

**NHDR Network**  
**Consolidated Answer**  
17 May 2000

**Discussion on theme for HDR2001**  
**Request from HDRO**

**Request from Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, HDRO**

It is now time to start working seriously on HDR2001 as well as to think through a number of themes that we might work on for the following years.

I would be grateful for your ideas about what would make a great theme for the report. I think the important issue is that it should be a theme that is central to the challenge of human development and poverty eradication, and on which HDR can offer - fresh approaches, emphasize key policy challenges for the world. HDRs present a reference type synopsis of issues and usually make a mark by presenting:

- a conceptual breakthrough,
- a measurement (or quantification) breakthrough, or
- a policy breakthrough.

Some of the thoughts that have been circulating are:

- education
- social mobility
- technology
- governance
- post conflict development.

I would be grateful for any reactions to the above or any new ideas. Could you send any ideas you have by next Tuesday, 16th?

Sakiko

**Brief summary of e-discussion**

It is quite impossible to summarize all the interesting opinions and excellent suggestions made during this discussion. Instead, here is a simple list of the various themes being proposed, with a few brief comments next to each. The number in parenthesis refers to the number of people having proposed/mentioned the particular theme.

- **Governance** (13): focusing not only on the management of government but also on issues of democracy, participation, equity, decentralization, accountability and corruption. This would be an opportunity to provide the basis for a clear alternative paradigm of good governance and democracy. In addition, “managing development” and “taking development efforts upstream” were suggested as themes, issues very much related to governance.

- **Conflict prevention/post-conflict/human insecurity** (9): looking at HD as an insurance against conflict, mid- and long-term development priorities beyond humanitarian interventions, the impact of conflict on HD, etc. Some suggested the topic be broadened to include other aspects of human insecurity such as natural and man-made disasters, epidemics, growing inequalities, and globalization.
- **Technology** (4): focusing on the digital divide, opportunities that new technology offers human development, etc.
- **Democracy** (3): as a key component of the HD equation in ensuring equity and reducing poverty. This is obviously part of the governance theme, but some members thought the report should focus specifically on democracy.
- **Policies for HD** (2): strongly argued by two contributors, the idea would be to focus on the what/how/who of policies that promote human development (could also fall under the governance umbrella).
- **Decentralization and local governance** (2): as a more focused theme within a broader governance context.
- **Education** (2): as an invaluable means to achieving empowerment and making a difference in people's lives. Promoting education is also a key element of poverty reduction efforts.
- **Social capital** (2): as a subject critical to both governance and poverty alleviation.
- **Rural development and agriculture** (2): a neglected topic despite the fact that 80% of Africans live in rural areas, the majority dependent on subsistence farming.
- **Sustainability** (2): looking at the sustainability of HD and poverty reduction efforts from an economic, institutional and environmental angle.

Themes with one "vote" each include: (i) **HIV/AIDS** and development (ii) **social mobility**, (iii) **empowering the most vulnerable** (iv) **intergenerational relationships**, (iv) **role of the State**, (v) **water** for human development, (vi) **migration** (vii) **global inequalities**, (viii)

Obviously, this list does not do justice to the arguments and justifications made for each of these suggestions, especially those with one "vote" each. It is therefore important to at least skim through the contributions to get a clearer picture of all the excellent input.

## Replies in full

Below are all the replies, in full and in the order they were received.

### **1. Samina Kamal [samina.kamal@undp.org], MDGD**

**Governance** is a good idea. However, another good subject would be '**Democracy**' also vital for ensuring equity, assists in reducing poverty, and results in sustainable development.

### **2. Anne Githuku [anne.githuku@undp.org], UNDP South Africa**

From Southern Africa we obviously have a bias, but I believe that most of the developing world would be interested as well in **HIV/AIDS and Human Development**. It is a particularly useful theme because it provides the opportunity to bring together most of the themes already addressed by the previous reports, including: People-centred development, governance, gender relations, human rights, social cohesion and social development in general. It would provide an opportunity for UNDP to lead the global debate on HIV and Development.

### **3. Alvaro Rodriguez [alvaro.rodriguez@undp.org], SURF Bangkok**

There are always so many good ideas at UNDP, especially among national officers who are so well placed to understand shifts in national sentiment and culture.

My recommendation would be to have a topic that has an element of all three of Sakiko's 'prerequisites', for the simple reason that this could allow for their operationalization at the national level more rapidly.

My suggestion would be **Social Capital**. While not a new topic, it is a subject so critical to both governance and poverty alleviation that it would merit a serious treatment by UNDP's leading intellectual contribution, as the HDR is perceived by many countries.

### **4. Piotr Mazurkiewicz [piotr.mazurkiewicz@undp.org], UNDP Poland**

I fully agree with Ms. Samina Kamal that **Governance** (including corruption issues) would be a bright idea for the next year's HDR. However the other subjects seem also to be very interesting, especially **post conflict development**. In my opinion this topic would also include natural and man-made disasters and their impact on human development.

### **5. Joao Freire [joao.freire@undp.org], UNDP Angola**

I just received your email concerning ideas on HDR 2001. In my own view, I think the theme in **Governance** is the best. As UNDP has organized the Global Forum in Stockholm and as also the participants agreed that the issues related to this question, such challenges, constraints, etc. are difficult to understand, we can work on it.

