UNDP's Definition of Human Development: The Missing Links

Arsène Honoré Gidéon NKAMA

Faculty of Economics and Management, the University of Yaounde 2, Cameroon
E-mail: ahgnkama@yahoo.com

Abstract: UNDP defines human development in its different human development reports, mainly from the 1990 to 2010 reports. The core definition which emerges from these definitions considers human development as "the process of enlarging people's choices". A question is, Does this short sentence perfectly represent the reality behind the concept of human development? The paper testes the ability of this UNDP's core definition to describe the reality behind the concept of human development. To this end, we consider the main approaches to human development by selected pioneers of the human development approach to draw human development characteristics. From this literature review of UNDP's definitions of human development, we highlight that UNDP's definition suffers from two main missing links. The first is related to the non-inclusion of the idea of sustainability. The second is linked to the failure to take into account interpersonal relationships. This observation has an implication in that UNDP's definition of human development needs an adjustment to take into account these two concepts and, as a consequence, the human development index should be refined to take these two dimensions into account.

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Introduction

The leading development approach prevailing since the post-war period assumed that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth automatically translates to human wellbeing. For this reason, GDP was used as a measure of wellbeing. This approach was mainly criticised during the 1980s in that GDP and related concepts are only means of material wellbeing and not ends of wellbeing. As a response to criticisms against GDP, UNDP (1990) proposed the concept of human development as a complement to the material-based approach of wellbeing. The human development approach considers

human beings as ends of development. Human development is defined as "a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP 1990: 10) and measured by the Human Development Index (HDI). This core definition is explicitly or implicitly contained in all Human Development Reports (HDRs) dealing with the definition of this concept, meaning that UNDP is satisfied with its definition.

A question is, Does this short sentence perfectly represent the reality behind the concept of human development? If this sentence does not efficiently reflect what human development is, another question would be, Which other concepts should be considered or introduced in UNDP's definition of human development to render it plausible?

The central objective of this paper is to test the ability of UNDP's core definition to describe the reality behind the concept of human development. To achieve this objective, section 1 is a literature review of UNDP's definitions of human development. This section mainly borrows from Alkire (2010). Section 2 goes through non-UNDP definitions of human development. Section 3 discusses human development characteristics. Section 4 analyses the missing links between UNDP's and non-UNDP definitions of human development. Section 5 is concluding remarks.

UNDP's Definitions of Human Development

How does UNDP define human development and how much progress has been observed so far since the introduction of this concept in 1990? To come out with an answer to this question, we begin with a review of UNDP's definition of the concept of human development between 1990 and 2022. The analysis is rooted in Alkire (2010). The review of UNDP's definition leads to the core definition of human development of this institution. This core definition suggests a need of refinement to better express the complex reality behind the concept of human development.

The first definition of human development is presented in the first HDR published in 1990. The report defines human development as follows:

> "*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 – what Adam Smith called the ability to mix with others without being "ashamed to appear in public*" (UNDP 1990: 10).

At a first instance, the term human development seems to be a tautology because development is neither centred on animals - even though some approaches include animals as key beneficiaries beside human beings (Nussbaum 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2011) - nor on unanimated things. Human development is development of the

human beings, by the human beings, for the human beings (UNDP 1990). In this sense, development always refers to human development.

The first chapter of the first HDR (1990) is entitled "Defining and Measuring Human Development". The first sentence of this chapter is "People are the real wealth of a nation" (UNDP 1990: 10). This sentence explicitly expresses the idea that people are at the centre of human development. By defining human development as "a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP 1990: 10), UNDP provides a starting point of the debate on this new concept. The definition recognises that people's choices can be infinite and can change over time. However, there are three essential ones that make accessible many other choices. These essential choices are: i) to lead a long and healthy life; i) to acquire knowledge; and iii) to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living.

As highlighted by Alkire (2010: 13), there is no evolution in the definition of the concept of human development in 1991, 1992 and 1993. The word "enlarging" is replaced by "increase" in 1991 and "widening" in 1993 while the 1992 definition comes back to the 1990 one. In 1994, not only the word "expand" is used, but human development is defined as "a process to create an environment in which all people can expand their capabilities, and opportunities can be enlarged for both present and future generations" (UNDP 1994: 13). This definition explicitly exposes the idea of sustainability.

