

## Looking for an Idea for Your Startup?

Here are some problems India is facing, think of a solution to them. You can identify some problems of your own too.

### 1. Prevent Food Waste in India:

- **What is the problem?** Food waste or food loss is that which is left uneaten or discarded. Indians waste food worth INR 88,800 crore per year, which is equivalent to INR 244 crore being wasted daily.<sup>1</sup> Even after producing more food than it needs, 194 million people go hungry in India every day<sup>2</sup> and as a result India ranks a disappointing 103 among 119 countries in Global Hunger Index<sup>3</sup>. This wastage has a knock-on effect on the environment, as the efforts made to produce this generates greenhouse gases, uses water, and can lead to deforestation
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government is making efforts to curb the wastage of food by setting up new storage facilities, making distribution more efficient, and distributing excess grains
- **What can you do?** Some of the avenues that can be explored are educating farmers on good storage practices, providing transportation and storage facilities, re-distributing leftover food from parties and events, and setting up compost plants
- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions to reduce or remove this problem will solve a multitude of problems for our country including widespread malnutrition, hunger, deforestation, and groundwater depletion
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; Ministry of Food Processing Industries

### 2. Cleaner Railways:

- **What is the problem?** The Indian Railways is the fourth largest railway network in the world and carries over 23 million passengers every day<sup>4</sup>. However, it is also rife with problems such as unhygienic platforms and coaches, rodent-infested pantry, and malfunctioning washrooms. This has been a major cause of concern as it makes the journey uncomfortable for the passengers and increases the chances of illness
- **What is the government doing?** The government has started a plethora of initiatives such as providing On Board HouseKeeping Service (OBHS) in nearly 980 trains for cleaning of coaches during the run of the trains; on demand 'Clean My Coach' service<sup>5</sup>, where passengers can request for cleaning services through a mobile apps; washing of bed linen provided for AC passengers is done after every single use, while blankets were being cleaned every two months
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are web-based solutions to track hygiene standards maintained at platforms, toilets that process human waste, advanced food storage systems to keep rodents and pests in check
- **How will your ideas help?** Devising methods, technologies, and resources to ensure a cleaner rail network in India will provide an essential solution for millions of Indians using the Railways daily
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Railways

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/personal-finance-news/india-wastes-rs-244-crore-worth-of-food-a-day-report/articleshow/62391489.cms>

<sup>2</sup> <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/india-wastes-food-worth-14-billion-year-194-million-indians-goes-hungry-daily-16316/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/india-wastes-food-worth-14-billion-year-194-million-indians-goes-hungry-daily-16316/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/railways>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thebetterindia.com/43716/indian-railways-coach-cleaning/>

### 3. Quality Education:

- **What is the problem?** Quality education and an employable workforce are critical for a rapidly developing country such as India. However, maintaining standard of education in more than a million schools nationwide, offering training programs to teachers, and keeping good balance with education system worldwide has been a big challenge for the Indian government. This problem is visible from the fact that about 25 per cent of Indian students in the age group of 14-18 years cannot read basic text fluently in their own language, and more than half face challenges in performing basic arithmetic. <sup>6</sup>This is a dismal state of affairs as nearly a quarter of India's population is of school/college going age
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has taken a number of steps to address this problem. Initiatives like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan seek to address the issue of school infrastructure, teacher quality and training, and filling vacancies; government budget allocated for quality education has been increased three-fold under the Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan; and Global Initiative for Academic Network has been launched with the aim to internationalize education and bring renowned professors from global universities to India<sup>7</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are social enterprises that focus on bringing more students under the formal education set-up, awarding meritorious students, developing interactive methods of teaching through internet and mobile, and bringing out programs that explain concepts in vernacular languages to students for better understanding
- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions to provide quality education to Indian students in the most economical and holistic way will play a key role in driving the economic engine of India. These solutions will play a key role in determining whether India's demographic situation will be an asset or a liability for the country
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Human Resource Development; Ministry of Science and Technology; Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

