

## **Highlights of Sikkim HDR (2001)**

### **Achievements**

- Per capita Net State Domestic Product doubled in real terms between 1980-90.
- Literacy rates went up from 7 per cent in 1951 to almost 70 per cent in 2001.
- In 1998-99, as against the national average of 47 per cent, only 21 per cent of children below 3 years were malnourished -- the lowest among all the Indian States and Union territories.
- A striking feature is the absence of gender differentials along many indicators of human development. In 1998-99, 83.2 percent of boys and 82.6 percent of girls between 6-17 years attended school.
- Infant Mortality Rates (IMR) 51 per thousand in 1996-98 have always been lower than those for the nation (71 per thousand 1996-98).
- Median age at marriage is 19.8 years (1998-9), 3 times higher than the national average of 16.4 years as per NFHS-2.
- As per Census of India 1991, close to 38 percent of women participated in the workforce as against the national average of 20 percent.

### **Challenges**

- The growth rate of HDI slowed down from 2.75 percent between 1991-5 to 1.85 percent between 1995-98.
- Proportion of population living below income poverty line has increased from 36 percent in 1987-88 to 41.3 percent in 1993-94.
- The high per capita income vis-à-vis high poverty status could be interpreted to mean that income distribution is very skewed.
- Urban-rural gap in terms of both distribution of income and asset creation is marked and can jeopardize the socioeconomic stability of the State.
- Equal gains are yet to reach many of the districts especially the smaller and more remote villages.
- 77 percent of the children below 3 years and 61 percent of women (1998-9) were reported as suffering from anaemia as per NFHS-2.
- Share of the primary sector to the State's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has gone down over the years.
- While the economy is dependent on agriculture accounting for nearly 40 percent of GDP, food production has declined.
- Progress especially in industrial progress has been hampered by small size, scarcity of land based resources, ecological fragility, high costs of infrastructure and limited availability of skilled personnel.
- Land resources constrained on account of demographic pressures and activities they can sustain.

### **Key Recommendations**

- Concerted public action, enlarging employment opportunities, safeguarding its environmental resources and responsive governance required.
- Human resource planning crucial keeping in view both the development needs and resource constraints of the State.
- Strengthening elementary, vocational training required. More emphasis on technical and higher education as also health and livelihood issues of adolescents is the need of the hour.
- The reporting units of National Surveys, Bureau of Economics and Statistics need to be strengthened and the data systems engendered.
- Social sector should be prioritized with very pointed target groups.

- Population growth and its implications for employment as well as the achievement of a balanced sex ratio need to be addressed.
- To ensure that development is sustainable and that economic growth does not lead to the destruction of its natural resources.
- Formal measurements of forest resources need to be supplemented with natural resource accounting as a policy tool.
- Innovative practices in land management, horticulture and floriculture identified as growth sectors.
- Develop industrial sector by stepping up rate of investment in infrastructure keeping environmental considerations in mind.

#### Human Development Index (1991, 1995 and 1998)

Year	District	Human Development Index (HDI)	
		(Value)	(Rank)
1991	State	0.454	
	North	0.391	4
	East	0.501	1
	West	0.432	3
	South	0.454	2
1995	State	0.504	
	North	0.439	4
	East	0.550	1
	West	0.485	3
	South	0.501	2
1998	State	0.532	
	North	0.467	4
	East	0.578	1
	West	0.516	3
	South	0.529	2
Source: Government of Sikkim (2001) <i>Sikkim Human Development Report 2001</i> , Social Science Press, pp.37			