

The Central challenge of the post - 2015 UN Development Agenda is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's peoples of present and future generations. Business as usual cannot be an option and transformative changes is needed. As the challenges are highly interdependent, a new , more holistic approach is needed to address them. Global trends, challenges all opportunities to which the post -2015 UN Development Agenda should respond has following dimension

Much Progress, But “business As Usual” Is Not An Option

Since 2000, when the Millennium Declaration was adopted, there has been strong economic growth in many parts of the world, lifting millions out of poverty. Major advancements have been made in technology, radically changing the way people communicate, organize, network, learn and participate as national and global citizens.

However, progress in human development has been uneven, leaving many behind and widening inequalities. Further more, the global food, energy and financial crises of 2007-2010 highlighted the fragility of global food supply

L abour incomes have been stagnant or have fallen as a share of national income in most developed and developing countries since the 1980s. Only 28 per cent of the global population is covered by comprehensive social protection systems, reflecting high degrees of informality.

systems and exposed systemic failures in the workings of financial and commodity markets and major weaknesses in the mechanisms of global governance. The rapid worldwide spread of the financial fallout in the United States and, more recently, the uncertainty in global financial markets generated by the sovereign debt crises in Europe have underscored the interconnectedness of the global economy. Higher and much more volatile world food and energy prices reflect decades-long neglect of agriculture, negative impacts of climate change, higher exposure and vulnerability to disasters, land use for bio-fuel production that went at the expense of food

Global Trends, Challenges and Opportunities of Development

** Ban-ki-Moon*

production, as well as energy and commodity market speculation. Nearly one billion people in the world are undernourished and more than 200 million are unemployed. Labour incomes have been stagnant or have fallen as a share of national income in most developed and developing countries since the 1980s. Only 28 per cent of the global population is covered by comprehensive social protection systems, reflecting high degrees of informality.

Indeed, the global jobs crisis reflects the human costs of these multiple crises, deepening marginalization and poverty among vulnerable groups. The economic and food crises are compounded by the



g l o b a l environmental crisis, of which climate change has the most ominous implication

terms the reduction was overwhelmingly concentrated in China. In spite of decreasing poverty rates in sub-Saharan Africa, the absolute number of poor people increased in the region. At the same time, the majority of the world's poor people — three-quarters —live in what are now middle-income countries.

With few exceptions, income and wealth inequalities within countries have increased since the early 1980s, including in high-income countries. Inequalities in access to land and other productive assets, as well as in social outcomes and service access, also remain widespread. In developing countries, nutritious food, safe drinking water, improved sanitation, basic education coverage and learning outcomes are much worse for low-income and rural families, while child death rates and stunting are two to four times higher between the lowest and highest wealth quintiles. Gender inequalities persist, as

s.
Progress In Poverty Reduction, But Major Inequalities Persist

A number of developing countries, mostly in Asia, have been narrowing the gap in living standards vis-à-vis developed countries. Others, especially in Africa, have fallen further behind. The number of the world's poor living on less than \$1.25 a day decreased from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 1.3 billion in 2008. Many developing countries have seen poverty decline, but in absolute

shown in wage earnings differentials, access to positions of decision-making and HIV infection rates. In too many contexts, equal access to justice and political participation is not guaranteed in practice.

Redressing these trends will be a major challenge in the years ahead. High inequalities have impeded sustainable development and have no place in a world where a decent and secure well-being should be a prerogative of all citizens.

The Knowledge Challenge

The worldwide spread of the internet and ICTs has massively expanded opportunities for the creation, transmission and dissemination of information. Yet, inequalities in access to ICT networks, education and technological progress and to innovation systems remain vast, within and among countries. Rapid loss of traditional knowledge and its non-formal channels of transmission is further widening the gap. Limited access to knowledge hampers progress towards inclusive growth and employment creation, technological progress for sustainable development and health improvements. Greater knowledge sharing will be critical to induce the transformative changes needed to achieve food, nutrition and energy security in sustainable ways and to contain the threat of climate change.

