

Unit 1

Development and Progress: Economic and Social Dimensions

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Learning Objectives

This unit will help you to explain;

- perspectives on development and progress;
- development as growth and modernisation;
- social and human dimension development; and
- paradigm shift in development discourse.

1.1 Introduction

The concepts of development and progress are often used in a positive sense to indicate the processes of advancement of individual or of collective phenomena or of objects or of actions. Human society has made a long journey in this; so is the concept of development. For centuries development was understood as progress, thereafter as growth, as change, as transfer of notion, as modernisation and so on. Very recently it is understood (along with economic) as social and human development as well. Human society has progressed and developed through several stages. Indeed, human society has made a ceaseless journey from the stages of savagery to barbarism, from barbarism to civilisation, from theological to metaphysical, from metaphysical to positive scientific, from simple to doubly compound, from doubly compound to trebly compound, from homogenous to heterogeneous, from under-developed to developed, from ancient to feudal, from feudal to capitalist, from traditional pre-industrial (mechanic solidarity), to industrial (organic solidarity) from pre-rational /pre-capitalist to rational capitalist, from primitive to intermediate, from intermediate to modern, agrarian to industrial, rural to urban and so on. In social science literature, these advancements have been viewed from diverse perspectives or orientations and have been diversely understood in philosophical, political, economic and social terms. This unit delineates the major perspectives on progress and development. We have initially located these concepts in the evolutionary perspectives as elaborated by the classical social thinkers like Morgan, Comte, Spencer, Hobhouse, Marx, Weber, McClelland, Durkheim and Parsons and go on to explain development in economic and social terms as has been visualised in the contemporary world.

The economic notions of development as predominantly understood by growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the Capitalist, Socialist and the

Third World models of development are also widely explained. Developmental perspectives have experienced a paradigm shift since the late 1970s. The notions of human and social development have required a central place in the emerging perspective on development. New strategies have also emerged to integrate the marginalised people and women in the development process and to redefine the role of the state in development. Hence the reformulated strategy of development, i.e., development with empowerment of the marginalised groups and the related issues are also examined in the last section of this unit.

As this is the first unit of this course, we have raised several issues here. These issues would be discussed and critically analysed at length in the following units of this course. Let us begin with an understanding of the concepts of development and progress.

1.2 Understanding of Development and Progress

As we proceed to understand the notion of 'development', we encounter several related notions, viz., evolution, progress, change, growth, transformation and so on. Indeed it is crucial that we should have an understanding of all these notions or concepts at the very outset even though there is a tendency to use them interchangeably.

The notion **evolution** is derived from the Latin word *evolvere*. It means 'to develop' or to 'unfold' which is closely related to the Sanskrit word *vikas*. The concept of evolution is specifically applied to mean the internal growth of a living organism – the plant, animals, etc. Moreover, internal growth has also seen through various stages of gradual transition. For example, seeds evolve to seedlings, then to plants, to trees and then starts the maturity and aging process of the trees.

The notion of **progress**, on the other hand, is used to mean 'to step forward' that coincides with the Sanskrit word '*pra-gat*'. The fundamental meaning of progress, therefore, is the forward march or advancement towards a desirable end. There may be as many types of progress as there are desirable ends, for instance, progress in the acquisition of learning in health, in our march towards a place, etc. Moreover, historically progress has an ethical connotation and is taken to mean advance towards the ultimate moral values which human kind had been striving all down the ages to attain (Gisbert 1994: 467). However, the human moral values and the standard of judgments, are as diverse as human societies. All these diversities do affect the process of attainment of different indicators of progress.

The concepts of development and progress have been understood by the social scientists from diverse perspectives – conflict, functional, neo-conflict, structural functional etc. However in this unit, we shall describe them as early perspectives, the perspectives of Marx, Weber, Durkheim and Parsons. We shall categorise these thinkers in terms of various schools of thought while discussing change and modernisation in the next unit.

1.3 Comte, Morgan, Marx and Spencer on Development and Progress

One of the early concerns of anthropologists and sociologists was to examine the development and progress of human society from an evolutionary perspective. The grand ideas of Morgan, Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Weber and many others are still considered for examining the journey of human society through various stages of development and progress. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the philosophy of history, which helped to formulate the general idea of progress, became very important especially

through the writings of Hegel and Saint-Simon who, later on, left their imprint on the work of Auguste Comte and Karl Marx and others. Let us begin with the work of Comte who was a student of Saint-Simon.

a) Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

August Comte (1798-1857), the founding father of sociology focused his attention on the study of change, development and progress in human society. He divided the study of society into two parts: **social statics** (the study of major institutions or institutional complexes) and **social dynamics** (the study of development and change). Comte saw human society and history as a single entity. Moreover he regarded the history of Europe as synonymous with the history of the human race (Aron 1965: 65). Accordingly he made several generalisations.

Comte observed that certain types of societies were dying and others were being born. The dying types were the theological and military. Medieval society was united by transcendent faith as expounded by the Catholic Church. Theological thinking was contemporaneous with the predominance of military activity, which was expressed by the fact that the highest rank was granted to warriors. The type being born was scientific and industrial. In this society the scientists replaced the theologians; and the industrialists, businessmen, managers and financiers replaced the warriors. Indeed from the moment man related thinking scientifically, the chief activity of collectivities ceases to be the war of man against man and becomes the struggle of man against nature, the systematic exploitation of natural resources (Ibid: 64).

Comte gave a universal scope and a deeper meaning to the idea of progress when he expounded the law of three stages of human evolution. To him, the human mind passes through three stages of progression – theological, metaphysical and positive. In the theological stage human beings explain phenomena by ascribing them to beings or forces comparable to humans themselves. In the metaphysical stage human beings explain phenomena in terms of nature; in the positive scientific stage man examines the phenomena and their linkages are examined in terms of reasoning. "To Comte, the method that triumphed in mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry and biology must eventually prevail in politics and culminate in the founding of a positive science of society that is called sociology (Ibid: 66)".

When Auguste Comte defined sociology as the science of order and progress, and divided it into social statics (order) and social dynamics (progress), he was in fact inferring that progress was possible through order. He tried to understand social changes that occurred in the early years of the industrial revolution as an evolutionary process. The theory of evolution explains that societies pass through a number of stages starting from a simple form and becoming more complex as the process of evolution progresses. In the same way, Auguste Comte put forward the idea of evolutionary change and also related the idea of progressive change to the development of intellect, in particular the development of scientific thought. This "law of three stages" postulates that intellectual progress is accompanied by moral development, with a number of changes in social institutions as well. Comte considered material as well as moral progress to be essential types of progress and social change as a product of internal forces, that too, in a linear form.

b) Morgan (1818-1881)

Morgan was the first person to bring forth the definite order of human society systematically. He identified three main epochs through which human society progressed. These are *savagery*, *barbarism* and *civilisation*. He sub-divided savagery and barbarism again into lower, middle and upper orders according to the progress made in the production of the means of subsistence. To him,

“upon their skill in this direction the whole question of human supremacy on the earth depended. Mankind are the only beings that may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food. The great epochs of human progress have been identified more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence” (cf Engles 1970: 204). It would be interesting to elaborate a little more on how the human beings progressed from stages of savagery to barbarism and then to civilisation.

Savagery

- a) Lower Stage: Human beings lived in tropical or sub-tropical forests on trees. Fruits, nuts and roots served them as food.
- b) Middle Stage: Human beings began to utilise fire and fish as food. The new food made them independent of locality and human movement started geographically. Human beings of this stage predominantly used crude stones as weapons.
- c) Upper Stage: Human beings invented bow and arrow, wild animals were added to their food, and hunting became their normal occupation. Wood vessels and utensils were also used.

Barbarism

- a) Lower Stage: Human beings entered into the stage of barbarism with the introduction of pottery.
- b) Middle Stage: It began with the domestication of animals in the East; and in the West it began with cultivation of edible plants, introduction of means of irrigation; use of sun dried bricks and stones for making buildings.
- c) Upper Stage: This is a very transitional phase. This stage begins with “smelting of iron ore and passes into civilisation through the invention of alphabetic writings and its utilisation for literary records”. The use of iron ploughshare drawn by cattle, wide scale land cultivation, unlimited increase in the means of subsistence, rapid increase in population characterised this stage.

Civilisation

It is the period in which knowledge of the further working up of natural products, of industry and of art was acquired (Ibid: 209). In this phase of progression human society has acquired sophistication in dimensions of life.

c) Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx presents an interpretation of the structure, functioning and progression of the capitalist society from the previous stages. Marx however provides the idea of radical transformation of society by elucidating a comprehensive theory of human progress in terms of contradiction inherent in the material structure of society. To him the actual basis of society is its economic structure. To quote Marx:

In the social production which man carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, their relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rise the legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social political and spiritual processes of life At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change in the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed to reference (Marx 1992).

Marx outlines the asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the capitalist as the major modes of production or epochs in the progress of human society. The asiatic mode of production does not constitute a stage in the Western society. Primitive communities are characterised by community ownership and their subordination by the State. In the ancient mode of production, slavery and in the feudal mode of production, serfdom provide the foundation of the productive system. The capitalist mode of production is characterised by large-scale commodity production, emergence of free labour markets and rapid growth of technology. Marx forecasts that capitalism would be replaced by socialism through violent revolution.

Marx argues that new developments of productive forces of society come in conflict with existing relations of production. For Marx, it is the growth of new productive forces and the contradiction built into them outline the course of human history. Class struggles have been recognised as the driving force of social change and development. To him "the history of the hitherto existing society is a history of class struggles". The dichotomous class-based societies would be replaced through a vehement class struggle to usher in an epoch of classless, stateless society whereby each would contribute according to one's capacity and would receive according to one's need.

d) Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

Herbert Spencer believed in progress and in the unity and irreversibility of historical development. The law of Progressive Development of society was his central concern. Spencer was highly influenced by Charles Darwin's work *The Origin of the Species* (1859).

Spencer propagated that all through the ages there had been social evolution from a simple, uniform or homogenous structure to a complex multifold or heterogeneous one. Thus he drew an analogy between the living organism and human society in explaining their progress through evolutionary processes. To him, in the process of evolution, societies march from simple to various levels of compound on the basis of their composition. The aggregate of some simple societies gives rise to compound societies; and the aggregate of some compound societies gives rise to doubly compound societies. The aggregate of doubly compound societies gives rise to trebly compound societies. Simple societies, according to Spencer, consist of families unified into clans, doubly compound societies consist of clans unified into tribes; and trebly compound societies have tribes brought together forming nations or states (Timasheff 1967: 40).

Spencer has also delineated the evolution of societies from military to industrial as a model of analysis. Compulsory cooperation; a centralised pattern of authority and social control; myths and beliefs reaffirming the hierarchical notion of society; rigorous discipline and close identity between public and private spheres characterised the military society. The industrial society, on the other hand, was characterised by voluntary cooperation; recognition of personal rights; separation of the economic realm from political control of the government; and growth of free associations and institutions (Ibid: 42).

It is very important to note that Spencer's model of evolution helped explain the emergence and expansion of the *Laissez Faire* doctrine of free market in Europe and America.

Spencer was of the view that progress was largely due to pressure of population and he presented a comprehensive theory by including a variety of factors in his theory of social evolution and progress. He treated human society as a biological organism and, therefore, tried to study "development" in the sense of change from within. He propounded an analogy between society and organism and between social and economic growth; and argued that "with increase in size, the structural complexity of the society also increases."

Reflection and Action 1.1

What are the fundamental tenets of progress of human society as propagated by Morgan? How are these different from those of Comte?

1.4 Tonnies, Durkheim, Weber, Hobhouse and Parsons on Development and Progress

The idea of progress and development were further explored by many scholars highlighting the discontinuities between old and new. In this section we shall focus only on the central ideas of Tonnies, Weber, Durkheim, Hobhouse and Parsons.

a) Tonnies (1855-1936)

To Tonnies, in *Gemeinschaft* human beings are united by their natural condition – by blood relations, by marriage or through a strong relationship between husband and wife, mother and child and among siblings. The kinship group, neighborhood and friendship are the major types of groups in the *gemeinschaft*, who are guided by the authority of the common will. Moreover the common will is evolved based on shared beliefs, values and ways of behaving. In the *gesellschaft*, on the other hand, there is no common will as individuals are guided by self-interest. Here every relationship is measured in terms of its value or worth which are measured in terms of amount of labour used for their production. Thus the relationship in *gesellschaft* is a production relation.

Through these theories, an attempt was made to explain the course of social evolution in a linear sequence. Tonnies viewed development as the loss of *Gemeinschaft* or human community. He believed that the Industrial Revolution was tearing apart the idea of family and replacing it with emphasis on facts and efficiency. Societies all over, especially in North America and Europe, had begun to focus on self-interest, what Tonnies called *Gesellschaft*.

b) Durkheim (1858-1917)

Durkheim also conceived society in terms of an evolutionary scheme. He talked about **social solidarity** by which he meant the moral beliefs and ideas, which defined the “common sense” underlying social life. Like a social evolutionist, he was of the view that **mechanical solidarity** (characteristics of pre-industrial societies) was based on agreement and identity between people, while **organic solidarity** in industrial societies was derived from agreement to tolerate a range of differences, conflicts being moderated through a variety of institutional arrangements such as courts, trade unions and political parties.

In the pre-industrial societies there is little or no division of labour, every one works in similar ways and consumes in similar ways; there is little division of opinion, little individuality. In organic solidarity, on the other hand, there are specialisation of activities and advanced division of labour whose production, distribution and consumption are carried out in specialised ways (Durkheim 1965: 133).

Durkheim tried to explain social change as the result of changes in the bonds of morality, which he called social solidarity. Societies based on mechanical solidarity are transferred to organic solidarity by the growth of industrialisation, heterogeneity, differentiation, specialisation of activity and individualism. The problem of the growth of population, shrinking of natural resources and growing individualism (growth of material and moral density), according to him, is resolved by division of labour in the industrial society, i.e., in the organic solidarity. As each individual is specialised and also individualism is respected they are socially integrated with bondage of division of labour. Indeed division

of labour in the organic solidarity ensures the integration of individual specialisation in the system. However, abnormal division of labour, according to Durkheim, may lead to normlessness (anomie)

Box. 1.1: Material and Moral Density

To Durkheim, material density means sheer increase in the number of population in a given space. Which moral density indicates the increased interaction among individuals caused by their increase in numbers.

Durkheim considers the development of the division of labour in the society to be associated with the increasing contact among people (moral density) since the greater density of contact leads to the specialisation of people. But, he argues, the moral relationship can only produce its effect only if the real distance between individuals diminishes, which means increase in material density. What Durkheim refers here is that moral density cannot grow unless material density grows at the same time. He refers to three ways in which this happens:

- 1) Concentration of people: People begin to concentrate together. Agriculture may begin this, and this continues with the growth of cities as well.
- 2) Cities: Cities always result from the need of individuals to put themselves in very intimate contact with others. They can multiply and extend only if the moral density is raised.
- 3) Transportation and Communication: Increased number and rapidity of means of transportation and communication results in suppressing or diminishing the gaps separating social segments which in turn increase the density of society.

Source: Durkheim 1933 and 1984

c) Max Weber (1864-1920)

Weber has examined the question of development of human society in the context of his study on capitalism. He pointed out that capitalism, as a symbol of progress, emerged out of rationalisation of work ethics, savings, frugal life style beliefs, values, and attitudes. Weber pointed out that capitalist industrialisation emerged in selected countries of Western Europe and not in other places because Calvinist Protestants of these countries developed a lifestyle of this worldly asceticism by way of rationalising their thoughts, religious beliefs and values to reduce consumption and to promote investment in industry with a view to glorifying the world as desired by God. Turning to India, Max Weber pointed out that the predominance of traditional values of Hindustan in terms of *Dharma*, *Karma*, *Moksha* and *Sansar*, traditional caste values, etc., were the major hindrance to the development of rational capitalism in India. In brief, Weber observed the development of human society from traditional pre-industrial to rational capitalist which was mediated by a process of rationalization of religious beliefs.

David McClelland, like Max Weber, emphasised those internal factors like the values and motives of the persons to provide opportunities to shape their own destiny. Therefore, the problems of backwardness, poverty, malnutrition, etc., are vitally linked to traditional and non-traditional thought. He was of the view that educational programmes and technical aid aimed at increasing the "need for achievement" of the people of backward areas are needed to solve these problems. McClelland concluded that modernisation and development can be achieved through a process of diffusion of culture, ideas and technology.

d) L.T. Hobhouse (1864-1929)

Hobhouse was strongly influenced by both Comte and Spencer. Following Comte he propounded that "the development of the human mind was the crucial

factor in social development”, while from Spencer he took the viewpoint of social evolution or development as a process of increase in scale, complexity and internal differentiation. Hobhouse highlights that the development of the mind brings about social development and “since this mental development includes a development of moral ideas towards the ideal of a rational ethic, which transforms the major social institutions, it can be regarded as progressive” (Bottomore 1962: 293).

e) **Talcott Parsons**

Parsons has used an evolutionary perspective to explain the development of human society through several stages. He introduced the concept of **evolutionary universals** to mean that despite historical specificities there are some general directions of evolution through which each social system evolves. He also emphasized on a historical and comparative analysis of major types of evolutionary stages of the social system across the globe ranging from primitive to the modern industrial society. Parsons analysed the following types of evolutionary societies: **Primitive/Archaic, Intermediate and Modern.**

The primitive societies are characterised by elementary forms of social organisation and elementary economic activities like food gathering, hunting, animal husbandry and cultivation to meet the survival needs of human beings. These societies predominantly use elementary technology. Their cultural expressions are integrated with animism, magic and religion. They have a very simple political system, which is governed by the community’s collective rule.

The intermediate societies evolve from primitive societies out of the pressure for social differentiation caused by growth of population. To Talcott Parsons, as a result of population growth the division of human settlements between towns and cities on binary lines increases. This also leads to occupational differentiations and the emergence of new classes of people in society. Thus there would emerge elaborate systems of stratification based on one’s control of power, wealth or status or in the pattern of the caste system. There would evolve generalised rules and codified norms for social control paving the way for the sustenance of a systematised political structure in the form of feudalism or monarchy. To Marx, traditional China, India, Islamic and Roman Empires are typical examples of intermediate societies.

Modern societies, according to Parsons, are a unique contribution of the West to humanity, which evolved because of the industrial revolution, democratic revolution led by French revolution and educational revolution. The Industrial revolution brought about radical changes in the production process with the help of advanced technology and science. The French revolution brought forth the ideas of equality, fraternity and justice paving the way for democratic governance and achieved social status. Education initiated the process of secularisation and universalisation of liberal thought. The main feature of modern society, according to Parsons are: the growth of universalistic law, evolution of the modern institution of money and banking, rational bureaucracy and growth of democratic society (for further details on Parsons read MSO - 001).

Reflection and Action 1.2

Compare and contrast the evolutionary models of development as elaborated by Marx and Parsons.

1.5 Development as Growth, Change and Modernisation

Though there are perceptible disagreements, development has also been understood widely in terms of increase in productivity, increase in the intensity

of modernisation, urbanisation and industrialisation. Here development has been viewed as the processes of the quantum increase of the goods and services, as transformation of society from pre-modern to modern in terms of institutional arrangements, as transformation of economy from agrarian to industrial, as migration of population from rural to urban areas, as shifting of economic activities from agricultural to non-agricultural and so on.

In this section we shall discuss the different connotations of development as in general perceived in the post-World War II period. We shall also discuss the impact of these notions of development in society very briefly.

