Capabilities and Human Development:

Beyond the individual—the critical role of social institutions and social competencies

by Frances Stewart

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ABSTRACT

Social interactions are a quintessential part of human life, and their quantity and quality determine a person's social or relational capabilities (capabilities involving relations with others). In addition, social institutions and social competencies play a critical role in advancing capabilities and shaping individual choice. Social institutions (norms and organizations) operate collectively (defined here to exclude the government and the private sector). Social competencies are what social institutions can do or be. As well as an important instrumental role in creating and enhancing particular capabilities, social institutions help shape individual preferences and behaviour so that individuals cannot be assumed to be fully autonomous. Finally, relations among people and institutions determine whether a society is peaceful, cohesive and inclusive. This paper analyses some policy implications arising from this analysis—aimed at promoting well-functioning social institutions likely to advance human development.

INTRODUCTION

Individuals cannot flourish alone: Indeed, they cannot *function* alone. When they are born, the family provides their life support. In turn, families cannot function independently of the societies in which they are located. Being a member of a family, of a locality and of the larger society is an essential component of a flourishing existence. Since these groupings can provide good or bad conditions for the individual, it is not only their existence but also their nature that is relevant to human development. Thus a major task of the human development approach—which aims to assess human progress and identify the conditions for human flourishing—is to explore the nature of social institutions that are favourable for human flourishing, as against those that impede it.

The capability approach, developed by Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000), provides the theoretical underpinning of much discussion of human development. It is essentially individualistic. Development consists of the expansion of *individuals'* capabilities or freedoms. These are defined as what a person can be ('beings') or do ('doings'). The objective of development is then to expand the set of capabilities of each individual. From this capability set, an individual makes

choices and thus translates the potential to be or do a variety of things into actual beings or doings, or what are called 'functionings'. It is these functionings that we observe. The human development approach tends to focus on functionings rather than abilities because of its major concern with assessing progress, since functionings can be observed and measured. It is much more difficult to measure capabilities, although there have been a number of attempts, both theoretical and empirical, e.g.,(Burchardt and Le Grand 2002; Anand, Hunter et al. nd; Schokkaert and van Ootegem 1990). Nonetheless, like the capability approach, the human development approach maintains that freedom of individual choice is a central aspect of satisfactory development. As stated in the 1990 *Human Development Report*, "Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP 1990, p. 10). This implies that if we could show that a set of functionings was not chosen freely, this would constitute a serious defect, even if the actual set of achieved functionings was deemed to be good.

Whether we are discussing capabilities or functionings, progress is assessed by how *individuals* are affected. In this respect, the different approaches share the views of the utilitarian approach, which they aim to replace. How does this

individualism relate to the essentially social quality of human existence? In principle, the individualism of the capability approach and the social features of human life appear quite compatible. Expanding individual capabilities forms the end, or the objective, while identifying and promoting good social institutions is a means to this objective. Yet in two ways the primacy of individualism in the capability approach is at odds with the flourishing of social beings. First, individuals are so bound up with others that it can be difficult to disentangle them and treat them as separate. As Etzioni (1993) stated: "(A) basic observation of sociology and psychology *is that the individual and the community 'penetrate' one another* and require one another, and that individuals are not able to function without deep links to others" (Etzioni 1993, p. 65, italics added). We shall explore whether this means that the strict means/ends nexus partially breaks down. Second, as a consequence of the emphasis on individual choice and individual flourishing, there has been a tendency in human development analysis to neglect the study of social institutions and competencies. This is not to claim that the capability or human development approaches entirely ignore the importance of the social as instrumental—for example, Sen 1999, UNDP 1993, and Drèze and Sen 1989—but that they have given it insufficient emphasis. Moreover, Sen has gone beyond recognition of the instrumental aspect of social arrangements[1] to hint at a more fundamental role that society plays in determining individual capabilities: "(I)n valuing a person's ability to take part in the life of the society itself, there is an implicit valuation of the society itself, and that is an important aspect of the capability perspective" (2009, p. 246).

This paper aims to explore these issues in order to consider how the social can be better integrated into the human development approach—in analysis, research and policy. The paper is organized into four parts. Part One will consider some definitional issues. Part Two explores ways in which *social competencies* are important for individual flourishing, in order both to show how important they are and to lay down the broad boundaries of what we are discussing. Part Three considers factors relevant to assessing social well-being at an aggregate level, going beyond particular social institutions to societal relationships, and discussing the concepts of social cohesion and social inclusion. Part Four will consider implications of the previous analysis for the human development approach, including for research, data collection and policy recommendations.

1. SOME DEFINITIONS

We need to start with definitions. *Social institutions* are understood here as all institutions in which people act collectively (i.e., involving more than one person), *excluding profit-making market institutions and the state*. They include formal non-governmental organizations (NGOs); informal associations, such as neighbourhood associations or social clubs; cooperatives and producer associations; sports clubs and savings associations; and much more. They influence, and are influenced by, both state and market. While both state and market have been subject to much investigation in relation to the human development and capability approaches, the role of collective activities outside the state and the market has been given a much less central place.

Following North's (1990) broad definition of institutions as "humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interactions," social institutions include norms and rules of behaviour. They thus encompass both organizations, such as those listed above, and norms, which in each case may be formal or informal. Social norms influence behaviour and are consequently important in determining the human development impact of goods and services intended to promote human development, whether provided by the state, the market or social organizations. *Social competencies* are defined here as what such institutions can be and do—i.e., they are in a sense the capabilities of institutions, as against those of groups. We do not use the term 'social capabilities', leaving *capabilities* to refer to valuable things that individuals can be or do, and which they have reason to value.[2]

Social competencies are needed, first, for all activities that, by their essence, can only be done in a group and not individually; and second, for many activities that in principle could be carried out by individuals alone, but that could be carried out much more effectively if done collectively. Examples of the first type are a football team, a book club, an orchestra, a neighbourhood group, a policing group, an army, a library, a social club or dating agency, a group to protect the environment and communal worship. Examples of the second include a mass of activities where there are economies of scale, so that doing things individually is highly uneconomic; the provision of health services is an example. There are some organizations to which both arguments apply—for example, education, where there are clear economies of scale, so providing it collectively is more economic, but there are also intrinsic virtues of collective provision since social interaction among children is important in itself as part of the educational experience.

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[1] Sen 1999, p. 116, refers to "the advantage of group activities in bringing about substantial social changes."

[2] Roy 2012 has suggested that these should be termed relational capabilities.

Some of these activities could be provided by the market—e.g., private sports clubs or privately provided education. Where there are large externalities, however, market provision will not occur, and any collective action needs to be provided either by the state or by non-state social institutions (or some combination). The division of responsibility between state and non-state institutions varies across countries (and time). For example, there is more of a tradition of state provision of social competencies in Europe, and especially northern Europe, than in the United States, where non-state groups play a bigger role. There is also often a blurring of the distinction between state and non-state because the state often subsidizes the non-state activities (e.g., subsidies to the arts and sports).

