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Looking Ahead: areas of future research in human development

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A research programme on human development should be guided by the following six principles.

1. It should be centred on human development, both as an end in itself and as a means to raising productivity. All events and policies should be judged by their impact on people. At the same time, the impact of people (their changing preferences, attitudes, aptitudes and skills) on events and policies should also be studied. It is this process of interaction between people and their environment that is our central concern. In this effort, it should support and illuminate the annual *Human Development Reports (HDRs)* of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These are concerned with the human dimensions of development and, more particularly, the rapid eradication of destitution and poverty. The work calls for high standards of scholarship because sound research is needed to maintain the reputation of the Reports as authoritative sources of data, analysis and policy.
2. The research should help in building and strengthening the administrative, managerial, technical, institutional and policy-making capacity in the developing countries. It should also assist in improving their research capacity, without sacrificing quality. This can often be achieved by collaboration between a team in an industrial country and one in a developing country, or by a network of teams, contributing to comparative studies. For some purposes, international comparability is essential and central coordination is then called for.
3. It should be of practical use to the policy-makers in the developing countries, and the bilateral and international development agencies. Purely academic exercises, however valuable in advancing our knowledge, are not of interest to the Human Development team.
4. It should, as much as possible, cooperate with and draw on existing research in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, other UN agencies, universities, research institutes and the rest of the academic world. Although some overlap is unavoidable and even desirable, for competition here, as in the market place, can be healthy, the stress should be on avoiding duplication of efforts, and on filling gaps in our knowledge.

5. It should, wherever appropriate, draw on the vast experience and documentation of the UNDP, which rests with its staff members, past and present, its field work and is buried in its files. Much of this has been untapped so far; access to it and use of it can help to overcome the gap that exists now between thinkers and doers, between academics and practitioners.
6. High priority should be given to work on building capacity and institution in the developing countries.

While these criteria should be borne in mind, it is not intended to restrict in any way the free flow of original ideas and the exploration of new areas. The spark of originality is so rare that it should be fanned wherever it is struck. The following areas are intended as suggestions and should not prevent anyone from exploring other fields.

In the light of these six criteria, the topics proposed can be grouped under eight main headings:

1. Conceptual, methodological, and statistical issues
2. National capacity building
3. Human development and poverty
4. Employment and small-scale enterprises
5. The links between democratization and liberalization
6. Sustainable development
7. Problems of the transition
8. Global and international issues

Under each of these headings, a few specific topics are suggested.

Conceptual, methodological and statistical issues

Refinements of the Human Development Index and the Political Freedom Index

It is ironic that what some would regard as the analytically weakest part of the *HDRs* has most spectacularly caught the public's eye: the Human Development Index (HDI). Criticisms have followed upon the initially enthusiastic reception. The Index, and the indicators on which it is based, need a good deal of further work, although the simplicity of the Index is appealing. Clearly, the concept of human development is much broader and richer than anything that can be captured by any index, however refined; but steps towards refining it are to be encouraged. Work along lines that improve the Index or apply it to regions or groups within a country is most welcome.

Some critics of the HDI have said that it understates well-being, others that it overstates it. Well-being is thought to be greater than the index suggests because it does not capture autonomy and self-reliance, independence and a sense of community, or freedom and human rights. On the other hand, it is said to be less because of environmental damage, violence, insecurity and fear, and, in some countries, a disintegrating social fabric.

Even quite basic needs are not fully accounted for. For example, how can food security or morbidity be incorporated in the HDI? Environmental concerns are becoming increasingly important. How can they be included? (Attempts are being made at the 'greening' of Gross National Product (GNP) or HDI.) How can the Political Freedom Index be purged of culture-specific components and made universally valid and acceptable?

Human development indicators can be measures of the inputs or determinants of well-being (e.g. hospital beds or number of teachers) or of the outputs or constituents of well-being (e.g. health or literacy); the relation between the two is a measure of the effectiveness of the system. The present Index is intended to reflect the constituents, for even income is an expression of the range of choices before the consumer, and therefore partly an end.

Critics have said that not only are the weights of the three components arbitrary, but so are what is excluded and what is included.

Another problem with the HDI is the implicit trade-off between life expectancy and income. For a country with an income per head less than the world average (\$5,711 per year at 1993 purchasing power parity, which is about equal to the income per head of Costa Rica), an increase of annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head of \$99 will exactly compensate for 1 year less of life expectancy, so as to keep the HDI constant (Ravallion, 1997; other criticisms inviting further work are Hicks, 1997; Bardhan and Klasen, 1999). If the people in one poor country have 1 year less of life expectancy but \$100 higher GDP per head than in another country, this country will have a higher HDI. The value attached to longevity rises sharply with income. For a country with twice the average income (about the income per head of Malta), an extra year of life is valued at \$7,482 in income per head. At three times the average (about the income in the UK), it is worth \$31,631, about twice the country's income per head. At four times the average (about Switzerland's income), its value reaches \$65,038, about three times actual income. The implication is that life is far less valuable in poor countries than in rich ones. The value judgements underlying these trade-offs have been rightly rejected. So 'Human Development' and the Human Development Index are not ultimate insights, and other ideas will take their place.

One defect of the economic and social indicators used in the first *Human Development Report* (1990) was that they neglected the existence or absence of civil and political freedom, the respect for human rights, the presence of violence and the degree of security enjoyed by the people. While, for example, many African countries score better on the life expectancy of women than, say, India and China, absence of civil rights and political freedom has to be set against this merit. Subsequent Reports experimented with Human Freedom and Political Freedom Indexes. It is for consideration whether human rights and political freedom (indicators of negative freedom) should be integrated with human, social and economic variables (indicators of positive freedom) into a single index, or whether it is not better to keep them separate in the light of the volatility of regime

changes, the subjectivity of judgements relating to them, the desirability of keeping the index simple, the high correlation between the two sets of indicators, and the distinctness of this dimension of human development. (Indicators of national self-reliance are discussed under the section 'National capacity building'.) Separateness is also useful if one wishes to analyze the links between freedom and economic welfare, although this argument could also be used for separating the components of the HDI, such as health and education.

