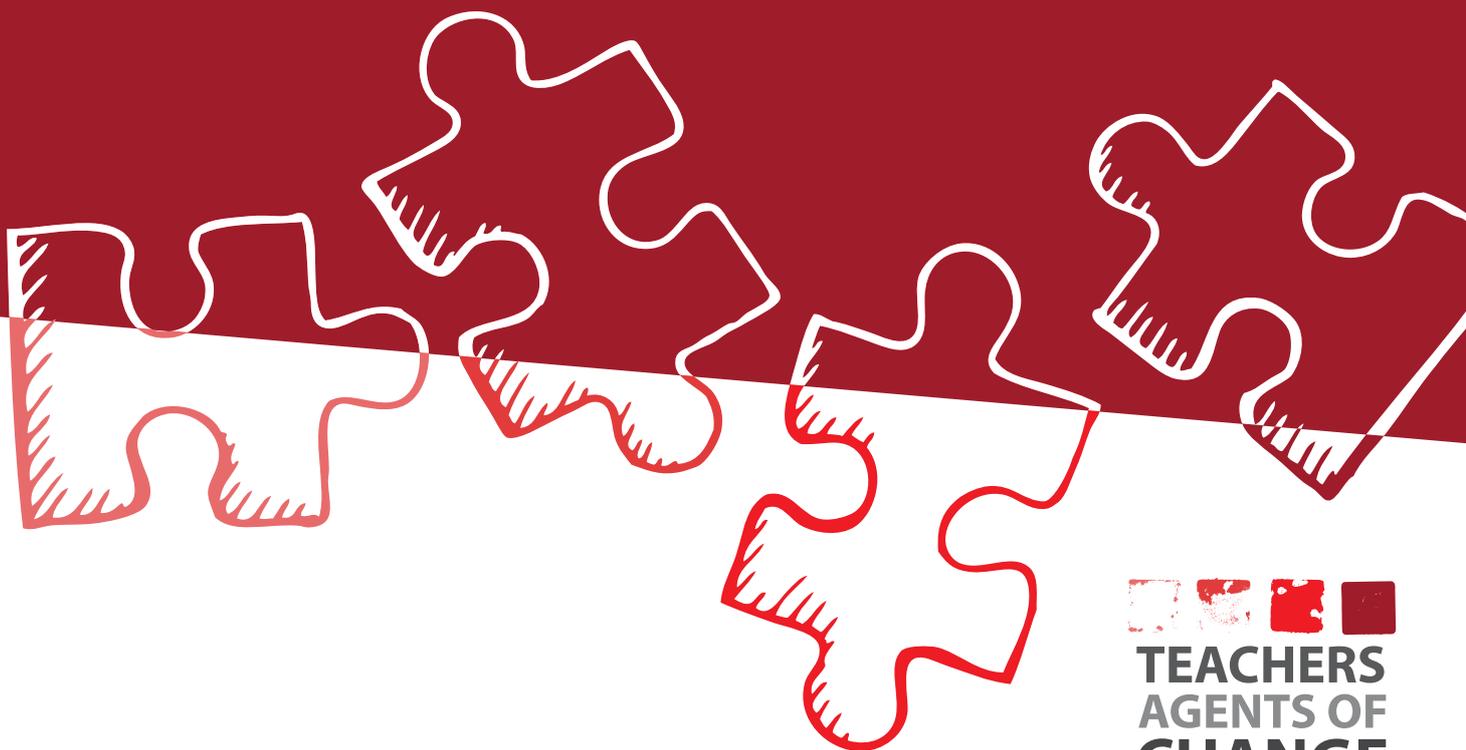


Piecing the puzzle together.

How to identify, understand and address global issues.



Piecing the puzzle together. How to identify, understand and address global issues

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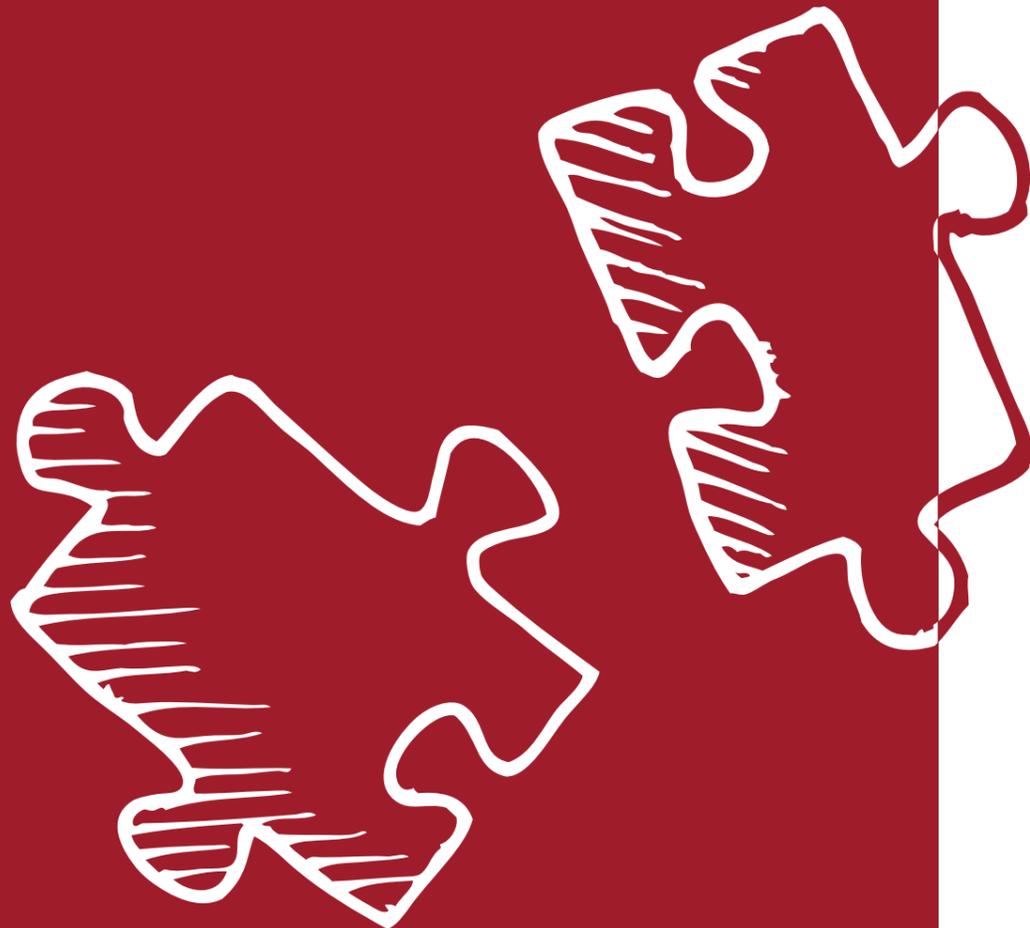
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'Piecing the puzzle together.

How to identify, understand and address global issues'



Dear Readers,

collection of texts entitled 'Piecing the puzzle together. How to identify, understand and address global issues' aims to encourage you to explore global issues and to think about how these connect to education and fit together within the global world puzzle.

Shared vision of this publication is importance of work with global topics at all levels of educational system. Moreover in a way that is putting principles of selected issues in practice. Practice of participative, inclusive and democratic education that we would like to share with you.

In keeping with the aims of the Teachers: Agents of Change project where this collection originated, these texts aim to support educators to bring a change to the classroom environment and to the way subjects are taught.

By change we mean change in terms of educational approaches and methods, and in relation to perspectives and points of view on different issues. The complementarity of themes is reflected in the structure of the publication, offering a wide range of topics written by authors who are diverse both in terms of geography and their background. This collection is not attempting to offer and analyse every aspect of the themes covered, but it does reflect something of the dynamic world we live in as authors offer both a challenge to our thinking and their own vision of change. Whilst presenting their own point of view, they also leave space for us to create our own understanding and opinion on different global issues.

We would like to thank our authors: academics, activists, teachers, journalists, NGO practitioners and educators for sharing with us their pieces of the global puzzle.

In the first section of the publication we have tried to explore the main concept of global education and define or re-define our approach to this. Following this is a discussion of the idea of global citizenship and the questions this raises about our local, national and



European and global identity. The focus then shifts to practice, to explore participatory methods and Philosophy for Children (P4C) in particular, as a method for promoting caring and critical thinking. The final article in this section asks us to re-think Sustainable Development and its relationship to environmental responsibility and global learning. This recognises the importance of global interdependence and holistic approaches to education and emphasises the process of learning through Education for Sustainable Development.

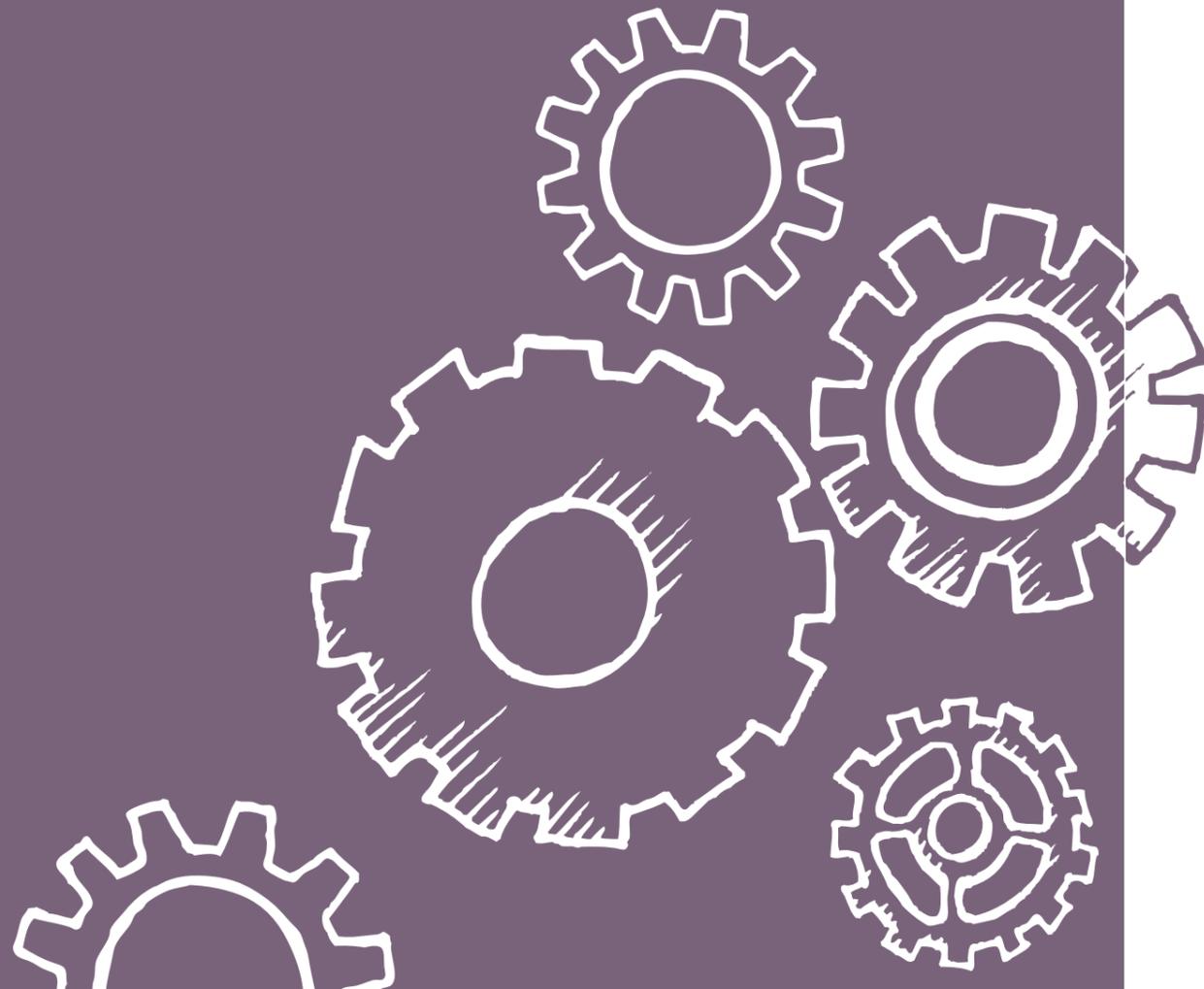
In the second section of the publication articles focus more on few topics which educators might associate most closely with global education and be most concerned about. Beginning with the concept of development and how this is understood in the Global South, what follows is a discussion of the idea of poverty and the dynamics involved whereby this is so often identified with Southern countries. Further to this is a discussion of the idea of food justice (rather than hunger), which is not only affected by global policy, but requires us to take account of different global mechanisms and think about local responses to global needs and vice versa. Finally, two texts raise issues of identity and perspective in the global development process: the younger generation's attitude towards global issues and the need for a gender sensitive approach which appreciates that development as a process is not all about financial rates and index.

In looking for answers about how to overcome stereotypes and cliches, how to re-define the world in keeping with our values and find new ways forward, we have attempted to provide space for reflection and questions rather than offering a set of 'right' answers. These articles are also an attempt to help you fit the pieces together and in doing so to recognise how we are all part of global processes with the potential to be reflective agents of change.

We wish you inspiring reading!
Teachers: Agents of the Change project team

The World: A difficult subject for both students and teachers

Petr Čáp



It is not uncommon to hear that we can barely influence what is happening in our street, at our local city hall, at Straka Academy, the seat of the Czech government, or in Brussels, let alone influence global problems. The protests against the deforestation of Brazil, the famine in Somalia, child labour in Asian factories, the fight of Malala Jousafzai for the right of Pakistani girls to education, the civil war in Mali... Is getting interested and becoming engaged in such issues worth it? Why? Isn't the concept of global citizenship just another myth?

Why global citizenship

From the perspective of the Czech Republic, a small country at the heart of Europe, many global problems seem far too distant. We read about them in the newspaper and watch them on TV, but the safety of our homes draws us back into our private microcosms. We are not concerned about melting glaciers, because there is no sea in our country; we are not interested in civil unrest in Tibet, because it is not a tourist destination for us. It is more difficult to create a sense of genuine concern for distant and abstract issues than for our daily affairs. We have little confidence in being able to contribute to the solutions for global problems, and our sense of helplessness is getting deeper. Even if we are affected by a story, it is not always easy to find a concrete and effective way to get engaged. Fortunately, new technologies allow us to respond quickly to humanitarian crises by launching fundraising campaigns and thus delivering quick assistance to victims. However, a number of problems beyond humanitarian disasters remain outside our zone of influence.

Global problems are presented to us by the media, often forming a disagreeable kaleidoscope of fragmented news. For a moment, remote people, their stories and their problems may catch our attention, but in general they are distant from us. Often, we do not understand the context and why the things we are watching are happening. As humans we generally fear the unknown.

It is easier and safer to judge other people's stories through the lenses of our own view of the world. But what are the viewpoints we share as the citizens of Central Europe?

Our views are based on our culture, our history and our 'Western' concept of the world. Vanessa Andreotti from the University of British Columbia defines seven areas where we generally commit noncritical ethnocentrism when judging other cultures (Andreotti, 2014):

- 1) **Hegemony** – a tendency to justify our cultural superiority and domination over other nations and cultures.
- 2) **Ethnocentrism** – a tendency to project one's view as universal and applicable all over the globe.
- 3) **Ahistoricism** – ignorance or forgetting historical legacies.
- 4) **Depoliticization** – disregarding power inequalities and ideological roots of analyses and proposals.
- 5) **Salvationism** – framing help as the burden of the fittest.
- 6) **Uncomplicated solutions** – offering simple and easy solutions to complicated problems that require systemic change.
- 7) **Paternalism** – seeking affirmation of our superiority through the need to provide help to others so that they can become like us.

These seven areas can be seen as seven obstacles that prevent us from understanding the globalised world and the role we play in it.

Argentinian small-scale farmers are engaged in a long term struggle, for the expropriation of land owned by the large-scale soy growers who have been in possession of vast territories of fertile Pampas for centuries. Their claim, which from our point of view is in direct

conflict with article 17 of The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** on the right to private property, is based on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, which says that we are all sons and daughters of Mother Earth and as such we are not allowed to own land, but we can borrow it to meet the needs of all. In this case, the set of values of human rights contradicts the set of values of the native people. Who is in the right?

The question is whether we can, as Central Europeans, be aware that something like the Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth exists in South America so that we can take account of different perspectives, avoiding ethnocentric, ahistoric, simplistic and depoliticized responses. Well, we don't have to. The ethics of global citizenship demand us to avoid forming opinions about foreign cultures and their problems only on the basis of our current knowledge. If we are interested in an issue we can search for more information and if we lack time or resources to look up the information, we should acknowledge that we are not able nor obliged to form an opinion.

The school and global education

Nobody is able to follow everything, but all of us can monitor something. In this way, a collective awareness of the global world is being created. The school class can represent a group where each pupil collects information about his or her interest, analyses this information, connects and interprets it and searches for more. The teachers who include global education in their teaching, are not responsible for the depth of the content and its interpretation, but have a responsibility to encourage 'deep' and critical interpretation of global issues. Several studies confirm that teachers perceive global education as the most relevant subject to teach pupils about context, tolerance and solidarity.

As a cross-sectional theme global development education allows for creating links between the content of a number of subjects and for relating it to current affairs, thus helping pupils to understand the big picture.

Professor Fernando Reimers from Harvard University defines three basic competencies necessary to understand the global context, which in turn can be interpreted as the learning objectives of global education.

- 1) Good knowledge and understanding of world history, geography and issues such as health, climate change and economics.
- 2) Ability to speak, understand and think in foreign languages. Ability to think critically and creatively about the current global problems.
- 3) To have a positive approach toward other cultures. This requires a sense of identity and self-esteem and at the same time, an active interest in the values shared by other civilizations. The ability to see these differences as an opportunity for constructive dialogue.

The concept of global education as defined above can be described as a readiness to understand the outside world. Global education guides pupils to analyse the links between different phenomena and to develop the ability to "see behind the media curtain" of global affairs. From the point of view of developmental psychology, the identity of "I, a global citizen" is formed during pubescence when young people search for their place in the world. This can influence whether or not they will have an interest in outside affairs and perceive themselves as being part of a broader society, or whether they will lock themselves in their own world with no interest at all in their surrounding world. However, the process that allows us to develop a global identity and the above mentioned competencies does not happen by itself,



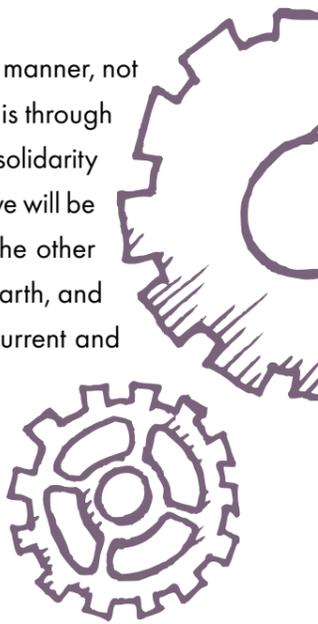
but as a result of pedagogical influences which ideally should be carried out in a targeted and methodical manner through the educational process. Without the critical acknowledgement of the connections that influence the globalised world, young people will be left to play the role of naïve spectators that observe, through the lens of the media, world events which they can neither understand fully nor influence in any way. School education usually focuses on the education and socialization of young people for the known world where there are single answers. The themes covered by global education are different. Often we don't know the answers to questions, they are too complex or have so many aspects that we are not able to come to a clear solution. The message is not to provide correct answers but to assist with the method or resources, how and where to look for answers. The teacher searches for the answers together with the pupils, and in this way co-creates a collective awareness of the globalised world.

Conclusion

Does it make any sense to become involved in global affairs? By flying the Tibetan flag we are unlikely to change China's policy towards Tibet. By boycotting the products of multinational companies, whose commercial practices we disapprove of, we are unlikely to change their management. However, through our own small acts we let other people, and ourselves, know that we are "aware", what our values are, that we monitor issues, and that we stand on guard¹.

Global citizenship is not about feeling helpless and responsible for all the global problems. It is rather a compromise to avoid staying indifferent and closed to the world around us, and to strive for understanding its

problems in a complex and critical manner, not just through our own world view. It is through this approach of tolerance, interest, solidarity and contextual understanding that we will be able to engage in dialogue with the other inhabitants of the planet, Mother Earth, and search together for responses to current and future problems.



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¹ see Masaryk 1991, p.137

What is ESD?

And why is it important to your students?

