



## 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.

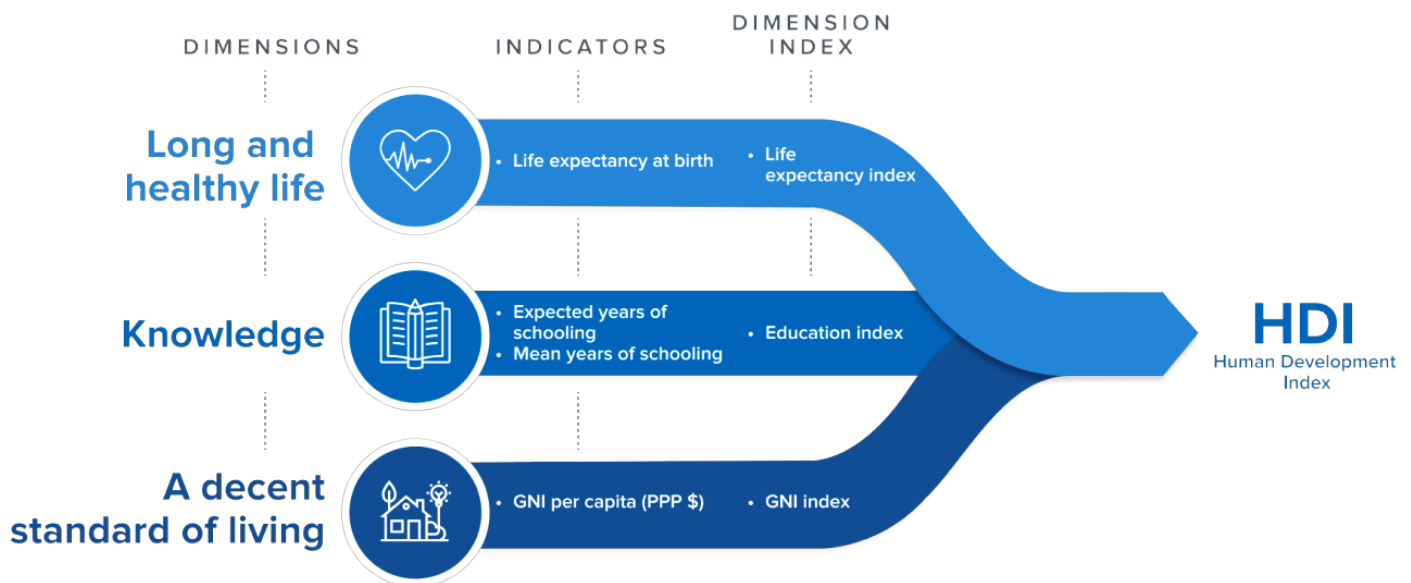
The **idea of humanity lies at the core of human development**. Human development goes beyond the notion of economic growth with **wealth maximisation of the economy**. The concept of human development is more about **expansion of freedom, enhancement of capabilities, providing equal opportunities to 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:**

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## 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 **101<sup>st</sup>** 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/printpdf/road-to-human-development>