

2016 UNDP Human Development Report

BACKGROUND PAPER



Policies for human development

By Christina Lengfelder



Christina Lengfelder is a research analyst who joined the Human Development Report Office in 2014. She previously lectured on social policies, international relations, and qualitative and quantitative research methodology in Santiago de Chile. She consulted for the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C., and for the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago and Santiago de Chile. Christina comes from a multidisciplinary background, holding a dual bachelor's degree in international business (Mexico and Germany), a master's in international development economics, and another in political science. Her PhD dissertation focussed on triangular cooperation and was co-funded by the International Development Research Centre in Canada, the Pontificia Universidad Católica and the Government of Chile. Christina's research interests lie in human development, international relations, social policies and psychology. She has published her work in peer-reviewed journals, as a book chapter with Ottawa University Press and in the 2016 UN Reflection Series.

ABSTRACT

The Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) distinguishes itself from other flagship reports on development in the sense that it is based on an innovative concept that defines development as the expansion of choices by enhancing capabilities. The present paper analyses to what extent this innovative concept is reflected in the policy options suggested by the reports, and whether it makes a difference for the direction the suggestions take. The purpose of the analysis is to understand how conceptual work on development influences policy advice, which is the foundation for action to achieve development objectives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Introduction

The UNDP Human Development Report Office launched its first Human Development Report in 1990. The report distinguishes itself from other flagship reports on development in that it is based on an innovative concept of development. The human development paradigm puts people at the centre of development and focuses on enlarging freedoms and choices through the expansion of capabilities. Twenty-five years after the launch of the first report, it can be observed that the human development paradigm has remained quite stable over time, though it has been enriched by academic literature and continuously updated by the Human Development Report Office to reflect current issues.

This paper analyses whether UNDP’s innovative concept of development makes a difference for the policy options suggested by the Human Development Reports. The central question is whether the concept is sufficiently reflected in the options, so that they distinguish themselves from options that are suggested to pursue other development objectives such as economic growth. An analysis of this kind is essential for learning to what extent conceptual work on development influences policy advice for achieving development objectives such as the SDGs.

The paper is organized as follows. First, it will present a brief introduction to the human development approach, juxtaposing it to utilitarian approaches. It will then proceed to a stocktaking exercise that reviews the policy options that have been suggested by the Human Development Reports from 1990 to 2014. It categorizes the options according to their objectives, such as “peace and security,” “growth with equity,” “gender equality” and others, and quantifies them according to how many reports have referred to each recommendation. The second part of the paper analyses the options regarding their relation to the concept of human development. For this purpose, it uses the different groups of objectives categorized earlier, but also quotes some concrete examples for in-depth analysis. Finally, some suggestions are made on how the policy options can be further adjusted to the concept of human development and how they can tackle the challenges of our time.

The human development approach

The concept of human development was implemented by the Human Development Report in 1990. Its origins can be found in the works of some of the world’s greatest thinkers, including Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, John Rawls, Adam Smith and Karl Marx (Ul Haq 1995a, 1995b). People are at the centre of this paradigm, and human development is defined as the process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical of choices include leading a long and healthy life, being educated and enjoying a decent standard of living (UNDP 1990, Ul Haq 1995a). The main concern of the human development paradigm is to build human capabilities, which consist of a set of “doings” and “beings”

that help humans to lead the life they have reason to value (Sen 1989, 1997, 1999). The first Human Development Report defined human development as:

“a process of enlarging people’s choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and change over time. But at all levels of development, the three essential ones are for people to lead a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. If these essential choices are not available, many other opportunities remain inaccessible” (UNDP 1990, p. 10).

The role that income plays within the concept of human development is merely instrumental, constituting a proxy for some capabilities that are not fully reflected in quantitative measures such as the Human Development Index (HDI) (Anand and Sen 2000). These capabilities can be as basic as the freedom from hunger or access to adequate shelter. Moreover, income reflects the basic resources people can access in order to achieve other functionings they have reason to value. One of the main concerns of the Human Development Reports has been to spread this new notion of human development and encourage the world to enhance capabilities to live better lives through more freedom of choice (Ul Haq 1995a, Anand and Sen 2000).

Although the human development paradigm has achieved fame through the Human Development Reports, it is deeply anchored in the capabilities approach developed by Amartya Sen and others. Sen and the first director of the Human Development Report Office, Mahbub Ul Haq, were friends who complemented each other. Sen had the patience to build the theoretical foundation of the capabilities approach, while Ul Haq had the ambition to practically implement the paradigm and make it accessible to policymakers on a global scale.

According to Sen, development is not a state or condition of a person, but the level of agency and freedom a person enjoys. The capability approach is opposed to resource-based and most utilitarian approaches, which would ask about the resources that are present, but not about how and whether people can convert these resources into functionings that they value (Sen 1989, 1997, 2008, 2009; see also Nussbaum 2000). This constitutive approach thus focuses less on material aspects than utility approaches (Ranis et al. 2006). The difference between the capabilities and utilitarian approaches becomes even clearer when considering the role of primary goods in development. Although Sen has often acknowledged his debt to John Rawls, his work sharply separates from Rawl’s philosophy of primary goods for interpersonal comparisons (Sen 1980, 1992, 2004; see also Robeyns 2005 and Nussbaum 2015). Sen points out that primary goods are means not ends to development and that they cannot account for the diversity of human beings. Different people may need different kinds and different amounts of goods to achieve the same level of well-being. Moreover, utility does not take into account that people may adjust to the status quo, developing adaptive preferences, which would not

have been their first choice under conditions of full freedom of choice (Sen 1990, 1999; Nussbaum 2003).

