District Indicator Framework and Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals in Maharashtra

Dr.BRAD BEST GFD

Statistical Officer, District Statistical Office, Gondia, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs are integrated-they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability. It is widely agreed that India will play a leading role in determining the success or failure of the SDGs, given its significant share in the global development progress due to its huge population. The achievement of the SDGs depends, more than ever, on the ability of local and regional governments to promote integrated, inclusive and sustainable territorial development done to its population. Sub-national governments should not only be seen as mere implementers of the Agenda but also the policy makers, catalysts of change and the level of government best placed to link the global goals with local communities. In Maharashtra, „Sustainable Development Goals- Implementation and Coordination Centre" (SDG-ICC) under the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of Planning Department has been entrusted the responsibility to steer the implementation of SDGs in the state. Accordingly, SDG-ICC, Government of Maharashtra has developed Maharashtra State Indicator Framework (SIF) that will provide appropriate direction to the policy makers and the implementing agencies of various schemes and programmes. In keeping with our motto of taking the SDGS from 'global to national to local', Maharashtra SDG District Indicator Framework (MH-DIF) has been prepared by SDG-ICC to monitor the progress on the SDGs at the district level.

Keyword: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), National indicator framework (NIF), State indicator framework (SIF), District Indicator framework (DIF), Localization

Introduction

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with 8 goals were introduced as a powerful framework, which was accepted by the world leaders with consensus and political commitment to combat poverty, hunger, diseases, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. MDGs provided an important framework for development and significant progress has been made in a number of areas. Though many countries have witnessed significant progress on these goals, the progress was not even.

Taking forward the uneven achievement of MDGs across countries, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, in its 70th Session held on 25th September 2015, adopted the document titled *"Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"*- comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets- the 17 SDGs are: (1) Mo Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, *(7)* Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work

and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reducing Inequality, *(11)* Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and Production, (13) Climate Action, *(14)* Life Below Water (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, and (17) Partnerships.

Unlike the MDGs, primarily focused on social agendas**,** the SDGs are broad in scope because they address the interconnected elements of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. The MDGs targeted developing countries, particularly the poorest, while the SDGs apply to all countries, developed and developing. Furthermore, SDGs also emphasized the participatory approaches in bringing everybody together for comprehensive development of all nations- with principle of 'no one is left behind'. Officially, the SDGs came into effect from 1 January 2016 and targets to be achieved by 31 December 2030. At the SDG Summit in September 2019, the world leaders called for 'Decade of Action' for delivering sustainable development and pledged to mobilize finance, enhance national implementation and strengthen institutions to achieve the Goals by the target date of 2030. The SDG Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next 7 years in five areas of critical importance: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.

A robust follow-up and review mechanism, for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, require a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders. Indicators are the backbone of monitoring the progress of SDGs at local, national, regional, and global levels. Therefore, the comprehensive set of inter-connected goals and targets of SDGs are required to be monitored during 2016-2030. Countries are the primarily responsible for implementing SDGs at national level by following up and reviewing the progress made. To do so, NITI Aayog is facilitating and coordinating the implementation of SDGs in the country and also undertaking comparative analysis of SDG achievement in the States and UTS. Further, for measuring India's progress against SDGs, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) Govt. of India, has developed National Indicator Framework (NIF) comprising 306 indicators (initially, now 284 indicators in 2023) following due consultation process with concerned Ministries/Departments, UN Agencies and other stakeholders. NIF is the backbone of monitoring of SDGs at the national level and provides appropriate direction to the policy makers and the implementing agencies of various schemes and programmes. Keeping in view the localization of SDGs, at sub-national level, the States/UTS have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the state, district and local government levels with regard to the progress made in implementing the SDG goals and targets and their achievements. In this backdrop, it is thus important for States to develop their own State Indicator Framework (SIF) based on their individual critical development priorities, data requirements, available infrastructure and resources. To measure progress at the district level in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, a District Indicator Framework containing 120 indicators has been prepared and approved by the Government of Maharashtra. The book was released on June 29, 2023.

