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Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: Tackling Poverty and Bridging

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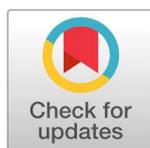
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***Abstract:** The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, aim to create a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world by 2030. Among the 17 SDGs, eradicating poverty and reducing inequality are fundamental objectives that influence all aspects of human development. Poverty deprives individuals of basic necessities such as food, education, healthcare, and shelter, while inequality widens social and economic gaps within and among nations. This article examines the importance of tackling poverty and bridging inequality as essential steps towards achieving sustainable development. It highlights the causes, challenges, and strategies needed to ensure inclusive growth and social justice for all.*

***Keywords:** SDG's, Income Inequality, Poverty, Education, Skill Development
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Introduction

Sustainable development refers to development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals provide a global framework to address major challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and injustice. Poverty and inequality remain deeply interconnected problems that hinder economic growth, social harmony, and human dignity. Despite global progress, millions of people still live below the poverty line, and inequality continues to rise due to unequal access to resources and opportunities. Therefore, achieving SDGs requires focused efforts to eliminate poverty and bridge inequality in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

1. Understanding Poverty and Inequality

Poverty is not merely the lack of income but also the denial of basic human rights, opportunities, and social security. Inequality refers to unequal distribution of income, wealth, education, healthcare, and political power. Both issues reinforce each other and create long-term social exclusion.

2. Poverty Eradication as a Core SDG Objective

SDG 1 aims to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. Effective poverty reduction requires access to quality education, employment opportunities, healthcare services, and social protection systems.

3. Bridging Economic and Social Inequality

SDG 10 focuses on reducing inequality within and among countries. Policies promoting fair wages, inclusive economic growth, gender equality, and equal access to resources are essential to bridge disparities.

4. Role of Education and Employment

Education empowers individuals with skills and knowledge, enabling them to escape poverty. Decent work and inclusive employment generate income and promote social mobility.

5. Government Policies and Global Cooperation

Governments play a crucial role through welfare schemes, progressive taxation, and inclusive policies. International cooperation, financial aid, and technology transfer also help developing nations achieve SDGs.

6. Sustainable and Inclusive Development Strategies

Sustainable development must integrate economic growth with social equity and environmental protection. Inclusive development ensures that no one is left behind.

Additional Sub-Titles for the Article

7. Poverty, Inequality, and Human Rights

Poverty and inequality violate basic human rights such as the right to food, education, health, and dignity.

8. Gender Inequality and Feminization of Poverty

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by poverty due to unequal access to education, employment, and property.

9. Rural–Urban Divide

Unequal development between rural and urban areas increases poverty and migration, widening social and economic gaps.

10. Impact of Globalization on Inequality

While globalization promotes growth, unequal benefits often increase income disparity between rich and poor nations.

11. Health Inequality and Access to Healthcare

Lack of affordable healthcare pushes vulnerable groups deeper into poverty.

12. Digital Divide and Economic Exclusion

Limited access to technology and digital resources increases inequality in education and employment.

13. Role of Social Welfare Schemes

Government programs such as food security, housing, pensions, and employment schemes help reduce poverty and inequality.

14. Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Economy

Economic growth must be inclusive to ensure benefits reach marginalized communities.

15. Environmental Sustainability and Poverty Reduction

Environmental degradation affects the poor the most; sustainable practices help protect livelihoods.

16. Role of Education in Social Mobility

Education reduces intergenerational poverty and promotes equality of opportunity.

17. Youth Empowerment and Skill Development

Skill training and entrepreneurship enable youth to contribute to sustainable development.

18. Role of NGOs and Civil Society

Non-governmental organizations bridge gaps where government support is limited.

19. Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development

International cooperation is vital to fund, monitor, and achieve SDGs.

20. Challenges in Achieving SDGs

Corruption, lack of resources, political instability, and climate change hinder progress.

21. India's Efforts Toward SDGs

Initiatives like MGNREGA, PMAY, Digital India, and Skill India support poverty reduction and inclusion.

22. Monitoring and Accountability

Transparent governance and data-driven monitoring ensure effective SDG implementation.

23. Leaving No One Behind

A core principle of SDGs is ensuring development benefits all sections of society.

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by tackling poverty and bridging inequality is both a moral obligation and a developmental necessity. Poverty and inequality undermine social stability, economic progress, and human dignity. Sustainable solutions require collective efforts from governments, international organizations, civil society, and individuals. By promoting inclusive growth, equitable resource distribution, quality education, and social justice, the world can move closer to achieving the SDGs. Ultimately, a future free from poverty and inequality is essential for sustainable and lasting development.

