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Bringing together people of Bangladesh and India through border markets

In remote border regions in Bangladesh and India, a government-to-government initiative is changing cross border relations, shifting the focus from smuggling and skirmishes to mutual economic gains and building a coalition for peace and cooperation.

In 2011, Bangladesh and India flagged off the first of their border haats, representing an attempt to recapture once thriving economic and cultural relationships that had been truncated by the creation of national borders.

Border Haats are local markets along the Indo-Bangladesh border that

stretches 4100 kms and runs through densely populated regions.

Conceived as Confidence Building Measures between India and Bangladesh, four Border Haats were set up between 2011 and 2015.

- Balat (Meghalaya) – Sunamgunj (Sylhet)
- Kalaichar (Meghalaya) – Kurigram (Rangpur)
- Srinagar (Tripura) – Chagnaiya (Chittagong)
- Kamalasagar (Tripura) – Kasba (Chittagong)

Initially, only local produce was permitted for trade. But subsequently, the range of items has been broadened to include goods of household consumption.

Connecting communities through cross-border markets

Overall, Border Haats have been strongly welcomed by people from both Bangladesh and India. The positive experience of border haats has prompted both the governments to flag-off six more Border Haats: two in Tripura and four in Meghalaya.

More Haats mean more trade, more people to people connect and more trust, one leading to another. This will go a long way in linking marginalized border communities to more mainstreamed trade and development.

But Border Haats are not only about trade.

The total trade at each haat as estimated by the state governments is at \$600,000 (Rs 4 crore or Rs 40 million) a year.

Even if the purchase limit at the haats were doubled, the number of days of operation raised to two days a week, and many more haats, say 50, were established along the border, these markets could generate total trade of \$120 million (Rs 800 crore or Rs 8 billion) a year, which would still only be slightly more than 1 percent of the total formal trade between Bangladesh and India.

As the new World Bank report: *A Glass Half Full – the Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia* shows, the relatively small amount of trade has improved cross border relations and is having a positive welfare impact on the communities in the areas near the border markets.



Boosting the local economy

Border Haats are boosting the local economy and creating opportunities for Haat participants. It has increased the income of vendors, opened up new business opportunities for buyers who source from the Haats and sell locally, and created opportunities for transporters who operate more trips on haat days and for small businesses like food joints and vehicle repair shops to set up outside the premises. “The Haat gives us an extra source of income, which is very welcome given our generally impoverished condition,” said Linda Marak, village head and sole woman vendor at Kalaichar haat in Meghalaya.

Border Haats have helped empower women

Border Haats play a role in fostering women’s entrepreneurship, though participation is determined by the sociocultural context. Today, visibility of women in cross border trade is challenging the status quo of traditionally male dominated trade. “Women in Bangladesh are no less competent than men, and it is time that they get the highest

encouragement and support not only from the government, but also from their families to get involved in business,” said Balamari, sole woman vendor from Kurigram, Bangladesh.

More people-to-people contacts

Social mixing is a large part of what the haats offer. Women and children gather for picnics and visits, and hawkers sell food items for immediate consumption. Most important: Border Haats have helped build trust and people to people contact. Haats have not only created new bonds and friendships among people residing across the border, but also rejuvenated old family ties that were temporarily disconnected by political barriers.

Informal trade has gone down

Indian laborers at the Haats, earn one-third or more of their average monthly income from just four days of working at Haats. Focus group discussions with stakeholders and interviews with Border Security Force personnel, conducted specifically for this study, reveal that the Haats have also led to a reduction in informal and illegal trading, and generated a peace dividend. 🌐



South Asia should remove trade barriers for mutual economic gains



Deeper regional trade and connectivity has the potential to more than triple India's trade with its South Asian neighbors. *A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia*, estimates India's potential trade in goods with South Asia at \$62 billion against its actual trade of \$19 billion, which is a mere 3 percent of its global trade and about \$43 billion below its potential.

All countries in the region stand to gain from increasing trade cooperation, the report says. For example, for India, deeper regional trade and connectivity can reduce the isolation of Northeast India, give Indian firms better access to markets in South Asia and East Asia, and allow it to substitute fossil fuels by cleaner hydropower from Nepal and Bhutan. Indian consumers will also gain from availability of greater variety of consumer goods at cheaper prices. Trade between India and Pakistan today is a mere \$2 billion. The report shows that without trade barriers, this could be \$37 billion.

Today, countries around the world harness the potential of intraregional trade to prosper together with their neighbors. However, while intraregional trade accounts for 50 percent of total trade in

East Asia and the Pacific and 22 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa, it forms only 5 percent of South Asia's total trade.

Have there been any breakthroughs?

India, the report points out, can play a critical role in regional cooperation for mutual economic and welfare gains. It highlights two specific examples of cooperation in the region that sheds light on both the barriers and the opportunities related to regional trade and connectivity.

An initiative by the governments of Bangladesh and India aimed at recapturing the once thriving economic and cultural relationships is now changing cross border relations and reducing incentives for smuggling. This is occurring through Haats (local border markets) that enable small-volume trading among local communities on both sides of the border.

Surveys done for this study confirm significant increase in incomes of vendors in both Bangladesh and India and growth in livelihoods opportunities for women and marginalized workers. For example, Indian laborers at the Haats, earn one-third or more of their average monthly income from just four days of working

at Haats. Focus group discussions with stakeholders and interviews with Border Security Force personnel, conducted specifically for this study, reveal that the Haats have also led to a reduction in informal and illegal trading, and generated a peace dividend.

Another example is the progressive liberalization of India-Sri Lanka air services, which has improved connectivity, reduced air fares, and increased passenger traffic and air cargo volume. Today, Indians and Sri Lankans enjoy direct connections from Colombo to 14 Indian cities, with a total of about 147 flights per week. Since 2005, India has been the largest source of foreign tourists in Sri Lanka.

Barriers to trade

Intraregional trade in South Asia falls short of its potential because of significant barriers. This report addresses four specific barriers that have constrained trade within South Asia: tariff and para tariff barriers; nontariff barriers, examined through the lens of selected products in Bangladesh-India and India-Nepal trade; the high costs of connectivity investigated using the India-Sri Lanka air travel agreement as a case study; and the trust deficit among South Asian countries, which underscores the importance of people-to-people interactions through initiatives such as the Bangladesh-India border haats program.

Despite significant liberalization in tariff regimes by South Asian countries since the 1980s, average tariffs are still high. In 2016, average tariffs in South Asia were 13.6 percent, more than double the world average (6.3 percent) and the highest among major regions of the world despite a regional free trade agreement (SAFTA) that came into force in 2006.

