



SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

We quite often read about different concerns of socio-economic development like poverty, unemployment, development of roads and bridges and facilities like hospitals, educational institutions in newspapers, magazines and other periodicals. During elections in particular these are discussed by political leaders, political parties, electorates and media. Whenever there are discussions on development and particularly on socio-economic development, the issue of empowerment of disadvantaged groups in our society is referred to. You may have also come across these terms in your study materials or somewhere else. What do these terms mean? Why and how should we understand the relationships between socio-economic development and empowerment of disadvantaged groups? The present lesson will make an attempt to discuss these issues.



OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- analyze the concepts of socio-economic development, human development, regional development and sustainable development;
- explain various factors responsible for regional imbalances and socio-economic disparities in India;
- highlight the issues related to empowerment of disadvantaged groups like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women;

- evaluate various policies and programmes related to groups like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women and children; and
- appreciate various policies/programmes related to different sectors like education, health and nutrition.



25.1 MEANING OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

What does socio-economic development mean? In order to understand this concept, let us begin by defining development. Generally, development is defined as a state in which things are improving. But it is defined in different ways in various contexts, social, political, biological, science and technology, language and literature. In the socio-economic context, development means the improvement of people's lifestyles through improved education, incomes, skills development and employment. It is the process of economic and social transformation based on cultural and environmental factors.



ACTIVITY 25.1

You may have read in different materials or heard in discussions in the media the use of concepts like economic development, social development, developments in the human body and developments in science and technology.

Can you prepare a list of some other terms using the word 'development' as mentioned above? Try to write at least eight terms.

Socio-economic development, therefore, is the process of social and economic development in a society. It is measured with indicators, such as gross domestic product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy and levels of employment. For better understanding of socio-economic development, we may understand the meaning of social and economic development separately.

Social development is a process which results in the transformation of social institutions in a manner which improves the capacity of the society to fulfill its aspirations. It implies a qualitative change in the way the society shapes itself and carries out its activities, such as through more



Figure 25.1: Social Development Components

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progressive attitudes and behavior by the population, the adoption of more effective processes or more advanced technology. As you see in the illustration below, there is a close relation among environments, ways of living and technology.

Economic development is the development of economic wealth of countries or regions for the well-being of their inhabitants. Economic growth is often assumed to indicate the level of economic development. The term “economic growth” refers to the increase (or growth) of a specific measures such as real national income, gross domestic product, or per capita income. The term economic development on the other hand, implies much more. It is the process by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social wellbeing of its people.



Do you know

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): The gross domestic product or gross domestic income (GDI) is one of the measures of national income and output for a given country’s economy. It is the total value of all final goods and services produced in a particular economy within a country’s borders in a given year.

National Income: The income earned by a country’s people, including labour and capital investment. It is the total value of all income in a nation (wages and profits, interests, rents and pension payments) during a given period, (usually one year).

Per Capita Income: The total national income divided by the number of people in the nation. This is what each citizen is to receive if the yearly national income is divided equally among all.

Socio-economic development, thus, is a process of improvement in a variety of ways. It has to influence all aspects of human life in a country. But do you think the concept of socio-economic development takes care of all aspects of development? Its major indicator, the GDP is a specific measure of economic welfare that does not take into account important aspects such as leisure time, environmental quality, freedom, social justice, or gender equality. Another indicator, the per capita income also does not indicate the level of income equality among people. These indicators do not ensure that the benefits of development have been equally distributed and have reached particularly to the disadvantaged groups of society. Which is why, a new concept of **human development** is being used. It is focused on the overall quality of life that people enjoy in a country, the opportunities they have and the freedoms they enjoy.

25.2 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

As we have seen, when we talk about economic development, the focus is on income only. For a long time the general notion about development was accumulation of wealth or economic assets. But **human development focuses on expanding and**



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widening of people's choices as well as raising the levels of wellbeing. It covers almost all aspects of human life and people's choices like economic, social, political, cultural, educational, physical, biological, mental and emotional. Income is only one of the many components of development. Human development places people at the centre of development and emphasizes that the purpose of development is to enlarge all human choices, and not just income. It regards economic growth as essential but emphasizes the need to pay attention to its quality and distribution.

**Do you know**

The concept of human development was introduced by Dr. Mahbub ul Haq, a Pakistani economist who described it as development that enlarges people's choices and improves their lives. The Indian Noble Laureate Professor Amartya Sen has also made contributions to the evolution of this concept and defined it as development that increases freedoms.

The Human Development Index (HDI) was developed in 1990 by a group of economists including Dr. Mahbub ul Haq and Professor Amartya Sen. It has been used since then by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its annual Human Development Report.

You may now understand that if the socio-economic development of a country is modeled along human development framework, it can provide better understanding of development and its impact on the quality of life of the people. We may appreciate it in a better manner when we try to understand the Human Development Index (HDI) developed as a means of measuring human development. The basic use of HDI is to measure a country's level of development.

