



Overview

One of the most heartening developments in recent years has been the broad progress in human development of many developing countries and their emergence onto the global stage: the “rise of the South”. This growing diversity in voice and power is challenging the principles that have guided policymakers and driven the major post–Second World War institutions. Stronger voices from the South are demanding more-representative frameworks of international governance that embody the principles of democracy and equity.

Just as important, many developing countries are reshaping ideas about how to attain human development. The rise of the South has resulted not from adhering to a fixed set of policy prescriptions, but from applying pragmatic policies that respond to local circumstances and opportunities—including a deepening of the developmental role of states, a dedication to improving human development (including by supporting education and social welfare) and an openness to trade and innovation. Even so, future progress will require policymakers to play close attention to such issues as equity, voice and accountability, environmental risks and changing demography.

Over the past decades, countries across the world have been converging towards higher levels of human development, as shown by the Human Development Index (HDI), a composite measure of indicators along three dimensions: life expectancy, educational attainment and command over the resources needed for a decent living. All groups and regions have seen notable improvement in all HDI components, with faster progress in low and medium HDI countries. On this basis, the world is becoming less unequal. Nevertheless, national averages hide large variations in human experience. Wide disparities remain within countries of both the North and the South, and income inequality within and between many countries has been rising.

Although most developing countries have done well, a large number of countries have done particularly well—in what can be called the “rise of the South”. Some of the largest countries have made rapid advances, notably Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, South Africa and Turkey. But there has also been substantial progress in smaller economies, such as Bangladesh, Chile, Ghana, Mauritius, Rwanda and Tunisia.

The South has risen at an unprecedented speed and scale. For example, the current economic takeoffs in China and India began with about 1 billion people in each country and doubled output per capita in less than 20 years—an economic force affecting a much larger population than the Industrial Revolution did.¹ By 2050, Brazil, China and India combined are projected to account for 40% of world output in purchasing power parity terms.

During these uncertain times, countries of the South are collectively bolstering world economic growth, lifting other developing economies, reducing poverty and increasing wealth on a grand scale. They still face formidable challenges and are home to many of the world’s poor. But they have demonstrated how pragmatic policies and a strong focus on human development can release the opportunities latent in their economies, facilitated by globalization.

A changing world, a more global South

To the casual observer, the state of affairs in 2013 may appear as a tale of two worlds: a resurgent South—most visibly countries such as China and India, where there is much human development progress, growth appears to remain robust and the prospects for poverty reduction are encouraging—and a North in crisis—where austerity policies and the absence of economic growth are imposing hardship on millions of unemployed people and people deprived of benefits as social compacts come under intense pressure. There are also deeper problems, shared by North and South: growing inequality in many countries, both developed and developing, which threatens global recovery and the sustainability of future progress

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and limits poverty reduction, as well as serious concerns about the environment.

While focusing on the rise of the South and its implications for human development, this Report is also about this changing world, driven in large measure by the rise of the South. It examines the progress being made, the challenges arising (some as a result of that very success) and the opportunities emerging for representative global and regional governance.

The headline story of a resurgent South is both uplifting and in some ways misleading. The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South. The world is getting more connected, not less. Recent years have seen a remarkable reorientation of global production, with much more destined for international trade, which, by 2011, accounted for nearly 60% of global output. Developing countries have played a big part: between 1980 and 2010, they increased their share of world merchandise trade from 25% to 47% and their share of world output from 33% to 45%. Developing regions have also been strengthening links with each other: between 1980 and 2011, South–South trade increased from less than 8% of world merchandise trade to more than 26%.

Yet the United States remains the largest economy in the world in monetary terms and will remain so for the foreseeable future. If the US recovery hesitates and Europe is unable to pull itself out of its current economic and social doldrums, there will be a large knock-on effect on the developing world. Global challenges such as climate change and stressed ecosystems require countries to cooperate even more than before. While the rise of the South is reshaping power relations in many important respects, hard-won gains in human development will be more difficult to protect if cooperation fails and difficult decisions are postponed.

Indeed, one can go further and state that there is a “south” in the North and a “north” in the South. Elites, whether from the North or the South, are increasingly global and connected, and they benefit the most from the enormous wealth generation over the past decade, in part due to accelerating globalization. They are educated at the same universities and share similar lifestyles and perhaps values.

