

## India's G20 Presidency: Advancing the 2030 Agenda and Its Challenges

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**Motto: One Earth - One  
Family - One Future**

*India's G-20 presidency will be inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented. India will strive to ensure that the G-20 acts as a global "prime mover" to envision new ideas and accelerate collective action over the next one year."*

**Narendra Modi**

### ABSTRACT

India's forthcoming presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) presents a significant opportunity for the country to expedite progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while simultaneously addressing the formidable challenges that impede its realization. India's leadership within the G20 can catalyse efforts to tackle pressing global issues while focusing on the specific challenges to the country itself. This paper highlights the key areas of focus for India's G20 presidency, including enhancing inclusive growth, addressing climate change, fostering technology innovation, advancing gender equality, promoting sustainable infrastructure, and stimulating global trade. It also explores the challenges faced by India in effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda, such as poverty eradication, ensuring quality education, reducing inequality, and providing access to clean energy. The paper also discusses an Assessment of India's Performance in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals — the analysis of four graphs provides valuable insights. How India's Hits and Misses, and the Opportunity Ahead.

**Keywords:** Agenda 2030, India's G20 Presidency, Inclusive Growth, Gender Equality, Sustainable Infrastructure, Global Trade, Technology Innovation, Poverty Eradication, Quality Education, Reducing Inequality and Clean Energy

## **Introduction**

India's upcoming presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) represents a significant opportunity for the country to accelerate progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while concurrently addressing the formidable challenges that hinder its realization. The 2030 Agenda, adopted by world leaders in 2015, serves as a comprehensive framework for promoting inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development on a global scale, encapsulating seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India's leadership role within the G20 offers a chance to galvanize efforts toward tackling pressing global issues while also concentrating on the specific challenges it faces domestically. This comprehensive paper outlines the key areas of focus for India's G20 presidency, which include enhancing inclusive growth to uplift marginalized communities, addressing climate change and working towards green development, fostering technology innovation to drive progress and development, advancing gender equality to empower women and girls, promoting sustainable infrastructure for balanced growth, and stimulating global trade for economic prosperity. Additionally, the paper delves into the challenges confronted by India in effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda, such as eradicating poverty to ensure no one is left behind, ensuring access to quality education and healthcare for all, reducing inequality, providing access to clean and renewable energy, and building resilient and sustainable cities. India's presidency of the G20 presents a crucial platform to advocate for and accelerate sustainable development, contributing not only to India's growth but also to global prosperity and the achievement of the shared vision of the 2030 Agenda for a better, more equitable and sustainable future. The paper has discussed an Assessment of India's Performance in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals — The analysis of four graphs provides valuable insights.— 4 Graphs Offer an Insight India's progresses can be analysed using four graphs (1-4). While the 17 SDGs are all-encompassing and perhaps even overlapping, one can group them into four broad categories: Economic Prosperity and its impact on the Society (SDGs 1,2,3,4 and 8), Infrastructure and Environment (SDGs 6,7,9,11 and 12), Justice, Equality and Cooperation (SDGs 5,10,16 and 17) and Climate Change and its impact on the Planet (SDGs 13,14 and 15). The classification is based on the interconnectedness of the first two groups and independence of the groups 3 and 4. At the end the study provides an opportunity to know India's Hits and Misses, and The Opportunity Ahead.

## **Historical Background**

The Group of Twenty (G20) has its historical roots in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis in 1997-1998. It was established in 1999 as a forum for finance ministers and central bank governors from the world's leading economies to discuss and coordinate policies on global economic issues. Initially, the G20 consisted of only finance ministers and central bank governors, but in 2008, amid the global financial crisis, it was elevated to the level of heads of state and government, recognizing its importance in addressing global economic challenges.

- **G20 Members**

The Group of Twenty (G20) comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom and United States) and the European Union. The G20 members represent around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

India has been an active member of the G20 since its inception and has played a crucial role in advocating for the interests of emerging economies. As a member of this influential forum, India actively engages in discussions and negotiations on a wide range of global economic issues, including trade, finance, climate change, development, and sustainable growth. India's involvement in the G20 reflects its commitment to contributing to global economic stability, cooperation, and sustainable development.

## **G20 Associations with Agenda 2030 in the Indian Context**

The G20, as a group of major advanced and emerging economies, has a significant association with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and this relationship is particularly relevant to India. The 2030 Agenda, adopted by world leaders in 2015, outlines a comprehensive framework to achieve inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development globally, encompassing seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Given its influential role in global economic affairs, the G20 has a crucial responsibility to expedite progress toward these goals. For India, the G20 provides a unique platform to both contribute to and benefit from the 2030 Agenda. As a member of the G20, India

actively participates in discussions and negotiations on issues like poverty eradication, access to education and healthcare, gender equality, climate change, and clean energy. India's involvement in the G20 allows it to advocate for the interests of emerging economies and work towards more equitable and sustainable global development. Additionally, as a developing nation with a vast population and diverse challenges, India's commitment to the 2030 Agenda is paramount. The G20 provides an opportunity for India to collaborate with other countries, share best practices, and mobilize resources to effectively address its developmental priorities, aligning them with the broader global goals. By actively engaging with the G20, India can leverage the forum's collective strength and influence to make substantial strides towards achieving the SDGs, ensuring that no one is left behind and promoting sustainable and inclusive growth on a global scale.