One can recognize the foundation of the Human Development Report's theoretical framework in Sen's book *The Idea of Justice*, which was published many years after the launch of the first report in 1990 (Sen 2008, 2009). In his book, Sen specifies four features of what can be argued to be the conception of justice that lies behind UI Haq's work:

1. The focus on lives and freedom. This focus takes into account the wide variations that people have in being able to convert freedoms into functionings they value.
2. Linking responsibility to effective power. This conception is based on Buddha's responsibility to protect those who are disproportionately less powerful than oneself.
3. A comparative approach as opposed to a transcendental one.
4. Globally unrestricted coverage.

In order to understand each pillar, it is necessary to take a closer look at the capabilities approach. Regarding the first point, the main question asked by the capabilities approach is what a person is actually able to do and be, i.e., what functionings he or she can develop given a certain set of capabilities. Based on Aristotle's works, functionings are "beings and doings," such as being nourished or being able to work, that are constitutive of what a person is. Assessing development based on a person's achieved functionings would be a mistake, according to Sen, because such assessment does not consider people's freedom to decide which functionings to value. Neither does it consider which functionings actually translate into well-being. As explained above, this aspect distinguishes Sen's capabilities approach most significantly from utility approaches (Sen 1992, see also Alkire 2005).

The second point, linking responsibility to effective power, can be interpreted as the responsibility of the people in power to protect their citizens, and thus the role of policymakers in elaborating policies conducive to human development. The third point suggests a comparative approach that empirically compares the world's different countries, reflecting the stage of development the countries are currently in. This is usually accomplished by the first or second chapter of the Human Development Report and the statistical annex that includes country rankings. Finally, the fourth point suggests that the capabilities approach is universal because the enhancement of capabilities is important for all people in all parts of the world at all times. It refers, however, only to capabilities. It does not specify associated functionings, because this would entail expecting all people to prefer certain functionings over others, while capabilities only express the possibility of achieving those functionings one has reason to value (Nussbaum 2011). The Human Development Reports should thus leave open the

specific sets of functionings to develop, given that this depends on personal preferences, local circumstances and the stage of development of each country.

According to Alkire (2010), who carried out a thorough review of the concept of human development within the global Human Development Reports in 2010, the concept of human development is “simple yet rich, full yet open-ended, flexible yet responsible, normative yet visionary, inspiring yet practical” (p. 1). Over time, the human development paradigm shows both continuity and change within the reports and academic literature. Within the former, it has remained quite stable, adjusting, however, to ongoing changes in international politics and development since its first launch in 1990. It has been open to new policy challenges emerging from a changing world, especially in the era of globalization and sustainability. This is reflected in the diverse issues that have been picked out as central themes of each report, from human security to gender to new technologies to water to the “rise of the South” (see Annex II).

In academic literature, the human development paradigm and its theoretical foundation have evolved over time. The capabilities literature has been significantly advanced by the philosopher Martha Nussbaum. Nussbaum’s approach distinguishes itself from Sen’s in that the former constitutes a partial theory of justice based on moral, legal and political philosophy that argues that governments are responsible for providing and guaranteeing certain political principles for their citizens (Nussbaum 2000, 2011). According to Nussbaum, external provisions are crucial in order for citizens to exercise their internal capabilities without external constraints. Citizens living under repressive regimes, for example, have the internal but not the external capability to express themselves freely without fear of punishment. In contrast, Sen’s approach, being much wider and not claiming to be a theory of justice, does not focus on claims on the government. Rather, it is highly participatory and leaves it to the people to determine whether governments, markets or other institutions should facilitate the achievement of selected capabilities (Sen 2009).

Nussbaum has also distinguished herself from Sen in providing an operational framework for the capabilities approach, consisting of a list of capabilities that she identifies as crucial for being able to live a life one has reason to value (Nussbaum 2003, 2015). Based on his assumption of diversity, Sen has always been reluctant to include any kind of operational frameworks in the capabilities approach, though he has not directly criticized Nussbaum’s list on substantive grounds. In turn, Nussbaum argues that normativity will always creep in, including in the Human Development Reports and their measurement of human development, which implicitly recommends certain development goals for all nations, such as health and education (Nussbaum 2015).

Another important point of separation between Sen and Nussbaum is the subject of liberty and freedom. Both authors agree on the principle of liberty, which implies respecting diversity in so far as all people should be free to live according to their own ideas and preferences. However, Nussbaum

adds: “except when the equal rights of others or some other very urgent public considerations, such as those of peace and safety, are at stake” (ibid. p. 8). The economist Paul Streeten, who contributed to several Human Development Reports, also scrutinized the notion of unlimited freedom of choice, pointing to the infeasibility or unrealistic nature of a society with infinite freedom of choice.

