



BUILDING STEWARDSHIP ON AGENDA

2030

IN NORTH EAST INDIA





AGENDA 2030

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, world leaders from 193 countries, including India, agreed on 17 goals to improve the world by the year 2030. These goals have the power to end poverty, fight inequality and address the urgency of climate change. Guided by the goals, it is now up to governments, businesses, civil society, and the general public to work together to build a better future for everyone.

Relevance of achieving SDGs in North East India

The North East region constitutes 3.78% of India's population (45 million) with almost half of the states having more than 85% of a Scheduled Tribe (ST) population.

There are few indicators where the North East Region (NER) surpasses national averages.¹ For instance, at the regional level, the average literacy rate is 78.5% as compared to the national average of 73%. Similarly, the average Infant Mortality Rate is 25 per 1,000 live births as compared to the national average of 34. However, several parts of the North East region grapple with challenges such as the lack of basic infrastructure, unemployment, and the lack of access to proper healthcare services.

The average unemployment rate in the **North East region is 9.1%** as compared to **6.5% at the national level**

The average **drop-out rate is 13%** at primary and higher secondary level in North East India as compared to **6% at the national level**

As per NITI Aayog², few North Eastern states are among the lowest scorers in terms of 'Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure' and need to perform better to attain the goal of 'good health and well-being'.

Apart from this, regional level issues require urgent attention.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework attempts to provide direction to the local strategies. It also focuses on the action plan building exercises that can be conducted to transform these challenges into opportunities and accelerate progress.

¹Source of all NER-level statistics – Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region: <https://mdoner.gov.in/dashboard/pages/nerfacts.php?page=1>

²SDG India Index Baseline Report, 2018 released by NITI Aayog

Preparedness for building stewardship on Agenda 2030 in Nagaland



- Institutional Mechanism:** Under the Department of Planning and Coordination, the nodal department in the state, an SDG Coordination Centre has been set up in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This Centre consists of consultants and is headed by Additional Chief Secretary & Development Commissioner. A High Level Steering Committee headed by the Chief Secretary has also been formed to review the progress of SDGs at the state level.



- Capacity development:** Workshops have been undertaken with state-level officials to sensitise them regarding the SDGs. Moving forward, district, block, and village-council level sensitisation will also be carried out at the local level.



- Mapping of schemes:** All Flagship schemes, State schemes, and projects have been aligned and mapped to the SDGs.



- Vision, strategy papers and action plans:** The state is in the process of building the Vision document that is based on strategy papers and action plans for each of the identified growth sectors.



- Indicators:** The State Indicator Framework along with the targets has been finalised.



- SDG-aligned budget:** The state has initiated steps to align the state budget with the SDGs.

STEPS TO LOCALISE SDG IMPLEMENTATION

Building local ownership and capacities

Capacity development of the custodian department at the state level and nodal officers at the district, block, and village-council level. It will help to fast-track local-level understanding and implement the suitable strategy.

Developing Vision Plan

Visualising futuristic development at the state level across key priority areas (such as quality education, skill development/livelihood building, healthcare) or each of the 17 SDGs.

Identifying indicators

Finalising Indicator Framework at the state and district level, set baselines and targets and conduct mapping of state and national-level schemes that are being implemented.

Translating vision into strategy and action plans

Integrating SDGs into action plans at the state, district, block, and village-council level and preparing strategy papers to target key growth sectors in North East India.

SDG-aligned budgeting

Mapping of state, district, block and village-council level budget to SDGs and identifying gaps so that targeted investment can be made.

Formulating policy-level transformation

Developing new policy frameworks and/or revising the old ones at the state/regional level to align with SDGs.



CASE 1: ASSAM

It was the first North East State and one of the first few Indian states to adopt the SDGs at the sub-national level. The state's Vision 2030 was released in February 2016. The Transformation and Development Department has been assigned as the nodal department. A Centre for SDGs was also established in 2016 under the Assam Administrative Staff College as a knowledge hub.

State-wide SDG-aligned budget: Since 2016-17, Assam's budgets have been made SDG-centric and schemes have also been mapped to the SDGs. A thorough analysis of the Outcome budget for 2018-19 revealed that over 90% of the budgetary allocation is spent towards SDGs. Government of Assam was also one of the first state governments to come out with their vision document titled 'Assam Agenda 2030: Strategies and Actions for Achieving the SDGs'.

CASE 2: ARUNACHAL PRADESH

The Finance Planning and Investment Department act as the nodal department in the state. The SDGs act as the basis for the preparation of the draft vision plan and the state-level development schemes.

State-wide 'e-Cabinet' System: Arunachal Pradesh is the first North East State and second Indian state (after Andhra Pradesh) to implement the 'e-Cabinet' system. The system has been implemented by the Department of Information Technology and Communication. This web-based solution primarily enables Ministers to prepare for cabinet meetings, conduct the meetings and review minutes. It is done entirely without paper and thus it cuts down meeting time by over 60%.³

CASE 3: MIZORAM

The Planning and Programme Implementation Department is the nodal department with an SDG Cell set up in its Research and Development branch. A high-level committee has been created to coordinate with all departments and monitor the implementation process.

