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## “Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs) – A Study Of Challenges Of India With Emphasis On Urbanization”

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### Abstract

The whole world has united in their endeavor to obtain the goals of sustainable development. This is in absolute opposite to the earlier proposals where governments engage in goals for the growth & development of their own economies. The fight for development & superiority has generated inequality in the economic development & growth among countries, depleted the natural resources & has therefore changed the ecological balance. The effect of this is being observed in the form of global warming & dramatic climate change. Since this warn the survival of human life on earth, a strategy that would make sure a safe & better environment for coming generations has become the need of the present generation. Sustainable development is a concept which emerged to ensure that growth & development takes place in such a manner that natural resources are sustained & carry on to the next generations perfectly. This paper makes an attempt to know & understand the challenges experienced by India in achieving Sustainable development goals & provide recommendations to resolve them.

### Key Words:

Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Ecological Balance etc.

### Introduction:

Sustainable Development has become the zoom word for whole world. The fight for development & superiority has generated inequality in the economic development & growth among countries, depleted the natural resources & has therefore changed the ecological balance. The effect of this is being observed in the form of global warming & dramatic climate change. Since this warn the survival of human life on earth, a strategy that would make sure a safe & better environment for coming generations has become the need of the present generation. Sustainable development is a concept which emerged to ensure that growth & development takes place in such a manner that natural resources are sustained & carry on to the next generations perfectly.

Seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed to make a more promising, more equal, & more safe international community by the year 2030 have been started and developed. They have been approved by 193 Member States at the UN General Assembly Summit in September 2015 as a part of their agenda for Sustainable Development. India is a founder member & signatory to this summit & is strongly dedicated to the 2030 agenda.

At this juncture this paper makes an effort to know & understand the challenges faced by India in achieving the Sustainable development goals. The paper also makes an attempt to suggest measures to overcome the challenges.

### Objectives:

- To provide better understanding about the sustainable development goals in reference to India.
- To analyses the challenges of India for achieving the sustainable development goals with maintenance of the pace of growth of country.
- To provide some strategies & recommendations to maintain the balance between environmental management (sustainable development) & growth of country in reference to urbanization.

### Methodology: -

This research paper is a vivid study in nature. The study has been depending on the collection of significant & practicable secondary data. Collection of secondary data is based on various sources like as published books, articles published in different journals and newspapers, periodicals, conference papers, working papers & web sites, etc.

### Findings

The study provides an outlook of long-run sustainability challenges in India. to achieve sustainable development goals, Implementation of low carbon sustainable development strategies requires concerted policy action and interventions. We also find that biggest challenge to achieving sustainable urbanization in India is non strict compliance of rules and regulations regarding this.

### The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also famous as the Global Goals, were adopted by all members of United Nations in 2015 as a global call to action to end poverty, conserve the planet & make certain that all people enjoy peace, success & prosperity by 2030.

The 17 SDGs are unified —that is, they identified that action in one area will impact results in others, & that development & growth must make balance among social, economic & environmental sustainability.

Through the commitment to Leave No One Behind, countries have pledged to fast-track progress for those furthest behind first. That is why the SDGs are shaped to bring whole world to many life-changing 'zeros', including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS & discrimination against women & girls etc.

Everybody is required to touch these ambitious targets. The creativity, know how, technology & financial resources, support from all of society is unavoidable to achieve the SDGs in every context. As far as India is concerned, the national development goals of India clinched well with the SDGs & India is expected to play a leading role in determining the success of the SDGs, universally. The 17 SDGs are as follows-

1	End the poverty in all its forms from everywhere.....
2	End the hunger, achieve food security & improved nutrition & promote sustainable agriculture.....

