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**Global Conclave 2024**

**Advancing  
Human Development  
in the Global South**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

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**Venue**

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# **Global Conclave 2024**

## **Advancing Human Development in the Global South**

**11 – 13 January 2024, New Delhi**

The Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi jointly with Niti Aayog and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is organizing the Global Conclave 2024: 'Advancing Human Development in the Global South' during January 11-13, 2024 in New Delhi, India. This three-day event forms a part of the IHD Silver Jubilee Celebrations which began in January 2023 and will conclude by March 2024. RIS is celebrating its four decades of establishment and the Conclave is an important activity of their celebration.

The major aim of the Conclave is to provide an objective and broad-based platform for dialogue on critical issues facing humanity, particularly in the Global South, in the realms of human development, inclusive and equitable economic growth, and sustainable development.

The Conclave brings together leading experts and scholars on diverse themes of human development and contemporary development policies globally. The themes include: i) economic growth and human development linkages; ii) livelihood security and employment; iii) food and nutrition security; iv) universal health coverage; v) access to quality education and building relevant skills; vi) universal social protection; vii) gender equality, women's empowerment and human development; viii) climate justice and sustainable development; ix) equity and inclusion and; x) transformative governance and institutions for advancing human development.

Several well-known research institutions and organizations working on human development issues from India and a few from Global South are partners in this Conclave organization. The event provides a broad-based platform for both academic and policy deliberations on the challenges faced by communities and regions in the Global South in advancing human development. About 400

participants drawn from academics, civil society, development institutions, international organizations, the private sector, and policy-making communities are attending the three-day Conclave.

With less than seven years left for achieving the 2030 Agenda, special attention is paid to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focusing in particular on strategies for inclusion and equity so that the objectives of ensuring 'No one is Left Behind' and 'Reaching the Farthest First' are within reach. Although the focus of the Conclave is on the Global South, it is beneficial to learn from the experiences of the North as well as the challenges faced by them.

The Conclave aims to deepen the existing approaches, conversations, research and evidence-based policy-making on human development across academic, research and policy communities of the Global South, broaden strategic linkages and networks of global expertise on development committed to reducing human development gaps globally.

The link to the conclave website is: <https://www.ihdglobalconclave.com/>



# **Plenary Sessions**



# Plenary Session 1

## Panel on Growth and Human Development Linkages

### Concept Note

Economic growth and human development are expected to be closely linked, but they represent distinct concepts that capture different aspects of a society's progress. The 1996 global human development report pointed out that the linkage between economic growth and human development is not automatic. The Report talked of five types of growth failures that undermine the well-being of individuals and communities: a) Jobless growth; b) Ruthless growth; c) Rootless growth; d) Voiceless growth; e) Futureless growth. Some key linkages between economic growth and human development are:

**Income and Standards of Living:** With economic growth, people's incomes and standard of living tends to improve, allowing for better access to food and housing, and also improved education, skills, and healthcare. A synergy between HD and economic growth sets in. However, not all forms of economic growth provide equal opportunities or jobs. The composition of growth to a great extent determines how much is ploughed towards HD. The setting-in of Dutch Disease is a typical example of neglect of many sectors for short-term gains. Of course, the answers will have to be country / region-specific, but some broad contours need be laid out.

**Demography:** economic growth, when led by increased human effort (as against extraction of natural resources), often leads to the creation employment opportunities, and higher participation of women in the workforce. Such a process has often resulted in diverse developments: reduced TFR, higher savings rates, decentralisation and promotion of democratic values. In some countries, especially those diverse and labour-surplus, dualism can set-in. E.g. In India, there is a high-tech sector growing rapidly in a few centres, engaging hundreds of thousands of workers possessing skills. Those outside the said growth centres—many rural people, tribals, in some cases women, and those having low incomes or poor language—skills tend to stay out and are un/underemployed.

**Infrastructure Development:** economic growth facilitates investments in infrastructure such as transportation, communication, and energy. Improved

infrastructure enhances connectivity, accessibility, and overall living conditions, contributing to human development. There are situations where infrastructural development can displace farmers and villages to make space for roads, bridges, dams and industrial centres. Such situations have arisen many times in the late industrialising countries.

**Innovation and Technology:** economic growth often goes hand in hand with technological advancements and innovation. Technological progress can lead to improvements in various aspects of human life, including healthcare, education, and communication, fostering overall development. A typical example is of increased jobless growth or even of reducing of jobs stemming from technologies like Artificial Intelligence and Automation.

**Environmental Sustainability:** sustainable economic growth considers the impact on the environment. Balancing economic development with environmental conservation is crucial for ensuring that growth benefits current and future generations.

Today's world seems to contend with poly-crises as economies and societies are facing increasing challenges and uncertainties arising out of erratic weather conditions and climate change, disruptions caused by war, conflicts triggered by geopolitical tensions, polarisation of communities on grounds of race, religion, class and colour, the potential risks of pandemics, and the real threat of shrinking economic opportunities for a large and growing young population with rising aspirations. The position of women and vulnerable communities in all this remains precarious.

Understanding the linkages between the types of growth and HD is crucial for crafting effective policies and promoting overall well-being. Policymakers and other stakeholders must strive to pursue inclusive and sustainable economic growth that positively impacts human development across various dimensions.



## **Plenary Session 2**

### **Panel on Jobs and Social Protection: Towards an Inclusive and Sustainable Structural Transformation**

#### **Concept Note**

The reallocation of economic activity and jobs across sectors has been a defining feature of the development process since the Industrial Revolution. This process of structural transformation has driven increases in labour productivity, which, in turn, have supported rising incomes and improved living standards. However, it is important to note that the distribution of these gains has not always been equitable, leading to higher levels of inequality in some cases. In addition, structural transformation has had significant implications for the participation of women in the labour market, influencing both how and where they have been able to enter the workforce. However, in recent decades, this process has faced challenges in many developing economies, where manufacturing has not played its expected role in absorbing capital and labour from agriculture. Despite its crucial role in economic and social development, structural transformation has become increasingly uncertain and complex in these contexts.

In recent years, economies have been buffeted by multiple and complex shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted labour markets hard. At the same time, the longer-term effects of technology, demographics and climate change pose new challenges. Technological transformations, including through automation, artificial intelligence and digital labour platforms, are argued to help developing countries leapfrog, and raise productivity and drive transformations of economy and society. However, these developments are bringing about new labour market challenges, especially in terms of ensuring decent working conditions and accessing social protection. There are also questions whether such a technological transformation can change the structure of economies in ways that lead to 'development' of these economies.

In this context, new integrated approaches on jobs and social protection are needed to support an inclusive structural transformation process that is accompanied by improvements in the quality of employment, while tackling larger goals on climate change and harnessing opportunities through digitalization. Given the multidimensional nature of these objectives, integrated

policy frameworks are crucial, which, in turn, require effective political leadership, coordination and implementation mechanisms. Due to the higher levels of debt and reduced fiscal space in most developing countries, new sources of financing are essential for implementation of such integrated strategies, including through investments in green, digital and care economies. These dimensions are the pillars for the “Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions”, which was launched by the UN Secretary General in 2021 and aims to promote a job-rich recovery, as well as just ecological, technological and societal transitions to more sustainable and inclusive economies.

Against this backdrop, this panel will explore global trends and lessons, while highlighting regional and country-specific practices on such integrated approaches to promote jobs and social protection. It will underscore the need for stronger policy implementation and better linkages to development financing.

## **Panellists**

### **Macroeconomic Policies and Labour Markets: Lessons Learned and Steps towards a Pro-Employment Framework**

**Sher Verick**, Head, Employment Strategies Unit, Employment, Labour Market and Youth Branch, International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva

Macroeconomic policy, which includes monetary, fiscal, exchange rate and financial policy interventions, played a critical role in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, including an unprecedented level of fiscal support to keep workers employed through job retention schemes. For the first time, the majority of developing countries also employed counter-cyclical measures to limit the deep economic impact of the lockdown measures. However, almost four years later, many developing countries are facing debt distress (and, in some cases, have defaulted on their external debt). Based on these experiences, along with the outcomes of the global financial crisis of 2008-9 and its aftermath, this paper explores three dimensions: 1) trends in macroeconomic policies over the last two decades; 2) lessons learned, most notably from the GFC and COVID-19 crises; and 3) the key features of a pro-employment macroeconomic policy framework for developing countries. Overall, orthodox macroeconomic policy frameworks were challenged by both the GFC and the COVID-19 crises, which both confirmed the importance of countercyclical macroeconomic policy

to support economies and labour markets. However, the premature return to austerity following the GFC, most notably in Europe, showed the dangers inherent in rapid fiscal adjustment, which resulted in a slower labour market recovery and elevated youth unemployment. Although the COVID-19 crisis witnessed an increasingly enthusiastic shift to countercyclical measures, including in developing countries (often for the first time), the cost-of-living crisis led to rapid tightening of monetary policy over 2022-23. While these steps have arguably resulted in a “soft landing” in most advanced economies, higher interest rates have pushed up the costs of borrowing. Fiscal space in developing countries has shrunk, leaving little room to increase the necessary investments in jobs and social protection. A shift to a more comprehensive pro-employment macroeconomic policy framework would require a stronger focus of policies on labour market outcomes, along with better coherence with sectoral/industrial and labour market policies to promote decent and productive employment.

## **Social Protection and Workers in the Informal Economy: Moving towards Progressive Policy Alternatives**

**Laura Alfors** (South Africa), Laura Alfors, Director, Social Protection Programme

Informal employment makes up just over 60 percent of the world’s employment. A significant share of this – 44 percent – is in informal self-employment (ILO, 2018). In this context, the role of social insurance – which links work-related social protection to employer and worker contributions – is increasingly contested. Key global actors have positioned it as “increasingly irrelevant” in labour markets dominated by informality and self-employment, where social contributions can be hard to gather. Since the late 1990s there has also existed an idea that mixed systems of social protection, combining employment-linked social insurance with tax-financed social assistance for low-income informal workers, drive up levels of informality by establishing a financial incentive for workers and firms to exit the formal economy.

But is this really the case? This presentation highlights new research from the ILO and WIEGO, which re-examined the case against social insurance. We found that worldwide social contributions still make up almost 20 per cent of total tax revenue. Moreover, over the last two decades, contributions have remained a stable source of financing, with a slow but steady increase after the financial crisis of 2008.

While on an intuitive level, it might make sense that employment-linked social

protection might not serve the interests of informal workers, the reality is that social insurance continues to play an important role in comprehensive social protection systems – supporting higher-level benefits for working people, opening up fiscal space for social assistance, and establishing pathways for redistribution. With this in mind, the presentation focuses on some of the innovative ways in which particularly self-employed informal workers are being covered under social insurance schemes, highlighting both the experiences of workers themselves with these schemes as well as innovative financing mechanisms.

## **The Segmented Expansion of Social Protection in Latin America: Progress and Limits for Transformative Change**

**Camila Arza**, Principal Researcher, Centro Interdisciplinario Para el Estudio de Políticas Públicas (CIEPP), Buenos Aires Independent Researcher, National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Over the first fifteen years of the 21st Century, Latin America experienced a new wave of social incorporation, both in the labour market and in the social protection system. Public social expenditure increased, and new social programs were created or expanded to protect a wider population, particularly precarious and informal workers and families who were previously largely excluded. A set of socioeconomic and political factors have both promoted and shaped expansion, including a positive economic and fiscal context, the consolidation of democracies, electoral competition, and the rise of progressive governments (Arza et al. 2022).

Since around 2015, however, the economic and political conditions that had fuelled the expansionary wave began to weaken. The external context turned less favourable, GDP growth rates shrank, public social expenditures stagnated, and the demographic bonus started to run out in some countries. Given limited options for full time affordable childcare and poor job opportunities for women, female labour force participation remained stagnant at a regional average of 51% – about 23 points below male’s – with adverse consequences for women’s economic autonomy and family incomes.

Social development indicators, including poverty and inequality, which had improved substantially during the first fifteen years of the century, saw virtually no progress during the following decade. In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic hit Latin America particularly hard, bringing further economic insecurity to this already gloomy scenario. Over 26 million people lost their jobs during 2020 (ILO,

2021), and although most governments deployed a significant jobs and social protection response, emergency measures soon run out and did not drive a more lasting transformation of welfare architectures.

Thus, despite the achievements of the expansionary wave, the main drivers of inequality remain virtually intact. The creation of new social programs for “outsiders” expanded access to social protection but also reinforced segmentation as different kinds and qualities of benefits were provided across class, region, and gender, among other stratifying factors. Highly segmented labour markets and social protection systems, together with the limited tax raising capacity of governments, and the weak distributional impact of tax and transfers programs across Latin American countries continues to block a more structural transformation.

Putting public policy to the service of overcoming this dire scenario would require what currently seems like an unlikely task – enhancing the redistributive power of tax and transfer policies, tackling labour market segmentation, undoing the barriers that keep people apart, and promoting more inclusive and gender-equal social protection systems.

## **Induced Stagnation Hurts Jobs and Social Protection**

**Jomo Kwame Sundaram**, Emeritus Professor, University of Malaya, Malaysia; Former Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, and Assistant Director-General, Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO)

**Protracted world stagnation since GFC (2008-09 global financial crisis):** great recession ‘unconventional’ QE, more financialization, debt Market, financial pressures for fiscal austerity ‘Global heating’ effects worse in tropics Some commodity prices, exports, incomes up Stagflation: Contraction, but inflation decelerating

**Earlier policies worsen stagnation:** export opportunities are now more constrained, uncertain Developing countries: limited policy, fiscal space to cope ‘Unconventional’ QE: share buybacks, etc., not invested Market, financial pressures for fiscal austerity Fed interest rate hikes: concerted rises, stagnation ‘Geopolitics’ priority, less fiscal space for SD, jobs, social protection US ‘exorbitant privilege’. Others limited policy, fiscal space Major debt crises: larger, more

commercial, non-bank debt

**Supply-side disruptions:** inflation, stagnation: Cold War, C19, sanctions: supply-side 'cost-push' inflation Economic warfare in 2nd Cold War on many fronts: Investment sanctions: reshoring, friend-shoring, etc Technology war: TRIPS, Huawei, TSMC, Samsung SWIFT, other financial transactions curbed: mixed effects Less, not more market access, even foreign direct investment Sanctions economic warfare weapons: contractionary Anti-inflation focus on CPI demand, not asset prices Inappropriate? Demand-side squeeze for supply-side inflation

**US Fed interest rate hikes deepen stagnation:** 2008 GFC: 'unconventional' QE, share buybacks, etc. Inflation not accelerating; no wage-price inflation spiral Arbitrary redefinition of acceptable moderate inflation Inflation targeting fetish: Fed, world emulating NZ's 2% Rate hikes blunt tool, also inappropriate: reduce spending demand, recovery, development Interest rate hikes not apt, unnecessary Concerted rate increases: economic slowdown 1980, 2022 rate hikes deliberate, contractionary, class-biased

**Macroeconomic policy constraints:** economic policy space constrained Geopolitical Cold War priorities, less for SD, jobs, social protection More exposed to global markets: pro-cyclical policy bias Monetary policy: Monetary financing, not MMT. MMT? US exorbitant privilege. Others limited policy space Difficult with independent central banks IMF, BWIs imposed/urged fiscal austerity Earlier policies curbed productive capacities

**Stagnation cuts jobs, social protection: 2014:** commodity prices, exports, incomes collapse OECD trade, investment, technology, finance policies US Fed interest rate hikes contractionary: less fiscal space Inappropriate? Demand-side squeeze for supply-side inflation Anti-inflation focus on CPI demand, not asset prices Less demand: less jobs, lower wages, other incomes IMF fiscal austerity: less government social spending Increasing international inequality: more migration? Uneven unemployment impacts: US v Rest, North v South.

## **Plenary Session 3**

**Industry Leaders Speak on Accelerating Decent Job Creation in India**

# Plenary Session 4

## Panel on Climate Change, Equity and Human Development

### Concept Note

In the past few years, the reality of climate change has become undeniable. The steady increase in average global temperature in recent decades has been accompanied by more frequent extreme weather events such as record high or low temperatures, persistent heatwaves, widespread drought, and excessive rainfall and floods. These effects are being felt all over the world, they are already affecting lives and livelihoods, and their impact can only increase in the future. This is one of the most important challenges that the world faces today, and it is critical to understand what is happening and the consequences for our social and economic systems.

Among the pernicious impacts of climate change, those that affect human development in the Global South are particularly devastating. These impacts include the undermining of fragile production systems, and of the employment and incomes they provide; direct effects on health and working conditions; destruction of key assets due to floods or forest fires; loss of water resources and of arable land; a distortion of investment priorities away from health and education towards protection against catastrophic weather events; disincentives for private investment in the face of growing uncertainty.

These impacts are diverse but they have in common that the consequences are very unequally distributed, both between and within countries. Between countries regions of the world that have contributed the least to GHG emissions have the greatest exposure to risk, and the least ability to adapt. Within countries, it is those in more precarious living conditions who are impacted most. In gender-unequal arrangements for production and employment women are particularly vulnerable. The impact of climate change on individuals and social groups reflects the prevailing pattern of inequality, and reinforces it further.

State policies to compensate for adverse climate effects often reflect the interests of the most influential economic actors, and fail to address the consequences for human development or for inequality. Too often, action on climate change is



seen through the prism of technical solutions or changes in lifestyles to reduce carbon emissions, rather than in terms of the social and economic structures on which it impacts. Unless the goals of human development are preserved in climate policies, and priority is given to the livelihoods of the poor and deprived, the net outcome may be a development path that is even more unequal than that we see today.

The panels at the IHD Global Conclave will examine these questions. They will include presentations on the wider issues, and country presentations which examine situations and policy responses in depth. The aim is to map out clearly how human development goals can be preserved in the face of climate change, and how forces driving increases in inequality can be reversed.

# Plenary Session 5

## Panel on Global Value Chains: Fostering Inclusive Economic Development in the Global South

### Concept Note

Global Value Chains (GVCs) have emerged as a crucial element in the resurgence of the South, playing a transformative role in the realm of international trade. This resurgence, a direct outcome of globalization, marks a significant shift in the economic dynamics of developing regions. Many countries, influenced by the Export-led Strategy (ELS), have strategically embraced participation in GVCs. This strategy leverages their competitive advantage, allowing them to integrate with the global economy.

The approach towards maintaining competitiveness in GVC sectors has been challenging, yet it has seen widespread participation from the South. Developing countries, in particular, have emerged as major beneficiaries of this global trend. Engagement in GVC trade has not only led to increased income and growth but has also facilitated a profound structural transformation within these economies. It is crucial to note that firms in developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) tend to be predominantly engaged in production activities within these chains. This involvement has enabled these countries to move up the value chain, gradually shifting from simple operations to more complex and value-added processes.

In expanding the role of GVCs, it is essential to recognize that trade through these chains is not just a catalyst for economic growth but also a key driver for the resurgence of southern trade. The integration of southern economies into GVCs has led to the diversification of their export bases, improved access to international markets, and increased foreign direct investment. This integration has also fostered technological transfer and skill development, contributing to the overall improvement of their economic capabilities.

Furthermore, the dynamics of GVCs have promoted collaborative partnerships and interdependencies between northern and southern countries. This has paved the way for a more balanced global trade, where the South is no longer seen merely as a supplier of raw materials but as an equal player in the global market, contributing

significantly to the production of intermediate and final goods.

Globalisation has radically reshaped the landscape of international trade, with GVCs playing a key role. This development has facilitated a complex international division of labour, which has proven to be the basis for promoting economic development in the South. The concept of 'Unbundling' aptly captures this transformation. In its first phase, it led to an industry-by-industry division of labour, allowing different countries to specialize in distinct industries. This phase significantly benefited several Asian countries as they integrated into the global market. In the second phase of Unbundling, southern countries are not only specialised in specific industries but also particular tasks within those industries. This task-specific specialisation has allowed for a more efficient allocation of resources, increased productivity, and spurred innovation, particularly in the South.

In the third phase, a new frontier in the international division of labour is emerging - a person-by-person approach. By leveraging the trends of globalization and advancements in technology, these countries can position themselves to benefit from even more personalized and specialized roles in GVCs. It suggests that globalization, through the expansion and deepening of GVCs, has not merely enabled trade growth in the South but has also provided a platform for these countries to enhance their economic standing in the world economy.

In the contemporary global economic landscape, China has emerged as a major stakeholder in the domain of GVCs. The post-COVID period has seen a shift in the dynamics of GVCs, although evidence of a significant relocation of firms from China to other Asian destinations like India remains limited. Some GVC sectors such as network products, semiconductors, automotive, and telecommunications are closely linked with China, as well as with East and Southeast Asian economies. This linkage presents the integral role of the region in the global supply chain network. China's dominance in these sectors is a testimony of its strategic positioning in GVCs.

It is important to recognize that other developing countries are also making notable strides in GVC sectors. These countries are increasingly participating in and benefiting from the global trade and investment flows facilitated by GVCs. The resilience of GVCs in the face of mounting challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights their importance in the global economy. The role of GVCs in facilitating economic recovery and growth becomes

increasingly significant. While China remains a dominant player in GVCs, the increasing participation of other developing countries in these chains is a positive development.

The growing landscape of GVCs necessitates a renewed focus on regional and sub-regional cooperation, particularly among Southern States. Such collaboration is key in augmenting the regional flow of investment and technology, which are essential components in bolstering domestic production capabilities. Access to technology and trade finance emerges as a critical factor in strengthening regional value chains, enabling countries to support each other in achieving mutual economic growth. In the realm of GVC trade, the interconnection between service links and production blocks is important. Services such as e-commerce, digitization, banking, and insurance play a crucial role in this context, emphasising the need for service sector cooperation. This aspect of cooperation is significant in enhancing the efficiency of GVCs, thereby contributing to economic development. It has been observed that the backward linkage of GVC production in several developing countries is notably strong due to their trade linkages with fellow developing nations. Empirical evidence points to a gradual decline in Northern dominance in specific trade sectors, particularly in 'parts & components' value chains. This trend accentuates the growing capability of the South in matching, and in some aspects, surpassing the North in trade performance, largely driven by the surge in GVC trade.

The dynamics of Global Value Chains (GVCs) have brought to the fore the critical issue of equitable gain distribution among different stakeholders. It is increasingly evident that the benefits derived from GVC trade are not always equitable. While GVCs offer developing countries opportunities to leverage their comparative advantages, there is a growing concern that GVC integration can aggravate pre-existing disparities, including the rural-urban divide. One of the notable challenges in the GVC landscape is the high barriers to entry, which have benefitted MNCs disproportionately. These entities, often based in the North, command high returns and thus reap significant gains from GVCs, overshadowing the contributions of local firms in the South. This imbalance presents the need for effective governance in GVCs to ensure a more equitable distribution of trade gains.

Non-chain actors, such as governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations, play a crucial role in this context. Their involvement in policy regulation, adoption of new technologies, and addressing barriers to entry is essential in creating a more level playing field within GVCs. The role of these actors becomes even more significant in Free Trade Agreement

(FTA) negotiations. The stringent Rules of Origin criteria often discussed in these negotiations can be detrimental to promoting equitable participation in GVCs if not addressed properly. The prolonged global recession and its ensuing crises have further highlighted the vulnerability of several countries engaged in GVC trade. The pressures of economic downturns have led some to fall into a debt trap, demonstrating the need for robust mechanisms to mitigate such global economic challenges.

The governance of GVCs is vital in maintaining just distributions of gains from trade. This requires a concerted effort to balance the interests of MNCs from the North with those of local firms in the South, ensuring that GVCs contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The development of such governance frameworks will be key in addressing the disparities within the GVC system and in fostering a fairer global trade environment. The rise of global trade should rely on the competitiveness of firms, which should be regulated by effective mechanisms within global governance.

With this backdrop, the session would explore the following:

- How the Global South can take advantage of globalisation under the 3rd unbundling of value chains?
- How the unequal distribution of benefits from GVCs has affected developing countries and how it can be addressed by the Global South?
- What are the macro and micro policy interventions required to reap the benefits of the GVCs in those developing countries that are not yet a major part of supply chains?
- What are the trends in the GVC trade post-pandemic and is there any substantial shifting of firms from China to other developing countries?
- How participation of developing countries in the GVC sector improved their global trade share during the last two decades?

## **Panellists**

## **Globalization For Economic Development**

**Fukunari Kimura**, Professor, Faculty of Economics, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan and Chief Economist, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Jakarta, Indonesia

Globalization forces led by technological progress has steadily overcome geographical distance, and the evolution of international trade and the international division of labor has been speeded up particularly in the past three decades. To accelerate economic development, the Global South must aggressively utilize globalization forces.

To step up from the first unbundling (the industry-by-industry international division of labor) to the second unbundling (the task-by-task international division of labor), the reduction in service link costs and the improvement of location advantages are necessary. ASEAN and the surrounding East Asia have aggressively utilized the mechanism, particularly in general and electric machinery industries, and have reached at a doorstep for fully developed economies. Other developing countries can still utilize this channel if a set of proper policies are implemented. ASEAN's experience as "usual" developing countries can be a good reference.

In the past decade, the third unbundling (the person-by-person international division of labor) has emerged. Although the significance of such an international division of labor is still limited in size, it may become a major form of the international division of labor for developing countries. The transportation cost for digitalized services is almost zero through the internet. However, we still do not know the mobile and immobile factors for such activities. The consequences for the economic development of the whole economy are also unknown. However, this will become one of the major elements of our renewed development strategies.

Globalization is not dead yet, as opposed to the public belief in some advanced countries. Although the geopolitical tensions in the North weaken the rules-based trading regime to some extent, the Global South should believe in it. Some of the rules may not be perfectly compatible with necessary policy room for economic development, but now is the time to defend the once established regime.

## Reframing Value Chains: Fostering Economic Development in Global South

**Mustafizur Rehman**, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Global value chains (GVCs) which depend on cross-country production networks, cross-border flows of investment and, based on these, stimulate trade-flows, have emerged as the most prominent feature of the ongoing process of globalisation and global trade. A large part of global trade is now value-chain originated. Increasingly more countries are considering participation in GVCs as a key strategy to translate their comparative advantages into competitive advantage.

For example, Bangladesh has been able to reap significant benefits from participation in GVC in the particular case of its dominant export item, the Readymade garments (RMG). The RMG has established strong backward linkages with India and China in raw materials (cotton) and intermediates (yarn and fabrics). The production process (spinning, weaving and garmenting activities) takes place in Bangladesh. Forward linkages that establish connectivity with key markets take place through foreign brands and buyers. However, distribution of benefits along the value chain remains a concern for Bangladesh since only fraction of the price generated at the retail level is retained in the country. This is not an uncommon feature of the global trade, as far as many developing countries of the global south are concerned.

In this backdrop, deeper and closer south-south cooperation could play a transformative role in several ways. Firstly, regional and sub-regional production networks and value chains could provide a significant advantage to these countries in terms of raising trade competitiveness of southern countries through the triangulation of investment, multi-modal transport and trade connectivities. Secondly, access to technology and technology transfer are emerging as major bottlenecks for low-income countries of the global south; closer cooperation among countries of global south in these areas could help raise productivity and enhance competitiveness of these countries. Thirdly, access to trade finance is a major concern for developing southern countries. Time has come to think of designing alternative payment mechanisms for trading purposes. And this can be fostered and promoted through cooperation among southern countries. Fourthly, and building on the last point, in today's world, since trade in goods and services are

closely entwined, greater cooperation among southern countries in services (e-commerce, digital services, banking and insurances), could help raise trade competitiveness of the southern countries. Here, countries in global south could gain significantly by cooperating in services areas to facilitate trade and raise trade competitiveness.

The nature of GVCs in south could be made co-operational, rather than transactional, and these could be win-win for the participatory countries. All southern countries stand to gain from democratisation of distribution of value and benefits along the value chains if the cooperation is designed accordingly. An 'enlightened self-interest' should guide South-South cooperation. The more prosperous the southern countries are, the more will their capacity be to import and trade. Thus, whilst one could argue that there is a north within the global south, and there is a south within the global south, all countries in the global south will stand to benefit by building inclusive value chains, rather than looking at value chains as sources of extraction of values. Since a number of institutions to deepen south-south cooperation are being established at present, the modalities of their functioning may be crafted from the very beginning on principles that recognise intra-south differentiation. South-south regional agreements could be based on less than full reciprocity, two-track liberalisation, trade-conducive rules of origin, flexibility in implementation of rules and regulations, mutual recognition agreements etc. FTAs and CEPAs with participation of southern countries could be informed by these modalities. And these could play a critically important role in deepening south-south cooperation.

Global south should look at deeper cooperation and development of production networks and RVCs and sub-regional value chains also as a strategy for entering into the process of globalisation from a position of strength.

The rules guiding the functioning of the new financial institutions of the global south such as the NDB, AIIB and others will need to be geared to service the needs of the southern countries, and not guided primarily by profit motive.

South-South cooperation could take lead from many of the new initiatives promoted under the G-20 presidency of India, in areas of economic cooperation, debt and debt relief, lending, building of social and physical infrastructure. Implementation process, aligned with this philosophy, could be the foundation of a new international economic order. Such an order will benefit all countries of the global south. Southern Value chains could be different, and could make a significant difference for countries of the global south.



## Global Value Chains and Inclusive Development

**Nihal Pitigala**, Senior Trade Economist and Senior Consultant, The World Bank, Washington, USA

Global Value Chains (GVCs) now account for a major share of international trade, impacting people in developing and developed economies, alike. The rise of GVCs contributed to higher growth and income levels in many developing economies, facilitating structural transformation and leading to an acceleration of cross-country income convergence. In some instances, these positive effects have benefited workers and firms that otherwise face larger barriers in accessing foreign markets, such as informally employed workers and women, thereby shrinking existing labor market gaps. However, the gains from trade in GVCs are not always equitably distributed. While GVCs have the potential to deliver more inclusive growth—with opportunities for developing countries to leverage their comparative advantages along complex value chains—they have yet to deliver inclusive growth. A small number of developing economies are meaningfully integrated into GVCs. In most instances, small and medium enterprises, which are the backbone of most developing economies, are poorly integrated. GVC integration can also widen preexisting disparities by raising the demand for certain skills or by strengthening agglomeration—forces that widen the rural-urban divide.

Understanding the governance of a value chain is crucial to understanding the distribution of gains along the chain. The ability to govern often rests with those that hold intangible assets (R&D, design, branding, marketing) which are characterized by high barriers of entry and command high returns – usually reaped by developed country firms especially MNCs and TNCs which set the rules and parameters for GVC transactions. Developing and least developed country firms tend to be locked into tangible (production) activities, producing to the parameters set by the ‘governors’, and suffer from low barriers of entry and reap low returns. However, the governance structure is increasingly influenced by non-chain actors such as the government, NGOs, and international organizations, partly owing to information asymmetries and externalities. These are taking place at the domestic level and are yet to evolve as international norms.

There is a need for a robust discourse of the governance structure applied at the level of ‘lead firms’, the local firms, and non-chain actors, and the institutional structures that can evolve in a way GVCs can achieve more sustainable and

inclusive growth through both corporate and social norms. The presentation explores channels to incentivize the behaviors of the MNC's toward the achievement of shared values, whereby developing countries, their firms, and their workers realize greater benefits while maintaining the efficiency of GVC operations. This includes empowering subordinated stakeholders in the design of inclusive GVC governance while exploring the domestic enabling environment in terms of policy, regulation, and new forms of technology as a way of addressing barriers to entry.

## **The Great Supply Chain Shift from China to South Asia**

**Ganeshan Wignaraja**, Visiting Senior Fellow, ODI and Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka on Strategic Trade Policy, Sri Lanka

China-centric global supply chains, which brought prosperity to East Asia, are changing as MNCs re-assess risks in the post-Covid era. This paper asks the question – is a shift of supply chains from China to South Asia occurring? A careful read of recent data and experience in suggests that East Asia and China will remain prominent in supply chains as industrial relocation is costly and replication of conditions for sophisticated manufacturing is hard for latecomers. Historically South Asia has had a limited role in global supply chains. But high-profile manufacturing investments by Apple and Mercedes in India suggest that South Asian supply chain pessimism could be changing with India emerging as a complementary supply chain hub in Asia. India can spread the gains regionally though more outward FDI to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, a Make in South Asia Programme and bilateral FTAs. Outward-oriented development strategies, smart business strategies, and close business-government collaboration are crucial for South Asia while the deployment of industrial policy merits careful study.

## **Towards Equitable Growth in the Southern Trade: The Rising Influence of Southern Countries in GVCs**

**S K Mohanty**, Professor, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi

The examination of Global Value Chains (GVCs) focuses on their role in shaping trade dynamics between Northern and Southern countries over the past two

decades. It argues that GVCs have been pivotal in driving trade, which is emerging as the key growth driver. The 'centre-periphery' theories have little relevance where the south is the supplier of raw materials and the north is the producer of final products and the transfer of products from north to south and south to north resulted in deteriorating terms of trade for the south. In the new role of the South, it is exporting and importing intermediate and final products through trade in GVC. However, the recent global slowdown has significantly impacted this trajectory, particularly affecting sectors dominated by GVC trade through supply disruptions.

The rise of the South is closely linked with the intensive trade of the countries in GVC. While saying that the South is expanding, it refers to the all-round progress of different groups of countries within the South. It is often argued that the resurgence of the South is mostly seen in emerging countries and China. The benefit of the trade surge has not percolated down to other segments of the south. This assertion is not correct. The benefit of the trade surge supported all segments of the South. To examine this consideration, our analysis categorizes Southern countries into distinct sub-groupings – emerging economies, other developing countries, transitional economies and least developed countries (LDCs). The pattern of rise in trade has been almost similar to all sub-categories of the south. The inclusion of China in the group of emerging countries or developing countries has very little influence in altering the general trends of results. The rise of the South is irrespective of the rise of China. South is 'catching up' with the North in trade performances because of the surge of GVC trade. The results are also not diluted in different global trade regimes.

Empirical evidence suggests a gradual decline in Northern dominance in certain trade sectors, particularly in 'parts & component' value chains, where Southern countries are making notable progress. However, this progress is somewhat similar across different segments of the South. The paper also notes the minimal contribution of transitional economies to overall trade. Certain sectors such as network products, semiconductors, automotive, telecommunications, etc. are those where southern countries are catching up progressively. More coordination between developed and developing countries should take place for deeper interaction between them in the areas of technology and investment. This may benefit developed countries in tapping the synergies created in the south. In agricultural value chains in agriculture, it could be a win-win situation for both North and South

# Plenary Session 6

## Reflections on the Future of Human Development

### Concept Note

Human development has been defined as an enhancement of human capabilities, a widening of choices, an expansion of freedoms, and an assurance of human rights for all. There are two important ideas embedded in the concept of human development: a) that societies ought to focus on an expansion of all freedoms – economic, social, political and cultural. Prioritising economic and social over cultural and political freedoms hasn't worked. It cannot be the path to sustainable human development; b) that societies must focus on people of all ages, everywhere. This calls for prioritising disadvantaged and difficult-to-reach communities. The world is getting increasingly polarised. Also, economic growth is becoming jobless.

The future of human development in such a world poses several challenges that need careful consideration:

**Increased Inequality:** Rising polarisation may exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities. It's crucial to address these disparities to ensure that the benefits of development are more evenly distributed. Policy interventions, such as progressive taxation and targeted social programmes, may be necessary to address inequality.

**Social Cohesion and Stability:** Heightened polarisation can strain social cohesion and lead to increased political and social tensions. Fostering dialogue, promoting understanding, and investing in social cohesion initiatives are essential to mitigate the risks of division and conflict.

**Job Displacement and Reskilling:** Jobless growth, driven by automation and technological advancements, may result in job displacement for certain sectors of the workforce. Governments and businesses need to invest in education and promote programmes to equip individuals with the skills needed in emerging industries.

**Social Safety Nets:** Robust social safety nets are essential to provide a buffer for those adversely affected by jobless growth. Unemployment benefits, healthcare coverage, and other social programmes can help individuals and families navigate economic uncertainties.

**Environmental Sustainability:** As development continues, it's imperative to prioritise environmental sustainability. Balancing economic growth with environmental conservation is essential for the well-being of the current and future generations. Green technologies and sustainable practices should be integrated into development strategies.

**Inclusive Policies:** Policymakers must prioritise inclusivity in their decision-making processes. This involves ensuring that marginalised and vulnerable populations have equal access to opportunities and benefits. Inclusive policies can contribute to social cohesion and mitigate the negative impacts of polarisation.

**Technological Governance:** Effective governance of emerging technologies is crucial to harness their benefits while minimising negative consequences. Regulations and ethical frameworks should be developed to guide the responsible use of technology and prevent further polarisation.

In summary, addressing the challenges posed by a polarised world and jobless growth requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. It involves not only economic policies but also social, educational, demographic and environmental considerations to ensure a sustainable and inclusive future for human development.





## **Roundtables**







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## Roundtable on Revisiting Measurement of Poverty

Organiser: Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune (marking the completion of five decades of publication of Dandekar–Rath Pioneering Work on Poverty in India)

### Concept Note

There is a considerable amount in India, we had a long history of studies on measurement of poverty. NSS data on consumer expenditure has been used to estimate poverty. After the Working Group of the Planning Commission delineated the methodology of poverty estimation in 1962, it has been intensely debated by the academicians, experts, policy planners etc. over the years. While the previous estimations had stressed on subsistence living or basic minimum needs as a criterion for the poverty line, a landmark study by Dandekar and Rath suggested that the poverty line's criteria must be based on the expenditure that would provide 2250 calories per day both in rural and urban areas. They fixed a minimum consumption line in the 1970s based on calorie norm and that was used to define poverty line in the next two decades. Dandekar and Sukhatme had a big debate on calorie norms. Sukhatme argued that the human body has an adaptation mechanism which means that calorie requirement varies from one day to another for the same person engaged in similar kind of activity depending on the intakes. The erstwhile Planning Commission has constituted Task Force/Expert Group from time to time to review the methodology. These include the Task Force under the chairmanship of Y.K. Alagh in 1977, the Expert Groups under the Chairmanship of D.T. Lakdawala in 1989, S.D. Tendulkar in 2005, C. Rangarajan in 2012. Below poverty line (BPL) surveys and Socio Economic Caste Survey 2011 were also used for estimating poverty.

In the early 2000s, economists and others engaged in a heated debate about how much India's economic reforms since 1991 had reduced poverty. A book by Angus Deaton and Valerie Kozel (2005) entitled 'The Great Indian Poverty

Debate' brings together key papers in the Indian poverty debate. C. Rangarajan and S. Mahendra Dev in a book entitled "Counting the Poor in India: Where do we stand" discuss measurement and other issues on poverty.

We do not have official data on consumer expenditure after 2011–12. In the last few years, there have been studies on poverty using indirect methods and using CMIE, NSS 2011–12 consumer expenditure survey, and PLFS (Periodic Labour Force Survey) data sources. It is termed as the Great Indian Poverty Debate 2.0. An IMF paper by Bhalla with Bhasin and Virmani use official 2011–12 survey and shift the distribution in line with the growth of consumption in the national accounts and add food transfers under PDS (public distribution system). According to the study, the proportion of population below \$1.90 ppp terms was 0.8% in 2020 after taking into account food transfers. A World Bank paper by Sutirtha Sinha Roy and Roy van der Weide use data from the consumer Pyramid Household Survey (CPHS) of CMIE after re-weighting the raw data to make it comparable to the official NSS surveys. This study showed poverty was 10.2% in 2019 with the poverty line of \$1.90 ppp terms.

Recent years witnessed use of multidimensional approach for measuring poverty. The search for non-income dimensions of poverty possibly stems from a view that, the capabilities' may not be tightly linked to the privately purchased consumption basket in terms of which the poverty lines are currently drawn. Therefore, poverty based on income or consumption is different from deprivations based on education or health. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and UNDP together developed MPI (multidimensional poverty index). Launched in 2010, it used 10 indicators relating to health, education and standard of living. NITI Ayog has also followed similar methodology and brought out reports on multi-dimensional poverty index. A recent report by NITI Ayog on multi-dimensional poverty shows that the percentage of the poor has gone down from 25% in 2015–16 to 15% in 2019–21 and around 135 million people were lifted out of poverty during this period.

Against this background, the round table on 'Revisiting Measurement of Poverty' will discuss several contemporary issues and way forward for measuring poverty. Some of the issues, among others, are the following.

## 1. Issues under Consumption Based Poverty

- Is calorie norm still useful for estimating poverty line? Dandekar and Rath and some of the expert groups appointed by the Planning Commission used this norm.
- How do we include non-food components in the poverty line? For example, Rangarajan Committee recommended that the observed expenditures on the essential four items by households located in the median fractile (45-50 fractile) be treated as the normative minimum private consumption expenditure.
- Should we use all India or state specific baskets for der
- How do we take care of Sukhatme's comment on nutrition that that the human body has an adaptation mechanism and calorie requirement varies for same individuals and groups?
- What are the appropriate price indices for estimating poverty line?
- The differences in private consumption between NSS and NAS (National Accounts Statistics) widened over time – the gap increased from 10% in 1972-73 to more than 50% in 2011-12. How do we reduce this gap?
- Reviewing the method of estimation of poverty in other countries and World Bank, the Rangarajan Expert group arrived at the conclusion that neither their methodological nor procedural aspects are superior to what is being used in India at present. Are there any international experiences useful for measurement of poverty in India?

## 2. Public Expenditure on Social Services and Impact on Poverty

- The official poverty ratios in India are estimated using certain minimum level of private consumption expenditure on food and non-food items. The issue of public expenditure on social sector has been mentioned in earlier committees on poverty as well.
- Public expenditure, particularly in the areas of food, health, education and sanitation constitute a significant proportion of total consumer expenditure

and their proportion is high among the poor. There have been attempts to estimate the impact of food transfers under PDS (Himanshu and Sen, 2013; Bhalla et al, 2022). How do we estimate the impact of public expenditure on poverty in areas like health and education?

- What are the price indices to be used (market prices or some other prices) for valuing the public expenditure on food and other items?

### **3. Multidimensional poverty**

- Multidimensional poverty is much wider than consumption based poverty. However, there are several issues regarding measurability, aggregation across indicators, and crucially of databases.
- There is also arbitrariness in cut-off point for deciding multi-dimensional poverty ratio.
- Is multidimensional poverty substitute for consumption-based poverty?
- Rangarajan and Mahendra Dev (2023) argue that consumption based poverty is still relevant and multi-dimensional poverty is complementary rather than a substitute for consumption based poverty.

### **4. What is the way forward in poverty measurement?**

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## **Roundtable on SDGs Agenda 2030: Data for Tracking Transformative Changes**

Organisers: National Data Innovation Centre, National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

### **Concept Note**

Tracking transformative changes in society is of utmost importance in assessing the impact of state policies on development. However, this task is not without its challenges. From identifying suitable indicators to filling data gaps and ensuring data quality, there are several hurdles to overcome. Moreover, making sense of the data, considering the complexity and interconnectedness of development processes, is equally crucial. Despite these challenges, it is essential for high-quality data and evidence to shape programs and policies. The following key questions will be addressed during this session:

1. What are the indicators that can effectively track transformational changes across economic, social, cultural, and political domains? What are some new indicators needed to provide insights into the progress of societies?
2. What is the current state of data availability for tracking transformational changes? What are critical data gaps that need to be addressed? How best can these gaps be filled?
3. How can we generate more disaggregated and reliable data to track changes at the decentralized community level? What are effective strategies and mechanisms to collect data at a granular level that can capture localized transformations and ensure inclusivity in the developmental process?
4. What mechanisms can be employed to enhance capacities and make effective use of real-time data in influencing program delivery?

5. To what extent can digital platforms and new technologies be utilized to collect and analyze data for policy-making?

### **Data is essential for evidence-based policy and data demand driven for the SDGs agenda 2030 monitoring and evaluation in Lao PDR.**

**Phetsomone Sone**, Deputy Head, Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB), Ministry of Planning and Investment, Government of Laos, PDR

SDG Localization and Mainstreaming SDG into the of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) 2021-2025 monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) have been localized encompassing 18 goals (17 plus an additional goal addressing “Life Safe from Unexploded Ordnance” and integrated into the Lao PDR 9th NSEDP, 2021-2025 and will be continued for the next 10th five-year plan, 2026-2030. The forthcoming third Voluntary National Review (VNR) report, scheduled for presentation at the high-level political forum (HLPF) in July 2024, is currently undergoing preparation. This VNR will principally focus on trend and tracking analysis related to prioritized goals, considering both national and global goals and targets for the year 2024 where applicable. The Government of Lao PDR has demonstrated a strong commitment to capitalizing on the data revolution and fortifying the country’s statistical systems. Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB) coordinates the national statistical system, leveraging technology for enhanced data collection, analysis, and accessibility, as well as mobilizing external assistance. The Statistics Law of 2017 and the NSDS 2016-2025 establish a conducive environment for monitoring and assessing progress towards SDGs.

Fundamental achievements and data gaps the global level comprises 232 SDG indicators(2019), with 71 indicators (30%) aligned with the NSEDP. In the scope of localized SDGs, 112 indicators (47%) mirror the global set.

Key challenges include institutional challenges in particular the readiness of National Statistical System, the coordination mechanism exists but need to improve. Human Resources: The quantity and quality of statistical human resources, including managerial skills in LSB and other data producers, are

limited. Limited Finance –Investment budgeting. Lack of an integrated data system network, particularly in provincial and district offices, which hampers the effective use of available ICT infrastructure for data systems. General awareness and understanding of statistical principles, statistical processes and data literacy is limited. The existing M&E Systems for policies, programs, activities and projects across line ministries are complex, with data systems that are often not interoperable. There is a need to develop relevant development indicators with reliable and timely data to close existing information gaps.

The way forward. The LSB continues to reflect on the relevance of the Bureau, the entire NSS, and official statistics to development planning processes. The NSDS 2021-2025 holds significant promise to improve the capacity of the Lao PDR Statistical System to produce and disseminate good quality statistics promptly to enhance the use of key statistics. The increased availability and use of disaggregated data can lead to better informed decision-making and, ultimately, more equitable and sustainable development outcomes. Develop the NSDS 2026-2035 vision 2040. Implement Statistics Program and the projects 2021-2028 resulting in improving of Economic, Social, and Environmental statistics; enhancing the use and trust of statistics for Tracking Transformative Changes harnessed for policy actions that ensure the sustainable and inclusive and benefit all segments of Lao PDR society.

## **Roundtable on Regional and Sectoral Value Chains in South Asia**

Organiser: Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi

South Asia is a latecomer in global supply chains representing a significant underutilization of its economic potential. However, recent developments indicate a pivotal shift, particularly in the context of Regional Value Chains (RVCs) which could catalyse deeper economic integration within the region. The region is gradually catching up and there is an increasing trend of alignment with global standards, as evidenced by the entry of high-profile manufacturing firms like Apple and Mercedes into India's market. This session would explore the potential of South Asia to evolve into a new supply chain hub, considering the post-COVID-19 global re-orientation of production networks away from traditional centres like China. The spillover effects of these developments could benefit India and its neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, further consolidating the region's position in the global economic landscape. The ultimate goal is to understand how South Asia can capitalize on these emerging opportunities to enhance its role in global supply chains.

South Asia's integration into the Global Value Chains (GVC) has been hindered by persistent regional bottlenecks despite the establishment of regional trading agreements in the mid-1980s. It is important to examine the multifaceted barriers that have sustained high levels of trade impediments over the past four decades. The region's progress has been notably impacted by a score of factors including geopolitical tensions, the COVID-19 pandemic, disruptions of technologies, environmental and climate challenges, and international conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine standoff and the Taiwan crisis. In addressing these challenges, it is observed that the promotion of GVCs through specific policy interventions is very much warranted. These include the reduction of tariff barriers (TBs) and non-tariff barriers (NTBs), the relaxation of Rules of Origin (RoO), and the enhancement of connectivity and trade facilitation coupled with investment cooperation. It is required to identify and address bottlenecks in regional trade facilitation, which encompass issues of connectivity and the careful management of institutional architecture. It is also important to provide



insights into how South Asia can overcome these regional bottlenecks. By doing so, it aims to chart a path forward for the region to play a more significant role in the global economic network through effective integration into GVCs.

The current state of South Asia's participation in Global Value Chains (GVC) is characterized by a predominance of primary and low-technology manufacturing products, yielding limited economic benefits. There is a need for a strategic shift in the region's GVC engagement, particularly in the manufacturing sector, to capture more substantial gains from premium trade segments. South Asia should adopt a comprehensive approach across various sectors, with a special emphasis on manufacturing and trade in networking goods. Central to this strategy is the prioritization of discussions on non-tariff barriers (NTBs) specific to network goods in trade policy negotiations among South Asian economies. It is necessary to draw attention to the potential impact of partial reductions in digital trade policy measures, positing that such reforms could significantly enhance economic and trade growth in the region.

The significant potential of RVCs in agriculture and services is highlighted in promoting inclusive growth and addressing the high incidence of poverty in South Asia. The region, endowed with substantial resources in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, faces challenges due to heavy reliance on imported agricultural inputs and balance of payment difficulties. The development of RVCs in agriculture is emerging as a solution to reduce this dependency and foster sustainable value chains within the region. It is important to note the advantages of increasing agricultural productivity and rural industrialization to strengthen food value chains. It emphasizes the need to connect local producers with dynamic agricultural markets through effective RVCs. However, the volatility in total factor productivity change poses a significant challenge to the sustainability of these value chains. There is also a need for the promotion of service value chains, suggesting that this could be a pivotal area for regional economic growth. The reforms in regional integration measures, including Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) and existing tariff structures, are needed to enhance the region's participation in both agricultural and services RVCs.

The ongoing industrial relocation from China offers a unique opportunity for South Asian countries to develop their manufacturing sectors and align with global supply chain transitions. To capitalize on this, South Asia needs to adopt outward-oriented development strategies underpinned by well-defined industrial policies and an emphasis on government-business collaboration. These strategies should focus on fostering a sophisticated manufacturing sector capable of integrating into global supply chains.

A critical aspect of promoting RVC involves addressing existing regional challenges. High tariffs, slow trade facilitation processes, and prevalent non-tariff barriers are significant impediments that must be tackled. Policy reforms in these areas are essential for creating a more conducive environment for trade and investment. Furthermore, the development of a robust and resilient value chain sector in South Asia requires extensive consultations with various stakeholders. These include governments, regional and international institutions, non-governmental entities, and the broader public. Raising awareness among these groups about the benefits and mechanisms of GVC participation is crucial.

With this backdrop, the session would explore the following :

- Can regional value chains improve intra-regional trade in South Asia?
- With high levels of impediments in South Asia trade, how does the region succeed in deeper integration of the region through regional value chains?
- What are the prospects for value chains in networking goods in South Asia? How the nexus between trade in goods and services can be exploited in South Asia to improve value chains in the region?
- What are the challenges faced by South Asian countries in promoting agriculture value chains?

## **Roundtable on Investing in Creative Economy for Inclusive Growth**

Organiser: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

### **Concept Note**

Recently, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution on the 'International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, 2021' that stated that the creative economy contributes to all dimensions of sustainable development and to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

In today's world, much of cultural interaction happens over the exchange of cultural goods and services, such as visual arts, design, crafts, films, books, music, media services and so on. These creative and cultural expressions are increasingly being recognized globally for their significant economic contribution to employment and GDP. While this sector, particularly in the Global South, remains unmapped and unorganized, the figures that have been mapped and accounted for show a contribution of 3.1% of global GDP and 6.2% of all employment and engage a younger workforce aged between 15-29 years than any other sector. Besides, it has also been increasingly recognised to contribute to innovation, inclusion, diversity, and sustainability at large and thus plays a vital role in responding to contemporary global challenges.

In 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, followed by the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. These serve as important global measures for the protection and promotion of cultural diversity and heritage, contributing to the enrichment of the global cultural landscape and sustainable development of societies.

For South Asia, the home to some of the greatest repositories of living cultural practices and indigenous knowledge systems in the world, the potential for

harnessing our creative economy is enormous. Their geographical spread across rural areas, indigenous knowhow and cooperative nature makes them a key structural unit to enable inclusive growth. Combined with our demographic dividend, the creative and cultural industries can possibly become one of the largest human resources in the world, with the prospect for millions of local, green and sustainable livelihoods.

However, from policy and sectoral point of view, when you refer to culture and creativity as an Industry in South Asia, the constant challenge areas that come to front are... How do we measure the size, scale, and diversity of this sector? How do we know how many people work within it? How do we divide it, categorise it? How do we track progress or assess forms of decline or stagnation? How do we understand the real contribution of this sector to the economy?

One of our greatest challenges remains finding a contextually relevant framework to map the culture and creative sector. The lack of such a coherent database has led to the fragmentation of cultural policy and policymaking, making it difficult to establish just how large and how significant this sector is within the Indian economy.

The Jodhpur Consensus of 2005 was coordinated by UNESCO on the Indian soil and this was one of the seminal attempts that tried to forge a working definition of cultural industries “as those industries which produce tangible or intangible artistic and creative outputs, and which have a potential for wealth creation and income generation through the exploitation of cultural assets and production of knowledge-based goods and services (both traditional and contemporary). What cultural industries have in common is that they all use creativity, cultural knowledge and intellectual property to produce products and services with social and cultural meaning.”

It also emphasized the urgent need for data collection methodologies for CCIs to enable policies and strategies for the sector. While significant innovation and resilience has been demonstrated at the grassroots, the sector continues to be viewed as being ‘informal’ and not appropriately categorized for development planning in terms of investments and other needed support. A key area of concern at the policy level is the lack of coordination among several Ministries/ Departments that engage with CCIs as part of their mandate. Perhaps an overarching Cultural Policy can provide a vision and roadmap for various stakeholders and inspire collaboration disabling silos.

Digital platforms are enabling global distribution and access to cultural

goods and services and wider participation of creators. The sector also needs to take advantage of information technology to promote easier access to knowledge resources and promote exchange of creative expressions. A variety of resources in the form of art and craft documentations, reports, academic work, books, recordings, visual material, etc. exists in various government cultural and academic institutions, NGOs and private archives. These existing knowledge repositories related to CCIs need to be digitized, linked and collated in centralized digital repositories and databases that can be made available to a wider audience. This is necessary to ensure easier access, avoid duplication of efforts and resources and enable collaborations and cross referencing across institutions and individuals.

In the same breath one must caution the increasing risk to diversity of cultural content in the digital realm and to intellectual property rights of creators. Cultural content based on community rights such as music traditions or visual arts in tribal and other communities are particularly vulnerable in the digital context.

These discussions are an important platform to deliberate and collaborate on these critical issues that are transnational to help develop and strengthen suitable legal and regulatory frameworks while simultaneously building digital capacities in the sector. This panel discussion provides an opportunity for knowledge exchange and discussions on the potential of India's creative and cultural industries and their contribution to the country's sustainable development in response to contemporary global challenges.





# **Thematic Panels**







## **Thematic Panel 1**

# **Theme: Emerging Paradigms of Global Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development**

Organiser: Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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### **Concept Note**

Countries in the Global South advocate for the reform of Global Governance to facilitate progress towards human development, a goal impeded by potential resistance from the Global North, which is the primary beneficiary of the existing system established after World War II. Despite challenges raised during the 1960s-1970s economic discussions, the Global North successfully resisted reform efforts, particularly in the context of the New International Economic Order (NIEO). This panel posits that a fundamental obstacle to reform lies in the absence of a theoretical framework guiding Global Governance. While the grievances of the Global South were articulated in the 1960s-1980s, primarily focused on the international economic system's imbalances, the lack of a cohesive theoretical foundation hampers meaningful transformation. The NIEO Declaration and Programme of Action attempted to address these grievances, influenced by structuralist development theories prevalent at the time. Developing countries played a pivotal role in aggregating grievances and proposing reform programs. Present-day concerns centre around equitable representation in global economic governance institutions, issues like non-agricultural market access, subsidies from industrialized countries, the impact of liberalized trade on development and employment, access to pharmaceuticals under the TRIPS agreement, external debt burdens, climate change effects, and the need for financial support. In the peace and security domain, the Global South seeks fair and effective representation in the United Nations Security Council, emphasizing the critical link between peace, breaches of peace, and overall development,

including human development, as outlined in the United Nations Charter.

In the sphere of climate action, questions can be raised about two fundamental political foundations: that there is but one common humanity and that global warming is the most critical and immediate threat to the survival of humankind. While 'climate justice' appears centre-stage to climate action, its conceptual basis remains weak since it fails to integrate, in its underlying philosophical foundations, the enormous work done on justice, human rights, equality, governance, democracy and civil society since the mid 19th Century. On a political campaign level, it may be said that the global conferences such as the series of COPs have received excessive attention, while much less has been done on charting how the emergence of global corporations, rapid urbanization and the growth of Megacities especially in Asia, and the enormous increase in the size of the global consumers, or middle class is affecting the dialogue surrounding climate action today. Focus on the local/community and regional levels to promote familiar technologies and conservation practices may prove to be more effective than the global, unwieldy conferences and carefully crafted statements that necessary follow.

## **Abstract**

### **Global Governance, Democracy And Human Development**

**Sudipto Mundle**, Chairman, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum and Former Member, 14th Finance Commission, Government of India

Death and destruction on an unimaginable scale still ongoing in Gaza, now into its third month, bears tragic witness to the failure of global governance. The failure is attributable to the non-democratic governance structure of these institutions, especially the UN Security Council with its voting and veto powers, as also the other UN organisations, the multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other international organisations. Their voting and veto powers reflect the unequal distribution of geopolitical power of the member countries of these institutions. The absence of democracy in the governance structure of international organisations is reinforced by the weakening of democratic forces at the level of individual nation states. The V-Dem institute at Gothenburg

University pointed out in a 2021 survey report that autocratic regimes rule over 67% of the global population. It is the ruling elites of the autocratic regimes that represent 68% of the world's population in the global governance institutions. The power of popular movements to drive political change in dire situations should never be under-estimated. This is what brought about the collapse of the Soviet empire, and many other autocracies. However, this is not the best way forward. The key to a more orderly strengthening of liberal democratic institutions is the empowerment of civil societies. For that we need as robust institutions the other pillars of a democratic society, in particular a judiciary independent of the executive and a vibrant and free press. Absent these institutions civil society is hobbled by a handicap. Human development, in particular the spread of universal basic education, has a key role here in providing a broad and robust foundation for an empowered, self-confident civil society, as also the strengthening of the other pillars of a democratic society within nation states and, therefore, also for a more democratic and equitable architecture of global governance.

## **A Theory for Transforming Global Governance**

**Ibrahim Awad**, Professor of Practice and Director of Centre for Migration and Refugee Studies, Department of Public Policy and Administration, The American University, Cairo, Egypt

Countries of the Global South call for the reform of Global Governance in order to be capable to advance towards human development. The Global North may be obstructing any significant reform since it is the foremost beneficiary of the current Global Governance. It is the Global North that conceptualised, designed and put it in place after World War II. When it was questioned in the economic segment of the international system in the 1960s–1970s, the Global North could preserve it, defeating efforts at its reform. The reference here is to the New International Economic Order (NIEO).

This presentation at the Global Conclave 2024 argues that a major impediment to reform, and to the transformation of Global Governance, is its lack of Theory. Global Governance is made of institutions, norms, rules, arrangements, public and private, at the international, regional, national and subnational levels. Our concern is with the international and regional levels. In the 1960s, 1970s and up to the early 1980s, the Global South's grievances were consistently articulated and reiterated in political positions and academic analyses. These grievances

were about the place of developing countries in the international division of labour; relations of dependence; dependency and centre-periphery relations; deterioration of the terms of trade; exports of low value-adding raw-materials and commodities, against the import of manufactured products; fluctuation of commodity prices; and uneven access to technology. A theoretical framework assembling these grievances and drawing up a programme to redress them were consigned in the NIEO Declaration and Programme of Action. Even before NIEO, in the mid-1960s, new institutions, such as the UNIDO and UNCTAD were set up to address the imbalances in the international economic system. The 1960s and 1970s grievances and proposed reform were largely influenced by the structuralist theory of development.

The Group-of-77, bringing together the decolonised African and Asian countries and those of Latin America, was instrumental in the aggregation of the grievances and in proposing the programme to remedy them. In the peace and security sphere, a symbolic reform increased the number of non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from 11 to 15. Again, the Global South's grievances at present evolve around equitable representation in governance institutions of the Global Economy; non-agricultural market access (NAMA); industrialised countries' subsidies to their agricultural products; the impact of liberalised trade on their development and on employment in their labour markets; access of developing countries' workers to industrialised countries' labour markets; the TRIPS agreement affecting access to pharmaceuticals; the external debt and its servicing burden; access to financing for development; development processes in a context of climate change; financial support to face up to climate change through measures of adaptation and mitigation, and setting up a fund for past loss and damage. In the peace and security sphere, the Global South calls for an equitable and effective representation in the UNSC. Threat to the peace and breaches of the peace, in the language of the United Nations Charter, severely damage development, including human development.

## **The Political Foundations Of Climate Action: Time For A Reset**

**Satish Mishra**, Economist, Policy Advisor and Corporate Strategist, Bali, Indonesia; Former Head and Chief Economist, UN Support Facility for Indonesia Recovery, UNDP, Jakarta

This paper questions two fundamental political foundations for climate action:

that there is but one common humanity and that global warming is the most critical and immediate threat to the survival of humankind. It further argues that the philosophical foundations of climate action lack depth and precision. While 'climate justice' appears centre-stage to climate action, its conceptual basis remains weak since it fails to integrate, in its underlying philosophical foundations, the enormous work done on justice, human rights, equality, governance, democracy and civil society since the mid 19th Century. In fact 'climate justice' only makes sense as a part of an overall framework of equality rather than something sui generis. On a political campaign level, this paper argues that too much attention has been paid to the global conferences such as the series of COPs, culminating with the most recent COP 28 in Dubai. They have done well in promoting awareness of the damage done by global warming but are no longer effective tools for political action on climate change. Much less has been done on charting how the emergence of global corporations, rapid urbanization and the growth of Megacities especially in Asia, and the enormous increase in the size of the global consuming, or middle, class is affecting the dialogue surrounding climate action today. It suggests that it would be more fruitful to focus on the local/community and regional levels to promote familiar technologies and conservation practices rather than the global, unwieldy conferences and carefully crafted statements that necessary follow.

## **An Alternative Policy Paradigm for Consumption, Well-being and Sustainability**

**Chiranjib Sen**, Distinguished Professor of Economics and Public Policy, School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University, Gurugram, Haryana and Former Professor Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

Moderating and restructuring consumption is a crucial but relatively neglected aspect of sustainable development policy. This is necessary for attaining both a higher level of well-being and for respecting planetary resource boundaries. We propose an alternative policy paradigm and implementation strategy framework to attain these goals. Our policy recommendation has the following elements—(a) modifying the underlying materialistic and individualistic values that motivate the compulsive consumption behaviour of the affluent sections (the top quintile accounts for 40% of Indian consumption); and (b) promoting consumer demand for targeted 'green' commodities. Our approach draws on

the findings of research done by psychologists, economists and sustainability scholars on consumption, well-being and sustainability. A core idea reflected in our paper is that maximizing material consumption (even though this is the central aim of development policy) is not the most effective means of generating well-being. A deeper and more fulfilling type of happiness (eudaemonic well-being) may be accessed through transforming values.

To attain these objectives, we propose a two-fold strategy— (1) a ‘micro-level’ strategy that seeks to modify the individual’s attitudes and behaviour via education, better information and awareness building, and persuasion. We do not rely exclusively on economic incentives; (2) a ‘macro-level’ strategy that creates an enabling environment. To ensure a “decent living standard” for the poor, we recommend targeted government expenditures. Available estimation procedures can be used to estimate the environmental footprint of these expenditures. Government buy-in and leadership are crucial for the strategy. We recommend a modification of the policy making framework that involves a realignment of the relationship between government, market and civil society and adopts a participative and consultative approach.

To implement the ‘micro-level’ values-oriented strategy, we recommend a strong role for higher education institutions to create and disseminate courses on human values and environmental ethics. To illustrate how this may be done, we discuss as the human values compulsory course that has been successfully introduced in the International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad. To illustrate how ‘green consumption’ may be promoted, we recommend the adoption of a Social Marketing Framework (Kotler and Zaltman). We discuss as an example the ‘Solarise Delhi’ campaign to promote the adoption of residential rooftop solar installation in two Delhi neighbourhoods. This is a very interesting pilot project based on private-public-residential association partnership. It provides a model that may be replicated elsewhere.

## Thematic Panel 2

# Theme: Economic Growth and Human Development Linkages: Regional Experiences in India

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### Concept Note

As India strives for economic growth, it navigates a multifaceted terrain marked by a varied performance in developmental indicators. While witnessing considerable income growth and reductions in poverty, specific social and health outcomes show limited improvement, prompting inquiries into the intricate interplay between economic advancement and human development. This panel aims to delve into these dynamics from a regional perspective, acknowledging the diverse socio-cultural and historical contexts that mould India's path of development. The regional perspective spans not only the sub-national level, but even comparison across borders, such as between the state of Kerala within India and Sri Lanka. The environmental concerns necessitate consideration of sustainability in human development alongside equity.

By examining historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors, the panel aims to identify key challenges and opportunities in aligning economic progress with improvements in social and health indicators. The ultimate goal is to inform policy discussions and interventions that promote sustainable and inclusive development across diverse regions of India.

#### Major Questions to be Addressed:

- What factors contribute to the disparity between India's impressive income growth and the sluggish progress in social and health outcomes?
- How do cultural and historical elements, such as gender norms, caste

systems, and education investments, influence India's ability to achieve robust social development?

- How do regional variations within India offer a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and successes in achieving human development?
- What challenges does India face in balancing economic growth, equity, and sustainability at the sub-national level?
- What is the causal relationship between social infrastructure (education and health) and economic growth in selected Indian regions?
- Which specific development indicators exhibit a strong association with economic growth, and how can policy interventions leverage these insights for effective development strategies?
- By addressing these major questions, the panel aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the economic growth and human development linkages in India, with a focus on regional experiences. The insights generated will contribute to informed policy decisions aimed at providing holistic development and addressing the challenges unique to each region.

## **Abstract**

### **Why has India Remained a Laggard in Developmental Indicators?**

**Neeraj Kaushal**, Professor Social Policy, National Bureau of Economic Research, Columbia School of Social Work, United States

India's report card on developmental indicators has been mixed. Over the past three decades, India has charted a trajectory of high income growth, accompanied with a record fall in poverty (based on the consumption poverty measure) as well as multi-dimensional poverty (Bhalla, Bhasin, and Virmani 2023; Panagariya and More 2023; Kaushal 2023). Yet, progress on a range of developmental and demographic health indicators has remained tepid, in



particular when compared with India's neighbors with less stellar economic performances and fiscal management. This has raised the question: why has income growth not translated into better social and health outcomes? Are cultural and historical factors (such as gender norms, including low female labor force participation, caste system, perennially low investments in education and health) inhibiting India to achieve high social and developmental outcomes? I investigate these questions by first comparing Indian regional/state level performance in social and developmental outcomes with the contiguous South Asian countries. For instance, I compare level and growth in social and developmental indicators of Kerala and Tamil Nadu with Sri Lanka; West Bengal with Bangladesh; Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh (hilly states) with Nepal; and Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan. The underlying assumption of these analyses is that regional comparisons are more appropriate in capturing some of the cultural and historical factors that have determined the long-term trajectories of social outcomes of Indian states and the comparisons allow us to parse out the impact of these historic factors. The regional comparisons present a more nuanced story: in terms of most indicators Indian states/regions have done as well as, and sometimes better than, the contiguous neighboring country. Wide regional (or state-level) differences across India make such comparisons more appropriate than all-India comparisons. Next, I examine the association between state GDP and social and developmental outcomes, nationally, and across groups of states, (e.g. southern states versus northern states; states with historically more evolved gender norms measured using women's labor force participation) to draw inferences about whether faster GDP growth in future would be sufficient to improve developmental and social outcomes across state types.

### **Southern Supermodels: Human Development Trajectories of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka**

**Swati Narayan**, Associate Professor, School for Public Health and Human Development, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

A woman in Sri Lanka and the Indian state of Kerala can expect to live on average for at least 78 years – longer than American men. Despite being entirely separate political and geographical entities from the early nineteenth century, Sri Lanka (1830 - 1977) and the neighbouring Indian state of Kerala (1817 - 1975) across

the Palk Straits, have evolved almost simultaneously in their respective human developmental trajectories, during their heydays. Tamil Nadu matured decades later (1916 onwards) in a similar mould of exceptional advancements in human development outcomes, notwithstanding modest per capita incomes. This paper adopts a comparative historical analysis to juxtapose the political economy of the development arcs of the three regions – Sri Lanka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu – to glean their similarities on the economic, social, historical, cultural and human development fronts. Based on Mill’s Method of Logic and the ‘similarities in similar cases’ across borders, a century of empirical evidence from archival sources on education is also collated to validate the superiority of the human development outcomes of the South Asian trio. The contention is that the relative success of these frontrunner regions has primarily been built on their ability over centuries to diminish multi-dimensional inequalities of caste, class and gender. This research explores four catalysts that have fuelled their progressive transformations. First, these regions are similar in their steadfast commitment to the provision of universal public services. Second is the contribution of social reform movements by subaltern classes, including the role of left-wing parties in nurturing and building the edifice for progressive social outcomes. The third anchor focuses on the scale and depth of women’s movements. The last facet explores the cultural ties between the Southern triad, which enabled the mutual osmosis between emancipatory social movements and the evolution of progressive developmental states. This research concludes that the evolution of the human development trajectories of the Southern Supermodels has primarily depended on their forays to overcome multi-dimensional inequalities. Through these class, caste and gender transformations in the course of a century, these “exceptional” regions have been able to achieve levels of human development comparable to developed countries.

### **Causal Connection Between Human Development and Economic Growth: Explaining the North–South Divide in India**

**Santosh Mehrotra**, Visiting Professor, Centre for Development, University of Bath, UK and Former Professor of Economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

**Jajati Keshari Parida**, Associate Professor, School of Economics, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

Though the Indian economy has grown at a much faster rate than ever before

since 2002-03, at an average of about 7 per cent per annum until the Covid-19 pandemic struck hard, interstate disparity in terms of economic growth has widened considerably. The divergence between per capita incomes and human development indicators between the well-performing mostly southern/western states on the one hand, and the lower-performing northern/eastern states of India also emerges during the last three decades. States like Kerala, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat etc., which could sustain high GSDP growth (close to double-digit) were also relatively advanced in terms of Human Development (HD). In contrast, the relatively backward states (in terms of HD ranking) like Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, have registered under 5 per cent per annum (on average) economic growth (EG). These are the states where the incidence of poverty, malnutrition and infant mortality rates are very high, and the mean years of schooling have remained low, which did not improve much during the last two decades. This article aims to examine the link between economic growth and human development in Indian states. The major findings of the article suggest that provincial states which achieved and sustained higher rates of economic growth were mostly advanced in terms of the human development index. This is mainly because a synergetic relation exists at the macro level among income-poverty reduction, expansion of functionings (education and health), and economic growth in Indian states.

Based on these above empirical findings it can be argued that the provision of basic social services is a fundamental factor in triggering the virtuous circle between economic growth, income-poverty reduction and enhancement of functioning. State intervention in promoting expansion of functionings, reduction of poverty and economic growth supports and strengthens each other in a synergistic way or through various feedback loops. For instance, it is argued that economic growth will be faster and more sustainable if poverty is reduced simultaneously with improvement in education and if the health status of the poor is targeted. Similarly, the policy impact of poverty reduction on economic growth depends on the level of human functioning attained by the population. Similarly, economic growth will be more successful in reducing income poverty, i.e. the elasticity of poverty reduction to economic growth will be higher when human capital is more equitably distributed. In other words, positive feedback from improved education to greater income equality is likely to favour higher rates of economic growth. This is because, as education becomes more broadly based, low-income people are better able to seek out economic opportunities.