The Human Development Index (HDI) combines three basic indicators and their dimensions as shown in Table 25.1

Table 25.1: Human Development Index: Indices and Dimensions

Sl. No.	Indices	Dimensions
1.	A Long and Healthy Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy at birth, as an index of population health and longevity
2.	Knowledge and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Literacy Rate The combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrollment ratio
3.	A Decent Standard of Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross domestic product (GDP), per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) in United States dollars (US\$)

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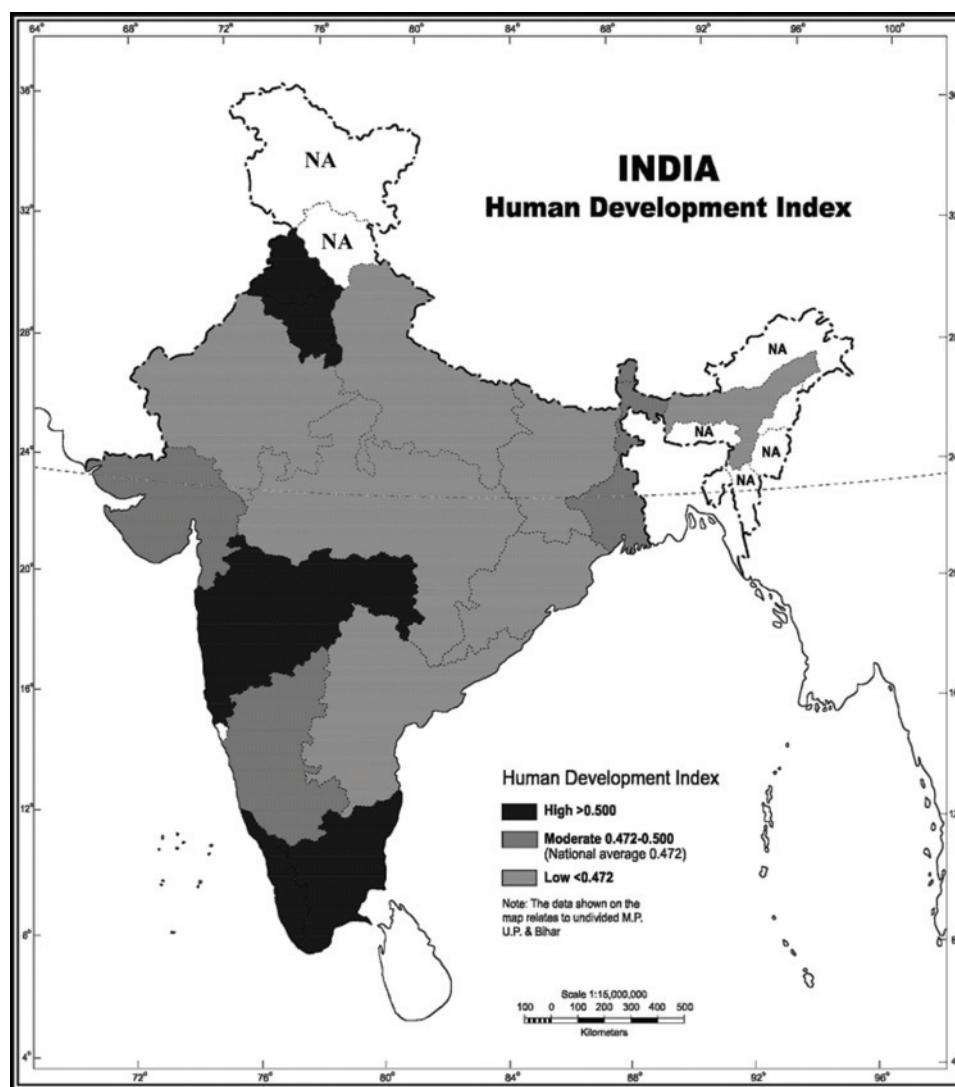
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Do you know

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched Human Development Report in 1990, incorporating development related data in respect to the above mentioned indices. Since then this Report is published every year and the nations are ranked every year according to the level of improvements made in respect of each of the indices.

The analysis of Human Development Report published since 1990, indicates that India is always placed almost at the bottom of the table in the medium level category. Out of 177 countries included in the Report, India's rank was 128 in the



Based upon Survey of India Outline Map printed in 1990.
The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
The boundary of Meghalaya shown of this map is as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, but has yet to be verified.
Responsibility for correctness of internal details shown on the map rests with the publisher.

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Figure 25.2: India : State wise Human Development Index 2001

year 2007-08. The Government of India has also made an attempt to develop state wise Human Development Index. You may see figure 25.2 and observe the variation among the States.



ACTIVITY 25.2

Study the above mentioned Human Development Index Map of India and find answers to the following questions:

- What is the situation of your State as far as HDI is concerned? Give any two reasons for such a situation.
- Identify two States of India - one having very high HDI and the second having low HDI.
- State any three factors that are responsible for high and low Human Development Index in these States.
- Suggest any three measures for improving Human Development Index in the States where HDI is very low.

