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Abstract: Development experience nor the effects of social safety programs are not dissimilar around the globe. There are certain social, state, and individual preconditions that pave the way for a development policy to be successful – delivering the desired outcomes. It will be a gross miscalculation to define development in economic terms only and ignoring the social issues like poverty and inequality. A marked difference in speed and span of the effects of social policies and programs in Asian and Latin American countries confirms this argument. Almost all developing countries are facing a set of uniform challenges in the form of a high level of poverty, strong pressure of population growth, chronic unemployment and increasing social inequality. Handling this needs a departure from the traditional development approach of implementing generalized policies such as conditional cash transfer programs that mostly failed in retaining policy focus and sustaining the impact. This further indicates the need to recalibrate and redefine developmental goals, especially for developing countries. Such direction is shifting the focus from managing poverty through support to ensuring graduation from poverty alleviation programs, which requires targeted policies offering a quick, direct, widespread, and wholesome impact. For the effectiveness of such an approach, different treatment for rural and urban poverty is proposed that otherwise miss achieving the optimal effect of generalized and one-size-fits-all kind of social safety and poverty alleviation programs. A comprehensive growth strategy driven by support for two major but primary sectors – agriculture and human resource, can help induce and sustain economic development through social development.

Keywords: social safety; poverty alleviation; economic development