## **Causal Link Between Social Infrastructure and Economic Growth: Explorations from A Panel Study of Selected Indian Regions**

**Suresh Chand Aggarwal**, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi

**Bishwanath Goldar**, Sr. Fellow, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi

**Yashobanta Parida**, Assistant Professor of Economics, FLAME University, Pune

Many studies have empirically established the causal link between infrastructural development and economic growth. While infrastructure directly induces economic growth through facilitating production and by increasing its productivity and efficiency, economic growth may also induce infrastructure growth through different routes, especially through the supply of funds and increased demand for infrastructure. However, while all infrastructure plays an important role in economic development, it is the social infrastructure, i.e. education and health, which has a direct bearing on the level of human development. The importance of infrastructure, especially social, and its inadequacy in most of the countries is immediately exposed when faced with any natural calamity, as happened during COVID-19, or during floods, fires, heat waves, etc. It is thus not obvious that the developed countries do have better social infrastructure and it is only the poor regions which face the inadequacies. There are examples where the GDP per capita of a country may be low but it has developed social infrastructure, i.e. have high level of human development (Cuba) and vice versa (Saudi Arabia). The same may be true about different regions within a country. While some studies have established the causal link for specific aspects of physical infrastructure, e.g. transport, highways, and power and telecommunication, others have done it for social infrastructure, i.e. for education, health, etc. The studies have used different parameters and indicators to measure infrastructure. The present study aims to be comprehensive and would identify and differentiate between indicators of social infrastructure and their causal link with economic growth. Its focus is to find out which of the indicators have stronger relationship with economic growth. The key facilitators and the main bottlenecks to growth would be identified, which could have important policy implications—as different policy initiatives in turn have a strong bearing on the growth of social infrastructure. The methodology planned for the study is to use panel data of selected nineteen major regions (States) of India over a period of time and use panel data econometric models to estimate the stipulated relationships. A priori testing of data using ADF and

PP unit root tests, applying Johansen co-integration technique and VAR models, and post estimation testing of the coefficients would be part of the methodology. The different indicators constituting the social infrastructure will be identified and the weights assigned by using the Principal component analysis and the sub-indicators will be aggregated into indices. The results are expected to give a long term relationship between different indicators of social infrastructure and economic growth and the role which each indicator of infrastructure plays in economic growth. The variation in the status of different regions of India and the underlying reasons would be identified and analysed.

### **Human Development, Innovation and Income Inequality: A Study of Asia-Pacific Countries**

**Lakhwinder Singh Gill**, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi and Former Professor, Punjabi University, Patiala

**Zemed Degu Mangesha**, Assistant Professor of Economics, Oromia State University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Modern economic growth triggered by epochal innovation has generated structural transformation and dramatically increased productivity and production. This has led to the rise of income and wealth inequality. The twentieth-century economic development experience has shown a roller coaster ride of income and wealth inequalities across space and time. From the last quarter of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the 21st century, inequalities have broken all records that have made the well-established theory of income inequality redundant (Kuznets, 1955). The recent phase of hyper-globalization has witnessed an unprecedented rise in income inequality thrown a challenge to understand the dynamics of the processes and factors that determine it. Several attempts to understand the continuous rise of income inequalities have shown that multiple factors are involved but the debate lacks consensus (Singh and Mangesh, 2023). However, the fourth industrial revolution innovations have further accentuated the income and wealth inequalities. In this study, an attempt is made to examine the role of innovations in determining the level and pace of economic inequalities over time. A novel perspective is adopted in terms of examining the role of human development human capital aspect of it and financialization as conduits of innovation impacted income inequalities. This study is based on a panel data set of the hyper-globalization phase covering

the period 1990 to 2022 of the 15 Asia-Pacific countries. The preliminary findings are as follows:

The Pesaran CD, Pesaran scaled LM and Breusch-Pagan LM tests indicated that all variables rejected the null hypothesis of cross-sectional independence at the standard level of significance. In the presence of cross-sectional dependence, the first-generation panel unit root tests may produce incorrect findings. Hence, the study has employed second-generation panel unit root tests to test the stationarity of the study variables. The Pesaran CIPS and Bai and Ng-PANIC unit root test results revealed that inflation, globalization and institutional quality variables are stationary at the level and integrated at order zero,  $I(0)$  whereas income inequality, innovation, human capital, financial development and GDP per capita variables are stationary after first differencing,  $I(1)$ . The test result indicated that the null hypothesis of no cointegration was rejected and concluded that innovation and other control variables have a significant joint impact on income inequality in the long run.

Concerning the estimation results of the econometric model, the study revealed that innovation has a positive and significant impact on income inequality in the sampled Asia-Pacific countries. Similarly, inflation and globalization variables have a significant positive effect on income inequality. On the contrary, institutional quality has a negative significant impact on income inequality indicating that better institutional quality has an income equalizing effect. As mediating variables employed in the nexus between innovation and income inequality, human capital development has a significant impact in reducing the income inequality gap whereas financial development widens the income inequality gap in the sampled Asia-Pacific economies.

## **Thematic Panel 3**

### **Theme: Employment, Vulnerabilities and Inclusive Policies**

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#### **Concept note**

In the contemporary global landscape, employment vulnerabilities have become increasingly pronounced, reflecting the intricate challenges faced by workers worldwide. Factors such as technological advancements, automation, and artificial intelligence have reshaped industries, leading to job displacement and a demand for new skill sets. The rise of gig and precarious work arrangements has contributed to a lack of job security and social protection for a significant portion of the workforce. Moreover, the ongoing globalisation of economies has created a competitive environment, where companies may prioritise cost-cutting measures at the expense of stable employment. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these vulnerabilities, with widespread job losses and disruptions amplifying existing inequalities. As the nature of work evolves rapidly, addressing employment vulnerabilities requires comprehensive policies that focus on reskilling, social safety nets, and fostering inclusive economic growth to ensure sustainable and equitable employment opportunities in the contemporary world.

Among the different issues, thus, in addition to the difficulties in availing jobs, are also those in regard to the quality of jobs. This panel examines varied dimensions of contract employment, migration, gaps in the demand and supply of work, and Covid disruptions that has caused in the world of work. The five dimensions of the job market discussed here are,

- The sustained impact of Covid on the job markets due to the disruptions it has caused.
- There are problems arising out of skill-gaps. Skills-migration needs to become a key element of national employment policies and strategies to balance the supply and demand for jobs across national boundaries through safe, orderly and regular pathways for movement of labour.
- Vulnerability of worker, especially among workers in the lower echelons of jobs.
- The perennial issue of migration.

Among the aspects also discussed, is the impact of specific policies on the exports of goods from India (case discussed: Steel) under different policy regimes. In the event that the exports fall, employment is accordingly impacted.

## **Abstract**

### **COVID-19 Pandemic, Economic Growth and Employment: Experiences and Lessons**

**Rizwanul Islam**, Former Senior Adviser, ILO, Geneva

The whole world was shaken by the COVID-19 pandemic that started towards the end of 2019 and has been ravaging the world since then. The crisis caused by the pandemic was widely regarded as the worst since World War II. Since then, over 695 million people have been infected, and over 6.9 million have died (as of 31 August, 2023 – according to data from Worldometers – <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> - accessed on 31 August 2023). Vaccines for treating patients infected by the virus were not available until about the end of 2020. So, the initial response for preventing the spread of the disease was to isolate people from each other which in turn required shutting down of normal activities of human beings – the measure which popularly came to be known as lockdown. The result was disruption in economic activities, education of students and the livelihoods of people. Throughout the pandemic period, the



focus of discussion and debate was the dilemma between saving lives and livelihoods of people. The shutdown of economic activities imposed in various countries led to such a sharp downturn in the global economy that it was the worst recession after the Great Depression of the 1930s. The downturn continued throughout 2020 and recovery was attained only in 2021. Most countries – both developed and developing – responded by adopting measures to stimulate economic activities and to protect those whose jobs were threatened. A few points may be noted in that regard. First, during the initial phase of the spread of the disease, not all countries were affected to the same extent. However, subsequent “waves” of the pandemic hit many more countries and caused more deaths. Second, all countries did not go for strict shutdown of their economies. Third, some countries were able to bring the virus under control more quickly than others. A number of questions arise from the differences in experiences mentioned above. For example, did the countries less affected by the virus face less severe economic downturns? Were those who did not adopt strict shutdown able to avoid economic downturn? What was the nature and magnitude of the impact on the employment and labour market situations and how helpful were the response programmes in mitigating the adverse effects? Although there is a growing literature on the impact of the covid pandemic on the economy and labour markets of various countries, the same cannot be said for comparative analysis of the experience. Furthermore, although the pandemic appears to be over, the virus has not yet been fully eliminated from the planet. It is changing form through mutations and is continuing to infect people, although it is no longer as deadly as before the discovery of vaccines. Also, the likelihood of similar challenges to human health in future cannot be completely ruled out. Hence, an analysis of the experience gained from the impact of the covid pandemic and of the measures adopted to address the challenges can be useful in formulating policies and strategies for future.

### **Jobs in Africa or Jobs for Africans? Integrating skilled migration in national youth employment policies (A+)**

**Saurabh Sinha**, Chief of Social Policy, UN Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The paper analyses the issues of demography, education and skills migration in an integrated way so as to accelerate national and regional-level actions for

increasing employment opportunities for young Africans. The central argument of the paper is that skills migration needs to become a key element of national employment policies and strategies to balance the supply and demand for jobs across national boundaries through safe, orderly and regular pathways for movement of labour. Africa will add 184 million to its youth population (15-24) in the next thirty years so that by 2050 one in every three young people in the world will be African. The working-age population (20-64 years) will be more than double the number in 2022 and constitute almost 25 per cent of the global working-age population. At the same time, Europe is rapidly aging, with a decrease in the proportion of the working-age population – by 2050 there will be nearly 100 million fewer people aged 20-64 in Europe than there are in 2022. Creating regular pathways for properly managed migration presents an immense opportunity for alleviating the challenge of job shortages for skilled workers in Africa with development benefits for all parties. However, in most countries, issues and policies relating to youth employment and migration are dealt with independently of each other across different ministries and often with little integration among them. Lack of coordination across ministries results in inefficiencies and lack of attention to important, overlapping issues and disjointed policies. Policymakers while devising policies to increase jobs for youth within national boundaries (or Jobs in Africa) need to also identify opportunities, and partner with countries, in the region and outside the continent to absorb their increasing and young labour force (for Jobs for Africans). The global mismatch between jobs and labour – demand for labour in Europe and North America and demand for good jobs in Africa – has huge implications for development policy. Through a rigorous analysis of demographic trends, and review of literature on education and skills, and employment in Africa and Europe, the paper makes a number of policy recommendations. There is an urgent need for integrating skills migration with national employment strategies for increasing access of young Africans to suitable jobs, within or outside the country. Countries in Europe need to undertake a thorough analysis of their labour requirements and identify countries in Africa to source future skilled labour. None of the options currently being explored in Europe, such as extending retirement ages, exporting jobs, and investing in automation, can fully meet their future demand for skills from among its current working-age population. Bilateral partnerships between countries of origin and destination should be encouraged to promote regular migration pathways. Countries can set up an effective, responsive, and dynamic labour migration governance system and scale-up bilateral skills partnership models such as ‘Talent Partnerships’ and the ‘Global Skill Partnership’. As part of bilateral skill partnerships, countries that benefit from inflow of regular skilled migrants should invest in training and skills development to upgrade the stock of skills

and improve the average level of skills in the countries of origin. This will ensure that even after migration, there are sufficiently qualified workers in the country and minimize the potential adverse impact of loss of skills through migration.

## **Vulnerable work and labour market transitions**

**Shamim S. Mondal**, Professor, Alliance University, Bengaluru

**Priya Harchandani**, Assistant Professor, Bennett University, Uttar Pradesh

The developing countries are characterized by a large informal sector that often employs most workers with jobs characterized by a high degree of vulnerability and very few institutional protections. Thus, an understanding of vulnerability of jobs, and documenting the transitions of workers from the states of highly vulnerable to less vulnerable jobs as well as to unemployment and self-employment, is important towards informing public policy in such countries. This paper studies the nature of work, especially when employees work for an employer. We aim to characterize workers into high and low vulnerability categories based on job characteristics such as type of job contract, availability of social security, eligibility to avail paid leaves and the size of the enterprise using the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). Because of lack of consistent data availability for all worker characteristics for all periods in the sample preventing assignment of vulnerability scores in all instances, we propose and implement a machine learning random forest predictive model to assign vulnerability status (high versus low) to employees in instances of data unavailability based on observable characteristics. Next, we use the longitudinal feature of our data to study the transitions in and out of the following labour market states: unemployment, self-employment, high vulnerability, and low vulnerability employment. We study the variations in such transitions for different groups of people in urban India by age, gender, education, marital status, religion, and caste. Using unit-level data for urban workers from the PLFS for the years 2017-2020, we characterize the jobs of workers that are not self-employed into whether they are vulnerable or not. We use a vulnerability index for jobs created in Harchandani and Shome (2023) to categorize workers into high and low vulnerability jobs. We use a random forest classification prediction model (using first visit as training data) to classify people into high vulnerability and low vulnerability jobs for subsequent visits using age (15-64 years), logarithm of monthly earnings, dummies for state, and industry and occupation at 2-digit levels. Based on the actual and the predicted

labour market status (unemployed, self-employed, high vulnerability and low vulnerability), we then create transition probability matrices overall and for different groups by age, gender, education, marital status, religion, and caste of workers. We find that in general, labour market states are highly persistent: for the overall population, the probability of transitioning to the same state in the next period is at least 83.8% in our sample. The self-employment is the most persistent state, with the transition probability being 94.74%. The probability of transitioning from low-vulnerable to high-vulnerable job is about 14.5%, and people have a reasonably high likelihood from transitioning from highly vulnerable job to unemployment 7.32%. Transition from low-vulnerability to unemployment is very rare (1.1%). From unemployment, people transition to unemployment 83.8% of time, to highly vulnerable jobs 11.48% of time and to self-employment 4% of time. More educated people (having higher than secondary education) have higher persistence in both high- and low-vulnerability jobs (about 85.4% for both), but also in unemployment (90.84%), which accounts for a higher unemployment rate for them compared to less educated, who has an unemployment-to-unemployment transition probability of 73%. Similar predictable patterns are observed by age, marital status etc. Further analysis by gender, caste and religion provides useful insights. Our results suggest prioritizing policies to create jobs with lower job vulnerability.

## **Mobility and its determinants at the Lower Echelons: Evidence Based on Slum Household Panel Data**

**Arup Mitra**, Professor, South Asian University, Delhi

**Yuko Tsujita**, Sr. Fellow, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan

The developing countries are characterized by a large informal sector that often employs most workers with jobs characterized by a high degree of vulnerability and very few institutional protections. Thus, an understanding of vulnerability of jobs, and documenting the transitions of workers from the states of highly vulnerable to less vulnerable jobs as well as to unemployment and self-employment, is important towards informing public policy in such countries. This paper studies the nature of work, especially when employees work for an employer. We aim to characterize workers into high and low vulnerability categories based on job characteristics such as type of job contract, availability of social security, eligibility to avail paid leaves and the size of the enterprise using the Periodic

Labour Force Survey (PLFS). Because of lack of consistent data availability for all worker characteristics for all periods in the sample preventing assignment of vulnerability scores in all instances, we propose and implement a machine learning random forest predictive model to assign vulnerability status (high versus low) to employees in instances of data unavailability based on observable characteristics. Next, we use the longitudinal feature of our data to study the transitions in and out of the following labour market states: unemployment, self-employment, high vulnerability, and low vulnerability employment. We study the variations in such transitions for different groups of people in urban India by age, gender, education, marital status, religion, and caste. Using unit-level data for urban workers from the PLFS for the years 2017–2020, we characterize the jobs of workers that are not self-employed into whether they are vulnerable or not. We use a vulnerability index for jobs created in Harchandani and Shome (2023) to categorize workers into high and low vulnerability jobs. We use a random forest classification prediction model (using first visit as training data) to classify people into high vulnerability and low vulnerability jobs for subsequent visits using age (15–64 years), logarithm of monthly earnings, dummies for state, and industry and occupation at 2-digit levels. Based on the actual and the predicted labour market status (unemployed, self-employed, high vulnerability and low vulnerability), we then create transition probability matrices overall and for different groups by age, gender, education, marital status, religion, and caste of workers. We find that in general, labour market states are highly persistent: for the overall population, the probability of transitioning to the same state in the next period is at least 83.8% in our sample. The self-employment is the most persistent state, with the transition probability being 94.74%. The probability of transitioning from low-vulnerable to high-vulnerable job is about 14.5%, and people have a reasonably high likelihood from transitioning from highly vulnerable job to unemployment 7.32%. Transition from low-vulnerability to unemployment is very rare (1.1%). From unemployment, people transition to unemployment 83.8% of time, to highly vulnerable jobs 11.48% of time and to self-employment 4% of time. More educated people (having higher than secondary education) have higher persistence in both high- and low-vulnerability jobs (about 85.4% for both), but also in unemployment (90.84%), which accounts for a higher unemployment rate for them compared to less educated, who has an unemployment-to-unemployment transition probability of 73%. Similar predictable patterns are observed by age, marital status etc. Further analysis by gender, caste and religion provides useful insights. Our results suggest prioritizing policies to create jobs with lower job vulnerability.

## Thematic Panel 4

### Theme: Gender, Social Norms and Work

Organiser: Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### Concept Note

Gender equality not only benefits women, but society at large. Similarly women's labour force participation is crucial for various reasons, not only does it increase a nation's GDP and significantly reduce poverty, but also creates diversification and resilience. A workforce that is gender-inclusive and diversified is better prepared to adjust and withstand economic shocks. Women can provide a variety of abilities and practical expertise that can help businesses and economies through difficult times. However, to bring in gender parity in the work force, it is paramount to challenge the assumption that male labor force participation patterns are the gold standard for a well-lived life and that women should aspire to emulate them to achieve prominence in their careers. Instead, a more nuanced understanding is required of preferences and agency in the context of labor force participation, considering the possibility that, men may also benefit from greater flexibility, choice, and support for domestic and care work. This brings us to our next area of concern, "motherhood penalty". The impact of motherhood and societal origins affects women adversely. The motherhood penalty - the disadvantages mothers face in the labor market - is a global phenomenon with significant consequences for women's economic well-being and career advancement. This is especially evident in the Indian subcontinent when it comes to interactions with cultural and societal factors. Once these factors are taken into consideration, it has the potential to inform policy interventions and organizational practices aimed at promoting gender equality and reducing discrimination against mothers in the workplace. In regards to women's labour force, women's entrepreneurship is a powerful force for positive change, driving economic growth, social progress, and innovation across the globe. Increasing women's entrepreneurship has a ripple

effect, boosting their economic independence, agency, and overall societal contributions. By uncovering the specific relationships between social norms, sanctions, and female business ownership, robust evidence is gathered to inform targeted policy interventions. This can guide national and regional policymakers in crafting effective strategies to address social barriers and promote supportive environments for women's entrepreneurship. Overall, a healthy female labor force participation benefits not only women, but society as a whole. It results in a more wealthy, equitable, and healthier world for everybody.

### **Abstract**

## **Why Can't a Man be More Like a Woman? Gender, Preferences and Agency in Labour Force Participation**

**Alaka Basu**, Department of Sociology, Cornell University

A large and growing literature documents, with regret, the low and falling levels of female labor force participation in India in recent years. An equally large literature tries to identify the structural, normative, and physical reasons for this trend. However, although words like 'empowerment' and 'agency' are routinely used to describe both the determinants and the consequences of female participation in the labor force, there is much less reflection on what these words mean in the Indian context. This paper argues that these discussions and debates do exactly what feminist scholarship on gender has long been complaining about – use the male experience (in any aspect of life – economic, social, political, health) as the gold standard to define what constitutes the well lived life and therefore what women almost must aspire to. Thus, if employment is central to the lives of men, then women too must be encouraged to make employment and income central aspects of their own lives if we want a gender equal world. My paper uses the example of labour force participation to ask if we need to take a step back and look at some of the ways in which male labour force participation levels might not reflect male 'preferences' for labor force participation and male agency in labour force participation decisions. Once

we allow for some ambiguity in these preferences and agency, we can move towards a framing of gender equality goals as those take those labor market preferences and practices of both men and women which lead to the best outcomes for individuals and societies and then redesigning a more syncretic gold standard that both men and women can aspire to. In practical terms, this might mean that both men and women need more flexible kinds of work, more choices in the kind of work they do, more time and opportunities for satisfying leisure activities, and more time and institutional support for domestic and care work. For too many women as well as men, the contemporary work environment is toxic, frustrating and exhausting and employment policies need to go beyond only providing jobs to everyone. To make these points, my paper tries to examine concepts of 'preferences and agency' in a more gender-neutral framework that allows for the possibility that, in some ways, men may benefit from 'becoming more like women' instead of gender equality being only about making women more like men, even in the economic sphere. After all, even in the MDGs and the SDGs, the emphasis on jobs and employment is not just to increase national GDP; it is as much to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and societies.

## **Gender Norms and the Motherhood Penalty: Experimental Evidence from India**

**Arjun S. Bedi**, Professor, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Hague, South Holland

**Tanmoy Majilla**, Assistant Professor, Plaksha University, Chandigarh, Chandigarh

**Matthias Rieger**, Associate Professor, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Hague, South Holland

The paper is based on a CV experiment with motherhood and societal origins as treatments. We quantify if employers differentiate between applications sent by mothers and non-mothers from different origin societies. Our fictitious applicants are mothers or non-mothers of Khasi (Northeast India, matrilineal), Naga (Northeast, patrilineal) or Bengali (East India, patrilineal) origin. This allows us to examine the effect of empowerment by comparing interview callback rates for mothers from Northeast India with mothers from East India, as well as the implicit effect of culture by comparing Khasi to Bengali and Naga mothers.



To execute the experiment, we searched for entry-level jobs in call centres or business process outsourcing (BPO) and in the financial sector, across three Indian cities. To complement the experiments, we conducted qualitative interviews with Human Resource (HR) managers and head hunters. To preview our results, we find that mothers are substantially less likely to receive callbacks (14%-points). This effect varies considerably across communities. Relatively more empowered Northeastern women average a smaller motherhood penalty (5.68%-points;  $p$ -value=0.10). Mothers from patrilineal East India and Northeast India experience a large (-29.48%-points;  $p$ -value=0.00) and smaller penalty (-9.12%-points;  $p$ -value=0.08), respectively. Mothers from matrilineal Northeast India face no discernible penalty (-2.27%-points;  $p$ -value=0.67). Interestingly, we do not find gender differences in callback rates for male and female applicants without children. Consistent with findings from the US (Correll et al., 2007), gender differences materialize only due to motherhood. In the second round of the experiment where we added experience to all CVs, qualitatively similar patterns emerge, although, the magnitude of the adverse motherhood effect is smaller. With regard to ethnicity, we find that women from the Northeast receive substantially fewer callbacks as compared to Bengalis. This gap arises mainly due to differences in callback rates in the financial sector. Our paper makes three contributions to the literature. First, we provide causal evidence on the societal origin and labor market success of women with and without children. We build on previous gender experiments across cultures, and social norms in organizations. Rather than focusing on preferences, we examine the downstream effects of culture on labor market success in the context of one of the most important dimensions of gender and labor markets, namely motherhood. Thus, our study feeds into the literature on the organizational origins of economic inequality (Cobb, 2016; Cobb and Lin, 2017; Amis et al., 2018; Tomaskovic-Devey and Avent-Holt, 2019). Second, we add to the broader literature on the firm-specific drivers of female labor market participation (Dwivedi et al., 2018; Fernandez-Mateo and Kaplan, 2018; Zhang, 2020). To the best of our knowledge, there is limited experimental evidence on the labor market consequences of motherhood and gender norms in a developing country setting. Third, in addition to identifying the labor market effects of culture and motherhood, our rich setting allows us to examine the related effect of ethnicity adding novel evidence on ethnic-based discrimination in the Indian labor market. Given the importance of workplace diversity in firm productivity (Richard et al., 2007; Nielson and Nielson, 2013), it is a cause of concern for senior managers.

## **Examining the relationship between social norms, sanctions, and women’s entrepreneurship in three Indian states**

**Vedavati Patwardhan**, Research Scientist, Center on Gender Equity and Health, University of California, San Diego, San Diego, California

This paper examines the relationship between social norms and sanctions around women’s business ownership and the prevalence of women’s entrepreneurship in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. This analysis uses data from a cross-sectional survey conducted in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra during September – October 2022 on behalf of the EMERGE initiative of the Center on Gender Equity and Health (GEH) at the University of California, San Diego, in partnership with the International Institute for Population Sciences and with advisement from UN Women. The survey was developed to advance measures of agency and norms related to women control over financial resources, assets and income generation, as well as socio-economic and political engagement and leadership. In total, 6634 men and women aged 15 years and above were interviewed. The survey sampled households using multi-stage stratified, population proportionate to size sampling and is representative at the state-level. The final sample size for our analysis is 3284 women across the three states (1046 women in Bihar, 1166 women in Uttar Pradesh, 1072 women in Maharashtra). For each state, we used multivariable logistic regression analyses to examine associations between descriptive norms (more supportive, i.e., believing it is the norm for women to own a business vs. less supportive or believing it is not the norm for women to own a business), sanctions (absence vs. presence) and women’s business ownership. Analyses adjusted for demographic and household covariates, including respondent’s marital status, religion, caste, age, education, number of children under 15 years, household size, and the gender of the household head. Women who believed that it was the norm for women to own a business were almost four times more likely to own a business in Bihar, nearly five times more likely to own a business in Uttar Pradesh, and over seven times more likely to own a business in Maharashtra. Turning to sanctions, we found that women who perceived a lack of sanctions against female business owners were significantly more likely to own a business in Maharashtra. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, there was no difference in the likelihood of female business ownership based on the presence (or lack of) women’s perceived sanctions. However, in Bihar, sanctions significantly moderate the association between supportive descriptive norms and female business ownership. Our findings suggest that creating greater acceptance of women running businesses is

important in promoting women's entrepreneurship in India. This is in line with evidence that shows that community approval matters for women's work. In the case of perceived sanctions, we found a different state wise pattern, wherein a majority of sampled women in Maharashtra and Bihar perceived sanctions against female business owners, while fewer than half of sampled women from Uttar Pradesh perceived sanctions. These diverging patterns related to descriptive norms and perceived sanctions highlight the need to capture both norms and associated sanctions as distinct survey measures; assessing descriptive norms alone does not capture all aspects of norms. Only 8.05 million of the 58.5 million businesses in India (i.e., just under 14%) are managed by women (Government of India, 2014). Our study underscores the need for policy interventions aimed at increasing women's labor force participation, and in particular, entrepreneurship, to consider the enabling and limiting role of social norms and sanctions related to women's business ownership.

### **Deadweight Losses or Gains from In-kind Transfers? Experimental Evidence from India**

**Gaurav Datt**, Professor and Deputy Director, Centre for Development Economics and Sustainability, Monash University, Australia

Are in-kind transfers associated with deadweight losses? To answer this, we conducted an incentivized field experiment, which offered low-income respondents the choice between a free quantity of rice and varying amounts of cash to elicit their willingness to pay for rice. Contrary to expectation, we find evidence of deadweight gain on average, though with a striking contrast between a deadweight loss among women from female-headed households and a deadweight gain among women from male-headed households. After investigating several alternative mechanisms, our results highlight that greater bargaining power of women within the household increases the likelihood of choosing cash over rice.

## Enhancing Work Participation for Women in Urban India: Insights from a Large Survey in Delhi

**Balwant Singh Mehta** and **Alakh N Sharma**, Institute for Human Development (IHD) New Delhi

Women's participation in the labour market is significantly low in developing countries like India, particularly in urban areas. Existing literature suggests several factors contributing to this low female work participation in urban India. These include social and cultural norms, domestic and care responsibilities, income and education effects, lack of suitable job opportunities for women, work environment and safety concerns, as well as issues related to the measurement and underreporting of women's work in official statistics. This paper aims to delve into these key issues within the context of women's work participation in the urban labour market, drawing insights from a large primary survey conducted by IHD in NCT Delhi, covering 10,173 households in 2021/22.

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), NCT Delhi exhibited a significant gender gap in the labour market in 2021-22, with the workforce participation rate (WPR) for males standing at 54.5%, more than six times higher than the 8.8% reported for females. However, the IHD survey revealed a significantly higher WPR for females (16.9%) compared to PLFS (8.8%), hinting at a potential male bias in reporting female activity status. This disparity might be attributed to the fact that almost half of the respondents and enumerators were females in the IHD survey, unlike the male-dominated national-level labour force surveys conducted by the national statistical office.

The second issue is measurement or exclusion of part-time workers. Around one-fourth of the women categorized as non-workers in the survey were engaged in occasional economic activities such as cooking, selling goods, textile and garment manufacturing, and other home-based work. However, these activities didn't align with the definitions used in standard labour force surveys, leading these women to not report themselves as workers.

The third issue explores reasons for women's non-participation in the labour market. Factors cited by non-working women included family and child care responsibilities, refusal by family or husbands to allow them to work, unsuitable work environments, financial sufficiency, lack of job availability near their residence, and transportation constraints to reach workplaces.

The fourth and fifth issues pertain to the desired job roles and support required by non-working women willing to participate in economic activities. Around one-fifth of non-working women expressed a willingness to engage in suitable work, with preferences for roles closer to their homes or within Delhi. Preferences for job roles varied, with 38% aspiring for regular office jobs, 28% aiming for other salaried occupations, 32% desiring self-employment activities, and 2% expressing openness to any job providing decent earnings.

These findings underscore the need not only to improve survey methodologies but also to create suitable job opportunities and encourage supportive environments, both within households and through government and employer initiatives. Enhancing women's work participation requires addressing these multifaceted challenges comprehensively.

## **Thematic Panel 5**

### **Theme: Addressing Malnutrition, Anaemia and Morbidity among Children below Five in India**

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#### **Concept Note**

Child malnutrition in India poses a multifaceted challenge with far-reaching implications for human development. It encompasses growth retardation, heightened morbidity rates, survival risks, impaired cognitive development, reduced learning capacity, poor academic performance, and sub-optimal productivity in adulthood. India shoulders a substantial burden, hosting 40 percent of the world's malnourished children and 35 percent of low-birth-weight infants among developing nations. This persistent malnutrition issue, leading to low birth weight, childhood illnesses, and diseases, is exacerbated by gender discrimination and inadequate access to nutrition. Globally, the right to survival faces obstacles, with 5.3 million children failing to reach their fifth birthday, underscoring the urgent need for interventions.

The first 1000 days of a child's life, from conception to age two, are pivotal for physical and cognitive development, emphasizing the paramount importance of interventions during this period. Undernutrition during these initial years results from inadequate exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and optimal meal frequency. Exclusive breastfeeding within the first hour of birth, coupled with age-appropriate complementary feeding, can significantly reduce under-five mortality.

Childhood malnutrition is a complex issue influenced by immediate causes such as insufficient diet and disease, underlying factors including household food insecurity, poverty, limited healthcare access, and basic causes related to socioeconomic and political factors. These factors create a challenging

environment for children's nutritional well-being, necessitating comprehensive strategies to combat childhood malnutrition.

In addition to malnutrition, anemia and diarrhea emerge as critical issues among under-five children in India. Anemia, affecting 68 percent of children in 2019-21, has rightly been labelled a public health emergency. Diarrhea compounds the health challenges, responsible for up to 50 percent of all cases of child malnutrition. Improving sanitation infrastructure, promoting proper hygiene practices, and ensuring access to clean water are critical interventions to address child malnutrition and reduce the burden of preventable infections.

This panel discussion aims to drive evidence-based policies and discussions, aiming to address these pressing issues and push India towards achieving Agenda 2030.

## **Abstract**

### **Risk Factors for Malnutrition among Children below five in India: Evidence from NFHS-3, NFHS-4 and NFHS-5**

**Swati Dutta**, Fellow, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi

This study explores the persistent challenge of malnutrition among children under the age of five in India, drawing on data from NFHS-3, NFHS-4, and NFHS-5. Despite global efforts, malnutrition remains a pressing concern with profound implications for child development and well-being. In India, the prevalence of underweight children under five is alarmingly high, constituting a significant portion of the global estimate of 149.2 million stunted children. Malnutrition, encompassing stunting, wasting, and underweight, contributes substantially to child mortality, particularly in India, where it is associated with a staggering 68% of child deaths. This paper delves into the multifaceted nature of malnutrition, examining various factors such as educational levels, maternal demographics, nutrition and health conditions, family size, and assets as influencers of child nutrition outcomes. The first 1,000 days of a child's life are identified as a critical period for intervention, emphasizing exclusive breastfeeding and age-

appropriate complementary feeding. However, despite existing health schemes like the Anganwadi Service Scheme and POSHAN Abhiyaan, malnutrition remains a formidable challenge in India. The study identifies varying rates of progress among Indian states, emphasizing the need for region-specific interventions.

The paper utilizes NFHS data to examine trends in different forms of child malnutrition, employing logistic regression models to identify associated risk factors. The analysis reveals that, while there has been a decline in stunting, wasting, and underweight between 2005-06 and 2019-21, the prevalence remains high. Rural areas exhibit higher malnutrition rates than urban areas, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions in specific geographical contexts. Social disparities are evident, with malnutrition rates higher among scheduled tribes compared to other social groups.

Economic factors play a crucial role, with children from the poorest households facing elevated risks of stunting and underweight. The study also highlights the intricate dynamics of malnutrition concerning age groups, revealing higher risks in specific age categories. Notably, the prevalence of overweight children has increased, signifying the dual burden of malnutrition.

The analysis of infant and young child feeding practices indicates an increase in exclusive breastfeeding rates, but challenges persist, with only a quarter of children meeting minimum dietary diversity requirements. Further, improvements in nutrition can be achieved through diversified diets, but only a limited percentage of children meet the minimum dietary diversity requirement.

Rural areas, economic disparities, social stratification, and low birth weight emerge as consistent risk factors across various forms of malnutrition. The nuanced findings shed light on the complex interplay of factors contributing to malnutrition and provide valuable insights for targeted interventions.

In conclusion, this comprehensive analysis not only outlines the persistent challenges of child malnutrition in India but also outlines the multifaceted risk factors contributing to this issue. The study underscores the need for region-specific strategies, considering the diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts across Indian states. Targeted interventions addressing economic disparities, social stratification, and improving infant and young child feeding practices are essential to effectively combat the complex challenge of malnutrition among children under the age of five in India.



## Decoding the Health and Morbidity Pattern of Children Under Five in India: Insights from NFHS Rounds

**Sunil Kumar Mishra**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

UNICEF has highlighted that India has the highest global proportion of under-five deaths, totalling 1.08 million, and approximately two-thirds of all child fatalities are attributable to preventable diseases like diarrhoea, malaria, and pneumonia. According to the National Family and Health Surveys, in India, the prevalence of diarrhoea, fever and ARI among under five children was 7.3%, 13.2% and 2.8% respectively in 2019-21. As compared to 2015-16 the prevalence of diarrhoea reduced by about 2 percentage points whereas the prevalence of fever and ARI is more or less constant. A marked difference was found between rural and urban areas. It is interesting to found that the prevalence of morbidity by age group wise disaggregation shows that the prevalence among 6-11 month and 12-23-month children is higher as compared to other groups. The incidence of illnesses in children aged 0-5, whose mothers are between 15 and 19 years old, demonstrates a greater rate of morbidity compared to those belong to mothers in older age groups. The morbidity rate is higher among children of Muslim households when compared to those from Hindu households or other religions. Additionally, children in households without access to improved water exhibit a higher prevalence of diarrhoea and fever. Notably, there is a significant difference in the morbidity rates among children whose mothers have exposure to information through TV, newspapers, and radio. The type of fuel used also plays a crucial role in the morbidity pattern of households, with higher disease rates observed in households using unsafe fuel. Furthermore, the incidence of diseases is higher among children belonged to EAG states compared to those in states outside this category. Children belonged to illiterate mothers experience a higher incidence of diseases compared to those to mothers who are literate.

The health seeking behaviour of children shows an increasing trend between 2015-16 and 2019-21. The proportion of children going for formal treatment for diarrhoea, fever and ARI is respectively 76%, 80% and 70%. There is an increase of treatment seeking behaviour of children over the period ranged from 7-8 percentage point points. The study found the treatment seeking behaviour for children in the age group 6-11 month and 12-23 months is higher as compared to the other age group. The study revealed that there is a higher rate of

treatment seeking for children whose mothers are educated, in contrast to those with uneducated mothers. There is a discernible difference in treatment-seeking behaviour observed between children living in rural and urban areas. Additionally, the seeking of treatment for morbidity is higher among children from higher wealth quintiles.

In the logistic regression model examining morbidity prevalence, several factors were analyzed. Children aged 0-5 months exhibit a 32.7% increase in odds of morbidity in comparison to those aged 48-59 months. Notably, children aged 6-11 months experience a significant 2.59 times higher morbidity risk, while those aged 12-23 months, 24-35 months, and 36-47 months demonstrate increases of 88.2%, 43.0%, and 17.7%, respectively, compared to the reference group of 48-59 months. Families with 2 children or less show a 10.7% reduction in morbidity compared to families with four or more children. Access to information for mothers at the time of childbirth is associated with a 3% reduction in morbidity prevalence compared to instances where mothers lack such access. Similarly, practicing safe stool disposal is linked to a 6% decrease in morbidity prevalence compared to mothers not adhering to the practice. Additionally, the prevalence of morbidity is found to be two times higher among children belonging to SC/ST communities in comparison to those from the general caste.

### **Gender Disparities in the Prevalence of Anaemia among Children aged 6–23 months and 24–59 months: Exploring the Role of Son Preference in Rural India**

**Deeksha Tayal**, Associate Fellow, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

**Vikas Dubey**, Research Associate, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

In India, the proportion of under 5 children suffering from anaemia is among the highest in the world. In 2005-06, the prevalence rate for 6-59 months old children stood at 69.4%. It declined to 58.6% in 2015-16 and further increased to 68% in 2019-21. Besides, the rural-urban disparity remains visible. In 2015-16, it stood at 56% for urban children and 59.6% for rural children and statistics for 2019-21 are 64.8% and 69.2%, respectively. An age-group wise disaggregation of trends in

incidence of anaemia among 6-59 months old rural children shows that with an increase in age from 6-11 months to 12-23 months, severity of anaemia and hence the proportion of anaemic children tends to increase. Thereafter, with an increase in age from 24-35 months to 48-59 months, the percentage of children with moderate or severe levels of anaemia shows a declining trend. However, a comparison between 2015-16 and 2019-21 shows that in the age-group of 6-23 months, an increase is visible in the percentage of children with moderate or severe levels of anaemia, while in the age-group of 24-59 months, percentage of children with both mild and moderate/severe levels of anaemia increased. Further, a gender disparity seems visible in rural children when an age-group wise disaggregated trend is examined. In the younger age-cohort of 6-23 months, the prevalence of anaemia is higher among boys than girls, while among 24-59 months old children, a higher proportion of girls than boys are anaemia. In both 2015-16 and 2019-21, it is found that the gender gap disfavouring boys is highest in the age-cohort of 6-11 months, and the gender gap disfavouring girls is the highest in the age-cohort of 36-47 months. Given this background, the paper explores the prevalence of son preference as a possible reason for such age-linked gender gaps in the anaemia levels of rural children. The paper is based on the nationally representative data from the fourth and the fifth rounds of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted in 2015-16 and 2019-21, respectively. A varied set of factors may be linked with the observed gender differences in the prevalence of anaemia among children. We consider son preference of the mother or gender bias against the girl child as the main explanatory variable for capturing this linkage. Son preference is measured in terms of the ideal number of sons and daughters a woman prefers to give birth to in order to complete her family. If she prefers more sons than daughters, she is interpreted to have son preference. The other explanatory factors include problems of stunting and underweight among children, maternal characteristics of anaemia, body mass index, education level, and household characteristics like number of children and family income, etc. Using probit regression analysis and nonlinear Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition technique, the paper explores the importance of son preference and other variables in explaining the gender disparity in prevalence of anaemia among rural children. The results indicate that the directly captured maternal son preference does explain the higher incidence of anaemia among 24-59 months old girls. However, the differential impact of factors like child malnutrition, maternal anaemia, and number of siblings in the family may also reflect benign health and nutritional discrimination against girls in the rural households.

## **Addressing Malnutrition, Anaemia and Morbidity among Children below Five in India: Key Issues for achieving Agenda 2030**

**Aasha Kapur Mehta**, Chairperson, Centre for Gender Studies, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

Trends in malnutrition, anaemia and morbidity among children below the age of 5 reflect a mixed picture. On average, the trends in malnutrition, anaemia and morbidity among children in this age group reflect a marginal decline in the prevalence of stunting, wasting, underweight and morbidity in this age group as well as a sharp increase in anaemia. In 2019–21 (NFHS 5), approximately 35.5% of children below 5 were stunted, 32.1% were underweight, 19.3% were wasted and almost 70% were anaemic. The prevalence of diarrhoea and fever in this age group was 7.3% and 13.2%.

However, while on average, stunting among children below the age of 5 declined, there were substantial spatial variations. On the one hand, prevalence decreased substantially in Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim and Rajasthan, and yet, it increased in states such as Tripura, Uttarakhand, Himachal and Kerala. Further, while approximately half the children belonging to the poorest households were stunted in 2015–16, there was a large decline in stunting in this category in 2019–21. However, the corresponding estimate for children of the richest households showed an increase in the prevalence of stunting.

Similarly, on average, there was a decline in the percentage of wasted children in this age group between 2015–16 and 2019–21. While the decline in wasting was high in a few states such as Puducherry, Haryana and West Bengal, the reverse was true in Nagaland and a few other states. The gap between the prevalence of wasting between boys and girls increased marginally between NFHS 4 and 5. On average the prevalence of wasting was higher among boys compared with girls. However, wasting was higher among boys in some states and among girls in others.

Malnutrition, anaemia and morbidity are inter-related and reflect on adequate nutrition or repeated bouts of illness or both. These are directly related to several SDGs and addressing them is critically related to the achievement of Agenda 2030. What are the underlying factors that must be addressed in order to reduce the prevalence of malnutrition, anaemia and morbidity among children below 5 years of age? This paper builds on the findings of the other three papers in this IHD panel in addition to other work, to draw attention to the policy levers that must be strengthened in order to reduce malnutrition, anaemia and morbidity among children below 5 in India.

## **Thematic Panel 6**

### **Theme: Development of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Role of Platform and BPO Workers Organiser: International Labour Organisation (ILO), Geneva**

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#### **Concept Note**

Advancements in digital technologies, computing power, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI) have raised concerns about the impact of automation on jobs and labour markets. While there are claims of an imminent “AI-driven transition to a post-work world” and a rise in AI-focused start-ups aiming to automate jobs, this narrative and discourse is increasingly challenged by researchers. The notion of what is being portrayed as AI is also under scrutiny.

The rise of AI-enabled business models in the digital economy has resulted in the creation of tools, products, and services that enhance the efficiency and functioning of the digital ecosystem. The growth of these businesses has been largely driven by substantial financial resources from governments, the private sector, and venture capital funds, coupled with low-cost information technology and cloud infrastructure. This enables entrepreneurs to enter the market with minimal investment in physical infrastructure and establish AI companies offering a range of services. Advances in AI and natural language processing have also enabled start-ups to market and sell their services as AI-enabled, potentially reducing costs for firms through AI-driven worker replacement or productivity improvement.

Despite the prevailing discourse on AI-driven automation, research highlights the AI industry’s increasing reliance on invisible and precarious workers, and how the production of AI is part of a global value chain with workers dispersed across the world. This panel places emphasis on recognizing the human labour required for AI development and machine learning algorithms, as well as workers

performing tasks often portrayed as AI-driven. It will provide evidence on the development of AI as well as the working conditions of workers from a global as well as regional perspective based on surveys and interviews conducted by the researchers. Many of the AI-related activities encompassing datified and taskified human activities fall under the category of digital labour, who are often classified as on-demand labour, micro taskers, or crowdworkers. Many of the workers in the BPO companies are also performing such jobs. The presenters in this panel will highlight the crucial role played by human workers in preparing and verifying AI, often behind the scenes while AI takes the front-end spotlight. It will demonstrate that human workers remain vital in many sectors despite the portrayal of AI as taking over their jobs, while they often work under often precarious working conditions and have limited job mobility.

## **Abstract**

### **AI-enabled business model and human-in-the-loop (deceptive AI): implications for labour**

**Uma Rani**, Senior Economist, Research Department ILO, Geneva, Switzerland

This presentation will focus on the emergence of AI-enabled business models and discuss the three major implications on work and workers. Firstly, it highlights the shift towards contingent work arrangements on digital labour platforms, which provide access to a global pool of digital labour. They may provide flexibility but also lead to precarious working conditions and weaken the bargaining power of workers. Secondly, it shows the important role played by workers in generating data and training algorithms, which may lead to the deskilling of workers and the creation of a global sweatshop of digital labour. This trend is concerning as it risks replacing or displacing highly skilled and professionally certified workers in various fields, especially in developing countries. Thirdly, these AI-enabled models can change the organization of work, and can contribute to lower labour share in income, polarization of the workforce, and increase income inequality.

The presentation will show the AI-enabled business models in low-end (such as image annotation, labelling, and content moderation) and high-end services (like

translation, legal and medical transcription) sectors, and the level of automation and human involvements in these models, based on existing literature. It will highlight that the human-in-the-loop process remains important in these AI-enabled models as algorithms are not yet accurate and these models rely heavily on human labour for training, development, monitoring, and service of the AI. The presentation will then focus on the impact of this process on workers' working conditions, income, social security, and skill development drawing on global surveys of workers on microtask platforms conducted in 2017 and Indian workers in the BPO companies and microtask platforms conducted in 2022. Specifically, it will focus on tasks such as labelling, image annotation, transcription, translation, and content moderation. The presentation will conclude with a discussion on how these AI-enabled business models are transforming the nature of employment and its relationship as work is outsourced to crowdworkers on digital labour platforms, raising concerns about the quality of jobs in terms of both working conditions and the content of the task.

### **Colonial Shadows: Unveiling Global Inequalities in AI Labor**

**Antonio A. Casilli**, Professor of Sociology, Paris School of Telecommunications (Telecom Paris), France

A prevailing focus of the contemporary discourse surrounding Artificial Intelligence (AI) is on dissecting its societal implications for human labor. In the dominant narrative, there are disturbing ideological undertones to the notion of “great technological replacement”, which describes job displacement and flexibility requirements for workers. Despite this apparent logic, an intriguing and significantly underexplored question arises: what role does human labor play in actively shaping the future of artificial intelligence?

This presentation sheds light on the crucial role human labor plays in the production of machine learning solutions. A diverse and often overlooked group of AI workers lies behind the spotlight placed on data scientists, system engineers, and software developers. As an integral part of AI production, platform-mediated data workers play a vital role, but their contributions are often overlooked and undervalued. Several million people are estimated to belong to this underclass, which is diverse and often overlooked.

Crowdworkers, clickworkers, and microworkers take center stage, performing a multitude of tasks including image labelling for self-driving cars, information sorting for search engines, text processing

and audio transcription that feed large language models like ChatGPT. As the collective consciousness outside of the Majority World grapples with the precariousness of these evolving work arrangements and the fierce competition among data workers, a substantial portion of this labor is found in the complex web of outsourcing, which often extends into countries in the Global South. Data work is prevalent in countries with significant levels of labor informality, the persistence of extractivist practices, and economic dependence on high-income countries. An increasing body of literature indicates that the digital economy and its virtual value chains bear similarities to the colonial system in terms of their structures and practices.

The objective of this presentation is to examine the working conditions and socio-demographic profiles of data workers across several regions, including African, Latin American, European, and Asian countries. Using data collected between 2020 and 2023 by the DiPLab (Digital Platform Labor) research team of the Polytechnic Institute of Paris, the investigation uses a mixed-methods approach based on thousands of questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and participant observations.

As a result, this presentation exposes the complex interplay between global inequalities and international digital supply chains for AI production. To illuminate the less audible narratives of those behind the scenes, it seeks to enhance our understanding of the complex relationship between human labor and technology development. It serves as a catalyst for a critical reevaluation of the dominant power structures within the AI landscape. It emphasizes the urgent need for policy considerations to permeate the design and deployment of AI technologies. Reactivating the values of solidarity, resistance to exploitation, and civic engagement is crucial to formulating radically progressive policies that promote and bolster workers' rights.

## **Whose data, whose truth? Data work and the production of AI training data**

**Milagros Miceli**, Research Group Lead Data, Algorithmic Systems and Ethics, Weizenbaum Institute, Berlin, Germany

The generation and interpretation of data by data workers are essential components of artificial intelligence (AI) systems, yet the intricate power



dynamics inherent in data work and shaping these tasks often remain obscured. This presentation draws on extensive research involving data workers from the Global Majority to explore the labor involved in creating training data for AI systems. It delves into hidden (inter-)organizational structures, power relations, and normalized impositions that underscore the production of data and AI systems. The presentation emphasizes that arbitrary classifications, designed to interpret data, are vertically imposed on data workers through task instructions and reinforced by widespread work practices and interfaces. It highlights the significant influence these classifications exert on the nature of the data produced in such processes. Beyond mere technicalities, this imposition represents a complex exercise of power, with far-reaching implications for the quality of data, the training of AI systems, and the communities affected by these systems. The talk contends that understanding and addressing these dynamics is crucial not only for fostering more equitable data work but also for advancing the overall quality of data and the responsible development of AI systems.

## **AI production as global value chain: Foregrounding unevenness and extraction**

**Kelle Howson**, Senior Research Specialist, Institute for Economic Justice, Johannesburg, South Africa

Because digital goods, services and systems like data and artificial intelligence (AI) are seen to be intangible products existing in digital space, the material impacts of their production on actors and geographies has been under-theorised. This has contributed to a lack of focus on the role of labour in the production of AI, as well as the impact of AI production (alongside its design and deployment) on economic inequality within and between countries.

Theories of global value chains (GVC) (Gereffi, Humphrey & Sturgeon, 2005), and global production networks (GPN) (Coe, Dicken & Hess, 2008; Coe, Kelly & Yeung, 2019), provide a framework for mapping how value is created and distributed across space, through the lifecycle of a commodity from conception to consumption. This has enabled researchers to describe how “lead firms” (or powerful corporations) have exerted increasing “governance” over protracted linkages of firms and workers in different territories. A key logic of this governance was the extension of granular control over the activities of subordinated firms and workers, coupled with the externalisation of the ownership, costs and risks of

those activities, what Yeung and Coe (2015) referred to as optimising the “cost-capability ratio”.

This arguably describes a key aspect of the logic and business model of powerful digital platform and AI companies, which exert very high levels of control over the activities of global networks of suppliers and workers, whilst fiercely asserting their independence from local socioeconomic contexts, labour regulation, or the ownership of physical production assets or infrastructure (Katta et al., 2020). However, GVC and GPN approaches have been slow to grapple with the new global networks of value creation and exchange brought into being by platforms and AI companies.

In this presentation I argue that it is important to apply insights from GVC and GPNs to platform capitalism and AI production. This is not only in order to update economic geography theory in light of our changing global economy—but also from a political standpoint, to bring greater attention to the global distributional outcomes of the production of AI, and to understand how these processes may serve to reproduce economic inequality, and concentrate wealth and power in the global economy. To explore these questions, I draw on research undertaken with platform workers in many countries over several years by myself and colleagues in the Fairwork project (Howson et al., 2022; Howson et al., 2023). I focus on how governance is enacted in global networks by digital labour platforms as lead firms. In particular I explore how platforms accumulate value by maximising the proportion of labour time that is unpaid, in other words the extraction of surplus value from labour.

## **Thematic Panel 7**

### **Theme: Advancing Women's Work in Global South: Towards Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality**

Organisers: NITI Aayog and Institute for What Works to Advance Gender Equality (IWWAGE), and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

Economic empowerment of women is one of the crucial pillars for achieving gender equality and inclusive growth. It is not only a necessity for the economic and social wellbeing of societies as a whole but also a moral imperative for building a just world. While the journey of women's economic empowerment has come a long way since the Beijing Declaration, there is still a long, arduous road ahead for ensuring that women have unfettered access to different forms of employment opportunities while also reducing gender wage gaps and other forms of gender discrimination in the labour market.

In the context of developing economies, promising economic conditions, improved levels of female education and declining fertility rates should have led to enhanced female labour force participation rates (FLFPR). However, the trends in FLFPR of global south countries have been rather uneven- showing a sharp rise in Latin American countries, marginal improvements in the Middle East and North Africa while even falling in South Asia- especially in India despite being one of the fastest growing economies. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the FLFPR has remained more or less the same hovering around 50% as a response to economic shocks and extreme poverty<sup>1</sup>. Regardless of the differences in the FLFPR in the global south countries, women face several barriers in entering, sustaining and growing in the labour market through access to decent working conditions.

The low levels of women's participation in the workforce are due to an interplay of several factors like restrictive gender norms, poor asset base, domestic work burden further exacerbated by adverse conditions of climate change and health emergencies like the Covid- 19 pandemic. Even in countries where the FLFPR has risen, long standing issues faced by women workers continue. These include pay gaps, poor quality of work, occupational segregation which restrict women to certain kinds of industries, lack of requisite skills and training, non-compliance with labour protection codes and lack of systems to end gender based violence at workplaces.

In order to address these challenges, countries in the global south need to make concerted efforts to ensure that national growth strategies must promote female employment through gender transformative macroeconomic planning and adequate resource allocations. Access to universal healthcare, education and social protection is fundamental to achieving WEE (Women's Economic Empowerment). Moreover, creating access to productive assets like land and credit (beyond microcredit) is also necessary.

Given that unpaid childcare work done by women is one of the key reasons keeping them out of the labour force, developing policies and infrastructure for safe, accessible and affordable child care centres is urgent and necessary. In the context of the care economy, it is important to highlight that women make up a majority of the paid care labour force. It is therefore prudent to recognize care as a separate sector and drive investments into it to ensure creation of quality jobs to meet the rising global demand for care workers.

With the advent of new technology, rapid digitalization as well as the introduction of gig and platform-based work, skilling women in upcoming areas of employment is critical to their inclusion in the rapidly evolving labour market. Digital technologies have also had an augmented effect in increasing income and outreach for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME). It is, therefore, integral to ensure equitable access to ICT tools and plan for digital inclusion and literacy as the foundational pillars for WEE. Additionally, in order to ensure that women have diverse opportunities and are not restricted to traditional sectors, it is important that the skilling ecosystem adapts to changing labour market demands so as to build an appropriately skilled female labour force, facilitating their entry into non-traditional jobs.

Availability of good quality, intersectional, gender-disaggregated data is a prerequisite for planning and executing the points discussed above. Governments need to develop mechanisms to adequately measure women's work as well

as time poverty so as to develop need-based policy responses that can help women access to decent jobs, safe workplaces, fair pay and also aspire to grow into leadership roles. It is also crucial to engage the private sector since it creates a major share of formal employment. With global platforms like the G20 acknowledging the need for investing in measures to improve WEE, it is important that advocacy on this front continues with consistent momentum. We must therefore leverage platforms like these to add to the discourse highlighting the need to identify pathways for enhancing WEE in the global south.

This Panel is being organised by IWWAGE and NITI Aayog during the Global Conclave on “Advancing Human Development in Global South” being held during 11–13 January 2024. The Conclave is being organised by Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi in partnership with NITI Aayog, Government of India and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).

## **Abstract**

### **Women’s Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality in Southeast Asia**

**Wei-Jun Jean Yeung**, Professor and Provost’s Chair Department of Sociology and Anthropology National University of Singapore, Singapore

In this talk, I will compare multiple indicators of human development and gender equality across countries in East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia and identify the mega trends, focusing on the gender equality dimension in countries in the Global South. Thereafter, I will focus on the situation in Indonesia specifically.

Indonesia achieved middle-income status in 2004 and high growth also rapidly reduced poverty. The economy’s share of manufacturing and services is growing, and agriculture is declining (although still at a high level overall). Yet the participation of women in the labour market has not changed much. At around 51 percent, Indonesia’s female labour force participation rate is well below that of males (around 80 percent) and low relative to countries at a comparable stage of development.

The main drivers of low female labour force participation in Indonesia are marriage, children below two years of age in the household, low educational attainment (below upper-secondary and tertiary levels) and changing economic structure (decline in the female-friendly sector of agriculture due to transitions from rural to urban areas in particular) as well as social norms that think the main role of Indonesian women is at home.

Indonesia has committed to decreasing the gap between female and male labour force participation by 25 percent by 2025. Research shows that this target will only be reached under the most optimistic circumstances. Under less optimistic (and arguably more realistic) assumptions, female labour force participation may even decrease if the most recent trends continue. Policy support, together with shifting social norms and practices is needed.

There is also a significant gender wage gap in Indonesia with a much larger gap in the informal than formal sector. This gap is not due to differences in productive characteristics but reflects discriminatory practices. There is also strong evidence that women at the lower end of the wage distribution face a much bigger gender wage gap than women in higher-wage jobs.

Women tend to be under-represented in entrepreneurship even though women concentrate in the self-employed informal sector. Low entrepreneurship is often attributed to women's difficulty accessing financial resources.

Education equality is a critical pathway to economic opportunities later in life. Statistics show little gender education gaps amongst younger cohorts in Indonesia. However, the overall educational performance of Indonesians is low. In terms of health, maternal mortality rates are higher than in comparable countries. Both education and health gender equality are critical in determining

human capital development. In addition, inadequate transport infrastructure and services are additional barriers to women's full economic participation. Efficient and safe transport, in particular can assist women in juggling work and family responsibilities better

Finally, institutions and laws signal a commitment to improving gender equality. In Indonesia, despite reasonable maternity leave entitlements for formal sector workers, several laws discriminate against women. This includes tax and inheritance laws, as well as a lack of legislation or penalties to protect against sexual harassment. It is important to increase Indonesia's competitiveness and growth through women's full economic participation.

## **Right to Work, Rights at Work, and Capabilities in a Care Economy**

**Marina Durano**, Adviser on Care Economy and Partnership Engagement, UNI Global Union, Geneva

A few countries have moved to add to their constitution an article recognizing care as work. We look at the implications of this recognition on a select group of rights, particularly the application of the “Right to Work” as well as to “rights at work,” and on the “Right to Development.” While we are more familiar with rights at work, the right to work is more complex as it brings with it “full and productive employment” with “individual freedoms.” We also discuss the capabilities approach, especially the function of care in facilitating the expansion of capabilities; and, seeking to understand whether the constitutional recognition of care as work can become a starting point for capabilities underpinning constitutional principles.

## **Gender in the age of automation and digitalization: A study of Thailand’s National Economic and Development Strategies**

**Kyoko Kusakabe**, Professor, Gender and Development Studies Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand

Thailand boasts one of the highest women CEO ratios in the world, but overall, gender gap in the labor market persists and Thailand remains in the middle among Southeast Asian countries according to the global gender gap index. This presentation explored how Thailand’s current economic policies might have gendered implication on labor market by focusing on the two large drivers under the 20-year National Economic Development Strategy, namely focusing on S-Curve industries and BCG model. S-Curve industries are industries that the government has selected to have the largest potential to contribute to national competitiveness enhancement, and includes industries such as next-generation automotives, smart electronics, robotics, digital products, biofuels and biochemicals, wellness tourism, agriculture and biotechnology, etc. The presentation focuses on how promotion of digital technology can affect women’s work, noting that women are less in STEM education and female-dominated industries are not included in S-Curve industries. Whether the promotion of S-Curve industries can promote work-life balance through flexible work or will be

able to create new jobs for women, especially noting the dominance of women in the informal economy, are points of discussion. Similar discussion takes place for BCG model (Bioeconomy, circular economy, green economy). While global trend shows that women are lagging behind, for example, in the renewable energy sector, does BCG model provide more opportunity for women? The presentation will be exploring not only gender differences but the differences among women. Who gets more opportunities, who loses out in getting the opportunities, who gets marginalized through these economic policies and why. The study has shown that young women and women aged 40 up are affected by the transformation, while having to shoulder the burden of care work that is not supported by these economic policies. The presentation ends with some recommendations.

### **‘Advancing Women’s Work in Global South: Towards Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality ’**

**Prof. Grace Ngare**, Gender and Development Studies, Department of Sociology, Kenyatta University Nairobi, Kenya

The gender divide in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) has persisted for a long time. Women in particular, have remained at the lower echelons of the economic ladder despite the deliberate and numerous efforts by State and non-state actors to empower them. For instance, efforts to increase their participation in the labour market at the formal and informal sectors are enormous; all these emanating from campaigns to access higher education, equal opportunity policies in employment, including at times; Affirmative Action; and in the informal sector, increase in strategic funds to obtain collateral for doing business. From the surface, a lot has been done for women’s economic empowerment.

However, hidden gender barriers in SSA continue to militate against women’s economic empowerment. Borrowing heavily from Kenya; issues to do with tax policies heavily affect small- scale businesses; a domain for most women. In addition, other issues like the recent global pandemic (Covid 19); ongoing Climate Change; both which do not spare both men and women; but the latter being more affected, gravitate it all.

In the formal employment, the scenario is no better. Observably, education propels men and women to different career paths, unfortunately, disadvantaging women



from the onset. Most of better paid careers (STEM) are a male domain, due to the invisible gender barriers cultivated by a socialization process that propels men for leadership. Many women end up in the less prestigious underpaid jobs that are the traditional perceived domain for wives and mothers.

For those lucky to join the formal sector, institutional barriers, caused by gender stereotypes further disadvantage them. Patriarchy, illuminating discrimination, subsequently subject women to Gender Based Violence (GBV) at the work place, even as many struggle with family career conflicts. As men circumvent the job ladder, using all means to reach the top, many women are stuck at base.

Key among the forces that militate against their career growth is the burden of unpaid care work, Gender perceptions make women primary care givers. In addition, restrictive gender norms and poor asset base confine them “in their perceived place”. Many women retire at start grade, just slightly one up, or stick to one career all their lives. They remain “sedentary” as they lack the privilege of job exploration due to family demands, not mentioning the limitations for adding skills and training.

To achieve gender equality at the formal field of work, deliberate efforts are inevitable to circumvent structural gender barriers at the work place, including GBV. Child care demands need not be a burden to tie women; but a propeller for success. Traditional barriers that define women, need to convert to opportunities as we strive to address obstacles that continue keeping them there.

## **Thematic Panel 8**

### **Theme: Gender, Social Protection, and Child Wellbeing in a Changing World**

Organiser: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

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#### **Abstract**

Gender equality is a pressing global issue, with particular significance in developing countries, such as India. The potential of women is often undermined by gender bias, depriving them of their right to live life at its fullest. The issue is highlighted by Sustainable Development Goal – 5, which aims to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. This is also reflected in India’s vision of inclusivity and women led development.

The girl child faces gender-based discrimination across the life-cycle and the vulnerability arising out of this discrimination is manifested in low sex ratio at birth, poor education continuum (transition from pre-school to higher secondary), poor health and nutritional status, child marriage and low skill and empowerment, among others.

Social protection serves as a tool to address gender inequality, economic risks, and social vulnerability. Recognised as a human right and an entitlement in India, social protection is also seen as a transformative tool, supporting multisectoral outcomes and, in some contexts, fostering change.

Numerous social protection schemes for girls and women exist at the national and state levels in India. These schemes aim to address vulnerabilities across the lifecycle, with the goals of addressing women’s issues on a life-cycle continuum basis. They strive to make women equal partners in nation-building through convergence at different levels of governance and a participatory approach. The schemes seek to make women economically empowered, exercising free choice

in a safe and secure atmosphere free from violence. They also address issues related to the care burden of women and aim to increase their participation in the workforce by promoting skill development and financial literacy.

Many state-supported cash transfer schemes at the subnational level focus on the girl child and seek to improve the sex ratio at birth, education outcomes, and ending child marriages, all as part of adolescent empowerment agenda. However, the impact on improving the sex ratio at birth and ending child marriage varies across states/districts. This is likely because these vulnerabilities are driven by deep-rooted social and gender norms. Therefore, there is a need to use a gender transformative lens to examine social protection programmes, and assess their effectiveness in addressing underlying gender norms.

Recognizing the importance of addressing deep-rooted social and gender norms to progress towards gender equality, and acknowledging the limited scope of existing instruments to address these, UNICEF India partnered with the Institute for Human Development (IHD), to undertake a multi-state review of state specific cash transfer schemes that have similar objectives to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) programme. The aim was to assess their gender responsive and transformative potential, and to explore their complementarity with BBBP.

The major findings of this study will be presented at this panel discussion. Other panellists, who are experts in the field of gender and social protection, will present global experiences in the area of girl child cash transfer schemes and related issues.

## **Analysing Gender Responsive And Transformative Potential Of Girl Child Cash Transfer Schemes In 8 States Of India And Recognizing Their Complementarity With Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**

**Tanuka Endow**, Professor, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

**Veena Bandyopadhyay**, Social Protection Specialist, UNICEF, India

Gender equality is a crucial issue worldwide, with India being no exception. Gender inequality and discrimination against women have led to the establishment Sustainable Development Goal – 5, shaping global agenda which aims to ‘Leave

No-One Behind (LNOB), by 2030. India has taken progressive policy measures, particularly, in advancing social protection measures; social assistance, especially 'Cash-Transfers' are noteworthy. There are several cash transfer schemes designed to address specific vulnerabilities of girls and women.

There are several cash transfer schemes at the subnational level that focus on the girl child, offer high potential to strengthen gender transformative scope of the programmes. These schemes, implemented by the state government are designed to address the life cycle vulnerabilities such as sex ratio at birth, education outcomes, and ending child marriages. However, progress varies across states/districts due to factors like duration of the schemes, size of the cash transfers, targeting and conditionalities. Moreover, deep-rooted social and gender norms pose challenges, demanding sustained efforts to examine the pathways for change.

Recognizing the importance of addressing deep-rooted social and gender norms that girls and women experience through the course of life cycle, UNICEF India, and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi in consultation with the state government initiated a review of multi-state girl-child cash transfer and its potential to leverage national schemes like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) designed to achieve similar objectives with strong focus on addressing social and gender norms.

The review aimed to assess the gender-responsive and transformative potential of these state schemes namely, Bhagyalakshmi Scheme (Karnataka), Ladli Lakshmi Yojana (Madhya Pradesh), Kanyashree Prakalpa (West Bengal), Mazi Kanya Bhagyashree Scheme (Maharashtra), Mukhyamantri Rajshri Yojana (Rajasthan), Mukhyamantri Sukanya Yojana (Jharkhand), Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana (Uttar Pradesh), and Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana (Bihar).

The review highlights the positive impact of conditional cash transfers, in conjunction with other national and state government initiatives, on better outcomes for the girl child. These schemes have helped to close some of the gaps in terms of better access to education, reducing child marriage, health opportunities, and even achieve some social and behavioral change. For instance, in the areas of health, such as vaccination practices, menstrual health & hygiene, or inculcation of school-going habits among girls, there have been positive changes. However, the study also suggests that the gender

transformative components of the scheme need strengthening to address deep-rooted gender imbalances and attitudes in society. The cash transfer schemes, therefore, need to be combined with articulation of clear pathways of how the gender transformative scheme objectives are to be achieved. The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of social protection programs in addressing underlying gender norms, and the need to use a gender transformative lens to examine these programme.

## **Advancing human development through equitable early child development: Why every country should adopt a Universal Child Benefit**

**Dominic Richardson**, Managing Director, Learning for Well-being Institute and Former Chief of Social and Economic Policy Analysis UNICEF's Global Office of Research and Foresight

Universal Child Benefits (UCBs) are the foundational policy for children and indeed society as a whole. As cash payments made on a regular basis for flexible use to support children's needs, UCBs offer a simple and scalable route to increase public investment in all children, and especially those in early childhood where welfare systems are weakest, through universal coverage, supporting children's rights, and promoting child and socio-economic development. As a keystone policy in a broader family portfolio, UCBs are an essential element in meeting gender transformative goals of social protection.

UCBs are also particularly important for young children, when care needs are at their highest, but when on average children receive the smallest share of public expenditures. Analysis of age-related welfare spending on children in 84 countries, representing more than half of the world's child population, shows that young children receive the smallest share of public expenditures, despite early childhood being a time when families' need for social protection benefits and services can be at their highest, and child development is most sensitive, and a point at which public investment in children can generate the greatest returns over the long-term. This underinvestment in young children is true for India, as it is for much of the world.

Policies for young children, starting with UCBs, support families when they are least attached to the labour market and as such can address poverty risks today, while breaking cycles of intergenerational disadvantage, and promoting prosperity and inequality for generations to come. Evidence suggests that countries save money in the long run due to lower expenditures on health, education, and welfare.

This intervention introduces global evidence on the merits of UCBs and early interventions for children, in terms of children's development and well-being, rights and gender equity, and what this means for human development. Specific focus will be given over to the recent case of the United States, and the merits of implementing a UCB in the Indian context.

## **Nepal's Universal Child Grant**

**Usha Mishra**, Chief of Social Policy, Governance and Evidence, UNICEF Nepal

Nepal stands out as a leader in social protection among countries with comparable economic growth. A remarkable 12% of its budget is dedicated to social protection, almost evenly divided between contributory and non-contributory programs. Social protection is a cornerstone of Nepal's development and social cohesion plan, enshrined in its constitution as an essential element of the country's identity. Throughout its tumultuous history of democratization and nation-building, social protection in Nepal has been promoted as a major strategy for fostering equity. Recently, child-focused cash transfers have made their way into Nepal's social protection initiatives, marking a significant milestone in the nation's development policymaking. This shift highlights an emphasis on human development, as well as a growing awareness surrounding the rapidly closing window of opportunity offered by demographic changes. The Nepali Child Grant has evolved from initially targeting specific castes to adopting a universal approach, with a vision for progressively expanding geographical coverage. Those districts with the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) scores are prioritized for assistance. Now covering 1.3 million children, the Nepali Child Grant aims to support every child in the country by 2024. Independent evaluations reveal that even small, regular transfers into mothers' accounts

positively impact child wellbeing and gender rights. As a result, mothers feel more empowered, fathers spend more time with their children, and children enjoy better nourishment and access to education.

Along with universal child grant, Nepal is also currently implementing ambitious programmes focused on girl child- addressing both learning deficits as well combating the scourge of child marriage, which stands in some parts of country at as high as 40%. This marks at yet another watershed in national and sub-national policy making- remarkable yet again for a country which has just graduated ( on a pilot basis ) to Lower Middle-Income Status.

## Thematic Panel 9

### Theme: Climate Change and Livelihoods: Experiences and Policy Options

Organisers: Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, WITS University, South Africa and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### Brazil's commitments to just energy transition

**Lira Luz Benites Lázaro**, Department of Environmental Health, School of Public Health, University of São Paulo, Brazil

Climate change presents significant challenges to human development in Brazil, affecting multiple facets of the country's socio-economic and environmental landscape. The country experiences various extreme weather events due to its diverse climate and geographical characteristics. These events include heavy rainfall, culminating in widespread flooding, with cities with inadequate drainage systems being vulnerable. Some regions suffer from prolonged droughts, which disrupt water supplies. Brazil is experiencing intense heat waves in various areas, impacting health, agriculture, and energy consumption. Brazil has made various commitments and taken steps to address climate change. Mainly, the country has advanced in the expansion of renewable energy sources with a focus on diversifying its energy mix. Brazil has a long history of hydropower development, and a significant portion of its electricity comes from hydropower plants. However, this has sometimes led to environmental concerns, including deforestation and displacement of local communities. Furthermore, climate variability, including irregular rainfall patterns and droughts, can impact water levels in reservoirs, affecting the generation capacity of hydropower plants. Mainly, in the context of the 2001 energy crisis and electricity rationing, the Brazilian government established the Emergency Wind Power Program (Proeólica), which aimed to promote the wind energy market. This program subsidized the



ensuing proposition that resulted in the creation of the 2002 Alternative Energy Sources Incentive Program (PROINFA). PROINFA aimed to encourage wind, small hydroelectric plants (SHPs), and biomass sources. Brazil's renewable energy development has seen significant progress, particularly in areas such as biofuels, wind power, and solar energy. However, alongside these developments, there have been challenges related to the just transition and social conflicts, especially concerning the impacts of renewable energy projects on local communities. In addition, the issue of social exclusion is also relevant when compared to electricity consumption. Even though Brazil has a high electrification rate since 99.73% of households have access to electricity, but 22% of households have always had difficulty paying their energy bills and 25% of households began to have difficulties in 2018. This article examines Brazil's efforts to achieve just energy transition, beginning with an examination of the results from our analysis of the Energy Quadrilemma. The results highlight the complex challenges faced by different regions in Brazil, followed by an examination of policy responses aimed at promoting energy transition that negatively impacts disadvantaged populations.