The 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 definitions simply ignore the improvements of the 1994 definition and come back to the 1990 definition of human development. These definitions do not integrate the concept of sustainability despite its importance and its recognition in the 1994 report. However, it should be mentioned that if not sustainable, it is neither development, nor human development.

The 2001 HDR added a new expression in the definition of human development: "lead lives that they value". Although the search of perfection led to advancement in accomplishing a better definition, it added a significant difficulty. In fact, 'lives that people value' expression has something specific that it may lead to conflicting choices. The expression "lead lives that they value" might be controversial because people may value choices that endanger other people's choices, leading to conflicts. Expanding people's choices should consider the Pareto optimum approach that would only retain choices that improve someone's freedoms without declining freedoms of others. For better search of human development definition, it is important to avoid conflicting choices and consider human development as a "friendly process" where people lead the life they have reason to value (Sen 1999: 35).

The 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007/8, 2009 definitions fell in the 2001 approach of "live that they value". In the 2003 definition, the term 'freedoms' seems to be redundant because expanding people's choices is equivalent to expanding their freedoms. The 2009 and 2010 editions respectively use the expressions "as they value" and "goals they have reason to value" in lieu and place of "lives they value" used in previous reports. The expression "goals they have reason to value" necessarily discards conflicting goals as highlighted by Alkire (2010: 41). From 2011 to 2022, UNDP did not explicitly come back to the definition of human development, though the subjects covered give sight of the importance of sustainability, equity, and inequality among others. This implicitly means that UNDP is satisfied with earlier definitions of human development.

Summing up, UNDP defines the concept of human development in its different HDRs, mostly in its 1990 to 2010 editions. Though the definitions change, there is a core sentence which comes out in any definition. According to this core sentence, human development is "*the process of enlarging people's choices*". According to UNDP, there are three critical choices: health, education and livings standard.

Non-UNDP Definitions of Human Development

By non-UNDP definitions, we refer to definitions of human development used in debates gathering academics, practitioners and students in the space of policy definitions which aim at improving people's wellbeing. These definitions can be referred to as non-HDRs definitions. What follows is a tentative summary of selected definitions of human development from selected authors whose work is mostly centred on human development. Those concerned include pioneers of the capabilities approach like Sen (1988, 1990a, 1999, 2005); Haq (1995); Nussbaum (1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2011) and Alkire (2010).

According to Sen, the relation between GNP and living conditions is not simple (Sen 1988: 12). Economic development cannot be merely identified by economic growth. For instance, higher GNP per capita is not necessarily equivalent to higher life expectancy. Also, the prevalence of crime and violence may sometimes have a perverse relationship with average material prosperity (Sen 1988: 13). GNP is only a measure of the amount of the means of wellbeing that people have. It cannot be a measure of actual achievements of wellbeing. GNP only gives limited information about actual achievements of people wellbeing.

Sen based his thought on that the quality of human life is of great complexity. Human life is seen as a set of "doings" and "beings" or functionings. Assessing the quality of life is equivalent to assessing these functionings and the capability to function

(Sen 1990a: 44). Such valuation exercise necessarily goes beyond commodities and income. The study of an individual capability to achieve functionings is important in Sen's work for at least two reasons. First, functionings are constitutive elements of living. Any functioning is part of the state of a person (Sen 1990a: 44). Second, functionings promote individual agency. They see people as active rather than passive. Enlarging people functionings is equivalent to promoting their agency.

Based on the capability approach, Sen considers development as "*a friendly process*" consisting in expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. A friendly process is opposed to a conflicting process, what Sen refers to a fierce process, with much blood, sweat and tears (Sen 1999: 35-36). Expansion of freedoms is both primary end and principal means of development, respectively known as the constitutive role and the instrumental role of freedom in development. The constitutive role refers to the importance of substantive freedoms (elementary capabilities) to enrich human life. The instrumental role of freedoms is concerned with how different opportunities contribute to expand human freedoms and then development.

