



## Sustainable development goals through the lens of Gandhian constructive Programmes

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### Article Info

**ISSN (online):** 2582-7138

**Impact Factor:** 5.307 (SJIF)

**Volume:** 04

**Issue:** 05

**September-October 2023**

**Received:** 25-08-2023;

**Accepted:** 29-09-2023

**Page No:** 1033-1039

### Abstract

Development will happen by the growth, improvement, and betterment of main areas like society, system and the human life. It not only focuses on the development of a specific area but also include economic, social, cultural, technological, and individual spheres and through enhancing and strengthening the capabilities of an individual will lead to the development of people. The objective of this paper is to show the interconnectedness of Gandhian constructive programmes and Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable development is an important approach in development and it address all areas to improve the well being of individual and the society. As same as the father of nation of India, Mahatma Gandhi who shown a path of non-violence and the social change Gandhi's theory of development places a strong emphasis on independence, simplicity, decentralised administration, and the welfare of both individuals and communities through the approach of constructive programme. SDGs includes supporting communities hit by natural and man-made disasters, providing access to basic resources and facilities, and focusing on the most disadvantaged people. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Gandhian constructive programmes share some core values and goals, demonstrating a shared dedication to economic, social, and ecological well-being with a strong emphasis on broad, focused on people, and sustainable development. Both conceptual frameworks aim to build a world that is equal, equitable, and wealthy for both the present and the future. Through this paper the researcher attempted to view the SDGs through the lens of Gandhian constructive programme. Data from different sources are used to find out the linkage of Gandhian approach of rural development through the constructive programme and the UN effort of development through SDGs.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJMRGE.2023.4.5.1033-1039>

**Keywords:** Development, Gandhian approach, Constructive Programme, Sustainable Development Goals

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### Introduction

Development is the main factor which affects the life of the people. If development happens in a good manner the people's standard of living will improve; then we can call it as human development. Human development will involve their all sides of improvement like physical, economical, financial and so on. Nowadays, the government is mainly focusing on the areas where the people needs to be ensured as per SDGs which include clean drinking water, electricity, higher education, skill development, road connectivity, drainage, and gender equality. Development were essential for the better growth and standard of living of the people. The Sustainable Development Goals provide a roadmap for eradicating poverty in all of its forms and creating a better, more sustainable future for all. Among other global challenges, they address issues like poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and issues of peace and justice. SDGs have 17 goals given by United Nations to address social, environmental, economic well being of people and the community. On the same hand, the "Sarvodaya" or "Satyagraha Ashram"

movements, commonly referred to as Gandhian constructive programmes, which formed with the efforts based on Mahatma Gandhi's ideas of peaceful resistance and independence. The concept of Gandhi helped people to struggle for freedom and he added that without all this programs development is not possible completely. By boosting independence, community empowerment, and sustainable development, these programmes attempt to address numerous socioeconomic concerns. Here SDGs and Gandhian constructive programmes were interconnected in so many cases and both are focusing on people's development. So, let's find how those interconnected also helped and helping people.

### Development

Development is a multifaceted which involves not only just economic factors but also sociological, psychological, and political facets of society. In other words, it is important to think about development broadly because it encompasses more than just economic progress (Business Turkmenistan, 2022)<sup>[1]</sup>. Over the years, various adjustments have been made to the idea of development. These days, it also encompasses aspects like development that is sustainable, structural changes to the way things are made, technological innovation, social, political, and institutional innovation, and bettering living situations for people.

### Dimensions of Development

It mainly includes 3 dimensions: economic, social and environmental.

**Economic dimension:** Utilising limited resources is one of the main aspects of development. A system that is economically sustainable permits the production of goods and services to continue, prevents economic imbalances that put industrial and agricultural output at risk, and provides sustainability in the prudent management of a country's internal and foreign debt. (Business Turkmenistan, 2022)<sup>[1]</sup>.

**Social dimension:** The social components highlight how people develop over time. A socially sustainable system can enable an equitable and enough distribution of social services, such as education and healthcare, gender equality, and political responsibility and participation. (Business Turkmenistan, 2022)<sup>[1]</sup>.

