

CUET · GEOGRAPHY · CLASS XII · CODE 313

Human Development

CUET unit: Population Composition

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Snapshot

- Growth (quantitative, value-neutral) differs from development (qualitative, value-positive); this distinction is the conceptual core of human development.
- Dr Mahbub-ul-Haq (founder of HDI, 1990) and Prof. Amartya Sen (capability/freedom approach) laid the intellectual foundation of human development.
- Human development rests on four pillars (equity, sustainability, productivity, empowerment), four approaches (income, welfare, basic needs, capability), and two key UNDP indices (HDI and Human Poverty Index).
- HDI is measured on a 0-1 scale using health (life expectancy), education (adult literacy + gross enrolment) and access to resources (PPP), each weighted 1/3.
- Countries fall into four HDI categories; Bhutan's Gross National Happiness is an alternative measure — a high-yield CUET zone on definitions, indicators, and named scholars.

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

- **Growth is quantitative and value-neutral**; it may carry a positive or negative sign, while **development is a qualitative change that is always value-positive** (NCERT §Growth and Development, p. 13). NCERT is careful to say that both terms refer to "changes over a period of time" but only one of them is normatively loaded — a distinction CUET examiners exploit ruthlessly.
- **Development occurs only when there is a positive change in quality**; positive growth does not necessarily lead to development. For example, if a city's population grows from one lakh to two lakhs but housing and basic services remain unchanged, the city has grown without having developed (NCERT §Growth and Development, p. 13). The Banda Aceh tsunami photographs (June 2004 vs December 2004) reinforce that cities can even grow **negatively** — destruction is also a change in size.
- For many decades a country's level of development was measured **only by economic growth** — "the bigger the economy of the country, the more developed it was considered, even though this growth did not really mean much change in the lives of most people" (NCERT p. 14). The shift came in the late eighties and early nineties through the works of two South Asian economists — **Mahbub-ul-Haq** and **Amartya Sen**.

- **Dr Mahbub-ul-Haq**, a Pakistani economist, introduced the concept of human development and **created the Human Development Index in 1990**. He described human development as "development that enlarges people's choices and improves their lives" and stressed that people are central to all development; "these choices are not fixed but keep on changing"; the basic goal is to create conditions for people to live meaningful lives with dignity (NCERT pp. 14, Do You Know box).
- **A meaningful life is not just a long one** — it must have purpose; people must be healthy, develop their talents, participate in society and be free to achieve their goals (NCERT p. 14). The comic strip on p. 15 (Shehnaz wishing for good health, school/college completion and self-realisation) and the contrasting "Dead or in Prison" vs "cure for cancer" panels illustrate the difference between a meaningful and a merely-long life.
- The Government of India's **Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao** programme is cited as an example of policy addressing the declining child sex ratio and enlarging girls' choices (NCERT box, p. 15).
- The three key areas of human development are **access to resources, health and education**; capabilities in these areas must be built because lack of capability limits choices (NCERT p. 16). The textbook's everyday examples: an uneducated child cannot choose to be a doctor; a poor person cannot choose costly medical treatment.
- **Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen** saw "an increase in freedom (or decrease in unfreedom) as the main objective of development", arguing that increasing freedoms is itself an effective means of bringing about development. His work explores the role of social and political institutions and processes in increasing freedom (NCERT Do You Know box, p. 14).
- **Four pillars of human development** are **equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment** (NCERT §The Four Pillars of Human Development, p. 16).
- **Equity** = equal access to opportunities for everyone irrespective of gender, race, income and (in the Indian case) caste; the NCERT example points to women and socially/economically backward groups who form a disproportionate share of school dropouts in India.
- **Sustainability** = continuity in the availability of opportunities; every generation must have the same opportunities, so environmental, financial and human resources must be used keeping the future in mind. A standard example is the importance of sending girl children to school — failure to do so curtails opportunities for the next generation.
- **Productivity** = human labour productivity, constantly enriched by building people's capabilities; "people are the real wealth of nations".
- **Empowerment** = power to make choices, arising from increasing freedom and capability; requires good governance and people-oriented policies, with special focus on socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

