The NITI Aayog: Objectives and Function:

The Planning Commission of India supervised the five-year plan for the economic development of the country. However, in 2014, the 65-year-old Planning Commission was dissolved and a think tank – NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) took its place.

The NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India), is a think tank of the Government of India established on 1 January 2015 as a Commission to give suggestions to the Governments at the central and state levels with relevant strategic, directional and technical advice across the spectrum of key elements of policy / development process. The Prime Minister of India heads the Aayog as the Ex-officio Chairperson. Currently Rajiv Kumar is the vice chairperson of the NITI

Further, it has some full-time as well as part-time members along with four Union Ministers serving as ex-officio members. It also has a governing council which includes all State Chief Ministers and Lt. Governors of the Union Territories.

The council works towards fostering cooperative federalism for providing a national agenda to the Center and the individual States. Additionally, there are specific regional councils and the Prime Minister invites some special invitees who are experts and specialists in various fields too.

Since it serves as a think tank of the government or as a directional and policy dynamo, it provides advice on strategic policy matters to the governments at the Center and the States. Further, it includes economic issues of both domestic and international importance.

The Aayog provides direction to the Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) activities in India. It also pegs importance to the quality standards, ethical procedures and provides appropriate institutional mechanisms.

Therefore, NITI Aayog means:

- **A group** of people that the Government entrusts for formulating and regulating policies concerning the transformation of India.
- **A Commission** assists the Government in both social and economic issues.
- **An institution** with experts
- **A body** that actively monitors and evaluates the implementation of the Government’s programs and initiatives.

Seven Pillars of NITI Aayog:

1. **Pro-People**: Full fill aspiration of society as well as individual.
2. **Pro-Active**: In anticipation of and response to citizen needs.
3. **Participation**: Involvement of all
4. **Empowering**: Women in all aspects
5. **Equity**: of opportunity for the youth.
6. **Transparency**: Making government visible and responsive
7. **Inclusion of All**: SC, ST, OBC, Minorities, Gareeb, Gaon and Kisan.
Composition of NITI Aayog:
1. Chairperson - Prime Minister of India
2. Governing Council - comprising the Chief Ministers of all the States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories.
3. Experts, specialists and practitioners with relevant domain knowledge as special invitees nominated by the Prime Minister
4. Vice-Chairperson - appointed by the Prime Minister (Dr. Rajiv Kumar)
5. Full-time members (Dr. Bibek Debroy, Shri V.K. Saraswat, Prof. Ramesh Chand, Dr. V. K. Paul)
7. Ex Officio members -Maximum of 4 members of the Union Council of Ministers to be nominated by the Prime Minister.
8. Chief Executive Officer - appointed by the Prime Minister for a fixed tenure, in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.

Aims of the NITI Aayog:

1. Provide a critical directional and strategic input to the development process of India.
2. Serve as a think tank of the Government both at the Center and State-level. Also, provide relevant strategic and technical advice on key policy matters.
3. Try to replace the center-to-state, one-way flow of policy with an amicably settled policy which a genuine and continued partnership of state frames.
4. Seek to put an end to the slow and tardy implementation of the policy. This is possible through better Inter-Ministry and state-to-state coordination.
5. Further, it help to evolve a shared vision of national development priorities and foster cooperative federalism. Work with the view that strong states = a strong nation.
6. Develop mechanisms to formulate credible plans at the village level. Further, aggregate these plans progressively at the higher levels of the Government. In other words, ensure that special attention is paid to the sections of the society which carry the risk of not benefitting from the overall economic progress of the country.
7. Create a Knowledge, Innovation, and Entrepreneurial system through a collaborative community of national and international experts and practitioners. Offer a platform for the resolution of inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues to accelerate the implementation of the development agenda.
8. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of programs and also focus on upgrading technology and building capacity.

Objectives:

The NITI Aayog tries to accomplish the following objectives and opportunities:

- Creating an effective administration paradigm in which the Government is an enabler rather than a provider of the first and last resort.
- To focus on technology upgradation and capacity building for implementation of programmes and initiatives.
• To undertake other activities as may be necessary in order to further the execution of the national development agenda, and the objectives mentioned above.
• Attaining progress from food security. Focusing on a mix of agricultural production and the actual returns that farmers get from their produce.
• Ensuring that India is an active participant in global debates and deliberations.
• Ensuring that the economically vibrant middle-class is actively engaged and utilized to its full potential.
• Leveraging India’s pool of entrepreneurial, scientific, and intellectual human capital.
• Incorporating the geo-economic and geopolitical strength of the NRI Community.
• Using urbanization as an opportunity to creating a secure habitat via modern technology.
• Using technology to reduce opacity and potential for misadventures in governance.
• To pay special attention to the sections of our society that may be at risk of not benefitting adequately from economic progress.