But some activities *cannot* be carried out by the state. Basically, all the political economy type collective action described above is non-state, and indeed arises partly in order to gain control over the state or to pressure it to take some action. Non-state social institutions therefore supplement state activities in areas where there are large externalities, or where the market would fail because people are too poor to buy items considered, by the state or by particular groups, essential or high priority—like universal education or health services. They also provide services that the state may regard as lesser priority (e.g., libraries or theatres). They act where the state cannot, as in political and social movements.

Turning to rules, regulations and social norms: While the state is responsible for manifold laws and regulations, informal norms, which we call here social norms, are by definition outside the control of the state. They are the outcome of innumerable social interactions over time—among individuals and social institutions, and also through market influences. They can, however, be influenced by deliberate actions by both state and non-state actors.

2. WHY ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OR COMPETENCIES IS ESSENTIAL FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Social institutions and social competencies are critically important in determining individual capabilities because: (a) they have a direct impact on them—since most individual capabilities could not exist without social competencies; (b) societal institutions (in particular families) have a critical role in forming the character of individuals and consequently they (together with social norms) affect the choices people make within any capability set and the behaviour of individuals towards others, thus affecting other people's capabilities; (c) social institutions

and competencies affect the functioning of all other societal institutions, including both state and market institutions; and (d) they affect the power and influence of particular groups (and individuals in these groups) at the macro-, meso- and micro-levels. At macro-levels, they influence the policy choices governments make, and thereby the level and distribution of capabilities. Similar effects can be observed at meso- and micro-levels. Moreover, they also influence the terms individuals experience in market activities—wages and conditions, generally.

Societies vary hugely in the number, functions, effectiveness and distributional consequences of social institutions, and consequently in the range of social competencies that may contribute to advancing human development. While considerable work has been devoted to cataloguing variations in the state and the market across countries, and reasons for and consequences of these variations, the same sort of cataloguing has rarely been carried out for non-state social institutions. Exceptions are (Oxhorn, Selee et al. 2004; Edwards 2004) studies of civil society, while anthropologists have analysed the more amorphous social norms and mores in many particular communities, although much less has been done in describing and cataloguing then at national level. Yet 'good' social norms from the perspective of human development can make a large difference to behaviour, and consequently to capabilities and human development outcomes.

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMPETENCIES ON INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITIES

To illustrate this, it is helpful to consider a list of some central capabilities. Though Sen has resisted drawing up a list of specific capabilities, arguing that it is for individuals and their collective deliberations to determine the capabilities they have reason to value, there have been many attempts to delineate the main conditions needed for human flourishing. Table 1 summarizes six such efforts.

Drawing on the nine different dimensions of capabilities in Table 1, Table 2 points to the role of social institutions in underpinning each of these. Besides the state and the market, social institutions, including the family, community and neighbourhood associations, trade unions, social movements, political parties and NGOs are all important in influencing the production of different capabilities. Social norms also play a critical part in determining behaviour, which in turn affects capability sets. Not all social institutions have a *positive* impact: For example, norms of discrimination can be adverse for employment, education, health, and the material and mental well-being of some groups (including women), while criminal gangs and warring groups undermine security.

Table 1: Requirements for human flourishing

DIMENSIONS OF CAPABILITIES	Rawls 1971	Finnis, Boyle et al.	Doyal and Gough 1991	Nussbaum 2000, 2007	Narayan 2000	Camfield 2005
Defining concepts:	Primary goods	Basic human values	Basic needs and intermediate needs	Central human functional capabilities	Dimensions of well-being	Quality of life
Bodily well-being		Bodily life—health, vigour and safety	Physical health -Nutrition: food and water -Health care -Safe birth control and childbearing -Safe physical environment	Life Bodily health Bodily integrity	Bodily well-being Access to health services Good physical environment	
Material well-being	Income and wealth		Protective housing Economic security		Material well-being Food Assets	Food Shelter
Mental development		Knowledge Practical reasonableness	Basic education	Senses Imagination Thought Emotions Practical reason Play		Education (Bangladesh and Ethiopia, not Thailand or Peru)
Work	Freedom of occupation	Skilful performance in work and play	Work	Lack of discrimination Good relations at work	Work	
Security			Physical security		Civil peace Physically safe environment Lawfulness (access to justice) Personal physical security Security in old age	
Social relations	Social bases of self-respect	Friendship	Significant primary relationships	Affiliation Social bases for self-respect	Social well-being -Family -Self-respect and dignity -Community relations	Family
Spiritual well-being		Self-integration Harmony with ultimate source of reality				Religion (important in Bangladesh and Thailand)
Empowerment and political freedom	Rights, liberties, opportunities Powers and prerogatives of office and positions of responsibility Freedom of movement		Autonomy of agency Civil and political rights Political participation	Control over one's environment	Freedom of choice and action	
Respect for other species				Other species		

Source: Adapted from Ranis, Stewart et al. 2006, using material derived from Alkire 2002; Doyal and Gough 1991; Narayan 2000.

There are possible conflicts in the conditions needed to achieve different capabilities—for example, between material well-being and environmental conditions, at least in the short term; and possible trade-offs between the growth of market influences, which may improve material well-being, and conditions conducive to capabilities that depend on having a cohesive society. This is supported by some empirical work suggesting that particular institutions may favour some outcomes but not others. In the first place, research shows that there is not a high positive correlation among many of the main dimensions of human development as defined above (Ranis, Stewart and Samman 2006), indicating that conditions that give rise to some capabilities may not be conducive to others. Second, when grouping the characteristics into four broad categories—basic human development as measured by the Human Development Index, and social, economic and political aspects of development[3]—few countries do well or badly on *all* categories. Most tend to show mixed perfor-

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3   Ranis, Stewart et al. 2009. See the Annex for more information.