The study highlights two critical reasons that stand out in explaining the deficit in SAFTA's performance. First, each country maintains a long "sensitive" list of products that are exempted from the tariff liberalization program. Almost 35 percent of the value of intraregional trade in South Asia is subject to sensitive list tariffs; over 39 percent of India's exports to the region fall under the sensitive lists of various partners. Also, several countries in the region maintain high para tariffs (that is, duties imposed on imports, but not on domestic production), which have not been

included in the tariff preference programs in free trade agreements. Among the major economies in South Asia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka maintain high para tariffs.

This report also examines the Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) in bilateral trade between Bangladesh and India and between India and Nepal in selected products. Lack of awareness among exporters on regulations and standards in partner countries plays a big role in creating misperceptions about NTMs. A proactive approach is needed to address information asymmetries, while also enhancing infrastructure and simplifying procedures, the report says.

Recommendations

The report recommends an approach of open regionalism, and views intraregional trade as complementary to, and as a stepping stone for, deeper global integration. "Given the context of South Asia, an incremental approach toward deeper trade cooperation can be very powerful, and the region has witnessed examples of this in the form of India-Sri Lanka air services liberalization and India-Bangladesh border haats," said Sanjay Kathuria, Lead author of the report and Lead Economist, World Bank. "Given its complicated history, size asymmetries, and a trust deficit, small steps backed by policy persistence is probably the right way to go for South Asia," Kathuria added.

Some of the specific recommendations are as follows:

- **Border tax distortions:** The report suggests targeting sensitive lists and paratariffs to enable real progress on SAFTA.
- **Nontariff barriers:** The analysis points to a multi-pronged effort, focussing on information flows, procedures, and infrastructure.
- **Connectivity costs:** Policymakers can draw several lessons from the India-Sri Lanka air services liberalization experience, where liberalization was gradual and incremental, but policy persistence paid off.
- **Mutual trust deficits:** South Asian policy makers can address their mutual trust deficits by reinforcing the virtuous circle between trade and trust – the experience of Bangladesh-India Haats offer several useful insights in this context. 

The Human Capital Project

The human capital gap

By Jim Yong Kim, World Bank Group President



Governments in pursuit of economic growth love to invest in physical capital—new roads, beautiful bridges, gleaming airports, and other infrastructure. But they are typically far less interested in investing in human capital, which is the sum total of a population’s health, skills, knowledge, experience, and habits. That’s a mistake, because neglecting investments in human capital can dramatically weaken a country’s competitiveness in a rapidly changing world, one in which economies need ever-increasing amounts of talent to sustain growth.

Throughout the World Bank Group’s history, our development experts have studied every aspect of what makes economies grow, what helps people lift themselves out of poverty, and how developing countries can invest in prosperity. In 2003, the Bank published the first annual *Doing Business* report, which ranked countries on everything from taxation levels to contract enforcement. The findings proved hard to ignore: heads of state and finance ministers faced the possibility that foreign direct investment could go down as

companies chose to invest in countries with a better business climate. In the 15 years since, *Doing Business* has inspired more than 3,180 regulatory reforms.

Now we are taking a similar approach to marshaling investments in people. The staff of the World Bank Group is developing a new index to measure how human capital contributes to the productivity of the next generation of workers. Set to launch at the World Bank Group’s annual meetings in Bali this October, the index will measure the health, as well as the quantity and quality of education, that a child born today can expect to achieve by the age of 18.

Scholars know a great deal about the many benefits of improving human capital. But their knowledge has not turned into a convincing call for action among developing countries. One constraining factor is the shortage of credible data that make clear the benefits of investing in human capital, not just for ministers of health and education but also for heads of state, ministers of finance, and other people of influence around the world.

That's why an index of human capital across countries can galvanize more—and more effective—investments in people.

Over the past three decades, life expectancy in rich and poor countries has started to converge. Schooling has expanded tremendously. But the agenda is unfinished: almost a quarter of children under five are malnourished, more than 260 million children and youth are not in school, and 60 percent of primary school children in developing countries are still failing to achieve minimum proficiency in learning. In too many places, governments are failing to invest in their populations.

People power

The value of human capital can be calculated in several different ways. Traditionally, economists have done so by measuring how much more people earn after staying in school longer. Studies have found that each additional year of education increases a person's income by about ten percent on average. The quality of the education matters, too. In the United States, for example, replacing a low-quality teacher in an elementary school classroom with an average-quality one raises the combined lifetime income of that classroom's students by \$250,000.

But cognitive abilities are not the only dimensions of human capital that count. Socioemotional skills, such as grit and conscientiousness, often have equally large economic returns. Health also matters: healthier people tend to be more productive. Consider what happens when children no longer suffer from parasitic worms. A 2015 study conducted in Kenya found that giving deworming drugs in childhood reduced school absences and raised wages in adulthood by as much as 20 percent—lifelong benefits from a pill that costs about 30 cents to produce and deliver.

The different dimensions of human capital complement one another starting at an early age. Proper nutrition and stimulation in utero and during early childhood improve physical and mental well-being later in life. Although some gaps in cognitive and socioemotional skills that manifest themselves at an early age can be closed later, doing so becomes

more expensive as children reach their teens. It is no surprise, then, that focusing on human capital during the first 1,000 days of a child's life is one of the most cost-effective investments governments can make.

How does all of this relate to economic growth? For one thing, when the benefits of individual investments in human capital are added up, the overall impact is greater than the sum of the parts. Going back to those schoolchildren in Kenya: deworming one child also decreases the chances of other children becoming infected with parasites, which in turn sets those children up for better learning and higher wages. Some of the benefits from improved human capital also accrue beyond the generation in which the investments are made. Educating mothers about prenatal care, for instance, improves the health of their children in infancy.

Individual investments in human capital add up: development economists have estimated that human capital alone explains between ten and 30 percent of differences in per capita income across countries. These positive effects also persist over time. In the mid-nineteenth century, the state of São Paulo, in Brazil, encouraged the immigration of educated Europeans to specific settlements. More than 100 years later, those very settlements boast higher levels of educational attainment, a greater share of workers in manufacturing as opposed to agriculture, and higher per capita income.

Education yields particularly large returns, so it plays an important role in decreasing poverty. Ghana's success story is a testament to this relationship: throughout the 1990s and early years of this century, the country doubled its education spending and drastically improved its primary enrollment rates. As a result, the literacy rate went up by an astonishing 64 percentage points from the early 1990s to 2012, and the poverty rate fell from 61 percent to 13 percent.

