

# Status and Practical Relevance of Sustainable Development Goals: Impact of Pandemic

<sup>1</sup>**Dr. Juri Goswami**

Assistant Professor of Law, J.B. Law College, Guwahati, Assam.

<sup>2</sup>**Ms. Darshana Deepak Das**

LL.B (Student) 4<sup>th</sup> Semester, J.B. Law College, Guwahati, Assam.

## Abstract:

Covid-19 is such a pandemic which hit the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, since then it has shook the developed, developing and under developed countries with its complications. Ranging from healthcare, economy to education, infrastructure, industry and life of people as a whole. The Sustainable development Goals (SDGs) which were introduced as a successor of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were targeted to be achieved by the year 2030. Certain targets were set which seem to be affected by the advent of Covid-19.

This article has aimed in understanding how Covid-19 has affected the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals as a whole and in reference to India in particular. The article also contains a brief idea of the type of pandemics that have affected the world till Covid-19 in 2019. The article further analyses how SDGs are being re-initiated after the pandemic is taking a back shift.

**Keywords:** Sustainable, Development, Pandemic, Goals, Covid-19

## Introduction

It would be uncanny on one's part to disagree with the fact that Global development planning has been changing in a most highlighted way in the recent times. Sustainable development goals or in short known as SDGs were coined as a successor to that of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000. It was introduced in the year 2015 as a more strategized and integrated development to

that of Millennium Development Goals which existed from the beginning of the millennium i.e., 2000 to 2015. It is worth to be noted that, this integrated form of development goals was introduced after the MDG expired in the year 2015, this was emphasized by the United Nations as a form of governance advantage in order to create urgency among the member countries in terms of implanting the commitments of UN System Task Force on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. The question that is taking up the space is that whether this step was effective enough from the strategic point of view even though it is considered as a progressive model.



**Fig 1: Millennium Development Goals**

According to *Merriam Webster dictionary* a *pandemic* is defined as an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents) and typically affects a significant proportion of the population: a pandemic outbreak of a disease. When a certain disease takes the drastic turn of pandemic, it not only disrupts the normal life but, also, other corollary activities of the people. Analysing the term pandemic, one notices that whenever a pandemic has hit the world, it has adversely affected the population ranging from lives lost to the way it has affected the economy.

### **A Brief Overview of the Pandemics that have hit the World**

**Antonine Plague (165 AD) :** an ancient pandemic that affected Asia Minor, Egypt, Italy and Greece, is also known as the Plague of Galen and concluded as either Smallpox or Measles. This was brought back to Rome by soldiers returning from Mesopotamia; unknowingly and killed around 5 million people.

**Plague of Justinian (541AD):** it was an outbreak of Bubonic Plague which killed around twenty 5 million people of Europe and was carried along through a year. This mostly affected the people of Byzantine Empire and Mediterranean port cities where it completely devastated the city of Constantinople. The highest death of that particular city was around 5000 people in a day.

**The Black Death (1346-1353):** It was the Bubonic Plague which was almost concluded to have originated in Asia and was spread throughout the affected areas of Europe, Africa, and Asia by living rats in the Merchant Ships. At that point of time, the ports acted as the flourishing suburban hub which was perfect breeding place for the rats and fleas and thus the insidious bacterium flourished inside it. The devastation spread across 3 continents in its wake. It killed around 75 and 200 million people.



**Fig 2: Illustration of Black Death**

### **Cholera Pandemic:**

There was around 7 cholera pandemics and all of the same originated in India. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of it was considered as the deadliest as it killed around 900000 people in India and abroad.

**Third Cholera Pandemic (1852-1860):** It can be considered as one of the deadliest one out of all was the third one that occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century between the year 1852-1860. It killed around 23 thousand people in Great Britain and it is said to have originated in India. This fever spread from the Ganges River Delta spread throughout Asia, Europe, North America and Africa and ending the lives of over a million people. British physician John Snow while working in a poor area of London city found out that the cholera cases were eventually transmitted from the contaminated water.

**Sixth Cholera Pandemic (1910-1911):** Like its five previous avatars, the Sixth Cholera Pandemic originated in India. It went on to spread its wings to the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe

and Russia. By the approaching year of 1923 it still was prevalent in India but was drastically cut down in the U.S. It also considered as the source of last American outbreak of America the farsightedness of the American Authority helped to curb down the death curve in America by immediate isolation of those who were infected.

**Flu Pandemic:** The strain was said to be an outbreak of the Influenza A virus subtype H2N2, though recent discoveries it had been found that the cause to be the Influenza A virus subtype H3N8. There was around three flu pandemic which affected in the years of 1889-1890, 1918, 1956-1958 and 1968. The same is discussed briefly:

1889-1890: Popularly known as “Asiatic Flu” or “Russian Flu”. It was considered as the first true epidemic in the era of bacteriology which seems to have claimed life of over million individuals. The rapid growth in population was one of the sole causes behind the spread of this pandemic. Before is had a worldwide outbreak the initial outbreaks were reported from Central Asia, Canada and Greenland in the year 1889.