Some progress has been made in disaggregating the index by gender, income groups, rural and urban residence, etc., but even indicators such as life expectancy at birth by different groups do not tell us about age-specific mortality rates (or life-expectancy rates). For example, by 1850, female life expectancy at birth in England exceeded that of males, but female mortality rates in the age range 10–39 were greater than those of males.

The Reports have been criticized for putting forward a scalar where a vector is wanted. An area in need of clarification is whether a single index is desirable, and if so, what the appropriate statistical weights for its components should be; if several indicators are used, how they are related to each other and why; whether a lead indicator can be chosen or a wide menu of different indicators should be presented. If arbitrary weights are used for aggregation, sensitivity analysis should be conducted with respect to rankings by different weights. If the index is robust to different weights, why not use a single component instead of a composite Index? If a composite Index is used, should the arithmetic or geometric mean be used? Components of an aggregate index (e.g. literacy) should also be related to indicators outside the index (e.g. political freedom). Questions of aggregation or disaggregation of indicators can have important consequences for the direction of policy.

Another area for research is the exploration of the precise meaning and of the interpretation of some of these indicators. Knowledge can be measured by literacy rates, by years of schooling, by the number of scientists and engineers per 10 000 of the population, by the number of books published, by the number of libraries, etc. Or, in measuring political freedom, more than one party is often taken as an indicator of political choice. Does it follow that the more parties there are, the better? If there is only one party but a choice of candidates, is this enough for democratic freedom? The interpretation of any one of these indicators and its qualitative assessment is still largely unexplored.

Related to this is the interpretation in terms of the positive or negative value of some of these indicators. Are rising divorce rates or rising numbers of single-parent families (and even some forms of suicide) signs of a wider range of choice, and therefore to be welcomed, or are they signs of the breakdown of the social fabric, and therefore to be deplored? Or should no position with respect to their value be taken?

Finally, the causal links between policies and improvements in nutrition, health and education should be explored. Private and public expenditure on, say, a family planning programme provide only a partial

explanation, and other changes in attitudes and institutions, and the removal of obstacles and inhibitions, are often more important.

Operationalizing the HDI

How can the HDI be used for appraising (*ex ante*) and evaluating (*ex post*) projects and programmes? Can it be incorporated in project analysis? How can it be used for allocating aid by donors? How does the shift from project to programme aid affect human development through, for example, participation? How should countries, or groups within countries, prepare their human development profiles?

Statistics

It is well known that social and human indicators are even less reliable than most other statistics. It should be part of the research project to: (1) stimulate the gathering of statistics where none exist now (for example, data on local and provincial government expenditures are scarce and unreliable); (2) to improve the quality of the data that do exist; (3) to make them internationally comparable; and (4) to suggest ways that enable users to judge the reliability of data, such as giving ranges instead of single figures where the figure is unreliable, or grading the figures by their reliability. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) has been engaged in collecting data on social and human development, and the continuation and enlargement of this work should be encouraged.

New typologies for international cooperation

The classification of 'developed' and 'developing' countries, the notions of 'the South' or 'the Third World', have lost much of their meaning. Different typologies can be designed for different purposes. Among them, the following may be considered.

1. Income — by income per head: high income, middle income, low income.
2. Human development (social) — by HDI: high, middle, low.
3. Ecological — over-consumers, sustainers, marginals.
4. Political - high freedom, middle freedom, low freedom.
5. Geo-political — western hemisphere; Europe and ex-dependencies, East Asia; the rest.
6. Cultural, self-reliance — autonomous, semi-dependent, dependent.
7. Size (number of population or size of area) — large, middle, small: island, land-locked.
8. Peacefulness — ratios of military to social expenditure; ratio of military to GNP.
9. Structural characteristics — agriculture/industry; raw material exports/total exports.

10. Distributional indicators — Gini of income, land; ratio of income of bottom 40%.
11. Status of women — women in labour force; in Parliament; relative wage rates; comparative work loads.
12. Population growth — rates of population growth; fertility rates; net reproduction rates.
13. Degree of privatization — share of private sector in GNP, employment, investment, savings.
14. Self-reliance — ratio of foreign experts; aid per head and ratio to GNP.
15. Donor or recipient — financial aid, technical assistance; gross, net; knowledge transfer.

Income group-specific price indexes

Much work has been carried out on international purchasing power comparisons (see the excellent work of Irving Kravis, Robert Summers, and Alan Heston at Pennsylvania University). Compared with this well-funded research, little has been done on different price levels faced by different income groups, especially the poor. They face different prices for the same goods: in so far as they consume the same basket of goods as the better-off, but in different proportions, their prices move differently; and in so far as they consume different goods, different prices are relevant. In order to analyze the impact of poverty, this is an important issue. Work on such indexes should be encouraged.

Evolution of thinking

The purpose of this work would be to trace the evolution of our thinking from economic growth as the principal performance criterion, via employment, redistribution with growth, and basic needs, to human development. What have we learned in the process? How have the challenges changed to which the proposed strategies were the responses? Has the research been reflected in action? If not, why not?

National capacity building

To assist in building and strengthening the developing countries' capacity to design policies, govern, manage and administer their affairs, and to conduct high-quality, policy-oriented research is a prime task of the UNDP, and one of the objectives of the *Human Development Reports*. An important preliminary condition for this is to have indicators of: (a) national managerial and administrative capacity, and its different dimensions; (b) institutional strength, and (c) self-reliance and independence. These can refer to savings and capital, and their division between domestic and foreign, to the ratio of domestic to foreign manpower and technical assistance, to trade flows and to movements of people. But such measures of self-reliance can be mislead-

ing, for it is often the combination of the right type of foreign assistance and self-help efforts that makes for 'assisted self-reliance'. Both the paternalistic fallacy ("we shall teach you what you ought to know") and the populist fallacy (bottom-up participation spontaneously produces results, without any need for bureaucrats or technocrats) should be avoided. We now have, at best, measures of inputs rather than achievements. Indexes of such achievements will require hard thinking and much work.