### **6. Udo Etukudo [udo.etukudo@undp.org], UNDP Tanzania**

I believe the role of **Agriculture and Rural Development** in achieving rapid rates of economic growth, employment creation and poverty reduction in the developing world should be revisited. In sub-Saharan Africa for example, about 80 percent of the population resides in rural areas, rural poverty accounts for the largest proportion of absolute poor (by whatever definition used)and

agriculture remains the backbone of the economy. In spite of this, very little attention is being to the agriculture sector in terms of budgetary resource allocation and much is expected from the sector as the engine of growth, as part of on-going macroeconomic reforms. For example, in some African countries, agriculture receives as low as 2 percent of total budgetary allocations. However, one needs to be cautious when talking about agriculture and poverty reduction, because the problem cannot be addressed solely within the confines of the sector. It would require an integrated approach that encompasses the entire rural sector to include road transport, telecommunication, land reform, credit and education. The bottom-line is that if developing countries are ever to achieve success in addressing the challenge of human development and poverty reduction, an integrated framework to rural development that focuses on agriculture is critical.

#### **7. Saraswathi Menon [saraswathi.menon@undp.org], UNDP Nepal**

I would recommend **social mobility** in the broadest economic-anthropological sense. There is a depressing timelessness to social hierarchy in many countries when you look at race, caste, ethnicity, but at the same time there has been extensive change the result of mass movements, migration, social reform, etc. If HDR 2001 could capture these changes in a dynamic way giving pride of place to the agency of people it would be a natural development from the human rights report. And there is a lot we could do conceptually -- in moving beyond old notions of social stratification -- and methodologically in capturing winners and losers.

#### **8. Inge Kaul [inge.kaul@undp.org], ODS**

I think a study on **conflict prevention/post conflict/peace-keeping and HD** is urgently needed in order to get the world out of this strange notion that you can "decide" peace and security. Also, by pointing out that more development and notably more HD are the best peace strategy, we could strengthen the case for aid and for aid that is 'owned', locally. In particular now, in the light of the recent peace-keeping debacles, I feel it is critical to reclaiming the longer-term development agenda from the short-term crisis management enthusiasts

#### **9. R Sudarshan [r.sudarshan@undp.org], UNDP India**

It is quite remarkable that each of the HDRs published to date has indeed managed to produce what Sakiko calls a "breakthrough" - conceptual, measurement, or policy. It is not difficult to pinpoint conceptual breakthroughs - the concept of human development, to start with, and related to that, a series of new conceptions derived from old concepts, such as income poverty and human poverty, or conceptions of public expenditure classification, such as the human priority sectors. This exercise is epistemologically similar to deriving different conceptions of justice from the basic concept of justice.

Similarly, innovations in measurement, commencing with the HDI, and related to that, the GDI and income-inequality adjusted HDI, or HIV/AIDS adjusted HDI, GEM, are also easy to pinpoint.

What is more difficult to identify in the HDRs published to date are "policy" breakthroughs. This suggests to me that an important theme for a future HDR to take up could be "Policy". This is a much-used, well-worn word, in need invigorating new meaning and greater clarity.

Even in small organisations we have difficulties distinguished between who makes policies and who implements them. In large democracies like India, politicians often complain that it is the bureaucracy that ultimately determines both policies, how they are implemented, and their consequences, although formal accountability rests with those who have face the voter.

As UNDP is increasingly encouraged to focus on "**policy**", and as poverty eradication and human development are the goals to which the organisation remains committed, it would be worthwhile to explore what should count as "policies", in the first place, and then, what would be the characteristics of a set of "pro-poor, pro-human development" policies.

Policies which have a bearing on human well-being are made at different levels - at the global level by governments, strong and weak, by multinational corporations, by international treaties and global organisations, such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations, WTO, and regional groups such as EC, NAFTA, ASEAN, and political alliances, such as NATO. Then there are policies made at the national level, increasingly subject to the determinism of globalisation rather than animated by free will of democratic polities. And policies are made at sub-national and local levels also.

Policies often work at cross purposes with respect to human development impact. A policy of decentralisation, leaving it to local authorities to make decisions about education or access to health and water, could, in highly stratified or divided societies, result in greater discrimination than might be the case if those policies were determined at higher levels. On the other hand, social exclusion can be overcome through economic independence, and so whether or not the poor can have livelihoods whereby they are not beholden to feudal masters, is important. Policies that could foster such livelihood options cannot generally be made at local levels, and they depend very much on what happens nationally and even globally.

One wonders whether civil rights in the United States could have advanced if the US Congress had left the matter entirely to state assemblies and town halls to decide. What kind of policies, then, should be made at the global, national, provincial, and local level, from the point of view of accelerating human development? This is an important issue to discuss, and at least attempt to clarify, setting out conditions that should obtain policies made at different levels to be effective in their respective spheres and jurisdictions.

Related to this issue, would be the issue of information flows. How does the flow of information affect policy making, and can we infer from the patterns of information flow directions of the flow of power? Based on this analysis, it should be possible to come up with an account of information flows that would be conducive to human development and poverty eradication.

