Decent Work Promotion in India

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Definition of Goal 8: Decent Work

Decent work involves providing opportunities for everyone to get productive work with fair incomes, security in the workplace, better prospects for personal development, social protection for families, and social integration (The SDG Report 2018). SDG No. 8 aims to foster a type of economic growth that is environmentally sustainable, and economically inclusive, by providing full and productive employment and decent work for workers around the world.

In this article a short overview of the 8th SDG is given in Part I. The SDG 8 Indicators and Targets, the importance of Decent Work and why it matters, and SDG 8 Global achievements have also been discussed here. Part II examines Goal 8 in India, particularly indicator 8.5. Next, Decent work in India, various Central Government measures, policies and programs to achieve it are examined, and the SDG India Index and progress made so far at the National and State levels in achieving Goal 8 are analyzed. This is followed

by Conclusions drawn from this article, and a set of References.

Part I. Introduction: The need for Goal 8

Even though worldwide there is rising employment and standard of living, these are highly skewed with large sections of society being left out of the improvements. This is particularly true of rising unemployment among youth, women, and disabled persons, between urban and rural workers, between formal and informal sectors, literate and illiterate workers, and primary vs. secondary and tertiary sectors. It is thus necessary to promote safe and secure working environments, and improve access to financial services to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth. Economic development thus should encompass all sections of an economy, and the fruits of development have to be enjoyed by all, without affecting the natural environment (SDG Report 2018).

Gender equality with equal opportunities in the workplace is also important. Without decent work and sufficient investment opportunities, labor is either unemployed, or forced into jobs that provide only low incomes. Therefore, poverty persists in a large section of population in every country, defeating the motto of democratic societies: that all must share in economic progress. It is not enough to ensure merely growth of

employment, there should also be decent working conditions for labor and fulfilling jobs, without harming the environment. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/>

The benefits of Economic development should be shared by all. However, due to unavailability of decent work, lack of finance for investment, lack of training and literacy, lack of opportunities, etc., a large percentage of the population is caught in continuous and self-perpetuating vicious circles of poverty, with inhumane conditions of work and all its associated troubles. Hence it is important to remove or reduce the disparities in working and living conditions between various sectors of an economy, by fostering the growth of “decent working” conditions for the labor force. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/>

The 8th Sustainable Development Global Goal of the 2030 Agenda aims to achieve full and productive employment, and decent work for all by 2030.

The term *Decent work* covers the following features:

1. Everyone can freely choose a safe, fairly paid, secure, and fulfilling job with equal pay for work of equal value.
2. No one is excluded from work opportunities, i.e., men, women, people with disabilities, young people, and migrant workers.
3. It is necessary to reduce unemployment by providing training and finance for investment.
4. Child labor to be prevented and eradicated by 2025, along with forced labor, modern slavery, and human trafficking.
5. Labor rights have to be protected and safe and secure working environments for all workers should be provided to all workers, including migrant workers particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment (de Heer, Margreet 2020).

SDG 8 Indicators and Targets

SDG 8 comprises of some 11 targets such as sustained economic growth, diversification, technical training, etc. (sdg-tracker.org/economic-growth/). These are given in Table 1.

Although all these targets are interrelated, in this article the focus will be on target 8.5 decent work, i.e., full employment and decent work with equal pay, to achieve full and productive employment, and decent work for all women and men, young people, disabled persons, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Decent Work and Economic Growth: Why It Matters

Although global unemployment rate was 5.6% in 2017, down from 6.4% in 2000, the problems of distribution, as well as the conditions, opportunities, and biases in employment situations are yet to be resolved. For instance, 61% of all global workers were in informal employment in 2016, and if agricultural sector is excluded, then 51% of all workers were in this category (SDG Report 2018).

Gender differences were also significant, for instance in 40/45 countries with data, men earned 12.5% more than women. At present the global gender pay gap is 23%, and it may take another 68 years for men and women to achieve equal pay. Women's labor force participation rate is 63%, while that of men is 94% globally. However, women still continue to do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work than men. Further, as the global labor market grows, between 2016 and 2030, 470 million jobs have to be generated for new entrants (SDG Report 2018).