- l) **Development as Multiple Connotations:** There are several connotations about development, such as development as **growth**, development as **change** or **transformation** and development as **modernisation**.
 - a) **Growth:** In economic terms, development as growth refers to an increased capacity to produce consumption goods and a concomitant increase in consumption patterns. (Little, cf Marglin and Marglin 1990: 1). As growth, development very simply may be defined with respect to an increased ability to fulfill basic human needs of food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and education. (Streeten and associates, cf Marglin and Marglin 1990: 2). In a third sense of growth, development has also been defined in terms of expansion of possibilities, an increase in individual choices, capabilities and functioning (Sen, cf Marglin and Marglin 1990: 2). Development in the above senses carries with it connotations of being positive, progressive, and natural beneficial and inevitable.
 - b) **Change and Transformation:** Development as change and transformation refers to the economic, social, political and cultural processes of change in human societies (Schrijvers 1993).
 - c) **Modernisation:** Development is also understood as modernisation, though some may disagree about them being one and the same thing. Often modernisation being seen as a means to development. In the economic realm it refers to the processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and technological transformation of agriculture. In the political realm, it requires a rationalisation of authority in general and a rationalising bureaucracy in particular. In the social realm it is marked by the weakening of ascriptive ties and the primacy of personal achievement in advancement, and in the cultural realm it is the growth of science and secularization, along with an expansion of the literate population that makes for what has been referred to as a "disenchantment" of the world (Marglin 1990). Development in this sense of modernity stands for what is understood as **Westernisation**, where the west stands as the model for the progress of the rest of the world. Development in this sense becomes a comparative adjective, which is based on the western centric assumption that there is a process of linear evolution of the world in which the West leads world history and evolution and that other nations must follow in their footsteps towards a homogenous world.

The term development has acquired a special meaning since the end of World War II when an era of development was launched by the American President, Harry S. Truman, who publicly expressed the need to embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of scientific advances and industrial progress of his country available for the improvement and growth of "underdeveloped" areas. Discounting old imperialism and exploitation for foreign profit, he announced a program of development based on concepts of democratic fair dealing

(Esteva 1992). Development by this declaration came to connote as an escape from the undignified condition called "underdevelopment".

- II) **Development and its Impact.** As development was predominantly defined in terms of increase in productivity, economic prosperity and an expansion of the market economy; underdevelopment had been constructed as the phenomena of poverty, low productivity and backwardness. There was optimism that economic growth was the fastest road to development. From the 1950s onwards, therefore, there has been an obsessive focus on industrialisation and growth of GNP and it has been assumed that the natural consequence of a rapid growth in these will bring about positive changes in existing social conditions. However there were several adverse consequences due to this.
- a) As development has meant industrial growth, profits and resources were diverted to feed industry at times ignoring the basic subsistence need of society. It obviously led to the expansion of the market at the cost of livelihoods for many. While it has generated utilities of consumption and luxury, it has also resulted in higher levels of pollution and erosion of natural resources that threaten mankind's very existence.
 - b) The growth-oriented development was accompanied by an increase in inequalities and social disintegration. There was evidence everywhere to show how development itself either left behind or even created a new large area of poverty and stagnation, making for marginalisation and exclusion of sections of populations from the fruits of social and economic progress. Gunder Frank who perceived the injustices of the existing developmental processes, coined the phrase **development of underdevelopment**, for he held that the process of development that is underway makes some people and regions developed while others are underdeveloped as a result of this global dynamics of the world system.
 - c) Economic growth has manifested itself in terms of an internationalisation of the economies of developing nations a boom in the financial capital at the disposal of nations; and increased mechanisation impacting processes and patterns of production and consumption. It has also meant increased concentration of wealth, wide disparities in distribution of wealth, the withdrawal of the welfare state and an increasing role of the military in the political and economic life of countries. Thus economic growth and economies of concentration cannot be a generator of development in the widest sense of the word.
 - d) The economic model is mechanistic and its assumption of economic rationality is not suited to poor Third World nations. A liberalised market, for instance, means an exclusion of the vast masses of the poor people from economy and that cannot be a way of removing poverty, the greatest developmental issue for the Third World.
 - e) Increased income levels, multiplied exports and raised economic growth of a few regions cannot take away from the urgency of the problems of increasing poverty of the masses, depleting resources, unemployment, underemployment, inadequate housing and mounting foreign debts that threaten national sovereignty, besides entailing a chain of reactions that can deplete national resources and capabilities to irreversible limits.

If this economic development causes anxiety, alienation, fragmentation, cynicism and demobilisation, it would itself abort what it seeks to do, that is, progress of humanity. Yet we need development to address the powerlessness that people feel due to illiteracy, unemployment, lack of productive assets and lack of knowledge. We cannot deny the need to change the fact of substandard existence and poverty that dogs the vast masses of humanity. We must also work towards expanding possibilities for people to fulfill themselves, yet we must be cautious of “the binary, the mechanistic, the reductionist, the inhuman and the ultimately self-destructive approach to change” that development has meant, given its political anchoring (Rahnema 1997).

From the above discussions we can conclude that the balance sheet of development may not be very optimistic, yet it still carries the only possibility of ameliorating long standing human problems of poverty and backwardness. Now let's learn the different models of economic development.

1.6 Capitalist, Socialist and Third World Models of Development

Economic development has been the prime concern of the modern state. However, this concern has been widely linked with the ideology and power structure of the state. As the nature of the power structure and state ideology are diverse, there have emerged diverse models of economic development across the globe.

In the post-World War II period the process of decolonialisation, the emergence and need for economic reconstruction of nation-states, and the shadow of the Cold War widely shaped the development discourse till the late 1970s. The industrial and political rise of the West and Southern Europe and North America on the one side, and Russia and communist states on the other, alongside the stagnation of a vast number of nations with low productivity, industrial backwardness and poverty gave rise to the First, Second and Third World models of development respectively, i.e., Capitalist, Socialist and Third World.

The capitalist model of development is characterised by provision of private ownership of property and means of production, minimum state control on economic enterprises, and a free economy regulated by competition. The developmental model also emphasizes sustained growth and modernisation with massive state investment at the take-off stage. From the view of this perspective, “economic development would revolve around industrialisation and the transfer of an underemployed rural labour force to the more productive occupations in the urban industrial sector. The state would have to mobilise domestic and foreign saving to create an investment pool from which it could finance a programme of directed industrial development” (Corbridge 1995: 2).

The First World model of development, however, encountered several challenges with the expansion of the socialist model of development represented by the Second World. The socialist model was contradictory to the capitalist model of development as it propagated the abolition of ownership of private property and means of production, emphasised state ownership of means of production, state-owned public enterprise, and a state regulated economy and centralised planning by the state for economic growth. While both the capitalist and the socialist models laid primary emphasis on economic growth, the socialist model also emphasised on the equal distribution of the fruits of growth among all sections of the population.

The Third World is represented by the ex-colonial, newly independent and non-aligned countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America who are industrially backward. Indeed the Third World development perspectives are caught between the conflicting ideologies of the First and Second world. These

countries represented a diverse variety in terms of their socio-cultural and political setting and historical experiences and levels of technological and economic development. However, notwithstanding these variations these countries are economically and technologically underdeveloped, and are undergoing the process of nation-building and fast social transformation in the post-colonial era. As against these backdrops, these countries have been experimenting with diverse models of development. For example, India has followed the path of “mixed economy” by adopting a path of development in between the capitalist and socialist models.

Significantly, in the 1950s, the growth theory was visualised from social, cultural, and political terms which coincided with the modernisation perspective on development. The modernisation theory was associated with both the capitalist and socialist social and cultural orders. A vast number of Third World societies also followed the path of modernisation with varied degrees of success. Indeed the historical experience and specific socio-cultural contexts have given rise not only to diverse patterns of modernity across the globe, also they contributed towards the emergence of imbalanced economic and political relationships among the nations.

The dependency theorists argued that unequal trading relationships and capitalist development have made the countries of the southern hemisphere dependent on the northern hemisphere, especially Western Europe and North America, for capital, technology and market. To Gunder Frank, the exposure of the developing countries to the economic influence of the capitalist countries have contributed to their dependency latter. (You will learn more about the modernisation and the dependency theories of development in the subsequent blocks of this course).

Reflection and Action 1.3

Write on the sociological critiques of the various models of development.

It is important that since the 1980s there have been serious doubts on the major theories of development. “The leftist strategies of development were at least partially, if not wholly, discredited by the collapse of communism, whilst theories that advocated a development path based on the western capitalist model were also seen as having delivered few of the benefits that they have seemed to promise.” It has also been observed that Third World countries have been struggling under the weight of accumulated debt to the developed countries. The “structural adjustment programmes” have been forced on them by the West, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with a view to creating conditions of economic growth by removing obstacles to the efficient operation of the free market. Note that the structural adjustment programme has not stimulated economic growth all over the Third World (Parfitt, T 2002: 2). In this backdrop let us examine the social and human dimensions of development.

Reflection and Action 1.4

What are the various connotations of development used in the post World War II period?

1.7 Development: Social and Human Dimensions

As discussed in the previous section, in classical term development is always deliberated with economic connotations and it is referred to as an increase in the gross national product or in per capita income. In this understanding, development is equated with growth and it is envisioned that a quantum increase in the production of goods and services would bring development. It

was also assumed that the trickle-down effect of growth would lead to an equitable sharing of benefits, resources and opportunities in society. This process of development, however, has not been able to yield the desired result to humanity, especially in the developing countries. Development pattern of the past few decades have shown the following trends:

- The high Gross National Product (GNP) growth of the fast growing developing countries has failed to reduce the socio-economic deprivation of substantial sections of their population.
- High income for the industrialised countries has not been able to provide protection against the rapid spread of social concerns like drug addiction and alcoholism, AIDS, homelessness, violence and the breakdown of family relations.
- Significantly, some low-income countries have demonstrated that it is possible to achieve a high level of human development if they skillfully use the available means to expand basic human capabilities (UNDP 1990: 10).

Against this backdrop, there has been a perceptive shift in conceptualising development. The realisation is that economic growth is essential for humanity but it should be seen only as a means to improve human choices. The *Human Development Report*, 1990 states clearly:

We are rediscovering the essential truth that people must be at the center of all development. The purpose of development is to offer people more options. One of their options is access to income - not as an end in itself but as a means of acquiring human well being. But there are other options as well, including long life, knowledge, political freedom, personal security, community participation and guaranteed human rights. People cannot be reduced to a single dimension as an economic creature. What makes them and the study of development process fascinating is the entire spectrum through which human capacities are expanded and utilised. It is now realised that people are the real wealth of a nation, that the basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for the people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives and that the statistical aggregates to measure national income and its growth have at times obscured the fact that the primary objective of development is to benefit people (UNDP 1990).

In this background let us discuss the concept of human development.

a) Human Development

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), human development is a process of analysing people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are there for people (a) to lead a long and healthy life, (b) to acquire knowledge and (c) to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available many other opportunities remain inaccessible. Human development, however, does not end there. Additional choices, ranging from political, economic and social freedom to opportunities for being creative and productive and enjoying personal self-respect and guaranteed human rights are also inseparable parts of human rights.

UNDP depicts two sides of human development (a) the formation of human capabilities - such as improved health, knowledge and access to resources; and (b) the people making use of these capabilities for productive purposes—being active in cultural, social and political affairs.

If the scales of human development do not finely balance the two sides, considerable human frustration may result. According to this concept of human development, "income is merely one option that people would like to have, albeit an important one. But it is not the sum total of their lives. Development must, therefore, be more than just the expansion of income and wealth. Its focus must be people" (Ibid:10).

Box 1.2: Human Approach to Development

The Human Development Approach to development is different from the conventional approaches to development, i.e., the economic growth, human capital formation, human resources development, human welfare or the basic human needs approaches. As stated earlier, economic growth, that is, the increase in production (GDP) is necessary but not sufficient for human development. The theories of human capital formation and human resources development consider the human being as a means and not as an end. They are concerned with the supply side. The human welfare approach visualises people only as passive recipients of benefits of development and not as its participants. The basic needs approach aims to satisfy the basic minimum needs, i.e., food, shelter, clothing, etc., of the deprived sections of the population rather than on the issue of human choices (UNDP 1990: 11).

The human development approach puts equal emphasis on the production and distribution of resources, expansion and use of human capabilities, scope of choice, livelihood security, participatory process, social, economic and political freedom. All these indeed emphasise a paradigm shift in the social development strategy of the State.

b) Concern Against Ruthless, Rootless, etc. Growth

Following the conventional path of growth, the world has become more polarised and the gulf between the poor and the rich has widened further. The UNDP, in its *Human Development Report* (1996), points that the poorest 20% of the world's population has experienced a decline in its share of global income from 2.3% to 1.4% in the last 30 years, whereas the share of the richest 20% rose from 70% to 85% during the same period. The gap in per capita income between the industrial and developing worlds trebled. There have been regional imbalances. The UNDP has voiced its concern against the jobless, ruthless, voiceless, rootless and fortuneless growth in the late 1990s.

It was jobless growth, since the economy grew but did not expand the opportunities for employment for large sections of the population. For the developing countries, jobless growth has meant long hours and very low incomes for hundreds of millions of people in low productivity work in agriculture and in other informal sectors. This developmental process has been rendered ruthless by the fact that the fruits of economic growth have mostly benefited the rich; while millions of people stagnate in poverty. Ruthless growth causes people's cultural identity to wither. At places the dominant majority culture amplifies at the cost of marginalisation of the minority cultures. It has also been a voiceless growth as in many places it has not ensured the process of democratic participation of the people in decision making processes. The voiceless growth process also provides women a marginal role in economic development. Again, fast economic growth is also achieved in some countries at the cost of destruction of forests, polluting rivers, destroying bio-diversity and depleting natural resources. In this futureless growth, the present generation squanders resources needed by the future generation. At times the futureless growth benefits the industrialized countries at the cost of increased pressure on the poor people of the developing countries. As against this backdrop, the UNDP says development that perpetuates today's inequalities is neither sustainable nor worth sustaining (HDR 1996: 4).

c) Development as Freedom

In this context it is important to examine how development is being viewed as freedom by Amartya Sen (1999). To him, development must be perceived as a vital process of expanding real freedom that people enjoy. To him, expansion of real income and economic growth are not necessarily characteristics of successful development as countries with high GDP and per capita income at times have low achievements in the quality of life. On the other hand countries with low GDP and low per capita incomes have higher human development indicators. Here the central purpose of development is to improve human lives, i.e., expanding the range of things that human beings can achieve and can do. To him, the objective of development is to remove obstacles such as illiteracy, illhealth, poverty, lack of access to resources or lack of civil and political freedom. He does not deny that economic prosperity should be the major goal of planning and policy making. This is, however, only an intermediate goal to contribute to the ultimate goal of development, i.e., the development of human lives. To Sen, both the primary end and the principal means of development is expansion of freedom as freedom in one type helps advancing freedom of other types. While access to economic opportunities is a major factor of economic growth, he also recognises the contribution of instrumental freedom (political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security) in enhancing economic growth and the contribution of economic growth to facilitate those freedoms that come into the way of full attainment of human potentials.

Reflection and Action 1.5

How is the human development approach is different from the growth approach to development?

1.8 Paradigm Shift in Development Strategies

The post-colonial developing world since the early 1970s has experienced a phenomenal shift in the development strategy. For example, immediately after independence, India adopted a developmental strategy of “growth with stability” with the basic thrust on industrialisation, agricultural modernisation, expansion of infrastructure, education and mass communication. However, in the backdrop of the declining access of a vast number of people to the means of livelihood security, literacy/education, healthcare facilities, housing and other basic necessities of life, the philosophy of “social justice” was integrated in the development discourse in the 1970s. It is important that the focus of development has been shifted for the disadvantaged section of society. Again, since the early 1990s, especially in the wake of globalisation, the strategy of “empowerment with development” has been adopted to integrate the marginalised sections into the mainstream (SinghaRoy 2001). The developmental processes have experienced a phenomenal shift especially in the wake of the collapse of the socialist model of economy, the fast spread of neo-liberalised globalisation, introduction of new structural adjustment programmes, formation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and enactment of GATT and GATS agreements. The neo-liberal developmentism has provided a new dimension to the notion of development with the philosophy of one world, one market and one ideology

a) Redefining the Role of the State

The *World Development Report*, 1997 emphasised the need for an effective role of the State for social and economic development but in a new form. According to it, the State is central to economic and social development, not as a direct provider of growth but as a partner, catalyst and facilitator. The world is changing, and with it our ideas about the state’s role in economic and

social development. In view of the collapse of the command and control economies, fiscal crisis of the welfare states, explosion in humanitarian emergencies in several parts of the world, growing lack of confidence in governance by private investors, increase in corruption and poverty, various dramatic events especially the technological change in the world economy on the one hand, and the growing discontent of the people, manifestation of grassroots mobilisation and increasing pressure of the civil society on the other, a redefinition of the State's responsibilities was suggested as a strategy for the solution of the some of these problems. According to the World Bank (1997), this will include strategic selection of the collective actions that States will try to promote, coupled with greater efforts to take the burden off the State, by involving citizens and communities in the delivery of the collective goods. It observes that for human welfare to be advanced, the State's capacity – defined as the ability to undertake or promote collective actions efficiently – must be increased.

b) Focus on Empowerment of the Marginalised

The World Development Summit, 1995, talks about "people's initiatives", "people empowerment" and "strengthening capacities of the people". Regarding the objectives of development, it specifically mentions "that empowering people, particularly women, to strengthen their capacities is the main objective of development and its principal resource. Empowerment requires the full participation of people in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of decisions determining the functioning and well-being of societies" (*World Development Summit, 1995*).

To ensure the full participation of the people, it is pointed out that the state should provide "a stable legal framework" in accordance with the "Constitution, laws and procedures consistent with international laws and obligations" which promotes, among other things, the encouragement of "partnership with free and representative organisations of civil society, strengthening of the abilities and opportunities of civil society and local communities to develop their own organisations, resources and activities" (*World Development Summit, 1995*).

It is apparent that within the given perspectives of the "stable-legal framework", "strategic selection of collective action" by the State, possible "partnership of the State with civil society and state sponsored initiatives of the civil society to have their own organisations", certain important dimensions have emerged. These encompass (a) all initiatives for empowerment of the marginalised groups should be in accordance with the prescribed rule of the land (b) the State will selectively co-opt people's initiatives as and when required (c) the civil society organisations would play a significant role for empowerment of the marginalised. Besides proactive State intervention, civil societies are going to play an important role in the emerging development discourse with empowerment.

1.9 Conclusion

Development and progress are social processes. These processes have not got uniform patterns all over the globe as the humanity is diversely located in terms of their geographic, economic, technological and political advancement. However, notwithstanding these variations, efforts are made by the social scientists to develop broad perspectives on development and progress. At times these perspectives have emerged to be contradictory in nature. In this unit we discussed various perspectives on development provided by the classical sociological thinkers. We have also discussed the various models of development as propagated and used by the Capitalist, Socialist and the Third World countries. Shift in the development perspectives since the late 1970s and the emergence of the notion of human development and the strategy of

development with empowerment of the marginalised is also dealt with in the unit. This unit has laid the foundation for a broad analysis of sociology of development which would be followed in the subsequent units of this course.