3	Ensure the healthy lives & promote well-being for all which should be for all ages.....
4	Make sure inclusive & equitable quality education & promote lifelong learning opportunities for all persons.....
5	To achieve gender equality & empower the all women & girls.....
6	To ensure availability & sustainable management of water & sanitation for all persons.....
7	To ensure accessibility to affordable, reliable, sustainable & modern energy for all.....
8	Encourage sustained, inclusive & sustainable economic growth, full & productive employment & unique work for all.....
9	Build the resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive & sustainable industrialization & foster innovation etc.....
10	To reduce inequality within & among other countries.....
11	Try to make cities & human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient & sustainable.....
12	Ensure the sustainable consumption & production patterns.....
13	To take urgent action to combat climate change & its impacts...
14	To conserve & sustainably use the oceans, seas & marine resources etc. for sustainable development....
15	Try to protect, restore & promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, & halt & reverse land degradation & halt biodiversity loss.....
16	To promote peaceful & inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all & build effective, accountable & inclusive institutions at all levels....
17	To strengthen the means of implementation & revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.....

(Source: [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals))

### Steps taken for implementing SDGs in India

NITI Aayog, the Government of India's leading think tank, has been consigned with the task of coordinating the SDGs. States have also been recommended to take on a similar outline of their schemes, including centrally sponsored schemes & programs.

In supplement, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) is involved in the process & system of developing national indicators for the sustainable development goals.

Numerous of the Government's flagship programmes like as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Make in India, Skill India, & Digital India are at the essence of the SDGs. State & local governments play a crucial role in many of these such programmes. State governments are paying intense observation to dreaming, planning, budgeting, & developing implementation & monitoring mechanism for the SDGs.

NITI Aayog has recently published the Sustainable Development Goals India Index 2019 (SDGII 2019). In a notable improvement over the initial & inaugural version, 68 indicators have been directly taken from the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation's National Indicator Framework (NIF) while another 20 indicators are modified & revised versions of NIF indicators & 12 indicators have been developed by NITI Aayog in consultation with Union government & ministries. This alliance of indicators will cover the path for better cooperation among government bodies for tracking India's performance on SDGs.

Another remarkable improvement is the wide coverage of goals, targets & indicators. But in the first edition, Goals 12, 13 & 14 were not included, only Goal 17 has been left out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round for ranking sub-national governments due to the lack of any relevant indicators in the NIF. Further, while SDG II 2018 included 39 targets & 62 indicators, SDG II 2019 spans 54 targets & 100 indicators.

Therefore, how are we faring in our search for achieving the SDGs? In general, India's score has improved from 57 to 60, with notable progress on SDGs 3, 6, 7, 9 & 11. But, a decrease in the Maternal Mortality Ratio has

contributed to our upgraded performance in the area of ‘Good Health & Well-Being’, ramping up toilet coverage under Swachh Bharat Campaign has improved the country’s score on ‘Clean Water and Sanitation’

. The admirable performance on Goal 7 is due to enhanced access to clean cooking fuel & the government’s huge electrification movement. Likewise, on Goal 9, the improvement can be credited largely to a notable progress in rural road connectivity & increased mobile phone piercing. Our performance on Goal 11 has been powered by better access to housing by the Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana as well as more vivid adoption of door-to-door waste collection & processing system.

While this progress is encouraging, there are few indicators where more focused attention is needed. For example, India’s tuberculosis notification rate is still very high, thus limiting our overall improvement on Goal 3. Further, there are some SDGs on which the whole country requires to step up its presentation considerably, namely those pertaining to poverty, hunger, & gender & climate action.

