

CONCEPT NOTE

Side Event on Leaving No One Behind: India's Experience in Accelerating SDGs

Venue: Conference Room A, United Nations Headquarters, NY
|Date: 16th July 2024 |Time: 1:15 PM- 2:30 PM (EST) |Modality: In-person

Organizers

NITI Aayog, Government of India; Permanent Mission of India to the UN; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India; and UN Resident Coordinator's Office in India.

Targeted Participants

- Member States' representatives, HLPF delegates
- Stakeholders involved in localizing SDGs and ensuring last mile delivery from international and multilateral organizations, academia, think tanks, civil society organizations, private sector, and media.

Background

India's commitment to the SDGs is proven by its track record of extensive efforts for SDG localization marked with systematic and well-defined strategy of planning, reorientating resources, monitoring, establishing partnerships for implementation of 2030 Agenda through Government programmes and schemes extended up to village to ensure last mile delivery. At the National level, NITI Aayog, the Government of India's apex body for designing long-term policies, programmes and strategies, plays a crucial role in overall coordination of and localizing the SDGs. It fosters cooperative federalism and competition among States through collaborative efforts and comparative performance-based rankings. This model of 'collaborative competition', supported by rankings on the SDG progress, has generated momentum among sub-national governments. NITI Aayog has published four versions of SDG India Index- the primary tool for monitoring India's progress on SDGs, including the fourth edition this year. Similar indices like the North-Eastern Regional District SDG Index were developed with the aim of monitoring at a further granular level, i.e., at the level of districts which is also used for better channelizing developmental spending.

The attainment of the SDGs can only be realized if there is accountability and ownership at the different levels of Government administration. A majority of Indian state governments and Union Territory Administrations have followed a similar model for SDG localization, which includes formulation of the SDG Vision Document, developing and strengthening institutions and coordination mechanisms such as specialized cells, mapping SDGs to Government schemes, working groups, monitoring frameworks at different levels (State/ District/ Block Indicator Frameworks and dashboard), sensitization workshops and events for awareness generation and capacity building, and partnerships with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) entities, academia, think tanks, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Apart from the strong institutional structure built at the level of states and centre, the Government of India has taken significant strides to reach the last mile in the form of Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme. The programme is one such successful initiative which embodies the principle of leaving no region behind by accelerating development outcomes in those blocks and districts which were at the risk of being left behind. With States as the main drivers, this programme focuses on the strength of each district and block and identify doable actions for immediate improvement, measure progress and rank districts and blocks. The concurrent monitoring of the progress up to the blocks through the programme's 'Champions of Change' dashboard is a key element of the success of this Local Area Development Programme. Central Ministries and State Governments continuously support and handhold district and block level actors to plan convergent action, undertake effective implementation, and provide requisite resources and capacity building to ensure that they register rapid development across selected SDGs.

Scope of the Event

India has steadfastly pursued evidence-based development priorities, with a sharp focus on tangible outcomes. The 'Indian Model of SDG Localization' has played a crucial role in embracing the 2030 Agenda, a journey marked by continuous learning and adaptation. The contributions of sub-national units within India are instrumental in advancing the 2030 Agenda. The Government of India has spared no effort in implementing policies targeting the most vulnerable, with the aim of leaving no one behind.

As India accelerates the pace of development, its emphasis on welfare schemes and universal access to essential services has sharpened. This has been made possible through a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach, with each sector implementing specific schemes to achieve ambitious targets, particularly in areas such as healthcare, basic amenities, education and sanitation. The thrust has also shifted from women development to women led development.

India has ensured that the benefits of these schemes extend to the most remote areas of the country. Visionary programs like the Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme have provided crucial direction and support, particularly for marginalized communities. This concerted effort has yielded tangible results, as evidenced by India's reduction in multidimensional poverty from 24.85 per cent in 2015-16 to 11.28 per cent in 2022-23, aligning closely with SDG target 1.2 of reducing poverty by half much before 2030.

The side event is designed to showcase India's efforts to ensure last mile delivery for localization of SDGs, featuring initiatives undertaken by NITI Aayog and sub-national governments. These initiatives have significant potential for scaling up amongst nations of the Global South. The event will provide a clear understanding on how India is accelerating its sustainable development by focusing on targeted last mile delivery to serve as a replicable canvas for countries advancing towards achievement of the Global Goals.

Agenda (75 mins)

5 MINS	Welcome Remarks by Mr. Ravindra Raguttahalli Chargé d’Affaires a.i. Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations
15 MINS	Presentation by Dr. Yogesh Suri , Senior Adviser (SDGs), NITI Aayog, Government of India- <i>“Overview of India’s SDG Journey - Lessons and Opportunities”</i>
2 MINS	SDG India Index Report launch
4 MINS	Video: Experience of Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme
12 MINS	Presentation by Mr. Anand Shekhar , Additional Mission Director, NITI Aayog, Government of India – <i>“Global Goals to Local Actions: India’s Aspirational Districts and Blocks Programme”</i>
10 MINS	Keynote by Ms. Kanni Wignaraja , UN Assistant Secretary General and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific
15 MINS	Special Remarks by Mr. Suman K Bery , Vice Chairperson, NITI Aayog, Government of India
10 MINS	Discussions
2 MINS	Vote of Thanks by PMI

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