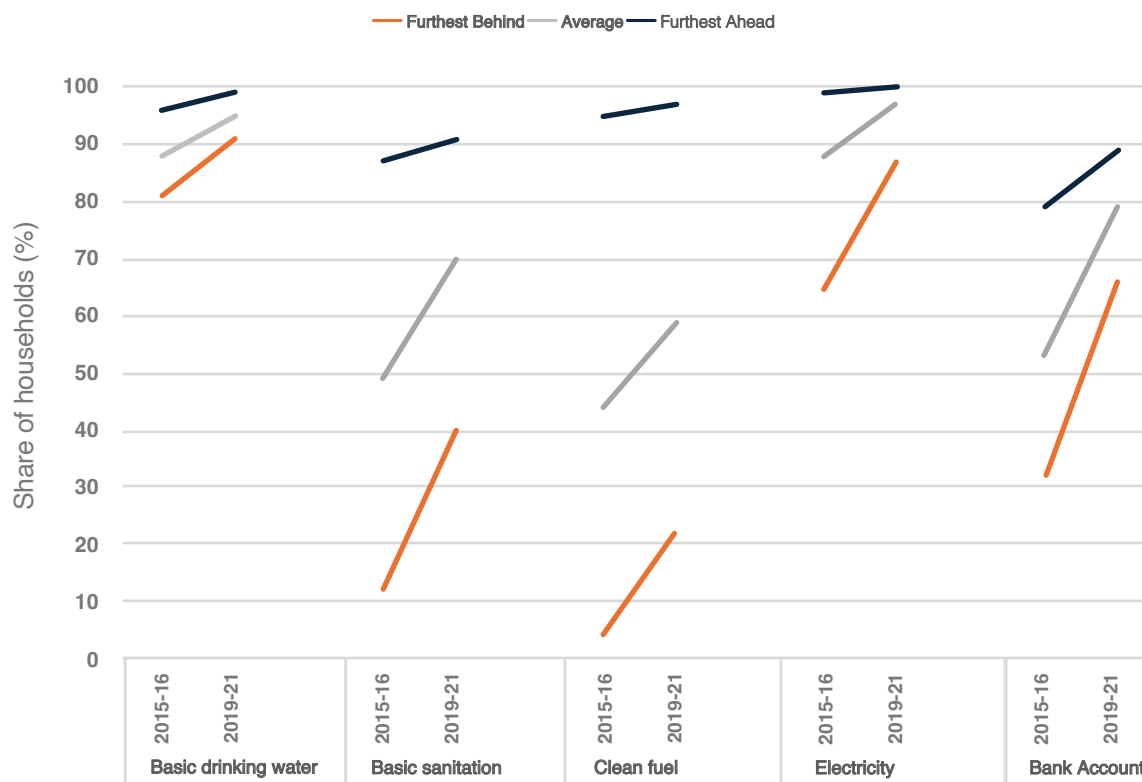
Source: ESCAP calculations based on NFHS Round 5 (2019-2021) and PLFS 2023.

Note: All results are weighted using respective weights. The results are validated against the published NFHS report online. The source of data for employment indicators is PLFS 2023.

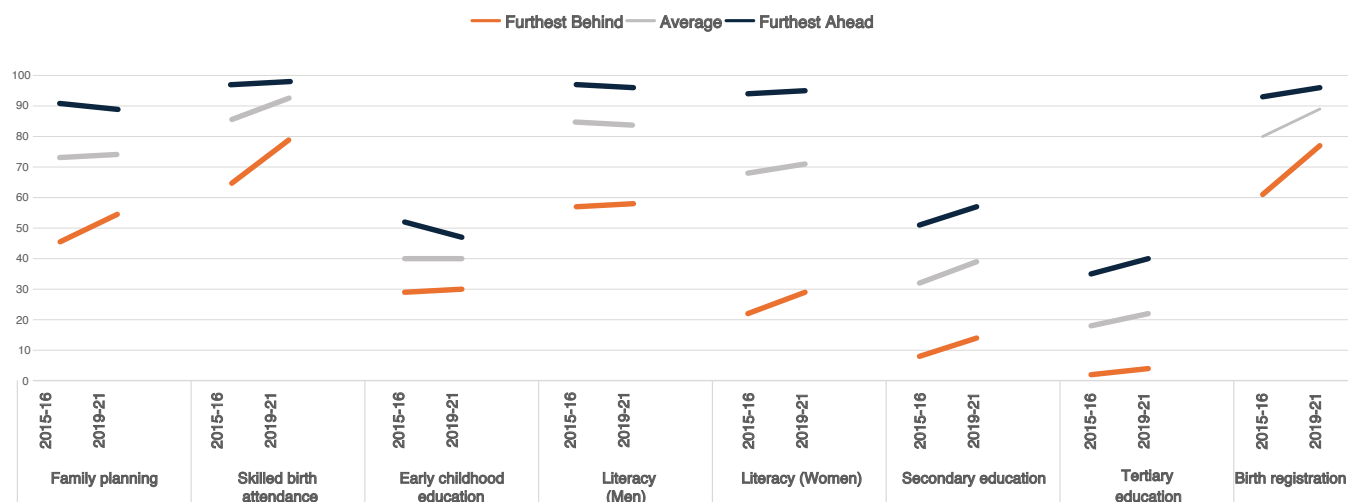
Importantly, over the past decade of India's SDG progress, the gaps in progress between the furthest behind and the national average have narrowed across most indicators. This means that in general the furthest behind groups haven't been left behind in progress. In fact, progress for those groups who were furthest behind in 2015-16 has been faster than

average across a wide range of SDG indicators. Figure 40 shows the gaps that have closed between the furthest behind groups and the furthest ahead compared with progress in the national average between National Family Health Survey Round 4 and Round 5.



Figure 40: Fewer people have been left behind as gaps narrowed, 2015-2021**40A. Gaps in household indicators, 2015-16 – 2019-21**

Source and Note: ESCAP LNOB Platform based on NFHS (2015-2016) and NFHS (2019-2021). Note that the circumstances that intersect in identifying the furthest behind and furthest ahead groups may change over time.

40B. Change in gaps for individual indicators, 2015-16 – 2019-21

Source: ESCAP LNOB Platform based on NFHS (2015-2016) and NFHS (2019-2021). Note that the circumstances that intersect in identifying the furthest behind and furthest ahead groups may change over time.

WAY FORWARD

In today's globalised world income inequality is increasingly shaped by economic dynamics and market forces that often lie beyond the direct control of any particular country. Despite these challenges India's recent experience demonstrates that national policies can still play a transformative role in reducing other forms of inequality, particularly those related to consumption and access to essential services. Through the effective design and implementation of targeted interventions focused on the convergence of initiatives and saturation of essential services through programmes like ADP and ABP, India has made

significant progress in narrowing disparities, fostering inclusion and ensuring that benefits continue to reach individuals, particularly those from marginalised communities.

By continuing to focus on improving the delivery of programmes, increasing access to opportunities, enabling more technological innovation, strengthening governance, deepening investments in social protection and addressing structural inequalities with inclusive policies, India is equipping itself to sustain and advance progress towards SDG 10.





GOAL 11



**Sustainable Cities
and Communities**

SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) aims to foster inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. Sustainable cities and communities are founded on the principles of social, economic and environmental sustainability. Urbanisation has led to the creation of new jobs and opportunities, contributing to poverty reduction. The sustainable development of cities plays a pivotal role in national development, providing avenues for economic and social prosperity. Urban areas can address challenges of rapid growth by enhancing resource utilisation, reducing pollution and poverty and ensuring access to basic services, energy and housing, while simultaneously lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Rapid urbanisation has presented numerous challenges to infrastructure such as increased demand for resources like water, energy and transportation.

The Government is implementing multiple initiatives to support sustainable urbanisation. The National Smart Cities Mission, an urban renewal and retrofitting programme, aims to develop smart cities nationwide. The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is dedicated to establishing infrastructure capable of providing robust sewage networks and water supply to facilitate urban transformation.

Additionally, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) was launched to ensure affordable housing for all. Municipal solid waste management also remains a major environmental issue in Indian cities and therefore significant progress in urban waste management also remains an important area of focus.

Hundreds of small cities have a key role in achieving the resolve of a developed India by 2047. “Our government is upgrading basic facilities in such urban centres to improve ease of living.”

-Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi

SMART CITIES

The Smart Cities Mission (SCM) aims to enhance the quality of life in India's cities through smart, sustainable solutions. Its goal is to create cities that are economically vibrant, inclusive and environment friendly. By focusing on key areas like infrastructure, governance and social development, SCM seeks to transform urban living across the country. With 100 cities leading the initiative the mission is reshaping urban landscapes across India. As of December 2024, 91% of the projects under the Smart Cities Mission have been completed⁷⁵, which demonstrates the country’s commitment to creating smarter, more liveable urban spaces for all.

Under the Smart Cities Mission each of the 100 cities has selected a defined area for targeted interventions. These areas, chosen through citizen participation, are being developed as replicable models for other parts of the city. Each city also has included pan-city technology-driven solutions. Under SCM over 66 cities are managing solid waste with increased technology use improving route management, efficiency of collection and daily management. Water supply systems are being monitored, reducing non-revenue water and leakages. Over 1,740 kilometres of smart roads have also been constructed or improved and 713 kilometres of cycle tracks have been developed.⁷⁶

In addition to the core initiatives the Smart Cities Mission has introduced projects in response to emerging challenges. For example, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, campaigns like ‘Cycles4Change’ and ‘Streets4People’ were launched to promote open spaces for active living. To ensure inclusive access to public spaces, initiatives such as the ‘Placemaking Marathons’ and ‘Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge’ focused on vulnerable groups were created. Other challenges like ‘Transport4All’ and ‘EatSmart Cities’ aim to support public transport startups and improve food hygiene in smart cities.

CITIIS, or City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain, is a sub-component of the Smart Cities Mission. It aims to enhance sustainability, inclusion and liveability in cities across India through innovation-driven urban infrastructure projects, capacity building and knowledge dissemination.¹ Government has approved the ‘City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain 2.0 (CITIIS 2.0)’ in a 4-year programme with three components: financial and technical support for up to 18 Smart Cities on circular economy and waste management, climate action support for all States/UTs and national-level interventions for urban scale-up.

TRANSFORMING STRATEGIC AREAS INTO WORLD-CLASS INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC HUBS

As part of the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) India is focusing on development of futuristic industrial cities which can compete with the best manufacturing and investment destinations in the world. The programme emphasises integrating industrial, urban and economic development through creation of greenfield Industrial Smart Cities. These cities are characterised by:

- State of the art plug and play physical infrastructure (Multimodal connectivity, power supply, water systems, etc.).
- Technology driven solutions for efficient urban management.
- A focus on environmental sustainability through smart waste management systems and promoting green energy.
- Creation of employment opportunities and economic growth leading to overall socio-economic development.

The programme emphasises efficient and inclusive planning through a comprehensive area development approach, leveraging PM Gati Shakti's advanced data layers and analytical tools to identify optimal locations and meet future demand-supply requirements for infrastructure, encompassing manufacturing as well as socio-economic development. The project incorporates inclusive city planning principles to ensure equal opportunities for workforce participation across all genders, fostering a diverse and equitable work environment. The selection of manufacturing sectors has been carefully aligned with the regional context, taking into account the availability of local raw materials and labour resources. This approach is designed to maximise employment opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups residing in the surrounding areas, thereby promoting socio-economic upliftment and ensuring community integration within the industrial ecosystem.

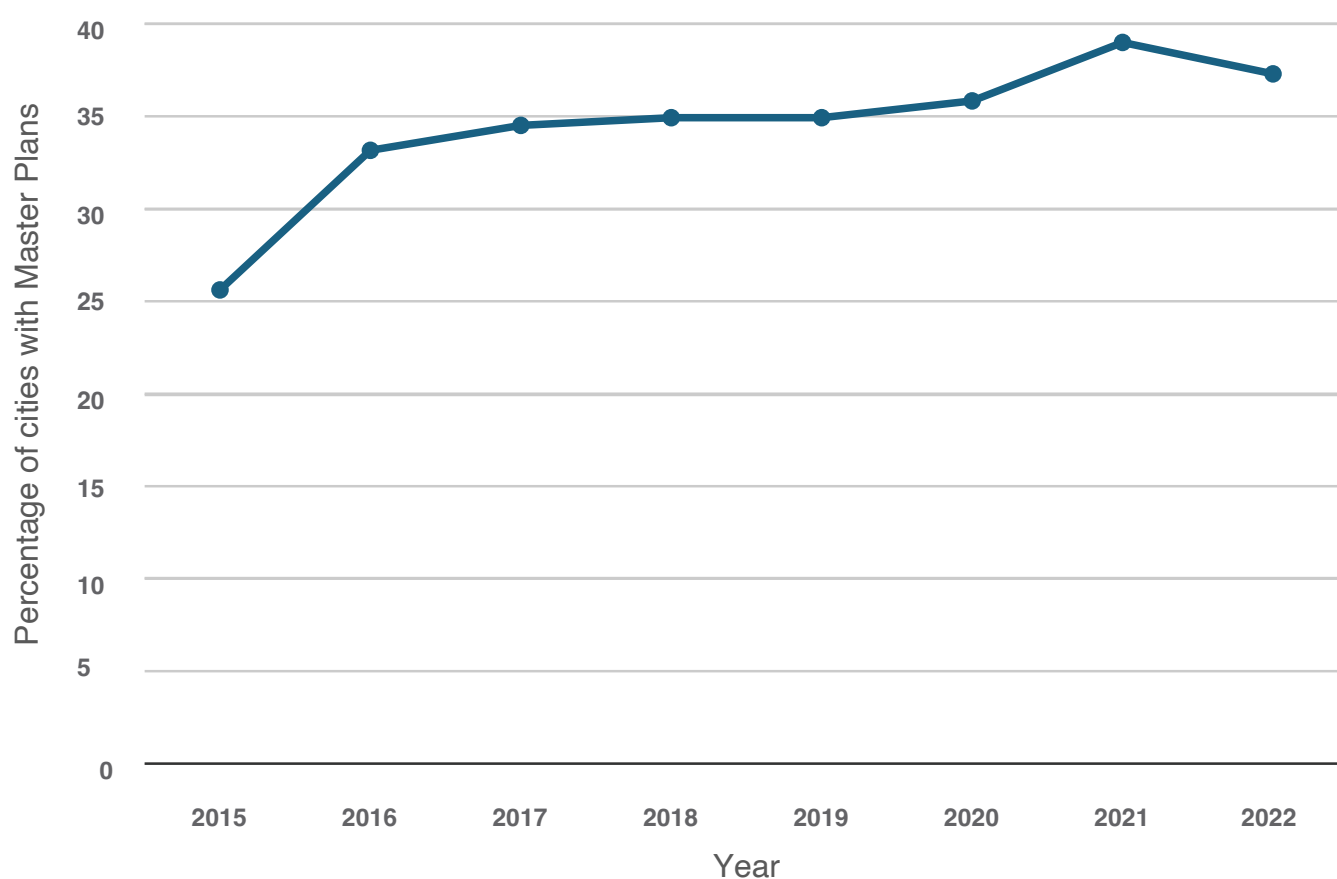


URBAN PLANNING

Since 2015, the proportion of Indian cities with Master Plans has risen from 1 out of 4 to more than 1 out of 3 (See Figure 41). The Government provides support to States / Union Territories for formulation of master plans by issuing advisories and design standards, providing schematic interventions and financial assistance, etc.

The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched in 500 cities in 2015. A sub-scheme of AMRUT focuses on formulating Geographical Information System (GIS) based master plans for AMRUT cities. This involves geodatabase creation, GIS based master plan formulation and capacity building, and covers 461 cities across 35 States / UTs. Final Geo database has been created for 447 cities. Draft GIS based master plans have been formulated for 154 cities and final GIS based master plans have been approved in 223 cities.⁷⁷

Figure 41: Proportion of cities with Master plans (in %)



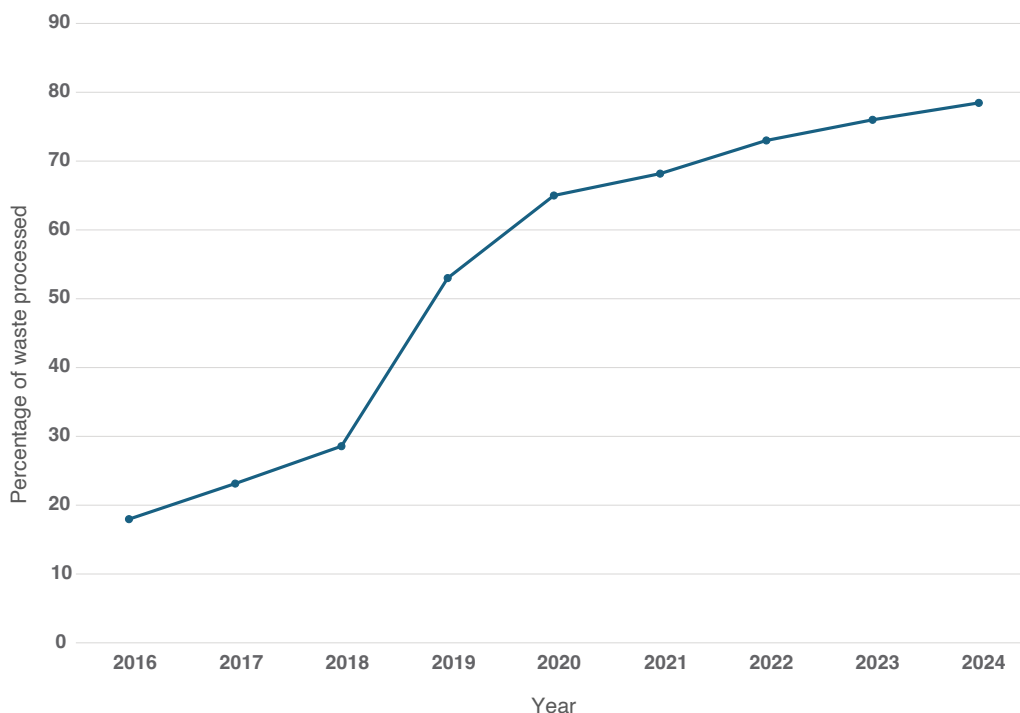
Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

IMPROVEMENTS IN WASTE MANAGEMENT

To deal with urban planning challenges related to garbage, waste and sewage, the government launched the Swachh Bharat Mission -Urban (SBM-U) in 2014. Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban

(SBM-U) 2.0 was launched in 2021, for a period of five years, up to 2026, with a vision of achieving safe sanitation and scientific processing of municipal solid waste in all cities.

Figure 42: Percentage of waste processed



Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Indian cities are also today processing much more of their waste (See Figure 42), due to initiatives like AMRUT 2.0. Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 scheme was launched in 2021 in all ULBs/ cities. These initiatives are enabling the cities to become 'self-reliant' and 'water secure'. Providing universal coverage of sewerage and septage management in 500 AMRUT cities is one of the major focus areas of AMRUT 2.0. Rejuvenation of water bodies, development of green spaces and parks and Technology Sub-Mission to leverage latest technologies in the field of water are other components of the Mission. The Government is prioritising storm water drainage systems to address waterlogging challenges alongside continuing efforts to enhance drinking water availability and sewerage systems.

The schemes are actively monitored through review at various levels of the information submitted by States/Union Territories on progress and through field visits. Additionally, the 'Swachh Survekshan' survey is conducted annually under SBM-U through third-party assessment to evaluate the cleanliness status and progress in the implementation of SBM-U in cities.⁷⁸

SAFE, AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

India currently has about 1011 km of metropolitan rail network including regional rapid transit system operational in 23 cities across the country. A number of advancements and technological innovations like the European Train Control System, Platform Screen Door and Indigenous Automatic Train Supervision systems have taken place. Installation of solar panels and adopting regenerative braking systems has

considerably reduced power consumption making metro projects more sustainable and environment friendly. 319 km of the Bus Rapid Transit System network is operational in the country and expansion to 505 km in 11 cities is already sanctioned.⁷⁹

PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Government has been implementing Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) since 2015 to provide pucca houses with basic amenities to all eligible urban beneficiaries. The scheme has been implemented in 4,618 Cities/Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) including all Metropolitan Cities across the country. Further, based on the learning from the experiences of 9 years implementation of PMAY-U, the Central Government has revamped the scheme and launched PMAY-U 2.0 'Housing for All' Mission with effect from September 2024 for implementation in urban areas across the country to construct, purchase and rent a house by 10 million additional eligible beneficiaries at affordable cost through four verticals i.e., Beneficiary Led Construction (BLC), Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP), Affordable Rental Housing (ARH) and Interest Subsidy Scheme (ISS).⁸⁰

In rural India, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin is improving access to affordable housing and playing a key role in transforming the rural housing landscape,

reducing poverty, improving living standards and fostering social and economic development.

ACCESS TO GREEN SPACES

In 2020, the Government launched the revised Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) in an effort to enhance the urban greenery for improving the quality of life and increasing social cohesion in cities. These Nagar Vans are not only vital environmental resources but also provide a space for recreation, environment education, biodiversity conservation and a tool for adaptation towards climate change making the cities climate resilient. The scheme provides financial assistance for the creation and maintenance of these urban forests, encouraging the involvement of citizens, students and other stakeholders in the creation and management of these green spaces. Nagar Van areas range from a minimum of 10 ha to 50 ha. Emphasis is on biodiversity, Planting fruit-bearing, medicinal and native species to attract wildlife and promote ecological balance. Community participation is central with opportunities for public engagement through tree planting, educational programmes and sustainable management. Each Nagar Van must have at least two-thirds of its area under tree cover and have components like Biodiversity Parks, Smriti Vans, Butterfly Conservatories and Herbal Gardens. The Nagar Van Yojana aims to develop 1000 Nagar Vans by the year 2027.



WAY FORWARD

India is urbanising rapidly with projections indicating that by 2030, more than 40 percent of the population will live in urban areas. Urban development has become a key government priority, focusing on modernising cities, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of urban living. The establishment of a ₹ 1 trillion Urban Challenge Fund in 2025⁸¹ demonstrates the government's strong commitment to sustainable and inclusive urban growth. This fund supports initiatives such as Cities as Growth Hubs, Creative Redevelopment of Cities and Water and Sanitation projects, reflecting a comprehensive approach to urban transformation.

However, the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, including cyclones, floods, heat waves, water scarcity and drought-like conditions, has adversely impacted many cities causing loss of life and affecting economic growth. In response, the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF) 2.0, launched in 2020, provides cities with a clear roadmap to combat climate change through planning and investment. This framework with its 28 progressive indicators across five thematic areas helps cities benchmark their development, identify gaps and prioritise climate-relevant actions. Strengthening climate-sensitive urban development is crucial as cities are at the forefront of addressing both urbanisation and climate change challenges.

Effective urban planning requires a deep understanding of each city's economic base, constraints and competitive advantages. The Government has recognised that focusing solely on tier-1 cities is insufficient. Programmes such as AMRUT 2.0, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)-Urban, Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban and the Smart Cities Mission have demonstrated the importance of tailoring measures to the specific needs of cities across different tiers. This approach ensures that the benefits of urbanisation reach every citizen, fostering inclusive growth.

The Government is also fostering a culture of innovation in urban development by reimagining cities as living labs that harness data and technology. This innovative mindset is essential for addressing the complex challenges of urbanisation and for creating sustainable and resilient cities.

Moving forward, India will continue to strengthen its urban development strategies by integrating climate resilience, innovation and inclusivity. Sustained efforts in planning, investment and governance will be critical to balancing rapid urban growth with sustainable infrastructure development and inclusive policies. By doing so India aims to build cities that are not only engines of economic growth but also models of sustainability and inclusiveness, ensuring a better quality of life for all residents.





CAUTION
CLEARANCE
TO
ONE METER
RESTRICTED

29
63



LONG LIVE
THE THRILL



70

70

70

LONG LIVE
THE THRILL

paisa

70

LONG LIVE
THE THRILL

paisa



GOAL

12



Responsible
Consumption and
Production

SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. This approach to economic development seeks to minimise the negative impact of human activities on the environment while promoting social equity and economic prosperity. According to the Oslo Symposium of 1994, sustainable consumption and production is defined as “the use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials, as well as the emission of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product, so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations.” Goal 12 emphasises the efficient use of natural resources, energy efficiency and sustainable infrastructure.

India is a part of international initiatives and agreements on sustainable consumption and production including the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10YFP) process. Government has given special consideration to renewable energy, organic agriculture, biofertilizers, reduced emission etc. in order to ensure responsible consumption and production. India has also pioneered international approaches to sustainable consumption and production through Mission LiFE, which is an India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment.

LIFESTYLES FOR ENVIRONMENT (LiFE)

Mission LiFE is a global initiative launched by India in October, 2022 aimed at fostering sustainable lifestyles through mindful and deliberate consumption to protect the environment. Following its introduction at COP-26 in Glasgow in 2021, Mission LiFE has also been recognised by the G20 in 2023 and has inspired the Sustainable Lifestyles resolution agreed by the UN Environmental Assembly in 2024.

Mission LiFE encourages individuals and communities to adopt eco-friendly behaviours, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving health and well-being at the same time. India is taking examples from its rich culture and from modern scientific solutions to strengthen collective awareness and action towards environmentally-friendly behaviour and choices.

The initiative focuses on seven core themes: saving water, conserving energy, reducing waste, managing e-waste, eliminating single-use plastics, promoting sustainable food systems, and adopting healthy lifestyles. Mission LiFE has been included, as a non-quantifiable indicators under Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

LiFE actions are easy to practice by individuals and promote economic activity in the foreseeable future. Mission LiFE aims to build a mass movement of people for adopting sustainable lifestyles based on mindful utilisation, minimising waste and making green choices, for themselves, their families and their communities.

ENSURE ACCURATE LABELLING AND PREVENT MISLEADING INFORMATION

Ecomark Rules 2024 encourage the demand for environment-friendly products aligning with the principles of 'LiFE', promote lower energy consumption, resource efficiency and circular economy. The scheme seeks to ensure accurate labelling and prevent misleading information about products. Products accredited under the Ecomark Scheme need to adhere to specific environmental criteria ensuring minimal environmental impact. This will build consumer awareness of environmental issues and encourage sustainable consumption. It will also motivate manufacturers to shift towards environmentally friendly production.