1.10 Further Reading

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McMichael, P. 1996. *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective*. Fine Forge Press: Thousand Oaks

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Unit 2

Change, Modernisation and Development

Contents

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Social Change: Concept, Characteristics and Causes
- 2.3 Perspective of Social Change
- 2.4 Modernisation: Concept and Features
- 2.5 Perspectives on Modernisation
- 2.6 Critics of Modernisation Theories
- 2.7 Development: Conditions and Barriers
- 2.8 Observations About Recent Development Experience
- 2.9 Conclusion
- 2.10 Further Reading

Learning Objectives

This unit will help you analyse:

- the various concepts of change, modernisation and development;
- perspectives of change, modernisation and development;
- conditions and barriers of change, modernisation and development; and
- developmental experiences of India.

2.1 Introduction

In the earlier unit of this block we have discussed development from the perspective of progress, evolution and growth. In this unit we shall discuss development from the perspective of change and modernisation. In the earlier unit, you must have noticed that along with the processes of evolution, progress and growth we have also touched upon change and modernisation linked to the issues of development in human society. In this unit we will specifically learn in greater detail how the processes of change and modernisation have been linked to the question of development.

This unit begins with a discussion on the major characteristic features of social change and its causes. Sociologists and anthropologists have perceived the process of change from diverse perspectives. We have presented a glimpse of these perspectives on change here. In comparison to change, modernisation is a relatively new concept. It is also a new process. Besides describing features and perspectives of modernisation we have also presented a critique of this concept. The last section of this unit deals with the process of development, various conditions that facilitate and hinder the process of development. This unit also presents a few developmental experiences.

2.2 Social Change: Concept, Characteristics and Causes

One of the central concern of the sociology of development is change. In societies of all times there is change affecting every realm of life – social, economic, cultural, technological, demographic, ecological and so on. Social scientists have underlined social change in terms of a change in relationships, organisation, culture, institution, structure and functioning of the social system.

According to Maclver and Page (1949), social change is a change in social relationship. It is a process responsive to many types of changes, to changes in man-made conditions of living, to changes in attitudes and beliefs of men and to changes that go beyond human control to the biological and physical nature of things. To Lundberg, "Social change refers to any modification in established patterns of inert-human relationships and standards of conduct." In a similar vein, Judson R. Landis (1960) writes, "Social change refers to change in the structure and functioning of the social relationships of society." Koenig feels "Social change refers to the modifications which occur in the life patterns of people." According to M.E. Jones, "Social change is a term used to describe variations in or modifications of any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organisation."

By social change, Kingsley Davis (1949) meant only such alterations that affect the organisation, structure and functions of society. Robert A. Nisbet (1969) views social change as a succession of differences in time within a persisting identity. To John J. Macionis (1997) social change is "the transformation of culture and social institutions over time."

There are few identifiable characters of social change. Some of them are as follows: that social change happens everywhere, but the rate of change varies from place to place; that social change is sometimes intentional but often unplanned; that social change may generate controversy; that some changes matter more than others do. For example, the invention of personal computers was more important than, say, patch dolls (Macionis 1997).

Causes of Social Change

Social change is caused by various factors. Let us highlight some of these causes here.

- i) **Cultural Change:** A large part of change in society is caused by change in culture. Culture is a system that constantly loses and gains components. Invention, discovery and diffusion are considered to be the main sources of cultural change. Inventions produce new products, ideas, and social patterns. It is a new combination or a new use of existing knowledge. Inventions may be classified into material (telephone, aeroplane) and social inventions (alphabet, language, government, etc.). Each invention is new in form, function and meaning and has long-term possibilities of impact.

Discovery is finding something that has never been found before, or finding something new in something that already exists. A discovery adds something new to the culture and becomes a factor in social change only when it is put to use.

Diffusion is a process of the spreading of ideas, culture and objects to other societies. It operates both within societies and between societies involving trading, migration, and mass communication. It is indeed a two way process.

- ii) **Ideas and Change:** New ideas and modification of old ideas in a new context bring wide-scale changes in society. For example, Max Weber established that rationalisation of religious ideas brought about phenomenal change in Protestant world.
- iii) **Demographic Change:** Demographic change is caused by an increase in birth and decline in death, and migration of populations. Change occurs from the demographic transition in society.

- iv) **Conflict and Change:** Social change is also caused by tension and conflict. Structural strain, deprivation, cultural revitalisation have been the major causes of conflict. Again social division based on class, caste, gender, ethnicity, estate, etc. have also been important sources of conflict in society.
- v) **Social Movements and Change:** Social movements are organised efforts of groups of people to bring about deliberate change in the values, norms, institutions, culture relationships and traditions of the society. They also generate new identities and a new perspective.

Reflection and Action 2.1

Social change is caused by so many broad social processes like urbanisation, industrialisation, modernisation, westernisation, globalisation, spread of education and literacy, enactment of new laws, penetration of mass media and communication networks and so on. Many of these process are interrelated. Select anyone of these social processes and try to explain its impact on change in your society.

2.3 Perspective of Social Change

In the previous unit, we have discussed the perspectives on developments in greater detail. Change represents a broad canvas or contour for development, progress, transformation, growth, modernisation and so on. We have specifically explained these processes in the previous unit. Let us now examine briefly how these perspectives have been used to explain change.

i) Evolutionary Perspective

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the concept of evolution assumed a central place in explanations of all forms of human development in both the social and biological sciences for example, Morgan's three epochs of humanity i.e., savagery, barbarism and civilisation and Auguste Comte's ideas of human intellect. Comte argues, human intellect passing through three historical phases of sophistication: the theological, the metaphysical and the positive. Spencer's view is that of human societies passing through a course of natural development, from relatively simple patterns of organisation to more complex structures, characterised by an increasing specialisation of parts.

ii) The Conflict Perspective

The conflict perspective can best be understood in terms of tension and conflict between groups and individuals and here change is viewed as an intrinsic process in society. To Karl Marx, social changes take place based on the antagonistic class relations based on ownership of the means of production; between the haves and the have-nots and that this class struggle culminates into a revolutionary change in society with its progression from ancient to feudal and finally from feudal to capitalist stage of development in society. According to Coser, conflict is an inevitable part of the socialisation process and no social groups can be completely harmonious as individuals have a predisposition for love as well as hate. Thus conflict acts as a creative force that stimulates change in society, constructive or destructive.

While Karl Marx has identified class and class conflict based on unequal distribution of material resources, Dahrendorf has identified the same in terms of unequal distribution of authority. According to Dahrendorf, all groups in society are divided into those who have authority and those who do not and conflict arises because of unequal distribution of authority in society. This conflict on unequal distribution of authority leads to change in society.

iii) The Structural-Functional Perspective

To structural-functional theorists, society consists of interrelated parts that work together for the purpose of maintaining internal balance. It perceives roles as locating individuals in social positions, and providing them with articulated sets of expectations specifying the rights and duties of occupants. This perspective is oriented towards order and stability and preservation of the status quo. Let us examine how various scholars have perceived change in this perspective.

Durkheim has observed change in terms of change in the nature of division of labour in society. He believed that the change in labour from traditional society to modern society was the cause for social change. According to Talcott Parsons, society is a system surrounded by three other systems – personality, the organism and culture. There is social equilibrium when the boundaries of the three systems are maintained, and social change results from boundary breaking. Ogburn's theory reasons that societies operate as homogeneous mechanisms and that changes that upset the equilibrium in one part tends to produce compensating changes to restore that equilibrium. To him all aspects of culture, i.e., material or non-material do not change at an equal rate. This creates the phenomenon of cultural lag that ultimately leads to change in society.

iv) Social-Psychological Perspective

These theories posit that activities of people constitute the essence of change in society and modifications in the behaviour can facilitate change and play an essential role in social development.

Max Weber thought that modernity was replacing traditional views with a rational way of thinking. In pre-industrial societies traditional views obstructed change, things were the way they were because that is what everyone believed and no one questioned it. In modern societies, things were questioned and answers were calculated.

According to Everette E.Hagen, traditional societies are characterised by fixed status levels and the personalities of the members are authoritarian, uncreative and noninnovational. On the contrary, in modern society, the predominant personality type is innovational, characterised by attributes such as creativity, curiosity and openness to experience. Change takes place when members experience what he terms withdrawal of status respect. This is nothing but disregard for one's role in society or for one's beliefs and aspirations.

David McClelland focused his study on what he called **need for achievement**, symbolized by '*n*' achievement. According to him, the greater the development of the '*n*' factor the greater the economic development in any society. Consequently, there are certain behaviour characteristics exhibited by people with this '*n*' factor, such as individualism, energetic innovative activity, drive for success and so on. In simple words, individual economic achievement produces economic growth.

Reflection and Action 2.2

What do we sociologically mean by change? Compare and contrast between the evolutionary and structural functionalist views on social change.

2.4 Modernisation: Concept and Features

Modernisation is a conceptual framework that articulated a common set of assumptions about the nature of developed societies and their ability to transform a world perceived as both materially and culturally deficient. Specifically, Modernisation theorists posited a sharp distinction between traditional (read poor) and modern (read Western) societies. They took for

granted that economic development, from traditional to modern, proceeded along a single, straight, unambiguous line. Modernisation advocates expected that contact with vital modern societies would accelerate progress in stagnant traditional societies.

a) **Concept of “Modernisation”**

According to scholars, the process of modernisation sums up the changes that combine to convert an agricultural or underdeveloped society with a weak state into an industrialised society with a relatively efficient, active government. The modernisation process embraces changes that leads up to this industrialisation and urbanisation.

According to Wilbert Moore, “modernisation is a ‘total’ transformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated social organisation that characterizes the advanced, economically prosperous and relatively stable nations of the Western World”. Similarly, Daniel Lerner defined modernisation as “the process of social change in which development is the economic component”.

In his major work *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958), Daniel Lerner examined the process of modernisation in several Middle East countries, carried out a sample survey in other underdeveloped societies and supplemented all this with his observations of village society.

Lerner’s premise is that Modernisation is a global process occurring in a similar manner the world over, and the role of indices of development like mass media, urbanisation, increase in literacy, etc. are responsible for the emergence of a new economic order. According to Lerner, modernity is result of not merely institutional changes in society but also due to changes in the personality of people. He had illustrated this with his account of the grocer and the chef in the village of Balgat situated in Turkey.

For Lerner one of the crucial aspects of modernisation is the development of a “mobile personality” which is characterised by rationality and empathy. Empathy is the capacity to see oneself in the other person’s situation, and this enables people to operate efficiently in a changing world. Modernisation, then, is characterised by a high degree of literacy, urbanism, media participation and empathy. To him, compared to the “traditional” individuals, the “modern individual” are happier, better informed and relatively young, and the people placed in the “transitional” category are inclined to be discontented and liable to extremism, especially their progress is blocked by a lack of suitable political institutions.

But Lerner was aware of the fact that although the people placed in the “modern” category seemed happier, there were difficulties in development, for example, strains may be put on the government, there are problems of social control, etc. Similarly, there are personal problems at an individual level, for example, individuals placed in the “transitional” category may have to adjust traditional Arab and Muslim beliefs to a “modern” setting.

b) **Features of Modernisation**

Based on this line of thinking, the main feature of modernisation may be summed up as follows:

- i) It emphasises a high degree of structural differentiation and specialisation.
- ii) It is based on a mode of production that has come to be known as the capitalist mode of production. It is implied from this that social order is constituted around two important classes – Capitalist, which owns the means of production, and the Working Class, which sells its labour in this process.

- iii) It is essentially a wage labour economy. It highlights the growth of a market economy in which both buyers and sellers are seen as individuals capable of engaging in a rational choice and operating within a framework of voluntarism.
- iv) It highlights the growth of bureaucratic institutions, which themselves are constructed on principles of rationality and role differentiation. It is these bureaucratic organisations that are seen as being the foundations of this theory. The entire gamut of institutions that maintains and regulates social order are seen as bureaucratic.
- v) It emphasises the growth of a political system based on the principle of right as crystallised within the notion of state and mediated through a set of constitutional principles.
- vi) The powers of the state are absolute and there is a democratic process based on the principle of political representation and adult franchise.
- vii) This process of democratisation of society has led to the existence of various interest groups within the political process who represent various competing ideologies that highlight the different ways in which the affairs of the state are to be managed.
- viii) Modernisation process also emphasises the growth of individualism, wherein the individual and individual rights are seen as being at the center of all social, economic and political development.
- ix) Finally, the modernisation processes also emphasise the idea of social progress and through the process of democratisation it is possible for societies to achieve higher levels of individual and social emancipation.

2.5 Perspectives On Modernisation

From the sociological point of view, the process of modernisation has yielded a vast amount of writing. There is no unified perspective on modernisation. We will analyse the following perspectives:

- a) The Ideal-Typical
- b) The Diffusionist
- c) The Psychological
- d) The Marxist

The first three perspectives have dominated American thought and received immense support and patronage all over, especially in the nineteen fifties and sixties. The fourth approach has emerged as a challenge to the other three approaches and offers a critique of their main tenets.

Similarly, the Marxist perspective has also contested the other four perspectives.

a) The Ideal-Typical Perspective

This approach has manifested itself in two major variants, namely:

- i) The Pattern Variable Perspective
- ii) Historical Stage Perspective
- i) The Pattern Variable Perspective

This perspective is derived from Max Weber's concept of "ideal type" which was later systematised by Talcott Parson. According to this perspective, characteristics of development and underdevelopment must be identified and

then programmes and schemes of development should be made whereby underdeveloped countries discard the pattern variables of underdevelopment and adopt those of development.

Inspired by the work of Talcott Parsons, Smelser elucidated that the modernisation process was made up of four sub-processes:

- i) The modernisation of technology, leading to a change from simple traditionalised techniques to the application of scientific knowledge;
- ii) The commercialisation of agriculture, which is characterised by the move from subsistence to commercial farming, leading to a specialisation in cash-crop production and the development of wage-labour;
- iii) Industrialisation, which depicts the transition from the use of human and animal power to machine power;
- iv) Urbanisation, which brings about the movement from farm and village to the large urban centers.

These processes sometimes occur simultaneously and sometimes at different times. For example, in many colonial situations, agriculture becomes commercialised without industrialisation. Nevertheless, these four processes affect the social structure of traditional society in similar ways.

Firstly, as a result of these changes taking place simultaneously or at different rates, traditional societies became more structurally differentiated. For Smelser, a developed economy and society is characterised by a highly differentiated structure, whilst an underdeveloped one is relatively lacking in differentiation. By "differentiation" Smelser meant the process by which more specialised and more autonomous social units were established. He saw this as occurring in several different spheres of traditional society, in the economy, the family, the political system and religious institutions.

So, structural differentiation is the process whereby one social role or organisation differentiates into two or more roles or organisations which function more effectively in the new historical circumstances. The new social units are structurally distinct from each other, but taken together are functionally equivalent to the original unit.

Secondly, as these differentiated units merge into larger units of the modern type, new relationships, which are not based on kinship, develop. This, Smelser calls, the process of integration.

Thirdly, Smelser shows that through such differentiation, social disturbances, such as mass hysteria, outbursts of violence, religious and political movements may occur, which reflect uneven processes of change. This can lead to conflict between the old and new orders of society. In other words, it produces what Durkheim called "anomie" or normlessness — a state of conflicting norms in society and a culture of discontent, where people are unable to realise their aspirations and may turn to violence, crime and other anti-social behaviour or to self-destructive acts such as suicide. As Weber also showed, at the religious level the process of secularisation causes disenchantment, fragmentation between competing or partial world-views, social and private worlds become meaningless and there is a sense of despair and hopelessness. One of the reactions to modernisation has been the emergence of fundamentalist movements that reject modern values and preach a return to traditional ones.

ii) Historical Stage Perspective

In this perspective apart from identification of the gap between characteristics of development and underdevelopment, it also specifies the intermediate stages and their characteristics. This perspective is mainly associated with Rostow and his economic model developed in 1960.

Walt Rostow was an economic historian who served as an adviser to the American government. His book, entitled *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960) was pre-capitalist and neo-evolutionary in nature and derived from the idea of an earlier evolutionary theory that change and development take place according to a set of ordered sequences.

According to Rostow, the processes of change are simpler and self-sustaining. Economic growth could be achieved by following a five-stage model of growth. He suggested that "all societies can be placed in one of five categories, or stages of economic growth".

The first stage; The Traditional Society: The essential feature of this society is that output is limited because of the inaccessibility of science and technology. Values are generally "fatalistic", and political power is non-centralised. Large number of people are employed in agriculture, which has very low productivity because of the factors mentioned above. In such a society, family and clan groupings are emphasized in the social organisation.

The second stage; The Preconditions for Take-Off: This second stage of growth is one of transition. A traditional society does not move directly into the process of industrialisation; first certain preliminaries need to take place. There are clusters of new ideas favouring economic progress arising and therefore new levels of education, entrepreneurship, and institutions capable of mobilising capital like banks, etc. Investment increases, especially in transport, communications and raw materials, with a general direction towards commercial expansion. But, in accordance with Rostow, traditional social structures and production techniques remain the same. There is the presence of a "dual society".

The third stage; The Take-Off: In this stage finally the old, traditional order and resistances are overcome. New forces, which trigger economic growth, expand and dominate the society. Agriculture is commercialised, there is a growth in productivity because that is necessary if the demand emanating from expanding urban centers is to be met. New political groups representing new economic groups push the industrial economy to new heights. In Britain, Canada and the United States, the proximate stimulus for take-off was mainly, though not entirely, technological. The take-off period began in Britain after 1783, in France and in United States around 1840, in Russia in about 1890 and in countries like India and China around 1950.

The fourth stage; The Drive to Maturity: In this stage, the growing economy drives to extend modern technology in all its economic activities. Between 10 and 20 per cent of gross domestic product is invested and the economy takes its place in the international order. Technology becomes more complex, refined and there is a move away from heavy industry. Now production is not the outcome of social necessity but of the need of maximising profits to survive in a competitive capitalist market.

The fifth stage; Mass Consumption: In this final stage, the leading economic sectors specialise in durable consumer goods and services. At this stage, economic growth makes sure that basic needs are satisfied and more resources are allocated for social welfare and social security. The emergence of the welfare state is an example. Durable consumer goods and services are diffused on a mass basis.

Rostow thought of his theory as a dynamic one i.e. "that deals not only with economic factors but also with social decisions and policies of governments".

Reflection and Action 2.3

What do you mean by modernisation? How is the ideal-typical perspective on modernisation different from historical stage perspective as suggested by Rostow?

b) The Diffusionist Perspective

This approach views development as a process in which there is a diffusion of cultural elements from the developed to the underdeveloped countries. The underlying assumption is that the underdeveloped countries cannot overcome their backwardness without assistance from the developed countries. There is diffusion of capital, technology, knowledge, skills, institutions including values and so on. These scholars perceive this aid as a sacrifice on the part of the developed countries for the benefit of the backward and suffering underdeveloped countries. If still a society does not reach the level of modernity and development as projected by them, then it is blamed on the inherent weaknesses present in the underdeveloped-backward societies, like demographic factors, presence of traditional institutions, beliefs, values, etc.

c) The Psychological Perspective

This approach is mainly associated with McClelland, Kunkel, Hagen and others. According to McClelland as mentioned earlier in this unit, a society with a high level of achievement will produce energetic entrepreneurs who, in turn, will produce more rapid economic development. This is because a high level of achievement among people makes them behave in ways which help them fulfill their entrepreneurial roles successfully. Therefore, the crucial factor for economic and cultural development, according to this approach, is the presence of achievement motivation among members. This leads to planned and concentrated growth and development.

d) The Marxian Perspective

This approach accepts the fundamentals of the Marxist philosophical and sociological postulates. According to this approach, the underdevelopment of some countries and the development of others is linked to the emergence of the modern capitalist system on a global scale. So the causes of underdevelopment and the problems arising out of this are blamed on the growth of capitalism.

