

Progressive development in SDG Index in India: A short review

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Abstract

Efforts to achieve sustainable development are being made across the globe. Sustainable developmental goals were designed in UN General Assembly 2015 with the aim to achieve a more secure and sustainable world by 2030. In India, NITI Ayog in cooperation with states and other government operated schemes operates the tasks to achieve the target and publishes its report in the form of index based on indicators. This article is an attempt to overview the challenges came across and the success achieved till 2024 with the help of recent SDG India Index issued and to compare it with previous index. There has been a significant advancement in goals on eliminating poverty, economic growth and providing reasonable work, climate action and life on land but still there are areas to work on. Despite having significant success in various indicators still there is substantial work to be done to achieve the agenda 2030.

Key Words:- Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), SDG Index, Indicators etc.

Introduction

Sustainable development is utmost needed for a balanced ecological system as modern world development tend to exploit natural resources, needed to preserve for the future world. Sustainable developmental is defined as "Development which meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".¹ Sustainable approach is a must to work on by all nations. Paris agreement brought in almost 196 countries together on a platform to combat the challenges. The United Nations created World development goals called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These SDGs have been aimed to achieve a more secure and resourceful world by 2030 by UN General Assembly summit in 2015.² India as a signatory member committed strong for the agenda and has achieved considerable success since then. This article is an attempt to overview the challenges came across and the success achieved till 2024.

India's Take on Sustainable development goals

In India, extensive progress has been made in the field of basic universal education, gender equality in education and global economic growth. However, there was a slow progress in improvement of health indicators related to mortality, morbidity and various environmental factors contributing to poor health condition.³ Still Indian government is trying to integrate the efforts taken towards achieving sustainable development goals.

NITI Aayog is the nodal institution for achieving SDGs in the country, leading the 2030 agenda with the spirit of cooperative and competitive federalism. It monitors the national and sub-national levels progress through various mechanisms like the SDG India Index. States have also been advised to undertake similar mapping of their schemes including centrally sponsored schemes. In addition, the Ministry of Statistics and Programmed Implementation did the task of developing national indicators for the SDGs.⁴ Many of the Government's programs such as Swachh Bharat, Make in India, Skill India, and Digital India support the purpose of the SDGs. State governments play a key role in various programmes.⁵ State governments are paying

keen attention to visioning, planning, budgeting, and developing implementation and monitoring systems for the SDGs.⁶

Efforts of NITI Aayog have strengthened the statistical systems and developed a monitoring framework covering all the Goals and more than 100 indicators across the Nation. Based on these indicators a compiled report is published from time to time. Here we assess the latest SDG index in comparison to previous ones and will discuss the challenges further on.

SDG - No Poverty

Sustainable Developmental Goal for 'No Poverty' improved by 12 points from 2020-21 to 2023-24 as about 24.8 crore people move out of multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23. Among the people demanding employment under MGNREGA almost 99.7% were offered employment in 2023-24. Almost 95.4% families had the opportunity to live in pucca/semi-pucca houses as per NFHS-5 and about 41% of households have at least one member covered under health insurance or health scheme as per NFHS-5, an improvement from 28.7% in NFHS -4.⁷

SDG-Zero Hunger

There was observed overall improvement in composite goal 'Zero Hunger' from SDG index 3 to index 4 which include improvement in rice and wheat productivity, increased gross added value in agriculture per worker. Almost 99% of beneficiaries were covered under the national food security Act 2013.⁷

SDG-3 Good Health and Well-being

Sustainable goal 3 focuses on the health aspect of people and substantial improvement was observed from score 50 to 72 in 2023-24. The reduction in mortality rate, more immunised children, and high alert of tuberculosis cases were among indicators.⁷

SDG – Quality Education

SDG for 'Quality Education' targets to elevate the quality of education. One of the numerous indicators is 100% parity between male and females in higher education. ANER (Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate) for elementary education has increased and 14 states and UTs have achieved 100% success. Almost 88.65% of schools have electricity and drinking water.⁷

SDG - Gender Equality

In SDG emphasising gender equality score improved from 36 to 49. The improved ratio of female to male earning has been reported with an increased labour force participation rate. As per NHFS-5 almost 88.7% of married women participate in household decisions and 53.9% women possess mobile for personal use.⁷

SDG - Clean Water and Sanitation

SDG, demanding clean water and sanitation, scored higher in recent statistics from 63 to 89 as targeted individual household toilets have been constructed and almost 94.7% of schools have functional toilet for girls. More than 99% rural households have improved the source of drinking water, and any overexploitation has been reduced since the previous index.⁷

SDG – Affordable and Clean Energy

SDG for affordable and clean energy had a higher score from 51 to 96, as 100 percent of households had access to electricity under Saubhagya scheme. A significant increase has been recorded in supply of clean cooking fuel connection in 2023-24 index.⁷