Sen (1999) distinguishes five instrumental freedoms: political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security. Political freedoms refer to the possibility people have to decide who should govern and under what principles. Economic facilities refer to opportunities people have to access to economic resources to produce, consume and exchange goods and services necessary for their wellbeing. Social opportunities are social arrangements which make social services accessible to sustain both individuals' private and social life. Transparency guarantees refer to the degree of openness individuals expect in their daily life. Protective security helps those in difficulties not to fall in a pronounced dependency which would affect their human condition; it refers more to social safety nets. For Sen, human development is equivalent to expanding all these instrumental freedoms. Sen recognises that capabilities may change over time because "we use capabilities for different purposes". Changing purpose may lead to change in capabilities ranking. Also, social conditions and the priorities that they suggest may vary and, even with given social conditions, public discussion and reasoning can lead to a better understanding of the role, reach and significance of particular capabilities (Sen 2005: 159-160).

Haq is the founder of the HDR. Despite his implication in UNDP's definition, his work as an academic should be stressed beside authors like Sen with whom he had close relations on this issue. In his *Reflections on Human Development*, Haq (1995) explains how the focus of development economics shifted from national income accounting where totals and averages were given an important place to people centred policies

where individuals became the means and the ends of development policies. According to Haq, "there are four essential components in the human development paradigm: equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment" (Haq 1995: 16). Equity refers to justice, fairness in opportunities. This is not necessarily in terms of results. People are free to use their opportunities or not. Equal access to opportunities puts human life at the heart of the human development paradigm. Sustainability is the condition which ensures that future generations enjoy at least the same level of wellbeing as the present one does. Technological progress is key to support sustainability which does not mean preserving every natural resource in its current form (Haq 1995: 16). Productivity needs investments in people and a favourable macroeconomic environment to enhance growth, an essential component of human development. Lastly, empowerment encourages people to participate in activities, events and processes that shape their lives. Empowerment is not charity. It means that people should exercise choices at their own free will. This is important to human dignity. Human development is a holistic concept concerned with building up capabilities within these four essential components of the human development paradigm.

Nussbaum is one of the pioneers of the capabilities approach. Her use of the concept first reflected Aristotle's use of the notion of human capability to articulate the selected goals of good political organization (Nussbaum 1997: 275) before placing it in the contemporary debate. The contribution of Nussbaum (and Sen) is to have combined the Aristotelian capabilities' approach with the concept of rights, making it closer to liberal theories. There is a strong and close link between rights and capabilities. A person may have a nominal right of political participation without having the capability to participate in political life. According to Nussbaum, capabilities give an important precision and supplementation to rights. The concept of capabilities is close to that of equality. To go by the words of Nussbaum, the problem does not concern in identifying which nation is rich as measured by GNP, but in who has the money or the wealth of this nation? The problem is not, Which social total is higher (utilitarianism), but, Which social total is good enough to help individuals avoid facing extreme deprivations? (Nussbaum 2011: 18). This idea is equivalent to Haq's because it stands against averages and totals and Sen's because it implicitly refers to a friendly process.

In a society where people - mostly women - structurally face discriminations, Nussbaum is engaged in a fight against "adaptive preferences" which reinforce marginalization and discrimination. To better fight against discriminations, Nussbaum (1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2011) proposes an open-ended list of fundamental capabilities which apply to any society and the absence of which jeopardizes the move

towards human development. This threshold of capabilities includes: i) *life*: live a human life at a normal length; ii) *bodily health*: good health and shelter; iii) *bodily integrity*: move freely from place to place; be secured against violence; have sexual satisfaction and reproductive choice; iv) *senses, imagination and thought*: reason and do things in human ways (information, culture, education etc.); v) *emotions*: attachments to things and people outside ourselves; vi) *practical reason*: planning one's life; vii) *affiliation*: friendship and respect (self-respect and non-humiliation in social life); being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others; viii) *other species*: relation with the nature; ix) *play*: laugh, play, jock, enjoy recreational activities; x) *control ever own environment*: political (political choices participation) and material (access property) environment. The starting point of human development is within these ten fundamental capabilities. Human development for Nussbaum refers to "creating capabilities". Creating capabilities necessarily starts with creating basic capabilities for all, male and female, in an equal way, based on the theory of justice and centred on human dignity.

Human development definition by Alkire (2010) includes participation as the fourth essential dimension beside the 'old' essential dimensions of human development.

