

Millennium to Sustainable Development Goals: A Review of India's Progress and Challenges

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Abstract:

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established in the year 2000 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development. India, being a signatory to the MDGs, made significant progress towards achieving these goals. However, with the expiry of the MDGs in 2015, the world adopted a new agenda for sustainable development, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This paper provides a review of India's progress towards achieving the MDGs and the challenges it faces in the implementation of the SDGs.

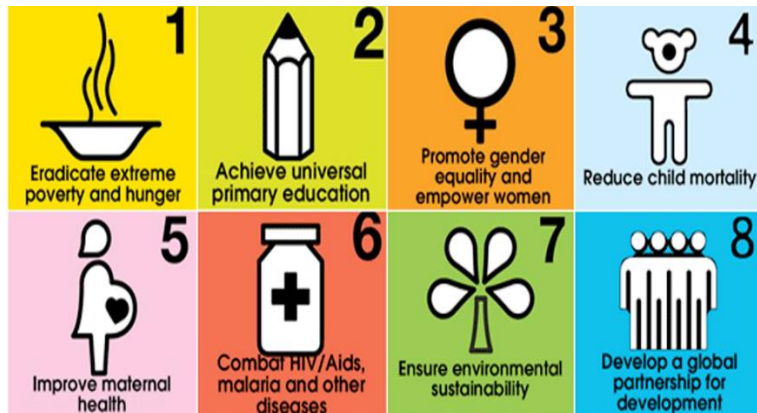
Keywords: Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Introduction:

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a set of eight global goals established in the year 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development. India, being a signatory to the MDGs, made significant progress towards achieving these goals. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a set of eight global development targets established by the United Nations in 2000, with a deadline for achieving them by 2015. The goals were designed to address some of the world's most pressing development challenges, including poverty, hunger, disease, gender inequality, and lack of access to education, clean water, and sanitation.

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The MDGs were adopted by 189 UN member countries and were widely regarded as a major step forward in global development cooperation. The goals were not legally binding, but rather a voluntary commitment by member countries to work towards achieving them. However, with the expiry of the MDGs in 2015, the world adopted a new agenda for sustainable development, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Objective of study:

The aim of this study is to examine India's progress under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by comparing and contrasting the two sets of goals.

Research Methodology:

To conduct this research, secondary data from various sources including government reports was used to evaluate India's progress in achieving the MDG targets. Additionally, the study explored the transition to SDGs, which have a more expansive scope that includes multiple aspects of sustainable development. The analysis focused on goal-specific targets and accomplishments under MDGs in India. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the inadequacy of MDGs and the requirement for SDGs to be more all-inclusive in addressing the needs of economies.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in India:

The MDGs comprised eight specific goals and 21 targets, with a deadline of 2015. India was committed to achieving these goals, and significant progress was made towards some of the targets.

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: India has reduced the percentage of people living below the poverty line from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 21.9% in 2011-12. However, this reduction is still inadequate, and around 270 million people still live below the poverty line. Moreover, India ranks 94th in the Global Hunger Index, indicating the need for further improvement in this area.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education: India has achieved a 96% gross enrolment ratio (GER) at the primary level, which indicates significant progress towards this goal. However, dropout rates and low learning outcomes continue to be a challenge, particularly in rural areas and for disadvantaged groups.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women: India has made considerable progress in reducing gender disparities in education, health, and employment. However, violence against women and girls remains a significant concern.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality: India has achieved a 42% reduction in under-five mortality rates from 1990 to 2015. However, neonatal mortality rates remain high, and progress in reducing infant and under-five mortality rates has been slower in some states.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health: India has made progress in reducing maternal mortality rates from 556 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 174 per 100,000 live births in 2015. However, this is still higher than the MDG target of 109 per 100,000 live births.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases: India has made significant progress in combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. However, the country still has a high burden of these diseases, and there is a need for further improvement in prevention and treatment.

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability: India has made progress in improving access to safe drinking water and sanitation. However, air pollution, deforestation, and unsustainable use of natural resources remain significant challenges.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development: India has been an active participant in the global partnership for development and has contributed to global efforts towards debt relief, trade liberalization, and access to essential medicines.

Overall, India has made significant progress towards achieving some of the MDG targets. However, progress has been limited by the deadline of 2015, and many challenges still persist.

India Progress towards the MDGs:

India has made significant progress towards achieving the MDGs. The country has successfully achieved the goal of reducing poverty and hunger, with the proportion of people living below the poverty line declining from 37.2% in 2004-05 to 21.9% in 2011-12. The country has also made significant progress towards achieving the goal of achieving universal primary education, with a net enrolment rate of 96.9% in primary education in 2012. India has also made progress towards achieving gender equality and empowering women, with the female-to-male ratio in primary education increasing from 0.86 in 2000 to 0.94 in 2012.

India has also made progress in reducing child mortality, with the under-five mortality rate declining from 69 per 1000 live births in 2000 to 50 per 1000 live births in 2012. The country has also made progress in improving maternal health, with the maternal mortality ratio declining from 437 per

100,000 live births in 1995 to 174 per 100,000 live births in 2015. India has also made progress in combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, with the prevalence of HIV declining from 0.38% in 2001 to 0.26% in 2015.

Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 as a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). SDGs aim to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all people by 2030. The SDGs cover a wide range of interconnected issues such as poverty, hunger, health, education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, life on land, peace, justice and strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals.

The SDGs are unique in that they integrate social, economic, and environmental aspects of development, recognizing that they are all interconnected and that progress in one area can positively or negatively impact progress in another. SDGs are also universal, meaning they apply to all countries regardless of their level of development. Each goal is accompanied by specific targets and indicators that are used to track progress towards achieving the goal. SDGs build on the lessons learned from the MDGs, which were focused on reducing poverty and improving health, education, and other social indicators. However, the MDGs were criticized for their narrow focus and limited scope. SDGs, on the other hand, aim to address the root causes of poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation, and to promote sustainable development in a holistic and integrated way.



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There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015, aimed at achieving a sustainable future for all. These goals are as follows:

1. No Poverty: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Good Health and Well-being: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Quality Education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Gender Equality: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Clean Water and Sanitation: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Affordable and Clean Energy: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
10. Reduced Inequalities: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12. Responsible Consumption and Production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Climate Action: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Life Below Water: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
15. Life on Land: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

17. Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Challenges in the implementation of the SDGs:

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) poses several challenges for governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders. Some of the key challenges are:

1. Limited resources: The SDGs require significant financial resources to be implemented effectively, but many developing countries struggle to secure the necessary funding. This limits their ability to invest in areas such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and poverty reduction.
2. Capacity building: The SDGs require a significant amount of capacity building in many countries, particularly in areas such as data collection and analysis, policy formulation and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. This requires significant investment in training and development, which may be challenging for some countries with limited resources.
3. Political will: The SDGs require strong political will and commitment from governments to implement policies and programs that are aligned with the SDGs. However, many governments may lack the political will to prioritize the SDGs, particularly if they conflict with other political or economic interests.
4. Limited institutional capacity: The implementation of the SDGs requires the coordination of multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector. However, many countries lack the institutional capacity to effectively coordinate and implement these initiatives.
5. Data gaps: The SDGs require accurate and timely data to track progress and identify areas that require intervention. However, many countries lack the necessary data infrastructure and may face challenges in collecting reliable and relevant data.
6. Inequality and exclusion: The SDGs aim to promote social and economic inclusion and reduce inequalities, but many countries face significant challenges in addressing these issues. This may be due to structural inequalities, discrimination, or marginalization of certain groups.
7. Environmental challenges: The SDGs require a significant focus on environmental sustainability, which may pose challenges for countries that are heavily reliant on natural resources or face environmental degradation.

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort from governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders. It will also require the mobilization of significant resources and the development of innovative solutions to address these complex and interconnected issues.

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Findings:

According to the study's results, India has successfully achieved some of the MDG targets, but the overall progress was insufficient by the deadline of 2015. The research concludes that the MDGs were primarily focused on human development and could be measured using universal standards. However, the SDGs are more inclusive and address a wider range of concerns such as poverty reduction, sustainability, economic growth, and job creation. The success of the SDGs will depend on a more open and accountable system for monitoring and evaluating progress, along with the efficient implementation of policies and programs at both national and sub-national levels.

The Millennium Development Goals vs the Sustainable Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are two frameworks that aim to promote sustainable development globally.

The MDGs were established by the United Nations in 2000 and consisted of eight goals to be achieved by 2015. The focus of the MDGs was largely on social development, including reducing poverty and hunger, improving health and education, promoting gender equality, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

The SDGs were established in 2015 and consist of 17 goals with 169 targets to be achieved by 2030. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs are more comprehensive and cover a wider range of issues, including economic growth, social development, and environmental protection. The SDGs aim to end poverty in all its forms, protect the planet, and promote peace and prosperity for all.

One of the main differences between the MDGs and the SDGs is their scope. While the MDGs focused primarily on social development, the SDGs take a more holistic approach, covering a range of economic, social, and environmental issues. The SDGs also emphasize the importance of partnerships and collaboration among governments, civil society, and the private sector. However, despite the wider scope and more comprehensive nature of the SDGs, there are still challenges in their implementation. One of the main challenges is the lack of adequate financial resources, particularly for developing countries. Another challenge is the lack of political will and commitment to achieving the SDGs, as well as limited capacity and infrastructure in many countries. In addition, the SDGs are complex and interconnected, which makes it difficult to track progress and measure success. To overcome these challenges, there is a need for increased investment in sustainable development, as well as stronger partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders.

Conclusion:

India's progress in achieving the MDG targets was similar to the global average in all targets except under-nutrition. It is expected that India's progress towards achieving the SDG targets will also be similar to the global average, except for the targets related to under-nutrition and non-communicable diseases. To reduce wasting, India needs to focus on early detection and effective management of wasting, which can also accelerate the reduction in stunting. Despite these challenges, India has taken

several initiatives to address these issues, such as launching programs like the National Action Plan on Climate Change, and Digital India, and promoting renewable energy. India's progress towards the MDGs provides a strong foundation for the country to build on as it works towards achieving the SDGs. To achieve the SDGs, India needs to continue to address these challenges and work towards sustainable development practices that will benefit its citizens and the global community.

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