The changing global economy is creating unprecedented challenges and opportunities for continued progress in human development. Global economic and political structures are in flux at a time when the world faces recurrent financial crises, worsening climate change and growing social unrest. Global institutions appear unable to accommodate changing power relations, ensure adequate provision of global public goods to meet global and regional challenges and respond to the growing need for greater equity and sustainability.

This phenomenon, coupled with the diverse development paths followed by these countries from the South, presents an opportunity: the principles that have driven post–Second World War institutions and guided policymakers need recalibration, if not a reset, to accommodate the growing diversity in voice and power and to sustain development progress over the long term. These principles require reconsideration, and global institutions need greater flexibility to reinforce directions that put people first and nudge institutions to aim forcefully at a fairer, more just world. Potentially, the growing diversity in development patterns is creating space, even demands, for such a global dialogue and restructuring. There is scope then for innovation, and the emergence of global, regional and national governance frameworks that embody principles of democracy, equity and sustainability.

The developmental paths of Brazil, China and India, as well as less well recognized success stories such as Bangladesh, Mauritius and Turkey, are reshaping ideas about how to attain human development. The success of these countries calls into question the notion of “right” policies, but that does not mean that valuable lessons cannot be drawn from the experiences of these successful countries. On the contrary, key drivers and principles of development begin to emerge from the diversity of development paths that include deepening the developmental role of states, dedication to human development and social welfare, and openness to trade and innovation. And while this Report acknowledges the positive aspects of the rise of the South, it also underlines the imperatives of ensuring that concerns of equity and sustainability are fully incorporated into future policies and strategies. As the 2011

Human Development Report also stressed, continued human development progress is unlikely if inequality and environmental destruction are not moved to the forefront of policy discussions. Under worst case scenarios, a business as usual approach to development combined with environmental crises could reverse human development gains in the South or make this progress unsustainable.

Concerns for the future apply in the North as well, where low economic growth, high unemployment rates and austerity measures threaten the high levels of human development. In both the North and the South, ruling elites cannot afford to ignore these threats to social inclusion and social welfare, given the rising call for fairness and accountability—from citizens, communities and civil organizations at home and abroad, facilitated by the explosion of social media.

To support policymaking and research that adequately address these contemporary and emerging global realities, measures and analytics are needed that broaden the human development concept. The Human Development Report and the family of human development indices must meet this challenge by moving beyond a focus on measuring individual capabilities to incorporate society-level capacities, concerns and perceptions. Individual achievements in health, education and income, while essential, do not guarantee progress in human development if social conditions constrain individual achievements and if perceptions about progress differ. The turmoil in several countries in the Arab States is a reminder that people, especially the young, who are better educated and healthier than previous generations put a high premium on meaningful employment, on exercising a voice in affairs that influence their lives and on being treated with respect.

Furthermore, the promotion of social cohesion and social integration, a stated objective of development strategies of countries such as Brazil, is based on evidence of the positive development impact of a unified society. More-equal societies tend to do better in most measures of human development—from teenage pregnancies to suicide rates—than do unequal societies. This finding is borne out by studies in both developed and developing countries. These society-level aspects of development

have been underappreciated in past conceptualizations of development but are proving to be essential elements of any viable and desirable long-term development path.

Helping other countries catch up

All developing countries are not yet participating fully in the rise of the South. The pace of change is slower, for instance, in the majority of the 49 least developed countries, especially those that are landlocked or distant from world markets. Nevertheless, many of these countries have also begun to benefit from South–South trade, investment, finance and technology transfer. For example, there have been positive growth spillovers from China to other countries, particularly close trading partners. To some extent, this has offset slackening demand from developed countries. Growth in low-income countries would have been an estimated 0.3–1.1 percentage points lower in 2007–2010 had growth fallen at the same rate in China and India as in developed economies.²

Many countries have also benefited from spillovers into important human development sectors, especially health. Indian firms, for example, are supplying affordable medicines, medical equipment, and information and communications technology products and services to countries in Africa. Brazilian and South African companies are having a similar impact.