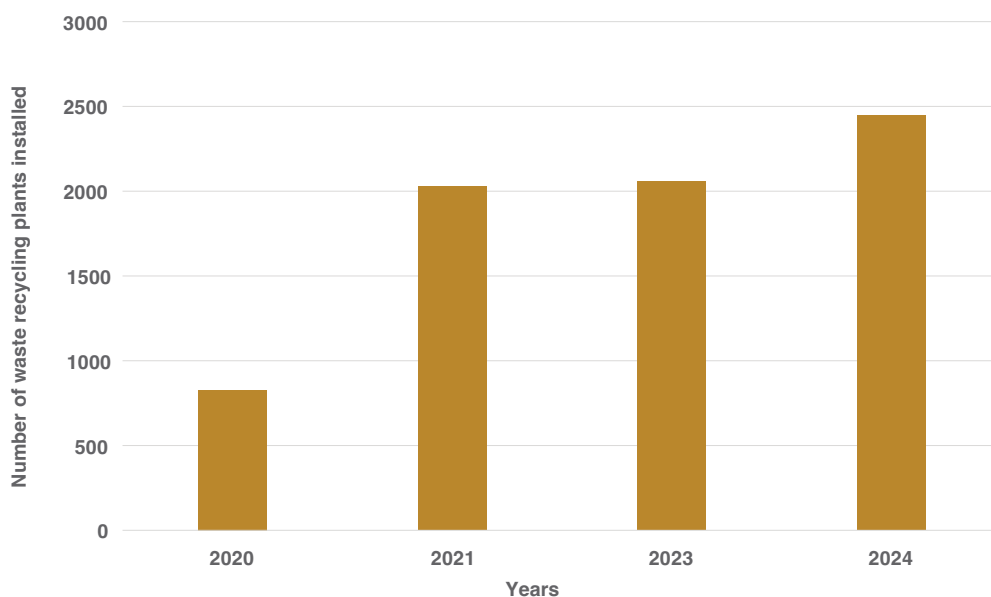
The scheme marks a significant step in promoting sustainable lifestyles and through individual and collective decision making, encourages sustainable consumption in India. It aligns with global sustainability goals and reflects the government's commitment to conservation and protection of the environment.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY: FROM WASTE TO WEALTH

India is shifting from waste management to harnessing the economic potential of recycling through waste to wealth initiatives. The circular economy will play a major role in reducing, reusing, and recycling at every stage, from product design to

end-of-life management. Waste should not be treated as a burden but as a resource. As such the number of waste recycling plants in the country has more than doubled since 2020 (See Figure 43).

Figure 43: Number of waste recycling plants installed



Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

By the year 2050 India's circular economy is expected to have a market value of \$2 trillion and create 10 million jobs, representing a sizable opportunity for start-ups and new recycled product developers. The recycling industry in the country is developing and adopting newer innovative technologies for reducing dependence on natural resources as well as cutting down imports of critical minerals needed for economic growth.

The Government has notified regulatory frameworks for Circular Economy in various waste streams. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) rules have been notified for plastic waste, tyre waste, battery waste, used oil waste and e-waste. Further, EPR framework for scrap metals, end of life vehicles, solid waste and liquid waste, construction and demolition waste are under active consideration. The EPR framework will not only enhance the circularity in economy but also help manage the wastes in

environmentally sound manner. A robust recycling industry will also create jobs and contribute to economic growth.

Generation of e-waste has increased over the past years and is increasing day by day due to increased usage of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) by consumers. To address this the Government revised the E-Waste (Management) Rules and revised rules came into force in 2023. The objective is to take all steps required to ensure that e-waste is managed in a manner that protects health and environment against any adverse effects from e-waste. These new rules intend to manage e-waste in an environmentally sound manner and put in place an improved Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regime for e-waste recycling wherein all the manufacturers, producers, refurbishers and recyclers are required to register on a specific portal.

SUSTAINABLE TEXTILE PRACTICES

As a large producer and exporter of textiles India has long championed sustainable textile practices, with our handloom heritage, natural dyes and traditional crafts embodying zero-waste principles. In alignment with Mission LiFE, India is taking bold steps to tackle textile waste through policy interventions, industry collaborations and grassroots initiatives.

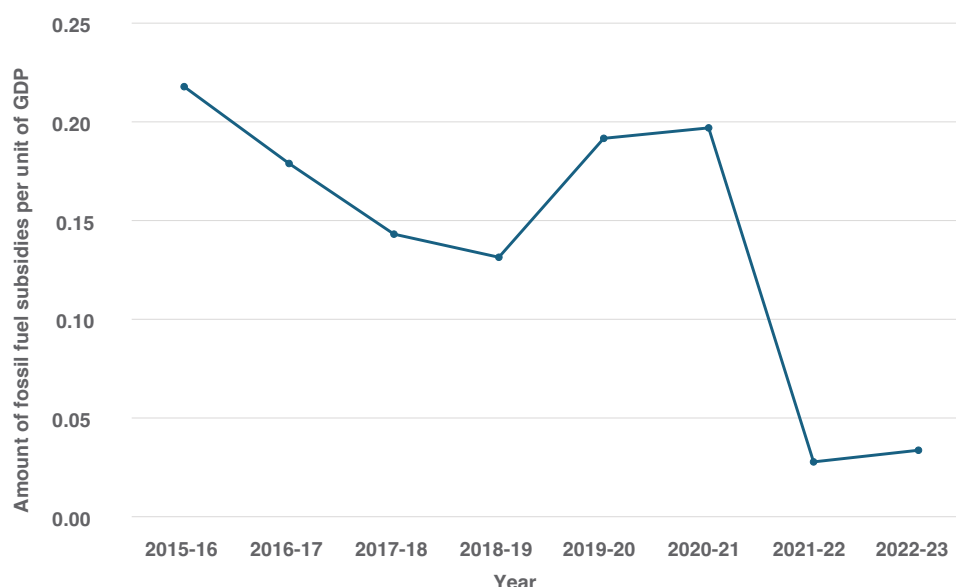
- **Project SU.RE (Sustainable Resolution):** In collaboration with major fashion retailers, this initiative commits brands to sourcing sustainable raw materials, improving waste management, ensuring ethical supply chains and overall minimising the industry's environmental impact.
- **Upcycling and Market Access Initiative:** This initiative empowers “last-mile upcyclers” by providing direct market access, eliminating intermediaries and streamlining supply chains.
- **Vocal for Local campaign:** India is promoting khadi, handloom and organic cotton—sustainable alternatives that support local livelihoods while reducing the reliance on fast fashion. The Government of India's "Vocal for Local" campaign encourages consumers to embrace eco-friendly, traditionally crafted textiles.

PHASING OUT FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES

India is also shifting its focus from an unsustainable dependence on fossil fuel subsidies to fostering clean energy. India's reform of fuel subsidies has slashed subsidies by a striking margin between 2014 and

2018.⁸² This has led to the level of fossil fuel subsidies per unit of GDP dropping dramatically since the advent of the SDGs (See Figure 44).

Figure 44: Amount of fossil fuel subsidies per unit of GDP



Source: a) Numerator - Ministry of Finance b) Denominator - National Accounts Division, NSO, MoSPI Periodicity: Annual

This shift was achieved through careful steps, including the gradual phasing out of petrol and diesel subsidies from 2010 to 2014, followed by measured tax hikes on these fuels up to 2017. These moves, though bold, were made to create fiscal breathing room for renewable projects, allowing the government

to channel funds into clean energy initiatives at an unprecedented scale. With subsidies for solar parks, distributed energy solutions and state-owned enterprises now steadily rising, India's commitment to clean power sets a strong example for others looking to shift toward a more resilient energy future.

RENEWABLE ENERGY – GLOBAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION MEET AND EXPO (RE-INVEST)

RE-INVEST is the governments' flagship event to showcase India's RE potential to the world and to invite investment in the sector by initiating multilateral dialogue. It is a global renewable energy investors meet and expo organised by the Government of India. It is a platform for bringing together global investors, developers, manufacturers and innovators in the renewable energy sector. The event aims to accelerate the development and deployment of renewable energy in India and connect the Indian energy stakeholders with the global investment community.

The 4th Edition of the RE-INVEST was organised in 2024 and highlighted India's commitment towards renewable energy. India committed to 540 GW of RE by 2030 from states/UTs. Financial institutions committed investments of \$386 billion and RE manufacturers committed to 340 GW of solar module capacity, 240 GW of solar cell capacity, 22 GW of wind capacity and 10 GW of electrolyser capacity.⁸³



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Environmental sustainability and socio-cultural sustainability are the two key pillars in the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism. In line with the strategy, the Travel for LiFE programme has been initiated to promote sustainable tourism in the country and to encourage tourists and tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices. In addition, the Swadesh Darshan Scheme has been revamped as

Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD 2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations following a tourist and destination centric approach. The Scheme encourages adoption of principles of sustainable tourism including environmental sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability and economic sustainability.

ZERO-WASTE HOUSING SOCIETIES

Several cities are rising to the challenge by adopting zero-waste strategies, transforming communities and housing societies into models of sustainable living. With over 123,000 tonnes of waste processed daily and 86,000 wards practicing door-to-door collection and segregation, India's urban waste management efforts are equally commendable. Zero-waste housing societies are playing a critical role in these advancements, reducing waste generation and fostering environmental consciousness. They exemplify the power of community-driven initiatives in transforming waste management across India.

In Navi Mumbai, the Seawood Estate NRI Cooperative Housing Society, with 1,500 residents, has emerged as a leader in zero-waste practices. The society generates around 1,000 kg of waste daily—600 kg of dry waste and 450 kg of wet waste. While dry waste is managed by the local municipal corporation, wet waste is processed on-site, producing approximately 50 kg of compost per day. The society also operates a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) with a capacity of 105 kilolitres per day, using treated water to maintain green spaces. In preparation for the monsoon season, the society has enhanced cleanliness efforts, including regular inspections and awareness drives.

Further south in Calicut, Kerala, the Rock Way Residents' Association has implemented 100% waste segregation in its 96 households. The society generates over 3,000 kg of waste per month, with bio-waste converted into energy through biogas plants or composted for household gardens. Tools like Bokashi buckets and Geebin Multi-Layer Aerobic Kitchen Compost Bins are used to produce over 1,500 kg of compost each month. To ensure hygiene during the monsoon season the society collaborates with the Haritha Karma Sena for waste management and undertakes pre-monsoon cleaning efforts.



WAY FORWARD

Key to India's progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 12 (SDG 12) is to enhance the adoption of advanced recycling technologies, which are essential to transforming waste management systems and improving recovery rates. More investment in advanced recycling technologies is needed as adoption of emerging technologies can transform waste management systems, thereby improving recovery rates.

India is prioritising the adoption of advanced recycling technologies to modernise waste management and enhance material recovery. Strengthening collaboration across the entire value chain is essential to optimise resource use, promote

circular production models and develop robust markets for recycled materials. Equally important is increasing consumer awareness and driving behavioural change through sustained campaigns that incentivise recycling and encourage sustainable consumption patterns.

India remains committed to working towards building a circular economy that not only supports environmental sustainability but also offers significant economic opportunities. With a projected market value of \$2 trillion and the potential to create 10 million jobs by 2050, advancing circularity presents a powerful pathway for inclusive growth.⁸⁴



आपातकालीन शटडाउन प्रक्रिया

आपातकालीन स्थिति में,

चरण 1 :
विद्युत पैनल पर जाएं।

चरण 2 :
ऊर्जा मीटर में निबंधक आपूर्ति, सौर बैटरी और सौर पीवी पैनल (संलग्न चित्र देखें) को बंद करें।

चरण 3 :
मदद के लिए
044 4011 4424
पर कॉल करें

EMERGENCY
SHUTDOWN

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CALL FOR HELP

044 4011

फार्म
फ्रेश



सब्जी



फल



करने योग्य...

- वास्तव में ठीक।
- उपकरण को ठीक से चलाएं और ठीक से रखें।
- उपकरण को ठीक से चलाएं और ठीक से रखें।
- उपकरण को ठीक से चलाएं और ठीक से रखें।
- उपकरण को ठीक से चलाएं और ठीक से रखें।

Do's...

- Keep the door closed.
- Read the installation manual before use.
- The product shall be installed by certified operators or authorized service personnel only.
- Clean the solar panels regularly.
- All keep the household's water tank filled.
- Use the eggs while loading and unloading produce in cold storage.





GOAL

13



Climate
Action

SDG 13 (Climate Action) aims to take urgent measures to combat climate change and its effects. This goal encompasses efforts to address and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The world is witnessing rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions and increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases, threatening lives, particularly in coastal areas. With the continuous rise in greenhouse gas emissions, there is a need for ambitious plans and accelerated actions for both mitigation and adaptation to climate change impacts. This includes access to finance and enhanced capacities. Goal 13 emphasises building capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate-related hazards and integrating these measures into national policies. It focuses not only on early warning systems but also on reducing impacts. Moreover, it highlights the importance of partnerships and commitment among nations to achieve these objectives since the causes and effects of climate change transcend national boundaries.

India's National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) comprises national missions in specific areas of solar energy, enhanced energy efficiency, water, agriculture, Himalayan ecosystem, sustainable habitat, green India, human health and strategic knowledge on climate change. This plan aims to achieve India's developmental objectives with a focus on reducing the emission intensity of its economy. India successfully achieved its pre-2020 goal of reducing emission intensity and is now implementing programmes to meet its post-2020 targets. The Government also remains committed to creating disaster-resilient societies and these efforts have significantly reduced casualties from disastrous events over the years.

INDIA'S CLIMATE TARGETS AND ACTION PLANS

There is an urgent need for decisive action to combat climate change, a challenge that is no longer a distant threat but an immediate reality affecting lives, economies and the future of the planet. Recognising India's responsibility as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, the country is committed to balancing sustainable development with global climate change mitigation efforts.

India's climate action is guided by its updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)⁸⁵ and the

long-term strategy to reach net-zero by 2070 and it cuts across various sectors of the economy. As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement, India submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)⁸⁶ in the year 2015, for the period 2021 to 2030. In August 2022, India updated its NDC according to which the target to reduce emissions intensity of its GDP has been enhanced to 45 percent by 2030 from 2005 level. Likewise, the target on cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources has been enhanced to 50% by 2030. India also formulated and submitted its Long-Term Low Greenhouse Gas Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) to UNFCCC in November 2022. LT-LEDS involves seven key strategic transitions, namely: (i) Low carbon development of electricity systems consistent with development; (ii) Developing an integrated, efficient, inclusive low-carbon transport system; (iii) Promoting adaptation in urban design, energy and material-efficiency in buildings, and sustainable urbanisation; (iv) Promoting economy-wide decoupling of growth from emissions and development of an efficient, innovative low-emission industrial system; (v) CO₂ removal and related engineering solutions; (vi) Enhancing Forest and vegetation cover consistent with socio-economic and ecological considerations and (vii) Economic and financial aspects of low-carbon development and Long-Term Transition to Net-Zero by 2070.⁸⁷

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) provides the overarching framework for all climate actions and comprises missions in specific areas of solar energy, enhanced energy efficiency, sustainable habitat, water, sustaining Himalayan ecosystems, Green India, sustainable agriculture, human health and strategic knowledge for climate change.

India has progressively continued the process of decoupling economic growth from GHG emissions. Between 2005 and 2020, India's emission intensity of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reduced by 36% as against the updated NDC target of 45% by 2030. During 2005 to 2021, additional carbon sink of 2.29 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent has been created against a target of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon sink through additional tree and forest cover by 2030⁸⁸. By February 2025, the share of non-fossil sources in the installed electricity generation capacity was 47.37% against the updated target of 50% by 2030⁸⁹

Despite India's very low contribution to historical emissions and to the current levels of global emissions, India has taken several climate actions to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, as enshrined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement.

Thirty-four States/UTs have prepared and some have updated their State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) in line with NAPCC addressing region-specific vulnerabilities such as extreme weather events (floods, droughts) and shifting monsoon patterns. These SAPCCs outline sector-specific and cross-sectoral priority actions, including adaptation and climate resilient infrastructure.

India has developed various sector-specific strategies to strengthen its climate goals. These goals include:

- **Energy Sector:** Investments in renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and biomass, alongside the implementation of smart grids and energy storage.
- **Transportation:** Promotion of electric vehicles (EVs) and enhancement of public transportation systems.
- **Agriculture:** Focus on climate-resilient crops, improved irrigation and sustainable farming practices.
- **Urban Development:** Encouragement of sustainable urban planning, green building practices and waste management initiatives.
- **Water Resources:** Promotion of water conservation, rainwater harvesting and enhanced river basin management.
- **Disaster Management:** Strengthening resilience against climate-induced disasters through improved early warning systems and community preparedness.



AT A GLANCE: EIGHT KEY MISSIONS OF NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

- **National Solar Mission:** Aims to promote solar energy technologies and achieve 100 GW of solar power capacity by 2022. This mission has propelled solar energy growth, with installed capacity rising from 9.01 GW in 2016 to 97.86 GW in 2025.⁹⁰
- **National Wind Energy Mission:** Focuses on expanding wind energy capacity and encouraging innovation in wind technology.
- **National Mission for Energy Efficiency:** Seeks to enhance energy efficiency through programmes such as the Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) scheme.
- **National Mission on Sustainable Habitat:** Aims to promote energy efficiency in buildings, urban planning and waste management.
- **National Water Mission:** Focuses on water conservation and equitable distribution, addressing the impacts of climate change on water resources.
- **National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem:** Works to protect the fragile Himalayan ecosystem through research and monitoring.
- **National Mission on Agricultural Adaptation:** Aims to build resilience in agriculture by promoting sustainable practices and crop diversification.
- **National Mission on Green India:** Seeks to increase forest cover, restore degraded ecosystems and enhance ecosystem services.

REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

The Government amended the Energy Conservation Act in the year 2022 to facilitate the development of carbon markets in the country. Subsequently under the Act, the Government has notified the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS), which provides for two mechanisms, namely compliance mechanism and offset mechanism. In the compliance mechanism, the obligated entities are required to comply with the prescribed GHG emission intensity reduction norms in each compliance cycle of CCTS. The obligated entities which reduce their GHG emission intensity below the prescribed GHG emission intensity are eligible for issuance of Carbon Credit Certificates. Under the offset mechanism the non-obligated entities can register their projects for GHG emission reduction or removal or avoidance for issuance of Carbon Credit Certificates.

A plan has also been developed to smoothly shift energy-intensive sectors and Designated Consumers (DCs) from the Perform, Achieve, and Trade (PAT) Scheme to the compliance mechanism under the CCTS. This plan ensures continuity, consistency and alignment with national climate goals while avoiding duplication of targets. To initiate the transition the Government has identified nine energy-intensive sectors for inclusion under the compliance mechanism of the CCTS, namely Aluminium, Cement, Steel, Paper, Chlor-Alkali, Fertiliser, Refinery, Petrochemical and Textile. Under the offset mechanism ten sectors have been approved, which include energy, industries, waste handling and disposal, agriculture, forestry, transport, construction, fugitive emissions, solvent use and Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage.

IMPROVING DISASTER RESILIENCE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The Government has adopted a holistic approach to disaster risk reduction to address the whole range of issues in the entire disaster management cycle, ranging from preparedness, response, capacity building, recovery and reconstruction and mitigation by the use of innovative methods, technology and international cooperation. During the last few years, India built on its earlier efforts and made significant progress in disaster risk reduction. States are also actively developing specific initiatives, for example, the Government of Himachal Pradesh has started the Climate Resilient Villages (CRV) programme under which it has identified 100 climate sensitive villages. The focus is on reducing disaster risk, benefit in conservation of crops, food safety and empowering rural communities.

The National Landslide Risk Mitigation Programme has also been approved which includes implementation of landslide risk mitigation activities / projects in 15 States. Under the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project (NCRMP), early warning systems have been installed in the Coastal States, which helped in alert dissemination to the coastal community during the recent cyclones. A web-based Dynamic Composite Risk Atlas and Decision Support System (Web-DCRA and DSS tool) for cyclone risk mitigation and response planning has been developed. The tool has been successfully used in recent cyclones such as Biparjoy (June, 2023) and Michaung (December, 2023)

Aapda Mitra Scheme has been implemented and 1,00,000 community volunteers have been trained in disaster rescue in 350 multi-hazards disaster prone districts, covering all States/UTs. Each volunteer – Aapda Mitra or Aapda Sakhi – is given two-week intense training in disaster response (relevant to their area of operations), equipped with an Emergency Responder Kit (ERK) and provided insurance cover for five years. In addition, each district is provided an Emergency Essential Resource Reserve (EERR) for the use of Aapda Mitra during disasters.

Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) based Integrated Alert System has been implemented for dissemination of geo targeted early warnings/alerts related to disasters to the citizens of India for all 36 States/UTs using various disseminating medium like SMS, TV, Radio, Indian Railways, Coastal Sirens, Cell broadcast, Internet (RSS feed and Browser Notification), Satellite Receiver of GAGAN and NavIC etc., through integration of all Alerting Agencies. The alerts are sent to geo-targeted areas in regional languages. There is a web-based dashboard to disaster managers for approving/editing alerts and choosing media for dissemination.

India has developed an Indigenous climate model, namely the IITM-Earth System Model (IITM-ESM), which provides reliable future projections of Indian monsoon rainfall and is used in addressing climate variability and change issues across the region. The model is the first from India to contribute to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC-AR6). A number of mobile applications such as Damini, Mausam, Meghdoot etc. have been developed for timely dissemination of early warnings and alerts to the common people / farmers.



MISSION MAUSAM: ENHANCING WEATHER AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOR INDIA

Recognising the critical need for accurate weather forecasting, especially in a country where agriculture is a primary livelihood, the Government approved Mission Mausam, an initiative designed to make the nation 'Weather Ready' and 'Climate Smart'. It aims to improve weather and climate services, ensuring timely and precise observation, modelling, and forecasting information for multiple sectors, including agriculture, disaster management and rural development. Through collaboration with national and international research institutions, academia, and industry, Mission Mausam aspires to revolutionise India's weather and climate services while cementing its global leadership in this critical field. The initiative leverages cutting-edge technology, including high-resolution models and supercomputing systems to provide accurate forecasts on various timescales—ranging from short-term (hours) to seasonal predictions.

Achievements include:

- Over 37 Doppler Weather Radars have been installed across India to strengthen real-time monitoring capabilities.
- The Mausam mobile app provides location-specific weather forecasts for 450 cities in India.
- Seasonal prediction models have shown significant improvement under the National Monsoon Mission framework.
- Specialised programmes on urban flooding prediction and cyclone tracking have been initiated.

During India's 2023 G20 Presidency, a Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction was established in which five priority areas of disaster risk reduction were identified: global coverage of early warning systems; disaster and climate resilient infrastructure; financing framework for disaster risk reduction; disaster response system; and ecosystem-based approach to DRR



WAY FORWARD

Achieving climate targets will require building stronger partnerships among government, industry, academia and civil society to effectively mobilise resources, share knowledge and scale up solutions. Enhancing these collaborations will enable coordinated and impactful climate action across all levels.

Innovation remains central to India's climate strategy, with advancements needed in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and green technologies. The Government's commitment to supporting research and development is a positive foundation, but continued efforts are necessary to accelerate the translation of innovations into practical, scalable solutions that can drive the country's transition to a low-carbon economy.

Investing in resilient infrastructure today is critical for securing a better tomorrow. Resilience must be integrated not only into the design and construction of new infrastructure but also into post-disaster rebuilding efforts, ensuring that communities are better prepared to withstand future climate shocks.

Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) holds a vital role in decarbonising India's industrial and power sectors. It is key to promoting sustainable development and growth, particularly by enabling the production of clean energy and products that support the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Scaling up CCUS technologies will require focused investment, supportive policies and capacity building.

For climate adaptation India aims to follow a multi-faceted approach tailored to the regional specificities. It includes inter alia, policy initiatives, sector-specific strategies, development of resilient infrastructure, research and development and securing financial resources for adaptation efforts. Additionally, the ongoing work on the preparation of India's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) focuses on developing a comprehensive and inclusive NAP that aligns with sustainable development goals and ensures climate resilience for all regions and sectors.⁹¹

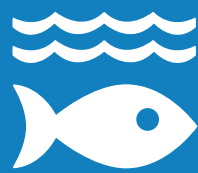






GOAL

14



Life Below
Water

SDG 14 (Life Below Water) recognises the importance of the oceans and marine ecosystems in sustaining life on Earth, supporting livelihoods and regulating the climate. SDG 14 seeks to tackle the challenges faced by marine life, including threats from marine and nutrient pollution, resource depletion, overfishing, habitat destruction, climate change, degradation and loss of biodiversity and ocean acidification, all primarily caused by human actions. The goal advocates for corrective measures, such as effectively regulating harvesting, overfishing, and protecting marine and coastal ecosystems. Another important facet of this goal is also to increase scientific knowledge to improve ocean health and provide access to marine resources and markets for small-scale artisanal fishers.

India is a maritime country and has wide water resources lying both in inland and marine sectors which are being utilised for capture and culture fisheries. The Indian fisheries sector is set in a unique and diverse set of ecosystems ranging from the pristine waters of the Himalayas to the sprawling Indian Ocean. The fisheries biodiversity of the country encompasses a wide spectrum of physical and biological components that support the livelihoods of millions of people. Several initiatives have been undertaken to protect marine and coastal ecosystems including mangroves and coral reefs. These efforts have contributed to the growth in the maximum sustainable yield in fishing over the years.

TRANSFORMING THE FISHERIES SECTOR

The fisheries sector plays an important role in the Indian economy. It contributes to the national income, exports, food and nutritional security and in employment generation. This sector is also a principal source of livelihood for a large section of the economically underprivileged population of the country, especially in the coastal areas. India has become the 2nd largest fish producer⁹², 2nd largest aquaculture nation and the largest producer of shrimp⁹³, taking Brand India from 'Local to Global'.

The fisheries sector in the country continues to be among the most critical and fastest growing agriculture allied sectors in the country. The sector has exhibited strong growth of about 8% per year on average with aquaculture growing at an annual

average of more than 10%. The fisheries sector has been recognized as a 'Sunrise Sector' and has demonstrated an outstanding double-digit average annual growth of 10.87% since 2014-15, with a record fish production of 175.45 lakh tons at the end of FY 2022-23.⁹⁴

India is at the forefront of transforming the fisheries sector and bringing about economic revolution through the Blue Revolution in the country. To enhance the economic resilience of the coastal communities impacted by climate change, the Government has launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). This transformative scheme for the fisheries sector and the welfare of fishermen has identified 100 coastal fishermen villages situated close to the coastline as Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages.⁹⁵ The activities in the identified coastal fishermen villages are need-based facilities, including common facilities like fish drying yards, fish processing centres, fish markets, fishing jetties, ice plants, cold storages and emergency rescue facilities. The government is also promoting climate resilient livelihoods like aquaculture, especially the mariculture of seaweed, food and ornamental fishes, bivalves etc. Additionally, it is providing funding support for research, technology development and capacity-building to enhance inland and marine aquaculture.