**Environmental dimension:** According to the environmental dimensions, physical and biological systems must be in balance. Making it feasible for ecosystems to change with the environment is the aim. An environmentally sustainable system must be created because of the exploitation of renewable resource systems or environmental investment functions that ensure the stability of the resource base. This system also includes the preservation of the biodiversity, atmospheric balance, and other ecological elements that cannot be classified as resources for economic use. (Business Turkmenistan, 2022)<sup>[1]</sup>.

### Approaches of development

The main approaches include income approach, welfare approach, capability approach, and basic needs approach.

**Income approach:** It is an oldest approach which links with development. According to the theory, a person's amount of freedom is directly correlated with their money. The level of human development rises in direct proportion to wealth levels (Unacademy, 2023)<sup>[7]</sup>.

**Welfare approach:** This strategy sees people as the recipients

or targets of all development initiatives. The strategy promotes greater public spending on amenities, social services, and the humanities. People are just passive recipients of growth, not active participants. By maximizing welfare spending, the government is accountable for raising the level of human development (Unacademy, 2023)<sup>[7]</sup>.

**Basic Need approach:** The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was the organisation that first advocated for this strategy. Health, education, food, access to clean water, sanitation, and housing were determined to be the six fundamental necessities. Human decision-making is disregarded, and focus is placed on meeting the fundamental requirements of designated sections (Unacademy, 2023)<sup>[7]</sup>.

**Capability approach:** Prof. Amartya Sen is credited for developing this strategy. Increasing human development requires strengthening human capacity in the areas of health, education, and resource access (Unacademy, 2023)<sup>[7]</sup>.

### Gandhian Approach of Development

The Gandhian ideology and approach to development are based on the ideas and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, who supported an all-encompassing, human-centered, and sustainable model of growth. Gandhi's strategy was very different from the standard modernization and industrialization paradigms. The inspirational Gandhiji led the Indian national movement. He had a unique perspective on Indian politics, the economy, and society. His outlook on the spiritual realm informed his approach to politics, economics, and society. He stood out from other people when it came to the analysis of economic issues because of his astounding emphasis on the moral dimensions of economic deeds. He held that moral and financial considerations could not be separated (Dane, 2023)<sup>[2]</sup>. Gandhiji viewed life as a single, integral totality. Gandhi had the opinion that an individual's goals and a society's goals should not be at odds with one another since he opposed the idea of creating people's lives into social, economic, political, etc. Gandhi was a proponent of the "Good of All." Therefore, the goals of an individual and a group of people could not be different. To arrive at the ultimate reality of existence, they must all strive for a same objective while working together to add to and oppose one another.

### Constructive Programmes

Gandhi's comprehensive vision for national renewal, which he dubbed the constructive programme, sought to create a just and non-violent social order. In any way, he wished to end the exploitation of man by man. Gandhi's constructive agenda did not list the topics in ascending order of significance (Singh, 2017)<sup>[6]</sup>. He made it clear that anyone might add to the list if they discovered that an important topic related to independence had been missed. The planned programming covered a wide range of topics, and the entire programme had eighteen components that were essential for the nation's emancipation through non-violence. Gandhi did not present the programmes according to a set format; instead, he arranged the topics according to their importance (IGNOU, n.d).

1. **Communal Unity:** Gandhi thought that communal unity would not only relate to political harmony but also to an unbreakable unity of the heart. Gandhi also believed that communal unity could only be achieved by residing among people and adopting their way of life. (Singh, 2017)<sup>[6]</sup>.

