

# Accomplishing Sustainable Development Goals in India: A systematic literature review

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**Abstract.** *The purpose of this study is to organize the existing empirical research on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India, to pinpoint the areas of research that have not gotten enough attention, and to create a bridge to close the knowledge gap. Additionally, it considers prospective routes for future study and frameworks for policy. A systematic review of the literature (SLR) was conducted on 100 academic works about the SDGs in India that were released between 1995 and 2022. What is known about academic study in India on SDGs? The center of interest may have created and directed the review. What procedures were used in these research projects? Where was the research carried out? Why should SDG research be considered by academics and professionals? What function do the SDGs serve in terms of policy?*

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## Introduction

All UN Member States agreed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, and it provides a comprehensive framework for peace and prosperity for people and the planet both now and in the future. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an urgent call to action for all developed and developing nations, are at the center of this initiative. They are aware that in order to combat poverty and other forms of deprivation, legislation must be passed to enhance people's access to healthcare and education, lessen inequality, promote economic growth, combat climate change, and protect our forests and oceans. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other UN organizations have been focusing on the SDGs for a long time as a part of the Earth Summit in June 1992.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides a shared road map for peace and prosperity for people and the planet both now and in the future, was adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. At its core are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a pressing call to action for both developed and developing countries to work together in a global partnership. They comprehend that in addition to alleviating poverty and other types of deprivation, we must take action to safeguard our oceans and forests in order to battle climate change, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and foster economic growth. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, along with nations and the UN, have been working on the SDGs for decades. The Earth Summit took place in June 1992.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was ratified by all UN Member States in 2015, offers a common road map for achieving peace and prosperity for people and the planet both now and in the future. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an urgent appeal for action by all nations—developed and developing—in a global partnership, are at the centre of it. They understand that combating climate change and striving to protect our oceans and forests must go hand in hand with policies that enhance health and education, lessen inequality, and promote economic growth in order to alleviate poverty and other forms of deprivation. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the result of decades of work by nations and the UN, especially the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Earth Summit in June 1992.

A unified roadmap for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, both now and in the future, is provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was accepted by all United Nations Member States in 2015. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all nations, developed and developing, in a global partnership, are at the center of it. They understand that combating poverty and other forms of deprivation necessitates policies that enhance health and education, lessen inequality, promote economic growth, combat climate change, and seek to protect our oceans and forests. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other UN agencies have been working on the SDGs for decades at the Earth Summit in June 1992.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was endorsed by all United Nations Member States in 2015, offers a unified framework for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, both now and in the future. At its core are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a global partnership's urgent call to action for all developed and developing countries. They are aware that implementing legislation to promote economic growth, combat climate change, increase people's access to healthcare and education, and protect our forests and oceans is necessary to eliminating poverty and other forms of deprivation. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were a focus of the Earth Summit in June 1992 for the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other UN organizations.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was endorsed by all United Nations Member States in 2015, offers a unified framework for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, both now and in the future. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an urgent call to action for all developed and developing nations, are at the centre of this initiative. They know that overcoming poverty and other types of deprivation necessitates enacting laws that improve people's health and education conditions, reduce inequality, foster economic growth, battle climate change, and defend our forests and oceans. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other UN agencies have worked on the SDGs for decades.

At the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in June 1992, Agenda 21, a comprehensive action plan to create a worldwide partnership for sustainable development to enhance human well-being and safeguard the environment, was ratified by more than 178 nations. The Millennium Declaration was unanimously ratified by Member States in September 2000 at UN Headquarters in New York. Eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were developed as a result of the summit to end extreme poverty by 2015.

The Millennium Declaration and Agenda 21 were both expanded upon in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation, which was adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa in 2002. It reaffirmed the global community's commitments to environmental protection and the eradication of poverty while placing a stronger emphasis on multilateral partnerships. In June 2012, at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Member States adopted the outcome document "The Future We Want," in which they decided, among other things, to start the process of creating a set of SDGs to build on the MDGs and to create the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In addition to these additional measures for implementing sustainable development, the Rio + 20 conclusion also included directives for upcoming work programs in development funding, small island developing nations, and other areas. In 2013, the General Assembly set up a 30-member Open Working Group to develop a proposal on the SDGs.