25.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As we all observe and feel, we are using natural resources almost carelessly to meet our needs. It is said that a number of minerals like, coal, petrol and many more will last only for a few decades, if we go on using them at the present rate. Future

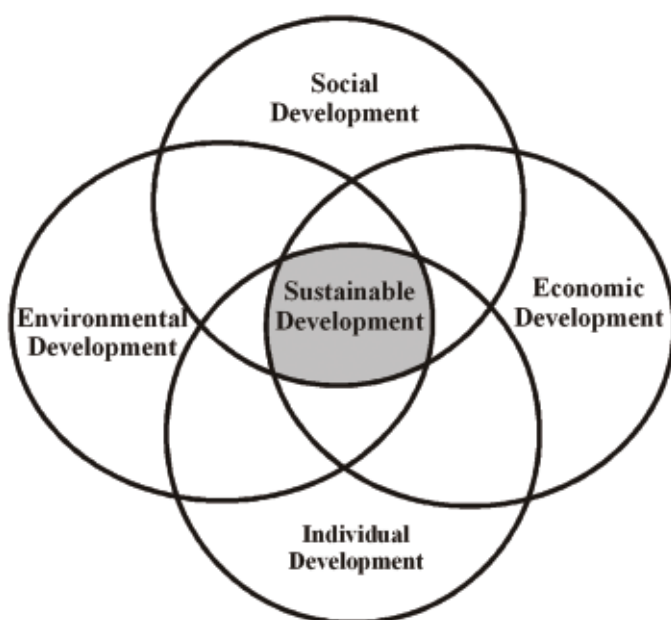


Figure 25.3: Sustainable Development



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generations will not have the facility of using these resources. Is it fair for our generation to deprive the future generations of these resources? The concept of sustainable development has emerged in this context. It is a broad concept that is defined as **‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’**. Although many think that it is relevant only in the environmental context, it actually does not focus solely on environmental issues. As shown in the figure below, it includes economic development, social development, individual development and environmental development. It is a pattern of social and economic transformation, i.e. development that optimizes the economic and societal benefits available in the present, without adversely affecting the likely potential for similar benefits in the future. A primary goal of sustainable development is to achieve a reasonable and equitably distributed level of economic and social wellbeing that can be perpetuated continually for many human generations. It takes care of the needs and requirements of all sections of the society including the disadvantaged groups.

25.4 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

We have discussed so far various aspects of significant issues related to four concepts: development, socio-economic development, human development and sustainable development. Based on our appreciation of these, let us now try to understand the socio-economic development taking place in India. Although various efforts have been made for the development of the country right from the day the country became independent, it is since 1990 that India has emerged as one of the fastest-growing economies in the developing world. It is said that the economy of India is the twelfth largest in the world by market exchange rates and the fourth largest in the world by GDP, measured on purchasing power parity (PPP) basis.

This has been accompanied by increase in life expectancy and literacy rates and attainment of food security. There has been significant reduction in poverty, although official figures estimate that 27.5 per cent of Indians still lived below the national poverty line of \$1 (PPP), (around 10 rupees in nominal terms) a day in 2004-2005. It is also said that India's recent economic growth has widened economic inequality across the country. Despite sustained high economic growth rate, approximately 80 per cent of its population lives on less than US \$2 a day (PPP). Even though the arrival of Green Revolution brought an end to famines in India and ensured food for the entire population, 40 per cent of children under the age of three are underweight and a third of all men and women suffer from chronic energy deficiency.



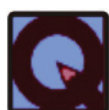
Do you know

Purchasing Power Parity (PPP): It is a method of measuring the relative purchasing power of currencies of different countries. PPP has been found more useful for comparing differences in living standards among nations. Earlier, the

comparison was based on per capita income, but this was abandoned by most of the international organizations, because it was giving a misleading picture. It is well known that the purchasing power of different currencies varies substantially. For example, one US dollar (US\$) can buy far fewer goods and services in the United States than Rs. 50 which is equivalent to one US dollar, can do in India. Therefore, by investing Indian currency equivalent to \$1000, one can have a much better standard of living in India than that in USA by investing the same amount.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.1

1. Why do GDP and per capita income not effectively measure the quality of people's life?
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.....
2. How is the concept of human development different from the traditional concept of social and economic development?
.....
.....
3. Define Sustainable Development.
.....
.....
4. Why is it said that development and under-development co-exist in India? Identify the major reasons.
.....
.....

25.5 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: IMBALANCES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISPARITIES IN INDIA

We have discussed above that the efforts made for socio-economic development in India have been aimed at holistic development of all the regions of the country. In fact, one of the major objectives of development planning initiated immediately after independence has been reduction of regional disparities by promoting the development of all regions. The planning and implementation processes have focused on an approach of regional development. But one of the critical problems facing

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India's economy is the sharp and growing regional variations among different States and Union Territories.