“Yet, infinite choices without limits and constraints can become pointless and mindless. Choices have to be combined with allegiances, rights with duties, options with bonds, liberties with ligatures. It is true that bonds without options are oppressive; but options without bonds are anarchic. Indeed, choices without bonds can be as oppressive as bonds without choices” (Streeten 2003, p. 101).

These authors thus call for certain limits to the freedom of choice. The matter of limiting freedoms has become more and more relevant in interconnected societies challenged by climate change, terrorism, financial crises and epidemics, making it necessary to restrict some of our freedoms for the sake of peace, safety and equal rights for all. To a certain extent, this is reflected in the Human Development Report policy options reviewed in the next section.

Human development in the Human Development Report’s policy options

There are two principal suggestions that derive naturally from the human development concept: to enlarge peoples’ choices and freedoms to enhance capabilities. Apart from these two very broad suggestions, the Human Development Reports have proposed around 200 specific policy options since the launch of the first report in 1990. The following sections analyse whether the innovative nature of the human development definition is reflected in these suggestions, making a difference in proposed actions for policies. The analysis does not follow a comparative approach, meaning that it does not compare the policy options to recommendations from other reports or institutions. This would go beyond the scope of this paper, though it would certainly be a highly useful exercise for future research.

Against the background of the theoretical framework of the human development approach outlined in the previous sections, its practical implementation can be juxtaposed to two other approaches of development predominant in the 1990s: neoliberalism and the so-called basic needs approach. Even though all three approaches are concerned with human well-being, they differ in their understanding of it. As in the utilitarian approaches, for neo-liberalism, the main concern is utility maximization, and development is usually measured by economic growth. Rights and human agency are mostly neglected (Fukuda-Parr 2003a). The basic needs approach shares with the human development approach the fact that both put people in the centre of development. The main difference

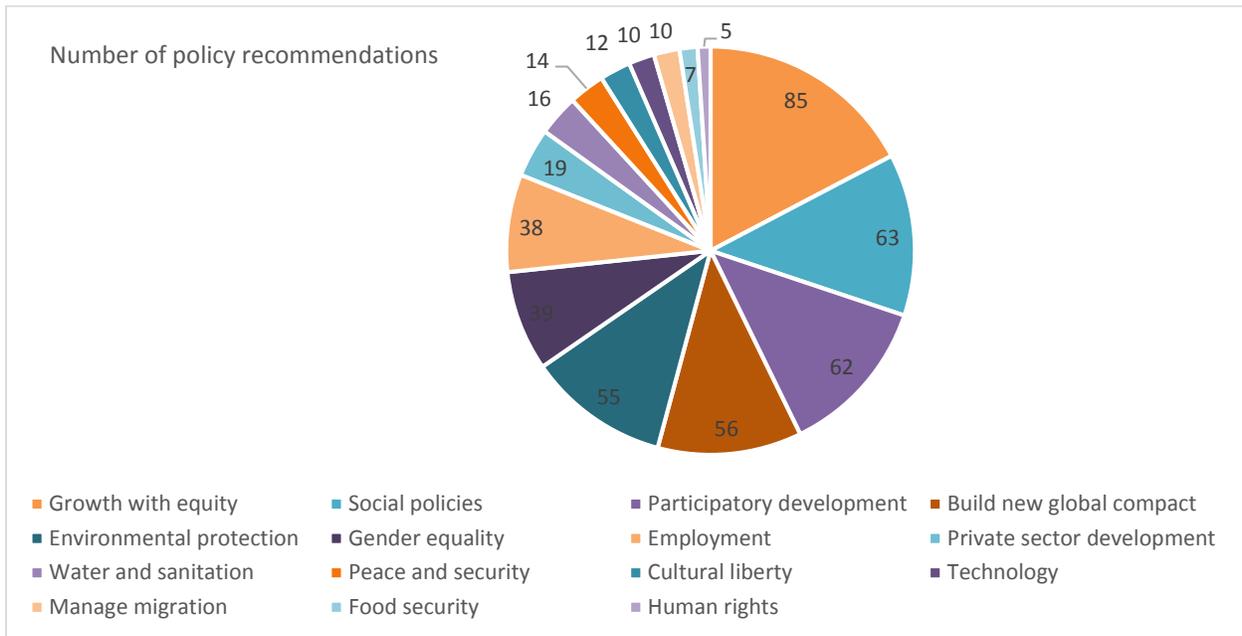
is that the basic needs approach emphasizes the provision of basic services and commodities for people, whereas for the human development approach, the expansion of capabilities is the foundation for human well-being. The basic needs approach thus focuses on materialistic development and is often quantified by poverty measures. The human development approach focuses on freedoms, and the only measurement that comes close to measuring it is the HDI, which can be interpreted as a constitutive measure for what people are able to be or do.

Given these substantial differences in the application of the human development approach compared to other approaches, it can be expected that the uniqueness of the Human Development Report's concept of development leads to a peculiar kind of policy recommendation. In a preparatory stocktaking exercise, the author of this paper thoroughly reviewed the suggestions of all Human Development Reports from the first launch in 1990. The results of this review are documented in Table 1 in Annex I, which shows a list of all policy options and indicates in which report they were published. The next sections will categorize the options according to their policy objectives, and then analyse whether and to what extent they are uniquely attached to the human development approach.