## **Climate change, equity and human development in South Africa**

**Imraan Valodia**, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Director, Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS), WITS University, South Africa

**Katrina Lehmann-Grube**, Associate Researcher, Climate Change and Inequality, Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, WITS University, South Africa

Climate change is occurring in the context of the triple threat to development in South Africa – high poverty, inequality and unemployment. Like many other parts of the global South, South Africa is very vulnerable to climate change impacts, which are likely to exacerbate these challenges. These impacts include worsening health outcomes, reduced productivity, loss of arable land, destruction of assets and infrastructure, and the distortion of investment priorities.

However, unlike most of its peers, South Africa is also a high greenhouse gas emitter due to its carbon-intensive energy system. Therefore, South Africa is facing the need to transition towards a low-carbon economy, as the world shifts towards renewable energy, electric vehicles, and import taxes on carbon-intensive products, which are likely to reduce South Africa's competitiveness and

key exports. This transition is also likely to increase demand and mining for critical minerals necessary for renewable and battery technologies, which could result in worsening social and environmental impacts associated with extractives, while at the same time increasing employment and exports. Therefore, while there may be positive opportunities in the transition, if poorly managed, this could have significant negative impacts.

This paper therefore first aims to situate these climate change and transition challenges within South Africa's context of inequality (Gini coefficient of 0.63). South Africa's emissions-intensity is not evenly distributed, with the top 1% of income earners responsible for 18% of emissions, compared to 7% of the bottom 50%. Similarly, the impacts both of climate change and the transition are unlikely to be evenly distributed given the high levels of inequality in South Africa. While the wealthiest are able to protect themselves with higher incomes, insurance mechanisms, diversified assets, and livelihoods less reliant on environmental conditions; the poorest will be hardest hit due to their weak labour market security, limited access to services, vulnerable agricultural systems and insufficient capabilities to withstand shocks.

This makes the development objectives of South Africa all the more urgent, but the usual pathways of structural transformation are severely reduced. Within this context, possible interventions for climate justice are explored, including investment in the care economy, comprehensive and adequate social protection, universal social services and targeted industrial policy. Considerations for the financing of these interventions is also briefly addressed.

## **Climate Change and Human Development: Synergizing Perspectives in India**

**Purnamita Dasgupta**, Chair Professor and Head, Environmental and Resource Economics Unit, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi

Policy-making on human development reveals the former as having a history, accommodating gradually changes in approaches and policy guidelines, and overall, appears to be a fairly structured discourse. In comparison, policy making on climate change, can appear to be fairly haphazard and contentious, even where the latter has its focus on sustainable development. Much of the academic interest in climate change stems from the consensus that has emerged over the

last couple of decades on the science of future risks from climate change. The policy imperative for ameliorating and protecting the consequent risks to human development has followed at a slower pace, with interests expanding alongside the experience of observed impacts. Increased understanding on climate change impacts, risks and actions, has together provided an unprecedented boost for recognizing that synergies across sectors, actors and policies are essential for successful advancement on development, including conventional non-climate dimensions. Evidence from India shows that impacts are felt here and now, risks are posed across geographies within national and regional boundaries, and livelihood and economic disruptions occur from extreme events. Broadly, human development contributes to reducing climate impacts, and action to reduce climate change reduces risks to human development. However, the degree and extent of association between these two postulates, vary widely in a large country like India, given its social, bio-physical and economic heterogeneity. Policy differentiation is therefore required to take care of both the co-benefits and co-costs of synergizing developmental and climate policies, while making sure to enable national priorities and yet being appropriate to the local context. This foreground's major overlapping dimensions with regard to resource flows, including finance, technology and human resources. Substantial in-house progress has been made in modeling climate and weather variability and the prediction of extreme events, for instance. Its translation to policies and implementation that on- boards climate dimensions to enhance development outcomes has progressed differentially at sub- national levels. Fundamentally, an improved understanding on climate change contributes to human development in two ways: (a) the need to bring actors across sectors together to implement policies that advance human development; and (b) the need for convergence of policies on human development itself across sectors, including the environment. Using examples from the health sector, this presentation will highlight some of the synergistic responses, focusing on both aspects - enhancing co-benefits, and minimizing co-costs.

### **Climate Change, Loss and Damage and Livelihoods of the Poor: Experiences from Coastal Areas in Bangladesh**

**Golam Rasul**, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Human-induced greenhouse gas emissions are causing climate-related disasters like floods, storms, droughts, and heat waves, impacting human well-

being, particularly in the poorest and developing countries. Chapter 8 of the AR6 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) conclude with high confidence that adverse impacts of climate change, development deficits and inequality exacerbate each other and existing vulnerabilities and inequalities intensify with adverse impacts of climate change.

Bangladesh is one of the world's most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. According to a World Bank study, over 97% of its geographic area and about 98% of its population are at risk of multiple hazards. Every year, the country faces different natural disasters and poor people incurs huge economic and non-economic losses due to climate induced disasters such as flood, cyclone, river bank erosion, sea level rise, saline water intrusion, ecosystem degradation, drought and other climate induced health and livelihood risks.

The climate is constantly changing, and the environment is rapidly degrading. The last assessment of the IPCC, confirmed that climate change is accelerating, and climate-related loss and damage are increasing. Scientists now agree that the impacts of climate change would intensify even if emissions were reduced to keep global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels because the action on mitigation and adaptation measures have been slow and inadequate. Some climate change impacts are unavoidable because they have already been 'locked in' to the Earth's system and losses and damages may occur where adaptation limits have already been reached and adaptation is physically and technically impossible and socially unacceptable.

In Bangladesh, every year thousands of people lose their crops, livestock, land, homestead, and other livelihood assets and they are displaced from home due to floods, riverbank erosion, cyclones, and other natural disasters. The impact of climate change is more severe in coastal areas in Bangladesh. The freshwater river area in the southwest coastal zone in Bangladesh is shrinking. This is affecting coastal ecosystems, which has not only disrupted agricultural livelihoods but also contaminated drinking water resources, increased health risks, diseases, food insecurity and malnutrition in the coastal areas.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the current challenges to livelihoods faced by the people of coastal areas in Bangladesh. It will investigate the various effects on their livelihoods, including both economic and non-economic losses and damages, as well as suggest policy options to overcome the current challenges. The findings of the paper will be relevant for researchers and policymakers, as well as contribute to the loss and damage framework and literature.

## **Thematic Panel 10**

### **Theme: National Multidimensional Poverty Index as a Policy Tool for Advancing Human Development**

Organisers: NITI Aayog and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

Poverty is a multidimensional challenge, encompassing various simultaneous deprivations such as inadequate health, limited education, job insecurity, and low living standards. Acknowledging this complexity, it is widely recognized that effective poverty reduction policies must adopt a multidimensional perspective and rely on accurate measurements. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly address this, with SDG Target 1.2 aiming to halve the proportion of individuals in poverty across all dimensions by 2030. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), a systematic measure developed by UNDP in collaboration with OPHI, serves as a robust tool to evaluate progress toward achieving SDG 1.2. Globally acclaimed, the MPI captures overlapping deprivations in health, education, and living standards through ten equally weighted indicators.

Recognizing the additional dimensions of poverty affecting individuals, NITI Aayog was appointed as the nodal Government agency by the Government of India to develop an indigenous version of the global MPI. India's National Multidimensional Poverty Index (NMPI), produced by NITI Aayog with technical support from UNDP, and OPHI, adheres to the global MPI framework while introducing two new indicators based on national priorities, totaling twelve indicators. The NMPI provides granular data on multidimensional poverty across 28 States/UTs and 720 districts in India. The recently released NMPI report (2023), based on NFHS 5 (2019-21), highlights India's remarkable progress in nearly halving multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21.

While India's NMPI has taken a positive step by incorporating a gender-focused indicator, a comprehensive, gender-disaggregated poverty measure is crucial for fully utilizing its potential and informing policies and programs for women-led development. Globally, women bear a disproportionate burden of poverty, facing higher rates of extreme poverty, especially in female-headed households. Gender-based inequalities limit opportunities for women and girls to combat poverty effectively. Beyond improving living standards, education, and health, eradicating poverty requires a gender lens to address structural barriers, including redistributing and reducing unpaid care responsibilities, ensuring equal access to decent work, and guaranteeing a life free of violence. Developing countries, including India, can benefit immensely by analysing poverty dimensions through a gender perspective.

Multidimensional poverty measures, including MPI, are widely used globally to complement other measures such as income poverty, GDP, and inequality. The increasing use of MPI in shaping budget allocations and formulating poverty reduction plans underscores its significance. Addressing around 30 targets in 12 SDGs, the NMPI has the potential to facilitate coordination and convergence in policies across sectors and Government levels, breaking down silos and intensifying policy impacts. Integrated policies can efficiently recognize overlapping deprivations and address them collectively.

Moreover, the private sector plays a crucial role in reducing multidimensional poverty globally. The NMPI framework enables businesspeople to understand specific regional and demographic needs, avoiding duplication of efforts and facilitating the design of projects that accelerate human development. The private sector can complement public funds, invest in socially responsible ventures, and contribute to civil society efforts that accelerate robust human development and reduce poverty.

In the above-mentioned context, the proposed panel discussion, jointly hosted by NITI Aayog and UNDP India, aims to deliberate on the potential of using NMPI to inform policy and planning processes. It will explore global best practices in using MPI to advance human development, emphasizing gender-sensitive MPIs to help Governments design policies that focus on overcoming specific barriers faced by women and girls. This approach enables better use of available resources and greater progress in closing gender gaps and eradicating global poverty. The panel will also explore pathways and strategies through which the private sector can contribute to reducing multidimensional poverty.

Key Questions:

- What have been the global experiences in using MPI as a policy framework/ tool to advance human development, including budgeting, poverty reduction plans, and M&E activities?
- How can NMPI be leveraged to break silos between Government departments and develop convergence and multi-sectoral strategies to ensure a Whole-of-Government approach towards poverty reduction and human development?
- How can NMPI be made more responsive to the markers of women's poverty to address structural constraints faced by women?
- What are the key strategic areas on which the Government and private sector could collaborate and converge their efforts on poverty reduction, human development, and women-led development?
- How can the Government leverage the strengths of the private sector to improve the quality and delivery of public services?

# Thematic Panel 11

## Theme: Lifestyle for Environment: Towards an Alternative Development Paradigm

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### Concept Note

The situation of interlocking and interacting crises accentuated by climate change that has gripped the world since 2020, has resulted in the stalling or even reversal in the progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030. The decline in the value of the Human Development Index for two consecutive years in 2020 and 2021 for a large number of countries, the rising food and fuel prices, and the accentuation of inequality and poverty indicate the abject failure of the current development policies to ensure an equitable and sustainable world at the national and global level. The increasing mismatch between the current approach that rests on an unrestrained pursuit of self-interest by individuals and maximization of profits by firms, and the global goals that aim to usher in equity and sustainability, necessitates a rethink on the approaches to development.

The Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) concept was proposed in this context by the G20 India Presidency and endorsed at the G20 Leaders' declaration (para 36) in September 2023. LiFE seeks to promote behavioural change at the individual level towards sustainable lifestyles. Sustainability is also an integral element of the human development approach along with equity. Both approaches emphasise the role of the State in creating an enabling policy environment for adoption of sustainable lifestyles, reduction in inequality and vulnerability and enhancing the agency of women and marginalized groups.

The two approaches have many similarities and encompass the theoretical foundations that could lead to the emergence of an alternative development paradigm that is ethical, equitable and sustainable. The processes that can usher in such a development paradigm however, are not yet clear and need to be discussed further.



The objective of this session is to explore the LiFE and human development approaches with a view to exploring some of the following questions:

1. What are the main challenges facing development in contemporary times?
2. How can LiFE and constituents of human development help arrive at an alternate development paradigm?
3. What are the mechanisms essential for reconfiguring the roles of the state, market, individuals and communities in the LiFE paradigm?
4. How can enhancements in human development help secure lives and minimize people's vulnerabilities?

## **Abstract**

### **Lifestyle for Environment and Human Development: Synergies and Challenges**

**K. Seeta Prabhu**, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi and Former Head, Human Development Resource Centre, UNDP, New Delhi

The 'polycrisis' comprising interconnected and interacting crises has glaringly exposed the deep fault lines of the current neo-liberal development paradigm, with rising inequality, high unemployment and poverty affecting human well-being and halting progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The accelerated pace of climate change as a result of the Anthropocene has resulted in an unprecedented situation globally with life and livelihoods under severe threat. There is an emerging consensus that 'business as usual' is no longer an option and that it is imperative to adopt alternative development approaches that can usher in a more equitable and sustainable planet.

It is in this context that Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE), was adopted as a signature concept by the Indian Presidency of the G20 and ratified unanimously by the Leader's Summit in New Delhi in September 2023. The concept has at its core behavioral change towards adoption of more sustainable lifestyles by individuals and communities.

Much earlier, in 1990, it is a similar search for alternative development approaches that led to the emergence of the Human Development approach in 1990 through extensive bi-partisan dialogues at the North-South Roundtables. Posed as an alternative to the resource-intensive and economic growth oriented neo-liberal paradigm, it rests on the values of enhancing people's choices, freedoms, agency and capabilities. It constitutes an ethical approach to development with emphasis on the processes of Sustainability, Equity, Empowerment and Productivity (SEEP), being adhered to simultaneously.

Interestingly, both approaches have some similarities though the pathways differ. The LiFE approach relies on nudging and incentives to influence behaviour at the individual and community level, whereas the human development approach accords importance to enhancing capabilities to foster responsible choices and freedoms. Both approaches consider the market to be an essential institution but require it to be moulded to support circular economy and impact investments through social enterprises in the former and to shift to sustainable production practices using technology and innovations in the latter. Both the approaches consider the role of the government to be important in providing a regulatory framework and in creating an enabling policy environment. The LiFE approach emphasizes incentives towards 'for-benefit' enterprises, whereas the human development approach focuses more on ensuring entitlements and safety nets for the marginalised sections of the population to enhance basic and advanced capabilities and ensuring synergies between policies, processes and finances.

The LiFE and Human Development approaches are relevant in the current context as they emphasise an ethical approach to development. However, they need to address some aspects that require further analysis to make them applicable widely. First, the linkages between individual and community/collective with respect to values, norms and choices, especially in instances where the community is heterogenous need to be spelt out clearly. Second, the mechanisms that enhance collective capabilities that will enable the realization of the new values and standards for sustainable development need to be specified. Third, the processes that can usher in a new social contract in consonance with social welfare and social justice needs to be delineated. The role of the 4 Cs - culture, community, choices and conservation need to be incorporated into the new approach. Finally, the ambitious march towards a new development paradigm cannot be achieved unless the global actors demonstrate commitment, cooperation and coordination in the interests of achieving an equitable and sustainable world.

## A Different and Better Development Path for the Global South

**Thomas Pogge**, Director of the Global Justice Program and Leitner Professor of Philosophy and Political Science, Yale University, USA

The main challenge facing development in contemporary times is that political decision making, which determines the real workings of the world economy, is increasingly dominated by a small international elite of powerful individuals and organizations (political parties, corporations and industry associations, banks, hedge funds, law firms, lobbyists, and management consultancies). They are not hostile to human development, but they are obsessed with their own advantage, often in fierce competition with one another. As a side effect of their efforts to accumulate wealth and power, partly through tax avoidance, the burdens on the poorer half of humanity are greatly increased even while their income share remains compressed to about 5%. Relevant burdens on the poor include health burdens from air pollution (causing about 2.5 million deaths per year in India alone), health and other burdens from climate change, monopoly markups on essential medicines, and massive death and destruction from wars and civil wars fueled by elite rivalries and profits from arms trading.

Securing lives and minimizing people's vulnerabilities – this is not something development achieves but what development consists in. The traditional economists' identification of development with GDP growth is absurd because it is indifferent between additional income going to a tiny elite of already superrich households and its going to the very much larger poorer half of the population. (The touted Human Development Index shares this defect.) Development that does not help secure lives and minimize people's vulnerabilities should not qualify as human development.

The LiFE paradigm is meant to address specifically vulnerabilities that originate in the environment. These prominently include threats from air, water, and soil pollution, threats from climate change, including sea level rise, dangerous heat, spread of tropical diseases, crop failures, water scarcity, extreme weather events, and extinction of species, and threats from pathogens, snakes, mosquitos, meteorites, etc.

Central to the LiFE economy are new technologies in the broadest sense – technologies that mitigate environmental threats or enable people to adapt to them. These specifically include new green technologies that reduce pollution as well as new health technologies that avert, cure, and contain disease. To

optimally benefit from such new technologies, we need well-targeted incentives to develop culturally appropriate high-impact innovations and then to diffuse them rapidly, widely, and effectively. Because the present patent system impedes dissemination and largely neglects the needs of poorer population segments, additional, complementary incentives should be created such as those envisioned in the Ecological and Health Impact Fund proposals.

In this way, diverse dimensions of poverty can be addressed, such as nutrition, water, shelter, health, education, energy, sanitation, clothing, family planning, labor, mobility, personal security, social inclusion and participation.

Advancing human development requires providing people with new and better options. These include new technologies, of course, but they also involve new ideas for how to live – changing and diversifying old habits of working, communicating, vacationing, eating, shopping, raising children, celebrating, and interacting with animals and the rest of nature. For the poorer half, such creative transformation requires affordable access to enabling technologies – something that impact fund incentives can provide most cost-effectively.

## **Private Sector Financing for LiFE: Concepts and challenges**

**Danang Parikesit**, Professor, Engineering Economics and Transport Policy; Founder and Senior Researcher, The Centre of Transportation and Logistics Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

The G20 leaders commit to pursue low-carbon/GHG emissions strategy, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable development pathway by championing an integrated and inclusive approach. Sustainable mobility is a good example in implementing those concepts and principles. Sustainable mobility encourage us to compliment physical mobility (transportation) with a virtual mobility (telecommunication), and thus, creating a sustainable alternative of delivering goods and services. This behavioral change will pave ways for enhancing the digitalization of services, reducing the use of non-renewable energy, and managing effective resource consumption.

The G20 declaration also encourages a reform in the international multilateral financing institutions, to ensure they fit for purpose, address scale and scope of needs, and are able to absorb risks faced by both government and private

sectors. When it comes to project levels and private sector participation, the financing ecosystem should allow different parties to shoulder commercial risks that cannot be managed by private parties. Financing greenfield, innovative projects such as climate-sensitive transport infrastructure and services is a complex undertaking since both costs and revenues are often difficult to forecast. Unlocking private financing for sustainable mobility projects requires project de-risking framework, innovation in a blended-financing, and re-position the role of MDGs to serve as a catalyst for a new path of development.

## **Catalyzing Sustainable Development through Community Engagement**

**Pami Dua**, Former Director, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

Sustainable development encompasses the integration of economic, social, and environmental considerations to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. However, to achieve sustainable development, there is a need to transform people's values, beliefs, attitudes, intuitive and spiritual consciousness, as well as conscientiousness. While the economic, social, and environmental aspects constitute the 'external dimensions' of sustainability, values, beliefs, attitudes and spiritual and intuitive consciousness and conscientiousness are referred to as the 'inner dimension' of sustainability. Together, these yield the concept of holistic sustainability that encompasses both inner and external dimensions (Dua et al., 2023).

Achieving holistic sustainability involves a symbiotic relationship between the inner and external dimensions. By cultivating values, beliefs, and attitudes that prioritize ecological consciousness and social responsibility, individuals become more inclined to make sustainable choices. This internal transformation, when translated into action, enhances the impact of strategies addressing economic, social, and environmental challenges. Thus, the inner dimension becomes the catalyst for developing enduring solutions. For this to be effective, a change in individual and community behaviour is crucial that would set into motion a cascading effect on the nation, globe and planet earth through a bottom-up approach.

Communities can thus play a pivotal role in catalyzing transformative change for sustainability by fostering collective action, shared values, and localized

solutions. This bottom-up approach ensures that sustainability strategies are not only effective but also culturally sensitive and locally relevant. Community-led initiatives, whether in sustainable agriculture, renewable energy adoption, or waste reduction, amplify the impact of global sustainability goals by addressing specific challenges at the grassroots level.

For instance, to achieve resolution of ecological issues, Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) is imperative that advocates an environmentally conscious lifestyle. Embracing a circular economy, this approach emphasizes reducing, reusing, and recycling resources to minimize waste and promote sustainable production and consumption patterns. By integrating these elements, individuals contribute to a holistic approach that prioritizes responsible choices, fosters community connections, and creates a harmonious balance between personal lifestyles and the well-being of the planet. Thus, to address issues such as environmental degradation and climate crises, it is important to change individual and community behaviour by practising a lifestyle that is conducive for the environment.

To illustrate the application of community engagement, as a case study, we examine a community located in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India. The Dayalbagh community embodies this approach through its Sigma Six Q-V-A (Quality-Values-Attributes) Model, guiding the transition towards holistic sustainability. Encompassing agriculture and dairy, education, healthcare, air quality, water quality, innovation, and human values, this model reflects the essence of Lifestyle for Environment and beyond. Dayalbagh's scientific model of Sigma Six Q-V-A is fundamentally seated in the scientific foundations of topological graph theory and systems theory.

In conclusion, catalyzing sustainable development through community engagement is a living reality exemplified by communities like Dayalbagh. The integration of eco-conscious lifestyles into community identity showcases the transformative potential of collective action. As the global community strives for a more sustainable future, embracing and adapting such models becomes imperative, paving the way for a harmonious coexistence between humanity and the environment.

## Thematic Panel 12

### Theme: Health Seeking and Health Systems: Some Insights

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#### Concept Note

Health seeking behaviour and health systems play integral roles in the overall well-being of individuals and communities. Health seeking behaviour refers to the actions individuals undertake to maintain or improve their health, including seeking medical advice, preventive measures, or treatment for illnesses. Effective health systems encompass organisations, institutions, and resources that deliver healthcare services to meet the population's needs. A well-functioning health system ensures accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare services. It involves a network of healthcare providers, facilities, and support services, working collaboratively to address health challenges. The success of health seeking behaviour is closely tied to the efficiency and effectiveness of health systems. When individuals have easy access to healthcare services, information, and resources, they are more likely to engage in proactive health-seeking behaviours, leading to improved health outcomes at both individual and community levels. In essence, the synergy between health seeking behaviour and well-structured health systems is essential for promoting and sustaining good health.

Social protection plays a pivotal role in promoting health and well-being. It encompasses a range of policies and programmes designed to provide financial, healthcare, and social support to individuals and families, especially in times of vulnerability or need. Accessible and effective social protection systems contribute significantly to improving healthcare outcomes by ensuring that individuals, including those facing economic challenges, have the means to access essential medical services. By fostering a supportive environment, social protection serves as a key enabler in the pursuit of better health.

## Abstract

### **Private Presence in Indian Healthcare and Education: A Comparative Analysis (A)**

**Amit Shovon Ray**, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

**Priyanka Yadav**, Assistant Professor, Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi, New Delhi

Merit goods are goods for which the state deems it necessary to intervene in individual preferences and coerce their 'ideal' consumption, often through direct public provision. Despite the existence of private providers of such goods, an added public provision results in an array of private-public mix systems of merit goods' provision operating in practice. While the relevance of public presence is amply justified by the failure of consumers to fully comprehend the benefits of such goods, the role of private counterpart is often debated. It has been observed that despite the concerns of the sceptics of private provision, the fiscal stress associated with state provision and the growing needs of an increasing population has entailed policy encouragement of private providers in both developed and developing nations. This in turn has underlined the need to observe the extent of private presence in merit goods provision, its variation across regions and sectors, followed by an exploration of the factors that may explain the extent of private presence in the two sectors.

The present study attempts to analyse private presence in two merit goods sectors in India – healthcare and education – with a comparative perspective. It has two broad objectives. First, we intend to explore how the extent of private presence in India varies across regions and across the two sectors. Our second objective is to throw some light on how various spatial characteristics (prosperity, geography, demography, culture, etc.) have influenced the extent of private presence in the two sectors in India. We use district wise measures of private presence from the demand side, calculated by using consumption data on healthcare and education provided by NSSO. For our first objective, we map the districts in quartiles and k-mean clusters with respect to our measure of private presence to discover incidence of any spatial patterns across Indian districts and across the two sectors of healthcare and education. For the second



objective, we investigate the determinants of private presence at the district level in the two sectors for a comparative analysis. It is expected that factors like socio-economic prosperity, cultural heterogeneity, district demographics and geography, coupled with exposure to media and access to health insurance (for healthcare only) will influence the extent of private presence from the demand side. Moreover, we expect the influence of these spatial attributes to vary across the two sectors.

We estimate seemingly unrelated regressions (SUR) model using data from NFHS, Census and NSSO. We observe that spatial patterns exist for private presence in both sectors, but they are more distinctly visible for healthcare with a clear north-south divide. There is significant variation in the dominance of private providers in the two sectors across districts. Private providers are dominant in both sectors in large parts of Punjab, Haryana, western UP and the southern states, while public providers dominate in both sectors in the north-eastern states and sporadically in central India. In large tracts of North and Central India, we observe that private providers dominate in one of the two merit good segment but not the other. As far as the determinants of private presence at the district level for each of the two merit goods are concerned, the SUR estimations indicate that socio-economic prosperity, religious diversity, cultural similarity, and exposure to media are the common factors positively associated with private presence in both, while linguistic and social group diversities and percentage of area under forest cover are more significant determinants of private presence in education but not in healthcare. Our results suggest that private presence in merit goods, as measured from the demand side, will be driven by a distinct set of spatial attributes. Hence any standalone policy encouragement to augment private presence may not yield the desired results unless these associated attributes are also taken into account.

## **Inequality and Social Determinant of Health**

**Hawati Abdul Hamid**, Deputy Director of Research, Khazanah Research Institute, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Although Malaysia has been acclaimed for producing laudable health outcomes at a relatively low cost, health inequities perpetuated by social, economic and environmental factors continue to persist. Against this backdrop, there is a strong link between poverty and ill health, with one begetting the other in a vicious

cycle. Low income and precarious work are among the biggest contributors to poor health with lower income groups having a higher likelihood of experiencing unexpected health loss. This is translated into economic vulnerability for both individuals and their families as those who fall ill are unable to work, pushing them further into chronic poverty. The differences in health outcomes by socioeconomic status are unnecessary, unfair and avoidable, provided that there is a solid social protection system with an inclusive and forward-looking approach to preventing poverty and addressing vulnerability. Social protection describes policy measures aimed at ensuring basic income security for all, ensuring universal access to social services and basic amenities, as well as enhancing people's capability to be productive and resilient to vulnerabilities. This presentation will explore how social protection can play a role in breaking the cycle of poverty and poor health in addition to addressing the growing inequities that disproportionately affect those with less power and privilege. Social protection describes policy measures aimed at ensuring basic income security for all, ensuring universal access to social services and basic amenities, as well as enhancing people's capability to be productive and resilient to vulnerabilities. This presentation will explore how social protection can play a role in breaking the cycle of poverty and poor health in addition to addressing the growing inequities that disproportionately affect those with less power and privilege. Social protection describes policy measures aimed at ensuring basic income security for all, ensuring universal access to social services and basic amenities, as well as enhancing people's capability to be productive and resilient to vulnerabilities. This presentation will explore how social protection can play a role in breaking the cycle of poverty and poor health in addition to addressing the growing inequities that disproportionately affect those with less power and privilege.

## **Social Health Insurance and Health Care Seeking Behavior in Urban Ethiopia (A)**

**Anagaw Mebratie**, Assistant Professor, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

**Zahra Zarepour**, Fellow, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

**Dessaiegn Shamebo**, Assistant Professor, Ethiopian Civil Service University, Ethiopia

**Zemzem Shigute**, Assistant Professor International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus, University Rotterdam, Netherlands and Institute of Development and Policy Research, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

**Arjun Bedi**, Professor, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

In the past 20 years, Ethiopia has witnessed a sharp expansion in its public healthcare system due to investments made to expand access to health services and improve health outcomes. To encourage healthcare-seeking behavior and provide financial protection for the poorest households, the country has made remarkable progress on the demand side through the implementation of voluntary Community-based Health Insurance (CBHI) schemes for the rural and informal sectors of the economy. After years of planning, in 2024, the government of Ethiopia proposes to introduce a compulsory Social Health Insurance (SHI) program for formal sector employees. The proposed scheme will provide access to contracted healthcare facilities at a premium of 3% of the gross monthly income of employees with another 3% coming from the employer. Objectives: Several studies have examined the willingness to pay (WTP) this premium, however, little is known about the health care seeking behaviour (HSB) of formal sector employees. This paper investigates both - the determinants of healthcare-seeking behaviour and among other aspects, WTP the premium. Through these explorations, the paper sheds light on the potential challenges for the implementation of SHI. This study is based on a retrospective cross-sectional household survey, conducted in person in four main cities of the country. The sample cities included Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Hawassa and Mekelle. Considering the distribution of the formal sector in these four cities, a total of 2,740 sample that is representative of the population of formal sector workers were collected. The data were collected in June-July 2016. Descriptive statistics, logit and multinomial logit (MNL) models are used to analyse

retrospective survey data (2,749 formal sector employees) which covers the major regions of the country. Findings: Regarding outpatient care, conditional of falling ill, a majority of the visits (55.9%) were to private healthcare providers. In the case of inpatient care, it was the opposite with a majority of healthcare seekers visiting public sector hospitals (62.5%). Among those who used services, 85.5% of the respondents sought care within a couple of days (2.4 days) of falling ill. A majority of the sample (67%) supported the introduction of SHI but only 24% were willing to pay the proposed SHI premium. While knowledge about the plans for SHI were already widespread (83% of the sample had heard of SHI) in 2016, knowledge about the SHI premium was not widespread (40% knew the premium). The average WTP was 1.6% of gross monthly income. Respondents in the two richest income quintiles were more likely to oppose SHI and consider it unfair. The interaction between the low quality of health care at public facilities and the additional cost of accessing care translates into an unwillingness to pay the 3% premium even amongst those respondents who find it affordable. The prominent role of the private sector and the resistance to SHI amongst the two richest income quintiles, suggests that the SHI program needs to actively include private health care facilities within its ambit. Additionally, concerted efforts at enhancing the quality of care available at public health facilities, both, in terms of perception and patient-centered care and addressing drug and equipment availability bottlenecks, are needed, if SHI is to garner wider support.

## **Engaging the Community in Integrated Universal Health Coverage in Kenya: The Role of The Community Health Promoters**

**Awuor C. Ponge**, Sr. Research Associate, African Policy Centre (APC), Nairobi, Kenya

**Ochieng' Antoinette Akinyi**, Public Health Officer (PHO), Ugunja Sub-County, Kenya; Sub-County Disease Surveillance Coordinator, Ugunja Sub-County, Kenya; and Sub-County Malaria Control Coordinator, Ugunja Sub-County, Kenya.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) stands as a global imperative, aimed at ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic status or geographic location, have access to essential healthcare services. It has emerged as a global priority for achieving equitable access to quality healthcare services. In the context of Kenya, a country striving to achieve UHC by 2030,

community engagement is essential to ensuring that healthcare reaches all citizens, especially those in underserved and remote areas. Kenya's healthcare landscape is characterised by disparities in access, resource constraints, and a diverse population spread across urban and rural areas. These challenges have necessitated innovative approaches to bring healthcare closer to the people, particularly those residing in remote regions. Community Health Promoters (CHPs), individuals from within the community who are trained to provide basic healthcare services and health education, have emerged as indispensable agents of change in this context. This paper explores the pivotal role played by Community Health Promoters in Kenya's journey toward integrated UHC. Kenya's healthcare landscape is marked by geographical disparities, limited resources, and a diverse population. CHPs, who are community members trained to provide basic healthcare services and health education, have proven to be a crucial link in bridging these gaps. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of how CHPs facilitate the integration of UHC principles at the grassroots level. The study draws on a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, including interviews, surveys, and case studies conducted across various regions of Kenya. It examines the impact of CHPs in improving healthcare access, promoting preventive care, and increasing health literacy within their communities. It investigates the multifaceted roles played by CHPs in promoting integrated UHC and the impacts they have achieved within their communities. Furthermore, it analyses the challenges faced by CHPs in fulfilling their roles and suggests policy recommendations to enhance their effectiveness. Key findings highlight that CHPs have not only increased healthcare awareness but have also reduced healthcare disparities by providing timely and culturally sensitive care. They have acted as advocates for marginalised populations, fostering a sense of community ownership of healthcare services. Despite their invaluable contributions, CHPs face several challenges in fulfilling their roles effectively. These include limited resources, inadequate training, and the need for sustainable incentives. To bolster their impact, policymakers should consider investing in ongoing training programs, strengthening the supply chain for essential medicines and equipment, and devising mechanisms to recognize and compensate CHPs for their services. In Kenya's relentless pursuit of UHC, the role of Community Health Promoters cannot be overstated. Their efforts have transformed healthcare access and delivery at the community level. By providing immediate care, promoting preventive practices, and increasing health literacy, CHPs contribute significantly to the realization of integrated UHC in Kenya. This paper contributes valuable insights for policymakers, healthcare practitioners, and researchers aiming to strengthen community involvement in achieving UHC goals. It underscores the importance of recognizing and supporting the role of

CHPs as key drivers of progress toward integrated Universal Health Coverage in Kenya. As Kenya and other nations strive to make healthcare accessible to all, this research sheds light on the pivotal role of community health promoters in achieving truly comprehensive and equitable healthcare systems.

## **Financial Technology and Health Insurance Nexus in India: An Empirical Copula Regression Analysis**

**Reshmi Sengupta**, Associate Professor, FLAME University, Pune, Maharashtra

**Debasis Rooj**, Associate Professor, FLAME University, Pune, Maharashtra

**Anurag Banerjee**, Assistant Professor, Delhi School of Business, New Delhi, New Delhi

In our study, we examine how financial technologies affect the rate of health insurance adoption among households in India. We use a unit-level sample of households from the 77th round of the National Sample Survey Organization's (NSSO) Debt and Investment Survey in 2019 to measure the adoption of financial technology through digital payment methods, specifically e-wallets. The NSS data provide rich information on the adoption of several digital payment systems by households, including debit cards, credit cards, and e-wallets, and information on health insurance. The low uptake of health insurance is a major hindrance in achieving universal health coverage (UHC) in India. The main reasons behind this are limited accessibility, lack of awareness, low education, lack of financial knowledge, and inadequate use of financial instruments. Emergency healthcare situations often force households to bear substantial out-of-pocket (OOP) expenses, leading to catastrophic healthcare costs and potential impoverishment.

In our study, we argue that the increased utilization of financial technologies (FinTech) can lead to a significant improvement in the adoption of health insurance. By providing easy access to insurance products and enabling swift payments and reimbursements through various technology-based platforms, households can tremendously benefit from health insurance access and utilization. Therefore, in this study, we jointly examine the relationship between FinTech and health insurance adoption. We acknowledge the complexity of studying the impact of digital payments on healthcare investment due to various

influencing factors such as culture, context, and policies. Additionally, household dynamics, including size and consumption expenditure, may exhibit non-linear patterns in digital payment and health insurance adoption.

To address these challenges, we employ a semi-parametric Copula regression estimation technique, as recommended by Radice et al. (2016), for its ability to consider unobserved confounding factors, non-linear effects of covariates, and non-Gaussian bivariate distribution between the outcome equation (health insurance status) and the treatment equation (digital payment adoption) while making minimal parametric assumptions.

Our analysis focuses on the uptake of health insurance by households, with the dependent variable defined as whether or not the household paid any health (medical) insurance premium within the last 365 days. The primary independent variable in our model is the usage of “Electronic wallets” (E-wallets) by any member of the household. In addition, our model includes a range of socio-economic variables, such as family size and consumption expenditure, as control variables. Our research indicates that households having a higher percentage of female members and those belonging to Scheduled Tribes are less inclined to utilize E-wallets. In contrast, households with reliable sources of income and wage earners are more likely to adopt E-wallets. The findings also suggest that middle-income households and those with a greater number of earning members are more likely to adopt financial technologies. Moreover, we find that the usage of E-wallets significantly increases the chances of enrolling in health insurance. We also observe that income is directly proportional to enrollment in health insurance, but it becomes relatively constant for high-income groups. Additionally, the study shows that the use of E-wallets considerably increases enrollment in health insurance schemes with higher premiums (a proxy for privately purchased health insurance). Our study results provide empirical evidence of the benefits of utilizing financial technology to increase the adoption of health insurance in India. Such adoptions and use can save many households from falling into debt and impoverishment due to high healthcare costs.

## **Thematic Panel 13**

### **Theme: Climate Justice and Sustainable Development: Some Insights**

Organiser: Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

Climate change poses significant challenges for India, impacting various facets of the country's environment, economy, and society. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and cyclones are becoming more frequent and severe. The Himalayan region, a crucial source of water for many rivers in India, is particularly vulnerable to the melting of glaciers, affecting water availability. Agriculture, a major sector in India, is also under threat due to changing climate conditions, impacting food security. Additionally, the rise in sea levels poses a risk to coastal areas, leading to potential displacement of populations. India has taken steps to address climate change, including adopting renewable energy initiatives and participating in international climate agreements. However, the country continues to face the urgent need for comprehensive strategies and policies to mitigate and adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

Efforts to address climate change are actively underway, both at the governmental level and by individuals, NGOs, and enterprises. Ongoing initiatives aim to diminish greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with targets outlined in SDG-6 and establishing interim goals. India's commitment to combating climate change is evident in substantial investments, particularly in the Solar Energy sector. Despite these efforts, Indian companies face challenges in lowering the costs associated with the construction of solar panels, leading to significant reliance



on foreign (particularly Chinese) companies. Reducing the production expenses for solar panels within India remains a substantial hurdle in the ongoing battle against climate change. The other direction Indian authorities have chosen, is harnessing Nuclear Energy. India already has 22 nuclear power plants though their contribution to the total energy consumption in the country is <5%. Also, it takes a very long time and it is expensive to set up a nuclear plant. There are yet other directions where efforts are being made, like Wind Energy, Tidal Wave, etc. However, the path is long given that the dependence on fossil fuels still exceeds 80%.

At the same time individual and localised efforts to combat climate changes are galore. This panel principally examines the regional dimensions of climate-change abatement efforts in the different papers presented.

## **Abstract**

### **Combating Climate Change at the coast: Pathways to selected SDGs**

**Indira Hirway**, Professor, Centre for Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad

**Rajesh Shah**, Managing Director, Save Ltd., Ahmedabad

Coastal regions where land and water meet are unique eco-regions. They are home to several important but fragile ecosystems. They also attract a number of economic activities like trade and port, ship building, fisheries, industries, defence, and tourism etc. These economic activities promote economic growth but also cause degradation of several coastal and marine resources. Since negligible value is attached to coastal resources, the right signals are not available for taking decisions on economic activities. A major challenge in coastal development therefore is to manage a balance between the economy and ecology. Most developing countries have failed to manage this balance and ended up in coastal degradation in multiple ways. Climate change, long term shifts in temperature and patterns, has made the situation worse. Climate change has impacted adversely sea and coast both. Global warming has

made sea water warm and sea level rise, generated marine heat waves and ocean acidification, and storms big and small. It has also impacted adversely on coastal ecosystems, like mangroves, salt marshes, sea grass, wetlands, coral reefs and oyster reefs. Consequently, coastal human life, livelihoods and well-being have degraded. Vikas Centre for Development, a CSO with which we have been associated for several decades, started working for improving life and livelihoods of coastal people in Jambusar block in Bharuch district in south Gujarat. Vikas started with social mobilization of the marginalised sections for elimination of bonded labour, landless farm labour (Chakar) and bonded women labour (Panihari) from the region. Vikas used NREGA productively and other funds for development of the land allotted to the poor. This was followed by improving farming, production of organic manure in Jambusar and strong legal cell to help the locals. After initiating mangrove plantation in Neja, Nada and Tankari villages, we decided to make an impact at the macro level, and ended up developing an ambitious project called Great Green Wall of Gujarat of growing bio-shield on a scale on the coast of Gujarat to combat climate change and to radically improve life and livelihoods of people. This paper discusses, conceptually and empirically, how the green wall is expected to combat climate change on the coast and sea both to promote adaptation and also mitigation, and to achieve some important Sustainable Development Goals.

## **Climate Action, Commodification and Community Institutions: Field Insights from Rural Arunachal Pradesh**

**Deepak K Mishra**, Professor, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

The well-known trade-offs between multiple development priorities and the need for building sustainable adaptation and mitigation policies to address the impacts of climate change necessitate an understanding of the complementarities as well as possible conflicts of interest across regions, sectors, classes, social groups, communities and occupational groups. Against this backdrop, climate action is often refracted through the existing political-economic structures that regulate and differentiate access to information, institutions and resources.

Taking the 'State Climate Action Plan of Arunachal Pradesh' as an example, this paper interrogates the institutional and political economy underpinnings of such action plans, typically presented as value-neutral and scientific

documents. We focus only on the proposals related to agriculture, forest and rural livelihood. After mapping the suggested actions in these areas, we examine the institutional implications of the proposed programmes. The outcomes of such climate action critically depend on the agency and capacity of actors at various levels of governance. The programmes for 'climate action' often involve an amalgamation and extension of pre-existing programmes in the respective thrust areas; the approach is state-centric, and the key constraints identified are technical and financial. Although the institutional constraints and the need to build institutional capacity are occasionally highlighted, the complex institutional reality is typically overlooked. Other reports, primarily by non-state agencies, have noted the centrality of community institutions in developing and implementing climate action, but have underappreciated the changing nature of these institutions.

We contrast these action plans with the institutional arrangements that exist at the village level. Based on the evidence generated through multiple rounds of field surveys in Arunachal Pradesh, we argue that property rights over land and forest are in a state of flux, with an informal and ambiguous transition towards private property. Development interventions, in complex ways, had already unleashed a process of commodification of nature, resulting in rising inequality within the communities. Community Institutions respond in diverse ways to emerging challenges through institutional adaptation, abandonment, and crafting new institutional mechanisms. The suggested climate action plans gloss over these institutional complexities, and hence, in the absence of countervailing measures, are likely to result in further commodification of collectively owned resources.

## **Climate Change and Human Development in India**

**Niranjan Padhan**, PhD Scholar, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, Karnataka

**S Madheswaran**, Professor, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, Karnataka

Combating climate change has become one of the key global priorities. IPCC (2014) projected, as compared to developed countries, it is the developing countries which will be adversely affect from the climate change due to their low adaptive capacity. As a developing nation, India faces a unique challenge

as a significant proportion of its population (75%) relies on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and natural resource etc., as their primary source of livelihoods. The vulnerability of these sectors to the effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, has direct implications for India's economy and therefore undermine the country's aims to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDG) by 2030. In this context, the recent report released by RBI (2022-23), projected Climate change due to rising temperature and changing patterns of monsoon rainfall, could cost the Indian economy 2.8 percent of its GDP and depress the living standards of nearly half of its population by 2050. Further, in the absence of appropriate mitigation policies, the country may lose between 3 to 10 percent of its GDP annually by 2100 due to climate change and its associated extreme events. The challenges related to climate change are intertwined with economic well-being and the livelihoods of a substantial portion of Indian population. This exacerbates existing economic disparities and social inequalities. The impact of climate variability and change on human development is multifaceted and depends on various factors, including the magnitude and frequency of climate-related shocks, the sensitivity of systems to damage, their vulnerability, and its resilience capacity. All such developments have made it imperative for policy makers to begin to mainstream climate change in development policies and strategies. To achieve sustainable and resilient human development, a comprehensive understanding of impacts of climate change and its far-reaching socio-economic repercussions is imperative. With this background, the present study delves into the intricate relationship between climate change impacts and human development by investigating the spatial patterns of the Human Development Index (HDI) at the district level in Odisha, an eastern coastal state of India, popularly known as the disaster capital of India (Sharma et al., 2016). To construct the HDI, the research draws upon secondary sources of data related to economic, health, and educational infrastructure collected from the District Human Development Reports and the District Census Handbook of 2011, Economic Survey of Odisha from various years and other government reports. The study developed a Climate-Sensitive Index by considering temperature and rainfall data, and the frequency of flood and cyclone occurrences at the district level spanning from 2015 to 2021, sourced from the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority and the India Meteorological Department. To understand the spatial distribution of HDI concerning the Climate-Sensitive Index, the study employs cross-tabulation techniques. The findings reveal that certain districts, specifically Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Kandhamal, Sundargarh, and Mayurbhanj, have emerged as particularly vulnerable to climate-related challenges such as recurrent droughts, water scarcity, and elevated temperatures. These districts also exhibit lower

human development indicators, notably in the developmental dimensions of education and income levels, when compared to the state average. The results highlight the urgent need for focused and tailored policy interventions in districts that are both climatically vulnerable and have lagging human development indicators. Such districts require targeted investments and strategies that can enhance their resilience to climate change while simultaneously addressing underlying development deficits. Finally this study provides valuable insights into the convergence of climate vulnerabilities and human development disparities at the district level in Odisha, India.

### **The Green Wall, People's Participation, and Climate Justice: A Case Study of Combating Climate Change in Jambusar Taluka of Gujarat (A)**

**Dinesh Awasthi**, Professor, L J University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**Rajesh Shah**, Managing Director, SAVE LTD., AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT

**Amita Shah**, Professor, Centre for Development Alternatives, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

The Green Wall, People's Participation, and Climate Justice: A Case Study of Combating Climate Change in Jambusar Taluka of Gujarat Dinesh Awasthi Rajesh Shah Amita Shah Introduction In the context of climate change, India with a Climate Risk Index of 18.17 is identified as the 5th "Extreme Risk" country in the world. The Indian subcontinent is a major victim of climate extremities as reflected in excessive heat, floods and sandstorms, among other devastating natural events. In 2018 alone, vagaries of nature caused more than 2,000 deaths; i.e., 0.16 per 100,000 inhabitants, suffered losses of US \$ 37,807 million and a decrease in per capita GDP of 0.36%. It is also argued that sectors like water resources, forests, agriculture, and coastal zones have severe impacts of climate change by experiencing changes in hydrological cycles, rainfall as well as the magnitude and timing of its run-off, resulting in the loss of livelihoods and poverty. The State of Coastal Gujarat and Climate Change Measuring 1,617 km., Gujarat has the longest coastline in India. It covers 15 districts that envelop 45 coastal talukas of Gujarat. Large sections of 15 million people living along the coast of Gujarat are engaged primarily in agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries and wood cutting/charcoal making. Climate change has led to a rise in land and sea

temperatures resulting in salinity ingress, an increase in intensity and frequency of cyclones, floods and droughts, extensive land degradation, etc., leading to an increased vulnerability of the coastal communities and their livelihoods. The Case Study of Jambusar (Gujarat) To combat the impact of climate change in coastal areas of Gujarat, an Ahmedabad-based development organisation viz. Vikas - Centre for Development (VIKAS - CFD), and Saline Area Vitalisation Enterprise (SAVE), a social enterprise took a novel initiative to create a green wall of mangroves in about 2500 hectares of coastal land of Jambusar, one of the most backward talukas of the state. Of the 2500 hectares, SAVE-VIKAS CFD had done 600 hectares for the Adani Group of Companies. The background of this endeavour is that the Adanis had removed 140 hectares of mangroves to set up their Mundra Port. In turn, it adversely affected the livelihoods of people, besides damaging ecology. As compensation, they have planted 600 hectares of mangroves. The plantation was done by SAVE, involving local communities. That makes an interesting case for climate justice. This paper presents the process and the impact of the Green Wall of Mangroves, which was created involving 3000 families of local marginalised and depressed communities. This increased the incomes of people, stopped salinity ingress and significantly reduced soil erosion, created new avenues of livelihoods in fisheries (shrimps and crabs), animal husbandry, and agriculture in the coastal areas. The paper argues that coastal poverty is the outcome of natural resource degradation in a large number of coastal areas. Once the communities are economically empowered, they graduate to social empowerment and in turn political empowerment, as reflected in their assertions. The Outcomes The paper is based on a first-hand account of the process of creating the Green Wall and its impact. The analysis is based on the baseline data and the changes that have taken place in the lives and livelihoods of the people over time. The impact is seen in terms of enhanced employment and thus wages, sequestration of carbon dioxide, higher yield of sea fish/crabs, reduction of soil erosion, reversal of land degradation process and salinity ingress, political assertion of people, etc.”

## **The Political Ecology of Indigenous Self Governance**

**Mollica Dastider**, Associate Professor, JNU, New Delhi, New Delhi

“The Political Ecology of Indigenous Self-Governance” Mollica Dastider, Associate Professor, Centre for Comparative Politics and Political Theory, JNU. The present

paper is part of my larger work on the imperatives of multiple knowledge epistemologies. A work of research that specifically seeks to draw our attention to the multiple knowledge worlds of several marginalized cultural communities that simultaneously present before the 'modern' world ecosystems(s) of Indigenous: knowledge, philosophies, and ideas on welfare. As the title suggests the objective, or the purpose of this presentation would be to highlight the 'conscious agency' of the indigenous peoples (in general, and the adivasis in India in particular) in abiding by their traditional knowledge subjectivity – most evident in the 'lived-practices' in the regions of their traditional habitations. The paper underlines need for ontological engagements with contingencies of traditional knowledge-practices especially in the forested zones of indigenous habitations of the Global South. It further urges for the need to identify these contingencies of ecological life-world practices as the critical contribution of the recalcitrant peasantry and of the indigenous peoples of the Global South in responding to the challenges of climate crisis. In short, the paper would argue that the many sites of Indigenous knowledge practices in Global South mostly offer alternative forms of 'governance' through Political Ecology. Methods of study: In its exploration of the lived practices of the Janajati/indigenous communities in East Himalayas the paper primarily looks at the crucial interventions that marginalized cultural communities make in the politics of modernity and modern developmental state. The Lepcha language community in the Dzongu region of Sikkim with their traditional knowledge practices present an excellent example of biologically-diverse human habitation in the eastern Himalaya (Dzongu is part of the Kanchenzanga National park and is identified by UNESCO as one of the world heritage sites of rare biological diversity). Engaging with the contingency of the Lepcha traditional habitation in Northeast India the paper draws our attention to the 'political' distinctiveness of the 'adivasi' practices. A 'political' that is not confined to European enlightenment reason, but guided by the 'non-anthropocentric' reasons of their oral knowledge – essential for the preservation of the natural world of snow clad mountains, glacial lakes, rivers and the forests. As the Lepchas believe this alone will ensure the survival and well being of the human species on the Earth. It is through the study of the contemporary community practices in the Northeast India that this paper reaches for a larger argument that the 'Ecosophy' of Indigenous Knowledge-Practices have long been a lived reality in many pockets of the Global South, and hence should be taken as the existing empirical examples of what the theorists in developed North are lately urging for (that too in the normative domain), which is to strive for an 'Ecosophical subjectivity in our late capitalist world' (Felix Guattari) to fight the climate crisis that the techno-industrial world has pushed us into.

## **Thematic Panel 14**

### **Theme: Kerala's Development Experience: Lessons for the Global South**

Organiser: Centre for Development Studies Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

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#### **Concept Note**

The Kerala model of development, paved through public action had reaped exemplary gains in human development. The trajectories of development accelerated demographic and health transition, enhanced education levels, hastened structural transformation of the economy and empowered the citizens in general. Welfare programmes, social protection and institutionalised wage setting ensured decent working and living conditions. The Kerala model widely accepted as a pathway to development for low income region, has now passed through many decades of its existence. The concept “ Kerala Model of Development” itself having its roots in the UNDP report prepared by CDS in the 1980s it is only appropriate that we as an institution revisit this concept and its relevance to Kerala and the rest of the world.

From the experience of Kerala it can be appreciated that the development path, while desirable is not without its downsides, as we call the second generation problems of the Kerala model. It is essential that these new issues are critically viewed, learning lessons for Kerala to reinvent and for other similar regions to learn from. In the light of the above it would be very desirable that CDS does this revisiting.

The panel would draw attention to one of the fundamental questions of development, namely the trade-off between growth and distribution. In the context of Kerala, the financial sustenance of the model and state capacity is a core issue. Migration, both international and internal, are consequences of the



Kerala model. How migration pans out in the near future would considerably influence Kerala's future development prospects. Concerns around exclusionary tendencies in development, especially gender and caste questions need attention. The second-generation challenges of ageing and health expenditure and persistent unemployment, needs to be addressed. These apart there are new challenges that are emerging, such as climate change and environmental degradation, waste management, unpredictable natural events and disaster management, life style diseases that requires to be integrated into the discussions around development.

## **Abstract**

### **Kerala's Development path and the employment dilemma**

**Vinoj Abraham** , Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram

This paper highlights some of the demographic consequences of the Kerala model. The development path has rolled out a set of second-generation concerns to sustain the development gains. Demographic transition has ushered in ageing with higher dependency rates. Health transition has increased life expectancy albeit with high rates of morbidity. Low fertility rates have implied lower care burden on women. Higher levels of education have changed the aspirations of the youth. The fiscal, economic and political implications of these issues is already reverberating. Further, the concerns around unemployment, especially youth unemployment and the poor nexus between output and employment growth is also discussed. Added to these are the emerging concerns of changing composition of international migration and depleting remittances; climate change and ecological fragility of the region. This paper forwards a labour focused development vision for Kerala, a vision that would encompass an economy that is economically growing, which is ecologically sustainable and socially equitable. Embedded in this vision is a livelihood centric growth strategy that is also sustainable.

## **Kerala Model of Development Revisited**

**K. P. Kanan**, Hon. Fellow and Former Director, Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Thiruvananthapuram Kerala

The remarkable achievements of the State of Kerala in India in basic human development indicators despite a very low per capita income had attracted the attention of development economists and other social scientists interested in the development of poor economies. This paper, based on a revisit of the Kerala Model for a sixty-year period since 1960, traces the trajectory of high human development that ultimately resulted in high economic growth in terms of two phases of growth. It measures that the early demographic transition, that is a result of high human development, itself contributed to a high per capita income growth in the second phase. The sustaining of the high growth was also a direct result of human development through large scale emigration of adult males to the Gulf countries for employment resulting in a long-term trend in remittances to the Kerala economy. The role of favourable initial conditions and a vibrant public sphere has been highlighted to emphasize the role of public action in demanding the delivery of human development services from the sub-national state. In this otherwise positive scenario, the paper notes the highly skewed nature of the high growth process with a diminishing role for the commodity-producing sectors of agriculture and industry. It has adversely affected employment generation to the increasing working age population. And this problem of high unemployment (those seeking as well as not seeking work) has been shown to be considerably higher for women than men. While women contributed considerably to the making of the so called Kerala Model and positioned themselves with high human development endowments, they are found to be the least beneficiaries of the economic outcome of such a model. This failure is rooted in the inability of the state to develop the productive economic sphere. Three examples of these 'state failures' are: (a) a declining revenue collection efficiency, (b) persisting loss of the public sector enterprises, and (c) waste of public resources due to time and cost overruns in public investments in basic infrastructure.

## **The gendered terms of inclusion in and the exclusion of migrant labour from human development in Kerala**

**PraveenaKodoth**, Professor, Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram

The presentation has a dual focus. One, it draws attention to how the male breadwinner family provided an institutional foundation to Kerala's celebrated achievements in well being as access to the system of public welfare, in the absence of public child care facilities, was premised on the unpaid time of women / mothers. Gender unfreedoms tied to the male breadwinner norm continue into the present in women's restricted access to the labour market and overseas migration despite rising aspirations for jobs underpinned by formal education, high and rising rates of dowry and increasing levels of gender violence reflected especially in Cruelty by the husband or his relatives (498 A, IPC) and sexual harassment (354 IPC). Women also risk being subject to stigma when they defy norms for instance to migrate overseas. Two, migrant labour is rarely able to conform to the male breadwinner norm therefore children are at risk of being excluded from public services related to nutrition, early childhood education and primary school because their mothers being employed are unable to accompany them to obtain these services. Migrants are also subject to othering. Their position as a precarious labouring class is displaced on to their ethnic identities shaping an overarching division between Malayalis, marked by human development, and migrant labour, who lack the qualities associated with it. Cast as a threat to social order, migrants are stigmatized and discriminated against.

## **Thematic Panel 15**

### **Theme: Interrogating Intersectionality: Insights from a Comparative Research in the Global South**

Organisers: Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS), WITS University and Partners

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#### **Concept Note**

Intersectionality is a term used to describe the pluralisation and interlocking of forms of discrimination and oppression based on compounding social differences. Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) coined the term intersectionality in the context of socio-legal research on black women's marginalisation in the United States and the erasure of their specific position of oppression in the courts. Since then there have been multiple theorisations of intersectionality. It has also become increasingly central to the study of inequality, identity and power relations, highlighting the inseparability of categories of social difference such as race/caste, gender, class, and nationality/citizenship. Activists and organizers are increasingly urging researchers and policy makers to account for the intersectional dynamics of the changing nature of work, forms of socio-economic precarity, patterns of wealth accumulation, access to public services and the impact of climate change.

Despite growing calls to embrace an intersectional approach to understanding and addressing systems of power and inequality, the concept still lacks specificity which makes it difficult to operationalise in research. There is also relatively little in the way of documented best practice and/or the possibilities, challenges and implications of embracing an intersectional approach in the research process. This includes how the research is carried out (i.e. questions of research design, method and data analysis) but also what happens to the research afterwards (i.e. dissemination, engagement and policy application).

The objective of this project is to understand, inform and promote intersectional approaches to development research across different program initiatives of the IDRC. Through collaborative partnerships with researchers based in the Global South, the project will produce 6-8 case studies that document the diverse application of an intersectional research approach. The project will also develop a synthesis report that summarises the benefits, limitations and barriers of incorporating an intersectional approach and a practical guide on how to put intersectionality into practice in development research (and policy).

### **Abstract**

**Sarah Cook**, Visiting Researcher, Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, WITS University, South Africa and Professor and Head of School, University of Nottingham- Ningbo China

This presentation explores the idea of a feminist economy of wellbeing and how progress towards such an economy might be measured. To understand why a new concept of the economy is being argued for, a good place to start is to ask what it is intended to replace: the answer is, the growth- driven economy. Currently, the dominant approach to measuring a country's growth is change in its Gross Domestic Product, a single metric constructed to measure the size of economy and one that, to paraphrase Coyle (2015), has come to play a central role in the policies that structure people's lives and livelihoods, dominates political debates and can make and break governments. In this paper, we bring a feminist lens to discuss the meanings ascribed to the GDP and what it does and does not measure, and track some of the ways in which critics have engaged with GDP as a measure of growth. We examine moves towards wellbeing as an alternative to growth, both as a goal that aspires to address drivers of ill-being, and as a measure of progress. By way of conclusion, we join the calls being made at the international level to find 'beyond-GDP' measures of progress.

## **Interrogating intersectionality: considerations on critical inquiry and praxis for WIEGO's actionable research**

**Siviwe Mhlana**, Member, Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU), Rhodes University, South Africa and Researcher, Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS), University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

This paper aims to expand on the emerging scholarship examining intersectionality as an approach for advancing struggles against global inequality, based on a case study of the research advocacy network Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and its Covid-19 Crisis and the Informal Economy Study. By examining WIEGO's mission in conducting actionable research with and for informal workers, the paper illustrates how advocacy in the informal economy is shaped by multiple intersecting challenges and dynamics of power in society. The general objective is to understand if and how intersectionality can bring nuance and complexity to WIEGO's specific framing around how class and gender shape segmentation in the informal economy.

For the past 25 years, WIEGO has been advocating for the official recognition of informal workers in economic analyses and supporting struggles in the informal economy through evidence-based research aiming to highlight the contributions and the unique vulnerabilities of informal workers globally. This aligns with the pursuit of a fair and equitable society – a core aspect of all intersectional research praxis. In addition, central to WIEGO's approach is the value of local knowledge and a plurality of perspectives. Hence, for WIEGO, challenging persistent inequalities involves a process of empowerment that supports workers to think critically about their challenges and influence the institutions that shape their experiences within the broader economic and social system.

While the Covid-19 crisis study was not framed as intersectional research, it provides points of alignment with intersectionality and a two-fold methodological reflection of intersectionality's applicability. First, it considers how intersectional methodological tenets such as oppression, complexity, context, comparison and relationality can help shape the design of quantitative and qualitative tools. Second, it reflects on the challenges of capturing lived experiences of inequality in both quantitative and qualitative methods. These discussions provide insights into the methodological challenges of applying intersectionality in research.

Overall, the case study highlights how a more nuanced approach of co-producing knowledge aligns with intersectionality's objective of bridging knowledge and action to drive policy change and address complex social problems.

## **Navigating Intersectional Realities: On Syrian Refugee Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Lebanon**

**Sohayla El-Fakahany** (Presenter), **Emile Whaibeh**, **Lina Abou Habib** and **Faysal El-Kak**

This case study delves into the application of the intersectionality concept and framework within the complex context of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender-based violence (GBV) affecting Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. It explores the lessons learned from integrating an intersectional perspective in the "Reproductive Rights in Times of Conflict" project, which places the narratives and experiences of Syrian refugee women at the forefront of discussions regarding SRHR and GBV in conflict and displacement scenarios. Employing a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach and a variety of qualitative methods, including face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, the project's conceptual foundation is deeply rooted in intersectionality.

Recognizing that individuals possess multiple intersecting social identities, encompassing gender, age, displacement, ethnicity, race, and socioeconomic status, the project emphasizes the interplay of these identities in shaping the distinct challenges faced by Syrian refugee women in Lebanon. Through the utilization of intersectional thematic analysis, a vital aspect of the research, the project highlights that women's experiences cannot be distilled into a single dimension or category but are profoundly influenced by the intersection of various social categories and structural factors. Embracing intersectionality provides nuanced insights into the intricacies of women's experiences, revealing hidden narratives and exposing disparities that might otherwise remain obscured.

This research project not only illuminates these intricate issues but also adopts a praxis-oriented approach by actively involving refugee women in disseminating findings, conducting training-of-trainers programs, and initiating community empowerment projects. Through its embrace of intersectionality, this project

emerges as a guiding light for inclusive, equity-driven research, policy development, and practical action in the field of SRHR and GBV. It underscores the paramount importance of incorporating diverse voices and experiences in transformative initiatives.

## **Using an intersectional lens to build stronger evidence and action at the grassroots level in India to build a comprehensive response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence**

**Sanjida Arora**, Research Officer, Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), Mumbai

This case study is based on a project aimed at generating evidence on Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) against young girls and women in India. The project was implemented with support from the International Research Development Centre (IDRC) through a collaboration between the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and the Centre for Enquiry Into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT)

The genesis of the project is based on CEHAT's recognition that most grassroots organisations working on SGBV collect and record data and information in different ways but do not have the time, skills, or resources to carry out the synthesis of their data. Very often, on sensitive issues like SGBV, the service data of grassroots organisations is the only available data. Thus, service data generated by grassroots organisations while providing services to survivors of SGBV has untapped potential for policy engagement. Further, these organisations are in a key position to provide data and influence the formulation of policy, and programs. Thus, using a feminist intersectionality approach, this project sought to build the capacity of grassroots organisations to analyse their service data and generate evidence on SGBV.

CEHAT collaborated with three grassroots organisations who work with, and provide different support services to survivors of SGBV, in varied geographical contexts. The frontline workers of these organisations document a lot of information while providing support services to survivors but face several constraints in establishing standardised formats for documentation, systems for data management, and the training of frontline workers. CEHAT worked to empower and amplify knowledge production that takes place at the community



level by partnering with grassroots “data holders,” who have information that is critical to better understand SGBV trends and the context-specific needs of survivors.

CEHAT worked with the partner organisations to support and strengthen their research and data skills. The research questions and processes were developed alongside the grassroots groups as partners. In the analysis of service data, the organisations attempted to highlight the vulnerabilities of the marginalised groups and need to adopt the interventions for addressing SGBV in these groups. CEHAT looked at sexual violence within the marital relationship and established a case for the criminalisation of marital rape. Jan Sahas’s analysis generated very crucial evidence on adolescent pregnancy among sexual violence survivors and the response of the health system. The findings indicated how the girl’s identity determined the case’s outcome where girls from lower caste and class were pressurised to do compromise with abusers. In the majority of the cases where girls were from a lower caste, the survivors were forced to compromise. The findings shed light on the prevalence of violence from natal families and how the identity of the survivor shaped the experience of accessing the criminal justice system.

## **Intersectionality research in economic empowerment of women**

**Kanchan Lama**, and Srijana Baral, PhD, Forest Action Nepal

The case study report is based on the research findings on the intersectional research experiences gained from a women managed low carbon project, “Economic Empowerment of Women through forest solutions.” The project is funded by IDRC-Canada and implemented in Nepal by a consortium of four organizations led by the Forest Action Nepal. The project design addresses the multiple forms of discrimination of women intersected by caste, ethnic origin, and wellbeing status in the context of forest-based enterprise development and documents evidences how they perpetuate to dominate them. Taking the cases of indigenous women, women belonging to Dalits , indigenous-ethnic communities, land less and land poor, women with disability, single women, and their access to resources, challenges faced due to inequitable distribution of rights, assets, resources, and power, the case report provides scope to discuss the praxis that is developed through project actions aiming at economically empowering these women, by taking forestry as a means. The project adopted

an intersectional approach by using in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, key informants' interviews, and ethnographic observation. Participatory tools, e.g., storytelling, participatory mapping and games were adopted for continuous learning. The research concludes that adopting an intersectional approach helps to understand the in-depth forms of oppressions, injustice, and complexities of dealing with multi-facets of dominance against women. The researchers consciously applied different tenets of intersectionality, i.e., oppression, context, complexity and relational. However, the researchers did not isolate these tenets rather treated them in relation to each other to discuss the unequal power relations. The researchers found the story-telling methodology to be the most appropriate to understand the women's issues and how they are differential. However, time invested for the method is longer as compared to other methods. A harmonious relationship between the researchers was established due to common language, different age group of the researchers, frequent visits and interaction with the women. Further story telling allowed the researchers to deal with complex contextual realities faced by women. Some unanticipated challenges were faced. The situation of access/control by women over productive assets at household level is still a complicated issue, which is influenced by compounded factors that intersects interpersonal relations regarding women's recognition, participation, benefit sharing, and gender-based violence. The case study confirms the usefulness of applying intersectional approach in framing action research in digging out the facts about women's changing roles under differential impacts of socio-economic and political influences, more so by the inter personal relationship at the level of household decision making processes. The study further recommends on developing a gender responsive intersectional analytical framework to support researchers to dig deeper on the intersecting factors influencing women's differential positions in the path of their advancement.

## Thematic Panel 16

### **Theme: River-Cities Nexus: Positioning Ecological, Social and Cultural Resilience**

Organisers: Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi and Department of Public Policy, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Bengaluru

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#### **Concept Note**

Human impact on the world's ecosystems have increased the chances of large, nonlinear, and irreversible changes (IPCC, 2021), with a special emphasis on aquatic ecosystems. Occurrences such as flooding, reduced ground water level, soil salination, destruction of biodiversity have devastating impacts on ecosystem services and human well-being. Resilience thinking has emerged as a crucial approach to mitigating the crises of ecosystems and as an approach it strives to achieve flexibility and adaptive capacities instead of stable optimal production and short-term economic gains. The notion of 'social-ecological resilience' is traced to the field of ecology and seeks to describe the complex system dynamics in the context of social-ecological systems (Folke, 2006). From this understanding, humans and the environment are understood as inextricably linked through the mutual services and disservices (Walker et al., 2004). The connecting of ecosystems and people is foundational to the field of social-ecological resilience as all ecosystems are shaped by humans and every human being relies on ecosystems and the services they provide. "Socionature" is a concept that is used to argue that "society and nature are inseparable and should not be analyzed in abstraction from each other" (Encyclopedia of Geography, Christopher Bear), with nature and humanity being ontologically inextricable.

This panel on river cities nexus explores the significance of diverse social, institutional, and cultural contexts in social-ecological systems. It draws attention to the appreciation of diverse values and the role of culture in motivating human actions (rather than instruments and incentives), thereby reducing the gap between science and society (Reyers et al., 2018). It critically examines local river-city relationships, exploring (1) the nexus question, i.e., what does the river-city nexus look like, (2) the resilience question, i.e., what have disruptions revealed over time and, (3) the recovery issues, such as what initiatives are being taken or can be taken to address disruptions with several case studies. It analyses relationships between human settlements and rivers over time, including actions undertaken to revitalise local river ecosystems and empower the communities adjacent to these rivers, being observant that actions designed to increase social-ecological resilience sometimes fail to address the issues of equity, justice, and power, thereby informing the intersection of ecological, social, cultural resilience with human development. The panel idea was shaped by the coming together of transdisciplinary scholars at the River Cities Network (<https://rivercities.world>) face-to-face meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, 25-27 November, 2023. This session is an attempt to bring together important perspectives of urban resilience thinking to policymaking. Through the perspectives and experiences of the speakers, the panel discussions will aid decision-makers to identify the most important steps in preserving and sustaining the nexus of rivers with cities.

## **Abstract**

### **Recovery of River Yamuna in Delhi: Deepening Urban Resilience with a Ecosocial Systems Community Approach**

**Anuradha Sen Mookerjee**, Senior Fellow, IHD, Delhi

Cities are hot spots where multi-layered, dynamic interactions between society and ecosystems take place. Urban development in Delhi has been identified by scholars across disciplines to be massively altering the hydrological cycle of the Yamuna catchment in Delhi, which has not only enhanced vulnerability of the

densely populated areas along the river but has also critically shaped Delhi as an urban space and place. The Yamuna river has been subjected to very high levels of contamination and has become a polluted drain with scholars declaring that the Yamuna is 'about to die' (Misra, 2010). Domestic waste water, industrial effluents, idol immersion, pesticide residue, untreated sewage have been identified as some of reasons causing pollution of the Yamuna river. Despite the Yamuna being considered a goddess by the Hindus, the river continues to be associated with waste disposal, including waste water including industrial effluents and the dumping of ritual wastes other than the active flood plains being sites of cremation. The river flood plains have been home to riverine communities, including unauthorized settlements housing migrants and the poor in the last two decades that have also been identified as sources contributing to the ecological vulnerabilities. The enhanced levels of pollution of the Yamuna can be traced to the setting up of the modern waterborne sewerage system for New Delhi that was put in place after New Delhi's inauguration as the British capital city in 1931. The Yamuna Action Plan (YAP), a river restoration project, was introduced in 1993 to restore the river, the second phase of which started in 2003; it is now its third phase, initiated in 2018. As recently as July, 2023, incessant rains in Delhi and neighbouring states upstream resulted in the Yamuna swelling to a record 208.33m, inundating large parts of the Capital in some of the worst flooding the city had seen in decades. It led the Government of India to form a committee to conduct a flood management study of the Yamuna from the Hathnikund barrage in Haryana to the Okhla barrage in Delhi to identify possible drainage congestions in the Capital in case the Yamuna is flooding. The socionature of Yamuna reveals the complexities in the Yamuna-Delhi relationship, noting the hybridity of its riverscape enmeshed in the contradictions for the diverse agencies in river and urban governance that have been observed to be not easily resolved in environmental jurisprudence, with the socionature of river-cities making land/water categorizations difficult to implement (Follmann, 2023). In this review paper on the Recovery of River Yamuna, I identify actors, narratives and temporalities in the recovery trajectory of river Yamuna to probe the framework of urban resilience for the period 1993-2023. I review the vast and diverse scholarship on the Yamuna, social, cultural, policy related events that are organized around the Yamuna river, and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) orders over the years that have comprehensively contributed to the shaping of both the academic and practitioner discourse on Yamuna restoration. I engage with the academic debate on urban resilience that forks at ecosystem resilience understanding, premised on system's ability to bounce back to previous state with ecosystems being considered to be dynamic, complex and adaptive on the one hand and the dimensions of politics, power and equity that shape

social structures and implementation regimes that are critical in the shaping of how human communities respond to disasters, on the other. I argue that an Ecosocial Systems Community approach can offer the appropriate moral framing to the recovery of the river Yamuna and thereby deepen urban resilience approach in pursuing ecosocial justice.