A systematic exercise examining which of the policies of multiple actors have what kind of bearing on prospects for accelerating human development would be useful.

For example, there is not much clarity about what are the real reasons for objections to policies of the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO on the part of many international NGOs. And it is interesting that those objections are growing stronger just when the Bretton Woods institutions are more and more using the language of human development and affirming their commitment to poverty eradication.

Are those reasons for protest grounded on a clear assessment of the consequences for human development and poverty eradication of the objectionable policies? Is there some conceptual

ground clearing with respect to policies that can be done about motives and consequences - analogous to the distinction in criminal law between motive and the act itself.

The arguments over "social clauses" in the context of international trade have strong human development implications. But the fact that there is so much serious disagreement over policies and whether they are truly motivated by genuine social concerns or by protectionism implies that this is an area crying out for more clarity in communication.

An HDR that examines protests in the name of the poor, the exploited, the underdog, and the vulnerable would be very interesting, especially if the HDR took the etymological sense of "protest" which is "a strong affirmation of something", rather than a strong denunciation of something. Elucidating the affirmative part of protestations would be helpful, because what the general public grasps is what people are "against", and not so much what they are "for".

Examining what are the weapons of weak, how is power exercised in societies, and how do we tell who is exercising power are important issues. Is power being actually exercised by formal authorities and institutions, as is implied when, in the context of gender empowerment measures, we look at the number of women in parliaments? Or is power actually exercised by those who determine the agenda for public debate behind the scenes, the media barons, etc. And what do we do about situations that represent the most insidious exercise of power, when the victims themselves regard their exploiters as benefactors? For example, this happens in the case of families whose children work inhumanly long hours in match and fireworks factories in South India?

I recommend that the next HDR and future HDRs should focus on Policies, Protests, and Power, all pertaining to poverty and human development.

## **10. Michael Keating [michael.keating@undp.org], OA**

Thanks for asking. My vote is for either **governance** or **post crisis reconstruction**.

I don't know whether governance for human development/poverty reduction is a conceptual breakthrough - your call. An HDR on this would certainly explore the frontiers and put it more on the map.

On post crisis the breakthrough would be to reassert the fundamental role of development actors to build local and national capacities and governance mechanisms in the immediate post crisis phase. We would need to decide whether we are talking about both post conflict (Kosovo, E Timor) and post 'natural' disaster (Mitch, Moz); whether we are including complex political emergencies or only situations in which there has been a political settlement, and whether we are taking aspects conflict prevention into account (given that all post conflict situations are potentially pre-conflict, though the opposite does not apply).

Desperately missing from current post crisis (esp post conflict) interventions by international actors is real time analysis and planning that takes into account local capacities, the political AND socio-economic dimensions of critical, especially conflict, situations, and clear and mutually supportive division of responsibilities. The 'economy of war', how the globalized economy can help sustain conflict, and the economic tools for fostering peace are all fairly unexplored areas.

Also weak is the 'tool box' of possible actions that have been and can be taken to shore up/strengthen local capacities in post crisis situations. We and others have a lot of experience here. Another area, more controversial but which cannot be avoided, is the role of development actors in building peace during conflict situations.

Mark is positioning UNDP as the agency which fills the 'gap' after crises - between (but also alongside) the humanitarian crowd and the big development players - the World Bank etc. A HDR that addressed this might be a remarkable opportunity to advance both overall understanding and the scope and place of governance and development actors and to assert UNDP's own role/ambitions. Producing an HDR on this subject would also be a good 'partnership' opportunity - with UN partners, the IFIs, donors, NGOs etc

## **11. Michael Constable [michael.constable@undp.org]**

Two ideas:

In **technology**, the communications revolution, Internet, IT, cell phones etc. Are they developments which are widening gaps between haves and have nots or can they be harnessed to narrow gaps? If so, how, where, when, who etc? What are the success stories to date? What flopped and why? What can be learnt for making more of a difference in the shd of the poor? What from Gates? What for the future?

A broader "theme" might relate to **taking development efforts upstream**. Aiming to influence and advocate. Why? What do want to achieve in terms of shd? What do these mean in terms of making a difference with and for poorer people? How do we avoid imposing, presuming to know better than those whom we seek to help etc? How do "they" see it? What has worked well so far? And what not? Why funding interventions are not enough, especially to achieve the 2015 target? Lessons? What for the future?

The latter of course could be more narrowly focused on and intermingled with any of the other themes so far mentioned.

## **12. D Sukhjargalmaa [jama@undp.org], UNDP Mongolia**

**Governance** seems to be the theme as it relates to everything including to the emergence and management of conflicts. A very difficult thing to conceptualize to the satisfaction of all and particularly to measure and come up with benchmarks/indicators. An important thing is to remember that development practitioners and particularly UNDP need ARGUMENTS in the debate with many a macro-economics minded quarters of national polity. On the other hand Mr. World Bank has raised two issues lately -- end last year if I remember correctly, in NYT or Intl Herald Tribune (his usual fora) -- that is, corruption (WB used to think corruption was not it's business but now it's convinced it should step into the scene as corruption robs the poor, slows down growth, etc) and aid coordination (his perspective was coordination among donors themselves). These two things are very much topical for many countries and come well under the governance theme. US Govt/USAID reportedly tailor their ODA plans based, in part, on the indicators and measurement done by their NGO Freedom House. One of the FH indicators of a transparent and accountable govt is the publishing of annual expenditure reports by govt agencies/ministries. Only UNDP would be in a position to retrieve comprehensive data on how many countries/govts actually do such a thing. If not a conceptual breakthrough along the line indicated by Ms. Sakiko, then the UNDP report could become at least a consolidated report on the

state of affairs and a consolidated sheet of indicators/benchmarks serving as a tool for civil societies and people in many countries THEMSELVES to stand up for good governance.

