

Future Challenges and Strategies

Status and Progress of Human Development

1. Human development aims at enlargement of human choices in economic, social, cultural or political spheres. Human development has two sides. One is the formation of human capabilities, such as, improved health, knowledge and skills. The other is to enhance their acquired capabilities for employment, productive activities, political participation or leisure. Human development strategy aims at building up human capabilities and ensuring equitable access to human opportunities through a development process that is participative, equitable and sustainable.

2. Uttar Pradesh has made significant strides in all dimensions of human development particularly in the recent past, which is reflected in higher per capita income, increasing literacy rates and improvement in health indicators. All the indices of human development (i.e. HDI, GDI and Deprivation Index) have shown an improvement over the years. A sharp increase in literacy and decline in IMR have contributed to these trends. In terms of UNDPs HDR criterion, U.P. can be said to have moved into the category of medium human development (HDI between 0.50 and 0.80) in 2001, from the category of low human development (HDI below 0.50). But the state has still a long way to go to achieve full human development. The GDI during 2001-2005 has also improved by 7.47 % and the Deprivation Index has declined by 16.26 per cent between 1991 and 2005. It is satisfying to note that all the districts of the state have marked an increase in their HDI values over the period 1991-2005. However, the improvement in HDI values has not been uniform across the districts.

3. One can observe a distinct spatial clustering of districts according to level of HDI. Many of the districts belonging to Western region have highest value of HDI. Districts belonging to eastern plains fall in the medium category. Most of the districts of Central Region have low HDI value, while the *tarai* districts have the lowest HDI. In the recent years, however, there is a trend towards convergence between backward and developed districts. Many districts that had low HDI values initially made large improvement in their HDI values subsequently due to the special efforts made under government programmes like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. This shows that despite their many inadequacies, the state directed developmental policies had some impact in raising the level of human development in backward districts.

4. At the same time there are considerable intra-regional variations in HDI in all the regions. Some districts of Western region like Rampur and Budaun have low HDI values. Relative deprivation of women is also more marked. Similarly, in all the other three regions there are districts which perform relatively well in terms of human development. The upshot of this discussion is that higher per capita income does not necessarily leads to higher human development or better conditions of women. Apart from public policy these differences are related mainly to the distinct socio-cultural factors, which have deep historical roots. In the districts where the community showed better awareness of the importance of education, e.g. Etawah in Western Region and Ballia in Eastern Region score well in terms of human development.

5. There are marked gender gaps in terms of human development. In general, the districts in the Western region have better ranks in HDI as compared to GDI. On the other hand, districts from Eastern region and Bundelkhand region are relatively better on the GDI front. This contrast in HDI and GDI ranks can be attributed largely to the higher work participation rate of women in backward regions. It can be said that the development of a region, especially in terms of per capita income, does not necessarily mean empowerment and human development of women. *Development, as is often said, needs to be consciously engendered.* There are many socio-economic factors impacting upon the status of women in different regions, which have to be addressed squarely.

6. There are aspects of deprivations afflicting the state, which are not fully reflected in the HDI. The deprivation Index calculated for this report paints a grim picture. The large majority of households in the state still lack adequate basic amenities like safe drinking water, sanitation, housing and electricity for lighting. Although some improvement in the provision of amenities is evident much work remains to be done in this regard. This task should be taken up on a priority basis in the development plans of the state.

7. The spatial and gender disparity in human development in the state is further compounded by the disparity among social groups. The state has a relatively larger proportion of the economically and socially deprived groups like the OBC, SC and Muslims, which are lagging behind in human development. In fact they constitute the majority of the population of the state and bring down the states average. This makes the

challenge of human development in the state all the more challenging.

Challenge of Education

8. Education is a key component of human development. It is needed both as an end in itself to enable people to lead a cultured and more satisfying life as well as for developing human capabilities for earning higher income. Studies confirm that educational levels are also closely related to other human development outcomes like fertility, mortality rates, etc. U.P. has made significant strides in education especially in the direction of universalization of education at the primary level, as a result of the special initiatives taken by central and the state governments. Literacy rates have gone up sharply. School enrollment and retention rate also show significant improvement. The state government has made special efforts for promotion of education of the girl child and backward classes as well as Muslims by providing various incentives and improving infrastructure.

9. In spite of these achievements, daunting challenges remain in the field of education. Still about 36 per cent of rural males and 70 per cent of rural females are illiterate. About two fifth of the urban females were illiterate in 2004-05 as compared to one fifth of the urban males. According to 2001 Census, more than half of the population is illiterate in as many as 20 districts and in as many as 56 out of the 70 districts more than half of the females are illiterate. Around one-fifth of children in the age of 5-14 are still not attending school. It is depressing to note in terms of the Educational Development Index U.P. ranks 27 at the primary level, 30 at upper primary level and 29 in terms of combined index among 35 states.

