

1. Introduction to Planning

The concept of **planning** involves a systematic process of thinking, formulating a scheme or programme, and implementing a set of actions to achieve specific goals.

In the context of economic development, planning is a move away from "hit-and-miss" methods toward structured reforms and reconstruction.

In India, planning was historically **centralised** after Independence but gradually moved toward a **decentralised multi-level approach**.

A landmark change occurred on **1 January 2015**, when the **NITI Aayog** was formed, replacing the decades-old Planning Commission.

The primary objective of NITI Aayog is to involve state governments in the economic policy-making process, providing both strategic and technical advice to the Centre and the States.

2. Two Main Approaches to Planning

Planners generally adopt two distinct approaches to ensure comprehensive national growth:

- **Sectoral Planning:** This involves formulating and implementing schemes for specific sectors of the economy, such as **agriculture, irrigation, manufacturing, power, transport, and social infrastructure**.
- **Regional Planning:** Because economic development is often uneven across space, regional planning is used to reduce **regional imbalances**. It takes a spatial perspective to ensure that lagging areas receive the investment and technology required to catch up with developed regions.

3. Target Area and Target Group Planning

To address persistent regional and social disparities, the Planning Commission introduced the '**target area**' and '**target group**' approaches. Even resource-rich regions can remain backward without proper investment and technology.

- **Target Area Programmes:** Examples include the **Command Area Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Development Programme, Desert Development Programme, and the Hill Area Development Programme**.
- **Target Group Programmes:** These focus on specific disadvantaged sections of society, such as the **Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA)** and the **Marginal Farmers Development Agency (MFDA)**.
- **Hill Area Development Programme (HADP):** Initiated during the Fifth Five Year Plan, it covered districts in Uttarakhand, Assam, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu with a height above 600m. It aimed to harness indigenous resources like horticulture, poultry, and village industries while considering topographical and ecological conditions.
- **Drought Prone Area Programme:** Launched during the Fourth Five Year Plan to provide employment and create productive assets through irrigation, land development, and afforestation. It emphasises restoring the **ecological balance** between water, soil, plants, and the human population.



4. Case Study: ITDP in Bharmaur Tribal Region

The **Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP)** in Bharmaur, Himachal Pradesh, illustrates successful planning in a fragile environment.

- **Background:** The area is inhabited by the 'Gaddi' tribe, who traditionally practiced **transhumance** (seasonal movement of livestock). The region faces harsh climate conditions and geographical isolation.
- **Objectives:** Introduced in the 1970s, the ITDP aimed to improve the quality of life for the Gaddis and narrow the development gap between Bharmaur and the rest of the state. Highest priority was given to **transport, communications, agriculture, and social services**.
- **Outcomes:**
 - Significant infrastructure development in terms of schools, healthcare, and electricity.
 - A massive increase in **literacy rates**, especially for females (rising from 1.88% in 1971 to 65% in 2011).

- Improvement in the **sex ratio** and a decline in child marriages.
- A shift in the economy from purely subsistence pastoralism to the cultivation of **pulses and cash crops**.

5. Concept of Sustainable Development

The definition of **development** has evolved significantly over time.

- **Evolution:** In the post-World War II era, development was synonymous with **economic growth** (GNP and per capita income). By the 1970s, goals shifted toward "**redistribution with growth**" to address rising poverty. By the 1980s, development became a multi-dimensional concept encompassing social, material, and environmental well-being.
- **Growth vs. Development:** Growth is **quantitative** and value-neutral (it can be positive or negative). Development is a **qualitative change** that is always value-positive, occurring only when there is an improvement in existing conditions.
- **The Pillars of Development:** Human development rests on four pillars: **Equity** (equal access to opportunities), **Sustainability** (continuity in availability of opportunities), **Productivity** (building human work capabilities), and **Empowerment** (freedom and capability to make choices).
- **Brundtland Report (1987):** The report titled '**Our Common Future**' formally defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

6. Case Study: Indira Gandhi Canal (Nahar) Command Area

This project represents one of India's largest attempts to transform a desert landscape through planning, while also highlighting the challenges of sustainability.