The policies suggested by the Human Development Reports can be broadly grouped into 14 categories according to overall policy objectives (Annex I). Most suggestions were made towards the objectives of “growth with equity,” “improve social policies,” “participatory development,” “build a new global compact” and “environmental protection.” Other, more specific suggestions aim at gender equality, private sector development, peace and security, technology development, human rights, food security, managing migration and cultural liberty. Figure 1 presents the categories in which policy options were suggested, ranked according to the number of suggestions made in each category.¹ The total numbers comprise the number of different suggestions made within one category and the number of repetitions of the respective recommendation in different reports. They thus represent the total number of policy options suggested within a respective group. The numbers can therefore be interpreted to reflect how much emphasis is put on each objective.

¹ All numbers are estimates, given that an exact count is unrealistic.

Figure 1: Objectives of the Human Development Report’s policy options



Source: Human Development Reports 1990 to 2014.

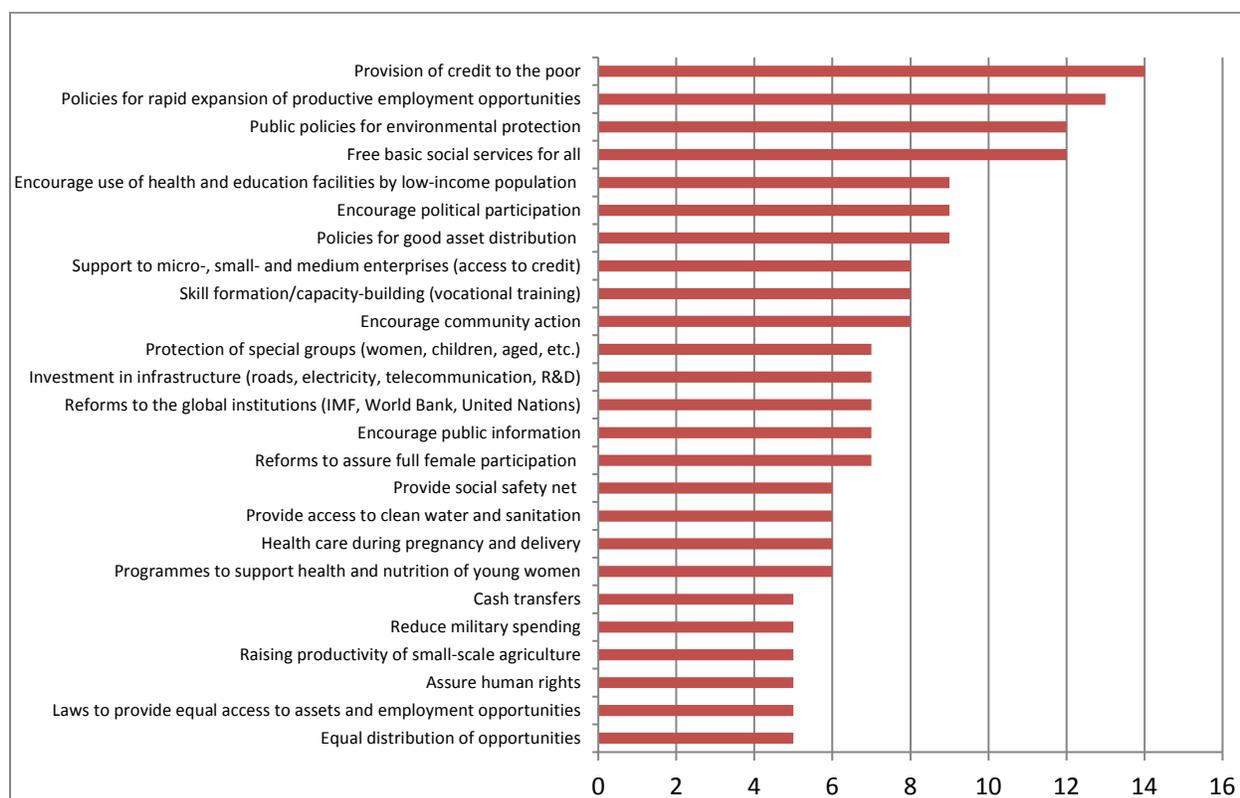
As pointed out by one of the former directors of the Human Development Report Office, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (2003b), the reports’ policy suggestions are based on the assumption that peoples’ choices regarding which capabilities to develop into functionings are open-ended, and can vary over time and place. In an ever-changing world, policy priorities thus also change, adjusting (in the best case) to peoples’ requirements and/or current political and development priorities. This is one of the reasons the reports change their subject each year. Most policy options are aligned with the respective year’s topic. Some differences can be observed between the levels of generality of policy options from earlier to later reports. The reports between 1990 and 2000 provide quite general policy options (except for the 1995 report on gender). Most aim at the objective of “growth with equity,” “participatory development” and “private sector development.” They range from policies for good asset distribution to creating productive employment opportunities to providing access to credit for the poor, especially for microenterprises.