According to this theory, the relationship between the developed capitalist countries and the underdeveloped countries is not one of harmony and cooperation, instead there is a subtle and indirect subjugation of the latter under the guise of "aid". It is argued that the developed world is transforming the underdeveloped societies into their neo-colonial dependencies and the entire image of "aid", "assistance", "support" and diffusion of skills, techniques, capital and modernised institutions and values is false and deceptive. The aid itself is seen as the basic obstacle to overcome backwardness.

Followers of this approach further state that the policies and schemes for development pursued by the ruling class of the advanced capitalist countries are based on a theory of development which relies on strengthening and furthering the interests of the propertied class and the rich.

Therefore it is postulated that a policy of development will only be successful if it is based on achieving the reliance of the working class.

2.6 Critics of Modernisation Theories

In analysing the assets of the modernisation theories, it should be understood that this school of thought emerged in the early years of the 1950s, and began

to disappear in the 1970s when belief in it started to wane. In the light of this, it could be presupposed that the weaknesses of modernisation theories outnumber its strengths; otherwise the theories would still be relevant today.

a) The Strengths

The main quality of the modernisation theory is its simplicity – the objective is already visible in the image of the West, and the path to follow is laid out by the history of Western evolution. All that remains is for the traditional society to recognise what is needed, from examination of other “take-offs” to modernity, for their own culture to evolve. Having already achieved their goal, the modern societies can assist in the evolution of the traditional society (although in reality this is far from the truth), by reference to their own history, and so essentially modernisation becomes a form of mimicking – a case of “what works for them should work for us”. The same concept was already covered in the term “Westernisation” (effectively referring to the mimicking of the West), but the word “Modernisation” has far less geocentric connotations, and as a result gains much more affection from developing societies who are keen to retain some sense of their own history.

b) The Weaknesses

However, the strengths of the modernisation theory also lead to its weaknesses. A few of them are presented below:

- i) The straightforward approach of advancing a society by way of itself evolving internally is, though easy to grasp and as such having strong exterior appeal, far too basic to incorporate into the world system we see today. The very fact that there are modernised societies to “look up to” entails that a communication and possible co-operation between North and South already exists, and that there are therefore links and ties already in place – not necessarily to the extent that dependency theorists would go, arguing that the South cannot grow without the severing off the North’s stranglehold, but nonetheless significant ties in the organisation of society, which mean that the target society cannot be solely regarded as an internal entity; there is little hope of avoiding international factors in today’s global village.

To resolve this, some thinkers have developed the theory of diffusionism (already dealt with earlier), which bears many of the characteristics of modernisation, but accepts the diffusion of ideas, products, and workforce between both modernised and traditional societies.

A culture can be changed sub-consciously and indeed overnight, in ways that may not be intended or in accordance with planned evolution. Modernisation may be revolutionary in that it replaces the traditional with the modern, but it must also be considered that revolutions can take some time – they are not an instantaneous event.

- ii) Another criticism put forth is that while the developing countries struggle to update its social, political, and economic structures to those of the developed countries, it is extremely likely that the modernised country will continue to grow at the same or possibly faster rate that the developing country will find it difficult to catch up.

Though global evolutionary equality is not a particular goal of the modernisation theory, it is surely one of the aims of development as a whole, and something that is worth pursuing. If this “closing of the gap” cannot be easily achieved by the performance of an established theory, such as seems to be the case with modernisation, then it is clearly not a comprehensive cure for the problem of development.

iii) It is also argued that since the modernisation theory is typically a Western phenomenon, its roots obviously must lie around capitalist society – the developing world is to be a mirror image of the civilised world which generally embraces capitalism. For example, it is automatically assumed by thinkers like Rostow that this is the correct way for an underdeveloped society to develop, without considering the implications or alternatives (See Critique of Rostow).

iv) Rostow has been criticised by many on the basis of the teleological approach. Teleological approach is one where the purpose, which is not explicitly intended by anyone, is fulfilled while the process of fulfillment is presented as an inevitable sequence of events. In Rostow's model, policies are the result of development and not vice versa, and this is unacceptable to many, as policies of a state should be chosen and not just merely adopted. It is felt by many scholars that the characteristics of stages identified by Rostow might overlap or spill into the other stages. For example, the pre-conditions stage things may continue in the take-off stage and could also get carried further beyond this stage. Critics feel that Rostow plays down all the obstacles and never discusses them. Therefore, it is felt by many that his approach is conceptually vague and empirically superficial. In the take-off stage, it is felt that merely a shift from agriculture to other sectors is not enough. For example, while Denmark, Canada and France attained this shift, in other countries like Russia, Sweden, Germany, etc. it did not take place to the extent conceived by Rostow. Similarly, it has also been pointed out by experts that Rostow failed to take into consideration other aspects, like the "bumps, crashlandings and nosedive crashes" in his take-off stage.

Rostow also failed to consider that an economy could reach the fifth stage without going through all the stages or a particular stage. For instance, it has been pointed out that countries like Canada and Australia entered the stage of mass consumption even before reaching the stage of maturity. This was happening, in recent times, with the oil rich countries also. There are limits to a particular country's growth. As there might be instances when a particular country should be regarded as "fully developed" even though it might not have reached the standards of the Western countries like the U.S.A, because it might have exhausted all its natural resources, manpower and capital, which set the limit of growth. With respect to the less developed countries, it is felt that Rostow did not take into account crucial factors like unemployment, underemployment, poverty, lack of infrastructure, nature of the government, etc.

v) The most well known reaction to theories of modernisation is that of its antithesis, the **Theory of Dependency**. The dependency theory takes a far more global view and postulates that the difficulties in development are not due solely to the internal workings of the country or region in question, but have more to do with the global structures imposed by the developed onto the less developed. This is best illustrated by Andre Gunder Frank's conceptualisation of international relations as a chain of "metropolis-satellite" relationships. Frank (of the socialist tradition) suggests that there is an unseen hierarchical structure to world relations: the chain begins with the first metropolis (usually attributed to the USA) that has no satellites i.e., that has no strong dependencies on any other region and continues downwards; the next layer consists of still strong metropolises, but still require the USA or other well-developed Western societies in some way; until much further down we reach the ultimate satellite, which is dependent on everything above it for existence. Frank argues that these dependence links are both the key and the problem when an inability to develop arises. The sanctions imposed, often consciously, by the metropolises to which the satellite is dependent, strip the freedom of the

satellite society to evolve and grow, because all of their output is effectively consumed by the upper society.

This theory is actually visible in reality, with the situation revolving around aid to the Third World, where the interest rates and terms are so harshly imposed that the recipient country will always be at the mercy of the donor. Frank feels that it is the dismantling of these dependency relations that is the solution to the problem of development: notably, though, this is a very socialist perspective, since the release of such restrictions allows for much freer and potentially diverse global system, one which does not fit well with traditional capitalist characteristics.

The connection this has with modernisation theory is simple: both have equal merits, even though they are completely opposed in attributes, but the question of which is most suitable is dependent on the belief of the observer – those brought up and embroiled in a capitalist society, and who believe in the benefits of capitalism, may be more likely to prefer modernisation theory. On the other hand, a neo-Marxist will almost certainly stick with theories of dependency. Clearly it is only the completely impartial spectator that can truly judge the pros and cons of both concepts.

- vi) Finally, it has been pointed out that modernisation theory itself has produced nothing truly visible yet. This is not because there has been no development in the past 50 years. There has been evolution related to both fields of thought, but the theories themselves are so indistinct and vague. Modernisation theory does not paint a very precise picture of what should be happening, and more particularly, how it should be occurring. As a motivational aid, this theory is an excellent boost to the drive of a developing society, but it is not the solution. What is, remains to be seen.

Reflection and Action 2.4

Write a critique of modernisation based on your understanding of the dependency theory of development.

2.7 Development: Conditions and Barriers

Now that we have covered the concepts of social change, modernisation and the theories of modernisation, let us move on to the last sub topic of this unit, i.e., development.

There is no definite definition of development. It is inescapably a normative term, which at times has meant economic growth, structural economic change, autonomous industrialisation, capitalism or socialism, self-actualisation, and individual, national, regional and cultural self-reliance. Notwithstanding such variations there has been a large agreement on the fact that human beings are at the center of development and that economic growth is a means to an end, i.e., human development.

Development is a function of society's capacity to organise human energies and productive resources to respond to opportunities and challenges. Scholars often trace the emergence of higher, more complex, more productive levels of social organisation through the stages of nomadic hunting, rural agrarian, urban, commercial, industrial and post-industrial societies. And in the process try to examine ways by which new activities were introduced by pioneers, imitated, resisted, accepted, organised, institutionalised and assimilated into a culture. Organisational development takes place on a foundation of four levels of infrastructure – physical, social, mental and psychological. All these four types of resources contribute to development, of which only the most material are inherently limited in nature. The productivity of resources increases enormously

as the level of organisation and input of knowledge rises. The human resource is recognised as the driving force and primary determinant of development.

The evolution of social institutions acts as a powerful stimulus for development by increasing the frequency, intensity and efficiency of social interactions. This evolution has moved through three successive but overlapping stages of development – physical, vital, and mental - which can be described in terms of the type of organisation predominant during that stage.

Box 2.1: Role of Urbanisation, Money and Internet in Development

Cities till today are physical organisations where people, activities, fields of life, resources and infrastructure are accumulated at high levels of concentration and interact in complex ways. The growth of population and urban population density increases the intensity of these interactions, creating the critical mass needed for the emergence of markets and in the process generates sufficient demand to spur mechanisation of production.

Money plays a parallel role at the social level as a medium for urbanisation and multiplies economic activities by several orders of magnitude. The establishment of a money economy frees individuals from dependence on land as an essential resource for production and frees commerce from the double coincidence needed for barter trade. Money increases the frequency and speed of transactions in virtually every field of activity by making it possible for people to convert the fruits of their labour into a common currency that can be exchanged for any products or services. Money also provides incentives for people to produce more than they can consume, releasing greater energy and creativity. It serves as a medium for conservation and storage of what each person produces and permits easy transfer over any distance, thereby overcoming limitations imposed by time and space and dramatically increases the efficiency of transactions.

The internet plays a similar role at the mental level of information and knowledge and acts as a medium to organise globalisation. Today, the internet is increasing the frequency, speed and efficiency of information exchange in every field – commercial, industrial, educational, scientific, political, religious, recreational, etc. The Internet also overcomes the limits of time and space by enabling instantaneous access to information around the world. It increases enormously the number, intricacy and complexity of interactions made possible between individuals, organisations, facts, activities and fields of knowledge. It is acting as an organised medium for bringing all existing social organisations into greater contact to release the maximum energy of society and thus lead to unprecedented levels of social productivity and development.

i) Suggested Conditions For Development

Surplus energy, awareness of opportunities and the aspiration for advancement are pre-conditions that prepare society for new development initiatives. This is not a linear process. The three factors interact with one another in complex ways to generate a growing pressure and ground swell of new activities. Accomplishment at a previous level helps release energy and aspiration for further accomplishment. Energy makes for greater alertness and awareness. Awareness of what others are doing evokes greater aspirations and provokes energetic responses. The process spirals back on itself, constantly reinforcing the forward momentum, while at the same time each new level of achievement brings a certain measure of satisfaction and security that relieve the pressure for further effort. Alternations between rising urge and rising satisfaction are one reason for the modulating rhythm of progress and stagnation that is often observed.

When these three factors are present in requisite measure, the society is subconsciously prepared for change. Let us try to understand each of them.

a) Energy

Excess energy is an essential condition for development. The onset and speed of physical and biological reactions depends on seed crystals, catalysts, essential nutrients, the frequency and intensity of interaction between elements, and conducive environmental conditions. So also, the onset and speed of social development depends on the seeding of new ideas in society, awareness of new opportunities, social aspirations and attitudes to change, the catalytic role of individuals, the presence of essential resources and instruments, the frequency and intensity of social interactions, social preparedness and support for new activities.

Development is an expression of social creativity. It requires immense investment of creative energy for society to experiment with new modes of activity, take the risks associated with change, break the active resistance and passive inertia of fixed habits, raise standards of functioning to higher levels, acquire new skills and build higher order organisations. Moving from one level of social organisation to another requires the accumulation of surplus energy as in the conversion of matter from a liquid to a gaseous state. Development is the result of surplus energy moving vertically and being organised at a higher level, rather than merely being spent in horizontal expansion at the same level. The higher-level organisation is able to utilise the energy more productively.

Indomitable energy has been an outstanding trait of great political leaders such as Napoleon, Churchill and Gandhi and business leaders such as Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, and Tom Watson of IBM. Inventor Thomas Alva Edison was known to work for days on end without sleep in the process of developing 1,100 patentable inventions and founding the General Electric Company. Organisations that are growing rapidly share the same characteristic, which is apparent even to casual visitors to high tech companies in Silicon Valley. Energy is highly visible in progressive urban centers around the globe, from New York and London to Hong Kong and Tokyo. It is, therefore, not surprising that this characteristic is found abundant in societies that have achieved high levels of development or that it becomes increasingly pervasive as societies enter the take-off phase.

The importance of surplus energy is most dramatically illustrated by two conditions under which it is unable to accumulate or express itself - war and dictatorship. War destroys infrastructure and interferes with production and trade. It physically saps the energy and resources of a country. The threat of war keeps those energies perpetually directed towards self-defense, rather than self-development. Dictatorship, on the other hand, can spur development efforts up to a point, using the threat or pressure of coercion to channel initiative in desired directions. But dictatorship also blocks the free emergence of new ideas and fresh initiatives, which are the seeds of social innovation. It can ensure obedience to authority but does not spur entrepreneurship and innovation. The end of feudalism in Western Europe was an important contributor to the onset of the mercantile era and the founding of the great European commercial empires. The further transition from monarchy to democracy stabilised the internal order and provided the social foundations for the Industrial Revolution. It stimulated innovation by encouraging the free exchange of ideas and provided incentives for greater individual effort by legally safeguarding property from arbitrary confiscation.

b) Awareness

Surplus social energy collects as potential beneath the surface, accumulating until it acquires sufficient force to burst out in new activities. But the mobilisation of this energy for action depends on fulfillment of a second essential condition – awareness of new development opportunities and

challenges. Societies that are fully consumed by the struggle for survival have little time or inclination to direct their attention outward to observe what other societies are accomplishing or forward to envision new possibilities. When life reaches a certain level of stable comfort, societies become increasingly interested in and aware of what is going on in the world around them. This awareness may also be thrust on a society by the unwanted intrusion of an external influence. The influx of English manufactured goods into the pre-industrial economies of Europe and the arrival of a modern armed American fleet in Tokyo harbor in the 19th century both had the effect of awakening societies to the opportunities and challenges of development and stimulating them to respond.

The increasing pace of development is directly linked to an increase in the speed and reliability of information about what is taking place in other parts of the country, region and world due to improvements in communication and transportation. The proliferation of books and newspapers following the invention and diffusion of the printing press, and the growth of international shipping following the invention of navigation aids beginning in the 15th century, the growth of railways, telegraph, and telephones in the 19th century, and the impact of radio, film, television, computers and satellite technology in the 20th century have exponentially multiplied the dissemination of information and the general level of social awareness. Today more than 60,000 newspapers are published around the globe, including 8000 dailies, with a combined circulation of 500 million and an estimated readership of 1.5 billion people.

c) Aspiration

Society must also feel a strong aspiration or felt need for achievement at a higher level that will spur efforts to convert a perceived possibility into a material reality. Social development is an expression of social will seeking to elevate the performance of the collective. As society becomes more conscious of the external environment and its own internal potentials, its aspiration and will for progress increases. The greater the knowledge of its potentials, the greater the aspiration.

Failures to respond to opportunities arising out of a sense of social superiority or social inferiority are expressions of a common principle. People respond to the example of those with whom they identify socially. When there is awareness of a developmental achievement by one belonging to the same social and cultural context, it can evoke a powerful urge for accomplishment in society. When the achievement is by one who lies outside the context, it is often ignored. Thus, the adoption of new crops and cultivation practices by a wealthy farmer may not lead to similar behavior by smaller farmers in the same community. Age, social status, class, caste, wealth, occupation and other factors help define social identity. But this trend seems to drastically change in the contemporary period.

There was a time when different societies, classes and groups within societies differed widely in the extent to which they manifested an aspiration for development. This is no longer true. Over the past five decades, both awareness of the possibility and the release of the aspiration for development have been spreading rapidly from one country and level of society to another. Harlan Cleveland coined the phrase "revolution of rising expectations" to describe this phenomenon which he observed in Eastern Asia in the early 1950s. Since the end of colonialism and the diffusion of democracy this revolution has circled the globe and ignited a clamor for education, higher levels of consumption and opportunities for advancement among billions of people. The universal awakening of this urge for progress is another compelling reason why the speed of development is increasing so rapidly.

This principle has important implications for planned development efforts. It implies that efforts by government to initiate development will only be successful in areas where the necessary social urge and preparedness already exist. Many well-conceived development initiatives fail to catch on or go awry because the leaders try to accomplish what the population has not yet come to aspire for. In these instances, the planned initiative can only contribute to preparing the society for readiness at some future date, but will not generate immediate results.

ii) Barriers to Development

Consequently, there are certain barriers to development. Observation of social progress reveals three recurring types of obstacles to development - limited perception, outdated attitudes and anachronistic behaviors. Let us briefly look at each of them.

a) Perceptual Walls and Apparent Dead Ends

One of the most striking characteristics of development discernible in all periods, countries and fields of activity has been the inability of society to envision or foresee its own future destiny. This attribute is usually accompanied by the contrary tendency to perceive opportunities as insurmountable obstacles. Innumerable times in history, humanity has come face to face with what it believed was a dead end to progress, only to discover sooner or later a way around or through the dead end to open up a wider field of opportunities.

Today, powerful perceptual barriers exist with regard to employment, technology, trade, environment, corruption, inflation and population that represent very real barriers to development the world over. Malthus, the great demographer was not the only one to foresee imminent doom where in fact there was enormous opportunity. In 1950 Holland's population exceeded 5 million, reaching a density that many believed approached the ultimate limits that this tiny landmass could support. Today the Netherlands has 15 million people, almost three times the population density, yet it ranks among the most prosperous nations in the world and is a major food exporter. In the mid 1960s, India suffered from two successive years of drought and was on the verge of severe famine. An expert team sent to India by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations estimated that the country's food grain production would rise only by a maximum of 10% before 1970. Many of our Indian scientists shared this pessimistic view. Actually grain production rose 50 percent during this period and doubled within a decade to make our country self-sufficient in foodgrains. Had our leaders shared the view of the experts, the Green Revolution may never have been attempted!

Errors in assessment of future possibilities occur when we make projections of future performance on the basis of historical trends, even though changing circumstances have radically altered the environment. Looking forward, we often see apparently insurmountable obstacles to future progress. Looking backwards, we discover continuity and progress. History has shown time and again that there are no dead ends, only people who are unable to see the opportunities and solutions concealed behind the immediate obstacles.

b) Outmoded Attitudes

The most persistent obstacles to human development are not physical barriers, but out-dated attitudes. Fifteenth century China possessed a navy unparalleled in size, skills and technology, but their expeditions led only to dead ends. The purpose of these expeditions was to display the splendor and prowess of the Chinese emperors. They obstinately resisted foreign ways of life and discouraged trade. The Chinese developed a traditional immunity to world experience. A Great Wall of the mind separated China from the rest of the planet for centuries. Fully equipped with technology, intelligence and national resources to become

great discoverers, their attitude doomed them to become the discovered. But with the end of cold war and opening up of economies and rapid globalisation in the past two decades forced Chinese society to have more interaction with world community and also for outsiders to have more accessibility to Chinese society.