1918- 1920: the outbreak of this pandemic was considered as deadliest as it affected three-fourth of the world’s population and killed around 30 million people. The only point of difference between the 1918 influenza outbreak and other outbreaks of the same was the age group it was targeted. It targeted or victimised in striking down the healthy young adults while it left the children and people with weaker immune system alive, whereas, the previous outbreaks affected the juveniles, already weak patients and the elderly people.

**Asian flu (1956-1958):** The source of outbreak traces back to China, known as ‘Asian Flu’, Influenza A of the H2N2 subtype. It caused death of around 2 million people and out of which 70,000 (approximately) people of US alone. The Asian Flu escalated from the Chinese province to Singapore, Hong Kong, and the United States.

**Asian flu (1968):** It is commonly known as “the Hong Kong Flu” because of its first outbreak in Hongkong in the year 1968 and killed around 500,000 people. It was caused by the H3N2 strain of the Influenza A virus, a variant of H2N2. Within a short span of 17 days, cases were reported from Singapore and Vietnam and within a span of three months it spread to The Philippines, India, Australia, Europe and the United States.

**HIV/ AIDS Pandemic (2005-2012):** It was first identified in the year 1976 in Democratic Republic of the Congo and went on to become a truly proven global pandemic by claiming a million (around 36 million killed and 31-35 million people living with it) lives since 1981. Around 21 million people which constitutes the vast majority of Sub-Saharan Africa are currently infected.



**Fig 3: HIV AIDS**

**The Novel Coronavirus (2019- ):** This outbreak shook the world and has slowed down to an extent where people suffered from all sorts of possible problems. The expeditious spread of it in the economic developed as well as low and middle income countries gave a clear idea of this infectious disease, is the greatest leveller. It is said to have transmitted from bats to humans in the wet market, in the region of Wuhan, China. It has been named Covid-19, a shortened form of “coronavirus

disease of 2019, also, it was first discovered in human beings in the year 2019. The causal virus is called SARS-CoV-2, which belongs to the coronavirus group and is closely related to the causal virus of SARS. The urge to survival of human race during the pandemic was the chief concern of the people.



**Fig 4: coronavirus (microscopic image)**

### **Millennium Development Goals: An Analysis**

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are 8 goals (initiated in the year 2000) which include UN member countries withstand poverty, hunger, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against with women. Every particular goal was targeted to be establish by 2015. It is quite obvious that some of the significant changes can be actually noticed since the time it was introduced. As for example:

- I) Decrease in number of children death was drastically decreased from 12.7 million in 1990 to 6.3 million in 2013.
- Ii)One of the striking issues of the colonies was number of underweight children in the age group of 5 years in developing countries, the percentage of underweight children less than 5 years old reduced from 28% in 1990 to 17% in 2013.
- Iii)Overall decline in HIV virus cases and deaths.
- Iv)A healthy decline in Tuberculosis cases.

There are also some health-related Millennium Development Goals which are as follows:

G1: to exterminate extreme poverty and hunger.

G4: diminish child morality

G5: boost maternal health

G6: to scrimmage against diseases such as HIV/AIDS and Malaria.

G7: ensure environmental sustainability by providing safe drinking water and to cut the amount of population into half regarding the same. G8: to develop a global partnership for development by coming in terms with pharmaceutical companies for providing accessibility to affordable essential medicines in developing countries

## Sustainable Development Goals: An Outline



**Fig 5: Sustainable Development Goals**

Sustainable Development Goals were introduced by the United Nations as a descendent to the Millennium Development Goals, which was introduced in the year 2015. It is a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed by United Nations General Assembly which are intended to be achieved by 2030. They are included in a UN-GA Resolution called Agenda 2030. According to an article by Street Business School, SDGs interconnect incorporating social, economic and environmental sustainability and as according to the UN it is a blue-print for dignity, peace and prosperity for people of the whole world for with present and futuristic view. The Director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University divulge some points on the importance of the global goals-

- Encouragement in social mobilization
- Creation of peer pressure among the contemporary political leaders
- Inducement of networks of expertise, knowledge and practice into action
- Mobilising of stakeholder networks across countries coming together for a common purpose

### The Impact of Covid-19 on UN Sustainable Development Goals

Eyeing for the implementation of Sustainable Development by 2030 the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the year of 2015. The world was smacked by COVID-19 in the early 2020 and created a big havoc worldwide. Even though it is considered as a boon to Mother-Earth but it has taken a big toll on normal human life. For the first time in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century human-folks experienced complete lockdown for around 6-7 months partially (different sectors experienced different duration of lockdown). It has not only affected the normal life of people but has dug up the mental health of the people. The impact of COVID-19 in the human society is still bleak and quite strenuous to measure. Furthermore, it heavily influenced the commitment undertaken by the United Nations in establishing the SDG's by slowing it down from its normal pace. In addition to the global disruption, the repercussions were mostly felt economic and financial sectors which further hampered the financing for sustainability.

