

**WHAT DO WE
MEAN BY
DEVELOPMENT**



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1. STARTING POINTS

a.

The purpose of this paper

The aim of this paper is to suggest a description [rather than any *ex cathedra* definition] of development, which is usable by development educators and can help their own thinking about development issues.

The reason for doing this is because many existing definitions lack clarity and often don't take account of new research or new ideas associated with development. Sometimes, also, it is hard to relate theoretical "models" of development with the here-and-now problem of real people. It is hoped that this paper will help to link the two.

To underpin any clear description, it is necessary for us to have:

- **an understanding of the way in which ideas about development have grown up and changed [ie., have themselves developed];**
- **agreement on the main components of development;**
- **an understanding of closely associated ideas;**
- **agreement on what development is not.**

b.

Terms and assumptions

Dictionary definitions of development include such components as "*evolution or bringing out from a latent or elementary condition*", "*growth and unfolding*", "*gradual advancement through progressive stages*" [Oxford English Dictionary]. To develop is seen as to "*improve or to prosper*" [Collins Thesaurus]. Development is about change, seen as change for the better, and implicit in all change are concepts of movement and process. If development is seen as a continuing process, then it follows that no person or group will reach the end state of being "developed". It is nowadays seen as a mistake to categorise any nation, for instance, as 'developed' in distinction from other so-called 'developing'.

This may seem pretty obvious to us, but the notion of dividing the world into developed and developing is quite strongly embedded in popular discourse [eg, among journalists].

Development is a term used in a number of fields – in property matters [about new building], in music [about the structure of a piece], in psychology [about individual people], in management [about training members of a work force]. For us, development is not about things or works of art or individual human beings. It is about collectivities of people, communities of all sizes, very often nations or geographical regions, but also smaller groups.

Ideas of development of communities included [and at the start were dominated by], the perceptions of economists, asking questions about growth and prosperity.

Collectivities of people relate to and influence each other [helping or hindering]. So persons interested in development become interested in the way development in one society impinges on development in another. Today we often, therefore, attach the adjective 'international' to the noun 'development', as the UK government did by renaming its development agency Department for International Development. This is useful for governments, but we as educators may also want to remember that there can be interconnectedness between development [its character and pace] in adjoining villages or in towns and suburbs, or in regions within a nation state [England and Scotland, say] or in

wider geographical regions [Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, say]. We therefore need to make it clear that the subject matter of development education is not identical with that of international education, while acknowledging that there are overlaps.

Development, then, is about: change for the better; continuing processes; collectivities of people; growth and prosperity; inter-relationships.

Further, concepts of development are applicable all over the world, not just to one sort of society or selected geographical areas.

From these starting points, we can look more closely at how ideas of development evolved [for most of us this is just a reminder, but I hope it is helpful to lay the story out in a way which can be passed on without too much difficulty to others.]

2. PAST IDEAS ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

a.

Growth and modernisation

Development is now of interest to a wide range of social scientists and to historians, not to mention politicians and moralists, but it was first a concern of economists.

The notion of growth, generally seen in evolutionary terms, was the starting point for economists' conceptualisation of development.

"A rapid and sustained rise in real output per head and attendant shifts in the technological, economic and demographic characteristics of a society"

Easterlin, Richard in Sills, D.[ed] Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, New York, 1968

Since the economists of Europe and North America took their examples from their own societies and cultures, their paradigm was one of modernisation [or Westernisation].

"Modernisation is the process of social change in which development is the economic component. Modernisation produces the societal environment in which rising output per head is effectively incorporated. For effective incorporation, the heads that produce [and consume] rising output must understand and accept new rules of the game deeply enough to improve their own productive behaviour and to diffuse it throughout their society."

Lerner, Daniel in Sills, Op.cit., 1968

"Historically, modernisation is the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in western Europe and North America from the 17th century to the 19th century and have then spread to other countries and in the 19th and 20th centuries to the South American, Asian and African continents."