Of particular interest would be an analysis of how the internationalization and globalization of transactions affects the lives of people: working for foreign firms, buying imported goods and services, producing for export; listening to and watching foreign radio and television programmes; benefiting (or suffering) from foreign aid and technical assistance.

Economic variables are not the only relevant ones. A qualitative judgement of institutions will be necessary. There should be an analysis of self-reliance in culture, the content of education, communications and the media. Indicators of technological dependence and technology gaps are also important. Self-reliance should not be confused with self-sufficiency. In an interdependent world, one-sided dependence is to be deplored, but a mutual give and take, or interdependence, may be welcome and inevitable. An attempt at self-sufficiency that fails (e.g. in food because of a bad harvest) can lead to severe dependence. Work on these indicators and on the possibility of a self-reliance index is still in its infancy. Analytical work has to be done first, so that we know what we are looking at, followed by the gathering and comparison of relevant data.

When does financial development aid contribute to greater self-reliance, and when to greater dependence? Can the Human Development Index be used as a guide to donors? If so, how precisely? Should those with a low index be helped first or most, because their need is greatest; or those with a high index, because their desert is greatest; or the greatest potential improvers, because this would yield the highest social returns on the aid expenditure? Is it better to help a lame dog over a stile or to pat an express train with the claim to be given credit for its speed? What should be the aid criteria for donors?

Technical assistance presents particularly tricky problems to any attempt to evaluate critically its impact on national capacity building. There is normally no independent measure of its output; this value is measured by its inputs: so many man-years, costing so many dollars, and hence, it is presumed, the result must be worth at least as many dollars. In addition, there are powerful tripartite vested interests at work on the donors' and the recipients' side, and among the experts themselves, to inflate its value. Tact, diplomacy and delicacy reinforce these vested interests and it is therefore very hard to obtain an independent, objective assessment of the value of these services. Yet, it is of the greatest importance to know what types of technical assistance help countries to become self-reliant and to acquire the necessary skills, and which are ineffective or actually counter-productive, prolonging and perpetuating dependency. The need for an objective, critical form of appraisal and evaluation is urgent. This analysis should form the

basis for making constructive proposals as to how the value of technical assistance can be improved and how the capacity of the developing countries can be strengthened.

The transfer of the appropriate skills and, even more, the appropriate attitudes, from one culture to another, is one of the most difficult tasks, more difficult than the transfer of funds or pieces of equipment. Drawing on the experience and the files of the UNDP, successes and failures can be selected, the impact analyzed and important lessons be learned.

Research into how to help build research capacity is a special topic within the general assistance in capacity building. Should students and teachers from developing countries study in the advanced countries or should teachers from these countries go out and help in designing curricula and to build departments? Should there be joint research projects and, if so, how should the work be divided between advanced country and developing country researchers? Should developing country researchers be encouraged to study the problems of advanced countries, as advanced country researchers now study the problems of the developing countries? What is the scope and what are the limits of technical cooperation, including that in research, among developing countries? It is likely that many problems, such as family planning, land reforms, nutrition and the informal sector, are more appropriately studied and taught in situations that are relatively near to each other than the far-removed ones of a highly industrialized country. How can advanced countries contribute to encouraging intellectual cooperation among developing countries?

Human development, poverty and exclusion

The ultimate objective of development is to improve the human condition by enlarging people's choices. At the same time, the most plentiful resource of the developing countries is human beings. On both these grounds, people must be put at the centre of the development process. This obvious truth has recently been rediscovered.

Work on human, social and political indicators has been going on for a long time, but nothing so far has replaced the powerful hold of the GNP, in spite of numerous attempts to weaken it. One important purpose of the HDI is to dislodge the monopolistic hold of GNP on our minds. We know that poverty can be removed at quite low income levels, and that high average incomes are no guarantee against widespread misery. Research in this area is directly relevant not only to the *Human Development Reports*, but also to policy-makers and international donors concerned with backing efforts by developing countries to improve the lot of poor people.

How to convert nutrition, health services and education into the full life

We do know how to make shoes out of leather, and energy out of coal or water power. But we know very little about how precisely to transform

social services, adequate food and certain institutional arrangements into long, healthy, productive, creative, enjoyable lives. More particularly, what policies promote human development? This question is at the heart of the development effort. Some countries that show high tax ratios devoted to these social sectors have little to show for them in results, while other countries that spend much less are more successful in improving the human condition. The linkage between, on the one hand, indicators of 'inputs', such as hospital beds, doctors, nurses, teachers per thousand of the population and school enrollment rates, and, on the other hand, indicators of 'results', such as life expectancy, reduced morbidity, literacy, birth control, etc., are tenuous, much more tenuous than the links between inputs of capital and labour, and the output of goods.

It is institutional, organizational, attitudinal and cultural factors as much as resources that account for the fact that one family planning programme is highly successful, but another fails. These qualitative factors have been neglected by economists, and it would be useful to draw on the knowledge not only of economists, but also of historians, geographers, anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and political scientists.

What are the relations, in achieving the desirable results, between public and private expenditure, between private profit-seeking and private voluntary activities, and between public central and public local and provincial expenditure? What should be the amount of these services produced and/or financed and/or provided by the government and privately? Four combinations between production and finance are possible, and each gives different results. Cost recovery and charging user fees is an example of public provision/private finance, and has merits and drawbacks. Vouchers for schools or hospitals is an example of public finance/private provision. Private insurance or buying the services in the market amounts to private finance/private provision, and free public services illustrates public finance/public provision. Although much has been written about the theory of these different forms (and even more on the ideology), very few specific, concrete case studies have been done. What is the role of private voluntary organizations in delivering health, family planning and education? Should they replace or collaborate with governments? If so, with central, provincial or local governments? If not, is their role one of pioneering that, later, can be taken over and replicated by governments? If so, what combination of central and local government action gives the best results? A collection and analysis of country experiences in this area promises fruitful guidelines for policy-makers. It is an area particularly suitable for collaborative work between advanced and developing country scholars.