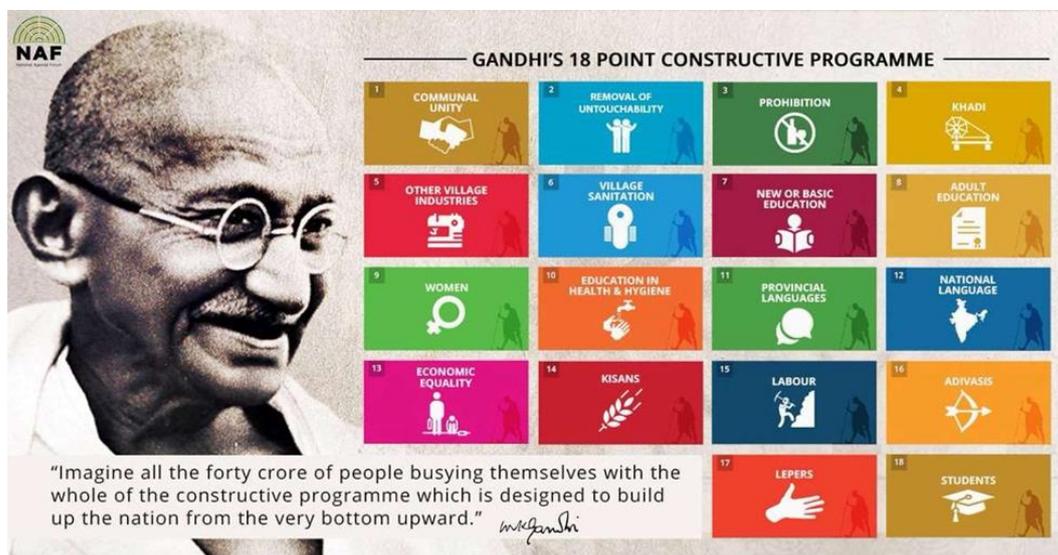
2. Removal of Untouchability: According to Gandhi, untouchability is a stain and a curse on Hinduism. To achieve social equality in the community, it was a persistent societal ill that needed to be eradicated (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
3. Khadi: Khadi was portrayed by Gandhi as a representation of nationalism, economic freedom, equality, and self-reliance. He thought that Khadi was the only one who could effectively lead a Satyagraha against foreign authority and rebuild society (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
4. Prohibition: Prohibition was a critical element of Gandhi's constructive strategy for social and moral change. Gandhi gave this a lot of importance since, unless they were liberated from the influence of intoxicants, people in towns and villages would be unable to put in the moral effort required for Satyagraha. He thought that women and students had a chance to achieve this revolution. They might get a hold on addicts via acts of loving service, forcing them to pay attention to the plea to give up the bad habit (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
5. Village Industries: Gandhiji viewed Khadi as a sun of the village's solar system, with the other industries serving as its planets. Khadi plays a crucial role in boosting the local economy. The other industries cannot develop without khadi. Similarly, khadi cannot advance to a reasonable level without the resurgence of other crucial industries. The growth of these businesses is crucial because they are interdependent to make the communities self-sufficient. Without the resurgence and expansion of other cottage industries like hand- grinding, hand-pounding, paper, soap, etc., a village's economy remains insufficient. The growth of these enterprises will enable the villages to function as self-sufficient entities and put an end to the exploitation of the rural by the cities (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
6. Village Sanitation: Gandhi gave cleanliness and hygienic conditions the highest emphasis. The people's poor hygiene and polluting habits caused him a great deal of pain and troubled him greatly. He believed that people were disregarding the most basic rules of hygiene by spitting, dumping food, trash, peelings, and other objects everywhere. These unclean follows all transmit illness and pollute the environment (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
7. New or Basic Education: Gandhi made it obvious that a society's foundation is its population. He therefore envisioned a brand-new educational system for the idealistic, non- violent society of his dreams and spent several years testing it. Basic education needs to be practical and promote the growth of the intellect, body, and soul. Gandhi had an unwavering belief in the force and potential that children possess. Children's upbringing and social environment can be highly beneficial for their survival and development. They can pick up a lot of knowledge by engaging in real-world employment and first-hand experiences. The Basic Education that was taught via handicrafts was specifically created to turn the village kids into role models for village life, keeping them connected to the land and to everything that is best and enduring about India (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
8. Adult Education: Adult education includes teaching those who are illiterate how to read and write as well as opening their eyes to the size and magnificence of their own nation. For adults to understand that the presence of foreigners is a product of their own weakness and lack of awareness of the power they must remove, Gandhi advocated for genuine political education of adults through word-of-mouth. Gandhi wanted to instill this knowledge in them through this programme (Singh, 2017) <sup>[6]</sup>.
9. Upliftment of women: Gandhi needed the support of women, Kisans, labourers, and students to complete his vision of Swaraj. He therefore intended to interact with them through a positive agenda, which was a deliberate strategy to raise their consciousness and win their support for the freedom movement. Without women's active involvement, in his opinion, the movement cannot prosper. He made it clear that custom and law hold men accountable for the oppressive situation of women. A woman has just as much of a right to control her own destiny in a non-violent worldview as a man does. Gandhi wished to reform the status of women in law and custom to equalise them with men (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
10. Education in Health and Hygiene: Gandhi accords equal importance to health and hygiene, stating that most of our diseases are caused by people not following the rules of health and hygiene. Gandhi offers some guidelines to follow to maintain the health of our minds and bodies, including the purity of the air, water, and food; personal cleanliness; maintaining the balance between physical and mental work; standing and sitting up straight; being orderly and tidy in all of our actions, which should reflect how we feel inside (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
11. Provincial Languages: Gandhi saw that the divide between the educated and politically astute bourgeoisie and the masses has been exacerbated by our obsession with the English language over our native languages. The public cannot successfully contribute directly to the freedom struggle because Swaraj, which is built on non-violence, is inherently ineffective if they do not fully comprehend each stage and all its ramifications. Therefore, explaining the methods in their native tongues is an essential (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
12. National Language: Gandhi believed that India needed a common tongue that was widely known and understood and that others could easily learn. It's Hindi. Because "it (Hindi) has long been accepted as the official language of India and much work has been done for its propagation and instruction in it by Prachar Sabha all over the country," he felt confident that English could never become our national tongue (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
13. Economic Equality: Gandhi believes that the best way to achieve non-violent independence is through economic equality. Building a non-violent society is obviously unattainable if there is a wealth gap between the rich and the poor. If the rich do not voluntarily abdicate their positions, there will undoubtedly be a violent and bloody revolution. Gandhi therefore proposes a method for the equitable distribution of money through his Trusteeship theory, which holds that the wealthy are merely trustees of their riches rather than its actual proprietors (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
14. Kisans: Considering that India is an agricultural nation, the bulk of its people are Kisans. Gandhi held that no authority on earth can withstand them if they are made

