



सत्यमेव जयते

Government of Assam



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



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## Conclave on Sustainable Development Goals for Health (Goal 3), Water & Sanitation (Goal 6)

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Organised by

**Health and Family Welfare Department  
&  
Public Health Engineering Department,  
Government of Assam**

24th April, 2017  
Centre for SDG Assam  
Assam Administrative Staff College



National Health Mission, Assam



## Assam's Endeavours in Achieving the SDGs

The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** were universally adopted in January 2016 as a call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 Goals which are to be achieved by 2030, were designed based on the learnings from Millennium Development Goals, through a global consultative process, to include many more new areas of focus such as Climate Change, Sustainable Consumption, Peace and Justice, Innovation among many other key areas. The SDGs are based on the principle of forging partnerships and set clear guidelines to achieving these targets as per the needs of each region.

The **Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi**, in his speech addressing the United Nations on 25th September 2015 at the UN Sustainable Development Summit stated, '**Today, much of India's development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals**'. Government of Assam, mirroring this commitment, under the leadership of Chief Minister Shri Sarbananda Sonowal strived to take forward the SDGs in Assam. Under the guidelines structured in the vision document called, '**Assam 2030: Our Dream, Our Commitment**', a strategy was created to start the process of inducting SDGs into the policy planning processes of the Government of Assam. It is one of the first states in India and globally to start bringing SDGs into the policy discourse of the state.

To take forward these goals in Assam the **Centre for Sustainable Development Goals (CSDGs)** was established in the Assam Administrative Staff College.

- The CSDGs was established as a think-tank to provide research and technical support to all departments in the Government of Assam, to take forward their SDG targets.
- The Planning & Development Department is the nodal department for coordinating all the activities within departments for achieving the SDGs. A SDG Cell has also been established within the Planning & Development Department to provide support to taking forward SDG related activities. It reports directly to the Additional Chief Secretary, Planning & Development Department.
- SDGs Strategy Support Group (SSSG) is also being set-up to provide a platform for collective generation and incubation of new ideas and innovations, and as a knowledge exchange, functioning in a semi-formal manner. The Chief Secretary, Government of Assam is the Chairperson for this group.
- Partnership creation has played a central role in taking forward the SDG Agenda. International organisations such as UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and others are collaborating and providing support to the Government of Assam in designing their mission to take forward SDGs.
- The UNDP has given high priority to the 2030 Agenda and believes that government, philanthropic organisations, businesses need to work together to achieve the SDGs<sup>2</sup>. UNDP is providing support to governments to integrate the SDGs into both the development plans and policies of nations. UNDP has allocated two State Technical Officers for assistance to the Government of Assam, for working specifically on the SDG Agenda of the state.

# SDGs Planning in Action

The work towards strategizing for the SDGs started with the Government Order (GO) dated 28th December 2015 issued by the Shri V. K. Pipersenia, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam. This was followed by an orientation conducted on 5th January 2016 and at the end of which 8 working groups were constituted to prepare the Strategy Paper and Action Plan (SPAPs) against the 17 SDGs. A second GO issued on 4th March 2017, by the Chief Secretary, Government of Assam, reinstated governments initiative and plans for taking forward the SDG goals. In preparation for the finalisation of these SPAPs, 8 conclaves have been planned by the Centre for SDGs and Planning and Development Department for covering all the 17 goals.

The first conclave is being organized by the **Health & Family Welfare Department and Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department**, Government of Assam on SDG 3 and SDG 6, on 24th April, 2017 at the Assam Administrative Staff College, Guwahati. UNICEF, WHO and UNDP are also playing an important role in the organizing and facilitation of this conclave. The decisions from this conclave will pave the way for finalizing the action plan and strategy of the state for achieving Goal 3 and Goal 6 respectively. Stated below is a brief understanding on Goal 3 and the expected outcomes from each of the sessions.

## SDG Goal 3: Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Well-Being for All at All Ages

### Technical Session I: Maternal & Child Health

**SDG Targets 3.1:** By 2030, reduce the maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births

**SDG Targets 3.2:** By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1000 live births and under 5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1000 live births

Two big challenges that must be addressed in terms of SDG targets 3.1 and 3.2, as well as being critical to the future development of the state, are reducing the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) and the under-five mortality rate. The MMR in India is 167 per lakh live births ( ) whereas in Assam the MMR is almost double with 300 per lakh live births. In upper Assam the MMR is alarmingly high with 404 per lakh live births (AHS 2012-13). Furthermore, Assam has the highest under-five mortality rate in India with 62 children under the age of five dying per thousand live births.