Another example would be the fact that the science of medicine developed very slowly in Europe due to the reluctance of physicians to share their successful remedies, until the establishment of the Royal Society of Physicians in the 18th century led to more open exchange of information, support for research and medical education.

One of the deepest and most widespread of human prejudices has been faith in the unaided, unmediated human senses. When the telescope was invented for seeing at a distance, prudent people were reluctant to allow the firsthand evidence of their sight to be overruled by some dubious novel device. The eminent geographer Cremonini refused to waste his time looking through Galileo's contraption just to see what "no one but Galileo had seen.... and besides, looking through those spectacles gives me a headache".

Distrust of the new was, for long, an obstacle to the development of science. Today outmoded attitudes bar social advancement in every field. The expansion of world trade after 1950 has been a tremendous force for stimulating job creation and raising living standards around the world. Yet, fear and resistance to expansion of trade persists among Americans and Canadians to the North American Free Trade Association, among Europeans to closer economic and monetary union, and among people in every country to freer international trade under the World Trade Organisation.

c) Anachronisms

Development is also retarded by a plethora of anachronisms which have no other reason than the momentum of past habits that refuse to die. High rates of childbirth have been traditionally practiced by the poor all over the world to compensate for high rates of infant mortality. Yet even after the introduction of modern medical technology in developing countries drastically reduced infant mortality rates in the 1950s, rates of child birth remained at high levels and have taken decades to decline to a degree commensurate with improved infant survival rates. Traditional behaviors have been slow to change until the population became more educated.

Gold was originally a popular form for saving personal wealth and a hedge against inflation in many countries prior to the establishment of reliable banking systems. The safety of banks and the higher returns available from other forms of investment have gradually diminished the importance of gold as a form of savings. But till today in many Asian countries, India being in the forefront, the traditional habit of saving and paying dowry in the form of gold jewellery has continued unabated, even after more secure and financially attractive forms of savings became widely available. In our country we possess nearly 30,000 metric tons of gold valued at \$300 billion, an amount roughly twice the value of the public deposits held by the Indian banks. Because the gold has to be imported, this form of savings removes liquidity from the national economy and prevents the reinvestment of personal savings in productive activities within the country. At a time when hundreds of billions of dollars are desperately needed for investment in roads, power plants and telecommunications infrastructure, an anachronistic habit forces the country to depend on foreign investors while we continue to sit on a huge hoard of untapped wealth.

We end with another example, UNDP has calculated that \$40 billion a year approximately would be sufficient to eradicate global poverty within ten years. Yet long after the end of the Cold War and at a time when there is not even

a serious potential enemy in sight, world military expenditure remains at \$850 billion a year. The war is over, but a costly, wasteful, unproductive anachronism persists.

Reflection and Action 2.5

Observe the overall economic condition of a particular community (caste, religious, tribal, etc.) living in your neighborhood. Now based on your observation write a note on the causes of their socio-economic well being or deprivation in the society.

2.8 Observations About Recent Development Experience

From the perspective of 10,000 years of history, human progress over the past 200 years has been extraordinary and the achievements of the past five decades are nothing short of miraculous. In two centuries social productivity has increased to the extent that the global community is now able to sustain a population 12 times as large as in 1800. From a rural-based, agrarian society in which less than three percent of the people lived in towns and cities, the human community has evolved into an urban-centered, industrial society in which the urban population now exceeds 40 per cent of the total. This change has brought with it and aggravated a host of problems – overcrowding, pollution, crime, etc.— but it has also brought political freedom, economic security, education and modern conveniences to billions of people.

What is more remarkable is that this social movement continues to expand and accelerate. The 1997, UNDP *Human Development Report* observes that over the past 50 years the world has made greater progress in eradicating poverty than during the previous 500. Around the globe, life expectancy is climbing, infant mortality is declining, epidemic diseases are receding, famine is becoming extinct and education is becoming more widespread. Since 1950, average per capita income has trebled, in spite of unprecedented population growth, and average real per capita consumption in developing countries has doubled. These achievements raise the possibility and the hope that unprecedented levels of prosperity could soon spread to all humanity.

These accomplishments still leave more than one billion people in poverty. But there is growing evidence to suggest that today's least developed countries could match and perhaps even exceed the achievements of the most advanced industrial nations within a much shorter time than it took for the original achievements. Beginning in 1780, it took the United Kingdom 58 years to double output per capita. The United States did it in 47 years, beginning in 1839. Japan accomplished the feat in only 24 years, beginning in the 1880s. But after the Second World War, Indonesia did it in 17 years, South Korea in 11, and China in 10. From 1960 to 1990 real per capita standards of living based on purchasing power parity multiplied twelve-fold in South Korea, seven-fold in Japan, more than six-fold in Egypt and Portugal, and well above five-fold in Indonesia and Thailand.

While the possibilities for increasing the velocity and expanding the scope of development to all countries are encouraging, it is by no means clear how quickly or to what extent they will be realised. Nor is there a consensus regarding the policies, strategies and actions most conducive for that realisation. Countries and regions are distinguished by vast differences in performance that are not easily explained or eliminated.

Among developing countries, between 1965 and 1990 per capita GDP rose by 5.5 per cent annually in high performing East Asian countries compared to less than 2 per cent in South Asia and about 0.25 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Similarly, if one looks at the experience in Eastern Europe since 1990, one will see that the transition strategies implemented by 25 East European countries were unable to prevent widespread economic decline and social distress. Production in all 25 countries fell significantly, from a minimum of 18 per cent in Poland to 45 per cent in Russia, 60 per cent in Ukraine and 75 per cent in Armenia. Even in East Germany, where the German government and industry have pumped in more than \$1.1 trillion since reunification, the expected results have not been achieved. Unemployment in East Germany has grown from very low levels to more than 25 per cent, while productivity remains at one-fifth, the level prevalent in the western part of the country.

So there are many questions regarding strategy and wide disparities in performance all over the world. The experience of the past two centuries has given rise to at least five major categories of development theory. Applying these theories to explain the development of 23 countries during the period 1850-1914, Morris and Adelman found that each major theory adequately explains the experience of a range of countries and periods, but none of the theories applies universally to the 19th century experience of all the countries. These findings suggest the need for a more comprehensive approach. Realisation of this need had prompted the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to call for thoughtful reflection on development "as the most important intellectual challenge of the coming years".

Reflection and Action 2.6

Look into the latest *Human Development Report* (UN) or *Human Development Report* of any of the states of India. Based on your reading develop a chart showing the changes that have taken place in various indicators of human development in our country or in a state in recent years.

2.9 Conclusion

Development today is not merely an economic phenomenon. It encompasses more than the financial side of people's lives. Development should be perceived as a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganisation and reorientation of the entire economic and social system. In addition to improvements in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes and, in many cases, even customs and beliefs. To conclude, development must be conceived as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty.

Development is a process. This process has been taking place in societies since time immemorial, but it has acquired greater intensity and velocity during the past five hundred years and has accelerated rapidly over the past five decades. In the broadest terms applicable to all societies and historical periods, development can be defined as an upward directional movement of society from lesser to greater levels of energy, efficiency, quality, productivity, complexity, comprehension, creativity, mastery, enjoyment and accomplishment. To highlight all these issues, we have discussed in this unit the concepts and perspectives of change and modernisation, criticism of the perspective of modernisation, scope, conditions and barriers of development. We have also presented a few developmental experiences in this unit.

2.10 Further Reading

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Unit 3

Social, Human and Gender Development

Contents

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Development as Realisation of Human Potential
- 3.3 Impact of Development on Women
- 3.4 Women as a Constituency in Development Policies
- 3.5 Identification of Gender Need, Role and Strategy
- 3.6 Perspectives on Women and Development
- 3.7 Conclusion
- 3.8 Further Reading

Learning Objectives

The central objective of this unit is to explain:

- development as a realisation of human potential;
- impact of women on development;
- gender need, gender role and strategy in development; and
- emerging perspective of development on women.

3.1 Introduction

In the earlier units of this course you have learnt several important concepts like change, evolution, progress, growth and development. In this unit we shall be focusing on the social, human and gender aspects of development. In the second half of the first unit of this course we have discussed at length the human aspect of development. In the second unit we have also discussed the various perspectives on change, modernisation, and development. As a continuity to earlier discussion this unit begins with a discussion of the objectives of the development. Here we discuss how the issues of justice, sustainability and inclusiveness, satisfaction of fundamental human needs, participation of the masses in the development processes, etc. have emerged to be integral parts of contemporary development discourse. Women have always been an important constituency of development. However impacts of development on women have not always been positive. Rather, many of the developmental practices have put women in a disadvantageous position in various ways. The impact of ongoing development processes on women, especially, intensification of gender inequality, increasing double burden, reinforcing of gender role stereotypes, feminisation of labour, increase in women's hardship and drudgery, etc. are outlined in this unit. In recent decades various perspectives on women's development have been thought of. In the last section of this unit we discuss some of these perspectives.

3.2 Development as Realisation of Human Potential

Development is seen by some as a desirable state of being and in this sense a developed society often connotes a modern industrial society that enjoys economic well being as it has reached certain levels of wealth and consumption. Others see development as a vision wherein the centre stage is occupied not by levels of production and consumption but by the satisfaction of human needs and potentials. Let us examine some of these visions of development.

a) **Development as an expression of human personality**

Dudley Seers (cf Thomas 2000: 33) while elaborating on the meaning of development, suggests that while there can be value judgments on what is development and what is not, it should be a universally acceptable aim of development to make for conditions that lead to a realisation of the potentials of human personality. Seers outlined several conditions that can make for achievement of this aim:

- The capacity to obtain physical necessities, particularly food;
- A job (not necessarily paid employment) but including studying, working on a family farm or keeping house;
- Equality, which should be considered an objective in its own right;
- Participation in government;
- Belonging to a nation that is truly independent, both economically and politically; and
- Adequate educational levels (especially literacy).

David Korten, a leading proponent of alternative development outlines three basic principles of what he calls authentic development. These are **justice**, **sustainability** and **inclusiveness**. He says development must ensure the following:

Justice: Priority must be given to assuring a decent human existence to all people.

Sustainability: Earth's resources must be used in ways that assure the well being of future generations.

Inclusiveness: Every person must have the opportunity to be a recognised and respected contributor to family, community and society.

(Korten, cf Thomas 2000: 33)

Manfred A. Max-Neef (1991), a Chilean economist and a recognised advocate of human rights and alternative development, disillusioned with the economic growth based developmental experience of Latin American countries, talks of a new praxis based on development focusing on the "satisfaction of fundamental human needs". He calls this **Human Scale Development**. The other salient features of this model of development are:

- Planning with autonomy;
- Growing levels of self reliance;
- Coherent and balanced interdependence of people, nature and technology;
- Balance between the personal and the social;
- Constructive interplay of civil society with the state; and
- Emergence of global processes alongside local activities.

b) **People's development**

The people are held to be the principal actors in human scale development. Respecting the diversity of the people as well as the autonomy of the spaces in which they must act converts the present day object person to a subject person in the human scale development. Development of the variety that we have experienced has largely been a top-down approach where there is little possibility of popular participation and decision making. Human scale development calls for a direct and participatory democracy where the state gives up its traditional paternalistic and welfarist role in favour of a facilitator in enacting and consolidating people's solutions flowing from below. "Empowerment" of people takes development much ahead of simply combating

or ameliorating poverty. In this sense development seeks to restore or enhance basic human capabilities and freedoms and enables people to be the agents of their own development.

c) Participation of the masses

In the process of capitalistic development and leading national economy towards integration into foreign markets, even politically democratic states are apt to effectively exclude the vast masses from political and economic decision making. The state itself evolves into a national oligarchy hedged with authoritarian and bureaucratic structures and mechanisms that inhibit social participation and popular action. The limited access of the majority to social benefits and the limited character of participation of the masses can often not be satisfactorily offset by the unsuccessful and weak redistributive policies of the government. Powerful economic interest groups set the national agenda of development, often unrepresentative of the heterogeneous and diverse nature of our civil society making for a consolidation and concentration of power and resources in the hands of a few. Also, a focus on people and the masses implies that there could be many different roads to development and self reliance. The slogans "human centered development", "the development of people," "integrated development", all call for a more inclusive and sensitive approach to fundamental social, economic and political changes involved in development such that all aspects of life of a people, their collectivity, their own history and consciousness, and their relations with others make for a balanced advancement. The adoption of a basic needs approach with the concept of endogenous development make for a development agenda that is universally applicable while at the same time allowing for country specific particularities to be given due account.

d) Nurturing diversity

The challenge of human scale development is to nurture diversity instead of being threatened by it, to develop processes of political and economic decentralisation, to strengthen democratic, indigenous traditions and institutions and to encourage rather than repress emerging social movements which reflect the people's need for autonomy and space. The fruits of economic development may be distributed more equitably if local spaces are protected, micro-organisations are facilitated and the diverse collective identities that make up the social body are recognised and represented. Greater control of popular masses over environment is a must. In fact this concept of development seeks for the civil society rather than the state to own up and nurture development, so that the role of social actors is enhanced.

e) Development as an open process

Human scale development has a vision of real development not as a stage or a state but as a process, a process that encompasses economic, social and technological changes by which human welfare is improved and embellished with its political, cultural and spiritual dimensions.

Above all, this conception frees development from any particular specifications and development becomes an open option justifiable only to the extent people need, understand, and able to integrate it. Development must become a process in constant motion for human beings themselves as well as their surroundings which are in permanent motion, a motion that defies static boundaries and frozen directions.

Social and Human Development, therefore necessarily requires a unified approach, integrating the economic and social components in plans, policies and programmes for people's betterment. The challenge is to simultaneously integrate cross sectoral and regional developmental needs as well as to make for a participative development. The issues of environment, pollution, women,

habitat, hunger and employment have come to the fore one by one and continue to require public and institutional attention along with resource allocations. Two major contemporary concerns that require focus in any development initiative are that of human security and sustainability. We need to ensure that development does not mean social dislocation, violence and war and that we meet “the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Each of these problems is interrelated in complex ways and requires a unified approach. The purpose of development should be to develop man and not to end with developing things. Fulfillment of basic needs of mankind should be the true objective of development and achievements that either do not contribute to this goal or even disrupt this basic requirement must not be pursued as a development goal.

Reflection and Action 3.1

What do you mean by development? What, according to you, should be the ideal objectives of development and why?

3.3 Impact of Development on Women

Development is not gender neutral. While one argues for the equality and participation of all human beings, men and women, in the process of development, it is important that we are not indifferent to social implications of biology and the physical constraints it puts for women. Women and development is a theme that raises issues of equality and justice for women's experience of development as mediated by both their biology and the social construction of it.

a) Intensification of Gender Inequality

Gender inequality tends to lower productivity and efficiency of labour at all levels of the economy, not just the household, and intensifies unequal distribution of resources. Lack of security, opportunity and empowerment also imply the lowering of quality of life for both men and women. Even when women and girls may bear the direct costs of gender inequality it needs to be recognised that the ultimate costs of lack of development and poverty have to be borne by people across the society. Women's development is therefore simultaneously a gender and a developmental issue, and the developmental planners need to be cognizant of women's subordination for centuries that has controlled women's mobility, their labour, sexuality and fertility.

b) Mixed Gain for Women

As far as women are concerned, development has had mixed gains for them while it has widened women's opportunities and opened up the public sphere to those hitherto confined to the private sphere of family life by tradition and superstitious beliefs, yet evidence from large parts of the world also show that women still face disparity in opportunities and often development for women has meant the widening of the gap between the incomes of men and women and increased strain on their time and energies. Women are unfavourably represented in very large numbers in the unorganised sector where they work under oppressive and exploitative conditions but find themselves restricted due to their biological and social responsibilities as well as the low status they enjoy in society.

c) Intensification of Double Burden

In fact women lose twice as the development planners have been unable to recognise the dual roles of women whereby they bear children and at the same time carry out economic activities and have in their shortsighted definitions of women as mothers ignored and downgraded their economic functions so as to classify them as economically dependents. On the one hand,

the exclusive burden of childcare makes women's access to the market limited, and then the market itself excludes prestigious and well paying jobs from them, doubting their ability to hold such jobs and perform in equal capacity to men. Also, the prevalent definitions of work as work when performed for money and work as work in the modern sector have also contributed to making women's economic contributions invisible. These definitions for instance exclude women who work in the agricultural sector as members of a family living off farm land products, women engaged in exchange labour, household work, childcare and many such activities that are not paid.

d) Reinforcing Gender Role Stereotypes

Stereotypes of sex roles have resulted in a situation where even developmental interventions aimed at modernising farming systems have only exacerbated the problem by targeting only men for inputs such as training, loans and resources such as seeds, land and so on. In case of the green revolution wherein there is high capitalisation involved, better harvesting systems have meant focus on good variety of seeds and fertilizers and such mechanisation that means less of labourers required; thus unemployment. It is women who loose again their traditional economic employment in farms and any alternative employment planned is done only for men.

e) Eroding Women's Role in Traditional Economy

This has widened the gap between men and women, reducing the status of women. Subsistence economies with little specialisation have been more equalitarian and just to women with little differentiation between the status of men and women. Civilisation has created more functional specialisations to the benefit of men and increasingly led to women being reduced to a dependency status as they separated from their erstwhile food production functions. Women, as they lost these functions in civilised societies, increasingly became economic liabilities, and vulnerable to a host of patriarchal controls. Anthropological evidence shows that civilisation's influence on subsistence economies has meant decreased involvement of men in child rearing roles and in other household tasks. Development being largely defined in terms of economic activities has thus focused on men, ignoring women's traditional economic roles.

f) Feminisation of Household

Changing of customary communal land tenure system to the concept of private property ownership, and introduction of cash crops have been two important developments that eroded women's role in traditional economic systems while favouring men and their rights over land and crops. Also the lure of the modern monetary economy has meant large scale migration of men away from their households, such that women are left to perform additional tasks formerly done by men, reducing significantly women's leisure as well as productivity. Again, improved transportation and markets have had mixed benefits for women and men. While increased access to the markets may have a positive impact on rural earnings, it also impacts people in making several traditional occupations redundant. Local hand-made artifacts can seldom compete with cheaper machine made goods.

g) Differential Access to Education

Since the 1980s a phenomenon called feminisation of labour has been noted as a global development which refers to the process of decentralisation of labour with the intention of reducing wage and non-wage costs of production. Women are preferred as employees for they are available on cheap, flexible, non-permanent terms and can be disposed of whenever it is felt necessary to do so. No doubt more women get an opportunity to work. However that itself is no reason for any optimism for they do such works on increasingly less

favourable terms. Similarly Structural Adjustment Programmes and New Economic Policy are not seen in most feminist quarters as auguring well for women who are expected to be hit the worst by inflation and the winding up of the barest of welfare state measures we have. Increased poverty with a female face, abandonment of women and children as the poor grapple for survival, prostitution and violence are some of the alarming social consequences that are said to be on the flip side of the economic development that is planned through the processes of privatisation, liberalisation and globalisation.

