



GREEN JOBS AND YOUNG INDIA: HOW CLIMATE ACTION IS RESHAPING WORK AND WEALTH

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Climate Action as a Career Choice

For many young Indians, climate change feels like a double-edged sword. On one side are heat waves, water stress, crop losses and floods that threaten livelihoods. On the other side is a rapidly growing “green economy” that promises new kinds of jobs and businesses in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, green buildings and circular economy models.

Globally, renewable energy employment has surged in the last decade. The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) estimates that jobs in renewables reached about 13.7 million in 2022 and climbed to over 16 million in 2023. India is part of this story: government data suggest that the country’s renewable energy sector already supports around 1 million jobs, reflecting strong growth in solar, wind and related services.

Where the Green Jobs Are

Green jobs are not limited to “scientists” or “environmentalists.” They span a wide range of skills and sectors that either reduce emissions, build resilience or protect natural resources. Some of the most dynamic areas in India include:

Renewable Energy

- Solar and wind projects need engineers, site supervisors, electricians, civil workers, logistics coordinators and operations and maintenance technicians.
- Rooftop solar in cities also creates opportunities for small installers, electricians and local service providers.

Energy-Efficient Buildings and Cities

- Architects and civil engineers are increasingly working with green building codes and materials.
- Urban planners, HVAC technicians, plumbers and electricians are needed to design and maintain energy- and water-efficient infrastructure in homes, offices and smart cities.

Sustainable Mobility

- Electric vehicles (EVs) require a new ecosystem: battery manufacturing, charging infrastructure, software, servicing and recycling.
- Public transport systems that are cleaner and better integrated also create jobs in planning, operations and maintenance.

Agriculture and Land-based Solutions

- Climate-smart agriculture, organic farming, agro-forestry and carbon farming create roles for extension workers, agri-tech entrepreneurs, input dealers and farmer-producer organisations.
- Better soil and water management not only reduce climate risk but also stabilise rural incomes.

The Promise in the Numbers

Several recent studies underline the scale of the opportunity. IRENA’s global analysis shows that renewable energy jobs are likely to keep growing as countries accelerate their energy

transitions. India-specific assessments suggest that green jobs could move from the margins to the mainstream of the labour market in the coming decades.

A 2025 review of India's green jobs landscape notes that the country could create over 35 million green jobs by 2047 and potentially more than 50 million by 2070, if investments, skills and policies align with long-term climate goals. These roles are expected not only in renewable energy, but also in sectors such as waste management, sustainable construction, electric mobility and circular manufacturing.

What Needs to Happen Next

To turn climate action into a broad-based employment engine, India will need coordinated efforts from government, industry and educational institutions:

1.Align Education and Training with Green Sectors

- Updating school curricula to integrate climate literacy and sustainability concepts.
- Expanding vocational training and apprenticeships in fields like solar, wind, EVs, green construction and resource-efficient manufacturing.
- Partnering with industry so that training reflects real job requirements and offers clear pathways into employment.

2.Support a Just Transition for Vulnerable Workers

- Designing reskilling programmes for workers in coal, thermal power and energy-intensive industries.
- Providing income support, social security and relocation assistance where necessary, so no community is left behind as the economy decarbonises.

3.Encourage Green Entrepreneurship

- Making it easier for start-ups and small enterprises to enter green value chains through simplified regulations, incubators and concessional finance.
- Promoting innovations that solve local problems such as low-cost cooling, efficient irrigation, or decentralised waste management while creating local jobs.

4.Set Clear Policy Signals

- Stable, long-term climate and energy policies help investors plan and create jobs with confidence.
- Public procurement and government programmes can prioritise low-carbon products and services, creating predictable demand for green skills.

Conclusion

For India, climate change is both a risk and a roadmap. On one side are escalating losses from extreme weather and resource stress; on the other is the chance to build a more resilient, innovative and inclusive economy. Green jobs sit at the heart of this transformation. If India manages to combine climate ambition with smart skills planning, supportive policies and social justice, the green transition need not be a story of sacrifice. Instead, it can become a story in which millions of young people find meaningful work, communities become more resilient and the economy grows along a cleaner, more sustainable path.

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