Paul Vare

William Scott



Abstract

Over recent decades, as concern has grown over a range of environmental and socio-economic threats to human well-being, education for sustainable development (ESD) has emerged as a crucial social strategy to support necessary change. ESD embraces both environmental education, which often focuses on behaviour change, and development education/global learning, which emphasises the need for wider social change. The authors argue for an approach that combines what they term ESD 1, which is content-focused and provides guidance on behaviours, and ESD 2, which is debate-oriented and builds students' capacity to think critically about the very issues raised within ESD 1. The issue of Fairtrade is given as an example of how ESD 1 and 2 can provide more meaningful learning for students, particularly in terms of preparing them for an uncertain future.

Beginnings

The origins of ESD (education for sustainable development) lie in environmental education and development education / global learning. ESD brings together a wide variety of educational strategies which examine how living things relate to each other and depend on the biosphere, and on how quality of life is increasingly imperilled by how we now live. It focuses on the increasing degradation of the global natural environment, and on the widespread lack of social justice and human fulfilment across the world. These are inter-related issues and must be addressed together if students are to understand them. In summary, then, ESD addresses this dilemma:

How can we all live well, without compromising the planet's ability to enable us all to live well?

This links people's lives, the economic and political systems these are embedded in, and the continuing supply of goods and services from the biosphere that underpin and drive such systems. Teachers across many subjects find much of value here, and students clearly find ESD interesting, motivating, and helpful – largely because they can see its relevance to the world and to their future lives.

Sustainable Development

Over the last century human socio-economic development has significantly compromised the biosphere's ability to support life on Earth. We find evidence of this in habitat destruction, biodiversity and species loss, desertification, chemical pollution, ocean acidification, stratospheric ozone depletion, and of course in rapid climate change. All this continues to get worse. During this period, there has been increased understanding that socio-economic problems such as poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, misogyny, racism, malnutrition, disease, and early death, represent gross and unacceptable inequalities between people inhibiting access to both vital resources and opportunities for well-being and a life that people find fulfilling. It is now widely accepted that such inequalities are both an affront to human dignity and a source of international and intercultural instability.

In response, United Nations' commissions, conferences, and summits over many years have generated ideas around what has come to be called 'sustainable development', that is about the capacity of human society to safeguard the delicate balance between us and our natural life-support system whilst creating economies that help ensure that everyone, now and in the future, as Amartya Sen put it, can live lives they have reason to value. Through this, different ways of socio-economic development are being sought to enable everyone to live well, and within the Earth's ability to support us – both now and in the future.

ESD

Over the last 50 years, education has come to be recognised as a crucial social strategy if such new ways of socio-economic development are to emerge, and environmental education and developmental education / global learning programmes emerged as responses. In some countries – the UK is a good example – these ran in schools and universities, and in a wide range of NGOs, with their focus varying across the social and natural sciences. In time, the term education for sustainable development (sometimes; education for sustainability or learning for sustainability) was coined as a means of stressing that a holistic approach was needed that dealt with both development and environmental issues together. In other contexts, global learning or global citizenship is the preferred way of emphasising this. The value of such approaches was recognised in a UN Decade of ESD (2005–2014) whose goal was to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects of learning, to encourage changes in human behaviour that would create a more sustainable future in terms of environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations.

Responsible Behaviours

The strong emphasis in this on behaviour change might look odd in an educational strategy, but some environmental education programmes had this focus, and a clear link to citizenship, from the outset. For example,

“The ultimate aim of education is shaping human behaviour [where] responsible citizenship behaviour can be developed through environmental education.

... The challenge lies in a willingness to do things differently than we have in the past.”

Hungerford & Volk (1990:302–317)

Put simply, this approach says that:

- if we can create a curriculum that takes sustainability issues seriously
- provide enough information about ecological concepts and environmental inter-relationships,
- provide carefully-designed opportunities for learners to acquire environmental sensitivity and a sense of empowerment,
- enable learners to acquire analytical and investigative skills, and citizenship action skills.

... then people will acquire understanding and both cognitive and social skills, their attitudes will shift, and then their behaviour will change in pro-sustainability ways. Note that such behaviours arise as a result of an educational strategy; the strategy is not itself behaviourist. This influential approach draws on theories of responsible individual environmental behaviour, and brings together understandings of scientific and ecological concepts, how these relate to our everyday lives, and the psychological influences on those lives. A problem with this emphasis lies in its separation of actions/behaviours from the social and economic context within which these take place, and this can lead to a naïve notion of citizenship. An integrated approach to sustainability, which deals with economic and social issues together with environmental ones, means that a focus on environment behaviours to the exclusion of considerations of social justice, the elimination of poverty and the like, becomes more difficult as our experience of living and working requires us to take all these into consideration, whether at global, national, community or family levels.

Being Socially-critical

This emphasis on behaviours drew criticism from those (e.g. Robottom & Hart, 1995) who saw that ignoring the socio-political and economic circumstances within which such behaviours were embedded, was to fail to



go to the heart of the problems we face. Their preferred alternative approach (see Huckle 2013) was to set out to effect social rather than behaviour change, and to help teachers and students to work towards social transformation and the reduction of socio-economic disparities. Such approaches are strongly associated with development education and global learning.

For some, helping learners think critically about the challenges our world faces, and about how to deal with issues such as poverty and inequality are a core part of ESD. This chapter has been written from that point of view. For others, however, the idea of global learning is so important that it maintains a separate focus through development education, which sets out to help learners make sense of the world in which they live and to understand their possible roles within a global society. Like ESD, however, global learning involves more than just learning about issues – in this case global and development ones. Global learning sets out to:

“...provide a quality learning experience to children and young people about how they relate to a globalised world and what they can do to reduce global poverty. It provides the opportunity for a pedagogical approach to learning that challenges dominant assumptions in society about the nature of our relationships to poorer countries in the world. It promotes the encouragement of a social justice values base to understanding the wider world. It can also pose challenges to existing approaches to teaching and learning.” Bourn (2014:7)

The purpose of this perspective on ESD is to help students analyse the values behind their socially-learned behaviour patterns, and work towards being more sustainable.

A key focus has been helping students and teachers to ask appropriate socially-critical questions, for example, about who benefits from particular systems and actions.

Examples might include looking in appropriate detail at the following international issues:

- the use of child labour in the clothing industry in east Asia
- the working conditions in smart phone manufacture across the world
- who really benefits from the extensive cut flower industry in East Africa
- human exploitation in the diamond business
- where the most money is made in the production and sale of coffee

Other examples might focus on more domestic issues such as whether:

- your government’s overseas aid programmes is effective
- your tax system really helps the poorest people in your country

And then there are more global questions such as whether:

- sustainable development is impossible because development (i.e. economic growth on the Western global-capitalist model) cannot be sustained?
- ‘free trade’ is a good thing
- trade is a better poverty eradication strategy than aid
- personal freedoms need to be curtailed in order to limit destabilising changes; for example, to climate?
- the free movement of people across the EU can be maintained

Such an approach, put simply, says that:

- if we can influence opinion-formers (e.g. teachers) and, through them, influence learners,
- raising their awareness and consciousness of the issues that prevent a sustainable society,
- then their under-pinning values will be changed, and

... then people will argue, work, vote and agitate for (pro-sustainability) social change

ESD Common Ground

Common ground amongst these different approaches is that ESD can helpfully be seen as an education in citizenship: a preparation for informed, open-minded, social engagement with the issues of the day, issues that

occur in the family, in the community and wider society, and in the workplace. Clearly, being socially critical and actively considering changes in entrenched behaviours, are each citizenly qualities that are necessary if societies are to actively re-create themselves, and a way has to be found to bring these together in schools if building an acceptable quality of life for all people across the world is to be possible. Schools are an acknowledged, integral part of any learning society, with the key role of supporting young people in the early stages of their acquiring the wide-ranging understandings, skills and capabilities that they will need to continue to develop for successful living in the world.

In terms of sustainability and ESD, a key purpose of schools might be stimulating young people's development of awareness and interest in relation to living sustainably, with the hope (but not certainty) that this will give rise to social participation that can contribute to the goals of greater social justice and human well-being, and the bolstering of the resilience of ecological systems.

In many countries, particularly (but not exclusively) in Western Europe, Australia and North America, schools address such issues through the curriculum, sometimes with integrated work across subjects, and there is growing use of personal, social, health education and citizenship courses, and partnerships with external groups. All these are designed to enable students to develop more rounded and fuller sets of understandings and skills. There has also been a growth of clubs and student councils

in schools with a remit to effect change, for example, reducing energy and resource use, increasing recycling and composting, and getting involved in community-focused activities with local groups and NGOs.

Learning or doing or both?

Given all this, should outcomes emphasise what students learn, or what they can do?

This is a curriculum question. Given that schools exist to help students prepare for what follows (whether further study, training, work – or just life), in sustainability terms, this suggests that an emphasis on the development of skills of critical thinking, dialogue and debate, (stressing the iterative nature of learning, participation and decision-making throughout life) ought to be at least as great as the emphasis on knowledge. Education certainly seems most successful when this happens, and Vare and Scott (2007) argue that it is helpful to think of two complementary approaches: ESD 1 and ESD 2.

ESD 1 – is content-focused, information-based, and grounded in everyday practice, providing guidance about behaviours, shifts in habit, and ways of thinking about how we live now.

This includes actions to be more efficient/less wasteful and 'learning to be more sustainable' (or, at least, less unsustainable). This needs information and communication strategies, and is exemplified by approaches where problems are explained to people and guidance about solutions provided.

ESD 2 – is dialogue and debate-oriented and focused on controversial issues, building students' capacity to think critically and develop abilities to make sound choices in the face of the inherent complexity and uncertainty of the future.

This includes thinking about what 'being more sustainable' might mean. This may well need information and communication; but it also needs more sophisticated pedagogies through which learners are able to get to grips with conflicting ideas and values. For example, rather than just giving learners information about the rights and wrongs of an issue, it means requiring them to explore an argument from a variety of perspectives, and come to their own views (however tentative) as an effective way of helping them understand what they know and think. The issue of Fair Trade that is explored at the end of this article lends itself to this sort of approach. ESD 2 also embodies a different view of what sustainable development is. Here, sustainable development doesn't only depend on learning; it is inherently a social learning process of improving the human condition, which can be continued indefinitely without undermining itself, recognising that:

- there are competing problem definitions, and participants have incompatible value-sets
- many problems lack precise specification and solutions to problems can sometimes cause other problems
- what can be known in the present is not always adequate, and desired 'end-states' cannot be specified with confidence
- meaning remains provisional – it has to be as much 'worked out' as 'carried out'
- the complexity and uncertainty we face cannot be wished, legislated, or educated away
- social, economic, cultural and environmental change is certain, though its exact nature cannot be predicted. Learning is important if we are to understand how our lives are changing, and how we might manage this.

These ESD 1 and ESD 2 approaches are complementary because people need to have relevant subject matter to debate and critically examine in their own contexts, and this cannot exist in a vacuum. This approach,

if well constructed, brings behaviour change and social-criticality together in the context of a liberal approach. In ESD 1-focused programmes, sustainability values and principles tend to be explicit while the values of learning may be implicit if stated at all. With ESD 2, it's the values of learning that tend to be explicit, and sustainability values implicit. If both forms of ESD are held in tension, then all is well. ESD 2 not only complements ESD 1, it makes it meaningful, because our long-term future will depend less on our compliance in being trained to do the 'right' thing now, and more on our capability to analyse, to question alternatives and negotiate our decisions. In this sense, ESD 2 involves the development of learners' abilities to make sound choices in the face of the inherent complexity and uncertainty of the future.

Authorities who promote sustainable development often see formal education mainly in terms of ESD 1, and there is a deep-rooted preference for ESD 1 both in governmental policy prescription and in the work of NGOs. However, too much successful ESD 1 in isolation would reduce our capacity to manage change ourselves and therefore make us less sustainable. This is a classic double bind: the more schools focus on delivering ESD 1, the less likely that they will ask learners to think for themselves through ESD 2 approaches.

For many, ESD is fundamentally about values and about respect for other people, including future generations, for difference and diversity, and for the environment we inhabit and need. This fits well with the idea that a high quality education has to be:

- interdisciplinary and holistic
- values-driven
- critical, problem-oriented and multi-method
- participatory
- applicable to daily life, and
- locally relevant.

This view is supported by research evidence (Barratt Hacking et al. 2010) that shows that an approach which engages young people, addressing real issues which impact on their lives, will lead to increased motivation and curiosity, and deeper, more meaningful learning experiences. These characteristics relate to how the approach to, and process of, teaching focused on sustainability can be conceptualised; they do not, of course, relate only to sustainability.

For some, it is helpful to see all this not just in terms of what happens in the classroom, but as a model that integrates activity across curriculum, campus, and community where

1. student learning:

- integrates academic, practical and ethical concerns
- acknowledges the significance of these issues to all humanity, now and in the future
- recognises different perspectives on problems and what might now be done
- understands the complexities and uncertainties in data
- appreciates the argument for involvement at a personal/social level

2. there is greater awareness by everyone in the school of how these issues affect all aspects of school life, and how what the school does as a community might change and develop in particular ways, leading, for example, to a more integrated consideration of issues, cost savings, the creation of school buildings and grounds that can provide models of sustainability in practice, and hence act as positive teaching resources and an enhanced involvement of students in decision making; and where

3. there is increased local community involvement in all aspects of school life, the opening up of the school for community use and its inspiration of the community to live more sustainably; but also the recognition that

the idea of community is now appropriately seen at the global, as well as local level, given our economic interdependence, our social linkages and our shared environmental and socio-economic problems.

Vare & Scott (2008) have used the idea and practice of Fairtrade to illustrate ESD 1 and ESD 2. In many countries, Fairtrade is now a popular theme for campaigning organisations and in schools, and buying Fairtrade goods can be seen as a desired behaviour and an end in itself. But if teachers and schools want to help learners think for themselves, weigh arguments and justify their opinions, and think critically about the world they live in, then the idea that they may be encouraged to support Fairtrade as an unquestionably 'good thing' seems a problem. After all, a student who is taught to support Fairtrade in a blind fashion will be ill-equipped to deal with the many challenges to it, such as these:

Fairtrade agreements can tie indigenous peoples into a market economy controlled by foreign companies rather than having the freedom to control their own land and resources.

Fair trade policies can have other disastrous effects... ..when (non-governmental organisations) demanded a higher price for bananas to help raise the cost of living for the Guatemalan banana producer, banana companies relocated to Ecuador where wages were lower.

... under the Fairtrade system, it is consumers in the North who are being exploited by large retailers, not impoverished farmers.

Taking on such challenges to Fairtrade provides a context in which to explore a range of themes that are central to sustainable development, such as entrepreneurship, economics, international trade, marketing and environmental protection. It also offers alternative perspectives to more usual accounts of such mainstream themes.

Practical activities with children are possible. For example, who actually benefits can be illustrated by

a simple shopping activity with plastic money exploring where money is being made in the value chain. It also allows an exploration of alternative labelling schemes such as the Rainforest Alliance and schemes such as Equitrade which aims to "end poverty through sustainable commercial international trade".

One potential problem is that exploring such approaches can make us feel frustrated that it is so difficult to do the 'right thing'. But this is the key point: doing the 'right thing' is not simple – and trade itself offers a powerful, if simplified, example of the complexity, uncertainty and risk that is characteristic of life on Earth. At the end of the day, students may feel that, on balance, buying Fairtrade is likely to be better than buying non-Fairtraded goods; though some may not. But, in educational terms, this doesn't matter; the point is that the students have arrived at (i.e., learned) their views by thinking and deliberating about it.

What is clear, however, is that to investigate issues like Fairtrade, we need to gather a good deal of information and present alternative arguments, which is ESD 1. However, in order to reach a considered position on Fairtrade we need the opportunity to marshal the evidence on both (or many) sides and think hard about who is saying what and why – and decide what we think – at least for the time being. This is ESD 2.

In other words, ESD 1 opens our eyes to a world of facts, processes, arguments and connections; in developing our skills of reading the world, it provides the text; and ESD 2 helps us to read and understand that text. It develops in pupils the skills, self-confidence, knowledge and motivation to be effective learners throughout their lives, and gives them the wherewithal to take action.

Crucially, ESD 1 and ESD 2 are each meaningless without the other, and the number of issues that can be explored in this way is extensive.

This combined approach represents what Foster (2008) terms 'learning as sustainable development'. In helping us find our way through a risky, complex

and uncertain world, this extends well beyond the specific issues under discussion in any given lesson; rather it aims to provide students with learning that is more meaningful for their lives.

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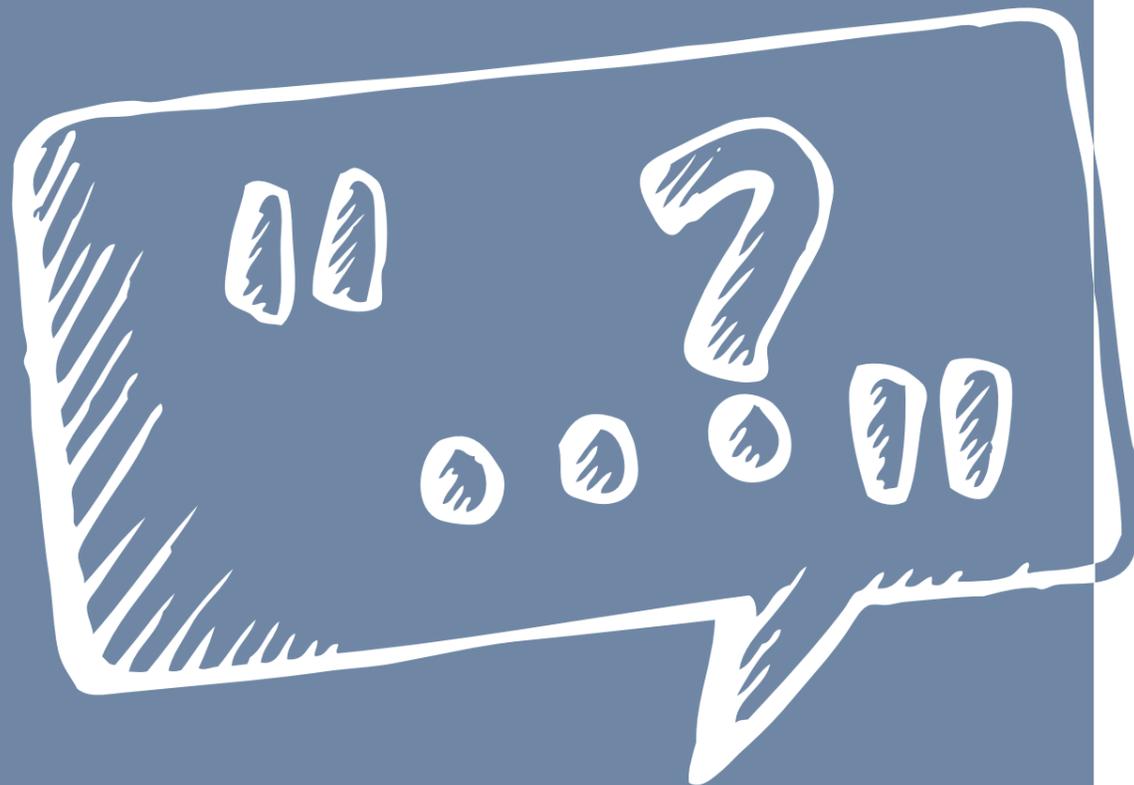
Abbreviations (if applicable)

- ESD Education for Sustainable Development
 NGO Non Governmental Organisation
Key terms: Sustainable development, Learning



Participatory Education: Philosophy for Children

Clive Belgeonne



Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a pedagogy that enables teachers to facilitate a communal dialogue with young people to try to find answers to questions that they find compelling and interesting. It gives learners and teachers the chance to listen to different ideas and opinions and is a way in which to investigate problems and issues in the world today.

Key terms: Critical Thinking – Community of Enquiry – Dialogue – Philosophy

Introduction

The “Teachers: Agents of Change” project aims to train teachers to teach Development Education (DE) effectively.

According to DEEEP:

Development education is an active learning process, founded on values of solidarity, equality, inclusion and co-operation. It enables people to move from basic awareness of international development priorities and sustainable human development, through understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal involvement and informed actions.