Education is widely regarded as one of the most important developmental initiatives to reduce gender disparity and there are several researches which show positive links between girl's education and economic productivity, maternal and infant mortality, fertility rates and health prospects of future generations. If we look into education and modernisation and its effects on women, though we find that the elite nature of education in most of the erstwhile colonial nations has meant that education has not reached rural populations, particularly women. There is still a wide gap between male and female literacy figures in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Lack of education was itself not a big problem when women engaged in traditional pursuits, however, with development and accompanying changes wherein traditional occupations of women are being superseded, it becomes difficult for poorly educated women to move into the new sectors. In the markets women come to be in a disadvantaged position because of their lack of knowledge and training making for exploitative conditions of work and their inability to compete with more favourably disposed men. Lack of education severely limits ability to take credit, innovate and earn independent income through economic enterprise. In case of migration to cities, rural women often find themselves in less paying jobs as domestic servants, shop assistants and even prostitutes.

Education has all the same opened up a host of occupations for the middle and upper classes and women of these classes have found representation in services like teachers, nurses and doctors. New job opportunities in computers and information technology have bid many a middle class woman to substantially paying jobs. However, it must be remembered that by and large women's economic activities are permitted to them only in situations of family crisis, when women are required to earn an additional income without changing the distribution of work at home. In countries like India educated women often enter prestigious services due to several factors working in their favour of which a supportive family structure that takes pride in their education and employment and the availability of cheap labour for taking care of household jobs, are very important. At the same time women's work outside the confines of the house is not without its problems; divorce, separations and increase in the number of women-headed households may have a link with the increased hostility between men and women, for while women are required to work double shift, men continue to keep off the home sphere. A related issue of concern is the contemporary increase in violence and crime against women which plays its function in maintaining women's subordination by restricting them from free and full participation in development initiatives.

h) Environmental Degradation and Increasing Hardship for Women

Similarly, if we look at development and its impact on the environment, we find that the destruction of the previous balance of nature through unbridled pursuit of man's capitalist interests have affected women more severely than it has men, as they struggle and search for fuel, carry water over long distances and spend unduly long hours processing food. Women's overwhelming involvement in subsistence related activities has meant that environmental degradation translates into special hardships for them for the ready access to natural resources they enjoyed earlier is replaced by working harder to get access to them, often having to pay for what was otherwise communally owned.

i) New Technology and Increase in Women's Drudgery

The dominant discourse on development often draws women as victims of household drudgery. Technology in the form of household appliances and modern science is seen as the panacea for all trouble. However this technology is not really all that "emancipatory" for much of environmental pollution and degradation is linked to this technology. It needs to be noted that women are aware of the links between a balanced and non-degraded nature and human survival as it is women who have taken the leadership and sought solidarity across the world in their struggles against the capitalist plundering of nature and environment be it on the issue of building large dams, the saving of mangrove forests, the building of atomic power plants or mining chalk and other resources.

This is not to say that development is not for women, rather that development interventions, based on certain stereotypes of women have bypassed them, they have negatively affected their productivity, and many times even created obstacles in women's lives when they were actually intended to facilitate them. Development interventions have either prioritised the woman's motherhood role or her economic agency while neglecting the other half of her role, thus creating a situation wherein women in their pursuit of development goals do not find themselves anywhere getting to be equal to men. While they have lost the protections and advantages of a sexually segregated society, they have not been able to get the freedom and status that development promised through reinventing their economic lives.

Reflection and Action 3.2

Make an observation on the economic and social condition of female labourers working either in agriculture or in construction in your neighborhood. Based on your observation write a note on the change in the social and economic status of women labourers in your neighborhood.

3.4 Women as a Constituency in Development Policies

It was only in the 1970s that development policy oriented itself to women as a distinctive category rather than as a residual one. Development planners of the time were faced with the failure of the trickle-down theory, with problems of poverty and unemployment that seemed to have aggravated with economic growth and with the need to focus on basic needs and poverty alleviation in the second decade of development.

At around the same time the women's movement gave a strong voice to the idea that women's issues have development policy implications. Several studies highlighting women's productive activities, especially women's critical role in food production, women's preponderance among the poor of the world and researches linking women's fertility to their status in society came to the fore and substantiated the need to integrate women in developmental goals. Thus the UN Decade for Women was declared. This brought about a marked change in how development came to be directed at women. Before 1970, policy makers had focused on women in very gender-specific ways. While men were targeted for development as household heads and breadwinners, women were seen primarily as mothers and dependents, hence were beneficiaries of welfare measures rather than development itself. The welfare category has its obvious negative connotations for it is seen in most quarters as a residual category made of dependents who failed to be self reliant, hence must be helped. Since women were type cast in their sex roles without reference to the reality of developing and underdeveloped countries, the kind of initiatives directed for them were programmes on nutritional training, home economics, maternal and children's health care and family planning. This assumption of female domesticity came to be challenged by researches that pointed to

women's productive roles and involvement in basic needs of their families. Development initiatives thereafter translated these insights into income enhancing programmes for women as women came to be conceptualised as managers of low income households. For most purposes during this interim phase development initiatives for women retained their "welfarist" projection and avoided any redistributive outcomes. It was much later, in the 1980s when the world economy was undergoing deterioration that there came about a growing emphasis on women as economic agents in their own right. It came to be realised that women's productive capacities had been under-utilised and as economic restructuring came to be prescribed through processes of liberalisation and privatisation, it came to be hoped that free market enterprise would make for a more efficient usage of human resources, both male and female. During this time, women first came to be given focus as key agents of the development process and were encouraged to take up micro enterprises, small scale business ventures and parallel marketeering.

However this emphasis on women's economic agency has its serious pitfalls. The basic subordination of women and exclusive responsibilities of home and childcare continue and with structural adjustment programmes and the wrapping up of the state welfare measures, these responsibilities only increased, thus making unreasonable demands on women's time and energies. The free market itself is not all that free for women to enter the market with these disadvantages and end up getting more exploited. The efficiency approach of women's development again does not go very far in making change for better conditions in women's lives or for equality to men. The old fable of the fox and the stork that both needed food to be served differently to them to be able to eat is an appropriate analogy to explain differential needs of men and women.

Feminists have sought to influence developmental planners with the idea that for achieving developmental goals of freeing women from their subordination and achieving gender equality, recognition needs to be given to the gender division of labour in production and reproduction. This would lead to better appreciation of the differential needs of men and women. Equity and empowerment cannot be achieved in policy approaches that merely add women to existing developmental plans. Development policies must be based on a social relations framework that accounts for the differences in gender roles and needs. Additionally, development policy cannot justifiably premise itself on a universal category "woman" which does not exist. There are material differences in power, resources and interests of women across the world that effectively stand disguised and denied behind the concept of woman's development, a fact that came to be deeply resented by women's groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Development does not operationalise itself in terms of uniform benefits for all men and disadvantages for all women. Women are on structurally disadvantageous terms with men but then Third World men and women are structurally disadvantaged as compared to First World men and women. DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era), a network of Third World activists proposed therefore that the strategies for a more equitable development need to be worked out from the vantage point of the most oppressed women who are disenfranchised by class, race and nationality. Only then can the complexities of subordination be fully taken care of in developmental agendas. Over the years, these insights have influenced development policies and achievement of equality, equity and empowerment became legitimate developmental goals of women across the world.

3.5 Identification of Gender Need, Role and Strategy

Two important conceptual rationales forwarded for recognizing women as a distinct constituency in development and gender relations as a necessary framework for planning and implementation of developmental policies need to be discussed in greater detail. These are:

- Gender roles and needs; and
- Control over resources and decision making within the households.

a) Gendered Men and Women and the Household

Women were presumed to be beneficiaries of development as part of families and households targeted for development. It was pointed out by feminist researchers that women and men have different roles in the household and in society making for differential access to resources and power within households. Therefore women's needs for development cannot realistically be merged into those of others in the household. The disaggregation of the household /family on the basis of gender was, therefore, the first principle proposed for planning for development that was responsive to the distinct realities of men and women.

Carolene Moser found that development fell far short of people's, especially, women's needs due to certain widespread stereotypes among development planners about the structure of low income households, division of labour inside them and the power and control of resources within the household. More specifically, she found three faulty assumptions that emanated from a western perspective and that distorted development initiatives as they had no roots in Third World contexts. These are:

- i) that the household consists of a nuclear family of husband, wife and two or three children.
- ii) that the household functions as a socioeconomic unit within which there is equal control over resources and power of decision-making between all adult members in matters influencing the household's livelihood.
- iii) that within the household there is clear division of labour based on gender. The man of the family, as the breadwinner is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman as the housewife and homemaker takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organisation of the household (Moser 1993: 15-16).

Firstly, the nuclear family with its naturalised division of labour is an idealised concept that distorts reality. It has also been pointed out that the household as a residential unit is distinct from families, the latter being a social unit that is based on ties of marriage and kinship and that though often these correspond, yet an assumption of them being one and the same is bound to lead to misconceptions about the nature of developmental needs of the units targeted. Moreover not only do households show heterogeneity in their structure and composition, it is also a fact that women occupy different positions in these structures. To treat the family, therefore, as a static unit without the socio-economic context and the contemporary pressures that make for constant restructuring of such units is bound to be problematic.

For instance, although it is normally assumed that the head of the household is a man, the situation is quite different in actuality with women-headed households showing an increase with desertion, death, male migration, situations of war, insecurity and disaster. Female dependency is constructed on a false assumption that men are the breadwinners and financial supporters of dependent women. While this may be a feature of industrial societies in some cases, it is a restricted phenomenon and does not represent the low income households and their realities where women are very often the primary or the sole earners. In the Caribbean, large parts of Latin America, Central America and parts of Africa, female-headed households form a sizable proportion of the economically vulnerable, often falling below the poverty line. Where the mother is the only adult income earner and there are several dependent children, poverty manifests itself in children dropping out of education, working

and in making for an inter-generational transfer of poverty. Women balance multiple roles in the household and the assumption of their economic dependence on men can seriously impact policy against their interests. There have been many instances when false assumptions of women's role in the family resulted in their labour and participation in agriculture being discounted and they being excluded from developmental initiatives involving ownership of land, credit-extension and other services.

Similarly faulty assumptions about the household as a natural socio-economic unit presupposes first that a family provides equal control over familial resources to all its members and that adult household members share between them the power of household decision making. The importance of intra-household dynamics in inequitable distribution of resources and in unequal exchanges of labour and its fruits is ignored and questions of power and control left unaddressed. Arguments about the economic rationality of household behaviour contradict the complex array of relationships and interactions within the household and treat the household as an individual decision maker. However the treatment of household as the most relevant unit of utility maximisation removes the possibility of exploring and treating conditions of unequal exchanges and exploitation between family members. Empirical evidence exists that there are conflicts of interests between men and women as well as interdependence and that gender inequalities are often rationalised through bias in perception of individual contributions and interests of men and women. There are economic as well as cultural and ideological reasons that underlie such asymmetries in intra-household resource allocation.

However it is commonly supposed that altruism governs family relations and individual family members subordinate individualism in pursuit of the common goal of the welfare of the family. Marriages specially are assumed to be cushioned with love and sacrifice from conflicts that dog other social institutions. However, the belief that marriages and families mean a partnership between men and women that is shared on the basis of common objectives and where there is reciprocity in rights and obligations that make for a joint control and management of resources such that each has access to pooled resources according to his/her need, belies reality. First the household may not necessarily be a collectivity of reciprocal interests. Even though sharing may be the dominant principle of household distribution, it does not mean that everyone has an equal access to resources. Gender is an important element in defining people's access to resources especially scarce ones. For example women routinely get less to eat in poor households, and are socialised to bear hardships so that their men can get better care and resources. Maternal altruism is held to be a womanly virtue and in most homes it is the woman's obligation to routinely sacrifice food, leisure, health and entertainment so that men can have a bigger share of these. Likewise women often do not have direct access to household assets and property and have any control over these solely by virtue of being wives or mothers of male relatives. In contrast men have direct access to property and cultural sanctions for independent decision making.

Household distribution of labour and responsibilities also plays an important role in circumscribing equal opportunities of men and women in the market and this limitation on women's ability to expand income generating activities pushes them back into a dependency status, vulnerable to violence and intra-household inequality.

It has also been pointed out that management and distribution of resources within the household takes place differently with men and women at the helm of affairs and this is linked to gender based responsibilities of the two sexes. Studies across the world show that women's income is largely used to pay for day to day food, clothing and domestic goods and thus this household provisioning implies that a greater share of women's income covers subsistence

and nutrition needs of the family as compared to that of men. It needs to be underlined that the assumption of the male head as a benevolent caretaker cannot be stretched too far and that the head cannot by himself represent household needs, therefore his welfare too cannot be taken to be a representative of the welfare of all household members. While it is true that in most cases cultural rules, ideology and practices make the intra household distribution appear natural and legitimate, yet inequalities continue to exist because men and women share the bias in perception of their actual contribution to the household. Direct money earning by men is often perceived as a bigger contribution to the household entitling men to greater household resources than women whose time and energy spent on ensuring overall wellbeing of the family as well as in non-market activities that indirectly go to support the men's enterprises in the market are discounted. Correct assessment of individual interests and well being for planning development interventions therefore need to be based on a gendered understanding of the dynamics of intra household inequalities.

b) Gender Roles and the Impact on Women's Development

Women though often perceived as dependents or as homemakers, are engaged in three basic responsibilities that they shoulder and these have been referred to in developmental literature as their triple role. Firstly, women are engaged in reproductive work that involves both child bearing and rearing. Secondly, most low income households in the Third World have their women engaged in what is called productive work, or work that earns wages. In rural areas this could be agricultural work in urban areas women work in large numbers in the informal sector, in and around their homes. Thirdly as part of their reproductive responsibilities women also take up community managing work that facilitates collective consumption needs of the neighbourhood or the community. Despite these three roles women's work is generally made invisible for either their work is regarded as a natural extension of their biological role of giving birth to children or nurturing them or their work is considered secondary. Men in contrast are largely seen as productive workers even when they may be unemployed or earning erratically. As far as reproductive role is concerned men do not have a clearly defined reproductive role in most societies and when involved in the community, men do not largely engage in consumption related voluntary work, rather they take up the community leadership roles that get them either some payment or social prestige.

Feminists have identified this gender based division of labor as both the reason and expression of women's subordination. They have contested the dualistic division of work as productive and reproductive, which essentially implies that the productive elements of reproductive work are completely erased. It has been pointed out that women's reproductive work both "produces" labour force and maintains it, thereby making for the fundamental productive activity that is essential for all subsequent productive enterprises. Capitalistic development is itself held responsible for this historical and artificial division between men and women's roles that later got enforced by ideology. Several feminists have traced this "domestication of women" to the industrial revolution which created the modern cash economy that cut women off from their traditional subsistence activities and resulted in women's loss of autonomy as farmers, crafts workers or traders. The housewife role that came onto women as their primary responsibility however is neither valued nor paid and the use value of reproductive work is not given the recognition it deserves. Even as far as the realm of productive work goes, the ideology of housewifisation masks asymmetry in men and women's work and their exchange value. Not only do women get work at the lower end of the economy which are low skilled and low paid and not wanted by men, they are also vulnerable to exploitation and harassment and an overload of labour due to their multiple roles. Yet the unpaid work of women at homes and in the community and their

low paid work in what is recognised as the productive sphere have not created major conflicts in the rank and file of women because they themselves accept and conform to the gender ascribed roles and find little choice.

c) Practical and Strategic Gender Needs

Since in discussing development, the concept of human needs and their satisfaction has emerged as an important criterion for assessing whether or not interventions lead to development, it is important to look at the twin concepts of practical and strategic gender needs when discussing gender development. Women and men have different roles in societies and therefore distinct prioritised concerns. Maxine Moleneux had conceptualised this distinction which was later elaborated by Caroline Moser while advocating to the developmental planners to be more gender sensitive. According to Moleneux and Moser, there are **women's interests** and **gender interests**. The two are not the same. Women's interests refer to interests which women across the world share by virtue of being the biological sex female. Since in real life situations, women live in a society where their position is defined not merely by their sex but by other important factors like their class and ethnicity as well as gender, it would be wrong to present women's interests and needs as a homogenous category for women. Rather, while planning, development planners must take cognizance of the fact that woman's interests and needs vary according to their social positioning which itself is defined by the specific socio- economic context and also by factors such as class, ethnicity and religion. This makes for the importance of referring to the general interests that women share amongst themselves as gender interests and the terminology changes to needs in reference to planning for addressing them.

Planning for development and change itself focuses on multiple levels of goals as policy interventions can accomplish limited goals. So that there is less confusion in what is aimed and what is achieved; the distinction between strategic and practical needs is very useful.

Moser defines thus

Strategic gender needs are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to particular contexts. They relate to gender divisions of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. It also changes existing roles and therefore challenges women's subordinate position.... Practical gender needs are the needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society. Practical gender needs do not challenge the gender divisions of labour or women's subordinate position in society, although rising out of them. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and often are concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care, and employment (Moser 1993: 40).

It is evident that addressing strategic gender needs makes for a transformation in social relations such that women come to enjoy greater equality and power and that such a transformation is dependent on a consciousness of a different order and a commitment to struggle against the prevalent order. Practical gender needs, since they are addressed to make for better adaptation to women's concrete conditions in the domestic arena or in income generating activities or even in community based resources, do not result in such transformation though they generally provide relief to women in their gendered roles and responsibilities. The greater majority of developmental interventions, aim at attending to women's practical gender needs and do not contribute directly to challenging either the sexual division of labour, or social political

and economic organisation of society that subordinates women. However it would not be right to term strategic needs based development interventions to be feminist and the interventions directed at improving women's access to their practical needs as "less" feminist, for the two are linked and in effect often inseparable.

Reflection and Action 3.3

How do gender roles affect women's participation in the development process? Answer this question with suitable illustrations.

3.6 Perspectives on Women and Development

There are several important perspectives on women's development. Let us examine a few of them here.

a) Structural Perspective

Structural perspectives on development are critical of the Women in Development (WID) approach of developmental policies for they start with the basic assumption of conflict in society that makes for competition for resources and power and that manifests itself in struggles of classes and groups, such that domination and oppression have a structural base. Change itself in existing systems is seen not in terms of accommodation and reforms but in radical and revolutionary transformations that result in a more fair redistribution of resources and power. Marxism forms an important wellspring for the critical conflict view. Marxism holds, like the WID approach, that development as economic modernisation or capitalist development has led to the marginalisation of women in the Third World. However, it goes further than the women in development approach in seeing sexual inequality at a deeper, structural and dialectical level and linking it to the uneven and unequal worldwide development of capitalism and to inequalities embedded in social classes. However there is criticism that Marxism fails to deliver what it promises for while it explains the capitalist development as a system of hierarchical structures of production that leads to the emergence of a small but powerful minority with resources and a much larger dispossessed majority that stands alienated from the means of production, it could by itself not explain women's subordination further to the subordination of men that is created by the capitalist mass production. Feminists have critiqued it also for reducing women's oppression to the abstract concept of a particular mode of production, thereby not paying any attention to the fact that men, and not just the abstract concept of capital, benefit from women's oppression. The agency and consciousness of human beings as social actors stands completely denied in this conceptualisation for the individual is defined purely in relation to class interests. Women's opposition to male domination and control is itself dismissed as false consciousness and the result of the divisive strategies of the ruling minority.