10. *The challenge emanating from the drop out rates at primary and upper primary levels and teacher pupil ratio are still formidable. Though, there has been a sharp decline in drop out ratio from 65 percent in 1992-93 to 24 percent in 2005-06 still it is significant. Similarly, teacher pupil ratio which was 1:67 in 2004-05 came down to 1:42 in 2005-06, but for further improvement in this ratio, more teachers are still needed.*

11. Indeed, very impressive quantitative expansion in education at all levels has taken place in the State over the years. The quality issue, however, remains weak. The quality of education at the primary level is particularly causing concern. Independent evaluation studies have revealed that the ability of students is very poor in reading, writing and mathematical calculations. Quality is wanting in many other respects too. Now is the time, when physical facilities have been created almost adequately, attention should be paid to improve quality in education.

12. One of the factors for poor quality of education is the shortage of qualified teachers. A large number of teaching posts remain unfilled. The government has tried to fill up this gap by appointing para teachers called *shiksha mitra* in large numbers. Such ad hoc measures may be justified in the short run, but the shortage of qualified and trained teachers will have adverse effect on the quality of education in the long run. The high absenteeism among school teachers also remains a cause of serious concern.

13. Another factor afflicting education in U.P. has been the severe resource crunch. Per capita expenditure on education has been the lowest among major Indian states. The quality of expenditure and its composition also show many deficiencies. Nearly all expenditure is pre-empted by salaries of teachers leaving little for maintenance and improvement of educational infrastructure. Substantial sums have become available under the SSA programme and through TFC grants for promotion of primary education. However, the problem of funding remains at the secondary and higher levels. The system of grants to schools is also defective and does not promote efficiency and quality.

14. The future strategy for educational development in the state should pay attention to the following issues:

- (i) As the goal of universalisation of primary education is nearing attainment, generation of extra capacity by opening new secondary schools and institutions of higher learning will be required to cope with the increasing outflows from the lower levels.
- (ii) Along with expansion in physical infrastructure and other facilities, quality of education will have to be strengthened. Quality has to be the hallmark of education in the days to come and the state that remains backward in quality education will be too weak to catch up with the forward states in almost every respect. The thrust therefore will have to be on quality improvement along with quantitative expansion.
- (iii) Reducing the gender gap in education and mitigating the educational disadvantages of the minorities and other backward classes will need to be taken care of more effectively with a view to promote their educational development in particular and the integrated social development in general.
- (iv) Special attention has to be paid to children of the marginalized sections like migrants, prostitutes, criminals in jails, etc. as well as the mentally and physically handicapped children.
- (v) Attention will have to be focused on promotion of primary education in the lagging districts and blocks.

- (vi) Even with the universalisation of primary education U.P. will remain burdened with a large mass of illiterate men and women for a long time to come. Special programmes are therefore needed for promoting literacy and functional skills in these groups especially those in the age group of 15 to 35 years. Audio and visual techniques can be effectively utilized for this purpose.
- (vii) There is a need to restructure the financing pattern and the grants in aid criteria for quality improvement in school education and the university education of all types, particularly in the government aided educational institutions so that they are able to successfully compete in the changed scenario of inter-state and international competition.
- (viii) Technical education needs to be upgraded and expanded in a big way to meet the emerging challenges in the globalised world and to provide employment opportunities to the youth.
- (ix) Funding of education at all levels has to be substantially upscaled to improve the quality of infrastructure and education. Neglect of higher and technical education will be detrimental to the interests of the state and the country in the long run. Apart from state funding of education private investment in education especially for technical and management education needs to be attracted and promoted. New initiatives in public private partnership in education need to be promoted.
- (x) Gradually the system of education in UP is moving from state controlled and state financed to privately managed and privately funded system. However, the State still has a major role to play. An increase in fee is bound to occur in the days to come and soon the system of “subsidized education” is likely to be replaced by “user charging education system”. Since free and compulsory education for children in age group of 6-14 years has been made a Fundamental Right in the Constitution of India, it will not be possible to make elementary education in the government sector fee charging. At secondary and higher levels, user charges will have to be raised and element of subsidy reduced. For making the governmentally subsidized system of education to fee charging one, a political consensus will be necessary, without which it would not be possible to raise or impose additional fee. However, along with making the system more fee charging, adequate provision will have to be made for free-ships to poor students lest they are deprived of education along with liberal provision of educational loans. The surveillance of the government on the user charges in the private institutions will be important to ensure ‘equality’ and ‘accountability.’
- (xi) Finally, management of education particularly at the primary and secondary levels has to be decentralized and brought under the Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies as envisaged in the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. Greater involvement of local communities and parents’ associations will be helpful in keeping truancy among teachers under control and improve the quality of education being imparted in the schools.