Unemployment

According to A.C. Pigou (1933), “Unemployment means all those people in an economy who are willing to work, but are not able to find a job.” Unemployment rate is usually measured in terms of the percentage of labor force within a country that is without work. Unemployment rates for 191 countries for the year 2019 is available from World Bank website (data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS) see Fig. 1.

The data shows that the average global unemployed labor was 5% in 2019. But large disparities in unemployment rates exist across the world, ranging from nearly 30% in the case of the West Bank and Gaza countries to 0.14% in Qatar. About 106 countries lie above the world average

Decent Work Promotion in India, Table 1 SGD 8 – Indicators and Targets

Target No.	Indicator	Target
8.1	Sustainable Economic growth	For all countries, and for less developed countries at least growth of 7% pa
8.2	Improve economic productivity,	Diversity, innovate, upgrade technology. Focus on high value added and labor-intensive sectors
8.3	Policies to support job creation and growing enterprises.	Support productive activities by 2030, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, etc. in micro, small, and medium enterprises, with access to financial services.
8.4	Improve resource efficiency in consumption and production.	By 2030 improve global resource efficiency in consumption and production, and delink economic growth from environmental degradation. To be led by developed countries.
8.5	Full employment and decent work with equal pay.	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, young people, disabled persons, and equal pay for work of equal value.
8.6	Promote youth employment, education and training	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training.
8.7	End modern slavery, trafficking, and child labor	Immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery, human trafficking, child labor, child soldiers. By 2025 end all forms of child labor.
8.8	Protect labor rights and promote safe working environments	Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
8.9	Promote beneficial and sustainable tourism	By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.
8.10	Universal access to banking, insurance and financial services	Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance, and financial services for all by 2030
8 A	Increase aid for trade support	Increase Aid for Trade support for developing and least developed countries, through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance.

Source: <https://sdg-tracker.org/economic-growth>. Data and charts available under relevant headings in <https://ourworldindata.org>

rate of 5%. Of these, while nearly 30% were African, another 26% were European countries. Top European countries unemployment rates were: Greece (18%), Spain (14.7), Italy (9.2), and France (9.1). Australia and Canada also had unemployment rates greater than the world average (data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL).

However, although some less developed countries had unemployment levels lower than some high-income ones, the quality of work involved is not comparable between them. Thus, the type and not merely the level of employment is important. For instance, from the World Bank data (data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL)

Afghanistan 1.72%, Rwanda 0.99%, Niger 0.26%

had very low unemployment rates compared to many developed countries. Cameroon (3.34%) or Guinea (3.57%) had unemployment rates only slightly lower than USA (3.87%) or UK (3.81%). But the type and conditions of work in the former two countries are not equivalent to that of the latter. For, the quality of employment is as important as the quantity. In many low-income countries with low unemployment rates, the conditions and type of work, availability of tools, training, and techniques, availability of investible funds, wage rates, hours of work, and risk factors are not comparable with those of the high-income countries. Under-employment and disguised unemployment may also be quite rampant in many countries, as well as child labor, bonded

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SU.UEM.TOTL>.

Decent Work Promotion in India, Fig. 1 Global unemployment – 2019 (% of country wise labour force)

labor, and slavery. Such workers, especially women, children, youth, and migrant workers though employed, do not have formal work arrangements, decent working conditions, adequate social security such as pensions, maternal benefits, health and life insurance, or trade union membership, they are inadequately paid, their earnings are low and highly volatile, with often risky, difficult, and dangerous conditions of work (Qatar football World Cup 2022).

For instance, in many countries, municipal workers, miners, etc. often working in inhuman conditions without gloves, masks, or other protective gear (www.mmpindia.in).

It has also been estimated that around 1.5 billion people globally were engaged in what is called as “vulnerable employment” (<https://www.ilo.org/africa/media-centre>). The share of “vulnerable employment” is calculated as the sum of contributing family workers and own-account workers as a percentage of total employment. Especially in Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, over 70% of the workers are in vulnerable employment. This is a little less than double of the global average of 46.3%. Hence there is an urgent

need to ensure that the work force not only gets employment, but is engaged in “decent” work to fulfil the conditions of sustainable development (Table 2).

The above table shows that there has been some progress in the various indicators of development, both globally and in less developed countries. However, a lot has to be done as the achievements are still short of the targets envisioned by the SDG goals.