Table 2: Role of social institutions in affecting major capabilities		
DIMENSIONS OF CAPABILITIES	Social organizations	Social norms
Bodily well-being	NGOs, communities and families provide goods and services	Norms of health behaviour Attitudes to violence
Material well-being	Cooperatives NGOs Family (including remittances) Producer and workers' organizations	Attitudes to employment Discrimination
Mental development/well-being	Family and community effect	Social norms (positive or negative)
Work	Workers' associations	Norms towards female and child work
Security	Warring groups and criminal gangs (negative) Community associations (positive)	Societal norms
Social relations	Family and community	Clubs and associations
Spiritual well-being	Religious organizations	Societal norms
Empowerment and political freedom	Political parties Social movements Peoples' associations as basis of empowerment	Norms of hierarchy and discrimination
Respect for other species and for natural environment	Community action NGOs	Norms of behaviour

mance, doing better on one aspect (e.g., social) and worse on others (e.g., economic or political) and conversely (see Table A.1). This suggests that we may not be able to identify institutions that are good (or bad) for human development as a whole, but rather those that are good or bad for some aspects of it.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, NORMS, CHOICES AND INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY

Individual behaviour is influenced by norms, a form of social institution with a powerful impact on human behaviour. Social norms include both moral commandments (often sanctioned by religion) and numerous norms without a clear ethical basis that affect behaviour in general or in particular situations. An example of the latter is a norm, prevalent in many Latin countries, that people take a siesta in the afternoon. Almost every action we take is influenced by some norms—for example, in relation to noise-making (or not), ways of dealing with people (levels of politeness and social distance, etc.), cleanliness, punctuality, technology use, and so on. Some norms are related to health behaviour and directly affect health capabilities; others influence the effectiveness of particular institutions—e.g., the norm of doing homework is helpful for improving the learning impact of school. Some

affect distribution of capabilities, for example, across genders. The previous section sketched how norms contribute to behaviour that affects capabilities. We now consider how social norms affect *choices* among capabilities.

A critical building block of much capability and human development analysis (as well as economists' analysis of welfare) is that individuals are autonomous and make their own decisions in the light of their own preferences, personality, etc. While the aim of development is to expand people's capabilities, the individual has the responsibility of choosing which capabilities to make use of, which to develop, and so on. Underlying this is the assumption that the individual knows best what he or she wants and is ethically the right person to make these decisions. This position only makes sense if the individual is truly autonomous, however. Two major influences on individual choices that arise from social institutions limit this autonomy. First, family (and societal) norms help form an individual's character, ideology, preferences and behaviour; secondly, social norms—outside the control of the individual, and formed by interactions among individuals and social, state and market institutions within society over time—greatly influence and sometimes constrain individuals' choices. Consider child labour: Individual decisions on this are affected by social norms, such as considering it fine for children to work, as in

many developing countries, or outrageous, as in some western countries. It is not the child, usually, but the family (parents or grandparents) that makes the decision for the child. In other cases, the community constrains free choice by ostracizing, stoning or even killing people who make choices—e.g., of marriage—that contravene social rules.[4]

It follows that the autonomous individual is somewhat of a myth—doubtless it represents the aspiration and belief, and possibly a near reality, among those philosophers who make it an essential component of their analysis. But most people are far from a position of complete freedom of choice: They have degrees of freedom, but their choices are heavily influenced by norms and institutions (market as well as social), with the extent of freedom varying across societies. Hence we cannot ignore social institutions, nor the influence exerted by the market, but must assess these to see whether or not they are promoting choices that enhance human development. Indeed, we may go further and try to promote social institutions that we think will advance human development, and to deter or prevent those that are deleterious to it.

But once we agree that the individual is not autonomous, given the influences of institutions and norms, and hence not necessarily the best judge of human-development-promoting capabilities, we enter very difficult territory, because we can no longer rely on individual decisions to be ultimately the right basis for maximizing human development. It is here that Etzioni's (1993) statement becomes particularly meaningful: i.e., *"(T)he individual and the community 'penetrate' one another"* (p. 65, italics added). There are several routes we might follow from this conclusion:

One is to take the decisions out of the hands of individuals and give them to the state. Yet this is unsatisfactory on many grounds and poses real constraints on individual autonomy. How can the state be trusted to know, and if it knows, to make the best decisions? Even if it is democratic, the state will not be able to take into account the aspirations and capacities of each individual, and is likely to be swayed by particular interests; moreover, there is clear value for individuals in having a significant degree of control over their own lives.

A second route is to ignore the arguments above and leave such decisions to the individual as usually recommended in analysis of human development. We should recognise that this may be the appropriate choice in many situations, but it cannot be justified as the best option without qualification, given the way that individuals and their choices are socially formed or influenced. If this is the approach adopted, it needs to be accompanied by various policies encouraging the individual to make 'good' human development choices. These include efforts to improve information about the options and consequences of certain behaviours. Secondly, policies are needed towards social institutions to help provide a favourable context for individual choice, so as to increase the positive impact of social institutions on individual choices and reduce their negative impacts. In some situations, this may justify regulation, reducing the freedom of choice of some individuals. Thirdly, since individuals themselves contribute to forming social institutions, and their decisions often affect other people, there is a need to encourage individuals to make decisions that are positive in these respects.

These are complex areas where judgement is required. Because of the influence of social norms on behaviour and the impact of individual behaviour on others, it is not justified to leave all decisions to autonomous individuals. Yet there are no simple rules about how much it is justified to influence individual behaviour, nor about who should do the influencing.

This can be illustrated with a few examples:

- Healthy behaviour involves hand-washing and the use of bed nets in malaria-affected areas. To achieve this, a family needs certain material resources (water, soap and bed nets). They also need to change behaviour, and this requires a change in norms of behaviour, which can be affected by information via the education sector, the media and/or leaders. Evidence suggests that simply providing bed nets, for example, without changing norms, results in only a minority of people using them (Banerjee and Duflo 2011). Moreover, to secure such a change may require overriding the preferences of children (to sleep without bed nets).

- Another type of healthy behaviour is to stop substance abuse, including consumption of tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Here, information and restrictions on the sale of these items (or their taxation) are recognized as desirable.

- The long-run well-being of a child (health, earnings, etc.) is likely to be affected by whether or not he or she goes to school. Here the family has to be persuaded, induced or compelled to send the child to school, possibly at the expense of loss of earnings from child labour.

- Equality of opportunities for women (and some ethnic or racial or religious groups) may require a major change in

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4   We should note that what we now regard as social norms with negative impacts on human capabilities are by no means confined to low-income societies. 'Negative' social norms in relation to homosexuality or to race, for example, were pervasive in Western societies until recently and still apply in parts of society. What Western societies approve of in relation to restrictions on the freedom of people labelled 'terrorists' and the treatment of animals may well be regarded as abhorrent in the future.

social norms in some societies as well as restrictions on discriminatory behaviour.

- Families can be trapped in poverty by informal norms that support early marriages and dowry requirements.

In each of these examples, it is assumed that there are some dominant or overriding objectives—of promoting health, child education or gender equality—that justify policies to change social institutions and restrict individual choice. Yet individuals, and indeed societies, may reject these objectives—for example, some societies appear to reject the objective of gender equality (although this could be predominantly the male view). Should those who wish to advance human development override local views where they are inconsistent with the assumed dominant objectives? Nussbaum (2000) has suggested that this is a false dilemma, and indeed that there is a broad and shared 'overlapping' consensus on many values; similarly, Sen (1997) has argued that despite a large diversity of views, many Asian thinkers value freedoms as much as, and in a similar way to, many Western thinkers. Nonetheless, in practice there do appear conflicts between the values espoused within and across societies. One justification that has been put forward for giving primacy to certain objectives is by appealing to universal human rights as the 'final court' (Vizard 2006). But some question these human rights as a Western-imposed conception (Mutua 2001).