- **Four approaches to human development (Table 3.1)** (NCERT p. 17):
 - **(a) Income Approach** — one of the oldest; human development is seen as linked to income; higher income reflects greater freedom and higher human development.
 - **(b) Welfare Approach** — treats people as passive beneficiaries/targets of development; argues for higher government expenditure on education, health, social security and amenities; government, not people, drives human development.
 - **(c) Basic Needs Approach** — initially proposed by the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**; identifies **six basic needs — health, education, food, water supply, sanitation, housing**; ignores the question of choices and focuses on provision.
 - **(d) Capability Approach** — associated with **Prof. Amartya Sen**; building human capabilities in health, education and access to resources is the key to enlarging choices.
- **HDI** ranks countries between **0 and 1** on three dimensions — **health (life expectancy at birth)**, **education (adult literacy rate + gross enrolment ratio)** and **access to resources (purchasing power in US dollars)** — each given a weight of **1/3** (NCERT §Measuring Human Development, p. 17).
- The closer the HDI score is to one, the higher the level of human development; HDI measures attainments but does not reveal distribution — that is its acknowledged limitation (NCERT p. 17).
- The **Human Poverty Index (HPI)** is a **non-income measure** of the shortfall in human development; it uses **probability of not surviving till age 40, adult illiteracy rate, lack of access to clean water**, and the **number of small children who are underweight** (NCERT p. 18). The HPI is "often more revealing than the human development index" and that looking at both together gives an accurate picture.
- The **UNDP** has published the **Human Development Report annually since 1990**, using both HDI and HPI (NCERT box, p. 18).
- **Bhutan** is the only country in the world to officially proclaim **Gross National Happiness (GNH)** as the measure of progress; Bhutan approaches material and technological progress cautiously, taking into account possible harm to the environment and to cultural/spiritual life — material progress cannot come at the cost of happiness (NCERT box, p. 18).
- Countries fall into four HDI categories per HDR 2023-24 — **Very High (above 0.800, 69 countries)**, **High (0.700-0.799, 49 countries)**, **Medium (0.550-0.699, 42 countries)**, **Low (below 0.550, 33 countries)** (NCERT Table 3.2, p. 18).
- **Top-ranked countries (HDR 2023-24, Table 3.3):** 1. Switzerland, 2. Norway, 3. Iceland, 4. Hongkong China (SAR), 5. Denmark (tied), 5. Sweden (tied), 7. Germany (tied), 7. Ireland (tied), 9. Singapore, 10. Australia (tied), 10. Netherlands (tied) (NCERT p. 19). Many of these are former imperial powers with low social diversity; many are European; but a "striking number" are non-European.

- **Size of territory and per capita income are not directly linked to human development** — smaller/poorer countries (Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago) outrank India; within India, **Kerala outperforms Punjab and Gujarat** despite lower per capita income (NCERT §International Comparisons, p. 18).
- **India ranks 134 out of 193 countries** in the HDR 2023-24, with HDI value rising from **0.633 (2021) to 0.644 (2022)** — placing India in the **medium human development** category; India's **Gender Inequality Index value of 0.437 (2022)** fares better than the global average (0.462) and South Asian average (0.478) (NCERT infographic, p. 19).
- Countries with **high HDI** typically invest heavily in social sectors, have political stability and more equitable distribution of resources; **low-HDI** countries tend to spend more on defence than social sectors and suffer political instability, civil war, famine or disease (NCERT p. 20). NCERT explicitly warns against blaming low HDI on the culture or religion of a people — "such statements are misleading" — and asks readers to look instead at government expenditure patterns and political freedom.