SDG 8 Global Achievements

The International Labour Organization (ILO) released a report, highlighting the fact that the achievements of SDG 8 have been slower than the target. At the current rate of progress, the report concludes that SDG 8 is unlikely to be achieved by 2030 (World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO)-Trends 2019).

1. *Unemployment:* Though unemployment rates were reduced around the world, they were not matched by improvements in the quality of work. This situation makes SDG achievement

Decent Work Promotion in India, Table 2 Some indicators of global development and employment

	Indicator	Rates	Year	Remarks
1.	Global growth rate of real GDP per capita	1.9–2%	2017–2020	Less than SDG expected goal of 3%
2.	World's labor productivity (GDP/employed person)	2.1%	2018	Highest since 2010
3.	Informal employment in non-agricultural sectors in $\frac{3}{4}$ of world economies	$\geq 50\%$	2018	Inadequate earnings, poor occupational safety, health and working conditions,
4.	In 62 countries, median hourly gender pay gap	12%	2017–18	Gender bias in earnings
	In managerial, professional, and informal sectors -	$\geq 20\%$	"	
5.	Global unemployment	5%	2018	Recovered from global crisis
	But, unemployment amongst youth	3 time more		
6.	World's youth not in education, employment or training, not in any educational or vocational programs in their prime years	20%	2018	Not getting professional experience, acquiring developing skills
	Young women unemployed or outside the labor force and not in education or training	2 times more		
7.	Workplace risks (Median deaths) in 55 countries 100,000 employees	3	2018	
	Median nonfatal injuries per 100,000 employees	889		
8.	Global growth of ATMs per 100,000 adults	66%	2010 to 2017	Access to finance and
	In less developed countries, ATMs / 100,000 adults grew from	3–5.8	"	automation

Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>

“unrealistic for many countries,” with major gaps within and across countries.

2. *Growth*: The report found that the least developed countries had recorded an annual PC GDP growth rate of $<5\%$ over the past five years, which is less than the SDG 8.1 target of at least 7% growth for less developed countries.
3. *Productivity*: Neither was there much improvement in labor productivity, which was below the SDG 8.2 target on economic productivity. The key obstacles to raise productivity levels include environmental vulnerability and limited economic diversification.
4. *Formalizing the economy*: The report found a “staggering 2 billion workers,” or 61% of the world's workforce categorized as informal, indicating their high vulnerability.
5. *Resource efficiency and sustainable consumption*: As per SDG 8.4 target, it is necessary to improve global resource efficiency and

progress on sustainable consumption and production. Further, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions continue to rise in most countries, showing that there has not been much progress in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation,

6. *Decent work*: SDG 8.5 target still remains elusive, as there are still over 170 million people who are unemployed; and there are lower chances for women, youth, and persons with disabilities to be employed. And gender pay gaps still persist.
7. *Youth*: SDG 8.6 target aims to substantially reduce the proportion of youth “not in employment, education or training” (NEET) by 2020. However, the report finds that one in five young people falls under NEET, thus reducing their chances of further employment and making it more difficult for the economy to grow over the long term.

8. *Reducing child labor*: It is too slow to meet SDG target 8.6 on reducing child labor by 2025. In 2016, 114 million children aged 5–15 years old continued to be employed across the world.
9. *Inclusive development*: On SDG target 8.10 on inclusive development and access to banking, insurance, and financial services, the report finds an overall pattern of “extreme disparities in access to financial services.”

The Report further finds that the lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income countries show greater promise to meet SDG 8 targets on growth and productivity. Global Inequality is the main obstacle in achieving SDG 8, i.e., to achieving decent work and sustainable growth. Further, mere employment does not always guarantee a decent living, for more than 700 million globally employed people are living in extreme or moderate poverty.

The gender gap in labor force participation still persists, with only 48% of women engaged in the labor force compared to 75% of men, decent work shortfalls continues with global unemployment of over 170 million people.

The Report suggests that to achieve equity it is necessary to ensure shared growth and decent work between and within regions, expand indicators of labor market performance, particularly on informality, in-work poverty, and underemployment. The report calls for an expanded “SDG 8+ framework” to include indicators from SDG 5 and SDG 10 as well (World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019).

