



Road to Human Development

This editorial is based on [“The solution to India’s stunted improvement on the Human Development Index: Improving access to quality education”](#) which was published in The Indian Express on 14/09/2022. It talks about the inequalities in India in different dimensions of development and Human Development Report 2021-22.

For Prelims: Human Development Index, Periodic Labour Force Survey 2020-21, District Information System for Education, Global Gender Gap Report 2022, Global Hunger Index 2021, Nature Based Solutions.

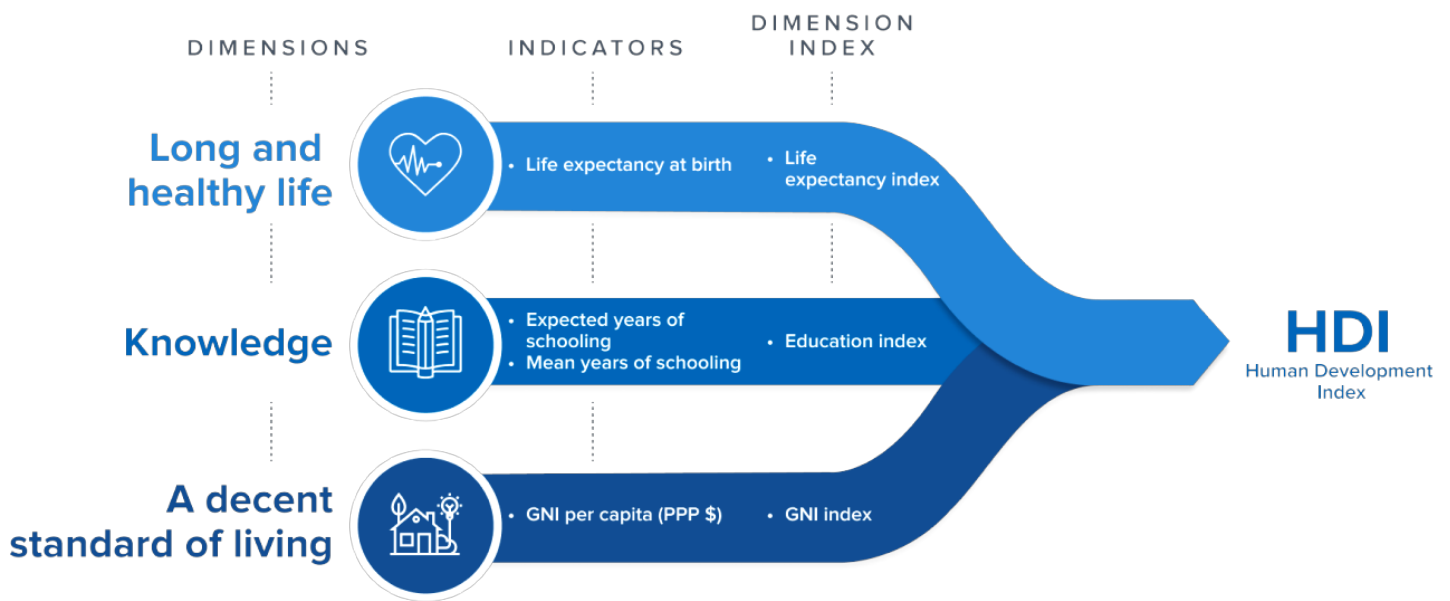
For Mains: Human Development Report 2021-22, Challenges For India Regarding Human Development, Social-Economic Inclusion.

The **idea of humanity lies at the core of [human development](#)**. Human development goes beyond the notion of economic growth with **wealth maximisation of the economy**. The concept of human development is more about **expansion of freedom, enhancement of capabilities, providing equal opportunities to all**, and ensuring a long, healthy and prosperous life.

Towards **2030**, India is expected to reach a total population of **1.5 billion**, becoming the world's most populous country. While India has multiplied its economy by many folds, it has not made much progress on HDI. The [Human Development Report 2021-2022](#) has signalled an alarming situation for India. In the global ranking of HDI, among 191 countries **India slipped to 132 in 2022**. (**129** in 2019 and **131** in 2020)

What is the Human Development Report?

- **Amartya Sen and Mahbub UI Haq**, conceptualised the human-centric approach to development in the first **Human Development Report** published by the **United Nations Development Programme in 1990**.
- **Indices Covered in Human Development Report:**
 - [Human Development Index \(HDI\)](#)
 - **Inequality-Adjusted HDI**
 - **Planetary Pressures-Adjusted HDI**
 - **Gender Development Index**
 - **Gender Inequality Index**
 - **Multidimensional Poverty Index**
- **Dimensions and Indicators of Human Development Index:**



What are the Criticism for Evaluation of the Human Development Index?

