

PEOPLE'S SCORECARD ON SDGs (India)

People's scorecard (PSC) on SDGs was a unique idea conceived by Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD) and launched across the world in various countries through national platforms of CSOs/NGOs working together with A4SD on SDGs decade of action and accountability.

The scorecard is considered as an excellent tool to assess the progress and collect public voices towards the implementation and achievement of socioeconomic and political commitments. The scorecard gives detailed assessment & monitoring of progress of each of the 17 SDGs in turn through scores at the scale from -5 to +5 as explained below. The purpose of the peoples scorecard is to mobilize and engage with common masses and political leaders to sensitize them on SDGs and to remind them over their commitments on SDGs towards the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) held at UNHQ in July 2025. India was currently presenting its 3rd Voluntary National Review (VNR) report at HLPF 2025 and the A4SD secretariat decided to engage stakeholders and marginalized communities under the aegis of Wada Na Todo Abhiyan for the Peoples Scorecard initiative in India.

Ratings from CSO Networks and Organisations on the SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals	Progress in SDGs according to Civil Society in India (Scale of -5 to +5)
SDG 1 - No Poverty	-0.31
SDG 2 - Zero Hunger	0.73
SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being	1.17
SDG 4 - Quality Education	0.78
SDG 5 - Gender Equality	0.33
SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation	1.7
SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy	1
SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth	0.5
SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	0.25
SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities	-1.22
SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities	0.64
SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production	1
SDG 13 - Climate Action	1.27
SDG 14 - Life Below Water	3
SDG 15 - Life on Land	2

SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	0.64
SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals	0.3

Progress on SDGs in India

As can be seen below in the SDG People's Scorecard, on an average there has been limited progress on the ground when it comes to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Progress on SDG 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty for all by 2030) and SDG 10 (Reduce inequality and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for all) has deteriorated, as noted by civil society organisations. This regression is particularly concerning in light of India's declining position in global economic indicators—its per capita GDP has fallen to 143 out of 181 countries, raising critical questions about the quality, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the country's economic growth. While India has made notable strides in lifting millions out of poverty since the adoption of the SDGs, it continues to have 234 million people living below the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index threshold, underscoring the persistence of deep structural inequalities.

SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) have witnessed limited but notable progress. In the past two years, India has recorded some of its highest allocations under the gender-responsive budgeting framework, alongside a visible increase in women's participation in local governance structures such as Panchayati Raj Institutions. However, significant challenges remain. The lack of adequate female personnel in police stations, the growing burden of unpaid caregiving, and persistent gender disparities in domestic responsibilities continue to limit women's participation in the formal workforce. Additionally, progress on SDG 17 is hindered by increasing restrictions on civil society organisations and NGOs. These include complex regulatory requirements, constraints on sub-granting and administrative expenditure, even as the government seeks their partnership in conducting studies on marginalised communities.

According to the scorecard, SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) have shown a moderate degree of progress. Under SDG 2, the continued provision of free rations to over 80 crore citizens under the National Food Security Act has played a crucial role in alleviating hunger. However, the beneficiary lists have not been updated since 2013, leaving millions potentially excluded. For SDG 4, while India's flagship health insurance scheme has expanded coverage significantly and offers protection against medical emergencies, the disparity in healthcare access between rural populations and affluent urban areas remains stark.

SDG 8 has seen growth in women-led MSMEs and expanded access to credit through initiatives such as PM SVANidhi, Mudra Yojana, and DAY-NULM. However, job quality remains a major concern. Two-fifths of regular male workers and one-third of regular female

