Human Development Concept and Approach

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Frame of the presentation

- Origins
- Framework of analysis
- Key elements of the approach
- Comparison with other approaches
Origins - discontent

• Growing **criticism** of leading development approach of 1980s

• Increasing evidence that the **trickle down** power of market forces to spread benefits and end poverty was not working

• Growing awareness of the **human costs** of the structural adjustment programmes

• Ongoing spread of **social ills** e.g, crime, weakening social fabric etc

• A wave of **democratization** that raised hopes
Origins – anxiety with type of growth

- **Jobless** – no expansion of employment
- **Ruthless** – benefits go mostly to the rich
- **Rootless** – stifles cultural diversity and identity
- **Futureless** – depletes natural resources
- **Voiceless** – without expansion of democracy and empowerment
Framework of analysis – different perspective

- **Analysing differently** – beyond economic growth at the persistence of inequalities
- **Measuring differently** – not just at GDP/GNP but together with literacy and life-expectancy
- **Visualizing differently** – questions on role of state, market, communities, individual responsibilities
- **Strategizing differently** – Types of policies, legislation, attitude changes, financing, partnerships, participation, corrective measures for extreme cases.
Framework of analysis themes/issues

• **Social progress** — greater access to knowledge, health services, better nutrition.

• **Efficiency** — in terms of resource use and their availability i.e, pro growth but should benefit the poor

• **Equity** — in terms of economic growth

• **Participation** — gender equality, democratic governance, cultural liberty

• **Sustainability** — for future generation (i) ecological, (ii) economic, (iii) social trends

• **Human security** — security against hunger, joblessness etc
Framework of analysis – normative yet pragmatic

• **Ethical test:** at each step in the analysis need to address the question: How does it enlarge people’s choices?

• **Theoretical break:** HD proposes an alternative explanation of how development is achieved and produced by human beings who are both beneficiaries and agents of development

• **Policy innovations:** seeks a different set of policies of how to achieve development outcomes.
Key elements – 2010 definition

• 1990 UNDP report: ‘the process of enlarging people’s choices’.

• 2010 HDR definition: ‘Human development is the expansion of people’s freedoms to live long, healthy and creative lives; to advance other goals they have reason to value; and to engage actively in shaping development and equitably and sustainably on a shared planet. People are both beneficiaries and drivers of human development, as individuals and in groups.’
Key element - functionings

• Functionings- ‘valuable beings and doings of people’
  – ‘beings’ such as being well nourished, being safe, being educated
  – ‘doings’ such as being able to visit loved ones, travelling, caring for a child
  – Elementary functionings – being healthy and nourished, being safe, being educated.
  – Complex functionings – ability to contribute to community life achieving self respect etc
Key elements - capabilities

- Capability is various combination of functionings that a person can achieve.
  - Functioning relates to realized outcomes
  - Capability is possibility and opportunity

- Three understandings of the concept of capability
  - Inborn potential
  - Trained potential, skills, abilities
  - Opportunity
Comparison with other Approaches

- Key concepts of 5 approaches
  - **HD** – expanding functionings and capabilities
  - **Neo-liberalism** – increasing utility
  - **Basic needs** – meeting basic needs.
  - **Human capital** – enhancement of stock of skills and productive knowledge
  - **Human Rights** – similar to HD since HR is an intrinsic to HD. Convergence
In conclusion

• **Evolving** and under construction. Not a closed system

• **Multi-dimensional** – pluralistic, holistic and aiming at several values

• **Interdisciplinary** – politics, sociology, anthropology, economics, environment sciences,

• **Action oriented** – development agenda
• Thank you