Eisenstadt, Stuart, 1966
[quoted Lehmann 1979]

While the idea of modernisation as such has been discredited, some of the thinking associated with it has proved surprisingly durable – perhaps because it is easy for politicians in the North to grasp. There is the notion that if there is an increase of wealth, the benefits will 'trickle down' through society. There is also the concept of human capital (knowledge, skills, education, health), in which the "heads that produce" are seen as one element or form of capital, rather than active contributors to the value of production. People become human resources and training becomes human resource development.

There have for some while been alternatives to the growth-and-modernisation package of ideas about development, as well as a number of critiques of the package.

b.

The Marxist – radical alternative

The theories of Marx originated in the North as a critique of the way in which countries in the North had developed, so that it too took Northern experience as a starting point – but as an experience to be avoided. From a Marxist perspective, capitalist growth engenders social and economic divisions between haves and have-nots and will inevitably lead to conflict and collapse. The capitalist system as an international system is essentially unstable, since it leads to gaps between rich and poor people within countries and between rich and poor countries internationally. Thus it is inbuilt into traditional Marxist thinking that Euro-American style of growth would not work.

Marxist ideas were moved forward by thinkers from the South, such as Cardoso and Gunder-Frank. They developed the model of a Core in

the world economy enriching itself [or certain classes within it] at the expense of the Periphery. Associated with this model are ideas of Dependency [of the periphery on the core, for technology etc] and of under-development. It disputes the idea that prosperity is indivisible and that the benefits of growth and modernisation will ‘trickle down’ from the rich to the poor.

This view-point from the South is immensely challenging. The question is: what alternatives can be offered to capitalist-dominated growth? The traditional answer was a ‘socialist transformation’. As this looks continually unfeasible, Southern thinkers have been mooting the possibility of disengagement from the development process at the grass-roots, in local community organisations. These ideas are popular in India and Sri Lanka.

c.

Other alternatives

The new free marketers

As it became evident that to manufacture ‘modernisation’ in Southern societies was a doomed project, much of official Northern policies became captured by a new school of free marketers. The belief, within some Northern governments and in major international agencies such as the World Bank, was that market-led economic activity would result in people having access to more choice and to greater equality of opportunity – Government activities within their own countries,

or in international arenas, will only hamper the market and put blockages in the way of free development. This approach has favoured globalisation of economic activity.

The radical liberals

Some development thinkers shared with the Marxists a concern for a more even distribution of wealth, but took social problems as equally worthy of focus as economic ones. Their position was classically stated by Dudley Seers:

“The question to ask about a country’s development are three: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to employment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned.”

Seers, Dudley, ‘The meaning of development’ in International Development Review, Dec 1969, Reproduced Lehmann, 1979

Social justice concerns then began to emerge in demands from the Non-Aligned Nations for a New International Economic Order – a campaign which ultimately failed; but some of these approaches began to appear in United Nations activities, notably those of the International Labour Organisation. (ILO)

ILO and basic human needs

Basic human needs have been defined as:

1. Personal consumer goods – food, clothing, housing;
2. General access to such physical and social services as good water supply, communications, preventive and curative medicine and education;
3. Physical, human and technological infra-structure and capacity necessary to produce those goods and services;
4. Productive employment of individuals, families and communal units, yielding high enough output and fairly adapted rewards so that they earn incomes sufficient to enable them to benefit from the supply of goods and services;
5. Mass participation in decision-taking, including revision of plans, general strategy formulation, control of leadership, and also in the carrying out of decisions.

List adapted from Green, R.H. ‘Adult education, basic human needs and integrated development planning,’ Convergence 9/4, 1976.

d.

An interim summing up

Components of development and dangers to development

The components of development have thus been seen as including:

- Growth, in the economy;
- Equity in the distribution of society’s resources to meet human needs;
- Participation in decisions about how these resources will be applied.

