

Human Development, Poverty and Public Programmes

10 CHAPTER

Social welfare aimed at human development or improvement in the well-being of the people is an important objective of development planning. While economic growth is extremely important, it has to be accompanied by improvement in the quality of life of the people for the development process to be sustainable in the medium to long run. More importantly, it has to be inclusive in nature. The notion of inclusive growth relates essentially to equality of opportunity to all for a productive and meaningful life with freedom and dignity. It is much broader than the objective of poverty alleviation. It encompasses human development and economic and social mobility for all sections of the society, and in particular, for the disadvantaged and marginalized population groups of the society. These population groups have not only to be brought into the economic and social mainstream but made active participants and legitimate beneficiaries of the development process. Ultimately, a healthy, educated and an empowered population contributes to improved productivity which, in turn sustains economic growth.

10.2 This chapter brings together some evidence on the relationship between human development, poverty, hunger and employment followed by a brief overview of the trends in social sector spending by the Central and State Governments. The chapter highlights issues and public programmes in social sector, including in rural infrastructure and

development, education, health, women and child development, welfare and development of weaker sections and persons with disabilities, social security and other related issues. The chapter also discusses briefly issues relating to climate change and its impact on development.