UNIT 22  HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND DEVELOPMENT: A REALITY CHECK

Structure
22.1 Introduction
22.2 Objectives
22.3 Status of Human Trafficking in India
   22.3.1 Global Trends
   22.3.2 Indian Trends
   22.3.3 Existing Measures dealing with Human Trafficking in India
22.4 Development in India
   22.4.1 Literacy
   22.4.2 Sectoral Growth of the Indian Economy
   22.4.3 Employment and Unemployment
   22.4.4 Poverty
   22.4.5 Human Development Index
22.5 Human Trafficking and Development: An Assessment of the Reality
22.6 Summary
22.7 Terminal Questions
22.8 Answers and Hints
22.9 References and Suggested Readings

22.1 INTRODUCTION
With the conceptual understanding of human trafficking and its linkage with the problem of development in the previous unit, we now move on to look at briefly the available evidences on human trafficking and development particularly some of the human development indicators in India so as to assess where we stand in these two fronts.1

2.2 OBJECTIVES
After studying this unit, you should be able to:
1 discuss the current status of Human Trafficking in India with the available data;
1 describe India’s Development status with the help of a few indicators; and
1 analyse the linkage between Human Trafficking and Development.

1 The evidences we have presented in support of existence of Human Trafficking and Development in this unit are limited and suggestive only. We motivate the students to consult other relevant references as well in addition to what we have suggested in consultation with the Teacher.
22.3 STATUS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The organised crime of trafficking in humans is found to be the third largest profit making industry following arms and drug trafficking. Though it has been ten years since the United Nations adopted the Protocol also known as Palermo Protocol which entered into force in 2003 with the primary objective to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, the crime seems to be assuming different roots and dimensions across the world to the tunes of Globalisation and Technological Advancement. As Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2005) observed, “Trafficking in women and children for purposes such as sexual exploitation, begging, domestic work is widespread in the Asia-Pacific region and has been extensively documented. Relatively richer ESCAP countries tend to be destination countries and poorer countries tend to be source countries. In some countries people are trafficked from rural areas to urban centres. The dynamics are unique by sub-region and by individual country, with differing trends and scale also from one part of the country to another and frequently changing over time. For example, in the sub-region of Central Asia, men are a high proportion of people trafficked. According to a report by the NGO Transcend, there is a growing tendency toward male prostitution in Central Asia due to high unemployment, and increasingly, young males are sent to the Middle East for prostitution. Several countries are used for transit and a number of countries are a mix of source, destination and transit countries.”

The recently released Report on Trafficking in Persons (2010) comprehends the problem much more succinctly, “Over 10 years, governments worldwide have made appreciable progress in understanding a number of realities about human trafficking: people are in situations of modern slavery in most countries; trafficking is a fluid phenomenon responding to market demands, weakness in laws and penalties, and economic and development disparities. More people are trafficked for forced labour than for commercial sex. The crime is less often about the fat-out duping and kidnapping of naïve victims than it is about the coercion and exploitation of people who initially entered a particular form of service voluntarily or migrated willingly. Trafficking can occur without movement across borders or domestically, but many countries and commentators still assume some movement is required. Men comprise a significant number of trafficking victims. And traffickers often use sexual violence as a weapon against women to keep them in compelled service, whether in a field, a factory, a brothel, a home, or a war zone.”

Since it is a clandestine industry run by the organised criminals, getting reliable and accurate data has been a big challenge for broader understanding of different dimensions of the issue and for focussed intervention by the stakeholders. The available data and estimates from different sources so far do not seem to be accurate as they have their own methodological fallacies. However, the world community appears to be slowly waking up to this reality, to have understood the enormity of the situation, and seems to be making renewed efforts in the recent times towards addressing the problem. The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2009)2 that analysed the current state of world’s response to human trafficking found that out of 155 countries included for the study, many of them are committed, took significant initiates and have made substantial progress, and are ready to share data they have. The report notes that the number of countries which have legislation to deal with human trafficking has gone up to 80 percent

2 For country specific legislations, actions, and other details relating to Human Trafficking please refer the Report and this Report is a ‘must refer’ one for all of you.
in 2008 from 35 percent in 2003 with 17 percent of them having criminalised some form of trafficking and 20 percent of them having both specific Anti-human trafficking laws as well as other laws that prosecute trafficking as well. This is a very positive trend serving as a motivation for other members also to follow suit.