## **Flowing Against the Current: Unraveling the Struggles and Triumphs of Riverine Women in the Xingu River**

**Satya Maia Patchineelam**, Doctoral Student, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Project Assistant and Principal Investigator River Cities Network, International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden University, The Netherlands

The construction of the highly contentious Belo Monte dam, a landmark event in Brazilian history, has significantly disrupted the free-flowing waters of the Xingu River. This river, renowned for its rich biodiversity of flora and fauna, serves as the habitat for numerous indigenous tribes and riverine communities. The establishment of a reservoir resulting from the dam's construction has led to the displacement of families, with many resettled to the outskirts of the nearby city of Altamira. This transformative event has particularly impacted riverine women, necessitating adjustments to their livelihoods in the face of alterations to traditional riverbanks and forest dynamics.

The consequences of this shift have compelled riverine women to adapt to urban living, where the application of their traditional knowledge becomes challenging. The resultant disconnection from the river has had profound effects on the mental health and independence of these women. In response to these challenges, a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders, predominantly comprising women from governmental authorities, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutes, led to the establishment of a riverine council. The primary objectives of this council are to uphold human rights and devise compensation strategies that align with the unique needs of the riverine community as they adapt to their new environment. Utilizing constitutional rights and methodologies often overlooked by the dam-operating company, the riverine community successfully reclaimed their status as traditional people and secured the right to return to the banks of the reservoir. Through persistent advocacy and collective struggles, riverine women not only flourished but also found their voices, advocating for their rights. Collaborating with their male

counterparts, a negotiation space emerged, facilitating the riverine community's return to their customary livelihoods.

In summary, the Belo Monte dam's impact on the Xingu River prompted significant socio-environmental challenges for the riverine community, particularly women. The establishment of a riverine council, formed through collaboration among diverse stakeholders, played a pivotal role in restoring rights and negotiating the community's return to their ancestral lands. This interdisciplinary effort, fueled by determination and resilience, underscored the importance of recognizing and addressing the intricate nexus between rivers, communities, and human rights.

### **Localizing climate resilience practices for river communities in Southeast Asian urban and rural region**

**Trinh Duc Tran**, Acting Research Fellow Coordinator, College of Business and Law, Research Cluster on Sustainable Development, RMIT University, Vietnam

Most of the urban areas in Southeast Asia countries are heavily settled around the river systems with river communities as the kernels of the development. Those urban and rural communities with its rapid growth are facing many challenges from social economic pressure, disaster vulnerability, environmental degradation, and infrastructure insufficiency. While establishing the linkage between the natural and societal connections in those river communities, the mutual reliance of the natural and societal systems has demonstrated an off-balance state and lack of resiliency in the face of climate change impact. Achieving sustainable development for river communities in Southeast Asian countries requires multidisciplinary methods and approaches to address the current challenges. The conceptual framework of the study is based on the Driving-Force/Pressure/State/Impact/Response method (DPSIR). This framework allows a well-structured analysis of natural, social and economic information in the context of an urban transformation process taking into account different factors that affect the climate change resilience practices in different contexts. The research applied DPSIR at different river communities together with the participatory approach to map and recommend localization of climate resilience practices in river communities in Southeast Asia (Kratie, Sam Nuea, Sleman, Ho Chi Minh cities). Assessment and recommendations from the study suggest the localization of the resilience practice taking into consideration the prevailing natural and societal tendencies from local experiences such as

valuing of the current nature wetland and its livelihood provisioning capacity which has been displayed differently between Kratie and Ho Chi Minh city, or embedding the integrity natural system with the human development trajectory as a climate resilience practices at Sleman. The study offers an approach and the living examples for localizing climate resilience practices for river communities in other Southeast Asian cities and beyond.

### **A Conceptual Roadmap for Socio-Cultural Action Plan: Changing from Illegal Tin Miners to River Care Community with the Case of Tin Town of Mentok in Bangka Island, Indonesia**

**Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan**, Professor, Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Indonesia (UI)

**Wiwi Tjiook**, Landscape Architect, Urban Planning Department, Rotterdam Municipality, The Netherlands

**Yuni Prihayati**, Lecturer, Universitas Pancasila, Researcher, Center for Regional Analysis Planning and Development, IPB University and Chief of Cultural Landscape Community (KALBU), Indonesia

**Dani Soedjalmo**, Board Member, Mekarsari Fruit Garden, Cileungsi, West Java, Indonesia

Mentok in West Bangka Regency has resources of river ecosystems that stretching from the upstream landscape of Menumbing Hill to the traditional residential landscape of Old Town downstream. The river passed through the town, historically played an important role to cater the everyday life of the people in the past. On the other hand, the attractiveness of tin resources on the Island has brought immigrants to settle and to dwell in the Island. Track record of the formation of traditional settlement, spaces, places of worship, sites, tombs were occurred mostly due to the welfare brought by tin mining, and this process has navigated the creation of unique cultural landscapes.

Unfortunately, at present, this river experienced problems due to massive sedimentation effected by illegal tin mining operation in the upstream area. Also, the fact that water is a limited resource with many users; actions by one user may affect other users. For example, industrial convection can affect water flows for downstream irrigation, while agricultural irrigation and chemical pollution affect water availability and quality for other users.



There are quite a number of people who care about the quality of river in Mentok at present. This community is social capital with a strong basis for solidarity. This research tries to experiment with a multi-stakeholder collaborative model for implementing a combination of top-down (policy makers) and bottom-up (grassroots initiatives) approaches facilitated by third parties (cross-professional experts). This model of collaboration between the community & local government, the private sector & caring communities and academics can bridge the communication gap between parties. KALBU is a non-governmental organization, together with IDN LIVEABLE CITIES and several Universities in Indonesia under RCN Mentok River, are committed to revitalizing activities and overcoming disaster problems in the Mentok River Old Town, collaborating with the provincial and city governments, universities, old city observers and communities by holding workshops and festivals with different but sustainable themes each year. In 2018, Mentok hosted The Historic Urban Landscape Workshop which issued the Recommendations for the importance of tangible and intangible Heritage aspects to achieve Liveable and Sustainable Town. We participated in that workshop, and as a continuation of its commitment of that 2018 Workshop Recommendation, we joined the 2nd National Urban Forum & Indonesia Urban Youth Assembly event conducted by Ministry of Public Work in Gelora Bung Karno Stadium, Jakarta , Indonesia on October 19th 2023, in order to support the theme of Social Cohesion and Equity – Urban Culture & Heritage. To interpret and connect this theme with our project on Muntok River, we held workshop on River and Urban Heritage with the case study on Muntok River. This event was a success and was enlivened by the presence of various participants (about total 70 participants) from young generation who is interested and care about river and its surrounding environment. Game simulation on Water champions was held in this event to attract young generations about the significance of river and how to protect it from degradation. Mapping the results of Step 2 based on layers of significance with a landscape approach to clarify conflicting stakeholder values and differences in the evaluation of proposals related to environmental assessment of cultural heritage in Old Town of Muntok. Moreover, water Resources Management needs to be designed in a holistic and integrated manner to address competing demands for water in a fair manner, which meets the needs of society, industry and the ecosystem. Building partnerships by adopting goals other than water management is a form of integrated landscape management. Therefore, this research intends to develop a Model of Rejuvenated and Renaturalised Muntok River through Participatory Methods in Achieving Livable and Sustainable Town.

## **Social readiness assessment for planning policies for river resources management**

**Harini Santhanam**, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Public Policy at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Bengaluru campus

'Social readiness' is a concept associated with the assessment of a society's engagement with technological advancements, organisational changes, educational or public health assessments or project implementation (for example, Madsen et al., 2005; Ladd et al., 2006; Yusif et al., 2017; Vik et al., 2021; Bernstein et al., 2022 etc.). Balancing social readiness levels (SRL) with organisational (ORL) and technological readiness (TRL) is being explored to achieve multiple development goals. In alignment, a conceptual framework of social readiness (SR) is proposed here to integrate the socio-cultural perspective of 'Knowing' (people, technology, and infrastructure) in the background with the insights of socio-ecology 'Being' state of ecosystem in the foreground for evolving river management policies. Recognising that SR would be critical to manage the emerging risks due to climate change (e.g. Bellamy, 2019) would lead towards consequential steps in the policy planning cycle and governance. In this context, the importance of parameterisation from the perspective of SR will be presented from not merely its metaphorical value but with an emphasis on interventional value-addition to policymaking. Presented through the lens of a perspective grid, the current study on SRL will emphasise on establishing connectedness in terms of five SRL determinants: 1. Blue-green infrastructure along the dynamic shore area (indicative of the design of natural spaces); 2. Design of for multiple uses (indicative of the management of resource-base); 3. Socio-cultural influences on river conservation (indicative of the influence of culture and society on river conservation practises), 4. Management of ecosystem services and disservices (indicative of co-benefits) and 5. Policy impacts for good governance (indicative of the existing policy approaches).

## **Thematic Panel 17**

### **Theme: Equity for All: Bridging Inequalities and Fostering Opportunity**

Organisers: Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi and Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, WITS University, South Africa

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#### **Concept Note**

The gap between the rich and the poor was not only historically at high levels, but continue to persist. As per the world inequality report 2022, the top ten per cent currently holding more than half of the national income, while the bottom half accrues only about ten percent of the national revenue. This gap has been widening over the years, especially in developing nations, underscoring not just income or wealth inequality but also inequality in opportunities. There is a consensus that as per fairness principle everyone should have equal opportunities amidst economic growth and development, without being hindered by the factors beyond individual control such as birth, race, gender, ethnicity, or family background. However, it has been argued that inequality has exacerbated further after the economic slowdown and income loss due to COVID-19 pandemic, especially in countries of the Global South, which are home of a large number of informal workers and poor individuals. These issues of rising inequality have gained significant attention and concerns from academics and policymakers in recent years. Against this backdrop, this panel aims to discuss these critical issues in detail. The following papers will be presented to address these pressing concerns.

## The COVID Pandemic and Dynamics of Labour Income Inequality in India

**Ravi Srivastava**, Director, Centre for Employment Studies, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi and Former Professor of Economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

**Balwant Singh Mehta**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

**Siddharth Dhot**, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

This paper examines labour income inequality across three periods: pre-COVID (2018-19), during COVID (2020-21), and post-COVID (2022-23), along with its contributing factors in India using from the Periodic Labour Force Surveys (PLFS) data. The results indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic reduced income inequality in both consumption and labour (workers) income from 2019 to 2021, which returned partially to pre-pandemic levels by 2023. This reduction in inequality during the pandemic was primarily linked to a decline in earnings among higher-income or wealthier workers, especially regular workers those engaged in without any contract or temporary contracts and informal employment who faced job losses and income reductions. Four primary factors influencing labour income inequality were identified: educational level, sector or location of work, geographical regions, and employment status. Additionally, an Inequality of Opportunity (IOp) analysis revealed that, on average, around one-third (32%) of labour income inequality can be attributed to predetermined circumstances, with parental education level and work locations (rural-urban) emerging as the most pertinent circumstances. Hence, there is critical need to device and enact specific policies intended to compensate individuals facing unequal opportunities in the labour market. This includes the provision of adequate social security measures, particularly tailored to support those engaged in irregular or non-standard employment.

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## Economic Inequality in the Lens of Human Development

**Sanjay Reddy**, Professor of Economics, New School for Social Research, New York, USA

Whether focused on describing, analyzing, or prescribing, discussions of inequality have usually been limited by a narrow focus on economic goods. Broadening the perspective by employing the human development and capabilities approach (HDCA) can guide our understanding of inequality in fruitful ways. Consider, to begin with, the description of how much inequality there is. Our understanding of the spaces in which inequalities should be considered and of how they should be measured are crucially influenced by the HDCA. Placing the HDCA at the centre of our attention gives reason to consider multiple kinds of inequalities, and to recognize that they each have their own reasons for salience. At the same time, what is considered a serious or objectionable inequality in one dimension, and why, will differ greatly from what is determined similarly in another. Consider, for instance, the comparison between health and income. Inequalities in a measure of health, such as life expectancy, are necessarily bounded, but are no less serious for that. For instance, a gap of 2:1 in life expectancy reflects very stark inequality, which might be viewed as far more objectionable in terms of its consequences for blighting lives and dividing society than a multifold difference in incomes. Attention to the HDCA directs us to focus on why particular inequalities matter, and our focus should be on their absolute consequences rather than their relative aspects. The HDCA also draws our attention to the role of public actions and community life in shaping what inequalities there are, because of their influence on outcomes in certain dimensions. In this perspective, the reasons that enormous inequalities of income and wealth are damaging is not only that they may be directly objectionable but that they are indirectly of great consequence in shaping the public actions and aspects of community life that cause inequalities in other dimensions to be great or small (for instance, through their effect on political power, and thereby on fiscal expenditures). Whether the inequalities in our world are more or less serious than they at first appear, when an HDCA perspective is applied rather than a narrowly economic one, is an interesting and important question.

## **Inherited Inequality: A general framework and an application to South Africa**

**Francisco Ferrera**, Amartya Sen Professor of Inequality Studies, London School of Economics, United Kingdom

Scholars have sought to quantify the extent of inequality which is inherited from past generations in many different ways, including a large body of work on intergenerational mobility and inequality of opportunity. This paper makes three contributions to that broad literature. First, we show that many of the most prominent approaches to measuring mobility or inequality of opportunity fit within a general framework which involves, as a first step, a calculation of the extent to which inherited circumstances can predict current incomes. The importance of prediction has led to recent applications of machine learning tools to solve the model selection challenge in the presence of competing upward and downward biases. Our second contribution is to apply transformation trees to the computation of inequality of opportunity. Because the algorithm is built on a likelihood maximization that involves splitting the sample into groups with the most salient differences between their conditional cumulative distributions, it is particularly well-suited to measuring ex-post inequality of opportunity, following Roemer (1998). Our third contribution is to apply the method to data from South Africa, arguably the world's most unequal country, and find that almost three-quarters of its current inequality is inherited from predetermined circumstances, with race playing the largest role, but parental background also making an important contribution.

## **Quality of Employment in India: Access and Exclusion**

**Alakh N Sharma**, Professor and Director, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi.

Despite increasing urbanization and mobility in India, considerable disparities persist among social groups, regions, gender, and rural-urban locations regarding access to 'quality jobs'. This paper utilizes unit-level data from employment and unemployment surveys by the National Sample Survey Organization between 1999-00 and 2022-23 to analyse the unequal access of various social groups—

SCs, STs, OBCs, Upper Hindus, Upper Muslims, and others (Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, and Jains)—to ‘quality jobs’. It aims to determine if factors like location (rural/urban) contribute to the exclusion of social groups. The findings reveal disparities in employment types among social groups. For instance, Upper caste Hindus predominantly hold regular jobs, while SCs and STs are more engaged in casual labour, albeit showing a declining trend. Interestingly, OBCs have seen an increase in regular employment and a decrease in casual labour. The ‘Others’ category mainly comprises self-employed individuals from higher income brackets. STs and OBCs are more involved in low-paid agriculture compared to other groups, while Upper Caste Hindus in white-collar jobs in finance and real estate. In the public sector, the representation of STs and SCs is relatively higher, indicating the effectiveness of reservation policies. However, it’s possible that many of these workers hold menial or informal positions and may not significantly fare better than casual labourers. More OBCs are present in both public and private sectors, raising questions about the influence of educational reservation policies on access to private jobs. This shift also signals a rise in OBC representation in the public sector, possibly due to affirmative policies or higher economic standing within certain OBC subgroups.

The logit regression analysis indicates urban residents’ greater likelihood of securing ‘quality jobs,’ highlighting the disadvantage rural workers face in accessing employment. Female workers are less likely to access quality jobs, indicating gender-specific exclusionary processes in the labour market. With regards to social groups, except for STs, all groups are less likely to access ‘quality jobs’ compared to SCs, potentially reflecting the impact of reservation policies. Additionally, the study reveals regional disparities, with Upper Hindus having greater access to formal jobs in certain parts of India, while OBCs fare better in others. There’s a significant impact of income classes and regional residence within social groups, suggesting significant within-group disparities based on socioeconomic status and region. Generally, richer classes are more likely to secure quality jobs, highlighting substantial variations within social groups and regions. This differential access to quality jobs across social groups and regions, where disadvantaged groups are often concentrated in low productivity sectors and low-paying jobs. While affirmative action policies play a role, the study reveals disparities among regions and social groups, indicating varying degrees of effectiveness in these policies across different contexts.

## **Thematic Panel 18**

### **Theme: Gender Responsive Budgeting in Public Financial Management: Bridging the Gender Gap**

Organisers: UN Women India and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Background and rationale**

UN Women, India and IHD have joined hands to host a technical session on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) under the larger theme of Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Human Development. Policies have differential impacts on women, men and diverse genders. Gender responsive policies pay attention to these differences, ensuring that programmes are effective in responding to different gender needs. GRB is not about creating a parallel budgeting system for women. Instead, it draws attention to the need for allocating budgets in an equitable way, and utilizing government expenditure intentionally to reduce gender inequalities. Gender equity is a powerful indicator of economic growth and development. Investment in women's education, health and wellbeing, employment opportunities and holistic empowerment pays large dividends in terms of socio-economic development. Legal, institutional, and cultural changes that increase women's access to capital, pay, and property ownership bolster their direct economic contributions. GRB seeks to ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources are carried out in ways that are effective and contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. It is a powerful tool for social transformation and an effective strategy to promote the goal of gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

All G20 countries have enacted gender-focused fiscal policies; however, the tools to operationalise these policies vary. While progress has been made in establishing gender budgeting frameworks and budget preparation tools, there



is substantial scope for improvement when it comes to closing gender gaps and addressing the challenges and barriers faced by women and girls through monitoring and auditing budget utilisation as well as revenue generation.

In the Global South, GRB has been adopted as a strategy by many countries over the past decades to integrate gender in planning and budgeting processes. While it is not a legislative mandate in most countries, it is often ensured by various advisories and institutional mechanisms across levels of government and sectors. Most of the efforts are by governments and CSOs to promote gender parity/equality, focusing on alleviating the gender gap through financing. Gender responsive public financial management as an approach to budgeting explicitly considers the impact of fiscal policy, PFM, and public administration on gender equality.

### **Session Overview**

In the above context, the Panel Discussion on 'Gender Responsive Budgeting in Public Financial Management: Bridging the Gender Gap' aims to provide a platform to discuss the effectiveness of GRB models, challenges and potential solutions for advancing GRB as a strategy to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

### **Gender Responsive Budgeting in Indonesia: Can Good Budgeting Help Achieve Gender Equality Results?**

**Qurrota A'yun**, Director, a.i., Populations, Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Youth and Sport Ministry of Planning, Government of Indonesia and **Dwi Yuliawati Faiz**, Deputy Representative, UN Women Indonesia

Indonesia has made progressive move towards the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming principles in budgeting and planning. The policy on gender mainstreaming to ensure that the principle of gender equality is integrated into development plans, policies and programmes was first introduced in 2000, with the Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000. However, it was not until the introduction of Performance Based Budgeting in 2003, the issue on translating this political

commitment into budget allocation took place. Throughout the later stage, various regulatory frameworks, such as the Minister of Finance Regulation in 2009 and later the joint circular between Ministry of Finance, Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and Ministry of Home Affairs in 2012 have emerged and strengthened the policy rationale. With the introduction of e-budgeting, GRB in Indonesia benefits from the ability for sectoral Ministries to make their budget plan and allocation for gender equality more visible and trackable. Hence the GRB implementation has been, at face value, benefitting from the Public Finance Management reform. Despite the progress, key national gender equality indicators such as female labour force participation and women's political representation are showing slower progress, particularly comparing with education and health related outcomes, leaving a question of the effectiveness of gender budgeting implementation.

The presentation will discuss the lessons learned from the policy implementation and share insights on how Indonesia is reforming its gender mainstreaming strategy, including a critical concern to provide a comprehensive approach such as institutional mechanism to support GRB, clarity in the implementation of gender equality strategy, availability of systematic monitoring and tracking of government budget against gender equality indicators, and the importance of understanding existing biases and misconception about gender budget to drive the transformative shift on how government allocate their budget for gender equality. There are some cases where national priorities like eradication of stunting and addressing the impact of climate change (through green budgeting) have seemed to 'take over' the GRB agenda. The discussion will also identify the limitation of the current GRB implementation in achieving the gender equality results without social norm change as an enabler.

## **Gender Budgeting: The Economic and Fiscal Rationale**

**Ms. Scherie Nicol**, Lead Gender Budgeting Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Paris, France

Gender inequalities persist in various aspects of social and economic life, hindering the full participation and representation of women in public life. This presentation highlights the economic and fiscal dividends that could be achieved from closing the gender employment gap. While female labour force participation has increased in recent decades, female employment rates

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remain lower compared to those for males. Part-time work and employment in lower-paying sectors also contribute to a gender pay gap, which further hinders female participation in the labour market. Closing gender employment gaps has significant economic benefits. By 2060, raising female employment to the same level as males could boost real GDP per capita by 5.7% in the OECD. A more balanced distribution of female workers across occupations and sectors could further reduce gender pay gaps and enhance productivity.

The social injustice of gender inequalities is clear. What is less understood is that the economic and fiscal costs of these gender inequalities are also high. Declining labour forces affect economic growth and strain public finances. The situation is exacerbated in countries with ageing populations and low fertility rates. This puts additional pressure on government budgets due to reduced tax revenue and increased spending on social welfare. To address gender gaps and promote sustainable economic growth, governments must enable greater female participation in the workforce. Increasing equality in the labour market requires addressing gender inequalities on many fronts. For example, gender-based violence, unpaid care responsibilities, and women's health issues can all impact the capacity of women to participate in the workforce.

Gender budgeting can be a useful tool for helping promote gender equality and economic growth. It integrates gender considerations into government budget decisions, ensuring that fiscal policies contribute to closing gender gaps. By analysing the distributional impacts of tax and spend measures, gender budgeting helps identify gender-responsive policies and programmes that promote women's economic participation. In identifying measures with a negative impact on gender gaps, gender budgeting also prompts improvements to the design of policies. At its core, it brings evidenced-based analysis to the forefront of budgetary decision-making, encouraging well-thought-out and effective budget measures that advance gender equality and contribute to economic prosperity.

The role of gender budgeting in embedding gender considerations in policy and budget decisions is illustrated through several country case studies. These seek to demonstrate how gender budgeting can put a focus on the measures that will be most effective at closing gender gaps, helping realise economic and fiscal gains.

## **Gender Responsive Budgeting in Times of Crisis: A Reflection on the Ukrainian Experience**

**Maja Bosnic**, Independent Public Finance and Gender Budgeting Expert University of Sarajevo, Bosnia

**Ermira Lubani**, Regional Programme Specialist- Gender Responsive Budgeting UN Women Europe & Central Asia Regional Office, Istanbul, Turkey

This paper provides a critical examination of the application of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in the context of crises and in particular in the case of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. It aims to assess the importance, challenges and opportunities of integrating gender considerations into budgetary decisions amid the harsh circumstances of conflict. The paper examines the impact of the conflict on vulnerable populations with a focus on gender-gaps, evaluates the effectiveness of existing GRB frameworks to ensure public funds are reaching new vulnerable groups, considering legislative and regulatory measures, institutional structures, and past initiatives. It also identifies challenges faced in implementing GRB during crises, such as data inadequacy, fast-changing realities, and the prioritization of defence expenditures and changes in budget process in the war with particular focus on external financial assistance. The purpose is to propose recommendations for enhancing the integration of gender considerations in budgetary decision-making processes during emergencies, including the focus on international financial assistance.

It uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. It utilizes both primary and secondary data. In addition to analysing official documents and data, it interviews key stakeholders to gather information on status of GRB implementation in Ukraine.

### Key Findings:

1. **Impact on Vulnerable Populations:** The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated gender-based violence, human trafficking, and difficulties in accessing financial and humanitarian aid and it has created new vulnerable groups. Vulnerable groups, particularly women and displaced populations, face heightened risks.
2. **Effectiveness of GRB Frameworks:** While Ukraine has a robust legislative and

regulatory framework for GRB, the implementation faces challenges. Data inadequacy, fast-changing realities of the conflict, and limited capacity hinder the comprehensive integration of gender considerations.

3. Challenges in Implementation: The paper identifies challenges in maintaining gender analysis during emergencies, with ministries struggling to conduct thorough analyses, and a lack of systematic data collection.
4. New ways budget is being developed: Aside from domestic revenues that are significantly decreased, Ukraine is receiving international financial assistance through bilateral and multilateral partners. There is no conditionality to include gender analysis in allocations of these funds by Ukraine or other partners.

The paper proposes recommendations including continued support for GRB coordination, making GRB provisions mandatory in the budgetary process, and ensuring that international funds require gender impact analysis, thereby contributing to long-term gender equality and social well-being in the aftermath of conflict.

## **Making GRB as an Effective Tool to Bridge the Gender Gap: Challenges and Opportunities for Bangladesh**

**Sayema Haque Bidisha**, Professor Department of Economics University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Sharmind Neelormi**, Professor Department of Economics Jehangir Nagar University, Bangladesh

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) aims to enhance the gender responsiveness of government spending by integrating gender equality outcome targets into the Mid Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) and process it through gender disaggregated analyses. Based on this rationale, since FY10, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has started to formulate gender budget and from 4 ministries in FY10, the GoB has expanded it to 44 ministries. Despite of such an initiative of allocating and re-distributing budgetary expenses, there is concern that the allocation of government expenditure has not been able to accomplish the desired objectives related to women's empowerment.

In the context of Bangladesh, while preparing the report of the gender budget, the Ministry of Finance gathers information from the ministries regarding gender sensitivity of the operating and development budget of the respective ministries and utilizes the RCGP model, a modelling framework commonly used to evaluate GRB to finally obtain the values of gender budget for each of the ministries. However, there is argument among the policy makers and academicians regarding to the methodology adopted as well as the effectiveness of such a resource allocation in attaining the core objective of women empowerment.

In general, GRB aligns strategic objectives with programs and initiatives and allocates resources with overall fiscal constraints for most of the Ministries/ Departments. However, since its inception, the GRB statements hardly exhibit any significant shift in the allocation and philosophy of public spending so that it can address the strategic needs of women. The actual spending of GRB allocation is also not reported and reflected in the revised national budget. Despite of more than a decadal practice of formulating GRB, Bangladesh still lacks the Monitoring Result Framework of GRB allocation. While the ex-ante assessments are in practice for GRB formulation, both concurrent and ex-post gender assessments are missing. Against this backdrop, the objectives of this presentation are to critically analyze the process of GRB practiced in Bangladesh and to suggest necessary steps for a more effective gender responsive allocation of budgetary resources.

## **Gender Responsive Budgeting in India: What has worked, where and why?**

**Aasha Kapur Mehta**, Chairperson, Centre for Gender Studies and Visiting Professor Institute for Human Development, New Delhi

**Abhilasha Sood**, Programme Analyst- Gender Responsive Budgeting

UN Women India

The Government Budget is more than an annual statement of receipts and expenditures. It is an instrument for fulfilling the obligations of the state and a political statement of the priorities set by the government in allocating resources. As Elson explains: 'The budget reflects the values of a country – who it values, whose work it values and who it rewards....and who and what and whose work

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it doesn't. Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) is a tool that can be used to ensure that the aggregate national, state, sector, departmental, programme or for that matter, any budget, is gender sensitive and enables the achievement of gender-just allocations and outcomes. GRB seeks to ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources are carried out in ways that are effective and contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. It is a powerful tool for social transformation and an effective strategy to promote the goal of gender equality and social inclusion.

While progress has been made in establishing GRB frameworks and budget preparation tools, there is substantial scope for improvement when it comes to closing gender gaps and addressing the challenges and barriers faced by women and girls. GRB implementation has been more intensive in the allocation and distribution of resources. The aspects of monitoring and auditing budget utilisation as well as revenue generation need more rigour and emphasis. This will help in establishing the efficacy of GRB and its impact on gender equitable outcomes.

GRB was first introduced in India in the 2005-06 Budget. How have Ministries and Departments responded to the introduction of Gender Budgeting? What initiatives have been taken to intentionally allocate budgets to bridge an identified gender gap? Which States have implemented Gender Budgeting better? Based on an analysis of the performance of a few ministries/departments at the central and state level, looking at beneficiary-oriented services and composite schemes in the social, economic and infrastructure sectors, the paper will seek to address the following questions: in Gender Budgeting, what has worked in India, where and why? The paper seeks to contribute to the evidence on GRB as an effective strategy for enhancing gender outcomes.

## **Thematic Panel 19**

### **Theme: Policy Paradigms in the Era of Digital State: Implications for Inclusive Governance, Citizenship and Social Transformation**

Organisers: Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

In addition to impacting the nature of work, employment, labour market outcomes and altering existing inequalities, new technologies around platformisation and data convergence have redefined the scope and meanings of citizenship, governance and welfare through the emergence of a digital state. Reduced transaction costs associated with maintaining a sizeable digital data systems have increased scope for consumer convenience, governmental connectedness and surveillance, enabling new forms of state and allied power. Such digital governance models have allowed virtually omnipresent state [s] to advance claims of extended welfare provisioning, financial inclusion and delivery.

Launched in 2009 through an energetic campaign to reduce fraud and increase efficiency in the targeted delivery of private and public services, the UIDAI initially functioned as an attached office of the then Planning Commission. In January 2010, the Technology Advisory Group for Unique Projects was set up under the Chairmanship of the UIDAI chief to build institutional capacities to enable Indian public administration to function through IT-intensive systems. Towards this, a class of institutions, 'private companies with a public purpose', profit-making but not profit maximizing, called National Information Utilities (NIU) were envisaged that would work in partnership with a strong dedicated team within Government that would 'inter alia drive policies, design a suitable solution architecture, supervise execution, frame appropriate contracts, adopt outcome based



pricing, evolve strict service level agreements and conduct independent audits'. After the dissolution of the Planning Commission in 2014 the UIDIA emerged as a statutory authority under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 now functioning under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Importantly the above technological shifts, institutional manoeuvres, partnership models and political claims are advanced in contexts where the pathways and meanings of what "structural transformation" entail are increasingly blurred and indeterminate. By the 1990s there was mounting evidence that the bedrock of development paradigms, namely the vision of economic progress through promised transitions -- from agriculture to industry, from countryside to cities, from employment in the unorganised sector to stable, long-term, formal employment -- seemed increasingly untenable. By the early 2000s, development discourse, ILO policies and World Bank studies acknowledged the exclusion of significant proportions of populations of the post-colonial world from the "modern" and "dynamic" segments of the economy governed by the logic of capital.

In India, the overlapping trajectories of these complex shifts have seen the setting up of UIDAI as the world's largest implementation of biometric technology, aimed at positioning the country as a global pioneer in public digital and data infrastructure. Simultaneously at least since 2012 India has topped the global league tables that classify economies according to the 'degree' and 'intensity' of their employment of informal labour, where there is an open advocacy of a dual economy model within state policy, wherein informal employment is no longer a 'transitional' stepping stone within a grand narrative of economic progress and development but a precondition of the national growth path.

For all these reasons, the rapid subsumption of the state's governance and welfare architecture through swiftly scaled-up digital infrastructures alongside a restructured planning establishment calls for careful understanding from a policy analysis perspective.

In what ways can digital governance address increasing levels of vulnerability, particularly, in contexts where the challenge now is for development agendas to be rendered meaningful in the absence of pre-given transitional narratives? Against this, how does one explore, document and assess the role played by partnerships with and articulated by non-state actors in the digital governance process? What is the impact of the increasing presence of such models of digital governance infrastructure at the local level? Has the ensuing erosion of federal

processes and mechanisms and local institutions increased the inaccessibility of the state to citizens and brought with it the danger of exclusion for already marginalized populations?

For all these reasons, the rapid subsumption of the state's governance and welfare architecture through rapidly-created digital infrastructures within a restructured planning establishment calls for careful understanding from a policy analysis perspective. While there now exist a range of studies pertaining to the linking of various welfare schemes and benefits to biometric data systems, in the face of high levels of vulnerability confronting the Indian workforce, a more nuanced understanding of the altered terrain and mechanisms of policy formulation, governance priorities and welfare categories informing the emerging regimes of the digital state, remains yet awaited.

Drawing upon their training in diverse fields of IT/communications policy, STS studies, sociology, economics and political science, our panellists offer an analysis of the above questions and paradigms shifts spanning the fields of telecom/ data protection policy and domains of financial inclusion, food security, health care and land/agricultural reforms.

## **Labour Policy and Food Security Agendas: Positioning ONORC as Digital Public Infrastructure, Reconciling Portability and Inclusive Models of Governance**

**Veena Naregal**, Professor of Sociology Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi

Expedited in the aftermath of the COVID lockdowns-induced migrant crisis, measures towards inter-state portability in the delivery of rations through the e-PDS systems operationalised as the One Nation One Ration Card [ONORC] Scheme have emerged as a significant mode of improving food-security and redressing precarity of migrant labour populations highlighted during the pandemic.

For a while, India has topped the tables that classify economies according to the 'degree' and 'intensity' of their employment of informal labour. Equally the very large proportions of the Indian work force in vulnerable employment tied to cyclical and short-term migration patterns have been regarded as making for a distinctively Indian pattern of economic growth. The NCEUS Reports onwards,

there has been a vigorous debate around challenges of establishing necessary frameworks and delivery mechanisms for social security. Equally there is a by-now-familiar critique of the lack of reliable and adequate data on internal migration in India.

Against all this, the real-time data now emerging through the databases meant to create portability of PDS entitlements as mandated as per NFSA, now being recorded on states-wise e-PDS websites, and mirrored on NFSA portals. Simultaneously there are rapid efforts to align the Integrated Management Public Distribution System - IMPDS, which has anchored the PDS system to transition to its current state inter-state connectivity. These ongoing realignments aim at repositioning the component of the IMPDS as a component of the envisaged Indian digital ecosystem or a digital national infrastructure or public goods, aiming to redefine government functions and horizons of social transformation through technology.

Specifically, the presentation examines the available e-PDS data on the drawing of rations outside the registered domicile to focus, firstly, on the nature and quality of PDS portability established between migrant-sending states and migrant-receiving states, and also how these data flows map out with respect to known patterns of inter-state migration flows and the light thrown on emerging intra-state migration patterns. These real-time ONORC trends are juxtaposed with qualitative data generated through preliminary fieldwork in Delhi on the stages through which portability mechanisms, procedures and protocols connecting the inter-state ePDS systems have been operationalised. Lastly, I focus on the extent to which current designs of ONORC are structurally poised to address the needs of large proportions of internal migrant populations, and ask what the envisaged alignment of the IMPDS within a national digital ecosystem will mean for the mandate for food security, inclusive governance and structural transformation.

## **Seeing like a State, but with even more Data? The need to move from Data Worship to Repoliticising Data in governance**

**Janaki Srinivasan**, Associate Professor, International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore

The 'Digital State' focusses a lot of its energies on Data: its collection, creation, processing and use in decision-making by the state and beyond. But even

as information and data are treated as game-changers in governance, their relational and political character are seldom emphasised in discussions around data. I will examine how framing information and data as self-standing, objective, always-valuable, and neutral in initiatives of the Digital State obscures important governance concerns. First, the emphasis on data and an associated 'data determinism' risks shifting the responsibility of achieving certain outcomes away from the state and from structural transformations. Second, it strips data of its historical and regional context i.e. an understanding of how certain datasets, their metrics and categories came to be. Relatedly, it also obscures the power relations within which data circulates, including who is able to access data about who. Finally, there is the question of expertise and who counts as an expert in the working of a Digital (rather, Digitalizing) State. I will draw on my own work and that of my collaborators on a range of Indian digital initiatives, to illustrate these points. I will conclude with an alternative framing of information or data - as having social and material roots - that builds on the construct of an "information order." I argue that such a framing can allow for the centering of "the political lives" of information and data. And that this, in turn, is crucial if we are to re-imagine the Digital State as one that does not merely build digital infrastructures for their own sake, but seeks to leverage them for structurally transformative and inclusive governance.

## **India Stack: Public Private Roads to Data Sovereignty**

**Jyoti Panday**, Internet Governance Project (IGP), Georgia Institute of Technology, USA

Advancements in technology have forced states to expand their capacity for effective and efficient delivery of governance and services. This has resulted in a new type of state and market collaboration for the development and implementation of critical industries and tech-intensive projects. India Stack, a national digital infrastructure spanning identity, payments, and data domains represents one such attempt to redefine government functions through technology. India Stack is positioned as a pivotal component of the Indian digital ecosystem, often referred to as digital public infrastructure or public goods. India Stack developers tout it as a blueprint for other nations' digital infrastructures, reflecting ambitions beyond India's borders.

I argue that India Stack is better understood as a recalibration of the state's

approach to governance of data, a mechanism to extend control sometimes by enabling accumulation and sometimes by restricting access to data from important markets. I trace the genesis and deployment of India Stack to show how its emergence is rooted in digital neomercantilism – where India defines national security in terms of the state gaining control over writing the rules for the economy, technology, and finance. The rise of India Stack has been led by the state through political-institutional structures and regulatory policies. However the power of India Stack is not just anchored in the state, it is also derived from a complex set of loosely connected private sector actors and institutions invested in the development of its services and frameworks. The architecture of India Stack has influenced the enterprises, conventions and practices emerging from its fold. India Stack has institutionalized the regulations, standards, conventions, and processes associated with data collection and use in India. India's efforts to extend sovereignty over data, have consequences for innovation, competition and consumer protection. While India Stack is succeeding at building at scale, integrating the services developed under its umbrella into different kinds of social governance processes carries significant political and socio-economic consequences. I will focus on India Stack's implications on commercial, political, and normative fronts, elucidating its role within the landscape of nation-state competition.

## Thematic Panel 20

### **Theme: Towards Universal Health Coverage: Closing the Gaps, Bridging the Divides**

Organisers: World Health Organisation (WHO) and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

Achieving UHC is one of the targets the nations of the world set when they adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, WHO points out that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, progress towards UHC was already faltering. Improvements to health services coverage have stagnated since 2015, and the proportion of the population that faced catastrophic levels of out-of-pocket health spending increased continuously since 2000. This global pattern is consistent across all regions and the majority of countries. The COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted essential services in 92% of countries at the height of the pandemic in 2021. In 2022, 84% of countries still reported disruptions.

The panelists will take stock of progress made and identify challenges that countries face in moving towards UHC. The session will focus on experiences of countries in filling the gaps and bridge the divides as efforts are made to achieve UHC. Listed below are a few lead questions:

1. How do countries in the global South reboot their health systems especially after the COVID-19 pandemic to get back on track with respect to UHC and the SDGs?
2. How can countries best address inequalities which continue to be a fundamental challenge for UHC. Even where there is national progress on health service coverage, the aggregate data mask inequalities within-countries.

3. Despite recognising that reorienting health systems using a primary health care (PHC) approach is critical for achieving UHC, many countries are struggling to do this. How have countries managed to shift the focus of health systems towards PHC?
4. What are the benefits and implications of pursuing integrated health services regarded as vital for achieving UHC?
5. How best can nations leverage cutting-edge technologies such as AI, ML, and innovative solutions to address public health challenges and ensure that benefits accrue to the most disadvantaged communities?
6. How can meaningful community connect be established to ensure last mile reach as well as improved accountability of health systems?
7. What are effective mechanisms for ensuring that health systems respond to the needs and factors in voices of communities?

## Thematic Panel 21

### **Theme: Navigating South Asian Workspaces: Opportunities and Challenges for Human Development**

Organiser: Department of Geography, Cambridge, University,  
United Kingdom

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#### **Concept Note**

This special session is co-convened by colleagues at the University of Cambridge. The Decent Work and Youth Livelihoods Programme (<https://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/decentwork/>) is concerned with the challenges in responding to the growing crisis of youth (un)employment, working poverty and livelihoods in the Global South. Work is critical to people's lives, not only as a source of livelihood but also providing a sense of identity and belonging, social contact, and psychological well-being. Work is critical to people's lives, not only as a source of livelihood but also providing a sense of identity and belonging, social contact, and psychological well-being. Co-led by Bhaskar Vira at the Department of Geography, this programme brings together established staff and early career researchers at Cambridge, exploring these issues from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds and perspectives.

#### **Bonded-Flexibility: Differential Lived Experiences among App-based Food Delivery Workers in a Small City in India**

**Debangana Bose**, Research Associate, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

This research offers fresh insights into a critical question concerning the future of (decent) work, which holds significant implications for global research and policy.



The central inquiry revolves around how digital platforms that mediate service provision are reshaping employment relationships, working conditions, and the work environment in smaller and often neglected cities. The term “platform/gig work” encompasses short-term and temporary labour activities coordinated by digital platforms, with no formal contracts between service providers and clients. It includes activities such as app-based ride-hailing (Uber, Ola), food delivery (Zomato, Swiggy), courier services (Amazon), beauty services (Urban Company), and online microtasks (Upwork, Freelance.com).

Over the past decade, platform work has witnessed a substantial surge in cities in the global ‘South.’ Policymakers have asserted that the expanding platform/gig economy could absorb surplus labor, create new employment opportunities for young people, and alleviate poverty in the global ‘South.’ However, research reveals that gig work carries the potential to perpetuate inequality and precarious working conditions due to the absence of formal contracts between service providers (workers) and clients. Despite celebratory narratives of gig work as flexible work, grounded research reveal different forms of de-flexibilisation within gig work, especially in app-based on-demand work.

Shedding light on this flexibility paradox, this paper investigates the lived experiences of app-based food delivery workers operating within the constraints of fixed work slots on on-demand platforms such as Zomato and Swiggy, as opposed to enjoying the freedom to choose their working hours. The study is based on qualitative data gathered in 2022 from app-based food delivery riders in Dehradun, India. While existing research highlights the de-flexibilization trend in platform work, contrasting it with the commonly perceived flexibility, this study takes a fresh perspective by unpacking what this de-flexibility mean. It examines and identifies three trends that app-based food delivery workers experience – bonded-flexibility, fragmentation and intensification, and constrained agency. By exploring the ambivalent practices of workers as they navigate between the temporal infrastructures of society and those of the app, this article expands the socio-spatial-temporal understandings of platform work.

In doing so, the study holds significant empirical, theoretical, and policy implications. On an empirical and theoretical level, it offers valuable insights into the expansion of the platform economy in small Indian towns and contributes to ongoing discussions about the platform work’s potential to bridge spatial disparities. Additionally, this research extends theoretical debates by shedding light on the significance of location, power dynamics, and local influences within the platform economy, with a specific focus on the overlooked cities in the Himalayan regions of India.

By amplifying the voices of gig workers in a small and overlooked city in India, this research carries essential policy implications. It prompts a reevaluation of the meaning of “decent work” within the context of persistent unemployment and development challenges in often-neglected urban centers.

## **As many people there are, as many opinions”: Social networks and young women’s entry into “men’s” jobs in Delhi**

**Garima Sahai**, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

The female labour force participation rate of women in India is not only one of the lowest in the world but has also been declining. It was about 37% in 2004–05 which dropped to 29% in 2009–10, which further declined to 21 % in 2019. During COVID-19, young women, heavily employed in the services sector, experienced the greatest job and earnings loss. To increase women’s employment, several studies have argued that occupational gender segregation needs to be reduced so that more women enter non-traditional, “male”, jobs.

Alongside, studies have emphasized the role of social networks in accessing jobs. This study therefore explored the role of social networks in young women’s entry into men’s jobs. In particular it asked, how do social-networks influence young women’s entry into non-traditionally female job training in Delhi?

The study is primarily informed by 72 semi-structured interviews that were conducted and analysed between 2017 and 2020. 56 interviews were with young women trainees themselves (taxi driver trainees; beauty trainees; electrician trainees and electronics mechanic trainees) who are the main subject of this study. Additionally, I carried out interviews with trainers, teachers, mobilizers, and principals at the training organizations to gather contextual information about the training.

Most studies on social-networks and employment argue that the former is a form of capital and crucial for entry into jobs. Such a view of social-networks, however, has been predominantly based on studies conducted in the global “North” and often on men’s working lives. In contrast, this study focusses on young women, living in slums in India. These young women who are expected to

stay mostly in and around home, on account of class and gendered constraints, are not entrenched in social networks – they have narrow social networks, and apart from their parents, they spend very little time with anyone in the network. Examining what non-entrenchment means for young women’s occupational outcomes, this paper suggests that such social-networks both ease and constrain the entry of these young women into non-traditional training. On the one hand, non-traditional occupational opportunities are inherently niche and limitedly known. Not having access to information that networks crucially provide in informal economies prevents non-traditional occupations from being a part of their information and occupational choice set. On the other hand, the non-entrenchment in networks means that women are autonomous of approval from wider networks. Not affected by the constraining effects of networks they are able to enter non-traditional occupations. In doing so, this study most crucially highlights that in contrast to studies on social networks which focus on them as ‘capital’, it points to a possible positive effect of having narrow social networks – lack of constraint of peer and neighbourhood approval can make non-traditional choices possible.

These findings also have implications for policy. It highlights that providing information about non-traditional jobs to young women is key but how the information is delivered is also crucial and makes suggestions in this regard. In sum, the study highlights that it is factors embedded in young women’s daily lives that determine their occupational outcomes and whether they are able to enter non-traditional jobs. Any effective policy needs to be cognizant of them.

### **Beyond what they are not: A time-use approach to understanding young NEETs in India**

**Kate Brockie**, Ph.D Scholar, Department of Geography, University, of Cambridge, United Kingdom

This paper presents an alternative approach to understanding young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), focusing on what these young people are doing. Using nationally representative data from India, it explores how a time-use based method can offer insights into NEET young people’s lived realities and the potential employment constraints they face.

The NEET concept has gained global traction directing youth employment

policy, solidified by Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.6 which seeks to substantially reduce the NEET rate (United Nations, 2015; Holte, Swart and Hiilamo, 2019). Young NEETs are particularly vulnerable to social and economic exclusion, both in the present and in their later lives (Bynner and Parsons, 2002; Mussida and Sciulli, 2023). However, defined by what they are not, NEET populations are also heterogeneous (Mascherini and Ledermaier, 2016). The challenges associated with NEET's wide scope are particularly acute when the concept is employed across diverse contexts of the Global South, stretching across varied labour market dynamics and socio-cultural conditions. There is widespread recognition that the diversity of the NEET population challenges the concept's relevance to targeted policy-making that caters to the diverse challenges young people face in approaching the labour market (Furlong, 2006; MacDonald, 2011).

This paper forwards a time-use based approach to understanding the many and context-specific realities within the NEET population of India, where this group is predominantly young women outside the labour force (Majid, 2021). In the context of a large, female-dominated NEET population, time-use data draws attention to the considerable burdens of social reproductive labour that fall outside of traditional labour force measures but nonetheless represent valuable work contributions to households and society (Budlender, 2010).

The proposed paper has three main sections, employing various statistical analysis techniques to microdata from the Indian Time Use Survey 2019. First, descriptive analysis of time-use data for young people makes visible the how paid work and unpaid workloads are distributed across and between young people in employment and those who are NEET. Second, cluster analysis on time-use across all market and non-market activities by NEET youth develops a time-use based typology of NEET youth in India, featuring seven sub-categories of NEET youth defined by their prevailing activities. Third, gender-disaggregated econometric modelling of the determinants of young people being in employment/education or in any of these NEET time-use typology groups presents the factors associated with young people's trajectories. The model incorporates a variety of individual- and household-level characteristics, including age, education, marital status, urban/rural location, as well as household wealth, caste, household composition, and the district-level prevalence of norms of female seclusion.

The analysis finds that young NEETs in India have distinctly different daily time-use according to their gender. While young NEET men spend considerable time doing social, leisure and self-care activities, young NEET women spend an average of 7.4 hours per day on unpaid domestic, care and volunteer work. The clustering of time-use data produces a typology of seven groups, defined

by their distinguishing time-use characteristics. While young NEET men are predominantly found in the 'free-timers' category (60.5 percent), young NEET women are concentrated in the 'household domestic workers' (49.1 percent) and 'household carers' (37.0 percent) categories.

The composition of each of these NEET subgroups highlights distinct trends according to individual and household characteristics. The econometric models raise several insights with implications for targeted youth employment policy. Marriage is the most significant factor shaping young women's status, decreasing the probability of being in employment or education by 37 percentage points. For young men, in comparison, marriage is associated with an increased likelihood of being in education or employment by 10 percentage points. Young children also have an important effect on women's status, while the effect on young men's activities is negligible. The marginal effect of educational attainment is much lower for young men than young women, but marriage and motherhood still have a greater effect than education on determining whether young women are NEET, and the subgroup of NEET they end up in. The implications of the findings suggest that youth employment policy targeting young NEETs in India must engage with the dynamics of the school-to-wife transition, as much as the school-to-work transition.

### **"Am I your sister or your worker?": Labor agency, relationality and livelihood trajectories of domestic workers in Hetauda, Nepal**

**Grace Mueller**, Ph.D Scholar, Department of Geography, University, of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Misleading dichotomies inform mainstream notions of what is 'economic' and what is not, imagining distinct worlds between the market and the household, value and values, and crucially, productive and reproductive work. Such distinctions can marginalise less 'profit'-able labour, in favour of what is theoretically considered to be 'productive' work. Paid domestic work is one such shadowed sector, positioned at the intersection of multiple theoretical worlds. It is prompted by the 'market' but deeply embedded in family and personal relations. It is 'productive', for the individual worker as well as the family being serviced, but only through reproductive labour, which has long been undervalued and considered unproductive.

The Asia Pacific region is home to the highest number of domestic workers in the world, with more than 250,000 workers in Nepal. Despite weak labour demand within Nepal, and extremely high levels of outward foreign migration, domestic work is one sector in which (formally) uneducated and (formally) unskilled workers are finding employment, often at the expense of their own rights and decent working conditions. Despite the growing opportunities for women to access domestic work in urban spaces in Nepal, research gaps exist which explore the characteristics, experiences and limitations of this industry on women's aspirations, labour agency and livelihood trajectories, and further, the complex system of values, relationships and non-monetary forms of exchange which can undergird informal employment relations.

This research explores the informal market for domestic work in households and hostels from the perspective of women in Hetauda, Nepal. Based on 120 interviews, 9 work-life histories and 3 focus groups collected between September 2022 to May 2023, the data from this project are currently being analysed. Thematic foci include the spatiality of domestic work, temporality of labour market decision making, the myth of unskilled and skill-gendered labour, and forms of everyday resistance and protest shaped by female labour agency of domestic workers and their relations with employers. My analysis of care work challenges the division between market and household, or productive and reproductive spheres, mapping a local labour ecosystem where work is accessed, exchanged, and performed through multiple currencies, such as honour, trust, education and the promise of 'good' work.

## **Thematic Panel 22**

### **Theme: Rethinking Ways to Attain SDGs in South Asian Countries in the Context of the Ongoing Global Challenges**

Organisers: South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM), Dhaka, Bangladesh and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Session outline**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals that aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all by 2030. However, South Asian countries face many challenges in achieving these goals, especially in the context of the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, global economic difficulties, geopolitical conflicts, and climate change. Moreover, many South Asian countries struggle with severe macroeconomic problems that hinder their ability to mobilize resources for the SDGs. Additionally, the institutional capacity of South Asian countries limits their progress towards the SDGs. Therefore, it is essential to rethink the strategies to achieve the SDGs in South Asia, by adopting a comprehensive, inclusive, and resilient approach that tackles the root causes of the issues.

## Abstract

### Rethinking Ways to Attain SDGs in Bangladesh

**Selim Raihan**, Professor of Economics, Dhaka University, Bangladesh

Bangladesh made notable progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. However, the SDGs are more comprehensive, ambitious, and interconnected than the MDGs, and they present many challenges for Bangladesh, especially in the context of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, global economic difficulties, geopolitical conflicts, graduation from the LDC status in 2026, and climate change. Furthermore, the ongoing domestic economic crisis is manifested through prolonged high inflationary pressure, fast depleting foreign exchange reserves, low tax revenue generation, a growing debt-GDP ratio, vulnerability of the banking sector, unstable performance of export, low growth in remittances through formal channels, and reportedly high degree of capital flight. Also, the country suffers from a narrow export basket, a low FDI inflow, and widespread institutional failures. Therefore, Bangladesh needs to increase its domestic resource mobilization, diversify its external resource mobilization, and enhance its public financial management. Bangladesh faces another challenge in ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth that benefits all segments of society and does not harm the environment. Bangladesh has achieved a high economic growth rate, but it also suffers from increasing inequality and vulnerability, and a large number of people still live below the poverty line. Moreover, Bangladesh is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change, such as floods, cyclones, droughts, and sea level rise. These effects endanger the lives, assets, and food security of millions of people, especially the poor and marginalized. Therefore, Bangladesh needs to adopt a growth strategy that promotes economic diversification, and that is pro-poor, and pro-environment. Bangladesh faces another challenge in enhancing the quality and accessibility of basic services, such as health, education, water, sanitation, and energy. Bangladesh has made considerable progress in these sectors, but it still has some shortcomings and difficulties, such as the low quality of health care and education, the high dropout and illiteracy rates, the inadequate coverage



and quality of water and sanitation facilities, and the limited access to affordable energy. Therefore, Bangladesh needs to increase its investment in these sectors and improve their efficiency, effectiveness, and equity. Finally, reforms in the critical economic and institutional domains are needed to achieve SDGs.

## **Attaining the SDGs amidst multiple crises in Sri Lanka**

**Ganga Tilakaratna**, Research Fellow and Head of Poverty and Social Welfare Policy Research at the Institute of Policy Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit held in 2015, 193 member states of the United Nations (UN), including Sri Lanka, pledged commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. During the first five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the government of Sri Lanka took various initiatives to implement SDGs. The country made much progress on SDGs before the pandemic, with the progress varying across the 17 goals. Yet, the challenge of achieving the SDGs has been magnified in recent years by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has adversely affected several SDGs, particularly those goals related to poverty, inequality, employment, and health. Aggravating the conditions that prevailed in the country, Sri Lanka's worst-ever economic crisis since independence began to unfold in 2022 affecting several goals, including poverty and hunger/ food security. Thus, achieving SDGs in Sri Lanka has become even more challenging now than ever before. This highlights the need for priority measures to reverse any negative implications and accelerate the progress of SDGs. In this context, the presentation provides an overview of the status of SDGs in Sri Lanka, highlighting the progress made thus far and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing economic crisis, with a special focus on SDGs related to poverty, hunger, decent work, health, and education. It further highlights some of the key measures/challenges to accelerate the progress of SDGs related to financing SDGs, strengthening partnerships, and addressing data deficits.

## On (de-)industrialization and Nepal's SDG quest

**Paras Kharel**, PhD, Executive Director, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu, Nepal

While Nepal made substantial progress in poverty reduction and several other development outcomes, such as those related to health and education, as part of the Millennium Development Goals and has been making further progress since the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016, it faces a challenging road ahead to meet its development aspirations, notably to become an upper middle-income country by 2030. The country is graduating from the least development country (LDC) category in 2026 without meeting the income criterion. It has the lowest per capita income among the dozen LDCs on track towards graduation. This reflects a key structural challenge faced by the Nepali economy masked by other, more positive, development outcomes. The challenge pertains to de-industrialization, low productive capacity and a poor rate of creation of decent jobs. The structure of its economy has transformed significantly in the last three decades, with agriculture's share in GDP falling and services' share increasing. But the growth-enhancing effect of this structural change has been limited. Manufacturing-led industrialization has bypassed the economy, while the booming services sector, largely of the non-tradable variety, has not generated enough decent jobs to an expanding labour force. Exports of goods and services as a percentage of GDP have seen a steady decline. Dearth of decent jobs has led to massive temporary work-related outmigration, with remittances emerging as the mainstay of the economy and contributing to the progress towards other development goals. Finding the resources to meet development goals was always a challenge. A huge resource gap was already staring at policymakers as the government embraced the SDGs. The lingering effects of the pandemic, the global economic slowdown and uncertainty, the economic shocks in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war, and LDC graduation present additional challenges, have reversed or threatened to reverse progress on SDGs, and trigger additional resource demands while making resource mobilization more difficult, for both public and private sectors. The average real GNI per capita growth during fiscal years 2018/19 through 2022/23 has been about 2.3 percent, a far cry from the about 7.8 percent required during 2019-2030 to meet the SDG income target for 2030 in real terms. While economic growth has been modest, public debt has surged since 2017 such that the public debt-to-GDP ratio is now higher than the target for 2030. Sweeping import restrictions in 2022 led to a decline in tax collections in fiscal year 2022/23. During 2016-

2019, the latest period for which an authoritative review of progress on SDGs is available, there was “slow” progress in SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 9 (industry and infrastructure). These are goals that were not part of MDGs, are critically associated with industrial growth, productivity, output and employment, and hence are significant determinants of structural transformation prospects. Nepal must begin with writing down an industrial development strategy that is focused and results-oriented.

## Achieving SDGs In India

**Sarathi Acharya**, Delhi Government Chair Professor on Human Development, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi, and Former Chief Technical Adviser, UNDP (Cambodia and Laos)

The most recent data indicate that India is in a favourable position to accomplish several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 6, SDG 7, and others. Being a relatively young country, it has the potential advantage of a demographic dividend as well. A significant emphasis is also being placed on the policy efforts directed toward renewable energy. Nevertheless, there are numerous obstacles to overcome in order to attain success in these and other objectives.

Some issues and anxieties:

- Some states and communities have done well on many social and economic parameters while others, particularly in the East, lag behind. Actually, the regional gap is increasing over time. The complex interplay of socio-economic disparities and inequalities poses significant challenges to achieving the SDGs.
- Next is the fragility of the achievements. This is because of the employment and job market situation. There are relatively large numbers of people and labour stuck in the primary sectors despite a recognised high growth rate in the GDP over the last 3-4 decades. With slight shocks, people could become economically vulnerable as happened during the Covid period. With the TFR falling fallen far too slowly in the last two decades, the numbers in the labour force would continue to rise until at least 2035, making the job situation precarious in the years to come.
- There are questions in the social sectors as well, mainly in Education and

Health. There has been little or no increase in government budgets for these sectors in recent years and decades, and there is increased privatisation. Since people's incomes at the lower rungs are not rising, the levels of deprivation for these sections of the population could be high, resulting in the SDG goals not being met. Specifics: In education, the low quality of skills can stifle growth and jobs. On Health, there are anecdotes and even survey data of people getting poorer because of the high costs of health.

- While gender equity may appear to be progressing in a positive direction, the pace of the movement is noticeably sluggish. The decline in women's engagement in the labour force in recent years is a cause for particular concern.
- There are issues on ecology and climate change. This is particularly so as the country aims to step up its manufacturing prowess, which is expected to leave a large carbon pawprint. Typically, among the priority sectors that the country has identified are, the making of semiconductors and automobiles, and space exploration, among others. Accompanying these are urbanisation and large infrastructure building. Most of these sectors are highly energy-intensive and mainly dependent on fossil fuels. They also have large backward linkages, e.g. in the metallurgy industry, like iron foundries, which are also hugely energy-intensive. Finally, urbanisation and infrastructure consume large volumes of energy. Therefore, unless there is a substantial emphasis on research and action towards the development of renewable and clean energy sources, significant gaps may remain.

India is a diverse country with vast variations in income, access to resources, and opportunities across regions and communities. Addressing these disparities requires not only comprehensive policy measures but also effective implementation and inclusivity. Challenges such as poverty, inadequate healthcare, unequal education access, and environmental degradation contribute to the complexity of achieving sustainability. Balancing economic growth with social equity and environmental conservation poses a continuous challenge that requires coordinated efforts from the government, private sector, and civil society to ensure that development is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable for all.

## **Thematic Panel 23**

### **Theme: Environmental Change, Community and Justice**

Organiser: School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University, Gurugram

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#### **Concept Note**

It is widely noted that to achieve environmental sustainability, it is imperative to rejuvenate the community and its ethos, which will help us to transcend the high environmental footprint dependent individualized way of living. As we engage with the notion of community, we witness that the form and the need for community is changing over time. Megan Garber captures this shift as she states “[i]t used to be that people were born as part of a community, and had to find their place as individuals. Now people are born as individuals, and have to find their community.” Energy driven lifestyle has given us autonomy and freedom to live independently and choose our community as we wish. This freedom is also necessary for social justice and actualizing an individual’s capability, going beyond socio-cultural determinism. However, this often comes at a cost of environmental sustainability. To ensure individual freedom entangled with social justice that allows us to explore an individual’s full potential, we often neglect the needs of the environment. Moreover, as we face an ecological crisis at multiple spatial and temporal scales, which threatens our existence, the community building ethos like social trust, care dwindles. This also concretizes the public-private conundrum where individuals are incentivized further to protect their private sphere by compromising ethical action towards public good. This conundrum begs the question: can community-oriented values be sufficient to achieve environmental sustainability without compromising the justice concern? In this panel from the humanities, social science and legal perspectives we attempt to explore in the age of climate change and migration what does it mean to achieve a just outcome as we aim for environmental sustainability and how far community-based ethos could help us. Some of the questions that we explore are: To what extent shared material reality

becomes a critical basis for the sustaining of community and its ethos? In the era of neoliberal globalization as community-based ethos degenerates, how to achieve environmental sustainability and justice? How to address social and environmental justice concerns while promoting community based sustainable transition? Can communities survive as we live amidst crisis and risk? Can rights-based litigation bolster climate justice?

### **How can 'Community' be Sustained in a Globalized World? A Socio-psychological Inquiry into a Public-Private Conundrum in the Global South**

**Soumyajit Bhar**, Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University, Gurgaon, Haryana

It has become evident that unless we take the issue of opulence head-on, the looming climate crisis threatening humanity's very existence cannot be addressed at its core. Scholars like Jackson (2004 and 2005) and Isham et al. (2022), highlight that the core problem of this age of consumerism is that people seem to have adopted material means to satisfy most of their basic needs, such as security, companionship, and freedom, that are inevitable to attaining a good life. Psychology of wellbeing literature confirms that material pathways can lead to wellbeing up to a level and fails to offer one long-term wellbeing (Isham et al., 2022). Environmental studies and degrowth literature to ensure sustainability transitions strongly advocates for community-oriented pathways that can decouple human needs from material need-satisfiers and in turn help sustain socio-environmental goods (Khmara and Kronenberg, 2020). Not only for realizing a sustainable world, the concept of 'double-dividend' argues that community-oriented pathways offer individuals a higher sense of long-term wellbeing (Jackson, 2005).

In this context, one can witness that in the Global North, newer forms of intentional communities are emerging where members are making an informed choice to be part of community settings based on shared post-materialistic and/or pro-environmental values and intentions. But in the Global South we witness the opposite – the existing forms of traditional communities along the lines of shared geography, religion, caste, or culture are deteriorating. Moreover, breaking free from community rules and restrictions for realizing individual autonomy

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and freedom of choice is considered societally aspirational and progressive as traditional close-knit communities often suppress individual freedom and autonomy and perpetuate systemic oppression to specific sections of society (Ambedkar 2014; Kanjilal 2022; Choudhary 2020; Heydari et al. 2021).

Moreover, any call for continuing community living for better environmental outcomes raises the 'public-private conundrum'. The motivations for consumption that enable individualization are always private in nature, whereas the expected environmental gains due to lowering consumption demands are public. So, the question is why one would forgo one's private motivations that are close to one's sense of wellbeing in lieu of perceived public gains in the form of improvement of environmental factors that will be spatially dispersed and temporally distanced. This presentation emphasizes the need for a socio-psychological understanding of human motivations for sacrificing private material comforts for ensuring public goods. This is important to understand how we can devise leap-frogging pathways to bridge traditional and intentional forms of communities in the context of the Global South facing a globalized world.

I will begin by highlighting the effect of distancing that is getting created due to the globalized nature of production and consumption. It is increasingly becoming difficult for individuals to perceive the impacts of their consumption choices because of distancing. Firstly, with the increased distancing between production and consumption, individuals cannot experience or witness the impact of their consumption choices. Secondly, the private share of a public good or harm is now minuscule. This concretizes the private-public conundrum further and eventually hinders the realization of double dividend. This presentation showcases that moral action becomes further challenging in a globalized world as the neoliberal political economy promises freedom through material individuality. Material freedom enables an exit option from conflict situations over negotiating a consensus, which is necessary to sustain public goods. As the neoliberal economic model penetrates the Global South, the process of actualizing this material freedom through globalization begins and becomes an integral part of developmental aspirations. Through meta-analysis and case studies from Global South, I show that the environmental studies literature, owing to ignoring the structure of human motivation for moral actions, overlooks the strong material dependence of each member of a community acts as a binding force to ensure the successful maintenance of public goods. I also argue that, as against the claim by double-dividend postulate, traditional community-oriented living by denying individuals the option to exit out of conflict situations would fail to offer a sustained long-term sense of wellbeing in the Global South.

The presentation ends with posing two questions: a) is there adequate moral motivation for individuals to choose double-dividend pathways without the individuality offered by this materially-enabled informed choice; b) can these double dividend pathways lead to sustained wellbeing when the public-private conundrum has been reinforced within a neoliberal political economy? This critical analysis helps us to reevaluate the call for sustaining and transforming communities in the Global South to realize the double dividend offered by community-oriented living arrangements within the neoliberal political economy.

### **The Long and Short of Gond Time-Space Curvatures: In Contexts of Earth-World-Globe-Planet**

**Anup Kumar Dhar**, Visiting Professor of Philosophy, BML Munjal University, Gurugram

Building on the Heideggerian Fourfold: 'earth', 'sky', 'mortals' and 'immortals', this paper explores the relationship among four other folds immanent upon Gond (indigenous) lifeworlds and emanating from Gond worldviews: Earth, World, Globe and Planet. How is the Gond subject placed with respect to the four folds? Does the Gond subject live simultaneously in four different kinds of "now-time" embodying the temporal and spatial logic of Earth, World, Globe and Planet? How are the four entangled in the Gond everyday - especially the everyday of the young Gond and Yadav women associates of Chinhari: The Young India ([www.chinhari.co.in](http://www.chinhari.co.in))? How is the shorter "now" of the 'world' and the 'globe' (i.e. of humanocentric, geographical and historical timescales) connected with the long "now" of Earth and Planet (i.e. of geological and bio-evolutionary timescales) in the lived experience of the ecofeminine and postcapitalist praxis of Chinhari - praxis of desi kheti (indigenous vegetable cultivation), praxis of seeing the forest as a living breathing relative, praxis of sharing-interdependence-interconnectedness-cooperativism? The paper shall show how the Gond subject in Dokal (a forest village in the Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh) is placed both inside and outside the World and the Globe; how the Gond subject is both inside third worldism (and developmentalism) and outside (such a lifeworld could be designated "fourth world" a la Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak); how the Gond subject is both inside the ever expanding circuits of global capital and outside (such an outside has been designated as the "non-capitalist world of the third"). The Gond subject could also be seen



as that which is both inside and “outside Empire-Nation exchange.” What is the Gond subject’s relationship with a much older Earth (what the Kondha adivasi in the Rayagada district of Odisha would designate as Dharti Penu and which can be inadequately translated as “Earth Spirit”) and what Dipesh Chakrabarty calls the “new historical-philosophical entity”- the Planet? Do Gond worldviews about Earth and Planet mark difference with not just with hegemonic understandings of World and Globe (developed in contexts of enlightened capitalo-centric humanism) but also counter-hegemonic understandings of Earth and Planet developed in contexts of ecological, environmental and sustainability activism? How does the Gond subject “work through” her own phenomenological and everyday experience of life, death, love and living - her own worldview about Earth and Planet and her own conceptions of time and space, her own time-space curvature with on the one hand, the hegemonic folds of World and Globe and the counterhegemonic folds of Earth and Planet developed as a response to and as critique of the Anthropocene in general and Capitalocene in particular. How is the plant, animal and non-human lifeworld (including immanent material divinities, spirit-neighbours and ancestors: Budha Deo [and Dhula Deo]) part of the Gond worldview? Is it indeed an integral part of such a worldview? Do the creation or origin myths and the totemic systems in Gond lifeworlds offer us possible hyphenations between humans and non-humans (both living and non-living)? Does it take us beyond the humanocentric World and Globe? What are possible translations between Gond know-how and worldviews (including customs, traditions, practices etc.) and the longer arche-texture of Earth and Planet developed as critique of the much shorter architecture of World and Globe?

### **The Vanishing Sense of Community from Traditional Communities: Implications for Environmental Ethics**

**Dr. Kalpita Bhar Paul**, Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University, Gurugram

For the past fifty years, the developmental trajectory of the Indian Sundarbans has been geared towards creating a new way of life for its islanders. This ‘new way’ has been conceptualized around risks and elimination of risks. Curbing uncertainty and gaining stability have been the most important objectives in the creation of this new way of life. However, this contradicts the inherent nature of the

Sundarbans land–waterscape. On the one hand, the striving toward stability and certainty negatively impacts the ecology of this young delta; on the other hand, traditional livelihoods have been systematically criminalized and push islanders towards the mainland and cities in search of ‘safe’ and ‘secure’ livelihoods. As a result, we witness that islanders spontaneously adopt migration as the key feature of their life. In this kind of scenario, the most widely accepted approach of a place–based ethic that places emphasis on traditional communities for achieving environmental sustainability loses its traction. Lack of engagement with traditional livelihoods and deltaic ecosystems take away the material basis that is crucial to have a traditional community. This in turn affects the sense of community, particularly, influence, fulfillment of need and membership criteria that McMillan and Chavis (1986) underline as an important aspect to have a sense of community.

Moreover, ‘risk’ is omnipresent and rising; it emerges as an important concept that shapes the ‘new way’ of life for these islanders. This echoes Beck’s (1992) idea of ‘risk society’. Beck underlines the main characteristics of a risk society is it is organized around a community of danger and the mood of the community is negative and defensive. The current mood of these islanders is exactly the same. The developmental narrative problematized many aspects of their traditional life. Simultaneously, in risk society marginalised people who live traditionally are also categorized as ‘risky’. Thus, as a society in this age, our risk tolerance capacity has reduced. In risk society those islanders who want to continue with their traditional livelihoods have been perceived as risky for the society. Also, mounting existential threat due to climate change makes them desperate to opt for the exit option to secure their life in other places instead of remaining committed to community membership and ways of life dependent on their traditional livelihoods. In fact, the traditional livelihoods which act as the anchor for this community fabric are deemed and normalized as risky and thus the communities start fragmenting at a more fundamental level. This further challenges the existence of a traditional community that can uphold an ethical and harmonious relationship with the Sundarbans.

At this juncture one important question that we need to engage with would be: if not a place–based traditional community, what could be a new form of community that we need to imagine? The dynamics between community and the risk society are not limited only to the Sundarbans. In larger society, the same we witnessed at the time of the COVID pandemic. As we live in and contend with a risk society, there is a constant effort to become an exclusive community with a tight boundary. Every one of us is trying to secure an exit option; the desire to

find a climate haven also falls under it. Hence, we need to think, in risk society, how can a sense of community be harnessed for ethical action towards the environment?

## **Can Rights-based Litigation Enhance Climate Justice?**

**Dr. Akhilendra Pratap Singh**, Assistant Professor, School of Law, BML Munjal University (BMU), Gurugram

Lately, there has been a steady growth of lawsuits about climate change. These lawsuits seek judicial application of the general obligations of states to contribute to global efforts on the mitigation of climate change and are often based on human rights law. Since climate change affects the enjoyment of human rights, the primary argument in these lawsuits is that states' positive obligations to protect human rights imply an obligation to mitigate climate change. For instance, in *Urgenda v. The Netherlands* [1], the Supreme Court of the Netherlands interpreted the rights to life and to family life under the European Convention on Human Rights as requiring the state to achieve at least 25 per cent reduction in national greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, compared with 1990 levels. Employing human rights law as a gap-filler to provide remedies where other areas of the law fail to do so is not a new phenomenon. More importantly, this has been a familiar approach in the context of environmental law. It is therefore not a surprise that human rights arguments are increasingly being made, and human rights remedies increasingly being sought, in climate change litigation.