The Challenge of Health

15. Biggest challenge of human development in U.P. lies in the area of health, in which the state continues to lag behind almost all the states. People of the state continue to suffer from serious health deficit which stem largely from maternal health, low birth weight, malnutrition, inadequate psycho-social stimulation and disability. These factors are compounded by other environmental and social factors such as gender and caste, inadequate family and community support and poor quality of service delivery in health care. Both the rich and poor face a very high burden of health related disability. However, the poor and women seem to be at a greater disadvantage, the incidence of IMR alone is found to be two and a half times higher amongst the poor.

16. Moreover, there are wide variations across the state as are evident from the inter-district comparison. There are districts in the state where the current status is much below the 1990 level, which was taken as the starting point for MDGs. The circumstances are worse in the districts falling in the *tarai* region of the state. It is also found that in most of the cases the districts and regions that perform poorly on one indicator repeat the poor performance on most related indicators, reflecting a cumulative and concentrative pattern of disadvantage, which is indicative of a definite interdependence of outcomes.

17. Uttar Pradesh has one of the highest incidences of infant and maternal mortality in the entire country. In UP, only about half of the total pregnant women get ANC services. Over ten million children in the state are malnourished and over half of the children are under-nourished. The task ahead in terms of curtailing these incidences is huge by any standard. The state is trailing behind substantially in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. If the scenario is to be positively affected then morbidity circumstances will have to be targeted with focus on the lagging districts and social groups.

18. It needs to be acknowledged that in Uttar Pradesh, in last several years, there has been progress on several health development parameters such as the overall decline in childhood mortality, maternal mortality and incidence of preventable diseases. Much of mortality

reduction during the past few decades is traceable to government-driven efforts, particularly, through immunization campaigns and focus on specific challenges like TB, etc. But formidable challenges on the health front lie ahead in the state.

19. The future direction of human development circumstances in the state, as in the country as a whole, depends critically on the interventions in the health sector. Following suggestions are given in this context:

- (i) The challenge of health care in U.P. can be summarized as a composite challenge of access, quality and demand. The large public sector does not have adequate access to the people besides being found wanting in the quality of care at the cutting edge (PHCs and Sub-centers). The private sector has better access especially in the urban areas, but a vast majority of this sector presents a picture of serious lack of quality to the extent that it often becomes a serious threat to the health of the people. It appears that a re-orientation of the health strategy in U.P., where the focus is increasingly on functionalizing existing structures; synergy through public private partnership particularly for reaching out to the poor and marginalized; and on finding solutions through innovative interventions can enable us to meet UP's health challenge.
- (ii) As the First U.P. Human Development Report argued a convergent and holistic approach to health is needed in the state. Health should not be seen as a concern of the Department of Health and Family Welfare alone. Health goals should be dovetailed with goals set in the areas of environmental sanitation, drinking water, elimination of maternal and child malnutrition, education and health awareness.
- (iii) In view of the significant variations in the health outcomes across the State a decentralised approach to health management is called for. District health plans should identify needs and requirement gaps, from the primary health care level upwards and should set clear goals which are linked to key health outcomes. The performance of the functionaries in the health-related sectors should be periodically assessed in terms of the achievement of these goals.
- (iv) Child Mortality reduction strategies will have to be appropriately aligned to focus increasingly on Sepsis or Pneumonia, which are the main cause of death along with focus on preterm birth. Discouraging child bearing amongst women under age 20 is likely to have a greater impact on overall mortality levels.
- (v) Antenatal care can contribute significantly to the reduction in maternal morbidity and infant

mortality as it includes pregnancy related health care and advice on the correct diet and the provision of iron and folic acid tablets to pregnant women. Improved nutritional status, coupled with improved antenatal care, can help reduce the incidence of low birth weight babies and thus reduce prenatal, neonatal and infant mortality.

- (vi) Sanitation is a problem area in UP. Out of the 70 districts of the state only 30 have more than 33% sanitation coverage. The problem in 40 districts is severe. Sanitation programmes have to be taken up with greater vigour and effectiveness.
- (vii) Severe shortage of manpower at all levels in the public health delivery system stands out as a major problem in public health delivery system. The problem of shortages is further compounded by the high absenteeism of public sector health personnel in the State. The lack of proper human resource development policies (e.g. lack of incentives, lack of in-service training, performance rating system, poor monitoring, etc.) contributes to low employee morale, indiscipline and poor performance. Similarly, inappropriate skills mix complicates the challenge further, for example, if a gynaecologist is posted at a CHC where there is no anaesthetist, it results in underutilization of skills. Likewise, transfers are often arbitrary and without adherence to any norms.
- (viii) The task of meeting the health challenges is too big to be handled by the government alone. The private sector has to play a key role in the delivery of health services in U.P. However, there is lack of standards and quality assurance systems in both public as well as private sectors. Virtually, there is no effective regulation in the private sector. The private sector provides no information about its performance and has no system for patient protection or fair pricing. There is absolute dearth of information regarding how well private care is delivered in U.P.
- (ix) At the same time, it must be emphasized that the role of public sector will retain its critical importance. It must be appreciated that the cost of treatment is among the highest in those states where the public health infrastructure is less developed. This fact applies to government and private hospitalization as well as to outpatient treatment. Where public health system is well developed the treatment cost of both public and private sector facility is low. Competition from public facilities is an important determinant of charges in the private facilities as demonstrated by Kerala Experiment. Access to health care is directly related to the cost of health care. It is amply clear that in UP the cost of private care is exorbitantly high in comparison to both the cost