And lastly, as far as I remember the GHDR of 1991 sent out an important message saying that fighting poverty is not a matter of money but a matter of political will. Perhaps it's time this message be followed up at the conceptual and analytical breakthrough level now. Cheers to all.

### **13. Kamil Kamaluddeen [kamil.kamaluddeen@undp.org], UNDP Nigeria**

While I share the view that **governance** is quite appropriate, for both the UNDP on the supply side and, in response to the needs of development market on the demand side, I think the area is so broad that a single edition may end up being too descriptive than analytical. I wonder if a more manageable aspect of governance such as **preventive development** with emphasis on pre and post conflict analysis, prevention and management could be explored. The impact of conflict on the key parameters of HD (the disruption of output, diversion of resources, distortions, casualties as well as cross boarder insecurity that it engenders) should be an exciting theme for HDR 2001.

### **14. Nadia Hijab [nadia17@email.msn.com]**

Re Sakiko's invitation to make suggestions for HDR 2001, I would add my voice to all those who proposed **governance**, zeroing in on the nitty gritty of getting government to work. This is something that UNDP does a lot of, but the work is so abstract and invisible that it's never really understood by development practitioners and donors. And yet it's the kind of development work that has the potential to make the greatest impact. And it can be done - which would make good development news for a change.

There are a lot of solid state reform programmes out there that can serve as examples and be used to draw general lessons and as the basis for indicators, many of them in Latin America. Eg. the state reform programme in the Dominican Republic, the consensus building exercises around legislation and institutions in various sectors in Panama, the integrated financial management systems in Guatemala that enables government to show donors and the public where their money goes (and were invaluable after Hurricane Mitch). All these examples cement both development and democracy.

There are also excellent internal intellectual partners through MDGD and the Governance discussion list, as well as external partners like the International Institute for Governance in Spain. Governance also provides an entry point to discussion on getting governing institutions up and running in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Even if no conceptual breakthrough is forthcoming, getting clarity around the issues, and providing an organized basis for discussion would be very valuable

### **15. Basil Al-Hussaini [al-hussaini@un.org], UNDP Iraq**

Although the rural poor were included to a certain extent in the overall analysis of the various poverty-related themes, the issues addressed in the HDRs were urban biased. For the HDR2001, let us go for **Rural Development**, let us give sufficient concern to the rural poor. There are over a billion of them who are involved in food production, yet starving. This is a fresh field for conceptual, measurement and policy breakthrough.

### **16. Ibro Abdou [ibro.abdou@undp.org], UNDP Niger**

Si on connaît dorénavant les leviers du développement humain ( éducation, santé, revenu etc..), ce qu'on connaît le moins et qu'on occulte le plus ce sont les conditions de **durabilité** du développement humain ( particulièrement les conditions économiques!).

En effet pour que le développement ( humain ou pas ) soit durable, il faut qu'il arrive à payer son coût complet total.

Questions: Comment mettre en place une politique de développement humain ( éducation , santé, revenu ) durable dans un pays pauvre? Comment payer les coûts du développement humain dans un pays pauvre? Contenu "DHD" des politiques sanitaires, éducatives et de revenu dans les pays pauvres?

Il me semble que ces questions peuvent ouvrir des pistes thématiques pertinentes pour le Rapport sur le Développement Humain (RDH ) de 2001.

#### **17. Djilali Benamrane [djilali.benamrane@undp.org], UNDP Niger**

As the HDR at the international level and the NDHRs at the national level are becoming the UNDP main substantive products, it is of course important to share with all colleagues, possible improvements with a double challenge : i) promoting a prospective thinking taking in account the strategic preoccupations of poverty alleviation, especially in underdeveloped countries, ii) and proposing solutions to main actual problems arisen by the so called global thinking in the global village. In many countries (see Bamako 2000) and many UN Institutions (see UN-ECA Meeting on Communication and development organized by the end of 1999), the **New Information and Communication Technologies** (NICTs) are considered as an efficient instrument able to help underdeveloped countries to fill the gaps in many sectors.

In Niger we are experimenting in partenariat with the Worldspace Foundation and other partners in development, Radio Rural Networking, integrating self management solar broadcasting units, manual and solar radio receivers, but also digital receivers to receive, thank to the solar energy transmissions, through Afristar Satellite and to re broadcast them at the local level. The experience is now at a second step where a dozen of units, all of them functioning in rural places without electricity nor telephone, will work in a networking approach, using NICTs.