This paper, divided into three parts, will be directed towards exploring the consequences of rights-based climate litigation for climate justice. To do so, the first part of the paper will contextualise human rights arguments in climate change litigation to answer the question: how can human rights arguments successfully be used in relation to climate change? In the second part, the paper will engage with climate change litigation to understand the challenges of using rights-based approaches in courts. In particular, it will explore the substantive and procedural challenges of climate change litigation. Additionally, it will also survey the case laws brought before the Indian courts to draw preliminary conclusions about the trajectory of climate change litigation in India and the opportunities that lie ahead. In light of the previous discussion, the paper will finally engage with the question: can rights-based litigation enhance climate justice?

## **Thematic Panel 24**

### **Theme: Agri-food Systems for Ensuring Food and Nutrition Security in South Asia**

Organiser: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Asia Office, Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

The past decade has witnessed many shocks – the COVID-19 pandemic, various natural disasters, and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza – with significant implications for global agrifood systems. In many Asian countries, any progress in reducing poverty and malnutrition has either reversed, stagnated, or decelerated. While evolving trends have long-term implications for people’s livelihoods and well-being, in many cases food systems have shown impressive resilience to meet emerging requirements. As climate change worsens and geopolitical conflicts expand and intensify amid the threat of recurrent pandemics, such shocks will only become more frequent and devastating.

Now is the time to think about sustainable food systems for inclusive and equitable growth, which can ensure food and nutrition security. Many governments, donor organizations, and international organizations have emphasized developing and strengthening a mechanism towards better prediction, preparation, and resilience building that will make the food system more resilient and sustainable.

In this backdrop, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in collaboration with the Institute for Human Development (IHD) is organizing a panel discussion on ‘Agrifood systems for ensuring food and nutrition security in South Asia’ on January 13, 2024, in New Delhi. This panel discussion is expected to have a solid deliberation on the gamut of agri-food systems in South Asia. The panel discussion can provide strategic options for moving forward and explore how diverse policy responses can improve livelihoods, incomes, food security and nutrition in the near future.

## Thematic Panel 25

### Theme: Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihoods

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#### Concept Note

In India, sustainable agriculture can play a pivotal role in fostering long-term food security, economic resilience, and environmental well-being. Emphasising practices that conserve soil fertility, minimise chemical inputs, and promote biodiversity, sustainable agriculture aims to enhance productivity while mitigating negative environmental impacts. Small-scale farmers often employ agroecological approaches, incorporating traditional knowledge and innovative techniques to adapt to local conditions. Implementing efficient water management, organic farming methods, and crop diversification are integral components of sustainable agriculture. Beyond environmental considerations, this approach also addresses social equity, empowering local communities and promoting inclusive growth. By prioritising the resilience of ecosystems, the sustainable agriculture model in developing countries contributes to breaking the cycle of poverty, ensuring food sovereignty, and fostering a harmonious relationship between agriculture and the environment.

This session has four papers, each on Indian agriculture. The various areas covered are:

1. Small farmers and agroecology
2. Small farmers and their incomes
3. Labour use in specific crops and impact on HD
4. Crop-specific agricultural dynamics

While the papers do not directly address the future issues in HD, they provide the building blocks and pointers towards how different approaches in agriculture can impact HD

## Abstract

### **Agroecology and Smallholder Sustainable Agriculture Towards an Appropriate Policy: Review of Agroecology Initiatives Across Countries**

**DN Reddy**, Visiting Professor, Institute for Human Development and Former Professor of Economics, University of Hyderabad

Beginning with the 1980s most of the smallholder agricultural households have been experiencing severe distress not only in India but across many countries in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. There are several contributing factors to the distress of which the major ones are: adverse effects of Green Revolution technologies inappropriately extended to all crops and regions; the unleashing of neoliberal reforms and the consequent downsizing state support and privatization with market domination in input output and credit markets; the rising costs and growing indebtedness of smallholders; and the climate change induced weather extreme events.

It is under these conditions that there has been growing interest in 'agroecology' as an alternative system of agriculture. In simple terms agroecology is the application of ecological principles to design and management of ecosystem through integration of traditional and scientific knowledge. Though agroecology is applicable to all farming conditions and sizes, it is extremely difficult to have ecologically sound farming at an extremely large scale, while small farms with family labour can follow ecologically sound practices and lead to increased labour productivity. Agroecology has gained worldwide attention since 1980s in the face of adverse effects of Green Revolution and the neoliberal structural adjustment policies exposing farmers to more risks, high costs and uncertain returns. Most of the farmers across the globe are small-marginal farmers. Of the estimated 570 million holdings in 167 countries and territories based on the World Agricultural Census, 410 million (72%) are marginal and another 12% are small farmers. There have been initiatives across the countries to bring these small farmers under agroecological practices. The early initiatives in Latin America were through social mobilization of farmers with farmer-to-farmer to spread of the practices. Over the years there have been initiatives based on civil society organizations, and certain international organizations including the FAO. Since

1990s there have been a number of studies on these experiences. Based on some of these studies some have come to the conclusion that agroecology enables sustainability of smallholders through the articulation and materialization of the multifunctionality of agriculture. These findings also emphasize that while agroecological principles are universal, the extent of practices vary in response to regional agroecological specifications.

There is growing literature on agroecological practices across countries but as yet no clear policy perspective appropriate to the promotion of sustainable agriculture. The specific objective of the review of the literature is to identify appropriate policy perspective for conditions obtaining in India.

### **Low Farmers' Incomes in India: Determinants and Solution**

**Nilabja Ghosh**, Professor, Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi

After over 75 years of development in India, agriculture remains the livelihood of the largest section 54.6% of workers (2011). Population growth has fragmented arable land so that the average farmer operates only on 1.08 hectare (2015-16) of holding that restricts the use of technology and limits the capacity of generating surplus above the subsistence needs of farm households and even inhibits reasonable returns in keeping with the average standard of living in the country. Estimates suggest that average farmer's income is only Rs 10,218 per month (DES, Website) compared to the estimated per household net domestic product (NDP) of Rs. 34,000/- (MOSPI, Website) assuming average household size 4.1. India's policy focus having shifted from greater production to farmers welfare, farmers income became an important indicator of development and drew public attention towards its supplementation with direct transfer by Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) Scheme while food, fertilizer and credit subsidies continue. PM-Kisan goes by bank transfer to small and marginal farmers holding up to 2-hectare land but such farmers are privileged or constrained by varied agro-climatic attributes, infrastructure and market efficiency and therefore face different choices among crops and technology and earn unequal incomes. This paper uses official secondary dataset of DES, MoA&FW and primary farm level data on Cost of Cultivation (CoC) to work out value added (VA) per hectare as estimates of farm income with and without the cost of factors of production, hired labor and capital for major food grain crop where VA is the total value of output less the cost of material inputs purchased

from other sectors like fertilizers, seeds and pesticides. VA in Rs/hectare is expressed in constant prices, deflating by CPI-Agriculture. Crops under study include not only rice and wheat but also millet crops and different pulses under public promotion. Focus will be on major growing states in the period starting 1980s to the latest for which data is available. With farm level data, the observation can be identified using key location codes to associate with climatic and other relevant attributes. The VA is then compared between crops and across growing regions to identify the lagging cases using information on cropping pattern. Regions are statistically clustered by income generated and by climatic and other agro-climatic attributes to look for associations. Similar analysis is conducted with data obtained on PM-Kisan from PM-Kisan portal to gauge the beneficiaries. Pooling state and yearly data, the VA crop-wise and aggregate is then analyzed for the effects of farm size, economics and policy correcting for geographical disparities of soil and weather using econometric method where irrigation, reservoir, roads, prices, credit etc are considered as determinants. Mapping of VA for crops in major growing regions will help to assess and suggest the direction of flow of PM-Kisan benefits. Value added in agriculture representing farmers income at the average farm and household sizes has increased sharply at nominal prices though falling short of the per capita NDP but at constant prices it has strong variation across states and crops. It is sensitive to economic incentives that drive fertilizer use and to water management. While farm size is a strong influence by itself and its interaction with other variables.

## **Stitching Together the Story: Labour Use in Indian Cotton Farming**

**Prachi Bansal**, Assistant Professor, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, Haryana

This paper aims to study the pattern of labour use in cotton crop cultivation. This paper has examined the trend in labour absorption in agriculture in the cotton crop across different regions of the country. The dynamics of the spatio-temporal pattern of labour used in cotton cultivation are explored in this study. The nature of labour used -- hired or family; men or women; casual or long-term -- is examined at various levels of disaggregation. The paper examines the variability in labour used in cotton cultivation for different size classes of farms (ranging from marginal to large farms). The paper discusses the nature of technological change in cotton cultivation and its effects on employment. he



determinants of labour use, the variation in levels of labour use across different classes of peasantry and regions are discussed. To examine the trends in labour absorption at the macro-level, data from the Farm Management Survey (1954-55 to 1972-73) and the farm-level (unit-level) Comprehensive Scheme for Cost of Cultivation of Principal Crops (1971-72 to 2019-20) are used. Labour absorption per hectare of land has fallen in most crops except cotton for a long period of time (see footnote 1). Cotton crop has seen a rise in intensity of labour use by a high 67 per cent, during the last four decades. Cotton witnessed a positive growth rate of labour use during 2000 to 2010. This decade coincided with the introduction of Bt cotton in most cotton producing states of rural India. Bt cotton led to a higher yield and thus higher requirements for labour in harvesting and other operations. The average per acre all-India level of labour use in Triennium Ending (TE) 2020 was 323 hours. Haryana had the lowest level of labour use, 198 hours per acre, and Tamil Nadu had the highest level of labour use, 513 hours per acre. The use of attached labour is pervasive in cotton cultivation. It was noted in all major cotton producing states. In terms of the relative use of casual and family labour, the cotton crop displays a high diversity in the composition of labour use across the different states. Cotton cultivation in Rajasthan and Haryana continues to depend on higher use of family labour, whereas in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka, there is relatively higher dependence on casual labour. In the states of Punjab, Gujarat, Odisha, Haryana, and Rajasthan, the increase in size class of operated area shifts the entire distribution of labour use from high family labour to high hired labour. Punjab and Haryana have higher use of family labour even for the large farmers, an observation that is true for Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh too. However, in the case of these three states: Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, the marginal farmers also use a high proportion of hired labour. The paper shows the major trends and patterns in labour use in cotton cultivation and examines the different determinants of labour use including biotechnology, mechanisation, yield, cropping pattern, and other socio-economic factors.

## **Rice Production Dynamics of Purulia, West Bengal: A Panel Data Regression Approach**

**Barun Majee**, PhD Scholar, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia, West Bengal

**Subhasis Bhattacharya**, Professor, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia, West Bengal

Agriculture stands as an integral foundation for the inhabitants of Purulia district in West Bengal. Rice, widely recognized as a staple food crop, occupies a central role in the dietary patterns of the district. However, Purulia faces recurrent vulnerability to droughts, presenting an ongoing challenge. Thus, it becomes imperative to comprehensively analyse the factors influencing rice production in the Purulia district, given that a substantial portion of the population engages in rice cultivation for their sustenance. This study delves into the agricultural dynamics of Purulia, encompassing twenty sub-districts, over a period. The primary aim is to investigate the impact of rainfall ( $X_1$ ), cropped area ( $X_2$ ), and irrigation ( $X_3$ ) on rice production in Purulia district, utilizing panel data regression. Employing a robust panel data regression methodology, this study endeavours to not only unveil the patterns and trends in rice production but also to determine the most suitable model for the multifaceted dynamics observed in the region. The study draws upon a robust dataset spanning two decades, from 2001 to 2020, encompassing critical variables across twenty distinct sub-districts within Purulia. District statistical handbook provides reliable information on rice production, area under cultivation, and irrigation practices in the specified sub-districts. Notably, the dataset for rainfall is derived from the currently operational PERSIANN (Precipitation Estimation from Remotely Sensed Information using Artificial Neural Networks) system, ensuring accurate and up-to-date estimations. Block-level data provides finer spatial resolution, allowing for more precise analysis of rice production, rainfall, area and irrigation within a district. Such information is valuable for identifying microclimatic variations and local factors that may influence rice production distribution. The study adopts a panel data regression model to effectively handle the heterogeneity of cross-sectional units over time in the context of crop production. Leveraging Levin, Lin & Chu  $t$  statistics, the research assesses whether the studied variable maintains stationarity at the level or necessitates differencing for analysis. A comparative analysis is conducted to choose the appropriate model among constant coefficient, fixed effect, and random effect models. The study further employs Chow and Hausman tests to validate the Fixed Effect Model's

superiority over the Common Effect and Random Effect Models. Subsequently, the study identifies individual effects and presents specific models for several sub-districts. Tests for multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity are employed, and issues are addressed through model refinement. Among the key findings, the F-test confirms the joint influence of rainfall, area, and irrigation on rice production. In conclusion, the Fixed Effect Model proves effective in capturing the nuanced aspects of rice production across the Purulia district. Utilizing the Fixed Effect Model with an impressive R<sup>2</sup> value exceeding 95%, the study investigates distinct intercepts without time effects for each sub-district. In conclusion, this study comprehensively explores the agricultural dynamics of Purulia district, emphasizing the critical role of rice in the local dietary landscape. Despite recurrent drought challenges, a substantial population relies on rice cultivation for sustenance. Through a rigorous panel data regression methodology spanning 2001 to 2020 and covering twenty sub-districts, the study identifies rainfall, area, and irrigation as key influencers on rice production.

## **Thematic Panel 26**

### **Theme: Violence Against Women - Risk Factors, Intersections and Interventions: Some Insights from Recent IHD Research Studies**

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#### **Concept Note**

Violence against women (VAW) is pervasive across regions, spanning private and public spheres of life. Domestic violence (DV) including physical, sexual and emotional violence perpetrated mostly by intimate partners has been recognised as a major human rights violation and public health issue. The latest figures on the incidence of DV or intimate partner violence (IPV) gathered by the World Health Organisation indicate persistence of this form of violence despite efforts by women's rights groups and governments – still almost one in three women suffer from it across the world, with wide regional variation in its incidence. The same is true in India as the evidence from the National Family Health Survey suggests. IPV also manifests in economic/ financial violence by male partners in restricting a woman's access to information and services, and not allowing her to work outside home; taking away woman's earnings and her control on her income, and by not fulfilling household responsibilities and not contributing income to household consumption. Further, domestic violence is not limited to home alone, it also spreads out to the workplace which is not a 'safe haven from domestic abusers' (Hoel et al, 2001).

On the other hand, VAW which is rooted in patriarchy and gender-based inequality also occurs in public places including the place of work, spaces of education, transport, leisure and so on concurrent with the power imbalances therein. Evidence suggests that more women are known to be sexually harassed at work place than in streets or public transport. Public space violence impedes

women's full participation in public life in realising their freedoms. There is, of course, differential violence experience among various sections of women owing to multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage and discrimination they face. For example, IHD's previous research has shown that women's experiences and sense of security significantly vary across localities and administrative spatial categories which are shaped by the levels of physical and safety infrastructure and basic services including, for example, streetlighting, access to toilets, and so on. These in turn influence the extent of women's physical mobility and how they navigate and access city spaces including education, work and leisure.

This panel aims to contribute to the conversation on addressing VAW by bringing evidence and insights on the incidence of violence against women, its intersecting factors and interventions by the state. It includes presentations based on three studies conducted by IHD researchers that map forms of violence, structural and contextual factors shaping it, as well as incremental changes as a result of policy and campaigns by women's rights groups and CSOs.

### **Drinking and Intimate Partner Violence: Impact of alcohol prohibition in Bihar**

**Bhim Reddy**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

**Tanuka Endow**, Professor, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

This presentation is based on our research which studies the impact of alcohol prohibition in Bihar on drinking, intimate partner violence (IPV), and household economic wellbeing, funded by the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and World Bank Group. Here, we focus on the extent of change in drinking behavior of men and IPV in the state of Bihar where the government has completely banned alcohol production and consumption since 2016. The intent of the ban was to reduce domestic violence and impoverishment of poor families, both of which were believed to be a result of excessive alcohol consumption by men in the state. Except for minor amendments made in 2018, this policy has since been in place despite some criticism on the drawbacks of prohibition and violations of the law.

We move beyond simplistic conclusions on the links between alcohol, prohibition policy and IPV and provide a nuanced analysis of the impacts based on women's experiences and views from our primary field research. We argue that women's hostile experience with drinking partners coupled with the patriarchal nature of families and spousal relations compels them to bestow faith in the state and negotiate with it. They invite state paternalism in drinking choices – to make alcohol inaccessible and thus restrict their partners from drinking.

First, we critically look at the prevalent notions around drinking and its linking with domestic violence, pointing at evidence, among others, the fact that the majority of women who experience IPV in India, including Bihar, live with non-drinking husbands, while the likelihood of IPV is higher among women living with drinking partners. On the other hand, we document and analyse evidence on the pathways of association between men's drinking and IPV as well as family discord including economic violence and impoverishment.

Second, we analyse the actual effectiveness in implementation of the ban and the unintended negative consequences of prohibition, including illicit brewing, bootlegging, hooch tragedies, higher spending on low quality liquor in black-market, and switching to substance abuse, among others.

Third, we assess the extent of reduction in drinking in a nuanced way by looking at both the frequency and quantity of drinking by men and how this change varies across different categories of drinkers.

Fourth, we document self-reported experience of violence among married women perpetrated by their partners before and after the prohibition. We analyse change in IPV including frequency and intensity of partner violence, and its links with drinking habits of husbands.

This study employs mixed-methods for gathering evidence, including a primary field survey of 500 households, and around 60 qualitative interviews with women and men in the communities and other stakeholders such as CSO representatives. As part of the household-level survey, we interviewed married women, living with drinking and non-drinking partners, from four urban centers to elicit information on household economy, husbands' drinking habits and IPV.

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## **Public Space Violence and Women's Safety: Insights from a Large Perception Survey in Delhi**

**Deeksha Tayal**, Associate Fellow, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

**Vikas Dubey**, Research Associate, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

In a rapidly urbanising world, the concept of 'Safe City' is increasingly being considered as essential for secure living and prosperity of the people. But the issue of violence against women both within the private sphere and public space remains a challenge. While violence against women prevails across the country, its incidence is particularly noteworthy in selected cities. Data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reveals that the rate of crime against women in Delhi continues to remain high. It is recognized that the availability of safe public transport services and infrastructural facilities as well as access to personnel from government departments like police may strengthen women's access to public spaces and reduce instances of violence. However, in developing a Safe City, it is necessary for the policy-makers and the Government to assess the perceptions of people about how safe they feel in the city. Given this background, the paper examines the linkage of such interventions with the experiences of crime and safety perception of women in public spaces. The paper explores the underlying gaps in the provisioning of public services by the government and the causal factors which continue to pose hurdle in ensuring safety of women. The paper is based on experiences, perceptions, and suggestions of a sample of around 5000 women residing in Delhi. It is a part of a large survey of 10,000 households conducted in 2021-22 for the Delhi Government (Delhi Human Development Report) by the Institute for Human Development (IHD). Combining the responses of women from different education levels, age-groups, and income categorizes, a safety and security index is developed. The findings indicate that just 52 per cent of the women rate the safety of public spaces as good. But this percentage is lower for the women from low-income families. Such an in-depth analytical overview of the perception of women on safety and security may be helpful in guiding appropriate policies and measures towards making Delhi a 'Safe City'.

## **Gender-Based Violence and Perceptions of Safety: State- Society and Family Interface**

**Uma Sarmistha**, Ph.D. Adjunct Faculty, University of Florida Senior Planner, City of Newberry, Florida

**Manoj Bandan Balsamanta**, Visiting Researcher and Former Senior Research Associate, IHD, New Delhi

Violence against women is pervasive and occurs in both public and private realms across the globe. Both its actual occurrence and the fear of it substantially restrict women's movement, undermine their ability to realize and fulfill their potential, and affect their effective participation in the development process. Therefore, the salience of researching violence against women has been steadily increasing in India, as is the case anywhere in the world. Noteworthy academic and policy efforts are progressing toward understanding the roots of persistent and emergent violence and developing violence reduction and prevention strategies. Studying violence against women in rural India is all the more important, for villages in India still largely fall outside the ambit of state institutions such as law enforcement agencies and exhibit a larger culture of non-reporting of crimes. While violence against women in urban spaces has been the main focus of contemporary research and policy in India, corresponding attention is scarcely paid to violence in rural areas. There is an urgent need to overcome this research deficit and conduct research on violence against women in rural areas, including factors such as caste, poverty, gender, and infrastructural deficit, which work in tandem and negatively affect rural women, especially those belonging to the SCs and STs. This study, by way of its exclusive attention to rural dimensions of violence against women, is an attempt in this regard. The focus here is on the rural violence against women, both tenacious and emergent, including unique forms of exploitation and discrimination and the prevalent socio-cultural norms stemming from caste and patriarchy.

This study is derived from a larger project that has studied violence against women in both the public and private realms in rural India. Four states, namely, Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, were chosen for the study based on relevant socio-economic indicators such as the crime rate, human development index, sex ratio, and gender development index. Besides enhancing research, particularly on under-researched issues such as public violence against women and fear of violence, this research has sought to devise strategies



for the reduction and prevention of violence. It has tried to identify institutions and practices that help in mitigating violence against women and has sought to explore ways to strengthen such institutions and practices. With less reporting of violence in rural areas, it is very challenging to capture violence, particularly gender-based violence, through purely secondary data tools. Thus, a structured mixed-method data collection and analysis approach was adopted to achieve research objectives. For the study, we conducted a survey consisting of 800 households across the four states. We undertook several interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies, which involved several visits to the research sites.

Drawing upon the findings from the field, this paper argues that both verbal and physical violence against women are still found in rural areas. It is also argued in this paper that its actual occurrence and the fear of it substantially restrict women's movement and undermine their ability to realize and fulfill their potential. Moreover, this paper critically looks into the state, society, and family interface concerning women and women's issues. It explores the collaborating and oppositional relations these institutions share with women in the villages. Sometimes, they work with each other for the cause of women, particularly regarding women's health and safety. But sometimes, they even work in tandem and act against women and women's freedom and rights. However, the collaboration between state, community, and family appears particularly threatening concerning violating the dominant culture.

This paper also discusses and elaborates on the male perceptions of women and women's issues. It is revealed during the field that, overall, men largely share a positive view towards women's rights and freedom. However, several contradictions are to be found among them, including what they say in general and what they say and practice in specific situations.

## Thematic Panel 27

### Theme: Gender, Entrepreneurship and Work Participation

Assessing Increasing Work Participation of Women during Recent Years: Insights from a Survey

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The importance of gender in development cannot be overstated, as it highlights the significant impact that gender roles, norms, and inequalities have on the overall development process. As the saying goes, “Women form half the Sky”. Recognising and addressing gender disparities is not only a matter of social justice but also a key driver of sustainable development. Gender equality is linked to enhanced economic productivity, improved health outcomes, and increased educational attainment. By empowering women and promoting gender inclusivity, societies can unlock the full potential of their human capital. Moreover, integrating a gender perspective in development policies ensures that initiatives are more responsive to the diverse needs and experiences of both men and women, contributing to more effective and equitable outcomes. In essence, prioritising gender in development is not just a moral imperative but a strategic necessity for fostering comprehensive and enduring progress.

This session has papers four papers addressing issues in women’s participation in work, entrepreneurship, higher education and platform workers. More specifically, the broad topics discussed are:

1. Trends in women’s work participation and the composition of their work, like unpaid family work, self-employment, and the like
2. Factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among female graduate and postgraduate students in contrast to male students, with a focus on the interplay between entrepreneurship education, family background and attitudes or behavioural traits of students
3. Disparities between men and women if any (gender gap in computer skills or GGCS), in information and communication technology (ICT) skills; An

outlier here is a paper on platform workers' perceptions and opinion of their jobs along

4. The lines of respect, integrity, humanity and trust. This paper is introduced here despite it not addressing gender per se, because it might ramification on gender.

## **Assessing Increasing Work Participation of Women during Recent Years: Insights from a Survey**

**Neetha N., Professor**, Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS, New Delhi)

The presentation will be on women's work and I will specifically look at the recent increase in work force participation of women. The increase in share of unpaid helpers and own account workers will be taken up for further discussion through sectoral and state wise analysis. The increased share of women as self-employed workers will be critically examined by linking it to women's role as housewives and the pressure on women to earn whatever little, in times of a larger crisis in male employment and other sources of household livelihoods. Analysis on this dimension will be based on the insights from a recent CWDS study in select districts.

## **Closing Gender Gaps in Entrepreneurship**

**Radhicka Kapoor**, Professor, ICIER, New Delhi

The importance of closing gender gaps in entrepreneurship cannot be overstated. Bridging this gap will spur growth, productivity, innovation and poverty reduction and also create jobs, particularly, for women. Further, it is a powerful tool of women empowerment. In the South Asia region, a mere 18% of small, medium and large businesses are reported to be owned by women (World Bank, 2020). What is more, enterprises owned by women are often smaller and less well-represented in the formal sector and in capital intensive industries compared to those owned by men. Women micro-entrepreneurs typically operate necessity-driven and survival-oriented enterprises and resort to self-employment due to lack of choice

either due to household distress or the inability to find productive employment. The policy focus on the subject of women entrepreneurship, therefore, needs to look beyond support to necessity-driven entrepreneurs and examine how it can provide an environment for dynamic transformative opportunity-driven women entrepreneurs to thrive. This is because entrepreneurs who start a business in response to a perceived opportunity—as opposed to a lack of other options for income generation—are more likely to be growth-oriented, which means that they are more likely to aim to expand their businesses and hire more workers, particularly women. Using primary and secondary data, this paper aims to provide a broad overview of the key stylized facts on women entrepreneurship in South Asia, the context in which women entrepreneurs operate, the key challenges faced by them and how women entrepreneurship can be fostered in the region to reap significant economic and social gains.

### **Entrepreneurial Intentions of female students in Indian Higher education institutions: The impact of Entrepreneurial Education, Family Background and Attitudes**

**Swati Dutta**, Fellow, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, New Delhi

**Jeemol Unni**, Professor, Ahmedabad University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**Vanita Yadav**, Sr. Fellow, Western Sydney University, Australia, Australia

Entrepreneurship is a driving force behind economic growth and job creation worldwide, and the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals play a pivotal role in shaping the future of industries and societies. This study explores the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among female graduate and postgraduate students in India in contrast to male students. We focus on the interplay between entrepreneurship education, family background and attitudes or behavioural traits of students. Drawing on a comprehensive survey of 940 students from diverse academic backgrounds and from 28 institutes in Delhi, we analyse the impact of various factors, household income, parental education and occupation, educational institution type and skills on the entrepreneurial intentions of students using binary logit. We use a multinomial logit model to see how entrepreneurial intentions among students vary with and without a business idea. Our findings reveal several significant insights into the drivers of entrepreneurial intentions among students. We observe a substantial

gender disparity, with female students being less likely to express a desire for entrepreneurship. However, among students who have developed a business idea the likelihood of aspiring to become an entrepreneur is high among females. Household income plays a crucial role, with higher income brackets positively influencing entrepreneurial aspirations. Specifically, household incomes between Rs. 75,000 and 100,000 exhibit the most significant impact, increasing the likelihood of wanting to become an entrepreneur with a business idea. It also elevates the likelihood of aspiring to become an entrepreneur among students without a specific business concept. The educational background of students' fathers significantly affects their entrepreneurial intentions. Having a father with a postgraduate education increases the likelihood of desiring entrepreneurship with a business idea. Similarly, a father engaged in a business occupation boosts the likelihood of aspiring to become an entrepreneur even without a business idea. Family involvement in entrepreneurship emerges as a strong driver of entrepreneurial aspirations, reducing the likelihood of not wanting to become an entrepreneur. Pursuing a final-year postgraduate degree positively impacts the desire to become an entrepreneur among students with a business idea, but not among those without a specific business plan. Moreover, the presence of dedicated entrepreneurship courses at educational institutions substantially influences entrepreneurial intentions, with a greater impact on students harbouring specific business ideas. Attitudes and self-perceptions play a significant role, as overall a higher perception of risk-taking ability, self-perceived innovativeness, self-confidence, and optimism increases the likelihood of aspiring to become an entrepreneur with a business idea. Gender disparity is noted where female students have lower risk-taking ability and their entrepreneurial intention is lower with or without a business plan. However, female students with self-perceived innovativeness, self-confidence and optimism are more likely to have entrepreneurial intentions, particularly so if they also have a business concept. Self-confidence and optimism among female students also enhance entrepreneurial intent even without a business concept. Finally, entrepreneurship courses, when coupled with specific attitudes and self-perceptions, significantly positively impact students' entrepreneurial intentions. The study highlights the positive influence of combining risk-taking attitude, innovativeness, and self-confidence with entrepreneurship education, shedding light on key drivers of entrepreneurial aspirations among students, and highlighting gender disparity.

## Digital Inclusion and Gender Development: Evidence across States in India

**E Revathi** and **Jadhav Chakradhar**, Centre for Economic and Social Studies  
Hyderabad, Telangana State

Empowerment of women is one of the essential requisites for achieving inclusive growth. Empowerment encompasses three broad dimensions; education, employment and political participation. Though education paves way for human development, gender development and empowerment the underlying structural inequalities still constrain access to higher education and higher level of skills in particular. Economic development maybe a necessary condition for human development, gender development and gender empowerment but not a sufficient condition. Indian states with a medium economic growth have ranked high in gender development indices. How do Indian states fare in gender gap in ICT skills? What is the relationship between gender development indices and gender gap in ICT skills? As technology advances, whether women catch up on par given the same level of education? These questions are explored in the present paper utilising the recently released data from NSS, 78th round, 2020–2021. The paper sheds light on the disparities between men and women (gender gap in computer skills or GGCS) in information and communication technology (ICT) skills across Indian states. Analysing the nine ICT skills, the paper explores the disparity between genders based on location, caste, education, wealth inequalities. ICT skills in general rise along with levels of education and wealth quintiles across social categories and wealth quintiles though there is much clustering among SC and ST as distinct from OBC and OC. Gender inequalities manifest across all nine analysed computer-related skills. Moreover gender gap in ICT skills is pervasive in all social groups and wealth quintiles. The study findings underscore that gender gaps in ICT skills are in medium to high range in some high growth states, while they are low in some low growth states. Lowest computer literacy is found in the intersection of caste and gender, such as ST –females, ranking lowest in the hierarchy. There is a discernible upward trend in skills proficiency with increased educational attainment. Individuals with higher levels of education tend to showcase greater proficiency across nine ICT indicators. There is a persistent gender gap in favour of men across same educational attainment levels. Wealth quintiles too reflect the same trend, with the percentage of females possessing lower computer literacy within the same wealth quintiles. Across social category there is a convergence between women attaining computer skills among the OBC and OC in all wealth groups, while SC and ST women lag behind.

Simple correlation between gender-related indices and GGS shows that human development and gender development contribute to lowering the gender gap in ICT skills, while GDP per capita income (economic growth) does not exhibit such relation. Based on our study findings, we suggest a need for women-centric policies prioritising their computer literacy in India. Underperforming states (higher GGCS) such as Uttarakhand, Telangana, and Karnataka require a committed approach to providing ICT skills to females. In alignment with this, India should focus on imparting ICT skills at all levels of education.

### **Rumblings of Discontent among Platform Workers**

**Vandana Vasudevan**, Founder-CEO, Naagrik Foundation for Cities Muhammed Alam, Research Director, Janpahal Dharmender Kumar, Founder, Janpahal

This paper aims to present platform workers' perceptions and opinion of their jobs along the lines of respect, integrity, humanity and trust. In India, the NCAER has released a research report earlier this year on food delivery workers. Based on a nationwide survey of over 5000 gig workers, called "RIGHTS which is an acronym for "Respect & Integrity of Gig workers; Humanity and Trust in Service" conducted by the activist organization Janpahal in collaboration with the author. The broad research questions that the survey results will answer are: 1. Do platform workers feel they are respected by the company and by society for the job they do? 2. Do platform workers believe the company is engaging with them with integrity and fairness with respect to compensation, penalties and transparency of payment? 3. Is the platform treating its workers with humanity, with attention to work conditions, hours of work per day, margin of error etc.? 4. Is there a partnership of trust between the platform and the worker as reflected by conflict resolution, level of surveillance and sharing of information? In addition, the results will be illuminated by over 50 personal interviews that the author has personally conducted across the country to understand the stories behind the numbers. The significance of this research is that the platform economy is still an evolving sector and operates in a regulatory grey zone. With growing digitalization, the employer-employee paradigm is fast changing, and old laws and policies are proving to be inadequate in ensuring fair work practices for gig workers. In the light of this, this paper will present a deeper understanding of the issues involved through authentic reports from the ground, in order to inform effective policy making.

## Thematic Panel 28

### Theme: Revisiting Human Development Paradigm: The Journey and Destination

Organisers: Thapar School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Patiala, Punjab and School of Liberal Studies, BML Munjal University, Gurugram, Haryana

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#### Concept Note

As the human development and capabilities approach (HDCA) enters its fourth decade there is a need for stock taking. Can a shift to well-being be more inclusive as well as practical in assessing how countries and people are doing? Should HD be understood as a set of objectives, seeking a causal pathology, a cul-de-sac of good intentions?

#### Abstract

### The Human Development Paradigm: A Cul-de-Sac of Good Intentions?

**Ashwani Saith**, Emeritus Dean, School of Liberal Studies BML Munjal University, Hon. Professor, IHD and Professor Emeritus, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands

At its origin, the Human Development notion was hallmarked by an exhortation to move away from the reductionist money-metric approach centred on GNP as



the dominant indirect measure of development, towards an outcomes-oriented, direct measure of well-being, showcased (regrettably) in the HDI. The profound weaknesses of GNP as a measure of welfare were well known from the times of its inception. This widespread dissatisfaction, alongside the star-status of the HD-HDI promoters, as well as the institutionally expeditious entrepreneurial genius of UNDP, propelled the new buzzword into academic and policy stratospheres as the new touchstone of development, the new Holy Grail. The creation of the HDI fuelled the phase-2 rocket that pushed HD into perpetual orbit, marked by an obsessive compulsion for measurement – often, without adequate justification, theory or pathology, and often without appropriate or sound data.

The road to development is littered with bits and pieces of earlier or later buzzwords, each emerging from the survival imperatives of various development organisations to reinvent and rebrand themselves, as the veneer of the previous slogan wore off and its limitations got revealed: basic needs, the poverty-line measures, the so-called participatory approach, social exclusion, decent work, happiness a la Layard, happiness a la Bhutan, dignity, choice and capability etc. The UNDP progeny of Human Development has survived the longest and is now well into its fourth decade, enabled perhaps by hitching a piggy-back ride on the shoulders of its sibling notion of capabilities which encompasses and incorporates virtually anything and everything under its imperial conceptual umbrella – while, paradoxically, excluding salient systemic, structural and strategic dimensions from the frame of reference. This arises to an extent from its general approach of methodological individualism, which it could be argued, paradoxically constitutes one side of a Faustian compromise with neoliberal globalisation in which the contemporary crises of capitalism and “human development” are themselves rooted. The partial, or sectoral, focus on “human development” then risks being perceived as serving as a poop-scooper of neoliberal globalisation and, willy-nilly by default, a fellow traveller, or a silent legitimiser of contemporary capitalism. Some could argue that such a critique is misplaced since this is the only game in town.

Some checks are proposed for assessing value-addition: redundancy – did it bring something new to the table beyond what was known already; identification – did it identify a different section of population or society that was overlooked by other approaches; and intervention – did it imply different forms of action or policy interventions? At best, HD’s report card is mixed with some glaring shortcomings. Can its longevity be read as evidence of its value addition, whether conceptually, methodologically, strategically or philosophically? Does the notion of human development fall somewhere between all four stools? Is it perhaps better

perceived as a pre-theoretical fuzzy concept, a diffuse notion, a portmanteau, or – in view of its wide intersectional range of discursive usage – a paradigm with the limited, albeit significant, potential role of advocacy for “good causes”?

There is a revealing comparison between HD discourse and the erstwhile WEP-ILO programme: the latter focussed on downstream outcomes of the growth process, but then, also trained its sweeping spotlight on the diverse upstream sources of these downstream outcomes, not shying away from challenging issues, a.o., those pertaining to the redistribution of property rights, trade unionisation, reorganisation of international trade and technology, alternative industrialisation strategies, the green revolution and agrarian reforms etc. In contrast, arguably, HD discourse has been disproportionately preoccupied with baling water out of the boat, not fixing the holes that lets it in. Should HD then be understood as a set of objectives, seeking a causal pathology, a cul-de-sac of good intentions? For the sake of stimulating conversations on some key issues around Human Development as a paradigm, the presentation adopts the position of the proverbial Devil’s Advocate.

## **Centering well-being: the promise and the pitfalls**

**Gita Sen**, Distinguished Professor & Director, Ramalinga Swami Centre on Equity & Social Determinants of Health, Public Health Foundation of India and Former Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

Can a shift to well-being be more inclusive as well as practical in assessing how countries and people are doing?

## **Human Development and Capabilities: The Challenge to Economic Theory**

**Sanjay Reddy**, Professor of Economics, New School for Social Research, New York, USA

How has the human development and capability approach (HDCA) influenced our view of economic theory and policy (or should it)? Although the HDCA

has foundations that can be traced in early economic theory (for instance in some of the ideas of Adam Smith) the ways in which the HDCA can build upon or potentially challenge contemporary economic theory have not been fully understood.

It is evident that the HDCA provides a way of thinking about the normative ends of economic policy that is an alternative to the utilitarian one that dominates welfare economics. Attempts to assimilate the human development approach to a utilitarian normative scheme therefore involve a fundamental misunderstanding of its origins and specificity. But the contribution of HDCA goes beyond a specification of the 'objective function' to an understanding of the constraints on pursuing that objective, and more generally to a perspective concerning what processes can be accepted or indeed should be promoted. Additionally, the HDCA draws our attention to the role of non-market institutions and processes in furnishing capabilities and provisioning human development. As such, it suggests the need for a form of economic theory that accommodates both market and non-market factors in its perspective. These too are fundamental challenges to standard economic theory, and policy. And yet arguably, there has not been a wide recognition of or response to any of these challenges within economic theory. This suggests the need for a more concerted effort to extend economic theory in a manner that recognizes the challenge that the HDCA presents. Such an effort can enable the HDCA both to provide an enduring contribution to economic theory and policy and to extend its reach in ways that meet the objection that it is unclear how to apply it practically in economic policy. At the same time, there should be no doubt that there will remain fundamental challenges in integrating the HDCA into economic theory and policy, for instance because of the tension between democratic and technocratic approaches to arriving at and promoting social objectives. Other challenges, for instance relating to the public defensibility of the normative individualism of the HDCA, are ones that we shall point to but not address.

## Thematic Panel 29

### **Theme: Labour Migration and Development in India: New Evidence and Insights**

Organisers: Department of Liberal Arts, Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad and Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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In continuation with IHD's research initiatives and policy dialogues on internal labour migration in India, this panel, organised jointly by the Department of Liberal Arts, IIT Hyderabad and the Institute for Human Development (IHD), seeks to bring together experts and deliberate on the fresh evidence and insights on internal migration gathered in the recent years.

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns imposed to contain it brought the spotlight on the vulnerabilities of migrant workers in India, which were not acknowledged adequately previously. Several immediate local and national level initiatives were introduced for the relief of migrant workers and rural and urban poor in this context. NITI Ayog, the public policy thinktank of the Government of India, in its draft policy on migrant workers (2021) highlighted the role of the migrant workforce in the economy and underscored the need to promote human rights and labour rights acknowledging migrant insecure and vulnerable work and living conditions. However, this crisis too has not yielded the expected policy response to secure social protection and wellbeing of the working poor. The deficit remains in instituting comprehensive policies for addressing the vulnerabilities of migrants and their families in both source and destination regions.

Nonetheless, the Pandemic has also induced a compelling new context for the study of migration and migrants in India to explore

- One, evidently, it has had a severe negative impact on the economy and employment. Even if economic activity is in the process of recovery, how is it

shaping the demands for labour and, in turn, migration flows across various geographies and migrant wellbeing?

- Two, what is the experience of policy initiatives across various levels of governance that were and are in place to support livelihoods and the wellbeing of migrant workers and their dependants?

Beyond policy and pandemic, migration has played a significant role in the economic, social and development dimensions of rural households. The circular nature of internal migration in India has implications for urbanisation and structural change. What are the new questions while resuming research focus on the social and economic dynamics and dynamism of migration, alongside the issues in standards of work and life, and in safe migration?

This panel aims to bring together evidence gathered in recent years, both during and after the Pandemic- from the migrant origin states of Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and West Bengal, and destination cities of Ahmedabad, Surat and other areas to share and deliberate on fresh research and policy insights on labour migration, as well as gaps therein, and the implications for migrant workers and their families and the achievement of core labour standards and SDGs in India.

## **Migration from Bihar: Dynamics of Change**

**Alakh Sharma, Gerry Rodgers, Sunil Mishra, Amrita Datta**, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

Migration is a key economic and social phenomenon, a way of life in the eastern Indian state of Bihar. Drawing on IHD's unique longitudinal database of household and village surveys (1998-99, 2009-11, 2015-16 and 2020), this presentation will focus on changes in the patterns of migration by caste, class and land, and by gender and life-cycle. It will analyse long-term changes in rural Bihar by examining the impacts of migration and the use of remittances in the village economy and society, and on left behind women. Through the latest round of data collection during the pandemic, the presentation will emphasise the rural-urban connections, migrant occupations at destination, their earnings and working conditions, circular nature of migration, and eventually their return migration. In doing so, this work contributes to knowledge and critically reflects

on the linkages between migration and development within Bihar, and, between Bihar and rest of the Indian economy. In the post-pandemic context, it also allows us to suggest policy measures for strengthening local rural development and, at the same time, improving conditions of migrants at destination to enable them to leverage greater advantage from migration.

## **Migration, Livelihoods and Gender: Insights from the Odisha Migration Study**

**Amrita Datta**, Assistant Professor of Development Studies Department of Liberal Arts, Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad

In Odisha, one of India's poorest states, migration has emerged as a fundamental feature of social and economic life. Yet, little is known about its characteristics, patterns, and processes. Based on the Odisha Migration Study 2023, an empirical mixed-methods study that estimates migration and remittances, and covers several aspects of social and economic development in the state, this presentation explores the role of migration and remittances in rural livelihoods and income. In rural Odisha, local non-agricultural income emerges as the most important income source, followed by agricultural income, government transfers, and migrant remittances. While a majority of the households engage in agriculture, yet, its overall share in household incomes is quite low. Migration spans across social groups, is male-dominated and peaks at six months in a year, with a majority of migrants combining work in both destination and source regions. Contrary to the mainstream migration and development literature, we find that households with migrants have lower incomes than households without migrants, suggesting that much of the migration from rural Odisha is precarious and distress-oriented. Unlike conventional labour force surveys that are delinked from production, livelihoods and income, we are able to capture work and employment more accurately by mapping individual employment data with wages, occupation and income of workers. In doing so, the study underscores the criticality of linking employment with household livelihoods for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the employment question in India.

## **Evidence to Policy Action in Internal Migration – The Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) and Jharkhand Migration Survey (JMS)**

**S Irudaya Rajan**, Chairman, International Institute of Migration and Development, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

**Arindam Banerjee**, Co founder and Partner, Policy and Development Advisory Group ( PDAG), New Delhi

The Covid-19 pandemic laid bare in an unprecedented manner the structural exploitation and challenges faced by migrant workers, especially in the destination regions. The post-pandemic reverse migration also highlighted how internal migration, a crucial factor in India's economic and infrastructural landscape, was inadequately documented, with little or no reliable data and evidence, leaving policymakers in the dark about migration policy interventions and implementing targeted welfare programmes.

Jharkhand, especially its tribal communities has had a long history of labour migration, especially to the tea gardens in the hills, strategic infrastructure and border roads construction in the Himalayan region and in recent times as caregivers in Delhi-NCR and supply line workers in garment and apparel manufacturing units in the southern states. During the pandemic induced lockdown, over 1.1 million migrant workers from Jharkhand were registered with the Control Room, Department of Labour and the Government of Jharkhand facilitated the return of over 8.5 lakh workers, including first-ever airlift missions evacuating workers from Ladakh and Andaman Nicobar islands.

The state government launched the Safe and Responsible Migration Initiative (SRMI) in 2021, a multi-organisation led initiative, exploring an evidence centred policy action framework to enshrine social security and welfare coverage for migrant workers of Jharkhand, both in select source districts as well as in select destination states. Jharkhand Migration Survey (JMS), a key component within SRMI undertook a massive state-level evidence generation exercise, reaching out to over 10,000 households, covering more than 50,000 respondents across 400 localities in all 24 districts of the state.

Following a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, comprising quantitative and qualitative methods, JMS investigated the patterns, causes, and consequences of migration within Jharkhand, identifying the key driving factors

behind migration, whether rooted in economic opportunities, education, or environmental factors.

JMS also deep dived into the impact of migration on the socio-economic fabric of Jharkhand, a state with high population of Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and other marginalised groups, especially the access to and inclusion of migrant workers in the social safety nets as well as assessing the role of remittances in migrant households. Results and findings from JMS hold paramount importance in the internal migration policy landscape considering its strong anchoring within a state-led policy initiative and commitment of the state government to pursue its recommendations.

## **Mapping migration of STs in Rajasthan: Livelihoods and labour**

**Bhim Reddy**, Senior Fellow, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi

**Tanya Chaudhary**, Assistant Professor, School of Global Affairs (Urban Studies), Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi

This presentation is based on a mixed-methods study that focuses on the dynamics of livelihood and migration among Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Rajasthan. Here, we present the patterns of migration and its role in household economy and social reproduction. The historical context of STs and the deep-seated socio-economic vulnerability had informed the making of a special constitutional category of STs, along with guarantees and protections in place. Notwithstanding these provisions and government interventions to secure rights and promote their wellbeing, STs had to confront serious challenges to their livelihoods and lifestyles. Rapid changes in their habitats and reduction in forest cover which formed a significant basis of their livelihood, besides the scarce cultivable land, exacerbated their vulnerability. In this context, seasonal migration has become part of work life and livelihood strategy among the STs of Rajasthan. Nearly half of the households migrate and a majority of them for short-term to work and diversify their earnings. Migrant incomes help mostly in meeting household consumption needs, including for various socio-cultural obligations, which are crucial to the social reproduction of the tribal communities. This presentation further elaborates on the gendered patterns of migration, challenges in work conditions and access to basic services. It focuses on the origin areas as well as some of the destination areas to understand the process of migration, local



economy and sectors of work. The study is based on a quantitative survey of 1000 households besides qualitative interviews of the families and individuals.

## **Circular Labour Migration and Women in the Indian Sundarbans: Subjective experiences of Gendered Belonging**

**Anuradha Sen Mookerjee**, Senior Fellow, IHD, Delhi

Migration is a gendered phenomenon, with not only the drivers of migration impacting men and women differently and patterns of circulation differing on the basis of gender but the totality of the migration experience in terms of the risks, vulnerabilities, needs, exclusions, relationalities and interdependence that are involved in the process. Inquiries of migrant cultures and social realities of migrant journeys have engaged with the cultural and materialities perspective, tracing the temporal and socio-spatial dynamics of embodied migration processes based on the experiences of migrants and their families. Migrant subjectivity offers insight into what goes into the understanding of attachment and relatedness, which comprehensively informs the migrant's sense of 'belonging', i.e. emotional connection and personal feelings regarding a particular group, place or social location and the influence of it on the trajectories of migration. Particularly for circular migration, "which refers to repeated migration experiences between an origin and destination involving more than one migration and return" (Hugo, 2013), it is significant how belonging influences and shapes these repeat migration processes that keep bringing the migrants back to the place of origin and also sending them off. This essay traces how gendered belonging in this particular spatio-temporal context impacts circular internal migration processes through the complexities in migrant subjectivities. I analyse the life histories of women in the context of labour migration in the Sundarbans, a group of environmentally fragile and social-economically marginal islands in eastern India, where both women and men have resorted to circular migration as a prominent livelihood strategy. It is based on ethnographic data collected from Sundarban island villages in the Canning and Kakdwip blocks of South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal and Kolkata. It traces the socio-spatial dynamics of gender to analyse the changing nature of belonging of those influenced by migration to space and place. Situating migrants and their families in terms of their subjectivities and practices, I explore how migration is experienced in these translocal village communities, subjectively and affectively, in context of gendered spatialities

(both material and symbolic) in the post COVID-19 context. I analyse belonging at origin and destination and the complex and layered socio-spatial dynamics of gender that emerge from the women's narratives of navigation of the structures of patriarchal constraints through agency and access to resources. I demonstrate how gendered belonging influences circular labour migration which through its influence on relational arrangements in turn shape the nature of belonging to the place the circular migrants keep returning to and call, "home".

### **Peripheralisation and Precarity: Impact of industrial shifts on migrant workers in Surat and Ahmedabad**

**Divya Varma**, Co-Founder and Director- Knowledge and Policy, Work Fair and Free

The shifting of industrial units to city peripheries marks a notable trend of modern industrialisation and contemporary urban development. This phenomenon profoundly impacts the work and living conditions of informal migrant workers and their ability to demand fairer terms of work. While decentralisation can alleviate congestion in the city centre, this presentation will demonstrate how the absence of state regulation in the outskirts and pervasive levels of informality engenders highly asymmetrical power relations between labour and capital. Specifically, it examines the impact of industrial peripheralisation on the work and living conditions of migrant power loom workers in Surat. It further reflects on the on-site housing among migrant industrial workers in the peripheries of Ahmedabad and Surat, illustrating a complex relation between reconfigured production processes, sub-optimal terms of employment, and kinship networks in the city. The presentation will draw from two distinct studies to comment upon some of the long-standing issues faced by migrant workers and how policies announced in the wake of COVID-19 have not been adequate in addressing the structural issues that drive the experiences of inequality and precarity faced by labour migrants in urban geographies.

## **Thematic Panel 30**

### **Theme: Equity and Inclusion in Access to Quality Education**

Organiser: Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

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#### **Concept Note**

Equitable access to quality education must begin at the foundational level. But rather than just enrolment expansion, it is important now to focus on equitable access to quality education; i.e. the focus should be on learning outcomes. Countries across the global South experienced an expansion of schooling in the second half of the twentieth century and a fast growth of higher education in the decades of twenty first century. But the success in enrolling children has not translated into access to quality education and enhancement of student learning levels. Research evidence across the global South have indicated a learning crisis in the global South.

The Higher education system is universalised in the global North but in the global South universalization has not taken place to that extent. While a larger share of new entrants in higher education is now from the disadvantaged groups as a result of affirmative actions, especially the quota system, research studies indicate that this sector, too, is afflicted by poor quality of education in the global South.

Higher education also suffers from the gradual withdrawal of public funding and increased space for private funding. With the currently dominant neoliberal ideation, along with lower public investment, there is now greater focus on 'useful knowledge' and innovations, human capital formation and perhaps 'massification' of higher education. Data from government and corporate funding agencies in the context of USA and UK since the 1940s, help to underscore the rise, evolution and culmination of what had emerged amid and in the immediate aftermath

of WWII as a 'call' from the ruling political leadership in these two countries for breaking away from the 'tradition' in the sphere of post-school education, with a special reference to the question of widening the access and participation in higher education. There is evidence that these post-war ideas favouring ever widening access to higher education/university often irrespective of merit, spur a process wherein education tends to become more vocationally-oriented than academic and scholarly, so that there might emerge sooner or later both a declining trend in overall standard of higher education leading to a shortage of people engaging in basic original inventive and independent research.

Inequitable access to education is manifested in the rather low levels of economic and human development in the eight northeastern states of India. A major discourse on the region's lack of development has been, historically, that of 'exclusion'; besides the geographical constraints. Since the bulk of the population of the region belongs to the marginalised communities, such 'exclusions' potentially bear far-reaching socio-political and economic implications. The issues of 'equity' and 'inclusion' thus continue to be the key concerns in this region. The issues of equity and inclusion for contemporary educational opportunities and achievements in the northeastern states offer unique features insofar as a state like Mizoram offers rather a high rate of literacy in the country, while the gender gaps in educational attainments within the region in select states are relatively low compared to other states in the country. In this context, Sen's idea of 'process freedom' alongside 'opportunity freedom' becomes useful. The role of the state in terms of provisioning public expenditure on education turns out to be one of the key factors in determining the extent of inclusion and/or exclusion.

## **Abstract**

### **Equity and Inclusion in Access to Quality Education**

**N.V. Varghese**, Former Vice Chancellor of National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi

Countries across the global South experienced an expansion of schooling in the second half of the twentieth century and a fast growth of higher education

in the decades of twenty first century. The enrolment ratios at the compulsory levels came close to universal levels, the dropout rates declined and the school completion rates increased. The rate of primary school age out-of-school children has been declining while the same at subsequent levels has remained relatively stable in the past decade. However, success in enrolling children has not translated into access to quality education and enhancement of student learning levels. The global South is a victim of the global learning crisis. National and regional studies, without exception, have pointed to the low levels of learning and the gravity of global learning crisis in the countries of the global South. Empirical studies have also shown that household factors have higher influence on student learning in the global North while school factors are major determinants of learner achievements in the global South. The empirical studies on quality of school education in India carried out in the past three decades have consistently highlighted the low levels and wide variations in learner achievement among social groups and geographical locations. In many states the between-school variations in learner achievement have been higher than within-school variations implicating the need for public policy interventions to overcome between-school variations. Expansion of higher education in the global South was slow and enrolment ratios remained low in the past century. This century experienced exponential growth of enrolment and this spurt in expansion is accompanied by a proliferation of private higher education institutions.

The higher education system is universalised in the global North and in some of the countries in the global South, the sector is massified in most countries and it remained in an elite stage in limited number of countries of the global South. One trend noticed in the recent past is that a larger share of new entrants is from the disadvantaged groups making the sector more inclusive. The affirmative actions, especially the quota system, have helped in bringing the disadvantaged youth to the colleges and universities. Studies show that the poor quality of higher education is a universal phenomenon in the global South. Although, external quality assurance systems are established and accreditation is made mandatory, several institutions have successfully insulated themselves from quality assurance processes. Unemployment among higher education graduates aggravated in most countries and it gave scope for reigniting the debate on higher education and vocational skill development.

## **Broken Pipelines or Fields of Power: Reflections on Gender and Higher Education in India**

**Manisha Priyam**, Professor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), New Delhi

There is a hubris around massification of higher education in India, based on the increased figures of enrolment (at 27.3 percent), and gender disaggregated participation rates (for at Male 26.7 percent; and Female 27.9 percent). International scholars who adopt the lens of gender in order to interrogate the claims of equity in higher education, caution against accepting this hubris as any firm indicator of gender equality. The analytical pathways that follow, are varied in their focus of inquiry. Three important pegs are: interrogating the nature of academic hierarchy, the subjective and quotidian experiences of women's participation, and finally, the production of knowledge drawing on intersectionality and gender studies. In all three, the spatial site of the university as a material space, appears important—the substantive claims of equality can be both interrogated and realized here.

This presentation presents some arguments in this regard: At first, it presents a comparative view of gendered participation in higher education in India, with comparative reflections from its South Asian neighbours. Second, it interrogates the nature of the academic hierarchy in India. These are done with the use of descriptive statistics, and mostly conform that equality in participation rates masks a real scenario of “broken pipelines”, where linear ascension up the academic hierarchy does not simply happen by arriving at the university. The barriers are invisible, and happen in myriads of ways. In an analytical shift, a subjective and intersectional account of challenges in rising up the ladder of academic hierarchy are then presented from a vignette in the drawn from a large public university in the southern part of India—the University of Mysore. The final section is a vivid description of the academic field of power, and is based on field work done amongst students in a large public university in northern part of India—the Banaras Hindu University.

While the first part is a narrative on structures of the academic hierarchy, it's picture of constraints and the broken pipelines; the second and concluding part interweaves the story of agency, and the merging of a horizon of egalitarian

futures of youth along with that of the university as a spatial site driving the capacity to aspire. The optimistic hope is for the futures of massification within gendered possibilities of the capacity to be.

## **Educational Opportunities and Achievements in North East India: Issues of Equity and Inclusion**

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In the capability approach, education is considered both intrinsically as well as instrumentally significant. Education not only determines what ‘functionings’ people really value but also enhances the way those valued ‘functionings’ are performed. Education, thus, is critical in delineating the capability space of the individuals, and also the conditioning of the capability achievements. Levels of attainments of human development, therefore, greatly vary depending on the levels of opportunities for and achievements in education. The 8 northeastern states of India are characterized by rather low levels of economic and human development. One of the dominant discourses on the region’s lack of development has been, historically, that of ‘exclusion’; besides the geographical constraints. Since the bulk of the population of the region belongs to the marginalised communities, such ‘exclusions’ potentially bear far-reaching socio-political and economic implications. In the development discourses of the region, therefore, the issues of ‘equity’ and ‘inclusion’ continued to be the key concerns. The present paper intends to examine the issues of equity and inclusion for contemporary educational opportunities and achievements in the northeastern states to understand differential levels of human development within the region. The region, interestingly, presents some peculiarities so far as education is concerned. Just as a state like Mizoram offers rather a high rate of literacy in the country, the gender gaps in educational attainments within the region in select states are relatively low compared to other states in the country. The typical forms of exclusion witnessed elsewhere in the country are not often visible in the region. This merits a detailed study on the specific forms of deprivations and exclusions prevailing in the region in terms of educational opportunities and achievements. In this context, Sen’s idea of ‘process freedom’ alongside ‘opportunity freedom’ becomes crucial. The role of the state in terms of provisioning public expenditure on education turns out to be one of

the key factors in determining the extent of inclusion and/or exclusion. It will be both interesting and instructive to study the educational opportunities and achievements in the region given the considerable amount of diversity among the states. Based on the unit-level data of the 75th round NSSO survey of 2017–2018 on Social Consumption of Education together with the 78th round of 2020–21 on Multi-Indicator Survey, the paper adopts a multi-dimensional framework while looking at the educational opportunities and achievements in the region focussing on myriad forms of deprivations, exclusions, and inequalities. Unlike the unidimensional aggregative analysis, the multi-dimensional approach relies on joint distribution emphasising simultaneous deprivations and exclusions. It offers a better understanding of both the extent and depth of such deprivations and exclusions. Further, multidimensional analysis facilitates dimensional and group decompositions providing deeper insights into the issues of equity and inclusion. The paper also highlights how the prevailing deprivations and inequalities interact with each other implicating the overall human development outcomes in general. The results, thus, obtained not only offer an in-depth understanding of the issues of equity and inclusion in education in the region but also carry useful policy insights and directions.

## **Equity in access to quality school education**

**Mohammad Akhtar Siddiqui**, Former Chairman, National Council for Teacher, Education and Former Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi

Equality of opportunity in all realms of life is a value cherished by all modern societies that have embraced democracy. Education in these societies is rightly seen as fundamental to success in other realms. Access to quality education plays a pivotal role in attaining all forms of educational outcomes, including economic well-being, health, employment, and responsible citizenship. It is true that there are remote chances of economic and social equality without access. But formal access to schooling, and even to further education, does not necessarily translate into effective equity outcomes as many barriers to access to quality education confront the children and young persons, both outside as well as inside the educational institution. Achievement of the goal of democratic equality demands conscious attention to be paid to both sets of the inhibiting conditions to ensure learning for all children. Various global meets on education for all have stressed that schools should accommodate all children regardless



of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic, ethnic or other conditions, and that this should include disabled and gifted, street and working children, children from remote and nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic and cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized groups. For affecting learning, schools have to pay attention to the social conditions needed for learning, to instructional quality, and to the resources that are necessary to support educational programmes.

In the process of ensuring access and success of learners, teachers play a focal role. Without good teachers in place, who have adequate training, and professional attitudes and value orientation, access can hardly lead to equitable and meaningful success in education and in life. Hence, the constructive role and contribution of teacher education system in the drive for equitable access to quality education becomes equally important and demands a more serious attention of the educational planners than what it has been getting in many countries.

## **Ingredients of an Ideational History of Mass Higher Education**

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Established liberal ideas, principles and practices of higher education (HE), now stand distant and distinct from currently dominant neoliberal ideational counterparts that include gradual withdrawal or lessening of public funds on HE and allowing for increasing room for private capital, focus on 'useful knowledge' and innovations, human capital formation and perhaps 'massification' of HE as a key to the future of economy and society. It is only this last major upshot of the neoliberal ideational regime, namely an ever-widening access/enrolment in HE or so-called 'massification' of HE that constitutes the main subject-matter of the present paper. This paper proposes to critically sketch a historical account of a radical ideational transformation towards so-called massification of HE. We delve squarely into landmark reports, documents, recommendations of several high-profiled commissions or committees, panels of experts, sponsored research projects set up both by government and corporate funding agencies in the context of USA and UK since the 1940s. We propose to chronicle critically and illuminatingly the rise, evolution and culmination of what had emerged amid and in the immediate aftermath of WWII as a 'call' from the ruling political leadership

in these two countries for breaking away from the 'tradition' in the sphere of post-school education, with a special reference to the question of widening the access and participation in HE. Amid WWII, UK's (coalition) government made plans for an ambitious programme of post-war 'social reconstruction' in which education would play an important part by achieving social equality through a 'better system of education' which would be available equally to all, irrespective of means. This marks a distinct shift of emphasis towards achieving the ideal of social equality in terms of educational participation of classes even within a capitalistic framework of economic inequality. During this period the USA embarked on setting up high-profile committees for recommending structural and other changes in HE with a view to augmenting both academic scientific knowledge, skills and personnel and their effective synergy with industry. Thus, amid war there emerged a call in the western world for heralding a new educational system. And the immediate aftermath of WWII marked a call for rapid expansion of colleges, universities and other research institutes for both augmenting pool of scientific talent for basic and applied research as well as promoting social equality in terms of wider access and participation of youth of all sections of population. A mission of mass or universal HE has been mooted formally and explicitly since the early 1970s. No matter the theoretical arguments, ideas and evidence that were harnessed in defence of mass or universal HE, the business dimensions, economic interests, and private corporate underpinnings of an ever expansionary HE as an industry appear to have been a key force behind it. There is considerable evidence that these post-war 'new' or 'novel' ideas favouring ever widening access to HE/university often irrespective of merit spur a process wherein education – curriculum and pedagogy – generally tends to become more vocationally-oriented than academic and scholarly, so that there might emerge sooner or later both a declining trend in overall standard/quality of HE generally and particularly an acute dearth of people who do, or can do, or wish to do, basic original inventive and independent research to bring in new breakthroughs and higher intellectual heights – the hallmark of modern civilisational progression.



# **Technical Sessions**





# Technical Session 1

## Food & Nutrition Security for All

### **Determinants of Child Nutrition: Findings from Household Survey in the Districts of Lower Assam**

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**Jith J.R.**, Research Fellow, The George Institute for Global Health, Bengaluru

India's nutrition-based welfare programmes are one of the longest-running interventions countrywide. Food policy being a state subject, state governments have complete autonomy concerning nutrition intervention programmes. However, in Assam, like in many other Indian states, the so-called aspirational districts lag in development indicators, including nutrition. What are the intermediate determinants of nutrition outcome indicators at the household level? Have nutrition intervention programmes been successful in making a dent in nutrition poverty? How important is the location of a district or the health system in place in determining nutrition outcomes? In this paper, we investigate the determinants of nutrition among children, specifically focusing on the processes at work at the village level. In 2019–20, the Directorate of Economics and Statistics commissioned a household survey among children aged 0–5 in seven districts of lower Assam – Barpeta, Darrang, Dhubri, Goalpara, Udalguri, Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar. We mapped 984 sample households to 31 Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) blocks and 90 Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). We allotted only one child aged 0–5 to each sample household. Therefore, the sample of children surveyed is 984. We followed a process framework for nutritional status assessment in the survey districts. The process framework advances the idea that interlinking variables at each intervention level are necessary for positive nutrition outcomes. For example, the scale of maternal and child nutrition investments is an input variable that impacts the process variable of ICDS functioning at the district level.

The number of children enrolled in AWCs due to the ICDS programme can be an output variable that directly impacts nutrition among children. We can assess the final impact of all the variables (input, process, output, outcome, impact) from overall income poverty levels or women's decision-making capacity at the household level. To capture the variables in a process framework, we prepared a comprehensive household-level questionnaire and followed up with interviews of Anganwadi Workers and other village-level functionaries. We found a very high incidence of stunting (41.2%) in lower Assam. The aspirational districts of Barpeta, Dhubri, and Goalpara had stunting rates higher than the lower Assam average. These are also the districts that have figured in the poorest districts programme of India since the 1990s. The incidence of severe wasting was highest (5.9%) in Barpeta. We also constructed a composite index of anthropometric failure (CIAF), showing that half the children in lower Assam are facing nutrition deprivation. A multi-dimensional poverty index showed 43.7% of households poor, which roughly corresponds to the scale of undernutrition among children. Deprivations on account of health and education indicators were the highest. Children facing multiple anthropometric failures were also multidimensionally poor. Nutrition surveillance, monitoring, child immunization, and vaccination cards were essential to nutrition outcomes. Similarly, maternity and delivery care significantly impacted the nutritional status of children. Status of education, age at marriage, and women's empowerment were some of the other critical indicators that directly impacted the state of nutrition among children. We interviewed a few frontline workers in the Dhubri district of Assam to understand the process challenges that may influence nutrition outcome indicators. The findings point to a weak systems framework involving various actors, institutions, and stakeholders that do not necessarily converge at the critical nodes of health and nutrition interventions.

## **Food Security and Child Stunting Prevalence: Empirical Evidence from Urban India**

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India has a higher child stunting prevalence than many South Asian and African nations. Child stunting is a multi-dimensional concept. Most dimensions of child stunting have been studied in the last decade due to the availability of

demographic health surveys (DHS), India, and other surveys. The impact of food insecurity could not be studied due to the unavailability of household consumption expenditure data from the National Sample Survey (NSS) since 2011. The study is the first attempt to fill the gap since 2011 using data from consumer pyramid household surveys (CPHS), Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) to analyse the impact of food security on child stunting prevalence in urban India using the framework of Smith and Haddad (2000). The study links the data from two separate databases (DHS,2015-16 and CPHS,2016). This linkage is done after re-weighting data from CPHS and making it DHS-compatible using the max entropy approach. This study used data from 26,115 children from DHS and data from 83,288 households on food expenditure from CPHS were used. This study finds that an increase in household food expenditure is negatively associated with child stunting prevalence. The Engel ratio is positively associated with child stunting in urban regions of India. Child diet diversity is negatively associated with child stunting but could not capture the effect of household dietary diversity on child stunting prevalence. An increment in child diet diversity by one food group reduces child stunting prevalence by 1.21 per cent, which is the highest reduction as far as all explanatory variables are concerned. Expenditure on meat and fish is inversely associated with child stunting prevalence. The increase in the proportion of both fruits and meat and fish in total food expenditure reduces child stunting prevalence in urban India, but the coefficient value of the proportion of fruits is higher than that of meat and fish. The Indian government should focus on policies to increase income (and total food consumption expenditure) in urban regions. The government also needs to focus on controlling rising food prices for meat, fish, and fruits through the use of technological advancements during production and post-harvest (in the supply chain).

### **Nutritional Status of Under-five Year Children: A Comparative Study of KBK and Non-KBK Region in Odisha**

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**Phanindra Goyari**, Professor of Economics, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

Health is an important ingredient of human capital and nutrition enriches human health so that it can perform physical work effectively. On that account, health should be given great importance. There is a strong relationship between the

formation of human capital and a child's height as well as their nutritional levels (Victora et al., 2008). Again, there are three stages in the progression of one's life expectancy. The first phase consists of advancements made in nutrition (Claudia, 2016). There is a need to focus more on the first phase, i.e., enhance nutrition. India had one of the highest numbers of severely malnourished children in the world. It was estimated that around 93.4 lakh children had severe acute malnutrition (SAM) as per NFHS-4. The NFHS-5 states that malnutrition among children under five has reduced as compared to the NFHS-4. The present paper deals with the backward region, i.e., Kalahandi-Balangir-Koraput (KBK) districts in Odisha state of India. In Odisha, 29.2% of children under the age of five are underweight, 29.1% are stunted, and 13.9% are wasted. The main objective of the present study is to examine the nutritional status of children in India and Odisha. Further, the paper evaluates Odisha's district-wise nutritional status of under-five children, highlighting the status of KBK districts. The present study used data from NFHS-4 and NFHS-5. The stunted, wasted and under-weight are the continuous variables and the district is a categorical variable. KBK and non-KBK are the two levels of the districts in Odisha. Therefore, the data values are analysed for 2015-16 and 2019-21 with the help of a parametric test, i.e., independent samples t-test and Welch t-test. Regression analysis is used to find the factors that are affecting the nutritional status. Comparing both the years, it is observed that in the KBK districts, a higher number of children were stunted and underweight as compared to the non-KBK districts. For the year 2019-21, there is a decrease in stunted and under-weight children in KBK districts which is an indication that there is an improvement in stunted children. However, KBK districts continue to lag in stunted and under-weight status as compared to the non-KBK districts. It is observed that in the KBK districts, higher numbers of children were wasted (2015-16) as compared to the non-KBK districts. But, for the year 2019-21, there is a decrease in wasted children in the KBK districts and there is no difference in wasted children between the KBK and non-KBK districts. The low outcome of health nutritional status in KBK districts, i.e., under-weight and stunted children, is an indication of low human capital. The low human capital via nutrition cannot be utilised effectively through employment, and health services and hence cannot enhance the productivity of human beings. Therefore, proper policies and implementations are needed for underdeveloped regions like KBK districts.



## **Critical Factors Influencing Child Malnutrition Under-5 In India: Some Insights from NFHS-5 Empirical Analysis**

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**Prasant Kumar Panda**, Professor, Pondicherry University, Puducherry

India faces a significant challenge as it has the highest number of malnourished children globally. To effectively deal with this urgent issue, it is crucial to promptly put in place specific and well-designed policies. However, existing research lacks in providing clear guidance on which actions policymakers should focus on to achieve the greatest reductions in child malnutrition in India. Consequently, this study aims to make a valuable contribution to the current body of literature by employing an innovative regression decomposition technique known as the Shapley–Owen decomposition. This methodology allows us to estimate the relative contributions of various factors that influence malnutrition. The study also utilizes logistic regression to identify the primary factors associated with child malnutrition. Our research draws on extensive data derived from the National Family Health Survey–5 (NFHS–5), encompassing a substantial sample of 232,920 households. These households are strategically categorized into two distinct groups: low-income states (LIS), comprising Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh; and high-income states (HIS), encompassing Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and West Bengal. Furthermore, we meticulously categorize the determinants of child malnutrition, beyond age and gender, into specific domains: child health and medical factors, neonatal factors, dietary patterns, child’s environment, maternal body metrics, mother’s specific characteristics, maternal environmental factors, socio-economic, cultural, and asset ownership. Macro-level decomposition analysis spotlights child age and maternal body metrics, mother’s specific characteristics, and asset ownership as pivotal determinants of child malnutrition in the under-5 demographic. A salient disparity emerges when comparing low-income states (LIS) and high-income states (HIS), underlining the significance of economic disparities in influencing child malnutrition. These determinants exert a more pronounced impact within LIS, emphasizing the urgency of context-specific interventions tailored to their unique challenges. Logistic regression corroborates the significance of child age, maternal attributes, and socioeconomic factors in the realm of under-5 malnutrition. These findings underscore the critical importance of ensuring access to adequate nutritional resources during the

early stages of a child's life as a pivotal strategy to alleviate the burden of malnutrition in India. Furthermore, our study highlights the potential benefits of directing welfare schemes towards young girls, as this investment can positively impact their anthropometric measurements, subsequently leading to healthier children in the future. In light of the escalating challenge of malnutrition in India, there has been a concerted effort to increase investment in a comprehensive array of interventions. These interventions encompass optimal food intake, effective nutrient absorption, improved sanitation, enhanced maternal nutrition, expanded educational opportunities, and increased access to social safety nets. Within this evolving landscape, the study stands as one of the pioneering endeavors to provide rigorous econometric analysis that elucidates the relative importance of these interventions. Consequently, this research serves as a guiding compass for policymakers, directing their focus toward specific sectors that hold the potential to ameliorate the nutritional well-being of children in India. In conclusion, India's battle against child malnutrition is a multifaceted struggle, and our research endeavours to shed light on the most influential factors in this complex landscape. By discerning the relative importance of various determinants and highlighting the disparities between low-income and high-income states, our study equips policymakers with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and prioritize interventions that can make a tangible difference in the lives of malnourished children across the nation.