Shifting Demographics

Over the past quarter century, world population increased by two billion. Currently, about 78 million people are added to the world's population every year. This means that, by 2050, the global economy would need to be able to provide a decent living for more than 9 billion people, of whom 85 per cent will be living in what are now developing countries. Africa will account for about half of the absolute increase in population and be home to nearly one quarter of the world population by 2050.

Inequalities in access to sufficient and nutritious food, education and basic social and health services, including reproductive health services, are key determinants of both higher mortality and fertility rates among the poor and in low-income regions. High levels of unintended pregnancy persist in many countries, particularly among the poor and young adults. The growing number of youth

with limited employment opportunities poses an enormous challenge, potentially undermining social cohesion and adding pressures on migratory flows.

Overall progress in human development worldwide has contributed to dramatic reductions in mortality rates and increases in longevity. As a result, the world population is ageing rapidly. By 2050, one in three persons living in developed countries, and one in five in what currently constitute developing countries, will be over 60 years of age. Declining and ageing populations are already putting large pressures on pension and health systems, especially in developed countries, but increasingly also in some developing countries. The challenges are manifold, including the needs to redesign pension systems so as to ensure economic security for all in old age while sustaining financial viability; to enhance health and long-term care services to keep ageing populations healthy and active; and to enhance opportunities for older persons to actively participate in society.

Around one billion people are international or internal migrants; South-South migration is as significant as South-to-North movements. With approximately 214 million international migrants and an estimated 740 million internal migrants today; about one billion persons live outside their place of origin or habitual residence. International migration today affects every region, with South-to-South migration as significant as South-to-North movements. Movements of people can be associated with multiple factors, including the search for better educational and job opportunities and working conditions, flight from poverty, conflict, human rights abuse, hunger, discrimination and environmental degradation and natural disasters. International migration is bringing benefits to both countries of origin and destination, including remittances and reduced labour shortages. The transfer of resources, skills, knowledge, ideas and networks through migration is difficult to quantify, yet significant. Many millions of migrants have also benefited from building a better future for themselves and their dependants. However, too many migrants continue to work and live in insecure, precarious and dangerous conditions, often marginalized and subject to discrimination and without access to social and health care services, while disruptions to family

life can have significant social consequences, particularly in the country of origin.

By 2050, 70 per cent of the world's population is projected to live in urban areas. Rapid urban growth is mainly occurring in countries least able to cope with the demand for decent jobs, adequate housing and urban basic services. Close to one billion people, or 33 per cent of the urban population in developing countries, live in slums, in inequitable and often life-threatening conditions. If left unaddressed, these trends may become sources of social and political instability.

Larger urban populations will also influence food and land-use patterns, with potentially vast implications. Rising incomes and continued population growth have not only raised food demand, but also altered dietary patterns. This is reflected in increased per capita meat consumption, which has risen by about a quarter over the past decade. While meat is an important source of protein, under existing production conditions, higher demand can lead to land use shifts and further deforestation, higher energy use, rising food prices and regional food shortages. Global agricultural production will have to almost double in developing countries to feed a growing population by 2050. Although global food production has outpaced population growth, it has failed to meet potential demand, and unequal distribution still left nearly one billion people undernourished worldwide in 2010. At the same time, about 500 million people are obese. Through its association with sharp increases in the prevalence of chronic diseases, unhealthy food consumption patterns are pushing up health costs worldwide. At the same time, under-nutrition at an early age limits adolescent growth and increases the risk of incurring chronic disease later in life. Under-nutrition further heightens women's health risks during pregnancy. Many developing countries face a double health burden caused by the high prevalence of both under- and over-nutrition.

Growing Environmental Footprints

Growth of population, income, energy and resource use, waste and pollution have come at the cost of unprecedented use of natural resources and environmental degradation. Almost half of the Earth's forests are gone, groundwater sources and fish stocks are being

rapidly depleted, and land degradation and ocean acidification are worsening. Biodiversity has been enormously reduced, and carbon dioxide emissions increased by 40 per cent between 1990 and 2008, to reach dangerous climate destabilizing concentrations of close to 30 billion tonnes a year.

