



Worksheet 26.1

Myths about economic development, debunked

Hans Rosling, a Swedish professor of international health, has created a presentation which reveals and debunks some of the prevalent myths about global poverty. Using software he developed to analyze data on human development called '[Gapminder](#)', Rosling gives a mind-blowing presentation on the trends in economic and human welfare over the last thirty years, debunking several myths believed true by many in the first world about development and poverty.

The first video is from the 2006 TED Conference in Monteray, California. The second video is from 2007's TED. Both have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times on the web. Watch and discuss.

1. [2006 TED Conference speech](#)
2. [2007 TED Conference](#)

Essential Questions

1. What is human development and what factors contribute to this development?
2. What does it mean to have an improvement in the standard of living?
3. What is the difference between economic growth and development?
4. What indicators are used to measure the economic development of nations?
5. How can data help us to better understand LDC's while developing more effective strategies to improve their development.
6. What are obstacles that stand in the way of development?

What is the HDI?

The [Human Development Index](#) (HDI) is a summary measure of human development. It measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. Data availability determines HDI country coverage. To enable cross-country comparisons, the HDI is, to the extent possible, calculated based on data from leading international data agencies and other credible data sources available at the time of writing.

The assignment: Follow the steps below and make notes to help you complete the follow up questions at the end of this post.



Step 1:

Go to the [UNDP website](#), and watch the video entitled [2010 Human Development Report](#). Take note of the indicators that have contributed most to the development of the country as well as the obstacles that have and are still standing in the way. Reflect on the following questions in your notes:

- What are the successes of each country?
- How do they measure this success?
- What are some of their obstacles?
- How have they been overcome?

Step 2:

Go back to the [UNDP website](#) and click on [the tab for Countries](#) and look up the current statistics on your home country, a BRIIC country (Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia or China) and a country that scores low on the HDI ranking. Be sure to take note of which indicators are listed and how each country compares to the other. You can also find data on individual countries here: [Table 1 – Human Development Index and its components](#).

Step 3:

Go to [GapMinder World](#), chose five indicators that were used in the HDR video or used in the Countries profile that you believe have contributed most to the countries' development. Choose time on the horizontal axis and the indicator on the vertical axis and see what the overall trend has been for all five indicators in each of the three countries. Take note of what the overall trends have been. Create at least one screen shot and include it in your notes for the assignment.

Step 4:

In order to better understand what factors contributed to the changes your countries have experienced, it is important to see the relationship between different indicators. For example, it is clear that the life expectancy in almost all countries has risen over the past century. It is not immediately clear, however, what may have contributed to this change.

Go back to each of the five indicators that you previously looked at. This time, change the horizontal axis to an indicator that you believe may have contributed to the changes/trends and see if there is a correlation between them. This should give you a better idea of what indicators act more as a means towards development rather than as a goal for development.



Step 5:

As countries develop, they are confronted with both opportunities and obstacles. What are the obstacles to economic development that each of your three countries are facing?

- Using data and trends from GapMinder, choose one obstacle for each country and explain why it is their major obstacle.
- Brainstorm and describe one strategy of how this country may be able to overcome its greatest obstacle to development.

Follow Up Questions (to be completed and turned in to your teacher by the end of the third class period):

- What are the weaknesses and strengths of the Human Development Index (HDI) as an indicator of progress in comparison to GDP/GNP per capita? **(Total 5 marks)**
- Explain two reasons why increased investment in education is essential for development in developing economies. **(Total 4 marks)**
- What evidence would indicate to an economist that a country is experiencing economic development as well as economic growth? **(10 marks)**
- Evaluate the strategies (based on your findings in gapminder) that may be used to achieve economic development. Refer to real world examples in your answer. **(15 marks)**