This section has shown that social institutions do indeed penetrate the individual, in the sense of contributing to the way they see the world and the choices they make. Consequently, it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between an 'autonomous' individual and prevalent social institutions. It follows that social institutions, and particularly social norms, should themselves be an object of policy so as to promote institutions that foster conditions conducive to creating capabilities, and also influence individual choices among capabilities in a positive way from the perspective of elements agreed to be important in human development, such as promoting health and education, and limiting violence and substance abuse.

If we believe that one set of outcomes (and choices) is superior to another from a human development perspective, then we need to try and change social institutions so that they favour such outcomes. This assumes that we can agree broadly on human-development-promoting activities and outcomes, whether by discussion and consensus or by appeal to human rights conventions. A big issue is who 'we' are in this context. Should these decisions about human development priorities be determined at a local level, national one or globally in the light of values shared by the global elite?

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND POWER

Policy change is the outcome of a political struggle in which different groups (and individuals) provide support for particular changes. In this struggle, uncoordinated individuals are generally powerless. They are also powerless to improve the conditions they face in the market. Yet by getting together to support particular changes, individuals can acquire considerable power collectively. As the Dominican Republic's 2008 *Human Development Report* states: "*El empoderamiento individual y el colectivo, para sersostenibles, tienen que ser simultaneous*" (individual and collective empowerment can only be sustained together) (UNDP 2008).[5]

Groupings of people that have been effective in supporting change include producer groups, workers' associations, social movements and political parties. Organizations uniting people are especially crucial for poorer people, since rich individuals can exercise influence through their wealth. The power conferred by social institutions that unite people to support particular changes can be observed at many levels:

- Even among the very poor and marginalized, unity can improve people's conditions by enabling them to bargain effectively with employers or the state. For example:
  - An analysis of sex workers in Calcutta shows how one of the most diverse, fragmented, internally competitive and conflicted sets of individuals organized into a single group, and improved their conditions and their self-respect (Gooptu 2002).
  - Similarly, women in a squatter community in Cape Town (Crossroads) came together to form a highly successful action group that challenged state-sponsored eviction attempts and was even instrumental in the overthrow of apartheid. The group increased their strength by seeking the assistance of middle-class rights groups and soliciting media publicity for their cause (Kaplan 1997).
  - Scavengers, who sell waste to middlemen, are truly marginalized—associated with disease and squalor, perceived as a nuisance and probably criminal, and exploited. Studies in Asia and Latin America have found the scavengers receiving some 6 percent of the price industry pays to the middlemen. In the 1990s, the organization of scavengers into groups

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5 The report investigates many of the relationships among collective action, empowerment and human development outcomes—see Diagram 1.4. It also develops individual and collective empowerment indices.

resulted in successful cooperatives that significantly improved the conditions of members. In Colombia, for instance, the cooperative Recuperar in Medellin by the mid-1990s had almost 1,000 members, 60 percent of whom were women. Members earned 1.5 times the minimum wage, and were eligible for loans and scholarships from the coop (Medina 1998).

o   Women's groups (often organized for productive purposes, such as cooperatives, or for microfinance) have been shown to empower women (Chen 1983; Mahmud 2002, Kumar and Quisumbing 2010, Agarwal 2010).

- At a meso-level, people organized by ethnicity, occupation, race or gender can improve their position if they overcome their internal fragmentation, and unite to lobby effectively for improved conditions and policy changes. For example:

o   The Orang Asli in Malaysia forged a single identity, encompassing 18 different groups, including different customs and languages, to negotiate for improved conditions. The Peninsula Malaysia Orang Asli Association (POASM) has been formed to help protect Orang Asli culture and people in terms of treatment by the state.

o   Similarly, the Luhya in Kenya, also formed of 18 groups speaking different dialects, united under a single umbrella organization—the Luhya Elders Forum—to become an effective force in politics. Together, they form about 16 percent of the Kenyan population; their vote is often decisive in elections.

o   Posner (2005) has shown how in Zambia different ethnic groups unite under a common political banner in order to form a majority and secure power democratically.

o   Muñoz, Paredes et al. (2006) compare rural indigenous areas in Peru with stronger and weaker organizations for collective action. They show that in well-organized areas (Bambamarca and Espinar) there are joint activities to promote security and improve living conditions. In a less-organized area (Ayacucho) there is little social or economic collective action, and the Shining Path was able to exploit the situation to mobilize for violence. Even in the better organized areas, however, the indigenous peoples were unable to improve their conditions to any great

degree because of weak state action. The authors attribute this to weak institutions at the intermediate level: "(I)f the intermediate level is controlled by political parties that are fragmented, corrupt and prone to personalism and favouritism, then the connections go sour" (p. 23).

o   The achievements of Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra, or MST) provide another example: "Over the course of the MST's twenty-five years of work, it has expropriated some 35 million acres, land that is now occupied by roughly a million families. The settlements, which are cooperatively organized, are home to hundreds of MST-built schools, which have enabled tens of thousands of people to read and write" (Dangl-Znet 2009).

o   In Cochabamba in Bolivia in 2000, there was a "Water War, a popular uprising that kicked out Bechtel, a multinational company that had privatized the water in everything from communally built wells to rain cisterns. Many citizens from across the economic spectrum couldn't afford the exorbitant rates set by the company, so they joined together in protests and road blockades, sending Bechtel packing and putting the water back into public hands" (Dangl-Znet 2009).

o   In the state of Rajasthan in India, social movements were instrumental in achieving 'right to information' legislation that allowed citizens to investigate government records (Goetz and Jenkins 1999).

- At the macro- or national level, policy change favouring human development is most likely when there are strong political institutions backing it. These include social movements, workers' and peasants' organizations, and political parties. As Polanyi (1944) saw, the swing of the pendulum towards interventionism and social action does not happen automatically, but as a result of movements such as these provoked by the extreme conditions that a focus on markets alone produces (Polanyi 1944, Stewart 2010). Cornia and Martorano (2011) have shown how Latin American countries with progressive governments have introduced policies favouring human development, including extended education, higher and more progressive taxation, cash transfers and raised minimum wages. After years of high and increasing inequality, these

countries have shown some decline in it, although quite slowly, indicating the entrenched nature of inequalities.