In Niger, UNDP CO and other UN Agencies decided that the NDRH 2001 will cope with NICTs as innovative entry point to fight the poverty and promote growth and development. I attach a Power Point presentation of the Bankilaré experience which give some information on the approach and i will be happy to get some comments.

#### **18. Neil Buhne [neil.buhne@undp.org], UNDP Belarus**

I have seen you already have so many good ideas with well reasoned support, I hesitate to try to add anything new. But....

The HDR has argued brilliantly before the dangers of the increasing inequality of choice in the world. It is something that strikes me (again!), having moved from booming southeast Asia, where even in an economic crisis, peoples' horizons were opening up; to an increasingly isolated and economically stagnating eastern European country, where for people the horizon seems further and further away, or in the past. This paradox is more stark if you compare OECD countries with sub-Saharan Africa, or if you compare northeast Brazil with southern Brazil.

A new approach to this continuing and growing divide could be to look at the link between **human insecurity, human uncertainty and human development**. This could revisit the work done before on human security and preventive development in the earlier HDR (92?), and tie it to the increasing uncertainty billions of people feel because of their separation from the globalized economy and the physical (i.e. domestic crime, wars) and mental insecurity and uncertainty this causes. This insecurity breeds uncertainty and is accentuated by the speed of globalization, which in turn leads to more inequality, more frustration and more insecurity. The result: an increasingly vicious circle that harms human development.

The HDR could try to do some measure then of the "return on investment" from preventing conflict and/or doing post-conflict work which prevents further conflict within societies or among societies. The report could also provide an opportunity to show some of the positive opportunities that exist for taking advantage of the globalized world to reduce conflict, to build peace, to create conditions for human development, and the importance of good governance in helping do this.

Good luck. Whatever topic you choose, I am sure it will be as interesting and useful as those before!

#### 19. Yves de San [yves.de.san@undp.org], UNDP Lebanon

An answer in two parts: my wishes & my vote:

1. Two subject areas would seem very opportune:

- The current evolution of humankind is characterized by an unprecedented pace of change. The subject I would give the highest priority to is "**Intergenerational relationships and Human Development**".
- The 'business' and phenomenon of development are undergoing an inescapable transmutation that already starts affecting everyone, from the fisherman on a remote island to Wall Street tycoons. The debate, though, remains dangerously confined. Still, once the metamorphosis is completed, none of our current 'maps' and few of the present 'landmarks' may look that relevant. "**The Global Governance of Development**" would be a very well-timed subject. (The dimensions are numerous and cross-cutting: the role of the UN System, the role of the commercial private sector, the longer-term meaning of the latest WTO jamboree(s), trade in Global Public Goods, the impact of I&C technologies, emerging powers, etc, etc, including a foresight 'revisitation' of the core concept of development.)

2. Having had the pleasure of reading so many insightful answers on both the [Surf-NHDR] and ResReps networks, if I were to endorse one proposal (already made by several participants), it would be in support of those who recommended that the HDR2001 deal with the relationship between **development and peace**.

#### 20. Stefan Priesner [stefan.priesner@undp.org], UNDP Bhutan

Another vote on **governance** (although I doubt that the final decision on the theme will be so democratic) - the development bandwagon of the day on which more and more agencies are jumping. With the HDR 2001 UNDP can be at the forefront of further conceptually developing an amorphous theme, which is understood in its comprehensiveness if at all only by very few.

I agree with earlier suggestions that the HDR should not only target governance in the managerial sense, but also focus on the interface with the value part, in particular participation (democratic governance) and equity (rights). This would not only be a logical complement to the HR focus of this year, but would also provide the development community for the first time (?) with comprehensive insights on the very complex interdependence of these issues.

**21. Juliette El Hage [juliette.hage@undp.org], RBEC Bratislava**

[1] Thanks for soliciting our views on the subject of the HDR 2001. All the thoughts that have been circulating are legitimate, interesting and timely. Whatever theme is selected I would suggest that a strong focus on the crucial **role of the State** be applied.

The State has a crucial role to play in providing human security and promoting human development. However, many of the trends that are being witnessed nowadays (such as globalization, regionalization, information technology revolution, transition to market economies, even decentralization, etc..) are confusing the role of the state. While these trends have allowed other key players to contribute to the HD efforts of a given country, they have also blurred the division of labour and responsibilities.

It would be interesting to look into not only what the role of the state is (or ought to be), but also who makes the decisions about what should be the role of the state, and how these decisions are made. My views may be biased because of my work on transition economies and the never-ending debate about the role of the state vs. the market, but I believe the concerns about the fading (or changing) role of the state is a global one.

[2] I read some of the contribution of our colleagues and would also like to support the suggestion from Africa that it would be beneficial for the next HDR to look at the challenges of promoting HD in poor countries (or in the context of a country that is facing negative growth).

**22. Luong Nguyen [luong.nguyen@undp.org], SURF Bangkok**

Thanks a lot for asking! I wish to refer to the recent discussion between Mr Maurice Strong and BDP on the need for a "systemic" approach to SHD and Poverty Reduction. There are, as elaborated in other fora, three main conditions for SHD:

- (i) Macro-economic Stability;
- (ii) Social Cohesion and Solidarity; and
- (iii) Environmental Sustainability.

