SDG India Index

The **NITI Aayog** has released its **SDG India Index** which intends to provide a holistic view on the social, economic and environmental status of the country and its States.

Index

- **First** of its kind **'SDG India Index'** has been developed in collaboration with the **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Global Green Growth Institute, United Nations in India, and NITI Aayog.**
  - In September 2016, MoSPI developed a **National Indicator Framework (NIF)** which is a consolidated list of possible national indicators. It consists of **306 statistical indicators** to serve as a **backbone for monitoring of SDGs.**
- NITI Aayog has prepared the SDG India Index spanning across **13 out of 17 SDGs** (leaving out Goals 12, 13, 14 and 17).
- Being the **baseline report,** it does **not consider time series comparison** of data. As a result, the SDG India Index tells us where a State/UT currently stands on each of the indicators considered, and will present incremental change in subsequent versions.
- Classification Criteria based on SDG India Index Score is as follows: **Aspirant: 0-49; Performer: 50-64; Front Runner: 65-99; Achiever: 100.**

Key Findings

- **Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu** have emerged as the **front runners** in the race to achieve key sustainable development goals (SDGs) in a ranking of states released by NITI Aayog.
- **Kerala's** top rank is attributed to its superior performance in providing **good health, reducing hunger, achieving gender equality and providing quality education.**
- **Himachal Pradesh** ranks high on providing **clean water and sanitation, in reducing inequalities and preserving mountain ecosystem.**
- The toppers in **gender equality, Sikkim and Union territories Andaman and Nicobar islands and Chandigarh** have crossed the halfway mark in reaching the goals.
- **Jharkhand, Odisha and Nagaland** are among the states that have a lot more **ground to cover** in the overall rankings.

Limitations

- **Exclusion of goals:** SDG India Index does not currently cover Goals 12, 13 and 14 largely on account of **unavailability of comparable data** across States and UTs. Further, SDG 17 was left out as it focuses on **international partnerships.**
- **Indicators emerging from the State schemes not included:** The Indicators focus largely on data sources emerging from central official statistical systems and the respective Union Ministries/Departments.
- **Limitation of equal weightage:** Assigning equal weightage for all indicators across all Goals may lead to biased results. Additionally, some indicators may be **less relevant to some States.** For example, indicators like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) have less relevance in States like Punjab and Haryana because they have already been performing better on these targets. Thus, their progress on these schematic indicators will seem less in comparison to other States.

- **Missing data:** Data for a few States /UTs is **not available** for some indicators.

Background

- The Sustainable Development goals were adopted at the **UN Sustainable Development Summit in September, 2015.**
- They came into **force from January 1st, 2016** and have **2030 as deadline** for achieving the targets.
- The success of Agenda 2030 globally will depend, on the **progress India makes on the SDGs**. It is not just the size of India's population (about 17% of the world population) or the scale of its interventions that makes it so critical to the SDGs, but its unique convergence of extraordinary economic growth, commitment to sustainability, and social and technological innovations.
- India has also emerged as a **global leader on the international climate action agenda** and an enabler of **sustainable development for developing countries around the world.**
- This combined with some of the world's largest and most ambitious social programmes including **housing for all, energy for all, urbanization, health and nutrition, and digital and financial inclusion,** make it a leading force for the SDGs globally.
- This SDG India Index by NITI Aayog is an important first step in **enabling comprehensive tracking** of the country's progress, and in benchmarking SDGs for **both central and State governments** across the country serving its **twin mandate** to oversee the **implementation of SDGs** in the country, and also **promote Competitive and Cooperative Federalism** among States and UTs.
- The SDG India Index embodies the **five Ps** of the global SDG movement - **people, planet, prosperity, partnership and peace.**

Way Forward

- The SDG India Index will help every State and Union Territory identify their strengths and areas of opportunity, relative to their peers, and to identify the steps they can take towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- It is also important to note that this exercise has revealed that their **urgent need for the improvement of statistical systems** to **generate data** that helps in effective monitoring of SDGs at the national and State level on a real-time basis. The selection of indicators for present exercise was constrained by the availability of data. Improved data availability and quality in the future will make the index more robust.
- Going forward, the report should be used for **identifying priority areas** that require interventions and also to **strengthen capacities for monitoring SDGs.**