

Knowledge Partners



सत्यमेव जयते
NITI Aayog



– G20 Think Tank Workshop Series –

Accelerating Progress on Sustainable Development Goals

for Adoption and Implementation of G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration

(Hybrid Mode)

BACKGROUND NOTE



Date: 06 November 2023

Venue: Dr Ambedkar International Centre, Delhi

India's G20 presidency has been structured around the theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'One Earth-One Family-One Future,' a theme that is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad. Essentially, the theme affirms the value of all life – human, animal, plant, and microorganisms – and their interconnectedness on the planet Earth and in the wider universe. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that nations have committed to achieving by 2030, mirror the same interconnectedness in the universe. This presidency presents a unique opportunity to assess progress, impact, and chart the future course of the G20 in accelerating the achievement of SDGs.

The G20 Summit attended by the world leaders in India in the month of September 2023 adopted the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration (NDLD). Amongst the various focus areas of the Declaration, 'Accelerating Progress on the SDGs' is a key area. The declaration goes beyond rhetoric, suggesting substantial, pragmatic steps to bolster developing nations in their quest to achieve the SDGs. Moreover, a resolute G20 2023 Action Plan, aimed at expediting progress on the SDGs, underscores an unwavering commitment to driving the global advancement of these crucial development objectives.

At the midway point to 2030, the global progress on SDGs is off-course with only 12 percent of the targets on track. During this Decade of Action, NDLD aims to leverage the G20's convening power and its collective resolve to fully and effectively implement the 2030 Agenda and accelerate progress toward the SDGs, in a timely manner, to shape the world we want to see for our future generations. India's wealth of think tanks and the extensive experience of its diverse s are invaluable resources for upholding their commitment through indigenous leadership and support. The workshop will endeavour to ascertain the key elements of NDLD and develop a national roadmap with stakeholders ranging from State Governments, private sector, engagement groups, among others, towards achieving the same. India's pursuit of the 2030 Agenda is critical for its rapid and sustainable development, aligning with the aspirations of

its large, youthful, and dynamic population. In a diverse nation like India, the localisation of SDGs becomes imperative, given the range of issues at the local level and the magnitude of the challenges. Each of the twenty-eight States and eight Union Territories have embraced the SDGs. The States have taken the leadership in SDG localisation, through developing implementation mechanisms, monitoring frameworks, and driving action at ground level till blocks.

For tracking the progress of SDGs, India has established a robust monitoring framework, overseen by top policymakers both at the national and State levels. This system encompasses a range of SDG Indices developed by NITI Aayog, including the SDG India Index and dashboard, NER District SDG Index and dashboard, and Urban SDG Index & dashboard. These indices have emerged as essential policy instruments, serving not only as progress metrics but also as catalysts for actionable measures.

India has shown notable progress in its SDG journey, evident in the improvement of the NITI Aayog SDG India Index & Dashboard score over the years. The positive momentum toward SDG achievement is particularly driven by the outstanding nationwide performance in Goal 1 (No Poverty), Goal 3 (Good Health & well-being), Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities), Goal 13 (Climate Action) etc.

SEGMENT 1: ELIMINATING HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

The NDLD focuses on some priority areas for accelerating the progress of SDGs including Eliminating hunger and malnutrition, strengthening global health and implementing One Health Approach and Delivering quality education. The performance of the SDGs in these areas need concerted and accelerated action. The score for SDG 2ⁱ (Zero Hunger) is 2020 is 47, up from 35 in 2019. The NDLD underscored the need to strengthen research cooperation on climate-resilient and nutritious grains such as millets, quinoa, sorghum, and other traditional crops including rice, wheat and maize. Building more sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and food systems is a key aim in this context.

The initial part of the workshop, which centres on nutrition, will broadly address the following issues:

1. Strengthening research cooperation on climate-resilient and nutritious grains
2. Building more sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and food systems (including focus on soil health)
3. Enabling access to affordable, safe, nutritious, and healthy diets, and to foster the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.
4. Utilising technology to revolutionise fight against malnutrition.