Implementation of ReALCraft, a web-based portal for registration and licensing of fishing vessels, issuance of biometric identity cards to marine fishers and vessel communication and support system supported under the PMMSY is helping in prevention of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.⁹⁶

CONSERVING AND RESTORING COASTAL AND MARINE HABITATS

To ensure long-term viability of the sector and to address the issues related to climate change, protection and restoration of critical habitat, the Central Government is working closely with the State Governments and environmental agencies. These efforts include establishment of artificial reefs along the entire coastline of India, conduct of sea ranching, promotion of seaweed farming, implementation of uniform fishing ban for 61 days during the major fish breeding period and installation of Turtle Excluder

Devices (TEDs) in trawl nets for conservation of turtles etc. Further, advisories have been issued to States/UTs to take measures to prevent juvenile fishing such as implementation of mesh size regulations and minimum legal size of fish under their Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRAs) to ensure sustainable and responsible fishing practices.

The Union Government also provides financial assistance to coastal States to undertake activities related to conservation and management of coastal ecosystems such as mangrove plantation, shelterbelt plantation, coral transplantation and enhancement of livelihood security of coastal communities including capacity building.

The installation of Artificial Reefs in India is part of the ongoing efforts to restore marine ecosystems, enhance biodiversity and support sustainable fishing practices. Artificial reefs are engineering interventions designed to rehabilitate and/or enhance natural habitats, increase productivity and manage aquatic resources, including habitat improvement. India's largest coral translocation project involved relocating

16,522 corals from intertidal and subtidal zones to suitable sites around Narara, Gujarat.¹²³ Additionally, 2,000 coral cement frames (artificial reefs) have been strategically placed to ensure the long-term preservation of marine biodiversity. 937 artificial reef units across 11 coastal states and Union Territories have been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to promote the restoration of aquatic life.

The Government has taken a number of steps to protect and enhance mangrove forests in coastal States/Union Territories through regulatory and promotional measures. This includes the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI), a programme launched by the Government of India in 2023, in collaboration with coastal States and Union Territories to restore and promote mangroves for preserving and enhancing the sustainability of the coastal ecosystem and habitats. The objective of MISHTI is to restore/afforestation of mangroves covering approximately 540 sq km, spreading across 9 coastal States and 4 UTs.⁹⁸

India's total mangrove cover stands at 4,991.68 km², constituting 0.15% of the nation's geographical area. There has been net increase of 363.68 Sq.km (7.86%) in Mangrove cover area of the country in 2023 as compared to 2013 and net increase of 509.68 Sq.km (11.4%) between 2001 and 2023.⁹⁹

West Bengal holds the largest share of the country's mangrove forests, accounting for 42.45% of the total cover, followed by Gujarat (23.32%) and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands (12.19%). Notably, Gujarat has recorded an impressive increase of 253.06 sq. km in mangrove cover between 2001 and 2023, attributed to large-scale plantations, community participation and public-private partnerships.



CONTROLLING MARINE POLLUTION

The National Policy on Marine Fisheries provides the guiding principles of conservation and optimum utilisation of fisheries resources. The policy also highlights the marine environment and pollution issues including micro-plastic and ghost nets. The policy supports regulatory mechanisms to control pollutants from land and sea-based sources, which can be effectively controlled and the ecosystems monitored for pollution related aspects. To combat marine plastic pollution particularly from fishing and maritime sectors, the Government of India has been actively engaged in the global efforts like Glolitter

Partnership Project and Reglitter Project both of which are jointly implemented by the International Maritime Organization, Food, and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. These projects focus on preventing and reducing Marine Plastic Litter from sea-based sources with an emphasis on addressing abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) and wastes from ships. As a Lead Partnering Country in the Glolitter Project, India has published its National Action Plan, which outlines strategic measures to reduce Marine Plastic Litter from Sea-based Sources. To address the issues of destructive fishing the Government of India has banned fishing methods such as pair or bull trawling and the use of LED or artificial lights for fishing in the EEZ area.

REGIONAL MARINE POLLUTION RESPONSE CENTRE

In 2024, India established the Regional Marine Pollution Response Centre, a first-of-its-kind facility for coordinating response against marine pollution, particularly oil and chemical pollution, in waters adjoining the coastal states in the Indian Ocean Region. It has an Emergency Response Centre which is manned 24x7 by Indian Coast Guard personnel to monitor marine oil pollution incidents. The Centre imparts training in Pollution response techniques to various organisations such as Ports, Oil Handling agencies, Government organisations and private participants. It also trains personnel from other countries in combating oil pollution at sea. The practical training involves actual deployment of various oil handling equipment for maximum exposure to real time oil spill scenarios.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGIES TO PROTECT MARINE SYSTEMS AND TAP MARINE BIO RESOURCES

The Government has launched several programmes using advanced technologies like satellite imagery to manage and protect coral reef ecosystems. Ocean Services, Modelling, Application, Resources and Technology (O-SMART) encompassing oceanographic research activities is being implemented with the objectives for providing forecast and services based on the continuous observation of our oceans, development of technologies and exploratory surveys for sustainable harnessing of our oceanic resources (both living and non-living) and promotion of front-ranking research in ocean sciences. The scheme encompasses seven

sub-schemes namely Ocean Technology, Ocean Modelling and Advisory Services (OMAS), Ocean Observation Network (OON), Ocean Non-Living Resources, Marine Living Resources and Ecology (MLRE), Coastal Research and Operation and Maintenance of Research Vessels.

Several major milestones have been achieved through the activities of the scheme, the most significant is India's recognition as Pioneer Investor with International Seabed Authority for conducting extensive research on deep sea mining of Poly Metallic Nodules and hydrothermal sulphides in the allotted area of the Indian Ocean. The technology development for desalination using low temperature thermal desalination and installation of such facilities in Lakshadweep islands is also a significant achievement. Moreover, India's ocean related activities are now extended from the Arctic to Antarctic region covering large ocean space which have been monitored through in-situ and satellite-

based observation. India has taken a leadership role in implementing the Indian Ocean component of the Global Ocean Observing System.

Considering the importance of collection of data on coastal processes towards coastal protection measures a new component Coastal Management Information System (CMIS) has been initiated under the Development of Water Resources Information System scheme. CMIS is a data collection activity carried out to collect near shore coastal data which can be used in planning, design, construction and maintenance of site specific coastal protection structures at vulnerable Coastal stretches.

Coral Reef in situ Observation Network (CReON) programme focuses on long-term coral reef health monitoring, calcification rates and ocean acidification, based on the deployment of Data Buoy and Automated Weather Stations at various Coral Reef sites along the Indian Coast including Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands. NCSCM has mapped 1439 square km of the coral reefs of India. The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services provides early warnings of potential coral bleaching using satellite data, helping to protect coral ecosystems and support climate resilience efforts. The Coral Bleaching Alert System (CBAS) assesses thermal stress accumulated in coral environments based on sea surface temperature. Information derived from CBAS is disseminated every three days, including data on hotspots, the degree of heating weeks and time series products.

WAY FORWARD

India faces several specific challenges in making progress on SDG 14, each requiring targeted action to ensure sustainable marine ecosystems and livelihoods.

Small-scale and traditional fishers face vulnerability due to declining catches, climate impacts and competition from mechanised fleets. Many are forced to alter their fishing methods or seek alternative livelihoods. Supporting these communities through capacity building, financial inclusion, alternative livelihood programmes and access to sustainable fishing technologies is essential to enhance their resilience and well-being.

Public-private partnerships present an opportunity for advancing sustainable fisheries, improving market access and developing marine infrastructure. The country is focusing on fostering collaboration between the government, industry, academia and local communities to develop a robust and sustainable blue economy.

A significant challenge facing India's marine and coastal sector is the increasing frequency of cyclones, the impact of marine heatwaves, coastal erosion and rising sea levels. These climate-related threats, combined with other issues, place considerable strain on the sector despite numerous government schemes aimed at its development. These factors not only threaten the livelihoods of coastal communities but also undermine the sustainability and resilience of marine resources. Therefore, the Government is continuing to further strengthen the resilience of India's coastlines and developing comprehensive risk management strategies.







GOAL

15



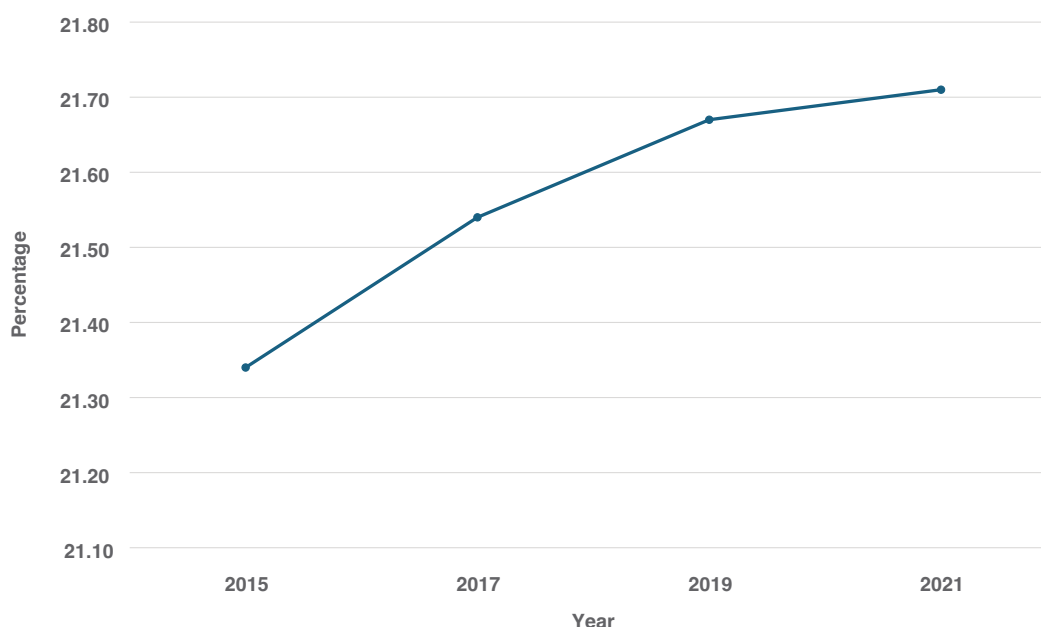
Life On
Land

Goal 15 underscores the critical importance of biodiversity as humanity's life - support system. However, the relentless depletion of forests around the world, coupled with an alarming rate of species extinction and stagnation in safeguarding key biodiversity areas, jeopardises the delicate balance of ecosystems. To address the pressing global environmental challenges and crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, as well as desertification, land and soil degradation, drought and deforestation, it is imperative to intensify efforts to fulfil our global environmental and biodiversity commitments. It also seeks to promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources, and prevent poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna.

The total forest cover of the country is 7,15,267.67 5 square kilometers which is 21.76% of the geographical

area of the country.¹⁰⁰ It shows an increase of 156.41 Sq. Km in the forest cover at national level as compared to the previous assessment (See Figure 45). There is improvement in soil health (87.16 % of shallow to deep soil as against 83.53 % in 2013). The load of moderate to heavy grazing has come down to 35.79 % in 2023 as compared to 41.04 % in 2013. Biotic influences on forests have also come down to 26.66 % (2023) from 31.28% in 2013. All these indicate improvement in floral biodiversity as well as improved surroundings for faunal biodiversity. Several initiatives are contributing in this regard, such as Forest Fire Prevention and Management, Green India Mission, Nagar Van Yojana, Development of Wildlife Habitat (DWH), Project Elephant and Tiger, as well as through the CAMPA funds, etc. This is a reflection of India's successful efforts to balance development priorities, while simultaneously addressing environmental conservation.

Figure 45: Forest cover as a percentage of total geographical area (%)



Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY AND INCREASING FOREST COVER

India released its updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) at the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Cali, Colombia in October 2024. The updated NBSAP aligned with the KMGBF is a vital roadmap to address the strategies to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, with a longer-term vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050. India had adopted the 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approach in updating its NBSAP. The updated NBSAP acknowledges environmental challenges and outlines strategies to address them through ecosystem

restoration, species recovery programmes, community-driven conservation efforts focusing on the restoration of degraded ecosystems, the protection of wetlands, and the sustainable management of marine and coastal areas.

The updated NBSAP emphasises the adoption of a transformative approach and focuses on an ecosystem-based management approach, a bottom-up approach for implementation, mainstreaming biodiversity, sectoral integration and inter-agency cooperation. It also provides an insight into the current status of biodiversity across India and trends, therein existing policy and institutional frameworks, biodiversity expenditure and potential biodiversity finance solutions.

Biodiversity Conservation Scheme is being implemented as a pilot project at four identified sites namely Nanda Devi, Dehang Debang, Pachamari and Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserves for a five-year period from the last quarter of 2021. The objective of the scheme is to conserve the diversity and integrity of plants and animals within natural ecosystems; to safeguard genetic diversity of species on which their continuing evolution depends; to provide areas for multi-faceted research and monitoring; to provide facilities for education and training; and to ensure sustainable use of natural resources through most appropriate mechanism for improvement of economic well-being of the local people.

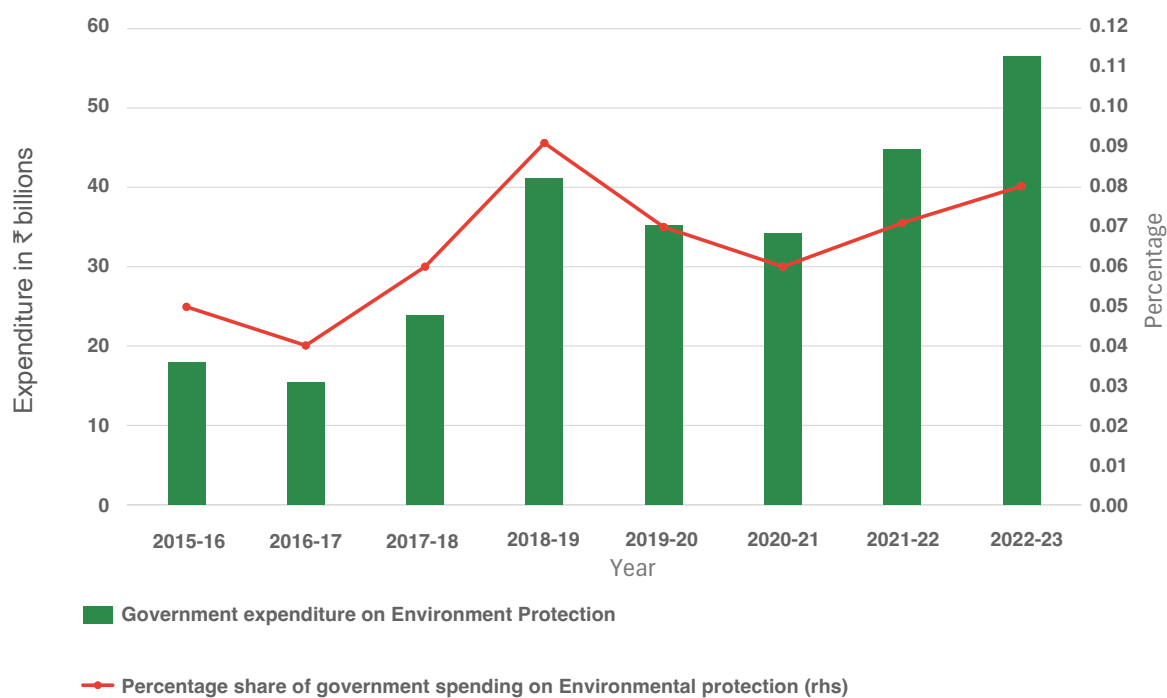
Green India Mission (GIM) aims at increasing the forest/tree cover and improving the quality of the existing forest cover; improving ecosystem services including biodiversity, hydrological services and carbon sequestration; increasing forest-based livelihood income of households living in and around the forests; and enhancing annual CO₂ sequestration. The activities under GIM were started in the FY 2015-16 and so far funds have been released to 17 States and 1 UT for creation of plantation/eco-restoration over an area of 155130 hectares. GIM is being implemented on a landscape approach with the help of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC's) which includes the representatives of local communities. It is largely focusing on the eco-restoration activities (including plantation) in the vulnerable and degraded landscapes.

The Government has launched several schemes/programmes viz. National Afforestation Programme: A Participatory Approach to Sustainable Development of Forests, National Action Programme to Combat Desertification etc. for conservation of biodiversity, which contribute to the target of restoration of 26 million hectares of degraded land and achievement of land degradation neutrality with focus on sustainable and optimum utilisation of land resources. This will help in preserving forests and biodiversity, facilitating conservation of natural resources and improving carbon sinks. As a consequence of these and other efforts, forest biomass in the country is increasing and the proportion of forests included as protected areas has been rising (See Figure 46). Government spending on all forms of environmental protection has also been rising (See Figure 47).

Since 2014, 59 wetlands have been added to the list of Ramsar Sites taking the tally to 89 in the country covering an area of 1.358 million hectares.¹⁰¹

Figure 46: Progress towards sustainable forest management

Source: FSI, Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change

Figure 47: Percentage of government spending on environmental protection to total government expenditure

Source: National Accounts Division, NSO, MoSPI

PACHATURUTH (GREEN SPOT) INITIATIVE IN KERALA

Kerala has launched the Pachaturuth (Green Spot) initiative under the Haritha Keralam Mission, a pioneering project aims to address climate change, preserve biodiversity and enhance local ecosystems by creating green spaces that serve as carbon sinks. The initiative involves the active participation of various stakeholders, including government departments, environmental organisations and educational institutions, ensuring a collaborative approach to safeguarding Kerala's natural heritage.

ENHANCING SOIL FERTILITY

To improve the health of soil, for the past decade, the Government has been issuing soil health cards to all farmers in the country. Soil health card provides information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendation on the appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility. The Soil Health Card contains status of the soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely N,P,K, S (Macro-nutrients); Zn, Fe, Cu, Mn, Bo (Micro - nutrients); and pH (Acidity or Basicity), EC (Electrical Conductivity) and OC (Organic Carbon). The card also indicates fertiliser recommendations and soil amendments required for the farm. Soil samples are taken generally two times in a year after harvesting of Rabi and Kharif Crop respectively or when there is no standing crop in the field.

A pilot project on School Soil Health Programme has been undertaken in 20 schools in rural areas. The aim is to make students aware about soil health for sustainable agriculture practices. Modules for students from class VI to XII and teachers have been developed and disseminated and 20 soil health labs have been set up in these schools. Under the programme soil samples were collected by school students and soil testing was also done by students and SHCs were generated. Students also educated farmers about the recommendation of soil health cards for the judicious use of fertilisers and crop recommendations. As of February 2024, 1020 schools are implementing the School Soil Health Programme, with 1000 soil testing labs set up and 125,972 students enrolled.¹⁰²

TACKLING FOREST FIRE

The Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme supports states and Union Territories in preventing and controlling forest fires. The scheme aims to reduce forest fire incidents and restore productivity in affected areas. It emphasises the involvement of local communities in forest protection and contributes to maintaining environmental stability. Developing a fire danger rating system and forecasting methods is also a key objective. The scheme encourages the use of modern technology, such as Remote Sensing, GPS, and GIS, to enhance fire prevention efforts. Additionally, it seeks to improve knowledge about the impact and behaviour of forest fires. A forest fire detection system is also in place to detect and share information about forest fires in near real-time. This system plays a crucial role in the early detection and effective management of forest fires across the country.

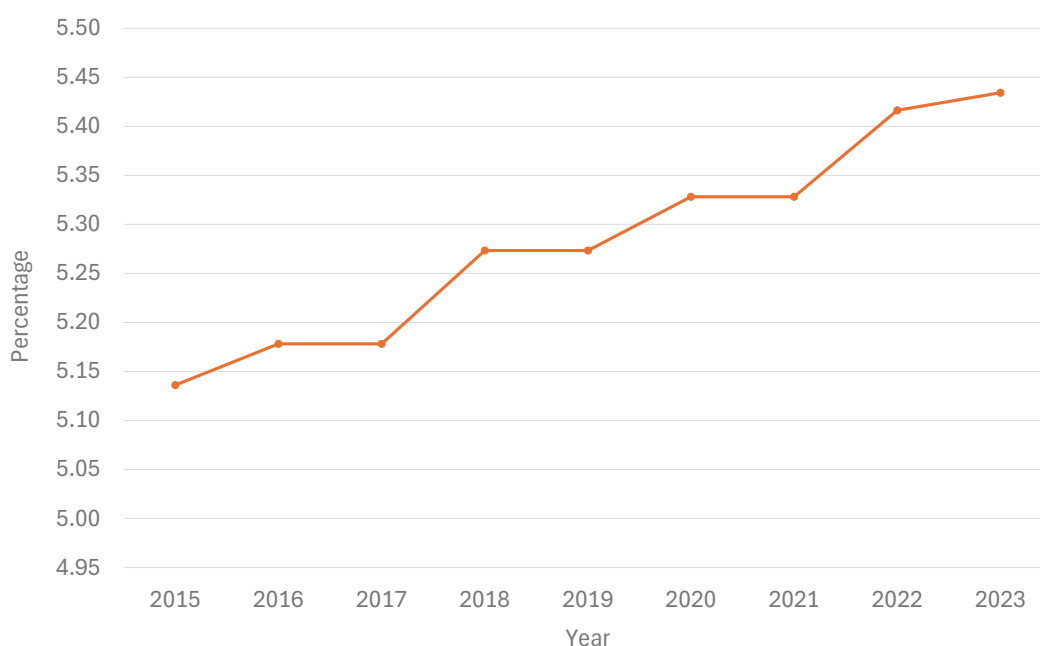
Based on a study with the World Bank and consultations with key national and state stakeholders a National Action Plan on Forest Fire has also been developed to minimise forest fires. The plan comprises taking actions by informing, enabling and empowering forest fringe communities and incentivising them to work in tandem with the Forest Departments. It also comprises reducing the vulnerability of forests against fire hazards, enhancing the capabilities of forest personnel and institutions in fighting fires and speeding up recovery after a fire event.

CONSERVING WILDLIFE HABITATS

Conservation planning in India is based on the philosophy of identifying and protecting representative wild habitats across all the ecosystems. The number of Protected Areas (includes National Parks, sanctuaries, conservation reserves or community reserves) in the country, which stood at 745 in the year 2014 have risen to 1022 in the

year 2024. This accounts for 5.43% of the country's total geographic area (See Figure 48). Participation of people is given more impetus and there has been a substantial increase in establishment of Community Reserves. The number of Community Reserves in the country has increased from 43 in the year 2014 to 220 at the end of 2024.¹⁰³

Figure 48: Protected area as percentage of total geographical area



Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India

Note: The Convention of Biological Diversity defines a Protected Area as a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

Apart from the protected areas, the country also has 57 tiger reserves notified under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 with the prime focus of conservation of tigers and its habitat. States have also declared 33 elephant reserves for providing safer

habitats to the elephants. As per All India Tiger Estimation 2022 report the estimated tiger population in India is 3,682, which accounts for 70% of wild tiger population of the World.

INTERNATIONAL BIG CAT ALLIANCE

India has launched the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) in 2023 and established a demonstrative step to conserve 7 wild cats across the globe in the world. Five countries namely India, Nicaragua, Eswatini, Somalia and Liberia have signed the Framework Agreement (FA) and have become the members of IBCA. The Framework Agreement is intended to establish IBCA to collectively address common challenges for the protection and conservation of seven Big Cats in the world. The parties to this agreement shall be guided by the principles of coordinated action for protection and conservation of seven big cats and seeking the benefits of collective action under the IBCA.

WAY FORWARD

Sustainable management of terrestrial ecosystems is critical for maintaining biodiversity, supporting livelihoods and ensuring environmental stability. Multiple interconnected issues threaten India's progress on SDG 15, ranging from habitat loss and species decline to pressures from urbanisation and skill gaps in conservation efforts.

Forests and plant biodiversity face significant challenges due to deforestation, land-use changes and unsustainable agricultural expansion. Fragmentation of habitats and loss of native plant species threaten the ecosystem stability. It can also reduce the availability of medicinal and economically valuable plants. Tackling these challenges requires continued promotion of large-scale afforestation and reforestation programmes focusing on the native species to restore degraded landscapes. The Government is continuing to mobilise resources for afforestation, conservation and sustainable management through various central and state schemes.

Rapid urban expansion and intensive agriculture exert heavy pressure on forests and land resources, leading to soil degradation, desertification and loss of ecosystem services. This threatens both biodiversity and the livelihoods dependent on these ecosystems. Adoption of sustainable land-use planning that balances development with conservation priorities, and agroforestry and sustainable agricultural practices that enhance soil health and biodiversity should be promoted.

Many animal species in India are endangered due to habitat loss, poaching, human-wildlife conflict and climate change. There is a need to expand and effectively manage protected areas and wildlife corridors to ensure habitat connectivity. India is creating and strengthening wildlife corridors to facilitate wildlife movement, maintain genetic diversity and improve habitat connectivity. Further, legal frameworks in India are evolving to provide more robust protection and management for these areas.

By integrating conservation efforts with community participation and sustainable policies, India continues to pave the way for a greener, healthier and more prosperous future.







16



Peace, Justice and
Strong Institutions

SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. It seeks to address the most significant and destructive challenges to development, growth and well-being: violence and armed conflict. The global sustainable development agenda for 2030 promotes transparent and effective local governance and judicial systems, reducing crime and sexual and gender-based violence, tackling homicide and trafficking cases and ending violations of children's rights. SDG 16 addresses the challenges of violence at all levels—individual, relationship, community and societal.

The Indian Constitution deeply embeds the spirit of democracy, justice, liberty and equality in governance of the country. Legislation such as The Right to Information Act, Lok Pal and Lok Ayukta Act and Whistle Blowers Protection Act further reinforce these principles. Additionally, more than 90% of citizens are covered under the unique identity system Aadhaar. The constitutional framework of the country ensures political participation of vulnerable groups.

PROVIDING LEGAL IDENTITY FOR ALL

Aadhaar, India's 12-digit unique identification number, has reshaped the nation's approach to

identity verification and service delivery since its inception in 2009. The programme was launched with a mission to provide every resident with a reliable, digitally verifiable identity using minimal demographic and biometric data. Aadhaar's robust authentication framework addresses long-standing issues of identity-related fraud and resource leakage by eliminating duplicate and fake identities.

As the world's largest digital identity programme, having generated 1.3834 billion Aadhaar numbers by the end of 2024, Aadhaar enables secure authentication anytime and anywhere. This facilitates the transparent and targeted distribution of services, benefits and subsidies, through Aadhaar-linked Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT), which directly deposit cash benefits into bank accounts, simplifying processes and reducing fraud.

In order to seamlessly register births and deaths, in 2024 the Central Government launched the Civil Registration System (CRS) mobile application to integrate technology with governance. With this application citizens are able to register births and deaths in their state's official language from anywhere, significantly reducing the time required for registration.