If we accept the notion that DE is a “process of learning”, what sort of teaching and learning methodologies may be most suitable? I have suggested previously in relation to teaching the global dimension, that in terms of teaching and learning it comprises

a) Ways of thinking and knowing:

- the ability to make local to global connections (this could be seen as systemic / holistic thinking, understanding interconnectivity and interdependence) and
- acknowledging and appreciating a diverse range of perspectives (the recognition of the partiality of all knowledge and the need to learn from a variety of perspectives)

b) Ways of engaging and relating. This involves learning and teaching approaches that are:

- active (students engage in discussion, higher order thinking etc.)
- participatory (teachers allow negotiation of areas of what we learn and how we learn)
- democratic (students and teachers allow for shared decision-making)

- inclusive (teachers and students recognise individual needs / diverse backgrounds)
- critical (students develop a constructively questioning habit of mind)
- experiential (students learn from reflection on doing)
- empathic (students are able to understand and communicate the context of others)
- dialogic (students and teachers recognise and use of the power of talk to extend thinking and understanding)
- transformative (students engage in informed and ethical action beyond the classroom)

There is a range of methodologies that the teacher who wants to engage with DE and the “process of learning” can use, from fairly simple techniques such as ‘Mind Maps’ (making connections, active and democratic process) and ranking activities (participatory and dialogic), to more in-depth ones such as Forum Theatre (empathic and experiential) and Mantle of the Expert (active and critical)¹. In this article I am going to focus on one methodology, Philosophy for Children.

Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a teaching methodology that enables participants to discuss ‘big’ questions and take their learning deeper.

It is based on the notion of a ‘community of enquiry’. This has been defined as “a group of people used

¹ Further information: Mind maps <http://www.mind-mapping.co.uk/make-mind-map.htm>; Ranking activities <http://waze.net/oea/activities/5#Resources>; Forum Theatre <http://dramaresource.com/strategies/forum-theatre/>; Mantle of the Expert <http://www.mantleoftheexpert.com/about-moe/introduction/>

to thinking together with a view to increasing their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of each other.” (SAPERE)

P4C aims to create a caring classroom situation where children learn to:

- *listen to and respect each other*
- *be clear in their thinking and to make responsible and more deliberate judgements*
- *be more thoughtful by basing their decisions and actions on reasons*
- *be open to other people’s ideas and perspectives and develop empathy* (DECSY)

Origins

One of the origins of P4C is the idea of Socratic dialogue. Socrates aimed to encourage people to examine their lives and to think every day ‘How can I best live my life? What kind of person should I be?’ P4C was first developed by Matthew Lipman, a professor of philosophy at Columbia University, New York, in the USA in the 1970s. Building on the work of another U.S educator, John Dewey, Lipman believed that a classroom is a type of community of enquiry, which leads to “questioning, reasoning, connecting, deliberating, challenging, and developing problem-solving techniques.” Lipman and a number of associates established the ‘Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children’ at Montclair State College, New Jersey.

By the 1980s there was a growing interest in P4C from a number of countries. In 1990 the BBC produced ‘Socrates for Six Year Olds’, a one hour film on Philosophy for Children which was shown in Britain, the United States, Japan, Israel, and other countries around the world. The huge interest generated in the UK led to the formation of SAPERE (Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection

in Education²) in 1992. P4C is now practiced in over 60 countries.

Process

P4C encourages participants to ask open-ended, ‘philosophical’ questions. These questions are examined through dialogue. Through the dialogue further questions are generated that help the participants to examine issues more deeply. The process encourages all participants to listen to each other, respect and value each other’s opinions and gives each person an equal say. The teacher is also a part of this process and a co-learner / co-enquirer. The teacher may provide the stimulus for the enquiry and ‘chair’ the dialogue, but s/he is there as a facilitator of dialogue.

Principles

P4C is based on four types of thinking:

- Caring
- Collaborative
- Critical
- Creative

Caring: Listening (concentrating) and valuing (appreciating) - showing interest in, and sensitivity to, other’s experiences and values.

Developing empathy, which means really listening and hearing other people’s points of view, putting yourself in their shoes; creating a listening community with teachers and students showing a genuine interest in each other’s ideas and showing respect for an idea by listening carefully then building upon it or questioning it. Creating a caring atmosphere and ethos, where participants feel safe to try out new ideas and to be tentative. Demonstrating careful thinking, taking care

² SAPERE is the organization that promotes and accredits P4C in the UK



about the way we express ourselves and wrestling with ideas. Caring about (valuing) each other, the process of the enquiry and caring about the subject matter of the enquiry – motivation is generated.

Collaborative: Responding (communicating) and supporting (conciliating), building on each other’s ideas, shaping common understandings and purposes, supporting the development of new lines of enquiry. Working together to grapple with a question, trying to find an answer or several answers, whilst building on other’s ideas and experience and sharing or pooling ideas.

Critical: challenging preconceptions, analysing and problematising issues, weighing up multiple perspectives, seeking meaning, evidence, reasons, distinctions and making good judgements, identifying assumptions and implications.

Creative: Connecting (relating) and suggesting (speculating), providing comparisons, examples, criteria, alternative explanations or conceptions, imagining different perspectives or scenarios, coming up with new ideas, synthesising, thinking ‘otherwise’ (i.e. outside of the box).

These four elements of thinking work together to broaden, deepen, bond and build the community of enquiry. The skills developed in the community of enquiry should become habits of mind.

The process encourages all participants to share their ideas. It encourages participants to examine different perspectives and to think ‘otherwise’ – Is this always the case? How might it be viewed in a different culture / context? It allows participants to recognise that it is acceptable, even laudable, to change their mind in the light of dialogue and reflection. It is also important to recognise, value and learn from different perspectives and world-views.

In addition to the 4Cs.

P4C has the following underlying principles:

- Proper valuing of each person’s interests and questions
- Acknowledgement that each person’s experience / story is unique
- Recognition that no one is all-knowing or all-wise
- Appreciation of different ways of interpreting and thinking (SAPERE)

Classroom environment

It may take some time to establish the type of classroom environment where young people are ready to enact the four types of thinking described above, as well as the other underlying principles. They may need to develop their listening skills and it may take time to be able to fully understand and enact ideas such as respect and empathy. Caring and Collaborative thinking may need to be developed first, so that students are comfortable to open up and share with each other and respect different points of view, before they can effectively engage in Critical and Creative thinking.

Teachers may need to take time to help students to develop these skills. The seating arrangement for P4C is usually that of a circle, with the teacher-as-facilitator a part of the circle. The enquiry will need to take place in a space where everyone can hear and see each other clearly and ideally where there will not be interruptions. Teachers may like to use changing places / moving activities to ensure that pupils do not always sit in friendship groups.

The group will need to establish a set of ‘Ground Rules’ for how they will behave towards each other

in the enquiry process. This is usually written up and displayed. Once agreed, the teacher may like to get everyone to make a show of agreement with the principles (i.e. thumbs up).

Ground Rules

Take turns to speak

Show respect to the person who is talking

It's ok to disagree
but you must give a reason why

We will show active listening,
only put your hand out when a person
has finished talking.

These Ground Rules will need to be revisited and amended in the light of experience, as an important part of the structure of each enquiry is a review of how well the process was carried out and what could improve it.

Role of the teacher

The teacher will need to take time to practice the role of facilitator and co-learner and get used to the idea of 'giving up' some of the control in the classroom. This can be one of the most challenging parts of the process, but one that most teachers find very liberating, when they reach a stage when the students themselves can begin to self-facilitate and take the enquiry in unexpected but productive directions. It will also take the students time to see the teacher in the role of facilitator and even co-learner and not the voice of authority. Teachers need to be aware of differences in status and power within the group (including their own position) and think carefully about how and when to make interventions, in order to help students develop their own ideas in an inclusive and mutually supportive environment, yet one that accepts challenges to perspectives and perceptions.

Stages in a P4C enquiry

There are usually ten stages in a P4C enquiry:

- Getting Set
- Presentation of Stimulus
- Thinking Time
- Question - Making
- Question - Airing
- Question - Choosing
- First Thoughts
- Building
- Last Thoughts
- Review

Getting Set: This involves a warm up or team work activity that aims to get the participants to see themselves as a group or team. It can involve moving around to mix up friendship or gender groups. It may also involve a thinking game to warm up their brains. This is also the time to set or review 'Ground Rules'.

Presentation of Stimulus: The stimulus can be a story, a piece of art, a photograph or set of photos, a film clip or short video, a news story or an object. It will usually have been selected by the teacher, with a view to provoking thinking about a particular issue or topic. As students become more familiar with the process, it may be possible to ask them to suggest stimuli around particular themes.

Thinking Time: After the stimulus has been presented, the teacher needs to allow some individual thinking time. S/he may like to allow one minute, as many classrooms only allow a few seconds of thinking time when questions are asked, and deeper thinking and reflection needs to be encouraged. The teacher can ask students for key words, ideas or thoughts. These may be written down individually, in pairs, or voiced to the whole group for the teacher or a scribe to note down. The teacher may want to draw attention

to concepts that may need to be investigated to ensure participants have similar understandings.

Question - Making: Students are then asked to come up with a question that has been prompted by the stimulus and their reflection. This is usually done in pairs. If you have a group of about thirty, you may like to ask each pair to join up with another pair and agree one question between them. Students should be encouraged to make open-ended, 'philosophical' questions i.e. ones that have no easy answer. These questions could be based on concepts that may have arisen. Students are usually asked to write their questions on sheets or strips of paper to be displayed to all (or the teacher may choose to write them up).

Question - Airing: The questions are displayed and then the teacher or a member of each group reads them out. Some words, phrases or the question itself may need defining, clarifying or explaining to ensure that everyone has a shared understanding. Participants can also look for connections between questions and group them together or see if any questions are the same or slightly different.

Question - Choosing: Participants then get to vote on the question they feel will produce the most interesting and fruitful discussion. The teacher can consider different types of voting: for example one vote each (you only vote for the one question you think best) or one vote per question (you can vote for them all if they are good or only vote for the ones you think interesting). It can



be an open vote or a blind vote (if you feel some participants may be influenced by others). The questions can be placed on the floor and participants vote with their feet by standing next to the question they want – if there is a tie, the less popular can be eliminated and vote again. The important point is that the students are choosing what they consider to be the most interesting question that they have composed.

First Thoughts: When the most popular question has been chosen, the teacher may like to ask those whose question has been chosen to introduce it and explain how and why they came up with this question. It is also an opportunity to define any terms or words that may need clarifying.

Building: After this initial explanation, the group then has to develop their ideas and dig deeper. The teacher can ask who would like to comment on the initial explanation. The teacher can choose who speaks next from a show of hands or the speaker can choose the next speaker. If there are periods of silence, it may be that participants are thinking, so the teacher should not always feel they have to jump in.

The first few times a teacher conducts a community of enquiry, students may need prompting, for example the teacher may have to ask the group questions to take their thinking deeper or consider different perspectives. As they get more confident and used to the process, students will become more adept at asking questions and pursuing different lines of enquiry. Teachers can display sentence stems for children to use e.g. "I agree with ...because"; "I disagree with.... because"; "I'd like to refer back to..."; "I want to ask a question" etc. If the discussion seems to be drifting, the teacher can step in and ask: "Have we answered the question?" "Where have we got to?" The teacher can break the class into smaller groups for a few minutes to give everyone a chance



to contribute and come up with ideas and then bring them back to the plenary.

Last Thoughts: When the teacher feels the discussion has run its course or you are running out of time, the teacher can sum up main points discussed (when students are used to the process, you can ask

a student to write up the key points in the discussion as you go along on the board, perhaps in the form of a mind map). Ask everyone to reflect individually for one minute and then share final thoughts (what they have learned, a final comment, what they want to learn more about). The teacher can pass round a final-thoughts 'special object' to ensure everyone focuses on their turn.

Review: It is very important to allow enough time to review the whole process of the community of enquiry, using questions such as: How did we do? Was it a good enquiry? Did we choose a good question? Where do we go from here? What sort of follow up learning or consolidation do we want to carry out? What action do we want to take?

Enabling dialogue

A key task for the teacher is to create the learning environment where pupils feel comfortable to say what they really feel.

When the teacher asks an open-ended question, the pupil's response will tell the teacher where their thinking is. It is then the teacher's task to ask the question that takes that thinking deeper or in a different direction. The skill of the teacher in developing and modeling dialogue is crucial. Ideally pupils need to learn how to conduct such rich dialogue with each other when working in groups. Alexander describes

the impact when a child sees that one of their peers has a completely different perspective to them – it can lead them to rethink their own worldview and boosts their cognitive development. The greater the diversity of perspectives in the group, the more there is the potential for cognitive and social development.

The idea of challenging assumptions and preconceptions is also important for the teacher. S/he will need to think carefully about how they approach an enquiry, what sort of stimulus they choose, what sort of questions might arise and how their own values and world-view might influence their questions and interventions. S/he will also need to think about how different students might react to the theme or stimulus due to factors such as their gender, ethnicity, faith group or status within the group. What sort of sensitive issues might arise? How will the teacher deal with them? How can s/he ensure a safe and inclusive environment where all feel able to participate, yet where preconceptions and assumptions can be challenged? Are there areas of knowledge and understanding that may need to be addressed before engaging with the topic or stimulus or will it show the need to engage with further learning as a result of the enquiry?

P4C and DE

Critical thinking, reflection and dialogue are key skills in DE. Children need to develop the skills to critically engage with information and viewpoints that they encounter in their lives, whether these are from the media, the internet, books, school, their family, friends or other people in their lives. Unless people can learn to think independently then there is always the possibility that they will be led unthinkingly into behaving in ways which may be damaging to themselves, others or the environment. DECSY (Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire) has been training teachers in P4GC

(Philosophy for Global Citizenship) for a number of years. The starting points for a P4GC approach are two questions developed by Lipman.

'What kind of person do I want to be?

What kind of world do I want to live in?'

Philosophical enquiry develops these critical thinking skills. Children learn to ask questions in response to a variety of stimuli, each other and the teacher; to give reasons for their opinions, examine their own values and tease out their own and others' assumptions about an issue. One of the roles of the facilitator in an enquiry is to challenge thinking which is either too woolly or too rigid, encouraging children to have and express their own viewpoints without being dogmatic.

Alongside this critical engagement, P4C encourages openness to other people's ideas and perspectives. As a child (after reviewing a P4C enquiry) said with awe and wonder in his voice:

I never knew there were so many viewpoints about something before! (Callum, aged 9).

The ability to listen to other people, see their point of view and perhaps change your own mind is another skill essential to living peacefully in a plural society. Peaceful dialogue between people with potentially opposing points of view and even value systems is crucial to a world where the possibility exists of tensions being resolved without the use of force or violence. At its best, P4C gives young people an experience of how it is possible to engage with people with differing viewpoints and disagree with them in a non-confrontational way (Helen Griffin).

SAPERE recognises the potential for P4C to be an important and effective methodology for DE:

In a world where 35,000 people die every day of starvation, where one in five are malnourished and where 16 per cent of the global population controls 80 per cent of the world's GDP, there must be – surely – a desperate need for reasonable, responsible, informed, freethinking and active citizens to change this appalling situation for the better. P4C has demonstrated over 30 years that it can be non-partisan, and yet give rise to the thoughtfulness that is needed to challenge injustice and suffering.

Teaching topical and controversial issues

In the not-so-distant past, the idea of education as the passing down of a received body of knowledge was widespread in Western education. That meant knowledge that had been sifted through layers of discussion and deliberation. This also meant that educators could decide when they thought young people were 'ready' to receive different types of knowledge and information. The revolution in communications (as well as challenges to notion of knowledge and how children learn) in recent decades has changed all this.

Children from a very young age can see confusing and disturbing scenes and images beamed into their living rooms or bedrooms at all times of the day. What impact does this have on them? Where do they get the chance to digest and discuss what they see and hear? How can they start to develop informed and independent opinions based on a range of perspectives?

Many educators are aware of the importance of addressing topical and global issues but often feel wary of engaging with them as they feel they are complex, controversial and they may not have expertise in related knowledge and understanding. Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a pedagogy that enables teachers

to facilitate a community of enquiry around a stimulus of their choosing, but enables the learners to decide the key questions they want to discuss. It will help to establish what they know and understand and what they want or need to know more about. It provides a forum to share and develop ideas and understanding.

The formal education systems in many countries are increasingly dominated by testing and examinations in the belief that they will help nations to produce students who will succeed in a competitive global economy. One of the downsides of this trend is that education systems come to prioritise the lower order thinking skills in Bloom's taxonomy of memorising, recalling and applying (usually in a limited, theoretical context).

The reality is that the world that young people are growing up in is increasingly complex and uncertain, facing major challenges such as climate change, environmental destruction, growing inequality, rapid technological change and food and energy shortages. Such problems are only likely to be solved by developing the higher order thinking skills of analysing, evaluating, synthesising and creating. To achieve meaningful and equitable solutions to these problems, which are bigger than any one country or region, it could be argued that we will need collaboration and dialogue on a global scale.

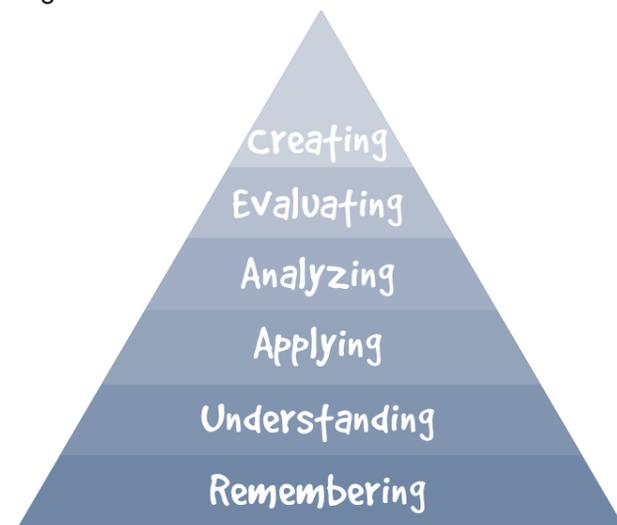
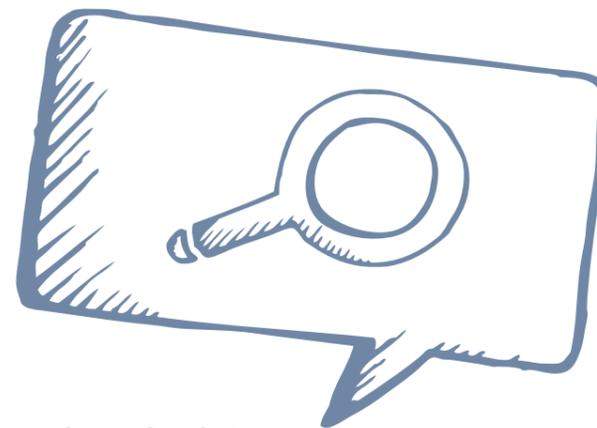


Diagram: Bloom's taxonomy - Thinking skills

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Notions of Development in an Underdeveloped Country

Abubakar Adam Ibrahim



Beginnings

The notion of development, like all abstract concepts, is relative, dependent on variables like the people involved, their ideas and thoughts on what constitute development. Perhaps there will never be a universal accord on what development means. Does it mean an increase in wealth, an improved way of living (and here also improved way of living vary from person to person) or a convergence of both?

Economic development, which is the growth and improvement in a country's or individual's resources, does not necessarily translate to human development. Often, the indicators of wealth, which reflect the resources available to a country, do not indicate how these resources are allocated and so we have had instances where relatively wealthy countries, such as China, Nigeria and India, have an incredibly huge number of extremely poor people.

For the purpose of this presentation, let us assume that human development entails, but is not restricted to, access to quality health care, decent shelter, decent livelihood according to the standards of the society, and other such indicators of wellbeing.

This article focuses on the perceptions of development and underdevelopment in underdeveloped countries, with an emphasis on Nigeria, trying to grasp how a country so wealthy is still largely underdeveloped and how the people are trying to cope.

The crust

It is official. Nigeria is now Africa's biggest economy. Following a 'rebasin', the country's GDP is now put at \$509.9bn. The last time such an exercise was done was in the 1990s but the recent result more than doubled the previous figure, catapulting the country into first place ahead of South Africa at \$370.3bn, taking into account industries

like the Nollywood film industry, the music industry and telecoms which have contributed significantly to this figure.

In other climes, these would be considered a positive development. But not so in Nigeria. Nigerians way of seeing things is quite different from others. The realities on the ground and the figures on paper simply do not correlate.

Due to the Nigerian's penchant for interpreting things differently—and this may be as a result of a series of unscrupulous leadership that has perfected the art of fabricating statistics and propaganda that are so far removed from reality to raise significant scepticism among the populace—notions of development and economic growth, being relative already, are even more so to the Nigerian.

