

CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT - AN OVERVIEW

In recent years the focus of development planning has shifted from mere material attainments in general, and growth of per capita income in particular, to planning for enhancement of human well being. This has been primarily on account of the experience that there is often an inadequate correspondence between attainment of economic prosperity and enrichment in individual's quality of life, as reflected in the social indicators on health, longevity, literacy, environmental sustainability etc. The latter are valued not only as outcomes that are socially desirable and hence the objectives of the process of development but they are also seen as valued inputs for putting the development process on a sustainable path. It has made human development and improvement in quality of life as the ultimate objective of development in general and planning in particular. Much of the credit for this broadening in the conceptualisation of well being, and hence in development, has been due to the popularisation of the human development approach by the UNDP, through its human development reports that are being brought out annually since 1990.

2. The general acceptance of this approach has reinforced the need to have a holistic perspective for formulating development plans and policy frameworks, especially for the social sectors, in the developing countries. While it is true that human development has always been an important objective in each of our plans since the independence, it is only now that the need to explicitly develop an inter-sectoral development framework with policies that strengthen the virtuous cycles of development, cutting across various sectors and yielding outcomes that are socially desirable has been recognised and is being, given shape. Thus, beginning with the Ninth Plan various thematically homogeneous issues under the social sector were brought together in a consolidated write up. This framework was adopted in the Annual Plans as well and the same format is being continued in this document. In this chapter we have brought together social sector issues including those related to education; health and family welfare; housing; urban development; water supply and civic amenities; social welfare; employment and labour welfare; art and culture; youth affairs and sports; and information and broadcasting.

3. A major focus in this year's Annual Plan in respect of human development initiative has been the revamping of the earlier basic minimum services programme. This programme has been given a new name, namely Prime Ministers Gramodaya Yojana to further the initiative on sustainable human development at the village level. In our development context, rural connectivity is being seen as a vital link in furthering multiple developmental objectives in the social sectors. Annual Plan 2000-01 has recognised this and has given a shape, to begin with, through the PMGY.