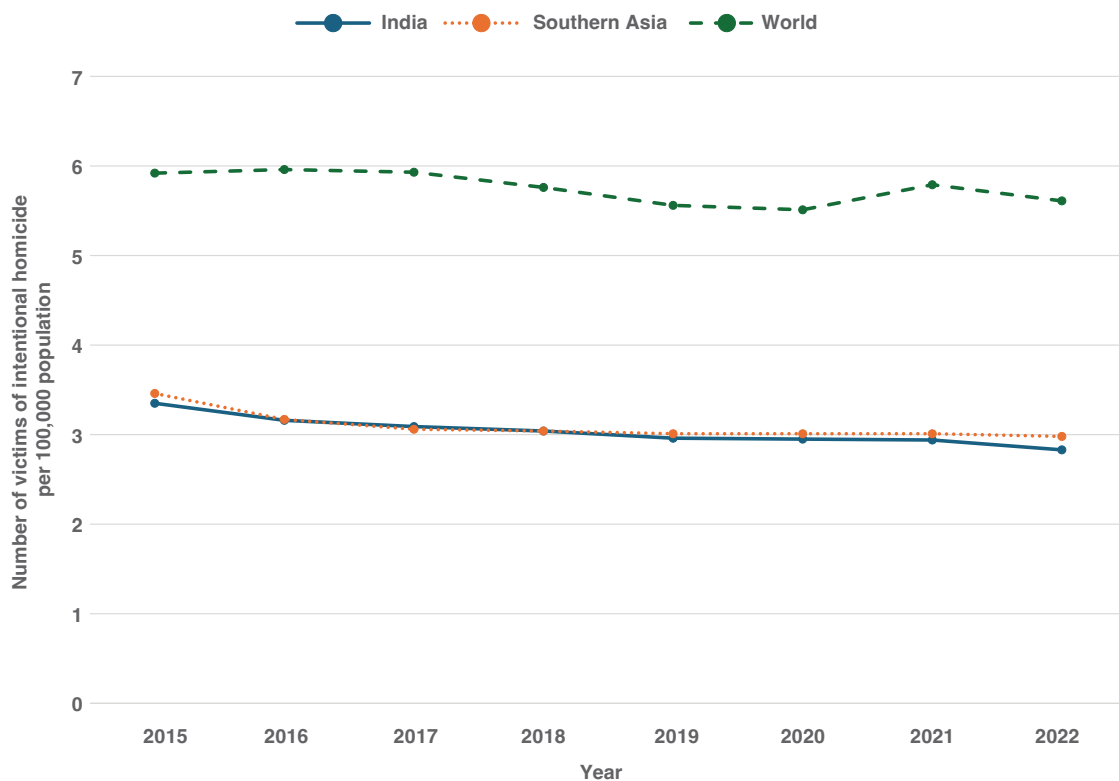
DECLINE IN HOMICIDES AND NEW CRIMINAL LAWS

National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) compiles and publishes data on crimes, including crime against women and children. Latest NCRB data shows that India's intentional homicide rate has been decreasing and remains roughly half of the world average (See Figure 49).

India gives highest priority to ensuring safety and security of its citizens, especially of women and children and has undertaken various legislative and schematic interventions in this regard. In 2023, India replaced the pre-Independence era criminal laws with Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya 2023. All these three Acts are the basic laws for the

criminal justice system. The three new laws abolish the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Criminal Procedure Code, (1898), 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 made by the British and passed by the British Parliament. The earlier legislations were made to strengthen and protect the British rule and their purpose was to punish, not to give justice. The new laws bring changes in both these fundamental aspects. The soul of these three new laws is to protect all the rights given by the Constitution to the Indian citizens. Additionally, 827 Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) have been established across all States/UTs. Additionally, Anti-Human Trafficking Cells have been established to improve effectiveness in tackling cases of human trafficking, raising awareness among women and girls. Capacity building and training of Anti Trafficking Units has also been instituted to increase responsiveness of the law enforcement agencies.

Figure 49: Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population (victims per 100,000 population)



Source: UNODC estimates based on national data and NCRB

NARI ADALAT

As part of 'Mission Shakti', the Government is running Nari Adalat, an initiative aimed at providing women with an alternate Grievance Redressal Mechanism for resolving cases of petty nature (harassment, subversion, curtailment of rights or entitlements) faced by women at Gram Panchayat level, through pressure group tactics, negotiation, mediation, and reconciliation with mutual consent for speedy, accessible, and affordable justice. This mechanism also provides the opportunity for citizens to engage with the government and raise awareness on women's rights, legal options and ascertain details on the different schemes. The initiative has been successfully piloted from 2023-24 in 50 Gram Panchayats (GPs) each in Assam and Jammu & Kashmir. This initiative is now being expanded and piloted in 10 GPs in Bihar and Karnataka and 5 GPs of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. By the end of 2024, 77 out of 102 cases in Assam and 337 out of 395 cases in Jammu and Kashmir had been resolved through this process.

CARE AND REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Strengthening preventive action is critical to the secure welfare of children, particularly for those in difficult circumstances. The Government is committed to providing ground level support to children and their caregivers, while raising awareness and building capacities under Mission Vatsalya Scheme. The scheme provides preventive, statutory care and rehabilitation services to children who are in need of care and protection and those in conflict with law as defined under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. It supports and sustains children in difficult circumstances by developing context-based solutions for holistic development of children from varied backgrounds and providing the scope for green field projects for encouraging innovative solutions. It creates a safety net with service structures for both institutional care (in Child Care Institutes providing education, health, skills) and non-institutional care (Adoption, Foster Care, Sponsorship). Furthermore, Mission Vatsalya also provides for "After care" to support youth over 18 years transitioning from institutional to independent life. The mission lays emphasis on child rights, advocacy and awareness along with strengthening of the juvenile justice care and protection system with the motto to 'leave no child behind'.

PROMOTING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance reforms must begin at the grassroots to bring about long-lasting and meaningful change. Since 2021, the Prashasan Gaon ki Aur (Administration towards Village), a nation-wide campaign for redressal of public grievances and improving service delivery is held annually. Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur 2024 was India's largest campaign for doorstep delivery of services and redressal of public grievances. Conducted in more than 700 districts across India the 2024 campaign focused on effective redressal of public grievances, timely disposal of service delivery applications and documentation of good governance practices and dissemination.¹⁰⁴

In a significant step towards strengthening grassroots governance the Government launched the 'Viksit Panchayat Karmayogi' initiative in 2024. The initiative, which is part of the broader 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur' campaign, aims to enhance the capacity and competence of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by equipping elected representatives and officials with the tools and knowledge required for effective governance and participatory planning.

As part of increasing convergence between Panchayati Raj Institutions and SHGs a greater role for SHGs in local participatory governance is being envisioned. To foster inclusive governance the Government under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan is emphasising the importance of Panchayats working collaboratively with community-based organisations.

BRINGING TRANSPARENCY AND PANCHAYAT SERVICES DIRECTLY TO CITIZENS' SMARTPHONES

Nirnay application has revolutionized transparency and accountability in rural governance by providing citizens with direct access to Panchayat meeting proceedings and Gram Sabha decisions. It deals with helping the Panchayat to schedule and maintain records of the meetings held at Gram Sabha, different statutory meetings and capture GPS locations of the venue, meeting pictures, notifying citizens with meeting agenda well in advance and enhancing public participation in Panchayat Meetings.

Meri Panchayat application has been developed to provide details on demography, elected representatives, Panchayat Secretary and officials, Gram Panchayat Development Plans, funds received, income and expenditure of Panchayat, and Sankalp or resolution by Panchayat for development, among others.

WAY FORWARD

To effectively advance SDG 16 at the international level, the global community and India could benefit from continuing their focus on enhancing international cooperation aimed at addressing organised crime, preventing violence, terrorism and reducing illicit financial flows and corruption. Additionally, there is a need to actively support participation of developing countries in global governance institutions to ensure inclusive decision-making and equitable representation. By promoting partnerships, countries can collectively foster just, peaceful and inclusive societies that transcend borders and contribute to sustainable development worldwide.

Achieving SDG 16 is critical for creating a stable environment where development can flourish. At the national level addressing issues such as enhancing digital accessibility, enhancing the judge to population ratio, ensuring uniform service availability, bridging infrastructure gaps and increasing awareness are ongoing priorities to improve ease of living, particularly for marginalised and vulnerable groups is important.







GOAL

17



Partnership
for the Goals

SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) aims to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. It emphasises collaboration and partnerships between various stakeholders, including governments and societies to achieve the SDGs.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, a cascade of multiple overlapping crises globally has put the means of implementation for achieving the 2030 Agenda in serious peril worldwide. This has made strengthening the global partnership for sustainable development more important and more challenging than any time since the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development were agreed in 2015. The pace of growth in SDG investments and the magnitude of global partnership required have been far below the 2015 ambitions, especially given shrinking fiscal space, high levels of external debt, declining capital flows to developing countries and fewer remittances from diaspora communities since 2020. At the same time, the compounding impacts of ongoing crises, including the accelerating impacts of climate change, have raised the costs of implementing sustainable and just transitions globally, especially in energy, water and other systems that require significant investments.

India's implementation of the SDGs has been remarkably resilient to these worrying global trends. To overcome the headwinds India has made important progress strengthening its domestic enabling environment and addressing international obstacles to SDG finance. India has strengthened the domestic environment for implementing sustainable development by:

- mobilising India's domestic resources
- harnessing the dynamism of India's private sector
- channelling international private finance to India
- leveraging official sources of international finance for India's development.

At the same time in its role as an important voice of the Global South and as both the only lower-middle income country of the G20 as well as the fastest growing major economy globally, India has made important contributions to advancing meaningful international dialogue on addressing obstacles to SDG financing, especially by strengthening the South-South and triangular cooperation, and building stronger coalitions for reform of global institutions.

MOBILISING DOMESTIC RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Public expenditure is pivotal to meet India's sustainable development objectives, including by delivering public health, quality education, and strong social protection and welfare schemes. India has made significant progress in strengthening its public financial management. Efforts to improve domestic resource mobilisation have included improving the direct tax regime, introducing Goods and Services Tax (GST) and digitising many aspects of tax administration.

More than 77.5% of the Government budget is financed domestically by taxes, well above the world average of 60%. Total Government revenues as a proportion of GDP grew from 8.68% in 2015-16 to 8.84% in 2022-23. These improvements can be credited to reforms in tax administration, including the use of AI and machine learning techniques to curb tax evasion.

In addition to mobilising more domestic resources India's improvement in public financial management can also be credited to greater efficiencies in how public monies are spent. Innovations such as Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and greater use of digitisation, along with greater emphasis on capital spending are some of the ways in which the efficiency of public expenditure is being improved.



Quality of public spending, with a focus on infrastructure, research and development, health, education and other social services are critical to promoting sustainable development. Capital expenditure with strong multiplier effects can crowd in private investment, address supply constraints and improve productivity. This ultimately improves growth prospects producing a virtuous cycle unleashing further domestic resources for development purposes.

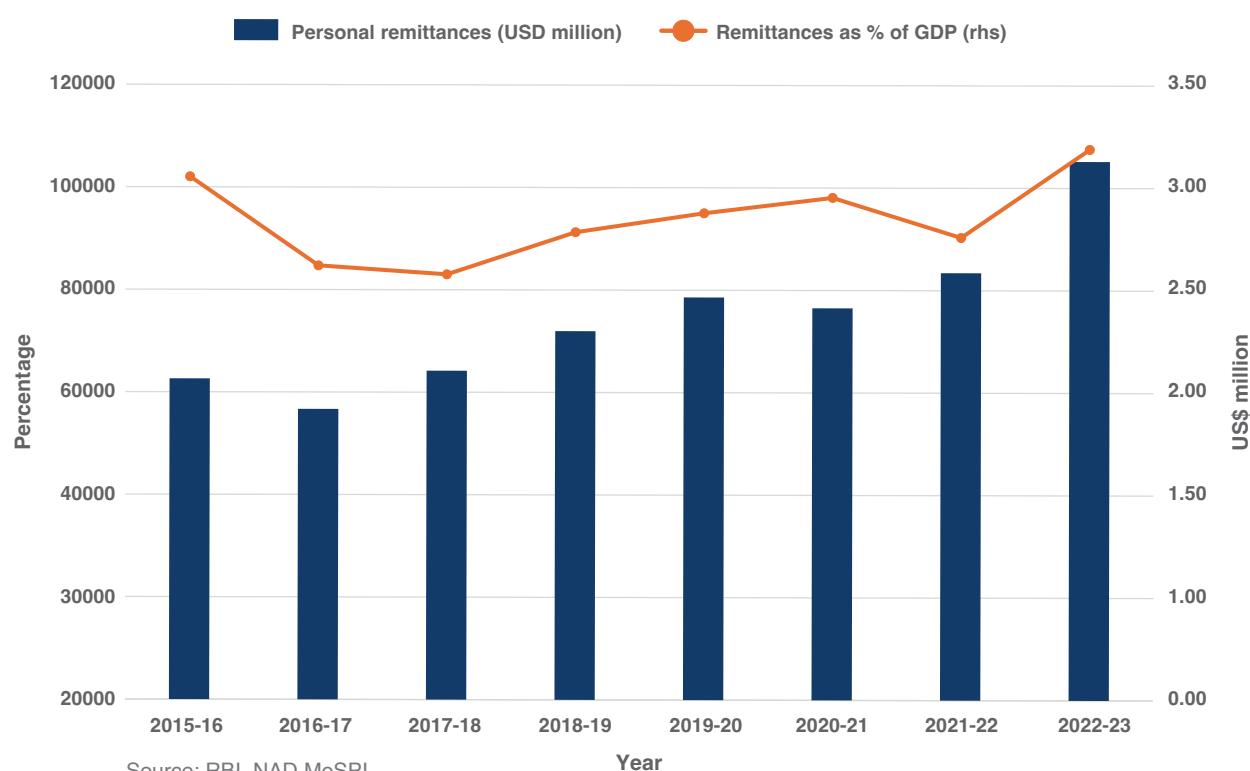
PRIVATE REMITTANCES FOR DEVELOPMENT

India's diaspora abroad is an asset to the country, playing an important role in India's development process and in the promotion of the country's interests abroad. Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) contribute to India's growth and sustainable development story in multiple ways, especially inflows play a crucial role in improving household welfare and supporting local economies. Remittances contribute to socioeconomic development and are used for the recipient family's personal use (accounting for 50 percent of household expenditure in rural areas), and for donations to schools. These remittances play a critical role in poverty reduction by improving consumption,

especially in rural areas. Remittance-receiving households are generally not only better-off than non-remittance-receiving households, but they also use the remittances in key development-related activities, purchasing food, spending on healthcare and investing in education of young people.

Remittances from Indians abroad have also accelerated technological change and contributed to India's vibrant start-up ecosystem. Metros such as Bengaluru, Gurugram, Pune, Chennai and Hyderabad are thriving as information technology hubs not only because of FDIs from global technological firms but also due to investments by Indian diaspora members into many Indian start-ups. These entrepreneurs and small businesses in India are contributing to SDG achievement by facilitating technical knowledge transfers and leveraging financing from the diaspora. These ecosystems have benefitted significantly from policies to make FDIs and remittances easier. For example, since 2015 government policy has treated NRI/OCI holders' and PIOs investment as domestic investment and not as FDI, thereby inducing more inflows into India's vibrant entrepreneurial economy. India's remittances rose to a record level in 2022-2023, reaching more than US \$100 billion in annual inflows, making India the country with the largest receipts of remittances worldwide (See Figure 50).

Figure 50: Volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP

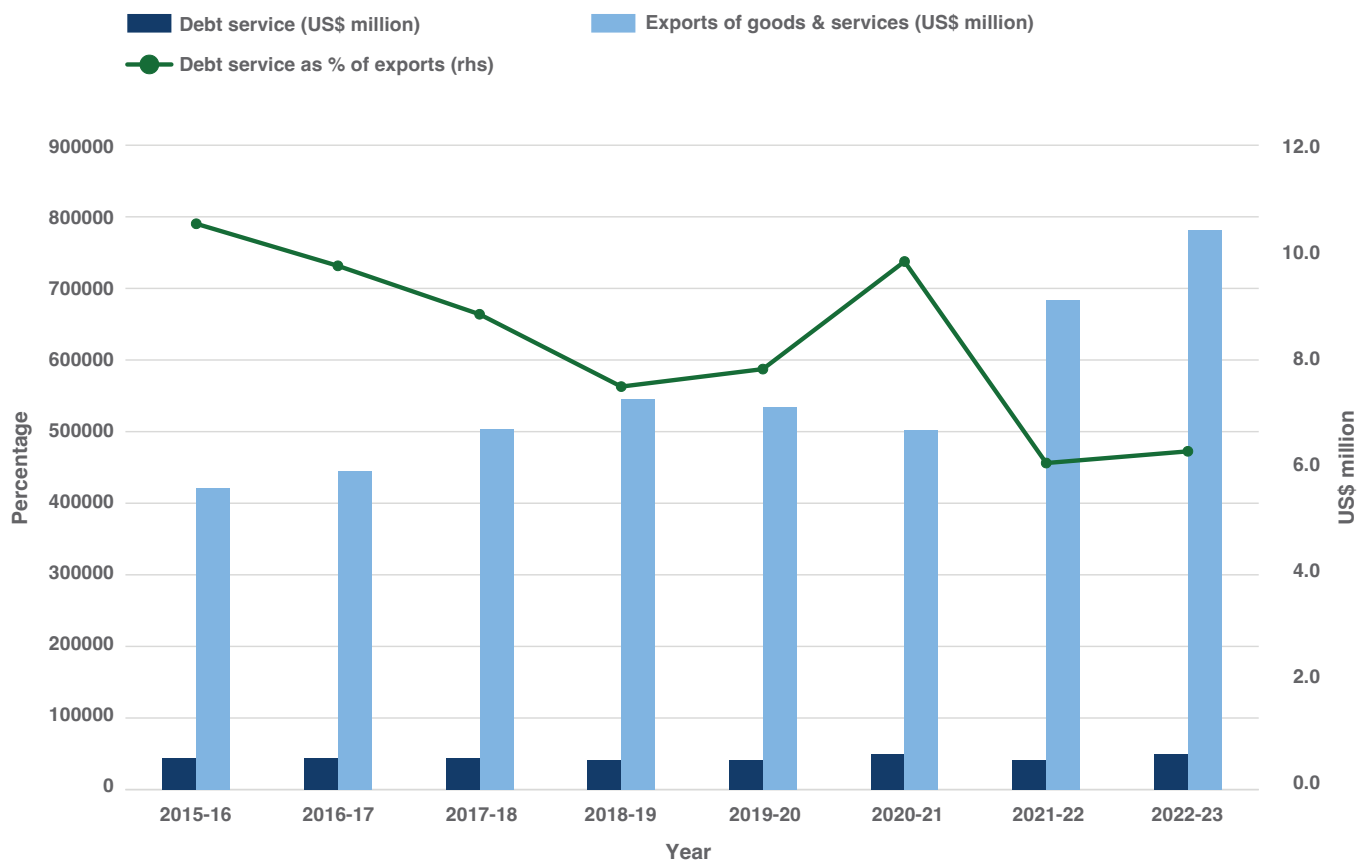


EXTERNAL DEBT SUSTAINABILITY

External debt stock levels have remained unprecedentedly high in many developing countries. At the same time rising borrowing costs are putting a growing number of developing countries at risk of debt crises. About 60 percent of low-income countries are at high risk of debt distress or already experiencing it.

By contrast, India's external debt is relatively low compared to peers and a high level of foreign exchange reserves mitigates against external vulnerabilities. As India's international trade has grown, India's debt service as a proportion of its exports of goods and services, a key measure of debt sustainability, has declined from 10.5% in 2015-16 to 6.3% in 2022-23 (See Figure 51).

Figure 51: Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services



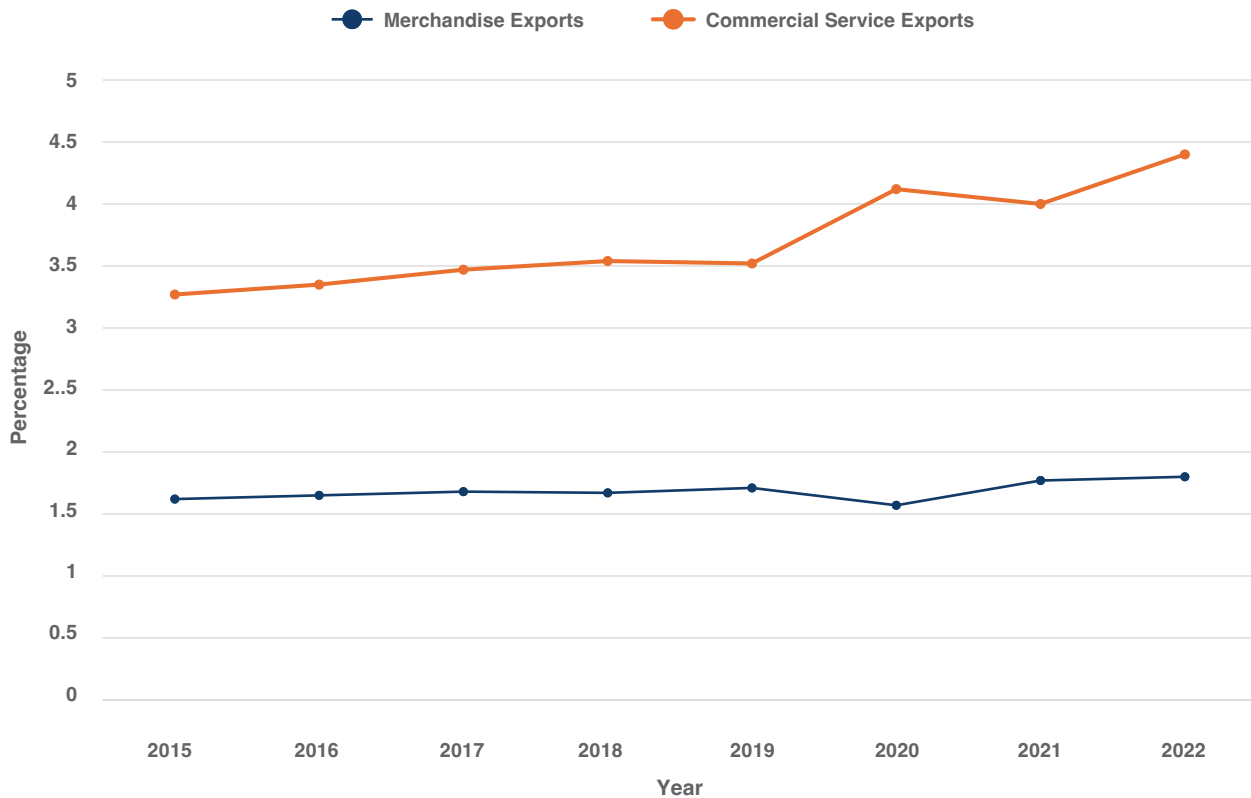
Source: RBI

TRADE AS AN ENGINE OF DEVELOPMENT

In the evolving global trade landscape marked by gradual shifts towards greater protectionism India has been adapting to these trends and leveraging its strengths to accelerate its growth and enhance its presence in global trade. To strengthen its competitiveness and further integrate into global supply chains, the country is focusing on reducing trade-related costs and enhancing export facilitation to create a more vibrant export sector. This proactive approach is helping India continue to thrive in an ever-changing global market.

In line with the 2030 Agenda's target of increasing developing countries' share of global trade, India has increased its share of global merchandise and services exports (See Figure 52). India's share of global merchandise exports has risen from 1.6% in 2015 to 1.8% in 2022, while its share of global commercial services export has risen from 3.3% in 2015 to 4.4% in 2022.

Figure 52: Share of India's exports in Global exports (In Percentage)



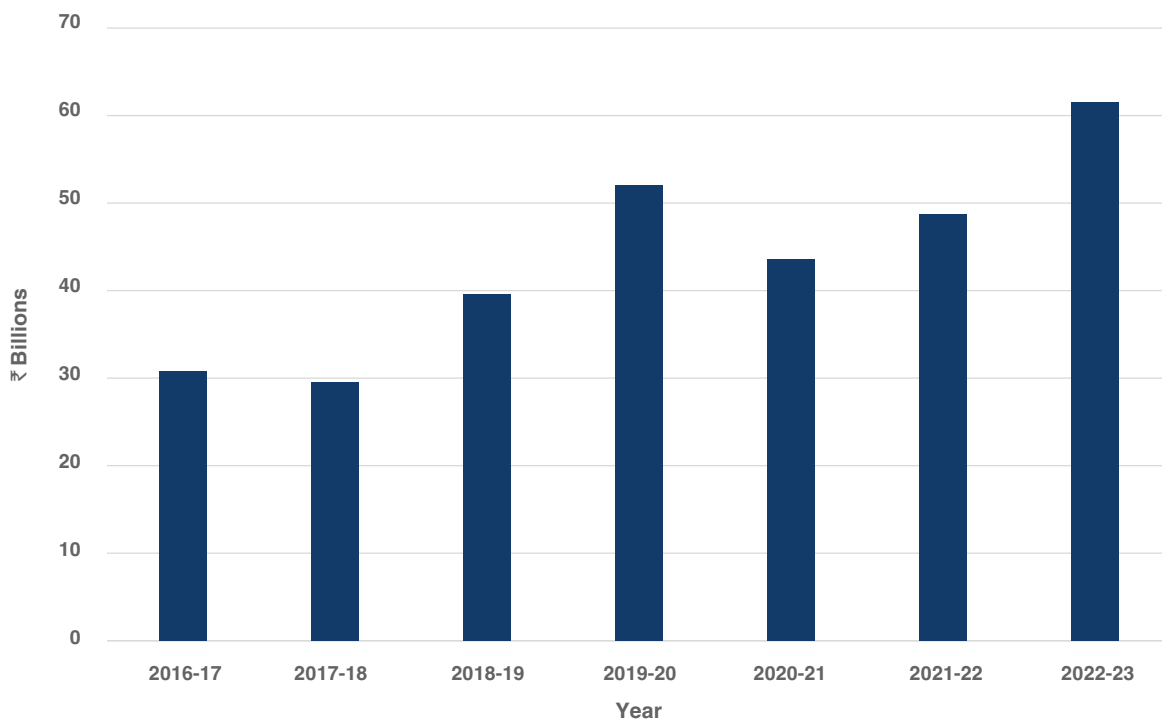
Source: DGFT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

MEASURING PROGRESS AT NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL LEVELS

In the pursuit of achieving the SDGs, measuring progress at both national and sub-national levels is crucial. The Government has developed the National Indicator Framework (NIF), while States and UTs are encouraged to develop their own State and District Indicator Frameworks. Till date, 27 States and 5 Union Territories have created their State Indicator Frameworks, while 24 States have developed District Indicator Frameworks. The remaining States and UTs are in the process of developing these frameworks.