### **India's G20 Presidency:**

India is currently part of the G20 Troika (current, previous and incoming G20 Presidencies) comprising Indonesia, Italy and India. India will assume the rotating Presidency of the G20 from 01 December, 2022 to 30 November, 2023. Honourable PM launched a logo and theme for India's G20 Presidency on 8 November, 2022. These are as below: The G20 Logo draws inspiration from the vibrant colours of India's national flag – saffron, white and green, and blue. It juxtaposes planet Earth with the lotus, India's national flower that reflects growth amid challenges.

The theme of India's G20 Presidency - "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth One Family One Future" - is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad. Essentially, the theme affirms the value of all life – human, animal, plant, and microorganisms – and their interconnectedness on the planet Earth. The logo and the theme together convey a powerful message of India's G20 Presidency, which is of striving for just and equitable growth for all in the world, as we navigate through these turbulent times, in a sustainable, holistic, responsible, and inclusive manner. They represent a uniquely Indian approach to our G20 Presidency, of living in harmony with the surrounding ecosystem.

**The 2030 Agenda: A blueprint for fostering inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development on a global scale.**

The 2030 Agenda, a ground-breaking global initiative adopted by world leaders in 2015, presents a comprehensive and transformative framework to achieve inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development worldwide. At its heart lies a set of seventeen interlinked Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that address pressing challenges faced by humanity. For India, the 2030 Agenda holds immense significance as it aligns closely with the nation's development priorities and aspirations. The SDGs offer a roadmap for India to eradicate poverty, improve healthcare and education, promote gender equality, ensure access to clean water and sanitation, foster sustainable urbanization, and address climate change, among other crucial objectives. For a country as diverse and populous as India, the 2030 Agenda provides a unifying vision to tackle social, economic, and environmental disparities and achieve inclusive growth. It acknowledges the importance of leaving no one behind, urging India to focus on reaching the most marginalized and vulnerable communities, including rural populations, indigenous groups, and women and girls. Emphasizing the principles of equity and social inclusion, the SDGs encourage India to work towards reducing income inequality, providing equal access to resources and opportunities, and promoting social cohesion. Sustainability is another cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda, and India's commitment to renewable energy, environmental conservation, and sustainable practices aligns well with this goal. The country's efforts to expand its renewable energy capacity, promote sustainable agriculture, and safeguard biodiversity contribute significantly to the global mission of preserving the planet for future generations. Furthermore, the 2030 Agenda's emphasis on resilient development is particularly relevant to India, considering its exposure to natural disasters and climate-related challenges. By integrating disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation measures into its policies, India can build resilience and ensure its communities are better prepared to cope with future shocks and crises. The 2030 Agenda also recognizes the importance of strong partnerships and international cooperation in achieving these ambitious goals. India's active engagement in global forums and its commitment to South-South cooperation position the country as a key player in advancing the 2030 Agenda not only domestically but also on the global stage. The 2030 Agenda, with its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, provides a robust and relevant framework for India to pursue inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development. By aligning its policies and programs with the SDGs, India can accelerate progress in

critical areas such as poverty alleviation, healthcare, education, gender equality, and environmental conservation. As India endeavors to achieve these goals by 2030, the world will witness a nation taking bold strides toward a brighter and more sustainable future, setting an inspiring example for others to follow.

### **India's Leadership in the G20 and 2030 Agenda**

India's leadership within the G20, particularly the Agenda 2030, has the potential to catalyze significant efforts in tackling pressing global issues while simultaneously addressing specific challenges faced by the country. The G20, being a major platform for international economic cooperation, plays a crucial role in advancing the goals of the Agenda 2030, which focuses on sustainable development, poverty eradication, social inclusion, and environmental protection. As a key member of the G20, India's leadership has emphasized the importance of aligning the group's efforts with the SDGs, thereby amplifying the impact of collective action in achieving these ambitious targets. India's leadership within the G20 can contribute significantly to the Agenda 2030 by promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. With its vast and diverse economy, India can advocate for policies that prioritize poverty reduction, job creation, and human development, ensuring that no one is left behind. India's experience in implementing large-scale social welfare programs can also offer valuable insights to other G20 nations in devising strategies to achieve social inclusion and reduce inequality. Additionally, India's leadership in the G20 can strengthen efforts to address environmental challenges and combat climate change. The country's commitment to renewable energy and sustainable practices can serve as a model for other G20 members in transitioning towards greener and more resilient economies. By promoting innovation in clean energy technologies and advocating for international cooperation on climate action, India can contribute to the global effort of mitigating the impacts of climate change.

India's leadership within the G20 can also address specific challenges the country faces in the context of the Agenda 2030. For example, as a country with a large and growing population, India can seek cooperation from other G20 members in addressing issues related to healthcare, education, and access to basic services. By advocating for increased investment in healthcare infrastructure and sharing best practices in education, India can work towards achieving its national development goals while also supporting similar efforts in other developing countries. Furthermore, India's leadership in



the G20 can promote innovative solutions to global challenges, especially in the areas of technology and digitalization. As a leading player in the IT sector, India can advocate for the responsible and ethical use of digital technologies to advance social and economic progress worldwide while addressing concerns related to data privacy and cyber security. India's leadership within the G20 Agenda 2030 presents a significant opportunity to catalyse efforts in tackling pressing global issues while addressing specific challenges faced by the country. By aligning the G20's actions with the SDGs, India can foster inclusive and sustainable development, promote environmental stewardship, and advocate for innovative solutions to complex problems. As India continues to play an active role within the G20, its leadership can contribute to making significant progress towards a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable world.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Enhancing Progress and Advancing Challenges to Inclusive Growth Agenda**