2.2 Definitions to memorise

| Term | Definition | Page |
|----------------------|---|------|
| Growth | Quantitative, value-neutral change over time; may be positive or negative | 13 |
| Development | Qualitative change that is always value-positive | 13 |
| Human development | "Development that enlarges people's choices and improves their lives" — Mahbub-ul-Haq | 14 |
| Meaningful life | A life with purpose — healthy, with developed talents, social participation and freedom | 14 |
| Equity | Equal access to opportunities for everybody irrespective of gender, race, income and caste | 16 |
| Sustainability | Continuity in availability of opportunities so each generation has the same opportunities | 16 |
| Productivity | Human labour productivity, enriched by building capabilities in people | 16 |
| Empowerment | Power to make choices, arising from increasing freedom and capability | 16 |
| Income Approach | Oldest approach; higher income reflects higher freedom and higher human development | 17 |
| Welfare Approach | Treats people as passive beneficiaries; relies on government expenditure on welfare | 17 |
| Basic Needs Approach | ILO-proposed approach identifying six needs: health, education, food, water supply, sanitation, housing | 17 |

| Term | Definition | Page |
|---|--|------|
| Capability Approach | Amartya Sen's approach: building capabilities in health, education and access to resources | 17 |
| HDI | Index ranking countries 0-1 on health, education and access to resources, each weighted 1/3 | 17 |
| Life expectancy at birth | HDI indicator for health | 17 |
| Adult literacy rate + Gross enrolment ratio | HDI indicators for education / access to knowledge | 17 |
| Purchasing power (in US dollars) | HDI indicator for access to resources | 17 |
| Human Poverty Index (HPI) | Non-income index measuring shortfall in human development (survival to 40, adult illiteracy, clean water, child underweight) | 18 |
| GNH | Gross National Happiness — Bhutan's official measure of progress | 18 |
| Very High HDI | Score above 0.800 — 69 countries (HDR 2023-24) | 18 |
| High HDI | Score 0.700-0.799 — 49 countries | 18 |
| Medium HDI | Score 0.550-0.699 — 42 countries | 18 |
| Low HDI | Score below 0.550 — 33 countries | 18 |
| Gender Inequality Index | Index measuring inequality in achievement between men and women; India 0.437 (2022) | 19 |

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- **Cover image of "Human Development Report 2023/2024 — Breaking the Gridlock"** (p. 13) — the report's subtitle is "Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world"; UNDP's flagship annual publication since 1990.
- **Banda Aceh "before/after" tsunami photographs (June 2004 vs December 2004)** — illustrate the negative growth of a city; note that natural disasters are not the only reason for such negative growth (p. 14).
- **Comic strip "What is a Meaningful Life?"** (p. 15) — Shehnaz wishing for health, school/college completion and self-realisation as a birthday wish — illustrates the human development idea in everyday speech.
- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao logo** (p. 15) — example of a Government of India policy addressing child sex-ratio decline and enlarging girls' choices.
- **"Which of these lives is a meaningful life?" comic** (p. 15) — contrasts a youth on a criminal-track ("Dead or in Prison") with a doctor seeking a cheaper, more effective cure for cancer; underlines that purpose, not duration, defines meaningfulness.
- **Cartoon of a person juggling indicators** (p. 18) — one hand holding quantitative items (Road Length, No. of Hospitals, GDP, GNP), the other holding qualitative ones

(Satisfaction, Employment, Happiness, Health) — visualises why pure economic growth is an incomplete measure.

- **Table 3.1 — Four Approaches to Human Development** (p. 17): Income, Welfare, Basic Needs, Capability — with each row giving the approach's key claim and named originator (ILO for Basic Needs; Amartya Sen for Capability).
- **Table 3.2 — Four HDI categories with score ranges and number of countries** (p. 18): Very High >0.800 (69); High 0.700-0.799 (49); Medium 0.550-0.699 (42); Low <0.550 (33). Source: HDR 2023-24.
- **Table 3.3 — Top ten ranked countries (HDR 2023-24)** (p. 19): 1 Switzerland, 2 Norway, 3 Iceland, 4 Hongkong China (SAR), 5 Denmark, 5 Sweden, 7 Germany, 7 Ireland, 9 Singapore, 10 Australia, 10 Netherlands — ties at ranks 5, 7 and 10.
- **"India shows progress in Human Development Index, ranks 134 out of 193 countries" infographic** (p. 19) — HDI 0.633 (2021) → 0.644 (2022); GII 0.437 (better than global 0.462 and South Asian 0.478); dated 14 March 2024.