Dangers to development have been seen as:

- Economic arrangements which

favour one group enriching itself at the expense of others;

- The spreading of myths that if one group gets richer, others will somehow share in the wealth;
- The instability of the capitalist system.

There is also a danger in terms such as ‘human capital’, which make people seem to be economic building blocks to be used or discarded at will. It was in reaction against this type of thinking, that some development economists moved in the 1990s to a focus on human development.

3. IDEAS OF THE '90s

a.

World Bank and UNDP

There are two main positions in 'official' international bodies. One is that of the World Bank, which has, as said above, moved to the position that free markets and the Western capitalist model are the best prescription for development. Its policy for poor countries was one of 'structural adjustment', i.e., reduction of the public sector and thus of public services, such as health and education. It is generally understood now that these policies have been adverse to the poor and particularly adverse to both low-income and middle-income women and have had negative effects on gender equality. Concentration on growth has obscured the social costs, but some of the themes from other development paradigms have also been incorporated, e.g. 'redistribution with growth'; sustainability; and order and stability in civil society [we will come back to these later].

The alternative orthodoxy, influenced by social justice arguments, is that of the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]. Its attempt to make practical its analysis of development is through the Human Development Index [see below]. The UNDP's definition of development is:

"Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are for people to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available, many other opportunities remain inaccessible."

Human Development Report, 1990

The yearly Human Development Reports show a continuous building up of this approach to development, in contrast to the still rather intellectually static yearly reports of the World Bank. UNDP adopts the language of 'choice' and 'opportunity', but there is an underlying set of moral values about access to that choice and opportunity.

There is also more of an attempt to describe development rather than to theorise away from the realities for poor people.

For development educators this approach is likely to be more appealing, I believe, because it is evolving in a coherent way, as well as because of its value system. The next sections will describe it in more detail.

b.

The human development index

Building on the definition above, the UNDP has constructed a Human Development Index, focusing on the three indicators of:

Health – Longevity or life expectancy, related to the intrinsic value people place on it [especially in the poor countries where old age is a rarity] and also to good health and nutrition.

Knowledge – Literacy figures are taken as representing “a person’s first step in learning and knowledge-building”.

Resources – Command over Gross Domestic Product per head, adjusted by relating it to purchasing power [taking account of taxes etc.].

Such statistics can enable comparisons between countries to be made, but they are about averages, so may hide great inequalities between rich and poor or men and women. There are methods of adjusting averages to take account of known inequalities, but especially in the case of income they are still not wholly satisfactory. The UNDP has tried to combine these three indicators into a Human Development Index, which is at least a useful step toward comparing deprivation and development in different parts of the world.

While the idea is not to construct a ‘League Table’, but to enable comparisons to be made, with a view to seeing what countries are encountering difficulties in human development terms, it is interesting to see how the Index works out.

The maximum score is 1.0. The figures are from the 2006 Human Development Report.

Of 177 countries, 63 score 0.8 or over [high human development] and the top five are [starting with the highest]:

Norway
Iceland
Australia
Ireland
Sweden

The UK is no.18 and the US is no.8.

Another 83 countries score between 0.5 and 0.79 [medium human development], while 31 score under 0.5 [low human development]. The lowest five are [starting with the very lowest]:

Niger
Sierra Leone
Mali
Burkina Faso
Guinea-Bissau

Some of the most distressed countries [eg Somalia] are, however, omitted.

Some lessons from the index

While absolute poverty equates with very severe deprivation, it has been found that there is no automatic link between the level of per capita income in a country and the level of human development. For instance, Antigua, Costa Rica, and Mauritius have a relatively high HDI, although they are not rich, whereas some rich countries, such as Saudi Arabia, have not yet translated their wealth into corresponding levels of human development.

The HDI as a guide to components of development

To the earlier ideas about growth, distribution and participation, the HDI now adds three specific ingredients, as listed above: health, knowledge, and wealth defined in a more sophisticated way.