An important field for research within this range of issues is the impact of 'decentralization' of public expenditure and taxation on the development of human resources. Decentralization (together with deregulation, privatization and liberalization) has become a popular slogan. It is said that it would improve the quality of government activities; that it would be more responsive to local needs; that abuse and the wrong use of funds would be avoided and that these benefits would elicit additional resources.

Against these claims, it is said that decentralized control can increase inequality between communities; can enhance the power of the local elite, and be more exploitative than central government; that there would be a loss of much needed central finance; and that central action is needed to protect the poor. Systematic study would clarify the issues in this dispute and point to the structure of decision-making at different levels most suited for different purposes.

Related is the question of 'participation' of the poor in the design, implementation, maintenance and monitoring of programmes and policies. Here again, there are disputes about the efficiency and desirability of participation. Clear definitions of its objectives and of its appropriate organizational forms would help to clarify matters. A careful spelling out of which types of decision should be taken in what sequence, and at which administrative level, would replace slogans by understanding and provide guidelines.

A research project in this area might consist of three stages. First, there would be a critical survey of the literature, pointing to gaps in our theoretical and empirical knowledge. Second, an analytical framework would be developed in which the public sector would be decomposed into central, provincial and local levels. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), cooperatives, private profit-seeking enterprises and families would then be added to examine how all these affect public expenditure on human development, and the access to it by different groups of people. The third stage would look at specific country experiences and evaluate them in light of the analysis. Comparisons of experiences that in some respects are similar but differ in other relevant respects might be particularly promising.

Related to this investigation is research into 'the impact of public expenditure on poverty reduction and income distribution'. Who benefits from public expenditures on health, education, nutrition and other social services? Who contributes to finance these services? What are the re-distributive effects of taxation, direct and indirect, capital and recurrent, central and local? How have these effects changed over time? Are the effects different according to whether tax collection and/or expenditure are centralized and decentralized? What has been the experience with targeted programmes? Is self-targeting possible and desirable? Can productive joint activities in financing and providing services be established between government, private firms and NGOs? What political constituencies can be mobilized to ensure that the intended beneficiaries are reached, without causing excessive opposition by middle income groups?

Finally, there is the topic of 'women and development'. It is a topic that pervades all the others and to separate it can be counterproductive, if it leaves other work free to ignore the problem. Nevertheless, until awareness of the role of women has entered into all research topics, special studies are necessary.

The Gender-Related Development Index has been criticized for giving too much weight to income differentials, and too little to life expectancy and education; and the Gender Empowerment Measure has been criticized

for neglecting the civil society and local government. The question is, can these deficiencies be repaired (Bardhan and Klasen, 1999).

The role of women in development is, of course, a well-ploughed field, with intensive research having been carried out for at least the past 20 years. It is, by now, well known that women predominate in the agricultural labour force in many countries, that much manufacturing for export depends on women, that they play an important role in public works employment, and that female literacy is crucial in family welfare, children's school attendance and family planning. But the nexuses between, for example, women, energy policy (gathering of fuel wood), the environment (deforestation, soil erosion and desertification), technology (the need for efficient, small, cooking stoves), basic needs (nurturing of children), education (and its role in hygiene and family planning, as well as awareness of the importance of school attendance) and political participation (in many countries neglected) have not been given the attention they deserve.

One important task of a research programme would be to undertake a detailed appraisal of projects that have been aimed at extending the degree of control exercised by women over their lives, and at improving their access to resources of all kinds. The research would analyze the reasons for the success or failure to achieve the stated objectives. This research should be conducted at least in part by using innovative and participatory methods, drawing on the approaches developed under the broad heading of Rapid Rural Appraisal. The aim of the research would be to provide a systematic re-examination of donor, government, NGO and community strategies for enhancing the economic and social status of women.

Another area for research that would be directly relevant for policies and programmes is the development of gender-sensitive methods of cost-benefit analysis, and national and social accounting, which take full account of women's time, and the development of guidelines for the application of such techniques, e.g. the formulation of policies towards energy, water, health, etc.

A further promising area for research would be a micro-based examination of the differential patterns of expenditure, consumption, savings, and leisure time use of men and women, and the implications of these differences for household welfare, including of course the welfare of children. Since the household has usually formed the most micro-level unit of analysis in studies of consumption, the often dramatic differences in men's and women's consumption patterns and time use are rarely examined. The policy implications of such analyses would also be investigated.

This work should probably be carried out by local institutes and local consultants after an initial identification of countries with adequate data, while headquarters would coordinate the work.

The study of political and social movements based on religious, ethnic, national or cultural identity and their impact on women is a new area for research. Islamic fundamentalism, Christian evangelism, spreading in Latin America and East Asia, and Jewish fundamentalism in Israel, Hindu and Muslim communalism in India, and Sinhala Buddhist communalism in Sri

Lanka are radically redefining the social position, the sex role and the rights of women. Why had earlier nationalist and socialist movements built into them a women's emancipation component, whereas current movements regard this as an alien, Western trend?

Social exclusion

There are numerous non-material or not readily measured benefits, often more highly valued by poor people than material or measurable improvements. Among these are adequate leisure and satisfying forms of its use, satisfaction from work, good working conditions, freedom to choose jobs and livelihoods, self-determination, personal security, social recognition, self-respect, liberation from persecution, humiliation, patronage, oppression, violence and exploitation, the assertion of traditional cultural and religious values (often the only thing a poor person can assert), empowerment or access to power, recognition, status, independence, freedom, autonomy, mobility, a sense of purpose in life and work, the opportunity to join and participate actively in voluntary societies and social activities, and in decisions that affect people's life and work, in a pluralistic civil society, with institutions that are layered between the individual and the central government, and the opportunities to develop fully the personality of every human being born into this world.

Some of these dimensions of poverty have been recently analyzed under the heading 'social exclusion'. The British labour government announced, at the end of 1997, that a high-profile Unit on Social Exclusion will be set up within the Cabinet Office, and ministerial speeches regularly commit the British Government to combating social exclusion. The London School of Economics has set up a new Research Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, and Harriet Harman, the Minister launching the project, described social exclusion as the Government's "big issue". On the continent of Europe, social exclusion has been discussed for some time. Indeed, it is a rare example of westward transatlantic transmission.