The General Assembly started negotiating the post-2015 development agenda in January 2015. At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, the process culminated with the approval of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has 17 SDGs at its heart. With the passage of numerous significant accords, 2015 was a watershed year for multilateralism and the development of global policy:

- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (March 2015)
- July 2015's Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development
- Changing the world: In September 2015, the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York established the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has 17 SDGs.
- Climate Change Agreement of Paris (December 2015)
- The UN now uses its annual High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as its main platform for monitoring and evaluating the SDGs.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) offers significant support and capacity building for the SDGs and their related thematic issues, such as water, energy, climate, oceans, urbanisation, transport, science and technology, the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), partnerships, and Small Island Developing States. The DSDG is crucial to the review of the 2030 Agenda's implementation across the UN system as well as to advocacy and outreach efforts for the SDGs. The SDGs must be widely embraced by all stakeholders in order for them to be implemented in order for the 2030 Agenda to become a reality. The goal of DSDG is to make this interaction easier.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of global targets adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals provide a comprehensive framework for addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges to achieve sustainable development by 2030. India, as a signatory to the SDGs, has committed to implementing and achieving these goals within its national context. India's journey towards sustainable development is of critical importance due to its large population, diverse socio-economic landscape, and environmental challenges. The SDGs provide India with a roadmap to address key developmental issues and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. In India, the SDGs are aligned with the country's national development priorities and are integrated into policy frameworks, plans, and programs. The Government of India, along with various stakeholders, is actively working towards achieving the SDGs by leveraging its strengths and addressing the specific challenges faced by the country.

The SDGs in India cover a wide range of goals, including, among others, eradicating poverty, ensuring high-quality education, promoting gender equality, utilizing renewable energy in sustainable cities, addressing climate change, and conserving biodiversity. These objectives are intertwined, and advancement in one area may have repercussions in other areas. India has achieved tremendous progress in several SDG-related fields, including poverty reduction, renewable energy, and educational access. The nation must address issues including gender-based discrimination, environmental degradation, healthcare inequities, and poverty and inequality, which call for specialized responses and policy changes.

India understands the value of multi-stakeholder partnerships, including cooperation between the government, civil society organizations, businesses, academic institutions, and foreign organizations, to achieve the SDGs. These collaborations promote information exchange, resource mobilization, and creative problem-solving to tackle the intricate and interconnected challenges of sustainable development. The progress, difficulties, and potential policy ramifications of the SDGs in India are examined in this literature study. To provide insights into the nation's efforts to achieve the SDGs, identify gaps, and suggest solutions for effective implementation, it synthesizes previous research and studies.

India wants to build a sustainable and inclusive future, enhance the welfare of its people, and ensure that the earth is preserved for future generations by concentrating on the SDGs. The parts that follow will go into greater detail about the various SDGs in India, highlighting significant research findings and their political ramifications. Various governmental organizations, academic institutions, and international organizations gather and keep track of data about the SDGs in India. Data collection and analysis on SDG development at the national level are the responsibility of the Indian government through the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI).

An array of indicators is used to gauge and monitor progress toward each SDG as part of the National Indicator Framework for the SDGs in India. These indicators are in line with international indicators created by the United Nations and include a wide range of social, economic, and environmental characteristics.

National surveys, censuses, administrative records, and other data sources are used to compile information for the SDGs in India. The National Sample Survey (NSS), the Census of India, the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), and several sector-specific surveys carried out by various ministries and departments are some of the major sources of data. International organizations including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and other research institutions also produce data and studies on the SDGs in India in addition to the government. Based on their own data gathering and analysis, these organizations offer insightful assessments of India's progress in reaching the SDGs.

It is advised to visit official government websites like the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) or consult publications released by international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank to acquire particular data on the SDGs in India. These resources offer thorough data sets, analyses, and indicators about the SDGs in India. Please be aware that depending on the objective, indicator, and period of data collection, the availability and particular data points may change. For accurate and current information on the SDGs in India, it is crucial to check the most recent studies and data sources.

### Research Analysis

SDGs Analysis is the process of evaluating and assessing the progress made in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a particular level, such as national, regional, or local. It entails assessing data, indicators, and trends relating to each aim to determine its strengths, weaknesses, and key areas in need of improvement. The 17 goals and 169 objectives that make up the SDGs span a broad variety of social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainable development. The SDGs Analysis seeks to provide a thorough understanding of the present status and performance in connection to each objective and target, supporting the development of policies that are based on solid evidence and the distribution of available resources.

### Key aspects of SDGs Analysis

**Data Gathering and Indicators:** Gathering pertinent data and using the right indicators to gauge each goal's progress. This entails locating trustworthy data sources, setting up data collection procedures, and assuring the accuracy and consistency of the data.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Consistently keeping track of and assessing the advancement achieved towards achieving the SDGs. This entails monitoring indicators, evaluating trends over time, and contrasting outcomes with predetermined goals or benchmarks.

