

A Level Geography

Specification and PLC (Personal Learning Checklist)

AREA OF STUDY: 4 – Human Systems and Geopolitics

Topic 8A: Health, Human Rights and Intervention

Overview: Traditional definitions of development are based largely on economic measures but have been increasingly challenged by broader definitions based on environmental, social and political quality of life with many new measures used to record progress at all scales in human rights and human welfare. There are variations in the norms and laws of both national and global institutions that impact on decisions made at all scales, from local to global. These decisions lead to a wide range of geopolitical interventions via international and national policies, from development aid through to military campaigns.

The impact of geopolitical interventions on both human health and wellbeing and human rights is variable and contested, with some groups appearing to benefit disproportionately, which can lead to increasing inequalities and injustice.

What do I need to know?		R	A	G
EQ1: What are superpowers and how have they changed over time?				
8A.1 Concepts of human Development are complex and contested.	I know Human development has traditionally been measured using the growth of GDP as an end in itself but the relationship between human contentment and levels of wealth and income is complex (Happy Planet Index) and many dominant models are contested (Sharia law)			
	I know improvements in environmental quality, health, life expectancy and human rights are seen by some (Rosling) as more significant goals for development while economic growth is often the best means of delivering them.			
	I know education is central to economic development (human capital) and to the understanding and assertion of human rights; this view is, however, not universally shared (attitudes to gender equality in education) as both access to education and standards of achievement vary greatly among countries (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)			
8A.2 There are notable variations in human health and life expectancy.	I know there are considerable variations in health and life expectancy in the developing world that are explained by differential access to basic needs such as food, water supply and sanitation, and which impact particularly on levels of infant and maternal mortality.			
	I know variations in health and life expectancy in the developed world are largely a function of differences in lifestyles, levels of deprivation and the availability, cost and effectiveness of medical care			
	There are significant variations in health and life expectancy within countries (UK Reading vs Manchester) that are related to ethnic variations (Aboriginal peoples in Australia) and income levels and inequalities, which, in turn, impact on lifestyles			

8A.3 Governments and International Government Organisations play a significant role in defining development targets and policies.	I know the relationship between economic and social development is complex and dependent on decisions made by governments on the importance of social progress; this ranges from welfare states with high levels of social spending to totalitarian regimes run by elites with low levels of spending on health and education.			
	I know the dominant IGOs (World Bank, IMF, WTO) have traditionally promoted neo-liberal views of development based on the adoption of free trade, privatisation and deregulation of financial markets but also, recent programmes have been aimed at improving environmental quality, health, education and human rights.			
	I know progress against the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been mixed in terms of individual countries, global regions and targets; the UN post-2015 development agenda expands on the MDGs, setting new goals to include sustainable development.			
Enquiry question 2: Why do human rights vary from place to place?				
8A.4 Human rights have become important aspects of both international law and international agreements.	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a statement of intent and a framework for foreign policy statements to explain economic or military intervention but not all states have signed the Declaration			
	I know the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) was drafted by the nations of the Council of Europe to help prevent conflict and integrated into the UK by the Human Rights Act of 1998; the ECHR remains controversial as some see it as an erosion of national sovereignty.			
	I know the Geneva Convention forms a basis in international law for prosecuting individuals and organisations who commit war crimes and is endorsed by 196 countries; however, few cases come to trial and over 150 countries continue to engage in torture			
8A.5 There are significant differences between countries in both their definitions and protection of human rights.	I know some states frequently invoke human rights in international forums and debates whilst others prioritise economic development over human rights and defend this approach			
	I know some superpowers and emerging powers have transitioned to more democratic governments, but the degree of democratic freedom varies (comparison of an authoritarian and a democratic system); the protection of human rights and degree of freedom of speech varies			
	I know levels of political corruption vary and can be measured (Index of Corruption); high levels of corruption are a threat to human rights as the rule of law can be subverted.			
8A.6 There are significant variations in human rights within countries, which are reflected in different levels of social development.	I know in some states (post-colonial states) there are significant groups, defined by gender and/or ethnicity that have had fewer rights than the dominant group			
	I know differences in rights are frequently reflected in differences in levels of health and education (indigenous populations in both North and South America).			
	A demand for equality from both women and ethnic groups has been an important part of the history of many states in recent years (Afghanistan, Australia, Bolivia) with progress taking place at different rates.			
Enquiry question 3: How are human rights used as arguments for political and military intervention?				