Objectives of the study

(i) To study the role of DIF in achieving SDGs

(ii) To study features of Localization of SDGs

(iii) To know the issue and challenges in achieving SDGs

Research Methodology

The present study based on secondary data available in books, various reports, magazines etc.

National, State and District Indicator Framework

Achieving SDGs is a dogged marathon where success can only be secured through evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring, continuous improvement and judicious utilization of resource identifying gaps. In this direction, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India has developed National Indicator Framework (NIF) with detailed data. In Maharashtra, State Planning Commission has been entrusted the responsibility to steer the implementation of SDGs in the state. Accordingly, SDG-ICC, Government of Maharashtra has developed Maharashtra State Indicator Framework (SIF) that will provide appropriate direction to the policy makers and the

implementing agencies of various schemes and programmes. In keeping with the motto of taking the SDGS from 'global to national, national to State and State to District', District Indicator Framework (DIF) has been prepared by SDG-ICC to monitor the progress on the SDGs at the district level.

National, State and District Indicator Framework – A Comparison

SDGs	Number of Indicators		
	NIF	SIF	DIF
SDG 1: No Poverty	17	19	14
SDG 2: Zero Hunger	19	12	10
SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	39	44	17
SDG 4: Quality Education	19	19	15
SDG 5: Gender Equality	29	23	11
SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	13	14	7
SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	5	4	2
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	24	29	12
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	17	8	7
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	11	6	3
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	13	13	3
SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	14	9	2
SDG 13: Climate Action	6	1	1
SDG 14: Life Below Water	11	4	2
SDG 15: Life on Land	14	9	2
SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	21	18	12
SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals	12	5	0
Total Number of Indicators	**284**	**237**	**120**

Features of District Indicator Framework for SDGs in Maharashtra

'Sustainable Development Goals- Implementation and Coordination Centre' (SDG-ICC) under the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of Planning Department, taking consideration of all feedbacks/ suggestions from nodal officers of state departments and officials from districts, has prepared District Indicator Framework (DIF) identifying 120 indicators. Finally, Government of Maharashtra has approved the DIF for monitoring the progress towards the SDGs at the district level.

Depending upon the availability of reliable data with sound collection methodology, indicators relevant for the district are best suited to track its own progress and monitoring towards sustainable development at the district level. Districts should use these indicators as a reference for their own regular monitoring and review, guided by the national/state policies, priorities, strategies and capacity to implement monitoring activities.

Key Features and Significance of DIF

1. The Maharashtra DIF consists of 120 indicators for all 17 SDGs (except goal 17).
2. The Indicators were mapped with relevant state departments**,** Government of Maharashtra**,** data source and data provider at District level.
3. Target was fixed for each identified indicator in DIF by the mapped state department.
4. Out of 120 indicators, data periodicity for 87 indicators is annual, data periodicity for 22 indicators is three years, data periodicity for 8 indicators is decadal, data periodicity for 2 indicators is biannual and data periodicity for 1 indicator is quinquennial.
5. Metadata of indicators has been created to accurately capture the statistical information of district indicators. While collecting the information for calculating district indicators, the information collection tables have been prepared so that the information can be obtained equally in all the districts. Data is being collected from various State /PRIs and other agencies in the district/division.
6. District Indicator Framework (DIF) would help the districts officials to better understand how the SDG Goals can be localized by engaging all relevant stakeholders at district level.
7. DIF provides a framework for localizing the implementation of SDGs by involving local governments from planning to monitoring and implementation of the SDGS. This covers from setting goals and targets to determining the best means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress.
8. DIF will strengthen commitment towards local implementation of the SDGs and include a debate on the role played by local governance stakeholders in ensuring that development benefits all and that no one is left behind.
9. DIF has identified 120 indicators aligning with 237 SIF, will act as a tool for fast-tracking the progress of the SDGs at district level, in which not only targets have been fixed for each indicator but also nodal department, data source, data periodicity, data providers at district level have also been mapped.