Part II. Goal no.8 Implementation in India

India was one of the early signatories of the 2015 SDG declaration and has set up various targets for implementation of these goals. The NITI Aayog (former Planning Commission) formulates the SDG policies and programs in India, and coordinates and interacts with Central ministries, States/ Union Territories (UTs), NGOs, academic and businesses, for their implementation. SDG targets

with schemes and programs have been developed to achieve sustainable development, by linking economic, social, and environmental sectors of the country (India and Sustainable Development goals: the way forward, 2016). The NITI Aayog is supported by the UN Country Team in India. It also tries to advocate for adequate financing to achieve the SDGs.

India faces 4 main issues in the implementation of SDGs (David 2018):

1. *Defining proper indicators* to monitor the progress of SDG implementation to get a correct indication of the achievements. Each of the 17 goals have a number of indicators within them, and it would be impossible to achieve them all within the given time frame. Therefore, suitable choices have to be made on which of these can be undertaken, how representative they are, how to achieve them, and if required data is available to measure progress.
2. *Financing SDGs*: According to a report of the Standard Chartered SDG Investment Map, India needs USD 2.64 trillion investment to meet the SDGs. The private sector could benefit from such investment opportunities to the tune of over USD 1.12 trillion by 2030 (Economic Times 2030).
3. *Monitoring and Ownership*: Though the NITI Aayog initiates and tracks the progress of SDGs, there are uncertainties regarding implementation, monitoring, and measuring the outcomes of the SDG goals.
4. *Measuring Progress*: How to measure the progress or achievement of SDGs is yet another matter of concern, mainly due to paucity of data, particularly at the state and district levels, periodicity issues, and incomplete coverage of administrative data.

SDG Programs and Policies in India

As mentioned earlier, the onus of achieving SDG goals lies with the Central Government, which formulates programs and policies that are then implemented by the State and local governments. Most of these policies cover a number of SDG goals, for many of them are interrelated, and the same policies can help to achieve them

simultaneously. For example, reducing unemployment also helps in poverty alleviation, gender equality, etc.

Central Government Schemes to Achieve Goal 8

1. *Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP)* is a central sector scheme administered by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). It aims to generate employment opportunities by establishing micro enterprises in rural as well as urban areas. It is a credit linked subsidy program where Self-Help Groups registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860 are eligible for subsidies to set up projects under PMEGP. At the national level, the Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is the nodal agency for implementation of the scheme, while at the state level it is implemented through KVIC, KVIB, and District Industries center (www.bankofbaroda.in/prime-minister-employment-generation-programme.htm).
 2. *Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY)* aims to uplift the urban poor by enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development. It seeks to provide them access to gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities. Another aim is to provide shelters with essential services to the urban homeless in a phased manner. It also takes into account the livelihood concerns of urban street vendors by providing them with suitable space, institutional credit, social security, skills, and opportunities to access various market opportunities (<https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/deen-dayal-antyodaya-yojana>).
 3. *Start-up India* is another program launched by the Central government to foster innovation and start-ups in the country for creating employment opportunities and economic growth. The goal of Start-up India is the development and innovation of products and services and increasing the employment rate in India. The benefits of Start-up India Scheme include simplification of work, financial support, government tenders, and networking opportunities. Bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 Crore to be provided by Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), to among others at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST), and one woman per bank branch, for setting up a Greenfield enterprise in trading, services, or in manufacturing (www.startupindia.gov.in).
 4. *Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)* is yet another initiative set up by the NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in India. It helps in the alignment of innovation policies of Central, State and Sectoral innovation schemes. Further, it aims to set up and promote a network of innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives at various levels – starting from higher secondary schools, science, engineering, and higher academic institutions, to SME/MSME industry, corporate and NGO levels (<https://niti.gov.in/aim>).
- The long term goals of AIM include establishment and promotion of Small Business Innovation Research and Development at a national scale (AIM SBIR) for the SME/MSME/start-ups, and in rejuvenating Science and Technology innovations in major research institutions of the country like CSIR (Council of Scientific Industrial Research), Agri Research (ICAR) and Medical Research (ICMR) aligned to national socio-economic needs. (SDG India Index, 2019)
5. *Skill India* seeks to provide institutional capacity to train a minimum of 400 million skilled people by 2022. It focuses on short-term vocational education programs, with the mission to scale-up skill development which aligns demands of the market with a well-trained and skilled workforce. Specific programs under this scheme are the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, and the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. These programs aim for the growth of Indian MSMEs (SDG India Index 2019, p. 107).
 6. *Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act, MGNREGA*. Unskilled manual workers in rural areas are to be provided with at least 100 days of wage employment each financial year, under this scheme. It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing:

(a) 100 days of guaranteed employment with an assured payment in a year to the rural poor who opt for unskilled manual work. (b) Registration of proper households and issuing of job cards by the gram panchayats, (c) 33% Reservation for women (www.nrega.nic.in).