aware of their might. Gandhi's kisan movement may be seen organising kisans successfully in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli, and Borsad (ignou The People's University, n.d.).

15. Labour: Gandhi views the nonviolent labour union in Ahmedabad as a role model for India to follow. Unions should be independent of labour. The Union ought to run its own schools, medical facilities and creche for working parents' kids. It should also feature a maternity home, a printing press of its own, a khadi depot, and housing. Additionally, the union needs to operate night schools for the workers' general and scientific education. They ought to educate the workforce on how to organise a successful strike. In addition, capital ought to serve workers rather than be its master. Elevating the status of labour was the goal of the constructive project (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
16. Students: Gandhi said that the current educational system is unnatural and that it is a waste of time for kids to learn a foreign language in instead of their mother

tongue. Gandhi outlined a detailed plan to instruct and prepare the students, who will be the nation's future leaders, on what they should and shouldn't do. He believes that students should steer clear of coercive tactics, political strikes, and party politics. They should start spinning, use khadi and local goods, learn the language of the country, and develop their mother tongue (ignou The People's University, n.d.).

17. Adivasis: Adivasi service was also a part of the positive programme. Gandhi made it clear that this job is a national service as well as being purely humanitarian (ignou The People's University, n.d.).
18. Lepers: Gandhi believed that we urgently needed to address the long-ignored plight of the lepers and our cruel treatment of them. We must foster empathy, love, and service for those who are unwell, weaker physically and economically, if we are to create a non-violent social order. A society free from violence cannot exist unless all people have access to equal opportunities and status (ignou The People's University, n.d.).