Disparity in human poverty within countries and regions

- A study of 77 countries with 82% of the world's people noted that between the 1950s and the 1990s inequality rose in 45 of the countries and fell in 16 with many of the countries with rising inequality in Eastern Europe and the CIS.
 - Latin American and Caribbean countries have among the world's highest income inequality. In 13 of the 20 countries (with data for the 1990s), the poorest 10% had less than 1/20 of the income of the richest 10%.
 - All five South Asian countries have fairly low levels of income inequality as do the Arab States. Countries in East Asia and the Pacific have no clear pattern varying from the fairly equal Korea and Viet Nam to the much less equal Malaysia and the Philippines.
 - In China income inequality fell until the mid-1980s but has been rising since. In India, the story is better with inequality falling until recently, and then coming to a halt.
- Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have high levels of income inequality. In 16 of the 22 Sub-Saharan countries (with data for the 1990s), the poorest 10% of the population had less than 1/10 of the income of the richest 10%, and in 9 less than 1/20.
 - Among OECD countries there is also diversity in income inequality, from the low levels in Austria and Denmark to the relatively high levels in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States. Yet, in global terms income inequality in these countries is relatively low – although inequality has increased in many OECD countries between the mid- to late 1980s and mid- to late 1990s.
 - According to the 2001 Human Development Report (quoting recent surveys) world inequality is very high. In 1993 the poorest 10% of the world's people had only 1.6% of the income of the richest 10%; the richest 1% of the world's people received as much income as the poorest 57% and the richest 10% of the US population (around 25 million people) had a combined income greater than that of the poorest 43% of the world's people (around 2 billion people).

4. IDEAS CLOSELY LINKED TO DEVELOPMENT

a.

Poverty

Encouragement of growth and increase in wealth without safeguards over distribution of wealth leads to poverty for those who are excluded. Poverty, seen as human distress, becomes more dramatically noticeable in societies where there has been a rise in wealth for some but a widening gap between those who have benefited and those who have not. Now even the World Bank is talking about 'bridging the gap', apparently unaware that its own policies have helped to depress many people into even greater poverty.

"The contrast between human development and human poverty reflects two different ways of evaluating development. One way, the 'conglomerative perspective', focuses on the advances made by all groups in each community, from the rich to the poor.

This contrasts with an alternative viewpoint, the 'deprivational perspective', in which development is judged by the way the poor and deprived fare in each community. Lack of progress in reducing the disadvantages of the deprived cannot be 'washed away' by large advances – no matter how large – made by the better off people."

Human Development Report, 1997

Poverty is about low [or no] income, deprivation of basic needs and inhibition from functioning effectively in society, eg, participating in decisions.

It is associated with lack of well-being [ie, about ill-being] and with an unsatisfactory quality of life.

The 2006 Human Development Report attempted to construct a Human Poverty Index [HPI] based on the percentage of people in a country who face some of the basic deprivations mentioned. Among 102 countries for which the index has been calculated, 21 have populations in which a third or more of the people live in poverty [based on the international income poverty measure of those earning less than US\$1 a day. Under the poverty measure of those earning less than US\$2 a day, this figure increases to 48 countries].

The index doesn't show regional differences within countries, but we do have information to show, for instance, that in India there is a greater concentration of poverty in Rajasthan and Bihar than in Kerala. It also doesn't show how wide the gap is between rich and poor, how concentrated wealth is and whether there is a shift towards or away from a more even sharing of wealth.

We know something about this from UK figures. If you total up all household incomes in the UK, in 1979, the poorest fifth of the population had access to 10% of that total, in 1994 they had access to 6% and in 1999 this had risen to only 6.1%. Meanwhile, the share of the richest fifth of the population was 35% in 1979, increasing to 43% in 1994 and 44% in 1999. This is a very telling example of the rise in inequality, and a complete failure to combat poverty.

b.