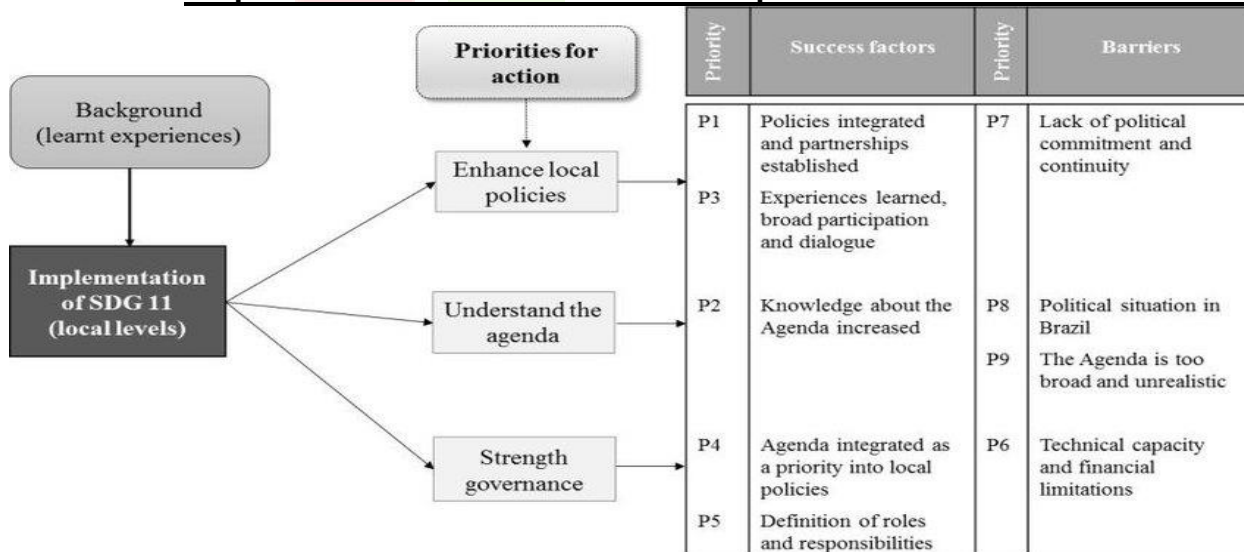
Here we have SDGII 2019 is a much-improved & latest version; an exercise of this nature is not without its constraints, especially due to the gaps in data availability. In successive versions of the Index continued efforts require to be prepared to include indicators that cover the complete extent of the SDGs. For example, if the target is to remove all forms of violence against women & girls in the public & private fields, we require going beyond measuring campanile violence & sexual crimes against children. Likewise, SDG 3 must cover at least single indicator that shows the country’s improvement on tackling non-communicable diseases.

Importantly, concerted efforts require to be prepared to generate data disaggregated by gender, age & socio-economic status to truly get a sense of how we are faring in concern to fulfilling the overarching SDG formula of ‘leaving no one behind’.

Lastly & finally, future sustainable development Index reports could perhaps go a step forward by including good & healthy practices that enable high-performing States/UTs to make improvements on each of the goals, thus providing useful & valuable massages for those lagging behind.

India is the only country to openly rank its sub-national governments on SDGs. But the exercise requires strengthening in terms of scope & quality on a running basis; it is a valuable effort that needs to be continued with as it helps to bring the SDG agenda into the focus at the national level as well facilitates its localization at the States & UTs levels.

**Proposal action framework to enhance implementation of SDG 11 at local levels**



Source:- Ana Almeida, Sep. 2018



## **United Nations Support regarding SDG initiatives in India**

The U N in India supports the participation of civil society organizations, think tanks & the Indian media in discussions & side sessions at the International Conference on Financing for Development at Addis Ababa & during the General Assembly in New York.

The United Nations Country group in India supports NITI Aayog in its initiative to address the conjunctions of the goals, to ensure that no one is left behind & to advocate for enough financing to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In close collaboration with NITI Aayog & its partners, the UN has supported thematic consultations on the SDGs to bring together different state governments, central ministries, civil society organizations & academia to deliberate on specific Sustainable Development Goals.

### **United Nations Support regarding SDG initiatives in state governments**

The United Nations in India presently supports 05 State governments (Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, & Odisha) in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals to address measure development challenges at the state level.

### **Challenges in achieving SDGs in India**

Few areas have been identified as areas of big concern for India in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals. They are debated below-

