

Availability of Basic Minimum Needs (BMNs) and Development of Rural Hill State Uttarakhand

Dr. Raj Bahadur

Associate Professor

Department of Economics

S.G.R.R. (P.G.) College, Dehradun

HNB Garhwal University

Email: dr.rajbahadur70@gmail.com

Dr. V.S. Rawat

Associate Professor

Department of Economics

S.G.R.R. (P.G.) College, Dehradun

HNB Garhwal University

Dr. Jyoti Pandey

Associate Professor

Department of English

S.G.R.R. (P.G.) College, Dehradun

HNB Garhwal University

Abstract

As human development is linked to enhancement in quality of life, therefore it is considered a top priority in plans by every nation. There are three basic indicators of quality of life viz. education, health and income. Apart from these main indicators clean water, sanitation, housing and gender equality came to be added to the human development indicators. The development of any society, region, state or country depends on the factors that fulfill the basic minimum needs (BMNs). This is an important indicator of development. If the basic minimum needs (BMNs) of the society are fulfilled, the society will definitely reach a developed stage. "It is now widely believed that improvements in the quality of life of people as a productive agent must be a central objective of development policies." (Meier, Gerald, M., 1990)

Keywords

Development, Quality of life, Basic minimum needs, Indicators.

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Introduction

While the basic minimum needs of every family and village are not universal, in this situation, there is a need to make programs related to those aspects of life which are the basic needs of every family, village, region, state or nation. Basic minimum needs like health, education and income are the most important quality-of-life indicators. In this hill state, the government should focus on raising health, education and income generation opportunities. Provision for a special budget is required for the development of these fields.

The planning according to the basic minimum requirements will certainly enhance the quality of life of the rural masses of the Garhwal and Kumaun hill regions. A planning model has been suggested here for the development of Uttarakhand on the basis of the research conducted in the hills of Dehradun, Tehri Garhwal and Pauri Garhwal. The status of the basic minimum needs of the state are as follows-

Health

a. Primary health care network

After analysis of data related to the health facilities in Uttarakhand, it is observed that the current medical care and facilities exist only at the most basic level, and are grossly inadequate to meet the needs of this region. Present facilities of doubtful quality and function, provide for only 10% of the estimated necessary hospital beds to meet the basic needs of the community of this region. Table 1 shows the presently existing availability of health personnel in Uttarakhand. There is no community health infrastructure. The number of patients seeking medical care greatly exceeds the capacity of existing resources. It is ironic and paradoxical that the entire region has no modern hospital facility to serve its large regional population. The availability of basic medical facilities for the population indicates a higher standard of living.

Table:1 Existing Availability of Health Personnel in Uttarakhand

Cadre	Sanctioned	In Position	Vacant	Vacant as a Share of Sanctioned Posts (%)
Allopathic Doctors at PHC	147	65	82	55.78
Surgeon at CHC	83	6	77	92.77
OBG at CHC	79	7	72	91.00
Physician at CHC	79	5	74	93.67
Pediatrician at CHC	80	154	66	82.50
Total Specialists at CHC	321	32	289	91.00

Source: Uttarakhand Vision 2030

b. Drinking Water and Sanitation

A safe and adequate drinking water supply is an important determinant of the health of the poor. Non availability of clean water and sanitation is the most important health problem of all. Their effects on health are shocking: they are major contributors to the diarrhea disease every year, which causes the deaths of children. A major part of these deaths could be prevented if adequate sanitation and clean water were available. People suffer from bilharzia, hookworm, cholera, typhoid and paratyphoid in the absence of safe water and sanitation. Providing access to sanitation and clean water would be the single most effective means of alleviating human distress. Table 2 shows the drinking water facility in Uttarakhand by the tap.

Table: 2 Drinking water Facility in Uttarakhand by Tap

S.N.	Items	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1	Beneficiary population (in lakhs)	72.12	71.93	69.15
2	Number of Partially Covered Settlements	16949	16155	14952
3	Established by Jal Sansthan 'Uttarakhand well'	1672	1457	1437
4	Installed hand pump	47941	48869	49723
	(i) Jal Nigam (ii) Jal Sansthan	9569	9629	9760

Source: Statistical Diary, 2019-20

The river water can only be used through lifting schemes, which are quite expensive. The natural springs can play a significant role in providing potable water to those villages, where water can be supplied under gravity. All available water sources located within the village are being utilized for such purposes. There are certain limitations of this system also. All hill districts have a considerable number of villages that do not have water sources at suitable heights to provide the required gradients from the water source and these villages often suffer from scarcity of drinking water.

Table: 3 Share of Households (%) Getting Tap Water from Treated Sources in Uttarakhand (Census 2011)

S.N.	Type of Household	Total	Rural	Urban	Ratio Urban/Rural
1	All Households (%)	53.9	46.0	72.7	1.58
2	SC households (%)	46.1	39.1	70.3	1.80
3	ST households (%)	42.96	36.35	69.31	1.91

Source: Government of Uttarakhand.

Proper management of rainwater must aim at utilizing the maximum amount of rainwater to meet the human, animal and crop needs, and at reducing to the minimum damage by floods and soil erosion. Excess water could be stored in the catchment areas, which will reduce the furry of flash floods, and recharge the groundwater and improve the environment. (Sati, M.C., 2000)

c. Environment

The environment is a basic dimension of mountain areas. Land, water resources and forests constitute the basic elements of the environment, and they are closely linked and interdependent. Development strategies for mountain areas must recognize these facts and plan for the use and preservation of these resources.

It is important to ensure that the process of development and patterns of consumption and production are environmentally sustainable to improve the quality of life of its citizens by providing them the opportunity for higher electricity consumption.

Table:4 Changing Shares (%) of Components of Renewable Energy as Proposed in Vision 2030

Source of Renewable Energy (Million Units)	2016-17	2019-20	2023-24	2029-30
Micro hydel	18	74	95	151
Solar	70	351	409	601
Co-gen, biomass, W2E	284	821	922	1137
Total Renewable Energy (Million Units)	371	1246	1426	1889
Source of renewable energy (%) Micro hydel	4.85	5.9	6.6	8.0
Solar	18.86	28.2	28.7	31.8
Co-gen, biomass, W2E	76.54	65.9	64.7	60.2
% Renewable w.r.t. Total Demand	3.2	10.5	11.8	15.1

Source: Government of Uttarakhand

Education

Education is the strongest agent of social change that paves way for community development in a holistic manner. (Misra, A., 2001) Better education is more likely to be associated with greater utilization of health and hygiene practices again lowering maternal and child mortality and leading to improvement in quality of life. (Srivastav, R.S., 1999) This means that the rapid expansion of educational opportunities is a cost-effective way of improving health. (Meier M. Gerald, 2000). Table 5 shows the literacy rate of more than 7 years age population in Uttarakhand.

Table: 5 Literacy Rate of more than 7 years age population in Uttarakhand

S.N.	District	Literacy per 100 person		
		Person	Male	Female
1	Uttarkashi	75.8	88.8	62.4
2	Chamoli	82.7	93.4	72.3
3	Tehri Garhwal	76.4	89.8	64.3
4	Dehradun	84.2	89.4	78.5
5	Garhwal	82.0	92.7	72.6
6	Rudrapyag	81.3	93.9	70.4
7	Pithoragarh	82.2	92.7	72.3
8	Almora	80.5	92.9	69.9
9	Nanital	83.9	90.1	77.3
10	Champawat	79.8	91.6	68.0
11	Bageshwar	80.0	92.3	69.0
	Hill Districts	81.8	91.0	72.7
12	Haridwar	73.4	81.0	64.8
13	Udhamsingh Nagar	73.1	81.1	64.4
	Plains Districts	73.3	81.1	64.6
	Uttarakhand	78.8	87.4	70.0