Sustainability and the environment

The word sustainability has been used in two senses in discussions about development. One is a theme in ideas about the balanced use of environmental resources. Ever since Malthus voiced worries about increasing population becoming too large for survival, this balance between people and environment has been on the public policy agenda. Sustainable development can be seen as a situation in which, over time, the basic ingredients of human development, fairly distributed, don't decrease in total.

"The emphasis on sustainability implies a greater concern for the future and for the inhabitants of the future than has characterised past models of the development process. It may not be too unfair to suggest

that previous models of the development process have tended to assume that 'the future will look after itself', whereas the sustainable development approach acknowledges that the ability of the future to do this can be seriously impaired by actions taken now."

Pearce, David, Edward Barbier and Anil Markandya, Sustainable Development: Economics and the Environment in The Third World, London, Earthscan 1990

Unfortunately, an alternative use of the word sustainability has been applied to development projects, with the aspiration that such projects should become self-sustaining after a fixed number of years. Sustainability in this sense is usually unrealistic and is contrary to the idea of development as a process, since it related to a standstill condition.

c.

Gender and development

Why gender wasn't noticed in the past

"No political system today automatically assumes the equal status of women, and production-oriented societies generally tend to undervalue their contribution. Statistical methods still largely ignore the contribution of women when it takes place within the household rather than in the labour market, and they also tend to ignore the economic contributions of women because their employment is often concentrated in the so-called 'informal sector' or is seasonal and thus difficult to measure. UN statistics

also underestimate the number of households in which the woman is the de facto economic head because they used biased definitions of head-of-household instead of a criterion reflecting actual economic contributions. Thus women remain statistically invisible."

Brandt, Willi and others,
North South: A Programme for Survival
London, Pan, 1980

Gradually, voices such as Brandt's [but largely those of women themselves] were raised to point out both the contribution of women to

development and their lack of benefit from it. This comment encapsulates what women were saying:

“Women provide more health care than all health services combined, yet out-number men among the world’s illiterates.”

Fägerlind, I. And Saha, L.
Education and National Development:
A Comparative Perspective,
Oxford, Pergamon, Second Ed, 1989

Here is a comment on the nature of women’s contribution:

“The essence of women’s distinctiveness lies in the multiplicity of their roles. Most men can confine themselves mainly to being producers. Most women, in addition to being heavily involved in economic production, take prime responsibility as home managers, child-bearers and carers of children and the elderly. Both women and men are also community organisers. In consequences, women work longer hours than men, usually with smaller resources, fewer opportunities and lower rewards. Inequalities, in fact, typify gender differences.”

Chinery-Hesse, Mary and others
Engendering Development, London,
Commonwealth Secretariat, 1990

The gender-related development index and the gender empowerment measure

Just as it is possible to take statistics apart to observe the status of poor people in relation to development, so it is possible to do this for women. The outcomes so far have not been encouraging.

“One of the most significant differences within the overall HDI

score for any country is between males and females. Men generally fare better than women on almost every socio-economic indicator [except life expectancy since, for biological reasons, women tend to live longer than men].

All countries treat women worse than men – unconscionable after so many years of debate on gender equality, so many changes in national legislation and so many years of struggle”

UNDP, Human Development
Report, 1994

The UNDP are now working out ways of monitoring human development in relation to gender equality. Adjusting the HDI to take account of gender disparities [in relation to health, education and wealth] has produced the GDI or Gender-Related Development Index, applied to 177 countries (2006). The top five countries in the GDI rankings are:

Norway
Iceland
Australia
Ireland
Sweden

The UK is no.16 and the US is no.8

The GDI list shows clearly that gender equality does not depend on a country’s income level. Thailand, with a real per capita income less than one third that of Kuwait is at 58.