Investments in education can also reduce inequality. In most countries, children born to more affluent parents start having access to better opportunities early in life, and these lead to lifelong advantages, whereas children born to poorer parents miss out on these opportunities. When governments take steps to correct that problem, economic

inequality tends to fall. One study released this year drew on a trial conducted in North Carolina to estimate that if the United States made effective early childhood development programs universal, U.S. income inequality would fall by seven percent—about enough for the country to achieve Canadian levels of equality.

The societal benefits of investing in human capital extend even further. Staying in school longer reduces a person's probability of committing a crime. So do programs that improve noncognitive skills. In a 2017 study in Liberia, drug dealers, thieves, and other criminally inclined men were enrolled in cognitive behavioral therapy in order to build skills such as recognizing emotions, improving self-control, and navigating difficult situations. The program, when combined with a small cash transfer, significantly reduced the odds that these men would fall back into a life of crime.

Human capital is also associated with social participation. In the mid-1970s, Nigeria introduced universal primary education, sending a large cohort of children through primary school who otherwise wouldn't have gone. Years later, those same people were more likely to pay close attention to the news, speak to their peers about politics, attend community meetings, and vote.

Investments in human capital increase trust, too. More educated people are more trusting of others, and more trusting societies tend to have higher economic growth. They are also more tolerant: research suggests that the large wave of compulsory school reforms that took place across Europe in the mid-twentieth century made people more welcoming of immigrants than they were before.

The visible hand

Human capital doesn't materialize on its own; it must be nurtured by the state. In part, that's because individuals often fail to consider the benefits that investments in people can have on others. In deciding whether to deworm their children, for instance, parents take into account potential improvements to their own children's health, but they rarely consider how the treatment will reduce the risk of infection for other children. Or in deciding whether to pay to enroll their children in preschool,

parents might not consider the wider societal benefits of doing so, such as lower crime and incarceration rates. These knock-on effects are significant: a 2010 study of one preschool program developed in Michigan in the 1960s estimated that for each \$1 spent, society received \$7 to \$12 in return.

Sometimes, social norms hold parents back from investing in their children. Although the preference among parents for sons over daughters has been well documented, the extent of the discrimination can be astounding. The government of India has estimated that the country has as many as 21 million "unwanted girls," daughters whose parents wished for sons instead. These girls receive much less parental investment, in terms of both health and education. Other times, families want to invest in the human capital of their children but simply cannot afford to do so. Poor parents of talented kids cannot take out a loan on their children's future earnings to pay for school today. And even when education is free, parents still have to pay for transportation and school supplies, not to mention the opportunity cost that arises because a child in the classroom cannot work to earn extra income for the family.

Despite how crucial it is for governments to invest in human capital, politics often gets in the way. Politicians may lack the incentive to support policies that can take decades to pay off. For example, in the absence of a pandemic, they can usually get away with neglecting public health. It is rarely popular to fund public health programs by raising taxes or diverting money from more visible expenditures, such as infrastructure or public subsidies. The government of Nigeria ran into major resistance in 2012 when it removed the country's fuel subsidy to spend more on maternal and child health services. Media coverage focused on the unpopular repeal of the subsidy and paid scant attention to the much-needed expansion of primary health care. After widespread public protests, the subsidy was reinstated. In some countries, such resistance is partly explained by a weak social contract: citizens do not trust their government, so they are hesitant to pay tax money that they worry will be misspent.

The problem of implementation is equally daunting. Across the world, too many children cannot read because their teachers are not

adequately trained. The Service Delivery Indicators, an initiative launched by the World Bank Group in partnership with the African Economic Research Consortium to collect data on sub-Saharan African countries, has revealed the depth of the problem. In seven countries surveyed—Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda—only 66 percent of fourth-grade teachers had mastered the language curriculum they were supposed to be teaching, and only 68 percent had the minimum knowledge needed to teach math. In health care, medical professionals in these countries could correctly diagnose common conditions such as malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diabetes just 53 percent of the time.

Implementation is also challenging in places where the people providing a given service lack the motivation to do their jobs well. In those same seven countries, on average, teachers taught for only half the time they were supposed to. In many cases, the problem is that civil servants work in politicized bureaucracies, where promotions are based on connections, not performance.

But there are success stories. When the incentives of central governments, local governments, and service providers are aligned, countries can make great strides in improving human capital. That has been the case with Argentina's Plan Nacer, a program launched in 2004 and supported by the World Bank Group that provides health insurance to uninsured families. Plan Nacer allocated funding to provinces based on indicators measuring the scope and quality of their maternal and child health-care services, an approach that incentivized provinces to invest in better care. Among its beneficiaries, Plan Nacer reduced the probability of a low birth weight by 19 percent.

More and more, populations in developing countries are demanding better health care and education. In Peru, for example, a remarkable campaign led by civil society groups placed stunted growth among children firmly on the political agenda in 2006, an election year. Politicians responded by setting a clear target of reducing stunting by five percentage points in five years. The country managed to outperform even that ambitious goal: from 2008 to 2016, the rate of stunting

among children under five fell by about 15 percentage points. It was proof that change is possible.

The power of measurement

When politicians and bureaucrats fail to deliver, poor people suffer the most. But there is a way to empower the people to demand the services they deserve: transparency. Better access to information allows citizens to know what their leaders and civil servants are and aren't doing. In Uganda in 2005, for example, researchers working with community organizations released report cards grading local health facilities, which galvanized communities to demand better services. This simple policy led to sustained improvements in health outcomes, including a reduction in mortality for children under five. Similarly, in 2001, after Germany's disappointing scores in the inaugural Program for International Student Assessment were released to an embarrassed public—an event known as “the PISA shock”—the government undertook major educational reforms that improved learning.

Learning assessments proved similarly pivotal in Tanzania. In 2011, the nongovernmental organization Twaweza, supported by the World Bank Group, published the results of a survey assessing children's basic literacy and numeracy. The news was dismal: only three out of ten third-grade students had mastered second-grade numeracy, and even fewer could read a second-grade story in English. Around the same time, the results of the Service Delivery Indicators surveys came out and shined a spotlight on teacher incompetence and absenteeism. The ensuing public outcry led to the introduction of Tanzania's “Big Results Now” initiative, a government effort to address low levels of learning.

