WAYS OF MEASURING DEVELOPMENT.
INTRODUCTION

• Given that development varies from place to place and over time, it is only natural that we would want to measure it.

• Geographers use indicators to compare levels of development.

• These are economic, social and environmental.
The most common way of measuring development is using economic indicators. These tell us about how much wealth and income a country has. The most common used indicator is the Gross Domestic Product.
Gross Domestic Product.

- Using this indicator we see which countries are well off and which are not.
- GDP is the total value in money of all goods and services produced in a country.
- If we divide this by the total population living in the country we can work out the per capita GDP or per person GDP.
- It is given in US dollars which makes it easier to compare.
- E.G Norway has a per capita GDP of $54 000 while Mozambique has a per capita income of $1 000. This shows that Norway is more developed than Mozambique.
GDP

In most countries the GDP per capita is increasing but in some of the poorest countries it is not. Generally this happens when those countries are involved in a war or they have no natural resources or they have extremely large debts or any other disaster like AIDS.
Structure of the economy

• Another economic indicator could be the structure of the economy.
• E.g. if the majority of the population are engaged in primary activities then these tend to be less developed.
• E.g. USA only has 1% of its population involved in farming whereas Bangladesh has 54%.
1. Economic measures

GNI (PPP) per capita
As a country becomes more developed, normally it becomes increasingly industrialised. As even more time passes, the service sector begins to expand. This means that firstly, more and more people are employed in the secondary sector and then they are increasingly employed in the tertiary sector of the economy.

Be careful how you rank the continents based on this map!
Problems of just using GDP

- A biased picture could be formed if geographers only used the GDP.
- For instance how reliable is the data that is collected?
- Some economic activity like informal trading is not included.
- Also shadow economies (illegal activity) like prostitution is not reflected. So it only tells one side of a complex story and we need to look at more indicators.
Social Indicators

- Social development is about the wellbeing of the people living in the country.
- There are many indicators to determine this for example:
  - **Life expectancy** – is how long (in years) an average person is likely to live.
  - The longer the life expectancy the more developed a country is as it influenced by other factors such as:
    - Diet
    - Health care
    - Diseases
    - Sanitation
    - Ect.
Social Indicators

- Another indicator is **infant mortality** that is the number of babies that die before they turn one.
- Also **literacy levels** – this is the ability of people to read and write.
- In general countries that have higher incomes and are more developed have higher literacy levels and lower infant mortality rates.
2. Social measures

Life expectancy (years)
2. Social measures

Death rate (deaths/thousand)
2. Social measures

Infant mortality rate

(number of children who die before their 1st birthday/thousand)
2. Social measures

% of population undernourished
2. Social measures

% of country’s budget spent on health care

Expenditure (%)
- 2 - 4.9
- 5 - 9.9
- 10 - 14.9
- 15 - 19.9
- 20 and higher
- Data not available
2. Social measures

% of population literate

Source: UN Human Development Report
Environmental Indicators

- These measure the extent of how humans have impacted the environment.
- E.g. the percentage of polluting gases in the atmosphere
- The quality of water
- Drop in fish stock in the sea.
- Most developed counties with high GDP usually have lots of environmental damage. Their high scores due to their environmental damage.
In 2010 the HDI was adopted as a more reliable indicator than the GDP. It takes three indicators into account and not just the GDP. These indicators are:

- Life expectancy
- Adult literacy
- GDP
Human Development Index.

- This index does not look at any environmental factors.
- There are 187 countries on the index.
- The first three according to the index in 2014 were Norway, Australia and Switzerland.
- The bottom three were Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Niger.
- South Africa ranked 118 out of 187 countries.
- The HDI is a number between 0 and 1.
- 1 is highly developed and 0 is less developed.

- In some countries the life expectancy has increased due to better medicines however not the case in less developed countries due to diseases like malaria and HIV.
Human Development Index.

- The countries with good education systems mean that the people have skills to do jobs that will improve the development of their countries.
- Where education is low, pupils leave school early to find work, and the countries remain undeveloped.
Human Development Index.

- Although GDP is used it does not always follow that countries with high incomes will have high levels of development.
- E.g. South Africa has a huge gap between the rich and the poor.
Problems with HDI

- One of the biggest criticism of the HDI is that it is still very closely related to the GDP.
- Also there is no measure of human rights or freedom.

- However HDI is valuable when it comes to the poverty stricken nations as it stimulates debates as the where the aid, trade and debt relief should be concentrated.
Referencing

- Development gap – slide share.