Identifying gaps and difficulties in the SDGs' implementation is known as "assessing gaps and difficulties". This entails studying differences between various regions or population groups, figuring out why some things are moving more slowly than others, and locating roadblocks to accomplishing goals. **Interlink ages and Synergies:** Understanding the interlinkages and synergies between different goals and targets. This involves assessing how progress in one goal can contribute to or hinder progress in other goals and identifying opportunities for integrated and cross-sectorial approaches.

### Policy Implications

Examining the SDGs Analysis's Political ramifications. Assessing the success of current policies and programs in achieving the SDGs is part of this process, as is coming up with policy interventions, strategies, and priorities to speed up progress toward the objectives.

Engagement of various stakeholders in the analytical process, such as government agencies, civil society organizations, businesses, and communities. This ensures that different viewpoints, knowledge sharing, and collaboration are all present while addressing the SDGs. SDGs Analysis offers useful insights into the developments, difficulties, and chances associated with sustainable development. It helps in identifying priority areas, setting targets, and designing evidence-based policies and interventions to achieve the SDGs effectively.

An in-depth understanding of a particular subject can be attained through the systematic review of the literature (SLR), which is an exhaustive and rigorous way of analysing previous research works. A thorough

literature review can offer important insights into the research landscape, advancements, difficulties, and policy implications associated with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) when applied to them.

### **An SLR on the SDGs involves the following key steps**

- Formulating a specific research topic that is aligned with the relevant SDGs or their sub-goals is known as research question formulation. The SLR procedure is directed by this research question.
- **Search Techniques:** Create a methodical search strategy to locate pertinent research reports, studies, and articles. To choose studies that adhere to quality requirements, this involves choosing the proper databases, employing pertinent keywords, and applying inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- **Study Selection:** Studies are screened and chosen using pre-established inclusion and exclusion criteria. To ensure that each study adds to the research topic and meets the requirements for inclusion, this requires evaluating the relevance and quality of each study. Data extraction is the process of taking pertinent facts and data out of studies. This entails highlighting important factors, methodology, conclusions, and any other relevant information that contributes to answering the study question.
- **Data Synthesis and Analysis:** Analysing and combining the data that was extracted to find themes, patterns, and trends that were present in all of the studies that were chosen. Depending on the type of data, this could entail quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, or a combination of the two.
- **Interpreting the findings:** Evaluating the combined data in the context of the research issue and the SDGs. Identifying crucial insights, information gaps, and areas in need of more research or policy attention is necessary for this.
- **Policy Implications:** Using the SLR's findings to inform policy implications and suggestions. Finding effective policy interventions, initiatives, and best practices that support the SDGs must be done in this regard. An SLR on the SDGs offers a thorough and fact-based evaluation of the available literature, assisting in the identification of knowledge gaps, strengths, weaknesses, and topics for more study. It aids in the development of evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation in the pursuit of sustainable development, as well as the improvement of awareness of the difficulties and possibilities related to the SDGs.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Aims to organize the empirical research on the SDGs that has already been done in India, identify research gaps, fill them, look at potential policy frameworks, and suggest areas for more study. The study focused on SDGs in India and conducted a comprehensive literature assessment on 100 academic articles published between 1995 and 2022. Background information on the SDGs and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by all United Nations Member States is given in the introductory section. It emphasizes the significance of combating climate change, addressing environmental preservation, enhancing health and education, lowering inequality, and eradicating poverty. The history of sustainable development initiatives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the outcomes of Rio+20, is also covered in this section.

The following parts go through India's progress towards sustainable development, how the SDGs fit with the country's top development priorities, and the opportunities and problems it is currently facing. It highlights how linked the SDGs are and how multi-stakeholder collaborations are essential to achieving them. The part also emphasizes the significance of data gathering, monitoring, and assessment in determining India's progress toward the SDGs. The examination of the research on the SDGs in India follows. It describes the idea of SDGs analysis, which entails monitoring and evaluating progress, assessing gaps and problems, comprehending interlink ages and synergies, analyzing policy implications, and involving stakeholders. In order to support decision-making based on evidence and allocate resources, the analysis strives to provide insights into the state and performance of each goal currently being pursued.

The methodology of the systematic literature review (SLR) is the subject of the next section. The main procedures for carrying out an SLR on the SDGs are described, including defining research questions, creating a search strategy, choosing relevant papers, obtaining data, synthesizing findings, analysing results, and drawing policy implications. With regard to the SDGs in India, the SLR identifies knowledge gaps, strengths,

weaknesses, and topics for additional research. Finally, policy recommendations for achieving the SDGs in India are presented in the conclusion section. The SDGs are mainstreamed into national policies, data collection and monitoring, stakeholder engagement, financing and resource mobilization, capacity building and knowledge sharing, climate action and environmental conservation, social inclusion and equity, and policy coherence are all stressed as being essential components of an integrated approach.