## **Measuring Prevalence of Food Insecurity: Results based on Food Insecurity Experience Scale Surveys in Six States of India**

**Vaishali Bansal**, Food Security Statistician (Consultant), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Experience-based measures have been the most important innovation in the last two decades in the area of measurement of prevalence of food insecurity. Going beyond the traditional measures based on consumption of dietary energy, experience-based measures better capture lack of access to adequate and nutritious food, and provide tools that allow a probabilistic but highly disaggregated measurement of food insecurity.

FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) is the gold standard in the area of experience-based measurement of food insecurity and provides a global standard scale for measuring severity of food insecurity. Prevalence of food

insecurity is estimated using a set of questions that are posed to a sample of individuals. Each question is designed to ask the respondent whether, over the reference period, they have experienced a particular situation for example, having had to skip a meal or consume inadequate quantity of food because of lack of money or other resources. Studies have shown that such experiences are associated with different degrees of severity of food insecurity. Assuming that a person facing a high degree of food insecurity is likely to answer questions regarding moderate degrees of food insecurity in the affirmative, the tool allows for endogenous estimation of degree of severity associated with each experience as well as the severity of food insecurity faced by every individual in the sample.

This paper uses FIES to estimate prevalence of food insecurity in selected villages in six States of India namely Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur and Rajasthan. Although purposively selected, these villages are very diverse in terms of socio-economic composition, nature of agriculture, physical access to markets, access to food from forests and other common property resources, and access of households to non-agricultural employment. The villages also capture considerable diversity in terms of coverage of social protection programmes such as the public distribution system.

Data used in this paper were collected through stratified sample surveys conducted in the selected villages. FIES data were collected from a randomly selected member of each sample household. Apart from data on FIES questions, the primary surveys collected information on basic demographic characteristics of the household, sources of livelihoods, landholding, income, asset holding and access to credit. The surveys also collected information on the extent to which they obtained food from social protection programmes such as the Public Distribution System.

After testing the statistical validity of these estimates, the paper analyses variations in prevalence of severity of food insecurity across villages, economic classes, social groups, and gender in the study villages. Survey results show that the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity varied from 15-25 per cent in villages of Haryana and Rajasthan to 70-77 per cent in villages of Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. In Manipur and Andhra Pradesh, prevalence of food insecurity was between 40 to 60 per cent. The paper also identifies some of the important determinants of prevalence of food insecurity in the survey villages. The prevalence of food insecurity was found to be significantly related to operational holdings and economic classes of households.

## Technical Session 2

### Universal Health Coverage

#### **Relative Contributions of Adult Daughters and Sons to Elderly Parents' Care in India: Insights from Haryana and Kerala**

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**Irudaya Rajan**, Chairperson, IIMAD, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

**Aswini Nanda**, Professor, Jammu University, Jammu and Kashmir

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This paper analyses the financial and non-financial support that elderly parents receive from their sons and daughters in the contexts of limited institutional support either through government or private systems. In the absence of universal social welfare and inadequate pension coverage, the expectation of old age support is one of the main factors driving strong son preference, daughter aversion and the resulting daughter elimination in India. In a patrilocal context such as in India where daughters move to their husbands' place post-marriage, married sons (and their wives) are seen as responsible for the care of their elderly parents. Yet there is limited evidence on whether it is indeed the case that married daughters do not contribute financially or otherwise to their natal families. Theoretically, the research is located within an interdisciplinary framework as people's lives as well as the reproduction of families are embedded within political, socio-economic, spatial and cultural contexts. Specifically, the study lies at the intersection of gender and generation. While the current (limited) research in India focuses on elderly care in isolation, the study brings together gender and intergenerational dynamics, as elderly care cannot be studied in isolation, it has to be examined in conjunction with the value of and

expectations from children. The study focused on the North-west Indian state of Haryana and the South Indian state of Kerala which offer contrasting socio-cultural contexts about women's status, son preference and daughter deficit. Primary data collection included 50 in-depth interviews and a household survey with about 300 daughter-only families and another 300 families with only sons or families with both sons and daughters in each of the two states in 2018-2020. The study found that daughters provide more non-financial than financial support to their parents in both states. Prevailing gender/social norms shape parents' expectations of support from daughters and sons and to a lesser extent the actual support that they receive. While sons provide greater financial support than daughters in both states, daughters provide greater financial support to their parents in Kerala as compared to Haryana. Besides support from their children, the elderly in both states rely on their resources (incomes, savings, borrowings) and state/ public support. Public support in the form of pensions accounts for about two-thirds of monthly income in Haryana and about a third in Kerala. Low to non-existent financial support from married daughters may be due to their lack of independent means and/ or prevailing gender norms (evident in daughters in Kerala providing more financial support to their parents than in Haryana). At the same time, a higher reliance on pensions in Haryana has barely dented the reliance on sons for financial support or son preference. Highlighting daughters' contributions to their parents could help shift attitudes and norms towards daughters.

### **Why is the Economic Gradient in Self-Rated Health Weak for the Elderly in India?**

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Analysing data from health and retirement surveys conducted in Brazil, India and China, recent research has shown that while the socioeconomic gradient in frailty (the likelihood of poor recovery from a physiological stressor) of the elderly was strong when education was used as the indicator of socioeconomic status, evidence was mixed and inconsistent when economic indicators such as income or wealth were used. Scholars have noted the income gradient to be weaker than the education gradient even when the indicator of self-rated health (SRH) was

used. Counter-intuitive results on the linkages between socioeconomic status and self-perceived health led to a complete dismissal of these indicators by a section of important scholars. Later works questioned their skepticism by showing that self-perceived morbidity and SRH were indeed predicted by socioeconomic status when the latter was measured by educational attainment. Though recent studies vouch for the validity of SRH in developing countries such as India, surveys still show that the absence of a strong economic differential in SRH. The Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI) Wave-1 shows that among the elderly population in India, the proportion reporting poor health varies between 24.4 for the richest economic quintile and 26.4 for the poorest. Contrastingly, it varies between 26.5 for people with no education and 15.7 for those who have completed 10 or more years of schooling. This paper argues that two types of biases may lead to the dampening of the economic gradient in self-perceived health in developing country contexts, namely a) inconsistency and b) positional objectivity. Inconsistent responses would mean that an individual provides substantively different ratings of health if they are asked the same question a second time (in the same survey) using a different rating scale. Moreover, in developing countries like India, a second type of bias may further confound indicators of self-perceived health, namely positional objectivity a la Amartya Sen. Sen understood responses for self-perceived health to be positionally objective. Responses vary, but not subjectively; they are instead conditional on positional parameters such as education, awareness, and access to healthcare. While previous studies have specifically addressed either of the biases, we are unaware of scholarly work that has comprehensively dealt with both types of biases, possibly due to data limitations. This paper is novel in its approach since it proposes a simple method that would purge the self-rated health responses of the two types of biases. It uses an alternative measure of SRH (adjusted SRH) instead of SRHa and SRHb after adjusting for variations in age, education, and cognitive ability. This new measure of SRH is seen to have a strong economic gradient for aged individuals in India. The substantive finding that the economic gradient is dampened by the aged poor systematically reporting better health because of certain biases merits the attention of ageing research and health policy in India.

## **Does Health Insurance Coverage Lead to Reduction in Out-of-Pocket Expenditure for Inpatient Healthcare Services: An Analysis of South Indian State of Karnataka**

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The primary goals of a health system are to enhance population health by providing quality healthcare services while ensuring accessibility and financial protection. In addition to that, a desirable health system providing and financing healthcare also aims to ensure that the population receives health services when they need it and are not deprived of care because of one's inability to pay for services, avoiding wasteful spending and allowing care to reflect the different tastes of individual patients. However, in practice, it may not be possible to realize all three goals fully. In such a case, a health system may opt to accomplish one goal fully by trading off one or both goals. Thus, according to Schieber & Maeda, (1999), good healthcare financing in the health system will be guided by these goals. In this context, achieving equity in access and healthcare financing has been an important goal of international and national policies across the globe. An equitable health system essentially ensures that utilization of health services is based on the need [equity in delivery] and payments are by the ability to pay [equity in financing]. One of the approaches used to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure in India and the global South is through the provision of health insurance for the marginalized population. Thus, the present study aims to analyze if the provision of health insurance reduces out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) among the population. Data from large-scale health surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey in 2004, 2014, and 2017-18, with sample sizes ranging from 333,104 to 555,352, form the basis of the analysis. The Heckman's two-step model is employed to estimate determinants of OOPE for a South Indian state. Overall inpatient out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure incurred by households in constant prices witnessed an increase between 2004 to 2014 while declining during 2014-2017 in all South Indian States. The rate of decline in the OOPE was highest in Tamil Nadu (11%) followed by Karnataka (10%), Andhra Pradesh (4%) and Telangana (2%). The reduction in OOPE is attributed to an increase in the number of households/ individuals utilizing inpatient healthcare services free of cost. For instance, in 2014 about 43.8% of them reported having sought free inpatient care in Tamil Nadu which increased to 56% by 2017. Heckman's two-step model to estimate results suggests that individuals utilizing public healthcare facilities incurred 80 per cent  $((\exp(-1.61)-1))$  less OOP expenditure due to hospitalization in 2017 compared to those using private healthcare facilities. While

those belonging to the OBC community incurred 17.30 per cent ((exp (-0.19)-1)) and 13.8 per cent less OOP expenditure due to hospitalization as compared to those from SC and ST communities in 2014 and 2017 respectively. Further, those seeking treatment for injury and non-communicable diseases incurred relatively higher OOPE compared to those who sought treatment for infectious diseases. Although overall out-of-pocket expenditure has declined due to an increase in the enrolment of households and subsequent utilization of health insurance during hospitalization differences in the extent of utilization of health insurance and thereby reduction in OOPE were observed across social groups, place of residence, choice of care and type of illness treated. Policy initiatives aiming to reduce these differences must focus on reorienting programmes through increasing overall health insurance coverage to households through increased public investment in health.

### **Ensuring Equity and Accessibility of Universal Health Coverage of Climate-Changed Marginalized Population: Establishing Linkage System with Govt. Health Care and Family Planning Services for the Bede Community in Bangladesh**

**Md. Tarik Hossain**, Program Officer, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh

**Farhana Huq**, Program Manager, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh

About 750,000 Bede people, locally known as “river gypsies” in Bangladesh. Professionally their ancestors were snake charmers and herbal medicine makers but because of climate change, digitalization, and urbanization, most of them are detached from their heritage. The Bede community is a miserable example of early marriage and childbearing, and the non-use of FP methods is a social practice. The Bede couple is not registered in the public family planning system and has not received immunization services. In addition, universal health coverage (UHC) services are limited within this community. The Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) and Health Services (DGHS), Bangladesh collaborated with the USAID-funded Shukhi Jibon project to increase access to UHC for this community. The Govt. program implementation is running in the Madaripur district in Bangladesh. All kinds of people get services from the DGHS and DGFP except the Bede community.

The objective of the assessment was to explore key themes of the Bede



community regarding UHC and FP services. Action research was conducted using qualitative approaches at Shibchor of Madaripur district, Bangladesh where the total Bede population were 1600. Among them, 297 married (114 men, 183 women) between the ages of 13 to 39 years were interviewed. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were applied to the selected person. 18 Key Informant Interviews, 18 Focus Group Discussions, 64 In Depth Interviews as well as observation were done. Data were rearranged through thematic observation.

As a result of continuous advocacy done by the project, UHC and FP services were made available through the combined action of DGFP and DGHS by organizing satellite clinics, courtyard sessions, etc. Before introducing and implementing the intervention, the people were almost unaware of the FP and UHC services. Almost all the respondents were unaware of SRH and FP services. The mean age at marriage for girls and boys was 13 and 15 years respectively. The mean age at first child for girls was 14 years and 92% of girls already have given birth by the age of 17 years. Two third of respondents (67%) mentioned the current use of modern contraceptives (86% OCP, 14% Condom). Two unskilled Bede women were conducted NVD here. They believed that a grilled placenta saved a newborn baby's life during the delivery period. Still, they have lots of misconceptions and myths about FP methods and general medical treatment.

Conclusion: Continuous advocacy with DGFP and DGHS resulted in introducing this marginalized community to mainstream UHC services. There need to be more awareness sessions, and engaging community-level stakeholders and leaders, conducting door-to-door visits, uthan-boithok can increase their awareness. Govt. and Non-Govt. stakeholders need to give more emphasis on them. Need a concrete population data set on them and need to explore and assess their knowledge and demand in the SRHR sector. Local-level Govt. will keep separate programs with them to solve their problem. However, further support from the government and stakeholders is required to ensure quality UHC services and overcome the existing harmful practices and social norms.

## Technical Session 3

# Access to Quality Education and Building Relevant Skills

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### Downgrading of Graduates on The Côte d'Ivoire Labour Market

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Over the last few decades, downgrading has become a recurring concern for graduates in the Côte d'Ivoire labour market. In the context of persistent mass unemployment, some graduates are compelled to accept low-skilled or low-paid jobs rather than have no job at all. The employment situation in 2018 shows that, at the level of technical education and vocational training (ETFP), the integration rate of graduates is only 32.36%. In other words, two-thirds (67.64%) of ETFP graduates active in the labour market are unemployed (DAIP, 2019). As for general education, considering the employment/population ratio according to level of education, it is to the disadvantage of the better educated, i.e. 64.9% for primary education, 42.7% for secondary education and 36.8% for higher education. Overall, young people experience long-term unemployment for more than 6 years after leaving the education system. To cope with unemployment-related pressures, these young people prefer to accept unsuitable jobs, particularly in the informal sector or with lower wages. According to AFRISTAT (2017), 87.1% of jobs held are in the non-agricultural informal sector, which generally generates a high proportion of insecure jobs, and only 6.2% in the formal private sector.

Concerning the situation of people in employment, 43.8% of wages received are low wages and 56.8% of these people earn less than the minimum wage authorised by law. The causes of downgrading are diverse and partly due to the high number of degrees, which are becoming less valuable, the complexity of adapting to new production techniques in a competitive environment and the rigidity of job creation, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire. Companies' needs change rapidly with competition, unlike education policies in developing countries. The degree obtained is less and less a sign of the potential productivity of the human capital acquired by the individual. So, to get out of a situation of unemployment, the graduate accepts jobs with lower qualifications than his/her level of education. They give preference to any immediate job while hoping to climb the ladder through internal promotion or accept a low-skilled job to reduce the duration of unemployment and thus avoid being crowded out on the labour market (Plassard and Nhu Tran, 2009). Downgrading is a source of concern for households and decision-makers. It penalises individuals in terms of income and employment opportunities, and wastes resources for society as a whole through the under-use of human capital and the inefficiency of public spending on education (Groot, 1996; McGuinness, 2006). As the general level of education rises, many observers question whether the supply of educated labour matches the needs of companies. Previous research has shown that the effects of downgrading on variables such as earnings, job satisfaction or participation in training may depend on the measure applied (Verhaest and Omey, 2004). This study aims to analyse the determinants of downgrading and its effects on the wages of graduate workers. To this end, the methodological approach combines the econometrics of qualitative variables with that of linear regressions. The results show that in 2017, the application of different downgrading measures to graduate employees led to different results. While 34.77% of graduate employees were downgraded professionally from a salary point of view, 36.89% said they had been downgraded. The results also show that the higher levels of degree (Bachelor's, Master's and PhD) have the highest salary gains. However, despite their high status, these degrees are affected by the phenomenon of wage downgrading.

## **Inequality In Educational Expenditures and Occupational Linkages: Reproduction of Social Hierarchy Through School Education**

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Education, crucial for the economic development of a nation, is a transformative force that not only provides skilled labour power but can also reduce various forms of social inequalities. While in the traditional view, education is instrumental in raising individual productivity and earnings, in the broader view of human development, education can expand individual capabilities, reduce social inequalities, and lead to a positive transformation of society. In the recent decade of high economic growth, India witnessed an expansion in schooling opportunities as well as educational outcomes—measured in the years of education. This gave rise to the expectation of growth in formal sector jobs and occupational mobility in India (Himanshu, 2011; Ghose, 2016; RBI, 2019). However, the period of economic growth failed to reduce formal-informal dualism and occupational segmentation and its hierarchical structure remained largely unaltered (Kesar, 2020; Bhattacharya and Kesar, 2020; Cassan et al, 2021). Given the traditional view of education, households may consider educational expenditure as an investment that may improve the chances of mobility for their children. However, it is only by acquiring relevant skills through school education, like English speaking skills, arithmetic, and socialisation skills, that a person can expect upward mobility. With the rapid growth of the private sector and falling government allocation on education in the last decade, several studies argue that households might prefer English-medium schools and private schools to provide top-quality education and, therefore, associate them with better chances of upward mobility (Kumar and Choudhury, 2021; Ganapathy-Coleman, 2023). In this paper, we examine the role of educational expenditures in reducing/reproducing the social hierarchy focusing on occupational segmentation in India. We argue that schools differ by the skills and socialization that they provide to their students. While the above-mentioned skills may improve mobility prospects for students, the schools that provide them remain expensive. We use disaggregated data on school education and household occupational structure for 2007-08 and 2017-18 collected by NSSO in the 64th and 75th rounds respectively. We classify schools based on their medium of instruction (English/ Vernacular) and type of management (Public/ Private) and rank households in terms of their primary occupations. In the last decade, a period of high economic

growth along with an expansion of schooling opportunities was expected to improve the participation from low-ranked occupations in better schools. However, using a logistic regression framework, we find that the low-ranked occupations remain largely excluded from English-medium private schools while high-ranked occupations have a high likelihood of attending them. Such a pattern remains persistent over time with educational expenditures playing a crucial role in improving/reducing the likelihood of attendance. OLS regression shows that the inequality in educational expenditures has strengthened over the past decade based on occupational position. This in turn is likely to strengthen the occupational inequity. Using decomposition analysis, we find that the observed difference in expenditures among occupations can not only be explained by the advantageous characteristics of high-ranked occupations compared to low-ranked occupations—in terms of their caste, religion, and educational status—but a substantial part is explained by the differential returns to these characteristics that they reap due to their social position. Such characteristics not only enable greater expenditures on education but they are also difficult to acquire by choice. Given the sticky nature of social identities, such a pattern is likely to reproduce the occupational segmentation and the social hierarchy in India over the decade.

## **Towards Creating Cultural Bridges Between Home and School:**

### **A Qualitative Case Study of a High School in Bengaluru, India**

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This paper draws from the findings of a qualitative case study exploring the study strategies of students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and how it translates to educational outcomes. Looking through the lens of New Literacy Studies (NLS), this study aims at reconceptualizing study skills as academic literacies, that is, as strategies employed by students to learn in specific sociocultural contexts, thereby challenging a deficit approach, which views study skills as decontextualized technical skills that some learners lack or fail to acquire and internalize. The current study was conducted at a private,

unaided English medium CBSE school (K-12) in Bengaluru, India where students from diverse socioeconomic groups enrol. The school offers a mix of regular students (day scholars paying fees), students enrolled under the Right to Education (RTE) Act and residential students residing in the school hostel and studying on scholarships provided by the school. The participants were thirty high school students of grades 8 and 9 identified through purposive sampling from the site of the study. Classroom observations and interviews were used for data collection. Classroom observation gave a hands-on exposure into the classroom behaviours and social skills of the students. A semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended, non-judgemental questions developed by the researchers was used to understand the study strategies deployed by each student and how they mobilize the resources available in their networks. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and line-by-line coding was done using NVivo 12 based on what was common across the interviews. The codes were then organized concerning categories informed by the theoretical framework and by those emerging from the data. Categories were then reorganized into themes and selected excerpts from the data that illustrate these themes for further contextual analysis in the paper. Thematic analysis revealed that although students have access to similar teaching and learning resources at school, educational outcomes vary among groups from different socioeconomic statuses within the same school context. Thus, it can be said that home and cultural contexts do play a role in shaping educational outcomes across socioeconomic groups. This suggests that mere access is not enough and that schools should adopt practices that can bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps between school and home contexts, as well as between cultural groups within classrooms. The study argues that schools must incorporate learning experiences in their curriculum which provides knowledge, skills, and interpersonal competencies taking into consideration the diverse experiences that students bring from their sociocultural contexts, thereby creating intercultural learning communities. The study will help re-conceptualize academic success in contextual ways, with implications for educationists and policymakers to develop mechanisms that provide opportunities for the vast majority of students to attain skills and knowledge depending on their skills and abilities and not on their socioeconomic backgrounds.

## **Impact Of Covid-19 on the Education of Students of Vulnerable Communities, Especially Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes: A Study in Haryana and Jharkhand**

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The main research objectives of the study are as follows: (i) In the technology-driven post-Covid education scenario, what is the impact on the education of students of vulnerable Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SDGs) such as Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the area of classroom instructions and learning in school education? And (ii) Is the digital divide contributing towards deepening educational inequality among students? The study is based on a primary survey in two states, Haryana and Jharkhand, which were chosen based on development levels – one developed (Haryana) and one relatively backward (Jharkhand). Mixed methods were adopted, i.e. both quantitative and qualitative surveys were undertaken among students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders. Six districts were selected considering concentrations of SC/ST populations. The study involved 1,293 households across 36 villages in both states. In Haryana, 645 households were surveyed, and in Jharkhand, 648 households were surveyed. The findings indicate a noticeable impact of the pandemic and school closures on the drop-out rate of 6-16-year-old children, more so in Jharkhand than in Haryana. In both states, the drop-out proportion increased following Covid, compared to the pre-Covid situation. The drop-out was higher among STs and SCs compared to 'Others', and among girls compared to boys. For 15-16-year-old children, the drop-out rates were high at around 7-9% in Haryana and 10-18% in Jharkhand. The impact was severe in terms of school attendance and learning loss. However, students in Haryana fared better than the students in Jharkhand. Three-fourths of the surveyed children in Jharkhand could not attend online classes, while in Haryana the proportion of students who could not attend online classes was much lower at 14%. Students could not attend online classes due to a paucity of mobiles, poor internet connectivity, lack of electricity, high mobile recharge costs, etc. Internet-related challenges were ranked as the highest challenge for attending online classes. This challenge was especially severe in the sample villages in

Jharkhand. Poor supply of electricity also affected the charging of mobile phones, without which children could not attend online classes. Space constraint was also mentioned by many students. The education of children in large families also suffered more due to the shortage of mobile devices available to the family. There was a rise in the education expenditure for most social groups as parents were compelled to buy smartphones during school closure. For those who could buy some devices, the expenditure was met by drawing down their own savings, borrowing, or seeking support from relatives and friends. Many families became indebted during the lockdown, among whom the SC/ST families were particularly affected. The main reasons for indebtedness were loss of livelihood due to the pandemic and the need to buy a smartphone for children's online education. On the positive side, education could continue in some form as a result of technology and government initiatives. In Haryana WhatsApp groups were formed by the schools, where teachers sent educational videos and homework. In Jharkhand, contents were sent to students on the DIGISATH app.

## **Is India's Higher Education System a Case of Elusive Inclusive Development?**

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The National Education Policy for India (NEP 2020) spelt out the need for the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for Higher Education to inch up from the present 27.3% in 2020–21 to 50% by 2035. Given this motive, the paper analyses the policy framework and analyses the trends in Higher Education in India from 2000 – 2020 using secondary data sources from AISHE (All India Survey in Higher Education) reports, the NSSO (National Sample Survey Organisation) rounds, 2011 Census data and World Bank data. The findings reveal mixed outcomes. On the one hand, student enrolments, GER, expenditure on education as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the number of universities and institutions



have been on the rise throughout the study. However, the low GER for India, when compared with G 20 countries, highlights a need to not only increase the overall enrolments but also for the socially and economically weaker segments of society. There is also a need to increase the number of universities and institutions further and, at the same time, enrich the quality of HE with global benchmarks. The paper concludes that the Higher Education system in India is a case of elusive inclusive development. It is likely to miss the SDG global agenda in 2030, and it will be challenging to achieve the NEP target set by 2035. The recommendations include closely monitoring the Higher Education system at the third tier of governance at the district level and providing high-quality and affordable online education to realize the desired outcomes.

## Technical Session 4

### Universal Social Protection

#### **Linking Pension and Health Related Capabilities among the Widows: A Case of Gujarat**

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Despite the decline in fertility combined with improvement in mortality and expansion of healthcare facilities the women in India face many severe health concerns including reproductive health, violence against them and poor nutritional status. While women in India suffer from several challenges in experiencing desirable nutritional and health status, the challenges are worse for widows. Being widowed as opposed to married is associated with worse health outcomes particularly psychological distress, worse self-rated health, and hypertension in the long run. Government of Gujarat in 2019 had launched the Central Government's National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) Portal for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of monthly pension of Rs. 1250 directly to 3.70 lakh widows, elderly and disabled women in 33 districts in the state. This programme was named Ganga Swarupa Aarthik Sahay Yojana (GSASY henceforth). GSASY scheme aims to help the widow to improve the economic condition and lend respectability to the beneficiaries in the family and society. Given this background, this paper discusses the health status of widows. It analyses the loss of income due to health reasons among them. The paper also indicates how GSASY contributes to the health-related capabilities among widows in Gujarat. The health capability is understood by an index (CI henceforth) constructed by several qualitative and quantitative information. The CI ranges between zero and

one. While zero represents incapability, one denotes the capability of widows concerning their health status and related functioning. Descriptive statistics and econometric techniques are used to analyse the contribution of pension to the health-related capability of widows. The morbidity, types of prevalent diseases and disability show an abysmal picture of widows' health status in general. Widows are found to suffer not only from physical health problems but also psychiatric and neurological disorders. The abuses and violence toward widows are also observed. It is found that the widows depend mostly on public healthcare facilities. The analysis reveals how widows, dependent mostly on informal sector employment, are affected by the loss of wages due to absenteeism due to ill health. Often it is observed that the widows belonging to the poorest of the poor economic strata and out of the ambit of GSASY benefits (Patan in particular) experience catastrophic burden of loss of wages due to health reasons. The high burden of wage loss even among non-beneficiaries strongly argues for the improvement of the reach of GSASY by including the eligible poor widows in its ambit. The FGDs also help in revealing how familial and social values shape the perception of widows about health status, treatment for illnesses, employment and remarriage. The high dependence of widows on wage employment in the informal sector, particularly of the older widows, implies a revision of the benefit amount under GSASY so that it can adequately meet their livelihood requirements. The improvement of capabilities among employed widows and those living with married sons indicates that the linkages between employment generation programmes, skill-development programmes and other health schemes focusing on elderly people, disabled and chronic patients, particularly in the urban areas are necessary.

### **Freedom of Choice: Examining Universal and Unconditional Cash Transfers in Krishnapur through Capability Approach**

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This study is action-oriented participatory research that examines the potential of universal unconditional lump-sum cash transfers (UUCT), which took place at Krishnapur, a village in the Wardha district of Maharashtra. Its

primary objective is to investigate the extent to which such transfers empower individuals, enabling them to unleash their aspirations to their full potential and transform ideas into tangible endeavours. Krishnapur is inhabited by the Kolam Adivasi community, comprising 50 households. Preliminary findings from the project's initial survey indicate that over 80% of these households are burdened by debt (DEEP, 2023, p.9). This pervasive debt has left them in dire financial straits and has also taken a toll on their mental well-being, rendering them unable to unleash their aspiration to their full potential (DEEP, 2023, p.12). Consequently, their capacity to utilize available resources for economic gain and personal fulfilment is severely constrained. This study primarily views UUCT through the lens rooted in the Capability Approach. Within this framework, the role of values is paramount in broadening an individual's array of capabilities, influencing the types of functioning deemed meaningful, and thereby shaping valuable capabilities, functioning, and agency for that individual (Vaughan & Walker, 2012). Utilizing the Capability Approach, where values are at the core of an individual's capacity 'to be and to do' or function (Sen, 1993), this perspective allows us to elucidate how individuals who receive financial support develop their reasoning and values (Shin & Park, 2019). Consequently, it sheds light on how their functioning and agency evolve, expanding their capabilities in decision-making and effective utilization of the provided funds. The capability approach served as a guiding framework for analysing the utilization survey, the experiences of people using the money, and the decision-making process. The findings show that by providing individuals with the freedom to invest in productive activities, such as cultivating additional land, money expands their capabilities for economic empowerment, which can yield long-term gains. The funds allocated for housing and security address protective factors, offering greater financial freedom and dignity, thus augmenting the functioning of the households against future crises. Additionally, it promotes the expansion of capabilities through increased immediate consumption choices, stimulating the local economy. Money was deposited in women's bank accounts, increasing their agentic actions and aspirations in UUCT. Intervention generated employment opportunities for 35 women, obviating their need to seek work outside the village, saving daily effort and commuting time, and fostering a sense of self-sufficiency and empowerment. Lastly, the intervention has disrupted the debt cycle, liberating households from the burden of interest payments and debt repayment. This has translated into increased disposable income post-harvest, permitting families to allocate resources towards a broader spectrum of needs and desires. Overall, the intervention exemplifies how financial resources can directly contribute to enhancing an individual's capabilities, help reduce monetary distress, and create non-monetary benefits. The interim finding substantiates

that eradicating poverty in marginalized populations, which is multidimensional (NITI Aayog, 2023), requires a non-paternalistic approach of UUCT, enabling freedom of choice to address unique needs. <https://www.project-deep.org/>. The Kessler Psychological Distress scale measured stress levels, showing that 29% of men and 50% of women in the village have mild to severe disorders (Deep, 2023, p. 12). Studies such as Zimmerman and Katon (2005); Johnson et al. (2020) corroborate findings on the association between financial distress and well-being.

### **4ps (Philippines' Conditional Cash Transfer Program): Challenges and Prospects**

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The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is a poverty alleviation program of the Philippine national government that aims to solve the problems of short-term and intergenerational poverty by dispensing conditional cash grants as a form of immediate monetary assistance; and social development, by investing human capital for the psycho-social development of impoverished Filipino families as defined by certain conditionalities, specifically, on children's health and education. Since its launch in 2007, the program has helped alleviate the conditions of 9 million children and 4.4 million Filipino households, leading to a poverty reduction rate of 1.4 percentage points per year, which translates to 1.5 million "less poor" Filipinos. Despite this, there persists the issues of adequacy and effectiveness of the program to achieve its intended goal of breaking intergenerational poverty in a country that sits at the Pacific Ring of Fire as such, faces a high risk of calamities per year compelling families to utilize the cash grants for disaster reparation instead of its intended purpose. In the recent years of 2020 and 2021, the Philippines was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and the onslaught of Supertyphoon Odette (known internationally as Rai) which revealed the frailty of the program during crises wherein it was forced

to waive its conditionalities for the meantime after signing the resolution on force majeure despite continuing the dispersal of monetary assistance. Using narrative thematic analysis as adapted from Creswell's (2013) framework, this qualitative case study employs participant interviews that include the program's key informants, to examine the challenges faced and the distinct strategic adjustments executed by the involved delivery unit, as well as the program's beneficiaries concerning their access to services during crises. Specifically, the study probes the locality of Metro Cebu, a metropolitan aggregate of cities that was badly struck by two recent disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic and Super typhoon Odette. Previously, Metro Cebu was the highest contributor in the Philippine poverty incidence report of 2021, with a staggering 22.1% rate higher than that of the country, Philippines at 13.2%. Its component cities Lapu-Lapu, Mandaue, and Cebu City recorded rates of 10.8%, 10.4%, and 9.8%, respectively. The analysis of the study revealed that 4Ps suffer from internal operational deficiencies that include flaws in program design and implementation, slow bureaucratic processes, and the overall systemic failure to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty proven by a majority of its beneficiaries who are still below the poverty threshold, despite the national government adhering to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of eradicating all forms of poverty by 2030. This was exacerbated by the government's lack of urgency, situational awareness, and crisis management when the COVID-19 pandemic and Super typhoon Odette struck the country. To address these challenges, there is a need for the government to thoroughly assess its mechanisms to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the 4Ps. Following the results of the themes and narratives, the paper proposes a comprehensive, integrative, and sustainable policy recommendation output that aims to aid the national and local government units, to "future-proof" 4Ps as a poverty alleviation program that shall withstand tough crises moving forward.

## **Empowering Rural India: Combating Corruption and Fostering Financial Inclusion**

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This paper aims to identify the caste that most often takes the role of a Bank middleman between the poor and the loan-giving institutions in rural India. We would like to understand the relative socio-economic positioning of this caste

that empowers it to undertake this role and how strong this power holds. Societies are often to some extent aware of the existence of forms of discrimination in their reality. However, the reasons for this discrimination and the way that it can be modified are largely under-researched. This paper aims to contribute towards narrowing this gap of knowledge by clarifying the multiple types of cultural discrimination that can exist in a place – both in terms of subjective and objective discrimination and also in terms of the cultural marker (type) which serves as a basis for the experience of the discrimination. Most importantly, we try to understand whether the propensity to discriminate on cultural foundations can be dynamic and whether these dynamics can be intentionally moderated through the provision of objective information. To achieve this aim, we focus on the case of a state of India with a typical experience of discrimination of individuals from rural areas during the process of applying for a bank loan. The bank loan system in India has been widely documented as exposing individuals to caste-related discrimination. However, why this happens and more importantly – how and whether all this discrimination can be moderated and abolished – is still unclear. The paper seeks to increase our understanding of the socio-economic empowerment of certain cultural ‘clubs’. To achieve this, we conduct primary data collection, since caste identity is not easily accessible as information on an individual level, especially in the context of corrupted behaviour. Thus, only snowball sampling can allow for this type of information to be obtained. We gather data about the experience of the poor rural bank client with corrupted middlemen, posing questions about their caste, the caste of the middleman and their perceived socio-economic sources of bargaining power in this setting. We also ask the rural bank client: (i) whether they would be willing to report the corrupted middleman to an authority handling such complaints and (ii) we will allow them to report the person to us. Previous research shows that the opportunity to file complaints decreases bureaucratic inefficiency. We add value to this with insights on cultural bargaining power, and differences between expressive behaviour (stating the willingness to report corruption) and actual behaviour. To explain cultural empowerment and quantify the difference in cultural power we employ the Culture Based Development paradigm and its approach to measuring individual and local cultural capital. Using a plethora of econometric techniques with a clear identification strategy, we find evidence for the role of cultural capital in the empowerment of the middlemen in the grey part of the banking sector in India and the willingness of individuals/bank clients to report these cases. Keywords: Middleman, culture, poor, caste and bank.

## **Narratives of Inclusion and Exclusion in Inclusive Governance of Nepal: Rhetoric or Reality of People**

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In the last decade, Nepal in South Asia has chanted more songs of inclusion than any other state and obvious reason is state restructuring and constitution-making process. Inclusion was everywhere a need and a compulsion of the government and this can be evident of a term in the preamble of the constitution. Today's inclusion is not only a constitutional obligation rather has become a part of strong political practice. But the question is who is included in the name of an inclusionary policy of the government. Nepal is a country of minorities and there is asymmetrical development in terms of education, access, power, development and everything hence this relation has also made an impact on the effectiveness of the inclusionary policy of the government. How efficient and effective inclusion is narrated in the governance needs to be tested and verified. Where the inclusion has excluded the indigent or needy people and has included the elite among the poor or accessible among non-accessible needs to be a part of the study. Nepal has strongly projected in law for the implementation of inclusionary policy and not merely as rhetoric speech of the political parties. The judiciary is very positive to quash any non-inclusive move in terms of recognition in policy or conduct of the state or other organs. The state is more flexible in terms of recognizing the inclusive policy. The inclusive governance is an ideal goal of the government and it is only possible when people who need to be included in this model become part of it. The inclusion policy of the government needs to be part of everyday life and not only for those who have access to the system. The need for identification by the concerned agencies needs to be more realistic than rhetoric in nature. Nepal today is considered one of the best platforms for the issues of inclusion and exclusion considering the reflection of historical injustice and denial. The issues of inclusion are entirely based on historical exclusion and discrimination in the governance. The legacy of denial is projected as the main reason for the strong need for inclusion in a major stream of politics and state governance. The inclusion is not merely a symbol of representation or participation rather it creates a sense of attachment and also boosts the sustainable policies of the government. Still, there are no systematic studies to identify who are major beneficiaries among excluded Nepalese communities in the name of inclusion and other major streamlining movements of government. This paper will study the inclusion policy and its impact on Nepalese people based on their record in the system and also other key issues. The empirical



tools will be used for the accomplishment of the paper. The government policies will be taken into consideration for the reason of the development of inclusive policy. The reason for the decline in inclusive policy will be also studied with the help of different reports from the state and other stakeholders. The need for an inclusionary policy as part of the political system is a need hence this assumption will be verified with the help of effective tools of study.”

## Technical Session 5

# Access to Quality Education and Building Relevant Skills

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### **Policy Alternatives for Accelerating Health & Educational Attainments of Children in India: An Analysis Using Computable General Equilibrium Model**

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Assessing the impact of alternative policy options on developmental goals relating to health and education remains an analytical challenge due to several reasons. Much of the literature uses econometric methods to capture the impact of some micro- or sector-specific government policy or programme after controlling for a set of control variables. Often the control variables are at a particular level and the influence of other factors at different levels (region or macro-level) are captured in a rudimentary manner or ignored completely. While this approach is useful for assessing the impact of a single policy, a major shortcoming of this analytical framework is that it does not permit the evaluation of policy alternatives and hence cannot provide an assessment of their opportunity costs. One of the analytical frameworks extensively used in the economics literature to study trade and fiscal policy alternatives is the computable general equilibrium (CGE) model. In this paper, using India as a case, we demonstrate the use of CGE models to evaluate policy alternatives for achieving specific developmental targets relating to child health and education. We address the question “Which policy option would help India accelerate child health and education status to

levels comparable to developed countries in the shortest possible time". We proxy child health by IMR and educational attainment by dropout rates at the primary level. We specify a target value for IMR of 10 or less per thousand live births and DOR values of less than 1% are more or less, which are comparable with levels prevailing in developed countries. Towards this, we first develop a recursively dynamic CGE model and augment it by (a) incorporating two simple econometrically estimated equations relating progress in water and sanitation access to public expenditure in these sectors; (b) bringing in the econometric relationship between public expenditure in the education sector and progress in adult education; (c) integrating the econometric relationships to capture the impact of public expenditure on child health and education, taking into account the progress in adult education and access to water and sanitation; and (d) developing a set of link equations to capture the relationship between adult education outcomes and composition of labour supply by education levels. Through these additional equations, we capture the direct impact of improvements in adult education, water and sanitation on child health and child education and the direct impact of improvements in adult education on the supply of various types of labour force by education levels. Using an augmented recursively dynamic CGE model we simulate the following policy alternatives: (i) economic growth as the driver of progress in child health and education outcomes; (ii) additional public expenditure funded through public borrowings on (a) water and sanitation sector, (b) health sector, (c) education sector and (d) combined water, sanitation, health and education sectors. The results lead us to suggest that increasing public expenditure on water and sanitation through recourse to public borrowing is the best-performing scenario for accelerating child health and education attainment in the country among the above-mentioned policy alternatives.

### **Understanding 'Access to Education': Insights from an Urban Slum in Delhi**

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The importance of education in a person's life and for society in general, is well recognized. It is for this reason that one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education

for all by the year 2030. In India, while several policies have been implemented to improve the state of education, the universalization of elementary education has still not been achieved. In this regard, the need to further expand access to education is often emphasized, where access to school education is usually defined in terms of indicators such as Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), as these reflect the level of participation of children in schooling across different age groups and grades. However, such numbers reflect only the enrolment status of students, which depicts merely an entry point into a school. While entry into a school in itself can be a big achievement in many cases, it is important to examine whether that is enough to define what is known as “access to education.” This paper contends that access to education cannot adequately be understood only in terms of enrolment numbers. Once enrolled in a school, whether government or private, several factors affect the ability of a child to actually “access” the education being imparted. In fact, many of these factors may not even be directly related to the school, and could have more to do with the environment at the child’s house, the level of education of the parents, and even the existence of nutritional deficiencies in the child’s diet. Keeping this in mind, the primary objective of this paper is to unpack and analyze the different factors that affect a child’s ability to fully engage with the educational process, especially in the context of the urban poor in India. Primary research for this paper was conducted in an urban slum in the East Delhi district of the city of Delhi over ten months (from July 2021 to April 2022). Semi-structured interviews were conducted in 55 households, and the respondents were parents of children studying in school in classes 1 to 8. This study finds that even after getting admission to a school, several factors related to a child’s home, family, and neighbourhood, significantly affect the way the child interacts with the educational process. In the context of the particular slum where this study is based, factors such as caste-based discrimination and the desire for the next generation to break free of caste-based occupations also played a role in shaping the educational experiences of children. The study also delves into the excessive dependence on private tuition for most of the respondents. The current study finds that in the urban slum in question, tuition classes did not just provide additional academic support or individual attention to students outside of school, but often entirely supplanted the mainstream education system itself, even in primary classes. Through an analysis of these themes, this paper aims to understand the multiple layers of what access to education truly means for those belonging to economically and socially marginalized sections of the population, even in a metropolitan city such as Delhi.

## Unpacking the Spatial Variation in NEET Rates Across States in India

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**Sudeshna Dey**, Sr. Research Associate, LEAD at Krea University, Chennai

The paper aims to study the NEET rates across states and the macro and micro level factors associated with NEET. In particular, the objectives of the study are to:

- Identify available data sources which include different components of the composite indicator NEET and calculate NEET rates for all states
- Explain the variation in NEET rates by identifying contextual determinants
- Identify individual and household level characteristics that may increase the risk of being in the NEET category
- Identify policies and best practices that may help in reducing higher NEET rates prevalent in some states.

We have identified and analysed two existing data sources for calculating the NEET rates among the youth population across states in India. These are 1) the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5; 2019-21) and 2) the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS, 2019-20). PLFS includes information on all three components of NEET, i.e., an individual's current employment, attendance in an educational institute and whether received any vocational or technical training in the last 365 days. On the other hand, NFHS does not collect data on one's training experience, although it includes some other important variables which may help identify significant risk factors of NEET, for example, age at marriage. PLFS also defines employment status based on principal activity status in the last 12 months and current weekly status based on the last 7 days. Our preliminary findings suggest that all these factors are sensitive to the NEET rates at the national and state levels. To understand the contextual influences on NEET rates at the state level, we have studied bivariate association between NEET rates and the following indicators: 1) Per capita gross state domestic product (GSDP from RBI handbook of 2019 and population projections), 2) Incidence of child marriages (NFHS-5), 3) Per capita state allocation and fund disbursement for vocational training (Ministry of Skill Development Annual Report for 2021-22), and 4) Higher secondary school enrolment 2019-20 (UDISE plus report). According to PLFS 2019-20 data, an estimated 31% of India's youth population belongs to the NEET category (12.6% for youth males and 54% for youth females). There exists a huge variation in NEET rates across states and genders. If we leave aside the union territories because of the small sample size, the NEET rates vary between 45.1% to 18.4% across states. States like Nagaland, Assam, Odisha and West Bengal have the highest NEET

rates. On the other hand, Sikkim, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, and Maharashtra have relatively lower NEET rates. Gender differences in NEET rates are most pronounced in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Our preliminary findings from the state-level analysis suggest that NEET rates are negatively associated with per capita GSDP, per capita budget allocation for vocational training programs, and higher secondary school enrolment. On the other hand, it is positively associated with the incidence of child marriage. All the findings intuitively make sense. As the next steps, we plan to fit a multilevel logistic regression model with the NEET status of an individual as the dependent variable and contextual factors as covariates along with individual and household level characteristics such as caste, religion, health status, education, urbanicity, and wealth. In order to account for unobserved contextual differences, we plan to fit two different models; one with state-level fixed effects and the other with state-level random effects.

## **Categorical Inequalities in Education Outcomes**

**Shruthi Menon**, PhD Scholar, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

Education stands as a crucial catalyst for socio-economic development, contributing not only instrumentally to higher income but also intrinsically by enhancing capabilities and individual freedom. Education also affects the welfare of future generations through intergenerational transmission as better-educated parents tend to have more educated and healthier children. Further, it can become a source of economic inequality if access to it is denied by a majority of the population. Concern for educational inequality is an important driver of education policy in India. Although gaps in education persist, and widen as children enter into adulthood, explanations for these gaps are limited. Charles Tilly's concept of Durable Inequality provides a lens to comprehend the persistence of inequality, attributing it to organizations creating categorical boundaries that regulate unequal access to resources and power. This paper delves into educational inequality in India, focusing on social categories such as gender, social group, and region, aiming to quantify differences in educational outcomes and analyze the role of inequitable resource access. The study draws on unit-level information from the NSS Employment and Unemployment Surveys (2004-05 and 2011-12) and the Periodic Labour Force Survey (2018-19). Educational attainment is categorized, ranging from illiterate to postgraduate, and the education Gini index is employed to measure inequality, complemented

by entropy indices like Theil and Atkinson measure. An assessment during the years 2004–05 to 2018–19 shows an improvement in educational attainment levels between 2004 and 2019. The Gini coefficient at the national level showed a 13% reduction in education inequality. The entropy measure, confirm the same result of the Gini index. Educational attainment measured by AYS increased between 2005 and 2018. Despite, a drop in female education inequality, the gender gap in education persists. Individuals from scheduled groups too, face higher incidence of inequality. The average years of schooling of the Hindu upper caste are higher than ST and SC. In the state-wise analysis, Kerala had the lowest Gini coefficient, followed by Delhi. Of all the major states, Bihar, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh are the states where inequality is high. Decomposition analysis of Gini reveals that within-group variation contributed majorly to inequality in educational attainment than between-group variation. Policy Implications Our research shows, that gaps in education attainment continue to persist. While the implementation of policies led to significant progress in the field of education, there are still challenges to be addressed, such as inadequate infrastructure and reducing disparities in access and quality of education across different regions. At the same time, the focus may be to build foundational skills of children by providing learning support to those children who may not have had prior pre-school experience. Concerted efforts need to be taken to promote inclusion, not exclusion, for individuals from socially marginalized groups. For education to be an equalizer, systemic reform is needed to facilitate equitable opportunities for students.

## Technical Session 6

# Gender Equality and Violence Against Women

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### **Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces and police patrols: Experimental Evidence from Urban India**

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**Nishith Prakash**, Professor of Public Policy and Economics, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs, Northeastern University, Boston, USA

We conducted a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the impact of an innovative police patrol program on sexual harassment in public spaces in Hyderabad, India. In collaboration with the Hyderabad City Police, we randomized both exposure to police patrols and the visibility of officers by deploying both uniformed and undercover personnel to hotspots. We implemented a novel, high-frequency observation exercise to measure sexual harassment at 350 hotspots, where enumerators took note of all observed instances of sexual harassment and women's responses in real-time. We find that although police patrols had no impact on overall street harassment, the visible policing patrols reduced severe forms of harassment (forceful touching, intimidation) by 27 per cent and reduced the likelihood of women leaving the hotspot due to sexual harassment. We uncovered the underlying mechanisms and found that both police visibility and officers' attitudes toward sexual harassment are key to understanding its incidence. While the performance of undercover officers was similar to that of uniformed officers, harassment did not decrease when undercover officers were on patrol. This suggests that the visibility of police officers is critical in deterring perpetrators. Additionally, using lab experiments we find that, on average, police officers were more tolerant of mild street harassment and less inclined to



punish offenders in such cases. Correspondingly, we observed in uniformed hotspots a decline in all types of harassment only when assigned officers held stronger personal views on harassment.

## **Power to Choose? Examining the Link Between Contraceptive Use and Domestic Violence**

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**Karan Babbar**, Assistant Professor, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

This study examines the role of a woman's decision-making about the use of contraceptives as a potential determinant of domestic violence. In theory, a woman's sole decision to use contraceptives could indicate greater control of her bodily autonomy and fertility outcomes, implying that she holds greater bargaining power and thus may be able to resist domestic violence. However, her decision to use contraceptives alone and not jointly with her partner may also result in a more substantial backlash from her partner. A priori, how the decision to use contraceptives affects IPV is ambiguous and merits empirical investigation. To this end, we study if a woman chooses to use contraceptives solely, and does it has a causal effect on her exposure to IPV? If so, what is the direction and extent of this effect? We use nationally representative survey data from the fifth wave of the National Family Health Surveys of India for 2019-21 to estimate our causal effects. The main empirical challenge in identifying the causal effect is that the choice to use contraceptives may be endogenous owing to omitted variables. In addition, domestic violence also affects the decision to use contraceptives, leading to simultaneity bias. To address the issue of endogeneity, we employ an Instrumental Variable (IV) approach and utilize the cluster average of women's exposure to family planning methods through mass media, in particular, radio, as our IV for her decision to use contraceptives. We find robust evidence that choosing to use contraceptives solely puts the woman at a greater risk of IPV, physically, sexually, and emotionally. Using a conditional mixed process estimation, we distinguish correlations with causal effects and find that the likelihood of IPV increases by 10 percentage points (pp) if the use of contraceptives is the women's decision alone. The effects are higher for the incidence of sexual and emotional domestic violence. The marginal effects reveal that a woman is 12.5 pp (26.7 pp) more likely to face sexual (emotional) domestic violence if she decides to use contraceptives.

Recognizing that the IV may not be fully exogenous, we further estimate the bounds of our effects by assuming the IVs to be ‘plausibly exogenous’ through which we relax the exogeneity condition. We show that the positive effect of a woman’s decision to use contraception on all three forms of IPV considered is robust even for departures from exogeneity conditions. The results are also robust to the inclusion of neighbourhood-level indicators of social norms, beliefs and patriarchal attitudes. Our findings underscore the importance of focusing on sexual and reproductive health concerns in initiatives that aim to reduce domestic violence. The heterogeneous results also call for expanding policies targeted towards men’s understanding of family planning.

### **Investigating the Suitability of Complex Trauma as a Theoretical Framework to Analyzing Domestic Violence and Its Psychological Consequences in Ever-Partnered Adult Women in India**

**Maitrayee Sen**, PhD Scholar, Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

**Simantini Ghosh**, Assistant Professor, Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

This study aims at finding answer to the overarching question of whether the Complex Trauma theory can be utilized to investigate consequences of domestic violence in ever partnered adult Indian women. Researchers argue for a continuous trauma framework to better map the pervasive and chronic nature of domestic violence in India. The complex trauma theory, initially developed for childhood sexual abuse survivors, emerges as a relevant lens for understanding the multilayered trauma experienced by Indian women. Complex trauma theory posits that prolonged, inescapable trauma results in psychological disturbances beyond those defined by the clinical construct of PTSD. For Indian women, the pervasive environment of control, oppression, and abuse throughout childhood, adolescence, and adulthood aligns with the criteria of complex trauma. Our preliminary data (unpublished) also suggests that ever-partnered Indian women trapped in abusive relationships often display psychological disturbances that are well aligned with the disorders of self-organization (DSO) cluster of symptoms that complex trauma theory accommodates, that include interpersonal disturbances, negative self-concept and extensive somatic symptoms. We undertook a qualitative study to explore the typology of abuse and violence every partnered Indian woman has faced from their natal as well as marital families and the psychological consequences

associated with such. Fifteen urban female Indian residents aged 29–60 years in marital or cohabiting relationships at least for six months were interviewed using a snowball sampling technique. An interview schedule guided the interviews. Data were thematically analyzed using the inter-rater reliability coding method. Both Inductive and Deductive techniques were used to generate the themes. Deductive analysis of the experience of violence revealed Childhood abuse experiences as an emergent theme, often manifesting as diminished self-confidence due to male family members' preference. Perpetrators in partnered relationships manipulated victims through threats, deadlines, and verbal abuse. The inductive analysis also confirmed the presence of several psychological dysfunctions aligned with the tenets of the complex trauma theory extending beyond canonical post-trauma effects. Emotional dysregulation among participants led to motivation deficits, impulse control issues, and impaired decision-making capabilities. The study underscores the prevalence of broader psychological dysfunctions related to complex trauma symptoms among Indian women who have experienced domestic violence. Childhood abuse and manipulation by perpetrators in intimate relationships contribute to lasting emotional and psychological challenges. The findings emphasize the urgent need for a comprehensive framework that recognizes the continuous spectrum of violence women face, spanning from conception throughout their lives. The study's implications extend to policy and intervention development, advocating for trauma-informed approaches to address the intricate dynamics of domestic violence and its enduring impact on women's lives.

### **A Context-based Analysis of 'Rape Myth Acceptance' Literature: Reframing Findings and Transforming Understandings**

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**Simantini Ghosh**, Assistant Professor, Ashoka University, Sonipat, Haryana

This paper aims to analyse the general inferences from rape myth acceptance literature keeping in view the Indian/South Asian context using three different theoretical lenses: The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model (EM) (1977) and the theory of intersectionality (TI) (Crenshaw, 1985). In doing this, this paper tries to arrive at a formulation of sexual offending behaviour in a South Asian context that allows integration of social cognitive viewpoints on behavioural intent (TPB), with room for situational

and contextual factors allowed by an ecological framing (EM), and social identities rooted in intersectionalities that is so intrinsic of South Asian contexts (TI). Relevant literature and research studies are examined using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) to trace the origin and manifestation of sexual offending behaviour through attitude formation and translation into intent and behaviour. Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological Model is used to analyse the social factors existing at different levels of the ecosystem, contributing to sexual offending behaviour. When viewed through these two perspectives in conjunction, the larger contextual, normative and cultural factors come to the fore as having a crucial impact on the attitudes, beliefs and "rape myths" in different geographical and socio-cultural locales. Especially in the Indian context, additional factors such as class and caste differentials between perpetrators and victims; an array of circumstantial and socio-cultural contexts in which rapes are perpetrated, such as in the name of honour; the differences in the relationships between perpetrators and victims, which cannot be confined into straightforward categories of stranger versus acquaintance rapes etc. come into play. When viewed in light of these elements, the intersectionality theory proves to be a useful analytical lens to understand the minute nuances lodged in between the existing rape myths or perhaps not addressed by current understandings. From the current analysis, it is apparent that socio-cultural systemic factors such as hierarchies of class, caste, gender socialisation, financial autonomy, power dynamics etc., are critical in understanding the basic attitudinal and belief antecedents behind rape myths, thereby adding to and transforming current understanding and applicability of rape myth acceptance study outcomes. This helps a broader conceptualization of future empirical investigation of sexual offending behaviour. By extending it to analyse not only layers of human identities but also meanings ascribed to the act of rape, it provides useful insights into the current applicability of the concept of rape myth acceptance, especially in the Indian/ South Asian context. Potential areas of further research include a robust analysis of attitudinal dimensions of beliefs, norms and perceived behavioural control in the Indian context. Such an exploration will be beneficial if extended across multiple stakeholders, not restricted to victims and perpetrators alone. A deeper understanding of such factors might better inform potential intervention strategies or even help in identifying potential sites of interventions.

## Technical Session 7

# Gender Equality and Violence Against Women

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### **Valuing Women's Work in Mountain Areas in the Global South: Insights from a Time-Use Survey**

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This paper deals with the time utilization pattern of women in the Indian Himalayan region (IHR). The working patterns of rural women in the hills of the Indian Himalayan region are influenced by many factors. The mountainous terrain and the migration of male household members to urban centres in search of gainful employment creates a difficult work situation for the women in the households (Mishra 2007; 2018; Upadhyay 2017; 2020). Although most women are engaged in work and contribute to the economy in one form or another, much of their work is not documented in official statistics. The contribution of women towards the households; and food and energy security is immense, but there has been no measure as to how much they contribute towards it. The study of women's unpaid labour through the time-use survey in the context of hill economies is crucial because most of these economies are only partially market economies. The work that women do is often overlapping across sectors and activities.

Women who work in agriculture, for example, also work in raising livestock, weaving, food processing, and even petty trading. In mountain economies, the time use survey (TSU) has added significance, given the relative importance of subsistence production and low levels of commercialization of the economy. To investigate the gendered division of labour (in SNA, extended SNA and Non-SNA work), field survey was conducted across the twelve states in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR), namely, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. A total of 15,399 sample households were surveyed across 99 blocks in 150 districts in the IHR. An attempt has been made to study the involvement of the female workforce in both paid and unpaid activities, along with an assessment of the economic contribution from their engagements in the IHR. The time-use pattern of women in the IHR provides details of the process of economic transformation currently underway and the changes in the sectoral composition of output and the occupational structure. It has highlighted the absence of gender-neutral transformation processes resulting in women having to shoulder a dual burden — both domestic responsibilities and also the burden of those tasks and activities traditionally performed by men. It was found that for the IHR as a whole, female participation in SNA primary activities was relatively high in crop farming, followed by animal husbandry and animal care. As far as female participation in SNA secondary activities was concerned, it was found that a small percentage of them participated in trade and business, and in manufacturing activities at the household level. Female participation was highest for SNA primary activities compared to SNA secondary and tertiary activities. The gendered participation rate in the IHR is highly skewed towards women. Even in the case of secondary and tertiary activities, the female participation rate was much higher than that of males in the IHR.

## **Gender Differences in Job Search Methods: Explanations and Implications from PLFS Data**

**Bidisha Mondal**, Research Fellow, IWWAGE, Delhi

This study attempts to explore how much women's job search methods differ from men's in India and whether women's job search methods vary across their demographic, socio-economic status and education level. Since the empirical literature on informal networks as job market placement channels is largely confined to studying developed countries, this study aims to address the dearth

of evidence on the role of social networks in the labour markets of developing nations. The study is based on the Periodic Labour Force Survey conducted from July 2021 to June 2022. The methodology consists of descriptive statistics and a Probit model with selection bias correction. In the Probit model, the dependent variable is the binary variable of the job search method and the independent variables are the geographical location, gender, age group, income class, and a few interaction terms, whereas the participation equation contains marital status as a key determinant of labour force participation along with other variables. The PLFS 2021-22 indicates that the job search methods differ between men and women substantially. More women job-seekers resort to formal job search methods like applying to prospective employers/places or answering job advertisements/checking at factories, and registering with private employment centres, whereas more men jobseekers rely on referrals from friends and relatives. The job search process is found to differ among women of different age groups too, with the younger age groups of 15-25 years and 25-36 years depending much less on their informal networks as compared to women in the older age group of 36-59 years. The share differs across education levels too, with highly educated women relying less on informal networks, as compared to others. It points towards limited job market placements taking place through informal referrals in the case of white-collar occupations and a limited share of white-collar jobs. However, as indicated by the descriptive statistics, women across rural and urban areas, age groups, marital status, education levels, and expenditure quintiles depend less on their social networks as compared to men. The descriptive trends are confirmed by the regression analysis too and it shows that women are often 40% less likely to rely on informal sources as compared to men. At the same time, the higher efficacy of informal sources is corroborated by PLFS data as it is observed that women searching for a job through informal sources face a shorter duration of unemployment as compared to those depending on formal sources. Even among the highly educated women, expectedly looking for high-skill, highly-paid jobs, those who have dependable informal networks and thus explore that, face a shorter spell of unemployment as compared to those who depend on formal sources.

## **Prostitution Versus Sex Work: What Are The Names?**

**Suchetana Ghosh**, Assistant Professor, Bankura University, West Bengal

The paper aims to understand the nature of prostitution and public health policies, as well as the discourses surrounding them concerning the social processes that shape all of these in the colonial and post-colonial global south. The most remarkable transformation in the discourse of prostitution from the era of colonization to the era of globalization is the change or an attempt to change the term from “prostitute” or synonyms of prostitute to the word “sex worker”. Thus, on the one hand, the discourse has been extricated from a moralistic understanding of prostitution centred on the notions of honour versus shame and ‘Madonna versus Whore’ dichotomy that either stigmatized or attempted to criminalise the occupation as well as denied the women in prostitution (WIP) or the people in prostitution (PIP) the basic human rights and dignities previously. On the other hand, the changing discourse completes the shift of a prostitute from a sexual service giver and sometimes an artist in certain indigenous societies to an industrial worker in the globalized world, killing the heterogeneity and socio-cultural dimensions of the term “prostitute” that earlier had multicultural connotations, varying from region to region and society to society. The emerging discourses also attempt to create out of the prostitutes, the homogeneous working class in the post-colonial, global south. What is the political economy behind this name change in the era of globalization? Does the ‘name-change’ ensure improvements in the social and material conditions of the people engaged in prostitution leading to their social inclusion and empowerment? Does this paradigm shift transform prostitutes into working classes? Is the name change a matter of social acceptance or legal control? Is it leading to the collectivization and decriminalization of WIP/PIP increasing their power to bargain? Is there any significance of this shift in the context of policymaking? In this paper, an attempt has been made to analyze some such issues and queries with an emphasis on their border implications on women’s rights, equity and gender questions in the context of women in prostitution in Kolkata, West Bengal. The theoretical and methodological approaches of this work combine interdisciplinary perspectives, applying analyses of various social science discourses. Findings were based on multilayered analyses that mainly indicated that legal measures and biased policies might not be sufficiently effective to control STDs (including HIV&AIDS) by either criminalizing decriminalizing or attempting to control the women in prostitution (WIP) while such measures could help the WIP to gain their voices, especially through collectivization.



## **Unveiling Status of Social Protection of Marginalized Communities: A Case Study on Transgender and Sex Workers in Bangladesh**

**Md Mokhlesur Rahman**, CEO And Lead Consultant, Centre for Research & Development (CRD), Bangladesh

The paper aims to assess the current status of marginalized communities of transgender and sex workers in accessing services of education, healthcare, and social safety net programs (SSNP) in Bangladesh. The research encompassed all districts of Bangladesh and involved 320 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and community scorecard assessments. Qualitative data from 346 participants (transgender – 268; sex workers – 78) were transcribed, and a thematic analysis approach was followed to identify key themes. On the other hand, data from the community scorecards (total – 40 groups; with transgender – 32 groups; with sex worker – 8 groups) were analyzed statistically to determine average scores. The study findings corroborate the discrimination experienced by transgender and sex workers. Being the citizens of this country, they have the right to access healthcare services which is vital for all, especially in the government hospitals and health centres. However, 65% of them reportedly have a moderate level of accessibility to government hospitals and healthcare facilities, while 10% reported having very limited access. Even if they manage to enter the hospitals, 53% of people responded that they face negligence in receiving services and have no equal access to treatment in government hospitals and health centres. Regarding education, transgender individuals and sex workers perceive comparatively worse conditions than other marginalized communities. Among sex workers, 50% of them send their children to the nearest primary schools and they reported a high prevalence of school discrimination. In addition, as a parent, they (sex workers) do not feel comfortable enough to participate in the parents' meetings. For transgender, qualitative findings emphasized that they feel discriminated against in pursuing degrees. Upon the disclosure of their identity, they reported experiencing avoidance from both their teachers and classmates. In getting the services of Social Safety Net Programmes (SSNPs), 32% of them (both transgender and sex workers) face extreme discrimination even though they are eligible. Where they should be more advantaged, they are discriminated against the most. 27% of them do not have access to information regarding SSNP services from LG representatives. While 45% mentioned the biased selection process, 62% added the prevalence of bribing for receiving rightful SSNP services. Even if they

complain against the system, only 10% said that they might get any action to be taken. Based on findings and analyses, the paper argues that transgenders and sex workers are the most marginalized among the marginalized groups in Bangladesh. They should be provided with strategic support systems and social safety net services which contribute to breaking the cycle of marginalization and to a sense of belonging and social cohesion. Effective implementation of the existing government policies should be given emphasized and new policies should be introduced based on the specific needs and demands. Employment opportunities with affordable accommodation and the introduction of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs for them should be considered. Being the victims of systemic discrimination and unequal access to opportunities addressing their basic needs is crucial. In conclusion, the needs and rightful demands of transgender and sex workers should be considered as a practical imperative under social justice and social protection.

## **Empowering Informal Labor: The Imperative for Inclusive Policies to Support Informal Women Workers**

**Priyanka Banerjee**, Technical Specialist - Gender and Social Inclusion, International Centre for Research on Women, New Delhi.

**Aditi Vyas**, Assistant Director - Gender, Youth and Development, International Centre for Research on Women, New Delhi Delhi.

This study delves into how the absence or the restricted availability of social safety nets intensified the precariousness experienced by informal women workers IWWs throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The study also explores how existing policies can be made more responsive and accessible to the need for social security for IWWs. As a part of this effort, this study explores the critical role of the national database of unorganized workers, known as e-Shram, in facilitating linkages to social security services for this vulnerable segment of the workforce. The objectives are: What was the impact of the pandemic on the livelihoods of DWs and SVs in Delhi-NCR? - What were the challenges faced by them in accessing social security entitlements? - How can existing policies/schemes be more inclusive, responsive and accessible to IWWs, to ensure dignified livelihoods for this vulnerable group? Quantitative survey with SVs and DWs, in the age group of 18-49 years; 1502 women workers interviewed. IWWs listed with the help of local NGOs/CSOs and randomly selected - Qualitative

in-depth interviews with SVs and DWs (50), selected from survey cohort and key informant interviews (10) with subject matter experts and representatives of CSOs. The majority of IWWs surveyed had migrated from poorer states of India, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal. The paucity of economic opportunities and resources in their native areas had forced their families to move. Residing in informal dwellings, these women and their families were working in low-paying, low-skilled occupations, with limited access to state support and benefits. IWWs were at the periphery of digital inclusion, with 26 per cent not using mobile phones. The pandemic-induced lockdown, mobility restrictions, and fear of contagion resulted in the firing of workers, non-payment of wages and depressed earnings for a majority of respondents. The survey found that 62 per cent of respondents reported job loss and 32 per cent reported reduced incomes during the first wave of the pandemic. Loss of work forced 94 per cent of women to use their savings and 87 per cent to borrow to meet living expenses. The study also found that IWWs primarily borrowed from informal sources, with only 6 per cent taking loans from banks, revealing a glaring absence of linkage to the formal banking system. To prevent further marginalization of IWWs and be better prepared for a future socio-economic health crisis, policies for IWWs must be designed to be responsive to their specific needs while remaining easily accessible. IWWs face multiple challenges in accessing the services of the portal, such as a lack of awareness about the existence of e-Shram and its benefits, lack of relevant documents among IWWs, limited digital knowledge and access, fear of fraud and a daunting registration process. The study finds that some of these challenges can be addressed by strengthening awareness among IWWs about the portal through voice-based awareness initiatives, targeted digital skills training for IWWs, training and capacity building of non-digital facilities, and collaboration with employers, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders for effective delivery of services.

## Technical Session 8

# Livelihood Security & Decent Employment

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### Impact of Easing of Contract Labour Regulations on Total Employment and The Employment of Contract Workers in Indian Manufacturing

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The iron and steel (I&S) sector contributes majorly in the production of materials for vehicles, construction and machinery. The global steel production is increasing with the world share of steel exports falling to 22%. Since this sector also accounts for about 8% of the total emissions, numerous major steel-producing countries have implemented policy initiatives aimed at decarbonizing the steel sector. The EU, being a net steel importer, has taken measures to limit its domestic carbon emissions through stringent commitments. Given that international trade of goods contributes to about 27% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the EU intends to control embedded emissions from imported goods. This is proposed through the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) as part of the European Green Deal, a component of the 'Fit for 55' package. However, this mechanism could potentially have negative effects on the growth and trade prospects of developing economies like India, which is a net steel exporter with a diversified supply chain. This impact depends on the extent of substitution possible by EU and other countries for Indian steel exports. The present study using a partial equilibrium approach estimates the export demand and supply responsiveness with changes in the prices of the product. Using these estimates, an estimate of the effect of CBAM on India's exports of steel products to the EU is made. A more detailed analysis is undertaken by applying the ICRIER Samriddhi Model

(GTAP-E based) which evaluates the impact of imposition of CBAM on India's steel exports, thus indicating a pathway that India should adopt if EU imposes carbon border tax. The results of the study indicate that CBAM is likely to have a major impact on India's steel exports to the EU, causing a fall India's steel exports to the EU in the range of 8 to 14% which in certain circumstances could go even up to 34%. The paper also gauges if the imposition of CBAM would lead to a significant reduction in carbon emissions and finds that a reduction of 1% in aggregate emissions will take place in the global steel industry.

### **International Migration and Dietary Diversity of Left-behind Households: Evidence from India**

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Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 3 are targeted towards ending hunger and ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all ages. Since the goal setting in 2015, the progress towards achieving these goals has been really slow as per the recent The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020 report (World Health Organization, 2020). The estimates based on this report suggest that around 3.1 billion people around the world do not have access to an affordable and healthy diet. Given this background, this study contributes to the literature on migration and its impact on increased well-being and food security of the left-behind household. For our study, we consider the state of Kerala in India remains one such region where the incidence of international migration is one of the highest in the country. This setting provides us an interesting window to analyse the returns to international migration in terms of impact on well-being indicators such as consumption expenditure, food, and non-food expenditure as well as nutritional intake and food security indicators like dietary diversity. In this study, we investigate the impact of international migration on the food and nutritional outcomes of the left-behind household at the origin using survey data from the Kerala Migration Survey, 2011. The outcomes of interest are overall consumption expenditure, expenditure on food, share of food expenditure as well as dietary diversity measures- Shannon and Simpson Index. Our key findings are as follows. First, international migration by

the members of the household increases the overall consumption expenditure as well as expenditure on food. Second, the effect of international migration on food consumption and dietary diversity in urban areas is of a larger magnitude than in their rural counterparts. Third, households with international migrants have higher dietary diversity than non-migrants. However, this result hides the heterogeneity in the food sub-groups consumption. The emigrant households spend more on protein intake as well as on fruits and vegetables. Further, there is also an increase in consumption of processed and ready-to-eat food items. This is a novel finding. Lastly, we also observed a reduction in the consumption of tobacco, liquor and intoxicants for the rural emigrant households. Some of the key implications of these findings are as follows for various stakeholders ranging from households to policymakers. First, from the household's perspective, we show that international migration improves the overall well-being of the left-behind household in terms of consumption expenditure and dietary diversity. However, some cautions are important to highlight. International migration may not always have just beneficial impact. As seen in our study, international migration by the members exposes the household to unhealthy food habits such as the consumption of processed and ready-to-eat food items. For the policymakers, our findings are useful, as they highlight how there could be differential impacts of international migration on households in rural and urban areas. It is important to know the impact on consumption to understand the changing nutritional and health outcomes of left-behind household members. Policymakers can use the findings of this study to understand the nature of interventions to amplify the positive effects of migration while at the same time neutralizing the negative effects (if any).

## **Africans in Bengaluru: Social Exclusion, State Securitization and Migrant Strategies in Bengaluru**

**Shambhavi Bhushan**, Department of Anthropology, University of Florida

Migrant communities often face significant challenges and marginalization, with little support from political and social systems. This paper explores one such unique form of international migration to India, where the racialized African migrants in Bengaluru encounter social exclusion exacerbated by constant state securitization and control mechanisms. These young people leave their home countries due to political instability, economic fluctuations,

and limited educational opportunities. Drawn to Bengaluru's reputation as a "city of globalization," African migrants seek world-class education and economic opportunities in this booming trade hub in the Global South. However, what is obtained on the ground differs— caste-based racial discrimination, vindictive immigration policies, and the constant vigilance of the local police that shape the everyday lives of African migrants in Bengaluru city. I argue that by courting revenue from African students and seasonal traders, the Government of India entices African migrants to study and trade in India through the operations of private institutions and visa permits. However, it does not ensure the well-being, political rights, social-cultural security, and economic opportunities of these temporary migrants. Immigration laws and enforcement practices in India ensure stringent control over non-citizens, constantly criminalizing and securitizing them.

As a result, African migrants struggle to adapt to the demands and competition of their new surroundings, which drives them to take illegal and illicit measures to survive. However, they are not solely motivated by financial gain. Instead, their economic goals stem from a desire to establish meaningful social and spatial connections. This paper presents an anthropological perspective on the question of human development beyond the context of income, employment, and livelihood. I discuss the issue of human development in the context of social exclusion, state control, and the innovative strategies that migrants employ in response to such marginalization.