- **Tradeoff Between the Components:** HDI implicitly assumes **trade-offs between its components when these measurements may not always be equally valuable.** Countries can achieve the same HDI through different combinations of life expectancy and GNI per capita.
- **Slow to Reflect Recent Policies:** The [United Nations](#) itself even admits that the **HDI is not a comprehensive measure of human development.** HDI reflects long-term changes (e.g. life expectancy) and is slow to reflect recent policy changes and improvements to the lives of a nation's citizens.

What are the Challenges For India Regarding Human Development?

- **Gender Inequality:** Prevalence of [gender stereotypes](#) and **lack of upward mobility** of women (due to [glass ceiling](#)) has traditionally sidelined women from development. The Covid-19 pandemic has also exacerbated gender inequality.
 - In terms of women's economic participation and opportunity, the [Periodic Labour Force Survey's 2020-21](#) report states that the labour force participation rate among Indian **women is just 23.15%**, in contrast to **57.75 % in men.**
 - The World Economic Forum's [Global Gender Gap Report 2022](#) ranks India 135 out of 146 countries.
- **Low Gross Enrolment:** Every year, a large number of students dropout of school in India that **hinders their economic and social well-being** and creates a **non-innovative environment.**
 - The reason for this, reported by the [National Sample Survey Office](#), is **not only the financial constraints and engagement of children in domestic or economic activities** but their increasing lack of interest in education.
 - According to the [District Information System for Education](#), students' disinterest towards education is due to the **lack of educational and vocational counselling at the school level.**
- **Lack of Effective Education Infrastructure:** A **great deal of the quality of education is determined by infrastructure**, such as classrooms, water and sanitation facilities, [digital learning facilities](#), and sports facilities.
 - However, India **lags behind in providing quality education uniformly** across the country because of insufficient funding, regional disparities, and a **lack of strict regulatory mechanisms.**
- **Inadequate Health-Care Facility:** Although, healthcare system is improved, there are considerable **quality differences between rural and urban areas**, between **public and private providers** and investment in the healthcare sector is not uniform (**as health is a state subject**).
 - **Low and middle income population** of India faces [out-of-pocket \(OOP\) expenditure on health](#), preventing their upward mobility and pulling them into poverty.

- **Malnutrition:** Due to poverty, inequality, improper child care and food insecurity, India faces the problem of [malnutrition](#) that costs India around **10 billion dollars annually** retarding improvements in human development and further **reduction of [child mortality](#)**.
 - India ranks **101st** out of the 116 countries in the [Global Hunger Index 2021](#).
- **Lack of Social Security:** Around **88% of India's labour force** are employed as **daily wage labourers without contracts**, landless farm labourers and gig workers. The majority of these informal workers and their families have **no access to [social security](#)**.
 - Informal workers in rural and urban areas were massively affected due to the [Covid-19 Pandemic](#), because of the seasonality of their employment and **lack of formal employee-employer relationship**.

What are the Recent Government Initiatives Related to Human Development?

- [PM Kaushal Vikas Yojna](#)
- [SHREYAS Scheme](#)
- [Startup India](#)
- [New Education Policy, 2020](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana \(PMJJBY\)](#)
- [Women in Engineering, Science, and Technology \(WEST\) Initiative](#)
- [Ayushman Bharat Scheme](#)

What Should be the Way Forward?

- **Nexus Between Economic, Social and Environmental Development: Economic growth, social and environmental development are tightly correlated** and play a major role to improve the **basic living conditions in India**.
 - Socio-economic and environmental problems cannot be addressed in isolation anymore. Therefore, it is necessary to **nest economic, social and environmental aspects in homocentric planning** through [nature-based solutions](#).
- **Reach, Range and Reason Based Policies: Amartya Sen** contended that to achieve development's objective the government policies must focus on the **3 R's**:
 - **Reach (reach of the reason to be achieved)**
 - **Range (ways and means to be used)**
 - **Reason (priority to pursue).**
- **Social-Economic Inclusion:** There is a need for concentrated efforts to **streamline the marginalised section of the society** who are currently not free to expand their choices and achieve a decent standard of living.
 - Equality of opportunity ([Article 14 of Indian Constitution](#)) must be ensured closing the gender gap and moving toward **participatory democracy** that will take the country **on the path of achieving [National Development Goals](#) and [Sustainable Development Goals](#)**.
- **Investment, Insurance and Innovation in Social Infrastructure:** A **universal education and health care system** can be a **broad umbrella effort to solve a plethora of issues** in the country to sustain and improve its quality of life and deal with major emerging challenges such as urbanisation, housing shortages, power, water and [disaster management](#).

Drishti Mains Question

“While India has multiplied its economy by many folds, it has not made much progress on HDI”. Critically analyse.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q.1 The Multi-dimensional Poverty Index developed by Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative with UNDP support covers which of the following? (2012)

1. Deprivation of education, health, assets and services at household level
2. Purchasing power parity at national level
3. Extent of budget deficit and GDP growth rate at national level

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a)** 1 only
- (b)** 2 and 3 only
- (c)** 1 and 3 only
- (d)** 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (a)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-editorials/15-09-2022/print>