"*Human development aims to enlarge people's freedoms to do and be what they value and have reason to value. In practice, human development also empowers people to engage actively in development on our shared planet. It is people centered. At all levels of development, human development focuses on essential freedoms: enabling to lead long and healthy lives, acquire knowledge, to be able to enjoy a decent standard of living and to shape their own lives. Many people value these freedoms in and of themselves; they are also powerful means to other opportunities*" (Alkire 2010: 43).

The expression "what they value and have reason to value" in Alkire's definition is important to discard conflicting choices. This expression implies that in some cases, people do not have reason to value some choices, meaning that such choices should not be expanded because they are conflicting.

Human Development Characteristics

From the above literature review, the following characteristics of human development can be underlined. A first characteristic of human development is that human development is at the same time 'human' and 'development'. Human development is human because it is centred on people. In UNDP's short definition, the characteristic of being human is represented by the word "people". If we were to stop here, everything would be simple, even too simple to be discussed as it is obvious that human development is centred on

people. But difficulties appear when we introduce the second component of human development: 'development'.

As discussed in section 1, it can be underlined that human development is development because it is more than growth of income. Economists have been working on the concept of development for many decades. The single consensus emerging from this debate is another short sentence not far from 'development is more than growth' or 'development is growth plus something else'. Consequently, human development characteristics that emerge are: (i) centred on people; (ii); based on growth and (iii) based on 'something else' than growth. This 'something else' component may refer to several dimensions among which freedoms and sustainability.
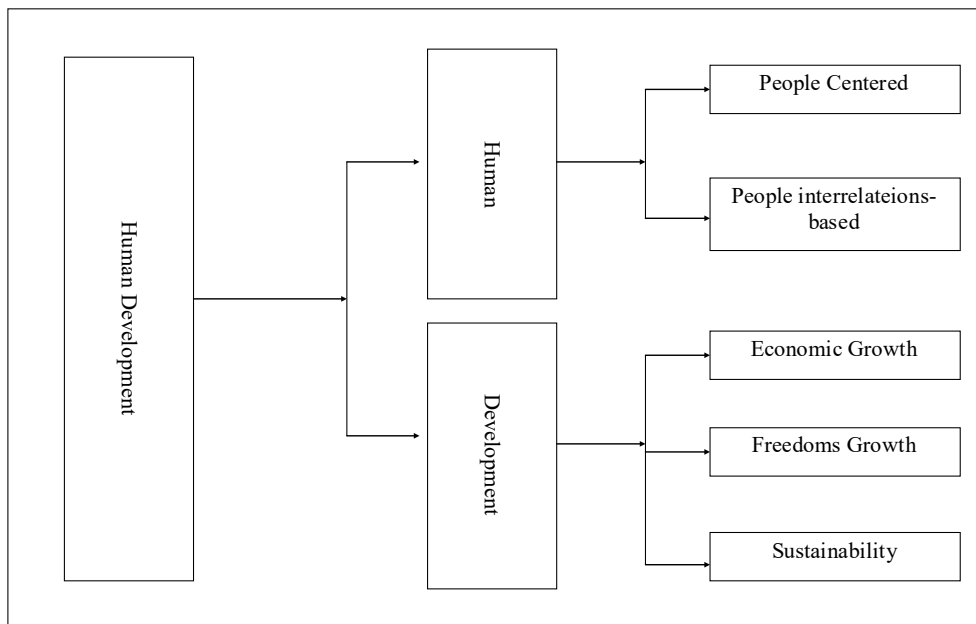

Figure 1: Human Development is 'human' and 'development'

Source: composed by the author.

Based on discussion above, we can underline the following characteristics of human development.

i)   Human development is *centred on people*;

ii)   Human development is *more choices*;

iii) These choices are *non-conflicting* and for this reason;

iv)   Human development is *sustainable* in both spatial and temporal senses;

v)   To be sustainable, human development should be rooted in two main principles: liberty-responsibility and human dignity (in the sense of Nussbaum 2011).

The liberty-responsibility principle is important in defining human development. This composite principle tends to discard conflicting choices. Based on the liberty-responsibility principle, people will always tend to value what they have reason to value. Within the liberty-responsibility principle, freely valuing a choice would not be the guiding principle of "have reason to value" as it seems to be in the liberty principle. It would henceforth consider the consequences of the choice for individuals who value this choice themselves, the consequences to other individuals, and even to the whole humanity.