There are certain differences which are already created by nature. For example, you may find in the figure below that (figure no. 25.4) some areas have plain topography, fertile alluvial soil and abundance of water like Indo-Ganga plain; whereas there are certain areas which have hilly terrains, dense forest cover and less fertile soil like North-Eastern parts of the country. These differences created by nature are called regional diversity. But there are certain differences that are human-made. These differences or inequalities are related to indicators like per capita income, agricultural growth, industrial growth, expansion of transport and communication facilities, literacy and status of health. These human-made differences or inequalities between regions are known as disparities. You may understand disparity in a better way when you observe figure no. 25.5. It is these disparities that are causes of concern. Let us analyse and try to understand the disparities in respect of the following:



Figure 25.4 : Diversity

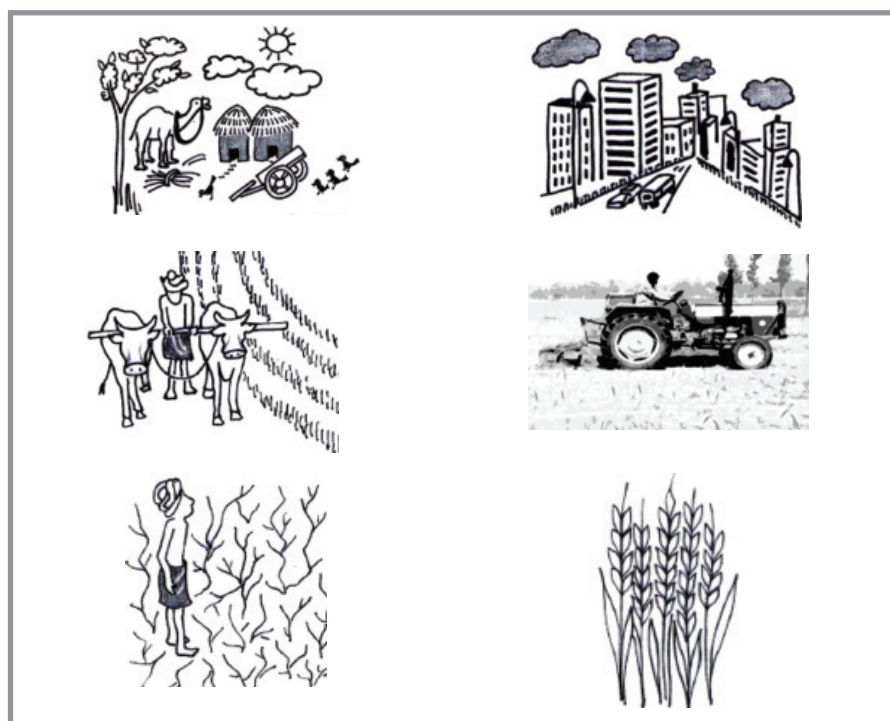


Figure 25.5 : Disparity



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A. Disparities in India

1. **Per Capita Income:** Per capita income is the essence of the level of economic activity in the region. There are very wide regional disparities in per capita income. For the year 2005-06, national average of per capita income was Rs. 25,716. There were only eleven States which had per capita income higher than the national average. The bottom seven poorest States that had per capita income below the national average are Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. These States are home to more than half of India's population.
2. **Poverty:** State-wise poverty ratios have witnessed a decline over the years. Though poverty has declined at the macro-level, rural-urban and inter-state disparities are continuing. The poverty ratio is still relatively high in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. Poverty rates in rural Orissa (43%) and rural Bihar (40%) are some of the worst in the world. On the other hand rural Haryana (5.7%) and rural Punjab (2.4%) compare well even at global level with some of the middle income countries.
3. **Industrial growth:** The initial distribution of industries in India was determined by the historical process of growth driven primarily by the interests of the British Rulers. As a result, most of the industries were concentrated at a few centers. This pattern has continued in the post-independence period as well despite all attempts made so far to expand the process of industrialization of various regions.
4. **Agricultural growth:** Regional disparities in agricultural growth have increased over the years with the States of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, pushing well ahead of others. The per capita average food grain production has been the highest in Punjab and the lowest in Kerala. Mizoram and Maharashtra are at the lowest level in respect of irrigated areas. States like Punjab and Haryana achieved high rate of agricultural productivity because of having extensive irrigation facilities and intensive use of fertilizers. In majority of the States agricultural growth is yet to pick up the needed pace and come up to their potential.
5. **Literacy:** It is one of the major indicators of socio-economic development but there are great disparities in this respect in various regions. According to Census 2001, the literacy rate is the highest in Kerala and the lowest in Bihar. Whereas the all-Indian average of literacy rate was 65.38 percent, it was 90.92 percent in Kerala and only 47.53 percent in Bihar. There are significant variations among rest of the States also.
6. **Transport and Communications:** Transport and communication in India are of various types. The common forms of transportation are Roadways, Railways, Airways and Waterways. When you look at the data in respect of even one of these, you may appreciate the prevailing disparities. For example, in respect of road length there are some States that are at a very advanced level, whereas there are some in which the road situation is very poor. With regard to total road length per 100 km. Kerala tops the list whereas the State of Jammu and Kashmir is at the bottom.