Source: IPAC (2018)

Fig 1

### UN Approach of Development

The promotion of human welfare, social advancement, economic growth, and sustainability on a global level serves as the cornerstone of the United Nations' (UN) approach to development. The development strategy adopted by the UN consists of several guiding concepts and tactics that aim to cope with the numerous challenges that nations and communities all over the world face. Development is one of the UN's main agendas. The purpose of development is to raise everyone's standard of living in various ways. Economic development, social development, and environmental protection are interconnected and mutually supportive of one another as the three pillars of sustainable development (United Nations research guide, 2023) <sup>[9]</sup>. All nations, especially those that are developing, require consistent economic growth to advance their economies and civilizations. The eradication of hunger, disease, poverty, and illiteracy, the provision of adequate housing and secure employment for everyone, and the preservation of the integrity of the environment through such growth—which should be broadly based to benefit all people—will enable

countries to raise the standard of living of their citizens. "Democracy, adherence to all fundamental freedoms and rights, including the right to development, open and transparent governance and administration in all spheres of society, and effective civil society participation are also essential elements of the foundations necessary for the realisation of social and people centered sustainable development. Development cannot happen without women being empowered and participating fully in all aspects of society on an equal footing (United Nations research guide, 2023) <sup>[9]</sup>.

### Millennium development goals (MDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a continuation of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which started in the year 2000 and ended in 2015. The MDGs contributed to bringing almost a billion individuals away from living in extreme poverty, fighting starvation, and enable more girls to pursue education in schools. The MDGs, specially target seven, enabled to protect the planet by virtually reducing global consumption of ozone-

depleting substances (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>. The 8 MDGs were,

Goal 1- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Goal 2- Achieve universal primary education.

Goal 3- Promote gender equality and empower women.

Goal 4- Reduce child mortality.

Goal 5- Improve maternal health.

Goal 6- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Goal 7- Ensure environmental sustainability.

Goal 8- Global partnership for development.

### Shift from MDGs to SDGs as Global Agenda for 2030



Source: UNDP

Fig 2

### Sustainable development goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to change how things are done around the world. To end poverty and injustice, protect the environment, and ensure that everyone can live in peace, justice, and prosperity, they serve as a call to action (WHO, 2023).

**Goal 1: No Poverty-** - To eradicate poverty in all its forms worldwide (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 2: Zero Hunger-** Achieve food security, increase nutrition, and advance sustainable agriculture to end hunger (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being-** Maintaining good health and promoting well-being for all people of all ages (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 4: Quality Education-** Make sure all students have access to high-quality, inclusive education, and encourage possibilities for lifelong learning (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 5: Gender Equality-** Obtain gender equality and give all women and girls more power (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 6: Clean water and Sanitation-** Make sure that everyone has access to water and proper sanitation facilities (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy-** Make ensuring that everyone has access to modern, affordable, dependable, and sustainable energy. (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth-** Promote full and productive employment, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and decent work for all (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure-** Increase innovation, promote equitable and sustainable industrialization, and develop resilient infrastructure (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities-** Reduce inequality both within and across nations (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities-** Make cities and communities inclusive, secure, powerful, and sustainable (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production-** Be careful that you follow sustainable manufacturing and consumption habits (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 13: Climate Action-** Immediately address climate change and its effects (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 14: Life Below Water-** Utilise marine resources wisely and sustainably for sustainable development (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 15: Life on Land-** Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions-** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

**Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals-** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (United Nation, 2015) <sup>[8]</sup>.

### Interconnectedness of SDGs and Gandhian approach

A collection of 17 objectives known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or "2030 Agenda" was established by the United Nations in 2015. These major objectives are all aimed towards the world's transformation and sustainable development by 2030 and have specific target populations. A visionary by the name of Mahatma Gandhi established 18 objectives for national development in his book "Constructive Programme (CP) for the Nation" seventy-four years before the SDGs were adopted. Due to their similarities, the constructive programme and the goals for sustainable development overlap frequently. Both are initially development objectives. Even though CP is not universal, many of the SDGs' objectives align with its goals and objectives (Rayahari, 2018). Gandhian approaches and SDGs are having some connections based on each purpose. It includes:

**Goal 1 Poverty:** Gandhi promoted economic freedom and self-sufficiency at the grassroots level. His vision for "Gram Swaraj" was to eradicate poverty by focusing on rural development and the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

**Goal 2 Zero Hunger:** There should be no hunger. Gandhian constructive programmes placed an emphasis on regional food production and distribution networks. He was in support of self-sufficient villages making their own food, which was in line with initiatives to guarantee availability of food and

promote organic farming.