Human dignity in the sense of Nussbaum protects life at any stage without any compromise. It goes beyond economic outcomes, justice and rights. It does concern the "development of each man and the whole man". Developing part of man is not a complete or authentic human development. All values matter: the individual, the individual's group and humankind as a whole.

The Missing Links of UNDP's Core Definition

The missing links between UNDP's definition and the reality behind the concept of human development can be broadly captured based on human development characteristics and specifically by considering the above-mentioned human development pioneers' approaches of human development.

With Regard to Human Development Characteristics

It is worth recalling that UNDP defines human development as "a process of enlarging people's choices". To evaluate the power of this core definition to express the reality behind human development, let us first refer to human development characteristics. The first characteristic of human development is that human development is at the same time 'human' and 'development'. The word 'human' is equivalent to the word 'people' in UNDP's definition. The word 'development' is equivalent to the expression 'expanding choices'. At a first instance, this characteristic of human development seems to be fully integrated in UNDP's definition of human development. However, more difficulties appear when one considers the contents of the words 'human' and 'development'. The term 'human' does refer not to people only, but also to people's interrelations. If one considers the term 'people' as equivalent to the term 'human', he will miss an important dimension of human being. This would be equivalent to reducing human beings to a collection of individuals. Really speaking, the society is a collection of individuals who

interact with one another. In UNDP's definition of human development, there is no term which refers to people's interrelations. With regards to the term 'development', in UNDP's short definition of human development, the term 'enlarging' refers to development (of capabilities). However, there is no term which refers to sustainability. Consequently, the absence of people interrelations and sustainability are the two missing links between UNDP's definition and the reality behind the concept of human development.
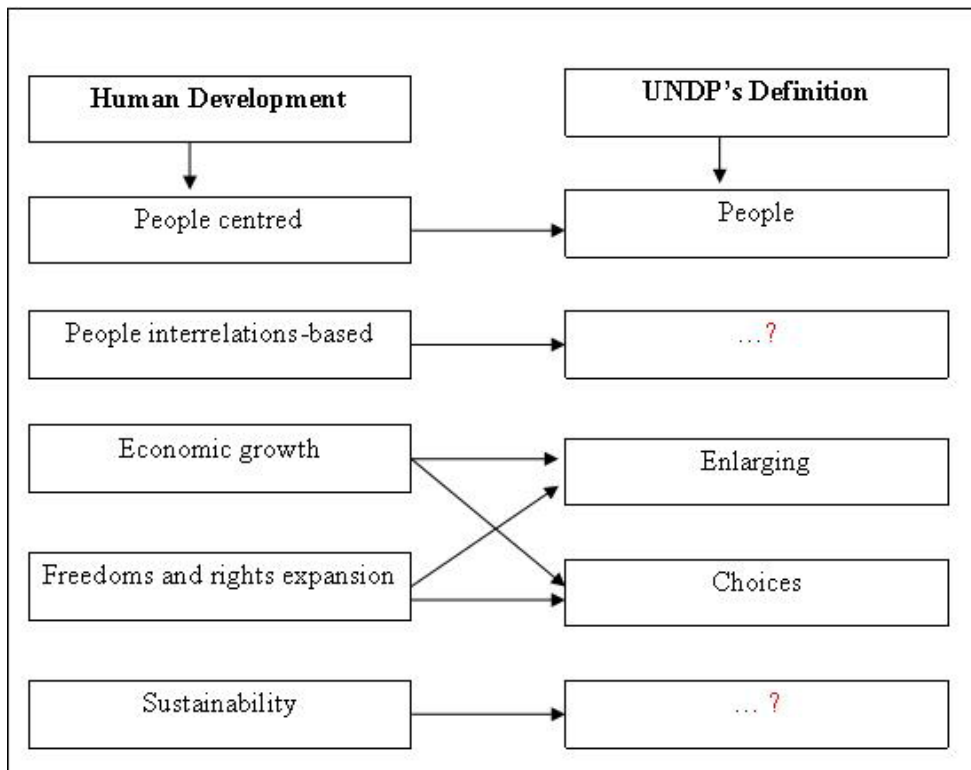

Figure 2: The missing links of UNDP's definition of human development
Source: Composed by the author.