Mizoram engages in **local level capacity building** through:

- ☉ Publicity material on all SDGs is prepared and distributed to different offices and schools for display
- ☉ Video clips on the SDGs being telecasted on local TV channels and social media platforms
- ☉ Talk shows on the SDGs have been organised for local TV channels. An expert panel from academia and officials from Planning and Programme Implementation Department take part in the shows to raise awareness

³The systems allows for cutting down meeting time from 3-5 hours down to 30-90 minutes.
https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/arunachal-first-ne-state-to-implement-e-cabinet-solution-117020701080_1.html

SUPPORTING MECHANISM TO LOCALISE IMPLEMENTATION

Institutional Mechanism

- ⦿ Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centres (SDGCC) can assist in building stewardship with the 'whole of government' approach through inter-departmental coordination. SDGCC provides technical support to build, design, and implement programmes.

Knowledge Management/ Awareness Generation

- ⦿ Supporting on documenting best-practices for wider dissemination and leveraging communication platforms.

Win-win partnerships

- ⦿ Forming clear roadmap and targeting for organic farming
- ⦿ Sikkim Organic brand with logo
- ⦿ Sikkim Organic Festival

FROM THE REGION, BY THE REGION AND FOR THE REGION

CASE 1: 'CLEAN & GREEN SIKKIM'⁴



Goal 2 [Zero hunger], Goal 6 [Clean Water and Sanitation], Goal 13 [Climate Action], Goal 14 [Life below Water] and Goal 15 [Life on Land]

- ⦿ Open defecation free (ODF) since 2008 (for rural Sikkim) and since 2018 (for urban Sikkim)
- ⦿ First Indian state to ban non-biodegradable materials in 2016
- ⦿ First Indian state to be fully organic in 2016

Steps taken:

- ⦿ **Government-level initiative:**

Open defecation free:

- ⦿ Under the 'Total Sanitation Campaign', launched in 1998, toilets were constructed using local materials by collaborating with the local people. The government even made it mandatory to have a toilet at home. It would make people eligible for any benefits from the government or to contest in village-level elections.

Plastic-free:

- ⦿ In 1998, the state government banned the usage of non-biodegradable materials.
- ⦿ In 2016, the state government restricted the use of mineral water bottles in government programmes, and banned state-wide use of foam food containers.

Fully organic: Sikkim Organic Mission

- ⦿ Forming clear roadmap and targeting for organic farming
- ⦿ Sikkim Organic brand with logo
- ⦿ Sikkim Organic Festival

⁴<https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/sikkim-first-state-open-defecation-free-how-state-truly-going-swachh-20971/>

- ◎ **Targeted communication:** 'Clean & Green Sikkim' – brand name/slogan for the State.
- ◎ **Funding:** In order to accelerate urban programmes for ODF status, the state government leveraged funding under the 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' for toilet construction.
- ◎ **Monitoring:** For effectively monitoring ODF-status and progress, geotagging technology was leveraged by the State government.

CASE 2: ASSAM'S ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY 'SACRED' INITIATIVE⁵



Goal 13 [Climate Action], Goal 14 [Life below Water] and Goal 15 [Life on Land]

By 2020, make one of the world's largest river islands - Majuli - the country's first ever 'Carbon Neutral district'.

Steps taken:

- ◎ **Government-level initiative:**
 - » In 2017, the Government of Assam launched 'Sustainable Action for Climate Resilient Development' (SaCRoD) initiative in order to reduce greenhouse gases in the district.
 - » District level committee was set up under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner to oversee implementation and a clear roadmap was drawn up, for fulfilling the vision.
- ◎ **Systematic approach:** Under this programme, the following components⁶ are included:
 - » Disaggregated renewable energy generation projects to cater to the increasing energy demands of the island
 - » A green sustainable integrated transport system
 - » Green norms for buildings and surrounding landscapes
 - » Waste recycling mechanisms leading to zero waste emissions
 - » Adopting practices in agriculture revolving around the efficient use of water and carbon neutral packages
 - » Afforestation across Majuli landscape
- ◎ **Targeted communication:** The initiative was launched on International Day of Forests and the 'Forests are Lives' campaign was undertaken to stress on the importance of Assam's rich flora and fauna. This programme launched by the Government of Assam in collaboration with IORA Consultancy Services has led to sensitising multiple stakeholders (including government) on carbon neutrality.