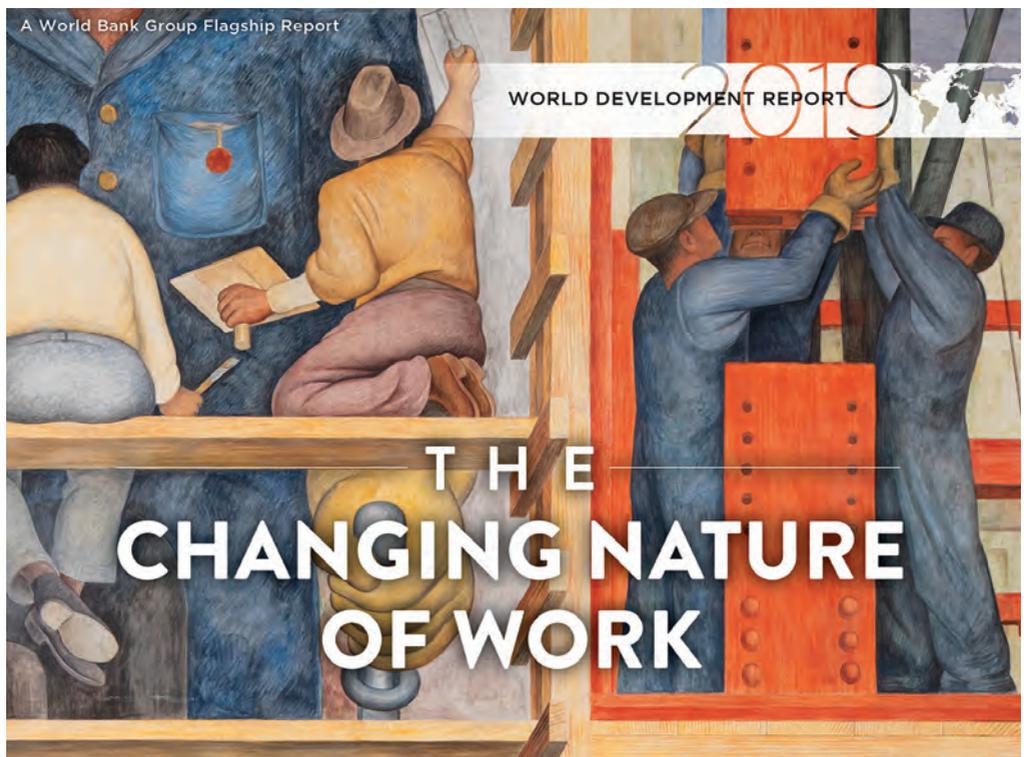
As these examples show, when credible analysis on the state of human capital development is made public, it can catalyze action. That is the logic behind the metrics the World Bank Group is developing to capture key elements of human capital. 

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Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/yapcd56k>

Will India seize the wave of disruptive technology?

Digital technology helps firms to innovate and scale up quickly, challenging traditional production patterns and blurring boundaries, says Federica Saliola, Joint Director of the World Development Report 2019



There are many ways to ‘Make in India’. What we know is that technology is going to be at the forefront of the quest to create more jobs in India. But how can India benefit from the opportunities that the advent of new technologies provide?

In its latest World Development Report, *The Changing Nature of Work*, the World Bank examines the global implications of the ongoing technological shift that is dramatically altering the nature of work. In so doing, it highlights many of the challenges facing India and other emerging economies as they seek to create jobs for their people.

As Asia’s third-largest economy, India needs to create jobs on a huge scale to absorb the large number of young people entering its

working age population. The challenge is to turn this technological shift to everyone’s advantage, so that its benefits are shared more widely.

Technology is also reshaping every industry and setting new demands for skills in every profession. The skills needed for work are changing, literally, every day. New jobs will require specific skills—a combination of technological knowhow, problem solving, and critical-thinking skills, as well as soft skills such as perseverance, collaboration, and empathy. That means countries must invest much more—and more effectively—in their people to build human capital.

Investing in human capital is the key mechanism to ensure that the next

generation is ready for the changing nature of work. However, too many countries are under-investing in these critical areas—especially in the early formative years of childhood, when the ability to learn new skills quickly is decisively molded. When countries don't invest in good education and health to build human capital, it puts successive generations—especially the poorest—at a severe disadvantage, exacerbates inequalities that already exist, and threatens to create instability when rising aspirations are met with frustration instead of opportunity.

Some features of the current wave of technological progress are notable. For instance, digital technology helps firms to innovate and scale up quickly, challenging traditional production patterns and blurring boundaries. New business models—digital platform firms—evolve rapidly from local start-ups to global behemoths, often with few employees and tangible assets, or “scale without mass”.

Think of IKEA, today a ubiquitous global brand. Yet it took IKEA 75 years to reach the point where it generates \$45 billion in global revenues across 50 countries. Now compare IKEA's glacial pace of expansion with the turbo-charged ascent of Alibaba, which reached a million users in just two years.

The rise of digital platform market places allows the impact of technology to reach more people more quickly than ever before, bringing economic opportunity to millions who do not live in industrialized countries, or even in the industrial areas of the developing world.

Platform-based businesses are on the rise in India too, harnessing technology to reach more people faster than ever before. For instance, the online consulting platform Indiez, founded in 2016, brings together a widely distributed community of talent from remote locations—mainly from India, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. Indiez takes a team-based approach to online freelancing and works on technology projects all over the world. Their clients include the Domino's Pizza restaurant chain in India, as well as the Aditya Birla Group, the Indian multinational conglomerate.

So what are the downsides of new technology?

First, digital markets create new opportunities for firms to stifle their competitors through user data and lead to the emergence of monopolies. Second, firms that possess “scale without mass” create new challenges for taxation. It is difficult to determine where value is created when businesses have a combination of users and ideas and production takes place across borders.

Profit shifting continues to be a challenge, despite recent multilateral efforts to combat it. Multinationals—digital and traditional—shift about 45% of their profits to tax havens, resulting in a loss of 12% of global corporate tax revenue. India, along with Australia, Brazil, France, Japan, Mexico, and the US, as well as much of Africa, are among the countries estimated to be most hurt by profit-shifting.

Revenues generated through digital advertising can also be hard to capture. Two years ago, the government of India introduced a 6% equalization levy on online advertising revenue paid by Indian companies to non-resident e-commerce companies.

These are hurdles that must be overcome because providing the new kinds of social protection that people need in the changing nature of work will be costly but achievable with sensible tax reforms. Even so, it's clear that digital platforms provide new economic opportunities to people. As long as they have access to the internet, women and people living in rural areas have the ability to create their own businesses, or work from home for employers who are thousands of miles away.