The SDG's marked a transition of global assay to stimulating development and intensifying sustainability to development, emphasizing the universality of assumed targets, a much wider thematic agenda, new central actors and an important focus on financing for development in comparison to that of preceding approaches, which now lays deeply infected by the Covid-19 Global Pandemic.

### **Policy Framework of United Nations on Sustainable Development Goals**

Covid-19, not only shares a cohesion with significant trials of SDGs but also sustainable development in regards to temporal, intergenerational dimensions. Covid-19 made the achievement of the SDGs perilous and dubious. The SDG:3 Good Health and Well-Being required more attention as Covid-19 influenced it to a greater extent. According to research conducted by Sustainable Accounting Management Policy (SAMP) related to medicine, health, economics and disaster studies, the findings demand for inter-and trans-disciplinary projects, besides putting a stronger emphasis on SDGs and their research during post-Covid-19 era. It investigated how this pandemic affected the values and motivations of the people in various professions. During the crises, the value of solidarity is staging an unexpected comeback. During the pandemic the way people shifted from their own personal benefits to rather reaching out to people who are lower in economic class than they are, the same attitude was demanded to be transferred to further sustainability issues like fair-trade consumption. Many SDGs could also stage a comeback, such as SDG1 (no poverty), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG10 (reduced inequalities), SDG12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG17 (partnerships for the goals). Further, this pandemic has also influenced the thoughts of people, like, people now are rational enough to think about the impact of the decisions they take now upon the future. Covid-19 pandemic has not only exaggerated the SDGs but also the globalisation which is actually an important factor for achieving the SDGs. A specific research is needed to analyse that whether the current observable effect on de-globalisation and growth is also effecting the SDGs in the long run and how the powerful and the both private and government organisations are reacting to the same. Earlier, loss of power of nation states was compensated by an increase of power of corporations, but after the pandemic shift of power and attention back to nation states which led to a temporary shift in power balances between corporations and national governments. In countries, Governments controlled corporations in a way that seemed highly unbelievable only months before the pandemic, as many businesses were completely shut down. In some countries, governments created a shift in power involving massive budgets which had a long-term fiscal consequence limiting the ability of governments to intervene in the future. If the willingness of governments to take immediate fundamental action for sustainable development would be similarly high as that of fighting the pandemic, issues such as social standards in supply chains or climate change could be regulated to a far stronger degree. Also, there should be an investigation that whether the experience with stronger regulation during the pandemic has weakened the opposition towards a stricter regulation and increased acceptance of governmental interference corporations. Implicit and explicit norms on sustainability accounting and reporting pose a possible way to ensure that during pandemics, the corporations remain aware of their sustainability impact and receive feedback on their activities. Many researchers have called for restructuring of the entire concept of the SDGs and it can be seen that UNO has already begun to work on the reconceptualization of the same. The pandemic once again lays down that emphasizing on new concepts are in need for supplementing the SDGs. Future research should focus more on setting up general criteria for integrating newly emerging challenges to the SDGs.

### **Covid-19 *vis-à-vis* Sustainable Development Goals: Indian Perspective**

India being a huge democracy of 1.38 billion people seems to be quite obvious that it would be stabbed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Repercussions of this deadly pandemic that leads to various critical questions in relation to socio-economic and environmental problems i.e. active role played that lacks in government's part, the jolt on economy, health, infrastructure, following proper protocols while jettisoning the dead bodies which effected at a larger amount in spreading the disease further and also Air and Land pollution, transboundary relocation of the migrant workers and labourers and many others. The crisis of Covid-19 in India started from declaration of lockdown, where daily wage labourers and the migrant works were severely hit. The professionals lost their jobs and hence it took a serious toll upon the family's total income and economic



condition. Among all the groups of people working in various sectors, the badly hit class was the labour class and also the migrant workers. Pictures and news surfaced the pathetic conditions of the people who were deprived of shelter, food and even proper transportation to reach their home. People started to change their job roles for their survival, as for example, a famous director as well as many small movie artists started selling vegetables to keep up the family. People reported of being looted and plundered by deceitful means. People undoubtedly got a big break from their busy life, but, also, many of the people faced mental health related issues. Complications like depression, anxiety and various mood disorders showed up among the youths and middle-aged people. The condition of the people suffering from emotional upheaval is also been portrayed in many of the web series and movies, as for example, in an Indian series named UNPAUSED directed by Raj & DK, Nitya Mehra, Nikkhil Advani, Tannishtha Chatterjee and Avinash Arun show-cased the stories of how the people of various walks impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The government have acted in a determinative way vanquish the spread of the virus and financed enough to cope with the impact in terms of treatment facilities and services, quarantine measures and social security benefits. It still is a matter of debate how far they were successful while implementing it.

Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the UN keeping in mind the root problems of the people, by the advent of the deadly coronavirus, these SDGs was hampered to a larger extent. Although we can say that some of the Goals were highly impacted like poverty, hunger, education, economic growth, industry and infrastructure, inequalities. Here we are trying to elucidate each of the 17 SDG's was stressed in terms of Indian context. These are as follows:

**SDG: 1 No Poverty-** India, being a colony of British has suffered many setbacks and still suffering in terms of development. However, in one of the campaigning meetings, the prime minister of India, Narendra Modi have clearly said that by 2023 poverty will be purely eradicated from the history of India, keeping in mind the particular goal they have tried to adopt certain measures but was not successful as they should have been in real.

Covid-19 here has somewhat major role to play, as during the first and second wave many people have lost their jobs. Because of slowing down in the economic trades where petty jobs (vendors, daily wage labourers, small businesses, etc.) were stopped by the crisis, many people lost their livelihood. The migrant workers and the marginalised people were the most effected categories of the strata. Around 150-199 million people will be added along the poverty index and people who are already poor will be push beyond their current status. The impact of it is lower in Indian states of Kerala, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and high impact was felt on the states of Assam, Bihar, Utter Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh both in rural as well as urban areas. 'Low Per Capita Income' can be trusted as the reason that can be listed behind severely hit states.

Obviously, the global aim of 5 i.e. by 2030; (i) to eradicate extreme poverty for the people all over the globe who are currently measured on living less than \$1.25/day (ii) reduction into half the proportion of men, women and children living in poverty (iii) to ensure that all men and women, poor and vulnerable to be precise have equal access to economic resources, basic services, ownership over land and other forms of property, new technology and financial services etc. (iv) to reduce their vulnerability to climate related extreme events, disasters and other economic, social and environmental shocks (v) ensuring significant mobilisation of verities of resources, which includes through strengthened development co-operation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries; is definitely impeded and slowed to an extreme extend by the complications of covid-19.

**SDG: 2 Zero Hunger-** the word hunger doesn't merely mean missing a meal or not getting to eat full meal or nutritious meal for millions of people around the world. Rather, it is one of the factors of poverty-stricken people, where they are not being to manage a full meal for a family. It was utmost important for the global leaders to exterminate hunger from its root, as it will push a vast amount of population from sycophantic poverty and ensure their development. Lack of food is not the reason of the extreme hunger among the folks, world produces enough of food to feed its population, it is only the incapability to buy it, the people cannot effort food or lack of resources to grow food.

The target of five by 2030 laid down are- (i) to end hunger and ensure that people of all age group get access to nutritious food (ii) end all forms of mal-nutrition and pregnant and lactating mother as well as adolescent girls have access to proper food (iii) ensuring of sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practises (iv) by 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, domesticated animals, cultivated plants etc. through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks (v) adopt measures to ensure proper infrastructural development, proper functioning of food commodity markets and prevention of trade functions.

India is ranked 100 out of 119 countries by Global Hunger Index and considered that it has serious food security situation. In-spite of robust policies, India's performance on SDG: 2 were comparatively low amongst all the SDG's. The Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand are ranked amongst the lowest in respect to SDG:2.

There were around 9 targets laid down by the UN for the SDG:3 by 2030- (i) reducing the percentage of global mortality (ii) to prevent death of new born and also children below 5 years (iii) to end the epidemics of AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases (iv) to reduce pre-mature mortality through prevention and also promote mental health and well-being (v) to prevent the use of substance abuse and narcotics (vi) to reduce the number of death by road traffics (vii) ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services which includes family planning (viii) to reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, soil pollution and contamination (ix) achieve universal health coverage.

The impact of covid-19 on this SDG can be counted with both good and bad impact, although, this particular goal like the other is not directly concerned or will be affected with the pandemic, but yes, overall progress can be noticed when it come in terms with target no. iii, where because of preventive measures of frequent hand-washing and sanitizing protocols were issued by WHO, many such disease such as Hepatitis, Jaundice, Malaria and other water-borne diseases came into a stand still.

**SDG:4 Quality Education-:** improving human capital is required to make informed decisions in the walk of life including those related to breaking out from the vicious cycle of poverty, for which investment on human development requires an integral amount of focus on education. This SDG was placed in the table for emphasizing the quality of education and learning outcomes. There are around 7 targets planned by SDG to reach by 2030, (i)to ensure free, quality and equitable primary and secondary education for all boys and girls with proper relevant outcomes (ii) they access to quality early development, care and pre-primary education so that they do not have problem in primary education (iii) equal access to all men and women for technical, vocational and tertiary education (iv) increase the number of youth having vocational and technical skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship (v) to eliminate gender inequalities and promote equal level of education (vi) to ensure that all the youths and adults both men and women have achieve literacy and numeracy (vii) to ensure that the learners get the knowledge and correct skills needed to promote sustainable development, through education, sustainable life styles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciated cultural diversity.



During the Covid-19 pandemic, education in India completely entered into a new phase called online education. Now, online education sounds very modern and technologically advanced. Another thing that popped up among the students was, the students who belonged to economically better families got a personal smartphone for conducting the online classes but, reports were there that these students were actually indulging in playing online games and other tasks rather than studying. The outcome of online education was not as fruitful as people thought it to be.