Institutional arrangement for SDGs in Maharashtra

Sustainable Development Goals- Implementation and Coordination Centre (SDG-ICC) - On 3rd of December, 2020, Government of Maharashtra established 'Sustainable Development Goals- Implementation and Coordination Centre' (SDG-ICC) under the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of Planning Department

SDG Centre in YASHADA, Pune

DoP issued GR on Nov 30, 2021 to establish SDG Centre in YASHADA, apex training institute of MH. It focuses on 3 areas- a. Training and workshops, b. Resource material preparation, c. Research including pilots, action research. Director, SIRD heads the Centre as Director of the Centre

Thematic Committees (6) under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary for review of SDGs

In line with the Vision 2030 Document, DoP, Government of Maharashtra issued GR on May 24, 2022 to guide and review progress on SDGs in the state. The 6 committees are a. Agriculture and allied activities, b. Industry, c. Infrastructure, d. Social Sector, e. Governance, f. Environment

Localizing SDGs in Maharashtra and steps taken for SDG localization

The Global Task force of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP and UN Habitat defined Localization as follows: *"Localizing" is the process of taking into account sub-national contexts in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets, to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress. Localization relates both to how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy and to how local and regional governments can support the achievement of the SDGs through action from the bottom up and to how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy.*

Localizing SDGs in Maharashtra include:

(A) Capacity Building

1. 1% fund of District Annual Plan has been made available for the training and capacity building on SDGs at district level. Additionally, micro-plans for monitoring SDG progress in the 27 backward blocks across 13 districts have been introduced. Further it has been directed that all proposals under the Human Development Programme covering 125 Backward Blocks should be vetted against Maharashtra's SDGs Checklist prior to approval by the District Administration.
2. Module for district and block officials developed by YASHADA through SDG Centre.
3. Women and child Centric SDG Module with UNICEF.

(B) Training of the officials

1. Government of Maharashtra has directed YASHADA to incorporate SDGs in the training modules for officers of Group 1 and 2
2. More than 1200 officials from Planning Department have received one day orientation on SDGs

(C) Mapping of state level schemes to SDGs and targets

1. A separate tab has been made available on Maharashtra Plan Schemes Information Management System (MP-SIMS) for providing information about SDGs and targets

relevant to the respective schemes. The District Annual Plan which has 138 district level schemes with an outlay of Rs. 14067 Crores in 2022 - 23 under the State General Plan, has been mapped to the 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 284 indicators identified by the Government of India.

2. More than 1600 State level schemes have been mapped with SDGs and targets. Based on the analysis of this scheme mapping exercise, a report has been prepared which has been approved by the state government.

(D) Monitoring framework for SDGs

1. State Indicator Framework (SIF) has been finalized consisting of 237 indicators to track SDGs related progress at the state level. The State level schemes have been mapped with SDGs in 3 Categories – A, B and C depending on their level of association with SDGs i.e. High; Medium and Low. The UN agencies are supporting the government in this endeavour.

2. District Indicator Framework (DIF) has been finalized consisting of 120 indicators to track SDGs related progress at the district level.

(E) Awareness generation

1. SDGs related important documents have been made available on the website of Planning Department. Booklets on SDGs that list out the 17 Goals and 169 Targets have been translated to the State Official Language 'Marathi' and have been shared widely with all departments of the government.

2. Efforts to integrate knowledge of SDGs into school curriculums are also underway.

3. RGSA developed posters on SDG themes.

4. IEC plan is being worked out in YASHADA in partnership with UNICEF

(F) Fostering Cross-Sectoral Partnerships

The Village Social Transformation Foundation (VSTF) was introduced to promote Public-Private Partnership (PPP) between the State and Corporate Sectors and Philanthropic Organizations for the transformation of a thousand villages.

(G) Prioritizing Gender-Responsive State Schemes and Policies

Maharashtra supports numerous welfare schemes for young girls and women as well as transgender individuals through the recent third gender welfare scheme introduced in 2019. These programmes address women's political participation, their social security and economic rights, their experiences of violence and lack of safety in private and public spaces, their right to nutrition, healthcare, education and several other cross-cutting targets of the SDGs.