### **Intensity of Seasonal Migration and Implications for Household Consumption of Left-behind Families: Analysis of East Indian Villages**

**Ayushi Basoya**, PhD Scholar, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Maharashtra

**Rama Pal**, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Maharashtra

Migration is undertaken to take advantage of the spatial differences in the availability of resources and opportunities across regions. These spatial differences widen, especially in developing economies characterised by vast and rising inequalities. Under such a context, migration occurs as a response to socio-economic inequalities and the associated distress that the households

experience in the place of origin. Thus, the households aim to improve their living standards through engaging in migration. In this light, this study focuses on seasonal out-migration from the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa in the Eastern part of India. Using the ICRISAT East-India panel dataset for 2011-14, the study attempts to analyse the determinants of intensity of migration which is defined as the number of person-months for which the household engages in migration. This helps to understand the frequency of migration in terms of the number of individuals migrating as well as how often they are migrating in a year. The study uses the Fractional Response Model (FRM) for the panel data (2011-14) to analyse the determinants of the intensity of migration. Secondly, we attempt to evaluate the impact of migration on the consumption expenditure of the left-behind households, segregated into food and non-food expenditure, using the propensity score matching (PSM) method and inverse probability weighted (IPW) regression. We conduct this analysis for (1) yearly cross-sectional data and (2) the combined panel data for the entire sample period. The analysis of the determinants of migration suggests the presence of distress migration where the marginalised sections in these villages are engaging in migration more prominently. Households from the middle wealth group experience lower migration intensity than the poorest households. At the same time, external shocks in the form of climate change-related losses further increase the migration intensity of the households, highlighting migration as a coping mechanism. The results also show that households from deprived social backgrounds experience a lower intensity of migration. This observation may be due to social network effects in the village. Additionally, on one hand, ownership of land for cultivation by the household decreases the intensity of migration. On the other hand, a larger size of the family tends to increase the intensity of migration. The second part of the study reveals higher per-capita food as well as non-food expenditure for the migrant households as compared to the non-migrants based on the yearly cross-section analysis. In the case of panel data, while the effect of the intensity of migration on per-capita food expenditure is positive and significant, the effect on per-capita non-food expenditure remains insignificant. These findings suggest the positive effects of seasonal migration on left-behind families as these families can spend more than the non-migrant households. Although the empirical evidence on the impact of migration on consumption expenditure is mixed, our study shows a positive impact of migration on food as well as non-food expenditure. Thus, a household's decision to engage in migration arising out of socio-economic distress is likely to improve the livelihood of the left-behind families.



## **Political Geography and Structural Change: A Cross-Sectional Study of the Status of Women in the Extractive Industry of India**

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**Prajna Paramita Mishra**, Associate Professor, School of Economics, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana

**Ch. Sravan**, PhD Scholar, School of Economics, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad

Political geography often creates options for livelihood and the extractive industry is one such institution under this umbrella in India. Mining gives opportunities to mineral-rich states/districts to achieve growth through mineral production. Conversely, several studies indicate that resource extraction is often associated with a large number of negative impacts in the form of externalities, violent conflicts, and poor economic performance. Less attention has been paid to how natural resource extraction is related to the status of women in local communities where the extraction takes place. The status of women has not been documented well in the field of political geography. The impact of the extractive industry at the macro level is well researched, but its socio-economic impact at the local level is less explored. In this context, one can recognise that the effects of mining on women remain an under-researched and under-theorised arena, nevertheless constituting an important issue to critically evaluate the mining sector and understand its relationship with the development paradigm and the poor in India. With this background, the study adopted a focused approach to understanding the key relationship between resource extraction and issues related to women. Consequently, the study attempted to answer the following research question: "What are the abrupt societal changes that are associated with the opening of a mine among women?" The study required a three-pronged approach while collecting information: (a) conducting a field survey; (b) collection of data from secondary sources and discussions with officials in government, non-officials, NGO representatives, and local leaders in the area; and (c) Focus Group Discussions. This study was conducted in the Mahanadi Coal Field (MCL), Basundhara area of the state of Odisha. An initial exploratory visit was made randomly to this area to see the status of the road, distance (in km) of the villages from the mine, water bodies, markets, educational institutes, transport for mines and non-mine purposes, etc. The researchers initially visited 18 villages, followed by another 8 villages, chosen based on a district-level

consultation with a non-governmental organisation which collects baseline information about issues related to women in different villages of this mining area. The various issues identified in the study area are: (i) increased insecurity, (ii) sexual harassment, (iii) rape and murder, (iv) social stigma, (v) dowry, (vi) dispute over the share in property, (vii) domestic violence, (viii) infertility, (ix) drop out, and (x) foeticide. Finally, the issues identified were discussed in length with different stakeholders in 8 villages through a household survey. The emphasis of this research was to recognise women as important actors within communities affected by mining. This was examined in relation to the 10 key intersecting issues mentioned above. “Women” remains the focal point of this research, compelling the adoption of a feminist approach, which is crucial to understanding the intersectionality that renders women particularly poor, unequal and thus invisible. Thus, the social construction of the mining space is the focus of the research and seeks to explore the abrupt societal changes associated with the opening of amine on women.

## Technical Session 9

### Equity and Inclusion

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#### Reforming Capitalism to Deal with Inequality and Sustainability in the Global Economy

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This paper shows that the ongoing conditions of inequality (both between and within countries) and sustainability (regarding the need to meet the challenge of climate change) are interlinked. We argue that to increase environmental sustainability, it is necessary to deal simultaneously with global and within-country, including gender, inequalities. Further, the paper argues that dealing with these interlinked crises also requires reform of how capitalism functions.

The paper starts with the contemporary structure of the global economy defined by intellectual monopoly capitalism and its derivative, global monopsony. This structure sustains inequality in the global economy. The under-pricing of both gendered labour and the environment was called reverse subsidies by Dev Nathan et al (2022). These reverse subsidies form the global base of what Marianna Mazzucatto (2018) terms the failure of the current price system to account for value as distinct from market prices. This reverse subsidy extracted by global monopsony capitalism, along with intellectual monopoly capitalism, sustains the condition of global inequality and the concentration of GHG-emitting

production systems, of both manufacturing and agricultural commodities, in the Global South.

While this shift of production has led to some increase in per capita income in the supplier countries, it has also meant polluting processes have shifted from the North to the South. For instance, in the garment industry, some 75 per cent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions take place in the manufacturing stage, which is largely located in the South. Competition for employment provided by GVCs means that supplier countries do not consider these increases in GHG emissions. But this shifting of manufacture of goods consumed in the North also means that de-carbonizing consumption in the North depends on the de-carbonizing of manufacture in the South.

There have been some changes in this structure of the global economy. For instance, very few countries have made the advance to high-income countries (HICs), while some input suppliers, mainly the oil-producing countries in OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) have been able to build their own monopoly control of supply to raise prices. But for large-scale or macro overcoming of the joint problems of inequality and climate change, there is a need for reforming global capitalism.

The paper proposes measures for reforming capitalism, including incorporating the hidden costs of labour and the environment into the pricing system to eliminate reverse subsidies. These hidden costs encompass women's unpaid care work and the insufficient coverage of environmental services' reproduction costs, hindering human development and sustainable environmental provision. The operationalization of planetary limits, specifically Net Zero production, is emphasized as a critical step. This approach, applicable to clusters or regions, addresses both local and global effects of production wastes, moving beyond distant carbon offsets.

Additionally, the paper advocates for addressing simultaneous crises by setting boundary conditions for firms and clusters in GVCs, aligning with considerations of equality and climate change requirements. Reforming intellectual monopoly, a hallmark of contemporary capitalism is highlighted as essential for expediting the adoption of low-carbon technologies. The suggestion involves implementing a system of compulsory licensing for critical technologies related to climate change and global health to curb the formation of monopolies.

The paper concludes by underscoring the need to build a global political coalition to drive the reform of capitalism. While acknowledging this requirement, the paper does not delve into further discussion on this aspect.

## Claiming Spaces and Public Services: Collective Action and Identity Politics

**Aashima Sood**, Associate Professor, Anant National University, Ahmedabad

Sustainable Development Goal 11, focusing on cities and communities, highlights the role of urban public services in supporting human development. Against the backdrop of large-scale informality in urban settlement patterns in India, how do communities access social and physical infrastructures of healthcare, education, water, or electricity? Studies suggest that identarian mobilization is a key facilitator of claim-making in informal settlements. At the same time, a growing literature indicates how social identity shapes patterns of social-spatial segregation in Indian cities (Malghan et al 2022). Formal and informal faith-based institutions represent an important arena for the study of what institutionalists call the “rules of the game” configuring collective action in Indian cities. At the same time, identity politics is seen to be a source of competition and conflict over urban resources (Kudva 2009). Not only urban planning and design but also urban policy must remain alert to the possibilities on the one hand, of urban conflict and the other, of co-existence and syncretic cross-pollination (Mahajan and Jodhka 2010). What is the role of faith traditions and neighbourhood places of worship in sharpening or mediating these tensions? What forms of political mobilization does it make possible? This paper draws on a multi-year ethnographic study of devotional singing groups in unauthorized colonies along a major artery of Southeast Delhi to answer these questions. Based on interviews as well as analysis of secondary and official data, the study offers three collective actions and identity politics in urban India. First, places of worship represent an important but overlooked mode of making claims over space in informal neighbourhoods. Second, the pluralization of faith traditions is an unremarked but pervasive feature of these sites. The old and new discursive platforms that allow for these plural traditions to come into dialogue also foster models of collective problem-solving and fluidity in identities. Third, and most important, these “networks of engagement” between identity groups mediate trust and social capital at the neighbourhood scale (Varshney 2001, 2003). The role of faith communities in fostering trust and social capital conducive to collective action within and across identarian boundaries in India remains a vital agenda in human development studies.

## **Achieving Broad-based Human Development in India: Challenges and Way Forward**

**Rajarshi Majumder**, Professor, Department of Economics, University of Burdwan, Burdwan, West Bengal

In 1924, Lord Hewart, the Lord Chief Justice of England, in the case *Rex v. Sussex Justices*, famously proclaimed, “Justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done.” A century later, this dictum, shaping jurisprudence globally, finds an analogous application in the realm of development: “Development must not only happen but must also be seen to have happened.” This aphorism encapsulates the nuanced relationship between Economic Development and Human Development, emphasizing that while the former involves accounting and academia, the latter unequivocally confirms the actual occurrence of development. The transition from economic growth to human development is neither guaranteed nor automatic, requiring suitable public policies to enhance both facets. Policies often harness the synergy between economic and human development, leveraging progress in one to enhance the other. Without such policy complementarities, countries risk unsustainable growth paths.

Over the past two decades, countries in the global south have made significant economic progress, narrowing the gap with developed nations across various macroeconomic indicators. However, the progress in commonly perceivable indicators of human development has been slower. Substantial differences persist between the developed north and the developing south in terms of accessibility and the achievement of quality education. Health parameters, including Life Expectancy and Immunisation coverage, remain lower in the South compared to the North. Intra-country inequality is a key factor contributing to the low average level of human development in developing countries. High and rising inequality within these nations, spanning economic and human development arenas, diminishes the aggregate level of the human development indicator. In this context, understanding the challenges within these countries in achieving sustainable human development goals and formulating effective policies becomes imperative.

This paper addresses the question of what drives inequality in human development levels and explores policies to mitigate these disparities, focusing on the Indian context. Despite significant economic growth, India grapples with inequalities in income, education, skill, and health conditions. The paper

contends that policies driving macroeconomic growth may not be suitable for ensuring the equitable distribution of development benefits at the micro level. To unravel this paradox, the study employs macroeconomic data to illustrate the magnitude of inequality in human development dimensions—education, health, and livelihood—both spatially and at the community and interpersonal levels. It identifies potential obstacles hindering the transformation of recent economic growth into equitable human development and assesses their applicability in the Indian context.

Furthermore, the paper draws on primary field data to examine the link between livelihood, human development, and well-being in a specific region of the country. Case studies evaluate existing governmental schemes, providing insights into policies that effectively uplift the lagging sections of society. Results highlight intergenerational stickiness in education and occupation, a lack of skill formation, insufficient income-earning opportunities at the local level, and a placid business environment as reasons behind unequal human development. The paper underscores the siloed operation of current policies and schemes across government departments, resulting in an unsmooth transition from education to livelihood to human development. A holistic and coordinated approach is recommended for formulating policies, with regular monitoring to identify and support individuals falling through the gaps in the development process.

### **Addressing Nutritional Security Among Tribals in Jharkhand: Some Insights from the Field**

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Nutritional security, a cornerstone of human well-being, remains a formidable challenge in various parts of the world, particularly among marginalized communities. This research delves into the intricate issue of nutritional security among tribal populations in the Indian state of Jharkhand. Our study is

committed to unraveling the intricacies of this challenge, to provide practical recommendations for policymakers and community leaders to formulate effective interventions. Jharkhand, situated in eastern India, houses a substantial tribal population historically grappling with territorial exclusion, socio-economic disparities, malnutrition, and food insecurity. This research paper is informed by extensive fieldwork in tribal-dominated, rural parts of Jharkhand, involving interviews, surveys, focus group discussions, and firsthand observations. It aims to illuminate the distinctive hurdles faced by tribal communities and to propose strategies to bolster their nutritional security. Our research reveals that the nutritional insecurity of tribal communities in Jharkhand is driven by a confluence of social, economic, and environmental factors. These factors include socio-economic disparities, and limited access to education, healthcare, clean drinking water, and sanitation, which perpetuate food insecurity. Furthermore, climate change impacts, deforestation, and erratic rainfall patterns add another layer of complexity, affecting agricultural productivity and exacerbating food scarcity. One salient finding of our study is the deep connection between tribal communities and their traditional dietary habits, intricately interwoven with their cultural heritage and rituals. While preserving this connection to traditional foods is vital, the adoption of diversified and nutritious diets remains the key to achieving nutritional security. The promotion of dietary diversity, respectful of cultural practices and traditions, is therefore pivotal to improving nutritional security among tribal communities in Jharkhand. The research underscores the significance of government and community-driven initiatives in tackling nutritional security. Collaborative efforts encompassing local government entities, NGOs, and tribal leaders can yield more effective and enduring interventions. Programs must be tailored to the specific cultural context and traditional knowledge of the tribal communities, focusing on enhancing agricultural practices, income-generating activities, and raising awareness about nutrition and hygiene. Moreover, improving access to healthcare services and water and sanitation facilities is imperative. This includes not only augmenting such facilities in tribal regions but also ensuring culturally sensitive and accessible services. Of import are maternal and child healthcare programs, essential in reducing malnutrition rates among tribal populations. The paper further emphasizes the necessity of environmental sustainability in tackling nutritional security. Tribal communities, heavily reliant on natural resources, are disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental degradation. Mitigating climate change effects and promoting sustainable management of land and water resources are pivotal in ensuring the long-term food security of these communities. In conclusion, ameliorating nutritional security among tribal communities in Jharkhand is a complex challenge, necessitating a holistic



and culturally sensitive approach. This paper provides field-based insights and proposes a set of recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to devise effective strategies for enhancing the nutritional security of tribal communities. By focusing on community-based initiatives, healthcare access, sustainable agriculture, and environmental conservation, it is plausible to make substantial progress in mitigating malnutrition and food insecurity among Jharkhand's tribal population, all while preserving their unique cultural heritage.”

## **Equality of Opportunity as a Driver of Innovation: Conceptualisation and Cross-country Econometric Evidence**

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**Amit Shovon Ray**, Professor Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

Innovation and creativity have been a key driver of economic growth and prosperity. Economists and policymakers have long focused primarily on economic factors such as resources and relative prices as the determinants of innovation. Social structures can play an important role in creating an enabling environment for innovation to flourish has received relatively little attention in the innovation literature. This paper attempts to focus on an unconventional and less-researched driver of innovation: Equality of opportunity (EOO). EOO is essential for innovation. An inclusive society that provides equal opportunity to all its members to pursue and nurture their innate talents and capabilities has a distinct advantage in generating better innovation outputs than an unequal society fraught with social discrimination. This paper conceptualises in detail how inequality of opportunity can stunt innovation in unequal societies through various channels, such as suboptimal human capital accumulation and allocation, limiting diversity in the research workforce, and limited possibilities and benefits of decentralizing innovation. Based on this conceptualization, the paper tests the hypothesis that EOO promotes innovation using cross-country econometric analysis. The extant empirical literature on the role of EOO in innovation is limited to anecdotal and micro-level (country-specific) evidence. This paper addresses this gap by conceptualizing a general macro-level causal relationship between EOO and innovation and estimating it in a research production function framework using cross-country econometric evidence. We formulate testable hypotheses regarding the impact of EOO on innovation output for given levels of innovation infrastructure, as well as possible moderation effects determined

by contextual factors. The paper develops a comprehensive and quantifiable measure of EOO at the country level by combining various global databases into an index using the principal component analysis technique. The paper then estimates a research production function, positing aggregate innovation output as a function of research infrastructure and EOO after controlling for a host of covariates and correcting for potential endogeneity using the 2SLS-Instrument variable regression method. The econometric results show that EOO has a strong positive and significant effect on innovation output. The paper also finds that the degree to which EOO affects knowledge and technology output is different from the degree to which it affects creative output. EOO plays a more important role in creative output than in knowledge output and technology output. However, EOO continues to have a positive and statistically significant effect on overall innovation output. Two robustness checks are also performed to check the validity of the results. The first robustness check involves taking the logarithmic transformation of all variables to account for potential non-linearity. The second robustness check involves using an alternative measure of EOO. However, the results do not change and are not found to be sensitive to the choice of model specification and the measure of EOO. The econometric results (with robustness checks) firmly establish the hypothesis that EOO acts as a key positive driver of national innovation. The paper concludes that social justice aiming at equal opportunity provides a positive impetus to growth and prosperity through facilitating creativity and innovation.

## Technical Session 10

### Equity and Inclusion

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#### Human Development of Scheduled Tribes in India: Converging in Basic Indicators?

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**Sarathi Acharya**, Delhi Government Chair Professor on Human Development, Institute for Human Development (IHD), New Delhi

The Scheduled Tribes (ST) in India represent the highest diversity in cultural and economic dimensions, which is quite distinct from the heterogeneity that is seen across other social groups in India. Historically they have lived in relative isolation and are mostly found in forest and hilly terrains. The category of STs exhibits significant variations across regions and even within specific regions as it encompasses several groups that are culturally and, in some cases, racially distinct from each other as well as from the majority of the Indian population.

The recognition since colonial times of their distinct historical-cultural context and socio-economic vulnerability vis-à-vis the caste-Hindu populations has informed protective administrative policy. Since independence, the same reasons culminated in securing special status in the Constitution of India with different administrative provisions and special protections and guarantees to safeguard their habitat rights and promote welfare. Despite special protections and affirmative provisions, on the one hand, and living amidst seemingly abundant natural resources, on the other, the ST communities are generally lower on the human development scale compared to other social groups in the country.

An earlier report of the UNDP (Factsheet 2011) finds human development indicators of the STs to be 54% lower than that of the other communities in India. During the last two decades, it appears that there have been better efforts by state and central governments to improve basic standards of living across social groups through various welfare measures. Recently, there have been special attempts at attaining 'saturation' in targeting the benefits of welfare schemes and providing basic services to all particularly to groups such as STs including the PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups). In this context, our presentation critically analyses the status and trends in human development parameters of STs, which is part of IHD's research in preparing the ST Human Development Report 2023.

1. The HDI of STs is lower compared with non-STs at the all-India level, with a seven-percentage point gap between the ST-HDI values and non-ST-HDI values (2019-21).
2. The overall HD status of the STs in the Eastern and Central states is relatively low compared to that in the Northeast and the Sub-Himalayan states. Specifically, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal fall in the group of states with low HD; Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana fall in the medium level; and Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Assam and other North-eastern states fall in the relatively high HD levels.
3. The HDI figure for the STs falls when it is adjusted for income inequality. The extent of this reduction ranges from 4% to more than 10%. States with relatively lower HDI such as Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand exhibit greater loss in HDI stemming from inequality, while the states in Sub-Himalayan and the North-eastern regions with higher HDI status exhibit lower loss in the index on this count. More equitable income distribution thus can raise HDI in states exhibiting low HDI.
4. A component-specific decomposition of HDI for STs suggests that income and nutrition are important components contributing to the indices. Enhancing livelihoods through employment and income generation are possible pathways for improving livelihoods and incomes. The component-specific analysis also suggests that the rankings of the three components of HDI are not the same. Implications: The policy priorities of states should be according to the felt shortfalls from time to time.
5. There are large gaps in education between the STs and non-STs, though the gaps are not limited to education alone. There is a need for special attention and policies to bridge multiple divides.

6. STs in peninsular India have a higher incidence of poverty and a larger share of the population in the poorest wealth classes. Interestingly, an analysis based on data from satellite images suggests that there is a faster rate of growth of night-light emissions in the areas inhabited by STs. What does this change exactly mean for STs – is it an indicator of progress, and, whether the increase is in street or domestic light or industrial light or all of these— needs more careful assessment.

Various government programmes and “positive discrimination” initiatives targeting the improvement of Scheduled Tribes (ST) communities and their integration into the development process appear to have had an impact. Nevertheless, there is a necessity to amplify and tailor these efforts to specific local contexts for more significant success.

### **Tribal Sub-Plan as Strategy for Inclusive Tribal Development: Challenges and Opportunity**

**Ramesh Sharan**, Director, Institute for Human Development (IHD) Eastern Regional Centre, Ranchi

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After independence, the special needs of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) communities, considering their marginalization, deprivation, very low socio-economic status, and strong cultural differences, were acknowledged. The Constitution of India includes special provisions for safeguarding and developing the STs. The government, recognizing their unique requirements, adopted a special strategy for the rapid improvement of their states. The Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) is one of the most ambitious strategies in this regard, initiated in 1974-75, and has undergone various changes in its implementation and strategy. It supposed to be a critical financial instrument for supporting the development, empowerment, and inclusion of ST communities, it is also termed as a development action for Scheduled Tribes (ST) or Scheduled Tribe Component (STC) within the budget. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana have enacted laws on TSP to ensure that allocated funds are used for the development of tribals, while Odisha has a draft law. Maharashtra and Gujarat have developed special models for tribal development, and Jharkhand has initiated some reforms related to TSP.

The ultimate goal of TSP is to empower and include the reduction of historical disadvantages, facilitating equal participation in the overall development of the country. Despite these provisions, tribal communities continue to be marginalized, judging from various development indicators, and remain at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder.

The TSP faces numerous challenges, including inadequate allocation, ineffective implementation, and limited participation of tribal communities. One significant issue is the unspent funds or their misuse for purposes that do not directly benefit the tribal communities.

The challenges faced by the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for inclusive tribal development are diverse. Some of the main challenges are first; insufficient allocation of funds hinders the effective implementation of targeted development programs and initiatives. Secondly, limited infrastructure and connectivity in many tribal areas hinder the delivery of essential services, education, healthcare, and skill development programs. Thirdly, land-related issues, including alienation and displacement of tribal communities, continue to impede their sustainable development, exacerbating poverty and marginalization. Fourthly, implementing development projects that respect and integrate tribal cultures can be challenging, requiring a nuanced approach to balance modernization with the preservation of indigenous practices. Lastly, there is a lack of awareness among tribal communities about the benefits and opportunities provided by the Tribal Sub-Plan, resulting in low participation and hindering the overall success of development initiatives.

However, challenges also present opportunities for the advancement and progress of tribal communities. Some of the major opportunities are highlighted in the following section. First, leveraging the traditional governance structures of the tribal community and encouraging active participation can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of development projects. Second, focusing on skill development and promoting diversified livelihood options can economically empower tribal communities, reducing dependency on traditional, often unsustainable, livelihoods. Third, targeted investing in education and healthcare infrastructure can uplift the overall well-being of tribal communities, breaking the cycle of poverty and improving the quality of life. Fourth, harnessing technology for education, healthcare, and skill development can bridge the gap between tribal and non-tribal regions, fostering economic growth and access to information. Fifth, addressing land-related issues through secure land rights and sustainable forest governance can contribute to the preservation of tribal cultures and ecosystems while promoting responsible economic activities.

In conclusion, while the Tribal Sub-Plan faces challenges, there are significant opportunities for inclusive tribal development. By addressing these challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities, policymakers and implementers can contribute to the empowerment and sustainable development of tribal communities, fostering a more equitable and just society. For the holistic development of the tribal community, which stands at the crossroads of challenges and opportunities, acknowledging the challenges, exploring the opportunities, having a holistic approach, community-centric and inclusive development, balancing inclusive and sustainable development, continuous improvement with a dynamic framework that evolves with time, and actively empowering the tribals in their own development are themes that pave the way forward for inclusive tribal development with the Tribal Sub-Plan.

## **Leaving No One Behind Ambition of the SDGs: Reaching the Ultra Poor in Rural Bihar**

**Meera Tiwari**, Professor, University of East London, United Kingdom

This study examines how the ultra-poor households that had tenaciously remained untouched by the numerous developmental interventions in rural Bihar in India, have been included in the targeted schemes since 2018. In 2020 between 9.1% -9.4 % global population was estimated to be ultra-poor or living in extreme poverty. They experience extreme multidimensional poverty and are severely capability deprived unable to access any opportunities and public service provision. There are several government safety net programmes, and large-scale government livelihood programmes that are targeted at the poor, however, many of these programmes do not reach the ultra-poor and the most vulnerable. The state-supported women's Self-Help Group network Jeevika with over a million members, has been acclaimed for its empowering platform, and also effective in mobilising the poorest (ultra-poor) women in rural Bihar. Yet, the ongoing data shows that 34.4 per cent of the state population lives below the poverty line and that 5 per cent of ultra-poor households get left out.

Cognizant of the significant proportion of ultra-poor households, the Government of Bihar launched a targeted scheme 'Satat Jivikoparjan Yojana' – SJY to graduate 100 thousand households out of ultra-poverty in 2018, scaling up to 200 thousand by 2024. The proposed study revisits the SYJ framework within the 'Leave No One Behind' literature and the ambition of the SDGs in the context of

rural Bihar. The investigation draws on primary data using mixed methods from a sample of 1000 SYJ participant households for quantitative analysis and in-depth interviews of 30 SYJ participating women. It is envisaged that the findings of this study will help in identifying policy pathways and conversion factors that enable the most capability-deprived households to sustainably springboard into secure livelihoods, social inclusion and social mobility. Given that the state remains home to the highest number of multidimensional poor in the country, the capability-enhancing framework of SYJ has particular state-level relevance in the efforts to boost Bihar's progress in achieving the SDGs with a focus on meeting the Left No-one Behind aspiration of the SDGs. The findings have further implications in the wider context of lifting the ultra-poor out of poverty traps within India as well as within several countries in the Global South.

### **Understanding Child Malnutrition in India: A Spatial Analysis Incorporating Sociodemographic, Environmental Factors, and Machine Learning Approaches**

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Achieving greater societal equity and inclusivity necessitates a profound understanding and resolution of poverty at the grassroots level. Poverty is an intricate, multifaceted concern that exerts profound influences on the lives of those ensnared by its grasp. In order to holistically address this issue, a multidimensional approach that takes into account diverse facets contributing to poverty is imperative. The present study seeks to delve into and evaluate multidimensional poverty at the village level through an empirically driven methodology, with specific emphasis on the Indian state of Jharkhand. In the pursuit of comprehending and ameliorating poverty, a diverse array of data sources has been harnessed. To gain comprehensive insights into the living circumstances and well-being of rural inhabitants, we have harnessed seven fundamental variables sourced from Earth observation data. These variables encompass land use land cover, NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index),



Nightlight, Rainfall, DEM (Digital Elevation Model), LST (Land Surface Temperature), and Distance. These Earth observation metrics afford a comprehensive depiction of the natural and physical environment, thereby aiding in the delineation of the complex interplay between environmental factors and poverty. Nonetheless, a holistic portrait of poverty mandates the incorporation of socio-economic variables. To address this imperative, socio-economic data, meticulously derived and constructed from the Census of India 2011, have been integrated. These data elements encompass the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), information pertaining to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes populations, the overall population of the villages, and the proportion of the population engaged in agricultural activities. These socio-economic parameters yield invaluable insights into the human and social dimensions of poverty, thus facilitating the establishment of connections between environmental determinants and the well-being of the local populace. Our research is centred on the state of Jharkhand, India, an illustrative case study offering a compelling backdrop for the analysis of multidimensional poverty. This region is characterized by its rich tapestry of cultural diversity juxtaposed with socio-economic disparities, rendering it an ideal context for an in-depth exploration of the intricate web of factors contributing to poverty. The overarching objective is to disentangle the complexities inherent to this multifaceted concern and, in doing so, to contribute to a broader discourse on inclusion and equity. To distil meaningful insights from this profusion of data and provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between environmental and socio-economic factors, a Random Forest model—a potent machine learning technique—has been employed. The Random Forest model enables the meticulous analysis of poverty dynamics, offering a comprehensive perspective of the intricate relationships at play within this multifaceted landscape. Through the discernment of patterns and associations inherent to the data, we aspire to offer targeted recommendations and policy insights to steer interventions aimed at elevating marginalized communities from the clutches of poverty. In a global landscape where the pursuit of a more equitable and inclusive future is paramount, reliance upon data-driven insights is imperative. Our research is deeply rooted in the tangible challenges faced by rural denizens of Jharkhand, rendering it an invaluable resource for policymakers, non-governmental organizations, and entities dedicated to poverty alleviation. By approaching poverty from a multidimensional, data-informed perspective, we aspire to pave the way for more effective and enduring interventions that empower communities and foster genuine social inclusion. Ultimately, our study underscores the transformative potential of data in the endeavour to construct a brighter, more equitable future, commencing at the village level.”

## Technical Session 11

# Economic Growth and Human Development Linkages

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### **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM): Impact on India's Steel Exports to the EU and Carbon Tax Incidence**

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The iron and steel (I&S) sector contributes majorly in the production of materials for vehicles, construction and machinery. Global steel production is increasing with the world share of steel exports falling to 22%. Since this sector also accounts for about 8% of the total emissions, numerous major steel-producing countries have implemented policy initiatives aimed at decarbonizing the steel sector. The EU, being a net steel importer, has taken measures to limit its domestic carbon emissions through stringent commitments. Given that international trade of goods contributes to about 27% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the EU intends to control embedded emissions from imported goods. This is proposed through the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) as part of the European Green Deal, a component of the 'Fit for 55' package. However, this mechanism could potentially have negative effects on the growth and trade prospects of

developing economies like India, which is a net steel exporter with a diversified supply chain. This impact depends on the extent of substitution possible by the EU and other countries for Indian steel exports. The present study using a partial equilibrium approach estimates the export demand and supply responsiveness with changes in the prices of the product. Using these estimates, an estimate of the effect of CBAM on India's exports of steel products to the EU is made. A more detailed analysis is undertaken by applying the ICRIER Samriddhi Model (GTAP-E based) which evaluates the impact of the imposition of CBAM on India's steel exports, thus indicating a pathway that India should adopt if the EU imposes carbon border tax. The results of the study indicate that CBAM is likely to have a major impact on India's steel exports to the EU, causing a fall in India's steel exports to the EU in the range of 8 to 14% which in certain circumstances could go even up to 34%. The paper also gauges if the imposition of CBAM would lead to a significant reduction in carbon emissions and finds that a reduction of 1% in aggregate emissions will take place in the global steel industry.

## **District Development Index: A Study of Maharashtra's Inter-District Developmental Disparities**

**Savita Kulkarni**, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune

The present study intends to understand the disparity in district-wise development level in Maharashtra by constructing a composite index. The erstwhile economic and social development and created infrastructural capacity were considered key dimensions of regional development. Six indicators representing achievements and another set of six indicators reflecting the availability of infrastructure were chosen to construct the dimension-specific sub-indices. These were further aggregated using Geometric Mean to bring in complementarity between them. Each indicator carried equal weights in the index. The government of Maharashtra's District Economic and Social Review for 34 districts (excluding Mumbai-Suburban and Palghar) for 2021 were used along with some frequently-updated official datasets as the key information sources. The key findings are consistent with the larger literature on district-wise variation in economic and social performance. Mumbai (city and suburban region), Pune, and Nagpur were the top performers while selected districts in Marathwada and Vidarbha were ranked towards the other end. The strength of the index lies in the potentiality of the disintegrated analysis of socio-economic developmental outcomes and infrastructural availability at the district level with the most recent data. With annual updation of the data by the

government, the index will also capture the changes in index scores as well as district ranking annually.

## **Deciphering Trade Characteristics and Fragility: ASEAN+3's Trade Networks in the Wake of Global Crises**

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**Prabheesh K.P.**, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad

This paper explores the intricacies of trade dynamics and the vulnerability of global goods trade within the ASEAN region, alongside India, China, and Japan, particularly under the strains of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the pandemic's most significant impacts was the reduction in international trade due to disruptions in supply chains. Because economies are highly interdependent due to the global value chains (GVCs) and, any disruptions not only affect the trade relations but also expose the inherent fragilities in these networks. The ASEAN+3 countries, due to their intensive trade relations and supply chain integrations with China, find themselves at a crucial juncture, facing heightened vulnerabilities to trade shocks. It necessitates a comprehensive exploration of the ASEAN region's trade structures, competition patterns, and the nature of its interconnected economies' vulnerability and resilience to crises. The primary objectives of this study are twofold. Firstly, it analyzes the trade competitiveness and complementarity between the ASEAN+3 countries and their trade partners. This involves employing trade network analysis to assess how these nations compete and complement each other in the global market. The study utilizes the Export Similarity Index (ESI) and Trade Complementarity Index (TCI), alongside multidimensional cluster analysis, to unravel complex trade patterns and identify distinct clusters within these relationships. The second objective is to examine the fragility of these trade networks and propose effective policy measures tailored for the ASEAN+3 countries. This includes measuring the riskiness of products and the intensity of shocks before and after the pandemic and analysing how specific sectors within different countries have responded to these external shocks. For this purpose, the study harnesses bilateral goods trade data from 2010 to 2021, sourced from the International Trade Centre (ITC), and applies Harmonised System (HS) 6-digit level goods classification. Network analysis is employed to determine the fragility

of these trade networks, focusing on factors such as central players, clustering tendencies, and transnational substitutability. Furthermore, the study explores the concept of shock propagation within these trade networks, using a forward propagation model to understand better how trade shocks spread and influence interconnected economies. The ultimate aim is to offer insights and strategies to enhance these economies' resilience against future global crises, thereby contributing to a more robust and sustainable global trade environment. This study sheds light on the current state of ASEAN+3 trade dynamics and provides a roadmap for mitigating vulnerabilities and strengthening economic ties in an increasingly interconnected world."

## **Foreign Direct Investment in Romania Over Three Decades: The Experience of a Transition Country**

**Nicolae Marinescu**, Professor, Transylvania University of Brasov, Romania

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), including Romania, has been a source of debate and investigation ever since these countries emerged from the Communist regime. The aim of this paper is to analyze the evolution and main traits of FDI received by Romania during three decades (1990–2019) and the occurring economic impact. Research objectives include the comparison with other countries in the CEE region and the way in which FDI inflows have evolved related to the country's privatization process of state-owned companies and its integration into European production chains. To this end, statistical data is considered and various methods and research instruments are employed to collect, process and interpret the results. On the macroeconomic side, foreign direct investment has registered a consistent upward pace, especially after the year 2000, reaching a record in 2008, the second year after Romania's accession to the European Union. Furthermore, the results of the research indicate that through the transferred benefits, namely capital, technology, modern management, and stable jobs among others, FDI has contributed to an enhanced competitiveness of the Romanian economy. Findings reveal the particularly close relationship between FDI and the privatization process, with its ups and downs. Privatization has been one of the pillars of transforming the transition countries from socialist centralized economies into capitalist market economies. At the same time, the research sheds light on the outmost important role played by the European Union in transforming the Romanian business environment via FDI and via economic

linkages of supply chain type. In conclusion, one can state with increased certainty that the positive effects of inward FDI to Romania have clearly outweighed the eventual negative sides. However, when a broader set of indicators is considered, the positive effects may be overestimated. The empirical results derived from the author's research suggest that decision-makers in the CEE region must always carefully consider the side effects of the policy measures they design, in order to find alternative solutions destined to overcome potential negative effects brought by FDI. Key terms: foreign direct investment, Central and Eastern Europe, privatization, Romania, transition”

## **Inclusive Development and Persisting Challenges: Mapping the South Indian Story**

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The South Indian pattern of development is receiving much attention in the recent times not just for its achievements in development indicators, but also for the politics, separate as it is, displayed by the region. In this paper, we examine the development trajectories of South India to explore the economic growth and human development linkages that the region amply demonstrates in varying degrees. The region, which comprises 5 states, namely Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana is being considered here. To begin with, we have the well-noted Kerala model of development, an expression largely characterising the state's high human development despite lagging in economic growth. The scenario, however, changed by the turn of the twentieth century and economic growth picked up too, giving us the demonstration of the back-and-forth linkages of human development and economic growth. So is the case of Tamil Nadu, which some scholars refer to as the Dravidian model, where again economic growth and human development linkages are strong. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana had considerable agricultural, industrial and infrastructural performance to begin with, but in recent years have shown increasing zest for improving their social indicators with active government intervention. Karnataka is known for its technology led growth as well as decentralised planning in the rural areas. These five states are clubbed together as South India, quite often to show its distinctiveness from its North Indian counterparts in terms of its inclusive development reflected in the better reach of its human development among the masses. This paper compares selected socio-economic indicators to assess how far the case of the South Indian model of inclusive development can be

made. It also looks at the persisting challenges faced by these states in their development trajectories. Kerala for decades had the problem of unemployment and fiscal stress to deal with; As for Tamil Nadu, caste violence, avowedly higher corruption in government offices, drought and shortage of water, farm crises and displacement-related issues often make their way to headlines. Among the issues of Karnataka, central is its regional imbalances where the size of the first city is many times larger than the second city. Much of the acclaim of the state comes from the city of Bangalore, implying a concentration of capital in the city. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana also are noted for their regional imbalances and strife with each other with regard to the sharing of resources. Besides, each and every state has to juggle with concerns on quality be it that of education, health care, employment and environment along with the serious issue of the low labour force participation and low employment status of women. Another common challenge faced by the South Indian states is regarding the centre-state fiscal transfers which have a punitive impact on better performing states.

## Technical Session 12

# Livelihood Security & Decent Employment

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### Rethinking the 'shifts' in the neoliberal development agenda: insights for a political economy of NREGA

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The neoliberal agenda for developing countries has been characterized over time by the 'shift' from the Washington consensus (WC) to the post-Washington consensus (PWC) and, subsequently, by the emergence of the paradigm of Inclusive Growth (IG). Starting from a reflection on the 'shifts' in the mainstream of development in the light of the Gramscian concept of 'integral State', it will be argued that these 'shifts' signalled, inter alia, the presence of a fresh focus on the issue of hegemony, in response to the recognized need to (re)create consent around the neoliberal social order. More specifically, the PWC and the IG paradigm can be considered, on the one hand, the bearers of a re-articulated 'common sense' on corruption as one of the major causes of poverty, which contributed to a continuous marginalization of structural explanations of poverty. On the other hand, they can be considered the bearers of a new 'common sense' on social policies, propagating a notion of the latter fundamentally reduced to targeted anti-poverty programmes, in a scenario that discouraged interventions which could potentially increase the bargaining power of labour relative to capital.

Starting from this terrain, which acknowledges that within the Gramscian intellectual horizon, social processes are never univocal, and the 'integral State' is also a locus of struggle for hegemony, we aim at offering some reflections on the political economy of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)



passed in India under a ruling coalition, which embraced the IG paradigm. This implies an attempt aimed at highlighting the possible tensions that emerged over time around NREGA within different components of the Indian society, bearers of different social demands and different agendas on social and labour policies. More specifically, this means exploring the tensions unfolding within those components of the Indian society which proposed and supported a formulation – and implementation – of the Act informed by a structural understanding of the causes of poverty and an ensuing comprehension of social policies as one of the means through which improving the bargaining power of the ‘classes of labour’ on the hand; and, on the other hand, those social components of the Indian society geared towards the government of poverty and inequality under the neoliberal social order.

## **Performance of the MGNREGA Scheme in Odisha: Evidence from Performance Index Analysis**

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Social welfare schemes are useful for socio-economic development and inclusive growth in any economy. Since its implementation in 2006 in India, the MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) scheme has been becoming an important scheme mainly in rural areas for employment generation, asset creation and other purposes. More than 80% of people in Odisha reside in rural areas, the majority of whom are economically poor. More than 70% depend on agricultural activities. Odisha’s labour force participation rate is slightly higher than the national level. Odisha contributes about 56.5% to the labour force participation rate compared to the 54.9% in the country. So, it is important to examine the performance of a social scheme like MGNREGA. The main objectives of the paper are (i) to examine the performances of the MGNREGA scheme with respect to employment generation and asset creation in Odisha, and (ii) to examine how the scheme has been contributing towards the livelihood or living standard of the rural population. The present study is based on secondary data from 2014-15 to 2022-23. For the analysis of MGNREGA performances, an index known as the performance index (PI) has been constructed based on some indicators such as employment generated, financial progress, gender participation (skill and unskilled), and work completion rate. Since indicators

have different units and are non-comparable directly, before constructing PI, data values were normalized through the max min/min max method. This index value lies between 0 and 1, zero indicates the worst performance, and one indicates the best performance of MGNREGA. An analysis is done inter-district, across districts and at the state level of Odisha. Based on the values of PI, districts were divided into four categories – best performance district (1.00 to 0.75), moderate performance district (0.74 to 0.50), low performing district (0.49 to 0.25) and very low performing district (0.24 to 0). The study found that in many economically poor and backward regions, the overall performance of MGNREGA is better than in the developed districts of Odisha. The analysis from the PI values found that people in economically poor or backward districts are participating much more in MGNREGA schemes in terms of employment generation, asset creation, and gender participation of skilled and unskilled workers. The scheme has been very important for the living standard and empowerment of a large proportion of the rural population because it has been providing employment and income generation, eradicating poverty, reducing distress migration, and gender equality to the vulnerable sections. In addition to gender equality in the MGNREGA scheme, there is a provision for equal wages for equal work. There is no discrimination in wages based on gender. During the COVID-19 crisis, this scheme was the only source of income for the migrant population and many rural people. Despite some limitations, this scheme is going to be an important scheme for employment generation and asset creation in rural areas of Odisha. However, the scheme requires proper implementation in every district, an efficient fund transfer mechanism, and systematic monitoring.

## **Rajasthan Gig Workers Act: Issues and Prospects**

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India, being one of the world's most populous nations, relies heavily on its diverse labour force to drive economic growth and development. In recent years, there has been a notable surge in gig workers, adding to the complexity and dynamism of the informal sector. Recently Rajasthan became the first state in India to

propose a legislative framework for gig workers, titled “Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Act, 2023”, which aims at providing social security to gig workers by establishing a welfare cess deduction mechanism to be integrated with the aggregator app. Against this background, the current paper analyses the status and issues of gig workers, in particular the issues that led to the adoption of this law, the implications of the Act including the importance of enhanced welfare of gig workers. Its broad aims are to: 1. Assess the potential impact of the Act on gig workers’ welfare, 2. Contribute to enhanced understanding and awareness generation among the relevant stakeholders of the importance of the Act, and 3. Provide recommendations for better implementation of the Act and learnings for other states/central government of India. The methodology followed by the paper includes 1. Studying the Act, and existing papers, articles, reports, acts, and bills to understand the present scenario, potential implications, and existing gaps, and 2. Primary research in Jaipur, Rajasthan to understand the on-the-ground challenges among the stakeholders, awareness of the Act, and potential barriers to the effective implementation of the Act. This component includes surveys on gig workers and primary employers or aggregators, and key Informative Interviews (KIIs) with the concerned departments in the Government of Rajasthan to have a holistic view of Sarkaar (the government), Samaaj (the gig workers), and Bazaar (the primary employers or aggregators). The paper highlights the findings on the on-the-ground picture of the gig workers and the gig economy. This will lead to a better understanding of the critique (viewpoints) of the relevant stakeholders and an understanding of measures needed for better and effective implementation of the Act. Broad findings and recommendations of the paper are: Firstly, it is important to sensitize gig workers about relevant elements of the Act. Secondly, it is important to extend healthcare benefits and insurance coverage to gig workers, especially in cases of accidents and medical emergencies. Companies can partner with insurance providers to offer affordable and comprehensive coverage. Thirdly, the central government should fund research initiatives to gather insights into the gig economy’s impact and gig workers’ welfare. Sharing best practices and lessons learned among states can lead to better policy outcomes. Fourthly, collaborate with educational institutions and vocational training centres to provide skill development programs for gig workers. This will empower them to enhance their employability and transition into other roles if needed.

## **Responsible Management of Safety Regulations Compliance in Local Municipalities of South Africa**

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Management of the safety of employees in any organization is an obligation that must be complied with by both employers and employees at the workplace. In this article, safety relates to the physical condition in the workplace and applies to a situation or condition where the chances of harm and damage have been correctly managed to remove or reduce to a tolerable level. Risk on the other hand refers to the management of the likelihood or severity relating to the danger that a worker and employer are facing in the execution of their daily activities. As such, through proper management, the likelihood of lowering and the severity of exposure of employees and employers to danger increases the safety of employees in the workplace. Organizations should change from regarding or treating safety as the absence of negatives, or no harmful incidents in the workplace, but rather to regarding safety as the presence of capacity and capability to positively manage and react to incidences that pose risks in the workplace. Observing and implementing safety regulations in the workplace saves lives increases productivity, and reduces costs. However, organizations may encounter numerous incidences that claim lives due to failure in management, negligence, and failure to abide by safety regulations as well as the risks posed by working in hazardous environments. This raises concerns about whether organisations, where these incidences occur, do manage and comply with legislation on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) as a requirement in the workplace as set out in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa as stated in a report by the International Labour Organisation. In addition to the Constitutional provisions, organisations are obliged to develop internal policies to manage and enforce safety regulations in the workplace. Hence, the development of a safety culture within an organisation as an avenue for promoting occupational safety at the workplace is very important with the availability of the proper human resources to drive safety. The objective of the study was to establish context-specific management strategies for the implementation of safety regulations in South Africa. The study was qualitative and the research design was descriptive. A total of 210 respondents were drawn from 536 employees by a Local Municipality in South Africa. Findings reveal municipality workers most exposed to hazardous environments were

linked to waste water and water treatment, maintenance of infrastructure, fire environment as well as roads and storm water environments compared to municipal administrators. The study found challenges associated with a lack of safety equipment and supervision to hamper compliance by employees to safety regulations at Municipality levels. The study suggests management initiates constant monitoring, safety orientation, and training of employees to enhance compliance with safety legislation continuously to entrenched safety culture. Such a strategy will reduce the risk of non-compliance with safety within the municipality work environment. Municipalities must ensure the enforcement of compliance with safety regulations through education and continuous training of employees on occupational safety. The study recommends municipal councils and management devise strategies to enforce supervision and enforce compliance with safety rules and legislation. Further research in this domain may investigate collaborative ways of implementing safety regulations in the workplace.

## Technical Session 13

# Gender Equality, Work and Labour Market

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### Women's Work in Rural India and the Role of Government Schemes

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India not only recorded one of the lowest women labour force participation rates (LFPR) in the world but also lower than many South Asian countries except Afghanistan and Pakistan. Periodic Labour Force Survey data indicates that for the working age group (15–59 years), women, LFPR is only 35.6 per cent in India with the participation rate being at 39.3 per cent and 26.5 per cent respectively in rural and urban areas in 2021–22. Moreover, over the period (2017 to 2021), women's LFPR increased more relative to men, that too in rural areas compared to urban because of the larger engagement of rural women in agriculture. Education and age group-wise classification of LFPR reveals that the recent increase in rural women's LFPR is entirely explained by the increase in self-employment with low levels of education and among elderly women. Among the working, nearly, three-fourths of rural women are involved in agriculture and allied activities and more than half of them work as unpaid family helpers (working in household business without getting any payment) in India during 2021–22. Rural women working as regular and casual wage workers faced a higher gender wage gap compared to urban women and self-employed women received less than half of men's earnings indicating a higher gender earning gap as compared to another category of workers in rural areas. Now apart from rural women workers, a significant proportion of women are involved in unpaid but essential activities and are not considered within the labour force in India. Though this proportion has declined from 60 per cent in 2017–18 to 46 per cent

in 2021-22 because of the decline in women's engagement in only domestic chores, still in rural areas, one-third of women are engaged in unpaid domestic chores like cooking, cleaning and other housework, taking care of children, sick and elderly in 2021-22. The Time Use Survey (2019) reveals that on average, women spend daily more than five hours in unpaid domestic services and more than two hours in unpaid caregiving services in rural areas which is substantially more as compared to men spending time in such activities. Recently, there has been a shift in the Union government's expenditure towards agriculture and the allied sector as cash-based schemes account for major proportions of the Union Government's budget and more emphasis has been put upon an Individual-centric approach. Various schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) are initiated by the Union Government under the Income Support and Risk Management category whose expenditure has increased from 13 per cent in 2015-16 to 73 per cent in 2023-24 and allocations for agriculture in the Union Budgets have signalled a high priority for these two schemes particularly. But the gender-wise beneficiary data highlights that only 15 per cent of women farmers received financial support from PMFBY in 2023 and only 25 per cent of women farmers received financial benefits under PM-KISAN. Since land owning is the major criterion for getting benefits from these two schemes many women farmers are excluded from such schemes.

## **Female Political Representation and Female Labour Market Outcomes: Evidence from State Assembly Elections in India.**

**Deepika Sharma**, Assistant Professor, TPS College Patliputra University, Patna, Bihar

**Deepak Behera**, Associate Professor, National Institute of Technology Patna, Patna, Bihar

The paper tries to explore the role model effect of female political representatives as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) on the female labour force participation. Expanding female political representation and leadership roles involves structural transformation at all levels of society and to achieve this, many countries have adopted gender quotas and legal reforms. In India, like

many other countries of the world, women's representation in parliament and legislative bodies is far from parity. The objective of the paper is to study the long-term impact of female politicians as MLAs at the district level on the female labour force participation rate. The paper tries to determine the causal effect of female political leaders of 15 select states of India over the last 15 years on Female Labour force Participation. In order to derive this causality, Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS) data of 2021-22 have been used to study the long-term impact of female politicians (MLAs) between 2005 and 2021 across 300 districts in India on the minds of young female cohorts during that period. The age group of the female cohort were between 10 years to 25 years. The study involves two stages of least squares estimates (2SLS) by taking care of the endogeneity through the use of instrument variables (IVs). The 2SLS estimates reveal that a 1% increase in female political representation as MLAs leads to a 0.3% increase in the likelihood of women working in the regular salaried category in the case of principal status employment, while in the case of self-employment, it leads to 0.16% increase. Since OLS estimates of FLPR under the regular salaried category are biased downwards hence 2SLS estimates were used to get consistent results. Dwelling upon the policy perspectives, we should bring in, a more inclusive policy mechanism, and a congenial environment for women to join politics which directly influences female economic participation under the regular salaried category in the case of India. Both from policy perspectives and role model effect the result goes on to conclude that women taking leadership roles have a positive impact on society as a whole in the medium to long term by affecting regular salaried employment. Empowering women politically improves women's economic status and well-being, control over resources, decision making and bargaining power substantially.

### **Situating Women in the Urban Narratives on Communal Conflict in India: A Critical Feminist Perspective on Agency, Victimhood and Development**

**Hrudaya Chandana Kamasani**, PhD Scholar, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

This paper aims to understand how women in 'communal' neighbourhoods engage in the ethnic conflict discourse. It also aims to explore the consequences of narratives such as the 'weak or virtuous woman' on the worldview and living conditions of the women residing in these neighbourhoods. The research paper



is a result of a larger doctoral study and analyses relevant information gathered from one-year intensive ethnography in two field sites, namely, the Madannapet colony in Hyderabad, Telangana, and the town of Bhatkal in Karnataka using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. It is based on an interdisciplinary approach and theoretical frameworks that can describe the multidimensional role of women in ethnic conflict. By using a Subcultures of Violence framework, the author identifies values and beliefs (religious, social, and cultural) that contribute to women's agency not only in engagement with violence but the developmental, rehabilitation, and reconciliation efforts thereafter. The paper notes that although ethnocentric values are prejudicial, in the absence of targeted social and economic progress to combat them, the hostility will not only persist but grow deeper into the social psyche. This mode of inquiry departs from viewing ethnic violence as episodic and engages with it as a social phenomenon that can be resolved by addressing underlying grievances that precipitate violent encounters. The author takes a Critical Feminist approach to analyse the local grievances of female respondents in the conflict-ravaged areas juxtaposing them with the positionality of women in the master narratives in India. It accomplishes this in two ways. Firstly, by engaging with the female respondents of the study as participants with the agency in the ethnic conflict that can make political choices and with their interpretations of ethnocentric values. Secondly, it examines the patriarchal notions that glorify 'female virtues' as a means of subjugation of women of their religious community and targeting the women of the ethnic other. This approach helps shed a new perspective on the discourse on ethnic conflict by interweaving ethnic conflict with issues such as security, urbanization, opportunity, education, religion, and marriage. The conclusions challenge the accepted narratives on women's locus in ethnic conflict discourse and the long-term impact it has on the conflict itself. Conversations with women in the study reveal an impressive awareness of what they consider to be the ulterior motives of religious institutions, community organizations, and political forums in assisting victimized neighbourhoods. However, they also reveal a conscious choice to magnify victimhood to gain sympathy or reparations; or to downplay victimhood to avoid public shame and scrutiny. It results in multiple victimhood narratives that compete for higher moral ground and are amplified by religious, political, and community actors to drive the discourse on ethnic conflict. The findings are valuable for any policy initiatives that can be undertaken to counter ethnic conflict by bringing the focus on women not just as victims but as participants with agency that drive discourses and hence can also direct them towards development and peace.

## **Impact of Marital Status on the Women's Labour Market Outcomes – An Empirical Understanding of Indian Labour Market for Women Labourers**

**Baishakhi Mondal**, PhD Scholar, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University of Delhi, Delhi, Delhi

This paper aims to examine and explore whether the Indian married women are facing marriage premium or marriage penalty in terms of their labour market outcomes. The labour market outcomes are referred here as the employment transition, labour force participation rate, and wages of the women labourers. There are three econometric techniques have been used here: the Multinomial Logit model, the Quantile Regression Model and the experimental approach to observational data. The first research objective of this paper is to analyse how the changing marital status of women affects their employment transition and whether the labour market attachment score is different for married and unmarried women. The analysis is based on a recent time period, from 2016 to the second quarter of 2023. I have used the CPHS data sets from wave16 to wave29, for the analysis of the 'employment transition' effect. CPHS data sets are the only data available in India which track the representative sample individual observations over the time period. The methodology adopted here for the first objective is largely the descriptive statistics along with the construction of transition probability of women labourers' movement through four different labour market statuses – employed, unemployed, out of labour force and non-employed for married, unmarried women and for those women whose marital status have changed from unmarried to married during the reference periods, separately, whose labour market presence has been observed. Further, these probability transition figures are being compared with the predicted probabilities of those categories of women for the same, computed from the multinomial logit model. The other research objective is to investigate whether there is any evidence of marriage penalty or marriage premium for Indian female labourers in terms of differential wages they received. A quantile regression (cross-sectional) approach has been used to see whether the 'marriage-penalty' or 'marriage-premium' if any, takes a similar pattern for women in different quantiles. Comparisons over the years have been discussed too. To approach the later objective, I have used the PLFS data from 2017-18 to 2021-22, as compared to the CPHS data, the PLFS data gives the wage data information in a more consolidated manner. A semi-parametric approach has been adopted where marriage is regarded as an exogenous treatment in the presence of positive or negative selection bias if any in the Indian labour market for female labourers to see its

impact on the log wages earned by the groups of women. It has been found that the labour market attachment score for married women is higher than that of unmarried women and the transition probability of the employment status of the married women if they were already employed is significantly higher than their counterpart unmarried women. Also, the wage differential pattern between married and unmarried women is not symmetrical in all income quantiles.

## Technical Session 14

# Improving Rural Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods

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### **Innovation at the Margins: Crafts, Institutions, Markets and a Case**

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**Sonal Jain**, Assistant Professor, School of Social, Financial and Human Sciences, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (Deemed University), Odisha

Modern and traditional technologies have coexisted in developing economies. The replacement of the old with the new is not automatic; technological change requires negotiating with the institutional framework and local infirmities that could challenge an innovation initiative if it falters in being broad-based or inclusive. The presence of a calibrated market deeply influences product and process innovations, even as business dynamism constantly searches for new and profitable market spaces by opting for newer technologies and ways of conducting business.

Industrial clusters are considered hotbeds for such business and technology transformation. Little is known, though, as to how such innovations occur and if these have a positive impact on the ground; our knowledge is especially scant when it comes to traditional or artisan enterprises in rural settings. What are the driving forces of innovation systems in these clusters and whether these have been inclusive/pro-poor mainly in terms of access to progress in innovation be that technological, organisational, market-related or institutional? What are the constraints in the participation of most firms in a cluster in the innovation systems? Have these innovations been exclusivist in their outcomes?

This field-survey-based study enquires into the dynamics of a south Indian leather footwear cluster in the rural town Athani (specialising in ethnic 'Kolhapuri' chappals) set up by the migrant Samagar community. In 1998, the intervention by a Bangalore-based NGO was a novel institutional and technological innovation towards orienting member-entrepreneurs to upgrade their production and processing to enter the global high-value-adding market space. Emphasising women crafts-persons and forming SHGs this unique initiative led to the creation of a brand with over 200 designs, use of modern machinery and exports to several countries including those in the global North. The organisation, in addition to having a formal base at Athani, has established a common facility centre, a raw material bank, a design studio and a resource centre. There have been persistent efforts to ensure product quality and standards.

While such an intervention might appear to have played a transformative role in the innovation sphere in the cluster, a closer examination brings out interesting insights into the possibilities and limits of a partial approach to promoting a local rural craft to suit the demands of the high-end global markets. As it turns out, members of the agency could find work for producing for the global market only for four months in a year and had to engage themselves to make footwear based on orders received from domestic buyers/traders from other cities. While the agency provides training with machines to its registered members, the artisans were not convinced if their productivity has risen. The microentrepreneurs, despite putting in hard work, were concerned about the small share of the profit they made through sales in the global market.

The paper enquires into the dynamics of local artisanal production and engages in the challenges of exclusion facing them as higher echelons of markets open up. Possibilities in institutional innovations including digital marketing that enable linking local products to the wider markets have also been explored.

## **Emerging Opportunities of Value Addition and Employment Creation: Insights from the Indian Agro-industry**

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**Harbir Singh**, Professor, ICAR-IARI, Delhi,

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The study aims to assess the growth pattern of value addition in the agro-industry and its subsectors in India. It also aims to analyse the pattern of employment and finally to measure employment potential in the Indian agro-industry. Industry-level published data from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) was used in this study. Gross value addition and number of persons employed are considered as the variables to analyse the growth of value addition and employment, respectively. The data point was taken from the 1980-81 to 2019-20. Variables were converted into constant series with the appropriate deflators such as wholesale price index (WPI) and consumer price index (CPI). The employment potential of the agroindustry was assessed by constructing an employment function which is the relationship between employment, real gross value added and real wage rate for the labor force. The results indicated that the agro-industry in India continues to operate as a labour-intensive industry as compared with other manufacturing industries and the growth of value addition in this industry has accelerated after the 2000's particularly for the high-value commodities such as meat, fish and feed industries. Employment patterns over the period indicated an increasing demand for skilled workers and also a rising trend in the case of contractual labour. Estimated employment potential reveals the potential of employment generation in two perspectives - firstly the growing high-value commodities viz., meat, fish & feed can be directly targeted to scale up the production to generate more employment and another way is from the traditional sector like grain, sugar and oil, which may have lesser coefficient but the size of the industry can be utilized to create more employment opportunity. In addition, other agri-related industries like the textile industry shown a positive trend in the growth of value addition also the employment growth trend. From the characteristics of food industry firms, the study has emphasized the strategy for scale expansion to boost further employment creation.

### **Role of Agroforestry Practices to Supply Forest-based Products to Rural Households in Mid Hills of Western Nepal**

**Namrata Devi Khatri**, Assistant Professor, Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), Nepal's

High dependency of the rural population on forest resources for their livelihood not only creates pressure on forest resources but also causes land degradation

and biodiversity loss. To tackle the issues of land degradation, obtain a high and sustained level of production, conserve biodiversity, and improve livelihoods, agroforestry has been recognized as the most efficient land management system. It not only provides a sustainable supply of tree products that were formerly harvested from the forest such as grass, fuelwood, and fodder but also improves the sustainability and productivity of local agriculture and thus reduces dependency on natural forests. This would, in turn, prevent forest degradation and improve socio-economic conditions for future generations. This shows that the dependency of rural households for fulfilling their demand for fodder, fuelwood, leaf litter, and timber on nearby natural forests can be reduced by increasing their availability in their farmland through different agroforestry practices. However, the extent to which it fulfils a household's total forest product need is not well explored in rural areas of Nepal. In this context, this study was conducted in the Mid-hills of Western Nepal where farmers have been growing native and exotic tree species on their farmland. Direct observation together with focus group discussion (n=3) and household survey (n=200) was deployed for data collection. During the household survey, the total forest product demand by each household such as leaf litter, grass, fuel wood, and fodder over a year as well as supply sources for these forest products was quantified in bhari using the recall method and later bhari was converted into Kilogram (Kg) using 1bhari=40Kg. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent-sample t-tests, and linear regression. The average annual demand of each household of leaf-litter, grass, fodder, and fuelwood was  $647.8 \pm 88.09\text{Kg}$ ,  $8753.40 \pm 398.96\text{Kg}$ ,  $796.57 \pm 39.06\text{Kg}$ , and  $2160.80 \pm 50.65\text{Kg}$  respectively. This demand was fulfilled by agroforestry, community forestry, wasteland, private forest, and markets. A comparison was carried out between community forest and agroforestry as both were significantly contributing to fulfilling the household's forest products demand using an independent-sample t-test under the condition of homogeneity. This test showed a significant difference in the average annual supply of leaf litter ( $t_{398}=5.898$  and  $p<0.01$ ); grass ( $t_{398}=-10.855$  and  $p<0.01$ ), and fodder (at  $t_{398}=-19.274$  and  $p<0.01$ ) while insignificant in case of the supply of fuelwood ( $t_{398}=1.061$  and  $p=0.289>0.1$ ) between community forest and agroforestry. Further, the linear regression between the quantity of forest product collected from agroforestry and respondents' socioeconomic variables showed a statistically significant positive association with total livestock units (TLSU) and total land area (TLA) at  $F=68.140$  and  $\alpha=1\%$ . This study shows that farmers' dependency on forests to fulfil their subsistence needs of forest-based products

is decreasing. In such cases, if scientific knowledge regarding the integration of different crops, ecologically suitable species combination, and suitable agroforestry practices are provided then their demand could be fulfilled from their land thereby reducing and making them self-reliant. Further, this finding will support all relevant stakeholders in promoting agroforestry as an effective tool for reducing dependency on the forests.

## **Sustainable Agriculture: A Panacea for Livelihood Security and Decent Employment Opportunity for the Tribal Farmers: A Case Study of Eastern Regions of India**

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A sustainable agriculture refers to the farming in admissible ways meeting society's present food, fodder for cattle and raw materials for agro-based industries and marketing of products without compromising the ability for current and future generations to meet their needs as per the Brundtland Report, 1987. The tribals or adivasis are the original settlers of their regions. There are about 700 different tribes in India and according to the census 2011, the tribal population consisted of 8.6 per cent. The tribal people generally live around the forests, hills and deserts. There is a symbiotic relationship between the tribals, nature, land, agriculture and forest. The majority of the tribals possess some lands in their regions but their land holding is very small. The scheduled tribe farmers manage about 11.9 per cent of the total cultivable land in the country. The major tribes of the Eastern States of India are settled agriculturists. Due to the increase in their population over the years, climate change, mono-cropping practices, inadequate irrigation facilities and dependent on rain-fed cultivation, agriculture is not able to meet their food and livelihood securities at present. Climate change has become a major issue of concern during recent years. It has affected the life, livelihood and economy of the tribal people and threatened their survival. Besides these, the forest and natural resources of the regions have been ruthlessly depleted by contractors and other agencies without considering the implications of their land holdings, forest cover, environmental degradation and climate change. This in turn, causes the problem of food and livelihood insecurity, distress migration, displacement, isolation from the natural



environment and social imbalances among the tribals of the eastern regions of India. The tribals of the regions are mainly dependent on natural resources and rain-fed agriculture. Therefore, they have been adversely affected due to the mega projects of development, industries, mining and commercial exploitation of lands, forests and other natural resources. The tribal farmers know how to manage their landed and natural resources provided they are supported by suitable government schemes like assuring the irrigation facilities, education, introducing organic farming techniques, integrated farming system, horticulture, animal husbandry and pisciculture for sustainable agriculture. Therefore, proper support and implementation of sustainable agriculture can become the panacea for livelihood security and decent employment opportunities for the tribal farmers of eastern India. This study has been conducted in the plateau regions of eastern India. For the study six districts from three states namely, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal have been selected on the basis of three-stage purposive sampling methods. From Jharkhand, Ranchi and Simdega districts; Odisha, Jharsugda and Sundargarh districts; and from West Bengal, Jhargram and Paschim Midinipur districts were chosen. The study is based on the analysis of secondary sources, case studies and success stories of the farmers. The main objectives of the study are: (i). to explore the suitable models of sustainable agriculture for tribal farmers; such as introducing integrated farming techniques, organic farming systems, soil management, water management, and pests management; (ii). to examine the impacts of sustainable agriculture in India; (iii). to motivate and create awareness among the tribal farmers about sustainable agriculture schemes; and (iv). to implement the sustainable agriculture model for food and livelihood securities and to create decent employment opportunities for the tribal farmers.

## Technical Session 15

# Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment & Human Development

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### Women's Empowerment and Multi-dimensional Poverty of Households

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The study examines the relationship between women's empowerment and the multi-dimensional poverty status of households. It draws on the framework of Kabeer (1999) to measure women's empowerment and adopt the global MPI indicators with some modifications to measure the multi-dimensional poverty of households. The index, motivated by Sen's idea of poverty as capability deprivation, complements uni-dimensional poverty measures by focusing on three areas of intrinsic importance: education, health, and standard of living. The literature provides ample evidence that uni-dimensional poverty measures, such as income or consumption, are not an accurate proxy for non-monetary deprivations like little schooling, poor health, lack of proper sanitation facilities, etc. For instance, if the allocation of family income towards the education of sexes is gender inequitable, it will translate into restricted learning for the girl child, and the income analysis may not adequately reflect this (Sen, 1999). The well-recognized lack of a one-to-one relationship between monetary poverty and other deprivations that people simultaneously experience has increasingly shifted the focus to the measurement of multi-dimensional poverty. This is evident from the efforts of the OPHI and the UNDP, culminating in a global MPI in 2010, with continual revisions since then. Also, target 1.2 of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs says, 'By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national

definitions.' Consequently, many governments have devised an MPI for their respective countries, the national MPI by NITI Aayog being an example. The 2030 Agenda also recognizes the critical role of women in achieving all the SDGs. It explicitly comes out as the fifth goal of the 2030 Agenda. While promoting women's empowerment is an important end in itself, it also is a means to other ends. There is considerable empirical research on the linkages between women's empowerment and the nutritional outcomes of children and women (Kishor, 2000; Smith et al., 2003; Malapit and Quisumbing, 2015). Smith et al. (2003) find a significant positive effect of women's status on children's nutritional outcomes in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean. However, the strength and the pathways of influence vary considerably across the three regions. The women's role in assuring household food security through their empowerment in agriculture is also well-known in the literature. (Sraboni et al., 2014; Tsiboe et al., 2018; Aziz et al., 2021). We utilize the 5th NFHS round and employ logistic regression to conduct our analysis. Our results indicate that what matters more for women to reduce the multi-dimensional poverty of households is their access to financial resources. The results have also indicated the relevance of women's attitude toward the use of violence for the multi-dimensional poverty of households. Women who do not justify societal gender norms are expected to invest equally in girls and boys and pay attention to their own needs as well, thereby improving the indicators of multi-dimensional poverty.

### **World Bank and the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM): Treading Towards a Substantive Framework of Women Empowerment in India**

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This paper uses the case of National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) to deconstruct and delegitimise the dominant understandings around empowerment and; unravels the potency of national women's movements (especially the empowerment wing) in constructing a substantive discourse around empowerment in India. The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is a living public policy example of a 'business case of empowerment' and exemplifies all that is wrong with the extant gender approaches. Its shifting nomenclature from Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) in the 1980s to Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) in the 1990s to National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) in 2010-11 is, in consonance with developments in

World Bank's anti-poverty approach within the Women and Development (WID) framework. This paper examines the nature of the organisation of SHG's within the NRLM program, their interaction with corporate financial institutions while seeking loans, the usage of these loans and the treatment (by the lending banks) of these SHG women in cases of non-payment. Its central objective is to highlight the instrumentalism and gendered essentialism that inform the rationale of the policy and further reinstate the idea of 'female domesticity' and male dependency. The approach of private banking institutions towards this welfare program and towards women of these SHGs, especially in cases of non-repayment or delayed payments, is pivotal here. For a study of these aspects, the paper employs a mixed methods approach (qualitative and quantitative research) consisting of structured and unstructured interviews with members of SHG's and bank managers and scheme mobilisers in both blocks. Focused group interviews with leaders of 10 Self-Help Groups in both blocks were also conducted. Further, the paper builds its theoretical framework using Critical Feminist Discourse Analysis (CFDA). Highlighting the shortcomings of Foucauldian analysis in empowering the 'subject' (here women), it suggests an effective integration of the 'global' (the GAD framework) with the national or 'the local' in constructing a requisite empowerment framework for developing countries like India.

## **A Rise in Educational Hypogamy, Women's Increased Bargaining Power and Child Health**

**Shreya Jain**, PhD Scholar, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai

The advancement of women's education, both in developed and developing countries, has ushered in profound transformations in the realms of the marriage market and educational assortative mating behaviours. These transitions encompass a notable decline in educational hypergamy and a concurrent rise in educational hypogamy, effectively challenging long-established societal norms. While extensive research has been conducted concerning the consequences of educational homogamy on child health outcomes, a significant gap remains in our understanding of the associations between educational hypogamy and child health. This study is designed to bridge this gap, exploring uncharted territory and delivering invaluable insights into the ever-evolving landscape of family dynamics and its potential influence on the health and well-being of the succeeding generation. This study primarily explores the relationships between

three key factors: 1. The Increasing Prevalence of Educational Hypogamy: Educational hypogamy is on the rise, challenging traditional societal norms. 2. The Augmentation of Women's Bargaining Power: In hypogamous marriages, women experience higher bargaining power, positively influencing prenatal care practices. 3. Implications for Child Health: Children born to hypogamous parents have a lower probability of being stunted and underweight, highlighting the beneficial impact of changing marriage patterns on child health outcomes. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of these dynamics, we utilized a multi-faceted research methodology. The study was based on a large, nationally representative dataset obtained from the National Family and Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), providing valuable insights into the Indian context. Our methodological approach includes both parametric and nonparametric techniques, surpassing mere associations to estimate causal effects. To address the potential issue of endogeneity, we adopted a recursive bivariate probit model as an instrumental variable approach. Additionally, we employed a nonparametric method for partial identification, enabling us to establish informative bounds on the average treatment effect of hypogamy on child health. Our research presents several noteworthy findings: 1. Rise in Educational Hypogamy: Educational hypogamy is progressively challenging traditional norms. A shift in the marriage market is evident, with more women having higher levels of education compared to their husbands. 2. Increased Bargaining Power of Women: Women in hypogamous marriages experience a higher level of bargaining power. This empowerment positively influences prenatal care practices. They are more likely to adhere to recommended antenatal visits, initiate care in the first trimester, and take necessary precautions and preventive measures during pregnancy. 3. Positive Impact on Child Health: Children born to hypogamous parents have a lower probability of being stunted and underweight. This underlines the beneficial impact of changing marriage patterns on child health outcomes, suggesting that women's increasing educational attainment can translate into improved child health within the Indian context.