### 4. Making India disable friendly nation:

- **What is the problem?** India has around 80 million people with disability. According to the Word Bank, one in every 12 households in India has a person living with disability.<sup>8</sup> This means that a significant proportion of India's citizen are disabled and the persistent issue is that disabled population are an excluded section of the society. They face a number of problems in their daily life such as lack of accessibility to most buildings, lack of appropriate healthcare services, un-inclusive educational system, and general discrimination and stigmatisation
- **What is the government doing?** From introducing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in 2016 to address some of the concerns faced by differently-abled persons in India to the Prime Minister rolling out Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan in 2015,<sup>9</sup> with a motive to make it convenient for persons with disabilities to access administrative buildings and transport facilities; the Indian government has made efforts to improve on this front
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are design solutions that assist disabled people in accessing buildings and transport facilities; tech solutions that help in their inclusion in work places and society; and general sensitization initiatives

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/1km3nIazOPD0JgDwqKjz8J/The-state-of-education-in-rural-India.html>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/33-new-initiatives-have-been-taken-by-the-government-to-strengthen-education-sector-118062000337\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/33-new-initiatives-have-been-taken-by-the-government-to-strengthen-education-sector-118062000337_1.html)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/working-towards-a-disabled-friendly-india/article25040700.ece>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/how-laws-and-government-schemes-supporting-people-disabilities-are-failing-83876>

- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions and initiatives to uplift societal status of disabled people and ease their daily life have huge potential in India. They will not only assist in uplifting the stigma surrounding disabled people but also help them become productive members of the society and contribute to the economic growth of the country
- **Concerned Ministries:** Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

## 5. Sports Reform & Accountable Governance - Next Olympian challenge:

- **What is the problem?** World's second most populous nation has the worst Olympic record in terms of medals per head and a number of smaller countries with limited talent pools to choose from, outperform India regularly at the Olympics. <sup>10</sup>India is unable to produce a steady stream of world-class talent that can bring medals at the world stage. The problem is not a dearth of talent but systematic failures that are responsible for India's historic poor performance at the Olympics; the major ones being lack of proper infrastructure, paucity of funding, politization of sports, and the lack of emphasis given to sports culturally
- **What is the government doing?** The government has started a number of initiatives to promote sports and sportspersons in India. Khelo India aims to encourage the participation on school students in sports while Target Olympic Podium Scheme assists elite sports professionals who are capable of bringing Olympic glory for the country<sup>11</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are technology and scientific expertise to improve the performance of athletes, initiatives to provide talented youngsters a platform to come in the limelight, and developing means to better meet the nutritional needs of athletes
- **How will your ideas help?** Sports has the power of bringing positive transformation in the society. Solutions and ideas to overcome this challenge of engaging young children in sports and providing right infrastructure and quality training from the start has huge potential in our medal-starved nation. An impressive performance in the Olympics will lead to increasing awareness about sports in our country, which in turn will lead to the rapid growth of the sports and nutrition industry in India
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

## 6. Traffic Management:

- **What is the problem?** India has the second-largest road network in the world.<sup>12</sup> The number of cars sold in the country is increasing day by day and so is the congestion and instances of road rage. Traffic congestion in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Kolkata during peak hours cost the Indian economy INR 1.47 lakh crores <sup>13</sup>annually and this number is projected to increase in the future unless relevant measures are undertaken. There is a pressing need to come up with methods and solutions to handle the increasing traffic in India, especially in the metros along with improving the discipline and driving conditions prevalent
- **What is the government doing?** The government has undertaken a number of initiatives such as constructing 599 highway projects across the country under the Smart Cities Program, a National Electric Mobility Mission Plan 2020<sup>14</sup>, which proposes to incentivize adoption of green vehicles, and an AI-based traffic management system being adopted by the Delhi Police

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.news.com.au/sport/olympics/the-worst-country-at-the-rio-2016-olympics/news-story/0d5ecc354791776b9cd0097eea6a5d21>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.rediff.com/sports/report/rathore-on-how-india-plan-to-succeed-at-2020-olympics/20180905.htm>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/roads-highways>

<sup>13</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/traffic-congestion-costs-four-major-indian-cities-rs-1-5-lakh-crore-a-year/articleshow/63918040.cms>

<sup>14</sup> <https://india.smartcitiescouncil.com/article/see-how-government-initiatives-propel-smart-transportation-market>

- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are developing tech-enabled solutions that can manage the flow of traffic efficiently, identify and track traffic violations, and understand the pain points of the current road network
- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions and ideas to de-congest roads and better manage the traffic flow has the potential to not only increase the productivity of the Indian workforce but to also save significant economic and social costs for the Indian economy
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

## 7. Crop Insurance:

- **What is the problem?** In a country like India, where a significant proportion of the population is engaged in agriculture; adoption of crop insurance is extremely important. However, this is not case for India as despite having approximately 52 per cent of the gross cropped area rain fed, agricultural insurance mechanism in India is very weak.<sup>15</sup> This lack of adoption of crop insurance in India and the unpredictable nature of monsoons has led to major issues such as farmer suicides
- **What is the government doing?** The government has introduced a number of schemes and measures to help farmers with crop insurance; the most notable being Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana<sup>16</sup>. This scheme aims to bring more farmers under the protection of crop insurance and help them get back on their feet in case crops fail
- **What can you do?** Avenues that can be explored include forming self-help groups or organizations that provide crop insurances to farmers at minimal premiums, initiatives to educate farmers about the benefits of crop insurances and how to find a credible crop insurance company along with tech solutions to improve the agricultural life cycle
- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions and ideas to bring crop insurance to more farmers will play a pivotal role in making agriculture an attractive sector once again, increase the output and productivity of farmlands, and most importantly help stem farmer suicides
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers; Ministry of Finance

## 8. Pollution Control:

- **What is the problem?** Rising air pollution is a menace for India, with multiple Indian cities regularly making it to the Top-10 most polluted cities in the World list.<sup>17</sup> India is also struggling with widespread pollution of its water bodies, case in point being Yamuna river. This is leading to a rapid increase in the number of chronic diseases across the country, the younger demographic being the ones most adversely affected
- **What is the government doing?** In recent years, the Government has taken a number of steps to fight the rising pollution problem. The National Clean Air Programme has been launched<sup>18</sup> in conjunction with state governments to come up with specific targets along with setting-up of a comprehensive action plan by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change<sup>19</sup>
- **What can you do?** The avenues that can be explored are solutions easing the adoption of electric vehicles, ideas to enhance manufacturing processes and water filtration process
- 

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.financialexpress.com/budget/economic-survey-2017-18-agriculture-climate-change-likely-to-lower-farmers-income-by-25/1035560/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/crop-insurance-scheme-farmers-at-the-helm-of-benefits/articleshow/66913601.cms>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.vox.com/2018/5/8/17316978/india-pollution-levels-air-delhi-health>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.thebetterindia.com/134193/india-cities-plan-reduce-air-pollution-50-five-years/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=179076>

- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions to effectively tackle the problem of pollution will help combat one of the most pressing problems facing the country along with helping increase the economic output and providing employment opportunities
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

## 9. Transport Infrastructure:

- **What is the problem?** Even though India has the second-largest road network<sup>20</sup> and India has the world's largest rail network in terms of passenger traffic<sup>21</sup>, majority of it is not well-maintained and leads to sub-par utilization of the available resources. Moreover, poor public transport infrastructure compounds this problem and causes traffic congestion
- **What is the government doing?** Government has launched new schemes to improve the transport infrastructure in India. Schemes such as Bharatmala Pariyojana aim to optimize efficiency of freight and passenger movement across the country by bridging critical infrastructure gaps and through development on new highways<sup>22</sup>
- **What can you do?** Avenues that can be explored are solutions that make the railways and roadways more efficient and better maintained, making air travel more accessible, and implementing global best practices in transport infrastructure
- **How will your ideas help?** Solutions that improve the transport infrastructure in India at a rapid pace are critical as will enable India's economic growth to not only continue but even increase in the future
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Railways; Ministry of Road Transport and Highways; Ministry of Civil Aviation; Ministry of Shipping