8A.7 There are different forms of geopolitical intervention in defence of human rights.	I know there is a wide range of geopolitical interventions to address development and human rights issues: development aid, trade embargoes, military aid, indirect and direct military action			
	I know interventions are promoted by IGOs, national governments and NGOs (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch) but there is seldom consensus about the validity of these interventions			
	I know some Western governments frequently condemn human rights violations and use them as conditions for offering aid, negotiating trade agreements, and as a reason for military intervention, which challenge ideas of national sovereignty.			
8A.8 Some development is focused on improving both human rights and human welfare but other development has very negative environmental and cultural impacts.	I know development aid takes many forms from charitable gifts to address the impacts of hazards (Haiti) administered both by NGOs (Oxfam or Christian Aid) and national governments, to IGOs offering loans.			
	I know the impact of development aid is contested, successes include progress in dealing with life-threatening conditions (malaria) and improvements in some aspects of human rights (gender equality) but critics suggest that it encourages dependency and promotes corruption and the role of the elite at the expense of human rights and minority groups.			
	I know, some economic development, both by superpowers and TNCs, has very serious impacts on the environment in which minority groups live and disregards their human rights to their land and culture (oil in the Niger Delta or Peruvian Amazon, and land grabs in East Africa).			
8A.9 Military aid and both direct and Indirect military intervention are frequently justified in terms of human rights.	I know global strategic interests might drive military interventions but are often justified by the protagonists in terms of human rights.			
	I know military aid, both in terms of training personnel and weapons sales, is sometimes used to support countries that themselves have questionable human rights records.			
	I know direct military intervention is increasingly part of a 'war on terror', which is partially justified as promoting human rights of minority communities but is compromised by the use of torture by combatant states that have signed the Declaration of Human Rights			
Enquiry question 4: What are the outcomes of geopolitical interventions in terms of human development and human rights?				
8A.10 There are several ways of measuring the success of geopolitical interventions.	I know measurements of success comprise a wide range of variables, including improvements in health, life expectancy, educational levels, gender equality, freedom of speech and successful management of refugees as well as increases in GDP per capita.			
	I know for some governments and IGOs, the introduction of democratic institutions is deemed important and freedom of expression is seen as central to the development of democratic and capitalist societies.			
	I know for other countries, success is measured in terms of economic growth with less attention to holistic development (human wellbeing) or human rights and the development of democratic institutions.			
8A.11 Development aid has a mixed record of success.	I know the relationship of aid, development, health and human rights is unclear, with relative success stories in some states (Botswana or Ebola in West Africa) contrasted with relative failure in other states (Haiti, Iraq).			
	I know some states that receive substantial development aid, economic inequalities have increased while in other states economic inequalities have decreased; this in turn impacts on health and life expectancy. (
	I know the extent to which superpowers use development aid as an			

	extension of their foreign policies and judge success in terms of access to resources, political support in IGOs and military alliances and formation of military alliances.			
8A.12 Military interventions, both direct and indirect, have a mixed record of success.	I know the recent history of military interventions, both direct and indirect, suggest that there are significant costs, including loss of sovereignty and human rights and contrasts between short-term gains with long-term costs.			
	I know other non-military interventions may have a stronger record of improving both human rights and development (Cote d'Ivoire 2011)			
	I know lack of action also has global consequences which may impact negatively on progress in environmental, political and social development (human wellbeing and human rights).			
Geographical Skills for Topic 7				
	(1) Comparison of different measurements of development using ranked data			
	(2) Use of scatter graphs and correlation techniques to describe the relationship between health and life expectancy and other indicators of development.			
	(3) Use of proportional circles to show the relative size of government spending and the share of that spending devoted to welfare, health and education across developing, emerging and developed nations			
	(4) Use qualitative and quantitative indicators to derive an index of corruption and show this on global maps to compare variations in levels of corruption with types of government			
	(5) Use of flow-lines on global maps to show both the direction and level of aid from donor to recipient global regions			
	(6) Evaluating source material, including newspaper articles and marketing material to determine the impact of development aid.			
	(7) Interpreting images to evaluate the impact of economic development on the environment minority groups live in.			
	(8) Critical analysis of source material to identify possible reasons for error in the assessment of success for named interventions such as the management of European or Asian boat people.			
	(9) Using Gini Coefficient and income or wealth proportion for deciles of the population to describe inequalities in and between nations			
	(10) Critical analysis of source materials to identify possible misuse of data in the qualitative assessment of success for military interventions such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.			

NOTES/CASE STUDY INFORMATION:

