

## **Session One: CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT**

### **1.1 Objectives**

By the end of the topic, you should be able to:

- i. Define the concept of development studies
- ii. Explain causes of development
- iii. Explain three core values of development
- iv. Explain goals of development
- v. Discuss the types of development
- vi. Explain the concept of under-development

### **1.2 Lecture Overview**

Every nation strives after development. This means that development is an essential element in human growth and wellbeing. However, many people define it in their own context according to their surroundings, immediate needs, ideology and historical experiences. Nevertheless, development is the process of creating the conditions for the realization of human personality, which implies a reduction in poverty, unemployment and inequality.

### **1.3 Concept of Development**

Development is a concept and multi-faceted phenomena. Although its history goes back to the ancient times, development exceptionally preoccupied states after the Second World War in the late 1940s. There have, since then, been efforts for social, political and economic progress all over the world facilitated by the quick technological evolution.

There are numerous definitions of development. Below, are some of commonly used definitions: TAYEBWA (1992:261) states that development is a broad term which should not be limited to mean economic development, economic welfare or material wellbeing. As per Tayebwa, development in general includes improvements in economic, social and political aspects of whole society like security, culture, social activities and political institutions. According to TODARO (1981:56) refers to development as a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social systems. He continues to argue that development is a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combinations of social, economic and political process secured the way of obtaining better life. Similar to the one given

by Tayebwa, Todaro's definition is applauded for its wider view of the development concept as related to social, economic as well as political changes in the society.

Hence, In lay man's language, **Development means an overall positive change for the better and improved quality of life. This change for better encompasses economic, social, political, cultural and spiritual aspects.** *It implies an improvement in quality of life through better health, education, housing and overall material and social welfare etc.*

#### **1.4 Causes of Development**

It is important to note that, no single "engine" to development can be found. Specific countries have specific causes to their development. Different authors give different arguments to explain the causes of development.

- i. Increased savings and investment and acquisition of appropriate technology; - Structural transformation of the economy and production;
- ii. Human capital formation and human resource development and;
- iii. Avoidance of unsustainable practices that would reserve the development process such as corruption;
- iv. A growing foreign trade with close attention to comparative advantages;
- v. An economic system that allows for efficient allocation, including increases in the efficiency of government.

#### **1.5 Three core values of development**

- i. Sustenance: the ability to meet basic needs.

All people have certain basic needs without which life would be impossible. These lives sustaining basic human needs include food, shelter, health and protection. When any of these is absent or in critically short supply, a condition of absolute underdevelopment exists.

- ii. Self-esteem: to be a person.

A second universal component of the good life is self-esteem, a sense of worth and self respect, of not being used as a tool by others for their own ends. All peoples and societies seek some basic form of self-esteem, although they may call it authenticity, identity, dignity, respect, honour or recognition. The nature and form of this self-esteem may vary from society and from culture to culture. However, with the proliferation of the 'modernizing values' of developed nations, many societies in developing countries that

have had a profound sense of their own worth suffer from serious cultural confusion when they come in contact with economically and technologically advanced societies. This is because national prosperity has become an almost universal measure of worth.

- iii. Freedom from servitude: to be able to choose.

A third and final universal value that should constitute the meaning of development is the concept of human freedom. Freedom here is to be understood in the sense of emancipation from alienating material conditions of life and from social servitude to nature, other people, misery, oppressive institutions and dogmatic beliefs, especially that poverty is predestination. Freedom involves an expanded range of choices for societies and their members together with a minimization of external constraints in the pursuit of some social goal we call development.

### **1.6 Goals of development**

- i. To increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection.
- ii. To raise levels of living, including, in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education and greater attention to cultural and human values, all of which will serve not only to enhance material wellbeing but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem.
- iii. To expand the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation-states, but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery.

### **1.7 Measures of development**

There are a huge number of measures that can be used to measure the level of Development of a place.

These measures can be classified as;

- i. Social – relating to the development of the people of the place;
- ii. Economic - relating to the finances and wealth of the place;
- iii. Environmental – relating to the quality of peoples air, water, soil etc.
- iv. Political - relating to the political systems and freedoms afforded by the place.

### **i. Social measure of development**

**Birth Rates** - How many babies are born per 1000 people in a population per year? The poorest countries tend to have high birth rates, and wealthier countries have lower birth rates. This is because poorer countries have high replacement rates to compensate for high infant mortality, poorer access to family planning and contraception, and a tradition for large family size to supplement a largely agricultural workforce.

**Death rates** - How many people die per 1000 people in a population per year? This is becoming less useful as a measure of development, as death rates fall due to imported medicine and technology in many poorer countries. It would be better to look at CAUSE of death, as in MEDCs it will be wealth and age related illnesses

**Infant mortality** - How many babies die per 1,000 live births per year? This is a useful measure as it indicates the medical systems in the country and how well the most vulnerable in society, the very young, are protected and looked after in their early years.

**People per doctor** - How many people there are for every doctor in a country or place. Again, this indicates how much money is available in a country for the training and recruitment of doctors, which has an instant knock on effect on the well-being and quality of life of a person.

**Literacy rate** - What percentage of the country is able to read and write as adults. This is another social measure, and helps to indicate the standard of education within a country or place.

**Life expectancy** - The average age a person can expect to live to at birth. This is a very useful indicator as it reveals how good food security, water quality, shelter and medical care are in a country.

### **ii. Economic measure of development**

*Per capita income*, also known as income per person, is the mean income of the people in an economic unit such as a country or city. It is calculated by taking a measure of all sources of income in the aggregate (such as GDP or Gross national income) and dividing it by the total population.

Per capita income is often used as average income, a measure of the wealth of the population of a nation, particularly in comparison to other nations. Per capita income is often used to measure a country's standard of living. It is usually expressed in terms of a commonly used international

currency such as the Euro or United States dollar, and is useful because it is widely known, easily calculated from readily-available GDP and population estimates, and produces a useful statistic for comparison of wealth between sovereign territories. This helps the country to know their development status.

#### *'Gross Domestic Product - GDP'*

The monetary value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period, though GDP is usually calculated on an annual basis. It includes all of private and public consumption, government outlays, investments and exports less imports that occur within a defined territory.

$$GDP = C + G + I + NX$$

where:

"C" is equal to all private consumption, or consumer spending, in a nation's economy

"G" is the sum of government spending

"I" is the sum of all the country's businesses spending on capital

"NX" is the nation's total net exports, calculated as total exports minus total imports. (NX = Exports - Imports).

#### *Gross National Product*

GNP is a measure of a country's economic performance, or what its citizens produced (i.e. goods and services) and whether they produced these items within its borders.

It is the total value of all final goods and services produced within a nation in a particular year, plus income earned by its citizens (including income of those located abroad), minus income of non-residents located in that country. Basically, GNP measures the value of goods and services that the country's citizens produced regardless of their location. GNP is one measure of the economic condition of a country, under the assumption that a higher GNP leads to a higher quality of living, all other things being equal.

### **iii. Environmental measure of development**

Access to safe water – shows what percentage of people have access to sanitary and safe water that is free from bacteria and parasites.

Ecological footprint – this is the impact of a person or community on the environment, expressed as the amount of land required to sustain their use of natural resources.

#### **iv. Political measure of development**

Corruption perception index – this has existed since 1995 and allows the public to score their countries on how corrupt their public sectors are seen to be. The idea is to put pressure on governments to be more open and transparent.

Some countries may have imbalances in these measures, so a country may have very high levels of wealth and economic development, but poor levels of political freedom -so poor political and social development.

#### **1.8 Concept of under-development**

Underdevelopment, relating to international development, reflects a broad condition or phenomena defined and critiqued by theorists in fields such as economics, development studies, and postcolonial studies. Used primarily to distinguish states along benchmarks concerning human development measures like health, education, and standards of living.

#### **Underdevelopment**

This means a situation where resources are not used to their full socio-economic potential, with the result that local or regional development is slower in most cases than it should be. Furthermore, it results from the complex interplay of internal and external factors that allow less developed countries only a lop-sided development progression. Underdeveloped nations are characterized by a wide disparity between their rich and poor populations, and an unhealthy balance of trade. Symptoms of underdevelopment include lack of access to job opportunities, health care, drinkable water, food, education and housing some of the world poorest

#### **Less Developed**

This means the countries designated by the UN as 'less developed' on the basis of health care, literacy, and per capita income. Most of them are in Africa, few in Asia and Pacific, and one (Haiti) in the Caribbean. They are generally characterized by subsistence agriculture and varying degrees of lack of competitive industries and exploitable natural resources. Many of them suffer from droughts, floods, hurricanes, and pests, have little prospect of any significant improvement

in economic prospects in the foreseeable future, and are likely to remain heavily dependent on external aid for many years. In an underdeveloped economy, production is carried on with relatively small amount of capital and usually with primitive and old techniques of production. The application of scientific and technological improvements to production is limited. As a result, the real incomes per head of population and standard of living are usually low.

A **developed** economy is considered to be one that carries on production with a large amount of machinery and using advanced techniques. The other available human and other resources are employed to the maximum; consequently, the production efficiency is very high leading to high per capita incomes

The **developing** countries are somewhere between being very primitive and achieving full economic development. Such countries are currently engaged in utilizing their resources to bring about economic development

### **1.9 Summary**

What have we learnt from this class? We have reviewed the definition of development, Define the concept of development studies, Causes of development, three core values of development, goals of development, types of development, concept of under-development and characteristics of under-development

### **1.10 Self-Assessment Questions**

- i. Explain the terms development and underdevelopment.
- ii. Explain any three characteristics of least developed countries.
- iii. African governments should come up with endogenous and people- centered development strategies. As a government officer working in Kenya advice the government on five such strategies that it can adopt.

### **1.11 Further Reading**

Sowell, T. (2015). *Wealth, Poverty and Politics: An International Perspective*. New York: Basic Books. ISBN-13: 978-0465082933.

Kersbergen, K. & Vis, B. (2013). *Comparative Welfare State Politics: Development, Opportunities, and Reform*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0738018842.

Pattanaik, B. K. (2016). *Introduction to Development Studies*. India: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-9351508205