- Achiever: when SDG India Index = 100
- Front Runner: when SDG India Index = 65–100
- Performer: when SDG India Index = 50–65
- Aspirant: when SDG India Index <50 (NITI Aayog, Annual Report 2019)

The SDG India Index

Countries around the world have been deliberating how to implement and measure success rates of the Goals. As there are 17 Goals, 169 Targets and 306 National indicators in the SDGs, it is difficult to measure and formulate an index, as well as to estimate success or failure in implementation.

India has been a forerunner in formulating SDGs in tune with its National Development Agenda. To enable tracking the progress of implementation of the above policies across States and UTs, the NITI Aayog has constructed a composite SDG India Index in 2018. The Index provides a holistic view of the social, economic, and environmental status at the National and State levels. It tracks their progress on a set of 62 national indicators. The data would help in analyzing the performance of different States, and identifying the best practices and priority areas that need to be developed to achieve these goals.

The SDG India Index covers 13 out of 17 SDGs and tracks their progress on a set of 62 Priority Indicators. Goals nos. 12, 13, 14 were dropped due to unavailability of comparable data across States and UTs, and since Goal 17 indicator deals with international relationships, it was not relevant for domestic performance (SDG India Index Baseline Report 2018).

The Index value of the score indicates the average performance of the State/UT towards achieving the 13 SDGs and their respective targets. The score ranges between 0% and 100%. The higher the score of a State, the closer it is to the target. If a State achieves a score of 100%, it indicates that it has achieved the national target set for 2030. But, if a State achieves a score of 0, it shows that it is one of the worst performers.

Based on the score, the States and UTs were classified into four categories, namely, Achiever, Front Runner, Performer and Aspirant, where

National Goals for Goal 8

Since this article deals with Goal No. 8, only this goal will be discussed now.

To measure India's performance towards Decent Work and Economic Growth for 2030, four national level indicators were identified, and were measured by three of the 8.5 Goals (Table 3). Taking into account the size and complications of the Indian economy, these three measurable yardsticks were set up based on availability of national level data, and to ensure comparability across States and UTs. The limitation of this indicator is that it has omitted the other seven targets, the inclusion and analysis of which may have given quite different results. This goes for the other SDG goals as well.

From Table 3, column 4 it can be seen that while the second and third indicators are close to the set target, the other two – GDP growth and ATMs – have not yet been achieved. The achievement of 10% PC GDP growth rate is rather difficult in the present circumstances, as there are too many unexpected global and national conditions that will influence it (for instance, the recent global shutdown due to the COVID-19 virus).

Goal 8 Index Scores: All India and State Wide Scores

The SDG India Index Score for Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth – was 65, and ranged from 33 to 90 for States, and 60 to 91 for UTs (SDG India Index 2018). Among the States, Goa was the top performer, and among the UTs – Daman and Diu. Seventeen States and UTs were Front Runners (with Index score greater than/equal to 65). Three States were categorized as Aspirants (with Index score less than 50) Table 4. The details of how these indicators were estimated is given in the above report.

Decent Work Promotion in India, Table 3 National Indicators – Goal 8 in SDG India Index 2018

SDG Global Target	Indicator selected for SDG India Index	National target value 2030	Present levels	Justification for national target
8.1 Sustain PC economic growth	1. Annual growth rate of GDP PC (constant prices 2011–2012)	10%	6.5%	National aspiration to achieve double digit growth
8.5 Full employment and decent work with equal pay.	2. Average unemployment rate per 1000 persons for males and females	14.83	64/1000	Average of top 3 performing States/ UTs taken as national target value
8.10 Universal access to banking, insurance and financial services.	3. Percentage of households with a bank account	100%	99.99%	The national target of The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana to provide at least one basic banking account to every household
	4. Number of ATMs per 100,000 population	50.95	16.84	Average of the Top 3 performing States/ UTs average taken as national target value