The notion of social exclusion is one of the most exciting developments in understanding poverty. It is an attempt to get away from a narrow definition of poverty as low incomes (and of the idea of its removal by handing out cash to the poor) and invites us to look at the dynamics of poverty. The poor of today are not necessarily the same as the poor of tomorrow. Some neighbourhoods recover from decay and unemployment, while others are in a spiral of decline (Hills, 1998). The dimensions of social exclusion cover incomes and employment, families and family change, and areas and neighbourhoods. Why are some people unable to participate in the economy and in civil society, and what factors and institutions promote recovery and inclusion?

In order to make good sense of exclusion as a concept different from income or consumption poverty, at least one of three conditions would have to be fulfilled. Either exclusion must cover, at least partly, different conditions from those of poverty, so that there are some non-poor who are

excluded and some poor who are not excluded. Or the mechanisms and institutions of being pushed into poverty and/or social exclusion or staying in it must be different from those normally discussed by analysts of poverty. Or it must point to additional dimensions of poverty otherwise ignored or neglected such as ethnicity, gender, the precariousness and insecurity of work, vulnerability, physical weakness, powerlessness, discrimination, humiliation, or psychological factors such as stress or other dimensions not reflected in low incomes. For example, women in a society may have adequate incomes and food but may be deprived as a result of excessive work loads, social subordination and reduced life expectancy. Social exclusion is not only a labour-market problem, but can be manifested in many other ways. The objective of policy in these cases would be to reconnect people who are outside society's network, to restore them to full citizenship with a sense of self-worth. In trying to find pathways towards inclusion, it points to helping people to obtain work rather than handing out benefits, a philosophy of the 'hand-up not hand-out' (Streeten, 1997a). Further exploration of the social exclusion concept, its policy implications and its extension to the global scale are important items on the research agenda.

Employment and small-scale enterprises

The informal sector

Many studies have found that the strongest influence on people's happiness is employment: people with jobs are very much happier than the unemployed, and the self-employed are happier than employees. Since the world's labour force is bound to increase rapidly for several decades, the creation of satisfying livelihoods should be high on the list of policy-makers.

The first priority here is the collection of data on the informal sector and small-scale enterprises. What are its constituent parts? How important is the small-scale sector in the economies of different countries: shares in GDP, employment, investment, sales, etc. What are the main reasons for the existence of the informal sector? How productive is it? How many very poor people are in it? What is its composition by age, sex and income? What are the needs of its members — credit, training, information, marketing?

Large-small, private-public and foreign-domestic complementarities

What has been the experience of making large-scale firms complementary to small-scale ones, without exploiting the latter. Sub-contracting, putting-out system, ordering components, spare parts, ancillary services: what are the conditions for this to be a success? Similarly, what conditions facilitate joint ventures between foreign and domestic firms, and between public and private enterprises? How can hybrid institutions be designed that combine initiative and enterprise of the private sector with social accountability of the public sector?

Labour markets and wages

How fragmented are labour markets? What has been the impact of trade unions, minimum wage legislation, labour legislation, inherited wage structures, etc.? What are the links between wage policy and rural-urban migration? International migration?

Public works programmes

Examples and reasons for successful employment-creating public works programmes. How can they be managed so as to make a minimum demand on factors that would have a higher productivity elsewhere? How can the programmes add to productive capacity?

Participation in large firms

It would be useful to collect examples of successful workers' participation in large private firms. What institutional forms does it take? Does it lead to cost reductions, to improved products, to lower labour turnover or to greater work satisfaction?

Capacity building

What are the main institutions and skills needed for a successful employment strategy?

Engendering employment and work

How should we measure women's contribution to the economy? How much do they contribute by housework, unmarketed work inside the household for the family; self-employment; wage employment? How does wage employment affect the bargaining position inside the family? What are the characteristics of women's work and the differences between male and female employment with regard to: sectors of the economy; type of work; size of establishment; productivity, etc.?

Democratization and liberalization

This is a topic for collaboration between political scientists, historians and economists. We are witnessing two powerful trends in the world: one towards democratic regimes, and the other towards market economies. How are the two related? Assuming they are compatible, what is the right phasing? What should be the government agenda in free market economies? What in the transition period? How are both democracy and markets related to human development? What is the role of the civil society, the media and the press in (a) making the private sector efficient and (b) making govern-

ment non-corrupt? What are the consequences of a weak and strong civil society? Can civil society be too strong, as in Lebanon and Sri Lanka?

Four theories are possible about the relation of democracy to markets: (1) markets require democracy; (2) markets require authoritarianism; (3) democracy requires markets; (4) democracy requires central planning and public ownership. Each of these theories can then be modified according to the sequencing of reforms, and the role of the civil society.

Sustainable development

Sustainability has many meanings, and has been attacked for being meaningless. Some authors refer to the long-term conditions of the physical environment, the air, water and land essential for life, and to exhaustible natural resources. Conventional national income accounting does not allow for the need to replace these resources so that economic growth can continue in the long term. The global aspects of environmental protection might be worked on under the section on global issues discussed later, or they might be taken together with the domestic problems. The legal and institutional implications of the two are rather different, although the scientific relations are close.

Sustainability should be applied to the constituents of well being, to the ends, not to its determinants or means. If substitution of inputs or means to achieve certain ends is possible, it does not matter if some of these inputs become exhausted.

There is nothing sacrosanct about maintaining the present stock of natural and environmental resources. World population is growing, and to meet the needs of future generations calls for increasing inputs. The amount and composition of these depend on population growth, technical progress and changes in preferences.