We could of course focus on any one of them. But the challenge seems to lie in balancing these conditions. In the near future, for example, most South East Asian countries will likely adopt "inflation targeting" to promote macro-economic stability, rather than pegging their currencies to the US dollar. How is "inflation targeting" going to affect employment and the quality of social relationships, the so-called "Social Capital"? Some industrialised countries have reportedly increased their inflation targets to allow for more employment.

Another example: Poverty Reduction should strengthen Social Cohesion but requires investments with low rates of return in the years immediately ahead. Should - say - Vietnam aim for rapid economic growth by investing in the most profitable sites - thus seeking economic efficiency - or focus on the "marginal" land and people, to promote social equity? Some VNM officials just told

me that "equitable 4% growth is better than unbalanced 9% growth". Is this a trade-off that the HDR 2001 would take on?

In DPR Korea a better trade-off, favouring "economic efficiency" rather than "social equity", would certainly make the "transition" much easier. What then about the devastating social consequences in Eastern Europe? Have they gone too far or too fast?

### **23. Gerardo Berthin [gerardo.berthin@undp.org], UNDP Bulgaria**

To me a theme that today is arguably central to the challenge of human development and poverty eradication is the issue of **governance**. It is an issue, like the one tackled before, through which UNDP can offer a fresh approach emphasizing key policy challenges.

The HDR as such has not tackled directly the issue of democratic governance and its implications for human development. In previous years, the issue of democratic governance has received either marginal attention or within the context of other issues (1993- popular participation, 1995- gender, 1996-economic policy, 1997- poverty, 1999-global governance).

Several current and alarming contextual (global and national) trends could well justify addressing this issue in full in next year's HDR.

For instance as UNDP, we have argued and have seen first hand, that human development is not possible without good democratic governance.

There is also a trend, in both developed and developing countries, of a declining synergy between government and society, which also brings to the attention issues such as state's capacity (public administration), political parties (representation), civil society (participation) and decentralization (local governance).

In the context of continued technological advance and processes of economic integration the classic conception of democratic state and structure of representation seem to be also in question. In addition, globalization and localization seem to be challenging traditional conceptions of democratic governance and state action.

In developing countries current efforts to modernize the state institutional system are weakening democratic governance and limiting the state role in long-term human development planning. There is also a general trend towards weaker public sector institutions, which also affect the enabling environment for business, enhancing opportunities for corruption and constraining the capacity to deliver much needed public services.

Finally, the general trend in the world today is towards less trust, credible and faith in governmental action.

Those are sufficient reasons for the HDR 2001 to tackle the area of governance in a timely, influential and propostive manner. Tackling the issue of governance in next year's HDR, could also be a conceptual breakthrough the report could go beyond the world banks world development reports on the state (1997) and global and local governance (2000), in that it could provide the foundations for an alternative paradigm of good governance and democracy, one that focuses more on instrumental issues, such as political parties and representation, civil society, strategies of consensus building and public sector development for human development.

As far as measurement breakthrough, i am sure that an innovative tool to establish the relation between the quality of governance and human development could be developed, one which measures synergies, dead ends, reversals and traps

Finally, as far as policy breakthrough, tackling the issue of governance may help to propose innovative ideas for policy-dialogue and institutional building, which is what Mr. Malloch-Brown wants UNDP to do any way. Furthermore, many NHDR's, like Bulgaria's 2000, are tackling or have tackled issues of governance with very important lessons and findings for the HDR.

#### **24. Eliane Darbellay [darbellay@undp.org.vn], UNDP Vietnam**

I will join the long list of **governance** supporters. I think indeed that governance is a very interesting and extremely useful theme to discuss How, for several reasons.

First, by essence governance is fundamental to human development as it encompasses all the 'tools' that empower the people, the Government and the whole economy, on the road to development. Participation and local democracy; the quality of the legal, institutional and business environment; corruption; and transparency and information, among others, are key issues.

Second, 'governance' is becoming a very 'trendy' issue (if I can say so), but it is still quite new and there is still room to define and refine the concept. It is therefore worth working on this now ourselves, before others do it.

Third, 'good governance' has been selected by our Administrator as UNDP's mandate for the years to come. And on the field, we are trying to respond to that by selecting new projects which have a clear link with and a potential impact on policies in the country. Therefore governance has a direct relevance and link with the work done at the country level,

I hope this is useful, thank you for asking our opinion,

#### **25. Andres Calvo [andres.calvo@undp.org], UNDP Costa Rica**

I would like to propose the topic of "**Water for Human Development**", as a possible focus for a HDR. Water, as a vital natural resource for human populations, must be considered in any countrywide strategy on HD, as well as at the local level. There is much uncertainty about the availability and quality of water in the near future. Many places in the world face water-related problems, right now.

The last International Conference on Water at The Hague, came with worrying data about the scope of the problem. We know, now, that 50% of the world population lacks proper sewage systems, and that 20% of the world population lacks access to drinking water. And this, just to mention two examples of the outcome of the Conference.