Government has also strengthened its focus on generating evidence and tracking progress with appropriate data and statistics in line with the 2030 Agenda's commitment to significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, disability, geographic location and other characteristics. In 2022-23 over ₹61.5 billion budget was allocated to different ministries for strengthening statistics – more than twice as much as prior to the adoption of the Goals (See Figure 53).

Figure 53: Budget allocated to different Ministries for strengthening statistics, (in ₹ Billions)



WAY FORWARD

Accelerating progress for SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) involves addressing several key challenges while leveraging opportunities to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration and resource mobilisation to accelerate sustainable development. External factors such as geopolitical conflicts, global economic shocks, and the lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic affect international cooperation, trade, and investment flows critical for SDG financing and technology transfer.

Despite progress over the years, many developing countries like India face significant challenges in mobilising adequate financial resources for SDG implementation, particularly in least developed regions and sectors requiring urgent investment. Addressing this necessitates enhancing domestic resource mobilisation alongside securing greater international development finance and leveraging innovative financing mechanisms, such as blended finance, impact investments, green bonds, and public-private partnerships to bridge funding gaps, especially for infrastructure, climate action and social sectors.

India can accelerate SDG achievement both nationally and globally by continuing to advocate for meaningful global partnerships, and for more effective and fairer multilateralism that is fit for the purpose of supporting all developing countries in implementing sustainable development.







CHAPTER

05



Data for Development



CHAPTER 5: DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

India has been at the cutting edge of using statistical data to measure progress on development since the pioneering and invaluable contributions of Professor P.C. Mahalanobis to the field of economic planning. This laid the foundation for India's national statistical system, significantly impacting India's economic policy formulation and setting the global standard for the representative sampling that permitted analysis of development outcomes in household survey data.

The country believes that data-driven decisions can help accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. High-quality development data is crucial for effective policy-making, efficient resource allocation and public service delivery across sectors like education, women's empowerment, infrastructure, public health and climate response. A robust national statistics system and a vibrant development data ecosystem are essential for harnessing data to drive sustainable development and innovation.

Successful use of data for development also requires fair and equitable data governance principles to address data protection, privacy and security. As a prominent global voice India emphasises the need for a robust data ecosystem to transform citizens' lives and reinforce democratic principles. This has been highlighted as critical for accelerating the SDGs by the G20 under India's Presidency and with the adoption of Global Digital Compact at the UN Summit of the Future in 2024.

INDIA'S DATA ARCHITECTURE FOR MONITORING SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The focus on benchmarking progress of the SDGs has led to the strengthening of India's National Indicator Framework and has resulted in subnational governments extending their monitoring of progress to the district and block levels, ensuring that local budgets align with SDG objectives. Data-driven benchmarking tools such as the SDG India Index, North-Eastern Region District SDG Index and National Multidimensional Poverty Index evaluate the performance and rank States/Districts, ensuring that even the most localised aspirations are recognised and realised, thus keeping the country on course to 2030.

Significant advances have also been made in the data and statistical systems to track progress on the implementation of individual SDGs. These include the release of new household consumption survey data, improvements in the instrument and timing of the periodic labour force surveys and the modernisation of India's administrative data systems, including critical civil registration and vital statistics systems managed by India's states and UTs.

NATIONAL AND STATE INDICATOR FRAMEWORKS

In the pursuit of achieving the SDGs, measuring progress at both national and sub-national levels is crucial. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has developed the National Indicator Framework (NIF), while States and union territories (UTs) are encouraged to develop their own State and District Indicator Frameworks. Since 2022-23 27 states of India have adopted a state monitoring framework that supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To aid these efforts, MoSPI has also issued guidelines for developing the State Indicator Framework (SIF).



CREATING A DISTRICT INDICATOR FRAMEWORK AND SDG MONITORING DASHBOARD: THE CASE OF CHHATTISGARH

Chhattisgarh, a State in India, prepared a District Indicator Framework in 2022. The formulation involved a structured approach to ensure comprehensive stakeholder engagement and data-driven decision-making. Relevant state departments associated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were identified and nodal officers were designated to facilitate the provision of necessary information. A total of 23 state departments were mapped to take responsibility for providing data for the Chhattisgarh District Indicator Framework (CG-DIF). To foster a sense of ownership multiple consultative workshops and meetings were conducted with the district officials and state departments. These workshops enabled discussions with the nodal officers from each concerned department, leading to the preparation of a draft CG-DIF that identified potential indicators aligned with the Chhattisgarh State Indicator Framework (CG-SIF). Subsequently, a consultation meeting was held with district officials, including Collectors, CEOs of Zilla Panchayats and District Planning and Statistical Officers (DPSO), to gather inputs and suggestions on the draft indicators. A state-level meeting with SDG nodal officers was then conducted to review feedback from district officials and finalize the District Indicator Framework. The final CG-DIF comprises 82 indicators covering 15 SDGs, excluding Goals 14 and 17 and addresses a total of 45 SDG targets. Among these indicators, 41 are outcome-based, 35 are output-based and 6 are process-based indicators. Regarding data periodicity, 70 indicators are reported annually, 10 follow a three-year cycle and 2 have a five-year reporting cycle.

A SDG Monitoring Dashboard has been developed to systematically track progress toward the SDGs at the state and district levels. Chhattisgarh SDG Monitoring Dashboard enables comparisons between districts as well as year-over-year analysis, providing a clearer insight into areas for improvement within each district. It includes an administrative login module for both district and departmental data entry. The data entry portal is made accessible to districts for a designated period during which the assigned department officers are required to input data for their respective districts. After submission the data undergoes scrutiny and verification by the department head, which determines the district-wise progress. State departments are responsible for entering SIF data, and the entire process is conducted online to ensure efficiency and accuracy.

SDG INDIA INDEX

The SDG India Index was conceived in 2018 following the need for a monitoring framework to track the progress of SDG implementation in the country. It is the most comprehensive performance measurement policy tool to gauge the performance of India and all the States/UTs across all the SDGs. The States and UTs are ranked on a composite index for each of the goals separately and on a combined index for all the goals. In addition to ranking States and UTs, these reports also highlight the country-level performance on each goal.

Grounded in the globally accepted SDSN methodology the development of the Index followed extensive consultations with the States and UTs (the primary stakeholders); MoSPI; Line Ministries; and UN agencies. The Index represents the articulation of the

comprehensive nature of the Global Goals under the 2030 Agenda while being attuned to the national priorities.

The Index computes goal-wise scores on the 16 SDGs for each State and Union Territory. Overall State and UT scores are generated from goal-wise scores to measure the aggregate performance of the sub-national units based on their performance across the 16 SDGs. These scores range from 0–100, and if a State/UT achieves a score of 100, it signifies it has achieved the 2030 targets.

The SDG India Index Dashboard, a public domain web platform has also been released as a complement to the report and allows users to visualise and explore the data in the SDG India Index Reports.

SDG India Index 2023-24, the fourth edition of the country's principal tool for measuring national and subnational progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) was released in July 2024 by NITI Aayog. The composite score for India improved from 57 in 2018 to 66 in 2020-21 and further to 71 in 2023-24. Since 2018, India has witnessed substantial progress in several key SDGs. Significant progress has been made in Goals 1 (No Poverty), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7

(Affordable and Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). All States have shown an improvement in their overall score. Scores for the States range from 57 to 79 in 2023-24, marking a substantial improvement from the year 2018 range of 42 to 69.

By fostering collaborative competition the Index not only highlights achievements but also encourages States and UTs to learn from each other to close outcome-based gaps.

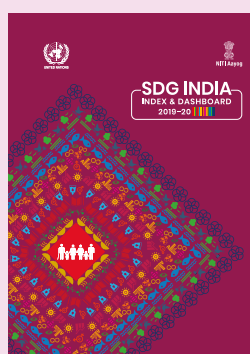


BASELINE REPORT 2018

13 Goals

39
Targets

62
Indicators



V2.0 REPORT 2019-20

16 Goals +
Qualitative Analysis
on Goal 17

54
Targets

100
Indicators



V3.0 REPORT 2020-21

16 Goals +
Qualitative Analysis
on Goal 17

70
Targets

115
Indicators



V4.0 REPORT 2023-24

16 Goals +
Qualitative Analysis
on Goal 17

70
Targets

113
Indicators

The SDG India Index has been consistently improved over the years to provide a comprehensive and comparative analysis of progress on the goals. The first edition of the index in 2018 was computed using only 62 indicators, covering 13 SDGs and 39 targets due to issues of data paucity, dated data and indicators that partially explained the targets. Nevertheless, the Index offered insights into India's baseline performance in achieving the SDGs while also highlighting the data gaps across different sectors and geographies. Despite the limitations, the Index was successful in initiating policy dialogues around the SDGs and opened up new arenas of partnership between the Government, private sector, CSOs, development partners and academia. Following extensive deliberations, peer-reviews, Ministerial and State consultations, the second edition of the SDG India Index for the year 2019–2020 was an improvement over the earlier version. It was constructed using 100 indicators, covering 54 targets spanning all the 17 goals. Goal 17 primarily focuses on partnerships (where sub-national indicators are not available). The indicators chosen were more robust and aligned with Global Goals, targets and the NIF. The third edition of the SDG India Index for 2020–2021 focused on “Partnerships in the Decade of Action” as its theme and covered 115 indicators and 70 targets. The fourth edition of the SDG India Index (2023–24), encompasses 16 goals, 70 targets and 113 indicators. This edition represents a substantial enhancement, meticulously refined through extensive nationwide consultations. These consultations were pivotal in optimising indicator selection in collaboration with Central Government Ministries, States and UTs through rigorous internal deliberations within NITI Aayog over 3 years.

NORTH-EASTERN REGION DISTRICT SDG INDEX

The North-Eastern Region (NER) District SDG Index 2021-22 has been developed by NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region. Constructed from 84 indicators, covering 15 Global Goals and 50 SDG targets, the index captures the progress on SDGs for more than 100 districts in the eight states of the North Eastern Region. The findings of the Index supported these states in identifying areas which require more attention, strengthening statistical and monitoring systems and promoting healthy competition among them.

All aspects related to the selection of indicators and computation methodology of the NER District SDG Index and Dashboard followed extensive consultation with all the eight States of the region. States played a crucial role in shaping the index by enriching the feedback process with localised insights and field experience.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX (MPI)

The National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for India is another key statistical measure fostering competition among the States and Union Territories to expeditiously take action towards meeting the SDG 1.2 target of reducing poverty in all of its dimensions.

The baseline report on National MPI was released in 2021 based on NFHS-4 (2015-16) data. An update to the baseline edition using NFHS-5 (2019-21) data and also

showing changes over time, titled “National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023” was released on 17th July 2023. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, about 135 million people have moved out of multidimensional poverty in India. Additionally, a discussion paper launched by the Government and UNDP has indicated that about 248.2 million people have escaped multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23.

The Index complements the 10 indicators of the global MPI with metrics on maternal health and bank account under the dimensions of health and standard of living respectively. The resulting work has also enabled the estimation of poverty not only at the State-level but also for all the 700 plus districts across twelve indicators, which capture simultaneous deprivations and indicator-wise contribution to poverty. It will also facilitate the formulation of sectoral policies and targeted interventions, also known as Reform Action Plans which contribute towards ensuring that “no one is left behind”.

NEW HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE SURVEY DATA

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) conducted two consecutive surveys on household consumption expenditure during 2022-23 and 2023-24, after the COVID-19 pandemic. The first survey was conducted between August 2022 and July 2023 and the summary results of the survey in the form of a factsheet were released in February 2024. Subsequently, the detailed report and the unit level data of the survey was released in



June 2024. The fieldwork of the second survey on the subject was undertaken from August 2023 to July 2024 throughout the entire country. The summary results of the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey: 2023-24 (HCES:2023-24) have been prepared at the State and broad item groups levels and were released in the form of a factsheet in December 2024.

HCES collects information on the consumption and expenditure of the households on goods and services. The survey provides data required to assess trends in economic well-being and to determine and update the basket of consumer goods and services and weights used for the calculation of the Consumer Price Index. Data collected in HCES is also used to measure poverty, inequality and social exclusion and are being used by international agencies like FAO and World Bank to update a number of global statistics related to chronic hunger and extreme poverty respectively.

STRENGTHENING INDIA'S NATIONAL STATISTICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECOSYSTEM

Taking advantage of the country's improved digital public infrastructure and the whole-of-society and whole-of-government efforts at achieving sustainable development, India's national statistical system has embraced reforms that have improved the accuracy, timeliness, relevance and reliability of Indian statistics in the service of evidence-based use of statistical data to measure and monitor progress. India's National Statistical System is highly decentralised, horizontally amongst Central Ministries and vertically between Union and States. Statistical reforms can help reduce the multiplicity of data silos and integrate multiple registries across various levels of government. A key objective of reforms to India's statistical system has been to maintain data in digital and portable formats to ensure interoperability. Strengthening the human capital management of the country's statisticians and data scientists as well has been a paramount concern. These efforts are enabling the country to capitalise on new data sources and make use of emerging technologies in real time, especially in pursuit of SDG progress.

Intensive use of technology is permitting faster data collection, faster processing and release of results and improved data quality. New techniques are also being employed to improve the measurement of socio-economic status – an essential requirement of monitoring SDG

progress. These include augmentation of sample surveys and administrative data sources, closer integration between national and state statistical systems and experimentation with alternative data sources and perception based indices. The country has also adopted the UN-NQAF—IQAF as well as the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Statistical Advisers have also been appointed across line Ministries in the Government of India. Efforts also continue to improve coordination with States by extending methodological assistance to State/UTs.

Technology adoption is being embraced as a key instrument of innovation by the national statistical system. In July 2024, MoSPI established the Data Innovation (DI) Lab initiative to infuse innovation and build an ecosystem for research-driven solutions. The DI Lab is designed to serve as a platform to harness emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML) and Big Data Analytics to enhance data collection, processing, and dissemination. As part of the outreach activities, the Lab has been engaging with premier academic institutions to stay abreast of the evolving statistical landscape and new methodologies needed to address issues like data integration, real-time analytics and predictive modelling.

Open Data Architecture is being employed to promote usage and collaboration, including through open APIs and better integration across various dashboards and data portals. To facilitate data sharing and promote innovation over non-personal data, the Open Government Data platform has been developed. In 2024, India launched the e-Sankhyiki portal with an objective to establish a comprehensive data management and sharing system for ease of dissemination of official statistics in the country. It provides time series data for key macroeconomic indicators with features for filtering and visualising the data. Users can also download customised datasets and visualisations and access them through APIs, enhancing the data's reusability. Further, the Microdata of Surveys and Census is disseminated via a dedicated portal, viz. Microdata Portal. e-Sankhyiki portal has an Application Programming Interface (API) which ensures seamless accessibility of data to various portals including National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP). In addition, Central Ministries/ Departments disseminate data produced by them through their respective portals/ websites and publications. A National Metadata Structure (NMDS) established by MoSPI ensures uniformity of Data Standards for consistency. Guidelines on Data Dissemination in compliance of National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) have also been developed.

NATIONAL DATA & ANALYTICS PLATFORM (NDAP)

In 2022, the Government of India launched the National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP) for open public use. The platform aims to democratise access to public government data by making data accessible, interoperable, interactive and available on a user-friendly platform. It hosts foundational datasets from various government agencies, presents them coherently, and provides tools for analytics and visualisation. NDAP follows a use-case-based approach to ensure that the datasets hosted on the platform are tailored to the needs of data users from government, academia, journalism, civil society and the private sector. All datasets are standardised to a common schema, which makes it easy to merge datasets and do cross-sectoral analysis.

NDAP represents a significant milestone in India's journey toward progress by fostering data-driven transparency, informed decision-making and ensuring the availability of data that reaches the last mile. It exemplifies how the transformative potential of data can be harnessed effectively.



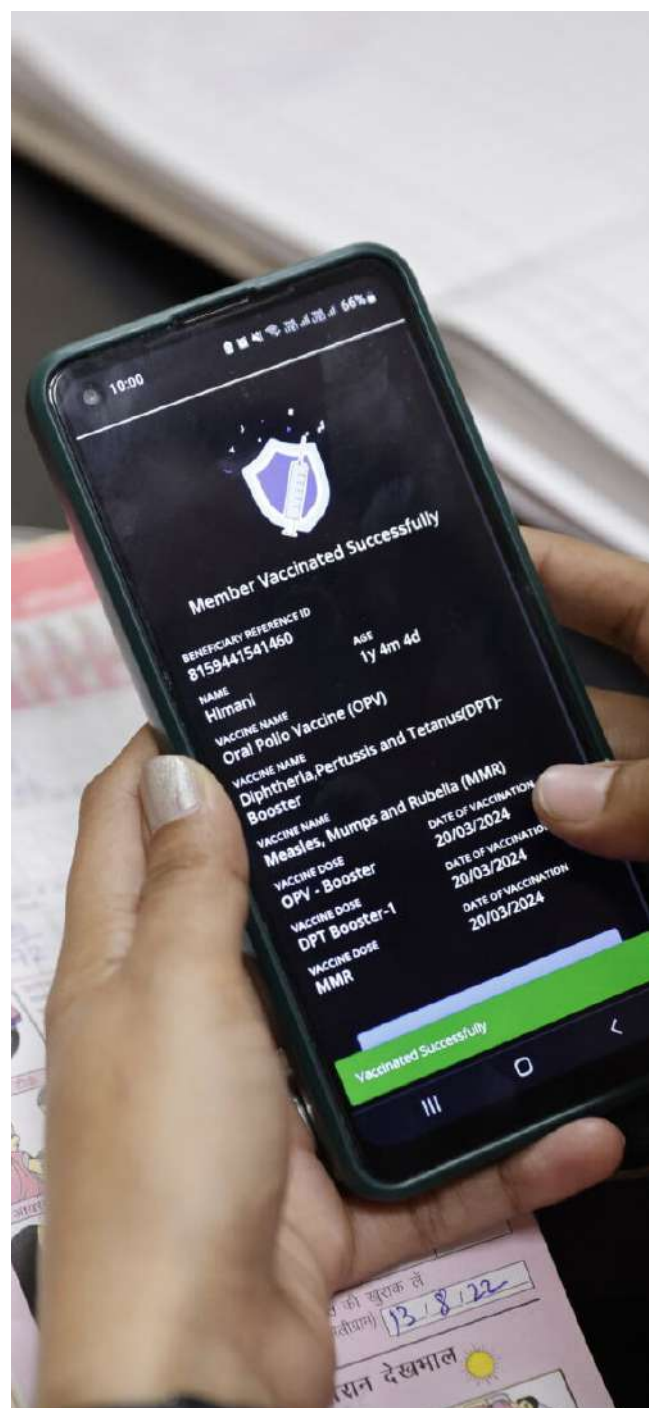
The support for the Statistical Strengthening sub-scheme for States/UTs is increasing capacities of the State statistical authorities. Grant in Aid to States/UTs under the ongoing Central Sector sub-scheme Support for Statistical Strengthening (SSS) is strengthening the statistical capacity and operations of the state statistical system for collecting, compiling and disseminating reliable official statistics. State /UTs are undertaking compilation of local level statistics, and creation of integrated State databases, studies and surveys to address data gaps. They are also compiling core indicators at State/Sub-State level, organising workshops, conducting training programmes for statistical personnel, awareness campaigns for statistics and strengthening of IT infrastructure, etc. undertaking compilation of local level statistics, and creation of integrated State databases, studies and surveys to address data gaps. They are also compiling core indicators at State/Sub-State level, organising workshops, conducting training programmes for statistical personnel, awareness campaigns for statistics and strengthening of IT infrastructure, etc.

Today India is also exploring non-traditional data sources, such as Citizen-Generated Data (CGD), Geo-spatial information and other innovative approaches, to complement official statistics and strengthen the tracking of SDG progress across different administrative levels.

INITIATIVES FOR SAFE DATA DISSEMINATION

In response to the rapid data expansion the Government of India has instituted robust data safety measures. These include storing data in the cloud facilities provided by the National Informatics Centre (NIC), conducting comprehensive security audits of applications and implementing Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology for domain protection. Additionally, the Government has focused on the vulnerability assessments and ensuring compliance with guidelines issued by organisations such as the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) and NIC. The CERT-In engages in several critical activities to enhance data safety. These include issuing advisories and cyber and information security

guidelines and conducting sensitisation programmes, training sessions and workshops. The NIC offers advanced ICT infrastructure and services to various government entities, including Union and State Governments, UTs and District administrations. Its extensive services include multi-gigabit nationwide networks (NICNET and NKN), National Data Centres, National Cloud, nationwide video conferencing infrastructure, Command and Control Centres, a multi-layered GIS platform, domain registration and webcast services. These capabilities are crucial for delivering efficient, citizen-centric e-services throughout the country.



INDIA'S LEADING GLOBAL VOICE ON DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

India has been a leading global voice on the importance of data for development. Under India's 2023 G20 Presidency the G20 Leaders reaffirmed the role of Data for Development. India has also been an important voice in discussions on data for development at the United Nations Statistical Commission and in the context of the Global Digital Compact, which was agreed as part of the UN Pact of the Future in September 2024.

DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNITED NATIONS

India has been a prominent voice in the international discussion of data for development issues at the United Nations, including through regular participation in the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators – the apex intergovernmental body that assesses the Global Indicator Framework for SDG monitoring. India has also rejoined as a full member of the UN Statistical Commission in 2024. The country has also joined the UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics. As part of the committee India will contribute to shaping global standards and practices in harnessing big data and data science for official statistical purposes. India's active engagement in the Committee of Experts will highlight its pioneering initiatives and experiences using big data and data science for informing policy.

G20 PRINCIPLES ON HARNESSING DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

During India's G20 Presidency, the Members endorsed the G20 Principles on Harnessing Data for Development (D4D) and welcomed the decision to launch the Data for Development Capacity Building Initiative. The G20 Principles focus on enhancing high-quality data and sustainable data infrastructure and promoting data-informed approaches for sustainable development. They recognise the importance of inclusion, bridging the digital gap, with

a particular focus on addressing gender and data disparities, while also championing the inclusive utilisation of data for development purposes. Access to technology and finance are critical to harnessing data for development, including by securing additional financial backing while also promoting technology assistance to enhance the progress and effectiveness of development initiatives. Furthermore, capacity building is key to enhancing the capacity of individuals and organisations, fostering collaborative efforts and nurturing strategic partnerships to bolster the effectiveness of data-driven initiatives for sustainable development.

DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE

For the benefit of the Global South, under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, India has established an Executive Programme on Data for Development-Capacity Building Initiative (D4D-CBI) in 2024. The programme welcomes senior level officers from various developing countries and aims to deepen appreciation of the concept of inclusive digital development and identify policies and programmes to realise an inclusive digital development strategy. It explores policy and other issues related to developing and implementing data-driven governance. The Programme is implemented by the National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development, an autonomous organisation under the aegis of NITI Aayog.





CHAPTER 06



Last Mile Delivery and a Whole-of-Society Approach



जन्म मृत्यु
चार पंजीयन-आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ता / स्वास्थ्य कार्यकर्ता
के पास आवश्यक रूप से स्वास्थ्य के रिकॉर्ड करायें।

HAN
yaan
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ment
पोषण - देश रोशन

क्र.सं.	नाम	पंजीयन	आंगनवाड़ी	स्वास्थ्य	सामुदायिक
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समोक्ति बाल
महिला एवं बाल विकास
सामुदायिक मंडल
लक्ष्मी - अनुसूचित
वर्ग (अनुसूचित जाति)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19



CHAPTER 6: LAST MILE DELIVERY AND A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH

India's commitment to the SDGs is closely tied to its efforts to ensure that the benefits of growth reach the marginalised and vulnerable communities, leaving no one behind. As the world's largest democracy, India faces the challenge of serving a diverse population, with a focus on effective last-mile delivery of essential services such as healthcare, education, housing, sanitation, and energy. The Government has recognised that reaching those most in need is crucial for achieving equitable development.

India's progress toward the SDGs has accelerated through strategic interventions aimed at ensuring no one is left behind. Central to this progress is the emphasis on last-mile delivery, ensuring essential services reach every citizen, including those in remote regions. By engaging grassroots communities and leveraging digital platforms, India is transforming the delivery of essential services, particularly in rural and tribal areas. This evolving model combines Union and State policy initiatives with community-driven actions, supported by technology and local governance.

ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS PROGRAMME

Launched in 2018, the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) aims to fast-track the development of 112 relatively underdeveloped districts from 27 states/UTs in India. It focuses on five critical sectors: Health and Nutrition; Education; Agriculture & Water Resources; Financial Inclusion and Skill Development; and Basic Infrastructure.

The programme focuses on Convergence (Aligning the efforts of various government schemes to maximise impact); Collaboration (Encouraging partnerships among different stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector); and Competition (Promoting a sense of healthy competition among districts to drive rapid improvement). The Union Government has been diligently monitoring the districts by capturing monthly data on 49 KPIs. The KPIs provide an overarching but non-prescriptive framework that facilitates planning and policy prioritisation at the implementation level.

Since its inception, the ADP has made significant strides across various thematic areas. For instance, the convergence of the National Health Mission (NHM), Ayushman Bharat, and Poshan Abhiyaan (Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0) at the district level has positively impacted maternal mortality and child malnutrition. Aspirational Districts have drastically improved antenatal care for pregnant women, supplementary nutrition and institutional delivery. While monitoring the outcome of financial inclusion, it has been seen that Aspirational Districts have performed well in increasing access to bank accounts and more people have been covered under the fold of government insurance schemes and pension schemes under Atal Pension Yojana (APY). In education sector, Aspirational Districts have prioritised access to functional toilets for girls in schools under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), and in the sector of skill development, the percentage of women certified as trained has drastically improved since March 2018.

Overall, the ADP serves as a model for inclusive and sustainable development nationwide. By rebranding previously labelled "backward districts" as "Aspirational Districts," the programme adopts a transformative approach that emphasises people as the key resource for development. Success stories from ADP have demonstrated that active community engagement leads to a more effective service delivery and lasting impact.



SOLAR POWER DRIVEN KHAWA CLUSTER TO BOOST MILK INDUSTRY AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In order to keep themselves afloat during severe droughts, farmers in Osmanabad District, Maharashtra within a Khawa cluster have come together, as an alternative to selling only milk. Khawa (reduced dry milk) as a product has more demand and shelf life than milk and every farmer makes a profit for every litre. Farmers have organised themselves in cooperatives and are pooling their cattle for making Khawa (milk solids) from their daily milk production. The profit margin is even higher during festivals and wedding seasons and is distributed according to share of the milk pooled in by the farmers. This has led to a massive proliferation of such cooperatives with 150 of them presently churning out 35,000 kgs of Khawa per day. The Khawa cluster concept has boosted the traditional milk industry and also promoted sustainable development, as modern induction machines are powered by solar energy. The cluster has also helped in reducing deforestation in the district, as traditional milk and Khawa industry was running on wood-fired kilns. A Skill Development Centre is also part of the cluster and is skilling more than 1,000 youth every year and integrating them in the Khawa value-chain at different levels, also as self-employed individuals.