#### Expected outcome

- Deliberate on causes of high maternal mortality and under 5 mortality rate in Assam
- Share evidence based interventions and best practices related to maternal and child health.
- Review and finalize SPAPs related to targets SDG 3.1 and 3.2, considering inputs received during the session.

### Technical Session II: Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

**SDG Target 3.3:** By 2030, end the Epidemics of AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria, and Neglected Tropical Diseases and combat Hepatitis, Waterborne diseases and other Communicable diseases"

**SDG Target 3.4:** By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental well-being

In terms of achieving SDG targets 3.3 and 3.4, the biggest challenges for communicable diseases are the prevalence of tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and HIV/AIDS. Assam has made progress through Special Immunization Days and *Mission Indradhanush*, though there is still work to control measles, rubella and Japanese Encephalitis. In regard to non-communicable diseases, cardiovascular diseases account for 52% of mortality in the country followed by chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cancer, diabetes and injuries. It is estimated that six to seven percent of the population suffer from mental illness and most (approximately 90%) remain untreated.



### Expected outcome

- Deliberate and identify the existing gaps in the Control of Communicable and NCDs.
- Share evidence based interventions and best practices related to the Communicable and NCDs from Global/National experiences.
- Review and finalize SPAPs related to targets SDG 3.3, considering inputs received during the session.

## Technical Session III: Health System Strengthening and Universal Health Coverage

**SDG Target 3.7:** By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

**SDG Target 3.8:** Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services & access to safe, effective, quality & affordable essential medicines & vaccines for all.

**SDG Target 3.C:** Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.

In India, out of pocket expenses are significantly high, especially in terms of patients having to buy their own medicines and in Assam the scenario is similar. Assam is making significant strides towards improving health systems and giving access to health coverage. *Atal Amrit Abhiyan* is a financial health protection scheme for families earning below Rs. 5 lakh per annum. However, there is significant work to be done in ensuring proper systems and access to primary, and sexual and reproductive health-care services.

### Expected Outcome

- Deliberate on different components of health system like governance, service delivery mechanisms, health workforce, information system, access to medicines and diagnostics and financing in the context of Assam.
- Assess the health system of Assam against National framework for SDG-3 (a) Scale up "public health" building on National Health Mission (b) Strengthen health service delivery with focus on quality and equity (c) Improve financial protection, building on New National Health Protection scheme (d) Monitoring and accountability for efficient use of resources.
- Review and finalize the SPAPs, considering inputs received during the session.

## IV. Convergence and Partnerships for Promoting Goal 3 and Goal 6

Establishing inter-sectoral linkages are important to facilitate joint efforts to address pertinent issues at all levels. This is especially important at policy formulation and implementation level, keeping in consideration cross-cutting and multi-sectoral issues. This session will highlight some of the critical issues in Assam, especially for areas which require special attention. It will aim to create a pathway, through the SPAPs, for inter-departmental convergence, reflecting in the policy planning for SDGs related programmes.

### Expected Outcome

- Discuss and explore possibilities of convergence of policy and programmes of Government Departments in order to achieve both the Goal 3 and Goal 6.
- Conceptualizing new partnerships and possibility of collaboration between Inter and Intra Government Departments for achieving Goal 3 and Goal 6.
- Identify and highlight some of the critical areas which need special attention in terms of policy planning and implementation.
- Discuss how convergence can be planned, with the SPAPs as the central focus in this planning exercise.

## V. Valedictory Session

**Outcome:** The final session will take the inputs from all the technical sessions to finalise the SPAPs which were discussed throughout the day. It will use the inputs and recommendations made by experts to come out with a road map, through the 7-year Strategic Paper and 3-year Action Plan, for achieving Goal 3 and Goal 6 in Assam.

<sup>1</sup> Government of Assam (2016): Assam 2030, Our Dream, Our Commitment: Vision and Strategic Architecture Document, July 12th, 2016. Extract from message from the Chief Minister.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP (2016): <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>. Accessed: 20.04.2017