Rising competitive pressures

Nevertheless, the arrival of exports from larger countries can also have disadvantages. Large countries generate competitive pressures that might stifle economic diversification and industrialization in smaller countries. Yet there are examples of industrial revival following such competitive jolts. A competitive role today may easily turn into a complementary role in the future. Moving from competition to cooperation seems to depend on policies that enable local agents to make the most of the new situation.

Increasingly, the most important engine of growth for countries of the South is their domestic market. The middle class is growing in size and median income. By 2025, annual consumption in emerging markets is estimated

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to rise to \$30 trillion. By then, the South will account for three-fifths of the 1 billion households earning more than \$20,000 a year. Nevertheless, such expansion will be hampered as well as marred by significant pockets of deprivation. These disparities in the South's expansion are not only undesirable in themselves; they also undermine the sustainability of progress, not least by creating social and political tensions.

These trends are leading to a more balanced world. Instead of having a centre of industrialized countries and a periphery of less developed countries, there is now a more complex and dynamic environment.

While there is much awareness at the global and regional levels that the world is in transition, leaders, institutions and academics seemingly find it difficult to put forward principles, institutions and policy recommendations that can secure the next steps in creating a more just and sustainable world. This may be in part because the world is changing so rapidly and on so many fronts, making shared assessments difficult and collective action elusive. This Report contributes to this conversation by critically assessing the contemporary global context and by promoting principles and concepts that can help a diverse world move towards human development strategies that meet the new challenges of the 21st century, reduce or even eliminate poverty and advance progress for all.

Policies, partnerships, principles

How have so many countries in the South been able to transform their human development prospects? Across most of these countries, there have been three notable drivers of development: a proactive developmental state, tapping of global markets, and determined social policy innovation. These drivers do not spring from abstract conceptions of how development should work; rather, they are demonstrated by the transformational development experiences of many countries in the South. Indeed, they challenge preconceived and prescriptive approaches: on the one hand, they set aside a number of collectivist, centrally managed precepts; on the other hand, they diverge from the unfettered liberalization espoused by the Washington Consensus.

Driver 1: a proactive developmental state

A strong, proactive and responsible state develops policies for both public and private sectors—based on a long-term vision and leadership, shared norms and values, and rules and institutions that build trust and cohesion. Achieving enduring transformation requires countries to chart a consistent and balanced approach to development. However, countries that have succeeded in igniting and sustaining growth in incomes and human development have not followed one simple recipe. Faced with different challenges, they have adopted varying policies dealing with market regulation, export promotion, industrial development and technological progress. Priorities need to be people-centred and to promote opportunities while protecting people against downside risks. Governments can nurture industries that would not otherwise emerge because of incomplete markets. Despite posing some risks of rent seeking and cronyism, this has enabled several countries of the South to turn inefficient industries into early drivers of export success as their economies became more open.

In large and complex societies, the outcome of any particular policy is inevitably uncertain. Developmental states therefore need to be pragmatic and test a range of different approaches. Some features stand out: for instance, people-friendly developmental states have expanded basic social services. Investing in people's capabilities—through health, education and other public services—is not an appendage of the growth process but an integral part of it. Rapid expansion of quality jobs is a critical feature of growth that promotes human development.

Driver 2: tapping of global markets

Global markets have played an important role in advancing progress. All newly industrializing countries have pursued a strategy of “importing what the rest of the world knows and exporting what it wants”. But even more important are the terms of engagement with these markets. Without investment in people, returns from global markets tend to be limited. Success is more likely to be the result not of a

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sudden opening but of gradual and sequenced integration with the world economy, according to national circumstances, and accompanied by investment in people, institutions and infrastructure. Smaller economies have successfully focused on niche products, whose success is often the fruit of years of state support built on existing competencies or the creation of new ones.

Driver 3: determined social policy innovation

Few countries have sustained rapid growth without impressive levels of public investment—not just in infrastructure, but also in health and education. The aim should be to create virtuous circles where growth and social policies reinforce each other. Growth is generally much more effective in reducing poverty in countries where income inequality is low than in countries with high inequality. Promoting equality, particularly among different religious, ethnic or racial groups, also helps minimize social conflict.