**SDG: 5 Gender Equality-** SDG Gender equality is not only is an essential fundamental human right, but it is quite necessary for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. At present, women as a whole between the ages of 15-49 have reported sexual and physical violence by an intimate partner within 12 months and 49 countries in total have reported no strict laws protecting women from domestic violence. Obviously, there was a sharp decline of 30% of harmful practices like child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) but there is still more work is to be done in this field. As the COVID-19 lockdowns trapped women at home with their abusers, domestic violence rates spiked throughout the world. In India, reports of domestic violence, child marriage, cyber violence and trafficking of women and girls had increased within the first few months of the pandemic. According to the National Commission of Women data, India recorded 2.5 times increase in domestic violence between February and May 2020. Some women's organizations reported that in the first four phases of the lockdown, they received more reports of domestic violence than they had in the last ten years for a similar period of time. Others indicated that many women were unable to report the violence, as they had less privacy and means to access help.

Writing about Gender Roles and gender equality during the pandemic, it is true that working women were put into jeopardy when work from home culture started. India being a patriarchal (mostly) country, obviously, men tend to play less active role when it comes to taking part in household chores. During the pandemic the percentage raised up to 30% in terms of unpaid care work. Now-a-days gender role concept have come in where we are re-learning the gender roles, again, it would be unacceptable for some men to divide the house hold chores amongst themselves. Women who are in various sectors have been stressed to a certain level where she have to do all the household chores alone and also have to manage working hours, along with it, have to take care of the children when on the other side, she might have put the kid in a crèche or some other such type to be taken care of. Again number of domestic violence cases has increased during the pandemic.

**SDG: 6 Clean Water and Sanitisation:** These to are the most essential yet basic need for the survival of human folk in a better way devoid of any illness, as according to most of the surveys it can found out that most of the communicable diseases like malaria, jaundice etc. somewhere traces its origin in the dirty water (unsafe drinking water), hygiene and improper sanitisation. The issue created by over exhaustion of the water bodies which is creating water scarcity, according to UNO more than 2 billion people are living under the risk of reduced access to freshwater resources which will definitely increase by 2050. There are around 6 targets set by the UN to be achieved by 2030, (i) achieve equal access to safe drinking water (ii) achieve equal access to safe and proper hygiene and sanitation and to end open defecation with special reference to girls and women. (iii) improvement in water quality (iv) significant increase in water-use efficiency and significant decrease in number of people suffering from water scarcity (v) implementation of integrated water resources management (vi) protect water related eco systems

In Indian Perspective being the second largest populous country, there is only 4% availability of freshwater in terms of its population. Around 600 million people face high- extreme water stress. By 2030 the water demand is likely to be twice. Therefore urgent need of evolving policies and sustainable in nature in the context of adverse climate change, demand environmental degradation.

According to the National Commission for Integrated Water Resource Development, the current water requirement to be 973 BCM and would be 1,180 BCM by 2050. After the launch of the Swachha Bharat Mission, the country has achieved sanitation coverage of 100% in rural area. Many districts were declared defecation free by 2019. During the pandemic, because of regular habit of washing hands with soap for 20 seconds, prevented people from many water borne diseases and also to maintain proper hygiene and sanitisation.

**SDG: 7 Affordable and Clean energy:** this particular SDG has got no such big role to play during the pandemic. However, this can relate to SDG:4- Quality Education, as there was a strict requirement of electricity for conducting of online classes. Without proper supply of electricity there will be of course problem to conduct the classes. There was 3 targets set by 2030 to be achieved, (i) universal access to energy services (ii) increase the share of renewable energy (iii) rate of improvement of energy.

India through its targeted programme *Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana* has already electrified all it's villages and also aims to electrify the remaining households. The next aim is to ensure uninterrupted power supply to all households. There are other schemes such as Integrated Power Development Scheme, Deendayal Upadhaya Gram Jyoti Yojana etc. to meet up these challenges.

**SDG:8 Decent Work and Economic Growth-** this goal strive to achieve higher economic productivity and job creation through innovations in technology and also at the same time protecting labour rights and creating safe and secure working domain. It also liquidates forced labour, human trafficking and child labour. India being one of the fastest growing economies, ranked 5 in terms of GDP, the country has the potential to be the engine of global economic progress. Skill India Programme as launched in the year 2015 emphasizes on vocational programmes and creates millions of skilled people. Further, reformation in Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, which stimulates the export and the manufacturing sector, to retain its rate of growth to a higher level, robust financial and infrastructure sector by the stabilisation of the GST regime. By 2030, SDG 8 targets on the implementation of 10 points- (i) sustain per capita economic growth and atleast 7% growth in GDP (ii)to promote policies that support productive activities, job creation, entrepreneurship and formalization and growth of micro and medium enterprises (iii)&(v) to achieve full employment to disabled, young as well as middle aged men and women (iv)&(x) strengthening of domestic financial institutions (v) reduce the proportion of youth not in employment (vi) immediate measures to remove forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, child labour (vii) protection of girls and promoting safe working environment (viii) devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the various establishments sent messages calling out for concurrence for tackling the disease by agreeing with the restrictions laid down by WHO to break the modes of transmission. Completed social and economic shutdown jeopardise the lives of the poor, it also doubled the load of government over the existing communicable diseases along with this virulent respiratory disease called Covid-19.