SDG - Decent work and Economic growth

India observed 5.88% GDP per capita growth rate in past year. Other highlights observed were reduction in unemployment rate, increased labour force participation rate, more accounts in Pradhanmantri Jandhan Yojana etc. Almost more than 95% of households have one member with the bank or post office account.⁷

SDG - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Score in this sustainable developmental goal increased from 41 to 61 in last 5 years. This was basically attributed to the fact that 99.7% of all targeted habitations got connected with all-weather roads under Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana. More than 93 percent of families have mobile phones.⁷

SDG - Reduced Inequalities

In recent SDG index it was observed that more than 45 percent of seats of panchayati Raj Institutions were held by women, and more than 28 percent SC/ST persons hold representation in legislative assemblies.⁷

SDG - Sustainable cities and communities

A high significant improvement was observed in this score from 39 to 83 in last 5 years which can be attributed to increase in installed sewage treatment capacity from 38% to 51%. There has been observed and increased percentage of municipal solid waste processing. Almost 97% of wards have 100% door to door waste collection and 90% wards have 100% source segregation under SBM.⁷

SDG - Responsible Consumption and Production

A slight increase has been observed in this score which includes more than 91% treatment of biomedical waste generated and almost 55% recycling or utilization of hazardous waste.⁷

SDG - Climate action

A radical improvement of climate action SDG in overall composite score of goal 13 was observed in SDG India index 4 compared to previous one which includes disaster preparation score as per disaster resilience index stands at 19.2. Improvement in electricity generation from renewable energy sources has been observed from 36 to 43% in 2024. More than 94% of industries company comply the environmental hazards.⁷

SDG - Life on Land

The composite score increased from 66 in index 3 to 75 in index 4. There was observed more than 1 percent increase in carbon stock in forest cover and nearly 25% geographical area under forest and tree cover as per India state of forest report 2021.⁷

SDG - Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

Indicators of this SDG states that more than 95% of population is under Adhaar coverage, almost 89% of birds of children under 5 years have been registered, more than 75% of IPC crimes have been charge sheeted.⁷

Overall Assessment

There has been a significant advancement in goals on eliminating poverty, economic growth and providing reasonable work, climate action and life on land. Overall sustainable developmental goal's score for the country is 71 for 2023-24 which is a substantial enhancement from 66 in the year 2020-21. States have shown advancement in several SDG scores which range from 57 to 79 in 2023-24 which is a substantial increase from previous years when it ranged from 42 to 69. Substantial progress has been recorded in Sustainable developmental Goal-No Poverty, Goal-Decent Work and Economic Growth, Goal-Climate Action and Goal- Life on Land, while Goal-climate action observed highest recorded increase from previous years.

Key involvements facilitating SDG attainments include⁷:

- Over 4 crore houses under the PM Awas Yojana (PMAY),
- 11 crore Toilets & 2.23 lakh Community Sanitary Complexes in rural zones
- 10 crore LPG connections under PM Ujjwala Yojana,
- Tap water connections in over 14.9 crore households under Jal Jeevan Mission
- Over 30 crore beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat -Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
- Coverage of over 80 crore people under the National Food Security Act (NFSA)
- Access to 150,000 Ayushman Arogya Mandir which offer primary medical care and provide affordable generic medicines
- Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of ₹34 lakh crore made through PM-Jan Dhan accounts.
- The Skill India Mission has led to over 1.4 crore youth being trained and upskilled and has reskilled 54 lakh youth
- PM Mudra Yojana sanctioned 43 crore loans aggregating to ₹22.5 lakh crore for entrepreneurial aspirations of the youth besides Funds of Funds
- Start Up India and Start Up Guarantee schemes assisting the youth
- The Saubhagya scheme for access to electricity
- Emphasis on renewable energy resulted in an increase in solar power capacity from 2.82 GW to 73.32 GW in the past decade.
- Between 2017 and 2023, India has added around 100 GW of installed electric capacity, of which around 80% is attributed to non-fossil fuel-based resource.
- Improvement in digital infrastructure with reduced internet data costs by 97% which has in turn positively affected and fostered financial inclusion

Conclusion

Despite such an improvement in the target achievement process for sustainable development goal still there are features which need more attention from government and the people. We have dragged a big population out of poverty but still there are more people below poverty line which need employment. Though, there are employment facilities like MGNREGA, but not all people have access or awareness about it. We still need to concentrate on health and hygiene aspect little more not only by providing facilities but also make

people aware of its benefits. Awareness for education and gender equality is continuously being spread but still the field has a lot of scope to overcome to match the global level, which is a goal for sustainable development. As the government, policy makers, states are working together for the challenges of sustainable developmental goals more indicators should be analysed to achieve the goal till 2030.

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