

Sustainable Development in India

College assignment | Original draft

PRACTICE ORDER · NO PAYMENT

This deliberately imperfect draft was written for a proofreading practice order. It contains realistic language errors, uneven formatting and incomplete or inaccurate references. It is not a reliable submission copy. Its argument and historical figures are retained in the edited version.

Student: [Sample student] Course: [Sample course]

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What this sample contains

This assignment looks at sustainable development in India and why growth, environment and peoples needs must be considered together. The following pages discuss economy, energy, farming, cities and the role of education. I also look at progress using the SDG India Index, with some limits of the numbers that are reported.

Draft outline

Introduction; economic growth; energy; agriculture and water; cities and waste; education and health; measuring progress; priorities and conclusion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is asking about progress for present lives, and future generations choices should not be made less by it. People link this idea with trees and renewable energy mostly, employment health education and public service quality is also inside this idea. A country cannot be described as developing sustainably if some people benefit from growth while others face unsafe water, insecure work or damaged surroundings. In India, the question is therefore about both the direction of growth and the way its benefits and costs are shared.

The Brundtland report (1988) connects development with meeting present needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs. By this definition it is not said that countries must stop the improvement of living standard. Instead, it asks them to consider the longer-term effects of their decisions. A road, factory or housing project may bring important benefits, but it can also use land, water and energy in ways that affect nearby communities. The relevant question is how to meet real needs while reducing avoidable harm.

The UN (2016) places economic, social and environmental goals within one framework. Its 2030 Agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals, covering issues such as poverty, education, gender equality, water, energy and responsible consumption. These goals should not be treated as separate boxes. Better sanitation can support health; reliable transport can improve access to jobs; and efficient energy use can reduce household costs. The connection between goals is especially useful when public resources are limited and one well-designed intervention can solve more than one problem.

This assignment argues that sustainable development in India depends on connecting environmental protection with basic services and fair opportunities. It uses the SDG India Index 2023-24 as a historical benchmark, not as a description of conditions in 2026. The discussion is based on secondary sources and does not claim to measure the effects of individual programmes. It considers progress, limitations and practical

priorities, while recognising that national averages cannot describe every state, district or household.

2 - Economic growth and social inclusion

Economic growth is important because it can create jobs, expand public revenue and support better infrastructure. However, the amount of output produced does not tell us whether work is secure, whether wages meet household needs or whether gains reach groups with fewer opportunities. Sustainable development needs attention to the quality and distribution of growth. A project that increases production but leaves workers exposed to unsafe conditions is not an adequate answer to the development problem. Its economic benefit has to be considered alongside its social cost.

The 2030 Agenda links poverty reduction with decent work, social protection and access to essential services (UN, 2016). These links matter when a family faces several disadvantages at once. A household may need schooling, affordable care and stable earnings rather than a single isolated benefit. If one member becomes ill, the expense and lost working time may weaken progress made elsewhere. The purpose of inclusion is development being more secure rather than only writing on paper that service is there.

India's federal structure makes the role of states and local bodies important. National policies may set broad priorities, but daily access to services depends on implementation in particular places. The SDG India Index supports comparison across states and union territories, which can make uneven progress easier to notice (Niti Ayog, 2024). Comparison can be useful where learning and support is coming from the comparison. It becomes less useful if rankings replace a discussion of why some places struggle or what resources they need to improve.

In my view, inclusion should be assessed through questions that people can recognise in everyday life. Can a child attend school regularly? Can a worker reach employment safely? Can a household receive treatment without abandoning other basic needs? These questions do not replace official indicators, but they help explain why indicators

matter. Sustainable development should connect a national ambition with the practical conditions that allow people to benefit from it. Growth is needed still, but when these conditions are missing it is not enough by growth only.

3. Energy and environmental responsibility

Energy supports transport, production, communication and household life. Sustainable development cannot simply mean using less energy regardless of need, because unreliable supply can limit education and employment. Meeting essential needs with waste being less and environmental burden being lower is a better aim to be having. This includes efficiency as well as changes in the sources of supply. The 2030 Agenda connects access to affordable and reliable energy with sustainability, rather than treating access and environmental protection as competing aims (UN, 2016).

A shift towards cleaner energy needs to be considered across the whole system. Producing equipment, using land, connecting supply and maintaining infrastructure all have consequences. A project may lower emissions while creating local questions about land access or livelihoods. Those questions do not make the project useless, but they need a fair process rather than being dismissed as obstacles. Public consultation and clear information can help people to judge proposal, and conditions affecting community by it can be explained also.

