

Editorial

India home to 28 percent of the world's multidimensional poor: Human Development Index 2019. The human development index of 2019 points that India is home to 28 percent of the world's poor people, despite the fact that between 2005 and 2015, the country has lifted 271 million people out of poverty. India shifted one spot up from 130 positions to the rank of 129 among 189 countries in the 2019 Human Development Index released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). India's HDI value is up by 50 percent with an increase of 0.647 in 2018 from 0.43 in 1990, placing India above average among countries in the medium human development group as well as above the average for other South Asian countries. However, in recent years the annual HDI growth in India has slowed down. India's average annual HDI growth was 1.43 percent between 1990-2000 which increased to 1.57 percent during 2000-2010 which, between 2010 to 2018 came down to 1.34 percent. Among the neighboring countries of India, Pakistan ranked 152 and Bangladesh ranked 135, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives ranked 71 and 104 respectively with China at 85th position. With 46 percent growth rate during 1990-2018 South Asia became the fastest-growing region followed by East Asia and Pacific at 43 percent growth. In global parlance, Norway is at first rank with an HDI value of 0.954 while Burundi with the value of 0.423 is at the bottom of the list.

Significance of the Report

The report highlights the inequality in development beyond income that exists in the society as well as to measure loss in human development progress due to inequalities along with emphasizing the gender gaps in development. The Human Development Report considers four parameters viz; per capita gross national income, life expectancy at birth, mean years of schooling, and expected years of schooling for evaluating the performance of the countries.

According to the report, India ranks at 122 positions out of 162 countries on the Gender Development Index and is only marginally better than the South Asian average (0.829 vs 0.828). In India, per capita income increased over 250 percent while life expectancy at birth rose by 11.6 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.5 years whereas the expected years of schooling grew by 4.7 years between 1990-2018. Despite the growth in basic standards, group-based inequalities especially affecting women and girls persist in India. HDI report indicates towards enormous high incidences of multidimensional poverty across countries. Out of 1.3 billion multidimensional poor living in the 101 countries of the world, almost half of it amounting to 661 million are from Asia and the Pacific region. The world is moving towards a new set of inequalities, from access to health services and education to inequalities based on climate education and technology. The irony is that in India despite a reduction in absolute poverty, the old and new inequalities are on the rise. Older inequalities in terms of access to healthcare and education and the next generation of inequalities specifically around the climatic crisis, education, and technological divide are becoming the roadblocks for achieving the agenda for sustainable development. In India the development initiatives for financial inclusion like the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana and for universal health care, Ayushman Bharat are the crucial campaigns for bridging an equal distribution of wealth and power in the Indian society and are essential for achieving the agenda for sustainable development and for ensuring the quality of human life.

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