- **Project Details:** Conceived by **Kanwar Sain** in 1948, the canal originates at the **Harike barrage** in Punjab and traverses the **Thar Desert** in Rajasthan.
- **Stages:** Stage-I involves a gently undulating topography in northern districts, while Stage-II covers the shifting sand dunes of Jaisalmer and Barmer where temperatures reach 50°C.
- **Impacts:**
 1. **Positive:** Availability of soil moisture led to the greening of the desert through afforestation and pasture development. Traditional crops (bajra, jowar) were replaced by high-value crops like **wheat, cotton, groundnut, and rice**.
 2. **Negative:** Intensive irrigation caused serious environmental problems, specifically **waterlogging and soil salinity**, which threaten agricultural sustainability in the long run.
- **Measures for Sustainability:** To restore ecological balance, five of the seven proposed measures focus on:
 1. Strict implementation of **water management** policies.
 2. Adherence to cropping patterns that exclude **water-intensive crops**, favouring plantation crops like citrus fruits.
 3. Reducing water conveyance loss through the **lining of water courses** and the **Warabandi system** (equitable water distribution).

4. **Reclamation** of lands affected by salinity and waterlogging.
5. **Eco-development** through afforestation and shelterbelt plantation.



UniDrill

Prepare Smart for CUET UG

Mock Tests | PYQs | Performance Analysis

Start Now at www.unidrill.in

7. Resource Management and Conservation Policies

Sustainable development in India is supported by specific national policies aimed at resource conservation and community involvement.

I. National Water Policy 2012

This policy aims to manage water as a scarce resource with a unified national perspective.

- **Economic Good:** After meeting basic needs for drinking, sanitation, and food security, water should be treated as an **economic good** to promote efficient use.
- **Community Participation:** Projects should be managed with local involvement to ensure social equity.

II. Jal Kranti Abhiyan (2015-16)

Launched to ensure water security through per capita availability, this programme focuses on:

- Creating 'Jal Grams' in water-stressed districts.
- Abating pollution and encouraging **artificial recharge** of groundwater.
- Using social media and mass communication to build awareness.

III. Watershed Management

Watershed management aims for a balance between natural resources (land, water, plants) and society.

- **Haryali**: A central project executed by **Gram Panchayats** for drinking water, irrigation, and afforestation.
- **Neeru-Meeru (AP)** and **Arvary Pani Sansad (Rajasthan)**: Successful community-led programmes for constructing harvesting structures like *johads* and check dams.
- **Ralegan Siddhi (Maharashtra)**: A landmark case where a village was transformed from poverty and liquor trade to self-sufficiency through watershed development and social reforms (banning dowry, untouchability, and open grazing).

IV. Rainwater Harvesting

A low-cost, eco-friendly method to recharge aquifers and increase water availability.

- In Rajasthan, traditional structures like **Kund or Tanka** are used.
- **Tamil Nadu** made rainwater harvesting structures compulsory for all buildings to prevent construction without harvesting capabilities.

8. Environmental Issues and Land Degradation

Sustainable planning must address the "toxic" side of development.

- **Land Degradation**: Defined as a temporary or permanent decline in productive capacity. In India, it is caused by both natural agents and human actions like **faulty irrigation** (salinisation), **excessive chemical use**, and **deforestation**.

- **Jhabua District (MP)**: A case study where the **Rajiv Gandhi Mission for Watershed Management** treated 20% of the area. Through community participation, the **Bhil** community revitalised common property resources (CPRs) by planting trees and adopting "social-fencing" to prevent open grazing.

- **Urban Waste**: A growing crisis where 30–50% of waste is uncollected in many cities, leading to health hazards. Policies like the **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** aim to improve quality of life in slums through better waste management.

Summary Table for CUET Preparation

Concept/Programme	Key Fact for Students
NITI Aayog	Established 1 Jan 2015; focuses on cooperative federalism.
Brundtland Report	1987; defined Sustainable Development as meeting needs without compromising future generations.
ITDP Bharmaur	Targeted Gaddi community; priority on infrastructure and social services.
Indira Gandhi Canal	Transformed desert ecology but caused salinity; requires strict water management.
Human Development Pillars	Equity, Sustainability, Productivity, Empowerment.
Watershed Success	Ralegan Siddhi (Maharashtra) and Neeru-Meeru (Andhra Pradesh).

**National
Water Policy**

Treats water as an economic good
and promotes community
management.