The internet and digital technology are the new superhighways of trade. India, where most workers are employed in the informal sector and the participation of women in the labour force is low, has an opportunity to seize the opportunities that digital technology provides. Innovation is also a friend to entrepreneurs and India's entrepreneurial spirit makes it an ideal incubator for start-ups to thrive. 🌐

This article first appeared in the Mint newspaper on 12 October 2018

Presenting India's rooftop story to the world



India stands at a crucial juncture for energy generation. While the country has consciously moved to boost its renewable

- The World Bank's India energy team organized an event on India's Rooftop Solar journey as a part of the 6th Global Environment Facility (GEF) assembly at Danang, Vietnam on June 26, 2018
- The event focused on sharing the best practices from India's Rooftop Solar program and to release the report titled "Identification of barriers for rooftop solar uptake in MSMEs (Medium and Small Enterprises) and development of financing framework for MSMEs."
- The event also saw interactive sessions to help participants find solutions to challenges; similar to what India faced while deploying solar rooftop and also discussed how trust funds such as GEF can help to leverage large amounts of private and public capital

energy generation, the bets are big on varying sources of energy generation – especially for solar power. With an installed capacity of over 20,000 MW, we are now on our way to becoming one of the fastest growing solar powers. To add to the charm, the Government of India has also set an ambitious target to generate 100,000 MW of solar power by 2022 – with a significant emphasis on solar rooftop generation as well.

While the goal for solar rooftop PV lies at 40,000 MW of installed capacity by 2022, its progress has been slow with only about 2,000 MW installed so far. This presented the need to look into various issues slowing down the solar rooftop PV deployment and it was this intent that the World Bank forged a partnership with the State Bank of India to create a \$635 million line for lending specifically for solar rooftop PV projects. This program named SUPRABHA – Sustainable Partnership for Rooftop Solar Acceleration in Bharat has already made a significant impact on solar rooftop PV adoption with the

sanction of \$315 million to deploy 600 MW of solar rooftops.

To showcase these insights on a global platform, the World Bank's India energy team organized an event on India's Rooftop Solar journey as a part of the 6th GEF assembly at Danang, Vietnam. The event saw speakers from the Ministry of Environment and Forest Government of India (GEF Coordinator for India), the State Bank of India (SBI), Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Finance Corporation (IFC) and EY consortium team, alongside the World Bank team. The event was also attended by senior officials from GEF, Government of Vietnam, officials from the Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) in India, African Development Bank, Development Bank of South Africa and other officials from several countries.

At this event the Joint Secretary (GEF) from the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, Mr Nikunja Sundaray, outlined the Government of India's plans in the solar sector. He highlighted the role that the \$25m GEF grant has played in leveraging some \$500m from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and \$125m from the Clean Technology

Fund (CTF). He also praised SBI's exhaustive efforts to achieve the rooftop targets in such a short period of time.

Additionally, Mr V. Ramling, the Chief General Manager for CPPD, SBI appraised the audience about the very important role lenders play in development of the solar ecosystem and also said that more such partnerships need to be developed to boost the sector. Looking into the future funding needs of the SME sector could be the next step for WB and SBI partnership, he added.

World Bank's Renewable Energy Specialist, Amit Jain moderated a discussion which highlighted the lessons from the Rooftop Solar Project, the challenges overcome and the role that various stakeholders played in the process.

The event was crucial to not just bring the insights gathered from India's rooftop journey to a global platform, but also to raise more awareness about the sector itself. It was an attempt to help resolve issues for the audience and present a viable future of opportunities for them. It was a crucial step forward to spearhead India's catapult into renewable energy. 🌍



Face to Face

Investing in the citizens of India will help build the future of India: Junaid Ahmad

World Bank Country Director in India Junaid Ahmad touched upon a plethora of topics from market volatility to economic growth, interest rates, oil prices, the future association of World Bank with India, and the importance of building India's human capital in an interview with Timesnownews.com. Excerpts from the interview:

It's been quite a roller-coaster ride for the markets and a lot of wealth was also wiped out recently. Investors would be concerned; what has been causing so much volatility?

Junaid Ahmad: I think it is very important to recognise that the market volatility that India is facing is really driven by external factors – you have the price of oil, you have interest rates going up in the United States, India is increasingly an integrated economy in the world, and naturally any external shock has implications on the Indian economy. And you will see market volatilities. But I think it is very important to recognise that the market volatility is not driven by fundamentals of the Indian economy, it is really driven by external shocks. And the tough part of it is, you really have to just wait it out and continue to focus on the fundamentals of a strong fiscal constraint, or good economics of letting the exchange rate adapt to some of these shifts.

When you are talking about the global factors, you mean US-China economic relations as well; the currency evaluation, market protectionism...there are many combined factors.

Junaid Ahmad: There are a lot of factors. I wouldn't be able to distinguish which is driving exactly what. But I think the increasing interest rates in the US, the oil prices, the trade uncertainties around the world as trade deals are being re-negotiated; all of this creates a bit of uncertainty. As India is increasingly integrated with the world economy (and India should continue to get integrated because the future of India lies in its connections with the global economy), we will see volatility impacting the country.

Any views on the US-China trade wars?

Junaid Ahmad: Not really. Other than the fact that you are beginning to see different nations relook at their trade-regime but, as per the World Bank's perspective, there is no doubt that an open trading system benefits everyone. There should be multilateralism; we are a big supporter of keeping the borders open, it influences the economic growth, the ability of nations to deal with poverty. So, we are very strongly in favor of continuing the focus on open trading-borders.

Amongst global factors, how do you think Brexit would affect the European Union and will it have ripple down effects globally?

Junaid Ahmad: Well, let's see what the final arrangements are. The leadership in England and the leadership in Europe are negotiating that. I think until we (soon) know the details of what is being dealt with and resolved, we really won't understand the implications. But we hope whatever is being done, continues to help the global economy grow.

India is looking at reducing oil imports from Iran. It's an open secret that it's the US pressure. And while we are looking at ways to bypass secondary sanctions, how do you think reduced imports from Iran would affect the prices here?

Junaid Ahmad: Let me answer this question in a slightly different way. A lot of interesting things are happening internally to India. First of all, the government is focusing on renewable energy; you are beginning to see India invest in renewable energy. Second, if you look at the energy intensity of the economy, that's gently moving away from being energy intensive. These factors are going to be very big for India, because it would enable India to be less dependent on oil imports. At this moment, it is dependent on oil imports and as long as it is dependent on oil imports, it will seek markets everywhere and I think if a market gets closed, it will hugely impact the country.

But, I think, on the positive side is the shift towards a much better energy management in the country. Energy efficiency, by the way, is another element of India's policy. The Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), which is a major state-owned enterprise, has made a huge impact on getting LED lights in municipalities. So, the internal decisions of shifting to renewable energies is making the country less energy intensive and improving energy efficiency; all these are building blocks of what I think will give India the resilience it seeks.