To demonstrate let me share an anecdote. Power supply in Nigeria is notoriously erratic. And so when a Nigerian professor based in North America returned home and spent the night in the house of a friend who happens to be a top government official, he was surprised by the uninterrupted power supply and voiced his impression. His host laughed and told him they had been on standby generator for almost 24 hours. When the baffled visitor asked how come he had not heard the riotous noise typical of generators that power most Nigerian residences and businesses, the official said, "Oh, there has been development. We are now using noiseless generators."

The visitor was aghast. If a government official will consider moving from noisy generators to noiseless ones "development", then it means there is no hope of stable development in power supply. And this for a country that is Africa's leading producer of oil, and the sixth in the world, is something fundamentally troubling.

To the average Nigerian, the concept of development and economic growth is rocket science. All the economic indices seem right. Foreign investment is topping \$5.5 billion. The country has maintained relatively low debt-to-GDP (less than 20% compared to Spain's 85%), largely met its Central Bank inflation targets, and runs a current account surplus. Inflation rate is at 8 per cent, 4 per cent less than the bank benchmark at 12 per cent, something very unusual in a frontier market¹.

This is the country that has produced Africa's richest man, business mogul Aliko Dangote, who Forbes Magazine estimates is worth about \$25 billion (and is ranked the 23rd richest in the world). Nigerian tourists are the 5th biggest spenders in the UK, according to Quartz Magazine. And of course, you cannot exempt the Nigerian pastors who own private jets and are competing with oil barons in terms of spending power.

But for the majority things are very different. Over 80 per cent of the populace live on less than two dollars a day. Bus fares going back home sometimes might be twice as much as the price when leaving and in Gishiri, a community within Nigeria's opulent capital, one dilapidated clinic with one grimy bed serves 5000 people. For the people of such communities, and there are many of them tucked away in the shadows of the embellished mansions of one of Africa's most expensive cities, development would mean getting another bed for their run down clinic, even a fresh set of bed covers, a new Chinese made generator to power the clinic during the vagaries of the power supply, a new borehole even to provide portable water.

For the people of Zamfara in the far North of the country, development would mean having enough sustenance so as to not send their children to the mines where they are exposed to lead poisoning that has

¹ Data in this sections were obtained from Quartz Magazine, February 28, 2014

claimed many lives already. At least 163 fatalities have been recorded, 111 of them were children. And to the pregnant woman who lives in Ganawuri, development would mean not having to commute 200 kilometres to the nearest hospital and not being one of the 630 women who die in every 100, 000 live births, according to World Bank Figures (compared to for example 5 in 100, 000 for the Czech Republic and also Poland, and 4 in 100, 000 for Austria).

So for many Nigerians, the concept of development simply means having the basic necessities that will make life tolerable:

access to good and affordable education, good health care, a steady power supply, adequate security for life and property, decent shelter, and decent wages and the likes.

Make no mistake, Nigeria is a wealthy country. Some Nigerians are super wealthy but many are super poor. And the government, whose responsibility it is to engender development has so far failed to do so to a significant extent. The reason for the failure is not farfetched; decades of corruption, cluttered bureaucracy that often got in the way of policy implementations, policy inconsistency and a lack of political will to make things work have all contributed to this.

The Bane of African Development

There are many reasons why some countries in Africa are in such sorry state, with poor health infrastructure, insecurity, deplorable social amenities and often an inexplicable failure of social services.

It is quite easy to pass the buck and for decades, and even now, that has been what has been happening. Governments and intellectuals have refused to take



blame for their failures and Walter Rodney's book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* was held, not only as essential reading, but a Bible of sorts that explains why Africa is the way it is.

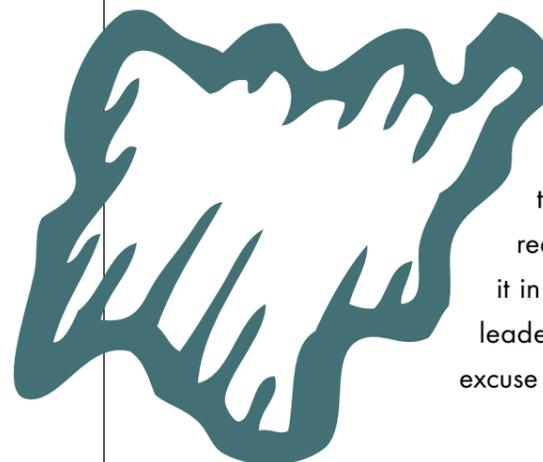
According to Rodney (1973), the blames lies squarely with the colonisers who came and met subsisting systems, kingdoms such as Egypt, Benin, Nubia and even the Fulani empire with clear ideologies and institutions and reduced them to nothingness such that their European overloads profited from the decimation of these societies.

He says "When a society finds itself forced to relinquish power entirely to another society, that itself is a form of underdevelopment."

He further argues that the slave trade and its attendant evils contributed to the current underdevelopment of the continent and colonialism made it even worse.

"Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profit to the so called mother land," (page 177).

While it is clear, Rodney has a point about the objectives of colonialism, is it still valid to hold the view that this is still the cause of Africa's underdevelopment?



His book is quite popular here and it is not uncommon to see young people reading it and discussing it in forums, or for political leaders referencing it as an excuse for their inadequacies.

In reality, Africa, and the rest of the exploited countries in the world have had significant time to address contemporary challenges facing their societies. While the damages of centuries of slavery and colonization cannot be undone in decades, all things considered, it is fair to assume that a much more appreciable level of development should have been attained compared to what is obtainable at the moment.

This is also the view of Ezekwesili²(2014) who in trying to understand why Nigeria has failed to thrive sites other colonized territories like Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore and even China as countries that have shaken off the yoke of colonialism and made significant progress with regards to their economic and social development.

Some others say it is our culture but like a political economist posited "European countries with different sorts of cultures, Protestant and Catholic alike, have grown rich. Secondly, different countries within the same broad cultures have performed very differently in economic terms, such as the two Koreas in the post-war era. Moreover, individual countries have changed their economic trajectories even though "their cultures didn't miraculously change." How about those who plead our multiethnic nationalities as the constraint but fail to see that the United States of America happens to be one nation with even more disparate ethnic nationalities than Nigeria and yet it leads the global economy! As for those who say it is the adverse impact of colonialism, were Singapore, Malaysia and even parts of China like Hong Kong not similarly conquered and dominated by colonialists? (Ezekwesili, 2014,p12)

As far as she is concerned, the failure of leadership in Nigeria and not necessarily colonialism is to blame.

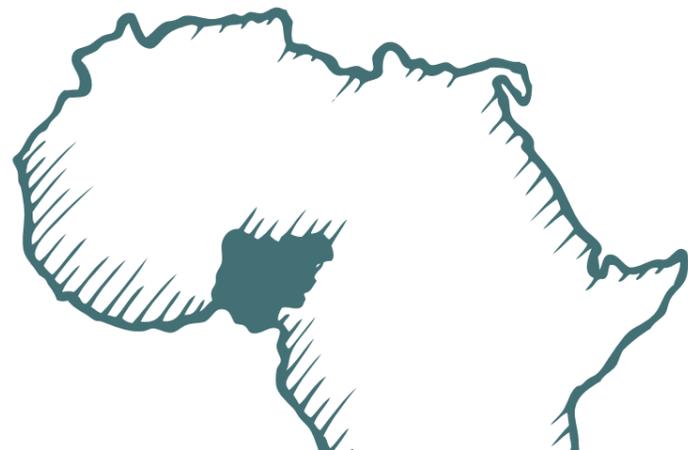
² Dr. Oby Ezekwesili was a Nigeria minister between 2005 and 2007, first as minister of Solid Minerals and then as Minister of Education.

The underperformance of our country as a result of the volatility of regime changes and truncation of democracy direly cost us the opportunity to build vibrant institutions, to pursue on a sustained basis sound macroeconomic, microeconomic and structural policies and finally to implement quality, effective and efficient public and private investment like other nations. (Ezekwesili, 2014, p19)

To buttress this, Nigeria has experienced several military coups, and only in the last 15 years has the military stayed out of government. The first elected government was toppled after six years in 1966 and the second after four years in 1983. And only in 1999 did a succession of military dictatorships relinquish power to an elected government.

Shooting to the top of Africa's economies is mostly seen as window dressing ahead of elections in 2015. The new GDP figures were released the same week the World Bank published statistics showing that Nigeria ranks third in countries with the highest number of extremely poor people in the world (behind India and China and ahead of Bangladesh and The Democratic Republic of Congo). Similarly, the Oxford Research Group pointed out that the 2012 Poverty Survey conducted by the National Statistical Bureau put the number of Nigerians living in poverty at 71 %.

Whilst there has been increased earnings by governments in the last couple of decades, there has



not been commensurate development to reflect these increased earnings but rather an increase in poverty in the country. This was also something that interested Ezekwesili (2014).

The trend of Nigeria's population in poverty since 1980 to 2010 for example suggests that the more we earned from oil, the larger the population of poor citizens: 17.1 million 1980, 34.5million in 1985, 39.2million in 1992, 67.1million in 1996, 68.7million in 2004 and 112.47 million in 2010! This sadly means that you are children of a nation blessed with abundance of ironies. (Ezekwesili, 2014, p13)

A large part of the problem can be attributed to corruption and misappropriation of funds. In a country like Nigeria where \$20 billion USD can go unaccounted for (this is about 6 per cent of the annual national budget) and the government suspends the Central Bank Governor for demanding proper accounting of this monies, it shows that there is a problem.³

It is estimated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) that about USD600bn has been stolen by various Nigerian leaderships between 1960, when the country got its independence from Britain, to 1999 when it returned to democratic rule after years of military rule. With the unprecedented looting of the treasury that has taken place between 1999 and now, it will be no surprise if that figure has doubled.

Imagine the number of hospitals that amount could have built? Imagine the number of schools that amount could have helped set up? Imagine how many people could have been educated from that money, or how

³ On February 20th, 2014, the Governor of Nigeria's Central Bank Sanusi Lamido Sanusi was removed from office by President Goodluck Jonathan after the governor repeatedly stated that \$20bn oil revenue have not been accounted for by the federal government. Sanusi has won praise as a competent financial steward and was named Banker of the Year 2010 by The Banker magazine.



many maternal mortalities could have been averted with proper medical care paid for from that money?

To do justice to Walter Rodney, his book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, cited above was written in 1973 just about a decade or so after many African countries got their independence but the fact that many experts and operatives in various economic sectors on the continent hold on to his views is inexplicable and a simplistic approach to pass the buck.

The Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, the United Nations set 8 Millennium Development Goals⁴ to encourage the world's poorest countries to attain a level of development in certain areas of life by the year 2015. The goals will be achieved with aid from richer countries and more than 50 per cent of this aid has been channelled to debt relief so that developing countries can invest their own resources in attaining these goals.

To the target date, it does not seem likely these goals will be met. Performance reviews have shown that very little progress has been made regarding five of the goals, while next to no progress has been recorded with the others. And this failure is not only restricted to Nigeria but to many other African countries as well.

In its Millennium Declaration of September 2000, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be reached in 2015

⁴ The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) are 8 goals set by the United Nations for developing countries. They are 1.To eradicate extreme poverty. 2.To Achieve universal primary education. 3. To promote gender equality and empowering women. 4.To reduce child mortality. 5. To improve maternal health. 6.To Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. 7.To ensure environmental sustainability. 8. To develop global partnership for development.

through concerted efforts worldwide. According to UN calculations, the estimated costs in terms of additional development aid of meeting the MDGs in all countries vary from US\$121 billion in 2006 to \$189 billion in 2015. It appears that while Asia is well on track to achieving the goals, essentially through its own efforts, Africa is lagging behind. (Keyzer, van Wesenbeeck, 2007 p1).

With more than half the population still living in extreme poverty, or less than 2USD a day, Nigeria's goal of eradicating poverty and hunger is far from being achieved as is that of achieving universal primary education. Despite the Universal Basic Education programme inaugurated by the government to help attain this goal, six out of ten eligible pupils have been enrolled in schools but disadvantaged groups have been overlooked and the quality of education has remained abysmal. There has however been significant progress in improving gender equality, but with regards to maternal mortality Nigeria still has the worst figures in the world, as noted earlier.

Progress has been slow in attaining these goals mainly due to a lack of commitment by governments, a lack of political will and constant policy changes.

A typical Nigerian government will deliberately eviscerate most policies put in place by its predecessors and even within the same government, changes in ministerial appointees will, ultimately, mean a change in policy. A recent example is the "Rebranding Project" embarked upon by the then minister of Information, Dr Dora Akunyili, wherein millions were spent in trying to "rebrand" the image of Nigeria. The project collapsed the moment Dr. Akunyili left office.

This lack of continuity is the bane of social and economic development in the country, and in many other African countries as well. It is driven by a desire to seem to outdo the previous government and in these climes, where governments are centred around individuals and not institutions every project is seen as a personal initiative of the person in charge, so the next person would want to impose his own personality on the system by coming up with another unsustainable project that will collapse the moment he or she leaves office.

Surviving the Austerity

As a consequence of government failures to inspire growth and development, Nigerians have been devising ways to cope.

Virtually every household has a standby generator to provide power when the power supply fails, which is often. To cope with habitual scarcity of petroleum products, even though Nigeria is one of the world's leading oil producers, vendors often find ways of getting this product and selling them to the people on the black market, often in the open and in full glare of law enforcement agencies and of course at exuberant rates.

There is little faith in the health sector and this is reflected by the number of people who have resorted to medical tourism. In 2013, Nigerians reportedly spent \$350 million to access health services in India alone according to the Nigerian High Commissioner to India, Ndubuisi Amaku.⁵ Many more go to countries like Egypt while the elites mostly travel to the UK, the US and Germany for medical attention. This of course is for those who can afford it. A clear case is that

of former President Umaru Yar'adua whose two and a half years in power between 2007 and 2010 were characterised by visits and long stays in hospital in Germany and then Saudi Arabia for medical treatment before his eventual death in 2010.

However, for those who cannot afford treatment abroad, alternative medicine, administered by mostly uneducated people under questionable hygiene, is an option and is often resorted to. The practitioners often call themselves "doctors" even though they do not have any qualification and the regulations guiding their practices are often loose. The efficacy of their treatments vary, but regardless of this they enjoy huge patronage because their rates are often affordable.

Prosperity churches have gained prominence and now enjoy huge following. Such churches often take on business premises for their services and their pastors have been prospering, joining the nouveau riche class and promising their followers instant or miraculous prosperity. What they offer can be viewed as spiritual development on the individual level. For these people, the return on their investment in faith is their own individual development: their own generators, their own cars, their own jobs or more profitable businesses, long awaited husbands or gallery wives. For many people these constitute development.

The proliferation of faith institutions and the increase in religious people however has not translated into a better, more socially responsible people. Crime is on the increase, often committed in the name of God incidentally, which is ironic. And it is not uncommon for thieving politicians to visit churches or mosques as their first port of call when their positions are consolidated or threatened. When prominent politician Bode George was convicted of embezzlement in 2009, and sentenced to jail and later released, the first thing he did was to organise a thanksgiving

⁵ Amaku made the statement at the 10th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave in New India and was reported in Nigerian dailies such as ThisDay newspaper of 11th March, 2014.



service in a church, a ceremony that was attended by other prominent politicians and was televised live on national television.

The consequence of the government's failure to engender development is that individuals focus more on personal development than collective growth.

Development has come to represent something personal, little bubbles of comforts in which life can be made to seem tolerable, a bubble to which they retreat to at the end of the day or at times of personal and social upheavals. This of course is relative to the individual and the resources available to him. These bubbles of comfort are often acquired by all means possible, legitimate or otherwise, giving rise to a situation where individuals prosper at the expense of society.

So, for example, because of inadequate public transport systems, everyone is desperate to get a car. Motorcycle taxis have become popular, and most of them are operated by youths serving not only as employment opportunities, but a way of alleviating transportation needs within certain localities. Some middle class income earners buy several and offer them to unemployed youths to operate for a share of the profits on a daily or weekly basis. The livelihood of many youths depends on these system. Some people have made billions importing motorcycles from abroad and others earn their livelihood putting the imported motorcycles together so, in that sense, a string of people depend on the business. In such ways, people have found the means to provide for themselves where the system has failed them.

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What Globalization Means for Young People: A Voice from the South

Abubakar Adam Ibrahim



The concept of globalisation has always been viewed with some degree of scepticism, especially in the Southern Hemisphere, where it is generally perceived to be exploiting the people and their ways of life.

This perception is not without cause. In previous years, and in fact going back as far as when the term globalisation was first deployed in its contemporary sense, many people in the South felt it was a successor to colonisation and principally designed to exploit the weaker economies and access the numerous resources in the South.

In the 1990s especially, cultural and economic exchange seemed one sided. The North was giving and taking what it chose; the cultural codes and materials that formed popular culture, finished products, the raw materials which were often taken from the South. The South was receiving and not contributing anything. A sense of deprivation arose in the South, especially considering that the South felt it was losing not only its resources to the North, but its culture was threatened by the more savvy popular culture in which the South had little or no say and were mere recipients. It was not an encounter between equals.

The scepticism of intellectuals in the South towards globalisation is not without antecedents. The arrival of the Portuguese in Benin in 1485 ushered in the slave trade and eventually centuries of colonisation, all under the pretence of giving something better— new faiths, new gods, new ways of lives. So the scepticism is not without justification. Whether the South has effectively recovered from these centuries of abuse is another topic for discourse.

How the North Dominates the South

In Nigeria it is not uncommon to walk down satellite towns around Abuja and find a Kentucky Fried Chicken

or Southern Fried Chicken¹. The impact of Shell in oil exploration and the deplorable state of the environment in Nigeria's Niger Delta² have made it impossible for local businesses to thrive. They simply do not have the expertise to compete and the multinational companies simply do not want the competition.

Hollywood movies and TV series dominated airtime in Nigeria in the 1970s and 1980s and only in the 1990s did the Nigerian government, through the National Broadcasting Corporation Code, demand a certain percentage of local content in local media. However, the problem then was that there was not enough local content because the cost of production was too high and it was easier to run foreign media content on a loop, as it is cheaper to import finished products.

The collapse in the 1980s of manufacturing industries in Nigeria as a direct result of badly executed public policies and the introduction of the International Monetary Fund's Structural Adjustment Programme resulted in the closure of industries. It made it increasingly expensive and impossible to produce goods locally, thereby forcing the closure of local manufacturing companies. And since many people were losing their jobs and their savings, with local currencies depreciating, there was really not much option.

So in a way it could be said that, drawing from the Nigerian case most especially, the South opened itself up to be dominated by globalisation, and the North, driven by its capitalist tendencies, took full advantage. However, it would be easy to echo the rhetoric and say that the North has taken unfair advantage of the South and exploited its people and resources, but

¹ Kentucky Fried Chicken and Southern Fried Chicken are popular American franchises that have outlets across the world.

² The Niger Delta region of Nigeria contains the bulk of Nigeria's oil wealth. Located in the south of the country, and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, the area is full of creeks as a result of the River Niger forming a fertile delta in the region. Oil exploration in the area with little regards for the environments caused the inhabitants to take up arms against the government to seek redress. The government has offered some carrots to pacify the unrest in the region and oil production has since resumed, but illegal bunkering and related criminalities still occur in isolation.

in reality this would not have been possible without the explicit and implicit participation of the South, whose leadership have by and large failed the people they are entrusted to lead. Slavery and colonisation would not have been possible without the complicity of some leaders of the enslaved and colonised people. This too is a subject for a separate discourse.

The dominance was not just economical, it was social and cultural as well. Young people in the South who had never been to the US for instance started speaking with American accents and displaying typical American mannerisms.

The North was producing an enormous amount of cultural contents; films, music videos, music and literature, which the young people of the South felt were trendy and wanted to relate to more than the poorly packaged and largely unavailable local content. Terms such as neo-colonialism were used by African intellectuals to refer to the erosion of and subtle domination of the South by the more prosperous north. The general sentiment in the South, as often articulated by some intellectuals in this region, is that the South is not contributing enough to the process, is mostly ploughed for resources and is a mere receptacle for finished goods and cultural products.

Young People And Globalisation

Almost two decades since globalisation became a universal concern, the children of that generation have come of age and have effectively been ushered into a world that is totally different from the one their parents grew up in.

Their socialization and sense of economic reality is significantly different. If the world had shrunk into a global village in the 1990s, now it has shrunk into an apartment block. It is almost as if, as Friedman(2006) summed up, "the world is flat".