Not satisfied by these explanations some feminists reworked with the basic Marxist argument to explain female subordination as a part of new constraints that came about as a result of inequities generated by capital intensive development on a global scale. One stream of feminists hitched their arguments to the dependency theories, furthering the argument that the capitalist mode of production has polarising tendencies and creates a relationship of dependency between the peripheral nations of the Third World with the metropolitan centres of the First World such that women's development is adversely affected in the Third World peripheral countries even while women in the First World may come to enjoy opportunities hitherto inaccessible. These theorists draw on Rosa Luxemburg's thesis that precapitalist forms of production provide an essential subsidy to capital accumulation. Saffiotti (cf Kabeer 1995: 47) suggested that the family was an example of such a precapitalist form of production that

aided capital accumulation by drawing on the labour of women, their time and energies without adequate payment, because the family is organised in such a way that voluntaristic sentiments rather than contractual labour marks production relations. Capital accumulation could take place in the metropolitan centres at the cost of women in the Third World countries that had to grapple with increasing poverty and marginalisation, even while their unpaid labour or their “reserve” labour was called upon to benefit the capitalist system. A pervasive patriarchal sex role ideology was held to be the direct cause of women’s subordination for it rationalised women’s confinement to home on the basis of her biology and social role. Dependency feminists thus worked out connections between different forms of inequalities at the international, national and household levels. Yet, like the Marxist approach they held the view that men and women held common class interests and did not see the rationale for the material exploitation of women in their households by men. Sexual aggression and subordination by men was attributed to the frustration and helplessness of men involved in exploitative capitalist production, thus ignoring the relationship of men and women itself in terms of a set of production relations wherein production of people itself was undervalued in comparison to production of things with exchange value.

Maria Mies, a German feminist while drawing again on Luxemburg’s thesis, has disagreed with the prioritising of class as the primary contradiction and sees the first contradiction to be that of gender. The basic biological difference between men and women, according to Mies meant that women experienced their relationship with nature and their environment differently; they experienced their whole bodies as productive and in tune with nature unlike men who could produce with their hands and the tools that became an extension of these hands. According to Mies men’s relationship with nature was predatory from the beginning and in his lust for power, man established a similar relationship with women who seemed to be like nature.

She sees capitalism as a more recent manifestation of a male patriarchal order that came into force far back in the history of mankind when men realised that the destructive tools that they could make could be used to domesticate women and animals and thus make for appropriation of economic surplus. Since women came to be seen as providing the essential physical precondition for male production, men made women as their first colony. All subsequent development is likewise marked by the same predatory mode of production. Colonisation and “housewifisation” are two ways that women and the weak are reduced to, being nature and thence their control and exploitation becomes justified. Mies’ account deviates from traditional Marxist accounts in that it establishes the relationship between men and women as a relationship of power and instead of blaming capitalism for women’s oppression, blames patriarchy. She traces different forms of violence on women as a manifestation of patriarchy irrespective of its forms in different production systems and exploitation and oppression as the common denominator for both First World and Third World women. Men everywhere are held to be violent for they uphold the global patriarchal hierarchy, but since the white men currently control the technology of destruction, Mies holds them more culpable than men elsewhere.

Reflection and Action 3.4

What do you mean by housewifisation? In your opinion how can this process be broken?

b) Gender Relations Framework

Both the structural explanations outlined above make global generalisations about the effects on women of capitalism and its interplay with patriarchy. These have been critiqued by a group of women who promoted the gender

analytical approach to development for being too monolithic to be of much use in practice. At the same time the WID promotion of the category “woman” was also found wanting for the exclusive focus on women creates woman and man as isolable categories.

Those who promote the gender analytical approach adopt social relations of gender as their chief analytical category and extend the Marxist concept of social relations beyond the production of objects and commodities to areas of gender relations such as procreation, care of children, old and sick and to what all comes under the daily reproduction of labour. Instead of seeing power rooted in men and denied to women in all circumstances, this approach sees power in general inherent in gender relations. While it explains women’s subordination in gender relations in the household it does not limit itself to the household and analyses how asymmetrical gender relations springing from the household interact, relate and define relations in the broader economic arena. Gender relations, thus are not merely male-female relations, they refer to the “full ensemble of social relationships”, through which men become men and women become women. More than the sex, it is the socially differentiated arrangements and patterns of gender behaviour and relations that define the differential experience of the world by men and women. The gender relations framework thus frees woman and man from any biologicistic determinism, while at the same time not negating the fact of different sex bodies leading to different rules and practices coming into operation so as to define gender relations and make for gender inequality.

The framework goes further to emphasise that other social relations such as class, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. mediate to define and translate gender inequality, so that neither class, nor sex, nor any other attribute has prominence over other as a determining principle of individual identity, social position or power. By rethinking of men and women without a universal structure of patriarchy, the gender relations approach makes it possible for constructing gender subordination in different societies, communities, institutions and arenas of action in a historically specific manner thus making for a more realistic and pragmatic attempt at changing how men and women work, live and relate.

Ascription of gender roles is often done discreetly, it may be implicit rules and practices that promote one gender rather than the others and there are strong biologicistic ideologies supporting them. Many gender discriminatory practices like the sexual division of labour, construction of an elaborate and sacrificial motherhood or violent and aggressive manhood stand to be questioned more logically once it is realised that they are neither instinctual, nor dictated by biology, rather it is an elaborate social system of gender relations that defines them and that privileges one gender over the other in terms of resources and power.

Lastly, development planners must realise that gender is never absent, though family is a critical site for the beginning of its operations, it operates as a pervasive allocation principle determining the participation of men and women in all social institutions. It links production with reproduction, the domestic domain with the public domain and the micro-economic units with the larger economy.

A gender relations approach has the advantage of being an inductive mode of analysis and can thus explain empirically found contradictions of subordination and power and the multiplicity of outcomes of developmental interventions, sometimes “emancipatory”, sometimes making for more oppressive and subordinating conditions for women across the world.

c) Empowering Women for Development

Very closely connected with the issue of women's development is the question of women's empowerment. But what does empowerment mean and how can development bring it about? The term is contentious, yet it is important not to see it equivalent to greater participation of women in economic activities for economic activities do not always improve women's conditions and often add extra work burden on her. The term empowerment has within it the highly contentious concept of power which is understood differently by different people. In an article, *"What is Empowerment"*, Jo Rowlands (1997) makes a distinction between "power over" and "power to", the first implying that some people have power or control over others, hence an instrument of domination and the second as a generative power, a power to stimulate, to lead without a conflict of interests, a power that does not seek to dominate or subordinate, rather a power that can resist and challenge the coercive intentions of "power over".

Empowerment generally is defined as bringing women from outside the decision making process into it such that they have access to political structures and decision-making, to markets and income and more generally to a state where they are able to maximise opportunities without constraints of the family, community or the state. A feminist definition of empowerment however is broader for it demands a consciousness of one's own interests and how they relate to the interests of others so that decision-making is based on knowledge of self and others and an assessment of ability to exert influence. Empowerment in the feminist sense would imply a realisation of the "power over" as well as the "power to" resist, negotiate and change. The ability to act and exert influence thus requires the empowered to understand internalized oppression as well as the dynamics of oppression such that power is not given or received, rather it comes from within. Empowerment is thus a process; and development itself should not be confused as empowerment. In some of the policies of the State, as it has been pointed out, the goal of development should be women's empowerment. This implies that women gain in self confidence and take charge of creating for themselves the conditions that will facilitate the maximisation of their human abilities and potentialities.

Reflection and Action 3.5

You must be reading several stories on women's empowerment in newspaper, journals and magazines. Select any two of stories from them and analyse the processes involved in women's empowerment in Indian society.

3.7 Conclusion

Gender issues and Gender analysis are today regarded as significant and of priority in development policy and planning. Since the 1970s a number of things have been accomplished as far as integrating gender in development is concerned. There has been a lot of thinking on cultural stereotypes and changing them, anti discriminatory legislation in all walks of life has been passed and state and national machineries for looking into women's affairs have been successfully set up.

However there is serious rethinking by feminists on their goals and strategies for mainstreaming gender in the developmental process. First, feminist theory ever since it has taken the post-modern turn has itself found it increasingly difficult to have gender as a universal reference point for analysis as well as action. The deconstruction of gender and women while on the one hand, an acknowledgement of multiple and distinct social identities of women and their often contradictory political interests yet on the other, is vastly confusing. For if there are no shared gender interests of women across countries and the world, then it makes little sense of privileging gender in development planning

and interventions. Also, while a lot of feminist passion went in bringing the issue of gender on the centre stage in the developmental discourse, feminists have realised that developmental agencies, nations and their machineries have co-opted the feminist vocabulary without either incorporating the ideology or translating it into sufficient and necessary action to change the realities of women. Women have been offered tokenistic and marginalised positions with little or no access to power. The state even when it appears to be democratic, progressive and proactive, seemingly offering space to women for renegotiating rights and privileges, in actuality implements policies and programmes that have strong shades of capitalist and patriarchal control and women's concerns are at best incorporated in a superficial and fragmented manner. Policy documents which incorporate state's vision of equality and justice to women are prepared every now and then. However, these largely remain as pieces of paper and only contribute to increasing the volume of state rhetoric on women.

In this unit we have covered a vast area related to gender issues in development. As human being is at the center stage of all development the gender issue can no more be neglected if we are to make development sustainable. Here we discussed the impact of development on women, women as a constituency of development and various perspectives on women's development.

3.8 Further Reading

Kabeer, Naila 1995. *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. Kali for Women: New Delhi

Krishnaraj, Maithreyi 1993. "New Economic Policy and Development of Women: Issues and Implications". In IAWS (eds.) *The New Economic Policy and Women: A Collection of Background Papers to Sixth National Conference*. IAWS: Mumbai

Schrijvers, Joke 1993. *The Violence of Development: A Choice for Intellectuals*. Kali for Women: New Delhi

Unit 4

Sustainable Development

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Learning Objectives

This unit aims to discuss:

- historical context of the emergence of the concept of sustainable development;
- genesis, evolution and expansion of this concept;
- sustainable development as our common future;
- vagueness and political concept of sustainable development; and
- future of sustainable development in the context of globalisation.

4.1 Introduction

In this Block, after the studying units 1, 2 and 3, we have already learnt some of the important concepts related to the process of development. By now, we are familiar with concepts such as progress, change, modernisation, development, social development, human development and gender development. We have seen that the concept of development is constantly being critically reviewed, and as a result our conception of development has been undergoing changes.

In the last four decades, there is a growing awareness and activism relating to worsening environmental situation at the local, national and global levels. The emerging environmental concerns have once again led to the reconsideration of our conception, goals and strategies of development. As a result of this, our conception of development has experienced a paradigm-shift and this has its expression in the concept of sustainable development, which emerged in the 1980s and continues to dominate the development-discourse at various levels. This unit deals with this concept.

An attempt to trace the roots of the concept of sustainable development in the historical context, which gave rise to the development-environment debate, is made in the first section of this unit. The second section attempts to locate the genesis and traces the evolution of this concept through some of the prominent international events/documents. The third section is devoted to elaborating the concept of sustainable development in terms of its definition, meaning, requirements, policy objectives and strategic measures as conceived in the Brundtland Commission's report "*Our Common Future*" (1987). In the final sections, we will make an attempt to understand the criticisms of the concept of sustainable development as well as the future of sustainable development in this globalisation era.

4.2 Sustainable Development: Historical Context

The early roots of the concept of sustainable development can be traced back to the development-environment debate. The economic growth model of development, its adoption by most of the countries in the world and realisation of the consequences it produced in various forms of environmental degradation has provided the historical context for the rise of the development-environment debate.

The economic growth model of development is characterised by the use of modern technology, the factory system of production and rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. The Western countries initially followed this model of development and prescribed it for the less developed ones. The predominant underlying belief was that the underdeveloped countries would eventually catch up with the industrialised countries, provided they emulate the economic and social systems of the West. The less developed countries adopted the western model of development rather uncritically.

The consequences of adoption of the western model of development by the less developed countries were not all positive. Economic growth occurred, but it was accompanied by a widened gulf between the countries in the North and the South, and it also helped to promote economic disparities between the rich and the poor sections within particular societies. It was realised that "development" conceived simply as "economic growth" was an inadequate notion, and that economic growth does not necessarily lead to the development of the lower strata of society. This realisation caused a shift in development thinking and eventually led to the inclusion of some additional criteria of development such as distributive justice or equity, and improvement in the overall quality of life of the masses (Dhanagare 1996: 7-9).

Moreover, it is more important to note that the examination of the impact of the western model of development on the quality of the global environment has led to the critical reconsideration of this model of development. It is realised that the reckless pursuit of industrialisation and the use of resource exploitative modern technology for development have resulted in environmental deterioration to such an extent that the very existence of all the living species is endangered. There is a general agreement that the economic expansion, especially during the post-war period, has had alarming consequences for the global environment (Munshi 2000: 253). Industrialisation required a continuous supply of energy and materials from nature. It led to the constant accumulation of wastes that resulted from accelerated industrial production and increasing level of consumption. There was a gradual deterioration of nature. The "modern, industrial form of production induced increasingly severe degrees of social inequality and growing environmental instability and degradation... which, together, have more recently been conceptualised as the "crisis of modernity" (Eduardo and Woodgate 1997: 85). The environmental degradation that has occurred is marked by a large-scale extraction of finite natural resources. Loss of forests, extinction of animal and plant species, depletion of the ozone layer, air, water and soil pollution, loss of marine life and bio-diversity etc. have occurred at an alarming rate and have posed a serious threat to the very survival of life on this planet.

While examining the consequences of the Western model of development in the context of ecosystems and economies of developing nations, Sunita Narain (2002: 13) comments that, the "western economic and technological model is highly material and energy intensive, it metabolises huge quantities of natural resources and leaves a trail of toxins, with highly degraded and transformed ecosystems in its wake. It is this model that developing nations are also following for economic and social growth, leading to an extraordinary cocktail of poverty and inequality side by side with growing economies, pollution and

large-scale ecological destruction". It is recognised that the "western development model in its most triumphant moments appears to be neither desirable nor universally applicable because it is simply not sustainable" (Bernhard 1997: 113). Thus, the two basic assumptions of the Western model of development, i.e. "first, development could be universalised in space and, second, that it would be durable in time" (Sachs 1997: 71), had lost their validity.

Due to the strategies adopted for economic growth, environmental degradation and exploitation of natural resources have become global phenomena. Eventually, the increasing awareness of environmental problems has led to the emergence of environmentalism. It is important to note that environmentalism has added an important dimension to the ongoing development discourse. In fact, it has caused a paradigm-shift in our vision of development. It has compelled the intellectuals concerned to think about what is being done to the ecosystem of this planet in the name of development. The worsening environmental situation has led to the re-examination and re-consideration of the policies, strategies and programmes for development. As a result, the environment - development debate emerged and became intensified in due course of time.

Initially, Development and Environment were seen as distinct entities. There was a sharp division between those who supported development over environment and those who argued for environment over development (Baviskar 1997: 196). As another scholar observes, there emerged two different camps of protagonists who inhabited two different mental spaces and regarded themselves as opponents (Ibid: 71-72). This gave rise to the dichotomy of development versus environment.

However, eventually, there also emerged an increased awareness about the fact that human beings need both "development" and "environment". As Balletmus has expressed, there was "a growing recognition that the overall goals of environment and development are not in conflict but are indeed the same, namely, the improvement of human quality of life or welfare of the present and future generations (cf Mohanty 1998:82)". Such thinking led to the view that "development" versus "environment" is a false dichotomy. This view is well articulated in *World Development Report 1992 – Development and the Environment*. It is argued in this report that the, "economic development and sound environmental management are complementary aspects of the same agenda. Without adequate environmental protection, development will be undermined; without development, environmental protection will fail...income growth will provide the resources for improved environmental management" (World Bank 1992: 25). In fact, such a view underscored the need of reconciliation between "development" and "environment". The concept of "sustainable development", as defined in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), titled "*Our Common Future*" (1987), represents such an attempt to reconcile the goals of development as well as that of environmental protection. Before we study the definition and meaning of this concept, let us look at its genesis and evolution.

Reflection and Action 4.1

What do you mean by sustainable development ? How is it relevant in present day context?

4.3 Sustainable Development: Genesis and Evolution

According to Eduardo Sevilla-Guzman and Graham Woodgate (1997: 86-87), the concept of "sustainable development" was the result of a dynamic gestation. Hence, they have attempted to trace its genesis in "official international discourse". They have reviewed various international events and publications

and schematically brought out their discovery/product and character (See Box 4.1). Adopting a similar approach, a brief review of the major international events/ documents and their contribution to the making of the concept of “sustainable development” is outlined here.

In 1972, the United Nations Conference on “Human Environment”, took place in Stockholm, Sweden. The Stockholm Conference was historical in the sense that environmental problems received a formal recognition for the first time at the global level. The modern industrial societies could realise that there is only “one world”. It was also recognised that environmental problems are global problems requiring international solutions, although the developed countries of the North and the developing countries of the South do not necessarily share the same environmental concerns.

A report titled *Limits to Growth* - the work of the Club of Rome (1972-74), has been credited as the first official study on global environmental deterioration. In this report, there is ecological analysis of industrialism. The report also focused on the predicted results of continuing levels of resource depletion, pollution and population growth. Due to this report, a sense of realisation grew that infinite growth was impossible with finite resources. Then, a diagnosis of the factors of global environmental deterioration brought out in a report titled *Global 2000* – commissioned by the U. S. President, Jimmy Carter and published in 1980 – underscored that northern lifestyles cannot be reproduced globally.

Then, in the year 1981, the concept of “sustainable development” appeared for the first time. It was enshrined in the title of a key document - *World Conservation Strategy: Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development*, published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP). According to the *Strategy's* definition, “for development to be sustainable it must take account of social and ecological factors, as well as economic ones; of the living and non-living resource base; and of the long term as well as the short term advantages and disadvantages of alternative actions” (Starke 1990: 8-9).

In 1983, the United Nations set up the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) headed by Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway, as an independent body. Its objective was to re-examine the critical environment and development problems on the planet and to formulate realistic proposals to solve them, and to ensure that human progress will be sustained through development without bankrupting the resources of the future generations. The WCED published its report titled “*Our Common Future*” in the year 1987. This report presented the first official definition of the concept of “sustainable development”. The contribution of “*Our Common Future*” (1987), is threefold: i) it offers the first official definition of sustainable development, ii) it suggests, for the first time, an international strategy for confronting the crisis of modernity, and iii) it brings about a paradigm change in conventional thinking regarding the notion of “development”.

Another document, “*Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living*” (published by IUCN, UNEP and WWF, in 1991), has suggested a revised global strategy for the conservation of nature. More importantly, it was recognised by this work that global nature conservation requires the participation of local people.

In 1992, representatives of over 150 countries met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the “Earth Summit”. The Earth Summit established important linkages between environment and development and contributed to the further

development of the concept of "sustainable development". It produced the "*The Earth Charter*" - a code of conduct or plan of action for the 21st century i.e. Agenda 21, and Local Agenda 21 (LA21), an interpretation for local issues (which came later); the Climate Convention – a convention to control climate change due to atmospheric pollution, and the Bio-diversity Convention – a convention to promote the conservation of bio-diversity. The Rio Declaration also set out the framework of principles of conservation and use of forests and, established important steps that needed to ensure an environmentally stable and sustainable planet (*The Hindu Survey of the Environment* 2002: 5-6).