Since the 2000 report, policy options have become more report topic specific. For example, the 2000 report on human rights hardly provides general options, but focuses on the implementation of human rights and governments’ accountability for their enforcement (UNDP 2000). Likewise, the 2001 report on technology recommends policies to manage these technologies efficiently and expand access to the poor (UNDP 2001). All subsequent reports follow the same pattern of specific policy suggestions. The exceptions are the 2003 and 2005 reports, which are more general due to their focus

on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).² Given the broad scope of the MDGs, policy options in these two reports touch almost all 14 objectives for development (UNDP 2003, 2005).

There are some specific suggestions that have been repeated several times in different reports, independent from the report topic. The most frequent ones include “providing credit to the poor,” “policies for rapid expansion of productive employment opportunities,” “providing free basic social services,” “public policies for environmental protection,” “encourage political participation,” “policies for good asset distribution,” and “encourage the use of health and education facilities” by low-income people. Figure 2 shows the most frequently suggested policy options, indicating the number of reports in which they were mentioned.³ A complete list can be found in Table 1 in Annex I.

Figure 2: Frequently suggested Human Development Report policy options



Independent from the human development approach, the policy suggestions follow certain ideological strands that have evolved over time. While the first three reports recommend rather liberal policies—mainly focused on creating free markets and ensuring favourable macroeconomic

² The focus on the MDGs is explicit in the 2003 report and implicit in the 2005 report on aid, trade and security.

³ The figure only shows recommendations suggested in at least five reports.

environments, with a strong emphasis on decentralization and little on social protection schemes— from 1994 onwards, the suggestions are much more oriented around regulation. For example, the first report recommends creating a proper environment for private sector development and free markets, and supporting private initiatives such as non-governmental organizations, enterprises and community self-help groups. It suggests privatizing “where the private sector is more efficient” (UNDP 1990, p. 20). The 1991 and 1993 reports recommend charging user fees for social services (providing free basic services), and the latter highlights the advantages of social safety nets through access to credit, human investment and worker retraining (UNDP 1991, 1993; see also Annex I).

The 1994 report recommends international regulations and international public policies on several subjects, including aid and global public good provision (UNDP 1994). Others call for cash transfers (UNDP 2008, 2011, 2013, 2014), industrial development policies (UNDP 2003, 2010, 2011, 2013), managing trade and capital flows (UNDP 1997, 1998, 2014), and the latest for free universal social services (UNDP 2013, 2014). The 1998 report was the first that extensively dealt with environmental protection, which implicitly requires some form of market regulation. It did so in relation to that year’s report topic, consumption, taking a strong stand that went as far as recommending governmental intervention in discouraging consumption patterns that have a negative effect on society (UNDP 1998). The 1999 report was one of the first (together with the 1994 report, to a lesser extent) to extensively recommend global action and international cooperation with the aim of regulating certain aspects on the global level (UNDP 1994, 1999). The report recommended codes of conduct for multinationals, the implementation of a “bit tax” in order to expand access to new technologies to the poor, and global action to regulate and supervise banking systems (UNDP 1999). The 2014 report suggests especially strong governmental intervention, such as raising the minimum wage, cash transfers to the poor, implementation of progressive taxation and targeted labour market interventions (UNDP 2014).

One could argue that this change in the direction of the suggested policy options can be attributed to the conceptual evolution described in the previous section, i.e., that Nussbaum, Streeten and other authors of the human development approach influenced the orientation of the suggestions throughout time. If this was really the case, it happened unconsciously, because nowhere was it officially announced or conceptually explained in the reports. It is more likely that the general *Zeitgeist* led this evolution. Many of the new regulatory policies are aimed at the international and environmental sphere in an attempt to regulate challenges such as climate change and globalization.

To sum up, the reports show both liberal and regulatory policy options with several different objectives that declaredly aim for human development as defined by the expansion of choices and capabilities. However, no concrete link between the policy options and the human development

approach could so far be identified. The suggestions are not necessarily different from the ones commonly made by other institutions with a focus on development.

Has the unique concept of human development really influenced UNDP's policy suggestions?

Two prevalent patterns can be observed in this regard:

1) There are some suggestions that are directly related to the human development paradigm, but they are very broad in nature; and

2) Those that are more specific have no clear link to the human development approach.

The following will explain both cases in detail.

In terms of the first case, the first two chapters of all Human Development Reports apply the concept of human development in their description and stocktaking of human development in different countries. They also use the concept to describe goals for development and to suggest where the developmental process of different countries could go. But only about half of all reports contain policy options that explicitly refer to the concept of human development. These are all rather broad and open, which is in line with the human development paradigm's conviction that each country should determine independently which path to development is appropriate for its national context. The broadness is thus quite natural. The human development paradigm suggests that the expansion of freedoms leads to development. There are uncountable ways for how freedoms can be expanded, and appropriate ways differ between countries and different stages of development. This broadness, however, conflicts with the degree of specificity implicit in policy options.

