



Consistency. Right Direction. Discipline.

International Relations best practices for upsc mains



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International Best practices useful for UPSC mains

GS-1 (Society, Women, Urbanization, Pluralism)

1. Rwanda – Women in Parliament

Best practice: 61% women MPs (world's highest) — constitutional quota

Outcome: More laws on health, education, gender

India learning: Useful to justify Women's Reservation Act

How to write in answer:

"Like Rwanda, which ensured 61% female representation through constitutional design, India must operationalize the Women's Reservation Act to create gender-balanced legislatures."

2. Iceland – Equal Pay Certification Law

Best practice: Companies must prove men & women paid equally

Outcome: Gender wage gap → stopped

India learning: Strengthen Equal Remuneration enforcement

Model sentence:

"Iceland's equal pay certification model shows how statutory audits can enforce pay parity, something India can adopt to close gender wage gaps."

3. Singapore – Ethnic Integration Housing Policy

Best practice: Housing quotas ensure ethnic mix

Outcome: No ghettos, stronger social trust

India usage: For communal harmony in urban planning

Answer insert:

"Singapore's ethnic quota housing policy offers a model to prevent communal clustering in Indian cities."

4. Paris – 15-Minute City

Best practice: All daily needs accessible within 15 minutes

Outcome: Low emissions, high liveability

India usage: SMART Cities can adopt

Answer sentence:

"The 15-minute city approach in Paris can guide India's Smart Cities Mission in building walkable, citizen-centric urban spaces."

GS-2 (Governance, Public Policy, Welfare, Education, Health)

1. Estonia – Digital Governance

Best practice: 99% services online, digital ID

Outcome: Saves 2% of GDP annually

India usage: Deepen Digital India

How to use in answers:

“Estonia’s digital state model — where 99% citizen services are online — shows the efficiency gains India can unlock via Digital India and AI-driven governance.”

2. UK – Citizen’s Charter

Best practice: Timelines, service standards, grievance redress norms

Outcome: Reduced corruption and delays

India relevance: Sevottam can be upgraded

Model phrase:

“Like the UK’s Citizen’s Charter, India must enforce measurable service standards and grievance timelines across departments.”

3. Brazil – Participatory Budgeting

Best practice: Citizens vote & decide on public spending

Outcome: 40% rise in sanitation access

India usage: Fits Panchayati Raj & ward committees

Answer template:

“Brazil’s participatory budgeting proves that direct citizen involvement improves social outcomes — a model India can apply in urban ward committees and Gram Sabhas.”

4. Finland – Education System

Best practice: No exams, teacher autonomy, free schooling

Outcome: Top PISA learning levels

India usage: Supports NEP reforms

Answer line:

“Finland’s no-exam, teacher-led pedagogy shows how India can shift from rote-learning to experiential education under NEP 2020.”

5. Thailand – 30 Baht Health Scheme

Best practice: Universal healthcare at 70 per visit

Outcome: Reduced medical bankruptcy

India usage: Strengthen Ayushman Bharat

Answer line:

“Thailand’s 30-Baht scheme proves how low-cost universal health can work, a lesson for expanding Ayushman Bharat to outpatient care.”

6. Japan – Long-Term Elderly Care Insurance

Best practice: Mandatory elderly care cover

Outcome: Ageing with dignity & social security

India usage: Useful for 19% elderly by 2050

Answer use:

“Like Japan’s long-term care insurance, India needs a dedicated ageing care policy integrated with Ayushman Bharat and ABHA IDs.”

GS-3 (Economy, Agriculture, Environment, Disaster, Security, Tech)

1. Germany – Mittelstand SMEs

Best practice: Innovation-driven small manufacturers

Outcome: High-quality exports & employment

India usage: MSME cluster + zero defect model

Answer line:

“Germany’s Mittelstand model shows how India can build globally competitive MSMEs through R&D, cluster support and credit guarantees.”

2. Israel – Precision Agriculture

Best practice: Drip, sensors, fertigation, AI

Outcome: Highest yield per drop of water

India usage: For drought regions — Marathwada, Bundelkhand

How to quote:

“Israel’s precision farming model (90% water-use efficiency) can revolutionize Indian agriculture under PMKSY.”

3. Netherlands – Room for the River

Best practice: Floodplains restored, not blocked

Outcome: Zero major floods since 2010

India usage: Adaptable to Ganga basin, Brahmaputra

Model phrase:

“Netherlands’ ‘Room for the River’ shows India a shift from embankment-centric to ecological flood management.”

4. Sweden – Carbon Tax

Best practice: \$150/ton carbon tax since 1991

Outcome: Emissions ↓27%, GDP ↑83%

India usage: Acts as model for green fiscal policy

Answer usage:

“Sweden’s carbon tax proves carbon pricing can cut emissions without hurting growth — relevant to India’s Panchamrit targets.”

5. Costa Rica – 98% Renewable Power

Best practice: Hydro, solar, wind, geothermal energy mix

Outcome: Near-zero fossil electricity

India usage: Can inspire 2030 renewable targets

How to use:

“Costa Rica’s near-100% renewable grid offers a model for India to scale solar + hydro synergy.”

6. Chile – Earthquake Infrastructure Codes

Best practice: Mandatory seismic design & drills

Outcome: Low fatalities despite high quakes

India usage: North India seismic zone reforms

Answer line:

“Chile’s quake-ready building codes can guide India’s urban safety in Himalayan and peninsular seismic zones.”

GS-4 (Ethics, Integrity & Public Administration)

1. Singapore – Zero Tolerance Corruption Policy

Best practice: High salary + strict laws + fast conviction

Outcome: Top 5 least corrupt globally

India usage: Strengthen Lokpal, Vigilance, CVC

Answer phrase:

“Singapore proves that ethical governance can be institutionalized by high pay, high punishment and fast investigation.”

2. New Zealand – Open Government Model

Best practice: Proactive disclosure, open data

Outcome: High trust & low corruption

India usage: Strengthen RTI & social audits

Use in answers:

“New Zealand’s open data governance can guide India in enhancing transparency beyond RTI compliance.”

3. Bhutan – Gross National Happiness

Best practice: Policy based on wellbeing, not GDP

Outcome: Balanced development + strong community values

India usage: Mention in ethics case studies

How to write:

“Bhutan’s ‘GNH’ offers an ethical framework where governance is value-driven, not growth-driven.”

4. Japan – Culture of Giri (Duty)

Best practice: Socially internalised duty ethics

Outcome: High civic responsibility

India usage: Use in duty-based ethics answers

Answer phrase:

“Japan’s ethic of ‘Giri’ shows how duty consciousness can reduce rule enforcement burden and build ethical behaviour.”

5. UK – Nolan Principles

Best practice: 7 ethical standards for public service

Outcome: Global benchmark ethics code

India usage: Used in 2nd ARC & civil services reforms

Answer usage:

“India can operationalize ethics reforms by adopting the Nolan Principles — selflessness, accountability, integrity and transparency.”