Increased levels of human activity are threatening to surpass the Earth's carrying capacity as a source and sink. At present, fossil fuels provide for more than 85 per cent of primary energy and account for about 60 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions as well as a significant proportion of emissions of sulphur and nitrogen compounds, black carbon, mercury and other air pollutants. To limit the increase in global average temperature to 2°C above pre-industrial levels (with a probability greater than 50 per cent), greenhouse gas emissions should have been reduced to less than 44 gigatonnes (Gt) CO₂ equivalent by 2020, well below present levels. The added challenge is that reductions in GHG emissions have to be achieved while enhancing access to energy. An estimated 1.4 billion people lack access to modern energy services, hampering their ability to overcome poverty. Traditional energy supplies also impose a higher unpaid work burden, especially on women.

The incidence of natural disasters has increased five-fold since the 1970s. This can be attributed in part to human-induced climate change. Natural disasters destroy livelihoods and may wipe out years of infrastructure investment. Deforestation, soil erosion, degradation of natural coastal protection and poor infrastructure have increased the likelihood that weather shocks will cause human disasters, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable in the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. It is estimated that over 42 million people were displaced by sudden-onset natural disasters in 2010.

Living In An Insecure World

At least one fifth of humanity lives in countries experiencing significant violence, political conflict, insecurity and societal fragility. Such conditions form a major obstacle to development, with lasting implications for societal well-being. Country affected by violence or fragility has achieved a single MDG target. Countries with major violence have poverty rates more than 20 percentage

points higher than the average. Fragile and conflict-affected countries also face far higher levels of undernourishment, educational deficits, child mortality, single female-headed households with young children, and safe drinking water and basic sanitation deprivations.

Peace, if defined as the “absence of violence” or “absence of the fear of violence”, is associated with multiple factors that reinforce one another, including horizontal, vertical and gender equality, justice, relevant education and employment opportunities, sound management of natural resources, human rights protection, political inclusion and low levels of corruption. Prevention of conflict and sustained peace can bring rapid development gains, as shown by the experiences of Cambodia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Rwanda, among many others. A legal system

ensuring freedom from threat of all types of violence, including against minority groups, women and children; freedom from abuse, coercion and harassment; security of property; and confidence that effective investigation and criminal justice will follow any victimization. Addressing the sources of conflicts requires a multidimensional approach where development, human rights, peace, security and the rule of law are interrelated dimensions of well-being.

Income and job insecurity have also increased due to patterns of globalization based on outsourcing and weaker labour protection. This, together with the limited access to social security for the majority of workers in the world, puts the livelihoods of many households at risk to even small economic shocks.

Governance And Accountability Deficits

The recent food, fuel and financial crises have highlighted the inter-connectedness of the world economic system. Climate change and rising migration are challenges with global ramifications. Yet, the policies, rules and institutions established to govern these processes are mostly national, while global mechanisms are strongly compartmentalized. The multilateral trade, finance and environmental architectures, for instance, lack coherence across many dimensions. Institutions of global governance differ in

constituencies and the distribution of voice and power among their respective memberships; democratic deficits exist in some of them, especially among the international financial institutions.

Global governance deficits and failure to implement international legal frameworks have spurred countries to seek regional solutions, including regional trade agreements, regional mechanisms of financial cooperation and informal arrangements to approach regional issues of migration. These arrangements are important in responding to region-specific development needs, but they require coordination to avoid policy fragmentation and incoherence with multilateral regimes and international standards.

Recent events in the Arab States have brought to the fore longstanding demands from civil society, especially from young people, for a development trajectory grounded in democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights. The events underscore the importance of addressing democratic governance deficits at the national and sub-national levels to ensure the legitimacy of development policies and to support the empowerment of people.

A Need For New Development Pathways

Continuation along previously trodden economic growth pathways will exacerbate inequalities, social tensions and pressures on the world's resources and natural environment. There is therefore an urgent need to find new development pathways that encourage creativity and innovation in the pursuit of inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth and development. Such an effort must be matched by reshaping the global partnership for development to support implementation and to ensure effective accountability mechanisms at all levels. ■

United Nations. The above article is abstracted from his Report titled “Realizing the Future we want for All” Submitted to UN in June 2012.