The ethics of distributive justice

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The idea of basic income has remained a hot topic for many years in the international forums. Depending on the economic conditions of different countries, the experts present different arguments. For example, the majority of them argue that each country should incentivize the economic and healthcare condition for all citizens by depositing a minimal sum in its own currency. This minimal sum from the state can be the initial income of each citizen and will be regarded as the starting salary above the poverty line. Scott Santens in his article published by the World Economic Forum argues that these basic incomes will be the unconditional guarantees of economics and health care[[1]](#footnote-1).

Since social safety net is not discriminating in nature so welfare cannot be made conditional in any state. Many countries of the world cannot guarantee equal working opportunities to its citizens. The developing countries like Russia and China also fall in this category. On the other hand, in the United States, the basic income was tested in the year 1970. In the same year some states in Canada managed to eliminate poverty for five years[[2]](#footnote-2). This was possible when states assured a minimum level of income for each citizen which guaranteed their rights from the state. Different to this, there is an opinion that why the State should provide money to its citizens for doing nothing. Santens argue that provision of a basic sum to each citizen can outweigh the economic benefits offered to the state by its citizen. Therefore, these minimal level of economic and healthcare opportunities should be unconditionally guaranteed to each citizen.

The example of the United States and Canada shows how the provision of a minimal sum can guarantee the health care and economic wellbeing of the citizens. Similar, the developing countries like Russia and China which aim at incentivizing the healthcare and economic opportunities generally, donot prioritize the individual development of citizens. Many underdeveloping states like India, Namibia and Brazil have experimented such programs with collaborating with some private entities like Y Combinator and GiveDirectly[[3]](#footnote-3). The results of such experiments have proved encouraging in light of their growing populations.

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1. “Why We Should All Have a Basic Income,” World Economic Forum, accessed July 15, 2019, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/why-we-should-all-have-a-basic-income/. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Carole Pateman, “Democratizing Citizenship: Some Advantages of a Basic Income,” *Politics & Society* 32, no. 1 (2004): 89–105. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Sarath Davala et al., *Basic Income: A Transformative Policy for India* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)