The problems are different for the rich and the poor, but they arise from both poverty and wealth. The advanced countries reduce sustainability by their unrestrained demand for ever higher production of a resource-intensive, polluting character, with the accompanying damage that this causes. (On the other hand, some environmental conditions, such as urban air and water, improve above a certain level of income per head.) In poor countries, the demand for food and fuel of rapidly growing and poor populations leads to deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, salination, silting and depletion of water supplies. The poor not only contribute to environmental degradation, but also suffer most from it. They are both cause and victim of environmental destruction. The links between poverty and environmental damage are close, numerous and complex.

Poor countries are predominantly agrarian and pastoral, and most people depend heavily on renewable natural resources. The activities of the poorest of the poor — their migration patterns, the time and distance required to gather water and fuel-wood, the difficulty of finding fish — often signal the state of the environment.

While the optimists continue to rely on technical progress or on ever new technical fixes, an analysis would have to allow for the uncertainty of these and would have to weigh the costs of having acted on excessive pessimism, when new technologies do appear, against the costs of excessive sanguinity, when the new techniques fail to appear.

Here, again, we do not have adequate indicators of sustainability. Work on environmental indicators and their links with poverty, wealth and human development would be valuable. Similarly, work on national income accounting that takes the use of environmental resources into account is useful.

Does the fact that natural resources, which are inputs into the economy, are finite impose a limit on sustainability? Optimists and pessimists are divided. So far, looking at history, the optimists have won. The optimists have argued that the decline of existing resources will always tend to be compensated by new resource discoveries, innovation in extraction, transport and processing, and substitution of human capital (new tools, new knowledge and new skills as a result of technical progress) for natural capital. As long as substitution of tools and knowledge for non-renewable natural resources continues, consumption can be sustained for ever. The pessimists say that natural resources and human capital are interdependent and complementary.

Knowledge can appear in three forms: disembodied knowledge in blueprints, designs or articles or books; knowledge embodied in equipment or physical capital, and knowledge embodied in human skills or human capital. Disembodied knowledge is not reduced by use or the passage of time and can be accumulated without limit. If disembodied knowledge can be substituted indefinitely for natural resources, growth can continue perpetually. If it has to be embodied in equipment, perpetual growth is impossible, for some natural resources will always be needed.

Knowledge embodied in people through education has shown two opposite trends: the new technological revolution has simplified some jobs and made them easier; but others require more education and higher skills (Pezzey, 1992; to which this argument is indebted). Production technologies become ever more complex. (Sophisticated mining and processing technology is replacing axes to provide fuel, and nuclear reactors are replacing open fires to burn it). Knowledge to protect the environment is also becoming more complex. Even longer education has been and will be needed in order to just maintain a constant living standard of a constant population.

Since our life spans are limited, the finite knowledge that people can create, absorb and apply can ultimately set a more serious limit on growth than the finite stock of oil or the capacity of the atmosphere to absorb carbon dioxide. The ever more highly educated workforce, which is cited as being good for competitiveness, may be a warning of future global unsustainability. The ultimate limit may be true. This point has been relatively neglected in the literature.

Information already greatly exceeds our ability to process and absorb it. According to David Shenk (1997), the excess of available information causes

stress, memory overload, compulsive behaviour and attention deficit disorder. It is also bad for the health of the community. The global village is increasingly fragmented into specialized territories, with magazines and advertizing catering for ever smaller specific audiences. This cultural splintering can break up communities.

The implications of this for policies relating to education, research and development, inventions, innovation, engineering application and commercial use could be explored in a research project. Is it the case that only the most recent additions to knowledge are relevant, in which case time would not set a serious limit, or does the educational process require ever longer time and greater capability? What would be the effect of the growth of knowledge and, hence, of specialization on social cohesion? Would it be possible for any one person to understand all the issues that affect sustainability?

Problems of the transition

Much work is now being carried out on the transition from planned, distorted economies to efficient market economies. The problem of the transition can be described as hyper-stagflation. The links between hyperinflation, anti-inflationary measures, recession, unemployment, the amount and direction of exports and imports, the establishment of private capital markets, private ownership, and privatization of state enterprises, the role of foreign investment, the need for new institutions, and the phasing of economic and political reforms are widely studied and debated. What is of interest for the work on the *Human Development Report* is the impact of alternative measures on people, particularly on vulnerable groups such as women, children, the poor and the unemployed without support. In particular, five types of reform should be studied from this point of view: (1) price reform; (2) financial reform; (3) privatization; (4) trade reform; and (5) institution-building. UNICEF's work on 'Adjustment with a Human Face' can be adapted to analyze transitions with a human face.

Transitional problems arise not only on Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, but whenever a government institutes radical reforms by attempting to shift from a set of bad policies to improved policies, particularly those promoting human development. Few guidelines exist for Prime Ministers or Presidents on how to proceed on this reform path. Many transitional problems are easily mistaken for mismanagement, which, of course, can be a contributing factor. Fundamental reforms, such as a land reform, a tax reform, an educational reform or an administrative reform, can cause inflation, unemployment, balance of payments troubles, capital flight, strikes and even coups d'état. It is time for a Primer for reform-minded Prime Ministers (Streeten, 1997b). The international community should also ease such transitions to more human development policies, and provide human adjustment loans. What criteria should be used and how should the dialogue be conducted?

Of special interest are studies that compare transitions and liberalizations in ex-socialist countries with those in developing countries and draw lessons from one group for the other.

Global issues

Much of the writings on human development is directed at national policy, but the prospects of democratization, liberalization and human development are crucially influenced by the external political environment, and in particular by the policies of the advanced countries. It is time for attention to be turned to these issues.

Many scholars and institutions are working on national problems: labour relations, trade policy, fiscal, monetary, agricultural policies, etc.; others are researching into inter-national issues. But these are again about nations, states, governments and their relations. Much of the research of the World Bank and the Fund is of this kind. It is concerned with inter-governmental issues. But, although the word has become ubiquitous, a genuinely global approach to problems is quite rare.

Global means different things to different people. The object of work in this area is the world community of human beings and their families. There are important experiences that all members of mankind share, and these include some quite local and small-scale issues. Global does not necessarily mean world-scale. It has been said that the nation state has become too big for the small things, and too small for the big things. Work on delegation downwards, to local institutions, decentralization and participatory organizations that meet basic needs of poor people, is discussed under decentralization and participation. It refers to one sense of the word 'global', that which covers problems shared by all members of the human race, wherever they may live. Delegation upwards to transnational (as distinct from inter-national) institutions is the concern of another meaning of 'global', and of this section.