of public sector facilities as well as the bearing capacity of the population, particularly the poor.

- (x) Large resources for the health sector will be needed in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. UP's per capita allocation to health, family welfare, water and sanitation is very small in comparison to other states and need to be at least doubled. Fortunately, under the National Rural Health Mission and other centrally sponsored schemes substantial resources have been made available to the state. A rational policy of user charges in government hospitals needs to be adopted to meet the severe resource crunch and improve the quality of health services. The government may provide subsidy in the case of poor patients in a transparent manner. There is a need for moving towards a system of health insurance even at a modest level covering all sections as some states like Punjab and Gujarat have introduced.
- (xi) The challenge before Uttar Pradesh is huge by any standard. It can only be surmounted if the private sector, NGO and the Government join hands. New forms of public private partnership have to be evolved and put into shape. The public agencies and NGOs should focus greater resources on development and widespread dissemination of public health information messages aimed at improving community members' capacity to safeguard their own and their children's health.
- (xii) A major problem in formulation of effective policy and devising intervention methodologies at the local level is the serious lack of credible, timely and regular data on various health indicators. The survey based data is either too infrequent or in most of the cases the disaggregate level at which the data is available leaves much to be desired. The problem of the availability of such disaggregated data on a regular basis which can throw up policy directions and enable area specific interventions has to be addressed urgently.

The Challenge of Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction

20. A vicious circle is operating in the state where low income levels and slow economic growth keep the attainment in human development levels low, while poor human development status acts as a constraint on rapid economic progress and restricts participation of the large masses in the development process. The low per capita income in the state conceals sharp differentials at the regional and the state level. Western region of the state is relatively more prosperous as compared with the other regions, while Eastern region is the poorest, Central region and Bundelkhand falling in the middle category.

21. Growth rates in the state have fallen consistently much short of the national growth rate resulting in ever widening difference in per capita income of the state and the country as a whole. Among the major factors responsible for deceleration of growth rates in U.P. are the declining public investments due to the fiscal crisis that plagued the state exchequer in the last two decades and the inability of the government to attract investment from outside due to the poor state of infrastructure particularly power shortage. Encouragingly, some upward trend in the growth rate of GSDP in U.P. is discernible in the last two-three years as both public and private investment has picked up.

22. The employment structure of the state is characterized by low participation of population in economic activity especially in case of women, low degree of diversification with predominant proportion of workers engaged in the primary sector, concentration of industrial activity in a few districts and a very low proportion of workers in the organized sector.

23. Growth rate of workforce has been fairly high at 2.5 per cent per annum during the decade 1991-2001 as per Census. However, the number of main workers has remained more or less constant, while that of the marginal workers show a very high jump. Growth rate of employment has also been uneven across districts. Bulk of additional employment has been generated in low paid over crowded activities like agriculture and allied activities, construction, petty trade, informal sector and social services. Organized sector employment has been actually declining since 1991. The pace of diversification towards non-agricultural activities is also slower in the state. Around two third of the work force is still engaged in the agricultural sector.

24. In spite of lower growth of income, poverty ratio has been steadily declining in the state at rates comparable with the national level. Despite the substantial decline in the poverty ratio, the absolute number of poor has remained high in the state. Almost 60 million people in U.P. were living below the poverty line in 2004-05 constituting over one-fifth of the total poor in the country. There are also sharp inter-regional and inter-district variations in the poverty ratio reflecting differential economic attainment. Poor asset base of the people, lack of economic diversification, poor levels of human capabilities and low productivity in the traditional sectors are among the major causes of poverty. Poverty ratios are found correlated with the social and employment status of people, land ownership and educational attainment.

25. Open unemployment rates are low in U.P. as compared to the national average. The problem of educated unemployment is, however, gradually becoming serious. There is a high burden of under-employment as a very high proportion of workers are crowded in low

income generating activities in agriculture and the informal sector.

26. Boosting economic growth in the state is essential for human development as higher income levels are required to meet the challenge of employment generation and eradication of poverty, increase their access to educational and health facilities and generate higher revenues to the government for investment in economic and social infrastructure. This requires a broad based, labour intensive and regionally widespread pattern of sustained growth. Investment levels in the public sector have to be stepped up substantially especially in power and infrastructure. At the same time a favourable investment climate has to be created to attract private capital in the state on a massive scale.