Education, health care, social protection, legal empowerment and social organization all enable poor people to participate in growth. Sectoral balance—especially paying attention to the rural sector—and the nature and pace of employment expansion are critical in determining how far growth spreads incomes. But even these basic policy instruments may not empower disenfranchised groups. The poor fringes of society struggle to voice their concerns, and governments do not always ensure that services actually reach everyone. Social policy has to promote inclusion—ensuring nondiscrimination and equal treatment is critical for political and social stability—and provide basic social services that can underpin long-term economic growth by supporting the emergence of a healthy, educated labour force. Not all such services need to be provided publicly. But the state should ensure that all citizens have secure access to the basic requirements of human development.

An agenda for development transformation is thus multifaceted. It expands poor people's assets by increasing public expenditures on basic services. It improves the functioning of state and social institutions to promote both growth

and equity. It reduces bureaucratic and social constraints on economic action and social mobility. It involves communities in setting budget priorities and holding leadership accountable.

Sustaining the momentum

Many countries of the South have demonstrated much success. But even in the higher achieving countries, future success is not guaranteed. How can countries in the South continue their progress in human development, and how can the progress be extended to other countries? This Report suggests four important areas to facilitate this: enhancing equity, enabling voice and participation, confronting environmental challenges and managing demographic change. This Report points to the high cost of policy inaction and argues for greater policy ambition.

Enhancing equity

Greater equity, including between men and women and among other groups, is not only essential in itself, but also important for promoting human development. One of the most powerful instruments for this purpose is education, which boosts people's self-confidence and enables them to find better jobs, engage in public debate and make demands on government for health care, social security and other entitlements.

Education also has striking impacts on health and mortality. Research for this Report shows that a mother's education level is more important to child survival than is household income. Projections also show that policy interventions have a greater impact in countries and regions where education outcomes are initially weaker. This has profound policy implications, potentially shifting the emphasis from efforts to boost household income to measures to improve girls' education.

This Report makes a strong case for policy ambition. An accelerated progress scenario suggests that low HDI countries can converge towards the levels of human development achieved by high and very high HDI countries. By 2050, aggregate HDI could rise 52% in Sub-Saharan Africa (from 0.402 to 0.612) and 36% in South Asia (from 0.527 to 0.714). Such

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policy interventions will also have a positive impact on the fight against poverty. By contrast, the costs of inaction will rise, especially in low HDI countries, which are more vulnerable. For instance, failing to implement ambitious universal education policies will adversely affect many essential pillars of human development for future generations.

Enabling voice and participation

Unless people can participate meaningfully in the events and processes that shape their lives, national human development paths will be neither desirable nor sustainable. People should be able to influence policymaking and results—and young people in particular should be able to look forward to greater economic opportunities and political participation and accountability.

Dissatisfaction is increasingly high in both the North and the South as people call for more opportunities to voice their concerns and influence policy in order to ensure basic social protection and social progress. Among the most active protesters are young people. In part this is a response to limited employment opportunities for educated young people. History is replete with popular rebellions against unresponsive governments. Such upheaval can derail human development—as unrest impedes investment and growth and autocratic governments divert resources to maintaining law and order.

It is hard to predict when societies will reach a tipping point. Mass protests, especially by educated people, tend to erupt when people feel excluded from political influence and when bleak economic prospects lower the opportunity cost of engaging in such protests. These effort-intensive forms of political participation are then easily coordinated by new forms of mass communication.

Confronting environmental challenges

Environmental threats such as climate change, deforestation, air and water pollution, and natural disasters affect everyone. But they hurt poor countries and poor communities most. Climate change is already exacerbating chronic environmental threats, and ecosystem losses are

constraining livelihood opportunities, especially for poor people.

Although low HDI countries contribute the least to global climate change, they are likely to endure the greatest loss in annual rainfall and the sharpest increase in its variability, with dire implications for agricultural production and livelihoods. The magnitude of such losses highlights the urgency of adaptation measures.

The cost of inaction will likely be high. The longer the inaction, the higher the cost. To ensure sustainable economies and societies, new policies and structural changes are needed that align human development and climate change goals in low-emission, climate-resilient strategies and innovative public-private financing mechanisms.