22.3.1 Global Trends

Touzenis Kristina (2010) observed, “ILO has estimated that the minimum number of persons in forced labour, including sexual exploitation as a result of trafficking, at any given time is 2.5 million. Of these, 1.4 million are in Asia and the Pacific, 270,000 in industrialized countries, 250,000 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 230,000 in the Middle East and Northern Africa, 200,000 in countries with economies in transition and 130,000 in sub-Saharan countries”.

The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons’ (2009) findings reveal that in addition to sexual exploitation being the most common form of human trafficking, forced labour and other forms of exploitation like domestic servitude, child begging, forced marriage, organ removal and ritual killings were also found to be existing across countries. Out of the countries 155 studied, in 52 countries the sexually exploited victims formed 79 percent, forced labour 18 percent and the other forms of exploitation 3 percent. The other forms of exploitation found to be less, could really be higher and alarming. The report also identified three dimensions of flow in trafficking viz. trans-regional trafficking, intra-regional trafficking, and domestic trafficking. According to the classification the report further observes, “Domestic trafficking affects victims who are citizens of the country in which they are exploited. Intra-regional trafficking occurs between different countries within the same region. This includes cross-border trafficking and trafficking between countries geographically close to one another. In trans-regional trafficking, victims are trafficked from one of the regions considered in this report to another region. This could be trans-continental trafficking, but it also involves trafficking flows to neighbouring regions on the same continent, such as between Eastern Europe and Western and Central Europe, or between Central and North America”.

22.3.2 Indian Trends

According to Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, “India is a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. In late 2009, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs assessed India’s human trafficking problem as including commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour, and bonded labour. The forced labour within the country of millions of citizens constitutes India’s largest trafficking problem; men, women, and children in debt bondage are forced to work in industries such as brick kilns, rice mills, agriculture, and embroidery factories. Ninety percent of trafficking in India is internal, and those from India’s most disadvantaged social economic strata are particularly vulnerable to forced or bonded labour and sex trafficking. Children are also subjected to forced labour as factory workers, domestic servants, beggars, and agricultural workers. Forced domestic work is a problem in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Orissa.”

Trafficking in Women and Children in India (2005) observed that in 2001, 4 million people mostly women and children were traded against their will in some form of slavery every year. In Asia alone, about 30 million people fell prey to the crime in the last 30 years. South Asia accounted for 15,000 trafficked persons according to US
Congressional Research Service. The figures for trafficked persons in India ranged between 70,000 and 2 million. To anyone’s simple guess, these figures must have grown many folds in the recent times with significant rise in its magnitude given the sophistication in technology and information advancement.

*Trafficking in Persons Report (2010)* puts it that the number of trafficked persons in India could be somewhere between 20 and 65 million. As far as the current patterns in human trafficking in India, according to the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2009)*, are concerned, most of the trafficking victims were identified in four States viz. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, and Haryana during the study period between 2005 and 2007. These victims were found to be trafficked from other Indian States as well as from neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bangladesh. For instance, in Maharashtra the majority of trafficked victims during the study period were from Nepal with 156 victims and from Bangladesh with 25 victims. The rest were from the other States of India like Uttar Pradesh (19 victims), Madhya Pradesh (14), West Bengal (13), Rajasthan (12), Karnataka (7), and Andhra Pradesh (4). Whereas in the other three States the majority of the victims were mainly from within the States and the contribution from State to State is negligible. Interestingly, the State of Kerala found to have the major number of trafficked victims with 610 victims during the period 2005-06 compared to the less number of cases recorded in Karnataka with 311 and Haryana with 85 victims. However, the Kerala figures largely represented the victims of other forms of exploitation and the sexually exploited victims found to be the least when compared with other States.

### 22.3.3 Existing Measures dealing with Human Trafficking in India

The legal instruments that India signed and ratified at the global level were the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with its optional protocols, and the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking among Women and Children. At the National level India has legal provisions like *Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act, 1956* (ITPA), *The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976*, *The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986*, *The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000*, and of course the important Indian Penal Code that provides punishment for crimes including trafficking.

Apart from the above, India also has the Institutional mechanisms like *The National Commission for Women (NCW)* set up to safeguard the interests of women, *The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)* established mainly for the promotion and protection of Human Rights of its citizens, *The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights*, and a *Central Advisory Committee (CAC)* for Preventing and Combating Trafficking of Women and Children for Commercial Sexual Exploitation constituted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Further, the Policy protocols like *Integrated Plan of Action to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking with special focus on Children and Women*, *Protocol for Pre-rescue, Rescue and Post-rescue Operations of Child Victims of Trafficking for the Purpose of Commercial Sexual Exploitation*, and many more have also been initiated by the Government of India.  

