



Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)

Review of TISS across the SDG Benchmarks

TISS is a community-engaged teaching- research Institution. In response to evolving national and international frameworks of development, it engages with knowledge production and its dissemination, as well as, with policy and development initiatives. The SDGs provide a basic scaffolding for a unified response amongst international and intra-national communities to address key persistent and new emerging issues of poverty, hunger, inequality, conflict, and climate change. The intuitive, responsive and compassionate character of the Institute is of great relevance to the current inter-connected world of today, as indicated by the synergy between TISS's work and the evolution of global thought as embodied by SDGs.

TISS continues to play a critical role in addressing the structural roots of poverty and other inequalities: it has a range of academic programs to examine issues of livelihoods, unemployment and job precarity and community interventions to reach out to the poor and destitute fostering compassion, appropriate knowledge and skills in young people to address issues of poverty, repositioning the development framework to address the structural reasons for poverty (gender inequality, for instance). TISS has developed extensive long-term engagement with various local communities around the issues aligned with the SDGs, a core strength developed through its years of service in its various Field Action Projects. A prime example is of 'Koshish' – a field action project with homeless people.

Recognising that hunger is a direct function of the loss of sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices and the nature of the challenge posed in farm productivity and profitability, Tuljapur Off campus of TISS has designed academic programs with thrust on Rural Development and focused its capacitation and policy advocacy towards the collectivisation of farmers and women through largely SHGs, Farmer Producer Organisation, Famer's Club, and enterprise groups.

TISS has several comprehensively focused programs on various aspects of health, particularly Hospital Systems, Community Health, Health and Development, offering 7 well recognised MA and Doctoral programmes in this area through its various Schools. TISS programs focus strongly on the intersectionalities between health, poverty, gender, disability and homelessness to initiate effective design and implementation mechanisms. Other essential works of the Institute on this front include the health and mental health of adolescents and youth, and women, global models of intervention for drug-resistant TB and people with HIV, and health of tribal people.

TISS has consistently addressed core concerns of access to quality education for all. Its expertise spans curriculum pedagogy and learning, sociological study of education, and institutional and policy reform/education governance. Some critical advances that TISS has made in the field of education include innovating in technology-enabled learning for secondary education through the Connected Learning Initiative; A key focus of TISS's work on education has been to realise the right to education for girls, rural students, scheduled tribes, Dalits and minorities. Focus on women and gender is part of the academic work across all programmes and campuses, and TISS also has dedicated courses both around the theory and practice of gender.

Other postgraduate courses that cover aspects of SDGs include Rural Development, Social Policy, Planning and Practice, Sustainable Livelihoods and Natural Resources Governance and Social Innovations and Entrepreneurship and PG diploma in WASH. TISS Tuljapur Campus is actively engaged with the semi-arid, rainfed, drought-prone areas and resource-poor communities in the Marathwada region, promoting sustainable and secure water use and capacity building of local governance functionaries. The Institute, over the years, has actively collaborated with the central government and various state governments. It has also been engaged with UN agencies, corporate bodies and universities to provide expertise and conduct training programmes.

TISS's urban policy group is working on international partnerships with universities in Global South. TISS responds to the challenge of creating sustainable and decent work and livelihood options through its work. TISS has been educating India's Human Resource Management and Labour Relations professionals for several decades. TISS's faculty and scholars are engaged in contemporary research in critical areas of importance such as leadership, ethics, diversity,

employer branding, industrial relations, and labour laws. TISS works in social entrepreneurship to solve social and environmental problems otherwise not addressed by the market or universities and promotes responsible entrepreneurship.

TISS has emerged as a leading advocate and thought leader on the issue of equity and climate justice at the national level with solid international linkages. Some key research in sustainability includes access to energy, climate resilience of infrastructure, the evolution of climate policy in India, industrial ecosystem analysis, economy and land use in cities and circular and green economies. The School of Vocational Education aims to improve the employability of disadvantaged people across the country and currently offers training.

Programmes at TISS address different levels of theoretical and practical understanding of sustainability and cleaner production and consumption covered in five other thrust areas, including Development studies (including policy planning and practice) and Sustainable Development linking Environment, Ecology, and Society; Globalisation and Labour, as well as Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship; Natural Resource Governance and Social Innovation; Governance including Water Policy, Regulatory Governance and Urban Policy; and the key areas of environmental studies including Climate Change and Sustainability, and Disaster Management. TISS's experience and expertise in disaster management make it uniquely positioned to deal with important aspects of resilience and adaptability of individuals and communities to withstand disasters and climate shocks. TISS has been at the forefront of disaster relief and rehabilitation for several decades and has extensive practical engagement in real-world disaster situations.

TISS offers trainings in ecologically sensitive areas for field-level functionaries on topics such as community-based governance of natural resources, conflict resolution related to water/forests/fisheries; training on community-based Geo-Mapping and decision-making for coastal management; Community-based Beach Profiling as Citizen science for shoreline mapping, etc. The master's programs on criminology, peace and conflict studies, and access to justice, offered across TISS campuses, are designed to equip students to understand and address different types of conflicts and injustice ranging from environmental injustice to social injustice. The mapping of TISS learning programmes with SDGs reveals synergy.