Some reports take up this challenge and try to be both at the same time: relevant for a variety of countries at different stages of human development, but also specific in suggesting necessary actions. The 1990, 1995 to 1997, and 1999 to 2011 reports are especially strong in this regard. The 2000 report tackles the dilemma through constitutive suggestions such as "access to basic education, health care, shelter and employment is as critical to human freedom as political and civil rights are" (UNDP 2000, p. iii). Access to these freedoms, in turn, drives other capability-enhancing activities, and thus human development. The 1995 report on gender focuses on investment in a certain group of the population:

"The goal of development must be justice, not charity. Women must be regarded as agents and beneficiaries of change. Investing in women's capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is the surest way to contribute to economic development. The engendered development model, though aiming to widen choices for both women and men, should not predetermine how different cultures and different societies exercise these choices. What is important is that equal choices exist for women" (UNDP 1995, p. 103).

This recommendation is sufficiently open to allow for diversity. It does not prescribe specific policies or suggest what kind of life men and women should live. It does, however, recommend the expansion of choice, and suggests a way in which this can be achieved: by investing in women's capabilities.

The 1990 report approaches the same dilemma by proposing different policy options according to countries' stages of development assessed by income, distribution and human development (UNDP 1990, p. 66). The 1996 report follows a similar approach, suggesting different options depending on countries' links between growth and human development (UNDP 1996). This way, the suggestions account for diversity, but they can still be more specific.

The 1997 report is another of those that include policy options that explicitly refer to the human development paradigm, while also providing more specific suggestions for policymakers on how to achieve human development:

“And for people to have greater freedom to choose among different ways of living, the opportunities need to be more equitably distributed – between men and women, between rural and urban areas, between ethnic minorities and dominant groups, and among all members of society” (UNDP 1997, p. 75).

With this recommendation, the report not only suggests expanding freedoms and choices, but also indicates how this can be achieved. It recommends laws to provide equal access to assets and employment opportunities; ensuring an active state; policies to support health and nutrition for young women; changes in laws on property, inheritance, and divorce; the provision of social safety nets through credit for the poor and human investment to distribute opportunities more equitably.

The 2007/2008 report is one of the few reports that provides a very specific recommendation with a direct and unique link to the human development paradigm. It proposes linking funding for adaptation to climate change to income and capabilities, measured by the HDI. This is one of the few policy suggestions that comes along with a concrete operational framework that is based on the human development approach, and that helps with the implementation of a specific policy (UNDP 2008).

The reports published under Jeni Klugman's leadership have an especially strong analytical focus on human development (Human Development Reports 2009 to 2011). The 2010 report, for example, points out that “capability-enhancing services are always coproduced by people [...],” meaning that education and health are not simply provided by the state, but that people may use infrastructure that facilitates the acquisition of these capabilities (UNDP 2010, p. 104). Furthermore, the report recommends making “progress equitable and broad-based, enabling people to become active participants in change and ensuring that achievements are not attained at the expense of future

generations” (p. 118). Put this way, people take an active role in their developmental process rather than being on the passive receiver side.

The 2011 report on sustainability and equity continues the same line of analysis, but nails the human development concept down to the concrete example of the interplay between sustainability and equity (UNDP 2011). It puts forward that the remarkable progress in human development cannot continue without global action to reduce environmental risks and inequality. Both environmental sustainability and equity, says the report, are crucial for expanding human freedoms. The key policy message is that although there may be trade-offs between equity and sustainability, policymakers should try to find solutions that promote both. The report not only helps in identifying positive synergies between the two, but also shows ways to build these synergies.

A change in the Human Development Report Office’s director for the 2013 and 2014 reports brought a quite regulatory approach that suggested substantial governmental intervention, especially regarding public investment. The two reports call for universal access to social services such as health and education, and go as far as strongly recommending targeted cash transfers for the poor, arguing that under certain circumstances, they can enable capability expansion. Especially during transition periods, the 2014 report states, “social security regimes are integral to—not optional for—enhancing people’s capabilities and societies’ competences [...]” (UNDP 2014, p. 96). For those to whom this may sound too regulatory for an approach that aims to maximize freedoms, the 2013 report explains that these provisions are constitutive for capability expansion that in turn enhances the freedom of choice. Once social services are provided, people can determine what capabilities to develop into functionings, which will enable them to lead the life they have reason to value. According to the report, “investing in people’s capabilities—through health, education and other public services—is not an appendage of the growth process but an integral part of it” (UNDP 2013, p. 69).

The second case, specific suggestions with no clear link to human development, can be viewed in Figure 2 and Table 1 in Annex I. None of the options presented in Table 1 explicitly mentions human development. Some have an implicit link, however. For example, from a human development perspective, it is plausible to recommend allowing migrants to work in their host countries (UNDP 1999), because this directly enlarges their freedom of choice and additionally enables them to enhance their capabilities. In this case, the recommendation is based on the paradigm. To the contrary, a recommendation like “charge user fees for social services (providing free access to basic services)” (UNDP 1991, 1993, 2001) is more difficult to relate to the human development paradigm, unless one assumes that society cannot bear the cost for free social services without limiting economic freedoms. Likewise, relating the recommendation “regulate the banking system” (UNDP 1999, 2014) to the human development paradigm—although highly important—requires some imagination. Suggestions such as “food subsidies” (UNDP 1990, 1991, 1999, 2014), “provide access to clean water and sanitation”

(UNDP 1998, 1999, 2003, 2006, 2011, 2014) and “income support schemes” (UNDP 1990, 2013, 2014) could also be part of policy recommendations that are based on the basic needs approach. The point is that the human development approach is not visible in these specific policy options, and there are no analytical explanations showing that they are theoretically based on it.