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B. Causes of Regional Disparities

Whenever we try to identify the reasons for regional imbalance in various regions we tend to think that population growth, illiteracy and lack of basic infrastructure are responsible for under-development of certain States. But if we analyse these reasons further, we find that these factors are not only the reasons of under-development in backward States but also its outcome. For example, there has been unabated population growth, prevalence of illiteracy and lack of basic infrastructure in many under-developed States, primarily because the socio-economic development has not taken place in the way it has taken place in other forward States. It is therefore, interesting to analyse the following major causes of regional disparities:

1. **Historical perspective:** During the colonial rule in the pre-independence era, the areas which were not important from commercial or political angles, received little attention and remained under developed. Those areas still continue to be ignored by entrepreneurs. The most prominent among such areas are the tribal areas of central and north-eastern India.
2. **Geographical factors:** Topography of a region can constrain its development. The desert region of Rajasthan and difficult hilly terrains of north-eastern regions are examples of such cases.
3. **Unequal distribution and variation in use of natural resources:** As you may be aware, natural resources like coal, iron ore, oil, natural gas and others are not available in all the States. But this availability alone has not ensured the development of such States. There are certain States that have made good use of this privilege, but others like Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa have not been able to do so.
4. **Remote areas from national markets:** The distance of the region from the national markets have also affected the development of economy in those areas especially the north eastern region, making it difficult to alter their growth process.
5. **Lack of basic infrastructure:** The States that have developed infrastructure facilities like roads, electricity and transportation facilities have made speedy progress in terms of socio-economic development. The States that lack these facilities find it difficult to adequately utilize the allocated investments and also to attract private investors.
6. **Poor governance:** The most important factor that influences socio-economic development is the quality of governance. You may observe that the States that have moved forward have had the spell of good governance for most of the periods. On the other hand, almost all of the backward States are those that have not been able to develop basic infrastructure, have been struggling with law and order problems and have not been able to make optimum utilization of national resources allocated by the Planning Commission. The poor governance has also been discouraging the private investors to set up industries or pursue any other productive activities in those States.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.2**

- Differentiate between disparities and diversities with suitable examples.
.....
.....
- How is Colonialism one of the important factors in creating regional disparities in India?
.....
.....
- Which one of following States can be grouped under economically developed States?
(A) Bihar
(B) Orissa
(C) Arunachal Pradesh
(D) Haryana
- Why are tribal areas of Central India underdeveloped in comparison to most of the areas in the country? Write below the correct statements selecting out of the following:
(A) The areas do not have much natural resources.
(B) They do not have any major industries in this area.
(C) The economic as well as human development for local people is very low.
(D) None of the above.

**Notes****25.6 DISADVANTAGED GROUPS OF THE SOCIETY**

As we have been emphasizing in this lesson, the ultimate goal of socio-economic development has been to ensure that all sections of the society are enabled to be a part of the development process. All must have equal access to the outcomes of development, and equal opportunities for upward economic and social mobility. Although it is said that India has been making notable progress, this goal of reaching the development outcomes is yet to be attained by all. There are many population groups that are till today discriminated both socially and economically and are not able to participate freely and fully in the development process and reap its benefits. These are known as disadvantaged groups. Some of such groups are Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), minorities and women. According to Census of India 2001, SCs constitute 16.23% and STs

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8.2% respectively. Minorities and other backward classes also have significant share, whereas women constitute almost half of the Indian population. We shall discuss the efforts for the empowerment of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Women.

25.7 EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES POPULATION

The urgent need for empowerment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country was realized in India on the eve of independence to reduce the regional disparities and uplift the status of these communities. Constitution of India makes a number of commitments under its various provisions for the development of these groups. Towards fulfilling the commitments, the Government of India has adopted a three-pronged strategy of (i) Social Empowerment; (ii) Economic Empowerment; and (iii) Social Justice to ensure removal of disparities, elimination of exploitation and suppression and to provide protection to these disadvantaged groups.

(a) Social Empowerment

Education being the most effective instrument for socio-economic empowerment of the disadvantaged groups, high priority continues to be accorded to improve the educational status of these groups. The following measures are important:

- With respect to elementary education, various incentives in the form of abolition of tuition fee, free supply of books, mid-day meals, and scholarships are provided. Special focus has also been on ST students in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, Navodaya Vidyalaya and National Talent Search Scheme.
- There are also major scholarship programmes. Post-Matric Scholarships are awarded to promote higher education beyond matriculation. Pre-Matric Scholarships are given to encourage children of scavengers and those engaged in menial works to pursue education. Upgradation of Merit Scheme is aimed at extending remedial and special coaching. Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowships for SC students provide special incentives to pursue higher studies and research.
- Coaching facilities are provided to students preparing for various competitive examinations.
- Hostel facilities are provided to both girls and boys for pursuing education from upper primary stage onwards.

(b) Economic Empowerment

Employment and income generation programmes have been launched for the economic empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups. The following apex financial organizations have been set up:



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- The National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) provides financial and other support to beneficiaries for taking up various income generating activities.
- The National Safai Karamchhari Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) provides financial and other support to safai karamcharis for taking up various income generating activities.
- The National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) supports various income and employment generating activities through loans, marketing support, training and so on.
- The Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs) finance employment oriented schemes that cover agriculture and allied activities including minor irrigation, small scale industry, transport and trade and service sector.
- The Scheduled Tribes Development Corporations (STDCs) function as channellizing agencies and extending financial and other assistance to beneficiaries. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) provides marketing assistance to STs for collection of minor forest produce and surplus agricultural produce.

(c) Social Justice

The Constitution of India guarantees protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. Some protective legislations have also been made. The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 are important.

