“The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South,” says the 2013 UNDP Human Development Report

Mexico City, 14 March 2013—Leading countries of the developing world, including key countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, are together reshaping global power dynamics in a new era of human development progress, according to the United Nation Development Programme’s (UNDP) 2013 Human Development Report. The Report—The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World—is being launched today by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto.

“The rise of the South is unprecedented in its speed and scale,” says the Report, which uses the term “South” to mean developing countries and “North” to mean developed ones. “Never in history have the living conditions and prospects of so many people changed so dramatically and so fast. The South as a whole is driving global economic growth and societal change for the first time in centuries.”

“The experience of many states in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in managing a rapid transition holds useful lessons for developing countries elsewhere,” explains Cihan Sultanoglu, who heads UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. “The overall experience underscores the importance of social inclusion and a responsible role for the state.”

At the same time, developing countries share a host of challenges, including an aging population, the environment and social and economic inequality and will need new domestic policy initiatives as well as international action to continue their human development momentum.

Indeed, the Report argues that the emergence of a new South is shaking up existing global institutions, creating new ones and showing new ways that countries and regions can work together. As a result, the South needs greater representation, but in reformed global institutions. The emergence of the Group of 20 is an important step in this direction, but the countries of the South also need more equitable...
representation in the Bretton Woods institutions, the UN and other international bodies, the Report says.

The rise of the South should be seen as beneficial for all countries and regions, the Report concludes. Human development is not a zero-sum game.

“The South needs the North, and increasingly the North needs the South,” the Report says. “The world is getting more connected, not less.”

* * *


UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations. Follow us on 🌐facebook, 🌐twitter, 🌐youtube.