SEGMENT 2: ENSURING GOOD HEALTH FOR ALL

India's progress regarding SDG 3 (Good health and wellbeing) is better with a scoreⁱ of 74 in the year 2020, up from 61 in 2019. In this regard, the NDLD focuses on building more resilient, equitable, sustainable, and inclusive health systems to achieve Universal Health Coverage, implement One Health approach, enhance pandemic preparedness, and strengthen existing infectious diseases surveillance systems. The aim would be to strengthen primary health care and health workforce and to improve essential health services & health systems to better than pre-pandemic levels, ideally within the next 2-3

years. The One Health approach is an integrated, unifying approach that recognizes that the health of people, animals and ecosystems are closely linked and interdependent. Although the health, food, water, energy and environment are wider topics with sector-specific concerns, a collaborative approach across sectors and disciplines would contribute effectively to protect health, address health challenges such as the emergence of infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and food safety. Simultaneously it would promote the health and integrity of our ecosystems.

The second segment of the workshop, dedicated to health, will focus on the following:

1. Strengthening primary health care and health workforce and improving essential health services and health systems
2. Eradicating and ending ongoing epidemics including AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis and water-borne and other communicable diseases.
3. Promoting the One Health-based approach to implement and prioritise tackling Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)
4. Promoting role of evidence-based Traditional and Complementary Medicine in health

SEGMENT 3: DELIVERING QUALITY EDUCATION

The third focus area in the NDLD is 'Delivering quality education'. India has not shown adequate progress in the related SDG 4 (Quality education); rather there has been a slight regression as the scoreⁱ declined from 58 in 2019 to 57 in 2020. Yet investment in human capital development is a crucial area for any nation. The NDLD focuses on delivery of inclusive, equitable, high-quality education and skills training for all, including for those in vulnerable situations. Just as the foundational literacy and numeracy along with socio-emotional skills are key areas, the importance of digital skills cannot be over-emphasized. With majority of the SDG targets directly influenced by digital technologies, there is a need to enhance high-quality data and sustainable data infrastructure,



bridge the digital divides, including gender digital divide and growing data-divide, as well as to focus on capacity building. Another area of critical importance, given the existing potential of reaping demographic dividends is quality technical and vocational education.

The third and final segment of the workshop on Delivering Quality Education will centre on the following:

1. Improving foundational learning
2. Harnessing digital technologies and overcoming the digital divides for all learners and equipping educational institutions and teachers to keep pace with emerging trends and technological advances including AI.
3. Expanding access to high-quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training
4. Enabling life-long learning focused on skilling, reskilling, and upskilling especially for vulnerable groups.

Acknowledging that meeting targets for the SDGs is a complex process which needs the active involvement and efforts of States, the workshop will comprehensively attempt to outline a plan of action in implementing the SDGs. It will also delve into the detailed aspects of implementing SDGs at the regional level within States, closely evaluating their effectiveness in managing this critical aspect of the global agenda.

The journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in India is a multifaceted and collaborative effort, driven by the combined endeavours of States, central ministries, and various stakeholders with a whole of society approach. The 2030 Agenda stands as a unifying vision for a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable future. With NITI Aayog leading the way and demonstrating innovation and commitment for SDGs, there is a strong foundation for progress. The workshop offers an invaluable opportunity to share good practices, learn from one another, and further solidify our collective commitment to leaving no one behind in our pursuit of a better world. The workshop will also focus on strengthening and broadening domestic engagement in the ownership and implementation

of SDGs and create a forum of Think Tanks and Researchers for accelerating the implementation of SDGs. As India's G20 Presidency aligns with the spirit of the SDGs, the nation is poised to play a pivotal role in fostering global cooperation and advancing the shared goal of sustainable development for all.

NITI Aayog serves as the primary agency responsible for SDG implementation in the nation. The workshop is being organised by NITI Aayog and its three knowledge partners.

1. Institute for Human Development

The Institute for Human Development (IHD), an Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) recognised category Institute, is an autonomous institution that undertakes research in the areas of labour markets and employment, livelihoods, health, education, gender, social protection and other dimensions of human development. The Institute has a wide network of researchers and other stakeholders working in these areas. IHD publishes two international peer-reviewed journals: The Indian Journal of Human Development (published by Sage Publications) and the Indian Journal of Labour Economics (published by Springer).

2. Centre for Social and Economic Progress

The Centre for Social and Economic Progress is an independent, public policy think tank with a mandate to conduct research and analysis on critical issues facing India and the world and help shape policies that advance sustainable growth and development.

3. UNDP India

UNDP's core areas of focus encompass poverty reduction, democratic governance, peacebuilding, climate change and disaster risk management, as well as addressing economic inequality. UNDP is the leading UN organisation to act as integrator of the SDGs at the national level. In India, UNDP collaborates with NITI Aayog through a Memorandum of Understanding to assist in the integration of SDGs into the country's national development plans and policies.