25.8 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution



Figure 25.6 Women Empowerment

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not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. However, there still exists a wide gap between the accepted goals and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other. The access of women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections of society to education, health and productive resources is inadequate. They remain largely marginalized, poor and socially excluded. But a number of programmes are being implemented and various kinds of efforts, as shown in the following figure no. 25.6, have been made to empower women. The following major steps are being undertaken for empowerment of women:

(a) Economic Empowerment

- Since women comprise the majority of the population below the poverty line, poverty eradication programmes are specifically addressed to their needs and problems.
- In view of the critical role of women in the agriculture and allied sectors as producers, concentrated efforts are being made to ensure that benefits of training, extension and various programmes reach them in proportion to their numbers.
- Comprehensive support in terms of labour legislation, social security and other support services is provided to women to enable them to participate in various industrial sectors, especially electronics, information technology, food processing, agro industry and textiles.
- The provision of support services for women, like child care facilities, including crèches at work places and educational institutions, homes for the aged and the disabled are being improved to create an enabling environment and to ensure their full cooperation in social, political and economic life.

(b) Social Empowerment

- Efforts are being made to ensure equal access to education for women and girls, eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupational/vocational/technical skills by women.
- A holistic approach to women's health which includes both nutrition and health services is being adopted and special attention is being given to the needs of women and girls at all stages of the life cycle.
- In view of the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face, focused attention is being paid to meet the nutritional needs of women at all stages of the life cycle.

- Elimination of all forms of violence against women, physical and mental, whether at domestic or societal levels, including those arising from customs, traditions or accepted practices has been getting top most priority.

(c) Political Empowerment

Women have been enjoying right to vote and contest any elections ever since independence. They have right to participate equally in decision making at all levels of governance. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Indian Constitution have served as a breakthrough towards ensuring equal access and increased participation in political power structure by providing 33.3 % reservation of seats for women in rural and urban local bodies. This has played a central role in the process of enhancing women's participation in public life. A Bill to provide reservation of seats in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies is under consideration by Parliament.



ACTIVITY 25.3

Situations related to discrimination against females are stated below. State the reasons for each situation:

Sr. No.	Situations	Give Reasons
1.	In most of the families girls do not get the same opportunity and facility for education as boys. Why?	
2.	Generally, the illness of females, i.e. mothers, sisters or sisters-in-law is not taken as seriously as that of the males. Why?	
3.	Most of the household activities are done by females only. Male members do not share. Why?	
4.	Birth of a female child in a family is not celebrated like the birth of a male child. Why?	

Study the above situations carefully and answer the following:

- Why do you think this inequality is prevalent in our society? Give any three reasons.
- Suggest any three remedial measures which will help in removing inequality.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.3

1. Which are the major socially disadvantaged groups?
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.....
2. Do you think that the steps taken so far have been empowering Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to reap the benefits of socio-economic development? Give three reasons.
.....
.....
3. Why are the efforts made so far have not been able to empower women in our society?
.....
.....
4. Do a survey of at least 5 families in your neighbourhood and collect data in respect of the following. It will be better if you do it on more families, may be 10.
(i) Number of adult male and female members; (ii) Number of male and female children; (iii) Number of male and female children born in the last two years; (iv) Number of male and female children dead in the last two years; (v) Number of male and female children above the age of 5 attending schools or colleges/ university; (vi) Number of females working outside home in offices or in some business.
Based on the analysis of collected data, try to find the answers to the following questions:
 - (a) What is the number of male and female children and how many of them are attending schools/colleges? Are the male and female children of a family studying in the same school? And if not, what are the reasons?
 - (b) Are females working outside home? If yes, where? If not, why?
 - (c) Do you find the environment of gender discrimination in families? If yes, why? If not, how?

25.9 MAJOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We have so far tried to understand various issues related to socio-economic development and empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Now you may also like

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to know about the major policies and programmes focused on socio-economic development. If we discuss all of them, it will be too exhaustive. We shall therefore discuss below some of the important policies and programmes related only to education and health. You may study the rest in your senior classes.

25.9.1 Education for All

You can very well appreciate that not only India but also the entire international community realizes the need for providing education to all. Under the leadership of UNESCO, a large number of countries met at Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990 and decided to provide Education for All by 2000. In 1992, nine highly populous countries namely China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Bangladesh, Brazil and Egypt congregated at Delhi to reinforce their commitment towards Education for All (EFA). For the last two decades India, with the help of international agencies, has adopted various measures towards achieving the goal of Education For All. The following are the most significant:

A. Universalisation of Elementary Education

The National Policy on Education 1986 envisages that free and compulsory education should be provided to all children up to the age of 14. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 made free and compulsory education a Fundamental Right for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Recently Indian Parliament has enacted the Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. As a result of the efforts made by central and state governments, almost 95% of the country's rural population now has primary schools within one km and about 85% have upper primary schools within three km. This has resulted in:

1. Steady growth of enrolment of children of 6-14 years of age in primary and upper primary schools has gone up steadily.
2. Significant improvements have taken place in enrolment of girls and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
3. There has been significant increase in the number of primary and upper primary schools.

The Central and State governments over a period of time, evolved strategies to reduce drop-out rates and improve levels of achievements in schools. The steps taken in this direction are as follows:

- Creating parental awareness and community mobilization;
- Involvement of community and Panchayati Raj Institutions;
- Economic incentives such as free education, free books and free uniforms;
- Improvement in the content and process of schooling; and

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- National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal Scheme).