## 10. Mosquito Diseases:

- **What is the problem?** Vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, zika virus, swine flu, chikungunya, and nipah are on the rise. Mosquitoes are responsible for causing around 725,000 human deaths every year and are found on every continent on the earth except for Antarctica.<sup>23</sup> This makes them a menace and tough to control
- **What is the government doing?** The government has undertaken a slew of initiatives to eradicate vector-borne diseases from India including fogging, providing mosquito nets and repellents free of cost,<sup>24</sup> launching awareness programs, and providing vaccinations and medicines
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are developing smart traps, efficient mosquito repellents, biological variations that can reduce the mosquito populations in problematic areas
- **How will your ideas help?** Vector-borne diseases are responsible for significant number of deaths every year and have a significant impact on the healthy population of the country causing financial loss. Innovative solutions that can tackle this efficiently and effectively will be major step towards reducing the incidence of diseases in India
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

## 11. Women Safety:

➤

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/roads-highways>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/railways>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/bharatmala-pariyojana-stepping-stone-towards-new-india>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.gatesnotes.com/Health/Most-Lethal-Animal-Mosquito-Week>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.who.int/malaria/news/2018/india-elimination-odisha/en/>



- **What is the problem?** Women safety is a big challenge in India. A report by the Thomson Reuters Foundation has ranked India as the most dangerous country for women, ahead of war-torn countries like Afghanistan and Syria. In India there are four rape cases every hour<sup>25</sup> and this trend has not shown a downward trajectory in the last couple of years, making it a pressing issue
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has launched several Initiatives to tackle the problem of women's safety in the country and introduce a shift in general mindset of the people. Initiatives such as One Stop Centre Scheme that provide shelter, police desk, legal, medical, and counselling services to victims of violence under one roof and the Working Women Hostels encourage women to join the formal workforce by providing them safe and conveniently located accommodations<sup>26</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are safety measures such as wearables that can inform the authorities or nearby people in case of an emergency, devices or applications that can identify or track the aggressors, and initiatives that sensitize people towards the issue of women's safety
- **How will your ideas help?** There is a pressing need for ideas, solutions, methods that work towards women's safety as this will not only allow the women to live without fear but also help unleash the potential that women have. This will not only help women when faced with such challenges but also transform the mindset of people in general
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Women and Child Development; Ministry of Law and Justice; Ministry of Home Affairs

## 12. Waste Management:

- **What is the problem?** India generates 62 million tonnes of waste every year, of which less than 60% is collected and around 15% processed.<sup>27</sup> And India's daily waste generation is expected to reach 377,000 tonnes by 2025<sup>28</sup>. This is a major problem as unprocessed waste or waste dumped in open dumpsites is an environmental hazard and causes public health issues, environmental degradation, and resultant climate change
- **What is the government doing?** The government has launched initiatives to improve waste management in India including the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and promoting the idea of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle<sup>29</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are innovative solutions that allow waste to be sorted before being dumped so that it can be treated effectively, devices which can generate products from waste such as biogas and recycling plants
- **How will your ideas help?** Innovative ideas to overcome the problem of inefficient waste management is crucial in a growing economy such as India because lack of a proper waste management system is not only harmful for the economy but after a time will cause become a roadblock in the development of the country
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

---

<sup>25</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/06/27/india-ranked-worlds-most-dangerous-place-for-women-reigniting-debate-about-womens-safety/?hpid=hp\\_hp-top-table-main-women-safety:homepage-link-top&utm\\_term=.f36adc8758f4](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/06/27/india-ranked-worlds-most-dangerous-place-for-women-reigniting-debate-about-womens-safety/?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main-women-safety:homepage-link-top&utm_term=.f36adc8758f4)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.goodreturns.in/classroom/2018/02/7-indian-government-schemes-women-empowerment/articlecontent-pf11343-680804.html>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/institutional-framework-implementing-solid-waste-management-india-macro-analysis>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/V2CgeiUq89kl1k2fDwJXMI/Swachh-Bharats-waste-management-problem.html>

<sup>29</sup> <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/reduce-reuse-recycle-for-development-waste-management-narendra-modi/articleshow/63668944.cms>