The measures were taken by the NITI Aayog to help India face complex challenges

• Leverage India’s demographic dividend and realize the potential of young men and women. This is done through imparting education, skill development, the elimination of gender bias and providing employment opportunities.
• Eliminate poverty and offer Indians a better chance to live a life of dignity and respect.
• Redress inequalities based on gender bias, caste, and economic disparities.
• Integrate villages into the development process of the country.
• Provide policy support to more than 50 million businesses – a major source of employment generation.
• Safeguard our environmental and ecological assets.

Functions of NITI Aayog:

1. Cooperative and Competitive Federalism

• Primary platform for operationalizing Cooperative Federalism by enabling States to have active participation in the formulation of national policy, as well as achieving time-bound implementation of quantitative and qualitative targets.

2. Shared National Agenda

• Evolve a shared vision of national development priorities and strategies, with the active involvement of States. This will provide the framework ‘national agenda’ for the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers to implement.

3. State’s Best Friend at the Centre

• Support States in addressing their own challenges, building on strengths and comparative advantages. This will be through coordination with Ministries, championing their ideas at the centre, providing consultancy support and building capacity.

4. Decentralized Planning

• Restructure the planning process into a bottom-up model.

5. Vision & Scenario Planning
• Design medium and long-term strategic frameworks across all sectors.

6. **Network of Expertise**

• Main-stream external ideas and expertise into government policies and programmes through a collaborative community of national and international experts, practitioners and other partners. This would entail being Government’s link to the outside world.

7. **Knowledge and Innovation Hub**

• Be an accumulator as well as disseminator of research and best practices on good governance, through a Resource Centre which identifies, analyses, shares and facilitates replication of the same.

8. **Harmonization**

• Facilitate harmonization of actions across different layers of government through communication, coordination, collaboration and convergence amongst all stakeholders. The emphasis will be on bringing all together on an integrated and holistic approach to development.

9. **Conflict Resolution**

• Provide a platform for mutual resolution of inter-sectoral, inter-departmental, inter-state as well as centre-state issues.

10. **Coordinating interface with the World**

• Be the nodal point for strategically harnessing global expertise and resources from multilateral platforms, nations etc.

11. **Internal Consultancy**

• Offer an internal consultancy function to central and state governments on policy and program design, specialised skills such as structuring and executing Public Private Partnerships.

12. **Capacity building**

• Enable capacity building and technology up-gradation across government, benchmarking with latest global trends and providing managerial and technical knowhow.

13. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
#NITIaayog is based on the 7 Pillars of Effective Governance

- **PRO-PEOPLE**: fulfils aspirations of society as well as individuals
  - in anticipation of and response to citizen needs
- **PRO-ACTIVITY**: Involvement of Citizenry
- **PARTICIPATION**: women in all aspects
  - of opportunity for the youth
- **EMPOWERING**: SC, ST, OBC, minorities, gareeb, gaon, kisaan
  - making govt visible and responsive
- **INCLUSION OF ALL**: making govt visible and responsive
  - making govt visible and responsive
- **EQUALITY**: making govt visible and responsive
  - making govt visible and responsive
- **TRANSPARENCY**: making govt visible and responsive
  - making govt visible and responsive

Source: PIB.NIC.IN
Objectives of #NITlaayog

- fostering COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM, active involvement of states
- formulation of plans at VILLAGE-level, aggregation at higher levels
- SPECIAL ATTENTION to sections at risk of not benefitting adequately from economic progress
- economic policy that incorporates NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS
- feedback for constant INNOVATIVE IMPROVEMENTS
- partnerships with national and international THINK TANKS
- creating a KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURIAL support system
- platform for RESOLUTION of inter-sectoral & inter-departmental issues
- state-of-the-art resource center for RESEARCH on good governance
- focus on TECHNOLOGY upgradation and CAPACITY BUILDING

Source: PIB.NIC.IN
Composition of #NITIaayog

Chairperson
• Prime Minister

Governing Council
• CMs (States) and Lt Governors (UTs)

Regional Councils
• Formed on need-basis, comprising CMs and Lt Gvs of the region

Members
• Full-time basis

Part-time Members
• Max 2, rotational, from relevant institutions

Ex-officio Members
• Max 4 from Council of Ministers, nominated by PM

Special Invitees
• Experts, specialists, practitioners with domain knowledge

Chief Executive Officer
• Appointed by PM for fixed tenure, Secy rank

Secretariat
• As deemed necessary

Source: PIB.NIC.IN