The following programmes are specifically aimed at universalisation of elementary education:

(a) Sarva Siksha Abhiyan

An ambitious programme for achieving the goal of universalisation of elementary education, known as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched in 2001. The goals of SSA are as follows:

- (i) Enrollment of all 6-14 age group children in school/Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) Centre/ Bridge Course by 2005;
- (ii) Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010;
- (iii) Universal retention by 2010;
- (iv) Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

(b) National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education or Mid-day Meal Scheme:

This Programme was started and is still continuing to attain the goal of universalisation of elementary education. The objectives of Mid-day Meal Scheme are:

- (i) Improving the nutritional status of children in class I-V in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools and EGS and AIE Centers;
- (ii) Encouraging poor children by helping disadvantaged sections to attend schools more regularly and help them concentrate on class room activities;
- (iii) Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation;

25.9.2 National Literacy Mission

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988. It aims at imparting functional literacy to adult non-literates in the age group 15-35 in the country. The main programmes of the NLM were the Total Literacy Campaign to impart basic literacy to the adult non-literates. It was followed by the Post Literacy Programme to reinforce the literacy skills of the neo literates. And then the Continuing Education Programme was aimed at providing facilities like rural library and reading room for the neo literates and other sections of the community. In addition, vocational training was also provided to the neo-literates and other disadvantaged sections of the society through the Jan Shikshan Sansthan.



Notes

The NLM resulted in the following major outcomes:

- It has been able to cover 597 districts in the country under various literacy programmes and nearly 124 million people are reported to have been made literate.
- The literacy rate of the country has also increased from 52.21% in 1991 to 65.37% in 2001, registering one of the highest decadal growth in literacy so far.
- However, despite these gains, nearly 34% of the non-literates in the 15+ age group in the world are in India. The gender, regional and social disparities are still continuing.

In view of the above, the Government of India has decided that an integrated approach to literacy would be followed now. This means, the **Total literacy Campaigns** and the **Post Literacy Programme** will now operate under one literacy Project. This approach would enable the enormous illiteracy problem to be tackled in a holistic manner. By treating the imparting of functional literacy as a continuum rather than as a one off benefit for the illiterate person, the inputs would be made goal-directed. Literacy campaigns would continue to run in those areas where there are large pools of residual illiteracy. At the same time, for those who have crossed the basic learning phase, programmes of consolidation, vocational skills, integration with life skills and such other aspects would be given priority.

25.9.3 Health for All

India was the first country in the world to launch a comprehensive Family Planning Programme in 1951. This was aimed at enhancing individual health and welfare in the country. But there were very few health facilities for serving the poor people living in remote rural areas. The past five decades have witnessed significant investments in developing a network of health centers all over India. However, though we have not achieved the expected infrastructure of sub-centers, primary health centers and community health centers, the government has been trying to provide health facilities to all the citizens of India.

Though India has been making a steady progress in the development in different aspects of health, a lot of progress has to be made to achieve Health for All goals. “Health for All by the Year 2000” was first enunciated at the WHO/UNICEF meeting at Alma Atta in 1978. As a signatory to this, the Government of India re-oriented priorities to emphasize primary health care, immunization, family planning and nutritional support programmes. World Leaders including India committed themselves to achieve this ambitious goal by 2000.

During 1951-2001, the population in India has increased almost three times from 36.10 crores in 1951 to 102.70 crores in 2001. Therefore, the health system is at cross roads with a wide gap between demand and supply. Looking at the distribution

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of medical facilities, we find there is highly unequal distribution and most of the facilities are concentrated around major cities and towns. To reduce this inequality in distribution, Government of India started an ambitious programme known as National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). Apart from NRHM, Government of India has also launched many programmes related to health of women and children like Janani Suraksha Yojna (JSY), Balika Samridhi Yojna (BSY), and Kishori Shakti Yojna (KSY). With the success of NRHM, Government of India is planning to launch a similar programme for urban area called National Urban Health Mission (NUHM). You may see in the Box, the names of some major national health programmes that are being implemented.

	NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAMMES
1.	National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP)
2.	National Filaria Control Programme
3.	National Leprosy Eradication Programme
4.	Revised National TB Control Programme
5.	National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme
6.	National Mental Health Programme
7.	National Aids Control Programme
8.	National Cancer Control Programme
9.	Universal Immunization Programme
10.	National Programme for Prevention and Control of Deafness
11.	Pilot Programme on Prevention and Control of Diabetes, CVD and Stroke
12.	National Tobacco Control Programme
13.	National Programme for Control of Blindness



INTEXT QUESTIONS 25.4

1. Identify the target groups for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and National Literacy Mission.
(i) and (ii)
2. Describe any two achievements of the health sector during the last fifty years.
(i)
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Notes

(ii)

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3. What is the latest approach adopted under National Literacy Mission?

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4. Why has Government of India started National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)?