**SDG:9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure-**This particular SDG was developed and designed so as to provide efficiency and effectiveness on rest of the SDGs. Each and every SDG is achievable only by proper utilisation and establishment of industry, innovation and infrastructure. Target that was aimed by 2030 for SDG:9, are 5 in number, i.e., (i) to develop quality, reliable and sustainable infrastructure including regional and trans-border infrastructure to support economic development and human well-being (ii) promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation (iii) increased access to information and communication- technology and to provide affordable access to internet (iv) upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable (v) to enhance

scientific research including the developed countries and also to upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sector.

India has strikingly progressed in the provision of basic infrastructure by the construction of National Highways, 12 major ports have cargo handling capacity, its industrial corridor is considered as the world's largest infrastructure projects with investment of US\$90 billion. To streamline the business regime under State Level Business Reforms Action Plan, more than 7000 reforms were undertaken. The next immediate milestone to in top 50 countries in the world Bank Rankings.

During the pandemic of Covid-19, industry, innovation and infrastructure suffered a major stunt in its progress. Obviously, the lockdown affected the three I's and have not progressed the way it should have been. The closing down of industries effected economically as many of the factory workers lost their jobs.

**SDG: 10 Reduced Inequalities-** Goal 10 of SDG aims in ensuring access to equal opportunities and promotion of social, economic and political inclusion for all, irrespective of age, sex, race and others including religion. It aims to create representation and voice for developing countries in decision making in international institutions. Inequalities among human beings acts as a hindrance for SDG to achieve its 2030 Agenda. It has all total of 7 targets to reach by the year 2030, (i) to achieve and sustain income growth of bottom 40% of the population (ii) to promote and sanction social, economic and political inclusion irrespective of differences (iii) ratio of transgender labour force to male labour force participation (iv) to adopt policies, especially fiscal wage and social protection policies and to achieve them (v) improve regulation and monitoring of global markets and institutions (vi) ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision making (vii) implementation of safe migration policies to facilitate safe and responsible migration.

The Human Development Report reads that India falls in the medium human development category of the Human Development Index and ranks 129 out of 189 countries. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana made banking services accessible to historically unbanked population and is considered as most potent instrument for financial inclusion for the vulnerable groups. It is noteworthy that half out of 377 million bank accounts belong to women and it can be said in one way that it has empowered women and the vulnerable by providing credit to micro and small enterprises. Covid-19 crisis brought part by part inequalities among the sexes, there were some information showing women losing more jobs as in comparison to men. Many of the company owners have closed their doors for the labourers and migrant workers during the pandemic, even women who were working from home face more burden as she have to take care of her family, do household chores and also sign into her job on time.

**SDG: 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities-** SDG-11 targets to promote inclusiveness and sustainable urbanisation in the cities to lay down a framework to ensure capacity building for better governance. It promotes inclusiveness and sustainable urbanization so that cities can attract talent, encourage innovation and create economic growth.

SDG 11 have set 7 targets to be completed by 2030- (i) access to safe, affordable and adequate housing (ii) access to safe, affordable and adequate transport system, by strengthening the government transportation system, also to give attention to the needs of the vulnerable, women, disabled and older persons (iii) enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries (iv) to safeguard and protect cultural heritage of the world (v) to reduce the number of deaths and number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global GDP by disasters

(vi) reduce adverse environmental impact (vii) universal access to green and public spaces for women, children, old, disabled

The target number five (V) was to reduce the number of deaths caused by economic losses, it can be emphasised with the purview of covid that along with the deaths of people giving away to covid related complications, there was also reports and surveys conducted found out that many people in big cities and towns have committed suicide or died out of economic crisis like losing of job, losses in business even the wage labourers.

**SDG:12 Responsible Consumption and Production-** SDG12 focuses on over consumption crossing the basic needs of human beings, it includes the over usage of resources provided by the earth. It is kept in mind that by 2050 when there will be significant rise in population, the usage now indicates a dark future where the future generations of earth will not be able to have access to the natural resources available to us. These particular goals aim to attain the better quality of life without compromising the efficiency of achievement. The 2030 targets of SDG:12 is as- (i) sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources (ii) halve the food wastes from all the sectors (iii) implement 10 year framework of programmes on sustainable production and consumption (iv) achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all the wastes (v) reduce in the wastes generation (vi) encourage companies to adopt sustainable practices (vii) promotion of public procurement practices (viii) enlightenment of people all over about the awareness of sustainable development. SDG:12 cannot be directly connected to covid-19 pandemic.