But, these things cannot be switched on and off quickly so there is an issue of managing the interim, and in the interim, the story surely needs to be about getting markets to be open and getting oil at the best price.

How do you view the Indian economy, the overall growth rate, sustaining that pace, job creations et al? Also, what is helping us to insulate ourselves from external shocks?

Junaid Ahmad: We recently completed a 50-year analysis of India's growth path. We took a 50-year view because a lot of the debate is short-term and that becomes politicized. So, we really wanted to take a step back (in time) and look at structurally how India has done in its growth, and (what we find is that) it is fascinating! The size of India, this type of economy has shown several characteristics. One, there has been steady growth; it has grown from old 2-3 percent growth rate to now safely inside 7 percent and that has been steady over the years.

Second, we have seen the stability of the growth rate. There have been variations each year but the variations are getting smaller and smaller. So there is a much more stable growth rate.

Third, what we have seen is that it's getting more diversified. For example, China has been heavily dependent on export growth. India is more diversified in getting its growth. Having said that, India must seek to grow its export, there is no doubt about it. But, it has more diversified growth.

And finally, which goes to your point, we have seen it to have a far more resilient growth. There have been shocks over the years and even recently the simple implementation of GST had shocked the country. But whatever is the shock that India has faced, India is back on its 7 percent growth rate path, which is the story that is often not told in the political debate. But if we want India to break the story, it has to go beyond 8 percent and to shift to 8 percent, there are various structural shifts that need to be done. First is, management of resources. Water, land and air; I think we have all assumed will be there and it's always seen as the end product. Today water, for example, is central to your growth, it's a natural element; management of that is number one (priority).

Number two is investment in human capital. India has announced impressive programs in health insurance, impressive programs in primary education, in early childhood. These have to continue to grow so that you have an investment in human capital. It's not just enough to increase the number of schools, you have to increase the learning per child and that is extremely important.

And then the third point that we have raised is investing in state capabilities. This is a huge federal system. The future of India lies in the states of India, enabling the capability of each of the states is going to be extremely important for (India's) continuing on the growth path. So, while we can celebrate what I think is the extraordinary move to the 7 and 7 and half per cent growth rate, breaking the 8 percent barrier in a sustained way will require structural shifts.

How do you view World Bank's relation with India in terms of alignment with our economic objectives and future areas of investment?

Junaid Ahmad: The relationship is phenomenal. Let me tell you, three weeks ago we presented the Country Partnership Framework to our Board. The Country Partnership Framework is a joint document of the Government of India and the World Bank and is presented to the Board of the World Bank. It actually maps the next 5 years. It was an extraordinary reaction from the Board. There was an outright endorsement of the Country Partnership Framework. People were calling it the benchmark of Country Partnership Framework, and I think we recognize that just as India was important for International Development Association (IDA), and now that India is out of the IDA, India will be important for what we call is the Forward Look of the Bank. The Forward Look says it is not only national development that matters but global development. And we know how India deals with its energy policies, the delivery of services, how it will affect climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). So, from that perspective, we need to invest in India because it makes a difference to the global growth path. So, there is an incredibly strong relationship, where we have moved from IDA into next generation of role for India in the world economy.

In terms of human development indices, we lag behind compared to some smaller neighboring South Asian countries. You come from Bangladesh where Grameen Bank has been a huge success story that has been celebrated all over. Are there small things that we are probably overlooking and concentrating too much at macro factors?

Junaid Ahmad: First, let me tell you as a Bangladeshi, I am proud to say, that what we do is not small, what we do is big. Bangladesh achieved open defecation-free society sometime back, and Bangladesh had always been on the forefront of women empowerment.

So how do we replicate success stories from some of these South Asian countries which are ahead of us in terms of women's empowerment, health, and poverty alleviation?

Junaid Ahmad: Now, I think you do yourself a disservice by saying how do we replicate, because it is always about exchanges in learning. So let's look at India. Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) has introduced Swachh Bharat, the Prime Minister has launched universal health insurance scheme, India has launched one of the biggest early education program – the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The challenge for India is not policy shifts but, challenges are, that I have already talked about, the capability to implement. And that's what you need – the last mile delivery, learning from other countries, and innovating for yourself.

If you look at the human capital indices by states, you will find that some of your states like Kerala would be up on the top, while the others would be on the lower side. So, there is a lot of learning that can happen inside the country, what we call as using Indian states as lighthouses, learning from each other. Investing in the citizens of India is the future of India. 🌐

Recent Project Approvals

Jharkhand Power System Improvement Project

The World Bank has approved a \$310 million project to help build new power transmission infrastructure, as well as put in place systems to improve the technical efficiency and commercial performance of the state power sector utilities. The Project will help bring in modern technology solutions such as automated sub-stations, and network analysis and planning tools to provide reliable power supply and enhance customer satisfaction.

While a significant portion of the proposed

investments are aimed at improving power transmission infrastructure, the Project will also focus on developing institutional capacities of state owned power transmission and distribution companies and improving their operational performance.

The Project is part of the Government of India's *Power for All* program launched in 2014. The project will also support smart meters, with two-way communication and backend IT infrastructure, deployed in select urban towns. 🌐

Andhra Pradesh Integrated Irrigation and Agriculture Transformation Project



The World Bank Board of Executive Directors have approved a \$172.20 million project to enhance agricultural productivity, profitability, and climate resilience of poor and marginalized farmers while ensuring that farming continues to remain a financially viable activity.

The Project will benefit over 200,000 families of poor and marginalized farmers, agro-entrepreneurs, women and other vulnerable groups. It will work with 1000 Small-Scale Community-Based Irrigation (SSCBI) systems spread over an area of 90,000 hectares (ha), covering over 1000 villages across 12 most climate vulnerable districts of Andhra Pradesh.

The Project will be implemented in rural areas largely dependent upon rainfed agriculture. It will strengthen the resilience of poor and marginalized farmers against adverse climate events by improving access to irrigation, drought seed varieties and post-harvest technology that are aimed at improving soil health, water-use efficiency and crop productivity.

By adopting climate-resilient seed varieties which have short maturity, are drought and heat resistant, and salt tolerant, the Project will help reduce risks of climate-related crop failure and help enhance farmer's income. 🌐

Recent Project Signings

Uttarakhand Workforce Development Project

The Government of India, Government of Uttarakhand and the World Bank have signed a \$74 million Uttarakhand Workforce Development Project to improve the quality of training at select Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and help the state produce higher-quality workers with relevant market skills.