This is just a preliminary proposal. Of course, the next task would be to think a comprehensive outline for research. I suggest the following elements in the interaction of water-human populations:

- Availability of the resource, worldwide (aquifers, lakes, rivers)
- Scarcity of the resource, focusing at "top risk" geographic regions (North Africa, Sahel countries, Northeast of Brazil, etc).

- Multiple uses of water by human populations: source for hydroelectricity, input for irrigation, human consumption.
- Disposal of polluted waters, and impact on populations.

Much of the information is available, already. As usual, most of the work is to find the correct sources. It would be very interesting to relate this topic with the components of the HDR index.

#### **26. Joong-wan Cho [joong-wan.cho@undp.org], UNDP Republic of Korea**

In reference to the above subject and to offer my own insight on the priority themes that the Global HDR 2001 should consider covering, may be as follows [in view of UNDP's new direction and comparative advantage]. I am not going to further elaborate on the reasoning/rationale for suggesting the topics below, for some of the NHDR Network colleagues have already provided them in their responses so far:

- 1) The linkage between **Sound Governance Policy and Poverty Reduction**;
- 2) Information Communications & **Technology** Revolution and Digital Divide;
- 3) **Human Security** for the 21st Century: Challenges and Prospects.

#### **27. Shashikant Nair [shashikant.nair@undp.org], UNDP Fiji**

I believe that the next HDR (or one of the ones in the near future) should focus on the critical factors that lead to **global variations in human development** and examining closely what it is that makes the difference. In other words, to go far beyond the tabulations of indicators into more critical analysis and discussion pointing to what makes the difference. In particular, given the new mandate of UNDP on upstream advice supported by downstream demonstrative projects, the issue of policies and practices at the national level and how they impact on human development indicators needs careful examination and exposure. What needs to get wide exposure in this regards also is best practices from around the world – in the process of policy formulation, articulation, implementation as well as the impact. The theme, if we were to put a tag, would therefore be **Governance**, but with the above-mentioned particular focus within this widely encompassing term.

#### **28. Maria Mattsson [maria.mattsson@undp.org], UNDP Zambia**

Thank you for giving us an opportunity to express our views on the theme for the HDR 2001. We have discussed the proposed themes within our CO and have the following comments:

1) We believe that governance would be an interesting and useful theme to discuss due to several reasons that have already been mentioned by others. However, we feel that since governance is a very broad issue, the end product might not turn out as exiting as one might expect.

2) In view of our comments in (1) above, we think that the suggested topic of **education** would be a more meaningful theme. Education is one of the foremost tools to achieve empowerment and a difference in people's lives. Adequate education can bring impressive social benefits in a wide range of areas - such as decreased mortality levels, improved nutritional in-take levels, increased participation and higher productivity. Today we unfortunately see a lot of education without quality and useful learning - that will not help the people or the country develop, in the same way as there can be economic growth without employment creation. It is our belief that education is

one of the key challenges to human development and a key approach to the reduction of poverty, and we therefore suggest it as the theme for the 2001 HDR.

**29. Thierry Lemaesquier [thierry.lemaesquier@undp.org], UNDP Chile**

Thanks for consulting and congratulations on an impressive feedback.

Many have already voted for governance, obviously an important theme that has been suggested for several years. The appeal is in the possibility that it would offer to analyze the bilateral relationship between HD and **governance**. Does 'good' governance help HD, does an increasingly high level of HD contribute to improve governance? There is a lot of demystification needed here.

My fear, however, is that the discussion result in a cookie-cutter approach which would help neither from the point of view of acceptability, nor from that of policy development and policy making.

How to avoid the foregone conclusion, in the minds of so many, that the democratic model which prevails in the group of countries with a high HDI is the only form of governance that leads to HD success? How will the subject stand in terms of diversity and pluralism?

Within the very broad theme of governance, **decentralization and local governance** also have their supporters. Decentralization had a full chapter in the '93 report on HD and participation. The chapter showed that decentralization could be either the best or the worst of all things, depending on the overall governance system within which it was being implemented. Would an HDR dedicated to that theme have a great deal more to say?

**Preventive development** has received quite a bit of support --HD as an insurance against conflict. This is a great theme, and one that paradoxically hasn't received much attention from the development community, in spite of the 'self-interest' argument. Some years back, Alejandro Grinspun and I ventured into a first analysis of what UNDP had contributed, idea- and action-wise, to this theme, and found many a colleague who wasn't convinced that this was a relevant topic for the organisation.

These themes can easily run into both intellectual and political impasses because of the extraordinary difficult that one faces trying to disentangle domestic from non-domestic causes. How could an HDR on, say, preventive development, avoid the danger of being overly general and focusing primarily on international issues, institutions, and action?

I find Sudarshan's suggestion to focus on policies absolutely fascinating and critical. Most HDRs have had strong policy messages that are not always easy to translate into actual policy development.

While perhaps a problem inherent to a global report, the issue of how one uses HD goals to makes one's way through policy tradeoffs is a critical one. The criticism that HDRs have on the whole been better for advocacy than for policy alternatives needs to be addressed now that the HD message has been internalized by so many agencies, including the IFIs.