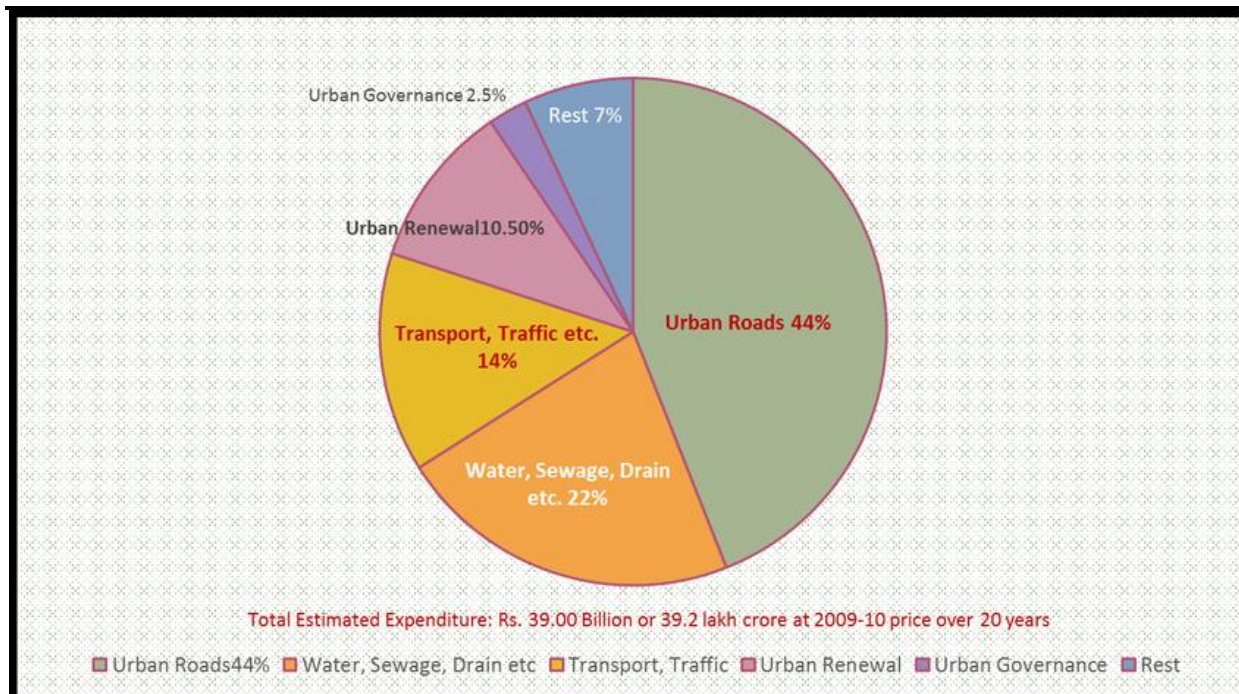
Firstly, in reference of localization of SDGs, the mechanism of policy & budget making, planning, enforcement & monitoring of strategy is not clearly showing SDGs at the level of State & local governments. Further, decentralization of funds, functions & functionaries to local bodies as per provision of 73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendment Act is still a far dream in most of the States. Hence, local bodies (rural & urban) are not capable to make people's plan & local budgets for their concern areas through people's participation. NITI Aayog being a nodal agency for examining the implementation of SDGs at the national level has not made any remarkable effort for engage in States for devolving funds, functions & functionaries to local bodies.

Secondly, like NITI Aayog, the State Planning Departments in the States have been build nodal agency to supervise the process of implementation of Sustainable Development Goals at the State level. So far many States are not ready for implementation of SDGs given their capability in reference of adequacy of financial & human resources & decentralized planning mechanism followed by them. Further, small efforts have been made to renew the policies & enhance the budgetary provisions as per the local felt requires.

Thirdly, there has been a poor effort to address the issues & challenges for increasing the domestic resources mobilization. Further, the share of central government Budget expenditure out of GDP had reduced from 13.3 % in 2014-15 to 13.2 % in 2019-20. Central Government's poor capability to mobilize the financial resources will decrease the quantum of public expenditure on social & economic services at the level of State & local governments because they are highly dependent on the transfers from the above. Further, the development policies & budget allocations of central & State Governments have not been completely integrated with Sustainable Development Goals.

Fourthly, it was monitored that there has been insufficiency in unit cost of services like as old pension scheme, disability pension, widow pension, housing scheme, Supplementary Nutrition Programme, Mid-Day Meal Schemes, Pre Matric & Post Matric Scholarships for Minorities, honorarium for frontline service provider, school teachers, health workers, Workers & Helpers of Anganwadi Centre & cooks. This escorts to inferior quality of service delivery by many flagship programmes & government institutions.