- Underlying political changes towards progressive governments have been long-term movements of workers and peasants. For example:

  o In India, market reforms did nothing for rural poverty, and high levels of rural underemployment and open unemployment (much of it seasonal) among landless labourers and poverty persisted. A mass movement developed, based on a coalition of left-wing parties and including huge popular marches, to secure a National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme. The Act introducing this was passed in 2005. It potentially revolutionizes opportunities for work and income in rural India, as it guarantees 100 days of work per household at minimum wages. It "provides an indispensable lifeline to the millions of poors in the rural areas of the country. This social security measure, for the first time makes the right to work a fundamental legal right—a new radical deal for India's poor" (Pandey 2005, pp.7-8). The act was introduced as a result of huge popular mobilizations, themselves a reaction to the abysmal conditions many rural poor face (Drèze 2008).

  o Hugo Chavez' assumption of power in Venezuela in 1998 and his subsequent reforms are the most far-reaching example of a political reaction brought about by workers and peasant movements to advance the conditions of the poor. Although initially Chavez tried to gain power by military means, eventually he did so through democratic election. This election was not an isolated one-off event, but followed and was supported by growing political movements in favour of change. As early as the 1950s there was the Revolutionary Left Movement (*Movimiento Izquier da Revolucionaria,* or MIR). Other more recent movements included the Movement towards Socialism (*Moviemento al socialism* or MAS) the Fatherland for All (*Patria para todos* or PPT) the Communist Party of Venezuela (*Partido comunista de Venezuela*), and above all the Fifth Republic Movement (*Moviemento V Republica* or MVR), which itself was supported by the Radical Cause (*La Causa R*), a mass movement started in 1970. Land reforms were introduced that put a ceiling on land holdings and gave the state the right to redistribute those that were "idle or

unproductive" Gott 2005, p. 220). The Hydrocarbons Law increased state revenue from oil. There was a major expansion of social services and food deliveries to the poor. Evidence suggests (though much depends on the source of data, dates used, etc.) that these changes have been accompanied by reduced poverty, and, probably, improvements in income distribution (Brouwer 2007, Beezy 2008).

  o Brazil notoriously has had one of the most unequal income distributions in the world. Lula da Silva came to power in 2002 with the support of the Workers Party as well as the Movement of Landless Workers (*Moviemento Sem Terra,* MST). While Lula continued to follow orthodox economic policy, he greatly increased expenditures on basic services, introduced large-scale cash transfer programmes to reduce poverty (Bolsa *Familia*) and raised the minimum wage. During his presidency, the Gini coefficient measure of inequality fell quite sharply, from 0.59 in 2001 to 0.53 in 2007. It is estimated that 0.2 of the decline was due to expanded access to education; the cash transfers accounted for another 0.2. For 2001-2007, "the bottom six deciles, who account for only 18% of income, accounted for 40% of total income growth" (IPC 2009).

  o In Bolivia, Evo Morales was elected President in 2005 with the support of the unions and indigenous people (he had been leader of the federation of unions, and general secretary of the *cocaleros,* coca farmers, union). A group of social movements were behind this election, including the Unified Syndical Confederation of Rural Workers (*Confederacion Sindical Unica de Trabajadores Campesinas de Bolivia*) and the Assembly for the Sovereignty of the People (*Asamblea de la Soberania de los Pueblos*). Together, they formed the Movement towards Socialism (*Moviemento al Socialism-Unzaguista*, MAS), bringing together indigenous people and workers (Stefanoni and Alto 2006). Morales introduced a new Constitution giving more power to indigenous people and more state control over natural resources; over 60 percent of the electorate endorsed more decentralization in January 2009. On the social side, it introduced a small universal pension for everyone over 60; expanded education programmes, including policies to eliminate illiteracy. The constitutional vote also imposed (non-retroactive) limits on landownership of 5,000 hectares (Crabtree 2009).

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, COMPETENCIES AND INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITIES

As stated at the outset of this paper, the capabilities approach has always defined capabilities as pertaining to individuals, and further argued that the objective of development is to expand individual capabilities and freedoms. We have shown here the critical importance of social competencies for providing the conditions for individuals to flourish. Good social conditions affect not only the outcomes (functionings) of individuals in a particular society today, but also those of future generations (including children already born). Clearly, social competencies are then of huge *instrumental* importance for advancing human development today and across generations. Moreover, as argued earlier, social norms affect the very choices that individuals make—not only among the capabilities they may have reason to value, but those that would not be classified as being capabilities people have reason to value, such as drug-taking, abuse of others and violence. In this way, social institutions and norms 'penetrate the individual', making it difficult to separate them completely. We would then want to encourage institutions and norms that influence individuals in ways that promote valuable capabilities.

Thus while the quality of development—valuable or non-valuable outcomes—depends on what happens to individuals, both those alive today and across generations, the nature of social institutions is of critical importance. When assessing societies from a capabilities perspective, we need to include not only today's individuals' outcomes (life expectancy, nutrition, education, political participation, etc.), but also the social institutions that affect their choices and outcomes, and those of future generations. Moreover, prevalent social institutions, together with individual capabilities and interactions, influence the development of social institutions and consequently future possibilities. There are also aspects of society that affect individuals but *cannot* be assessed by focussing on individuals alone—those that involve, by definition, relationships among the individuals in a society, such as social cohesion and social inclusion.

This does not imply that one can have a valued outcome at a societal level while individual capabilities flounder. But rather that one needs to investigate the quality of social institutions and social competencies as providing an essential foundation for the flourishing of individual capabilities.

Figure 1 presents a diagrammatic representation of some of the relationships between social institutions and individual capabilities. Note the two-way arrows indicating that social institutions affect individuals, and in turn are formed by individuals.

Figure 1. The relationships between social institutions and individual capabilities
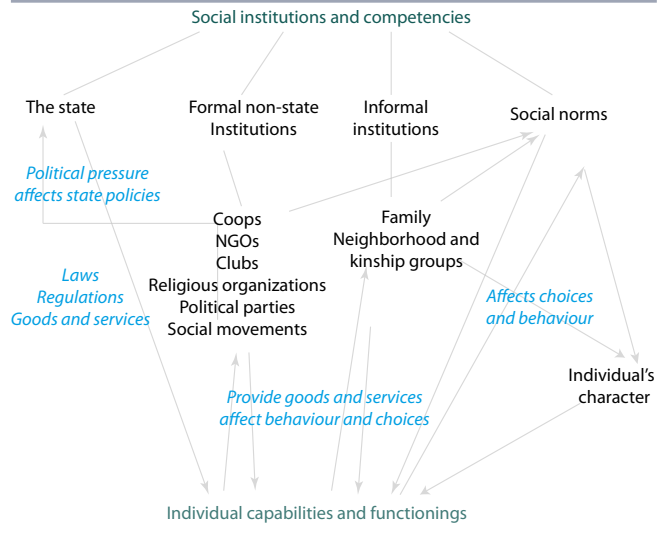
This part of the paper has laid out three different ways in which social institutions (including norms) affect individual capabilities and functionings: first, as essential inputs or means to achieve virtually every significant capability, or important dimension of human development; second, as affecting the choices people make; and third, as influencing individuals' relative power and consequently their market conditions, their access to politically granted benefits and the political economy of policy choices. Part Three will discuss ways of approaching a macro-level assessment of social institutions, both in relation to the types of social institutions discussed, and in relation to aggregate concepts of social cohesion and social inclusion, which go beyond the individual institutions considered above to the relationships across society.