Efficiency is another practical part of the energy discussion. Institutions can reduce waste by maintaining equipment, improving building design and checking unnecessary consumption. Households need affordable choices, not only advice to buy expensive products. A college, for example, could first examine lights and devices left on in empty rooms before buying new equipment. This is an illustrative suggestion, not a finding from a survey. Its value lies in connecting environmental responsibility with habits and maintenance that people can actually control.

The benefits and costs of an energy transition should also be shared fairly. Workers and communities linked to older industries may need training and support when activity changes. Consumers need reliable services during the transition. I would judge

success through both environmental improvements and the ability of people to adapt without losing basic security. If installed infrastructure is the narrow focus being kept, these concerns could be missed from this focus. Sustainable development is stronger when technological change is supported by public services and a clear understanding of local needs.

4. AGRICULTURE, WATER AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

Agriculture shows how economic and environmental decisions are connected. Farmers need income and dependable production, while soil and water must remain usable over time. A short-term increase in output is less valuable if it depends on practices that damage the resources needed for future harvests. The 2030 Agenda includes sustainable agriculture, food security and water management within its wider goals (UN, 2016). The point is to connect productivity with resilience rather than assuming that every increase in production is automatically sustainable.

Water planning should consider both supply and demand. Building storage or improving access can help, but the way water is used matters as well. Decisions about crops, irrigation and maintenance should reflect local conditions. The recommendation that is suitable in one area may not suit in the other area where it is different. Farmers also need reliable advice and the ability to manage risk. Telling them to adopt a new practice without considering its cost or the consequences of failure is unlikely to produce lasting change.

Rural development is wider than farm production. Roads, schools, healthcare, storage and access to markets can affect whether a household earns enough and whether younger members have choices. The links across SDGs help explain why a rural programme should not be judged by one output alone. For example, constructing an asset is different from keeping it usable. Maintenance and access may decide the benefit continuing after the project at first is counted to be complete. This is a planning argument rather than a claim about a particular scheme.

Community participation is important because local users can explain needs that a standard plan may overlook. Farmers, women, tenants and other groups may experience water or land decisions differently. Participation should be more than people getting invited in a meeting, with main choices already settled before them. It should allow information to change the plan. My argument is that environmental protection becomes more practical when people who depend on the resource can influence how it is managed. Their involvement also helps make responsibilities clearer.

5 - Cities, waste and public services

Sustainable cities need housing, safe mobility, sanitation and access to public space. New buildings or commercial areas looking attractive should not be the only judging of a city. People also need to travel to work, manage household waste and live without repeated exposure to unsafe surroundings. Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda addresses sustainable cities and communities, while other goals cover water, health and responsible consumption (UN, 2016). Urban planning therefore requires cooperation between services that are sometimes treated as separate departments.

Waste management begins before rubbish reaches a collection vehicle. Products, packaging and purchasing habits influence how much waste is created. Sorting at source can help later handling, but it needs clear instructions and a dependable collection system. If separated material is mixed again, residents may lose confidence in the process. I think responsibility should be shared between households, producers and local authorities. Asking citizens only for changing habits ignores product design role and the system collecting and processing waste through it.

The SDG India Index release describes improvement in selected urban indicators, including waste processing and sewage treatment capacity (PIB). These are useful signs of progress, but they need careful interpretation. Capacity is not always effective use same, and differences between neighbourhoods may be covered by national indicator. It is therefore sensible to ask whether infrastructure works

reliably and who remains outside the service. An output count becomes more meaningful when it is connected with an outcome people experience.

Transport offers another example of the connection between fairness and environmental responsibility. Better public transport and safer walking routes can give people more choice while reducing dependence on individual vehicles. The exact solution depends on local travel patterns and available funds. A plan should consider the needs of people who cannot drive or afford a vehicle, rather than treating private transport as the normal option for everyone. Accessibility and safety belong in the environmental discussion because they affect whether a less resource-intensive option is usable.

6. Education, health and participation

Education helps people understand choices about work, resources and public life. Its contribution to sustainability is not limited to teaching environmental definitions. Students also need to assess information, discuss competing needs and recognise the consequences of everyday decisions. A school or college can make these ideas practical through projects on water use, waste or local services. Such activities should be designed as learning exercises, with clear limits on what a small student project can prove.