(Source: SDG India Index, p. 101 and 239)

Decent Work Promotion in India, Table 4 2019–20 Performance of States and UTS on indicator for SDG 8

S.No	State / UT	Annual growth rate of GDP per capita (at constant price of 2011-12)	Average unemployment rate per 1000 persons for males and females	Percentage of households with a bank account	Number of ATMs per 1,00,000 population	Annual growth rate of GDP per capita (at constant price of 2011-12)	Average unemployment rate per 1000 persons for males and females	Percentage of households with a bank account	Number of ATMs per 1,00,000 population	SDG 8 Index score
Raw Data					Index Score					
1	Andhra Pradesh	10.35	39.50	100.00	22.37	100	91	100	35	81
2	Arunachal Pradesh	13.29	94.00	100.00	14.58	100	71	100	17	72
3	Azham	8.16	93.00	99.96	10.46	78	71	86	7	61
4	Bihar	5.81	68.00	100.00	7.19	50	81	100	0	58
5	Chhattisgarh	3.62	18.50	99.98	11.33	24	99	93	9	56
6	Goa	10.89	120.50	100.00	65.42	100	61	100	100	90
7	Gujarat	9.68	10.00	100.00	17.20	96	100	100	23	80
8	Haryana	7.47	66.00	100.00	23.04	70	81	100	36	72
9	Himachal Pradesh	8.87	132.00	100.00	24.47	87	57	100	39	71
10	Jammu & Kashmir	14.45	154.00	99.71	18.00	100	49	0	25	43
11	Jharkhand	4.17	98.00	100.00	10.17	30	70	100	7	52
12	Karnataka	6.35	16.50	99.97	26.22	56	99	90	43	72
13	Kerala	6.52	170.50	100.00	26.05	58	43	100	43	61
14	Madhya Pradesh	4.43	59.50	100.00	12.83	33	84	100	13	57
15	Maharashtra	6.94	21.00	100.00	22.73	63	98	100	36	74
16	Manipur	3.52	58.00	99.76	9.93	22	84	17	6	33
17	Meghalaya	6.14	56.00	100.00	12.02	54	85	100	11	62
18	Mizoram	8.15	30.00	99.92	13.11	78	94	72	14	66
19	Nagaland	1.64	85.00	99.92	12.85	0	74	72	13	40
20	Odisha	7.30	76.00	99.85	15.22	68	78	48	18	53
21	Punjab	4.00	120.50	100.00	24.44	28	61	100	39	57
22	Rajasthan	5.46	90.50	99.99	12.40	46	72	97	12	57
23	Sikkim	7.14	240.50	100.00	27.35	66	17	100	46	57
24	Tamil Nadu	4.96	47.00	100.00	32.47	40	88	100	58	71
25	Telangana	7.58	31.00	100.00	22.37	71	94	100	35	75
26	Tripura	10.58	288.00	100.00	11.00	100	0	100	9	52
27	Uttar Pradesh	6.55	133.00	100.00	9.19	59	57	100	5	55
28	Uttarakhand	6.33	86.50	100.00	23.92	56	74	100	38	67
29	West Bengal	Null	69.50	100.00	11.34	Null	80	100	9	63
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	7.06	189.50	100.00	25.03	65	36	100	41	60
31	Chandigarh	5.34	27.50	100.00	45.23	44	95	100	87	82
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Null	46.00	100.00	34.90	Null	80	100	63	84
33	Daman and Diu	Null	18.00	100.00	39.42	Null	99	100	74	91
34	Delhi	8.47	54.50	100.00	40.50	82	85	100	76	86
35	Lakshadweep	Null	153.50	100.00	21.03	Null	49	100	32	60
36	Puducherry	8.35	65.50	100.00	42.20	80	81	100	80	85
India		6.50	63.50	99.99	16.84	58	82	96	22	65
Target		10.00	14.83	100.00	50.95	100	100	100	100	100

Source: SDG India Index, Table 8.1 p.122

● Achiever (100)
 ● Front Runner (65-99)
 ● Performer (50-64)
 ● Aspirant (0-49)

Decent Work Promotion in India, Table 5 Employment indicators – India 2019

Indicator	All India	Urban	Rural	Male	Female	Urban male	Urban female	Rural male	Rural female
UER%	7.52	9	6.8	6.2	17.5	7	26	5.8	13.9
LPR %	42.71	40.7	43.7	71.2	10.9	68.8	9.5	72.5	11.06

Source: CMIE: Unemployment in India: A Statistical Profile 2019, p.3

In Table 4 below, the raw data for each State and UT is given in columns 3–6, while the index scores are given in columns 7–10.

