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Strictly embargoed until 12.00 GMT, 8 July 2003

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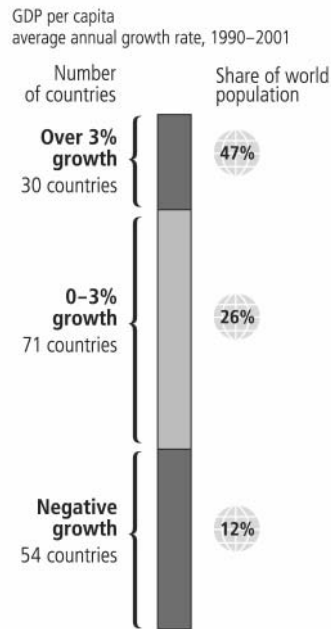
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Human Development Report 2003 Charts Decade-long Income Drop in 54 Countries

New York, 8 July 2003—While much of the world experienced sustained economic growth in the 1990s, 54 developing countries suffered average income declines over the course of the decade, reveals the United Nations Development Programme’s *Human Development Report 2003*.

Most of the countries that were poorer in 2000 than in 1990 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Fast growth is the exception
—with populous countries
doing well**



Source: Indicator table 12.

The *Human Development Report 2003* argues that to reverse declines, development strategies must focus not only on economic growth, but also on more equitable distribution of wealth and services.

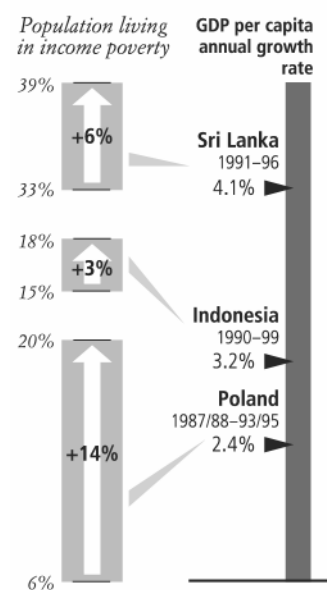
“Poverty can be a political problem,” said Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator. “This Report shows that there are many countries where income levels are high enough to end absolute poverty, but where pockets of deep poverty remain, often because of worrying patterns of discrimination in the provision of basic services.”

The Report introduces the new Millennium Development Compact, which proposes new global and regional policies to kick-start growth and reduce poverty. The Report argues that investment in industries and businesses that create jobs, such as manufacturing and textiles, are more important for human development than industries that require large amounts of capital, such as oil exploration and production. The Report also calls for special initiatives to support small businesses and entrepreneurs in developing countries.

The Report also calls on developing country governments to prioritize spending on the basic services that poor people need most: primary schools, not universities; rural clinics, not technologically advanced hospitals in big cities.

“Poor countries cannot afford to wait until they are wealthy before they invest in their people,” said Jeffrey Sachs, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals, and a guest contributor to this year’s Human Development Report. “This is the wrong way round. They need rural health clinics, schools, roads, and safe drinking water and sanitation, so that economic growth can take root in the first place. Investment in meeting basic needs isn’t just desirable in its own right for ending human suffering, but it is also a key part of an overall strategy of economic growth.”

Growth and income poverty: links not automatic



Source: Human Development Report Office calculations based on World Bank 2003i and World Bank 2000a.

The *Human Development Report 2003* shows that in many countries women, the rural poor and ethnic minorities do not get their fair share of increased social spending. Data shows patterns of discrimination in terms of access to education, healthcare, safe water and sanitation. In a majority of the countries in the developing world with reliable statistics charting health standards in rural as well as urban areas, progress towards the reduction of child mortality rates has been notably lower in the countryside than in cities. It is striking that in Cambodia, for instance, where 85 percent of the people live in the countryside, only 13 percent of government health workers work in rural areas.

The Millennium Development Goals are based on the premise that economic growth alone will not rescue the world from the poverty that entraps more than one billion people. Without addressing issues like malnutrition and illiteracy that are both causes and symptoms of poverty, the Goals will not be met. The statistics today are shaming: More than 13 million children have died through diarrhoeal disease in the past decade. Each year, over half a million women, one for every minute of the day, die in pregnancy and childbirth. More than 800 million suffer from malnutrition.

Many of the solutions to the problems of hunger, disease, and illiteracy are known—such as bed nets to prevent malaria; midwives to assist labouring women; fertilizers to increase agricultural productivity; hygiene training to safeguard potable water supplies.

These are hardly high-tech strategies. Yet combined they would save millions of lives.

ABOUT THIS REPORT: Every year since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has commissioned the Human Development Report by an independent team of experts to explore major issues of global concern. A worldwide advisory network of leaders in academia, government and civil society contribute data, ideas, and best practices to support the analysis and proposals published in the Report. The concept of Human Development looks beyond per capita income, human resource development, and basic needs as a measure of human progress and also assesses such factors as human freedom, dignity and human agency, that is, the role of people in development. The *Human Development Report 2003* argues that development is ultimately “a process of enlarging people’s choices,” not just raising national incomes.

The *Human Development Report 2003* is published in English by Oxford University Press.

ABOUT UNDP: The United Nations Development Programme is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.