ASPIRATIONAL BLOCKS PROGRAMME

The Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP), launched in 2023, builds on the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) and focuses on improving governance in India with a vision to enhance the quality of life of citizens in the most difficult and relatively underdeveloped blocks of India by converging existing schemes, defining outcomes, and monitoring progress on a constant basis. Across the country, 500 blocks in 329 districts from 27 states and 4 Union Territories have been identified. The programme focuses on monitoring 40 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from five thematic sectors: Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Allied Services, Basic Infrastructure, and Social Development.

The focus on blocks ensures that a larger than proportionate share of development reaches the marginalised and vulnerable sections of the population by building up social and economic infrastructure and addressing intra-district variations. Treating the block as an administrative and monitoring unit also ensures that a 'one size fits all' approach is not applied to every part of the country; instead the block administration can adopt customised approaches towards improving socio-economic indicators based on the diverse social and cultural context of the region and the most emergent needs. This method also brings the decision-making process closer to the grassroots.

Under ABP, nearly 5,000 Block-level officials have undergone comprehensive leadership and sectoral training, equipping them with the skills to implement effective policies, manage resources efficiently, and address local challenges through innovative, context-specific solutions. This capacity-building exercise has enhanced their leadership capabilities and fostered a collaborative, cross-sectoral approach among different line departments, leading to better policy execution at the block level.

A cornerstone of the ABP has been the creation of Block Development Strategies for all 500 identified blocks. These strategies were developed through a consultative and participatory process involving community stakeholders, government officials and development partners. The strategies emphasise the saturation of basic services such as health, education, drinking water, sanitation, and financial inclusion. The objective is to ensure that each block reaches the State averages in key socio-economic indicators within a defined time frame.

To accelerate this transformation, Sankalp Saptaah was launched in Aspirational Districts and Blocks, a dedicated week-long initiative aimed at driving focused action on identified thematic areas across these blocks. The initiative mobilised local resources, intensified governance efforts and fostered community participation to achieve tangible outcomes.

Additionally, the brand “Aakanksha” was launched in March 2024, to consolidate and promote traditional products from 500 Aspirational Blocks under a unified identity. This “Vocal for Local” initiative underscores the

economic potential of traditional products while fostering regional craftsmanship and entrepreneurship. By providing a national platform through “Aakanksha,” it strengthens local economies and promotes livelihood of the citizens.

GANGANAGAR BLOCK: HONoured WITH THE PRIME MINISTER’S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 2024

Ganganagar Block, nestled in the remote, hilly terrain of Dhalai district in eastern Tripura near the Tripura–Mizoram border, is primarily inhabited by tribal communities and encompasses several tribal villages. Spanning about 11,154.66 square kilometres and comprising 53 Gram Panchayats, the block has received the Prime Minister’s Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024 in recognition of its outstanding achievements under the Aspirational Blocks Programme.

The block has launched several important initiatives to guarantee access to essential services for all, with a special focus on marginalised groups. Thanks to these efforts, Ganganagar Block scored over 80% in qualitative assessments across four major themes, and an impressive 90% in agriculture, demonstrating its commitment to bridging service gaps and enhancing agricultural productivity through focused interventions.

Highlights of Key Initiatives:

- **Health and Nutrition:** Ganganagar Block achieved 100% antenatal care registrations and supplementary nutrition coverage. Non-communicable disease screenings more than doubled, rising from 2,600 to 5,128. Outreach activities such as Seva Camps, Night Camps, and Lucky Draws significantly increased health service coverage in remote tribal areas. Service integration, local partnerships, and data-driven planning led to rapid improvements in health access and infrastructure within a month.
- **Education:** Through a household survey 14 school dropouts were identified and all were successfully reintegrated into school. This was accomplished through counselling, parent outreach, and the provision of textbooks, uniforms, and midday meals. Ongoing tracking and community involvement were essential in improving educational access, particularly for children from Scheduled Tribe communities.
- **Agriculture:** From July to September 2024, all 845 pending farmers received soil health cards, reaching 100% coverage. The block addressed delays by using manual tracking, setting fixed monthly targets, and improving coordination with KVK, ensuring timely distribution and strengthening agricultural infrastructure for better soil and crop management.
- **Social Development:** A total of 2,402 rural households were mobilised into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under NRLM/TRLM, enhancing livelihoods, financial access, and women’s empowerment. The initiative emphasised building community infrastructure through capacity-building programmes, credit linkages, and skill development, thereby strengthening grassroots social and economic resilience.
- **Infrastructure:** Under the PMAY-G scheme, 1,644 houses were sanctioned and 1,641 completed, providing safe and well-equipped homes to economically weaker households. The percentage of households with tap water connections rose from 53% to 84.5%. Effective coordination and phased execution ensured timely delivery and significant improvements in rural infrastructure.

GRAM PANCHAYAT DEVELOPMENT PLANS (GPDP)

At the grassroots level, India has adopted decentralised approaches to align development with local needs, with Gram Panchayats (GPs) serving as the cornerstone of local governance in rural areas. These village councils play a crucial role in implementing development initiatives that directly impact community lives. Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) are pivotal in this process, empowering local panchayats to identify and address specific community needs while ensuring active participation from marginalised groups, including women and youth. GPDPs translate global objectives like Agenda 2030 into the local levels plans which can be effectively implemented at the grassroots level.

Guidelines have been issued for aligning Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs) with SDG targets. Doing so ensures that the principles of sustainable development are reflected in village-level planning and decision-making. Today, more than 0.22 million Gram Panchayats have uploaded their approved GPDPs to the eGramSwaraj portal.

In many rural areas, especially in tribal and remote communities, this approach has helped break traditional barriers to development by allowing women, youth, and vulnerable groups to play active role in decision-making. GPDP allows these communities to tailor development projects to their specific needs, whether it be improving local schools, establishing healthcare clinics, or upgrading sanitation facilities.

Recognising the significant role that each citizen and stakeholder plays in realising the vision of creating self-sufficient and sustainable villages, the Government launched the 'Sabki Yojana Sabka Vikas' Abhiyan – People's Plan Campaign in 2019. The initiative is aimed at strengthening grassroots democracy and promoting inclusive development in Grameen Bharat. Since its inception, every year the campaign continues to encourage active participation of citizens of rural India in the planning process of GPDPs. It empowers citizens to take an active role in

shaping the future of their villages and creating development plans that truly reflect local needs and aspirations.

To further enhance the provision of services to its citizens in a time bound manner, redressing their grievances and improving their lives, the Government has also prepared the Model Panchayat Citizens Charter/ framework for delivery of services across 29 sectors, aligning actions with SDGs for the Panchayats to adopt and customise. The 'Meri Panchayat, Mera Adhikaar- Jan Sevaayein Hamaare Dwaar' campaign, rolled out in 2021, has emerged as an effective strategy for ensuring that Gram Panchayats have a Citizens Charter approved by the respective Gram Sabhas in place, cataloguing the different categories of services rendered to citizens by the Panchayat and the time limit for such services.

In 2024, a Special Gram Sabha Orientation/Training Programme was organised in 750 Gram Panchayats across India. This first-of-its-kind event is part of the Government's commitment to strengthening the Panchayati Raj system and ensuring the creation of high-quality Panchayat Development Plans (PDPs) through active community participation. Special emphasis was given on engaging both the elders and younger generations to work collaboratively towards the sustainable development of Grameen Bharat. The involvement of senior citizens in the planning process reinforced the traditional wisdom and values embedded in rural governance.



A RENEWABLE ENERGY SUCCESS STORY: ODANTHURAI GRAM PANCHAYAT'S SUSTAINABLE POWER GENERATION IN TAMIL NADU

In Odanthurai, Karamadai, Coimbatore, notable efforts have been made to create a clean and green environment. The Gram Panchayat (GP) holds the distinction of being the first local body in Tamil Nadu to own a windmill. The windmill was installed using their own savings and a bank loan. It generates approximately 0.6 million units of electricity per year, which is sold to the TANGEDCO (State Electricity Board). This initiative not only promotes renewable energy but also generates significant revenue. The GP earns more than ₹ 1.6 million per year from the sale of electricity. These sustainable practices contribute to a cleaner environment while simultaneously boosting the financial resources of the GP.

SAMPOORNATA ABHIYAN: A FOCUSED INITIATIVE FOR SATURATION OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



In 2024, in a concerted effort to drive rapid and effective development in India's most underdeveloped regions, the Government of India launched the 'Sampoornata Abhiyaan', as part of the broader initiatives of ADP and the ABP. The campaign adopted a focused and time-bound approach, prioritising six key performance indicators (KPIs) each under the ADP and ABP, with the goal of achieving saturation within a three-month period (July to September 2024). These KPIs targeted critical areas such as maternal health, child immunisation, school infrastructure and financial inclusion, ensuring a concentrated effort for quick and tangible impact. Districts and blocks formulated structured action plans as roadmaps for coordinated efforts, emphasising the saturation of the six identified indicators. Progress was tracked monthly, enabling real-time identification of challenges and timely course corrections. Additionally, awareness campaigns were conducted to raise community awareness and encourage the uptake of essential government services.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, PRIVATE SECTOR, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

While government programmes are critical in last-mile delivery, CSOs, NGOs, and the private sector also play an essential role in bridging the gap between the government and target communities. These organisations are often in the best position to understand the unique needs of local populations and tailor interventions to be culturally sensitive and contextually relevant.

As part of the 2025 Voluntary National Review, extensive consultations were undertaken with private sector and civil society groups, as described in Chapter 3. The consultations provided an opportune moment for the Government to receive feedback from these different stakeholders on opportunities and challenges facing India's implementation of Agenda 2030 since 2020.

Perspectives from Civil Society Organisations on improving last mile delivery

Continued collaboration and focus on marginalised communities will be essential to achieving the transformative, equitable future that the SDGs promise. As India moves closer to achieving its SDG targets, the key challenge remains ensuring that the most remote and underserved regions continue to benefit from these initiatives. Consultations with CSOs articulated how some stakeholder groups continue to face the risk of being left behind due to the intersectionality of their vulnerabilities and associated deprivations.

While different groups highlighted varied sets of issues and challenges depending on their specific situation, there were recurring themes across the groups which resulted in a set of key shared recommendations. The following recommendations summarise the key observations from the community groups of how to improve the situation facing the members of these groups.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS

- The government must rigorously enforce anti-discrimination laws and mandate regular sensitisation training to eliminate stigma against PLHIV, Transgender Persons, Scheduled Castes, and persons with disabilities across healthcare, education, and workplaces.
- To improve welfare access for marginalised groups like the elderly, migrants, and de-notified tribes, the government should simplify eligibility criteria, accept alternative IDs, streamline enrolment, and raise awareness through community outreach.
- Expanding Ayushman Bharat by integrating marginalised groups into insurance schemes, establishing specialised clinics, and training providers in diverse care will improve healthcare access and reduce costs for women, youth, Scheduled Tribes, and persons with disabilities.
- Inclusive education can be promoted by integrating comprehensive sex education, gender equality, and indigenous knowledge into curricula, enforcing anti-bullying policies, and training educators to support marginalised students.
- The government should expand tailored skill development and entrepreneurship programmes while enforcing fair wages and workplace protections to economically empower farmers, migrants, women, and Scheduled Castes.
- Upgrading infrastructure with elderly-friendly transport, disability-accessible spaces, safe shelters, and improved rural roads and sanitation will enhance quality of life for persons with disabilities, women, migrants, and others.
- Strengthening data systems by collecting and publishing disaggregated data on gender, disability, caste, and socio-economic status will enable evidence-based policies that address the needs of marginalised groups.
- Legal protections must be enhanced by amending laws to close gaps, expanding rights for LGBTQIA+ individuals, strengthening cyber abuse laws, and establishing accessible reporting and sensitive law enforcement mechanisms.
- Nationwide multimedia and community-led awareness campaigns tailored to diverse audiences are essential to educate marginalised populations and officials about rights, entitlements, and anti-stigma measures.
- Institutionalising the participation of marginalised groups in local governance and planning processes will ensure sustainable and context-specific policies that build trust and accountability.

Perspectives from Private Sector on accelerating the achievement of 2030 Agenda

The business imperative for engaging in the SDGs is based both on the value to the business and the values of the business. Tackling sustainable development challenges helps to identify and mitigate material risks and costs for many companies and strengthen their relationships, licence to operate and longer-term resilience. It can also create opportunities for innovation and for accessing new producers, consumers and growth markets.

As part of the 2025 VNR, a wide range of private sector stakeholders were consulted on how they are contributing to the SDGs and what opportunities or challenges they face. Discussions focused around three areas where private sector plays a significant role:

- corporate social responsibility
- responsible business conduct and
- start-ups for sustainable development.

Social impact spending by private sector: CSR and the philanthropy ecosystem

India is the first country in the world to legally have mandated corporates to spend a certain percentage of their profit on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR involves the corporate sector taking into account environmental, social and human development concerns while carrying out their business activities. Companies have made strategic investments in health, education, skill development, and innovation to address employment gaps and improve worker preparedness. The integration of SDG indicators into CSR reporting has enabled better progress monitoring and data-driven strategies.

Prominent challenges in this area include the need for greater collaboration and convergence, aligning national priorities with CSR and SDGs, and addressing the skills gap between education and industry demands. Innovative financing options like impact bonds and pooled capital could be explored to enhance sustainability efforts. It is important to leverage smaller investments through blended financial models and catalytic funding to unlock substantial resources and drive large-scale change. Private philanthropy, both from foundations and high-net-worth individuals (HNIs), alongside corporate contributions through CSR, could play a key role.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PRIVATE SECTOR ON CSR

- Create unified platforms for sharing best practices and collaborating across sectors to reduce redundancy in CSR projects.
- Link national goals with CSR investments to evaluate impact and ensure that CSR investments align with national priorities and geographic focus.
- Enhance business engagement in employment and skill development to close the gap between college education and industry demands.
- Leverage technology, AI, and digital health solutions for scalable impact to improve progress monitoring and policy decisions.
- Promote systemic governance changes with new philanthropic and CSR policies to encourage sustained engagement beyond one-time consultations.
- Encourage private sector contributions beyond financial investments to include networks, resources, and expertise to drive systemic change.

Driving 2030 Agenda through responsible business conduct and action

Businesses in India are embedding sustainability, innovation, and inclusivity within their operations to accelerate SDG progress. Efforts include carbon neutrality, green infrastructure, responsible supply chains, and skilling initiatives. Companies are also focusing on diversity in procurement and integrating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles. There are many examples of major IT companies declaring themselves fully carbon neutral, with significant reductions in electricity consumption through renewable energy. Investments in carbon offset projects have benefited thousands of families, aligning with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Companies are securing green certifications for manufacturing units, focusing on zero net liquid discharge and energy efficiency to advance sustainability goals.

In the area of labour market interventions and workplace equality, businesses are integrating skilling initiatives and supporting legislations such as the Maternity Benefit Act to create fair and inclusive workplaces. Companies are prioritising diversity in procurement with notable recognitions for building gender-inclusive supply chains. The integration of ESG principles across businesses is driving responsible sourcing and environmental sustainability. Companies are focusing on ecological conservation, supplier responsibility, and workforce development along ESG-aligned value chains. This includes water conservation efforts, strategies to improve supplier responses, and tracking emissions for scalability by 2030.

Key challenges include identifying relevant SDGs and sector-specific issues, fostering partnerships, and ensuring independent third-party assessments. Regulatory uncertainties and supply chain bottlenecks often act as barriers to scaling responsible practices.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PRIVATE SECTOR ON RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT

- Develop standardised templates for data collection and sustainability reporting.
- Strengthen independent assessments and data verification mechanisms to enhance credibility and trust in sustainability disclosures.
- Enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration platforms for coordinated action among businesses, government bodies, civil society, and industry associations.
- Promote innovative financing models for sustainable business practices such as blended finance mechanisms, sustainability-linked loans, and impact investment strategies.
- Encourage transparency and accountability in corporate disclosures by tracking contributions to the SDGs and incorporating sustainability metrics into annual reports.
- Integrate SDGs into core business strategies, ensuring that all three pillars of the National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC)-economic, social, and environmental are addressed.

Start-ups for sustainable development in India

Start-ups are driving impactful solutions across healthcare, agriculture, sustainability, and social inclusion. Innovations include AI-driven health diagnostics, climate-smart agriculture, and circular economy models. Start-ups are also driving the transition to a circular economy through scalable solutions in waste management, sustainable packaging, and responsible consumption. Entrepreneurship-led initiatives are creating economic opportunities for women and marginalised

groups by addressing critical social challenges such as menstrual health, financial inclusion, and vocational skill development.

However, systemic challenges continue to hinder the growth and scalability of impact-driven start-ups. Limited access to patient capital, sector-specific funding gaps, and complex regulatory barriers create hurdles for early-stage enterprises. Additionally, decentralised governance structures make expansion across states difficult, while market adoption of sustainable products remains slow due to higher costs and limited consumer awareness.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PRIVATE SECTOR ON START-UPS FOR SDGS

- Encourage patient capital and blended finance instruments for early-stage start-ups to bridge early-stage funding gaps.
- Streamline regulatory processes and enhance public-private collaboration to facilitate government adoption of start-up solutions.
- Promote consumer awareness and market readiness for sustainable products to help shift consumer behaviour towards sustainable choices.
- Expand innovation ecosystems to Tier 2 and 3 cities by increasing access to entrepreneurship support hubs and promoting digital platforms in local languages.
- Integrate start-ups into government schemes and incentivise cross-sector partnerships.



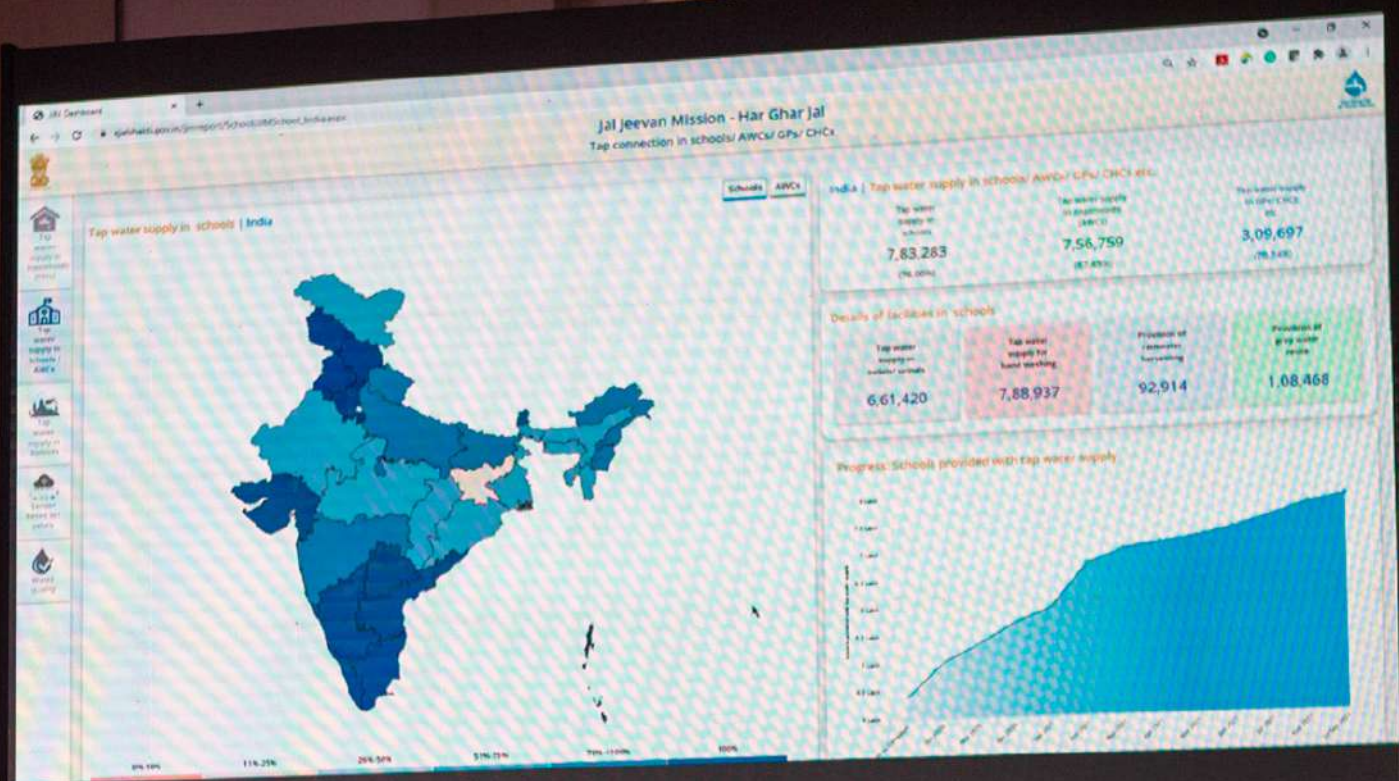


CHAPTER

07



India's SDG Localisation Model



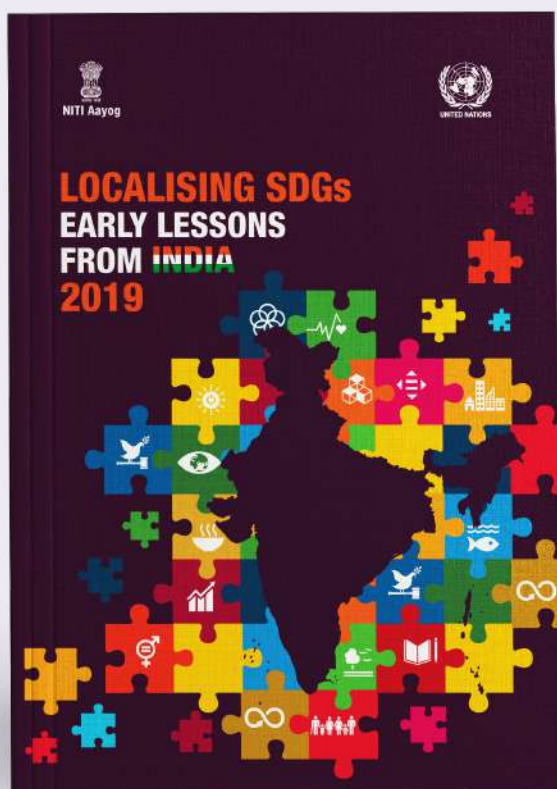
CHAPTER 7: INDIA'S SDG LOCALISATION MODEL

The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda depends heavily on progress at the local level. The need for SDG localisation in India is amplified by its vast geographic, demographic, and socio-economic diversity. With 28 states and 8 Union Territories, each with its own unique challenges and priorities, a one-size-fits-all approach would be ineffective. Progress toward the SDGs is closely linked to the development of States, which serve as primary drivers of growth. India's decentralised federal structure allows for tailored strategies that address local realities fostering ownership and responsibility for sustainable development at the regional level. Local governments being closer to communities have

a better understanding of the local needs and are more effective in addressing challenges, including those related to leaving no one behind (LNOB).

India leverages this federal structure by empowering States to design context-specific strategies while receiving ongoing support and guidance from the Union Government. This dynamic relationship highlights the collaborative and competitive nature of India's governance system, driving progress across the country. The Union Government champions cooperative federalism and fosters a competitive spirit among States and UTs in achieving the SDGs.

INDIA'S PUBLICATIONS ON LOCALISATION OF SDGS



India's approach to adopting, implementing and monitoring the SDGs reflects a deep and sustained commitment to the 2030 Agenda. Since the global adoption of the SDGs, NITI Aayog has published two editions documenting efforts and progress made by States and UTs. The 2019 document titled "Localising SDGs: Early Lessons from India" and the subsequent 2022 report "Indian Model of SDG Localisation", capture the evolving strategies, innovations, and progress achieved at the sub-national level. These reports offer rich insights into how India is translating global goals into local action.

FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS AND KEY FEATURES OF THE INDIAN SDG LOCALISATION MODEL

The Indian Model of SDG Localisation is built on the following key features for effectively driving SDGs.

1. Strong institutional focus:

The Government of India has assigned responsibilities for delivering the 2030 Agenda, following a 'whole-of-the-government' approach. At the centre, NITI Aayog is the government's apex body for designing long-term policies, programmes and strategies, and plays a guiding role in localising the SDGs. It is mandated to coordinate work on SDGs, convening Central Ministries, States/ UTs, CSOs, NGOs, academia and the business sector together to work towards India's SDG targets. Acting as the central authority for SDG-related data in India, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) coordinates the national data activities to support global SDG monitoring. It collaborates closely with States to adapt indicators to local contexts while building capacity within statistical institutions at sub-national levels.

Sub-national governments (States and UTs) are critical actors in translating national commitments into actionable local initiatives. Over the past 10 years, States have taken leadership roles in localising SDGs by establishing institutional mechanisms such as high-level steering committees, specialised Project Management Units (PMUs), and SDG monitoring systems at state, district, and block levels. Many States and even districts have developed vision documents aligned with the SDG priorities. They have also extended indicator frameworks to grassroots levels, and realigned budgetary allocations to focus on sustainable development objectives. These

efforts ensure that resources are effectively directed toward achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Local governance structures further reinforce this process by embedding SDGs into grassroots planning. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has integrated SDGs into Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs), ensuring that sustainable development principles are reflected in village-level decision-making. This empowers communities to actively participate in planning initiatives tailored to their needs.

Oversight and accountability mechanisms ensure that India's progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda remains on track. Parliament provides legislative oversight through regular reviews of government actions related to SDG implementation, while the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) conducts independent audits of programmes aimed at sustainable development. Figure 54 provides an overview of national and sub-national institutional framework for SDG localisation in India.