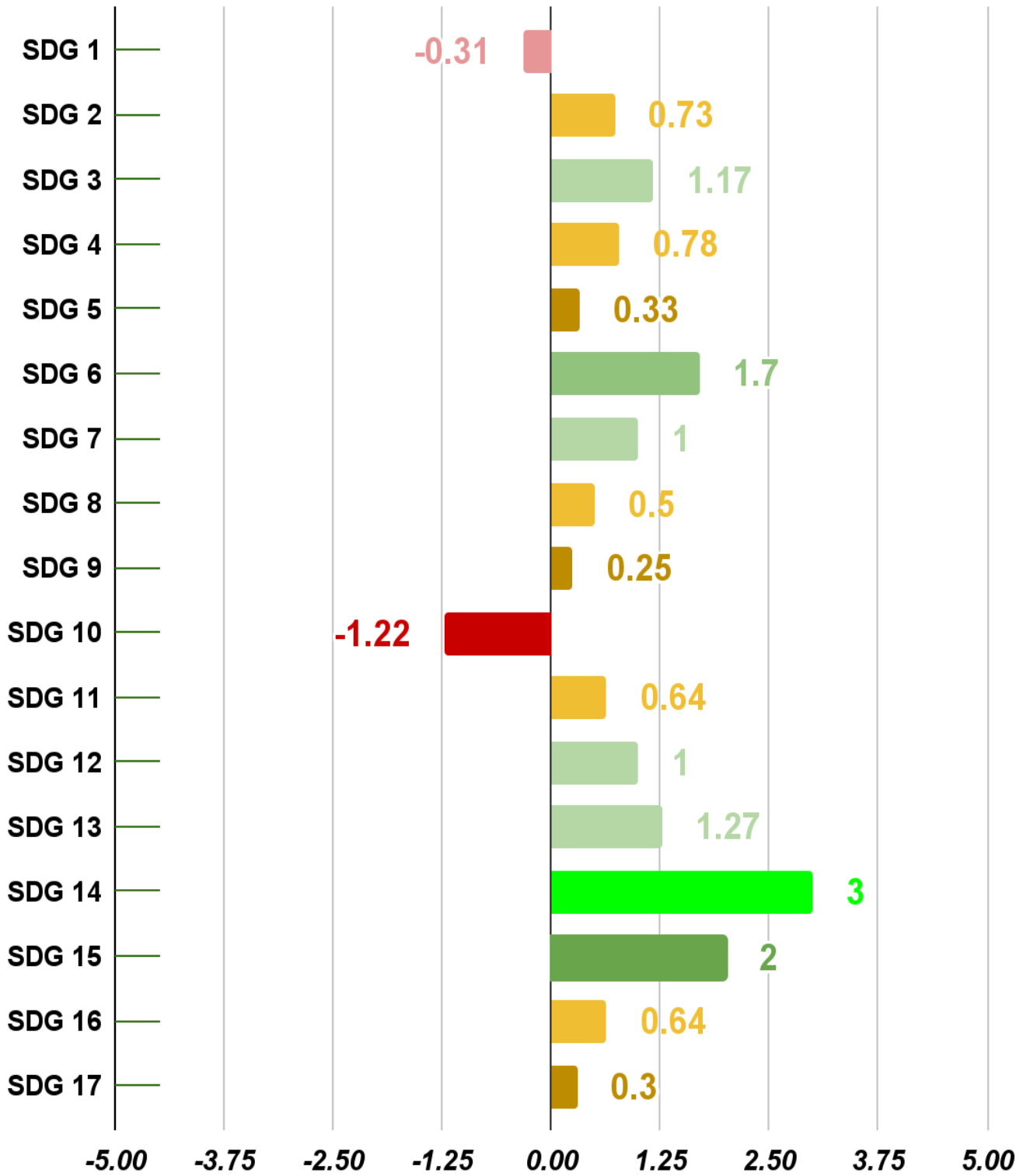
workers still lack access to basic social protections like provident fund coverage, health insurance, and written employment contracts. Under SDG 11, there has been a visible rise in budgetary allocations for slum upgradation and affordable housing through schemes like PMAY and AMRUT. Access to public transport has improved significantly. However, the pace of implementation of urban policies remains slow. Forced evictions without rehabilitation, exclusion of slum dwellers from planning processes, poor service delivery, and a skewed focus on infrastructure over urban poverty reduction continue to hinder inclusive urban development.