## 13. Crime Control:

- **What is the problem?** The crime rates in India have been increasing every year. Crimes such as robberies, thefts, molestation, rape, and murder have seen the most spike<sup>30</sup>. The time-consuming process of the judiciary and ineffectiveness of the authorities leads to culprits escaping scot-free and people losing trust in the judiciary system of the country
- **What is the government doing?** Government has introduced initiatives to control crime and fast-track the resolution. Setting up of fast-track courts for rape cases<sup>31</sup>, installing CCTV cameras for better monitoring, and harsher punishments for violent crimes are part of the efforts made by the government
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are devices that can inform friends and family members in case of a threat or crime, ideas that can help in better monitoring of vulnerable areas, and solutions to better track and predict probable crimes
- **How will your ideas help?** The need of the hour is for innovative and technological solutions that focus on preventing crimes from happening in the first place. This will not only have a trickle-down effect and save a lot of time and effort in the resolution process but also help countless people from becoming victims
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Law and Justice; Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

## 14. Water Resources:

- **What is the problem?** According to reports, the average annual per capita water availability in India fell 15% between 2001-2011. It's predicted to fall another 13% by 2025 and 15% again by 2050.<sup>32</sup> There's too much demand and not enough supply. India's burgeoning population woes, climate change, and ill-managed water distribution system are the main culprits. Agriculture, which as per estimates, accounts for 80% of India's water consumption is suffering due to unavailability of water and fickle monsoon<sup>33</sup>
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government is taking this issue very seriously and has launched multiple initiatives and plans to not only ensure supply of clean drinking water to everyone but also to better manage India's water supplies. The setting up of the National Water Mission and launch of the Swajal scheme<sup>34</sup> have been two of the major steps taken by the government
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are building check dams and catchment areas with local communities, developing micro water filtration and water recycle devices, solutions to check water wastage across the country
- **How will your solutions help?** Innovative and implementable solutions are the need of the hour to stem this potential country-wide water crisis and make sure that India's citizen get access to the elixir of life
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation

---

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/crimes-in-india-rise-in-2018-as-compared-to-last-year-murder-rapes-see-a-spike-says-this-report/1080222/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/law-ministry-to-set-up-special-fast-track-courts-to-try-rape-cases/articleshow/64932765.cms>

<sup>32</sup> <http://time.com/5302661/water-crisis-drinking-india-drought-dry/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-44492994>

<sup>34</sup> <http://nwm.gov.in/?q=schemes>

## 15. Hygiene:

- **What is the problem?** The World Bank links one in ten deaths in India to poor sanitation.<sup>35</sup> Top rivers in our country are facing a major pollution crisis. Around 450m people in India relieve themselves in public places and only 18% women in India have access to sanitary hygiene.<sup>36</sup> 48.2 million stunted children due to malnutrition and repeated infections live in India.<sup>37</sup>
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has undertaken multiple steps and initiatives in order to improve the hygiene standards in India, including the flagship Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan and various regional initiatives
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are providing affordable and sustainable sanitation solutions, environmentally friendly hygiene products, and setting up easily accessible public restrooms
- **How will your solutions help?** According to World Bank, investing a dollar in sanitation can save a government \$6-8 in healthcare costs.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, it is safe to say that effective hygiene solutions will play a key role in helping the government save the taxpayers' money and help the population of India fight this menace
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

## 16. Education & Literacy:

- **What is the problem?** Education in India has always been an important issue. Even though our culture emphasises on a good education the numbers tell a different story; India accounts for over one-third of the world's illiterate population<sup>39</sup>, more than 27 percent of the India's youth are excluded from education, employment, or training. Educational attainment in present-day India is not directly correlated to employment prospects. Indian authorities noted in 2017 that 60 percent of engineering graduates remain unemployed, while a 2013 study of 60,000 university graduates in different disciplines found that 47 percent of them were unemployable in any skilled occupation.<sup>40</sup>
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has been increasing emphasis on improving the education system in recent years. Initiatives such as the Right to Education (RTE) Act that made primary education compulsory<sup>41</sup>, Study in India, the setting up of the Higher Education Commission of India, and the establishment of new higher education institutions are among those undertaken by the government
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are bringing more individuals under the formal education system, especially through the use of internet; improving the quality of education offered by providing affordable innovative education solutions; partnering with world-class universities to understand global best practices; using technology to start schools in remote areas where physical infrastructure is not existent. Along with this technology to assist the blind and deaf people read can make a serious change as many people stay illiterate due to some physical or mental disabilities
- **How will your solutions help?** An educated, skilled, and employable workforce will play a key role in harnessing India's youth dividend to achieve inclusive economic development. It is only