3. ANALYSING A SOCIETY'S SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

The first part of the paper considered the importance of social institutions for individual choices, capabilities and functionings. Yet when we come to consider society as a whole, we need to go beyond the impact on particular individuals to consider the totality of social institutions in a country, and beyond that societal relationships. This section presents some considerations that should inform analysis and assessment of social institutions and social competencies *at a country level*. It considers the relevance of concepts that are often used in

aggregative assessments of society, notably social cohesion and social inclusion, each of which go beyond particular institutions to consider societal relationships as a whole. And it makes suggestions for how to undertake empirical assessments of social aspects of human development in particular societies.

CLASSIFYING AND CATALOGUING SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMPETENCIES

To assess how a society is doing in terms of social institutions, a first requirement is to explore the quantity and quality of social institutions and social competencies in a society. This requires differentiating those social institutions that promote human development, and those that do not and may undermine it.

Clearly, not all social institutions and competencies are desirable from a human development perspective. Non-state institutions and social norms can encourage anti-social behaviour—drug trading and consumption, criminality and violent conflict, for example. So, to put it crudely, we have 'good' and 'bad' social institutions from a human development perspective. In the tradition of capabilities analysis, 'bad' capabilities (those that people do not have reason to value) are not defined as capabilities, and we could do the same here, so that social competencies and the institutions that produce them are by definition desirable. An alternative approach would be to include all social institutions and social competencies (good and bad), and subsequently sort them into those that promote human development, and those that do not, some of which may have a negative impact on human development. This classification would be more transparent, and helpful for policy since policy should be directed at reducing the 'bad' institutions as well as promoting the good. We should note, though, that some institutions may be good in some respects, but not in others, so it may often be difficult to make a clear classification.

Clearly, a critically important part of any cataloguing of social institutions is to classify them into those that promote human development, those that do not affect it, and those that undermine human development, for two reasons: first, to assess the richness of particular societies in terms of institutions that promote human development (which could be called 'social capital', but this term has so many different definitions that it would be confusing to use it); and secondly, to identify the conditions that give rise to good or bad social institutions (including norms).

It might be argued that the totality of human development promoting social institutions is what is meant by 'social capital'. Certainly, this could be a reasonable interpretation of the term. However, I don't use it here because 'social capital' has been subject to so many interpretations. As Dolfsma and Dannreuther (2003) state: 'Social capital does not have a clear, undisputed meaning, for substantive and ideological reasons'.[6]

MACRO- AND MICRO-ASPECTS OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

While Part Two of this paper (and Table 2) explores the relationships among selected dimensions independently, it is also useful to aggregate across dimensions and social institutions, and consider whether or not we can identify the *general* features of major social institutions—such as the family, the community and society as a whole—as well as general features of social norms, which together provide a positive environment for a range of dimensions of human development. This can be geared towards identifying social institutions that are broadly good for human development. While there can be some ambiguity—e.g., a family may support the flourishing of some individuals, but not others (perhaps due to gender), or at some times but not others—it may still be possible to identify general tendencies.

A cataloguing and classification of social institutions in each society might provide details of the large number of institutions in existence, and yet might miss the big picture. In assessing social aspects, we need to be able to look at a society as a whole, and assess whether the social aspects of life are good, satisfactory or poor. The conclusion partly depends on the number and quality of social institutions. Yet it goes beyond both organizations and norms. We could have a society with broadly good social institutions, yet there could be dysfunctional family relationships ('living alone', or the opposite, 'living in an oppressive family'); relations across cultures could be highly limited (a 'silo' society, as Malaysia is sometimes described); there could be a high degree of hierarchy, with strong social institutions at different levels of society, but little contact across them (a 'class' or caste-ridden society); and/or economic and social mobility could be limited, which is most likely in hierarchical or silo societies, but could also be present in others.

All these aspects appear to be relevant to assessing how satisfactory a society is from a social perspective. While it is clearly not for me to lay down rules about what makes a good society in any of these respects, they each seem to be relevant dimensions to consider as part of any aggregate social assessment. It is here that concepts of *social cohesion* and *social inclusion* become relevant—these are macro-concepts aimed at assessing the quality of the social aspects of life for society as a whole.

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6 See Foley and Edwards 1999, Adler and Kwon 2002 and Claridge 2012. 'Social capital' was used by Putnam to mean membership of non-state social organizations, excluding the Church (Putnam et al. 1993). But many others have used it to refer to the quantity of interactions among people.

Table 3: The domains of social cohesion	
Domain	Description
Common values and a civic culture	Common aims and objectives; common moral principles and codes of behavior; support for political institutions and participation in politics
Social order and social control	Absence of general conflict and threats to the existing order; absence of incivility; effective informal social control; tolerance; respect for difference; intergroup cooperation
Social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities	Harmonious economic and social development and common standards; redistribution of public finances and of opportunities; equal access to services and welfare benefits; ready acknowledgement of social obligations and willingness to assist others
Social networks and social capital	High degree of social interaction within communities and families; civic engagement and associational activity; easy resolution of collective action problems
Place attachment and identity behaviour	Strong attachment to place; intertwining of personal and place identity

Source: Forrest and Kearns 2001.

Social cohesion is a complex concept that is impossible to define precisely. According to Ranci (2011): "This is a fuzzy concept, including heterogeneous dimensions such as social integration, solidarity, inequality, place attachment or identity" (p. 2,795). The concept has its origins in Durkheim's concepts of social solidarity and social integration. Intuitively, we understand it as a situation where people feel a strong sense of belonging and trust each other. In a multi-ethnic or religious situation, this means that national identities are strong (relative to group identities), that trust is strong across groups as well as within them, and people are not marginalised, or excluded, in economic or social terms.

This is summarized by Bécares, Stafford et al. 2011:

> "Social cohesion is a multicomponent concept, formed of various dimensions which together contribute to society's collective project and well-being … common values and a civic culture, social order and social control, social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities, social networks and social capital, and territorial belonging and identity" (p. 2,773).

Some authors put the main emphasis on cross-group relationships, entailing trust, identities, etc. (Chan and Chan 2006), while others emphasize inclusion (Dahrendorf 1995). Forrest and Kearns (2001) specify multiple domains that contribute to a socially cohesive society (see Table 3).

From these definitions, three distinct elements of social cohesion emerge: (a) low disparities and marginalization, and the absence of discrimination (broadly 'social inclusion'), (b) the presence of strong bonds that people have with one another; and (c) the result of these two elements, i.e., 'solidarity' and the absence of inter-group conflict.