It is my contention that the fall of the Berlin Wall, the rise of the PC, Netscape, work flow, outsourcing, offshoring, uploading, insourcing, supply-chaining, in-forming, and the steroids reinforced one another, like complementary goods. These flattening forces needed time to start to work together in a mutually enhancing fashion. That tipping point was reached somewhere around the year 2000 when the ten flatteners converged on such a scale and with such intensity that millions of people on different continents suddenly started to feel that something was new. (Friedman, 2006, p205)³

This is not necessarily an endorsement of Friedman's assertion; the world has remained significantly disproportional, bumpy and spiked in some regards. But the fact remains that now the world is even closer and more accessible than it had ever been.

What Lady Gaga wore to the Grammy awards is dinner time conversation in Pretoria and news about the Malaysian flight MH370⁴ is being monitored by the minute in Kano and Dakar in real time. And people do not just get the news, they get to contribute and comment or offer feedback on it instantly. Never has information travelled so quickly around the world as it does now. And people in the South, especially young ones, feel plugged into the global mainstream of trending events.

Internet access has multiplied in the last few years.

According to the International Telecommunication Union's 2012 survey, it is estimated that there are 55,

³ Thomas Friedman in his book, *The World is Flat* (2006) London: Penguin Books, argues that 10 factors have made the world accessible from all corners and to all people. His 10 'flatteners' are 1.The collapse of the Berlin Wall 2.Netscape 3.Workflow Software 4.Supply Chaining 5.Open Sourcing 6.Outsourcing 7. Offshoring 8. Insourcing 9. In-forming 10.The Steroids (personal digital devices).

⁴ Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370 took off on March 8, 2013 from Kuala Lumpur with 239 people on board en route to China but disappeared off the radars and has still not been found as at the time of writing this article, a month after. It is perhaps one of the greatest aviation mysteries of the modern world and has intrigued people around the world who want to know what happened to the plane and why.



930, 391 internet users in Nigeria alone, making it the 8th highest in the world with a total penetration of 32.9%, which is the percentage of the population that have access to the internet. A more recent survey will certainly show a higher percentage. But even this is over five times the population of Austria and the Czech Republic and almost twice the population of Poland.

Most of these people access the internet through smart phones and other mobile devices, generating and contributing to global dialogue through social media. They have also connected to the Diaspora population, such that the reality of life abroad and the realities of life in the South are discussed in real time. Consequently, young people have first-hand accounts of the realities of life abroad, the challenges of living in a foreign country and the inherent difficulties. The challenges of the immigrant experience is no longer something to be plucked from novels or other literatures, but something that they can access directly through people in the Diaspora, via the internet, social media updates and telephone conversations.

Regardless, some young people still dream of greener pastures abroad, but a lot more now look forward to travelling abroad mostly for studies in order to better position themselves for life back in the South, as they feel that they now have the means to access some of the services and facilities abroad without having to endure the difficulties of immigration.

For many of these young people life without the internet is unthinkable. They have a feeling that they are contributing to global discourse, that their voices somehow count. They are not only recipients of handed down information, they are also being heard, their stories are being shared, not only with people from the South but also those in the North.

But they are also creating content and contributing to popular culture. With YouTube they are contributing videos and through Twitter and Facebook they are sharing their stories.

The Negatives

It is generally believed that Nigerian youths are the major source of scam emails. Fraud is a major offence in Nigeria and is punishable under criminal code 419. The number: four-one-nine, is now used to refer to scam or fraud and the term 419ner is used to refer to the scam artiste. They mostly use the internet to defraud unsuspecting people or organisations, luring them to part with their money in return for some huge profit, often for implausible transactions.

Most of the victims of these crimes are those living in the North. And in most cases, there is no remorse on the side of the criminals because they approach the crime with a sense of entitlement. They think they are, in their own way and obviously for selfish reasons, extracting compensation for slavery and colonisation. Often they state this as justification for their crimes. Of course that is misguided and the real motive is mostly to make quick money.

Globalisation has also amplified local conflicts and made them global concerns.

Since 2011, terrorists have also explored the channels made available by globalisation to fester and become a global problem. Because of the instant connection to the most remote areas of the world, young people around the world have related to unfolding events that the 9/11 tragedy inspired and the subsequent wars. Religious fanatics have taken advantage of the internet to radicalise young people and organise terror attacks. The Nigerian terror group Boko Haram⁵ is a clear example of this. The group has often used the internet to post videos of its terror activities, to generate fear

⁵ Boko Haram is a terror group that operates mainly in the North-eastern parts of Nigeria and has been responsible for thousands of deaths in the last three years through insurgency and suicide bombings. The group's name means "western education is forbidden" in the local Hausa language. But ironically it has been using the internet and other forms of technology to preach fear, hatred and to issue threats. There is an on-going military operation to curb the radical group.

and reverence among the people, and has benefitted from the crisis in Libya, from where it is believed to have acquired weapons.

The Positives

In the last 20 years, Nigerian home videos, commonly called Nollywood after the American Hollywood, have become a global sensation, despite the low budget and low technical quality of the movies. The industry has gradually risen to be the second largest movie industry in the world, surpassing Hollywood in terms of quantity of movies produced and second only to Bollywood.

The movies are now a staple across the world, especially on the African continent. The success of Nollywood is replicated with the music industry with Nigerian musicians becoming household names and the ideal choice at parties and other events for young people across Africa.

Satellite TV has played a major role in the spread of these movies and music videos and the result is the creation of a shared code among youths and across the continent and elsewhere in the world, such that peculiar Nigerian expressions, mostly in pidgin English, do not seem out of place in Rome or Kampala. Considering that Nigerian English is peculiar even among the English speaking countries of Africa, being a blend of distinctive expressions, pidgin and a range of words from local languages - a derivative from the ownership and manipulation of the language by Nigerians who tend to favour the musicality in languages rather than the stiff formality of English - it easily stands out.

The result is that some people across Africa, in countries like Uganda and Kenya in the east and as far south as Zimbabwe, feel that Nigeria is now dominating the market on the continent and

exporting cultural contents at the expense of local contents in those countries. It is not uncommon to hear comments like "Nigerians are so dominating" elsewhere in Africa and this is mostly down to the zeal and robust spirit of the typical Nigerian as compared to the laid back approach of a typical Zimbabwean or Ugandan. With a population of 160 million and counting, Nigeria easily has the largest population on the continent and given that Nigerians travel a lot to pursue business interests, often with great zeal, this assessment is not completely off the mark. For other Africans, Nigeria represents a huge country sitting on oil money and the opulence and luxurious lifestyles showcased in Nollywood movies only reinforce this notion.

This author met a Zimbabwean writer who lives in the US and who unconsciously lapses into what other Zimbabweans call "Nigerian", even though no such language exists, especially when she gets emotional. She admits that she has read lots of books by Nigerian authors and is a great fan of Nollywood movies. Nollywood movies are huge among the diaspora communities because a lot of them feel a need to connect to their roots while in foreign lands and these movies with African characters and African themes and concerns often are the closest link to the unfolding reality back home.

Nollywood sprang out of nothing but the resourcefulness of some people. Its success is driven by the Nigerian spirit, which in turn has resulted in offshoot industries in Ghana, known as Ghollywood, and other smaller industries elsewhere across the continent. But the sense one gets from others, in different parts of the continent, is that of subtle domination by Nigeria. It has not reached the level yet where it would be considered a menace though and perhaps this is borne out of a feeling that it is easier for Africans to relate to these movies because of the content and where they are coming from, as opposed to Hollywood movies that portray a radically different reality.



What this proves is the reinforcement of the wonderful findings of Christopherson, Gareestsen and Martin (2008) in which they argued that contrary to Friedman's claims the world is not flat, despite the internet and the other 'flatteners' upon which Friedman based his bold assertion, suggesting that equal opportunity to create discussions, influence production and the likes now exist for people from all around the world.

According to their findings, if anything, the world now is "spiked" and far from being even or flat.

In fact, there is a sizable body of opinion and evidence that globalization is not flattening the world economy but accentuating its unevenness. It is even arguable whether the global ICT 'platform', as Friedman calls it, is itself flat. Indeed, both the architecture and the flows of Internet and telephonic communication are highly spatially skewed and concentrated, being overwhelmingly focused on and dominated by major 'global' cities. (Christopherson, Gareestsen, and Martin, 2008, p344.

So in essence, despite the significant progress made in somewhat improving the South-North flow of information, there is in fact still major disparities in the way globalization impacts on the world.

Advances in technology have taken away the few jobs available to hundreds of thousands of unemployed and mostly unemployable youths in the South. This may sound simplistic and perhaps one would want to rationalise the fact that a lot of corporations and businesses in the North outsource productions to the South thereby creating employment. The reality is that those working in such industries are mostly being exploited and the pay is insignificant and does not meet the standards set by the International Labour Organisation. There is no data suggesting that outsourcing has decreased poverty and created significant wealth for the South.

Most young people in the South are still stuck in the rut of certain career pursuits because the education system has remained the same mostly since the 1970s

and 1980s. The prime career choices have remained medical doctors and lawyers, especially in Nigeria, because they are considered professional courses. Many who, for some reasons (and there are many apart from academic excellence), fail to make the cut are often shipped out to study other courses that may not in any way be related to their individual aspirations, so that their best hope of employment is the civil service. The recent Nigerian Immigration Service recruitment scandal where over a million people were shortlisted for 5, 000 job slots and 16 died as a result of stampede⁶ is a demonstration of this overreliance on government jobs.

Many countries in the South have not adapted to the advances in technology so as to educate their citizens to make the best of it. Only recently, in 2012 to be precise, did the government introduce a new secondary school syllabus that makes computer studies and information and communication technology compulsory for all students.

Elsewhere, globalisations and ICT have been worked into the system. In 2012, pupils in some Kenyan schools received free e-book readers loaded with dozens of text books and stories in English and Kiswahili to enhance their education and mitigate the cost of buying text books. It was an exciting experience for the pupils, most of whom had never seen a Kindle before. But it is an experiment already tottering to fail as publishing houses in that country and government officials who get kickbacks from providing text books to schools are trying to undermine the effort and prevent it from going national.

Nigerian university syllabi are still years behind the times and the result has been the production of students who spend years studying what they really don't need

⁶ On March 15, 2014, over a million Nigerian jobseekers were invited to try out for 5, 000 job openings in the Nigerian Immigrations Service in exercises across the country. Sixteen of these job seekers were killed in a stampede at the Abuja National Stadium. Investigations later revealed that most the slots had already been allocated to some government officials and prominent politicians.

to know, making them dependent on government jobs that are not available.

Only those who are able to think outside the box can succeed in this system. A clear example is Nigerian entrepreneur Jason Njoku, as reported by the BBC, a young man who having studied in London decided to start an online distribution business for Nollywood movies. Having failed to make the business work from London, he had to return to Lagos, the heart of Nollywood, to make the business float. Today, he is the head of a major distribution chain that employs 81 people in Lagos, London and New York. He is able to harness the avenues and potential of a global market using the internet to provide goods, taking a thriving movie industry to consumers all around the world with only a few clicks of a button, just as Njoku and the film producers make their money, with only a few clicks. Njoku is a success story for globalisation.

The Things They Do

For many young people in the South, who have had experiences of dictatorships and grown up to stories of journalists disappearing for doing their jobs, it is liberating to have an avenue through which they can make commentaries about events that interest or concern them from all around the world.

Nowhere is this spirit more boisterously showcased than in Nigeria where young people have taken to social media to talk about bad governance and be openly critical of government. In 2011, Goodluck Jonathan was elected president of Nigeria. He was the first man to use social media to reach out to the youths, who felt connected to his background as the child of a poor fisherman. His incredible rise to power was inspiring, especially to the youths. He is the first president to appoint a special aide on social media, a young man who serves as the president's spokesperson on new media.

Three years down the road, the same youths who actively canvassed for his elections have taken to Facebook and Twitter to condemn the president for what they consider a below par performance in office. The liberty with which they criticise and condemn the president and the government as a whole, often making constructive criticisms, mimicry or caricatures of top politicians or outright crude jokes, is often astounding when compared to other places. Take Zimbabwe for instance; the police in that country are at liberty to stop an individual and check his or her phone for porn or caricatures of the president.

Such authoritarian measures are unheard of in a country like Nigeria which has endured numerous military dictatorships. The closest this came to happening was in 2013, when a democratically elected government proposed a seven year jail term for social media critics of the government. Of course, people took to social media to condemn the law, as they have done similarly with the law and resultant debates over the law prescribing jail terms for same sex relationships. The interest of youths vary. In some circles the talk is about fashion, whilst celebrity gossip too has become a major hit. Young people like Linda Ikeji have been milking this aspect to the fullest with her blog posting gossip about local and international celebrities, drawing an incredible number of hits on her blog and making a lot of money from the resultant adverts placed by companies and individuals. Another young man, Japhet Omojuwa, has become a social media celebrity with thousands of followers who hang on to his social criticism and tweets.

There are also conscious efforts to influence government policies through the use of social media. In January 2012 massive nationwide protests were organised by youths to protest a hike in fuel price. Most of the organisation was done via social media and the turn out for the protest, mostly inspired by the Arab Spring, was unlike anything Nigeria had witnessed before. After three days, the government backedpedalled and cut down from the proposed price.



But as is typical of youths, there is a preoccupation with all things youthful: fashion, sex and sexuality, personal challenges, youthful angst, concerns about education, dreams about the future and so on.

However one interesting aspect of this is the evolution of literature. With the cost of productions high and publishing companies shutting down, younger writers have taken to blogs, webzines and Facebook to share their works with the public and get instant feedback. Writers' groups have gone online, creating huge networks from which often anthologies are produced. Some of these young writers have actually succeeded in getting publishing deals from this platform. The possibilities are endless and in the coming years, with technology in a constant flux, it is hard to imagine what other avenues and doors these changes will open.

Conclusion

In essence, in the last 20 years, globalisation has significantly altered the way we live and think, and has substantially made progress towards creating channels through which the South can reach the North. It has by no means 'flattened' the world. Whereas the north has significantly dominated the south in the 90s and early 2000s to the extent that globalization seemed one sided and inherently evil, developments in the last five years have propelled the South to make contributions and become active participants in global discourse and cultural and product exchange. Economically, a lot still needs to be done for the South to fully explore not only their resources but the global market that is being opened to them to some extent.

What has become obvious though is that the South did not place itself well to take advantage of the opportunities globalisation has provided and has been slow to react to the sweeping changes being dictated by

advances in technology and shifts of ideologies. Hence government policies need to be changed to reflect the realities on the ground and the corporations need to make concessions to encourage greater participation of the South in the process.

For young people, the importance of popular culture cannot be over-emphasised and they have taken advantage of opportunities to create their own shared codes through which they transmit their thoughts and ideas to people across the world. The fact that they can reach far corners of the world has spurred creativity and in some instances significant business and trade opportunities. But it has not achieved equity between people across the world in terms of reduction of poverty or creation of an equal platform for social and cultural exchanges.

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FOCUS on Poverty

Jana Kubelková



What does it mean to be poor? Someone may feel poor if he is not able to obtain enough food or if he lacks a roof over his head. For someone else poverty may mean having to buy a cheaper mobile phone than his classmates, or spending holidays at the cottage instead of on the beach by the sea. Someone else may feel poor when he lacks a group of peers with whom to share his experiences.

Poverty is not a straightforward issue

Most definitions of poverty relate it to material deprivation or to the lack of meeting basic human needs. What are basic human needs? Up to now, income and consumption levels have been the most commonly used indicators. Health, life expectancy, child mortality and access to drinking water also play important roles. Other characteristics of poverty include vulnerability, helplessness, exclusion, quality of the surrounding environment and a number of other non-economic subjective indicators. Which of these indicators do you consider to be the most important?

The inhabitants of different parts of the world live in diverse conditions. Let us imagine a family of eight living in the remote countryside with a daily income of 12 USD. Its members have access to drinking water but there is not a single hospital or school in the far neighbourhood. The second family has four children, lives in an urban slum and shares a rented house with two other families. The family earns 10 USD a day and only has access to non-drinkable water, but the children have access to free health care

and education. Which of the families is doing better according to the indicators set out above?

Poverty goes hand-in-hand with material deprivation, but its precise definition is hard to find. It is a subjective and locally specific condition and its perception can vary considerably between individuals. So why should we measure poverty if it is so complicated?

Why is it important to measure poverty?

In practice, measuring poverty is of great importance and has a real impact on the lives of many of the world's inhabitants. Correctly determining affected groups and groups at risk are important prerequisites for effectively combating poverty, preventing it and providing assistance to vulnerable groups. For these reasons, it is important to define who is poor and who is not poor, both in geographical terms (defining areas with high concentrations of poor people) as well as in terms of social stratification (defining the poor class). However, in practice, there is often no other option but to use existing - often distorted - data. On this basis a certain threshold is defined and people below this threshold are labelled as poor. This group of the population is then targeted by a number of social programmes. Whether a person officially lives above or below the defined poverty line is closely linked to the right to social benefits and a number of other support services. This method is used in the Czech Republic as well as in different communities all over the world. The most commonly used international indicator is 1 USD per day, the threshold for what is so called extreme poverty.

Despite the indisputable practical value of measuring and categorizing poverty, we also need to look be-



hind the general definitions and numbers that often tempt us to stereotype. We should consider all the colourful and varied everyday life stories that are hidden under the label of poverty.

Poverty according to different approaches

According to traditional economic approaches, economic growth is the main factor in reducing poverty. Economic growth should lift a much larger part of poor people above the absolute poverty line¹. This simplified way of understanding poverty is represented by picture 1 which portrays the “pond of poverty” and “city of wealth” up on the hill. The level of the pond of poverty is decreasing due to economic growth which is represented in the picture by an elevator carrying poor people to the city of wealth.

However, the economic prosperity of a country does not usually translate directly into prosperity in the everyday lives of people. Different groups of people benefit from economic growth by varying degrees. A number of recent studies also demonstrate that poverty cannot be perceived as a static phenomenon – the composition of households under and above the poverty line keeps changing, often without a bigger change in the overall level of poverty. Picture 2 depicts a parallel flow, i.e. a slide that transports people from the city of wealth to the poverty pond. This situation is illustrated by the stories of Heera and Shantil, both of whom live in a village in the Indian state of Rajasthan (see box 1 and 2).

¹ Absolute poverty is the condition wherein a person does not have sufficient income to meet basic human needs. The most widespread method of measuring poverty is the poverty line which defines the minimum income needed for meeting basic needs, such as the food and shelter.

20 years ago, Heera’s family was one of the richest households in the village. They owned land and a big herd of cattle. However, their situation worsened over the course of time and today Heera’s family is among the poorest in the village. 18 years ago, Heera’s father fell seriously ill and the costs of his treatment rose to as much as 25,000 rupees (1 CZK = 3 rupees). Then the father died and the funeral costs amounted to another 10,000 rupees. In order to cover these costs, the family had to sell their cattle and at the same time take out a loan. Everybody worked hard to pay off the loan, but 10 years ago Heera’s wife also fell seriously ill and her treatment required another loan for 20,000 rupees. It became increasingly difficult for the weakened family to pay its debts. Then three years of drought came and with its meagre harvests. As a consequence, Heera had to sell his family’s land, and since then he and his son have made a living as day labourers. A number of similar stories of families that have fallen into poverty in a single generation can be found in the village.

Shantil’s family is among those that have managed to escape from poverty. When Shantil was a small boy his parents did not own any land and worked on the neighbouring farm. Outside the agricultural season they had no other income. During these periods, the family had to take out loans with high interest from a local merchant and as a result a big part of their earnings went to repay the debt. One day, Shantil’s father and his brother set off for a city 250 km away and began to work as seasonal workers in a cotton processing factory. The work was not well paid, but during those four months of the year it provided the family with useful income. Thanks to this additional income, the parents could send Shantil and his siblings to school, buy a herd of goats and extend the house. Shantil does not consider his family rich because they still do not have certain amenities, for example a refrigerator,



in their house. Nevertheless, their living standard has improved considerably. Outside the agricultural season, Shantil also works in a factory in a distant town. He has the highest education in the family so he handles the family budget and looks for more seasonal work.

What is the predominating image of poverty that we have? What is the image of poverty most often conveyed to us by the media?

Undoubtedly, economic growth is an important factor in reducing the number of poor people. However, poverty has many faces and many of these cannot be eliminated by economic growth alone. How can we explain the fact that even during fast economic growth many people fall into poverty while others escape it?

