

Country Brief: India

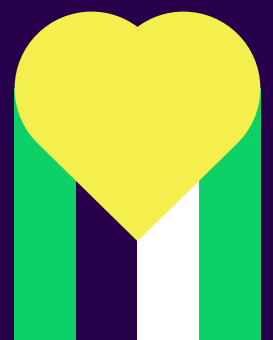
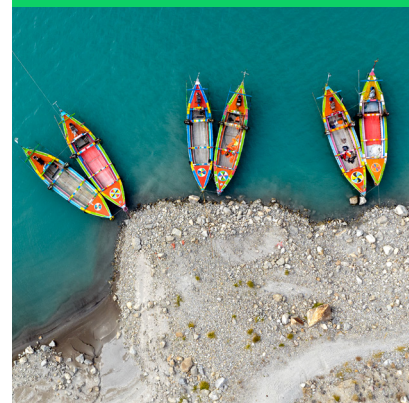
India has a large youth population and growing policy ambition around climate and skills, but delivery has not kept pace. Environmental education is structurally marginalised within curricula: ungraded, theoretical, and disconnected from the labour market. Green skilling programmes frequently end at the training event without job linkage. Opportunity and information concentrate in urban centres like Delhi and Mumbai, leaving rural youth reliant on self-learning and informal routes. Renewable energy offers real growth potential, but entry routes into installation and maintenance roles remain underdeveloped. Enterprise support for green businesses is largely absent.

At a glance

- More than three in four Indian respondents in the global survey reported facing challenges accessing green opportunities.
- The most frequently cited barrier was insufficient information or awareness (selected by nearly two in three respondents), followed closely by lack of local jobs and limited training access. Education-to-industry misalignment was also high.
- Rural youth and youth with disabilities were most frequently identified as vulnerable to being left behind. Mentorship and local training were the joint top requests for support, alongside improved information.
- Only around one in five Indian respondents considered current green training programmes inclusive; the large majority were unsure or said no.

Key Findings

- **Environmental education is ungraded and treated as marginal.** An educator confirmed: 'Environmental education is not a graded subject in the curriculum' (Educator, India). Youth reinforced this: 'Climate education should be more practical. They don't know what climate change is' (Youth, India). Peers are described as unaware of basic concepts. The survey echoed this: more than half of Indian respondents said education is not aligned with industry needs.
- **Training happens without job linkage or follow-up.** One NGO representative stated: 'What happens is we often do training without any outcomes' (NGO Representative, India). A policymaker was blunt: 'What is the point of green skilling if there is no absorption? Job linkage is missing' (Policymaker, India). Post-training 'handholding' is also absent, and green skilling is not yet a priority for state governments: 'Plumbing and carpentry are the traditional courses. For green skilling, I don't know whether the state thinks it's a priority' (NGO Representative, India).
- **Information and opportunity are concentrated in cities.** One youth explained: 'Only when I came to Delhi, I got to know more. Getting access to that information is very crucial' (Youth, India). Another described how marginalised groups arrive late: 'By the time it reaches the most marginalised groups, the privileged will already be quite ahead' (Youth, India). Insufficient information was the single most cited barrier among Indian respondents.
- **There are no subsidies or grants for green businesses.** A private sector leader stated plainly: 'There is no subsidies or grants for green businesses' (Private Sector Leader, India). At the Launchpads, a youth participant argued: 'Governments must pay youth to learn, not expect free internships.' Another participant observed: 'Technical skills get you in; soft skills keep you there,' pointing to the need for broader capability support.



“What is the point of green skilling if there is no absorption? Job linkage is missing.”
 Policymaker, interview, India

Spotlight: Misplaced infrastructure, missing pathways

An NGO representative described how green infrastructure investments can miss local needs entirely: ‘Imagine that in my village there is absolutely no scope for a solar-based system. Suddenly, the government decides to place a solar plant here and asks the people to start training, whereas the need is actually in some other village’ (NGO Representative, India). A policymaker linked this to climate-driven migration: ‘The dams in remote areas provide water to cities, while the people living there can only do small-scale agriculture for three to four months. After, they leave their villages and go to work in factories. They don’t have opportunities for doing climate-resilient agriculture’ (Policymaker, India). These accounts show that green transition planning must start from what communities actually need, not from what central programmes decide to place.

Key Recommendations

| Recommendation | Evidence basis | Who should act |
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| Make climate/ environment learning assessable and applied. | Educator confirms it is ungraded. Youth describe absence of practical content. More than half of Indian respondents said education is misaligned with industry. | Ministry of Education (NCERT, CBSE, state boards); NCVET; universities. |
| Require job linkage in all publicly funded green skilling. | Policymaker and NGO interviews describe training without outcomes. Post-training support is missing. Three in five Indian respondents cited lack of local jobs. | Ministry of Skill Development (MSDE); National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC); state skill missions. |
| Scale hands-on technical pathways for renewables through TVET and apprenticeships. | NGO stakeholders describe demand for solar installation and maintenance roles. Sneha (India, Launchpad): ‘Every certification should come with a real-world project.’ | MSDE; Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs); Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE); solar and wind employers. |
| Rural inclusion: local delivery, travel stipends, decentralised career guidance. | Youth describe urban concentration of information. Three in five Indian respondents requested local training. Launchpad: ‘Diploma courses are very high in price; youth cannot afford’ (Youth Researcher, India). | State governments; district skill committees; rural development agencies; NGOs with rural reach. |
| Create enterprise support instruments for green businesses. | Private sector leader: ‘There are no subsidies or grants for green businesses.’ Green skilling not treated as a state priority. Youth describe limited formal job options in many regions. | Ministry of MSME; NABARD; state industrial development corporations; impact investors. |
| Create enterprise support instruments for green businesses. | Indian respondents identified rural youth and disabled youth as the most vulnerable groups. A youth described gendered perceptions: women in green jobs are seen as ‘caring for the environment, not fighting for it.’ | Ministry of Social Justice; disability organisations (NIEPMD, NHFDC); women’s self-help group networks. |

Source: Country survey respondents: n=47. Supplemented by key informant interviews, youth diaries, and Innovation Launchpad discussions.

“The actual interventions that happen on the ground are mostly done by indigenous people and rural communities themselves. And I think they don’t get the limelight that they deserve.”
 Youth participant, interview, India