⁵<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/environment/the-good-earth/majuli-to-be-indias-first-ever-carbon-neutral-district/articleshow/56003942.cms?from=mdr>

⁶<http://ioraecological.com/spotlight/sacred-majuli/>

CASE 3: NAGALAND'S VILLAGE-LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM – 'VILLAGE VISION CELLS' PROGRAMME



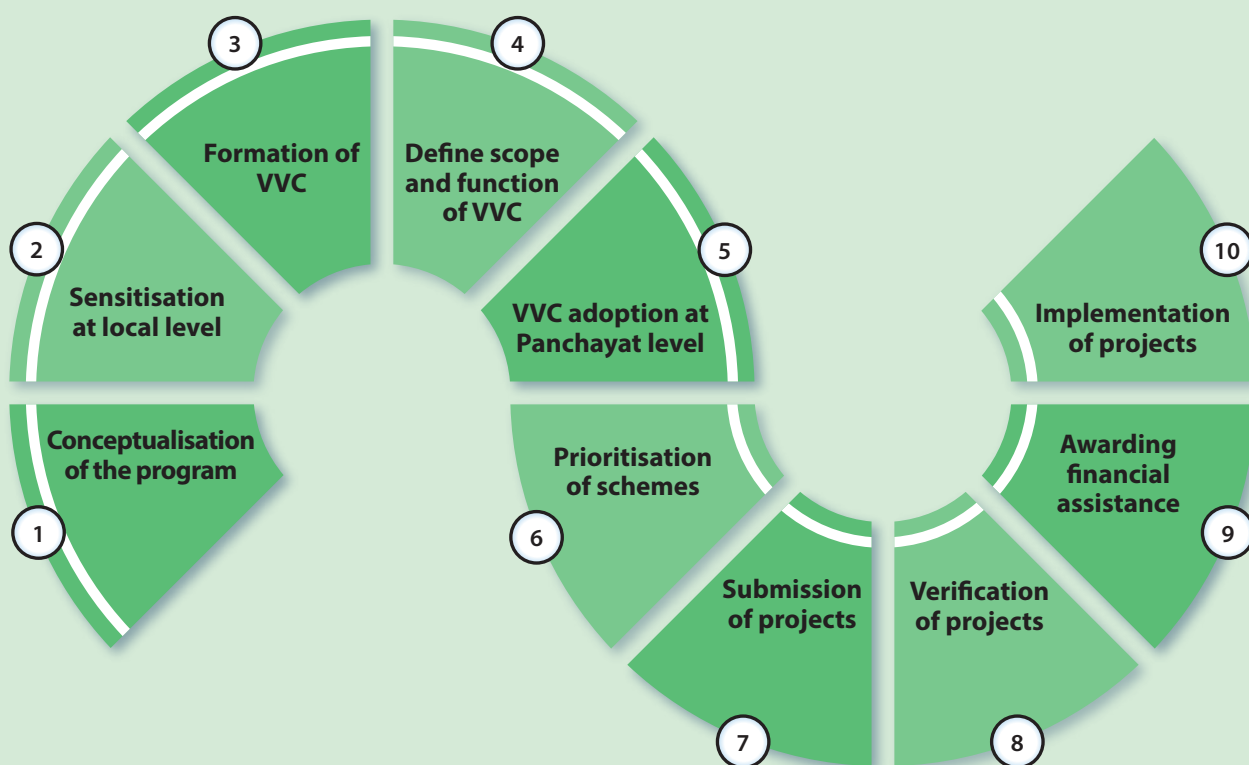
All Goals

In 2012, the Government of Nagaland introduced Village Vision Cells (VVCs) with the tagline 'Back to the Roots.' The objective was to benefit all the villages by generating long-term practical and feasible ideas at the local level.

Steps taken:

- Multi-stakeholder structure:** VVCs function as a non-governmental voluntary body that comprise of elected legislative members, bureaucrats, retired and present gazetted officers, social workers and entrepreneurs of the village.
- Two-pronged operations:** First, facilitating use of available physical resources judiciously based on priorities identified for sustainable development in consultation with the Village Development Board or other departments. Second, to sensitise villagers through workshops/seminars regarding vital aspects such as sanitation, healthcare, career counselling and so on. This programme is designed in a way to make it 'for the community, by the community, and of the community'.

Programme cycle:



NORTH EAST INDIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

With 8% of India's total geographical area and 5,300 kilometres of international borders, the North East region acts as an important geographic connection point with countries in South East Asia. Under the Government of India's 'Act East Policy', North East India is being developed as a gateway to South East Asian countries such as Myanmar and Thailand. In fact, this connectivity is in alignment with Thailand's 'Act West' Policy and it potentially also promotes 'South-South Cooperation'.

As an example, the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway – which is currently under construction – is one of the chief steps towards building this international relationship. This highway will allow greater movement of goods and economic activity. Hence, it is essential to focus on the development and connectivity aspect in India's North-East, with new road and rail links, opening up multi modal forms of transport. This also includes river navigation, and setting up of industrial corridors and economic activities such as local markets, with an emphasis on agriculture, horticulture, handlooms, handicrafts and processed food.



HOW CAN YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE?



Campaign:

Targeted campaigns which generate awareness and action at the ground level.



Collaboration:

Identify the low-hanging fruit where maximum impact is likely possible by employing minimum resources. Building strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders harnessing each of their strengths and capabilities.



Community participation:

Greater accountability and a higher likelihood of action-oriented outcome is possible when a community gets an opportunity at the local level with regard to the management, investment and owning the implementation of programmes in a structured way.

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