**SDG: 13 Climate Action-** The SDG 13 focuses on the fight against the climate change by twofold approach a) climate change mitigation and b) climate change adaptation. Global carbon dioxide level has increased at a rapid rate between the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Along with it, the resources are on verge of exhaustion and consecutively the temperature of earth is also increasing by 1 degree every year. Climate change is already affecting many countries and populations in developed countries. There are 3 targets which SDG13 tries to achieve by 2030, (i) strengthen durability and adaptive capacity climate hazards and natural disasters (ii) integrate climate change measures (iii) improve education and awareness regarding climate change

With the view of Covid-19, impact on climate can be considered as a boon. The impact of complete lockdown gave nature a great chance to heal itself to a good extent. Because of lower pollution levels, snowfall was experienced in some Indian hill-stations e.g. Shillong. Also, many endangered wildlife species was seen in the deserted streets of metropolitan cities e.g. 1000 of Flamingo descended Mumbai, peacock, nilgai was spotted in Noida, Malabar Civet in Kerala.



**Fig:6 Olive ridley sea turtle made a comeback in the beach of Odisha**



**Fig:7 Civet was found in the streets of Malabar, Kerela**



**Fig:7 Flamingos spotted in Mumbai**



**Fig:8 Water from river Ganga in Haridwar was found fit for drinking**



Some more striking changes that people had noticed during the lockdown. Water from the Ganges in Haridwar was found fit for drinking and also the improvement in Air quality. Obviously, the Ozone layer too was healed to a certain extent.

**SDG: 14 Life below Water-** works for prevention of marine pollution, ending illegal and destructive fishing practices and management and prevention of marine and coastal ecosystems. Much of the world's population is directly or indirectly into the world's oceans for their daily supply of protein which in turn results in pollution, depleted fisheries and loss of coastal habitats. It has also increased the acid level in the water because of human activities on water and the industrial wastes. This might lead to serious consequences for marine life by the end of century.

**SDG: 15 Life on Land-** It was established with the view of safeguarding and conservation of sustainable use of terrestrial and other ecosystems i.e., protection plan for life on Earth. Between 1990-2015 world's forest cover was cut down from 31.7% to 30, 7% for which the remaining forests were protected and long-term management plans were increased. Reported cases of wildlife poaching and trafficking led to protecting key biodiversity areas for strengthening of natural resource management and conservation of biodiversity.

**SDG: 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions-**This goal was established from the point of having full co-operation, foundation of peaceful and inclusive societies. It nestles for development of accountable and inclusive institutions for good governance to facilitate the 2030 Agenda.

**SDG:17 Partnerships for the goals-**This goal by 2030, targets the finance, policy and institutional coherence, multi stake holder partnerships, data, monitoring and accountability, trade, capacity building and technology by the developed countries over the developing countries for the establishment of the SDG's.

### A Way Forward

Finance is the primary in the establishment of UNSDG, capital markets play a vital role for the establishment of the same. Sustainable Development Goals Bonds can serve a mechanism for the re-acceleration of SDG's in Asia. There have been 585,950,085 Covid-19 cases and 6,425,422 deaths as of 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 (according to WHO). The Governments are muddling with their funds in between protection of incomes and providing of urgent medical care to citizens. As per the reports of International Labour Organisation, around 305 million jobs were lost globally. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) states that around 1.5 billion students were affected by the pandemic. It has severely hit the sectors of sanitation, water supply, housing, healthcare and certain changes were seen in climate change, ocean, land life and the biodiversity.

Setting the targets of the SDG's to be achieved by the year 2030, Covid-19 has served as a clear indication that a come-back on this targets is a sure overdue. The World Bank estimates this pandemic have added another 71-100 million of population into poverty. It has also exposed lack in education facilities, inadequate clean water, sanitation apart from inadequate health systems. Every developing country needs to renew its commitment to achieving the SDGs for equitable growth, conservation of natural resources and reducing the impact of climate change, which is a cross-cutting theme across almost all the SDGs. This is strongly supported by the UN, multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other organizations working for global sustainable development. During the Secretary General of United Nations High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond that was held on 8 September 2020, 50 heads of state affirmed their commitment to finding new ways to mobilize finance for the SDGs as a way out of the crisis.



The SDG Bond can be defined as framework that lies in it's interdisciplinary links, carrying over multiple aspects of development together and encouraging synergies. During the Pandemic it plays a greater role in finding a way to increase inclusion while mobilizing finances for recovery. It can be suggested that structured SDG Bonds can create bridge the acceptable return over a period to project performances. An SDG Accelerator Bond with its conventional payments, deferred payments or a zero-coupon bond can provide returns to the investors with comparable sustainability instruments over the tenor with an option to exit at pre-defined project completion or operational dates. This Accelerator Bond can be integrated as to authorise cheaper funds for projects as a provocation to achieve SDG targets faster.