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2017/09/24/why-it-is-so-hard-to-fix-indias-sanitation>

<sup>36</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/only-18-women-in-india-have-access-to-sanitary-hygiene-in-india/articleshow/64931350.cms>

<sup>37</sup> <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/world-health-day-2018-not-access-safe-sanitation-hygiene-killing-millions-india-18691/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/world-health-day-2018-not-access-safe-sanitation-hygiene-killing-millions-india-18691/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.oxfamindia.org/featuredstories/10-facts-illiteracy-india-you-must-know>

<sup>40</sup> <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/09/education-in-india>

<sup>41</sup> <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/ten-development-efforts-that-will-take-indias-literacy-to-new-heights/articleshow/65840746.cms>



through quality, innovative, and affordable education solutions can India truly become a global superpower

- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Human Resource Development; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; Ministry of Labour and Employment

## 17. Financial Inclusion:

- **What is the problem?** India has 190 million adults without a bank account. And almost half of the bank accounts remained inactive in 2017.<sup>42</sup> India's record of financial inclusion, despite the existence of a large and well-regulated financial system dominated by commercial banks, is poor.
- **What is the government doing?** Indian government has made some major reforms in order to bring more Indians under formal financial system. India's unbanked population has been the target of the government's flagship Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) while the Atal Pension Yojana gives a strong emphasis on including the economically weaker sections<sup>43</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are innovative solutions that can explain the benefits of formal financial system to people in rural areas in vernacular languages, ideas to incentivize and help individuals get connected to public banks and government schemes
- **How will your solutions help?** By bringing more individuals under the formal financial system we help them get access to a plethora of facilities such as insurance, subsidized loans, saving schemes, and investment opportunities. This helps them grow their income and savings and also avail the various benefits that the government has made available
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

## 18. Skilled Workforce/Labor Development:

- **What is the problem?** Just 4.69 percent of India's workforce is formally skilled, as against 52 percent in the US, 75 percent in Germany, and 96 percent in South Korea.<sup>44</sup> According to a 2018 report published by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), there are around 31 million unemployed Indians seeking jobs at present – the highest since October 2016.<sup>45</sup> This is a huge red flag for a country like India where the number of job seekers is only going to increase in the coming years as it will contribute to rising unemployment while the a number of high skilled roles will remain unfilled
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government's flagship initiative, Skill India along with the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana were the most prominent steps taken by the government to upskill the Indian workforce
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are providing training and apprenticeship programs for young graduates which will allow them to gain industry relevant skills, designing web-based courses that provide people knowledge and information about the fourth industrial revolution, and developing innovative solutions to revamp the current school curriculum
- **How will your solutions help?** Upskilling and reskilling of the Indian workforce is an unparalleled opportunity as it will play a massive role in catalysing the young workforce of India and helping them gain the relevant skills to bag the high skilled and high paying roles
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Labour and Employment; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship; Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

---

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/190-mn-indian-adults-don-t-have-bank-account-says-world-bank-report-118041900972\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/190-mn-indian-adults-don-t-have-bank-account-says-world-bank-report-118041900972_1.html)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.crisil.com/en/home/newsroom/press-releases/2018/02/indias-financial-inclusion-improves-significantly.html>

<sup>44</sup> <https://counterview.org/2018/07/03/bridging-the-skills-gap-less-than-5-of-workforce-in-india-has-undergone-formal-skill-training/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://yourstory.com/2018/08/india-challenge-unemployed-unskilled-workforce/>