27. Improvement in agricultural productivity and diversification of the rural economy through promotion non-farm activities are vitally needed for poverty reduction in the rural areas, where bulk of the poor live of productivity levels in the informal sector need to be raised through technological upgradation and supply of better inputs and credit and marketing support. Large scale investment in rural infrastructure is needed for accelerating economic growth in the rural areas and improving living conditions of the people.

28. The measures for promoting economic growth have to be backed up by the targeted poverty eradication programmes. The Employment Guarantee Scheme provides a timely opportunity for this. The working of the wage employment programmes, however, has to be improved to remove the deficiencies in their implementation. The strategy of promotion of self help groups of the poor supported by credit, training and marketing facilities needs to be vigorously pursued. The SHGs need to be federated into larger units to reap economies of scale and their technological and marketing capacities as the experience of states like Andhra Pradesh has demonstrated.

29. Social safety networks need to be substantially expanded for the protection of the vulnerable groups and destitutes. Improved performance of programmes aimed at children and women like ICDS, Mid Day Meal Scheme, etc. will also contribute in mitigating poverty among the poorer sections.

30. The economic opportunities of the poor are restricted by lack of education and poor health conditions. Therefore, a human development strategy is critical for meeting the challenge of poverty and inclusive growth in the state. While the continued role of state in provision of social services like education, health, water and sanitation will remain important, efforts should be made to encourage private investment in social sector and adopting public private partnership models. The quality of public services needs to be improved and access of the poor to these facilities encouraged.

31. A participatory approach needs to be encouraged by involving the people in planning and implementing the development programmes and in maintenance and running of the various social services meant for their benefits. Strengthening of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and their real empowerment will go a long way in strengthening the participatory approach.

The Challenge of Women's Empowerment

32. Mainstreaming gender into development process is a major challenge of human development in the state, where the situation of women in the State remains a cause of concern as documented in this report. Low literacy rates of women, low enrolment rates in schools and high drop out rates of the girls highlight how women have been denied the empowering touch of education. House hold responsibility and domestic chores are a part of the life of a young girl in the rural area. There is inequality within families evidenced by long hours of unvalued domestic work.

33. Women in U.P. as in other parts of India fall far short in terms of fully functional capability to have a long and healthy life. U.P. has the third lowest sex ratios among the major States of India, a telling evidence of the widespread discrimination in the state. Differential treatment of boys and girls is the most likely explanation for higher female mortality. A very high proportion of young girls are married by the age of 18, a factor which contributes to high fertility, morbidity and maternal mortality rate prevalent in the state. The access of women to health services is extremely limited. Overwhelming proportion of deliveries take place at home without the help of trained medical personnel.

34. Employment opportunities are much lower for women in U.P., which restricts their economic empowerment. Only 19.0 percent of rural women and 6.8 percent of urban women in U.P. were found to be economically active in 2001. Restriction on women's mobility, complete child care responsibility, ideology of female seclusion, vulnerability to abuse, low access to information and mass media, low literacy, assumption that women's work is supplementary and confined to largely manual untrained tasks, leads to women's poor access to income.

35. Women lead an insecure and vulnerable life subject to violence at home and crime, harassment and exploitation outside. The official crime statistics, even though inadequate in many respects, show that the incidence of crime against women in the state is high. In 2005, U.P.'s percentage contribution to the total crimes reported against women in the country was 9.6, second highest share in the country after Andhra Pradesh.

36. There are several critical issues which require attention of the government and the people of the state, if Uttar Pradesh is to emerge as a just, equitable and

developing State with reference to gender. These are highlighted briefly below.