Understanding Poverty

Poverty is not merely a lack of income but a multidimensional problem. It includes hunger, malnutrition, lack of education, poor health, unemployment, and social exclusion. People living in poverty often face insecurity and vulnerability, making it difficult for them to improve their living conditions. Poverty undermines human dignity and restricts participation in social, economic, and political life.

Nature and Causes of Inequality

Inequality refers to the unequal distribution of income, wealth, resources, and opportunities among individuals and groups. It arises due to factors such as discrimination, unequal access to education, gender bias, unemployment, and regional imbalances. Social, economic, and political inequalities often overlap, leading to marginalization of vulnerable groups such as women, minorities, and the poor.

Link Between Poverty and Inequality

Poverty and inequality are closely interconnected and reinforce each other. Inequality limits access to opportunities such as quality education and decent employment, pushing marginalized groups into poverty. At the same time, poverty restricts social mobility and perpetuates inequality across generations. Sustainable poverty reduction is not possible without addressing inequality.

SDG 1: No Poverty

SDG 1 aims to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. It emphasizes social protection systems, access to basic services, and equal rights to economic resources. Poverty eradication is the foundation for achieving other SDGs, as it improves health, education, and overall quality of life.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

SDG 10 focuses on reducing inequalities within and among countries. It promotes inclusive economic growth, fair wages, and equal opportunities regardless of gender, age, disability, or social background. Reducing inequality strengthens social cohesion and ensures sustainable economic progress.

Role of Education in Reducing Poverty and Inequality

Education is a powerful tool for breaking the cycle of poverty. Quality education equips individuals with skills and knowledge necessary for employment and economic independence. Equal access to education promotes social mobility and reduces inequality across generations.

Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth

Decent employment opportunities provide income security and improve living standards. Skill development, entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic policies help generate sustainable livelihoods. Inclusive growth ensures that the benefits of development reach all sections of society.

Gender Inequality and Poverty

Women are disproportionately affected by poverty due to unequal wages, limited access to education, employment, and property rights. Gender inequality not only harms women but also slows overall development. Empowering women contributes significantly to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Rural–Urban Inequality

The rural–urban divide remains a major challenge. Rural areas often lack adequate infrastructure, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. This imbalance leads to migration and urban poverty. Balanced regional development is essential to reduce inequality.

Access to Healthcare and Social Protection

Affordable healthcare and social security systems protect individuals from falling into poverty due to illness or economic shocks. Universal access to healthcare improves productivity and quality of life, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Role of Government and Policy Measures

Governments play a crucial role in addressing poverty and inequality through welfare schemes, progressive taxation, social security, and inclusive policies. Effective governance and transparent implementation are essential for achieving desired outcomes.

Global Cooperation and Partnerships

Achieving the SDGs requires international cooperation. Financial assistance, technology transfer, and knowledge sharing help developing countries address poverty and inequality. Global partnerships strengthen collective efforts toward sustainable development.

Challenges in Tackling Poverty and Inequality

Major challenges include lack of resources, corruption, poor governance, climate change, and political instability. These factors slow progress and widen existing inequalities. Overcoming these challenges requires strong institutions and global commitment.

Way Forward

The way forward involves adopting inclusive and sustainable development strategies. Investments in education, healthcare, employment, and social protection must be strengthened. Policies should ensure that no one is left behind. Collective efforts by governments, international organizations, civil society, and individuals are necessary to achieve the SDGs.

Conclusion

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by tackling poverty and bridging inequality is both a moral obligation and a developmental necessity. Poverty and inequality undermine social stability, economic progress, and human dignity. Sustainable solutions require collective efforts from governments, international organizations, civil society, and individuals. By promoting inclusive growth, equitable resource distribution, quality education, and social justice, the world can move closer to achieving the SDGs. Ultimately, a future free from poverty and inequality is essential for sustainable and lasting development. Tackling poverty and bridging inequality are central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Poverty and inequality threaten social justice, economic stability, and human dignity. Sustainable development can be achieved only through inclusive growth, equitable distribution of resources, and equal opportunities for all. By addressing these challenges collectively, the world can move toward a more just, peaceful, and sustainable future.

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<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/> — Official UN page on SDG 10 (inequality reduction).
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<https://sdgs.un.org/goals> — United Nations Sustainable Development Goals hub (navigate to Goal 1 & 10). Sustainable Development Goals