Managing demographic change

Between 1970 and 2011, world population increased from 3.6 billion to 7 billion. As that population becomes more educated, its growth rate will slow. Moreover, development prospects are influenced not just by the total number of people, but also by the population's age structure. An increasingly critical concern is a country's dependency ratio—that is, the number of younger and older people divided by the working-age population ages 15–64.

Some poorer regions could benefit from a “demographic dividend” as the share of the working-age population rises, but only if there is strong policy action.³ Girls' education is a critical vehicle of a possible demographic dividend. Educated women tend to have fewer, healthier and better educated children; in many countries educated women also enjoy higher salaries than do uneducated workers.

By contrast, the richer regions of the South confront a very different problem: as their population ages, the share of the working-age population falls. The rate of population ageing matters because developing countries will struggle to meet the needs of an older population if they are still poor. Many developing countries now have only a short window of opportunity to reap the full benefits of the demographic dividend.

Demographic trends are not destiny, however. They can be altered through education policies in particular. This Report presents

two scenarios for 2010–2050: a base case scenario, in which current education trends continue, and a fast track scenario, in which the countries with the lowest initial levels embrace ambitious education targets. For low HDI countries, the decline in the dependency ratio under the fast track scenario is more than twice that under the base case scenario. Ambitious education policies can enable medium and high HDI countries to curb projected increases in their dependency ratio, thus easing the demographic transition towards an ageing population.

Addressing these demographic challenges will require raising educational attainment levels while expanding productive employment opportunities—by reducing unemployment, promoting labour productivity and increasing labour force participation, particularly among women and older workers.

Governance and partnerships for a new era

The rise of the South is providing both opportunities and challenges for the formidable problems of an increasingly interconnected world. Challenges such as management of climate change; use of global commons; and regulation of trade, finance and migration have cross-border consequences. Some elements of global public goods can be provided at the regional level, but effective provision usually requires considerable multilateral coordination and cooperation. Neither the North nor the newly influential South can sit out the regional or global dialogues needed to forge agreement on these issues. Countries of the South are in a position not just to contribute financial resources towards strengthening regional and multilateral processes, but also to bring the substantial experience gained through their human development achievements and pragmatic policies in many of these areas.

The South has promoted new arrangements and institutions such as bilateral and regional trade agreements and financial mechanisms. Consequently, today's systems of international governance are a mosaic of old structures and new arrangements. And they may become even more diverse: international cooperation is

likely to involve an ever more complex web of bilateral, regional and global processes.

Many of the current institutions and principles for international governance were designed for a world very different from today's. One consequence is that they underrepresent the South. To survive, international institutions need to be more representative, transparent and accountable. Indeed, all intergovernmental processes would be invigorated by greater participation from the South, which can bring substantial financial, technological and human resources as well as valuable solutions to critical world problems.

In all of this, governments are understandably concerned with preserving national sovereignty. While appropriate in some cases, this focus can encourage zero-sum thinking. A better strategy would be “responsible sovereignty”, whereby countries engage in fair, rule-based and accountable international cooperation, joining in collective endeavours that enhance global welfare. Responsible sovereignty also requires that states ensure the human rights security and safety of their citizenry. According to this view, sovereignty is not just a right, but also a responsibility.

The current context has profound implications for the provision of public goods. Among the areas meriting urgent attention are those related to trade, migration and climate change. In some cases, public goods can be delivered by regional institutions, which can avoid the polarization that sometimes slows progress in larger, multilateral forums. But increasing regional cooperation may have disadvantages—adding to a complex, multilevel and fragmented tapestry of institutions. The challenge therefore is to ensure “coherent pluralism”—so that institutions at all levels work in a broadly coordinated fashion.

International governance institutions can be held to account not just by member states, but also by global civil society. Civil society organizations have already influenced global transparency and rule setting on such issues as aid, debt, human rights, health and climate change. Networks of civil society now take advantage of new media and new communications technologies. Yet civil society organizations also face questions about their legitimacy and accountability and may take undesirable forms.