Source: Census of India-2011

In the hill region, the education system should be based on the following suggestion to enhance the quality of life; these are:

a. Primary education and secondary education

The inhabitants of the particular village must develop a system may be with the help of volunteer groups or NGOs etc. to start children's education making it interesting for the children. According to Schultz, 1990 "important categories of activities of that improve human capabilities can be listed as: (1) formally organized education at an elementary, secondary and higher level. (2) Non-formal education in the form of literacy and training programs including extension programs."

b. Higher Education

It should be the responsibility of the education system that after passing out from a college or a university the candidate should be capable of getting a job and earning his or her living. The courses thus should be designed as to give young people, the knowledge and skill required for their future lives and occupations for life, to train them in the application of knowledge to practical problems. For this purpose, there is an urgent need to reorient courses of study to incorporate in their problems and situation relevant to students' own surroundings and regional needs. (Nautiyal, R.R., 2001)

According to Uttarakhand vision 2030, to convert Uttarakhand into a model state which promotes a very high level of educational attainments for its population, and arts, science and culture, ensures every individual's personal development to its full potential, and eradicates poverty and unemployment through appropriate training in employable skills of all who need them..

For higher education, maintenance of quality and ensuring the employability of graduates are key issues. In this context, the state government is taking measures such as the enhancement of soft skills, promotion of English-speaking courses, and enhancing computer literacy, and the provision of training for self-employment at the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Business Development (NIESBUD). (Uttarakhand vision 2030).

c. Vocational Education

Utilization of the educated manpower is significantly dependent upon their employability. The men leave their communities in the hills to seek work elsewhere in the plains and cities, with family disruption and increased burden on the women. After their education, the young adults no longer wish to stay in their villages and find themselves unemployed, with some economic improvement experiments with establishing community development funds that could be tried to achieve participation and self-reliance in at least partial self-financing of community development initiatives. Universities can enhance the employability of their graduates either by modifying their courses in the light of the skill enhancement.

e. Vocational Training for Women

The role of women is central to the success of any developmental plan. Migration is the major problem of this state with men leaving the villages because of unemployment and women carrying the load and responsibility of the work, health care, child care and care of the elderly and the handicapped of their families. Vocational Training and Income generation programs should be argued for the women's community. The location and timing of programs should be arranged in such a way as to get more involvement of the women, since their days may be spent laboring in the fields.

Income Generation

Income generation is the most efficacious for improving health. The reason is that the poor are most likely to spend additional income in ways that enhance their health: improving their diet, obtaining safe water, and upgrading sanitation and housing. (Mier M. Gerald, 2000) Income generation is closely related to the

generation of employment. In hill regions to generate the income of the people there is a need to make the planning at micro levels, the following step can be taken to generate employment in various fields -

a. Agriculture

The major industry of the region is agriculture with crops such as wheat, rice (paddy), mandua and potato, ginger etc. By contributing to the improvements locally in agriculture practices, land management as well as marketing techniques, the potential exists for economic improvement for the target communities. Through agricultural diversification, the rural unemployment problem can be solved.

b. Household Industries

The development of household industries can be able to generate a considerable volume of employment in rural areas. Most of the rural industrial works have vanished with the passage of time. At present only 2.24 percent of workers are engaged in such household industries. A strategy will have to be chalked out for the revival of such works in rural surroundings. Training centers to train rural youths can be set up at Panchayat levels.