More details of the above-mentioned missing links can be obtained while considering the work of selected pioneers of the capabilities approach who directly or indirectly intend to define human development.

With Regard to Sen's Instrumental Freedoms

Sen's instrumental freedoms can help define human development. In this regard, an ideal human development informational basis would integrate at least Sen's five instrumental

freedoms (Sen 1999: 38-41). These instrumental freedoms include political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security. A question therefore arises: Are all these five instrumental freedoms included in UNDP's core definition of human development?

Political freedoms can be captured by civic activism. Civic activism refers to social norms, social practices and social organizations which facilitate greater citizen involvement in public policies and decision (Indices of Social Development). They include access to civic associations, participation in the media, and any nonviolent means to participate in civic activities. Civic activism represents real opportunities people have to determine who should govern, on what principles, and the possibility of scrutinize and criticize authorities. These freedoms are yet to be integrated in UNDP's definition of human development.

Economic facilities have been so far privileged by UNDP, firstly via GDP per capita, and then by GNI per capita, then after with the inclusion of an inequality measure (Human Development Index adjusted for inequality introduced in 2010). However, to completely represent Sen's view of economic facilities, many other adjustments are needed. A way to adjust income is to consider that individual value of income can depart from its social value. Higher individual income may prepare the ground for higher insecurity that leads to lower social wellbeing. A lower individual income may produce a higher wellbeing of the society if members of this society have close harmonious ties. These aspects and many others still have to be considered in UNDP's definition of human development.

Education and health are the main instrumental freedoms of social opportunities. The two dimensions have so far been well integrated in the UNDP's definition of human development. They do include well the presence or absence of barriers to participating in economic and social activities. However, a question is to know whether the individual values of these components represent the same thing for the society in terms of happiness.

Transparency guarantees are instrumental freedoms which have been neglected in the definition and measurement of human development, one of the arguments being centred on data availability. Of course, in 1990, data availability was a big concern. However, the issue has changed today in 2023 because of a perceptible move observed in the production of such data. There has been a gain in current relevance to use these data too. In fact, many ills have expanded in the contemporary world: the rapid widespread of terrorism, social instabilities, the quest of new values not necessarily valued by all and not necessarily good for the improvement of people's wellbeing, etc. Human

development should not ignore this complex move that has complex consequences on humanity. In this view, people interrelationships should emerge as a key component explaining human development. Practically, and as an example, inter personal safety and trust and intergroup cohesion can help refine human development definition.

As presented by the Institute of Social Development, intergroup cohesion refers to relations of cooperation and respect between identity groups in a society. This cooperation is a sign of the existence of non-conflicting acts such as ethnic based or religious based acts, targeted kidnappings, acts of terror, riots… and their effects on growth and development. Concerning interpersonal safety and trust, the existence of norms of trust and security can allow people rely on those whom they have not met before, an advantage being the reduction in social organisation and collective action costs. On the contrary, when these norms do not exist or have been eroded, these costs are higher and their impact on human development should not be ignored.

Protective security is the last instrumental freedom highlighted by Sen. It can be measured by individual's participation in clubs and associations. In fact, for the poor, community ties represent their first safety net. For poor communities, the stronger these ties, the better individuals can protect against the impact of sudden hardship by relying on the support of friends, neighbours, local communities, etc. In the presence of weak ties, there is a greater risk for individuals to face adversity if hardship appears. This is more important in developing countries where social protection is weak.

Summing up, political freedom, transparency guarantees and protective security are Sen's essential components of human development which are not included in UNDP's definition of human development. These components are actually excluded from the direct evaluative role in UNDP's approach. For this reason, they are implicitly supposed to only have indirect effect on human development through their effects on income, education and health. Neglecting the direct effects of these components may lead to misunderstanding and mismeasuring human development.