## 19. Inefficient Public Distribution System:

1. **What is the problem?** The Public Distribution System (PDS) of India has been criticized for its inefficiencies and its failure to serve the poorer sections of the population effectively. In fact, in the last four years, at least 61 people across 11 states died of hunger or destitution<sup>46</sup> due to the inefficiency of the PDS and its touted replacement, Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT). PDS has also been in news for the multiple scams that have affected it.
2. **What is the government doing?** The Central government as well as the State governments have come up with a number of options and ideas to fight the problems plaguing PDS including the introduction of DBT<sup>47</sup>, linking of Aadhar Card with the Ration Cards<sup>48</sup>, and maintain a stricter control over the supply of food items through PDS
3. **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are innovative ideas to track the disbursement of the food items through PDS, devices to ensure that every unique individual is getting their share of food items, and solutions for a robust grievance process in case the benefits are not reaching their intended beneficiaries
4. **How will your solutions help?** In coverage and public expenditure, PDS is the most important food security network. Solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of PDS will go a long way in avoiding starvation and hunger related deaths, will ensure a reliable food supply to the poorest, and prevent the artificial inflation of prices through hoarding
5. **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution; Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

## 20. Epidemic Management:

- **What is the problem?** Over the next decade or two, the Indian disease control establishment will have to fight several new diseases apart from the already problematic Dengue, Chikungunya, Tuberculosis, and HIV. Some of these new diseases include Nipah, Monkey Fever, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever, and possibly even Ebola.<sup>49</sup> Doing so will be problematic unless we have a robust system in place to identify, isolate, and effectively treat any disease outbreak to check its transition into an epidemic
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has taken strong steps to tackle diseases which have caused or can cause epidemics along with strengthening the surveillance and response system for catching disease outbreaks early. Initiatives such as Pulse Polio and Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus Elimination Initiative have been hugely successful; while the government has set ambitious targets to overcome the various other diseases through programs like 2017 National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and Red Line campaign<sup>50</sup> and the 2018 Tuberculosis Free India Campaign<sup>51</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are innovative and affordable solutions to detect the early onset of major diseases, setting up of small hospitals in remote areas of the country, and initiatives to increase awareness and bring more people under the current government schemes
- **How will your solutions help?** Epidemics and outbreaks are very problematic situations for any country as they trigger a cyclical effect and put a lot of strain on the healthcare system of a country along with causing widespread panic and economic loss. Solutions that can tackle these problems will not only save lives but will also prevent other problems that an epidemic brings

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/addressing-hunger-will-result-in-other-gains-too/story-me0mgyX1LG85YFZpaYnDBO.html>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/columns/we-need-a-choice-based-approach-to-the-public-distribution-system/story-RY7jEYDmXfsxOMEsZguxmJ.html>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/if-the-supreme-court-could-change-its-mind-on-section-377-it-will-on-aadhaar-too/story-LbvvoegMI7pY0xf4eOnsI.html>

<sup>49</sup> <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-04-emerging-infectious-diseases-inindiathe-scourge.html>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.path.org/articles/7-ways-public-health-india-has-changed/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/a3hJk9Sqil1PZUtO0vAHN/PM-Modi-launches-campaign-to-eradicate-TB-from-India-by-2025.html>

- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers; Ministry of AYUSH

## 21. Superstition:

- **What is the problem?** Superstition is considered a widespread social problem in India. Prevalent superstition in India had earned it the title of "The Land of Snake Charmers and Black Magic". Superstition has such a strong grip in the country that people even kill others to justify these beliefs. In fact, an average of 156 people, mostly women and children, are killed each year across India after being accused of witchcraft<sup>52</sup> while 51 cases of human sacrifice were reported between 2014 and 2016
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government has taken some measures to fight prevalent superstitious practices in the country. In 2013 the government of Maharashtra promulgated the Maharashtra Anti-Superstition and Black Magic Ordinance.<sup>53</sup> Along with this the former Vice president of India, Mr. Hamid Ansari also pushed to make the anti-superstition law a national law<sup>54</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are initiatives to educate and make people aware about the ills of superstitions, innovative ideas to change people's beliefs and make the reporting of crimes related to superstition easier
- **How will your solutions help?** Solutions to tackle the widespread superstition in India will allow the country to alleviate itself from shameful practices that were eradicated from Europe centuries ago. Not only will this improve the image of the country but also help the socially and economically backward classes of India get relief as they are the most frequent victims of these oppressive practices<sup>55</sup>
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Law and Justice; Ministry of Panchayati Raj; Ministry of Rural Development; Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