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WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Development is defined as a state in which things are improving. But it is defined in different ways in various contexts, social, political, biological, science and technology, language and literature. In the socio-economic context, development means the improvement of people's lifestyles through improved education, incomes, skills development and employment. It is the process of economic and social transformation based on cultural and environmental factors.
- There are certain differences which are already created by nature. The differences created by nature are called diversity. But there are certain differences created by human beings. The inequalities created by human beings are called disparities. In India there are certain areas that have excellent facilities whereas there are certain areas which are not so advanced in terms of the socio-economic facilities. These human-made differences between regions are known as regional disparities.
- Human development focuses on expanding and widening of people's choices as well as raising the levels of wellbeing. So it covers almost all aspects of human life i.e. economic, social, political, cultural etc. So in human development, income is only one of the many components. Human Development Index (HDI) has three components: a long and healthy life; knowledge and a decent standard of living.
- According to Human Development Report 2007-08 India's rank was 128 out of 177 countries in the world. India was placed almost at the bottom of the table in the medium level category.
- In India, there are sizeable populations who can be classified as marginal section of the society. We group them as marginal because these groups are still

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discriminated both socially and economically and still are not able to participate freely and fully in the development process. Some of them are Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), women etc.

- Towards fulfilling the commitments, the Government of India adopted a three pronged strategy of - (i) Social Empowerment; (ii) Economic Empowerment; and (iii) Social Justice to ensure removal of disparities, elimination of exploitation and suppression and to provide protection to these disadvantaged groups.
- There are two significant programmes which were implemented in all the states of the country to improve two important social sectors of India i.e. education and health. These two programmes are Education for All and Health for All.



TERMINAL EXERCISES

1. Why does the concept of socio-economic development not take care of all aspects of development? Give any two reasons.
2. Why are there regional imbalances and socio-economic disparities in India? Analyze any six factors responsible for this.
3. Explain any six social empowerment measures adopted by the Government of India for the disadvantaged sections of the society.
4. Describe various measures undertaken by the Government of India for reducing the drop-out rates and to improve the levels of achievements in education.
5. What is Literacy Campaign? Describe various strategies adopted for the success of the programme.



ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

25.1

1. The GDP is a specific measure of economic welfare that does not take into account important aspects such as leisure time, environmental quality, freedom, or social justice or gender equality and similarly the per capita income numbers also do not indicate the level of income equality among people.
2. It covers almost all aspects of human life. It places people at the centre of the concerns of development and emphasizes that the purpose of development is to enlarge all human choices, and not just income.
3. Sustainable development is defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.



Notes

4. It is said because:

- (i) Indian economy is 12th largest in the world by market exchange rates and the fourth largest by GDP.
- (ii) Indian rank in HDI is 128 out of 177 countries in the year 2007-08
- (iii) 27.5% Indians still live below poverty line.
- (iv) Approximately 80% of India's population live on less than \$ 2 a day (ppp).

25.2

1. There are certain differences which are already created by nature. The differences created by nature are called diversity. But there are certain differences created by human being. The inequalities created by human being are called disparities.
2. During the pre-independence era, areas which were not important from commercial or political interests received little attention and it continued even after independence.
3. D
4. C

25.3

1. The major socially disadvantaged groups are Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Minorities and Women.
2. The steps taken so far have been empowering the SCs and STs. The reasons are:
 - (i). Different programmes have been initiated such as mid-day meal, supply of books etc.
 - (ii) Schools for SCs and STs such as Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya and special treatment in Navodaya Vidyalaya, National Talent Search Schemes, Scholarships are also provided.
 - (iii) NSFDC, NSKFDC, NSTFDC, SCDC and STDC have been opened to provide financial support to SCs and STs.
 - (iv) TRIFED provide marketing assistance to STs for their products.
3. The efforts made so far has not been able to empower women in our society because
 - (i) The access of women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections of society to education, health and productive resource is inadequate.
 - (ii) They remain largely marginalized, poor and socially excluded.

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- Survey has to be conducted by students themselves.

Assessment Key

Learning Objective	Assessment tool	Scoring key
To analyse the gender perspective of socio-economic development	To conduct small survey	<p>Level -1 (Marks - 0 to 33% – Insufficient response) Learner is able to answer only one out of three items</p> <p>Level - 2 (Marks 34-55% – Improvement required) Learner is able to answer at least two items.</p> <p>Level -3 (Marks 56-75% – more or less satisfactory)</p> <p>Learner is able to answer all the three items.</p> <p>Level - 4 (Marks 76-100% – very good) Learner is able to answer all three items with all dimensions of gender implications.</p>

25.4

- (i) Children of school going age but not attending the school (ii) adult illiterates.
- (i) Death rate has declined from 27.4 per thousand at the time of independence to 8.5 in 2001 (ii) infant mortality rate has been brought down from 134 per thousand live births to 71 in 2001 (iii) Life expectancy has risen from a mere 32 years in 1947 to 65 in 2001 (iv) There has been a steady progress towards elimination of leprosy, polio, neonatal tetanus, and iodine deficiency disorders. (Any two)
- The Government of India has decided that an integrated approach to literacy would be followed now. This means, the **Total Literacy Campaign** and the **Post Literacy Programme** will now operate under one literacy Project. This approach would enable the enormous illiteracy problem to be tackled in a holistic manner.
- There is highly unequal distribution of health facilities in the country and most of the facilities are concentrated around major cities and towns. To reduce the inequality, Government of India started an ambitious project of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).