Poverty under the microscope

The tools for exploring poverty in its different forms could be compared to a telescope and a microscope. The traditional macro approaches that explore the total number of poor people (mostly at the national level) use a telescope. By using a telescope we obtain a certain view of poverty. However, the relationships and patterns uncovered at the national level do not necessarily apply in particular regions and localities and may not offer good guidance when selecting suitable interventions. In order to understand flows (from and to poverty) at the local level, we have to employ other tools and methods that could be represented by a microscope. The image of poverty offered to us by a microscope may be totally different from the one offered to us by a telescope. The resulting mosaic from the images obtained both by the telescope and the microscope is enormously important in order to better understand poverty.

A telescope can be a useful tool in answering a number of important questions such as: *Why are some countries rich and others poor? What is the role of physiographic factors? What is the importance of the quality of institutions (from legal systems to value systems and customs), in particular the protection of human rights and, by extension, property rights, restrictions on the political and economic power of the elite, the guarantee of certain levels of social justice and redistribution of wealth? To what extent are the policies of regional development adequate? How is the internal development of a country influenced by the structure of global political and economic systems? Who determines the so called rules of the game (setting international trade and international labour divisions, access to international financial markets or solutions to global environmental disequilibrium, etc.)?*

We are well aware that some countries are poor. However, what are their inhabitants worried about? And what helps them in their lives? It is the microscope that uncovers many life stories and thus leads us to important findings. The reasons behind a fall below the poverty line or a rise above the poverty line are not identical across individual households. Being aware of colourful life stories enables us to look under the cover of statistical indicators such as GDP per capita.

In order to define poverty strategies correctly, it is essential to understand the causes of rising from or falling into poverty. For these approaches, it is also necessary that the local people themselves evaluate their own situations. The poverty line defined in this way is usually different from the officially defined line and is usually placed at a higher income level. This means that local people may set the poverty line at 5 USD per day instead of 1 USD per day, for example. *How would inhabitants of the Czech Republic view their own situation from the perspective of the telescope and from that of the microscope?*



Living with the label “poverty”

In most cases, changes for the worse are not caused by sudden reversals (such as natural disasters, political coups or economic collapses). It is rather a sequence of relatively common events that have a negative impact on households and a strong cumulative effect. Little by little households usually lose their property and their earning capacity. At the same time their level of indebtedness increases to the extent that only limited chances for recovery remain.

According to numerous studies², deteriorating health together with the cost of medicines related to its treatment are the most common causes of falling into poverty. Metaphorically it could be said that millions of people in the world are just one serious illness away from falling into poverty. Other common factors are limited access to financial loans, the costs related to the obligation of organising expensive weddings or funerals, long-term crop failure, etc.

The stories quoted in the studies also show that poverty is rarely related to personality characteristics such as laziness, weak will or lack of initiative. People living in existential uncertainty have to work because laziness is a luxury they cannot afford. And the same is true of initiative – hardly anywhere can be found such endeavour and entrepreneurial spirit as in the streets of Indian cities and villages.

Poverty at the individual level is primarily related to lack of opportunities and to obstacles that prevent poor people from effectively taking advantage of existing opportunities. Typical examples of such obstacles are insufficient education, limited access to capital and social security services (health care, insurance etc.).

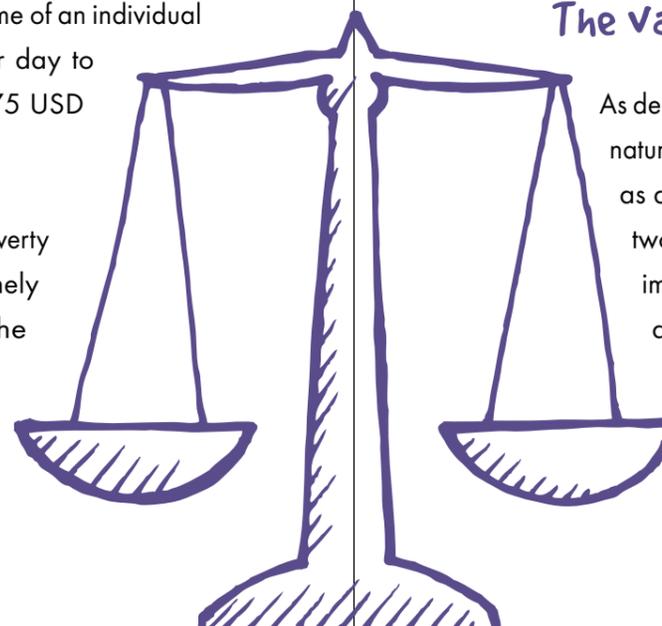
² The surveys were conducted using the same methodology in more than 200 villages and cities of India, Uganda, Kenya, Peru and United States (see Krisna 2010, Narayan 2008).

The breaking out of poverty is usually related to increasing household income through new employment opportunities. Other factors are education, access to information about employment opportunities and the possibility to use a number of social services. The development of infrastructure is usually mentioned with regard to access to a wider labour market which is also closely linked to the quality of transport connection. As with the causes of falling into poverty, diverse locally specific conditions and situations play an important role in escaping poverty.

Is there a relation between the reduction of poverty and an increase in the quality of life?

When examining a decrease in the number of poor people, it is extremely important to focus our attention not only on the quantity but also on the quality of the shift, that is, on the improved quality of life. A simplified approach (see picture 1) only makes a distinction between two phases – below the poverty line and above the poverty line. Therefore, it cannot be determined whether the income of an individual increased from 0.95 USD per day to 1.01 USD per day or from 0.75 USD per day to 2.5 USD per day.

Experience has shown that the poverty line has been set at an extremely low level. Therefore, from the perspective of an improved standard of living, the decrease in poverty is for some social groups almost imperceptible.



If the minimum income level was doubled (to 2 USD per day), the number of poor people would increase. Also, the problem is that poor people benefit from economic growth much less than more prosperous groups of the population. Poor people are at the same time more vulnerable and tend to be more affected by economic crises. This shift from the narrowly defined fight against poverty towards an orientation to wider support for the overall quality of life is also apparent in the process of preparing new global development goals (so called Sustainable Development Goals that will replace the so called Millennium Development Goals).

For many poor households, new job opportunities do not come in the form of well-paid and stable employment. Only a handful of lucky ones get into an elevator that quickly takes them to the globally connected city of wealth. A more realistic situation is portrayed in picture 3. The way out of poverty leads many people up a ladder that does not reach all the way to the “city of wealth”. It usually ends up somewhere between the pond of poverty and the city of wealth. Their positions remain very fragile. The above mentioned example of Shantila’s family falls into this category.

The variability of poverty

As described above, the so called dynamic nature of poverty, which perceives poverty as a constantly changing process with two parallel, opposite flows, has some important implications for the effective development of strategies to fight poverty. We cannot perceive poor people as a stable and uniform group. More than one third of the people today labelled

as poor were not born so, but were plunged into poverty during the course of their lives. Therefore, the risk of falling into poverty cannot be considered a marginal phenomenon. It is a process that threatens many inhabitants across countries in different parts of the world.

It might seem that the described trends only affect developing countries. However, similar stories can be also heard in cities in the US. In general, more and more experts wonder about the misleading division of the world into rich North and poor South on the grounds that more than three quarters of poor people in today’s world live in middle-income countries and not in the poorest countries of the world. They point out that a better geography of poverty needs to be defined.

Two independent flows also require two independent reactions in the form of two different sets of political measures. Firstly, there should be programmes preventing the risks of falling into poverty. Secondly, programmes aimed at lifting people out of poverty should focus mainly on the quality of the rise. This is related to increasing the standard of living for poor households and preventing them from staying just above the poverty line.

The first group of strategies focuses particularly on improved and more accessible health care and more universal health insurance. Importantly, public affairs at the local level can be influenced more effectively than responses to big and unexpected disasters. Under the second category are programmes focused on the development of quality work opportunities that would generate stable income, along with access to education and other social services. Access to information on available services and new job opportunities is also of great importance. Last but not least, it includes infrastructure development and strengthening public

transport systems. This should give each individual an opportunity to use their capacities for effective personal development. The government plays an important role in providing these services and in return it creates a wider spectrum of educated and economically active inhabitants. However, the implementation of individual measures should reflect the specific local conditions (which sometimes vary even between the different regions of a single country) and need to be adjusted accordingly.

Is life in poverty unhappy?

Finally, let us consider the question of whether or not life in poverty is unhappy. According to the testimonies gathered by the author of this article on the issue of subjective satisfaction with life in villages in southern India between 2010 and 2011, it does not seem so. The local people were, on average, "rather satisfied" with their lives. A more detailed analysis of the relation between the material wealth of households and the feeling of happiness revealed that the wealth of households has had an influence on the feeling of happiness but that it was just one of many factors. Among the more important factors were job security, employment opportunities, the health condition of close relatives and family relationships. Just as a matter of interest, we should mention that the feeling of happiness measured in Indian villagers was just a little bit lower than the happiness of Czech university students as revealed in another survey. The difference in the age of respondents and their health condition are possible explanations for this difference. *How satisfied are you with your life? What are the factors that impact on your feeling of satisfaction?*

In what respect can poor people be rich and, on the contrary, in what respect can rich people be

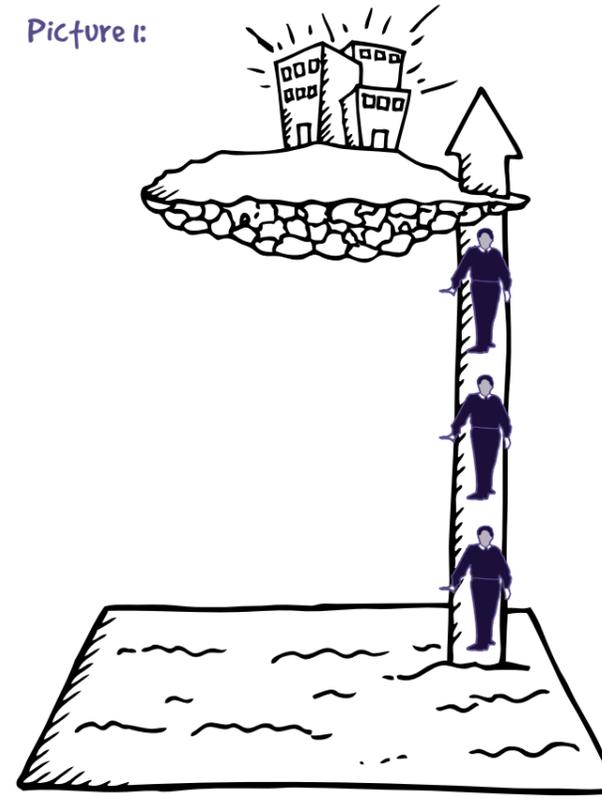
poor? What is the opposite of poverty? According to you, what should be the goal of development? When discussing poverty, try to think about what quality of life, satisfaction, and happiness mean. Try to ask yourself... What other questions are raised by this article?

Resources:

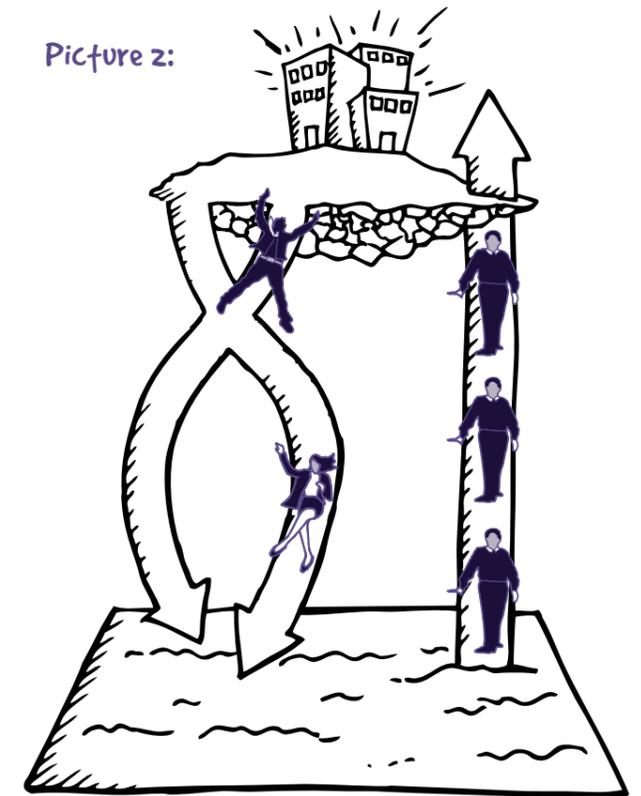
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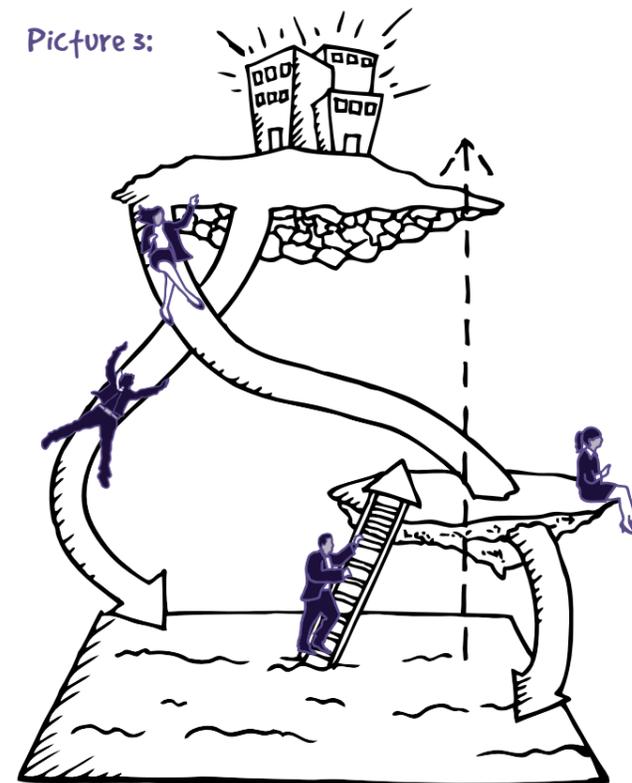
Picture 1:



Picture 2:



Picture 3:



Migration Around Us

Ludmila Kopecká



Have you ever considered how often political and economic situations in different countries change? Countries that are currently prospering and attracting many people from all over the world may suddenly experience financial crises or war and become countries that, on the contrary, people start abandoning. A country which receives immigrants can easily become a country that, conversely, produces emigrants.

- What would you do in a situation of high unemployment, war or humanitarian crisis? Would you opt for leaving your country as a survival strategy or to better provide for your family?

Migration: Today and in the Past

Some 232 million migrants are living in the world today, comprising 3.2 per cent of the world's population.

Migration is an issue that has become increasingly topical and is being discussed at universities, in the press and during election campaigns. National borders, jobs and the coexistence of migrants with the greater society are issues that are being debated in relation to migration.

In recent years, the fluctuation of people around the world has intensified, mainly due to the development of transport, tourism, communication technologies and transnational business networks. However, as proved by history, migration is not a modern phenomenon. People have always migrated to other countries, either in a forced manner or on voluntary basis. They have searched for better lives, new business opportunities or livelihoods, escaped conflicts, poverty or ecological disasters, or have been forcibly displaced.

Recent European history has shown also that its development has, in many aspects, been shaped by

the massive migration to North America in the 19th century, and by the forced migration caused by wars in the 20th century.

However, it was not until the second half of the 20th century that Europe, or rather the block of member states of the current European Union, became one of the most popular destinations for migrants. Only after World War II, did Europe begin actively accepting foreign workers and the number of people that applied for asylum increased considerably. Most of the migrants which came to Western European countries at that time were from other European states such as Italy, Spain, Greece etc. Migration thus occurred mainly within the borders of Europe.

The UN estimates that in 2013, 72 million international migrants lived in Europe. The total number of foreign nationals living in some of the EU member states numbered 34.1 million people, of which 20.4 million came from outside the EU and 13.7 million were citizens of other EU member states.

According to statistics, some European countries continue to produce higher numbers of emigrants and EU citizens emigrate both inside and outside the EU borders. For example, people from Spain affected by the economic crisis often leave for North and South America as well as for neighbouring France. Poland is a country with a long tradition of emigration. Poles are one of the largest groups of migrants in countries such as Germany and the United Kingdom.

If we focus specifically on the situation in the Czech Republic, some 20 years ago it was rather a country of emigration than a country of immigration. You may be familiar with names of famous Czech migrants such as Miloš Forman, Martina Navrátilová, Madeleine Albright, Ivana Trump, Jaromír Jágr and many others who left the Czech Republic for various reasons and



who still live abroad. Perhaps you have acquaintances that left the Czech Republic for neighbouring Germany, Slovakia or Austria, which are currently the countries with the highest number of migrants from the the Czech Republic.

Migration is a bilateral process and with the accession to the European Union and the transformation of its political and economic systems, the Czech Republic has become, on the contrary, a country sought after by migrants. However, in comparison with other neighbouring countries, the Czech Republic is still among those with a rather low number of migrants (around 4.5 per cent of the population).

- What is your personal experience with migrants in the Czech Republic?
- Do you often meet them?
- Do you have any classmates, neighbours or friends of other nationalities or citizenship?

Migrants come to the Czech Republic mostly from the Ukraine, Slovakia and Vietnam. Other groups of migrants are citizens of the Russian Federation, Poland and Germany. You have the highest probability of meeting somebody of another nationality (residing in the Czech Republic) in the capital city of Prague, and then in the Central and Southern Bohemian regions.

The Root Causes of Migration

What are the main causes of migration? What influences people to go to another country and leave their home countries? Economic, social and political factors in the migrants' homelands (so called push

factors¹) as well as in their host countries (so called pull factors²) play important roles.

Often, we hear that people mainly leave in search of better economic opportunities or jobs. A typical example is the Turkish labour migration to Germany in the 1960's, during the era of the so called "economic miracle" or economic boom when Germany needed many workers and when Turkish citizens became the most numerous group of labour migrants in Germany (often called "gasterbeiters").

There are some jobs that urge people to live constantly on the move. It is no longer exceptional, with the development of the global economy and the increasing number of multinational corporations, that a person may work for several years in one country and then several years in another. Labour migration is often considered temporary, but that is not always the case. Some migrants decide to stay and start a new life together with their families in their new countries.

Jobs are not the only pull factor. Other factors include favourable climates, stable political situations, perceptions of a better lifestyle etc. For example, have you ever thought about how wonderful it would be to live in the south by the sea? Some citizens of the United Kingdom pursue their dreams and move to Spain to enjoy a better climate, and a higher quality and slower pace of life. For health reasons they may move from polluted capitals to places with fresh sea air.

1 Push factors of migration or factors that drive a person to emigrate from his country of origin. For example, it may be high unemployment in the home country, discrimination, a low standard of living, low wages, a bad ecological situation etc.

2 Pull factors of migration or factors that attract a person to emigrate to another country. For example, it may be a demand for workers, higher wages, respect for human rights, favourable climates etc.



Migration is, without any doubt, influenced by various causes and motives that are not constant during the process of migration. There are as many reasons for migration as there are people. Everybody has unique dreams and expectations about their lives in their new country.

Maria (24 years old) came to study in the Czech Republic six years ago. She had been dreaming of Prague since her childhood because of some nice pictures of Prague castle, Charles Bridge and the Old Town Square she saw at her school in her small Siberian town. She had long imagined what student life would be like at one of the oldest European universities and when she received an offer to study in the Czech Republic she couldn't turn it down.

- What would you do in a similar situation?
- Do you have any dreams related to life in another country? Where would you go if you were offered a good job or an opportunity to receive an education?

Forced vs. Voluntary Migration

It should be stressed that the situation of forced migrants is completely different. People escaping their home countries because of war, totalitarian regimes or unstable political situations or persecutions often cannot choose where to go. They are lucky if they manage to escape and save their lives. These migrants are called refugees.

Sagar (27 years old) and her family left Afghanistan for the Czech Republic 16 years ago because of war. They applied for asylum and spent some time in a refugee camp. They were forced to leave

their home and lost everything in their country of origin. They cannot go to Afghanistan, even for a short visit, even though they have family and friends there.

Unfortunately, similar cases are not decreasing today, but on the contrary, are an increasing feature of migration today. According to various estimates, there are around 45 million refugees in the world. However, in the Czech Republic their number is very low - according to official statistics only several hundred people. For example, according to the statistics of the Czech Ministry of Interior only 49 people were granted asylum and 149 people were granted additional protection in the Czech Republic in 2012. There were 753 asylum applications in 2012, 244 out of these were repeated requests. In 2012, the citizens that applied most often for asylum in the Czech Republic were from the Ukraine, Syria, Belarus, the Russian Federation and Vietnam. In the 1990's, many refugees from the former Yugoslavia came to the Czech Republic too due to ethnic conflict in their homeland.