Health is equally important. A development plan is incomplete if people face preventable harm or cannot access essential care. The 2030 Agenda links health with wider social and environmental conditions (UN, 2016). Safe water, sanitation and a dependable living environment support well-being alongside healthcare facilities. This connection suggests that public agencies should work together rather than treating illness only as a problem for hospitals. The argument is about coordination, not a claim that one programme can remove every source of poor health.

Participation gives people a way to explain how services affect them. Women, persons with disabilities, informal workers and other groups should not be represented only through an average statistic. Their experience may reveal barriers that a general plan

does not show. The UN (2016) commitment to leaving no one behind provides a reason to look for those barriers. Listening should be followed by an account of what was changed or why a proposed change could not be made.

Students also have a role, although it should be realistic. They can reduce waste, use resources carefully and discuss public issues with evidence rather than slogans. A college can support this through accessible facilities and consistent rules. It would be unfair to ask students to use a particular system if the institution does not provide it. Individual responsibility is useful if institutions make the choices of responsibility possible for individuals. Otherwise, a message about sustainability can become advice that people cannot follow in practice.

7. MEASURING PROGRESS AND UNDERSTANDING LIMITS

The SDG India Index provides one way to organise evidence about progress. The PIB reports India's overall score as 71 for 2023-24, compared with 66 for 2020-21 and 57 in the 2018 baseline edition. These are index scores, not percentages of the SDGs completed. They indicate improvement within the reporting framework, but they should not be interpreted as proof that every household experienced the same improvement. The period of the evidence must remain visible when the figures are discussed.

The same release explains that the index uses selected indicators and that its methodology has been updated as data availability changes (PIB). This limits a simple reading of the trend. Differences between editions can reflect both changes in conditions and changes in measurement. The index is still useful, but a careful assignment should state this qualification instead of treating the figures as an exact measure of all sustainable development. Summary score can guide the attention but underlying indicators investigating cannot be replaced by it.

Unequal access is also something that can be hidden under national average. A service may improve overall while some districts or social groups continue to face barriers. For this reason, measurement should combine aggregate evidence with

more detailed information where it is available. Data should have a clear date, source and definition. If a reliable number is unavailable, it is better to state the limitation than to fill the gap with an attractive estimate. Public trust depends partly on making evidence easy to check.

I think the purpose of measurement should be improvement rather than ranking alone. Indicators can help governments identify a problem, decide where support is needed and review whether action made a difference. They can also help citizens ask specific questions. However, the process should avoid rewarding only what is easy to count. Maintenance, quality and access may be less visible than new infrastructure, but they affect whether development lasts. A useful score should lead back to these practical questions.

Year	India score
2018	57
2020-21	66
2023-24	71

Source: PIB, SDG report. The score is not percent completed.

8 - Priorities and conclusion

The first priority should be to connect basic services with environmental goals. Water, sanitation, transport, energy and healthcare are related in everyday life, even when they are managed through different departments. Planning across these services can reduce duplication and help identify gaps. This does not mean that every programme needs the same design. It means that decisions should consider their effects beyond one departmental target. The SDG framework provides a useful language for that discussion (UN, 2016).

A second priority is to support local implementation and maintenance. A national commitment becomes meaningful only when the service works where people need it. Staff and resources are needed by local bodies with understanding of responsibilities which is clear for them. Public reporting should make it possible to see whether a

project remains usable, not just whether it was completed. These are recommendations from the discussion, not findings from independent fieldwork. Their purpose is to keep attention on the conditions that sustain benefits over time.

A third priority is to keep fairness visible when environmental policies change. People with fewer resources may need support to adopt new practices or manage the effects of a transition. Consultation should include the groups most affected, and decisions should explain how their concerns were considered. Businesses, institutions and citizens all have responsibilities, but those responsibilities are not identical. A household cannot solve a service failure alone, and an institution should not shift all the burden of change onto individuals.

In conclusion, sustainable development in India is a question about the quality, durability and fairness of progress. The SDG India Index 2023-24 records improvement in its overall historical score, while the wider discussion shows why that score must be read alongside detailed evidence and measurement limits. Environmental protection, social inclusion and economic opportunity need to be considered together. Strongest approach improves daily life now with resources and public systems protected, future choices depends on these things.

References / websites

Brundtland. 1988. Sustainable development report.

UN 2016, sustainable goals, United Nations website.

Niti Ayog. SDG report 2024.

PIB - India progress report, website.