2. Monitoring architecture:

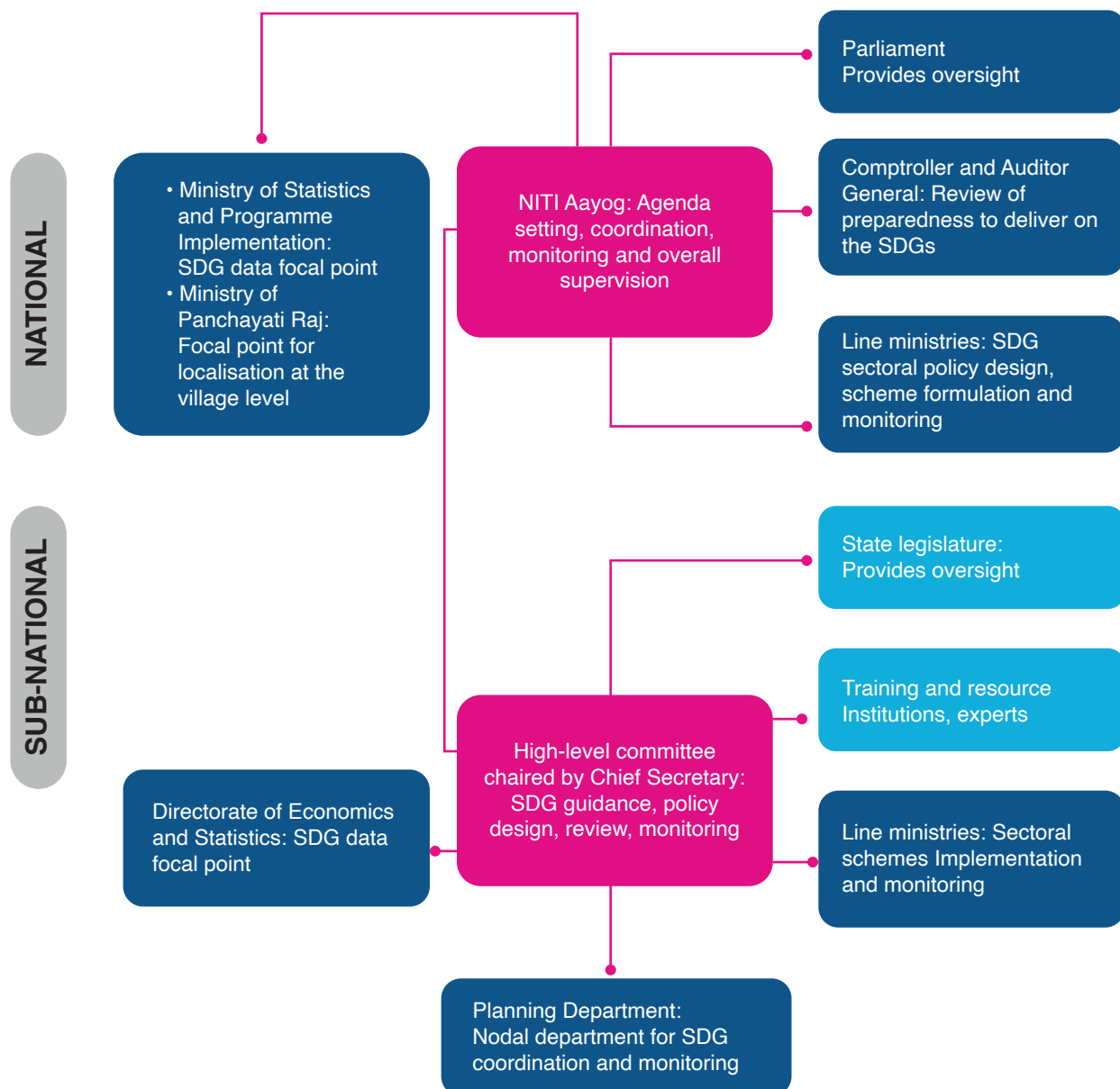
Fragmented and siloed development data often hinder effective decision-making, as they obscure the nuanced realities of progress across different regions. In a nation as vast and diverse as India, national averages can mask significant disparities among States and UTs. India's larger States rival entire countries in terms of population and area. Certain States and UTs perform on par with high-income nations in key socioeconomic indicators, while others lag considerably behind. Regular tracking of SDGs at the sub-national level, down to districts and cities is crucial for understanding the progress and tailoring interventions. Significant inter-state disparities demand granular analysis to address localised challenges effectively. To promote healthy competition among States and UTs, the Union Government has introduced comparative rankings



across sectors such as health, education, water management, innovation, and exports. Among these initiatives, the SDG India Index and Dashboard stands out as the most comprehensive tool for assessing performance across all SDGs since its inception in 2018.

Additionally, States and UTs, and districts are encouraged to develop their own State and District Indicator Frameworks. 27 States and 5 UTs have already developed their respective SIFs and 6 States have developed Block Indicator Frameworks.

Figure 54: National and sub-national institutional framework for SDG localisation in India



3. Aligning Public Finances:

Bridging the SDG financing gap requires a comprehensive overhaul of public finance strategies. This involves enhancing the mobilisation of domestic resources, accessing innovative private finance mechanisms, and leveraging international development cooperation. In India, sub-national governments align their budgets to the SDG targets and develop strategic budgeting for planned expenditures to address key SDG areas. 11 States and 1 UT have linked SDGs to their budget

allocation. To catalyse further progress, it is essential to integrate SDG financing gap analysis with investment opportunities. This involves exploring and implementing innovative financing tools that can attract private capital and support developmental projects. By linking these financial instruments with strategic investment opportunities, sub-national governments are vying to create a more robust framework for resource mobilisation.

4. Promoting “whole-of-the-society” approach:

A “whole-of-the-society” approach is crucial for realising the 2030 Agenda, as it is widely recognised that government interventions alone are insufficient. Achieving these goals demands unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration among civil society, businesses, governments, NGOs, foundations, and others. Shifting from a “whole-of-government” to a “whole-of-the-society” approach has involved establishing partnerships with diverse stakeholders such as CSOs, the private sector, academia, think tanks, and media. These partnerships are also being fostered by sub-national governments to leverage the unique strengths each partner brings, promote citizen participation, gain insights into relatively unexplored areas, and mobilise resources to address urgent SDG priorities effectively. By engaging a broad spectrum of society, these collaborations enhance the potential for achieving the SDGs by pooling resources, expertise, and perspectives to tackle complex challenges.

5. Advocacy, capacity building, and awareness creation:

At national and subnational levels, a wide range of initiatives have been launched to enhance awareness and build capacity for SDG implementation among government officials, civil society organisations, and the private sector. Workshops conducted across States and Union Territories have supported stakeholders in designing monitoring frameworks, developing dashboards, strengthening data systems,

aligning budgets, mapping schemes, and preparing vision documents. To further reinforce institutional capacities, collaborative partnerships have been established with development partners, academic institutions, think tanks, and UN agencies. These coordinated efforts—spanning national, regional, and state levels—have been instrumental in fostering inclusive participation and ensuring effective knowledge dissemination for localising the SDGs.

Since the 2020 VNR, the Indian SDG Localisation model approach has evolved to a more decentralised, data-driven and participatory model, with enhanced monitoring tools, integration of Voluntary Local Reviews, and a greater emphasis on partnerships and adaptive governance. There is a paradigm shift toward a comprehensive engagement involving not only government at various levels but also civil society organisations, local communities, vulnerable groups, and the private sector, fostering inclusive ownership and participation in SDG implementation.

SDG localisation in India has advanced significantly. In 2020, only 60 percent of States had formulated State Indicator Frameworks (SIFs), and around 30 percent had developed District Indicator Frameworks (DIFs). Today, 27 out of 28 States have established SIFs, and 24 have operationalised DIFs. This progress has enabled more granular data collection and strengthened the foundation for targeted interventions and monitoring at the local level.



Figure 55: Impact of capacity development and advocacy on the progress of localisation

Area	Parameter	No. of States completed (Out of 28)	No. of UTs completed (Out of 8)
Vision/roadmap	SDG vision document	23	4
Coordination	Mapping of SDG targets with schemes and departments	26	3
	Mechanism for coordination with line departments at State level	26	6
	Formation of Working Groups/ Committees/Task Forces	24	5
Monitoring and reporting	SDG cell/centre/team at State level	25	1
	State Indicator Framework	27	5
	District Indicator Framework	24	2
	Block Indicator Framework	6	0
	Dashboard developed	16	1
Budgeting	SDGs linked to budget allocation	11	1
Capacity building	Capacity building/training of officials	24	1
	Involvement of CSOs/CSR in awareness generation and capacity building	15	2

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS COORDINATION CENTRES (SDGCCS)

India has redefined SDG localisation through SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs) embedded within State Planning Departments to integrate sustainability into governance at every level. These SDG action hubs established in partnership with UNDP, serve as the backbone of subnational SDG implementation, driving localised action and impact. Functioning as specialised project management units, these centres align planning, monitoring, and budgeting processes with the SDGs, fostering interdepartmental coordination and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

States such as Haryana, Punjab, Nagaland, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, and Mizoram have partnered with UNDP to set up SDGCCs, while GIZ supports similar efforts in Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Madhya Pradesh. Funded through state budgets, these centres are embedded in governance systems, enhancing ownership, accountability, and institutionalisation of the SDG agenda.

Over the past six years, SDGCCs have emerged as critical enablers of transformative change, mainstreaming SDGs into planning, aligning schemes and budgets, developing monitoring frameworks, and promoting inclusive, evidence-based governance. By facilitating integrated and results-driven approaches, they have strengthened local-level implementation and embedded the SDGs across state systems. SDGCCs have helped shift institutional mindsets towards inclusive and sustainable development. By fostering a culture of data-driven decision-making and prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable, they have strengthened commitment to the SDGs across all levels of government.

SDG COORDINATION AND ACCELERATION CENTRES (SDGCACS)

As the world approaches the pivotal deadline of 2030, States are revamping their strategies, confronting emerging challenges, and adopting innovative solutions to expedite progress toward sustainable development. Building on the insights and learnings from the SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs) and addressing the evolving challenges faced by States, NITI Aayog has introduced the SDG Coordination and Acceleration Centres (SDGCAC). This new model is more refined, adaptive, and strengthened to enhance coordination, accelerate action, and drive impact more effectively. This evolution emphasises action and results-driven outcomes, building on the SDGCC framework with support from UNDP. This renewed model is designed to enhance coordination, accelerate action, and drive impact more effectively. The SDGCAC focuses on developing accelerator plans, ensuring the convergence of schemes, leveraging data for informed decision-making, and addressing the SDG financing gap. Additionally, they emphasise strategic messaging that prioritizes key indicators at the local level.



INDIA'S CHAMPIONING THE SDG LOCALISATION MODEL AT GLOBAL LEVEL

- In 2022, India organised a side event at the HLPF to highlight "India's Localisation Journey," providing a platform to share insights and strategies on localising the SDGs. In 2024, India continued its active participation by organising another side event to showcase the monitoring of SDGs through four editions of the SDG India Index, emphasizing transparent and accountable progress tracking.
- Also in 2024, India hosted the Eighth South-South West Asia Forum for Sustainable Development in partnership with UNESCAP, further establishing its leadership in promoting sustainable development across the region.
- UNDP India, under the guidance of NITI Aayog, has compiled the efforts of both Central and State governments into the SDG Knowledge Hub (<https://sdgknowledgehub.undp.org.in/>), a comprehensive resource that includes various initiatives and best practices aimed at accelerating SDG progress in India.
- The impact of India's localisation of SDGs was highlighted at the 57th Commission on Population and Development, where a side event in collaboration with UNFPA, "Localising the SDGs: Women in Local Governance in India Lead the Way," showcased the leadership of three elected women representatives from India in March 2024. This global platform amplified India's model for empowering women in governance and reinforced its potential for replication elsewhere.

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local governance plays a critical role in advancing sustainable development, and the Government has integrated Agenda 2030 into grassroots governance through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) actions.

Local actions based on needs-oriented planning and optimal resource utilisation are key to achieving these goals. Local governments are essential for interpreting Agenda 2030 within the local context and priorities. Efforts have focused on empowering villages along nine themes of poverty-free, healthy, child friendly, water sufficient, clean and green, self-sufficient infrastructure, socially secured, good governance, and women-friendly villages to effectively localise Agenda 2030.



PANCHAYAT ADVANCEMENT INDEX: INDIA'S COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING THE SDG 2030 AGENDA THROUGH PARTICIPATORY, BOTTOM-UP DEVELOPMENT

In a major stride towards localising Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and empowering grassroots governance, Government of India launched the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) in 2025. PAI is a composite, data-driven tool that assesses and monitors the development status of over 0.25 million Gram Panchayats (village councils) across India.

Anchored in the Local Indicator Framework, this Index has been compiled based on 435 unique local Indicators (331 mandatory and 104 optional) consisting of 566 unique data points across 9 thematic areas aligned with the SDGs such as health, education, livelihood, environment, gender and infrastructure. By providing the Gram Panchayats with theme-wise scores and an overall composite index, the PAI acts as a diagnostic and planning tool, guiding evidence-based decision making. It strengthens the integration of SDGs into local development plans like the Panchayat Development plans and enables Panchayats to identify development gaps, set clear targets, and allocate resources more effectively, thus driving more strategic and impactful governance at the local level. Additionally, by encouraging periodic assessment and incentivising performance, the PAI fosters a culture of continuous improvement and community participation.

Over 2.16 lakh Gram Panchayats from 29 States/UTs have already entered their data into the dedicated PAI Portal with each entry rigorously validated before being included in the final index. The PAI portal (www.pai.gov.in) serves as a robust, multilingual data management platform enabling Panchayats to enter and track their development metrics.





Theme wise PAI Score of Gram Panchayat

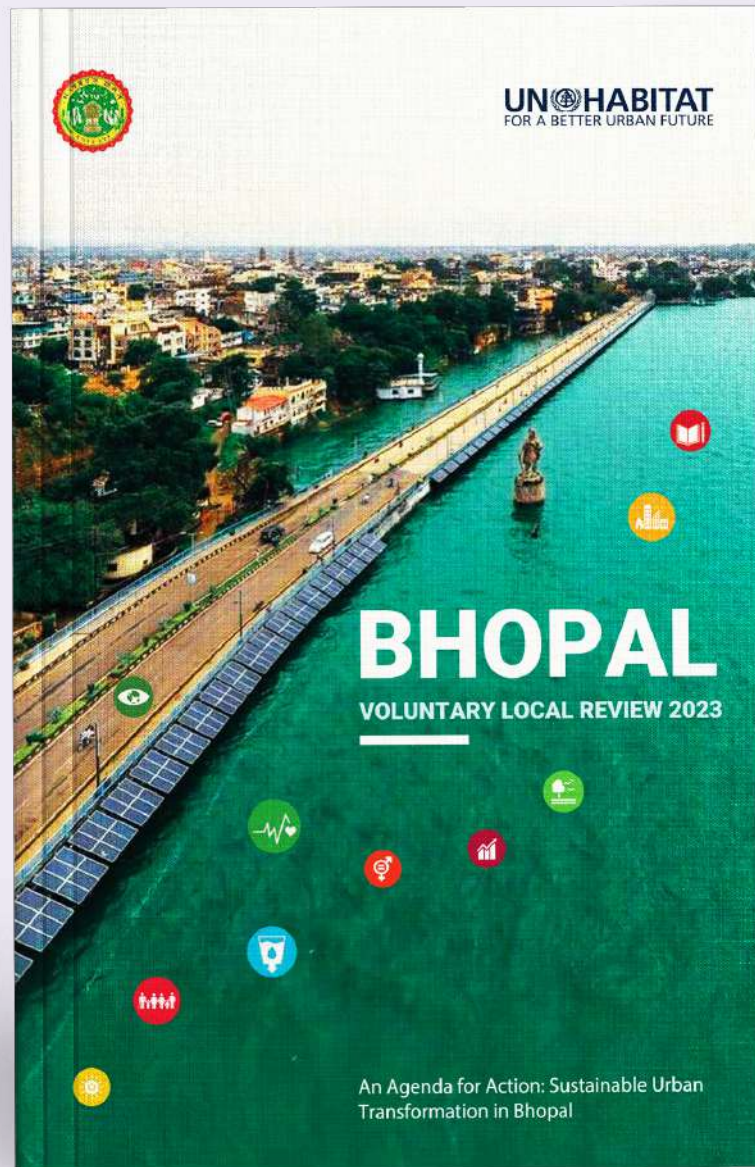
Gram Panchayat Details	Overall PAI Score	T1 - Poverty Free and Enhanced Livelihoods Panchayat	T2 - Healthy Panchayat	T3 - Child Friendly Panchayat	T4 - Water Sufficient Panchayat	T5 - Clean and Green Panchayat	T6 - Self-sufficient Infrastructure in Panchayat	T7 - Socially Just and Socially Secured Panchayat	T8 - Panchayat with Good Governance	T9 - Women Friendly Panchayat
GP - Bekinkeri- [215682] Block - Belagavi District - Belagavi	71.85 B Performer	83.97 A Front Runner	88.51 A Front Runner	80.01 A Front Runner	60.09 B Performer	65.65 B Performer	64.82 B Performer	72.69 B Performer	70.08 B Performer	65.22 B Performer
GP - Nileji-[215712] Block - Belagavi District - Belagavi	65.09 B Performer	72.73 B Performer	85.75 A Front Runner	69.97 B Performer	55.81 C Aspirant	52.01 C Aspirant	60.32 B Performer	63.43 B Performer	64.9 B Performer	56.66 B Performer
GP - Honga- [215693] Block - Belagavi District - Belagavi	64.53 B Performer	70.02 B Performer	73.66 B Performer	74.92 B Performer	50.77 C Aspirant	58.41 C Aspirant	61.55 B Performer	61.41 B Performer	72.81 B Performer	61.53 B Performer
GP - K K Koppa- [215696] Block - Belagavi District - Belagavi	63.6 B Performer	71.19 B Performer	67.9 B Performer	61.69 B Performer	64.32 B Performer	66.98 B Performer	57.74 C Aspirant	62.02 B Performer	68.35 B Performer	54.13 C Aspirant

A key achievement has been the identification of over 750 Women and Girl Friendly Panchayats across every district in India, serving as models for advancing gender equality. The initiative aims to establish at least one such Panchayat per district, embedding gender-responsive governance as a core principle. Through strategic policies and institutional frameworks, the government is fostering inclusive, participatory, and equitable local governance that effectively addresses the voices and needs of women and girls.

The People's Plan Campaign is also bolstering people's participation in the development of the Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GDPD) to empower marginalised groups, particularly women and children, and achieve the SDGs.

The campaign is a combination of consultation and negotiation, with the aim of making women, children and other vulnerable sections of society a central focus of the GDPDs. One of the collaborative efforts in this regard has been to localise the SDGs by prioritising issues concerning women and children and integrating them into the GDPD, through institutionalising Mahila Sabhas and Bal-Balika Sabhas (women's and children's assemblies) in selected Gram Panchayats (GPs) and establishing a model to be replicated across the country. This has been implemented in 40 GPs of 10 districts across four states (Assam, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Telangana) with support from UNICEF. The aim has been to ensure women's and children's voices are reflected in village-level development planning processes through local plans and budgets.

VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW OF BHOPAL



In 2023, the city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh in India joined the growing global movement on the localisation of the SDGs with the launch of An Agenda for Action: Sustainable Urban Transformation in Bhopal, India's first city-level Voluntary Local Review (VLR).

Bhopal's VLR is the result of a collaboration between the Bhopal Municipal Corporation, UN-Habitat, and a collective of over 23 local stakeholders to measurably demonstrate the city's aspirations for a sustainable and inclusive urban transformation. It incorporated a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the review of SDGs with qualitative mapping of 56 developmental projects--across the three pillars of People (SDGs 1,3,4,5), Planet (SDGs 6,13,15) and Prosperity (SDGs 7,8,11)—and an in-depth quantitative review of SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities).



स्विचडी
के लिए

A woman wearing a blue sari and a green top is smiling and looking towards the camera. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. In the background, there is a banner with the word 'annapu' and a logo. A white horizontal line is at the bottom of the page.

CHAPTER

08



Digital Public Infrastructure



CHAPTER 8: DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

India's digital transformation driven by a combination of policy reforms, technological advancements, and a population eager to adopt digital solutions, has empowered citizens and positioned India as a leader in leveraging technology for socioeconomic development. The country's expertise in this area is now recognised globally.

At the heart of India's digital strategy is the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), an infrastructure-based approach that uses technology to achieve societal goals through an ecosystem (comprising technology, markets and governance) built in the public interest. DPI includes key components such as a digital identification system (Aadhaar), a payments system (UPI), and a data exchange layer (Account Aggregator). These components have transformed the Indian economy by enabling efficient public service delivery, enhancing financial inclusion and contributing to a more inclusive and equitable economic growth. The design of DPI emphasises robustness, reliability, safety, and security, adhering to the principles of accountability, collaboration, open standards, transparency, and interoperability. This infrastructure has enabled various industrial players to innovate and provide digital access to a wide range of services, thereby enhancing consumer choice, entrepreneurship, and competition.

According to the State of India's Digital Economy Report 2024, India is the third largest digitalised country in the world. Of the estimated 8.36 billion mobile cellular subscriptions worldwide, 1.14 billion are in India. Average wireless data usage per subscriber per month in India was estimated at 18.39GB as of June 2023, among the highest in the world. India is the second largest exporter of ICT services in the world (at 15.8% in 2022).¹⁰⁵ Additionally, as per ACI Worldwide Report 2024, in 2023 around 129.3 billion real-time payment transactions happened in India. As of 2022-23, India's digital economy contributed significantly to GDP and employment, with high productivity and growth prospects. The sector's productivity is five times higher than in other industries and is expected to account for 20% of Gross Value Added (GVA) by 2029-30, driven by AI, cloud services, and digital platforms.

The Digital India programme, launched in 2015, has been instrumental in this transformation. The programme focuses on digital accessibility, inclusion,

and empowerment, bridging digital and language divides through affordable and sustainable technology. It is anchored in three key areas: Infrastructure as Utility to Every Citizen, Governance and Services on Demand, and Digital Empowerment of Citizens. Initiatives like Aadhaar, UPI, and digital health systems have played pivotal roles in driving inclusive development, streamlining access, improving efficiency, and ensuring that services reach all the corners of the country.

Advancements in cloud computing, AI, machine learning, and digital governance continue to evolve India's infrastructure, meeting the needs of both public and private sectors. Key projects and initiatives have strengthened the country's digital backbone, ensuring that government services are accessible, scalable, and secure, while promoting economic growth and improving citizens' lives.

REVOLUTIONISING IDENTITY VERIFICATION

One of the most pivotal developments in India's digital journey – and how it has supported achievement of Agenda 2030 – was the introduction of Aadhaar, a biometric and demographic-based digital identity system, in 2009. Aadhaar is the world's largest digital identity system, facilitating transparent, efficient, and targeted distribution of services, subsidies, and benefits. It uses a 12-digit unique identification number providing each resident with a digitally verifiable identity based on minimal demographic and biometric data. By 2024, over 1.3834 billion¹⁰⁶ Aadhaar numbers have been issued.

Aadhaar addresses long-standing issues of identity fraud and resource leakage by eliminating fake and duplicate identities using authentication anytime anywhere facility. The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), responsible for implementing Aadhaar, has established a robust digital platform that enables easy, electronic, and cost-effective identity verification. Beyond identification, Aadhaar has evolved into a crucial component of India's digital public infrastructure, enhancing governance, fostering trust in government processes, and empowering millions by simplifying access to essential services.

Aadhaar has significantly improved effectiveness of social welfare programmes, driving progress on

Agenda 2030. It has enabled transparent service delivery with Aadhaar-linked Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) introduced in 2013 directly transferring cash benefits from welfare schemes to beneficiaries' bank accounts, reducing paperwork and eliminating fraudulent beneficiaries. DBT has helped eliminate over 41.5 million fake LPG connections and 50.3 million duplicate ration cards, thereby streamlining the distribution of vital services like food and cooking gas subsidies. It has generated cumulative savings of ₹3.48 trillion by plugging leakages in service delivery.

Aadhaar-enabled services, such as the Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS), have also played a key role in providing banking access in remote areas, allowing individuals to withdraw cash, transfer funds, and complete other transactions using just their Aadhaar number. This accessibility has been crucial in bridging the digital divide, making financial services available to all, and advancing India's progress toward sustainable development.

DIGILOCKER AND ENTITY LOCKER EMPOWERING PAPERLESS GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS

DigiLocker is a secure digital wallet that allows users to store and share authentic documents such as identity records, educational credentials, and vaccination certificates. With over 512 million users and more than 9.4 billion documents stored, DigiLocker gives individuals control over their personal data and serves as a digital equivalent of paper-based documents, simplifying access for entities like loan providers and educational institutions. Its growth, marked by a 7.7-fold increase in users from 2018 to 2022, demonstrates its role in integrating data from various authorities and enhancing efficiency and accessibility.

Building on this success, India launched Entity Locker in 2025, a cloud-based platform for secure storage, sharing and verification of business documents. Entity Locker serves a wide range of organisations, including large corporations, MSMEs, trusts, start-ups, and societies, by integrating with government databases for real-time document access and verification. Using consent-based sharing and Aadhaar-authenticated role-based access for accountability, Entity Locker reduces administrative burdens and boosts operational efficiency, aiming to unlock new opportunities for businesses.

INCREASING FINANCIAL INCLUSION

The national digital payments ecosystem is a key deliverable of India's Digital India programme, offering significant support to achievement of the Agenda 2030 by ensuring more inclusive financial services. One of the most impactful developments in this effort has been the launch of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in 2016. UPI enables real-time interbank transactions through mobile devices, streamlining digital payments and offering seamless fund transfers, merchant payments, and peer-to-peer transactions—all within a single mobile application. By 2023, UPI accounted for a significant share of the global real-time payment transactions, with India handling approximately 49% of such transactions worldwide. Over 40% of all payments in India are now digital, with UPI contributing the largest portion. The volume of UPI transactions

surged to 16.73 billion in December 2024, up from 2.23 billion just four years earlier.

UPI has not only streamlined financial transactions, making them faster, more secure, and effortless, but has also been a key enabler in the country's shift towards a cashless economy. With 661 banks¹⁰⁷ connected to the UPI platform, the system's growing dominance in India's payment ecosystem highlights its crucial role in financial inclusion. The impact of UPI has been particularly profound for small businesses, street vendors, and migrant workers, who have gained easier and more efficient access to financial services. The adoption of UPI was significantly accelerated during the Covid-19 pandemic, when the demand for contactless safer alternatives to cash transactions surged. UPI's success goes beyond the robustness of its infrastructure; it also reflects a shift in behaviour, driven by increasing trust in the system and its accessibility.

UPI has significantly enhanced the creditworthiness of small businesses in India by creating a transparent and verifiable digital transaction history. With the formalisation of payments, even informal enterprises have been able to establish a financial footprint, enabling banks and fintechs to assess credit risk more accurately. This progress is further supported by initiatives like “Pre-sanctioned Credit Lines on UPI”, developed in alignment with the Reserve Bank of India’s vision to improve access to credit. This product empowers individuals and small businesses to avail pre-sanctioned credit from banks usable instantly for transactions via UPI. By facilitating seamless access to credit lines, overdrafts, and retail loans, the initiative strengthens financial inclusion and promotes economic empowerment at the grassroots level.