Goal 13 Climate Action: Gandhian philosophy encourages connection with nature. His support for frugality, minimising consumption, and utilising local resources is consistent with the need to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Goal 16 Peace and Justice: Gandhi's nonviolent approach and emphasis on settling disputes through communication and

understanding are in line with the objective of fostering inclusive and peaceful societies.

Goal 17 Partnerships: Gandhi's strategy included self-governance and engaged community engagement. Like SDG 16, SDG 17 emphasises the significance of collaborations between public, business, and civil society organisations. For example; (just for reference).

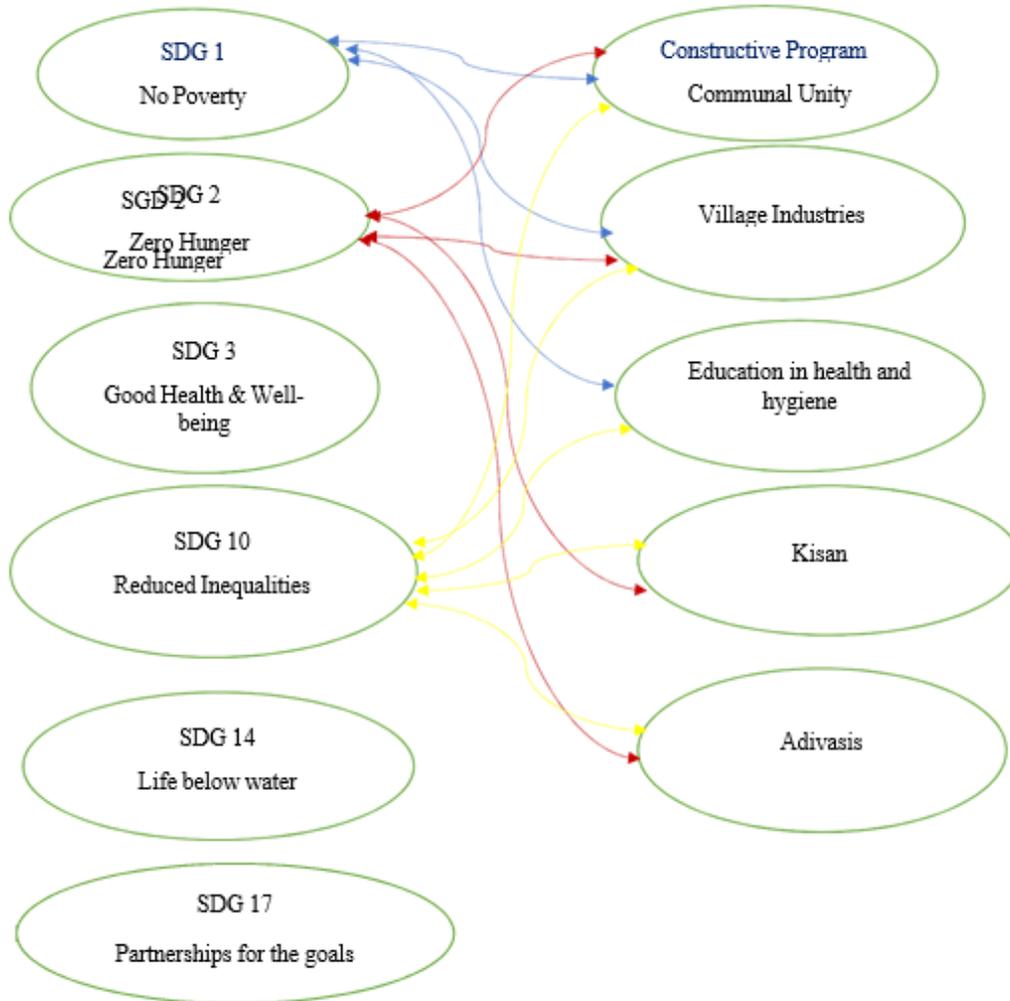


Fig 3

### Conclusion

Development is a factor which determine the standard of living of the people. When developments happen in the life of people, we can call it as human development. In this paper, the researcher explains about the interconnectedness of sustainable development goals and Gandhian constructive programmes. Both are mainly focusing on the development of the people and their community. This is the first paper showing both are linked and connected.

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