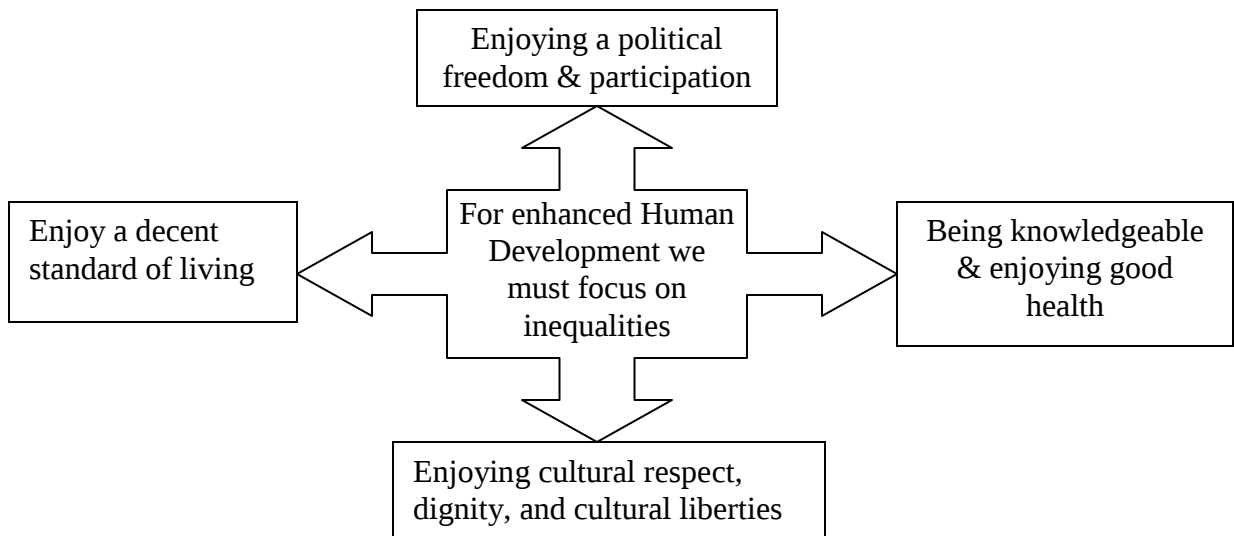


Event Report - Translating grassroots work into Human Development – Why Human Development Matters to a Nation, An Indian Analysis

On 27th January 2006, Indian Young Professionals Network in partnership with Young Professionals of New York City and United Nations Staff Recreational Council (UNSRC) Club hosted a presentation on *Translating Grassroots Work into Human Development – Why Human Development Matters to a Nation, An Indian Analysis*, given by Arunabha Ghosh, Policy Specialist and Co-author of *Human Development Report 2004 & Human Development Report 2005*, UNDP. The event took place at United Nations Headquarters, General Assembly Building, GA-37 Club Room from 7pm – 8:30pm.

The presentation highlighted what development really meant and how it was not just about income growth. It is highlighted below graphically:



The presentation included introduction to different family of indices: 1) HDI (Human Development Index), used to measure of human development; 2) GDI (Gender Development Index), its HDI but adjusted to gender inequality; 3) GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure), captures gender inequality; 4) HPI (Human Poverty Index), captures the human poverty in a country; 5) TAI (Technology Achievement Index), captures various dimensions of technological development.

It introduced, the constraints that persist in data collection, because i.) reliable cross-country data is not always available, ii.) Limited availability to time series data, iii.) Sub-national estimates suffer from lack of disaggregated data.

Later, it distinguished the comparative analysis, between Human Development and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are as follows:

Human Development has many other dimensions	MDGs are human development indicators
Human Development is the guiding paradigm	MDGs highlight the glaring gaps
Human Development focuses on equity and distribution	MDGs are largely inequality neutral

The underlying context of this distinction is *Millennium Declaration endorses the Human Development approach in broad terms.*

The presentation discussed where India stands in Human Development Index.

- 2003 HDI 0.602; HDI rank 127
- Life expectancy at birth (2003) 63.3
- Adult literacy rate (2003) 61; combined gross enrolment ratio 60%
- GDP per capita (PPP US\$) 2892
- South Asia: 0.628

It further highlighted, that economic growth in India has increased 6% since 1990. Although it was brought attention to some poor performance on many other fronts such as i.) Hunger and malnourishment, indicating presence of largest number of malnourished people in the world, ii.) Education, indicating youth literacy has increased, but primary enrollment ratio and completion rates still not high enough. There are wide regional and gender disparities, iii.) Mortality ratios are alarming identifying that 1.7 million children die before their first birthday, iv.) Infant Mortality Ratio declined from 127 to 63 (1970-2003), v.) Under five-child mortality rate decline from 202 to 87 (1970-2003). It underscored the fact that India & China's globalization success stories have failed their children.

Almost two-thirds of children in the top quintile are fully immunized; only a fifth in the bottom quintile are that lucky, the presentation said, bringing to the attention that Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh account for 15% of global neonatal deaths. It identified child immunization as critical measure in reducing infant and child mortality. It identified that India is off-track in terms of improving the proportions of girls to boys in primary education. The provision of midday meals for school children has been seen as a key element in increasing enrolment and retention of students.

It indicated that India is falling behind maternal mortality rate; with an estimated 126,000 maternal deaths occurring each year. Most common causes of these deaths were, hemorrhage, anemia, puerperal sepsis, obstructed labor, abortion, and hypertensive disease of pregnancy. There are 665,639 hospital beds or 6.9 hospital beds per 10,000 persons in India. It was brought to the attention that 13 percent of rural residents had access to a primary health care center, 33 percent has access to a sub-center, and 9.6 had access to a dispensary or clinic. Problems with facilities and health care service delivery

were identified as chronic. Issues such as paramedic absenteeism, poor physical infrastructure and cleanliness of the hospitals and centers need to be addressed giving access to the core problems of proliferation of different diseases in India. A staggering 421,000 deaths occur per year because of Tuberculosis in India, a disease that is completely curable with proper interventions. It is predicted that with increasing number of HIV/AIDS cases TB cases will also rise, as people with HIV/AIDS are more susceptible to TB. It is estimated that according to 2003 census, 0.79 percent of adult population (age 15-49) is living with HIV/AIDS and that 170,000 children (age 0-14) are living with the disease as well. There are 2.09 percent malaria cases in India.

In regards to environmental sustainability goal, India suffers from waterborne diseases and worst sanitary conditions. Diseases such as typhoid, cholera, dysentery, and hepatitis were more likely to be contracted under poor sanitary conditions, which abound when human excreta was not properly disposed of, particularly in city slums and rural regions – making it challenging for India to meet this goal by 2015. Access to safe drinking water was another challenge to address within this goal – a daunting task in rural regions.

The presentation concluded by highlighting that 14 states in India – Assam, Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal – have undertaken, developing their own Human Development Reports making it easier to track the progress of Millennium Development Goals within the states in India. It was brought to the attention that, of these fourteen reports, seven HDR's were prepared by non-governmental organizations.