- In your opinion, how can we avoid ethnic, religious and other conflicts that force people to leave their homes?
- How can we contribute to solving these global problems?
- What can we do for the people that seek asylum in the Czech Republic?

Migration and Society

One solution to these questions is that we could try to get to know each other better and thus avoid conflicts that stem from negative ethnic stereotypes. At first glance, various prejudices and stereotypes



might seem harmless, since we all tend to generalize information about others and simplify them. However, as we know from the recent past, negative stereotypes may lead from verbal insults to physical violence to discrimination laws and finally to ethnocide and genocide. Before World War II and the Holocaust, Jews became objects of prejudice related to their perceived differences and this led to their social isolation. Discrimination laws were the next step, followed by genocide.

We receive negative stereotypes about foreigners from different channels: statements made by politicians and celebrities, movies, textbooks, often school and our families, and naturally from the media who play a key role in forming our prejudices towards migrants.

- Can you remember in relation to which events do the media most often mention migrants and foreigners?
- Which metaphors and expressions are used in articles reporting on migrants?
- What is the image of different nationalities in the media?

Unfortunately, the media more often bring us negative reports about foreigners than positive ones. The media tend to mention foreigners in the news when reporting on crimes, police raids and illegal practices. There is a lack of positive news and stories, even though plenty of those could be found in real life. Moreover, the myths related to migration and migrants are generated and used repeatedly by journalists all over again. However, most of them stem from ignorance of migrants' current situations and migration laws. For example, the myth that "migrants take jobs away from Czechs" is easily refuted by the fact that the immigration policy of the Czech Republic is in this respect very restrictive and it is very difficult for any company to employ a foreigner without a permission to work. The employer must always give preference to Czech candidates.

In addition, migrants from countries outside the EU and without permanent residence have no rights to unemployment assistance from the state in the event they lose their jobs and cannot participate in the public health insurance program. This refutes another myth about migrants taking advantage of the social system and proves that, on the contrary, migrants are one of the most vulnerable groups in Czech society.

Nevertheless, the topic of foreigners appears on a regular basis in the media, especially during election campaigns, since it is a hot issue for some populist political parties. Some politicians try to score political points by artificially dividing people into us and them, between "decent" and "maladjusted" citizens.

The extent to which newcomers must adapt to others is of course a much more complicated issue than presented to us by some politicians. It requires a more thorough reflection on what it means to be Czech and what defines Czech society. What in particular should migrants adapt to? Can we talk



about a homogenous society or is diversity a natural part of every society?

If we look into our society from a historical perspective, during the Austro-Hungarian regime and later in the times of the first Czechoslovak Republic, social diversity and the use of various languages in daily life were an everyday reality. More recently, according to the Population and Housing census of 2011, approximately 35 per cent of the inhabitants of the Czech Republic claimed to have a nationality other than Czech, or did not state their nationalities. The nationalities most often stated were Moravian (521 801), Slovak (147 152), Ukranian (53 253), Polish (39 096) and Vietnamese (29 660). The Czech language itself is also a very diverse and dynamic system as shown, for example, by the existence of various dialects and accents. The blending of cultures and their mutual influence is even more evident on the borders with Poland, Germany, Slovakia and Austria. Moreover, the Czech Republic is a member of the European Union where variety and diversity are a feature at all levels.

- What is your view of Czech and European societies?
- In your opinion, is there any place for migrants, people of other nationalities or religions?
- What should migrants adapt to?
- To what extent should migrants change their ways of life in order to better integrate into society?
- Which of the elements of their original culture can migrants keep and which of them should they definitely give up (language, religion, the way they dress)?

Global Influences

Today it is difficult to find someone who is not influenced by global culture. Due to globalization, all of humanity is interconnected. The accessibility of transportation stimulates traveling between individual states and many contemporary migrants have become so called transnational migrants, meaning those that form and maintain socio-cultural relations across geopolitical frontiers. Information and communication technologies enable current migrants to stay permanently connected to their families and friends. This social contact with people in their home countries continues to play an important role and influence the behaviour of migrants in their host countries.

- Do you maintain contact with anybody faraway?
- How are you influenced by the thoughts and opinions of these people?
- Do you feel influenced by different cultures?

Migration also affects the traditional pattern and relationships of family life. Families are often separated for some time and in order to continue functioning they form so called transnational strategies across borders. This is reflected in the lives of each family member. Changes in the roles between men and the women are often discussed, especially with the increase of women migrating. For a long time, migration has been considered a men's issue, but nowadays 48 per cent of all international migrants are women.

Women very often occupy so called "traditionally female" jobs such as housekeeper, nurse or caretaker etc. In some cases, women emigrate alone and their husbands and children stay in their country of origin. Women migrants become the breadwinners

of their families and the responsibilities of childcare are passed on to their husbands, grandparents or even hired nannies. It is also interesting that women send the largest remittances (transfers of money from migrants) to their home countries. Cases where a man takes care about children and the woman becomes the breadwinner of the family can shift gender stereotypes upside down in some countries. For some families, this is a reality in their everyday lives. They live years between two or more countries cultures and societies. You may even find them in your class.

- How do you think migration can influence families and family relations?
- Can you imagine a situation where all the communication with your parents or children would be through Skype or on the telephone, and personal encounters would only be possible once a year, or even less often?
- How long would you manage to live that way?

Conclusion

Migration may seem a difficult and controversial issue, but it is a natural social process that we need to discuss and inquire into. We live in an interconnected world in which ethnic conflict or war breaking out in one hemisphere may impact on the economic conditions on the other side of the world and lead to the migration of people from several countries. In addition, as we know from history, it is not only people that move dynamically but also the borders of actual nations themselves. The phenomenon of migration also demonstrates that we cannot easily stereotype people and that if we look closely

at the story of each migrant we will see a whole set of causes, reasons and life dreams. For all of these reasons, investigating migration can be a very interesting process during which many important issues for the whole of society may arise and in which we gain a more enriched view of the world.

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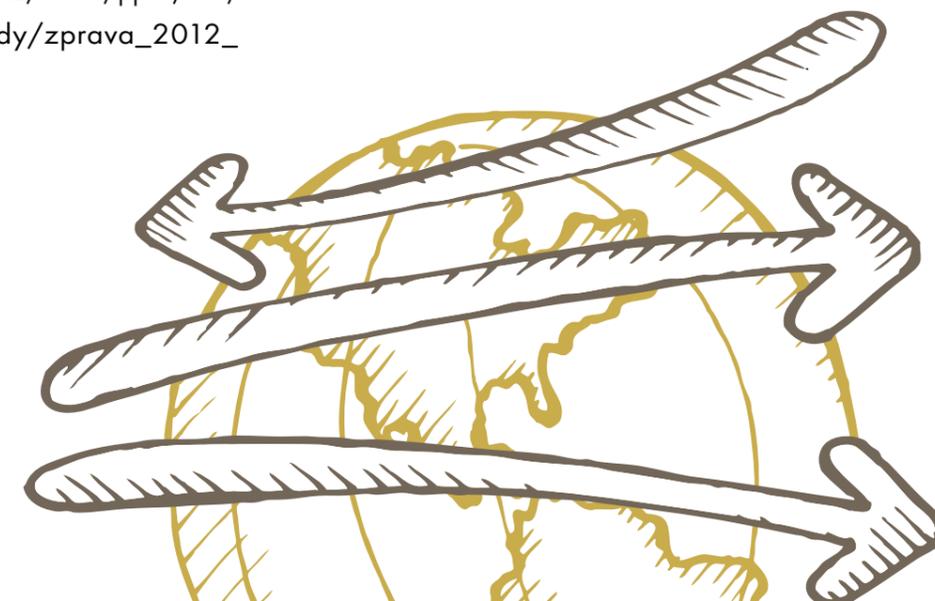
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<http://www.mvcr.cz/>
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Why development without equality is impossible?

Marfa Gontarska



According to the 1998 Nobel laureate and Indian economist Amartya Sen, development, or precisely human development, hinges above all on freedom and social justice. The extension of liberties and opportunities in life by eliminating different forms of enslavement, such as poverty, and the exclusion of a section of society from public life (for example due to disabilities, economic and/or social status, sex, religion, the lack of possibility to participate in public life and the lack of social security) leads to a durable development of societies. This development is defined as the possibility to live one's life according to one's desires and convictions. The social aspect of development that is emphasised in Amartya Sen's theory is particularly important in global issues when we discuss equality/equal treatment. **Development should be a process which serves all social groups to an equal extent, that extends possibilities of participation in social life and gives access to further choices, not limiting them to only those considered appropriate.**

HIS- or HER-story?

Historically, and in the political context, equality was understood as sameness. While establishing law and the social norm we meant a specific individual with specific traits. It was a white male who possessed specific property which sanctioned his social status. All political and social decisions were based on the assumption that members of every society were exclusively white males who had certain property. Therefore all people who did not fit in with this description were deprived of most political, economic or intellectual rights. The rights for which consecutive social groups, such as women, the disabled or indigenous people, had successfully fought became the basis for extending the understanding of the notion

of a human being. Equality therefore refers to equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all people, including women and men, girls and boys, people from different religions, races and socio-economic statuses. **Equality is thus a fundamental human right and should be central to human development.**

In equality we recognise the diversity of the groups that make up society, and that rights, obligations and opportunities are accessible to all, without exception. All social groups should protect equality, not only those who have to constantly strive for it.

Many reports from research conducted both in Poland¹ and the Czech Republic¹ draw attention to the question of equal treatment, including gender equality and the situation of women. EU countries are still struggling with the problem of discrimination in the labour market or in social and socio-cultural situations. Even though EU legislation has given us many laws and directives that guarantee equal treatment, stereotypes regarding roles of the two sexes and the resultant limitations remain the biggest problem. Every woman can remember at least several situations in her life in which she has suffered worse or less serious treatment due to stereotypes about women that assume that she is a bad driver, does not have a clue about mechanics or plumbing, cannot hammer a nail, her husband/partner is responsible for their finance and therefore larger expenses need to be consulted with him, women's brains are different than men's etc.

Although women constitute over 50% of the population of the majority of societies in the world, their voice and their positions regarding the issues which are the most important for them, such as health, motherhood, social welfare and social entrepreneurship, do not receive much attention in the offices of decision makers. It is difficult to think about stable and

¹ I particularly recommend the report: Kristýna Ciprová, Alexandra Doleželová, The European Union - accelerator or brake for gender equality in the Czech Republic?, 2014, http://pl.boell.org/sites/default/files/uploads/2014/07/dolezelova_ciprova_eu_gender_assessment.pdf

urable development of the Southern countries if we take as a reference point the needs and abilities of only one half of society in a country. Even if one respects cultural differences and distinctiveness of local communities, it is difficult to plan for stable development that would encompass all members of a community without taking into account the diversity of the groups that make up this community, their needs and abilities. The approach to designing measures to contribute to development should be sufficiently wide to incorporate the perspective of each of the groups and to take into consideration their demands in order to ensure that all people have the same access to goods and resources and fundamental rights. Certainly, it seems as though this would be impossible to achieve but let's think for a moment whether or not this is the world we would like to live in. Do political, economic and social/socio-cultural differences improve the quality of our life, fairly assess our competences and abilities, help us in everyday life? Judging people by their biological characteristics such as sex or race, is particularly harmful as it overshadows a human being and his/her individuality. Imposing a set of laws and opportunities on the characteristics which are given to people upon their birth without acknowledging their intelligence, potential, ambitions, personality traits or already acquired abilities, constraints our life from the moment we are born and we cannot have control over it. In a democratic society we should seek as equal treatment as possible of each human being that is not based on prejudices or stereotypes. Whereas such an approach is obvious in the legal context, the question of equal treatment regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or economic status in practice, is met with a lot of social and cultural resistance. It is probably simply easier to assume certain things about others a priori. The lack of acceptance for diversity in society and limitations stemming from traditions and culture often lead to perpetuating harmful stereotypes and isolating certain social groups and, consequent-

ly, to depriving them of rights and opportunities for personal development. As long as we do not find ourselves in one of these groups and do not become aware of our worse situation, we assume that this is simply the way the world is.

Equality and development leads to social justice

It is therefore important to draw special attention to equal treatment of women and men not as a senseless, uniform and trite treatment of people of both sexes, as if we did not notice their distinctive traits, but as a wise extension of a range of choices. Strategies for ensuring freedom and the possibility of making choices based on our own convictions should be adjusted to needs and should be consistent with the principles underlying social justice.

What is social justice? Leszek Kołakowski² provides an answer to this question saying that this idea assumes that there is a common human fate, that this concept confers significance to a notion of humanity understood as a moral value, not only a biological category. Social justice directs us towards helping all the weak, the excluded, the marginalised or the disabled, instead of excluding them or discriminating against them. Equality in social justice should therefore contribute to growth ranging from economic indicators to human happiness. Why focus on equality between women and men? Above all because women are the largest group which remains underestimated in development processes. It is thanks to their efforts and sacrifices that subsequent generations gain increasingly better education, that children and elders receive adequate care, and the whole family has, to a larger or lesser degree, sufficient food to eat

2 L. Kołakowski, *Po co nam pojęcie sprawiedliwości społecznej?*, [in:] L. Kołakowski, *Moje słuszne poglądy na wszystko*, Cracow, 2000, p. 216-217.

or enough resources to keep warm. Women's work for the sake of the family and the household is not estimated in terms of salary and is not included in any macro-economic indicators. However, these are the basic, unpaid activities that ensure a stable life for many societies both in the South and North and no durable development would be possible without women's involvement.

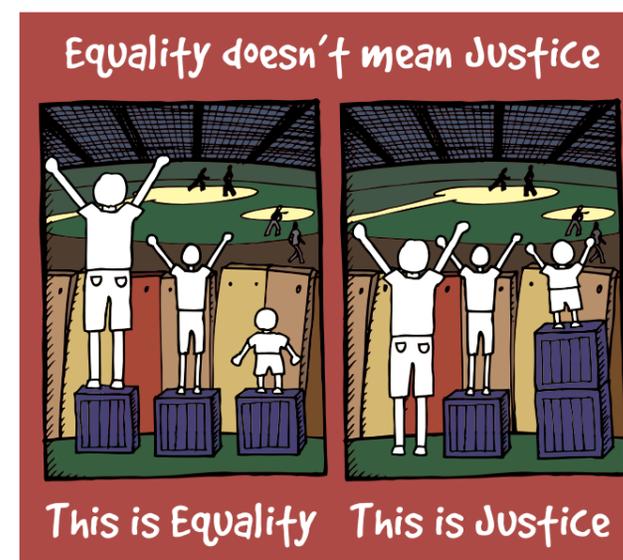
Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in her popular TED³ presentation, which already has over a million page views, talks about the danger of a single story, about how literature, media or culture make us see the world only from one perspective. When we exempt ourselves from reflection, we take a short cut to stereotypes and clichés, in perceiving issues of both race or culture and sex. According to the author of *Americanah*, only when we get to know the personal stories of as large a number of people from the Southern countries as possible – a professor, a hairdresser, a writer, a household help, a budding businessman or young hip hop musician – and through this a diversity of perspectives, do we have a chance of understanding the history of a community or nation. For this reason it is so important to give women an opportunity to tell their own stories

A substantial number of EU directives define equality of women and men as one of the EU's fundamental rights. The objectives of the EU are set to ensure equal chances, equal treatment of women and men and the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex. The EU has adopted a two-directions approach to this issue by combining specific measures with gender mainstreaming. This issue also has a strong international dimension when it comes to such topics as the fight against poverty, access to education and health care services, participation in the economy and decision-making processes. It is also strongly accen-

3 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *The Danger of a Single Story*, http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/pl/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story



tuated in human rights⁴. Equality and development go hand in hand because a developed society is a society that eliminates barriers and divisions, which means it is oriented towards equality. Thanks to this understanding of equality we can see development in other ways. By ensuring sanitation infrastructure, particularly by facilitating access to drinkable water, we positively influence the level of school enrollment of girls. As one of the responsibility in housekeeping for women and girls is to fetch water, it means that girls who have easy access to drinkable water could spend more time on going to school or take part in some informal, learning activities. When the percentage of educated girls increases, the infant mortality decreases. When we support economic independence of women, for example through micro-loans or the development of co-operativism, we contribute to economic development of a whole country because women reinvest almost 90% of their revenues, spending them on family.⁵



4 For more on the EU understanding of gender equality visit: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm

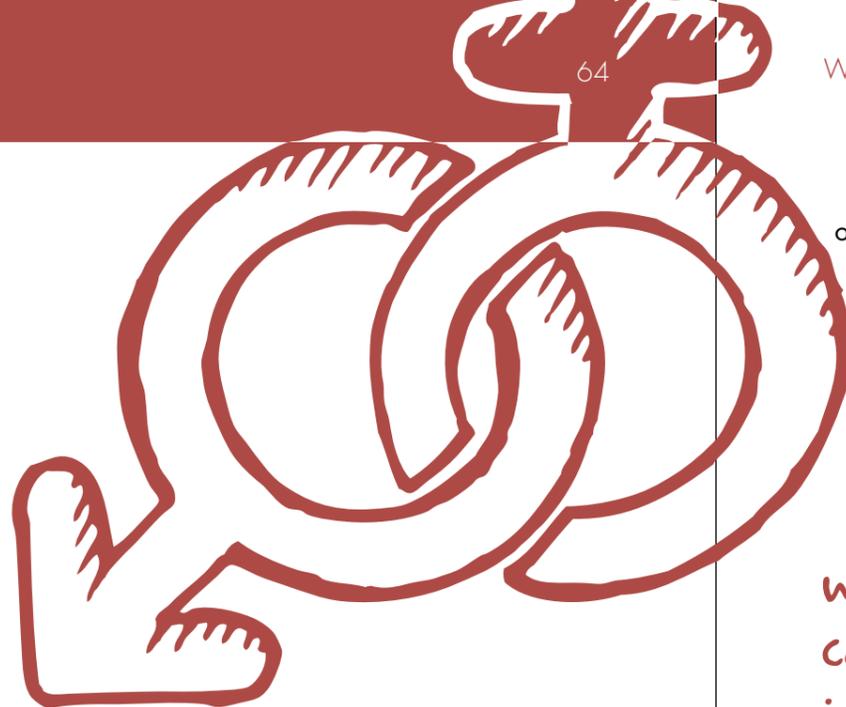
5 More information on the mechanisms and international documents regarding gender equality and women's empowerment can be found in an analysis prepared by KARAT Coalition (co-founded by the author of the present text) for Polish Humanitarian Action: <http://www.pah.org.pl/m/2968/Analiza%20-%20R%C3%B3wnouprawienie%20i%20prawa%20kobiet.pdf>

Let's face the facts about gender equality

The formula then appears to be simple: let's treat women and men equally and fairly and the whole community will thus benefit and progress towards sustainable, durable development. Then why is it so difficult to implement these recommendations both in Europe and in countries in the South? The data presented in several reports and publications is alarming.

The lack of basic infrastructure makes lives of both women and men in the South difficult. However, due to a certain model of culture it is women who bear the brunt of it and struggle with many difficulties every day. Irrespective of geographical location women perform most of the unpaid work linked to household, child or elderly care. In Southern countries everyday activities such as preparing meals or collecting firewood (or a fertiliser to be burnt to warm the household) take much more time. 1.4 billion people in the world do not have access to modern sources of energy and labour-intensive activities linked with keeping warm and ensuring food are mainly performed by women and girls. In over 75% of households in Southern countries women and girls are also responsible for collecting water, spending 200 millions hours a day on this across the world. This is time they cannot devote to paid work or education. It is estimated that if the time that girls in Ghana need to get to the source of water in order to collect it was shortened by 15 minutes a day, it would help increase their school attendance by 8-12%.

Women own a small portion of land, 5-30% depending on the country. This is a small percentage when one takes into account the fact that approximately 2.6 billion people make their living out of farming. Women own poor quality land, they also have difficulties in inheriting land after the death of husbands



because traditionally the legacy is inherited by the husband's family or his male descendants. For these reasons female farmers produce 20-30% less than their male counterparts.

As much as two thirds of 774 million adults who cannot read or write are women and this proportion has not changed for two decades, mostly because there are a considerable number of girls dropping out of educational establishments at further education levels. The higher the education level, the fewer women there are enrolled.