One way of measuring social cohesion is by cohesive *outcomes*—i.e., a cohesive society is one in which people have strong bonds with each other and with society at large; high levels of trust in each other, irrespective of group membership; high levels of trust in the government and strong national identities. A socially cohesive society would be signalled by the presence of such bonds and trust, and by the absence of political and social tensions, and also, obviously, the absence of violent conflict and high levels of criminality. Another approach is to identify a lack of social cohesiveness by the presence of factors likely to *cause* a poor outcome. This would include measures of exclusion and discrimination, high levels of inequalities (both horizontal and vertical), and strong group as against national identities. Measures of social cohesion would include indicators of inequalities, trust (especially across groups) and data on ranking of identities.[7] Clearly, all these elements are relevant to social cohesion, as either (or both) contributory factors and defining characteristics.

An alternative approach is to identify types of society that are clearly *not* cohesive. Three types may be differentiated:

1. A *conflict-ridden* society. We could include here societies that actually have had violent conflicts, or ones that appear particularly conflict-prone. High horizontal inequalities (inequalities among culturally defined groups, actual or perceived) and past conflict would be indicators. Another indicator might be that, when asked, people rank their particular identities (such as religion or ethnicity) above their national ones in importance, or alternatively, that people

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7   See Langer and Stewart (2013) for a proposed measure incorporating these three elements.

do not attach importance to the identities and historical relations they share with other people and groups.

2. A *silo* society. This is a society where groups are not in conflict, but there is very limited interaction across them. An indicator would be a low level of intergroup interaction.

3. A *hierarchical* society. This is a society with strong hierarchical divisions, based on class or wealth. Indicators would be measures of vertical inequality, low rates of social mobility and low levels of interactions across classes.

As argued above, the concept of social cohesion implies a society in which social interactions cross cultural and economic groups, i.e., ruling out the silo society, the hierarchical society and the stratified society. To assess this, one would need to consider social interactions and social mobility across cultural groups (i.e., groups defined by ethnicity, race and/or religion) and across class groups (defined by class or caste). Measurement of social interactions should include both the total quantity of interactions in society and the cross-group interactions in a number of dimensions including socializing; marriage; membership of social institutions; trust in others, and across groups; and social mobility of members of different groups.

A socially inclusive society is one in which no group or groups suffer multiple disadvantages (economic, political, social or cultural). A society with a high degree of social exclusion would not qualify as socially cohesive, since it would be hierarchical and stratified. Large *horizontal inequalities* are associated with social exclusion and a lack of social cohesion and may raise the risk of violent conflict (Stewart 2001; Østby 2003; Murshed and Gates 2005; Stewart 2008; Cederman, Weidmann et al. 2011). Measurement of social exclusion/inclusion and horizontal inequalities should, in principle, include both objective indicators by group (of income, assets, social service access, political access and participation, and cultural recognition) and, where possible, perceptions of inequality by group (Mancini, Stewart et al. 2008; Langer and Mikami 2011). High vertical inequalities (across individuals) are also likely to be an indicator of hierarchy.

Besides these measures of social cohesion, there are some aggregate *social outcome indicators* that may also be helpful in pointing to how satisfactory life is from a social perspective. These include:

• the homicide rate and other measures of criminality;

• the number of single parent families;

• the number of abandoned children;

• the suicide rate; and

• deaths in organized armed conflict.

Some of these measures, however, might be taken as indicators of freedom (such as suicide), however, and they may each be the product of reporting. For example, on the homicide rate, "The comparison of intentional homicide figures between countries and regions is, to some extent, a comparison not only of the level of intended killing of persons, but also of the extent to which countries and regions deem that a killing should be classified as such. In essence, societies define those killings that it perceives as acceptable and those that it does not."[8]

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

A full assessment of social aspects of a society then involves three types of measurement and description:

• A cataloguing of social institutions and social norms;

• Measurement of social cohesion including indicators of inequalities, trust and identity; and
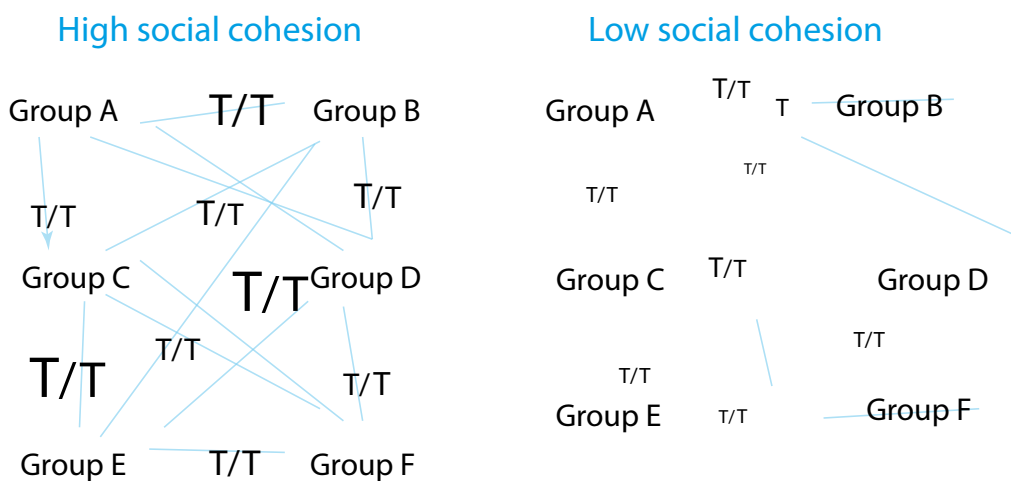
• Assessments of societal outcomes.

When it comes to social cohesion and social inclusion, we are not talking about the relationships between individuals and social institutions (as depicted in Figure 1), but about how individuals relate to others in society (the extent and nature of social interactions, trust among individuals and groups, inequalities among individuals and groups, and exclusion). Figure 2 illustrates features of social cohesion.

4. HOW DOES A FOCUS ON SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMPETENCIES AFFECT APPROACHES TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?

1. It is helpful to treat the question of how a focus on social institutions affects approaches to human development on four levels: analytic, empirical, policy and evaluation. At the level of analysis, this paper suggests that those concerned with the capabilities and human development approaches should go beyond the individual, where so much of the

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8   See: www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/IHS%20methodology.pdf, accessed 13 February 2012.

Figure 2. Social cohesion

High social cohesion

Group A   T/T   Group B

T/T   T/T   T/T

Group C   T/T Group D

T/T   T/T   T/T

Group E   T/T   Group F

Low social cohesion

Group A   T/T   T   Group B

T/T   T/T

Group C   T/T   Group D

T/T

T/T   T/T

Group E   T/T   Group F

Groups may be divided by religion/ethnicity/gender/region/class/caste.

Lines represent significant quantity of social interactions.
Ts represent trust in other groups (higher where T is larger).

work to date has been focused, and investigate the questions covered briefly in this paper, including those related to:

o The social formation of individual character and behaviour

o Social constraints on individual autonomy;

o Social institutions and competencies and their effects on human development, in particular;

o The role of norms in influencing behaviour;

o How norms are formed;

o The formation of groups and incentives and constraints on collective action;

o How groups affect political and policy outcomes; and

o The determination of the three elements that make up social cohesion or society as a whole (trust, inequalities and identities) and how these affect human development outcomes.

