



Hans Singer: the legacy and future



Basic Needs and Human Development

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Hans the forerunner



- ‘The real resources of a country are its people’ – a conclusion derived from Keynes.
- Within UN, major author of development decade (1960s) objectives including many BN elements, although then prime emphasis on growth.

1965 article

Four models of development:

1. **Classical puritan model.** Cut consumption to grow.
2. **Keynesian growth:** growth in output and consumption.
3. **Human investment model** – ‘degrading’.
4. **Antonine model.** Forerunner of today's Human Development. Growth and development. ‘The key concept must be the improved quality of people’s lives’, with feedback from better quality to higher productivity and back.



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Direct antecedent to much work on Human Development relating Economic growth and Human Development

Basic Needs and Human Development today



- Although not fashionable, many unfulfilled BN remain. Still relevant.
- But BN approach displaced and encompassed by HD:

Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect' (HDRO 1990) .

- HD, unlike BN, applies to rich AND poor countries.



Exploring Singer's feedback mechanisms between Economic Growth (EG) and Human Development (HD)



- Growth needed to support HD.
- But HD essential to support EG.
- Countries in vicious and virtuous development cycles.
- But 'lop-sided' development occurs.
- Yet countries that emphasise Growth without HD ALWAYS fallback.
- Countries that emphasise HD without growth can transfer to virtuous cycle.

New issues for HD



1. **Focus on groups:**
 1. groups among poor to empower
 2. how to achieve peaceful and supportive societies
 3. how to avoid group conflict, especially in multicultural societies.
2. **Beyond the HDI.** What are the dimensions of Human Development beyond HDI, beyond BN? What are the desirable characteristics of richer societies? How can they be measured and promoted?
3. How can global capitalist system be constrained **to deal with problems:**
 - to moderate inequalities;
 - to inculcate social values
 - to cope with externalities and environment?i.e. to promote HD; or are they in conflict?



Hans Singer

Britain's most highly respected and most loved development economist