Women find it much more difficult to decide about their own lives if they do not have control over spending money - on the national level, on the level of a local community and within a family. Every third woman in Malawi and every fifth woman in India does not have any impact on managing household expenses, even if their revenues are part of the family's budget. Women who do not have the same control over their households as men have more difficult access to exerting their rights, to be considered partners in discussions and to participate in decision-making.⁶ Real impact on women in shaping their lives is possible

⁶ Data from the report: „World development report 2012 : gender equality and development” published by World Bank: <http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTWDRS/EXTWDR2012/0,,contentMDK:22999750~menuPK:8154981~pagePK:64167689~piPK:64167673~theSitePK:7778063,00.html>

only when all members of society, regardless of sex and status, undertake common actions for this cause. Certainly, a choice of a way of life belongs to an individual. However, as we look at the examples above, we can see that women nowadays do not have such a choice.

Why should global educators care about gender equality in their practicee?

As we are involved in global education we cannot forget about the role of women in development and their involvement in global interdependence. Nor can we overlook women's involvement in grass-roots movements or local initiatives and their difficult socio-economic situation and cultural constraints. It is worth, therefore, extending the notion of respect and solidarity to gender equality, taking as guidance the *Code of Conduct on Messages and Images from the South*⁷. **Perceiving women as active members of society who are making a change, and not passive workers dealing with household activities, is a change that we should include in our practice as educators.** We can do it quite easily by ensuring that though the photographs, films and stories depicting lives of people in the South, we give both men and women an opportunity to be heard. It is important to emphasise the hardships of their everyday work, but also their political and international achievements such as their participation in peace movements (for example it is worth mentioning 2011 laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize: Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and

⁷ In English: Code of conduct in images and messages, Dochas 2006 http://www.dochas.ie/sites/default/files/Images_and_Messages.pdf
In Polish: Instytut Globalnej Odpowiedzialności, *Jak mówić o większości świata. Jak rzetelnie informować o krajach globalnego Południa*, 2008: http://igo.org.pl/download/jak-mowic-o-wiekszosci-swiata_poradnik-igo.pdf

Leymah Gbowee from Liberia and Tawakkul Karman from Yemen) or activity of women's movements⁸. Global education aims at helping develop many attitudes and values. The sensitivity to gender will therefore be extremely important - **if we seek equality it is not only between the North and the South but also between people across the world irrespective of their race, religion and sex. If we promote respect and dignity, it also means valuing women's work and sometimes their sacrifice for the sake of other family members. If we champion diversity, it is with the inclusion of a multitude of perspectives and awareness of the need for differentiation on the grounds of sexes.** This special attention and sensitivity and sometimes a shift in emphasis in presenting global education issues gives us a chance to make global education fairer, more just and closer to the realities of Southern countries.

⁸ Instytut Globalnej Odpowiedzialności, *Kobięcym głosem, czyli liderki ruchu kobiecego w Ugandzie o swojej pracy na rzecz praw kobiet i równości płci*, 2012: http://igo.org.pl/download/Kobięcym_glosem_internet.pdf



Food Justice

Agafa Hummel



The economization of all dimensions of life.

According to the degrowth¹ critique of economic growth the modernization and economization of life are presented as the universal way to fulfill the basic needs of all people. Nevertheless, the degrowth representatives emphasize that this path serves only those who design it and define it, and who at the same time are only a small percentage of the inhabitants of our Planet. Rahnama compares this economic growth path to the highway that serves only its designers and managers. When the everyman enters the highway he or she becomes the slave of its roles and its logic. He or she must not only use the car to commute but also becomes the passenger of a car measured by the capacity of the car engine (2010: 185-86). The global economy and its food system may guarantee the satisfaction of the needs of some groups of people but at the same time it excludes many other groups of people and eradicates their local traditions. Below I will analyze the globalization and economization of food production and distribution as the highway that excludes not only people but also the natural environment.

Commodification and globalization of food.

Commodification is the transformation of goods and services, as well as ideas or other entities that norma-

¹ Degrowth is an interdisciplinary scientific perspective and a social movement based on science. Degrowth has promoted the deconstruction or decolonization of a dominant economic paradigm - the economic growth. Degrowth is a response to a the main current world problems - like the limit of natural resources, pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, growing socio-economic inequalities, social alienation of individuals, extreme individualism - that are analyzed in the context of extreme economization of life and global domination of economic growth paradigm. The main postulate of degrowth is to eliminate growth not only as a measure of socio-economic wellbeing (expressed in the GDP index) but also as a motor of the global economy.



lly may not be considered goods, into a commodity. A commodity is something regarded as having been produced for sale on the market and is thus subject to the laws of demand and supply (Polanyi 2001, 75). The value of things change when they turn into a commodity. For example corn - from basic nourishment, religious symbol of life force and fertility in Latin America - has become a symbol of profit. This symbol of profit has its origins in different forms of corn processing, for example in biofuels or food industry.

In many ethnic groups in Latin America corn production, redistribution and consumption has been, and in some places still is, central for peoples' social and economic life. People used to establish social relations during their work in the field while cultivating corn. They used to exchange different varieties of corn with neighbouring villages, and they used to cook many different dishes based on corn. Now lots of varieties of corn are extinguished due to industrial and genetically modified cultivation and, together with the shrinking richness of corn, local traditions are also disappearing. Globalized food is being alienated from the culture. Local cuisine traditions are disappearing and multinational and multicultural products and food patterns are starting to dominate cooking habits all over the world.

In the subsistence economy food is produced mainly for consumption and the surplus is traded or exchanged.

The basic economic institution is the household. Its role is not to seek profit but to maintain itself, as opposed to corporations which are central institutions in the market economy. Therefore, food produced in the subsistence economy is rarely sold for profit. Food was converted

into a profitable commodity when corporations started to take over its production. During this process the economic and social value of food has changed dramatically. Its essence is no longer to assure survival but to assure profit from its trade. This can be called "the economization of food", that is a process in which food is being produced in order to support economic

growth, not in order to support peoples' wellbeing. And wellbeing does not necessarily go hand in hand with economic growth.

The commodification and economization of food had led to its globalization. Food has been mobilized as a commodity in global production and trade systems and governed through global institutions. On the other hand, the idea of globalization has been nourished through food, particularly with the mobility of people and of ideas about cuisine and nutrition (Phillips 2006: 43). Food is globalized through big scale monocultures. Monocultures are promoted in regions where certain plants grow better than others, especially if they are genetically modified and treated chemically which is seen as more efficient from the economic point of view. Then, the products can be sold on the international market with more profit than the same products from less specialized regions. However, the regions that specialize in mega monocultures like Brazilian soya become dependent on food imports from other countries, as they lose their food sovereignty. Furthermore, soya is sold for animal fodder mainly to developed countries where meat consumption is high (20% of the world's population that live in the richest countries consume around 40% of total amount of meat Weis 2011: 26). That way, people in Brazil and other countries that experience similar specialization of food production (for example China), lack land to produce food that would feed them.

The important actors in the process of food globalization are the transnational corporations (TNCs). "Food-related TNCs share the characteristic of having global investments in the food industry and controlling much of how food is grown, processed, distributed, and/or purchased" (Phillips 2006: 40). In other words, the owners of global capital are dictating where, how and for whom the food is produced.

How the international economic influences on food market?

Another important factor of globalizing the food market is the international economic policy. International organizations and institutions mobilize and govern food within and beyond nation-states. Agricultural production is being shaped by multilateral financial aid and lending institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The production of food becomes one of the economic growth engines. In this process food loses its original subsistence function and gains market value. However, we still need to eat to survive therefore this process of commodification of food may have severe consequences for those who do not have money to buy food and are deprived of the means to produce it by themselves. And there are more and more people in the world that can not afford to buy food or are not able to produce it: poor city inhabitants, landless peasants, etc.

International aid and lending institutions promote profitable food production in developing countries with the justification that the profit from the trade of food will bring economic development to the country.

However, the owners of the profitable farms are usually international and foreign investors, or local magnates at best. Therefore big investments in food production do not bring general development but rather cause enrichment of very few people.

Furthermore, this process has many other consequences. Big production requires concentration of land. As more than 50% of the population of many developing countries live in the countryside the land is still one of the main sources of subsistence. The agricultural territories are possessed by communities or smallholders who grow their own food and trade surplus. In order to establish big monocultures many thousands of concentrated hectares of fertile soil are needed and this is found in the hands of local peasants who, due

to their traditions, do not want to sell it and move to another place. Therefore, many methods are being used to drive the peasants out of their lands, among them changing legislation and abusing the law. The future owners of industrial farms are generally supported by governments that seek profit in alliances with economically influential people, sometimes themselves politicians who possess the legal power to deprive farmers of their lands.

Local farmers in countries whose governments tolerate land grabbing do rebel, but they can do little against global capital and governments that support it. Social movements arise, like La Via Campesina, that work at the international level to promote small-scale, sustainable agriculture and prevent land grabbing. "La Via Campesina comprises about 150 local and national organizations in 70 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Altogether, it represents about 200 million farmers" (<http://viacampesina.org>).

The pressure of international institutions around the world on developing big industrial production has led to the situation in which high prices of land, machines, fertilizers and pesticides, along with lowering costs of food (between the 1960s and the beginning of the twenty first century) and subsidies for big agricultural ventures have eliminated many small-scale farmers. Later, from 2002 the prices of food started to grow, due to the development of biofuel industry and the fact that 5% of global farming land was destined for fuel plants instead of food production. Moreover the commercialization and trade of agricultural land, supported by the World Bank, have led to the appropriation of big areas in the Global South by the countries with deficits of arable lands (Weis 2011: 7). First the drop of prices of food eliminated many small-scale farmers (and subsistence farms among them) forcing them to abandon their land and move to the cities and then the growing prices of food have led these ex-farmers to starve.



Measuring food miles and inequality

Globalization of food delocalizes food, that is we eat products that are produced far away from us, due to global food policy that promotes regional specialization of production and monocultures. If we have an appetite for tomatoes in December we can get them easily as they are imported from Spain or even from outside Europe. Our food travels many kilometres before it gets on our tables.

To measure this phenomenon the term "food miles" is applied. In the United States and Canada an average product travels from 2 to 2,5 thousand kilometres (Weis 2011: 23). It leads to a situation of dependency on fossil fuels in agricultures. This dependency does not concern only travelling food products but also the fertilizers and other agrochemicals that are produced with energy obtained with oil (Weis 2011: 36). Food produced with agrochemicals and transported many kilometres does not have the same nutritional values of local food. Food miles and agrochemical production are also prejudicial to the natural environment because of the CO2 emissions.

The globalization of food and especially monocultures not only displaces small-scale heterogeneous agriculture but also contributes to the loss of many plant variations and biodiversity in the wildlife. Genetic modification performed to make agriculture more efficient has eliminated many species of fruits and vegetables. Monocultures and agrochemicals have killed or driven out many wild species: animals and plants.

As stated earlier, globalized food is being alienated from the culture. In one of the indigenous villages in Mexico where I have been conducting my fieldwork, one person has opened a restaurant with pizza and Chinese food!

One of the most alarming characteristics of the globalization of food, and I will conclude the section with this argument, is the fact that while rich countries can afford good nutrition, the 80% of the world's population living in the Global South is endangered by malnutrition. In 2010 925 million people were starving (Weis 2011: 6). At the same time, in the Global North the most common diseases are originating in obesity. Hunger and malnutrition does not derive from the lack of food produced in the world but from its unequal distribution.

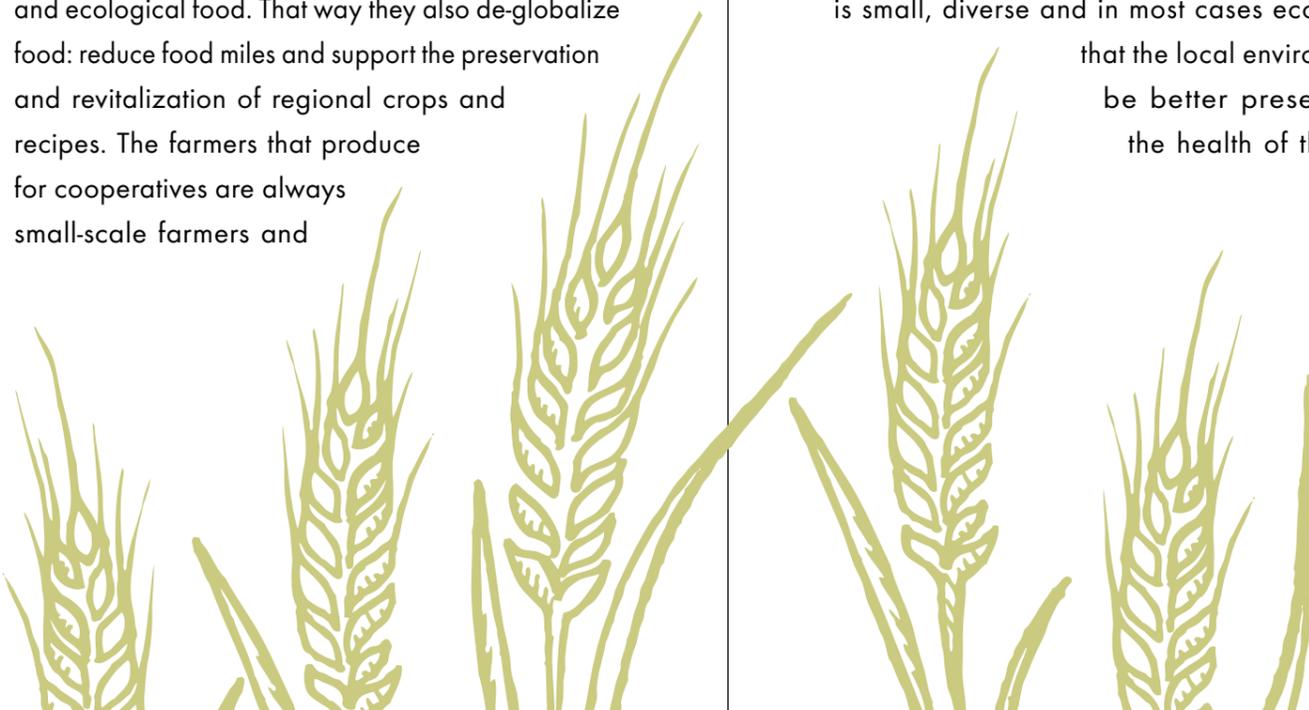
The local and global alternatives

Having defined the problem as food commodification, economization and globalization the alternatives should be sought in de-commodification, de-economization and de-globalization of food. How to reach these "de's"? Below, I will present some propositions arising from different social movements and some concrete practices.

In order to de-commodify food we need to give it a different value than the economic one. Instead of seeing it as a means of profit we can start to appreciate it as food, something that keeps us alive and healthy. Unfortunately, healthy food has also been commercialized. Ecological food is trendy, expensive and available to a very small group of beneficiaries. Healthy food is then an elite product. That is why the production of healthy food (without chemicals and grown in a clean environment) should be decoupled from economic growth (de-economization) and accompanied by an adequate policy like subsidies, price control and distribution control. With such a policy all people should have access to healthy food, regardless of their economic status, so that they can buy products according to their quality not their price. The disassociation of economic growth and food production and distribution can be reached through

different socio-economic models of organization: cooperative and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The food cooperative is a consumer initiative aimed at establishing a more direct relationship between producers and consumers, and in that way avoiding corporate mediation in food distribution. The cooperative model allows close relation of consumers with the farmers and farming conditions, and also enables better quality control. Consumers can visit farmers that produce food for them and check the environment in which the food is produced. Cooperatives establish durable relations with their providers and that way also assure the market.

Cooperatives also have very important social and educational dimensions. Instead of going to a shop where anonymous products are sold for the price dictated by the mediators, the members of the cooperative constitute a community of interests and values. They meet regularly and distribute the work in the cooperative between themselves more or less equally, so that they pay the farmers a fair price for their work rather than paying commissions to the mediators. There are many forms of cooperatives. Some are based on voluntary work only, others have permanent employees (usually recruited from the members). Cooperatives promote local, seasonal and ecological food. That way they also de-globalize food: reduce food miles and support the preservation and revitalization of regional crops and recipes. The farmers that produce for cooperatives are always small-scale farmers and



usually have a considerable variety of products so it is also a direct alternative to monocultural production. Ecological production, if performed outside classical market economy relations, also shifts the value of food from the economic model (economization) to a more human-focused one.

Community Supported Agriculture goes one step further than the cooperative. It is also a community of people who share values. The difference consists in the way farmers and consumers are equally part of this community. They gather before the season and plan the production and distribution, the investment and the costs, the organization and the wages, etc. In this process of planning consumers declare the amounts and kind of food they will consume and the money they have available to pay. On the other hand, the farmers declare the amount of work they are able to dedicate to the project and the remuneration they need for it. These concerns are discussed in the group until a middle ground is reached. Moreover the participants pay in advance for the whole season. This way they share risks with farmers and in return they get fair prices for healthy and good quality food.

CSA farms are normally located close to the consumers to reduce CO2 emissions. The production is small, diverse and in most cases ecological so that the local environment can be better preserved and the health of the farmers

and consumers protected. During the season the community organizes the distribution and many models of distribution are applied. In the CSA in Freiburg (Garten Koop) the distribution is divided between consumers rotationally. They distribute food by bicycles equipped with trailers to various collection centers. In Warsaw CSA (Świerże Panki) the farmers bring the food themselves to the collection center, where the food is divided into baskets and collected the same day. In the Witzenhausen CSA in Germany the collection center works like a self-service greengrocery store where the consumers may come anytime to take food they need. The interesting phenomenon of this model is that people never take more than they should and are always careful about what others will get.

The CSA model avoids the commodification and globalization of food thanks to local organization built on trust and common values. It also assures food sovereignty by the close connection between farmers and consumers. Similar to cooperatives, CSAs promote local, seasonal and ecological products.

Another alternative of food production close to the consumers is city gardening. In most cities there are many green areas sometimes unmanaged by the authorities or abandoned by their owners. These spaces are adapted to be urban gardens which are created and managed by groups of people: activists or neighbors. The edible city movement is one of the initiatives that promotes this type of alternative food production. Urban food production removes the distinction between farmers and consumers and allows individual food sovereignty in the city where more than 60% of the population lives. It also eliminates food miles as food is produced near the consumers' homes. The urban garden movements still struggle for their right to preserve and use green spaces in the cities. In Poland many allotments are used for gardening. In Berlin the city parks, lawns, roofs and even an old airport are used to plant food.

Planting food in the city does not only have the production use, it also has an important educational role. Growing vegetables in the urban context where the majority of people are alienated from food production builds awareness of where the food comes from and what is needed to grow it. One of the movements that promotes urban gardening, together with building local economies, local currencies and systems of exchange, is Transition Towns. It offers ideas for an alternative and more local life in the city. The movement not only focuses narrowly on the local context. Together with other movements, they also struggle for new food policy that would support and promote local and traditional production.

Slow Food, a global movement, also promotes local food and traditional recipes. The slow food members identify themselves as "a global, grassroots organization with supporters in 150 countries around the world who are linking the pleasure of good food with a commitment to their community and the environment". Slow food focuses on good quality and healthy food. It also promotes local products produced with traditional knowledge in contrary to globalized fast food. This movement also emphasizes the pleasure of slow, contemplative cooking and eating – an important value to be restored in today's busy and fast moving world.

All the alternatives described above aim at de-globalizing food, that is at returning to local products and recipes and to decentralizing food policy in order to distribute food in a more equal way. They also struggle to restore food sovereignty and biodiversity by promoting diversity of cultivation in small-scale farms instead of monocultures controlled by global corporations. Moreover, they adopt a degrowth perspective as they search for alternative forms of economic organization, and more communal ones which are not profit oriented. They are also environmentally friendly by localizing food

distribution, eliminating food miles and agrochemicals, and in that way diminishing fossil fuel dependency.

These food production and distribution alternatives are also educational initiatives. They often form part of broader movements that question a dominant economic paradigm and the mental structures that support it. They form networks of exchange of practices and ideas, and in doing so help to develop and spread global citizenship, a way of life driven by the awareness of global problems and global and local solutions.

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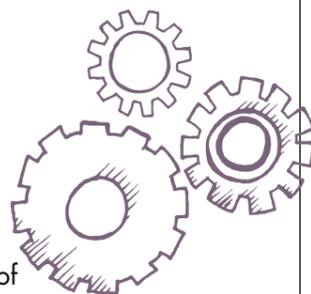
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Education Association) Good Practice Guide in ESD / GC (Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship).

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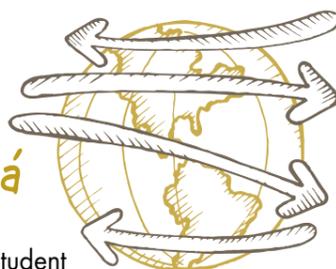
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