---

1 For a comprehensive view of all the schemes, programmes, and other measures initiated by the Government of India, refer *India Country Report*. 
Self Assessment Question

3) Fill in the blanks

   i) Trafficking in Persons Report (2010) states that the number of trafficked persons in _________could be somewhere between_________million.

   ii) The Expert Group set up by the Planning Commission of India estimated that_________people live below poverty line in India.

22.4 DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

On the development front if we look at we would understand that the development agenda which we have adopted and implemented in the independent India with emphasis on human development in the recent times, in order to correct the disparities and divisions in all terms, seems to have produced mixed results. On the one hand, there has been a considerable progress in terms of employment and income generation, access to education and health care, development of science and technology but with huge disparities across States. On the other hand, the core concerns of humanity like illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, lack of access to basic amenities, corruption, gender bias, violence against women, and social exclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups entrenched in our cultural practices continue to remain as major challenges of development agenda. Below we discuss the latest figures on some of the development indicators in India.

22.4.1 Literacy

The literacy rate, even after 63 years of Independence, still stands at 64 and above percent with stark regional disparity of one State (Kerala) having above 90 percent and another (Bihar) having just above 47 percent. The difference between male and female literacy rates appears to be significant with 75 and 54 respectively at all India level and the illiteracy level of women seems to be very high in rural areas than the urban centres. Such a difference certainly reveals the difficulty for women to access education reflecting the deep rooted cultural bias against women.

22.4.2 Sectoral Growth of the Indian Economy

The growth of different sectors of the Indian economy as presented in the Table 1 below reveals a very contrasting picture about India’s economic performance in the recent times. Although the overall growth rates of GDP seem to have been well above 8 percent from 2005-06 onwards except in the year 2008-09 that witnessed 6.7 percent owing to the impact of Global Economic Crisis, the sectoral contribution to the GDP seems to be highly irregular and worrisome. For instance, the growth of agriculture sector which is the backbone of the rural economy that employs majority of the rural workforce has constantly and drastically been declining from 2005-06 onwards and has reached the negative growth in 2009-10. It emerges very clearly from the figures presented that the other sectors of the economy are well taken care of though they do seem to fluctuate in their performances.

22.4.3 Employment and Unemployment

The unemployment figures for the labour force present a gloomy picture for the country. As per the National Sample Survey data analysis, the employment opportunities on a
current daily status (CDS) basis increased from 24 million during 1993-94 to 1999-2000 to 47 million during 1999-2000 to 2004-05. Nonetheless, the labour force in the country had grown at a faster rate. As a result the unemployment rate as a percentage of total labour force went up from 7.31 percent in 1999-2000 to 8.28 percent in 2004-05. Such an unwarranted growth represents the irregular unemployment of the unorganised work force which obviously includes the vast majority of the rural work force as well.

Table 22.1: Sectoral Growth Rates of Indian Economy over the years
(factor cost at 2004-05 prices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining &amp; Quarrying</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas &amp; Water Supply</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Hotels &amp; Restaurants</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage &amp; Communication</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing, Insurance, Real Estate &amp; Business Services</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community, Social &amp; Personal Services</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Economic Survey, 2009-10*

Table 22.2: Unemployment Rate as % of Labour Force (Current Daily Status)
(From various rounds of National Sample Survey)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>8.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>8.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>9.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>7.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>8.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Planning Commission, Government of India*

**Self Assessment Question**

2) True or False
   
   i) The vulnerable people are trafficked only for commercial sexual exploitation. (True/False).
   
   ii) GDP is an indicator of overall well being of the society. (True/False).
22.4.4 Poverty

The poverty estimates by different sources do not provide uniform figures and have generated much controversy in India. Estimates of the Expert Group set up by the Planning Commission reveal that the people who live below the poverty line constitute 37.2 percent, out of which 41.8 percent are rural poor and 25.7 percent are urban poor. Shockingly, Sengupta et al (2008) found that 836 million people forming three fourth of India’s population were poor and vulnerable including 6.4 percent of people falling under extremely poor category. The National Commission for the Enterprises in Unorganised Sector headed by Sengupta and set up by the Government of India in 2004 estimated that roughly 92 percent of India’s total workforce is engaged in informal/unorganised sector and most of them remained poor with an average per capita consumption of less than Rs.20 a day.