## References

### Books

1. Vol.1, Manohar Pawar, Henrickson., O'Sullivan., Rahamathulla., Sengupta., Jha., Lingam., Sapkal., Sanfelici., Walter McCabe., Rambaree., Nassen., Dafuleya., Bhatia., Sarkar., Rahman., Covid-19 Pandemic: Impact on and Implications for Community and Social Development, 2021
2. Vol.1, Alexandra R. Harrington, International Law and Global Governance, 2021
3. Vol.1, Desheng Dash Wu & David L. Olson, Pandemic Risk Management in Operations and Finance, 2021
4. Vol.1, Godwell Nhamo, Sustainable Development Goals for Society, 2021

### Articles

1. Kalterina Shulla and ors., Effects of Covid-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals, Discover, 2021
2. Rajvikram Madurai Elvarasan and ors., Impacts of Covid-19 on Sustainable Development Goals and effective approaches to maneuver them in the post pandemic environment, Springer, 2021
3. Richard Fenner and ors., The Implications of the Covid-19 pandemic for delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, Futures, 2021
4. Jacob Horisch, The Relation of Covid-19 to the UN sustainable development goals: implications for sustainability accounting, management and policy research, Sustainability Accounting and Policy Journal, 2021
5. Babatunde Abidoye and ors., Leaving no one Behind: Impact of Covid-19 on the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs), New York, NY: Frederick S. Pardee Center for International Futures and United Nations Development Programme,2021
6. Accelerating Sustainable Development After Covid-19, Asian Development Bank,2021

### Newspaper

### Web-Sources

1. Green Governance Initiative, <https://ggiindia.in/>
2. No Poverty, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-1-no-poverty/>
3. Zero Poverty, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-2-zero-hunger/>
4. Good Health and Well-Being, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-3-good-health-and-well-being/>
5. Quality Education, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-4-quality-education/>
6. Gender Equality, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-5-gender-equality/>

7. Clean Water and Sanitation, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-6-clean-water-and-sanitation/>
8. Affordable and Clean Energy, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-7-affordable-and-clean-energy/>
9. Decent Work and Economic Growth, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-8-decent-work-and-economic-growth/>
10. Industrial Innovation and Infrastructure, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-9-industrial-innovation-and-infrastructure/>
11. Reduced Inequalities, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-9-industrial-innovation-and-infrastructure/>
12. Sustainable Cities and Communities, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-11-sustainable-cities-and-communities/>
13. Responsible Consumption and Production, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-12-responsible-consumption-and-production/>
14. Climate Action, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-13-climate-action/>
15. Life Below Water, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-14-life-below-water/>
16. Life on Land, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-15-life-on-land/>
17. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions/>
18. Partnerships for Goals, <https://ggiindia.in/goal-17-partnerships-for-the-goals/>
19. Your Questions Answerd: Women and Covid-19 in India, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/7/faq-women-and-covid-19-in-india#:~:text=How%20has%20COVID%2D19%20impacted,lost%20jobs%20during%20COVID%2D19>
20. Coronavirus pandemic and cyclone will leave many Indians Hungry and Undernourished, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/coronavirus-pandemic-and-cyclone-will-leave-many-indians-hungry-and-undernourished/>
21. The Impact of Covid-19 on Poverty Estimates in India : A study across caste, class and religion, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2455328X211051432#:~:text=At%20all%20India%20level%2C%20around,Urban%20India%2C%202020%E2%80%932021>
22. Reports say India overtakes Nigeria as the globe's poverty nation, <https://hamslivenews.com/2022/07/28/reports-say-india-overtakes-nigeria-as-the-globes-poverty-nation/>
23. Addressing sustainable development through economic empowerment, <https://hamslivenews.com/2022/07/28/reports-say-india-overtakes-nigeria-as-the-globes-poverty-nation/>
24. Millennium Development Goals, [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-\(mdgs\)#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20Millennium%20Declaration,degradation%2C%20and%20discrimination%20against%20women](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-(mdgs)#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20Millennium%20Declaration,degradation%2C%20and%20discrimination%20against%20women)
25. Covid-19, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19>
26. Outbreak: 10 of the Worst Pandemics in History, <https://www.mphonline.org/worst-pandemics-in-history/>
27. Department of Economic and Social Affairs Disability, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal1.html>
28. Covid-19 : 4 unbelievable enviromrntal changes seen in India since lockdown, <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/gk-current-affairs/story/covid-19-4-vital-environmental-changes-evidenced-in-india-since-lockdown-1673726-2020-05-02>
29. Why Shift from MDG to SDG?, [https://www.sopact.com/perspectives/mdg-to-sdg#:~:text=The%20MDGs%20severely%20lacked%20monitoring,its%20quality%20and%20timely%20acquisition\).&text=The%20169%20targets%20and%202030,SDGs%20are%20just%20a%20start](https://www.sopact.com/perspectives/mdg-to-sdg#:~:text=The%20MDGs%20severely%20lacked%20monitoring,its%20quality%20and%20timely%20acquisition).&text=The%20169%20targets%20and%202030,SDGs%20are%20just%20a%20start)