With Regard to Haq's Essential Components of Human Development

It is worth recalling that Haq's essential components of human development are: equity; sustainability; productivity; and empowerment. Equity is equivalent to equality in opportunities. There is equality in opportunities if there are opportunities, meaning that equity is implicitly included in UNDP's expression 'enlarging people's choices'. However, if equity precondition is more choices, equity refers to more than that. In fact, apart from more choices, equity refers to 'shared choices'. 'Shared choices' are based on human dignity. More choices in the hands of a minority can lead to more choices

Table 1: Sen's Instrumental Freedoms and UNDP's core Human Development Concept: The Missing Links

Sen's instrumental freedoms	Related human development concept attached	Situation in UNDP's definition
Political freedom	Civic activism,	missing
Economic facilities	GDP/GNP	integrated
Social opportunities	Education and health, gender inequality; inclusion of minorities	integrated (mostly)
Transparency guarantees	Inter personal safety and trust, intergroup cohesion,	missing
Protective security	clubs and associations	missing

Source: composed by the author.

at national level. But, this is neither equity nor human development. At this level, the missing link in UNDP's definition stands to be the idea of 'shared choices'. Shared choices favour a friendly process. At the same time, a friendly process favours shared choices.

Sustainability ensures that future generations enjoy at least the same level of wellbeing as present generations. A condition for this is that poor living conditions of today should be re-examined (Haq 1995: 18) to ensure that people are lifted up the poverty line. It calls for justice. It also refers to both spatial (within same generation) and temporal (from presents to future generations) sustainability. In UNDP's definition, the term 'sustainability was only stressed in the 1994 report.

Productivity is the third essential component of human development highlighted by Haq. This component supports growth. The concept is implicitly integrated in the expression 'enlarging people's choices' used by UNDP. This is because choices can be material-based (economic facilities growth) and non-material-based (other facilities). Productivity is implicitly included in UNDP's definition through the standard of living measured by GNI per capita.

Empowerment is not far from agency. Both terms highlight the importance of human dignity which encourages the development of all parts of human being. Enlarging people choices necessarily leads to empowering them, meaning that empowerment is implicitly included in UNDP's definition of human development.

Considering Nussbaum's List of Fundamental Capabilities

An analysis of the list of central capabilities proposed by Nussbaum (2011) suggests that there are important missing links between UNDP's core definition of human development and the reality behind this concept. In fact, the first central capability

Table 2: Haq's Essential Components of Human Development and UNDP's Core Human Development Concept: The Missing Links

Haq's essential components of human developments	Human development related concept attached	Equivalent concept in UNDP' s definition
Equity	opportunities	choices
	shared (friendly process)	missing
Sustainability	spatial sustainability (friendly process)	missing
	temporal sustainability (friendly process)	missing
Productivity	more material choices	standard of living (enlarging choices)
Empowerment	more opportunities	enlarging people's choices

Source: composed by the author.

highlighted by Nussbaum is '*life*' which refers to 'live a human life at a normal length' capability which can be measured by life expectancy. With life expectancy, it is possible to capture if people die prematurely, what Nussbaum excludes in her 'life' capability. UNDP's definition includes this capability in that it considers life expectancy as a core human development dimension. With regard to '*bodily health*', Nussbaum highlights that this capability is equivalent to being able to have good health. This includes reproductive health, adequate nourishment and access to adequate shelter. This capability is related to health, which is included in UNDP's definition as underlined above. B*odily integrity*, the third fundamental capability appearing in Nussbaum's list seems to have been ignored in UNDP's definition. This capability refers to moving freely from place to place; being secured against violence; having sexual satisfaction and reproductive choice. There is no concept in UNDP definition of human development which considers such an important aspect of human life. The '*senses, imagination and thought*' capability of Nussbaum refers to reasoning and doing things in human ways. It includes being educated, reason, think, imagine; being informed and cultivated; being able to use one's mind, etc. The education component can be used to express this capability, meaning that it is included in UNDP's definition. If we consider *emotion*, the fifth fundamental capability of Nussbaum, it does not appear in UNDP's concept of human development. In fact, this capability refers to being attached to things and people around us. It underlines people interrelationships which are not included in UNDP's definition. For Nussbaum, *practical reason* (the sixth fundamental capability) is equivalent to planning one's life. UNDP does not say anything about that. The same conclusion applies to *affiliation*, the seventh fundamental capability which includes social

interactions. However, it is important to mention that UNDP underlines one aspect of this capability in its expression "appearing in public without shame" (UNDP 1990: 10). As regard the '*other species'* capability, Nussbaum uses it to refer to the relation with the nature. No expression or concept represents this capability in UNDP's definition. The *play* capability of Nussbaum expresses the possibility of laughing, playing, joking, enjoying recreational activities. This capability is not reflected in UNDP's definition. Lastly, the tenth fundamental capability of Nussbaum is '*control ever own environment'*. This capability refers to political (participation to political choices) and material (access property) environment. The first component of this capability is excluded while the second is included in UNDP's definition.