Overall, the report gives a thorough summary of the SDG research that has been done in India and emphasizes the significance of developing and implementing evidence-based policies. It is a useful tool for academics, professionals, and decision-makers who want to comprehend India's progress toward the SDGs, its obstacles, and the consequences of policy. It is necessary to take a multi-sectorial strategy that incorporates the social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainable development in order to establish a comprehensive policy framework to address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India. Here are some crucial policy points to remember:

- The policy should employ an integrated strategy that acknowledges the SDGs' interconnection and encourages synergies amongst many sectors. It ought to promote cross-sectorial cooperation and coordination between government agencies, civil society groups, businesses, and other stakeholders.
- The mainstreaming of the SDGs into national development plans, policies, and strategies should be given top priority in the policy. It should make sure that the SDGs are included in sector-specific policies for things like eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, education, health, and renewable energy as well as sustainable agriculture and environmental preservation.
- The policy should place a strong emphasis on gathering, analysing, and monitoring pertinent data to assess progress toward the SDGs. In order to evaluate the success of policy initiatives and support evidence-based decision-making, it should establish effective monitoring and evaluation systems, including indicators and targets.
- All stakeholders, especially marginalized groups, local communities, and civil society organizations, should be actively encouraged to participate by the policy. To ensure inclusion, local ownership, and shared responsibility in achieving the SDGs, it should promote participatory processes, dialogues, and partnerships.
- The financial requirements for fulfilling the SDGs should be covered by the policy. To efficiently mobilize resources, it should investigate cutting-edge funding techniques, public-private partnerships, and international cooperation. It should also give urgently needed areas like poverty reduction, healthcare, education, and sustainable development first priority when allocating resources. The goal of the policy should be to increase the ability of communities, civil society organizations, and government agencies to implement and monitor the SDGs. To improve the execution of sustainable development efforts, it ought to encourage knowledge exchange, adoption of best practices, and technology transfer.
- The policy should include environmental protection and climate action as unifying elements. Prioritizing actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance renewable energy, strengthen resiliency to the effects of climate change, and protect natural resources are all important.
- The policy ought to place a high priority on social inclusion and address disparities in access to necessities including opportunities, resources, and services. In the quest for sustainable development, it ought to support gender equality, give voice to marginalized groups, and make sure that no one is left behind.
- The policy should ensure that local, state, federal, and international plans for sustainable development are coordinated. It should promote coherence between economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability to achieve balanced and equitable development. A framework for routine evaluation, observation, and modification of SDG implementation measures should be established by the policy. It should permit flexibility to modify policies in response to new difficulties, shifting objectives, and changing regional and global environments.

India can effectively address the Sustainable Development Goals, speed up development, and guarantee sustainable and inclusive development for its inhabitants by taking certain policy concerns into account.

## Recommendations

Several important findings can be derived from the literature assessment on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India.

**Challenges and Progress** The evaluation emphasizes India's progress towards reaching the SDGs as well as the obstacles that have been encountered. Although there have been substantial improvements in a few fields, including poverty alleviation and education, there are still big problems in others, including inequality, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and healthcare.

**Policy Perspective:** The literature emphasises the significance of governmental activities and policy changes in advancing the SDGs. In order to handle the complex character of the aims, it emphasises the necessity for efficient policy frameworks, focused interventions, and implementation methodologies.

**Education's Function:** The SDGs can only be achieved if education is prioritized as a key component. The literature emphasizes the importance of education in combating poverty, encouraging sustainable development, advancing gender equality, and improving health outcomes. It highlights the importance of skill development, inclusive educational policy, and high-quality education.

**Data and observation:** The assessment highlights the importance of effective processes for data collection, monitoring, and evaluation in order to monitor progress toward the SDGs. In order to effectively inform policy actions, it emphasizes the need for better data accessibility, data disaggregation, and evidence-based decision-making.

**Partnerships and Collaborations:** In order to achieve the SDGs, partnerships, and collaborations between the government, civil society organizations, businesses, and international organizations are stressed in the literature. To solve the complex issues related to sustainable development, it emphasizes the necessity for multi-stakeholder participation, knowledge sharing, and resource mobilization.

**Policy Implications:** The literature assessment sheds light on how the SDGs may affect Indian policy. It demands the allocation of resources in accordance with the SDGs, as well as targeted policy interventions, institutional improvement, and capacity building. It highlights the necessity for integrated and comprehensive methods that consider the interlinkages between various objectives and sectors.

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