Correspondingly, at the international level, many nation-states have been trying to go ahead with the notion of "sustainable development". They are striving to find out economic and political solutions for environmental problems. One also notices periodical attempts to take stock of the progress made by the nations in the direction of "sustainable development". For instance, in 1997, "Rio+5" meet was held in New York in order to assess the progress towards "sustainable development". Again, as a further step, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held at Johannesburg, from 26th August to 4th September 2002. The Johannesburg Summit is recognised as "Rio+10". The agenda for this international meet was much beyond the review of the progress made in the direction of sustainable development in the 10 years since Rio. The agenda included every possible issue related to environment and development: energy, water and sanitation, health, forests, consumption patterns, poverty, trade, globalisation etc. Thus, the scope of "sustainable development" was broadened.

Sustainable development was seen as comprising three components: economic development, social development and environmental protection (Reddy 2002: 10). The newspaper reports which appeared during the Summit period highlighted that, there were discussions and debates over many issues which include: call for reduction of poverty, saving the planet's fast-dwindling resources from further plundering, criticism against the European and American pattern of agricultural subsidies and a need to eliminate the trade distorting subsidies, dispute on the definition of globalisation and demands by the Third World countries for more aid, finance and fairer trade.

Thus, various international events and publications have contributed to the making of the concept of "sustainable development". Let us now understand the definition and meaning of the concept of "sustainable development" as formulated and elaborated in "*Our Common Future*" (1987).

Reflection and Action 4.2

Is sustainable development a social movement? What are the historical genesis of this movement?

4.4 Concept of Sustainable Development as Defined in *Our Common Future* (1987)

The definition of the term sustainable development, its meaning, requirements, policy objectives, and suitable strategy, as mentioned in the report *Our Common Future*, have been briefly dealt with below. (The text inserted within quotes is adapted from the chapter from the Commission's report, *Our Common Future* (1987), reproduced under the title Towards Sustainable Development in *Science Age*, August 1987: 30-38).

a) Sustainable Development: Definition and Meaning of the Concept

The definition of the concept of Sustainable Development put forward in the report titled *Our Common Future* (1987) is:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of “needs”, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs” (cf *Science Age* 1987: 30).

In order to understand the meaning of the definition, let us understand the core issues addressed in the above definition. First is the issue of economic growth. The economic growth is not only considered essential for poverty reduction but also for meeting human needs and aspirations for better life. Second is the issue of limitations of the environment’s ability to meet the needs of the present and future generations. Due to the pressures generated by growing societal needs, societies are using modern technologies for extracting and utilising natural resources, which are limited. If we continue to exploit existing limited natural resources, future generations will not be able to meet their own needs. Thus, environment’s ability to meet present and future generations’ needs has certain limits. This realisation is clearly reflected in the definition. Thus, the concept of “sustainable development” is based on an integrated view of development and environment; it recommends pursuance of development strategies in order to maximise economic growth from a given ecological milieu on the one hand, and to minimise the risks and hazards to the environment on the other; for being able to meet the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability to meet those of the future generations.

In short, the above definition of “sustainable development” implies that: (i) we should direct our efforts towards redressing the damage already done to the environment by earlier unsustainable patterns of economic growth and, (ii) we should follow such a pattern of development which avoids further damage to the planet’s ecosystem and ensures meeting of the needs of present as well as future human generations.

b) “Sustainable Development”: Requirements

While elaborating the concept, the report *Our Common Future* (1987) also brings out the requirements of “sustainable development”. For a better understanding of the concept, some of the important requirements of “sustainable development” can be highlighted:

Sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life..... the promotion of values that encourage consumption standards that are within the bounds of the ecologically possible and to which all can reasonably aspire.....that societies meet human needs both by increasing productive potential and by ensuring equitable opportunities for all..... demographic developments are in harmony with the changing productive potential of the ecosystem.....At a minimum, ...development must not endanger the natural systems that support life on Earth: the atmosphere, the waters, the soils, and the living beings.....the world must ensure equitable access to the constrained resource and reorient technological efforts to relieve the pressure.....that the rate of depletion of non-renewable resources should foreclose as few future options as possible.....the conservation of plant and animal species..... that the adverse impacts on the quality of air, water, and other natural elements are minimized so as to sustain the ecosystem’s overall integrity” (cf *Science Age* 1987: 30-31).

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It is also added that, in essence, sustainable development is a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations” (cf *Science Age* 1987: 31).

Box 4.1: Genesis of the Concept of Sustainable Development in Official International Discourse		
Event	Discovery/product	Character
The Stockholm Conference(1972)	Modern, industrial societies realize that there is only 'one world'	A first official recognition of environmental deterioration
The work of the Club of Rome (1972-74): 'Limits to Growth'	Realisation of the impossibility of infinite growth with finite resources	The first official studies of global environmental deterioration
'Global 2000' commissioned by President Carter, published in 1980, ignored by President Regan	Realisation that northern lifestyles cannot be reproduced globally	A first diagnosis of the causes of global environmental deterioration
'World Conservation Strategy' (WCS) published by IUCN/UNEP/WWF (1981)	Nature conservation can be achieved regardless of human welfare in the vicinity	First global strategy for nature conservation and introduction of concept of 'sustainable development'
World Commission on Environment and Development publishes 'Our Common Future' (1987)	First official definition of the concept of 'sustainable development'	The first suggestion of an international strategy for confronting the crisis of modernity
Second WCS, 'Caring for the Earth: A strategy for sustainable living', IUCN/UNEP/WWF (1991)	Global nature conservation requires the participation of local people	Revised global strategy for nature conservation
United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: The Earth Summit (1992).	The Earth Charter (Agenda 21)	A code of human conduct for the twenty-first century
	The Climate Convention	A convention to control climate change due to atmospheric pollution
	The Biodiversity Convention	A convention to promote the conservation of biodiversity

c) Sustainable Development: Policy Objectives

The report, *Our Common Future (1987)* also recommends that in order to move on the path of sustainable development, all nations are required to bring about certain policy changes. It has been noted that the “critical objectives for environment and development policies that follow from the concept of sustainable development include: (i) reviving growth; (ii) changing the quality of growth; (iii) meeting essential needs for jobs, food, energy, water, and sanitation; (iv) ensuring a sustainable level of population; (v) conserving and enhancing the resource base; (vi) reorienting technology and managing the risk; and (vii) merging environment and economics in decision making” (Ibid: 32).

d) Sustainable Development: Suitable Strategy

Regarding suitable strategy, the report, *Our Common Future (1987)*, notes in its broadest sense that the strategy for sustainable development aims to promote harmony among human beings and between humanity and nature. In the specific context of the development and environmentthe pursuit of

sustainable development requires: (i) a political system that secures effective citizen participation in decision making, (ii) an economic system that is able to generate surpluses and technical knowledge on a self-reliant and sustained basis, (iii) a social system that provides for solutions to the tensions arising from disharmonious development, (iv) a production system that respects the obligation to preserve the ecological base for development, (v) a technological system that can search continuously for new solutions, (vi) an international system that fosters sustainable patterns of trade and finance, and (vii) an administrative system that is flexible and has the capacity for self-correction. These requirements are more in the nature of goals that should underlie national and international action on development" (Ibid: 38). Let us now turn our attention towards critique of the concept of sustainable development.

Reflection and Action 4.3

Select a development project known to you. Explain the reason why this project is or is not sustainable.

4.5 Criticisms of the Concept of Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development, as defined by the Brundtland Commission, has been subjected to critical scrutiny by many scholars. The criticisms not only point out the logical contradictions and semantic ambivalence in the term, but also center on its vagueness/ambiguity of the terms/phrases included in the definition, point towards difficulties at the operational level and attempt to uncover implicit assumptions and political motives.

a) Sustainable Development: Logical Contradiction and Semantic Ambivalence

Scholars like Ramesh Deewan, take an extreme stand and express the view that the concept of sustainable development represents contradiction in the term itself. He remarks that, development and sustainability are not only incompatible with each other, they are contradictory as well. In other words, sustainable is not development (cf Dhanagare 1996: 10). Such a view clearly implies that, the term development used in any sense – say economic growth or growth with equity or improvement in quality of life or modernisation – inevitably leads to an increase in the level of consumption and also to the exploitation of natural resources.

According to Wolfgang Sachs, the linkage of the term sustainable to development has created a terrain of semantic ambivalence. In his words, within the new concept, the locus of sustainability has subtly shifted from nature to development; while sustainable previously referred to natural yields, it now refers to development. And the perceptual frame also changes, instead of nature, development becomes the object of concern and, instead of development, nature becomes the critical factor to be watched. In short, the meaning of sustainability slides from conservation of nature to conservation of development" (Sachs 1997: 73).

b) Definition of Sustainable Development: Vague and Ambiguous

In the opinion of Sukhamoy Chakravorty, the phrase sustainable development ...says nothing precise and, therefore, means anything to anybody (cf Agarwal 1992: 51). Anil Agarwal adds: for a logging company it can mean sustained projects; for an environmental economist it can mean sustained stocks of natural forests; for a social ecologist it can mean sustained use of forest; and, for an environmentalist it can mean a clean heritage for our children. But surely confusion cannot be more productive than clarity" (Ibid: 52).

The observations of William F. Fisher show persons with different view points, holding different philosophical positions, having different goals in mind and

advocating different means to achieve desired ends use the same moral vocabulary of social justice and the same economic rhetoric of sustainable development. In his view, sustainable development has become a term that is used to justify whatever one does and, by implication, criticize those with differing goals, strategies, and opinions (1997: 9). Widely debated Sardar Sarovar Project in India is the case in point. Fisher writes, dam proponents and opponents seem sincere in their commitment to goals of sustainable development and social justice, but what they mean by these terms differs (ibid: 8). (For further illustration of this point see Box 4.2).

Box 4.2: Is Sardar Sarovar Project an Example of Sustainable Development?

William F. Fisher's observations are quite illustrative in this context. He writes, "The proponents of the Sardar Sarovar Dam insist that sustainable development is compatible with large scale, ambitious, centrally controlled schemes, which are capable of mitigating the effects of natural catastrophes and meeting the increasing needs of a growing economy for food water and energy.From their perspective, the Narmada runoff is a perennially renewed resource that currently goes to waste. Dam advocates argue that domesticating this untapped resource would enable Gujarat to "sustain" its economic growth and the standard of living of its population. Project planners and supporters argue that the readily apparent and increasing needs for water in drought-prone areas, for both agricultural growth and a growing economy, justify the projected means and the costs of damming the Narmada and relocating those currently residing in the submergence area of the reservoir."

On the other hand, "critics of the Sardar Sarovar Projectquestion the portrayal of Sardar Sarovar as an example of sustainable development and see it instead as another project that will overexploit the available resources to the detriment of the poor and the benefit of the rich. They argue that by any measure the project is unsustainable and unjust.They note that the size and comprehensiveness of schemes like Sardar Sarovar require that these schemes be initiated, financed and managed by the state as the guardian of the interests of the people. For these critics, sustainable development is not top-down but bottom-up. It requires that development efforts be decentralised and requires the involvement of local people at all levels of the design, appraisal, and implementation of projects.for them sustainable development should be as concerned with justice and equity as it is with an ecologically sustainable use of resources. From the perspective advocated by these critics, large scale, centrally controlled schemes are incompatible with sustainable development..."

(Source: Fisher 1997)

Not only does the term sustainable development mean different things to different persons or groups; its meaning also differs for one set of nations from that of the other. As Sevilla-Guzman Edurado and Graham Woodgate (1997: 86) have brought out, the official discourse as represented in the Brundtland Committee report, *Our Common Future...* seems to differentiate between the meaning of sustainable development as it applies to industrial nations and its implications for countries whose economies are relatively less industrialised. For the latter,first, it means the realisation of the potential for economic growth .. second, it promotes generalised increases in levels of consumption.....For highly industrialised nations,sustainable development allows for the continued realisation of a nation's growth potential, so long as it is not achieved at the expense of others. Such growth will continue to be industrial in nature as, according to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), industrial production is of "fundamental importance to the economies of the modern societies and an indispensable motor of growth".

C. R. Reddy also views the Commission's definition as "simple but vague" (2002: 10). In the words of Wolfgang Sachs (1997: 74-75),

upon closer inspection, one notes that the definition given by the Brundtland Commission does not refer to 'the greatest number', but focuses instead on the 'needs of the present' and those of the 'future generations'. While the crisis of the nature has been constitutive of the concept of 'sustainable development', the crisis of justice finds only a faint echo in the notions of 'development' and 'needs'. In the definition, the attention to the dimension of time is not counterbalanced by an equal attention to the dimension of space. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the canonical definition has resolved the dilemma of nature versus justice in favour of nature. But two crucial questions remain unanswered: 'What needs?' and 'Whose needs?' Is sustainable development supposed to meet the needs for water, land and economic security or the needs for air travel and bank deposits? Is it concerned with survival needs or with luxury needs? Are the needs in question are those of the global consumer class or those of the enormous numbers of have-nots? That the Brundtland report remained ambiguous throughout, largely side-stepping the crisis of justice, has not been without consequences in the years that have followed.

V. Ratna Reddy (1995: A-23), referring to the concern for meeting the needs of future generations expressed in the Commission's definition says, " at the conceptual level it is difficult to circumvent the conflicts between the present and future generations' interests. While needs are conceived differently from one environment and culture to another in the same generation, how future generations will conceive of their needs may well be beyond our imagination..."

c) Critique Relating to the Operational Substance of the Definition

While raising doubts regarding the operational substance of the definition, Anil Agarwal (1992: 50-51), asks.

who is going to ensure the rights of future generations when, given the highly divided world we live in, a large proportion of even the present generation cannot meet all its needs. Given such a social and political context, the.....definitions also fail to say whose future generations' needs are being sought to be protected and preserved. Are we talking only of the future generations of the rich or also of the poor?.

Again, C. R. (2002: 10) Reddy comments that, "while an entire U.N. machinery has been created around 'sustainable development', the world is still waiting for an operational meaning of what is an intuitively appealing but yet fuzzy concept".

In a similar vein, William F. Fisher (1997: 8) observes that, "while widespread commitment to the term 'sustainable development' might suggest a growing worldwide consensus on the need for development that is sustainable, there is no agreement about the specific goals of sustainable development or the appropriate means to achieve them.' About the Brundtland Commission's definition of the term, he further observes that,

itdefines an arena of intense debate, not an arena of consensus.... Used in so many varying ways, 'sustainable development' has broad appeal, but can not help direct a set of actions toward specific goals, nor can it offer any guidelines about how trade-offs are to be balanced among these goals. Instead, the term obscures, rather than clarifies, the central issue of balancing the need for income redistribution and economic growth with resource limits and population growth" (Ibid).

d) Critique Relating to "Politics of Sustainable Development"

K. R. Nayar (1994: 1327) looks at the concept of "sustainable development" as a political instrument and is critical of many aspects of the Commission's definition. He argues that, "the concept of sustainable development has emerged from those countries which themselves practice unsustainable resource

use" (Ibid: 1327), and further adds that "the politics of 'sustainable development' is that at present it is anti-south, anti-poor, and thereby anti-ecological" (Ibid: 1328-29).

Nayar also comments that, "the need" with reference to sustainable development is affluence rather than basic, or opulence rather than squalor. Because, when basic needs become an integral component of a developmental model, the question of unsustainability does not arise". He further adds, "the cyclical relationship between poverty and environmental degradation is conceptualised in simplistic terms". The assumption is that,

as poverty increases, natural environments are degraded and when environments degrade, the prospects for further livelihood decrease, environmental degradation generates more poverty, thus accelerating the cycle. While the basic factors which generate poverty are kept outside this framework, it also does not consider the role of lopsided development which degrades the 'natural' capital, and the issue of artificially inflated impact of the poor on an already lower quality of 'natural capital' set in motion by factors other than poverty" (Ibid: 1327-28).

While uncovering the implicit political motive behind the Western concern for curtailment of population growth in the developing countries for sustainable development, Nayar expresses the view that, "sustainable development is visualised as a solution to make available raw materials on a continuous basis so that the production system, the expanding market and the political system are not threatened. The raw materials in the developing countries, therefore, need to be protected and their population growth curtailed so that resources would remain easily available." Again, in his opinion, "The Not-in-My-Back-Yard or Nimby syndrome is mainly responsible for ecologically unsustainable development projects including hazardous industries shifting out of these countries to developing countries. When the aim is to suggest patchwork solutions to the unsustainable production system of the north, population growth in the south automatically becomes the target of the debate on sustainable development" (Ibid: 1328).

Reflection and Action 4.3

What are the major vaguenesses inbuilt in the concept of sustainable development. In your opinion how can these vaguenesses be removed?

4.6 Globalisation and Future of Sustainable Development

Globalisation has created new challenges in the march towards what is implied in the notion of sustainable development. Martin Khor comments that, "the process of Globalisation linked to liberalisation has gained so much force that it has undermined, and is undermining, the sustainable development agenda. Commerce and the perceived need to remain competitive in a global market, and to pamper and cater to the demands of companies and the rich have become the top priority of governments in the North and some in the South. The environment, welfare of the poor, global partnership have all been dislodged and sacrificed in this wave of free market mania" (Khor 2000: 39). The process of globalisation is seen as an important reason for the failure of the Johannesburg Summit. In its editorial, *The Hindu* remarks that "an important reason for the Johannesburg fiasco is that the global willingness to collectively deal with the problems of the environment gradually evaporated during the past decade of accelerated globalisation" (*The Hindu* 2002: 10).

The above remarks help us to critically look at the concept of sustainable development and to understand the complexities and intricacies involved in establishing liaison between the crisis of nature and crisis of justice. Given

the context of differential level of socio-economic development, cultural specificities, political positions of various nation-states in the North and the South, and challenges created by the forces of globalisation, the above criticisms also underline the practical difficulties in operationalising the concept in space and time. Yet, the concept of “sustainable development” can be seen to dominate the development-discourse and continues to enlarge a debate across the national frontiers.

4.7 Conclusion

In this unit we have tried to critically understand the concept of “sustainable development”. In the first section, we have noted that, the alarming degradation of the environment – spawned by the western economic growth model of development characterised by the use of modern technology, rapid industrialisation and urbanisation – provided the historical context that gave rise to the dichotomy of “development” versus “environment”. Eventually, the growing realisation that human beings need both “development” and “environment” resulted in reconciliation between “development” and “environment”, which finds its expression in the concept of “sustainable development”.

In the second section, we have traced the genesis and evolution of the concept, through a brief review of some of the prominent international events and documents – such as the Stockholm Conference (1972), *Limits to Growth* – the work of the Club of Rome (1972- 74), *Global 2000* (1980) *World Conservation Strategy: Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development* (1981), the report of the WCED *Our Common Future* (1987), “Rio+5” held in New York (1997) and WSSD held at Johannesburg (2002) – and brought out their contribution to the making of the concept of “sustainable development”.

The third section was devoted to elaborate the concept of sustainable development in terms of its definition, meaning, requirements, policy objectives and strategic measures as conceived, defined and elaborated in the report *Our Common Future* (1987).

In the fourth section, we have noted that the concept of “sustainable development” has been criticised on various grounds such as: “logical contradictions” involved in the phrase and “semantic ambivalence”, its “vagueness and ambiguity”, doubts expressed with regard to its “operational substance” and “political motives”. The process of globalisation linked to liberalisation is viewed as detrimental to the realisation of sustainable development agenda in future.

4.8 Further Reading

Agarwal, Anil 1992. “What is Sustainable Development,” *Down to Earth*, June 15th: 50-51

Fisher W.F. 1997. “Development and Resistance in the Narmada Valley”. In Fisher W.F.(ed) *Toward Stainable Development - Struggling over India's Narmada River*. Rawat Publications: New Delhi

Salunkhe, S.A. 2003. “The Concept of Sustainable Development: Root, Connotations and Critical Evaluation”, *Social Change* Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 67-80