We are suffering from a lag between rapid technological advances in communications, information, travel and transport that have unified the globe, and rather old-fashioned institutions, such as the nation state, that is stuck in 1648 when the Peace of Westphalia created the modern sovereign state. In the nineteenth century, nationalism had become a progressive force, unifying smaller units in response to the new technologies of railways, roads and canals. But by the middle of the twentieth century, it had become a restrictive force, to which there has been no political institutional response. This lag of our inert institutional imagination behind our highly active technological imagination helps account for many of our troubles.

Private agents have responded vigorously to the technological globalization. Transnational firms and banks use the globe as their field of operations. Professional associations, some trade unions and many voluntary organizations, in their affiliations, span the globe. Governments, on the other hand, take national boundaries as their limits, frequently with damaging results. It pays one country to build up arms, to put up protectionist barriers, to

pollute the global air and oceans, not to relieve debt, whether others do so or not. The result is the infliction of mutual damage and possibly mutual destruction, in which every country ends up by being worse off. These typical prisoners' dilemma situations and free rider problems arise from the fragmentation of the world and the end of a single dominant power, a 'hegemone' as is the fashionable term, who has in the past provided and paid for the public goods, such as peace, a monetary system, international lending of last resort, buying distress commodities, and who prevented the public bads, such as depressions, economic warfare or military conflict. They call for global reforms that transcend the sovereignty of the state.

One group of countries, above all Japan, amasses large balance of payments surpluses; another group, most of the remaining Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, have unemployed skilled workers and under-utilized industrial capacity; a third group, the developing countries, have large reserves of under-utilized unskilled and semi-skilled manpower. These three surpluses, now uncoordinated, are wasted or destructive. It is a challenge to the global community to think of ways in which they can be made mutually beneficial, in the interest of all. It calls for the exercise of the institutional imagination, so that rules, norms, procedures and organizations can be designed which will avoid the wasteful, damaging and destructive present system.

What is needed is an exploration of such rules and procedures that would help us to prevent these mutually harmful activities in a world no longer dominated by a single power. It involves careful and detailed thinking about the kind of arrangements (legal, social, political, economic and cultural) we need in order to create a pluralistic world in which all people can live in peace and prosperity, and be given the opportunity to develop their full faculties.

This goes, of course, much beyond economics. An important part is to be played by a normative political economy: how can we mobilize interests and coalitions across national boundaries to promote the necessary reforms? How can international and global institutions be democratized and made responsive to the needs of people? What is the role of international NGOs that align people across national borders in this movement?

There is research to be carried out on the inducements for reductions in arms expenditure and arms trade, and for the use of the peace dividend. It will have to be shown not only that health and education are better investments than guns and tanks, but also that national security itself is better served by reduced armament. A special sub-section is devoted to this issue.

The domestic physical environment has become an important concern of many national governments, but there is only an embryonic institution — the Global Environmental Facility — that is concerned with the global environment: the oceans and the air that are the heritage of all mankind. London's smog, a local problem, has been removed and there are now fish in the Thames again; but global warming and holes in the ozone layer are

unresolved issues. International cooperation, coordination and transnational institutions in this area are in their infancy. What interests can be mobilized, what agreements are necessary, what institutions are desirable, to halt the perilous course on which we are now embarked?

As the cold war has come to an end, there is a danger of its being replaced by trade and investment wars. Trading blocs are beginning to form that threaten to leave many poor and weak countries and people out in the cold. The growing attention paid to integrating the East European countries into the greater European economy may lead, as many fear, to the neglect of developing countries. A genuinely global coalition on aid, trade, private foreign investment, debt and monetary reform is needed to prevent the fragmentation of the world into inward-looking, restrictive and possibly aggressive blocks, as the pre-war era witnessed. But the positive political and economic impact of the end of the Cold War on the developing countries has been less studied. Neglect by the great powers in some areas may be beneficial to the developing countries. Their domestic policies may benefit from the inability to play one superpower against the other. There will no longer be a need to scare the advanced countries by alarmist presentations, and the climate for foreign investment may improve. There may also be beneficial effects of increased trade and investment opportunities, some arising from Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. In any case, this is a field worth exploring.

International trade in goods and services is a well-explored subject, but there is not much knowledge of the impact of trade not on countries, but on specific groups, and particularly the poor, within these countries. In a commodity scheme that calls for restrictions and country quotas, who does the restricting, who benefits from higher prices and unrestricted sales, and who loses? Equally, there is scope for research on the impact of people, their changing skills and knowledge, as a result of training, education and technical innovation, on changing comparative advantage and international trade. It might revolutionize the theory of international trade, which still talks of 'factor endowments' as if they were God-given.

International migration has been restricted and partial, encouraging the movement of skilled and professional manpower, while opening doors only a little to the masses of unskilled men and women. Who has benefited and who lost from these movements, whether the receiving host country, the parent country, the migrants, or specific groups within these countries, is a highly controversial issue; a serious study can contribute to clarification and improved policies.