Finally, and based on my limited but growing experience with the Chile NHDR, I would also support those who suggest dedicating an HDR to the issue of what makes HD sustainable over time. We here have, like a few others, developed a keen interest in issues such as social capital

that we see as critical pillars of human development, and while there is a lot that leaves to be desired in the social K literature, a fundamental question is: what kind of society does one need to have to generate long-term support for the values, policies and practices that 'guarantee' human development?

In point of fact, we're now going one step further trying to figure out what relationship there is, or needs to be, between culture and human development. Of course there are other, eg intergenerational, dimensions of sustainability, that could be brought into such a discussion.

To sum up, I would vote for (1) **HD and Policy Choice**, and (2) **HD: Making It Sustainable**.

### **30. Rosine Sori-Coulibaly [rosine.s.coulibaly@undp.org], UNDP Benin**

I would like to thank you for consulting us on the choice of the theme of the 2001 HDR. My suggestion is the following: In our countries, meaning Sub-Saharan Africa, there is often a huge gap between formal **democracy** and what the Constitutions say, and how it works for the people. A lot of democratic institutions exist but they do not properly work. This has much to do with social and institutional capital. The people do not trust the democratic institutions. They do not rely on them when a conflict develops.

Another important theme is related to **conflicts** as obstacles to development and the way a preventive approach should be developed and post conflict policies established. A lot of experiences exist in this respect...

### **31. Sylvie Kinigi [sylvie.kinigi@undp.org], UNDP Equatorial Guinea**

Nous apprécions votre initiative de partager avec les collègues des bureaux de terrain, le choix des thèmes à développer dans le prochain rapport sur le DHD 2001. J'appuie les collègues qui ont proposé:

#### **i) Gestion et **prevention des conflits** et le DHD.**

L'analyse de l'impact des conflits sur le DHD s'avère aujourd'hui appropriée. Cette analyse permettrait sans doute d'approfondir les études existantes sur l'aggravation de l'état de pauvreté dans les zones en conflit (situation des réfugiés/déplacés, prévalence du VIH/SIDA, diminution dramatique des ressources affectées aux services sociaux et infrastructures de base etc.), de mieux comprendre la complexité et la délicatesse des missions du système des Nations Unies (sans ressources appropriées, pas de stratégies adéquates, peu respectées), d'aborder les questions délicates du financement des conflits/gestion de l'aide humanitaire, les questions de faisabilité et de financement des stratégies de réconciliation/réhabilitation/réinsertion/reconstruction (sociale, politique et économique), la précarité des systèmes de planification du développement dans les pays affectés.

#### **ii) **L'éducation.****

L'analyse pourrait faciliter la mise en oeuvre du plan d'actions issu du forum de Dakar.

### **32. Christian De Clercq [christian.de.clercq@undp.org.lb], UNDP Lebanon**

My preferences for global HDRs in the next few years would be for the following subjects, not necessarily in order of priority:

- **Technology** and human development (from low-level, adapted to the cutting edge: contribution to development; measurement; technology for all: access, quality; effects and impact; technology and education; technology and social organisation; technology and resources; research and development; brain drain and options for compensation; ICT for human development; addressing the growing knowledge divide; etc.).
- **Managing (human) development.** An incisive, provocative analysis of the management of development at different levels and in different contexts, and of what is required/what are the opportunities to achieve better results and impact (including development cooperation). Aspects of the political economy of development to be addressed. The importance of leadership, and of social capital.
- **Empowering the most vulnerable** (groups and countries). An uncompromising analysis of persistent inequalities and distortions at the national and global levels with a view to shaping an ambitious, realistic agenda for improving the capacity of the most vulnerable.

The response and discussion of the past days have shown that there is tremendous ownership of the HDR. Ways and means should be explored to continue the democratic process beyond the decision on the subject and to associate the network members in the preparation of the HDR.

### 33. Virginia Trimarco [virginia.trimarco@undp.org], UNDP Costa Rica

Many thanks for your email of 11 May asking for new ideas for the HDR2001. On basis of our experience in Costa Rica, which includes our own National Development Report -Estado de la Nación en Desarrollo Humano- our contribution to the process of selection of the central theme for the next Report is the following:

1. **Decentralization** and human development, emphasising on the role of civil society. Costa Rica is implementing a programme based on the articulation of central government institutions, local government institutions, and civil society, aiming to solve the most urgent needs at the community level, linked to poverty and human development.
2. **Migration** and Human Development, analysing its origins (conflicts, urban-rural disparities, famine, etc.) and consequences (devastation of natural resources, environmental pollution, changes in cultural values).
3. **Democracy** and Human Development: representative democracy faces a crisis of legitimacy with different intensity in each continent. Exploring the effects of representative democracies on human development would be a substantive contribution of the HDR report.

### 34. Ewa Ruminska-Zimny [Ewa.Zimny@wanadoo.fr], Warsaw School of Economics

It was so interesting to follow the discussion. What an impressive feedback. I join last minute to support the **governance** theme. Could it be a breakthrough? I think so, if the report could explain what good governance means today in terms of HD. Does "good" governance equal democracy? The report could look both at institutions and policies. For institutions it would be interesting to show the relationship between formal (democratic structures) and informal institutions (culture, values, "social capital") -- and how the gap affects HD (including through limiting positive impact of establishing democratic institutions). What does good governance mean at local, national and global level?

END

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