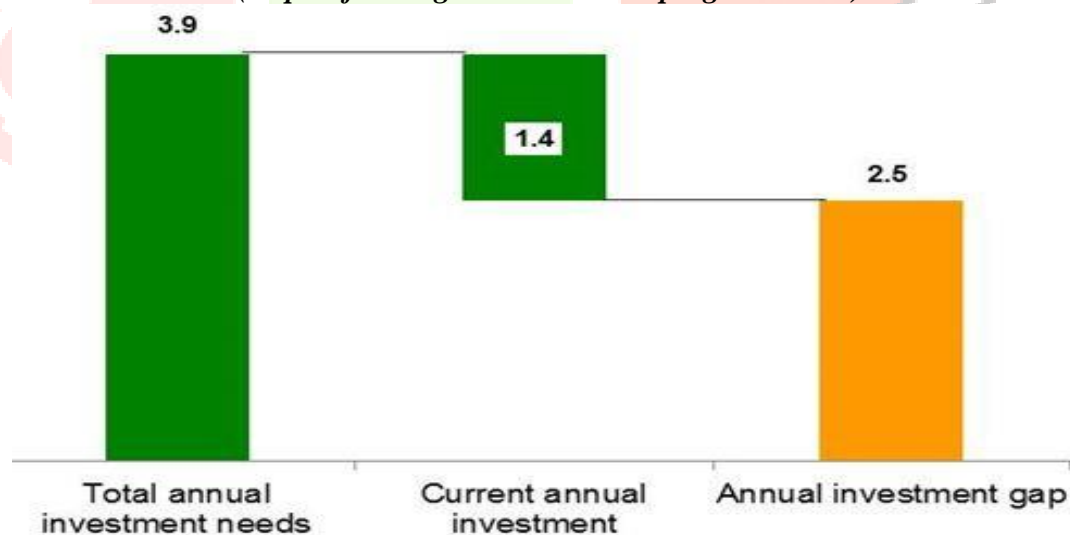
### **Estimated Expenditure on Urban Infrastructure Till 2031**



(Source: Mihir Bholey, April-2016)

Fifthly, there has been a delay in fund flow payable to delayed release of funds at the local level from the state & union government due to many reasons. Systemic weakness (institutional capacity) of line departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions & Municipal Corporations tends to inaccurate absorption of funds. Lack of human resources, training & capability entails improper planning & implementation of schemes & programmes. Most of the line departments are understaffed & also high rate of vacancies are observed at Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats & District Panchayats. These issues have poor effect on the planning processes & weaken the implementation & monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals.

*(Gap in funding SDGs in developing countries)*



(Source: [unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx? Original Version ID](http://unctad.org/en/pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID))

Sixthly, monitoring of outcomes has been one of the prime challenges under SDGs due to lack of formation of development indicators at State, district & block levels. Further, it has been observed that there is a non-regular data reporting on outcomes & there is a lack of capability of data collection at Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats & District Panchayats.

Lastly, the outline of monitoring & tracking the development benefits adopted by the central Government did not have enough focus on the inclusion of marginalized communities even though social inclusion is one of the three pillars of Sustainable Development Goals. There is lack of awareness & inadequate

participation by marginalized communities (SCs, STs, OBCs & minorities) in planning & implementation of Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.

## Measures to overcome Challenges

To overcome the above-mentioned challenges, present policy initiatives on Sustainable development goals should focus on making changes in the policy design, creating new institutions & development programmes, strengthening the institutions govern by the State & local authorities.

It is also important to enhance the financial sources to have better unit cost of services & enough payment to staffs, who are engaged with social & economic sectors. The adequacy of staff & their trainings has to be given top priority for better implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. There is a requirement for developing monitoring indicators & database on Sustainable Development Goals at state and local levels. It would be more useful if NITI Aayog may engage regularly with Central Statistical Organization (CSO), think tanks, research institutions & academic organizations along with department of planning & District Planning Committees to have more better local level feedback on implementation, monitoring & evaluation of Sustainable Development Goals.



Source:- UNEP

## Conclusion

India is largest populated country in the world. The measures adopted by India for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals matter a lot to the world. If India succeeds in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals it would mean a bigger part of the world has achieved it. So, it is crucial for India to develop effective methods for implementing, monitoring & measuring the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. We can say that biggest challenge for India is to be the development of suitable & appropriate methods for sustainable urbanization. This can be materialized by developing a comprehensive set of techniques and proper implementation mechanism with strict compliance.



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