Overarching all these issues is the question of institutional reform. What types of restructuring of existing institutions (such as the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, the regional banks, the International Monetary Fund, the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the transnational corporations, the NGOs), and what new institutions are needed to explore and exploit common and mutual interests? An analysis is needed of the desirability and feasibility of new institutions such as:

- an 'International Investment Fund', multilaterally guaranteed, that would recycle current account surpluses to developing countries on commercial terms with a soft window grafted onto it;
- a 'Global Central Bank' that would act as international lender of last resort, with power to create and withdraw liquidity;
- an 'International Debt Facility' that would overcome the double free rider problem which now impedes debt relief (banks and governments);
- a 'Commodity Price Stabilization Agency', as proposed by Keynes during the negotiations for the International Trade Organization, that would prevent excessive price and income fluctuations, and reduce both unemployment and inflation;
- a 'Global Energy Policy' that would avoid the zig-zag in oil prices and the consequent disruptions that the world economy has suffered since 1973;
- an 'Industrial Investment Board' that would prevent the lurches we now experience between scarcities and surpluses in industries, the plant of which takes a long time to construct and, once constructed, last a long time, such as steel, fertilizer, ship building;
- a move towards a 'Global Progressive Income Tax' (or other forms of taxation, such as that on fossil fuels or on military expenditure) for environmental protection and development;
- a 'Global Anti-Monopoly and anti-Restrictive Practices Policy' (while at present each nation has a policy for domestic use, but either permits or encourages its firms to gang up against outsiders);
- a 'Global Migration Authority' with power to tax and compensate losing countries for their investment in human capital; and
- a 'Global Environmental Protection Agency', which would avoid each nation casting its muck outside its national borders and deal with problems such as global warming, the ozone layer, acid rain, nuclear waste disposal, the export of toxic waste and the destruction of the rain forests, as well as with the more local problems of the low-income countries. The problems of creating an environmentally sustainable development process are so important that they are dealt with under a separate heading.

This list is intended to be only illustrative; other factors can easily be added, such as an institution dealing with the globalization of disease and health, with global governance, with aid allocations and aid monitoring, with corruption (an NGO), etc. Any one of these institutions or similar ones is worthy of a detailed research project, and the selection should depend on the preferences and experience of researchers, on policy priorities and, to some extent, on feasibilities. There are the difficult questions of how the decrees of these agencies can be enforced, and when, in the absence of global policing, self-enforcement can work. But some imaginative, quasi-utopian work can be fruitful here, not only as a thought experiment, the way physicists use a vacuum, and not only to indicate desirable directions, but also for contributions to blueprints when circumstances change suddenly and unexpectedly, and the unprepared then lose out.

This is not a programme for more international bureaucrats (in spite of their virtues), with large glass-plated headquarters, pretty receptionists and parking privileges. Some of the objectives can be pursued by modifying the mandates of existing institutions. Others call for the exploration of the norms, rules, procedures and agreements that would promote the interests of all nations and all people by some sacrifice of national sovereignty. These would be built on a global compact that would comprise reductions in military expenditure, its re-allocation to social priorities, integration of the ex-socialist countries into the global economy, and reach agreements on reduced protection and debt relief. Such a global compact would give flesh and blood to the human dimensions of international cooperation.

Arms and men

The dependence of the advanced industrial countries on West Asian oil, the flow of arms from abroad, and the role of the big powers in the conflicts that arise from these affect the prospects of the developing countries. In the aftermath of the Cold War, there is an opportunity for substantial arms reductions and for the articulation of new concepts of security, in which there is less reliance on military strength and more on diplomacy, international cooperation and human resource development. On the other hand, the need to confront some countries can give rise to new demands by the US, Britain and France for restructuring, rather than reducing, military power, and there are interests that will wish to reconvert the peace dividend into a war dividend.

Alternatively, human development, economic liberalization and political democratization in West Asia may be thought to be more conducive to global security than military competition. The policy thrust would, however, be quite different. It would aim at peaceful solutions, at control of the arms trade, and of nuclear and chemical proliferation, and at new economic and social cooperation between the advanced and the developing countries of the region. What would be the consequences of the phasing-out of military bases and arms deliveries? This would also call for an examination of the political pressures behind the arms trade and arms build-up, and the change in the relationships among advanced countries after the Cold War.

There are the problems arising from the use of the 'peace dividend'. Concrete calculations of the cost of alternative uses (say for reducing child mortality) would be helpful in mobilizing public opinion. There should be work on the conversion costs and the political pressures behind maintaining military expenditure; the trade-offs between military and social expenditures; the links between population growth and military power; the arms trade to, and the arms build-up in, the developing countries; the sources of conflict and, in particular, hunger, ignorance, poverty and ecological damage; their global origins; and the best ways in which security can be gained by reduced arms expenditure and an attack on these sources. It is, unfortunately, true that much military expenditure is used to protect rulers against

insurgency by the ruled rather than against external threats. How can these forms of oppression be eliminated? How can the internal and external political pressures for reformed policies be mobilized? How can international organizations be made accountable? The growth of an international civil society and of international public opinion is encouraging.

Topics not covered

It will be noted that many important research topics have been left out. Among them are: technical cooperation among developing countries; policy analysis and how to reduce the gap between researchers and policy-makers; technology generation in developing countries; the role of markets and states; private foreign investment and transnational corporation; international monetary reform and a new Bretton Woods; structural adjustment with growth and equity; international debt; agriculture; industrialization; urbanization and the problems of mega-cities; the analysis of the impact of religion and culture on development; and many others. These omissions are not due to the unimportance of these topics, but to the need to be selective.

Research procedures

Data collection, data improvements, and data assessments should be carried out under each of the topics cited in the previous section, but a special committee for data collection and statistics may be desirable. Both the capacity building and the human development fields are relatively new, and reliable figures are scarce or absent. A concerted effort is needed to improve this situation. It is important that the researchers in the developing countries are not put in the role of low-level data-gatherers and miners, whose work only adds to the glory of the high-level scholar in the industrial country. The statistics of human development call for the human development of statistics.

For each of these research projects, either in-house or outside sub-contractors can be engaged. For in-house personnel, it would be desirable to grant sabbatical leave for this purpose. There may be a case for setting up Steering Committees for some of the topics. Their duty it is to supervise and monitor the research, assist workers in formulating hypotheses, designing methodologies, gathering statistics, material and ideas, ensure their comparability, put the researchers in touch with similar work done by others, organize workshops, seminars and meetings at which interim results will be presented, and see to the dissemination of the final results of the work. We might wish to establish a series of publications in the form of discussion papers, monographs, or a reprint series of articles published elsewhere. In building indigenous research capacity in the developing countries, international comparability of results should be ensured by coordination. In many cases, joint ventures by teams from advanced countries and researchers in developing countries will be the appropriate model.

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