India's G20 presidency has been a significant opportunity to advance the inclusive growth agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The G20, as a forum of major economies, plays a critical role in shaping global economic policies and fostering international cooperation to address pressing challenges. During its G20 presidency, India has sought to prioritize issues related to poverty eradication, social inclusion, and sustainable development, aligning with the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

#### **Progress on Enhancing Inclusive Growth Agenda:**

Under India's G20 presidency, efforts have been made to promote inclusive economic growth and reduce inequalities. India has emphasized the importance of job creation, skill development, and empowerment of marginalized populations to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared equitably. By focusing on policies that promote inclusive growth, India has sought to address the challenges of poverty and income disparity, particularly in developing economies. India's G20 presidency has also underscored the significance of digitalization and innovation in driving inclusive growth. With its thriving technology sector, India has advocated for leveraging digital technologies to enhance access to essential services, financial inclusion, and education, particularly for underserved populations. Emphasizing the role of digital transformation in advancing the inclusive growth agenda has been a notable achievement during India's presidency.

### **Challenges in Advancing the Inclusive Growth Agenda:**

While India's G20 presidency has made progress in promoting inclusive growth, there are several challenges that the country has faced. One of the significant challenges lies in reconciling the diverse interests and policy approaches of G20 member countries. The G20 comprises both developed and developing economies, each with its unique set of priorities and challenges. Aligning these interests to achieve a collective commitment to inclusive growth can be complex and require skillful diplomacy and negotiation. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges during India's G20 presidency. The global health crisis has severely impacted economies and exacerbated existing inequalities, making the task of promoting inclusive growth even more critical but also more challenging. Coordinating a unified response to address the pandemic's economic and social impacts has been an on-going challenge for G20 leaders during India's presidency. Moreover, enhancing the inclusive growth agenda of the 2030 Agenda requires long-term commitment and sustained efforts beyond the duration of India's G20 presidency. Implementing policies and strategies to reduce poverty, improve education and healthcare, and empower vulnerable populations is a complex and multifaceted process that requires continued cooperation and collaboration among G20 member countries.

India's G20 presidency has made commendable progress in advancing the inclusive growth agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By focusing on issues such as job creation, digital transformation, and social empowerment, India has sought to address the challenges of poverty and inequality within the G20 framework. However, challenges remain, particularly in reconciling diverse interests among G20 member countries and navigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global economies. Nevertheless, India's leadership within the G20 continues to be a crucial force in fostering international cooperation and collective action to achieve the goals of inclusive and sustainable development.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Progress and Challenges in Addressing Climate Agenda Progress on Addressing Climate Change Agenda:**

As a major global economy and a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, India's role in addressing climate change during its G20 presidency is of utmost importance. India has already made notable progress in advancing its climate commitments and transitioning towards a more sustainable



and low-carbon future. During its G20 presidency, India can further advocate for climate action and build upon its domestic efforts to reduce emissions, promote renewable energy, and enhance climate resilience. India's G20 presidency can focus on initiatives to foster international cooperation on climate change mitigation and adaptation. This includes encouraging technology transfer and financial support to help developing nations in their climate action efforts. India can leverage its experience in renewable energy deployment to showcase successful models that other G20 countries can adopt to accelerate their transition away from fossil fuels. Furthermore, India's G20 leadership can prioritize climate finance and encourage G20 member nations to fulfill their commitments to provide financial assistance to developing countries for climate adaptation and mitigation projects. India can also support the scaling up of climate finance mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund, to ensure adequate funding for climate initiatives in vulnerable regions.

#### **Challenges in Addressing Climate Change Agenda:**

While India's G20 presidency offers a platform to address climate change, it may also face challenges in achieving consensus among diverse G20 member nations. Balancing the interests of both developed and developing countries in climate negotiations can be complex, given varying levels of responsibility and capacity to tackle climate change. Another challenge could arise from the geopolitical dynamics within the G20, where certain member countries may prioritize economic growth and energy security over climate concerns. India's leadership during its G20 presidency would need to engage in constructive dialogue and negotiations to find common ground and foster a collective commitment to climate action. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impacts may also affect countries' willingness to invest in climate initiatives during India's G20 presidency. Ensuring that climate change remains a top priority despite the ongoing pandemic and its consequences may require concerted efforts from India and other G20 members.

India's G20 presidency presents a significant opportunity for the country to advance the climate change agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By building on its domestic climate efforts, encouraging international cooperation, and prioritizing climate finance, India can play a leading role in fostering collective action to address climate change within the G20 framework. However, challenges in achieving consensus and balancing diverse interests will need to be navigated to make meaningful progress on the climate change agenda during India's G20 presidency.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Progress and Challenges in Fostering Technology Innovation Progress on Fostering Technology Innovation:**

As a leading player in the global technology sector, India's G20 presidency provides an excellent opportunity to promote and accelerate technology innovation to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. India has already demonstrated its capabilities in the technology domain, with a thriving start-up ecosystem and advancements in fields such as renewable energy, healthcare, and digital infrastructure. During its G20 presidency, India can prioritize initiatives to foster technology innovation across various sectors critical to sustainable development. This includes promoting research and development (R&D) investments, creating a supportive regulatory environment, and facilitating partnerships between government, academia, and private enterprises. By showcasing successful technology-driven projects and policies, India can inspire other G20 member countries to adopt similar strategies and scale up their innovation efforts. India's G20 leadership can also emphasize the importance of technology transfer to developing nations. Encouraging developed countries to share knowledge, expertise, and technology with developing economies can help bridge the digital divide and promote inclusive growth worldwide.