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Priorities for a new era

Through all this, the fundamental principles of human development remain critical. As ever, the aim is to expand choices and capabilities for all people, wherever they live. Many countries of the South have already demonstrated what can be done. But they have gone only part of the way. For the years ahead, this Report suggests five broad conclusions.

Rising economic strength in the South must be matched by a full commitment to human development

Investments in human development are justified not only on moral grounds, but also because improved health, education and social welfare are key to success in a more competitive and dynamic world economy. In particular, these investments should target the poor—connecting them to markets and increasing their livelihood opportunities. Poverty is an injustice that can and should be remedied by determined action.

Good policymaking also requires a focus on enhancing social capacities, not just individual capabilities. Individuals function within social institutions that can limit or enhance their development potential. Policies to change social norms that limit human potential, such as gender discrimination, early marriages and dowry requirements, open up opportunities for individuals to reach their full potential.

Less developed countries can learn and benefit from the success of emerging economies of the South

The unprecedented accumulation of financial reserves and sovereign wealth funds in both the North and South provides an opportunity to accelerate broad-based progress. A small portion of these funds should be dedicated to human development and poverty eradication. At the same time, South–South trade and

investment flows can leverage foreign markets in new ways that enhance development opportunities, such as by participating in regional and global value chains.

Burgeoning South–South trade and investment in particular can lay the basis for shifting manufacturing capacity to other less developed regions and countries. Recent Chinese and Indian joint ventures and startup manufacturing investments in Africa could be a prelude to a much expanded force. International production networks provide opportunities to speed development by allowing countries to leap-frog to more sophisticated production modes.

New institutions can facilitate regional integration and South–South relationships

New institutions and partnerships can help countries share knowledge, experiences and technology. This can be accompanied by new and stronger institutions to promote trade and investment and accelerate experience sharing across the South. One step would be to establish a new South Commission to bring a fresh vision of how the South's diversity can be a force for solidarity.

Greater representation for the South and civil society can accelerate progress on major global challenges

The rise of the South is leading to a greater diversity of voice on the world stage. This presents an opportunity to build governance institutions that fully represent all constituencies and that would make productive use of this diversity in finding solutions to world problems.

New guiding principles for international organizations are needed that incorporate the experience of the South. The emergence of the Group of 20 is an important step in this direction, but the countries of the South also need more equitable representation in the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations and other international bodies.

Active civil society and social movements, both national and transnational, are using the media to amplify their calls for just and fair governance. The spread of movements and the increase in platforms for vocalizing key

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messages and demands challenge governance institutions to adopt more-democratic and more-inclusive principles. More generally, a fair and less unequal world requires space for a multiplicity of voices and a system of public discourse.

The rise of the South presents new opportunities for generating a greater supply of public goods

A sustainable world requires a greater supply of global public goods. Global issues today are increasing in number and urgency, from mitigation of climate change and international economic and financial instability to the fight against terrorism and nuclear proliferation. They require a global response. Yet in many areas, international cooperation remains slow and at times dangerously hesitant. The rise of the South presents new opportunities for more effectively providing global public goods and for unlocking today's many stalemated global issues.

Publicness and privateness are in most cases not innate properties of a public good but social constructs and as such represent a policy choice. National governments can step in when there is underprovision at the national level. But when global challenges arise, international cooperation is necessary—and can happen only through the voluntary actions of many governments. Given the many pressing challenges,

progress in determining what is public and what is private will require strong, committed personal and institutional leadership.

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This Report presents the contemporary global context and charts a path for policymakers and citizens to navigate the increasing interconnectedness of the world and to face the growing global challenges. It describes how the dynamics of power, voice and wealth in the world are changing—and identifies the new policies and institutions necessary to address these 21st century realities and promote human development with greater equity, sustainability and social integration. Progress in human development requires action and institutions at both the global and national levels. At the global level, institutional reforms and innovation are required to protect and provide global public goods. At the national level, state commitment to social justice is important, as is the understanding that one-size-fits-all technocratic policies are neither realistic nor effective given the diversity of national contexts, cultures and institutional conditions. Nevertheless, overarching principles such as social cohesion, state commitment to education, health and social protection, and openness to trade integration emerge as means of navigating towards sustainable and equitable human development.

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