The expansion of the MSME sector can increase employment opportunities for the young generation of the state. It is possible to generate employment opportunities for educated youth by encouraging ICT, ITES and electronics manufacturing units to establish their enterprises in Uttarakhand.

c. Forest-based Industries

Forest-based industries can be another vital source of employment in the region. The region is enriched with different types of medicinal plants as described in chapter II, which are used in Ayurvedic, Homeopathic, Yunnani and Allopathic medical systems. The Government will have to develop such industries in the region, which not only will reduce unemployment, but also become a source of large monetary gains for the Government. In this regard, help can be taken from local institutions, persons, and cooperative societies.

d. Eco-Tourism

Kerala is the first state in India that took initiative to follow a planned eco-tourism in the state. The Western Ghats of Kerala is one of the among the 18 super biodiversity parks of the world. Having immense rural potential in Uttarakhand the state Government can develop 'rural tourism'. Government should introduce eco-tourism education by incorporating the curriculum of eco-tourism in primary and secondary education.

Suggestions to Improve Quality of Life in Uttarakhand

Past experience in planning and execution of programs has revealed that from the viewpoint of hills plan formulation and implementation have been lacking a proper and adequate orientation. Special aspects of the hill region should be incorporated in farming the plan proposals in the future. Emphasis should be laid on those schemes, which are labor-intensive, generate larger employment opportunities per unit of cost, and have a direct impact on the incomes of the people of the area. A major objective of the plan should be to create more employment opportunities in the productive and the service sectors. This would be the means not only to increase the income level of different sections of the society to a level not lower than could be earned outside so that out-migration of males slows down.

i) Provide Basic Health Facilities

Today it is necessary to increase access to basic health services for the rural people of Uttarakhand. At present available health facilities are not adequate.

ii) Improve Education System

Education has to be made useful in life. Skill development-oriented courses will have to be adopted in schools and colleges.

iii) Explore new areas for more employment generation

For generating more employment opportunities in the state emphasis should be given to exploring non-traditional areas. Like the promotion of local restaurants offering local *parade* (hill) dishes, the incentive should be provided to homestay facility providers.

iv) Promote Eco-Tourism

There is wide scope for different types of tourism in this state like a pilgrimage, holy temples, mountaineering, valley of flowers, water sports, houseboats, camping, bird watching, national parks, skiing, trekking, rafting, bunji jumping, etc. There is also scope for the tourists who come for peace and meditation. Yoga city Rishikesh is a well-known destination to learn yoga from Yoga expert trainers. There are abundant beautiful places, and scenic beauty to attract domestic and international tourists.

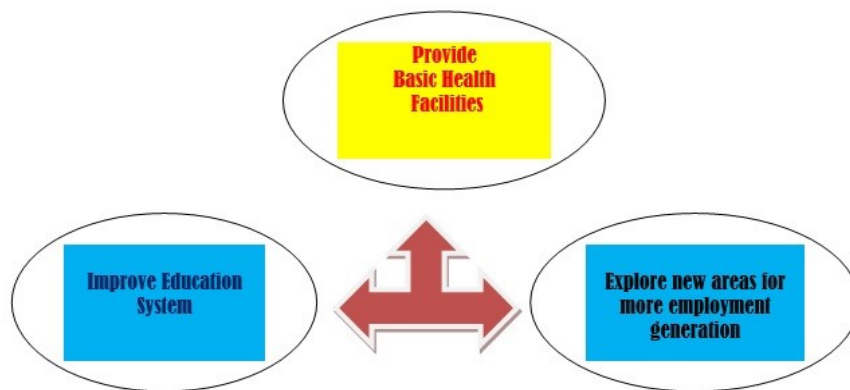
Summary

In summary Health, Education, and Income generation are the most important indicators of human resource development. "Human resource development is a slow and time taking process which requires patience on the part of development agencies including government and has to be carried out in the context of local needs and priorities on a sustained base". (Kumar, N. 2001)

The plan makers should also emphasize the role of women and families in communities as the core agents for change, further contributing to sustainability. Community-women should be consulted and involved as key players in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the developmental plans. Local men and women should be consulted and involved in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and development program.

Improved health, education, and income generation opportunities would, intern, improve work capacity and economic development. Thus, through sustained efforts and investment in education, health and in income generation programs will certainly help rural masses of hill regions to enjoy an improved quality of life.

Most Important Areas for Enhancement in Quality of Life



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