DEMOCRATISING DIGITAL MARKETPLACES

DPI can address the challenges of modern commerce by providing more equitable solutions. Currently, online goods and services are often controlled by massive vertically integrated platforms, which concentrates power in the hands of a few gatekeepers. DPI is empowering anyone wishing to sell goods or services

online, providing a more accessible and inclusive digital marketplace. The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) was launched by Government of India in 2022 to revolutionise India’s digital commerce landscape. By promoting open networks that are platform-agnostic, ONDC seeks to democratise digital commerce and create an inclusive marketplace. This initiative is based on open-source methodology utilising open specifications and protocols to ensure interoperability and independence from specific platforms. This approach empowers small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to compete alongside larger players, fostering a more equitable digital environment.

By addressing the challenges of monopolistic practices in e-commerce, ONDC empowers smaller players to thrive and contributes to transforming India’s digital commerce landscape. This inclusive approach ensures that all participants, including small businesses, local retailers, and artisans, have equal opportunities in the digital marketplace. It is just one of the initiatives that represents India’s efforts to create a more equitable, open, and inclusive digital future, echoing the 2030 Agenda’s promise of leaving no one behind.

INDIA’S DPI GOES GLOBAL

Government of India has embarked on several initiatives to expand the reach of its DPI both nationally and internationally. One key initiative is the development of India Stack Global, which aims to share the success of India’s DPIs with the global community and facilitate their replication in friendly countries.

Additionally, during its G20 presidency, India launched the Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository (GDPIR), a portal designed to serve as a resource for countries interested in adopting similar digital infrastructure models.

India has also signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with ten countries: Armenia, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Antigua and Barbuda, Papua New Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, Tanzania, Kenya, Cuba, and Colombia, to collaborate on sharing successful digital solutions implemented at a population scale. These efforts underscore India’s commitment to promoting its DPI as a model for inclusive development globally.

UPI now seamlessly facilitates live transactions in 7 countries, including key markets such as UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, and Mauritius.¹⁰⁸

ENHANCING HEALTHCARE

Digital health solutions are crucial for enhancing accessibility, affordability, and efficiency as the digital healthcare infrastructure evolves to address disparities between urban and rural healthcare services, leveraging technologies such as telemedicine, electronic health records, and AI-driven solutions. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), launched in September 2021, seeks to create a comprehensive digital health infrastructure that supports universal health coverage, making healthcare services more accessible, affordable, and efficient for all citizens. It introduces a unique health ID for every citizen, serving as a digital repository of medical records, prescriptions, and lab reports. This ensures that citizens in all regions can access and manage their health records digitally. Additionally, beneficiaries eligible under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana scheme can create their Ayushman card themselves using the Ayushman App, leveraging India's digital public infrastructure to put the furthest behind first.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CoWIN was launched to strengthen the COVID-19 Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system. This digital platform was used to efficiently roll out and scale up the national COVID vaccine distribution system and was also offered as a digital public good to the world to combat COVID-19.

E-Hospital, e-Blood Bank and Online Registration System (ORS) applications have also been developed. The e-Hospital application is a one-stop solution that helps in connecting patients, hospitals and doctors on a single digital platform. e-Hospital is available to Central Government/ State Government/ Autonomous/ Cooperative hospitals on the cloud through the SaaS (Software as a Service) model. Additionally, the e-Blood Bank application facilitates the implementation of a complete blood bank management system.

Telemedicine services have also been a breakthrough in healthcare delivery. In 2022, the Tele MANAS (Tele Mental Health Assistance and Networking Across States) was introduced as a toll-free helpline available nationwide, offering a wide range of mental health services. Through this digital platform, individuals can access telephone-based counselling, psychotherapy,

psychiatric consultations, and referral services, including urgent care, without the barriers of distance or cost.

IMPROVING NUTRITION

POSHAN 2.0 embodies a strategic shift in nutrition content and delivery to advance progress on SDG 2: Zero Hunger by creating a convergent technology enabled eco-system that promotes practices nurturing health, wellness and immunity. POSHAN Abhiyaan 2.0 has provided 1.1 million smart phones to Anganwadi workers to promote regular growth monitoring across the country. Furthermore, 1.25 million Growth Monitoring Devices such as Infantometer, Stadiometer, Weighing Scale for Mother and Infant and Weighing Scale for Child have also been procured by States/UTs under the Abhiyaan.

POSHAN Abhiyaan 2.0 also focuses on behavioural approaches to implementing Maternal Nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding Norms, as well as Treatment Protocols for SAM/MAM and Wellness through AYUSH practices to reduce wasting and under-weight prevalence besides stunting and anaemia. POSHAN 2.0 implementation is supported by the 'Poshan Tracker', a new, robust ICT centralised data system which is being linked with the RCH Portal (Anmol) of MoHFW.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

To address the complexity of the school education system and advance SDG 4, India has implemented digital public infrastructure initiatives like DIKSHA and NDEAR, which cater to varied educational needs. These efforts have expanded access and inclusion through technology, emphasising not just connectivity and devices but also open-source software, standards, and policies that enable diverse solutions and empower individuals while ensuring broad access.

In 2021, India launched the National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) with a vision to create a "unifying national digital infrastructure" that energises and catalyses the education ecosystem. NDEAR serves as a technological framework aimed at making existing systems interoperable while providing the foundational building blocks for new tools and solutions.



This architecture uses technology to bring together government and private school systems, multiple boards, linguistic variations, and a wide spectrum of learner needs—from gifted students to those with special needs. NDEAR enables this rich ecosystem by fostering collaboration among governments, autonomous bodies, civil society, and private sector players to build technology solutions that help achieve learning outcomes.

DIKSHA—"One Nation, One Digital Platform"—provides quality e-content for school education across States and UTs. Launched during the pandemic, DIKSHA features a federated architecture with 35 States/UTs having their own tenants on the platform. Each State/UT utilises DIKSHA in its own way, tailoring programmes for teachers, learners, and administrators according to their specific curricula needs. Many States/UTs have made their textbooks available on DIKSHA and linked them with additional learning resources such as explanation videos, audios, interactive assessments, and text resources through 12 billion QR codes. This initiative is known as Energised Digital Textbooks. Additionally, DIKSHA includes a dedicated vertical for Foundation Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), offering over 2,700 e-contents across various categories such as assessment sheets, gamified content, infographics, videos, worksheets and activity sheets. DIKSHA has achieved 4.93 billion learning sessions.

EXTENDING SOCIAL SECURITY TO UNORGANISED WORKERS

Recognising the vital role of unorganised workers in India's economy, the Government launched the E-Shram Portal (www.eshram.gov.in) to support and empower the unorganised workforce, which at 300 million workers forms the backbone of the nation's economy. Launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 2021, this portal is designed to create a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW), verified and seeded with Aadhaar, enabling the delivery of targeted welfare schemes and benefits. By leveraging technology, the E-Shram Portal ensures that workers gain access to social security, job opportunities, and financial inclusion, fostering a more equitable and resilient labour ecosystem. By March 2025, the portal had 306.8 million registrations.

EASE OF ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance (UMANG) is a key initiative designed to simplify citizens' access to a wide range of government services through a single platform. Integrating services from sectors such as agriculture, health, education, and pensions, UMANG allows users to access and complete transactions conveniently on their mobile devices. The app is available in 23 Indian languages and supports access to services from both Union and State Government departments, making it inclusive and user-friendly. With 79.6 million users, UMANG has streamlined interactions with government services, offering over 2000 services and become a one-stop solution for citizens to access government services efficiently.

India's DPI serves as a key driver for both economic growth and broader socio-economic objectives. By establishing a robust digital foundation, India has demonstrated how a well-designed DPI can support societal transformation, promote financial and social inclusion, and improve governance and last-mile service delivery. This approach has positioned India as a leader in leveraging technology for societal progress. As India continues to advance its digital landscape, it aims to share its experience in using DPI to enhance governance, public service delivery, and economic development with interested partner countries.



A young man with dark hair, wearing a plaid shirt, is looking upwards and to the right. The image is overlaid with a purple tint. In the foreground, the large number '09' is displayed in a dark purple color. The background shows a ceiling with a grid pattern and a window.

CHAPTER

09



**Towards a
Viksit Bharat@2047**



Choice
of Today

National

REGISTER

Name: Bhagat SHG

Address:

Phone No.:

Date: 2011

Be Indian Buy Indian

CHAPTER 9: TOWARDS A VIKSIT BHARAT@2047

India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since 2015 has laid a strong foundation for its developmental agenda. India's long-term development goals extend beyond the 2030 Agenda aiming for a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by the centenary of its independence in 2047. This vision seeks to unleash the latent potential of India's 1.4 billion-plus population harnessing their creativity and innovation to drive sustainable and equitable development. The path to 2047 passes through 2030, with strategies focused on accelerating economic growth, empowering citizens, and enhancing their capabilities to realize their aspirations. Achieving the SDGs by 2030 is therefore a crucial milestone on the trajectory of becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Localisation of development progress has been central to India's achievements, empowering local governments and communities to tailor SDG frameworks to their unique needs. This approach has accelerated grassroots development, fostering holistic progress in education, healthcare, agriculture, industry, and infrastructure. Saturation in social protection has been instrumental in ensuring last-mile delivery of essential services to the poorest segments of society with initiatives targeting food security, nutrition, health, quality education, electricity, and skill development. Between 2015 and 2025, approximately 250 million people have been lifted out of multidimensional poverty—a testament to India's commitment to improving the ease of living and quality of life for all citizens.

Acceleration of development progress now paves the way forward. India is actively devising strategies and initiatives to transform itself into a \$30 trillion economy by 2047, focusing on empowering citizens, building a thriving and sustainable economy, fostering innovation and technology leadership, and enhancing global competitiveness across socio-economic and governance sectors. A thriving start-up ecosystem is being encouraged to drive technological advancements and entrepreneurship, with initiatives like "Make in India" bolstering domestic manufacturing and reducing dependency on imports. These efforts aim to position India as a global economic powerhouse while addressing structural challenges and ensuring inclusive growth across regions and industries.

A HUMAN-CENTRIC VIEW OF PROGRESS

Citizen-centric growth remains the cornerstone of India's developmental strategy. The principle of Jan Bhagidari (citizen's participation) ensures transparency, inclusivity, and local ownership of SDG progress across states and districts. By uniting diverse regions on a shared trajectory toward sustainable development and ensuring no one is left behind, India is poised to achieve Goal 1 (No Poverty) ahead of schedule. These efforts reflect the nation's dedication to equitable growth and inclusive development as it lays the groundwork for achieving the vision of becoming a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Guided by the vision of "women-led development," India is experiencing a transformative shift in governance, ensuring women take the lead as architects shaping the nation's development trajectory. With a view to accelerating progress on SDG 5: Gender Equality, where progress has been slowest for the country, initiatives in financial inclusion, social empowerment, housing security, skill building, livelihood creation and entrepreneurship are aiming to make women in India not just participants but key drivers of the country's growth story. Recognising that women's empowerment is integral to India's future progress, the Government of India has prioritised Nari Shakti and made it a part of India's Viksit Bharat vision. The Government understands that empowering women requires a comprehensive and lifelong approach. Welfare programmes have been crafted to support women at various stages of life, helping them overcome socio-economic barriers and achieve empowerment. Women entrepreneurs and startups are expected to play a pivotal role in placing India on the global stage in the coming years. In a Viksit Bharat, there will be equal opportunity to women for participation and leadership positions across legislature, government, corporate, and community roles.

India's youth represent the country's greatest strength, with a vibrant and dynamic generation driving the vision of making India a developed nation by 2047.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has underscored their role, stating, “Youth power is both the agent of change and also the beneficiaries of change”. As the world’s largest youth population, with 700 million Indians below the age of 25 years, India’s bright, young innovative minds are crucial for harnessing the benefits of Agenda 2030 and propelling economic growth. The focus will be on investing in human capital and social infrastructure to ensure that India’s demographic transition over the next two decades places hundreds of millions of young women and men into better-paid, higher-value occupations across both urban and rural areas. Moreover, in a Viksit Bharat, India’s empowered youth will contribute more effectively to responsible governance and nation-building

A NEW ERA OF PROSPERITY

Indian industrial sectors are poised to play a crucial role in the country’s journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. By driving economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and fostering innovation, the manufacturing sector can significantly further boost the nation’s achievement of Agenda 2030 and accelerate momentum towards 2047. Government of India’s focus on initiatives like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme is enhancing manufacturing capabilities, attracting foreign investments, and promoting exports. Additionally, advancements in technology, infrastructure development, and skill enhancement programmes are further strengthening India’s productive capacities.

World-class infrastructure development remains central to this transformation. Initiatives such as Bharatmala (road networks), Sagarmala (port modernisation), the Smart Cities Mission (urban innovation) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (affordable housing) are pivotal in enhancing connectivity, urban living, and economic growth. These projects aim to improve productivity, create jobs, and ensure economic stability by fostering sustainable and inclusive urbanisation. The commitment to building liveable cities emphasises modernising transportation, urban amenities, and housing infrastructure. This approach not only boosts standards of living but also aligns with the vision of creating climate-resilient, future-ready cities. By prioritising extensive investments in infrastructure, India is laying the groundwork for long-term

sustainable growth while meeting the needs of its rapidly urbanising population. A Viksit Bharat will be a role model in transport decarbonisation, led by shift to cleaner modes, alternate fuels, and best-in-class energy efficiency standards. Its city agglomerations will be global exemplars of liveable environments with access to high quality essential services and state-of-the-art infrastructure for all.

The rural economy will also remain fundamental to India’s development and prosperity. With around 65% of India’s population currently residing in rural areas, the rural economy will continue playing a vital role in ensuring food security, reducing poverty, and promoting inclusive growth. Investments in rural infrastructure, education, healthcare, and technological advancements enhance productivity, improve living standards, and create sustainable livelihoods. This also strengthens the agricultural sector, which is pivotal for the country’s ambition to become a developed nation by 2047. Contributing approximately 16% to the GDP and providing livelihoods to about 46.1% of the population, agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy. The sector’s consistent growth, driven by government initiatives to enhance productivity, promote crop diversification, and increase farmers’ income, ensures food security and sustains livelihoods. Allied activities like animal husbandry, fisheries, and agroforestry provide diverse income streams, mitigating risks and enhancing resilience against climate variability. By improving productivity, adopting sustainable practices, and leveraging technological advancements, India’s agricultural sector can significantly boost economic growth, reduce poverty, and ensure a stable and prosperous future for the nation. A Viksit Bharat will not only be home to globally competitive, diversified and sustainable agriculture with food security for the growing population but also the ‘food basket for the world’.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE FUTURE

Indigenously created Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has been a core lever for achieving economic and social progress during the last decade. India will continue to leverage DPI across sectors like education, health, agriculture, and labour

through National Open Digital Ecosystems to improve delivery of public services for all citizens. This effort is complemented by continuous work to bridge the skill gap and foster innovation and entrepreneurship. India's National Programme on AI (NPAI) aims to foster research, innovation, and development-driven solutions across key sectors, including education. The National Programme on AI Skilling Framework integrates AI into the curriculum starting from Grade 6, with faculty training and industry-led assessments designed to bridge the skill gap in disruptive technologies. This prepares India's workforce for an AI-driven future. Through initiatives like AI for All, India seeks to demystify AI and promote its ethical, inclusive and human-centric use. Multilingual modules are being developed for students, educators, and the general public to increase AI adoption. With the world's largest youth population, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become synonymous with the Aspirational India (AI), ensuring that technology is accessible to the widest range of people, especially the youth. This commitment aligns with India's broader goal of harnessing AI to propel inclusive growth, offer solutions to global challenges, and uphold the principles of responsible AI.

India's demographic advantage and diverse economic landscape position it uniquely to benefit from AI. Achieving these benefits will require significant investments in education and workforce skilling, supported by enabling, insuring, and stewarding institutions. These mechanisms can help workers adapt to changing demands while also providing essential safety nets. By fostering collaboration between policymakers, the private sector, and academia, India can align AI-driven innovation with societal goals. Ensuring inclusivity and sustainability in this transition is key to maximising benefits while minimising disruptions. With robust institutional frameworks and strategic planning, AI can serve as a catalyst for equitable economic transformation, positioning India to thrive in an increasingly automated world.

Trade and investment are also key to India's ambition of becoming a developed nation by 2047. The country's external sector has demonstrated resilience amid global uncertainties. By further integrating into global supply chains and enhancing competitiveness, India aims to further reduce trade-related costs and improve export facilitation.

On the investment front, while foreign portfolio investments have experienced mixed trends due to global market uncertainties, strong macroeconomic fundamentals and a favourable business environment have kept overall flows positive. Gross foreign direct investment inflows have shown signs of revival, underscoring the importance of sustained investment in driving economic growth. By focusing on these areas, India seeks to accelerate its development trajectory and achieve its 2047 objectives. A Viksit Bharat will emerge as the epicentre for regional and global flow of goods, people and capital, with large-scale economic corridors.

India's partnerships with industries, private sectors, civil society organisations, and global allies are bolstering its sustainable growth efforts. On the international stage, India advocates for multilateral reforms and enhanced international financing to accelerate global sustainable development. With a fast-growing economy, a low per capita carbon footprint, and pro-environment lifestyle practices through initiatives like Mission LiFE, India presents a transformative model for sustainable progress. By integrating global best practices and crafting innovative indigenous solutions, India offers replicable models for the Global South. A Viksit Bharat will emerge as a Global Renewables Hub, and will include large-scale manufacturing capabilities in solar, wind, and bioenergy, and robust regional clean energy networks. It will not only be energy independent by 2047, but on track to be net-zero by 2070.

CONFIDENT AND COLLECTIVE TRANSFORMATION

India's journey to achieve Agenda 2030 reflects not only a shift in sentiment but also growing confidence in its ability to achieve transformative outcomes through collective efforts. By fostering convergence across schemes and sectors, leveraging technology for inclusive growth, and prioritising future generations, India is strategically positioned to strive towards its goals of prosperity, equity, and sustainability by 2047. The nation is building an enabling ecosystem that inspires innovation and collaboration towards its ambitious vision for a brighter future.

By adopting a human-centric approach to empower achievement of Agenda 2030, India is advancing concrete actions that drive meaningful change. Today, India is seizing the opportunity to make a quantum leap by focusing on economic stability, fostering social equity, and amplifying its voice on global platforms to influence policies for peace and prosperity. Through collaboration, sharing experiences, pooling resources, and strengthening resolve, India believes that the world can indeed change for the better. India is emerging as an inclusive and democratic development role-model for the Global South. Its collective efforts are propelling it forward in its pursuit of a prosperous and sustainable future for all. It aims to leverage its cultural, philosophical, and democratic traditions and emerge as 'Vishwa Bandhu' fostering a united and peaceful society and shaping global governance and the new world order as a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

While India is increasingly impatient about achieving its true potential by 2047, it remains steadfast in its commitment to Agenda 2030, where prosperity and sustainability are accessible to every citizen, and where the nation stands as a beacon of hope and progress on the global stage. This vision is fostering sustainable growth, empowering citizens, implementing strategies through innovation and technology leadership, and catalysing a transformative governance approach, ultimately building an inclusive and prosperous India.

FOLLOW UP AFTER VNR IN 2025

India's 2025 Voluntary National Review (VNR) report is designed to provide a comprehensive summary of the country's actions and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

initiatives over the past five years. It serves as both a record of progress and a strategic reference for future efforts as the 2030 Agenda deadline approaches. The report highlights the advancements achieved, as well as the ongoing challenges that India must address moving forward.

While notable progress has been made in adopting, implementing, and monitoring the SDGs at both national and local levels, several key targets remain unmet. Nevertheless, India continues to make steady gains, particularly in data collection and results monitoring. The SDG India Index reflects this momentum, with the composite national score rising from 66 in 2020-21 to 71 in 2023-24.

This improvement demonstrates India's accelerated SDG progress despite global challenges. The fourth edition of the Index covered 16 goals, 70 targets, and 113 indicators, representing a significant refinement achieved through extensive national consultations. Continuous collaboration between different stakeholders has fostered policy dialogue and aligned performance measurement with internationally recognised standards, with India committed to further strengthening its data-driven development and governance approach.

The key findings and the full report will be shared with States, Union Territories, and other stakeholders to build consensus on next steps at multiple levels. Based on consultations with civil society and the business community, detailed recommendations will be developed and presented to relevant government bodies. The insights from this report will inform ongoing dialogue among government, civil society and the private sector to guide future SDG implementation and beyond.





VNR 2025 Abbreviations

10YFP	10 Year Framework of Programmes
AAM	Ayushman Arogya Mandir
ABDM	Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission
ABP	Aspirational Blocks Programme
AB-PMJAY	Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
ADP	Aspirational Districts Programme
AePS	Aadhaar-enabled Payment System
AHTUs	Anti-Human Trafficking Units
AHWCs	Ayush Health and Wellness Centres
AIC	Atal Incubation Centers
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIF	Agriculture Infrastructure Fund
AIM	Atal Innovation Mission
AMI	Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure
AMRUT	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
ANRF	Anusandhan National Research Foundation
APY	Atal Pension Yojana
ATR	Award-To-Reward
AVYAY	Atal Vayo Abhyudaya Yojana
BBBP	Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
BCM	Billion Cubic Metre
BHASKAR	Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry
BIF	Block Indicator Framework
BNS	Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita
BNSS	Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita
BPKP	Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati Programme
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BRTS	Bus Rapid Transit System
CAMPA	Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority
CART	Classification and Regression Tree
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CCTS	Carbon Credit Trading Scheme
CCUS	Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage
CDRI	Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CMIS	Coastal Management Information System
CMPOs	Child Marriage Prohibition Officers
COP	Conference of the Parties
CPC	Criminal Procedure Code
CRC	Convention on Rights of the Child
CRPs	Community Resource Persons
CRS	Civil Registration System
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
D4D	Data for Development
DAM	Digital Agriculture Mission
DAPSC	Development Action Plan for Scheduled Castes
DAY – NRLM	Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission
DBT	Direct Benefit Transfer
DIF	District Indicator Framework
DIKSHA	Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing
DMP	District Master Plan
DoSEL	Department of School Education and Literacy
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure
DPIIT	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DTFs	District Task Forces
ECRP	India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Package
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMPS	Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme
e-NAM	e-National Agriculture Market
EoDB	Ease of Doing Business
E-PMsMA	Extended Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESG	Environmental, Social, and Governance
EVs	Electric Vehicles

VNR 2025 Abbreviations

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FFS	Fund of Funds for Startups
FLN	Foundation Literacy and Numeracy
FLS	Foundational Learning Study
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
FPOs	Farmer Producing Organisations
FSS	Food Safety Standard
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIM	Green India Mission
GIS	Geographical Information System
Gol	Government of India
GPDP	Gram Panchayat Development Plans
GPs	Gram Panchayats (Village Councils)
GST	Goods and Services Tax
GVA	Gross Value Added
HCES	Household Consumption Expenditure Survey
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HEW	Hub for Empowerment of Women
HICDPs	High Impact Community Development Projects
IBCA	International Big Cat Alliance
IBSA	India-Brazil-South Africa
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IIFSR	Indian Institute of Farming Systems Research
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IP	Intellectual Property
IPC	Indian Penal Court
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ISA	International Solar Alliance
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JAM	Jan Dhan Aadhar Mobile
JFMC	Joint Forest Management Committees
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission
JSA-I	Jal Shakti Abhiyan-I
JSS	Jan Shikshan Sansthan
KCC	Kisan Credit Card
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LiFE	Lifestyle for Environment
LKG	Lower Kindergarten
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
LMICs	Low- and Middle-Income Countries
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
LoCs	Lines-of-Credit
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MDBs	Multilateral Development Banks
MFRAs	Marine Fishing Regulation Acts
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MIDH	Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture
MIS	Management Information Systems
ML	Machine Learning
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MoSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
MoUs	Memorandum of Understanding
MOVCDNER	Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Expenditure
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index

VNR 2025 Abbreviations

MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MSP	Minimum Support Price
MUDRA	Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency
MVA	Manufacturing Value Added
NABM	National Agro-Forestry and Bamboo Mission
NAP	National Apprenticeship Policy
NAPCC	National Action Plan on Climate Change
NAPS	National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NDAP	National Data and Analytics Platform
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NEP	National Education Policy
NER	North-Eastern Region
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NFSA	National Food Security Act
NGHM	National Green Hydrogen Mission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHM	National Health Mission
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NICDP	National Industrial Corridor Development Programme
NIF	National Indicator Framework
NILERD	National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development
NIPAM	National Intellectual Property Awareness Mission
NIPUN	National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
NISHTHA	National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement
NITI Aayog	National Institution for Transforming India
NMPI	National Multidimensional Poverty Index
NMR	Neonatal Mortality Rate
NMSA	National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NPAI	National Programme on AI
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NRLM	National Rural Livelihoods Mission
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSSO	National Sample Survey Office
NVS	Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti
OBCs	Other Backward Castes
ODF	Open Defecation Free
ODOP	One District One Product
ONDC	Open Network for Digital Commerce
ONORC	One Nation One Ration Card
ONOS	One Nation One Subscription
OOPE	Out-of-Pocket Expenditure
PAI	Panchayat Advancement Index
PARAKH	Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development
PDP	Panchayat Development Plans
PDS	Public Distribution System
PLFS	Periodic Labour Force Survey
PLI	Production Linked Incentive
PM KUSUM	Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan
PM POSHAN	Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman
PM SHRI	Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India
PM-ABHIM	Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission
PM-AJAY	Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
PMAY-G	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin
PMAY-U	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban
PMFBY	Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
PMGDISHA	Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan
PMGKAY	Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana
PMGS-NMP	PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan
PMGSY	Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
PM-JANMAN	Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan.
PM-JAY	Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
PMJDY	Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
PM-KISAN	Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi

VNR 2025 Abbreviations

PMMY	Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
PMSBHGY	Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana
PMSBY	Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
PMSGMBY	PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana
PM-USHA	Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
PMUY	Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
POCSO	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
POSH	Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PWSS	Pipe Water Supply Schemes
RBI	Reserve Bank of India
RTE	Right to Education Act
SANKALP	Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion
SAPCC	State Action Plan on Climate Change
SAUBHAGYA	PM Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana
SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
SCM	Smart Cities Mission
SCs	Scheduled Castes
SDGCAC	SDG Coordination and Acceleration Centres
SDGCC	Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centres
SHGs	Self Help Groups
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIF	State Indicator Framework
SITs	State Institutions for Transformation
SMILE	Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SSM	State Support Mission
STs	Scheduled Tribes
UDISE+	Unified District Information System for Education Plus
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UIDAI	Unique Identification Authority of India
UJALA	Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All
UKG	Upper Kindergarten
ULBs	Urban Local Bodies
ULLAS	Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society
UMANG	Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHLPF	United Nations High Level Political Forum
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNNATI	Uttar Poorva Transformative Industrialization Scheme
UNOSSC	UN Office for South-South Cooperation
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator Office
UPI	Unified Payments Interface
UTs	Union Territories
VLR	Voluntary Local Review
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VOGSS	Voice of Global South Summits
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

Terms used Interchangeably in the text

State/Subnational - State refers to subnational level

Centre/Union/National - Centre/Union refers to national level

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