### **Challenges in Fostering Technology Innovation:**

While India's G20 presidency can advance the technology innovation agenda, several challenges may need to be addressed. One of the key challenges is ensuring that the benefits of technology innovation are accessible to all, especially vulnerable and underserved populations. Digital inclusion and addressing the digital divide remain critical aspects of fostering technology innovation to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Intellectual property rights (IPR) and technology sharing could also be areas of contention within the G20. Striking a balance between protecting IPR and facilitating technology transfer to enable global progress can be a complex task during India's G20 presidency. Moreover, fostering technology innovation requires robust investment in R&D and technology infrastructure. Economic uncertainties, geopolitical tensions, and competing priorities may impact G20 member countries' willingness to allocate resources for technology development and deployment.

India's G20 presidency offers an opportunity to drive the "fostering technology innovation" agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By leveraging its strengths in the technology sector, India can lead efforts to promote innovation, technology transfer, and digital inclusion among G20 member countries. Addressing challenges related to inclusivity, IPR, and resource allocation will be essential to ensuring that technology innovation contributes to sustainable development and leaves no one behind during India's G20 presidency.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Progress and Challenges in Advancing Gender Equality Progress on Advancing Gender Equality:**

India's G20 presidency provides a significant platform to advocate for and advance gender equality on a global scale. As a nation with diverse demographics and ongoing efforts to promote gender inclusivity, India can demonstrate its commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality during its G20 presidency. Under India's leadership, the G20 can focus on creating policies and initiatives that promote women's economic empowerment, increase their participation in the workforce, and address gender-based wage gaps. India can share successful models of programs and policies that have positively impacted women's economic participation, such as skill development initiatives, access to finance, and entrepreneurship support. Furthermore, India can encourage G20 member countries to prioritize gender-responsive budgeting, which ensures that government budgets address the specific needs and priorities of women. By advocating for gender-sensitive policymaking and budget allocation, India can highlight the importance of mainstreaming gender equality across various sectors. India's G20 leadership can also emphasize the significance of education and healthcare for women and girls. Promoting access to quality education, healthcare services, and family planning can positively impact women's empowerment and contribute to achieving the gender equality goals of the 2030 Agenda.

### **Challenges in Advancing Gender Equality:**

While India's G20 presidency can drive progress on gender equality, it may also face several challenges. One of the key challenges is addressing deeply ingrained gender norms and stereotypes that persist in different societies. Overcoming cultural barriers and traditional mind-sets that hinder women's progress in various spheres of life may require concerted efforts and awareness-raising campaigns. Another challenge lies in achieving meaningful representation of women in leadership

roles and decision-making positions. Encouraging G20 member countries to increase women's representation in politics, business, and governance can be met with resistance and systemic barriers. Furthermore, during its G20 presidency, India may encounter varying degrees of commitment to gender equality among member countries. Some countries may have made significant progress in advancing women's rights, while others may face substantial challenges and require support and technical assistance.

India's G20 presidency offers an important opportunity to advance the "advancing gender equality" agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By leveraging its own experiences and policies in promoting gender equality, India can lead efforts to encourage gender-responsive policymaking, economic empowerment, and access to education and healthcare among G20 member countries. Overcoming challenges related to cultural norms, representation, and varying commitments will be crucial to making meaningful progress in advancing gender equality during India's G20 presidency.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Progress and Challenges on Promoting Sustainable Infrastructure:**

#### **Progress on Promoting Sustainable Infrastructure:**

India's G20 presidency presents a significant opportunity to advocate for and promote sustainable infrastructure development among G20 member countries. As one of the fastest-growing economies with ambitious infrastructure goals, India can showcase its efforts in sustainable infrastructure development and encourage others to adopt similar practices. During its G20 presidency, India can emphasize the importance of integrating sustainability principles into infrastructure projects. This includes promoting green and resilient infrastructure that minimizes environmental impacts, addresses climate change concerns, and enhances the overall sustainability of development projects. India can also lead discussions on the importance of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in sustainable infrastructure development. By encouraging G20 member countries to explore innovative financing models and private sector participation, India can pave the way for increased investment in sustainable infrastructure projects. Furthermore, India can highlight the role of technology and digitalization in enhancing infrastructure efficiency and sustainability. By promoting smart infrastructure solutions, renewable energy adoption, and digital connectivity, India can inspire G20 nations to leverage technology for sustainable development.

### **Challenges in Promoting Sustainable Infrastructure:**

While India's G20 presidency can drive progress on sustainable infrastructure, several challenges may need to be addressed. One of the key challenges is ensuring adequate funding for sustainable infrastructure projects. Many developing countries within the G20 may face resource constraints and require financial support and capacity-building to invest in sustainable infrastructure. Harmonizing diverse national regulations and standards on infrastructure development can also be a challenge. G20 countries have different legal frameworks and guidelines, which may impact the adoption and implementation of sustainable infrastructure practices. Moreover, the scale and complexity of infrastructure projects may vary among G20 member countries. Tailoring sustainable infrastructure solutions to suit the unique needs and challenges of different nations may require tailored approaches and flexibility. In addition, sustainable infrastructure development must address social considerations, such as promoting inclusivity, gender equality, and community engagement. Ensuring that infrastructure projects benefit all segments of society and do not exacerbate inequalities requires careful planning and stakeholder involvement.