- (i) First and foremost, the State needs to look at its programmes not in the mode of welfare for women but in terms of human rights. This would have implications in many areas where women are treated minimally and given pittance like widow pension, old age pension and marginal wages.
- (ii) Another major area of policy lacunae both at the State as well as the central level is that the unit of poverty alleviation programmes is the family and not the individual. Unless individual is taken as the unit of addressing poverty, like in the case of education and health, we cannot be said to have a human rights approach to development nor can we be said to be gender responsive in our planning. Special and close attention should be given to female headed house-holds. Care should be taken to ensure that all income generation programmes achieve the target of 30% women beneficiaries. Any shortfall in number of women beneficiaries in a year must be carried forward to the next year.
- (iii) There is a need to design a gender audit system for all government and non government programmes which would look at targets, trainings, recruitments, promotion, infrastructure and decision making opportunities. The conscious effort of the State to mainstream gender issues through gender budgeting is a right move but requires participation of all departments. An effective MIS system for monitoring women welfare programmes needs to be developed with a check list which is simple and transparent and can be handled by both government and non government functionaries. There needs to be a regular updating of gender segregated data to assess the impact of all government schemes. All departments and programmes after a gender audit must clearly project a gender segregated list of beneficiaries and recruited officials.
- (iv) More effective publicity of government welfare schemes needs to be undertaken using multimedia and participatory processes.
- (v) Women's access to higher education needs to be improved for their economic empowerment. Hostels for secondary and high schools need to be instituted and more institutions of technical training need to be set up at block level for girls. Short stay homes with counseling centres are required at the block level with counselors who are qualified with degrees in social work, women's studies or psychology.
- (vi) Clear budgetary allocation is necessary for the publicity, training and monitoring with reference to laws like Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Sexual harassment at work place guidelines and compulsory marriage registration bill. Schemes to encourage women in non stereo typical occupations do not exist. Training of women in leadership is necessary at all levels and gender sensitization should no more remain tokenistic.
- (vii) The Women Policy declared by the state should be publicised and debated widely and implemented effectively. The State requires a full fledged mechanism to ensure gender sensitive policy and implementation through a participatory apex body. Department of Women and Child Welfare should now be renamed as the Department for Women's Empowerment.
- (viii) Ensuring property rights to women is critical for their economic empowerment. Joint *pattas* for men and women should be made compulsory for women's better control over resources. Initiatives like lower stamp duty for women should be introduced recently need to be introduced in other spheres as well.
- (ix) Women's Self Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as an important strategy to achieve the objective of empowering women and alleviating poverty. The basic agenda of making credit available to the economically vulnerable women forms the core objective which can then form the base for the structure expansion and growth of women's SHGs. Thus, SHGs can expand by linking in the form of collectives, clusters and federations. While embracing issues of common concern to the group wider than only credit, such as domestic violence, reproductive rights and political participation, SHGs offer an important dialogic space for women. SHGs are tools, which will reflect the ideology of their initiators, and in many cases they have an important potential to enable women to come together, form collectives and work for social and economic issues which are meaningful in their lives. The SHG movement is now rapidly picking up in the state with the creation of nearly four lakh SHGs under various schemes. The movement needs to be encouraged and given full support.
- (x) Decentralisation of the planning process and participatory approach with focus on women's groups will help in improving the condition of women while making development plans more meaningful and locally relevant. It is encouraging to note that the 2005 Panchayat election results have evidenced a phenomenally large number of women elected leaders, much beyond the reserved one-third seats. Areas where civil society organizations have empowered women at large, the elected women are found to be very articulate, vigilant and practical. Programme for capacity

building of women representatives in local bodies needs to be taken up in a big way.

- (xi) Women's concern for security, families and care need to be handled with sensitivity and beyond the blind call of procedural justice.
- (xii) Finally, women's agency needs greater recognition in all government policy. For a full functioning of women's capabilities the State needs to look beyond the parameters of mere service delivery of education, health and income. Women's experiences need to be perceived as legitimate in the larger public discourse. More time and space need to be devoted to allow for their expression, whether it is in training or in data collection efforts. All laws and regulations must be subject to scrutiny from the perspective of gender equality. All forms of discrimination against women entrenched in the antiquated patriarchal values and institutions and legal system will have to be eliminated. This requires change in the mind set not only of women but also of men. Civil society has to play a wider role in this regard.

Challenge of Inclusive Development

37. It is widely accepted that the process of economic growth in the State, as in the country as a whole, has failed to be sufficiently inclusive. There remain many divides in the society. U.P. has a higher share of the deprived population belonging to SC, OBC and Muslims, which depresses the overall attainment of the state in human development. As this report has documented large disparities across social groups continue to exist in terms of income, assets, education, health, nutrition, sanitation, employment and access to infrastructural facilities. These inequalities within the social groups hamper not only their own development but also create hurdles in economic, social and human development of the entire state

38. Despite some improvements in the living conditions of SC, ST, OBC and minorities as a result of preferential treatment under governmental programmes, the pace of human development in U.P. has remained slow in comparison to many progressive states of the country. These disadvantaged groups continue to remain backward due to a number of persisting structural problems they have been facing for long. The marginalized groups remain deprived of basic amenities and services like education, health care, connecting roads to their isolated habitations, drinking water, sanitation, housing, etc. The deprived groups are not only socially, economically and politically backward but also vulnerable to various kinds of social exclusion and atrocities.

39. Wide gaps exist in educational attainments of ST, SC, and rest of population. In addition, low level of income generating assets owned by the households

belonging to disadvantaged social groups and their consequent low earnings are the main causes of their economic deprivation. Poverty levels are higher among these groups. Lack of productive assets, education and good health and social capital keeps the human capabilities of the marginalized groups low and perpetuates their relative deprivation. Moreover, the tradition based economy of SCs and STs and artisans belonging to OBC and Muslims is facing serious threat from the liberalized market economy due to fierce competition for their traditional products. All these problems lead to negative impact on their capabilities, confidence and efforts to come out at par with the mainstream society and economy of the state. These complex problems still stand as a major hurdle in delivering social justice and empowerment of the weaker groups.