## 22. Energy Crisis:

- **What is the problem?** India is the 3rd largest energy and oil consumer in the world after China and the US. Oil and gas occupied approximately 35% share in India's energy consumption.<sup>56</sup> It is estimated that India will overtake China as the largest growth market for energy by late 2020s with the country's energy consumption growing by more than 4.2 per cent per annum, the fastest among all major economies of the world.<sup>57</sup> Given these numbers and the fact that India is also the world's third-largest emitter of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases; a rapid and effective shift is required in India's current energy policy and generation methods to prevent a nation-wide energy and environmental crisis in the long-run
- **What is the government doing?** The Indian government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made universal access to electricity a key part of its energy ambitions. Prime Minister Modi announced he would seek to add 100 gigawatts of solar power capacity along with increasing renewable-energy capacity to 175 gigawatts by 2022<sup>58</sup>
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are innovative ideas to increase the implementation and efficiency of renewable energy devices such as solar panels, developing affordable solutions such as electric cars and home appliances that can run on renewable energy, and initiatives to increase the awareness about methods to reduce everyone's energy consumption

---

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.ucanews.com/news/witch-hunts-cast-dark-spell-in-superstitious-india/84459>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.indiatogether.org/talk-about-superstition-society>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.indiatogether.org/talk-about-superstition-society>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.ucanews.com/news/witch-hunts-cast-dark-spell-in-superstitious-india/84459>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/oil-gas>

<sup>57</sup> <https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/india-will-overtake-china-as-largest-market-for-energy-by-late-2020s-bp-energy-outlook/63024657>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.peakoilindia.org/2018/12/28/indias-energy-crisis/>

- **How will your solutions help?** Solutions to reduce India's dependence on fossil fuels and coal to produce energy will not only have positive impact on the environment but also significantly reduce India's import bill, which in turn might reduce inflationary pressure on the economy. India has huge potential for renewable energy and the ability to utilize this potential properly will fuel the next phase of India's economic growth
- **Concerned Ministry** - Ministry of Coal; Ministry of Power; Ministry of Science and Technology; Ministry of New and Renewable Energy; Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

## 23. Animal Welfare:

- **What is the problem?** Over 3500 captive elephants in India live in abysmal conditions.<sup>59</sup> In 2017 over 700 camels were rescued from smugglers who were going to sell them for illegal slaughter.<sup>60</sup> Four to eight hens are crammed in a cage no bigger than two A4 sheets of papers in poultry farms across the country<sup>61</sup>. These are just some numbers to illustrate the cruelty that animals face in India and the dire need to tackle this problem
- **What is the government doing?** The government has introduced schemes and initiatives to crackdown on malpractices adopted towards animals in the country. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Rules, official orders to stop the illegal movement of animals to neighbouring countries, ban on captive dolphin shows, and ban on import of animal tested cosmetics<sup>62</sup> are among the major steps taken by the Indian government in this direction
- **What can you do?** Some avenues that can be explored are affordable solutions to allow tracking of animals, innovative ideas to predict and test the current state of an animal along with checking for diseases, and initiatives and solutions to rescue animals who have been victims of cruelty along with provision for safe areas where they can be rehabilitated
- **How will your solutions help?** Animals, just like humans, have emotions and some level of cognitive ability. This means that they too can feel pain, discomfort, anger, and sadness. Due to acts of animal cruelty animals suffer physical abuse as well as mental abuse. Solutions to eradicate animal cruelty from our country will ensure a happier and safer environment for animals to live in along with ensuring that they are not subjected unnecessary discomforts
- **Concerned Ministries** - Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

---

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/bruised-starved-and-sick-the-sorry-state-of-captive-elephants-in-india/story-ZAGBcVn2Ekyi8K98WCY6PP.html>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/jaipur/camels-smuggling-unabated-700-rescued-in-one-year/story-Dzt1JIFG7PVC0mW9LUmRZN.html>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/wired-cages-in-poultry-farms-killing-hens-in-india-shows-survey/story-KM7Nd0UZDnxsBc8TDpKvpM.html>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.thebetterindia.com/16188/laudable-initiatives-india-stop-animal-cruelty/>