India's G20 presidency offers an important opportunity to promote the "promoting Sustainable Infrastructure" agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By leveraging its own experiences and expertise in sustainable infrastructure development, India can lead efforts to encourage green and resilient infrastructure, public-private partnerships, and technology-driven solutions among G20 member countries. Overcoming challenges related to financing, regulations, and inclusivity will be essential to making meaningful progress in promoting sustainable infrastructure during India's G20 presidency.

### **India's G20 Presidency: Progress and Challenges on Stimulating Global Trade:**

#### **Progress on Stimulating Global Trade:**

As a major player in the global trade landscape, India's G20 presidency presents a significant opportunity to advance the "stimulating global trade" agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. India's own economic growth and trade policies can serve as a model for other G20 member countries in promoting open and inclusive trade that contributes to sustainable development. During its G20 presidency, India can emphasize the importance of free and fair trade that benefits all nations, especially developing economies. By advocating for multilateral trade agreements and reducing trade barriers, India can encourage G20 countries to work together in facilitating global

trade and economic growth. India's G20 leadership can also address challenges related to trade financing and access to trade finance, particularly for developing countries. By promoting discussions on improving trade finance mechanisms and supporting trade capacity building in developing economies, India can contribute to more inclusive and sustainable global trade practices. Furthermore, India can lead efforts to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global trade. As the world grapples with economic challenges and disruptions to supply chains, India's G20 presidency can foster dialogue and cooperation to ensure the smooth flow of essential goods and services.

### **Challenges in Stimulating Global Trade:**

While India's G20 presidency can drive progress in stimulating global trade, it may also face several challenges. One of the key challenges is navigating trade tensions among G20 member countries. Disagreements over trade policies and protectionist measures can hinder efforts to foster open and inclusive trade practices. Moreover, achieving a balance between trade liberalization and safeguarding national interests is a delicate task. G20 countries have diverse economic priorities and concerns, and finding common ground on trade policies can be complex during India's G20 presidency. The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic repercussions may also pose challenges to stimulating global trade. Disruptions to supply chains, travel restrictions, and fluctuations in demand can impact international trade flows and require coordinated efforts to address. In addition, promoting sustainable trade practices that align with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development may require addressing environmental and social considerations. Ensuring that trade practices promote environmental sustainability, decent work, and social inclusivity is crucial for advancing the "stimulating global trade" agenda sustainably.

India's G20 presidency offers an important opportunity to stimulate global trade in alignment with the "stimulating global trade" agenda of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By leveraging its own experiences in trade policies and economic growth, India can lead efforts to promote free and fair trade, address trade financing challenges, and navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global trade. Overcoming challenges related to trade tensions, sustainability, and national interests will be essential to making meaningful progress in stimulating global trade during India's G20 presidency.



### **Challenges faced by India in effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda Poverty Eradication**

India faces several challenges in effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda for poverty eradication. While the country has made significant progress in reducing poverty in recent decades, it still confronts various obstacles that hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to poverty eradication. Some of the key challenges include:

**1. Large Population and Inequality:** India's massive population presents a formidable challenge in tackling poverty. Despite overall economic growth, income, and wealth disparities persist, leading to a significant proportion of the population remaining below the poverty line. Bridging the wealth gap and addressing income inequality is essential for inclusive growth and poverty reduction.

**2. Regional Disparities:** Poverty is not evenly distributed across India, and certain regions and states face more significant poverty challenges than others. States in the northern and central regions tend to have higher poverty rates compared to southern and western states. Addressing these regional disparities requires tailored and localized strategies.

**3. Rural-Urban Divide:** The rural-urban divide is another critical challenge. A large portion of India's population lives in rural areas, and rural poverty remains a persistent issue. Access to basic services, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities are often more limited in rural areas, exacerbating poverty in these regions.

**4. Unemployment and Underemployment:** High rates of unemployment and underemployment contribute to poverty in India. Creating adequate and sustainable job opportunities for the growing labour force is crucial for poverty eradication.

**5. Agricultural Distress:** Agriculture employs a significant portion of India's workforce, and distress in the agricultural sector, such as low productivity, crop failures, and indebtedness, perpetuates rural poverty. Strengthening agricultural resilience and promoting sustainable farming practices are essential to address this challenge.

**6. Limited Access to Quality Education and Healthcare:** Access to quality education and healthcare is often limited for marginalized communities, perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Improving access to these essential services is critical to breaking the poverty trap.

**7. Climate Change and Environmental Degradation:** Climate change impacts, such as extreme weather events and natural disasters, disproportionately affect vulnerable communities and can push them further into poverty. Environmental degradation also impacts livelihoods, especially in rural

areas dependent on natural resources.

**8. Governance and Institutional Challenges:** Effective implementation of poverty eradication programs requires robust governance and institutional capacity. Administrative inefficiencies, corruption, and bureaucratic hurdles can hinder the delivery of social welfare programs and impede poverty reduction efforts.

**9. Inadequate Infrastructure:** Insufficient infrastructure, including access to clean water, sanitation facilities, and transportation, affects the quality of life and economic opportunities for many impoverished communities.

**10. Financial Constraints:** Despite the government's commitment to poverty eradication, financial constraints can limit the allocation of resources to poverty alleviation programs and social welfare initiatives.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving various stakeholders, including the government, civil society organizations, the private sector, and international partners. Policymakers need to design targeted and evidence-based strategies to ensure that no one is left behind in India's journey toward achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for poverty eradication.