2. Empirical work is needed to:

o Identify the nature of social institutions and norms that are associated with improvements in capabilities and human development, recognizing that different institutions emerge historically, and a range of

institutions may (in differing combinations) be consistent with good outcomes;

o Catalogue social institutions in a number of countries, and identify the conditions that give rise to 'good' social institutions from a human development perspective; and

o Explore the relationship between indicators of social cohesion (interactions, trust, inequalities, etc.) as well as other factors[9] with human development outcomes, including social outcomes, such as homicide, criminality, suicide, etc.

3. Potentially, this approach opens up a large arena for policy, though before arriving at policy conclusions the analytic and empirical work just noted is essential. Policies could include those to:

o Promote social institutions (including norms) that would support capabilities, e.g., in relation to regulations and norms, policies need to support health-promoting behaviour and discourage or even outlaw health-destroying behaviour; similarly, with respect

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9 Of course, political and economic conditions may also influence these outcomes.

to discriminatory behaviour, whether by gender or by ethnic or other groups;

o Facilitate empowering social institutions, notably through the poor forming groups for production and bargaining, such as cooperatives, borrowing associations and workers' unions, with a particular focus on promoting women's groups because of women's relative lack of power;

o Promote socially cohesive outcomes, including by encouraging interactions across groups (e.g., via the education system and/or the media, or through spatial planning and/or transport); and

o Reduce horizontal and vertical inequalities.

4. Data and evaluation. Data are essential for such research. This is an area where systematic cross-country data are particularly rare. Data are required to permit a picture of the 'social health' of each country, which would include the nature and quantity of social institutions, social interactions, trust and social mobility, inequalities and social outcomes. These data are not included in national accounts, nor recognised as an important omission. Nor are they included in the data on human development recorded in the annual Human Development Reports.

5. Nonetheless, a considerable amount of evidence is available from World Value Surveys and barometer surveys, which provide some evidence of trust in others, sometimes by group. But inconsistences in the questions asked over time reduce the usefulness of these sources (Langer and Stewart 2013). In some countries, there are data for cross-group marriages, but generally not other cross-group interactions. Global crime statistics are available for some outcomes (homicide, suicide, criminality, etc.), while a number of sources provide data for domestic violence. Data on vertical inequality are widely available, if not necessarily accurate. Data on horizontal inequalities can be calculated from many of the Demographic and Health Surveys, and by region, as well as from the Ethnic Power Relations data set, and geocoded data sets developed by Cederman, Weidmann et al. (2011). Inequalities across demographic groups (by gender and/or age) are often indicated in national accounts.

6. A major requirement is to promote the collection of appropriate 'social' data on a systematic cross-country basis.

7. Making an aggregate assessment of the strength of social institutions country by country is difficult due to deficient data and also because different indicators may move in different directions (Ranis, Stewart et al. 2009). Yet it would be desirable to complement information on economic and political aspects facilitating human development with some indicator(s) of the strength of social aspects.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has sketched how social institutions affect capabilities in an instrumental way. But further than that it has examined how they also affect the very choices people make and the things they value, and thereby limit the autonomy of the individual, posing major theoretical challenges as to how to identify 'good' influences and 'good' choices. The paper has explored how collective action—a critically important social institution—can affect the design and implementation of policies relevant to human development. Finally, it has considered a holistic approach, in which relations among people and institutions determine social cohesion and social inclusion, both important besides particular social institutions for developing a peaceful, sustainable and cohesive society.

Social interactions are a quintessential part of human life, and their quantity and quality determines what we might call a person's relational capabilities following Roy 2012 (i.e., those capabilities an individual may enjoy that involve relations with others). Moreover, we all live embedded in social institutions—in the family, the neighbourhood, the nation. These and the social norms we face deeply affect the nature and quality of our daily life. In other words, we can't get away from society and retreat into a monadic existence of autonomous individuals. And if we did, we would be immeasurably impoverished. That being so, the study of and policy towards social institutions must form an essential component of our approach to human development.

ANNEX: BROAD DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACROSS COUNTRIES

Empirical research (Ranis, Stewart et al. 2009) attempted to classify the performance of countries in relation to (somewhat crude) measures of basic human development, and economic, social and political performance, measured as follows:

Basic human development, measured by the under-five mortality rate; *economic aspects*, encompassing income per capita, unemployment, growth in per capita income and the GDP cycle; *social and community relations*, including a quite large and disparate set of variables comprising a measure of income distribution, the perceived importance of family and friends, tolerance of neighbours and gender empowerment, and (negatively) the male suicide rate; and *political freedoms and stability,* measured by an index of political and civil liberties, a measure of the rule of law and one of collective political violence.

In relation to the world median, country performance on each of the four dimensions was classified into high, medium and low categories. The results showed much inconsistency in performance, with only two countries being classified as high on all dimensions (Costa Rica, and Trinidad and Tobago), six as medium on all (Bolivia, Brazil, Nepal, Saudi Arabia and Turkey), and five as low on all (Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Zimbabwe, with incomplete data on all countries in this category except Sierra Leone).

Table A.1 shows the number of countries, by region, that did particularly well (or poorly), i.e., were 'superior' or 'inferior' on certain dimensions. The sharpest differences were found for sub-Saharan Africa, where both social and political performance exceeded economic and basic human development performance in a number of countries.

Table A.1: Superior or deficient performance* by dimension

|	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin American and the Caribbean	Middle East	East and Southeast Asia	South and Central Asia	Eastern Europe
Social superior	6	0	1	0	1	0
Social deficient	-1	-2	0	-1	0	-4
Political superior	10	0	2	0	0	0
Political deficient	0	-1	0	-1	0	-2
Human development superior	2	2	0	0	0	2
Human development deficient	-5	0	0	0	-1	0
Economic superior	0	1	1	0	1	0
Economic deficient	0	-3	0	0	0	-1

*A country was identified as superior in one dimension if it was high in one dimension and medium or low in the others, and deficient in a particular dimension if it was classified as low in one dimension and medium in the others, or medium in one dimension and high in the others.

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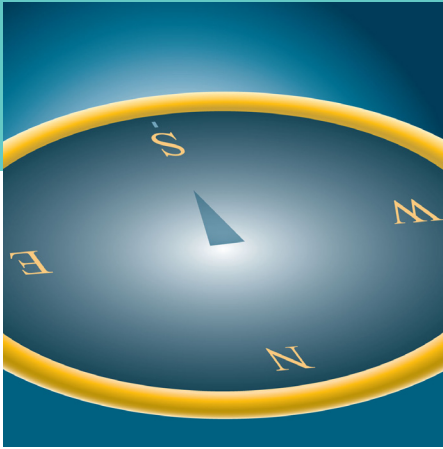
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