Closing gaps in education and health and income is, however, not enough. What about the active participation of women in political and economic life? A further monitoring tool developed by UNDP is the Gender Empowerment Measure [GEM] which attempts to assess the levels of women’s

participation in economic, professional and political activities, as well as their percentage share of earned income. Applied to 177 countries so far, it shows the top five as:

- Norway
- Sweden
- Iceland
- Denmark
- Belgium

The UK is at 16 and Ireland is at 17.

The UK remains the same as its position at no.16 in the GEM listing, with a score of 0.755, below Belgium (5th) and Australia (8th) among others. Ireland is one place below the UK at 17 with a score of 0.753. In the UK in 2004, women's share of all recorded income was 39%, and in Ireland it was 34%.

Note: the source for all data in this section is the Human Development Report for years 1997, 2001 and 2006.

d. **Civil society**

In the 1950s and '60s when policy-makers thought about development as growth and improvement, they believed that development could be planned for and managed. The rise in ideas about free markets put development planning out of fashion [although in reality, agencies like the World Bank and the IMF managed/manipulated development trends by their policies].

The decline in public services and the abdication [often forced] of local and central government from responsibility for their people's welfare has focused interest on 'civil society', on action by non-

governmental agencies to determine their own development. For obvious reasons, civic stability is an interest of anyone with wealth to guard; but it is also in the interest of poor people who become victims of instability, as refugees or the maimed and killed in war.

Non-governmental agencies have become somewhat problematic, since NGOs in poor countries are often not really actors in their own affairs, but are members of uneven partnerships with NGOs from rich countries and are also subject to the vagaries of short term funding.

5. WHAT DEVELOPMENT IS NOT

a.

Authentic development

By tracing different ideas about development and following through the ideas of Human Development, it has become apparent not only that the idea is underpinned by a value system [although UN agencies often try to be value-free!], but also that other views of development may be in collision with it. This means that there can be no uncontroversial description of development.

It is as a result of divergencies in ideas that some development activists have coined the phrase 'authentic development', to claim the rightness of their particular standpoint.

It is not self-righteous for us to try to arrive at a description of development which is authentic to us.

b.

Negatives

The sort of development which I have been describing here is one in which the following would have no place:

- International manipulation of markets by agencies representing the rich transnationals and rich nations;
- National control of the development process without participation in decision-making by the mass of citizens;
- Concentration on the accumulation of wealth to the exclusion of other components of an improved life for people, particularly health and knowledge;
- Concentration on improved average conditions without concern for uneven distribution;
- Absence of concern for the poor and for women;
- Absence of an interest in the strengthening and encouragement of civil society;
- Emphasis on sustainability as a static condition rather than on a dynamic continuation of change for the better.

6. DESCRIBING DEVELOPMENT

a.

The Ingredients

Throughout this paper, major components of development have been noted. These are suggested as the basic ingredients of any description.

The Components are:

- Change for the better;
- Continuing process;
- Application to groups of people, usually nations;
- Applicability to all countries;
- Inter-connectedness;
- Emphasis on its role in improving human lives;

- Equality in distribution;
- Participation in decision-making;
- Growth and prosperity;
- Chance to lead a long healthy life;
- Chance to have access to knowledge.

A full understanding of development will include an understanding of:

- The nature of poverty and deprivation;
- Gender inequality;
- The role of civil society.

b.

A possible description

We study development as a way of understanding relationships between groups of people and between nations, as well as to fulfil any hopes we may have for our work and other people to have opportunities for better lives. Ideas of development have changed as such understanding has deepened, so there is no final definition. We can only describe development in terms which include essential ingredients and our own basic values.

We see development as a continuing process of change for the better among collectivities of people [usually nations] and recognise that

the process in any one society can have positive or negative effects on development for others. All development should be about improvement of human lives and it is essential to such development that people have the chance to: lead long, healthy lives; have access to knowledge and learning; and both contribute to, and share in, increases in prosperity. Prosperity is not simply about aggregated wealth in money terms, but also about a fair distribution of incomes and about the actual purchasing power of those incomes. Fair distribution means also a fair access to all the chances

[health, knowledge and resources] to all groups in society, women as well as men, and it means a serious effort to eradicate poverty.