## **Ensuring Quality Education**

**1. Access and Equity:** Ensuring a quality education for all is a complex challenge in India, given its vast and diverse population. While progress has been made in improving access to education, disparities remain between urban and rural areas, as well as across different socioeconomic groups. Addressing these disparities and ensuring equitable access to quality education is crucial for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

**2. Infrastructure and Resources:** Inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a shortage of qualified teachers can hinder efforts to provide quality education. Improving school facilities, increasing budget allocations for education, and enhancing teacher training and recruitment are essential steps to overcome these challenges.

**3. Learning Outcomes:** Despite increased enrolment rates, concerns about learning outcomes persist in India. Many students continue to face learning deficits, leading to low proficiency in foundational skills. Strengthening the quality of education and focusing on learning outcomes is vital for achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

**4. Technology Integration:** Leveraging technology for educational purposes can enhance access to quality learning resources and improve teaching methodologies. However, challenges related to digital infrastructure and equitable access to technology must be addressed to ensure that technology integration benefits all students.

**5. Inclusive Education:** Ensuring inclusive education for children with disabilities and other marginalized groups is a priority. Creating an inclusive learning environment that accommodates diverse learning needs and ensures equal opportunities for all is essential for achieving sustainable development goals related to education.

**6. Curriculum Relevance:** Adapting the curriculum to align with the evolving needs of the job market and society is crucial for equipping students with relevant skills and knowledge. Striking a balance between traditional subjects and modern skills is a challenge that requires regular review and updates to the curriculum.

**7. Teacher Training and Professional Development:** The quality of education is significantly influenced by the quality of teachers. Investing in comprehensive teacher training and professional development programs can improve teaching practices and ultimately enhance the quality of education imparted to students.

**8. Private-Public Partnership:** Engaging with private-sector stakeholders and civil society organizations can complement government efforts in providing quality education. Building effective partnerships to leverage resources and expertise from various sectors is crucial for sustainable development in education.

**9. Education Financing:** Adequate financing is essential to meet the demands of quality education. Ensuring sufficient investment in education and optimizing the utilization of resources are challenges that require attention during India's potential G20 Presidency.

As a potential G20 Presidency, India can use its position to advocate for global cooperation on education and share its experiences and best practices in addressing challenges related to ensuring quality education. Through the G20 platform, India can collaborate with other member countries to identify innovative solutions, leverage resources, and support initiatives that advance the goal of quality education for all, aligning with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Reducing Inequality

**1. Income and Wealth Inequality:** India faces significant income and wealth disparities, with a substantial portion of the population living in poverty while a smaller segment enjoys significant wealth. Addressing income and wealth inequality requires policies and interventions that promote inclusive economic growth, equitable distribution of resources, and targeted social welfare programs.

**2. Regional Disparities:** There are considerable regional disparities in India, with certain regions experiencing higher levels of development and prosperity compared to others. Reducing regional disparities is essential for ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are spread more evenly across the country.

**3. Rural-Urban Divide:** The rural-urban divide is another critical dimension of inequality in India. Rural areas often face challenges in terms of access to basic services, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Bridging the rural-urban divide is crucial for inclusive development and reducing inequality.

**4. Access to Education and Healthcare:** Quality education and healthcare services are essential for empowering individuals and reducing inequality. Ensuring equitable access to these services, especially for marginalized communities, is vital in addressing disparities and promoting social inclusion.

**5. Gender Inequality:** Gender disparities persist in various aspects of Indian society, including education, employment, and representation in decision-making roles. Promoting gender equality is essential for reducing overall inequality and achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

**6. Social Inclusion:** Exclusion based on caste, religion, ethnicity, and other social factors remains a challenge in India. Ensuring social inclusion and promoting affirmative action measures can help reduce inequality and enhance opportunities for marginalized communities.

**7. Informal Sector and Decent Work:** A significant portion of India's workforce is employed in the informal sector, where job security and social protections are limited. Encouraging the transition to formal employment and promoting decent work conditions are crucial steps in reducing economic inequality.

**8. Governance and Corruption:** Effective governance and addressing corruption are essential for implementing policies and programs aimed at reducing inequality. Transparent and accountable governance is necessary to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and reach those who need

them the most.

**9. Data and Monitoring:** Timely and accurate data is critical for identifying areas of high inequality and monitoring progress in addressing it. Strengthening data collection and analysis capabilities can help in devising evidence-based policies to reduce inequality effectively.

As a potential G20 Presidency, India can use its leadership position to advocate for global cooperation in addressing inequality and share its experiences and best practices in tackling these challenges. Through the G20 platform, India can collaborate with other member countries to identify innovative solutions, promote inclusive policies, and mobilize resources to advance the goal of reducing inequality in alignment with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Providing Access to Clean Energy**

**1. Energy Demand and Growth:** India's rapid economic growth and population expansion have led to a significant increase in energy demand. Meeting this growing demand, while transitioning to clean energy sources is a major challenge. Balancing energy requirements with sustainability goals requires strategic planning and investments in renewable energy infrastructure.

**2. Energy Mix and Transition:** India's energy mix is currently dominated by fossil fuels, particularly coal. Transitioning to clean energy sources while ensuring energy security and affordability is a complex task that requires a well-coordinated approach and support from all stakeholders.

**3. Financing Clean Energy Projects:** The financial requirements for clean energy projects can be substantial. Mobilizing adequate funds and investments for renewable energy initiatives can be a challenge, especially for developing countries like India.

**4. Technological Innovation and Capacity Building:** Adopting and scaling up clean energy technologies often require technological innovation and capacity building. Building a skilled workforce and fostering research and development in clean energy is essential for effective implementation.