Over 24,000 trainees are expected to benefit at these ITI's during the project period and about 40,000 untrained youth, including unemployed and unskilled workers will participate in industry-relevant short-term training programs which are compliant with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). The NSQF is a quality assurance framework in India that lays down nationally

recognized competency standards for all qualifications.

The agreement for the Project was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Government of India; Ahmad Iqbal, Additional Secretary, SDE, on behalf of the Government of Uttarakhand; and Jorge Coarasa, Acting Country Director, World Bank India, on behalf of the World Bank.

Twenty-five ITI's have been selected – 13 located in district centers and 12 ITI's that are well-linked to industries. Two out of four women's ITIs in the state will be included in the list. 🌐

Events

Report Launch

Strengthening Forest Fire Management in India

New Delhi • October 9, 2018

Strengthening Forest Fire Management in India, a report jointly prepared by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the World Bank was launched in New Delhi last month.

The report says forest fires are today a leading cause of forest degradation in India and discusses policies on forest fire prevention

and management (FFPM) at the national, state and local levels, underscoring the need for a comprehensive national policy and guidelines. It provides recommendations on five broad themes – policy, institutions and capacity, community engagement, technology, and data and information and looks at national and international best practices in FFPM.

The report was released by Dr Harsh Vardhan, Hon. Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change at an event today. Speaking at the event Dr Vardhan said: "Forest fire management is part of our long-term vision for sustainable forest management. It is also crucial for sustaining progress towards our global pledge of creating additional sinks of 2.5 billion to 3 billion tons worth of CO2 stored in its forests by 2030."

"The new study will provide critical inputs for the preparation of Government of India's National Action Plan on Forest Fire Prevention and Management," he added. 🌐

Read: <https://tinyurl.com/ybtkhfbk>



ICR Update

This is a short summary of the Implementation Completion Report (ICR) of a recently-closed World Bank project. The full text of the ICR is available on the Bank's website.

To access this document, go to www.worldbank.org/reference/ and then opt for the Documents & Reports section.

Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water Bodies Restoration and Management Project



Context

Agricultural growth was constrained in Tamil Nadu – a water-stressed state – due to the poor condition of irrigation infrastructure and facilities. Roughly half of the state's 62 million people lived in rural areas with agriculture being the primary source of income. In addition, increasing urbanization and industrialization was putting a strain on the limited water resources.

The Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) undertook a project to modernize agriculture and restore and manage water bodies in the state.

Project Development Objectives

The development objective of the Project was to assist selected sub-basin stakeholders in increasing the productivity of irrigated agriculture within an integrated water resources management framework. It had three elements: (a) irrigation rehabilitation

Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water Bodies Restoration and Management Project

Approval Date:	23 January, 2007
Closing Date:	30 June, 2015
Total Project Cost	US\$ 489 million
Bank Financing:	US\$ 440 million (IDA: \$153 million, IBRD: \$287 million)
Implementing Agency:	Water Resources Organization, Public Works Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu
Outcome:	Satisfactory
Risk to Development Outcome:	Significant
Overall Bank Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Borrower Performance:	Moderately Satisfactory

and modernization; (b) intensification and diversification of agriculture; and (c) an integrated water resources management framework.

Achievements

Irrigation rehabilitation and modernization: Over 5,260 tanks covering an area of 404,000 ha. were modernized under the Project. During extreme flooding in Tamil Nadu in November and December 2015, only a handful of the rehabilitated tanks under the Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water Bodies Restoration and Management Project (IAMWARM) failed. This was thanks to the introduction of various improved construction techniques, and quality monitoring and assurance measures introduced under the Project. At project completion, fully irrigated area in the project sub-basins increased by 39 percent – from 364,768.4 ha to 508,132.6 ha. This represents a 98 percent completion rate of the target.

The target for expansion of micro-irrigation systems (drip and sprinkler) was 100,000 ha. The Project encountered some problems in the early years of implementation primarily due to lack of farmer demand for such systems and at mid-term, this target was reduced to 40,000 ha. However, when the Government of India enhanced its subsidy program for micro-irrigation systems, the area under micro-irrigation under IAMWARM increased by 53,901 ha.

Intensification and diversification of agriculture: The targets for increased area for maize, oilseeds, fruits and vegetables, and sugarcane, and conversion of traditional paddy to System of Rice Intensification (SRI) were met, with total increase in crop area exceeding well over 100 percent of the target.

The area under high value crop cultivation – primarily horticulture crops – increased by 124 percent against a target of 30 percent. Overall the percentage increase in farmer's income varied from 7 to almost 93 percent against a target of 50 percent.

Farmers also diversified into milk production. By the last year of the Project, the annual milk production increased to 705,410 m.t. against a target of 290,000 m.t. reflecting the success of the Project's artificial insemination (AI) program, and expansion of fodder cultivation.

An integrated water resources management: A major initiative for improving the efficiency of water use was the introduction of System of Rice Intensification (SRI). A study carried out on a sample of 832 SRI demonstration fields between 2007-08 and 2010-11 showed a 64 percent increase in output per unit of water for SRI in respect to comparator fields under conventional paddy production technology. A second major initiative for water saving was the introduction of micro-irrigation systems (MIS). A study conducted on the impact of MIS in Tamil Nadu showed a 51 percent increase in water productivity.

Some 2,775 Water User Associations (WUAs) were established. In addition, the State Water Resources Management Agency (SWaRMA) to improve coordination and institutional capacity for sustainable water resources management with a basin perspective became operational in June 2011. At the village level, bottom-up village water plans were formulated and adopted by all water user's associations and other stakeholders. Through these planning efforts, water allocation for the various users was determined and alternative water conservation options were identified to ensure sustainable use of water resources.

Lessons Learnt

The project yielded several important lessons, most of which will be relevant to similar projects in India.

- The project demonstrated conditions under which a combination of infrastructure, strengthening water management organizations, institutional reforms, and a wide range of agricultural interventions, can be effective in a single project.
- Some of the innovations introduced in the Project like the mobile quality control laboratory system, could become best practices for future development interventions in the water and agriculture sectors of India.
- Water management interventions and cross-sector water planning at sub-basin and basin levels can ensure enhanced productivity in a sustained manner.
- Irrigated agriculture can contribute to enhanced nutrition by diversifying crops, especially non-rice cereals such as millets, and other low water consuming staples. 