40. The state government has initiated over the years numerous development programmes to remove human deprivation among the lagging social groups on a priority basis. Financial allocations under Special Component Plans for the SCs and the STs have been substantially increased over the years. Encouraging results have been noticed in the development status of deprived communities, particularly in terms of increased literacy rates. Efforts are being made to ensure welfare of minorities, disabled persons, women and children.

41. Despite all these sincere efforts of GoUP, much still remains to be done. The implementation of these schemes need to be streamlined to ensure that the benefit of the schemes reach the target beneficiary groups and various leakages and misappropriation of funds are minimized. Plethora of schemes and weak monitoring affect the efficacy of these programmes. The state needs to go beyond a welfare approach towards the deprived groups and introduce measures for their social and economic empowerment. Such a strategy would require strengthening the productive base of the weaker sections, improvement in their capabilities through education and technical training, increased access to credit and capacity building among elected representatives from these groups in the local bodies.

42. In the final reckoning, the issues of backwardness and marginalization of deprived groups is tied to their socio-economic development and changes in social structure of any society. What obstructs the compensatory provisions earmarked for these groups in U.P. are growing caste consciousness, social divides, alienation and socio-economic deprivation. Both, the development interventions by the State Government and public pressures are required to bring about real change in the condition of these groups.

The Challenge of Governance Reform

43. A new public administration philosophy has emerged in recent decades with the broad aim of making

governments and their agencies and institutions open, transparent, adaptable, responsive, efficient, effective and accountable. The link between good governance and successful growth-cum-equity-oriented economic and social development has become increasingly evident through research and vast observational data. Good governance is the *sine qua non* of socially just and economically progressive human development.

44. In March 2000, GOUP came out with a Policy Paper on Reforms in Governance that, importantly, sought to redefine the government. The essential strategies included: (a) role redefinition of the Government, (b) bringing transparency and accountability to government functioning by increasing people's access to information, (c) quick grievance removal and vigorously combating corruption, (d) renewal of civil services through right-sizing, restructuring and strict performance appraisals, (e) institutional as well as administrative decentralization, (f) financial management reforms, (g) public participation in governance through voluntary action mobilization, etc. Sound financial management, budgeting and expenditure reforms and effective auditing were the other needed intervention areas flagged.

45. The progress in the direction of governance reforms has been mixed. Significant advancements have been in the area of fiscal reform and computerization of treasuries. The computerization of pre-metric and post metric scholarships provided to SC, ST, OBC Minority and general categories has been accomplished in the State. There has been a sharp turn around in the fiscal situation and U.P. has successfully eliminated the revenue deficit. A number of commissions have been set up and new institutions have been created. The right to information is being enforced in the state.

46. However, in other areas progress has been less than desirable. Corruption at different levels and law and order situation remain areas of concern. Corruption is a great enemy of human development. An effective anti-corruption strategy of State Government will need to be formulated and strictly implemented. Delay in the administration of justice is another critical issue that has to be addressed urgently

47. In open democratic systems transparency and accountability are the essential ingredients of good governance. Accountability is to be understood in terms of discharging public duty by public agencies and public servants, of standards of performance and of the quality of security and of services delivered to citizens. All this is possible when people have access to information relating to the functioning of public agencies. The Right to Information Act 2005 is indeed a powerful and enabling law. The crux lies in sincerely, effectively and unreservedly implementing the law. In U.P. the State Commission on Information was set up in 2006. The Chief

Information Commissioner and 5 Commissioners have been appointed so far. The results of this set-up have begun to emerge. The momentum is, however, yet to pick up. The important needs for its effective and successful implementation are (a) training and motivating of the personnel of government departments, public agencies, institutions, service providers, PSUs, local bodies, etc., (b) organizing information by all such establishments/bodies in a computerized form for easy and quick electronic accessibility, (c) equipping these bodies with computerization and connectivity facilities, (d) ensuring effective enforcement and (e) enlisting the co-operation and assistance of voluntary groups and community collectivities to play awareness-spreading and advocacy roles.

48. E-Governance is a powerful instrument for ensuring transparency and improving the efficiency and speed of service delivery. Other States have moved ahead in expanding the reach, scope and coverage of e-Governance. U.P. should also take steps to move rapidly in this area. *LOKVANI* has been a good initiative but its coverage is as yet limited. Policy is already in place; so are declared intentions. The information delivery and the needed quick grievance removal back-ups have to be properly put on the ground.