**5. Grid Integration and Stability:** Integrating intermittent renewable energy sources like solar and wind into the existing energy grid can pose challenges in terms of grid stability and reliability. Developing a robust grid infrastructure and smart grid solutions is crucial for efficient integration.

**6. Social Inclusion and Energy Access:** Ensuring access to clean energy for all, including marginalized communities, is vital for sustainable development. Addressing energy poverty and promoting social inclusion in clean energy initiatives are important considerations.

**7. Policy and Regulatory Framework:** Creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment that supports clean energy development is essential. Streamlining approval processes, providing incentives, and establishing clear guidelines can accelerate clean energy adoption.

**8. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:** As a signatory to the Paris Agreement, India has committed to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Achieving these goals, while providing access to clean energy requires aligning national and international climate commitments.

**9. International Cooperation and Technology Transfer:** Collaboration with other countries and international organizations is crucial for technology transfer, knowledge-sharing, and capacity building in clean energy. India's G20 Presidency can provide a platform for fostering such cooperation.

As a potential G20 Presidency, India can leverage its position to promote clean energy and climate action at the global level. India's commitment to sustainable development and its ambitious renewable energy targets can serve as an example for other G20 member countries. Through the G20 platform, India can advocate for increased support for clean energy development, access to financing for renewable projects, and technology transfer to facilitate global progress in achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

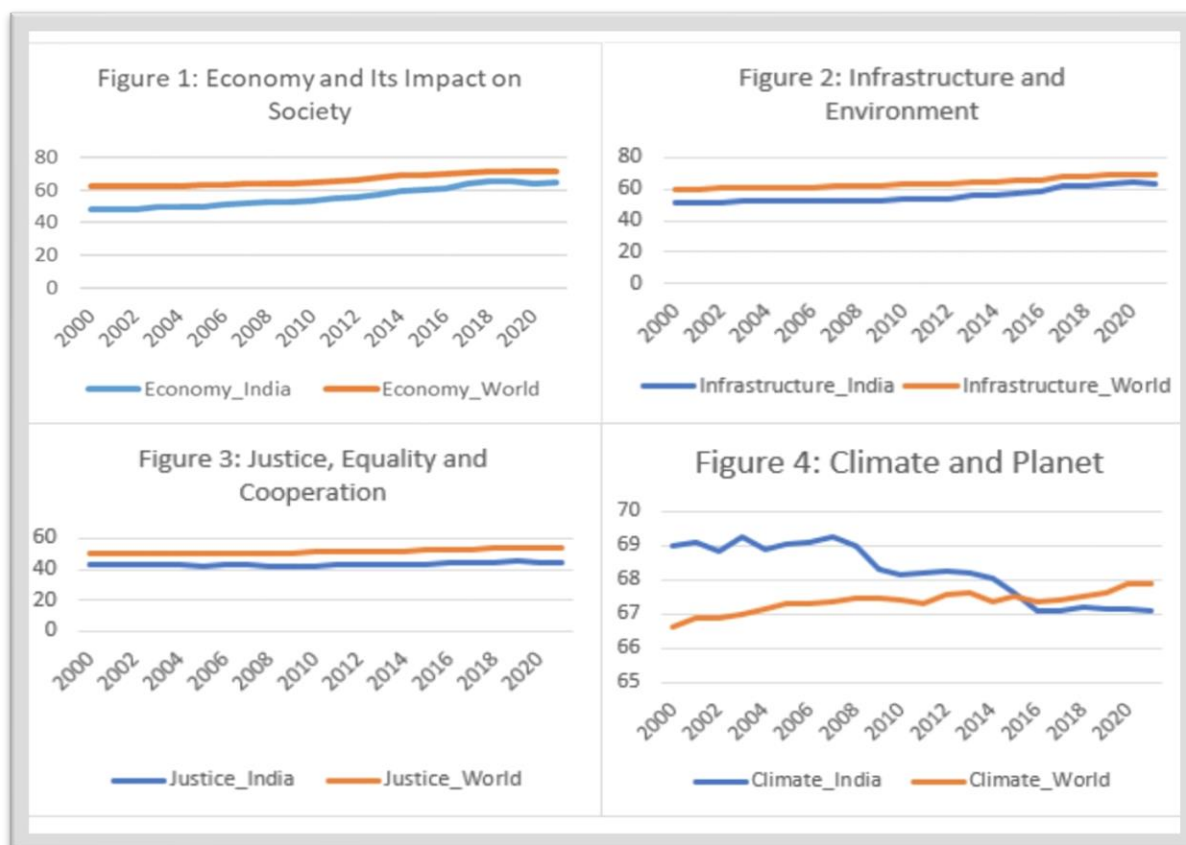
**An Assessment of India's Performance in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals — the analysis of four graphs provides valuable insights.**

With India assuming the presidency for G20, it is important that we analyse the journey so far for the country as one of the key players in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In September 2015, as many as 193 countries came together at the United Nations to adopt and commit to 17 SDGs with 169 sub-goals. India, a signatory to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has launched several developmental programmes aimed at meeting all 17 SDGs in a time-bound manner. As the most populous nation in the world, and the world's fifth largest economy, India's success in achieving the SDGs will largely determine global outcomes. In this backdrop, and with the halfway mark to 2030 already reached, it would be critical to assess where India stands and also chalk out the roadmap ahead.



India’s progress can be analysed using four graphs (1-4). While the 17 SDGs are all-encompassing and perhaps even overlapping, one can group them into four broad categories: Economic Prosperity and its impact on the Society (SDGs 1,2,3,4 and 8), Infrastructure and Environment (SDGs 6,7,9,11 and 12), Justice, Equality and Cooperation (SDGs 5,10,16 and 17) and Climate Change and its impact on the Planet (SDGs 13,14 and 15). The classification is based on the interconnectedness of the first two groups and independence of the groups 3 and 4.

