

**Centre for Development Studies  
Trivandrum**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**National Conference on  
“Challenges in Human Development in India”**

*January 24-25, 2009*

Although poverty has declined in India and economic growth has been around 8 percent, significant proportion of population still remains in poverty and is facing major challenges in important dimensions of human development such as infant and child mortality, child and maternal nutrition, educational attainment and morbidity and access to basic services. The progress in these indicators, particularly on child mortality and nutrition, is rather slow as compared even with many Asian countries. Although primary enrolment ratio is over 85 percent, the 55<sup>th</sup> round of NSS data (1999-2000) indicate that around 53 percent of children drop out of school before completing grade VIII. Due to changes in the age structure of the population, the supply of higher education is likely to exceed the demand and this will lead to a bigger challenge in terms of employment opportunities.

The pervasive economic and social inequalities are a matter of concern for India. The level of poverty, infant mortality, educational attainment and access to resources and services are significantly vary among the social groups. Though some States have reduced their regional disparities in social and economic development through public policies and private initiatives, both intra-State and inter-State differences in development still continue to persist. As the States are different with respect to nature and pattern of demographic, social and economic development including infrastructure facilities, the challenges are likely to be different across the States in India. Moreover, the policy initiatives and its efficiency in delivering the services are all important determinant for the progress in human development indicators. Whether India could reduce the regional disparities over the coming years is still a matter of concern. Rural-urban disparity in human development indicators continues to be stark in many of the States. It is important to understand the factors associated with regional differences within and between the States and challenges facing Indian States that hinder any scope for a convergence in human development.

The State of Kerala that ranks first among the major states in India is now facing second generation problems in human development; the Kerala Human Development Report 2005 has stressed the need for qualitative improvement in educational capabilities and infrastructure facilities and also reduction of inequalities across social groups. The other States in India, which are now in the process of human development enhancement, are also likely to face the second generation problems in near future. Moreover, the

general situation most of the States in India have today is peculiar to what is called 'exclusionary development' – development with some pockets of abject exclusion, with the islands of hard core poverty. As the state's role wanes down, honouring the right to freedom of these pockets becomes an unavoidable challenge as a matter of social praxis. The new challenge is in respect of the basic human right to development as freedom.

These challenges are all the more significant in the context of globalization and liberalization when the market tends to displace the state everywhere with promising possibilities for faster growth on the float and frightening implications for the common man's life underneath. An emerging flexible labour market sans security and private participation in the provision of public services at a market price, to cite a few examples, have already started to manifest those dismal prospects. The developments now stand to put a question mark on the very dynamics of public action that is *sine qua non* for human development. The pertinent question is: Can market enhance human development? Are the two non-contradictory? It is important to understand the challenges.

The micro level understanding of the capabilities, assets and activities is important for sustainable livelihood and furthering to enhance the human development. The planning at the district or state level should start from the strengths and opportunities available at the local level. It is also important to understand the institutions and processes at the micro level that facilitate achieving human development.

Given this context, CDS, with an enriched backdrop of more than four decades of development research, finds it of utmost significance to organize a national conference to understand **the challenges in human development in India**. The seminar intends to address both theoretical and empirical issues centered on, but not limited to, the following themes:

- Human development: Conceptual and measurement issues
- Poverty eradication, inclusive growth and human development
- Child and Maternal nutrition and nutrition intake
- Mortality, Morbidity, access to health care services and burden of disease
- Gender unfreedom, inequity and human development
- School education and higher education: equity, access and quality issues
- Role of the governance, institutions, policies and programmes in enhancing human development
- Liberalization, public expenditure and human development
- Infrastructure and human development
- Second generation problems in human development
- Understanding social and regional disparities in human development
- Human development in human rights perspective

The conference will have both invited and contributed papers. It is expected that leading researchers working on the human development issues might participate. A special session is also planned to disseminate the Kottathara Panchayat (Wayanad district) Human Development report prepared by CDS during the conference.

For contributing papers to the conference in any of the above themes, please send the abstract/paper proposal, limited to two pages, to [nava@cds.ac.in](mailto:nava@cds.ac.in) latest by October 1, 2008. We encourage young researchers/scholars working in these areas to contribute papers. The primary author of the papers accepted for presentation will be given financial support for travel and free accommodation during the Conference period. It is also planned to bring out an edited volume with selected papers presented.

**Important Dates:**

Conference announcement:	<b>25 August 2008</b>
Abstract/proposal submission:	<b>1 October 2008</b>
Decision on acceptance of the paper proposal:	<b>5 October 2008</b>
Submission of full paper:	<b>31 December 2008</b>
Conference Dates:	<b>24-25 January 2009.</b>

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