Table 3: Nussbaum's Central Capabilities and UNDP's Core Human Development Concept: The Missing Links

Nussbaum's basic capabilities	Human development related component attached	Situation in UNDP' s definition
Life	health	Integrated
Bodily health	health	Integrated
Bodily integrity	Protection against violence	Missing
Senses, imagination and thought	education	integrated
Emotion	Social live: trust	Missing
Practical reason	Rights, participation to public decisions	Missing
	Social life: group belonging	Missing
Affiliation	Social life: social rights	Missing
Other species	environment	integrated
Play	Individual rights	Missing
Control over one's environment	Social life: political participation	Missing
	Economic participation	integrated

Source: composed by the author.

Considering Alkire's Definition of Human Development

The core definition of human development by Alkire (2010:43) is "*Human development aims to enlarge people's freedoms to do and be what they value and have reason to value*". The remaining developments of the long definition proposed by Alkire can be considered as further explanations and illustrations of the above core definition.

In this core definition of Alkire, the term 'enlarge' is equivalent to the term 'expand' in UNDP. Both definitions use the term 'people'. In Alkire's definition, the term 'freedoms' is equivalent to the term 'choices' in UNDP's definition. Up to this level,

the definitions proposed by Alkire and UNDP are strictly equivalent. However, Alkire uses another term 'have reason to value', which is not included in UNDP's definition of human development. If we were to compare the two definitions, Alkire's definition implicitly underlines that choices expanded to achieve human development should be drawn in the 'have reason to value' set while UNDP implicitly considers both 'have reason to value' and 'not have reason to value' sets. Human development being a friendly process (Sen 1999: 35), it is important to limit choices expansion only to those belonging to the 'have reason to value' set. This is equivalent to saying that only 'non-conflicting' choices should be considered in defining human development. The term non-conflicting is used to underline that human development is a smooth process, a friendly process because it should lead to neither fear, sweat, tears, nor blood. It is a smooth process because it relies on non-conflicting choices which, by definition, are peaceful choices. It thus allows the accumulation of non-conflicting choices of individuals in a changing society. Improving human development based on a fierce process is uncommon. The missing link between Alkire and UNDP's definitions is that the concept of non-conflicting choices does not appear in UNDP's definition of human development.

Summing up, the literature suggests that human development is people centred and people interrelations based. It includes more material goods (economic growth) and more non-material goods (non-material related freedoms). Lastly, sustainability is important for human development.

Following the above analysis, the first missing link in UNDP's definition appears to be the idea of sustainability which was only used in the 1994 definition and abandoned later. However, it should be mentioned that the idea of sustainability should not only refer to the natural environment, but also to the social one (social sustainability). In fact, people's choices need to be non-conflicting in order to allow sustainable human development. The second missing link is therefore people associations and interrelations (confer figure 2).

Concluding Remarks

UNDP defines human development as "the process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP 1990:10). The analysis tested the ability of this core definition to describe the reality behind the concept of human development. Based on selected pioneers of the capability approach, namely Sen, ul Haq, Nusssbaum, and Alkire, the analysis highlighted two important missing links between UNDP's definition and the reality behind the human development concept. The two missing links deal with both spatial

and temporal sustainabilities. Spatial sustainability refers to sustainability between individuals of the same generation. It is rooted in people's interrelationships. Temporal sustainability refers to sustainability between present and future generations. It is equivalent to natural/environmental sustainability. In this regard, the two missing links are: (i) environmental sustainability and (ii) people's interrelationships. Including the two concepts in UNDP's core definition of human development would bring a value added to the above-mentioned definition. As an implication, this would lead to a refinement of the Human Development Index by including to two missing dimensions in its measurement.

Notes

1.   Nussbaum entitles her book « Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach" (2011).

2.   http://www.indsocdev.org/

3.   http://www.indsocdev.org/

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