To sum up, the policy options that are broader and frame a certain course of action from which policymakers can derive their own specific policies are notably conceptually anchored in the human development approach. Those that suggest specific actions (mostly the ones that are quantified above) are not substantially different from what other institutions that seek equitable and sustainable development would recommend. This is mostly due to the trade-off between the openness of the human development approach, which is necessary to allow for diversity, and the specificity that suggestions for action require. Considering this dilemma, how could specific suggestions still aim at human development in the strict sense of the concept, as opposed to economic growth or other forms of development? The final section makes some suggestions in this regard.

Suggestions for future human development reports

As noted in the section on conceptual evolution, Sen’s initial definition of development as freedom has been complemented by Nussbaum, Streeten and others with some critical analysis on how much freedom is possible and desirable in modern societies. In the era of climate change, terrorism and financial volatility, this question has become more important than ever before. These challenges confine the freedoms of some, and it is thus normatively ethical to governmentally restrict some freedoms in order to prevent and mitigate their consequences. The Human Development Reports could adopt and extend this analysis in the search for policies that foster a balance between maximum possible freedoms for capability expansion and sufficient regulation to assure that individual freedoms do not violate the freedoms of others, and that today’s freedoms do not compromise freedoms of future generations. This invokes a distributional issue and gives rise to a new policy objective for the reports: the equal distribution of freedoms.

In order for the reports to continue to make unique contributions that foster human development, it can furthermore be recommended to tighten the link between the policy options and the human development approach, while at the same time maximizing their operational value—a challenge identified in the previous section. As mentioned above, the 1999 to 2011 reports constitute good examples of how to accomplish this. They provide the analytical framework of the human development paradigm and then derive specific policy options for a given report topic from there. The following is another concrete example of how this can be accomplished.

Let's take the case of working mothers. Traditionally, women have assumed the role of caring for their children. For working women, this can mean a trade-off between their career and family planning. From a human development perspective, women are thus faced with constrained choices regarding their career and/or family. As pointed out by Sen and Nussbaum, they usually develop adaptive preferences, but then unconsciously live with constrained choices. The policy options that could be derived from the human development paradigm for this situation would aim at enlarging women's choices. Among others, a report could thus recommend the following:

- Legal right to at least six months paid maternity leave. Women would thus not have to trade in breastfeeding and bonding for their career plans.
- Legal right to part-time work after maternity leave is over. This would provide women with the opportunity to pursue a career, but also to spend extended time periods with their children.
- Governmental assurance of affordable (subsidized) childcare. Women's choice of whether to participate or not in the labour market would be expanded without the constraint of not being able to afford childcare.
- Prolonged paternity leave. Women's freedoms would be expanded relative to men's, and care responsibilities could be more equally shared.

All of these policy options would enlarge women's freedom of choice regarding traditional career-family trade-offs, and would thus foster human development. Following this pattern, future Human Development Reports could assure that their policy options are tightly connected to the human development paradigm—aiming primarily at enlarging the freedom of choice and enhancing capabilities. At the same time, they could be sufficiently specific so as to provide operational suggestions to policymakers.

Finally, in order to facilitate access to the suggestions, they should be summarized in one chapter in the back of the report, with the foregoing analysis in each respective chapter according to the chapters' topic. This is nicely done in the 2009 Human Development Report, among others. It provides busy policymakers with the option to search directly for policy suggestions on a certain subject whenever needed without re-reading the report.

Conclusion

This paper has examined suggested policy options from the first Human Development Report in 1990 to the most recent one in 2014. It has scrutinized whether the suggestions are closely connected to the

human development paradigm and can be derived from its theoretical foundation. It was observed that the human development paradigm, due to its broad nature, has left room for liberal as well as regulatory policy options, which provides policymakers with a range of suggestions to choose from. Moreover, considering the diversity of the world's countries, the broad nature and wide range of options enables policymakers to identify those policies that are right for the development priorities of their country. To address the trade-off that emerges when leaving this room for diversity but still aiming for specific policy suggestions that advance human development in the strict sense of the concept, the suggestions should be firmly anchored in a foregoing analysis of the human development approach presented in the first chapter of each report.

The paper has also considered the argument that unlimited freedom may be unrealistic in a world marked by challenges such as climate change, terrorism and financial volatility. It concludes that the Human Development Reports should make this a distributional issue, suggesting policies that aim at a relatively equal distribution of freedoms among individuals, but also among different nations.