Development is an ever-moving target. It can never be finally achieved and the process should never be arrested. It will best be moved forward if all citizens contribute actively to decisions about it and there is a constant opportunity for individuals and groups to participate in all aspects of it.

For those of us rich countries, this view of development has several consequences. One is that we have a responsibility to see that our government's actions in the interest of our country's development do not have a negative impact on the development of poorer countries. A second is that we support and

encourage official and unofficial [non-governmental] activities which will have a positive impact on development both in our own country and elsewhere. A third is that we carefully monitor development processes in our own societies to ensure that opportunities for health, knowledge and prosperity are equally open to all, so that poverty is reduced for all, women and men, minority communities as well as majority ones.

In order for all of this to happen, members of our society have to be aware of the issues. This makes development education essential. Although this paper is primarily an attempt to define development, it ends, therefore, with a few comments on the approach to development education.

7. EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The UK Department for International Development [DfID], in its White Paper, *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge For the 21st Century* [1997], recognised the need for development education and has indicated that it hopes to support development education programmes. Its motive is to enlist public opinion on the side of its international development activities. It is encouraging when a European government expresses such sentiments. But there are dangers, eloquently expressed by Peter Williams. He notes that the White Paper is expressed in terms of enabling the British people to “*have accurate, unbiased, accessible information about the causes of poverty and inequality in developing countries*” but goes on:

“There is nothing said here about the achievements of developing countries, no word of admiration either for their skill in tackling adversity and in taming harsh environments, for their specialised knowledge of farming techniques, the linguistic skill and versatility of their populations, or of the very rapid economic growth shown by many third world countries. We are not invited to respect their contribution to philosophy, mathematics and science; nor to applaud their outstanding sporting and athletic achievements. Rather we are presented with a vision of the deprived and impoverished, of shortfalls from targets, of failures and gaps.

“Nor is there any hint that we too live in a selfish society which is unwilling to

tax itself on a sufficient scale to eliminate poverty at home; that we have not dealt with inequality, exploitation and fear; that we are major environmental polluters; that we have our Northern Ireland situation to put alongside trouble spots elsewhere in the world.

“There is thus a danger that the development education programme could become an up-market and more sophisticated version of some charities’ appeals for fund-raising, presenting starving children and begging bowls as the essence of the condition of developing countries. Don’t ask about Bangalore: concentrate on Calcutta.

“Although support for public spending on the development assistance programme in the short term may be generated through such an approach, it is doubtful indeed whether it prepares young people for participation in a global society; and whether the end product will not be an unpleasantly arrogant attitude of pity and superiority, rather than empathy and solidarity. Only a recognition that we have problems in common with developing countries, a humility about every society’s failures to live up to its ideals, the sharing of experience, and a willingness to learn from each other, can save the aid relationship from becoming patronising, and can prepare us well to live in a future global society.”

Peter Williams in *Partnership and Poverty in Britain and Sweden’s New Aid Policies*. Occasional Paper No. 75. Centre of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, May 1998.

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Declaration on the Right to Development

Adopted by General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986

The General Assembly,
Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations relating to the achievement of international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian nature, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Recognising that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom,

Considering that under the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in that Declaration can be fully realised,

Recalling the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Recalling further the relevant agreements, conventions, resolutions, recommendations and other instruments of the United Nations and its specialised agencies

concerning the integral development of the human being, economic and social progress and development of all peoples, including those instruments concerning decolonisation, the prevention of discrimination, respect for and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the maintenance of international peace and security and the further promotion of friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter,

Recalling the right of peoples to self-determination, by virtue of which they have the right freely to determine their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development,

Recalling also the right of peoples to exercise, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, full and complete sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources,