Progress on SDG 16 remains limited. The functioning of the judiciary, police, and prison systems is severely affected by chronic understaffing—33% judicial vacancies in High Courts, 21% in district courts, 28% vacancies in police officer posts, and significant shortages across correctional and forensic institutions. Despite these challenges, the judiciary has delivered several critical judgments, including on interfaith marriages, LGBTQ rights, and unlawful demolitions, thereby reinforcing constitutional protections amidst systemic limitations.

SDGs 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, and 15 have demonstrated medium to significant levels of progress, based on inputs received through the scorecard. For SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), while government data reflects high enrolment figures in schools, independent assessments such as the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) continue to highlight serious learning deficits and underachievement among students, pointing to the need for systemic improvements in educational quality. Under SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), access to water in rural areas has improved substantially, with nearly 80 percent coverage achieved through piped water supply under the Har Ghar Jal initiative. Additionally, the rejuvenation of water bodies has been identified as a priority in the NITI Aayog's Aspirational Blocks Programme.

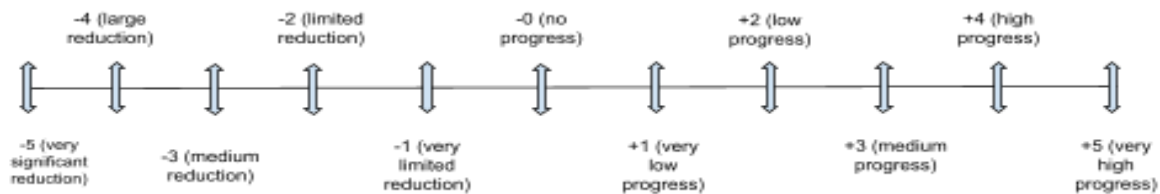
Progress under SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) is evident with the addition of 29 GW to India's renewable energy portfolio, primarily driven by solar photovoltaic (PV) expansion. However, despite reaching a cumulative total of 220 GW, India is unlikely to meet its 2030 target of 500 GW. Air pollution remains a critical concern, with over 96 percent of cities under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) exceeding PM10 levels set by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards over the past two years. SDGs 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land) have seen moderate progress, according to civil society inputs. However, there are serious concerns regarding recent regulatory rollbacks—specifically the dilution of key environmental legislations such as the Forest Rights Act and the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification. The elimination of requirements for local community consent in large-scale projects and the reduction of coastal buffer zones pose significant threats to environmental protection and the rights of forest-dependent and coastal communities.

People's Scorecard on SDG Progress in India 2025



Methodology:

The Wada Na Todo Abhiyan Secretariat in India followed the guidelines shared by Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD) regarding the people's scorecard to measure progress against each goal at the scale with 11 rating points, ranging from -5 which corresponds to very significant reduction to +5 which signifies very high progress.



The Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA) Secretariat developed and administered an online survey using Google Forms to assess the implementation status of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India. The survey remained open for a period exceeding one month and was disseminated through digital platforms across WNTA's expansive network of civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and collaborative civil society coalitions. Given the complexity of the SDG framework, which includes multiple sub-targets under each goal, the survey was structured into 17 direct questions—each corresponding to one specific SDG. To ensure clarity and enable informed responses, the relevant sub-goals as outlined in the SDG Index were embedded within each respective question. This approach allowed respondents to assess both the overarching goal and its associated sub-targets in an integrated manner.

Due to the limited timeframe available for outreach and follow-up, WNTA adopted a strategic dissemination approach. The survey was shared with a select group of CSOs that serve as conveners or key coordinators of extensive networks engaged in the implementation and monitoring of various SDGs. In parallel, outreach was conducted to individual sector experts—researchers, practitioners, and policy analysts—who have been actively tracking SDG implementation at the national level. This dual-pronged methodology ensured a robust and representative dataset, combining insights from organisations deeply embedded in community-level work with the analytical perspectives of domain specialists.

Together, the inputs from large-scale civil society networks and subject-matter experts present a credible, evidence-based snapshot of India's SDG progress, drawing upon grassroots realities from across multiple states. Moreover, the insights reflect an informed appraisal of governmental policy initiatives and execution mechanisms in the five years since India's last Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2020. In total, the survey received 20 detailed responses from key CSO networks and sector experts, forming the basis for this People's Scorecard assessment.