2.5 Key data table (chapter facts at a glance)

| # | Fact / figure | NCERT source |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Year HDI was created | 1990, p. 14 |
| 2 | Creator of HDI | Dr Mahbub-ul-Haq (Pakistani economist), p. 14 |
| 3 | Capability Approach — associated with | Prof. Amartya Sen (Nobel Laureate), pp. 14, 17 |
| 4 | Number of basic needs in ILO approach | 6 (health, education, food, water supply, sanitation, housing), p. 17 |
| 5 | HDI weightage per dimension | 1/3 each, p. 17 |
| 6 | HDI score range | 0 to 1, p. 17 |
| 7 | HDI health indicator | Life expectancy at birth, p. 17 |
| 8 | HDI education indicators | Adult literacy rate + Gross enrolment ratio, p. 17 |
| 9 | HDI resources indicator | Purchasing power in US dollars, p. 17 |
| 10 | UNDP HDR publication frequency | Annually since 1990, p. 18 |
| 11 | Very High HDI cut-off and country count (HDR 2023-24) | >0.800, 69 countries, Table 3.2 p. 18 |
| 12 | High HDI band | 0.700-0.799, 49 countries, Table 3.2 p. 18 |
| 13 | Medium HDI band | 0.550-0.699, 42 countries, Table 3.2 p. 18 |
| 14 | Low HDI band | <0.550, 33 countries, Table 3.2 p. 18 |
| 15 | Country ranked #1 in HDR 2023-24 | Switzerland, Table 3.3 p. 19 |
| 16 | Country with GNH as official measure | Bhutan, p. 18 |
| 17 | India's HDI rank (HDR 2023-24) | 134 out of 193, p. 19 |

| # | Fact / figure | NCERT source |
|----|---|---|
| 18 | India HDI value, 2022 | 0.644 (up from 0.633 in 2021), p. 19 |
| 19 | India GII value, 2022 | 0.437 (vs global 0.462; South Asian 0.478), p. 19 |
| 20 | Within-India example of HDI > per capita income | Kerala outperforms Punjab and Gujarat, p. 18 |

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- **Growth vs Development** — growth is quantitative and value-neutral (can be positive or negative); development is qualitative and always value-positive. NTA often swaps these qualifiers.
- **Who introduced HDI vs Capability Approach** — **Dr Mahbub-ul-Haq** introduced the concept of human development and HDI (1990); the **Capability Approach** is associated with **Amartya Sen**. Don't confuse the two.
- The **Basic Needs Approach** was proposed by the **ILO** (not UNDP or WHO) and identifies **six** (not five or seven) needs — health, education, food, water supply, sanitation, housing.
- **HDI weights** — each of the three dimensions (health, education, access to resources) gets exactly **1/3** weight; trap options may give 1/2, 1/4 or unequal weights.
- **HDI indicators** — health is measured by **life expectancy at birth** (not infant mortality), education by **adult literacy + gross enrolment ratio** (not just literacy), resources by **purchasing power in US dollars** (not GDP per capita in rupees).
- **Number of countries in each HDI category (HDR 2023-24)** — Very High 69, High 49, Medium 42, Low 33. "Medium" is the largest among the lower three brackets; "Very High" is the largest overall.
- **Bhutan and GNH** — Bhutan is the only country to officially proclaim Gross National Happiness as its measure of progress; do not confuse with HDI or HPI.
- **Top HDI ranks 2023-24** — #1 is **Switzerland** (not Norway, which is now #2); Iceland is #3; Hongkong China (SAR) is #4. Norway/Iceland have alternated at the top in earlier reports — a classic stale-fact trap.
- Within India, **Kerala outperforms Punjab and Gujarat** in human development despite lower per capita income — illustrating that income is not directly proportional to HDI.
- **Pillars vs Approaches** — four pillars (equity, sustainability, productivity, empowerment) vs four approaches (income, welfare, basic needs, capability) are different lists; CUET stems sometimes mix one into the other.
- **HDI measures attainments, not distribution** — that is its acknowledged limitation in the NCERT itself; HPI fills the distribution gap.

