
Sustainable progress?

WORKSHEET A

The latest *Human Development Report* from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) contains some good news but also a very serious warning about the threat posed by climate change.

The report, published annually since 1990, seeks to assess “human development” around the world, and calculates a “Human Development Index” (HDI) for 169 countries. The HDI is based on average income, life expectancy, and level of education. Unsurprisingly, rich countries tend to have higher HDIs than poor countries, but there are interesting variations in human development among countries with similar levels of economic development, because some have better health and education systems than others.

According to the 2010 report, the country with the highest level of human development is Norway, followed by Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Ireland. Most of the lowest HDIs belong to countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Almost every country in the world has a higher HDI than in 1990, despite the fact that since the 2008 financial crisis the total number of people living in extreme poverty has increased. The report concludes that most people are healthier, live longer, are more educated, and have access to more goods and services — and that even in countries with severe economic problems, people’s health and education have generally improved. Although sub-Saharan African countries are at the bottom of the pile in terms of human development, some of them have made significant progress since 1990. The report is critical, however, of the fact that economic inequality has increased significantly in the last twenty years, both within and between countries.

The greatest threat to HDI in the future, according to the report, is climate change. The way to increase average income in a country is through economic growth, which means increased production and consumption. However, if this leads to greater emissions of greenhouse gases, as has always been the case in the past, global warming will probably accelerate, causing severe environmental problems in some parts of the world that will threaten the livelihoods of huge numbers of people. The progress of the last twenty years, therefore, might not be sustainable.

The only solution, according to the report, is to break the link between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions — which, needless to say, is easier said than done.

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WORKSHEET B

Exercise 1

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), or if the text doesn't say (D).

1. According to the report, New Zealand has the second highest Human Development Index.
2. Norway has had the highest HDI in the *Human Development Report* for the past ten years.
3. A country's wealth does not make much difference to its HDI.
4. The *Human Development Report* is published every two years.
5. The *Human Development Report* doesn't cover every country in Asia.
6. Most countries in the world have a higher HDI than twenty years ago.
7. The difference in wealth between rich countries and poor countries has increased in the last twenty years.
8. All the countries with the lowest HDIs are in sub-Saharan Africa.
9. The first *Human Development Report* was published in 1980.
10. In the past, economic growth has always led to greater emissions of greenhouse gases.

Exercise 2

Answer the questions below.

1. What three factors is the concept of "human development" based on?
2. What has caused the number of people living in extreme poverty to increase since 2008?
3. In what ways does the report say the lives of most people have improved in the last twenty years?
4. Why might some countries with quite similar levels of economic development have quite different HDIs?
5. In what way might climate change have a negative effect on countries' HDIs?
6. What does the report say needs to be done in the future?

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WORKSHEET C

Exercise 3

The text from Worksheet A has been copied below, but now contains twenty mistakes: can you find and correct them?

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According to the 2010 report, the country with the highest level of human development is Norway, followed by Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Ireland. Most of the lowest HDIs belong to countries in sob-Saharan Africa.

Almost every country in the world has a higher HDI than in 1990, despite the fact that since the 2008 financial crisis the total number of people living in extreme poverty has increased. The report concludes that most people are healthier, live longer, are more educated, and have access to more goods and services — and that even in countries with seven economic problems, people’s health and education have generally improved. Although sub-Saharan African countries are at the bottom of the pole in terms of human development, some of them have made significant progress since 1990. The report is critical, however, of the fact that economic disequality has increased significantly in the last twenty years, both within and between countries.

The greatest threat to HDI in the future, according the report, is climate change. The way to increase average income in a country is through economic growth, which means increased production and consumption. However, if this leads to greater missions of bluehouse gases, as has always been the case in the past, global heating will probably accelerate, causing severe environmental problems in some parts of the world that will threat the lifehoods of huge numbers of people. The progress of the last twenty years, therefore, might not be sustainable.

The only solution, according to the report, is to break the link between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions — which, unnecessary to say, is easier said and done.

Sustainable progress?

WORKSHEET D

The latest *Human Development Report* from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) contains some good news but also a very serious warning about the (1) **threat** posed by climate change.

The report, (2) **published** annually since 1990, (3) **seeks** to assess “human development” around the world, and calculates a “Human Development Index” (HDI) for 169 countries. The HDI is based (4) **on** average income, life (5) **expectancy**, and level of education. Unsurprisingly, rich countries (6) **tend to** have higher HDIs than poor countries, but there are interesting variations in human development among countries with similar levels of (7) **economic** development, because some have better health and education systems than others.

According to the 2010 report, the country with the highest level of human development is Norway, followed by Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Ireland. Most of the lowest HDIs belong to countries in (8) **sub-Saharan** Africa.

Almost every country in the world has a higher HDI than in 1990, despite the fact that since the 2008 financial crisis the total number of people living in extreme (9) **poverty** has increased. The report concludes that most people are healthier, live longer, are more educated, and have access to more goods and services — and that even in countries with (10) **severe** economic problems, people’s health and education have generally improved. Although sub-Saharan African countries are at the bottom of the (11) **pile** in terms of human development, some of them have made significant progress since 1990. The report is critical, however, of the fact that economic (12) **inequality** has increased significantly in the last twenty years, both within and between countries.

The greatest threat to HDI in the future, (13) **according to** the report, is climate change. The way to increase average income in a country is through economic growth, which means increased production and consumption. However, if this leads to greater (14) **emissions** of (15) **greenhouse** gases, as has always been the case in the past, global (16) **warming** will probably accelerate, causing severe environmental problems in some parts of the world that will (17) **threaten** the (18) **livelihoods** of huge numbers of people. The progress of the last twenty years, therefore, might not be sustainable. The only solution, according to the report, is to break the link between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions — which, (19) **needless** to say, is easier said (20) **than** done.