## **Embedded Patriarchal and Gender Discrimination Mindset Towards Women Travellers and Tourists in Indian Sub-Continent**

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Travel destinations and accommodations are investing in women-centric tours as a result of the increased demand for solo female travel in India. Hostels and Homestays are also aimed at providing secure areas for women to dwell in a communal environment. This trend is poised for greater expansion in the upcoming year as more hostels and homestays provide particular accommodations for female travellers travelling alone. The other side of the story is that India is also known for having a high rate of crimes against women, especially those involving domestic and sexual abuse. While the official statistics are detailed primarily for local women, it does mention that 409 foreigners filed cases in 2019, 55 of which were for rape, assault, and kidnapping. Besides the mindset, the other prominent problems corresponding to unsupportive infrastructure for women tourists like no special helpline for tourists, bureaucratic airport & station handling, single queues for women and open urinary in public places are enough indicators of discrimination and patriarchal mindset to discourage women tourists to travel. This research is especially relevant in the context of India, growing trend of solo female travel. As travel to the Indian sub-continent has increased, so too has the movement of female travellers in the region. However, not much research has been done on women's travel experiences and preferences. This research analyzed the existing problems which dispirit women tourists to travel due to the above-mentioned reasons through appropriate data analysis. This paper will adopt a Qualitative method approach with a sample size of approximately 32 to 40 interviews with the technique of narrative and content analysis. The data collection will be from several travel agencies. This research has approached addressing the lack of research on female travellers' experiences and treatment by reviewing research on women travellers to advance knowledge of both the historical and modern travel habits of this population. Using a postcolonial feminist lens, this study uses a narrative synthesis and content analysis. The literature that has already been written has, however, also shown how women tourists can

be an agency in opposing gender-based discrimination in the travel industry, as evidenced by the way female travellers and tourists shared their accounts through Twitter and social media posts. This research makes it clear that gender norms and cultural identities have an impact on the travel experience of women in the Indian Subcontinent. This study offers a different interpretation of women, travel behaviour from a gender perspective and responds to the mindset experienced during their journey that is patriarchal and gender biased. This research has added to the crucial aspect of an Indian patriarchal viewpoint towards women travellers and tourists. This research attempts to make a significant contribution to the critical tourism behaviour in India and lays a solid framework for future studies on female visitors, a topic that needs more attention. The findings will suggest ways to find solutions to transform the tourism sector and critically analyze their shortcomings.

## **Gender Equality in Central Asia: Case Study of Kazakhstan**

**Akbota Zholdasbekova**, Professor in Regional Studies Department, Eurasian National University, Asthana, Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has identified its priority in the field of foreign policy integration with the world community. In the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000), which most countries in the world have signed, promoting equality between men and women, women's empowerment has been identified as one of the primary goals of human development in the third millennium. Currently, throughout the world, the historical and cultural dominance of men over women is undergoing a process of transformation. Kazakhstan is no exception. However, the transitional nature of post-Soviet Kazakhstan presents its own unique challenges. In most industrialised societies, the process of modernisation has ensured that women have practically achieved equality with men in matters of their rights and opportunities. Over three decades of its independence, as a sovereign State, Kazakhstan has also achieved certain progress in protecting the rights and legitimate interests of men and women.

In 1998, Kazakhstan acceded to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. It also ratified the UN Conventions on the Political Rights of Women and on Citizenship rights of married women. Further, International pacts on civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights and others were also ratified. In total, Kazakhstan has acceded to more than 60 international

treaties on human rights. In 2022 due to successful reforms, Kazakhstan was placed at 65th position out of 145 countries in the global index of gender inequality. In Kazakhstan, the subject of gender evokes extremely controversial reactions from a wide audience. On the one hand, there is a commitment to the idea of gender equality and a tolerant attitude towards various gender manifestations, and on the other hand, there is increasing resistance both in relation to the very concept of “gender” and its use in legislative and law enforcement practices within the country.

At the level of the State today there is no clear position on this issue. In the Concept of Family and Gender Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, gender issues are considered from the point of view of the institution of family, and the concept of gender is used as a synonym for biological “sex”. In addition to this, the social reality is such that culturally the Kazakh society adheres to the traditionally defined roles of men and women, denying the existence of gender as a social construct. Thus, activist(s) and gender justice advocates, face resistance at multiple levels – at the level of both the State and the Society. Consequently, gender issues have taken a back seat in the overall discourse on human rights in the country. However, the fact remains that within Central Asia, Kazakhstan has accorded a fairly prominent position to gender issues in the political and social discourse of the country.



## Technical Session 16

# Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment & Human Development

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### Gender and Climate Change: A Climate Equity Vision for now

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Current levels of global warming have changed Earth's climate and ecosystem in unprecedented ways. The report of Working Group-II of IPCC notes that vulnerability to climate change of the communities differs significantly between regions and groups of people. The issue is rooted in structural injustice and violence represented in the Global North-South divide, where women bear the extreme burden of the climate crises. Climate change is putting a disproportionate burden on women who are most marginalised. All climate solutions and actions need to put women (especially from marginalised groups) at their centre. To this end, the Synthesis report by the UNFCCC Secretariat on gender dimensions of climate change (UNFCCC 2022) notes that integrating women and marginalised groups into decision-making at all levels is critical to improving both mitigation and adaptation policies. The same can be promoted by following a rights-based, gender-transformative approach to build women's leadership and agency for achieving inclusive governance over time. Given this context, the present paper aims to conceptualise a gender-transformative climate framework (GTCF) which will: - Diagnose, intervene and transform the basic and underlying causes of gender inequity, which make different communities of women vulnerable to

climate change. - Catalyse climate solutions driven and led by women, challenging the current paradigm which is driven by patriarchy and neo-colonialism.

- Reimagine solutions for climate change based on intersectional feminist theories, feminist political ecology and degrowth. The process for preparing the framework was carried out in two phases - conceptualising a draft framework based on understanding developed through a review of existing literature and practical understanding of the authors, and redefining the framework based on structured interactions with selected key stakeholders. The literature review was undertaken to unpack the framing of the problem and discourse around gender and climate change - globally and in India. Mapping of government schemes was done against strategic interventions relevant to the gender transformative approach to climate change, through scrutiny of government schemes' guidelines, reports, web portals, and secondary studies. The draft framework that was conceptualised links the underlying causes of climate-induced gender vulnerabilities, to solution-focused key strategic interventions (with government schemes mapped against each) and their potential impacts. Broad boundaries for the framework were defined. In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted with key stakeholders working in the areas of gender and climate change. The gender transformative climate framework (GTCF) was finalised based on the insights from the IDIs. The GTCF developed, links the basic and underlying causes of gender inequities, to climate-induced vulnerabilities faced by women, proposes strategies to address these, and envisions the short-term and long-term impacts centred around the community of women. It marks a departure from more traditional approaches which address the gendered climate impacts instead of the causes, and are hence more gender-responsive or gender-sensitive, rather than gender transformative. The distinguishing features of the GTCF include: (i) approaching climate change as a political problem rooted in unequal power structures and oppressive social norms following a gender transformative approach; (ii) centred around the intersectional vulnerabilities of women; (iii) climate solutions driven by participatory decision-making led by women; (iv) climate solutions placed at intersections of adaptation, mitigation and resilience; (iv) climate solutions based on realities of different communities of women; (v) adaptable to diverse contexts in the Global South; (vi) solutions which are scalable and sustainable by leveraging government schemes in the respective domains. The GTCF is an evolving framework with scope for further revisions to factor in new realities over time.

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## Deepening Gender Responsive Budgeting in India: Progress and Prospects

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This paper aims to make a case for strengthening Gender Responsive Budgeting processes in India as an effective public finance tool for advancing national and global gender equality goals and empowering women and girls. It uses empirical data from budget documents to evaluate how Gender Responsive Budgeting is implemented in practice. A further objective is to explore the possibilities of translating existing theory and research in this domain to public policy frameworks and practice. This paper is based on a review of existing academic literature in the domain of Gender Responsive Budgeting. Further, relevant budget documents are analysed to assess the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms, methods, and practices being undertaken for Gender Responsive Budgeting at the level of the Union Government as well as several State Governments. Gaps and limitations are identified, and policy considerations are offered, including a discussion of notable practices which can be replicated elsewhere. This study found gaps in the implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting in the past two decades. For instance, the Gender Budget Statement published alongside the other budget documents is an important instrument for Gender Responsive Budgeting but has inconsistencies and inaccuracies in reporting. There is no standard format followed by State Governments. Neither do all State Governments publish a Gender Budget Statement, nor do all Departments and Ministries report in the Statement published by the Union Government. This has repercussions on the gender responsiveness of allocations in different states and across various sectors. All State Governments must practice Gender Responsive Budgeting, and a greater number of Ministries/Departments to earmark allocations for women and girls. In addition, the present quality of reporting needs to be improved. The Financial Year (FY) 2025-26 marks two decades since the adoption of the Gender Budget Statement by the Government of India, which is undoubtedly a significant milestone in the Gender Responsive Budgeting journey of the country. This paper is a timely attempt to take stock of the progress to date and chart directions for the future. In doing so, it argues that deepening Gender Responsive Budgeting practices and strengthening their implementation at the national as well as subnational levels is a crucial policy

ask for not only achieving development outcomes but also ensuring that these are equitable, inclusive and sustainable.

## **Measuring the Degree of Awareness About Gender Bias Among Adolescents in NCR**

**Surbhi Bhalla**, PhD Scholar, University of Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi

**Sarita Anand**, Professor, University of Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi

This study tries to explore the gender role development dynamics among adolescents. It emphasizes understanding the role of agents of socialisation, specifically parents, school, peers and technology has on them while trying to measure it through the gap that gets created between the aspirations and expectations of adolescents from themselves as well as their peers of the opposite sex. A part of that study has been discussed in this paper in detail that explores the level of awareness among adolescents of the NCR region about the explicit gender biases that are practised and participated. The study's sample size was 405 adolescents from the age group 14-16 years belonging to different economic groups. They were asked to fill out the Gender Socialisation tool questionnaire that had 30 statements based on 6 pre-selected themes. The tool tries to highlight the explicit bias expressed through gender privileges and restrictions they might be noticing in their own life experiences, on a five-point scale by capturing experiences of differential gender socialisation among adolescents within their immediate environments. On analysing the data, it was found that there was a statistically significant relationship between the sex of the adolescent, the type of school they are enrolled in, their parents' education, and monthly household income with the level of awareness about gender biases. Adolescents showed high levels of awareness about the explicit gender biases that they were obligated to participate in, where males showed higher scores than their female counterparts. The total Mean Score of all the adolescents was found to be 78.06 while it was 69.46 for females and 84.35 for males. This trend was reflected across all themes but was significantly evident in three of the selected themes: decision-making, gender attributes, and technology usage. This shows a higher degree of bias being accepted and practised by adolescent boys as

compared to girls. This concludes that adolescents do not truly realise the level of privilege they are being raised with as compared to restrictions adolescent girls must face, it is often reflected in being apathetic towards them as well. It was realised that schools need to be safe spaces for children that model gender equitable as well as gender transformative practices and behaviours. Schools can be positive role models for them to explore themselves without restrictions, which can be done by designing school environments, curriculum, infrastructure, and interactions (student-to-teacher as well as peer-to-peer) to be open and accepting.

## **Gender Equality and Climate Change in Global South: Impacts and Responses from India**

**Chandrika Arya**, PhD Scholar, University of Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi

Climate change exacerbate the pre-existing inequalities in terms of gender, class, and caste which is further creating barriers to effective sustainable development. Since women are more likely than men to live in poverty and due to gendered social norms, women in many developing and underdeveloped countries are engaged in climate-sensitive areas like agriculture, water, fuel and fodder collection for their livelihood, they are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Also, when coupled with persistent gender inequalities in terms of unequal access to resources, lower participation in decision-making bodies, and limited mobility women at a higher disadvantage against climate change. Focusing solely on women as vulnerable may be misleading because they are also the game changers in the fight against climate change. In the time of alarming warning from the World Organization that climate change will have far-reaching repercussions for health, food security, water management and the environment in the next five years, it is crucial to explore the subject from the perspective of gender. The objectives of the paper are: to understand the linkages between gender equality and climate change; to understand how gender justice is an effective means to ensure climate justice which helps to foster efficient and effective mitigation and adaptation; and to understand how climate conversations in general and climate policy of India in particular take cognizance of gender-based issues and perspectives related to climate change.

The methodology that the paper has followed is an extensive literature review to make the argument that gender acts as a factor of vulnerability to the risks of climate change. Using a gender lens to assess the impact of climate change, the paper will highlight the stories of gender-based vulnerability to climate change from different parts of India. Through several pieces of evidence collected from India, the paper further seeks to build the narrative that women are the agents of change amidst the crisis using their untapped skills, traditional knowledge and collective wisdom. The key findings of the paper are climate action plans and policies need to challenge the existing unequal distribution of resources, responsibilities, rights, power and opportunities. Empowering women and achieving gender equality through measures like gender budgeting, equal access to natural resources, productive resources like agricultural land, distribution of food and energy, access to capacity and technology and participation in policy-making are effective in addressing gender-based vulnerability and tackling the climate crisis. The major challenge to effective climate action is neglecting the voices of countries and communities most affected by climate change. Climate solutions should be led by local communities, particularly women, who possess indigenous knowledge to develop climate resilience strategies. Despite being at the forefront of dealing with the challenges of climate change, women are last to be considered in policy-making. Gender concerns and capacities have never been a mainstream focus either in the key international agreements or in national policy action of the country.

## **Harnessing Women's Economic Empowerment for Gender Transformation: Insights from Urban Poor Women in Delhi's Slums**

**Debarati Bhattacharya**, PhD Scholar, CEPT University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

This study dives into the profound impact of economic resources on women's decision-making capabilities and their capacity to shape their lives, drawing on 45 in-depth interviews with urban poor women living in the slums of Delhi. Economic resources undoubtedly play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life and catalysing the empowerment process. However, it's imperative to recognize that financial resources, on their own, are insufficient to bring about the transformative shifts required for comprehensive empowerment. In the

Indian context, women face a multitude of obstacles deeply entrenched in discriminatory norms, domestic imbalances, gender-based violence, and the pervasive influence of patriarchal structures. The patriarchal system often restricts women to predefined roles, curbing their self-determination and limiting their potential. Deniz Kandiyoti's concept of patriarchal bargains sheds light on how women navigate this system by adopting strategies to maximize personal advantages, albeit at the cost of reinforcing gender norms and impeding true empowerment. The core finding underscores the need for a holistic empowerment approach tailored to specific contexts. This accentuates the distinction between mere participation and genuine empowerment, underscoring the significance of accounting for power dynamics and social norms when designing interventions. Exposure to alternative realities, access to social networks, and awareness are equally indispensable components of the equation. Contextual subtleties and power dynamics significantly shape the experiences and perceptions of empowerment among urban poor women. The degree of access to economic resources intricately links with the women's ability to exercise agency in shaping their lives, with outcomes varying across different subgroups. While economic resources serve as catalysts for capacity building, the attainment of profound transformation necessitates a strategic focus on gender-specific needs. Ultimately, this approach creates a more inclusive and equitable path towards comprehensive empowerment. The implications of this research extend to policymakers and practitioners striving to promote women's empowerment through livelihood interventions, with particular emphasis on the challenges and opportunities unique to urban slum contexts. The study advocates for a multifaceted approach that not only breaks down barriers but also actively fosters genuine gender transformation. In conclusion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to empower 'lakhpati didis' represents a pivotal milestone in the pursuit of gender equality and women's economic empowerment in India. Yet, we must acknowledge that empowerment is not a linear trajectory; it requires persistent and deliberate efforts to dismantle the deep-seated barriers that persist in our society. As we pave the way for this transformative journey, we hold the power to ensure that every woman can aspire, achieve, and transcend without bounds.

## Technical Session 17

# Climate Justice and Sustainable Development

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### **Just Transitions to Clean Energy: Bottom-up Creation of Pathways for Low-income Urban Settlements in Odisha**

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This paper studies energy choices of urban poor in Odisha across the spectrum of household energy uses (cooking, lighting, space heating/cooling, entertainment, other home appliances and briefly mobility) to develop pathways that enable low-income settlements to transition to clean energy. The environmentally cleaner pathways incorporate usability, affordability, dependability, preferences, culture, quality of life, dignity and buy-in from the perspective of the urban poor, clearly identifying action areas and opportunities for stakeholders – government, the social sector, and the private sector, to make the cleaner alternatives a reality. They draw from a universe of clean energy solutions. The research underpins the fact that lower-income settlements have an energy footprint with reliance on cheaper, non-dependable, and polluting sources of energy for household uses, and fewer efficient appliances, which compromises their quality of life (including health) and resilience to climate change. Their energy and appliance choices also contribute to climate change and pose a noteworthy challenge to municipal-level energy efficiency targets. However, the urban poor are often left out of climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts presuming that their primary concerns are limited to water, sanitation, and housing security, in addition



to overriding concerns of employment, income stability, and living costs. But, ironically, the urban poor are also the most vulnerable to climate change through acute events ('shocks') and chronic issues ('stresses'). Although, this is naturally lesser due to their consumption patterns than due to spatial reasons, as well as the limited ability to mitigate and cope with the negative impacts of climate change due to lack of finance, knowledge, and access to markets and technology. Additionally, their consumption and preference patterns are often not captured formally and exhaustively unlike higher income groups, except maybe around willingness to pay and usage. The study bridges this gap and provides thought leadership to include the urban poor (literally and figuratively) in the journey of Just Transitions towards embracing cleaner energy at the household level. To ensure that the actual solutions and nuances of implementation emerge from the field, the study adopts a bottom-up approach, centred around the voice of the urban poor. The study includes (a) spatial mapping to understand ground reality and mark out key infrastructure and service access points, community spaces, open spaces and natural elements, shocks and vulnerabilities across 30 sampled low-income settlements in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Koraput; (b) a quantitative survey of 5000 respondents across the settlements to capture current energy and appliance choices and usage, levels of satisfaction with status quo, awareness of cleaner solutions, supporting schemes and enablers and barriers to transition; and (c) several rounds of co-creation and validation of the pathways with end users (urban poor) and stakeholders through focused group discussions and interviews to ensure citizen-led, acceptable and feasible, clean energy pathways. There is also adequate secondary research to provide background and context, and expert engagement with an Advisory Group to guide and ideate along the way. Preliminary findings for cooking from the completed pilot survey reveal that 84% of the respondents use LPG followed by 47% using firewood as at least one of their cooking fuels. 69% of LPG users report getting it from the market and only 28% got it under a government scheme. 60% of LPG users report dissatisfaction with cost and subsidy refunds, a potential area of exploration for pathway development. 90% of LPG users are satisfied with its health and environmental impact, and social status, much more than firewood users (indicating sensitivity towards health and environment). There is none to negligible adoption of PNG, biogas, solar, and electricity, with most respondents saying they have not heard of them as cooking fuels.

## **The Rights of Nature in South Asia: A Critical Perspective to The Emerging Discourse**

**Priya Singh**, Ph.D Scholar, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

The concerns surrounding the protection of the environment have persisted ever since the beginning of human life on planet Earth. However, the twenty-first-century man's ability to alter his natural environment has been compared with the greatest forces of the earth due to the latest advances in science and technology. This has caused unidirectional and indiscriminate damage to the environment and people. With the rising risk to environmental sustainability, the recognition of the Rights of Nature in over 30 nations around the world has set a normative scenario for revisiting the role played by law between human and non-human relations. In over a decade, this radical idea has been transformed into a legal theory being discussed and debated across various platforms. This thought has been referred to as the 'new earth jurisprudence' that significantly departs from the current environmental law regime that predominantly views nature and its parts as 'things' capable of being owned and controlled. The theory of RoN is based on the premise that nature and its parts have 'intrinsic value' above and beyond human beings. It is grounded in the natural law theory that argues that "right originates where existence originates" and that "which determines existence determines rights". This is why it recognises equal treatment for humans and non-human things occurring in nature, such as animals, plants, rivers, forests, etc. Thus, it acknowledges 'nature' as having standing in its own name. In other words, it recognises that nature should be recognised as a juristic person for it to bring matters that affect itself before the Court. South Asia, having one of the most biologically rich marine ecosystems, extensive networks of estuaries, backwaters, mangroves, and one of the largest mountain ranges in the north, is highly vulnerable to climate shocks due to overgrazing, loss of biodiversity, population pressure, abnormal patterns of weather, droughts, floods, heatwaves and so on. Although South Asia is pioneering many climate-smart solutions, the scale of destruction and the inability of the existing laws require the development of new and innovative approaches towards environmental protection. Three of the largest countries of South Asia, i.e., India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, have also recognised the rights of non-human entities through judicial interpretation. In India, the need for ecocentric principles has long been recognised as part of the law of the land, but the express recognition that environmental entities can bear rights was made in 2017 by one of the state courts. Although the decisions were stayed by the Apex Court of India, they rekindled the spirit of environmental protection in India. Following the decision of the Indian High Court, the High Court

of Bangladesh recognised the river Turag as a living entity with legal rights. It held that the same would apply to all rivers in Bangladesh. The Supreme Court of Pakistan recognised the need to protect the environment in its own right in 2021. The objective of this research is to explore whether the legal theory of rights of nature can lead to meaningful legal formulations that are worth adopting in South Asia. It also aims to explore the transboundary implications of this theory. It seeks to look at South Asian Intergovernmental Bodies that deal with environmental issues in South Asia and their role in the protection of the rights of nature.

### **Can the Economic Valuation of Water in India Bring Sustainable Viability to Portable Water Scarcity? Evidence from a Primary Survey of Kanpur City**

**Abhishek Kumar**, PhD Scholar, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

One-third of the population of the world does not have sufficient water to meet their basic requirements (Shiklomanov, 1999). The per capita water availability in India was 1816 cubic meters in 2001, which was reduced to 1545 cubic meters by 2011, and is further expected to reduce to 1367 cubic meters by 2031 (Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2020). In this context, the paper tries to investigate the mechanism of the economic valuation of portable water based on a primary survey conducted across the city of Kanpur and to find a sustainable solution to the problem of water scarcity. This study tries to address goal 6 of SDGs, which talks of access to clean and safe drinking water for all. Our study proposes the use of water pricing based on the Ordered Choice model. To arrive at the water pricing using the Willingness to Pay (WTP) method this study uses a primary survey conducted during the month of November 2018 to March 2019 across 350 households equally distributed between 4 wards of Kanpur city. The dataset on the supply side of water was collected based on secondary data from the Municipal Corporation of Kanpur Nagar. Face-to-face interviews of respondents were conducted using 53 semi-structured questionnaires. The study uses the Ordered Choice survey model (Greene, 2009) to derive economic modelling for the price setting of water. The study also uses the Logit and Mixed effect Logit model to find the estimates after comparing the regression coefficient of

Willingness to Pay (WTP) for improved water supply using maximum likelihood estimates. The cost-benefit analysis of the water pricing at the household level suggests a Pareto optimal solution, making both the consumers and the water-supplying agents better off. The study estimates that the households are willing to pay an average amount of Rs 794 for 30 KL of water supply per month while the municipality is charging only INR 384 per household for 30 KL/per month. The total cost born by the consumer every month including the implicit cost (on waterborne seasonal diseases) and explicit cost (water bills and filtration cost) is INR 1044 on average and the municipal water supply agency is able to collect only 60 per cent of its operating cost. The empirical result based on the logit and mixed effect logit model suggests that the occupation of the respondents, source of drinking water, respondents being male, quality of water, and expenditure on water treatment are positively associated with the willingness to pay for the respondents, while the type of family of the respondent, medical expenses, municipal water supply connection, amount actually paid by respondents to acquire water at present, water treatment before use of water, usage of groundwater, and awareness towards water conservation have a negative relation with their willingness to pay. To conclude, global issues of climate change, global warming, irregular rainfall, and rising population are only going to aggravate the situation of water scarcity in India. Given the rigid nature of this mismatch of demand and supply of water resources, water pricing based on WTP is expected to provide an optimal solution to both the consumers and water supply authority, making both parties better off, besides offering a sustainable solution for limited water availability.

## **The Security–development Nexus in Ethiopia Since 1991: The Case of Eastern Wallagga Zone**

**Megersa Tolera Abdi**, PhD Scholar, Peace and Development Studies, Haramaya University, Ethiopia

The article highlights the relationship between security and development in the Eastern Wallagga Zone of Ethiopia, emphasizing the impact of conflict on development outcomes and the potential of development initiatives to contribute to peacebuilding efforts. In many regions, including the Eastern Wallagga Zone, there is often a complex interplay between security and development. Conflict and insecurity can hinder development progress by disrupting or delaying infrastructure projects, economic activities, and social services. Conversely,

development policies that neglect security concerns or fail to address underlying grievances can exacerbate tensions and lead to further conflict. The study's findings indicate that the presence of conflict in the Eastern Wallagga Zone has had significant negative consequences for development. This includes the displacement of populations, damage to infrastructure, disruption of services, and economic costs. These factors create a cycle of poverty and vulnerability, making it challenging to achieve sustainable development goals. To address this issue, the study suggests that development programs should consider the local context and engage with the affected communities. It is crucial to involve local communities in the decision-making process, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are taken into account. This participatory approach can help build trust, foster social cohesion, and empower local communities to take ownership of development initiatives. Moreover, the study highlights the potential of development programs in promoting peace and reducing conflict. By addressing the root causes of conflict, such as social inequality, economic disparities, and political grievances, development initiatives can contribute to peacebuilding efforts. This can be achieved through fostering dialogue and reconciliation, promoting inclusivity, and supporting initiatives that build resilience and cooperation among different groups. The study recommends adopting a holistic approach to development that prioritizes conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and inclusivity. This means integrating security considerations into development planning and implementation, as well as ensuring that peacebuilding efforts are aligned with development goals. By doing so, development programs can enhance stability, reduce the risk of future conflicts, and contribute to long-term sustainable development. In conclusion, the study highlights the close link between security and development in the Eastern Wallagga Zone. It emphasizes the negative impact of conflict on development outcomes and underscores the importance of incorporating local perspectives and engaging with communities in development programs. Furthermore, it suggests that development initiatives have the potential to contribute to peacebuilding efforts by addressing the underlying causes of conflict. By adopting a holistic approach that prioritizes conflict prevention, peacebuilding, inclusivity, resilience, and cooperation, sustainable development and reduced conflict risk can be achieved in the study area.

Based on the understanding of the security–development nexus in the Eastern Wallagga Zone of Ethiopia since 1991, here are some recommendations to address the challenges and promote sustainable development: Prioritize efforts to prevent conflicts and address underlying grievances. This includes promoting inclusive governance structures, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and

engaging in dialogue and reconciliation processes to resolve existing conflicts. In addition, support the capacity building of local institutions, including local governments and community-based organizations, to effectively manage and respond to security and development challenges. This can involve providing training, resources, and technical assistance to enhance their ability to address local needs and promote participatory decision-making. Moreover, invest in basic infrastructure development, such as roads, schools, healthcare facilities, and water supply systems. Improving access to essential services will not only enhance the well-being of the population but also contribute to economic growth and stability in the region. Finally, implement sustainable natural resource management practices to address environmental degradation and resource-based conflicts. This can involve promoting responsible land use, and conservation efforts, and supporting community-based initiatives for sustainable resource utilization. Support efforts to enhance the capacity and accountability of security forces in the region. This includes training in conflict resolution, human rights, and community policing to ensure that security measures are conducted in a manner that respects and protects the rights of the population. By implementing these recommendations, it is possible to address the challenges faced in the Eastern Wallagga Zone and create an environment conducive to sustainable development, peace, and stability.

## Technical Session 18

### Equity and Inclusion

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#### **Mobility Pattern of Urban Poor in Siliguri City: A Study of mobility-poverty Interlinkages and Human Well-being**

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Transport infrastructure and mobility play a significant role in aiding human well-being and development by augmenting accessibility to economic and social opportunities. The present research stems from the question of how the urban poor, inhabiting slums and surviving on narrow close-knit networks of economic opportunities tend to negotiate their mobility practices in a city where the existing transport infrastructure is highly biased towards motorization. The study seeks to navigate through the mobility practice of the urban poor in a medium-sized Indian city, Siliguri, within the context that the city's urban transport scenario is visibly inclined towards automobile-centricism. As the city of Siliguri underwent rapid urbanisation and motorisation in the last three decades, this research aims to unwarp the intricate pattern of mobility behaviour of the most economically disadvantaged people in the city, living in its slums. Analyzing factors like travel preferences, access to transport modes, frequency of travel, and accessibility constraints, the study aims to unveil the mobility behaviour of the economically disadvantaged in slums. The research has three objectives: (i) Study mobility patterns of urban poor in Siliguri. (ii) Assess if mobility practices are marginalized due to automobile-centric planning. (iii) Advocate for inclusive urban transport planning.

Considering Siliguri, the slums are the absolute testimonies of urban poverty in the city and therefore, are being focussed upon for the study of mobility practices of urban poor. The method of primary data collection involved household surveys with a pre-drafted interview schedule in 400 slum households sampled through stratified random sampling technique from three different categories as follows: the core city slums, slums from the western periphery of the city, slums from the southern periphery of the city. The interview schedule contained both the close-ended objective questions, as well as open-ended subjective questions, to ensure the collection of quantifiable information as well as qualitative narratives that together represent the overall mobility practice of slum dwellers. The quantifiable data primarily pertained to the trip length, travel distance, trip frequency and modal choice of slum households, whereas the qualitative information was mostly grounded on the perception of poor people on their daily mobility conditions as well as their ways of negotiating with the existing transport scenario of Siliguri city. Findings align with existing evidence, showing that the urban poor heavily rely on non-motorized or shared modes for daily commutes. This mobility practice, tied to family budgets, reflects the resilience of the urban poor in optimizing resources. Furthermore, the qualitative narratives indicate that this kind of mobility practice has an essential association with the family budget of poverty-stricken slum households. This is the reason that poor people in the city travel shorter distances and spend a very limited proportion of their income on travel expenses, compared to other income groups, belonging to the middle and upper economic strata. The study concludes that Siliguri's automobile-centric infrastructure hinders the predominantly pedestrian or cyclist urban poor. It advocates integrating the mobility practices of Siliguri's poor into city road infrastructure planning and management.

## **Re-evaluating of Reservation Policy: Caste, Education and Economic Status in India**

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Throughout Indian history, a considerable segment of the population faced social marginalisation, including the deplorable practice of untouchability. This societal bias led to their exclusion from educational opportunities leading to their limited presence in regular wage employment (RWE). To rectify the



systematic underrepresentation of marginalised groups in the public sector RWE, affirmative action policies, e.g. quotas in tertiary education and employment were mandated by the Constitution. We investigate the effectiveness of reservation policies in increasing Dalit participation in RWE. Analysing labour force survey data from 1999–2000 and 2021–22, we find a substantial increase in the likelihood of Dalits securing RWE due to enhanced tertiary education participation. Further, using the logit regression method, we identified education as a significant determinant of being in RWE. Fairlie decomposition suggests persistent educational disparities account for a significant portion of the gap in the probability of being in RWE between Forward Castes and Dalits along with discrimination perpetuated against Dalits. This study uses the 55th round (1999–00) Employment–Unemployment Survey (EUS) and the first visit of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2021–22 data sets. The NSSO–EUS and subsequently PLFS data sets have been one of the most comprehensive data sources for labour statistics. They covered all categories of workers in the economy, along with their industrial activity and occupational codes. The data could be further disaggregated by age, gender, social groups, region, and state. While the EUS 1999–00 data provides insights into the labour market dynamics at the turn of the millennium, the PLFS 2021–22 offers crucial insights into the contemporary employment landscape. The total households surveyed were 1,01,782 and 1,20,578 for the first visit of PLFS 2021–22 and the 55th round of the NSSO respectively. In India, the labour force is often assessed by the usual status, which is calculated by combining the usual principal status with the subsidiary status. The usual principal status denotes an individual’s status throughout a one-year reference period, and a majority criterion is adopted to classify if an individual belongs to the labour market or not. An individual is considered to be in the labour force if he or she works or seeks for job for a significant portion of the year, that is, for more than six months in a year. The subsidiary status of employment means that a person is engaged in employment for a minimum of 30 days in a given year. This criterion is essential to determine the seasonality of employment in the Indian labour market. Thus, the usual status (ps+ss) includes both the major time criterion as well as the priority to work status. However, for the purpose of analysis in this paper, only the usual principal status (UPS) would be employed because subsidiary status (SS) primarily consists of unpaid family labour and reflects more on underemployment and disguised employment. Out of all the economic categories, this study would focus on regular salaried or wage employment (RWE). This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of affirmative action policies and their impact on employment patterns in India between 1999–00 and 2021–22. The data presented in this paper indicates significant improvements in educational attainment across all social

groups over the years, with particular progress observed among Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). However, despite advancements in education, there remain substantial disparities in regular wage employment (RWE) between social groups. The study reveals that education plays a crucial role in determining RWE, with higher education levels correlating positively with employment opportunities. On investigating the effectiveness of reservation policies in increasing Dalit participation in RWE, we find a substantial increase in the likelihood of Dalits securing RWE due to enhanced tertiary education participation. Further, using the logit regression method, we identified education as a significant determinant of being in RWE. Caste doesn't account for any significant difference in being in RWE for 1999–2000, however, in 2020–21, it is found to have a significant role in determining whether a person is in RWE or not. Fairlie decomposition suggests persistent educational disparities account for a significant portion of the gap in the probability of being in RWE between Forward Castes and Dalits along with discrimination perpetuated against Dalits.

## **Caste, Gender, and Economic Inequality: Evidence from An Indian Village**

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Indian society is stratified along the axes of caste, religion and gender. These identities have considerable influences on the access to resources and opportunities by individuals and households. Several studies report that female-headed households tend to have more wealth as compared to their male counterparts (Oginni et al, 2013; Rajaram, 2009). However, most of the studies are based on sample survey data and fall short of capturing the intricacies of village life. Therefore, the need for village studies has been pointed out by scholars (Lanjouw, 2018). In the Indian context, the longitudinal study of Palanpur village has provided valuable insights into the study of village societies in India. However, there is little information about the distribution of assets in the Palanpur study. This paper fills this gap using village study data conducted by IIDS-AMS in 2023 that has comprehensive data on the assets and liabilities of the households. This paper examines the wealth inequalities and its determinants. We hypothesize

that asset inequalities vary with the gender as well as the caste of the household head. The paper uses unit-level census data from a village located in Jaunpur district in eastern Uttar Pradesh. The village has a total of 160 households. The OBCs form a majority in the village representing 41% of the population followed by SCs (around 38%) and Brahmins (around 21%). The share of the female-headed households in the village is 29% of the total households. The detailed data on education quality and expenses, health status and expense, access to mass media, debt burden, investment made and assets owned. A comparison is made as to how the per-capita household expenses vary with the caste of the household and gender of the household head using descriptive statistics. We organize wealth distribution into quintiles to explore the nuanced relationship between the gender of the household head and wealth. A wealth indicator is constructed using the total value of assets adjusted for the number of household members. By comparing female-headed households to their male-headed counterparts across different wealth quintile groups, we aim to calculate the probabilities associated with their inclusion in each category. This approach enables us to provide a fresh perspective on the dynamics of wealth distribution in India, shedding light on the role of gender in shaping economic disparities among households. The same process is repeated to the caste of the households which gives us a sense of the wealth distribution across caste groups. We find sharp distinctions based on social groups in access to economic resources and spending. Specifically, we find that female-headed households tend to spend more on education and health as compared to male-headed households. A similar difference is observed between the social groups; caste groups belonging to OBCs spend much less on education compared to the SC as well as General households. Logit analysis reveals that female-headed households tend to be wealthier than male-headed households, their proportion of being in the lower wealth quintiles is lesser; whereas SCs are disproportionately represented in the lower quintiles.

## **The Universal Social Protection Measures: Whether a Myth or a Reality in Relation to House Help in Residential Societies**

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The classical utilitarians believed in “the greatest amount of good for the greatest number of people.” So, everyone’s happiness has the same significance. As society progressed on the pedestal of growth, different criteria for happiness were determined. One such criterion is livelihood, as it is understood that no one can be happy when hungry or when the livelihood is at stake, so the state being a welfare state and *parens patriae* took the responsibility to provide social protection measures to its citizens, particularly to those who are unable to protect themselves. However, the COVID-19 pandemic brought forth the reality of the social protection measures not only in India but worldwide. The post-Covid situation is worrisome across the globe irrespective of class, colour, region, gender, and strata. As far as livelihood is concerned there were mass retrenchments across the globe. While the developed nations have a standard approach to deal with mass layoffs, with a prescribed redundancy pay and unemployment benefits. In countries like India, the Covid impact was so massive that it changed the modus operandi of the Labour Department. The situations were far worse in the unorganized sectors, particularly with house helps who suffered the worst because social distancing being the new norm since COVID-19 times. The current scenario is a wake-up call and hence the focus of this paper is to critically analyse the state of the Indian social protection system in the context of unemployment as well as employment in unorganized sectors and particularly in relation to the house help who work in residential societies. Thus, the idea of this research paper is to explore the actuality of Social Protection measures underlying in Law and policies as stipulated in Goal 1.3 of SDG 2030 and it’s also an attempt to initiate a dialogue in relation to the gap found in these social protection measures. It becomes even more important when we have the objective of universalizing social protection measures. The research methodology to be followed to reach the key findings would be both doctrinal and non-doctrinal. The sample on which the research is to be conducted is identified through the non-probability sampling method. The research tool used for obtaining the data is the survey method and the technique to be used is the interview technique which will be conducted through face-to-face interview sessions.

## Household Consumption Expenditure and Idiosyncratic Health Shock: Findings from the Analysis of a Panel Data

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Of the world population, 15% are disabled, and, on average, individuals spend roughly eight years with disabilities. Of those poor, around 20% have some disability. Households in developing economies risk being exposed to shocks that negatively affect household income, a decrease in consumption or even a loss of productive assets. Health shock is among the most critical since it creates temporary or permanent disability. Economic welfare is also linked with other covariates like age and education. Childhood nutrition, vaccination, and hygiene affect an adult's health. These unobserved factors may make it difficult to study the impact of health on economic welfare. Health and economic welfare have two-way causality. This paper examines the impact of the unanticipated idiosyncratic shock on the household's consumption expenditure. We pose two research questions: 1. What is the impact of idiosyncratic health shocks such as disability on different types of consumption expenditure? 2. What is the impact of disability on socio-economic categories? We have used India Human Development Survey (IHDS) data from 2004-05 and 2011-12. We created Activity of Daily Living Intensity (ADLI) from the activity of daily living data to measure disability and days disabled due to major morbidity. The other covariates used are Disability pension received by the households, family size, Health Insurance, Highest completed education by adults in years, Households without toilet, Membership Intensity, Proportion of children 0-14, Proportion of adults 60+, Remittances received by the households. We have examined four different types of consumption expenditures, i.e., Monthly consumption expenditure, Adjusted consumption expenditure, food expenditure and non-food expenditures, and three types of health expenditures, i.e., total health expenditure, outpatient, and inpatient expenditure. Main findings Overall, ADLI had a positive and significant influence on monthly consumption expenditure and had a negative and significant influence on adjusted consumption expenditure. The ADLI had no significant influence on food expenditure. When we checked for adjusted consumption in rural areas, ADLI significantly influenced adjusted consumption. Urban consumption expenditure is influenced positively and significantly by ADLI. ADLI positively and significantly impacts urban non-food expenditure. We find that ADLI negatively impacts all three types of health expenditure. The ADLI is

positive and significant for only OBC in rural and urban areas. The ADLI negatively and significantly influences expenditure for higher caste, OBC, and SC in rural and urban. ADLI had different influences across quintile groups. Conclusion ADLI and days disabled due to major morbidity showed a positive coefficient for monthly consumption expenditure but negative for adjusted consumption expenditure. There is, therefore, a strong case for using consumption expenditure adjusted for health expenditure as a measure of economic welfare. The adjusted expenditure pays for household food and other non-food components; a reduction would mean fewer expenditures. To conclude, the productivity loss must be compensated differently for rural and urban areas. Socio-economic differentials also need to be reflected in the policies related to health intervention. An all-inclusive policy with inclusion and acknowledgement of disabilities is required.

## Technical Session 19

# Transformative Governance & Institutions for Advancing Human Development

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**Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions for Human Development: An enquiry into the National data on important related indicators and suggesting necessary interventions.**

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Governance encompasses the processes and systems that guide and manage a society or community. It can be defined as a framework of judicious decision-making, policy formulation, implementation of governmental flagship programmes and delivery of services to citizens that affect the day-to-day lives of individuals and communities. When governance is transformative, it maintains order and efficiency and also strives to uplift and enhance the well-being of individuals. This form of governance is crucial for advancing human development. In the context of India, governance at grassroots levels holds important significance.

India is predominantly a rural country with people residing in more than 6 lakh villages with 70% of its workforce living in rural areas that contribute to about 46%. These villages are amalgamated into around 2.6 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs). These are institutions of local self-governance at grassroots levels that have a key role in the planning, implementation and monitoring of a large number of flagship programmes. Fostering robust institutions is a critical global imperative, serving as a fundamental element in the pursuit of sustainable development and

good governance. The essence of transformative governance lies in devolving powers to grassroots governance bodies for the effective implementation of schemes and interventions. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 mandates States to endow powers to Panchayats on 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution to enable them to function as institutions of self-governance.

Capacity-building is essential to raise awareness among elected representatives about government policies and ensure efficient service delivery. National Panchayat Awards (NPA) conferred by MoPR, serve as a platform for PRIs to showcase their performance and learn from awardee Panchayats.

This paper analyses the correlation between the devolution of subjects to Panchayats and socio-economic indicators. It shows that states with higher devolution to Panchayats have lower multidimensional poverty and better facilities. This is supported by Mission Antyodaya (MA) 2020 data, indicating that a representative village has only 31% of the necessary facilities. Correlative analysis of the Devolution Index (DI 2015-16), Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021, and MA 2020 survey establishes a negative correlation between DI 2015-16 and MPI 2021 (-0.17) and a positive correlation between DI 2015-16 and MA 2020 Survey (0.64). Moreover, a higher Own Sources of Revenue (OSR) positively impacts service delivery and governance, evident from a 0.42 correlation between DI (2015-16) and state-wise per-capita OSR mobilized. In today's digital era, technology is integral for achieving good governance by facilitating access to information, evidence-based decision-making, transparent implementation, real-time monitoring, and timely adjustments. The paper emphasises the role of digital technology in enabling MoPR to efficiently collect data from over 2.5 lakh GPs for the NPA 2022. This data focuses on key parameters related to SDGs and is aligned with national-level published data. This digital approach supports evidence-based planning at a grassroots level, allowing targeted resource allocation and efficient utilisation for equitable development. The paper proposes and concludes with policy goals and approaches to strengthen PRIs. The bottom-up approach emphasises empowering Panchayats through power devolution, activity mapping, enhanced infrastructure, e-learning tools for training, and proficient technical manpower. Alternatively, a top-down approach suggests the central government defining national policies, strategies and programs to align with GP's roles, overcoming parallel mechanisms in States.”



## **Monitoring Sustainable Development: Does The State Indicator Framework Align with the National Indicator Framework in India?**

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Throughout the world, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda is the supreme global agenda until 2030. The United Nations adopted the document titled 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' consisting of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and associated 169 targets. It was a historical decision. In order to track sustainable development across the world, the global, national and state (within the country) should be on a common platform and monitorable indicators should be aligned with each other. At present, the Global Indicator Framework (GIF) includes 247 indicators, with 231 distinct indicators. India has been playing a prominent role in defining the contours of the 2030 agenda and is committed to achieving these goals in a time-bound manner. The Government of India is committed to ensuring "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas" which is aligned with the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals' motto of "Leaving No One Behind". NITI Aayog is facilitating and coordinating the implementation of SDGs in the country and also undertaking a comparative analysis of SDG achievement in the States and Union Territories. NITI Aayog is also working with States/UTs on the localization of SDGs. At the National level, more than 25 data sources are available. Union Ministries are involved in the process of providing data on SDGs and MoSPI coordinates with these line Ministries/Departments for collecting data on SDG indicators. In the latest National Indicator Framework (NIF version 3.1), nearly 78 per cent of indicators are sourced from administrative records, 21 per cent of indicators are sourced from surveys and the rest from the Census. The paper diagnoses the status of SDG indicators framework alignment across the levels. These levels include global, national and state indicators framework. The analysis of the paper shows that state development indicators are not fully aligned with the national (Indian) indicator and similarly, national (Indian) indicators are not fully aligned with SDG indicators. The geographical conditions, states' priorities, infrastructure requirements, resources and the capacity of the state statistical system vary across the states. The state Indicator Frameworks differ for each state in many ways. The states have to develop their own SIF in consultation with all the stakeholders, including national-level stakeholders, with

due diligence on their alignment with the NIF to facilitate inter-state comparisons. In light of the above background, this research paper tries to answer the pertinent questions by presenting a statistical abstract related to monitoring the progress of SDGs indicators considering the larger theoretical context of coordination failure which leads to underdevelopment. These questions are – (i) what are the differences between the national indicators framework and the global indicators framework? (ii) How does the state indicators framework deviate from the national indicators framework? (iii) How could it be aligned to monitor SDGs progress efficiently? (iv) How should policy be aligned with the indicators frameworks and to diagnose the progress of the indicators to take policy initiatives to achieve the SDG's indicators? (v) What needs to be done across the state to develop a framework for state indicators, as all states are not on equal footing in terms of statistical systems? Answers to these questions help us to reach certain conclusions and policy suggestions for further course correction in the alignment of indicators framework for reaching out SDGs.

### **Cascading Development to the Marginalised: The Case of the Badjao Community in Barangay Totolan, Dauis, Bohol**

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This study seeks to account the impact of the Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services – National Community Driven Development Programme (Kalahi CIDSS-NCDDP) to the improvement of the daily lives of the Badjao community. Further, it traces their history, ethnicity and institutional arrangements. The researchers arrive at a concrete manifestation of betterment in their lifestyle as attributed to their strong community involvement and participation. This is a qualitative study utilising an ethnographic method of data gathering and analysis. Key informants who have had direct access to the Badjao community for over a year and have personal knowledge of the KC-NCDD projects were selected to participate for the purpose of validation. Personal interviews were conducted with the Badjao community leader and/or elders, local government representatives and civil society organisations. Finally, in order to describe the characteristics of the Badjao Community in

terms of democratic decision-making vis-à-vis individual and collective forms of community empowerment through the KALAHI-CIDSS NCDDP, the Ladder of Empowerment proposed by Elizabeth Rocha is adapted.

Empowerment of the Badjao falls on Rocha's Type 3 of Mediated Empowerment in which the process of empowerment is mediated by KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP and the locus is the Badjao Community. The goals are to provide the Badjao with the necessary information and knowledge in terms of the identification of priority needs in order to align with the projects, programmes, and activities of the local government unit responsive to said needs. Further, it is characterized as a 'rights model' type of mediated empowerment where the Badjaos are seen as having "the ability to exercise choice". The community-driven development (CDD) is a precursor to providing avenues for future community transformation in the context of collaborative struggle. This is the challenge in the current structure because of the patent lack of resources, capacity and training of marginalised communities.

Albeit difficult, it is not impossible when laws are passed to protect the rights and ensure the empowerment of the marginalised. Such is the case of the Badjao in Barangay Totolan, Dauis, Bohol. CDD, through the implementation of KALAHI-CIDSS-NCDDP in Barangay Totolan, Dauis, Bohol had resulted in a positive impact on the lives of the Badjao community. Though the degree of empowerment varies in the lens of the different stakeholders with the stark contrast of the views from the Badjao chieftain, as juxtaposed with that of the Barangay Captain, it is a fact that the Badjao people themselves recognise that the programme had afforded them a stake and had in a way caused the betterment of their lives. The dynamics of their engagement is a welcome change in the existing institutional arrangements where the Badjaos are marginalised and thus generally excluded from development initiatives and in the lowest strata of society. While a lot can still be done to improve the deliberative participation of the Badjaos in Totolan, Dauis, Bohol, the seeds of development have already been planted making development initiatives available to the indigenous community, who are otherwise 'excluded' in the process."

## **Rising Wealth Inequality: The Need for Innovative Finance Mechanisms in India**

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Rising socioeconomic inequality around the world has been emanating from disparities in income, wealth, expenditure, gender, ethnicity, and family background. The Global Wealth Report 2021 indicates that the top 10% possess 65% of the world's wealth. This study focuses on India, a country with high real GDP growth and increasing inequality. The socio-economic crisis during 2020-21 driven by COVID-19 further elevated inequality in India, pushing an additional 75 million into poverty. The Consumer Pyramid Household Survey revealed over 90% of income declines in the two lowest deciles during the April-May 2020 lockdown.

This paper analyzes the socio-economic situation in India, with a focus on the issues of disparity and inequality to suggest the way forward through innovative fiscal intervention, based on the Situation-Actor-Process (SAP) - Learning-Action-Performance (LAP) paradigm. The 'actor' is endowed with the freedom of choice and the 'process' helps the actors to deal with the 'situation'. The key 'learning' issues emanating from the SAP pave the path for possible 'actions' to be taken and result in improvements in the 'performance'. In the present study, the situation refers to the socio-economic issues that are being treated by a cluster of actors such as government bodies, the private sector, self-help groups, financial institutions, non-state actors, etc. The process would lead to learning and action to improve the performance of the country to deal with the rising wealth disparity. The SAP-LAP paradigm has been applied in the fiscal policy framework to identify issues of socio-economic disparity in India, which is a unique contribution to the existing literature. Past research has used the SAP-LAP structure in the managerial context to suggest improvements in supply chain and operations research within industrial clusters in the context of product innovation, supply value chain management in the automobile industries and physical infrastructure. Therefore, the present study enhances the extant studies by applying the SAP-LAP paradigm in a macroeconomic context, in the realm of public finance and fiscal intervention is unique. The study has important recommendations for policymakers and highlights the need for the public administration system to implement hybrid models that include both private

and government service providers. The analysis highlights that India needs to evolve a new fiscal consolidation roadmap since India's deficits have continued to increase owing to the high stimulus packages through various government schemes over the years. Against the backdrop of limited fiscal space, revenue generation has to be directed through rationalization of tax rates, increase in tax base, and anti-tax evasion measures. However, in the face of the rising disparity, it is imperative to look at financing mechanisms beyond fiscal intervention. New innovative financing mechanisms are required to enhance investments in social infrastructure for the poor that ensures increased welfare expenditure adopting hybrid models that include both private and government service providers with an effective setup of public welfare. Some of the relevant and effective modes of fiscal intervention would include crowdfunding, public-private partnerships, Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives as well as Self-Help Groups. India's progress in alleviation of poverty and hunger would also largely influence global outcomes in achieving the Agenda 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals."

## Technical Session 20

# Livelihood Security & Decent Employment

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### **Can India Achieve Manufacturing-led Growth? Exploring Policy Strategies Using CGE Modelling Analysis**

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Manufacturing has played a significant role in the development process. The growth of the richer countries in the world had been led by the manufacturing sector. However, the sector is shrinking in almost every country in the world indicating premature deindustrialisation in the developing countries. The Indian economy has shown a non-traditional growth trajectory in terms of industrialisation. Its share of manufacturing in the gross domestic product (GDP) has declined to around 16 per cent. Given the labour-abundant economy, India can harness the potential of its industrial capabilities by increasing its share of the manufacturing sector in GDP and transforming into a developed economy. The present study aims to explore policy strategies for achieving manufacturing-led development in India using a computable general equilibrium modelling framework. Our findings indicate that a sustained comprehensive policy intervention through investment and productivity enhancement in the manufacturing sector as well as production incentives to firms and demand/income incentives to households along with policies for domestic firm protection has the potential to achieve inclusive manufacturing-led growth in India in 6 years. It has a significant positive impact on GDP, income, employment and trade. Its distributive income effect is more in favour of rural areas and the poor. Consequently, manufacturing-led growth has the potential to promote inclusive development. Further, policies merely focusing on labour-intensive sectors, protection of domestic industries, or tax incentives may not have desirable

results and can be counterproductive. Therefore, this study suggests that there is a need to adopt a long-term comprehensive industrial policy framework to achieve manufacturing-led growth and SDGs and transform the country into a developed economy. Keywords: Industrialisation, Manufacturing-led Growth, CGE Modelling, India Further, policies merely focusing on labour-intensive sectors, protection of domestic industries, or tax incentives may not have desirable results and can be counterproductive also. Therefore, this study suggests that there is a need to adopt a long-term comprehensive industrial policy framework to achieve manufacturing-led growth and SDGs and transform the country into a developed economy. Keywords: Industrialisation, Manufacturing-led Growth, CGE Modelling, India”

## **Harnessing India’s Youth Potential: State-wise Analysis of Youth Demography and Labour Market Outcomes**

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India is one of the youngest nations in the world with an average age of 28.7 years. With a youth population (15–29 years) of 36.6 crores (366 million) India accounts for nearly 20% of the world’s total young population. It is estimated that around 80 lakh (8 million) people enter the labour market every year in India. The working-age population is expected to increase by 1 to 1.2 crore annually over the next decade. This gives India a significant advantage since its share of the working-age population is high and rising vis-à-vis its dependent population, with the prospect for many more people to participate in the labour market and contribute to economic growth. This provides India with an opportunity to become the ‘Skill Capital’ of the world, as articulated by the Prime Minister in 2015, by providing a range of services to other ageing countries in labour-intensive sectors such as care services, construction, etc. Furthermore, there are regional variations in India’s demography. Over the course of the next few decades, the growth in the working-age population will be driven by northern and central states that lag in the demographic transition, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. These states will see their working-age population increase through 2041 and supply labour, especially low-skilled labour in sectors such as construction, retail, care, beauty, and transport to the ageing states in southern and western India. The paper attempts to analyse

the heterogeneity in youth demography in the age group 15-29 years while decomposing it into three age cohorts 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years. It examines the state-wise patterns and trends in the labour market and how labour market outcomes vary for different youth cohorts. It is increasingly being recognized that measuring youth unemployment is not a sufficient indicator to weigh the problem of youth in the labour market. (Venketnarayan, et al; 2011 cited O' Higgins,2008). ILO has supported this observation by estimating the 'neither in employment nor in education and training' (NEET) youth population. Youth unemployment does not consider those young people who are outside the labour force. This category of youth is also termed as 'jobless' youth. The joblessness among youth was high in India in 2004-05, constituting about 25.9% (S.M. Dev and Venketnarayan, 2011) and rising to 29.70% in 2011-12. The paper strives to estimate the number of NEET youth and gauge its gendered implications, given that NEET is higher among young females in the age group of 20-29 years. The paper also estimates the number of youths engaged in skill development programmes across Indian states and union territories. It utilizes secondary data sources such as the NSS Employment and Unemployment Survey and PLFS Survey, as well as administrative data such as skilling MIS dashboards for the analysis. It concludes by offering policy recommendations and strategies that can be leveraged to convert India's demographic transition into a demographic advantage.

## **Access To Quality Education, Skill Development and Employment in Haor (Wetland) Area of Bangladesh**

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Quality education and skill-based training are essential for employment and sustainable livelihood. However, Haor (Wetland) is an ecologically sensitive and economically disadvantaged region in Bangladesh where people face numerous challenges, including transportation and communication



problems, limited access to education, skill development, healthcare services and employment despite its natural beauty and cultural heritage. This study aims to investigate the current state of education and skill development in the Haor area. This comprehensive study has three primary objectives: (1) to explore the existing educational infrastructure and its adequacy in meeting the needs of the Haor population; (2) to identify the key barriers and challenges faced by residents in accessing quality education and skill development; and (3) to formulate recommendations and strategies to improve access to education and skill development in the Haor region. The study adopted a mixed-method design following the Qual-Quan approach. The study was carried out in two high schools located in the Haor region of the Sunamganj district of Bangladesh. Data were taken from 60 students from each school who were irregular, and inattentive in school. Qualitative data were collected using face-to-face interviews with students, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) involving local educators and community leaders, as well as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with parents and teachers. Quantitative data was collected through sample surveys to gather information on socio-economic conditions, factors affecting absenteeism and dropout, poor school performance, and aspirations. The findings reveal that seasonal floods, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-economic disparities are highly correlated to low enrolment and high dropout rates. Geographical location, poverty, and cultural factors severely influence their access to education. Lack of awareness, Cultural and gender-related norms, limited access to vocational training and unavailability of suitable jobs worsen the problem further. The study has suggested diverse vocational training programs ranging from agricultural to modern digital technology, reflecting the varied livelihoods of the Haor community. Infrastructure development, change in the mindset of community people, technology-based learning and skills-based training are required for Community-driven initiatives supported by GO-NGO are required to bring the desired change in the Haor, a hard-to-reach community in Bangladesh. In conclusion, a multi-faceted approach involving government, community, and other development actors is required to improve access to quality education and skill development in the Haor region. It is crucial not only for individual empowerment but also for the overall socio-economic development of the area. This study provides a foundation for future initiatives aimed at improving the educational landscape.

### **What Explains the Income Inequality Better: Quantity of Human Capital or the Distribution of Human Capital?**

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The relationship between income inequality, schooling and investment in human capital is highly contested in the human capital theory. Some studies confirm that these variables are perfectly negatively correlated: An increase in human capital and schooling decreases income inequality, while others doubt this result and express the need for deeper scrutiny. Intergenerational mobility theories (emphasizing on impact of inheritance or the effect of family cultural background) contest that unless there is an increase in education distribution along with expansion of average education, the same proportion of people would remain trapped in low levels of education and income for more than one generation (Galor and Zeira (1993), Banerjee and Newman (1993) and Piketty (1997)). The current study tries to establish a relationship between income inequality and education (distinguishing between years of schooling and human capital). For this purpose, we did a panel data study of 134 countries for the period of 1970 to 2020. We calculate Human capital Gini as well as schooling Gini from average years of schooling data compiled at an interval of every 5 years by Barro & Lee. Data for other control variables are taken from UNESCO, ILO, World Bank. For human capital calculation, we follow Lim and Tang (2006). we calculated schooling Gini which is the measure of inequality in schooling attainment in the population. The schooling data such as the average number of years of schooling and years of schooling at different levels has been taken from the Barro and Lee data set from 1970 to 2020. We have used three levels of completed education to calculate schooling inequality (unlike Thomas et al. (2001), who used seven years of schooling). With the above-mentioned method, we calculate the stock of human capital for both quality and quantity to be used for the econometric regression model. The results indicate that mere accumulation of human capital does not guarantee the equitable distribution of human capital which further causes low intergenerational mobility in income. To confirm the relationship further, we used regression analysis to see the causal relationship between the variables. In the pooled OLS regression both, schooling and average human capital negatively impact the income Gini with a 95% confidence interval. The coefficient for average human capital is -8.989, and for average schooling is -1.494. While for the fixed effect model, coefficients are comparable. Considering the impact of inequality in schooling and average human capital on income Gini, it is seen that a reduction in average human capital inequality is more effective in reducing income inequality as compared

to schooling inequality. When we consider both, the average and distribution of human capital in the regression model, the distribution of human capital significantly impacts income Gini, while average human capital has no significant impact. But, schooling average and distribution both, have a significant impact on the reduction of income inequality. These results are stronger for developing countries, while weaker for developed countries.

## **Status, impact and key issues of Food Security in Jharkhand: An Overview**

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Jharkhand is considered one of the richest states in India in terms of the availability of natural resources. However, the state has a very high incidence of poverty, hunger, and alarmingly high levels of malnutrition particularly among women and children in vulnerable groups. The state is one of the most food-insecure states in India. As per the World Bank, food security is 'Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.' The term 'access' here is inclusive of both the supply side and the demand side. Here, the supply side is meant as availability whereas the demand side refers to the term entitlement. Jharkhand has been suffering from both transitory and chronic food insecurity. Poverty is the root cause of chronic food insecurity. In Jharkhand, the assured supply of food prevails for only about three to four months in a year. Food availability tends to finish or run short by the end of the winter, and by June it marks the beginning of the starvation period and continues till the end of the month of October. Despite the hunger season people have started to decline their consumption of cereals and started to consume some of the forest products like gethi, chakora saag etc. The condition of SCs and STs, particularly primitive vulnerable tribal groups is extremely poor and serious as they are landless and dependent on migration in search of jobs to create income. Almost 50% of the area of Jharkhand faces uncertain and erratic rainfall and is under the covers of DPAP. Availability of sufficient, safe and nutritious food to all people has been one of the major concerns for a state like Jharkhand. The lack of food security poses both short-run and long-run development impacts. People living in rural areas are the most vulnerable group and least exposed to food security in terms of access to food and financial resources. Poverty in Jharkhand is highest among other states of India. In terms of the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI), it ranks second highest. The per capita value of agricultural output, the proportion of casual

and daily-wage labourers in works other than agriculture, female literacy rate, percentage of Schedule Tribe population, availability of basic health amenities, access to improved and non-shared toilet facility, safe drinking water are some crucial indices that are responsible for the determination of food security in the rural areas of any state. The objective of the study is to analyze the issues of food security in rural areas of Jharkhand with the foremost emphasis on classifying the districts based on the level of food security in terms of access, availability, utilization or absorption of food. Some of the objectives of the study are to investigate (i) the dimensions, indicators, approach and methods of measuring food security (ii) the status of food security at the district level (iii) inter-district inequalities across all three dimensions (iv) Food insecurity issues among Scheduled Tribe population.

# Technical Session 21

## Health and Wellbeing

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### **Psycho-Social Impact of Covid-2019 on Work-Life Balance of Health Care Workers in India: A Moderation-Mediation Analysis**

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This research constitutes a comprehensive exploration into the challenges faced by Healthcare Workers (HCWs) on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular emphasis on the considerable disruptions to their work-life balance. While a substantial body of research has spotlighted the strenuous socio-economic environments within which HCWs operate, an apparent void exists in terms of an in-depth analysis of the intricate factors that underlie and exacerbate these challenges.

In this study, we undertook the collection of data from a diverse sample encompassing 799 HCWs, who tirelessly served during the pandemic. This sample represents a blend of professionals from both private and public healthcare institutions, spanning the time frame from April 2020 to March 2022. We constructed five latent variables—Psychological Stress (PS), Socio-Economic Impact (SEI), Interpersonal Relationships (IPRs), the Role of Government Intervention (GI), and Work-Life Balance (WLB). Each of these variables was extracted and operationalised through a questionnaire. To unravel how these

variables differentially impact HCWs across an array of socio-demographic characteristics, we harnessed statistical tools. We also endeavoured to craft a comprehensive structural model to dissect and delineate the intricate factors shaping the very essence of work-life balance. This model has enabled a deep dive into the root causes and intricacies of HCWs' well-being. Further, we probed into the mediating role of Interpersonal Relationships (IPRs) in the complex interplay between Psychological Stress (PS) and Work-Life Balance (WLB). Additionally, we delved into the moderating effects of government intervention and the pivotal influence of a binary variable—whether a worker was directly affected by COVID-19 or not—on the elusive construct of Work-Life Balance (WLB).

We observe that both Psychological Stress (PS) and Socio-Economic Impact (SEI) exerted a significant, albeit adverse, influence on the delicate equilibrium of Work-Life Balance (WLB). Interpersonal Relationships (IPRs) have emerged as a salient and positive factor contributing to an improved WLB. Remarkably, government intervention exhibited a lack of significant impact on WLB, an observation that underscores the complexities and variables at play in the well-being of HCWs. Furthermore, we unravelled the intricate mechanisms at play in the mediating role of IPRs, which were found to partially mediate the relationship between Psychological Stress (PS) and Work-Life Balance (WLB). The role of government intervention was discerned to be non-significant in moderating the relationships between Psychological Stress (PS), Socio-Economic Impact (SEI), and WLB. A noteworthy finding was the substantial influence of HCWs directly impacted by COVID-19, as they played a pivotal role in moderating the relationship between Psychological Stress (PS) and IPRs. Moreover, they were found to moderate the direct relationship between IPRs and WLB.

We advocate for the reinforcement of resilience-building initiatives and the expansion of social support networks, both within healthcare facilities and within the communities in which HCWs live. This approach is pivotal, given the challenging and unprecedented circumstances that HCWs continue to grapple with. In essence, it is incumbent upon healthcare institutions and governmental bodies to take concerted actions to protect and elevate the work-life balance of HCWs, who stand as a pillar of strength during public health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These insights provide guidance to policymakers and healthcare institutions.

## Impact Evaluation of PM-JAY Health Insurance Scheme in Selected Districts of Bihar

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The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals prioritize health improvement as a crucial element for poverty eradication. Health insurance is recognized as a potential safety net, alleviating the burden of healthcare expenses for marginalized low-income families during emergencies. Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) was announced in the Union Budget 2019 on the recommendation of the National Health Policy, 2017. This flagship program aims to achieve the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) target and reduce catastrophic out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) an account of health by providing quality health care for the unprivileged section of the society. Previous studies discuss the different aspects of this scheme, but none of them focuses on the impact assessment of this scheme. Therefore, the study is trying to fill this gap by assessing the effectiveness of PM-JAY in achieving the targets of UHC using the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) method. The study is undertaken in two selected districts of Bihar, a state with poor health indicators and dysfunctional delivery of healthcare services (NITI Ayog's Health Index Report 2020). The data of randomly selected 320 households hospitalized during the last four years is collected in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas of East Champaran and West Champaran districts of Bihar. The study uses three outcome variables -utilization of healthcare services, financial protection from healthcare expenditure, and treatment outcomes. On the other hand, income, education, presence of a chronic patient, distance from the nearest hospital, medical expenditure, and land holdings, among others are taken as observable characteristics. PSM is a non-experimental technique that works by creating a treatment group comprising beneficiaries of the scheme and a control group, which includes the non-beneficiaries of the scheme with identical observable characteristics (covariates). Here, the objective is to find the match for every individual in the treatment group from the control group based on observable characteristics  $Z$ . Further, the mean effect of treatment is calculated as the average difference in outcomes between beneficiary and non-beneficiary. Thus, the Average Treatment effect on Treated (ATET) on an outcome variable  $Y$  can be written as  $ATET = E(Y_1 - Y_0 | D=1)$  Which implies,  $ATET = E(Y_1 | D=1) - E(Y_0 | D=1)$  Where  $D=1$  for treated observation and  $D=0$  for the control observation;  $E(Y_1 | D=1)$  is the outcomes of treated observation;  $E(Y_0 | D=1)$  is the outcomes of the treated

observation if they have not been treated (i.e., counterfactual). The results of the study may reveal the effectiveness of the PMJAY scheme in achieving the target of UHC. Results may play a significant role in the assessment and policy implication of the world's largest health insurance scheme in the selected districts of Bihar. Previous studies suggested that insured individuals are keener to utilize healthcare services than the uninsured individual. The results are expected to reveal whether the PMJAY scheme increases healthcare utilization among insured households. The prime objective of PMJAY is the financial protection of vulnerable sections of society from catastrophic healthcare expenditures. Therefore, the results will reveal the extent of financial protection this scheme is providing to marginalized households. Further, the results of the study may show the impact of PMJAY on the treatment outcomes, for example, post-treatment workability, satisfaction level, money saved or not, etc.

## **Cities, Pandemics and Public Health: Lessons from History**

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Covid-19 is neither the first nor last pandemic. We have witnessed more than 250 pandemics in history. Cities are shaped by disease. Pandemics have damaged cities and triggered urban development in the past. Cities have historically been characterized by their interactions with and responses to diseases. However, Cities have handled pandemics and epidemics effectively in the past as long as they are adequately managed and regulated. When urban communities are engaged in policy and decision making, and empowered with financial resources, the results are more inclusive and durable.” The Covid-19 crisis offers cities a chance for a “Great Reset” towards “resilient, healthier, inclusive, greener, and sustainable cities.” We shouldn’t miss this chance, try to learn from history and realize how the epidemic has affected and is going to influence the city in the future as well. Objectives to revisit the history of pandemics, the evolution of public health, and how well-managed and planned urban morphology can lead to a resilient city through an extensive review of their evolution, origin, causes, and impact on lives from ancient to contemporary times. Methodology We conduct an extensive review of major pandemics in history. Analyzed how the



evolution of urbanization and public health led to altering the impact of these pandemics. We compiled the timeline of major pandemics and plagues from the 160s to the 2020s. The evolution of the rate of urbanization from 5000 BC till the contemporary world. Also, the evolution of public health from ancient times through the British era till the Covid-19 period. Further, we discuss issues, solutions, and control methods as well as their influence on the urban morphology and environment. Key Findings and Conclusion Over the years, diseases have strongly influenced urban development patterns. Pandemics and epidemics have tracked the development of cities all over the world, whether it was the cholera outbreaks in the middle of the 19th century that prompted the creation of the Metropolitan Board of Works in London and modern sanitation systems or the 1896 Bombay plague that compelled the British to reclaim land to join the seven islands that make up today's Mumbai. This Covid-19 taught us that countries with strong public health foundations did well to fight against the pandemic. Poor countries with massive amounts of poverty and a lack of finance, planning, governance, and management are more vulnerable and prone to the spread of contagion and pandemic outbreaks. India's public health foundation is very weak. We don't have a proper water, drainage, and sewerage system. We have got an airborne disease this time. The next disease may be waterborne or vector-borne. However, we are making significant progress in the public health sector, from the disease phase to achieving health for everyone and having long-term development goals. A pandemic started by a micro-organism compels us to return to pandemic prevention tactics used in the history of pandemics. Understanding the history of public health provides us with the knowledge to face difficult circumstances with time-tested knowledge and to overcome problems. From this historical study, we have learned that public health has seen numerous ups and downs from ancient times to the present. The public health system in ancient India was powerful, but it experienced setbacks because of invasion and colonial domination. However, since independence, India has significantly improved public health standards."

### **Representational Inequities in Under-five Mortality in South Asian Countries: An Illustration of Relative Disadvantage Index**

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Health inequalities, particularly in the context of under-five (U5) mortality, have become a prominent focus in global health policy. While strides have been made in achieving targeted health performance under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), attention to the distribution of these health improvements, particularly in child health, has revealed emerging inequalities. Reading of such inequalities is largely motivated by its valuation (good and bad) alongside its unfairness that relates to differential attainment across varying attributes and characteristics. The twin broad conceptualization of inequality, i.e., vertical and horizontal, offers inequality measures for its assessment.

The Concentration Index, a popular measure, is often employed in health-related outcome studies to gauge vertical inequality, whereas horizontal inequality involves observing differential outcomes across identity groups. The South Asian region, marked by complex socio-political and cultural dynamics, exhibits entrenched health and social disparities associated with class, caste, gender, ethnicity, and evolving oppressive relationships.

On this count, an exposition of cross-country comparison of inequality in U5 mortality using the representative principle will reveal the extent of the disparity beyond the inequality pattern indicated by the Concentration Index. Data and Methods To portray the status of U5 mortality in South Asian countries, information available in the latest Demographic and Health Survey datasets will be used. For this exercise, we have considered seven countries, namely, Afghanistan (2015), Bangladesh (2017-18), India (2019-21), Maldives (2016-17), Nepal (2016), and Pakistan (2017-18) in terms of their latest data availability. The extent of the U5 death inequality is being assessed here in keeping with the representative principle. In comparison to average outcomes, relative advantage/disadvantage following this principle assesses how well a subgroup performs in any outcome. This measure used departure from an ideal condition, which requires that a subgroup's share in the population be equal to its share in the adversity. The characteristic groups considered here for illustration include Place of residence, religion, wealth status, education, and so on. Finally, we are contrasting the observed pattern of U5 deaths against a desirable pattern in keeping with the principle of RDI across countries. Findings There is consistent urban privilege indicated by Negative RDI values across all four countries, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, except Bangladesh and Maldives, where there is a rural privilege. The magnitude of such an advantage is largest in India, followed by other countries informing the wealth-linked inequality being greater in India. Negative RDI values for mothers with 12 or more years of completed education indicate a relative advantage in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India,

and Pakistan, suggesting lower U5 mortality rates among children of educated mothers. For Antenatal care visits, Maldives with positive RDI values, indicating a relative disadvantage in terms of lower U5 deaths. While contrasting the desirable share of this adversity against the prevailing share across wealth categories, it is evident that the redistribution required is quite different across nations. The required distribution of child deaths across the mother's educational category calls for a lesser charge in the lower educational category compared with the better educational categories. Conclusion This exercise exposes the characteristic imbalance in early-age mortality beyond the understanding of characteristic disparity in keeping with the representative principle of equality. Such an understanding not only identifies the characteristic category for focussed intervention but also informs on the representational facet of the unfair burden of under-five mortality.