49. Decentralisation and devolution are needed for bringing government closer to the people and making its functioning transparent, accountable and responsive. There is a general feeling that the 73rd and 74th amendments have not been effective in U.P. in enlarging the functional domain of rural PRIs in a meaningful way. The required measure of devolution of powers, functions and resources has not materialized so far. The line departments and agencies, in most cases, continue to function on their own in respect of functions marked for PRIs. The fact that bureaucratic control over *Panchayats* continues in a large measure is the ground reality. The initial momentum built for empowering PRIs and making them grass root institutions of meaningful self-governance has lost steam in Uttar Pradesh.

50. Similarly, Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in Uttar Pradesh remain weak in terms of resources, management capacities and real functional devolution. They do not command adequate financial resources. They are subjected to rigid government control leaving them little room for initiatives and innovations. They do not have the managerial and organizational capacities to provide and deliver the growing needs of civic services and infrastructure. A host of Government Departments, agencies, parastatals and institutions perform some of those very functions which should rightfully fall in the domain of ULBs. This confusing institutional overlapping diffuses responsibility, creates coordination problems and adversely impacts success of legitimate urban governance.

51. Unless empowered and participatory decentralization is promoted with political and administrative conviction and commitment, and concretized at the grass root level, peoples' institutions are restored, revitalized and strengthened in terms of authority, organizational wherewithal and resources, these bodies will remain disempowered and the task of inculcating a full sense of belonging in the citizen, of removing of inequities and poverty, and of reaching economic and social benefits to the common man, specially the poor and the weak, will remain largely unachieved. There is thus a crying need for putting decentralization firmly on the agenda of the state government by empowering the local bodies in terms of funds, functions and functionaries in a time bound manner.

52. If governance at the tool-meets-object level is to improve, which is undeniably the most critical level, and benefits of development and anti-poverty programmes reached effectually to those who need these most, it is the delivery systems that need to be tightened and vastly improved. Most development programmes launched at considerable costs and with lot of enthusiasm flounder for lack of properly worked out delivery systems.

53. As the chapter on governance highlights the key requirements for improving delivery systems would include:

- (a) Decentralization - democratic, institutional, financial and administrative,
- (b) Convergence of services and facilities at points of delivery,
- (c) Community participation, stakeholder involvement and citizen oversight,
- (d) Right to information, transparency, open decision-making,
- (e) One-window arrangements,
- (f) Quick grievance removal systems,
- (g) A credible and operative Citizen Charter system linked with social audit,
- (h) Effective field inspections, monitoring, feed-back and corrective action,
- (i) Careful targeting of benefits, subsidies, financial assistance, concessional prices, etc. also need to be delivered,
- (j) Outsourcing deliveries where feasible under supervision and quality-cum-cost control measures,
- (k) Use information technologies for improving deliveries, reducing costs and for ensuring smooth operation of supply lines, distribution, inventory control, monitoring, etc.

Concluding Remarks

54. In the last few decades U.P. has made considerable progress in all dimensions of human development which is reflected in improvement in HDI values over time in all districts of the state. However, as this report demonstrates the condition remains far from satisfactory and the state remains nearly at the bottom in human development levels among all states of the country. Major challenges remain to be met in the path of human development in the state. The report has also indicated the major steps to be undertaken for this purpose in different areas.

55. U.P.'s progress on human development indicators calls for a paradigm shift in governance. It calls for empowerment of the people. It calls for a policy framework focused on fundamental rights and freedoms, a framework that guarantees the right to be free of poverty, ill health, illiteracy. It must confer on all citizens the right to know how money allocated for public purposes is actually spent. It should distinctly be a framework that strengthens rights and punishes wrongs.

56. Human development is a task which cannot be left to the government alone. The involvement of the civil society and the NGOs is a must. The NGO movement in Uttar Pradesh is at present weak. It needs to be strengthened and fully and effectively co-opted into the streams of planned development. Their assistance can be very advantageously enlisted for improving human development outcomes. Their co-ordination, co-operation and accountability needs to be regulated at the government level through the setting up of appropriate machinery for that purpose.

57. U.P. today stands at a critical juncture on the path of economic and human development. Unless it takes bold and determined steps to move ahead to meet the challenge of rapid growth and human development, it will be swamped in the morass of poverty and human deprivation. Fortunately, there are some favourable circumstances which have emerged recently and which need to be taken advantage of. The fiscal situation of the state has considerably improved. The size of the annual plans has been going up sharply. The states capacity to invest from its own resources in the field of economic and social infrastructure has visibly improved. In addition, there has been a larger flow from the centre in the form of TFC grants and Centrally Sponsored Schemes. The momentum of economic growth seems to have picked up during the Tenth Five Year Plan giving confidence for taking bolder steps during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. After a long gap political stability has been restored in the state. There is greater awareness among the government and people of the state about the human development issues. What is needed is a clear political direction backed by effective delivery systems and constant vigil by the people.