The Sustainable Development Report (2022) by Sachs, Lafortune, Kroll, Fuller and Woelm is a good starting point. The data provides SDG Index scores of 163 countries (of the 193 signatories) in terms of their progress against each of the 17 SDGs, qualifying the progress in terms of “On track or maintaining achievement”, “Moderately increasing”, and “Stagnating” and “Decreasing”. The index is constructed by giving equal weightages to SDG components and sub components. The background data is mostly based on World Development Indicators by the World Bank.



### **Graphs courtesy: Special arrangement**

The four diagrams present a few clear trends. Firstly, while for the world as well as for India, the improvements are marginal when it comes to goals that try to promote economic growth, infrastructure and environment, and it has hardly improved when it comes to ensuring justice, equality and cooperation among all. Worryingly for India, we have consistently underperformed compared to the rest of the world with the gap getting bridged at a painstakingly slow rate. However, a critical pattern emerges when it concerns climate action and its impact on other life forms. This was one area where India was performing better than the rest, but over the last two decades we have been scoring less, so much so that we now score below the global standard. Thus, a brief snapshot of India's SDG journey between 2000-2020 presents more than a mixed picture. There appears to be a pattern — India has focused far more on economic prosperity than other objectives.

### **Hits and Misses, and the Opportunity Ahead**

Analysing the data in detail suggests that the specific parameters where India has improved are directly related to economic policies that promote GDP growth and its effect on improved infrastructure-both physical as well as human capital. It is heartening to see that many of the intended positive spill overs of high GDP growth are being observed. India has definitely improved substantially regarding health and education outcomes, water and sanitation, access to electricity as well as connectivity. This is a story of being future ready. The journey has been impressive too as India scores above the rest when it comes to responsible consumption and production. India has done better than the world in terms of fossil fuel subsidies (consumption and production) as a proportion of total GDP (%), lower household food waste per capita, and lower per capita hazardous waste.

However, there are areas where higher GDP growth should also have seen positive spill overs but it has not. For one, it is not creating enough opportunities for the youth. The proportion of youth in the age group 15-24 who are not in education, employment or training has remained between 28%-30% as compared to a global average of 23% during this period. Even more worryingly, high growth has not translated to substantial reduction in poverty, hunger or inequality.

There are areas where India is lagging behind, which may not automatically get addressed with high economic achievements. Both India and the world appear to have failed to deliver in its promises to ensure justice and equality. Specifically on the aspect of gender equality, the gap between the world and India is significant and has remained almost unabridged. The Indian story is under the scanner when one considers Climate Change and its impact on the Planet. While India was performing significantly better than the world at the beginning of the century, this pattern has reversed in the last few years with a widening gap. The last point is particularly worrying as many economic decisions are coming at the cost of destroying and displacing natural habitats.

The road ahead is an opportunity for India. With some impressive achievements and significant presence, India can guide the rest of the world by taking a leadership role in promoting justice and equality by being at the hub of inter-country cooperation. We can particularly do that with respect to strong protection of the environment to mitigate climate-related disasters. Given that India has demonstrated impressive economic growth rate along with very modest negative environmental footprints, it is in a natural leadership position to drive cooperative agendas, a role it must strongly advocate. To get there, it is important that India starts evaluating its policies with a strong focus on its possible impact on SDGs.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of establishing G20 is to create an atmosphere that supports equitable global growth and development. They bring together the most powerful economies in the world, both developed and emerging, to talk about global financial and economic stability. India's G20 Presidency presents a crucial opportunity to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and address the myriad challenges that hinder its implementation. As a global leader with a diverse and rapidly growing economy, India's leadership role within the G20 carries immense potential to influence and shape the course of sustainable development worldwide. The 2030 Agenda encompasses a wide range of interconnected goals aimed at promoting inclusive and sustainable development. During its G20 Presidency, India can leverage its own experiences, successes, and challenges to inspire and mobilize other member countries to take collective action toward achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India's G20 Presidency can serve as a platform for

advocating for increased international cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and partnerships to tackle pressing global issues, including poverty eradication, climate change, gender equality, access to quality education, and clean energy. By fostering collaboration and learning from each other's best practices, the G20 countries can collectively address common challenges and drive progress on the 2030 Agenda. However, India's G20 Presidency is not without its challenges. The country itself faces complex issues such as income inequality, regional disparities, and environmental concerns, which mirror global challenges on a larger scale. Addressing these challenges requires proactive and innovative approaches, as well as inclusive policymaking that ensure no one is left behind in the journey toward sustainable development. As a G20 Presidency, India must navigate differing priorities and interests among member countries, while promoting consensus and collective action towards sustainable development goals. Striking a balance between national interests and global responsibilities is critical in shaping effective and inclusive policies. India's G20 Presidency can also play a significant role in fostering international cooperation on financing sustainable development projects and facilitating technology transfer to developing nations. Bridging the financing gap and promoting access to clean and renewable energy technologies are central to accelerating progress on the 2030 Agenda.

India's G20 Presidency represents a momentous opportunity to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while addressing the challenges that impede its successful implementation. By leading with a strong commitment to inclusivity, sustainability, and international cooperation, India can inspire and mobilize the global community to take ambitious steps toward achieving the SDGs and creating a more equitable and sustainable world for present and future generations

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