POLICIES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Objective	Policy recommendations	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007/ 08	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015
	Income support schemes	x																				x	x	x	
Food security	Food subsidies	x	x								x													x	
	Food buffer stocks to improve distribution and smooth prices													x											
	Special nutrition programmes	x																						x	
Gender equality	Reforms to assure full female participation in political, bureaucratic and economic decision-making	x					x						x			x					x	x	x		
	Laws to provide equal access to assets and employment opportunities	x								x									x					x	
	Improve control over fertility																x								
	Programmes to support health and nutrition of young women	x					x			x	x					x								x	
	Permitting flexible work schedules						x									x									x
	Health care during pregnancy and delivery	x			x		x			x	x					x									
	Change laws on property, inheritance and divorce						x				x					x									
	Change tax and social security incentives						x																		
	Improving information on women's work, including unpaid work							x														x			x
	Expansion of public services (childcare)						x																		x
	Encourage men to participate in family care						x					x													x
	Policies should support private initiatives (NGOs, enterprises, community self-help groups)	x													x	x									
Participatory development	Provision of credit to the poor	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x			x			x		x	x
	Build electoral systems													x											
	Build social cohesion																							x	
	Encourage community action							x	x	x					x				x			x	x	x	

POLICIES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Objective	Policy recommendations	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007/ 08	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015
	support for disabled and aged)																								
	Cost reductions in health care, education, and water and sanitation to increase efficiency		x												x										
	Protection of special groups (women, children, aged, etc.)				x				x	x	x					x								x	x
	Ensure an active state								x									x		x				x	
	Encourage breastfeeding									x					x										
	Implement non-contributive pensions																							x	
	Implement low-cost insurance schemes																							x	
	Public advocacy to trigger desired behaviour (tobacco use, hand washing, etc.)																							x	
	Train community health workers														x										
	Free basic social services for all						x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x			x		x	x	x	
	Enable universal access to energy																					x			
	Targeted programmes for poverty reduction						x																x		
	Compulsive primary education							x					x		x								x		
	Distribute insecticide-treated nets for malaria prevention														x										
	HIV prevention policies and treatment accessibility for poor countries								x		x		x		x										
	Charge a user fee for social services but provide free basic services (primary education, basic health care)		x		x								x												
Water and sanitation	Establishment of national water and sanitation plan																	x							
	Create governance systems that hold governments and private suppliers accountable for achieving goals set in national plans																	x				x			
	Manage pricing of water									x								x							

POLICIES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Objective	Policy recommendations	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007/ 08	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015
	unwilling or unable to do so																								
	Establish forums for disarmament					x																			
	Phase out military assistance					x						x													
	Regulate arms trade					x						x					x								
Environmental protection	Pollution taxes			x		x				x								x	x						
	Bonds and deposit refund systems for environmental protection									x									x						
	Property rights for environmental protection									x					x										
	Greater transparency in resource management																x								
	Systematic development of cleaner fossil fuel using technologies and renewable sources									x					x				x		x				
	Introduce and enforce vehicle emissions and fuel economy standards									x															
	Investing in science and technology for the environment														x				x			x			x
	Elimination of permanent fuel subsidies										x					x									
	Promote development and production of low-polluting vehicles										x					x									
	Eliminate perverse subsidies										x					x				x					
	Provide information on energy efficiency																			x					
	Implement standards for vehicles and appliances																			x					
	Responsibility and liability on those who pollute(d) most																			x					
	Climate deal-flow facilities																						x		
	Crisis-related transfers (climate change)																			x					
Insurance for social risk management and poverty reduction																			x						

Objective	Policy recommendations	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007/ 08	2009	2010	2011	2013	2014	2015	
Human rights	Launch independent national assessments of human rights											x														
	Align national laws with international human rights standards and commitments											x														
	Promote human rights norms											x														
	Strengthen a network of human rights institutions											x														
	Promote a rights-enabling economic environment											x														
Cultural liberty	Power-sharing through federal arrangements and consociation															x										
	Policies on religious practices															x										
	Policies on customary law and legal pluralism															x										
	Policies on the use of multiple languages															x										
	Recognize legitimate claims to land and livelihoods															x										
	Policies for redressing socioeconomic exclusion															x										
	Incorporate accommodation of minority identities and adopt policies of multiculturalism															x										
	Consider asymmetric federalism and executive power sharing															x										
	Recognize multiple identities and multiple citizenship															x										
	Develop special support programmes for jobs, training and credit															x										
	Institute affirmative action programmes															x										
Offer separate publicly funded provisions, such as schools															x											
Managing migration	Liberalize and simplify regular migration channels																			x						

Annex II

Human Development Reports 1990-2014

Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience

Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World

Human Development Report 2011: Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All

Human Development Report 2010: The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development

Human Development Report 2009: Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development

Human Development Report 2007/8: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World

Human Development Report 2006: Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis

Human Development Report 2005: International Cooperation at a Crossroads: Aid, Trade and security in an Unequal World

Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World

Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty

Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World

Human Development Report 2001: Making New Technologies Work for Human Development

Human Development Report 2000: Human Rights and Human Development

Human Development Report 1999: Globalization with a Human Face

Human Development Report 1998: Consumption for Human Development

Human Development Report 1997: Human Development to Eradicate Poverty

Human Development Report 1996: Economic Growth and Human Development

Human Development Report 1995: Gender and Human Development

Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security

Human Development Report 1993: People's Participation

Human Development Report 1992: Global Dimensions of Human Development

Human Development Report 1991: Financing Human Development

Human Development Report 1990: Concept and Measurement of Human Development

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UNDP Human Development Report Office
304 E. 45th Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: +1 212-906-3661
Fax: +1 212-906-5161
<http://hdr.undp.org/>

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