- *Indicator 1. PC GDP Growth:* The SDG target PC GDP growth rate in India was fixed at 10%. Table 4. While 17 out of 36 States and UTs of India had growth rates greater than the All-India average of 6.5% in 2019, only 5 had growth rates greater than the 2030 target of 10%. The rest had growth rates below the national average, with Nagaland having the lowest rate. Data for four States and UTs were not available. To achieve this target therefore, tremendous effort will be required, with large investments in all sectors – public, private, self-employed, etc.
- *Indicator 2. Unemployment:* The average unemployment rate in India in 2019–2020 was 63.5 per 1000 persons. The 2030 target is to reduce this figure to 14.83. Among the States, Gujarat had the least number of unemployed persons per 1000 (10/1000). Among the UTs, the best performance was shown by Daman and Diu (18/1000). Some highlights of the unemployment conditions in India are shown below. The definitions of the various indicators are also given:

Labor force participation rate (LPR) is defined as the section of working population in the age group of 16–64 in the economy currently employed or seeking employment. The participation rate refers to the total number of people or individuals who are currently employed or in search of a job (www.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/definitions) (Table 5).

From the above data row 1, it can be seen that in India, rural unemployment was less than urban in 2019. Taking gender differences, female

unemployment rate UER was higher than the males (17.5, 26 urban females, and 14% rural). Surprisingly, the LPR for females was far lower than that of men, row 2. This could be due to various social and family compulsions, as well as lack of skills and opportunities that decide the low participation of female employment (Ghai 2018).

In the case of persons with disabilities in the age groups of 15 years and above, the unemployment rate was 4.2% in 2018 (Persons with disabilities in India: July– Dec 2018).

- *Indicator 3. Bank access:* To generate employment at the grassroot level, it is necessary to have access to funds. For the large informal sector, the lack of access to investable funds is a major problem. In India, the percentage of adults having a bank account in 2014 was merely 53% of adults compared to 62% globally. But through the concerted implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), it has increased to almost 99.9% (Table 4) in 2020 (CMIE Report 2019). Only nine States – Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha and Rajasthan fall short of 100% achievement on this indicator.
- *Indicator 4. ATM coverage:* 16.84 bank ATMs were available in the country per 1,00,000 population. The 2030 target is to take this figure to 50.95. Goa is the best performing State on this indicator with 65.42 ATMs available per one lakh of population. Among the UTs, Chandigarh leads with 45.23 ATMs for the same population. Indian government during August 2014 initiated the scheme of opening up of bank account at zero balance under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY). This led to expansion in the number of

transactions performed in an ATM as debit card users in India increased significantly.

The Reserve Bank of India passed a law to increase the penetration of ATMs in rural areas of India to meet the desired aim of financial inclusion of villages. Over the span of last 5 years, the number of ATMs installed grew at double digit rates. By March 2018, 80% of ATMs were outsourced by the banks, as this are found to be more cost effective (<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/the-atm-market-in-india-2018.html>).

India is an important contributor to the global achievement of SDGs, and within the last 5 years it has been able to make some significant strides in achieving them, considering the vastness of the country and its population, as well as the myriad social, economic, and political complexities existing here. However, there remains still a large amount of work to be done.

Conclusion

The aim of achieving SDG 8 by 2030 seems to be still challenging, with many countries falling short of these goals. Within countries also, there is substantial work to be done to reach anywhere close to the targets of Decent work, such as for instance goal 8.6, that of substantially reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training by 2020. Another unexpected but deadly impact has been the Covid-19 attack that has very badly affected the world economies. In India, a few of the goals are nearly achieved, while others still remain too distant. Under the present circumstances, the task of reaching the SDG targets worldwide seems to be getting bleaker and more difficult.

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