

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Arun Maira

Former Chairman, BCG India & Member, Planning Commission

Former Member, Planning Commission of India
Former Chairman, Boston Consulting Group, India
Chairman, HelpAge International

Any discussion on policy and the future of India is enriched with Arun Maira's views, and not just because he was a member of the Planning Commission of India for five years till June 2014. Arun is one of those rare people who have held leadership positions in both, the private as well as the public sector, bringing a unique perspective on how the two can work together to foster growth for India. He has led three rounds of participative and comprehensive scenario building for the future of India: in 1999 (with the Confederation of Indian Industry), 2005 (with the World Economic Forum), and 2011 (with the Planning Commission).

In his career spanning five decades, Arun has led several organisations, including the Boston Consulting Group in India. In the early part of his career, he spent 25 years in the Tata group at various important positions. He was also a member of the Board of Tata Motors (then called TELCO). After leaving the Tatas, Arun joined Arthur D Little Inc (ADL), the international management consultancy, in the US, where he advised companies across sectors and geographies on their growth strategies and handling transformational change.

Another decade later, Arun was back in India, this time as the Chairman of the Boston Consulting Group, a position he held for eight years till 2008. The other leadership positions he has held include being the chairman of Axis Bank Foundation and Save the Children, India. He was also board member of the India Brand Equity Foundation, the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs, and the UN Global Compact, and WWF India.

Recognising his astute understanding of both macro as well as micro policy issues, Arun has been involved in several government committees and organisations, including the National Innovation Council. He has been on the board of several companies as well as educational institutions and has chaired several national committees of the Confederation of Indian Industries.

In 2009, Arun was appointed as a member of the Planning Commission, which is led by the Prime Minister of India. At this minister-level position, he led the development of strategies for

the country on issues relating to industrialisation and urbanisation, and drove the formulation of policies and programmes in these areas. He also advised the Commission on its future role.

With his vast experience and expertise, Arun is indeed a thought leader. He is invited to speak at various forums and has written several books that capture his insights.

His recent books include *An Upstart in Government: Journeys of Change and Learning*; *Redesigning the Aeroplane While Flying: Reforming Institutions* (published in May 2014); *Remaking India: One Country, One Destiny*; *Transforming Capitalism: Improving the World for Everyone*; and *Shaping the Future: Aspirational Leadership in India and Beyond*.

His book, *An Upstart in Government: Journeys of Change and Learning (Rupa)*, was published in August 2016. The theme of the book is: the progress of nations and organizations has to be a cooperative endeavour. A good society is one that enables each individual to realize his or her aspirations. Everyone must cooperate to create such a society. The book should be of great interest to leaders in government, in the private sector, and in civil society organizations also. For they must all create better cooperation systems within their enterprises and with each other too.

Listening for Well-Being: Conversations with People Not Like Us, was published in 2017. The book is an incisive analysis of the causes for the increasing divisiveness in societies, aggravated by the shallowness of public discourse, and the break-down of communications between people with different beliefs and histories. He suggests ways to reverse these dangerous tendencies and make the world better for everyone.

His latest book is titled *Transforming Systems: Why the World Needs a New Ethical Toolkit*. In the book, he says, while economies have been growing, systemic problems of social inequality and environmental unsustainability are becoming intolerable. This realisation led to the Sustainable Development Goals, which all countries signed up to achieve. A new toolkit is required to attain these goals that go beyond the precepts of good business management and prevalent best practices in government as well as civil society organisations. This toolkit has to be founded on disciplines of systems thinking, ethical reasoning and deep listening.