- **HPI components** — note that income is not one of them; HPI is explicitly described as a "non-income measure".

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This chapter is a high-yield zone in CUET Geography papers (2023-25), typically supplying around 8 MCQs per year. Question patterns concentrate on direct definitions (growth vs development), scholars and their contributions (Mahbub-ul-Haq, Amartya Sen, ILO), the four pillars and four approaches, HDI indicators with their 1/3 weights, components of the Human Poverty Index, Bhutan's GNH, and rank-based recall from Tables 3.2 and 3.3 — making case-based, match-the-following and statement-based formats especially common. See [/pyq/geography](#) for the live PYQ vault and tag-wise filters.

CUET 2025 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.4 (CUET 2025) Which of the following countries has the highest Human Development Index (2021)?

- A) Germany B) Switzerland C) Egypt D) Nepal Tests: HDI country ranking (Table 3.2)
Answer: Not in extracted key

Q.49 (CUET 2025) Which international organisation publishes the Human Development Index (HDI)?

- A) World Bank B) International Monetary Fund C) United Nations Development Programme D) World Trade Organization Tests: UNDP as publisher of Human Development Report Answer: Not in extracted key

Q.50 (CUET 2025) Which of the following is a major indicator of human development?

- A) Life expectancy B) Literacy rate C) Per capita income D) All of the above Tests: Three HDI indicators (longevity, education, income) Answer: Not in extracted key

CUET 2024 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.39 (CUET 2024) Which of the following approaches was adopted by the International Labour Organization to identify basic needs?

- A) Capability approach B) Income approach C) Basic needs approach D) Welfare approach Tests: Four approaches to human development — ILO and basic needs
Answer: Not in extracted key

Q.40 (CUET 2024) Which of the following is not one of the pillars of Human Development?

- A) Equity B) Affordability C) Sustainability D) Empowerment Tests: Four pillars of Human Development (Equity, Sustainability, Productivity, Empowerment) Answer: Not in extracted key

Q.44 (CUET 2024) When and by whom was the first Human Development Report published?

- A) WHO in 1992 B) UNDP in 1992 C) WHO in 1991 D) UNDP in 1990 Tests: First HDR (UNDP, 1990) — Mahbub-ul-Haq Answer: Not in extracted key

CUET 2023 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.19 (CUET 2023) Match List-I with List-II. List-I (Pillars of Human Development): A. Equity; B. Sustainability; C. Productivity; D. Empowerment. List-II (Characteristics): I. Power to make choices; II. Equal access to opportunities; III. Continuity in availability; IV. Better work efficiency.

- A) A-IV, B-III, C-I, D-II B) A-II, B-III, C-IV, D-I C) A-II, B-IV, C-I, D-III D) A-III, B-II, C-IV, D-I Tests: Four pillars of Human Development matched with their characteristics Answer: Not in extracted key

Q.20 (CUET 2023) Match List-I with List-II. List-I (Approach): A. Income Approach; B. Welfare Approach; C. Basic Needs Approach; D. Capability Approach. List-II (Focus): I. Provision of basic needs; II. Build human capabilities and access to resources; III. Maximum expenditure on welfare; IV. Human development linked to income.

- A) A-IV, B-III, C-I, D-II B) A-IV, B-I, C-III, D-II C) A-III, B-IV, C-I, D-II D) A-II, B-III, C-IV, D-I Tests: Four approaches to human development matched with their focus Answer: Not in extracted key