(H) Accountability fixed

1. Nodal and supporting departments have been finalized for all the SDGs. For effective implementation and monitoring of SDGs in the state, the Government of Maharashtra has set up the 'Sustainable Development Goals- Implementation & Coordination Centre (SDG-ICC)' under Directorate of Economics & Statistics of Planning Department. The Government of Maharashtra has designated the Planning Department as the nodal

department and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics as the Nodal Office for implementation of SDGs.

2. Concerned Departments to form committee to look after implementation of the SDGs.

(I) Monitoring framework for GPs

LIF prioritization for GPs is in progress. Maharashtra GP Monitoring system is being piloted in Kagal Block based on SDGs/Social indicators in partnership with UNICEF. Web based monitoring system allows data based and community led monitoring too. System is being further developed in view of LIF.

Conclusion

The Maharashtra SIF will not only be useful as a tool for monitoring progress of various SDG themes but also helps in data driven evidence based decision making with regard to policies and financial allocations. This will also foster the true spirit of SDG implementation in the state.

District Indicator Framework (DIF) identifying 120 possible indicators and mapped with responsible district official for providing and tracking the progress of each indicator. This framework would be helpful in tracking the progress on SDGS and in identifying the gaps for sectoral development, It puts together, in one place, all development aspects, people-centric, and collaborative actions in envisioning capacity development and monitoring of SDGS. It also highlights the areas of improvement and the way forward in the journey of the districts towards achieving the SDGs in a time-bound manner.

Multilevel governance has been described as the decision-making system to define and implement public policies produced by a collaborative relationship either vertical (between different levels of government, including national, federal, regional or local) or horizontal (within the same level, e.g., between ministries or between local governments) or both. The success of multi level governance and coherent SDG implementation can be fostered, for instance, by effectively integrating the SDGs into the mandates of institutions and promoting cross- sector collaboration at all levels. This requires adjusting institutional structures, aligning decision-making procedures, and installing mechanisms that support the cross-cutting and integrative nature of the SDGs. While the SDGs are global, their achievement will depend on our ability to make them a reality in regional and local level. All of the SDGS have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, particularly to their role in delivering basic services. That's why local and regional governments must be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

Way forward

Review and monitoring have been accorded special priority in SDGs to track the progress of the indicators, targets and goals. To do so, development of district indicator framework is the first step to monitoring the SDGs at district level. In this spirit, SDG-ICC has developed DIF which will act as a driver for the agenda 2030 and following action points will help in achieving SDGs targets at local level as committed by Government of Maharashtra.

- Preparation of SDG Maharashtra Index to show the baseline and progress status, which will be containing-Analytics, Metadata and Data Tables.

- On the basis of DIF, SDG Maharashtra Index will be developed to measure the achievement of SDGs in the state by ranking the districts.
- Capacity Development and training programmes on SDGs for District, Block and Village level officers and functionaries of the State.
- Identification of intervention areas for making sure sustainable development in the district.
- Preparation of guideline for inclusion of SDGs in the district planning process.
- Preparation and publication of continuous progress report of SDGS containing data updating for each indicator at the district level.

References:

[1] Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti IAS (Rt), Mr. Anand Bhandari, Dr. Jitendra Chowdhary -SDG in Maharashtra, Policy Context

[2] Gender-Western-Club, Sneha Tatapudy, Localizing Sustainable Development Goals – The pursuit of Gender Equality in India and Maharashtra 2021

[3] https://planning.up.nic.in/Go/SDG/SDGL/SDGs%20in%20Maharashtra-Integrated.pdf

[4] https://mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Guidance_on_Monitoring Framework_for_SDGs_March31_2022.pdf

[5] Maharashtra SIF, Directorate of Economics and Statistics

[6] Maharashtra DIF, Directorate of Economics and Statistics

[7] SDGs-NIF, Progress Report2023

[8] SPC BOOK DIF Chhattisgarh