Mindful of the obligation of States under the Charter to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, Considering that the elimination of the massive and flagrant violations of the human rights of the peoples and individuals affected by situations such as those resulting from colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, all forms of racism and

racial discrimination, foreign domination and occupation, aggression and threats against national sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity and threats of war would contribute to the establishment of circumstances propitious to the development of a great part of mankind,

Concerned at the existence of serious obstacles to development, as well as to the complete fulfilment of human beings and of peoples, constituted, inter alia, by the denial of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and considering that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent and that, in order to promote development, equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the implementation, promotion and protection of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and that, accordingly, the promotion of, respect for and enjoyment of certain human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot justify the denial of other human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Considering that international peace and security are essential elements for the realisation of the right to development,

Reaffirming that there is a close relationship between disarmament and development and that progress in the field of disarmament would considerably promote progress in the field of development and that resources released through disarmament measures should be devoted to the economic and social development and well-being of all peoples and, in particular, those of the developing countries,

Recognizing that the human person is the central subject of the development process and that development policy should therefore make the human being the main participant and beneficiary of development,

Recognising that the creation of conditions favourable to the development of peoples and individuals is the primary responsibility of their States, aware that efforts at the international level to promote and protect human rights should be accompanied by efforts to establish a new international economic order,

Confirming that the right to development is an inalienable human right and that equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative both of nations and of individuals who make up nations,

Proclaims the following Declaration on the Right to Development:

Article 1

1. The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised.
2. The human right to development also implies the full realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination, which includes, subject to the relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources.

Article 2

1. The human person is the central subject of development and should be the active participant and beneficiary of the right to development.
2. All human beings have a responsibility for development, individually and collectively, taking into account the need for full respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as their duties to the community, which alone can ensure the free and complete fulfilment of the human being, and they should therefore promote and protect an appropriate political, social and economic order for development.
3. States have the right and the duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom.

Article 3

1. States have the primary responsibility for the creation of national and international conditions favourable to the realisation of the right to development.
2. The realisation of the right to development requires full respect for the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
3. States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring

development and eliminating obstacles to development. States should realize their rights and fulfil their duties in such a manner as to promote a new international economic order based on sovereign equality, interdependence, mutual interest and co-operation among all States, as well as to encourage the observance and realisation of human rights.

Article 4

1. States have the duty to take steps, individually and collectively, to formulate international development policies with a view to facilitating the full realisation of the right to development.
2. Sustained action is required to promote more rapid development of developing countries. As a complement to the efforts of developing countries, effective international co-operation is essential in providing these countries with appropriate means and facilities to foster their comprehensive development.

Article 5

States shall take resolute steps to eliminate the massive and flagrant violations of the human rights of peoples and human beings affected by situations such as those resulting from apartheid, all forms of racism and racial discrimination, colonialism, foreign domination and occupation, aggression, foreign interference and threats against national sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity, threats of war and refusal to recognise the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination.

Article 6

1. All States should co-operate with a view to promoting, encouraging and strengthening universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without any distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.
2. All human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent; equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the implementation, promotion and protection of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.
3. States should take steps to eliminate obstacles to development resulting from failure to observe civil and political rights, as well as economic social and cultural rights.

Article 7

All States should promote the establishment, maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security and, to that end, should do their utmost to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as well as to ensure that the resources released by effective disarmament measures are used for comprehensive development, in particular that of the developing countries.

Article 8

1. States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realisation of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access

to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices.

2. States should encourage popular participation in all spheres as an important factor in development and in the full realisation of all human rights.

Article 9

1. All the aspects of the right to development set forth in the present Declaration are indivisible and interdependent and each of them should be considered in the context of the whole.
2. Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as being contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, or as implying that any State, group or person has a right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the violation of the rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights.

Article 10

Steps should be taken to ensure the full exercise and progressive enhancement of the right to development, including the formulation, adoption and implementation of policy, legislative and other measures at the national and international levels.



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