22.4.5 Human Development Index

Although the indicators discussed above reveal a lot of about India’s uneven development, taking a look at the human development status of India would help us to understand the overall socio-economic picture of the country better. From the country wise assessment presented in Human Development Report 2009, we find that India takes its position among the countries with medium human development. Specifically it ranks 134 among the 182 countries in terms of overall human development index with no improvement between the years 2006 and 2007. This is shocking because some of the countries like Sri Lanka (102) and Bhutan (132) in South Asia and poorer South Africa (129) have performed better than India despite the commitments made at national and international levels so as to improve the human well being. Further the figures at the disaggregated level in terms of human poverty and gender disparity reveal that India is far from realising its goal of achieving equitable human development. The human poverty index places India at 88th rank, whereas the countries like Sri Lanka and South Africa were ranked at 67th and 85th respectively with better performance. In terms of gender disparity India’s rank goes down further to 114 while Sri Lanka and South Africa have ranks of 83 and 109 respectively.

Self Assessment Question

3) Provide Answer in one word.
   i) Which sector of the Indian economy has been poorly performing over the years?

22.5 HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE REALITY

Despite India having suitable legal instruments, institutional mechanism, polices and programmes at the National level and its commitment at the International level to work to eliminate human trafficking, the problem, as the evidences presented above clearly suggest, continues unabated. The existing Laws in India have been criticised for they have loopholes which facilitate easy escape of the perpetrators of human trafficking. Had these laws been effectively enforced with the prescribed punishments strictly, perhaps the increasing trends in the immoral practice would have reversed, if not stopped completely.
The problem of Human Trafficking despite the several good initiatives by different stakeholders continues in India because the root cause of the problem has not yet been addressed. In other words, the development in India has not yet fully addressed some of the major issues like illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, and gender bias. As the development indicators that we discussed above have shown, the development particularly the human development in India has been uneven so far. India’s problem of underdevelopment with its deep rooted socio-cultural prejudices, which prevent the large chunk of its population, especially the subjugated women, and the vulnerable from realising their fundamental rights and total participation in the socio, cultural, economic, and political process creates hurdles for realising the overall development of the country. What we infer from this is that the lack of socio, cultural, economic, and political development of a country is a fertile ground for the emergence and perpetuation of human trafficking. Especially when majority of India’s population living on a meagre income of rupees 20 per day per head with no or limited livelihood options and social security, any alluring attempt to bring those vulnerable groups in the lower rungs of society into trafficking by the organised criminals would be resisted with little efforts.

### 22.6 SUMMARY

1. Human Trafficking and Development of a country are closely linked. As the evidences suggest, the lack of Development forms the basis for the emergence of problem of Human Trafficking.
2. Millions of Women and Children from vulnerable segments of the society are being forced not only into commercial sexual exploitation but also into other forms of exploitations like domestic servitude, forced marriage, begging, etc across countries every year.
3. The available data and estimates on Human Trafficking, though not very accurate, do present the enormity of the problem which is getting perpetuated despite significant initiatives being taken by different stakeholders including the State in many countries ever since the adoption of UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
4. India seems to be a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. It appears that the trafficked persons in India could be between 20 and 65 millions.
5. As per the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2009)*, the Indian States such as Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, and Haryana account for majority of trafficked victims who are trafficked from neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bangladesh and from other States of India.
6. India has appropriate legal, institutional, policy and other instruments to deal with the problem of Human Trafficking. Yet, the problem continues unabated.
7. India’s development has not yet fully addressed the issues like illiteracy, unemployment, poverty, and gender bias which is deeply rooted in its socio-cultural prejudices. Such a development indirectly perpetuates human trafficking.

### 22.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Explain the trends in Human Trafficking and the initiatives by different stakeholders towards arresting the trend.
2) Discuss India’s Development with the help of a few indicators.

3) Human Trafficking is basically a Developmental problem. Critically analyse this statement in light of your understanding of these two issues.

### 22.8 ANSWERS AND HINTS

#### Self Assessment Questions

1) i) India; 20 and 65 ii) 37.2%

2) i) False ii) False

3) i) Agriculture

#### Terminal Questions

1) Refer to Section 22.3

2) Refer to Section 22.4

3) Refer to Section 22.3, 22.4 and 22.5

### 22.9 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS


Websites

1) Planning Commission, Government of India
   http://planningcommission.nic.in/
   http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/Data0910/tab%2028.pdf
   http://planningcommission.nic.in/data/datatable/Data0910/tab%2021.pdf

National Commission for the Enterprises in Unorganised Sector, Government of India
   http://nceus.gov.in/