This is a select listing of recent World Bank publications, working papers, operational documents and other information resources that are now available at the New Delhi Office Public Information Center. Policy Research Working Papers, Project Appraisal Documents, Project Information Documents and other reports can be downloaded in pdf format from 'Documents and Reports' at www.worldbank.org

Publications may be consulted and copies of unpriced items obtained from:

The World Bank PIC

The Hindustan Times House (Press Block)
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South Asia Publications

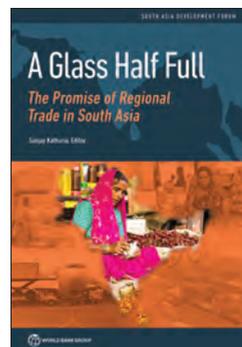
South Asia Economic Focus, Fall 2018: Budget Crunch



By World Bank
Available On-Line
Published: October 2018,
78 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN (electronic):
978-1-4648-1369-6

South Asia remains the fastest-growing region in the world and its performance has strengthened further. The external environment, while remaining conducive, has become more turbulent. Monetary policy is being adjusted accordingly, but fiscal policy is not equally responsive and fiscal deficits remain large. Despite strong demand from advanced economies and considerable depreciation of domestic currencies, imports are still growing stronger than exports in most countries. Rising oil prices add further pressure on South Asia's high current account deficits, says the latest addition of the South Asia Economic Focus.

A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia



Edited by Sanjay Kathuria
Available On-Line
Published: September 2018,
250 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1294-1

This report documents systematically the gaps between current and potential trade in South Asia and addresses important specific barriers that have held trade back. These barriers include tariffs and para tariffs, real and perceived nontariff barriers, connectivity costs, and the broader trust deficit.

This policy-focused report unpacks these critical barriers to effective trade integration in South Asia through four in-depth studies that produce new, detailed, on-the-ground knowledge.

India: Policy Research Working Papers

WPS 8599

India's Growth Story

By Junaid Kamal Ahmad, Florian Michael Blum, Poonam Gupta and Dhruv Jain

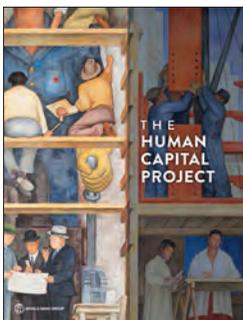
India has attained much economic success in the past three decades. Yet an economic deceleration in recent years has generated worried commentaries about the country's growth outlook. This paper offers a long-term perspective on India's growth experience. Analyzing the past five decades of data, the paper notes that growth has slowly but steadily accelerated, become less erratic, and been well diversified across sectors and states.

A more granular assessment of the period since the early 1990s finds that there were three distinct phases of growth: a period of slow acceleration from 1991 to the early 2000s; a short period of unusually rapid growth, with certain features of unsustainability, during 2004-08; and a corrective slowdown that started with the global financial crisis in 2008. The slowdown has been reflected most profoundly in investment, credit, and exports. Even as the economy has now recovered to a growth rate of 7 to 7.5 percent, durably accelerating it to a higher level will require a concerted policy momentum that succeeds in reversing the slowdown in investment, credit supply, and exports; and support from the global economy.

Maintaining the hard-won macroeconomic stability, implementing a definite and durable solution to the banking sector issues, and realizing the expected growth and fiscal dividend from the Goods and Services Tax are some of the other factors that can help attain a higher growth rate.

Other Publications

The Human Capital Project



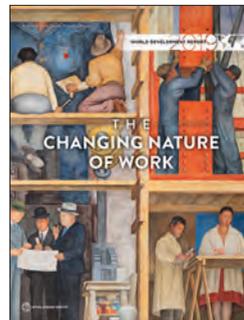
By the World Bank
Available On-Line
Published: June 2018,
59 pages
English Version, Paperback

By improving their skills, health, knowledge, and resilience—their human capital—people can be more productive, flexible, and innovative. Human capital is a central driver of sustainable growth and poverty reduction. Investments

in human capital have become more important as the nature of work has evolved. Yet despite substantial progress, significant gaps in human capital investments are leaving the world poorly prepared for what lies ahead.

The World Bank Group has launched the Human Capital Project (HCP) to mobilize efforts to address these gaps. The project is intended to raise awareness of the costs of inaction and make the case for investing in people through country engagement and analytical work. The goal of the HCP is a world in which all children arrive at school ready to learn, the time spent in school translates into better learning, and they can grow up to live and work as healthy, skilled, and productive adults.

World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work



By World Bank
Available On-Line
Published: September 2018,
151 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISSN: 0163-5085
ISBN: 978-1-4648-1328-3
e-ISBN: 978-1-4648-1356-6

The 2019 World Development Report

studies how the nature of work is changing as a result of advances in technology today. Technological progress disrupts existing systems. A new social contract is needed to smoothen the transition and guard against rising inequality. Significant investments in human capital throughout a person's lifecycle are vital to this effort. If workers are to stay competitive against machines they need to train or retool existing skills. A social protection system that includes a minimum basic level of protection for workers and citizens can complement new forms of employment. Improved private sector policies to encourage startup activity and competition can help countries compete in the digital age.

Governments also need to ensure that firms pay their fair share of taxes, in part to fund this new social contract.

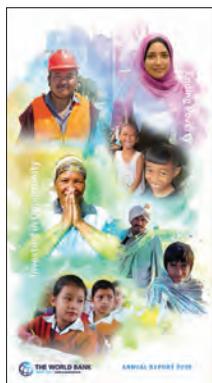
What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050



By Silpa Kaza, Lisa Yao, Perinaz Bhada-Tata, and Frank Van Woerden
Available On-Line
Published: September 2018,
291 pages
English Version, Paperback
ISBN (paper):
978-1-4648-1329-0
ISBN (electronic): 978-1-4648-1347-4

What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050 aggregates extensive solid waste data at the national and urban levels. It estimates and projects waste generation to 2030 and 2050. Beyond the core data metrics from waste generation to disposal, the report provides information on waste management costs, revenues, and tariffs; special wastes; regulations; public communication; administrative and operational models; and the informal sector.

The World Bank Annual Report 2018

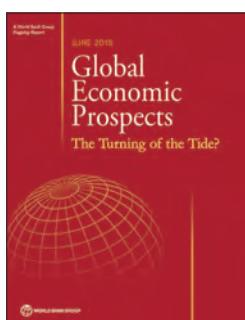


By World Bank
Available On-Line
 Published: October 2018, 3 Vol.
English Version, Paperback
 ISBN: 978-1-4648-1296-5
 eISBN: 978-1-4648-1297-2
 doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-1296-5

The Annual Report is prepared by the Executive Directors of the International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA)—collectively known as the World Bank—in accordance with the by-laws of the two institutions. The President of the IBRD and IDA and the Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors submits the Report, together with the accompanying administrative budgets and audited financial statements, to the Board of Governors.

Global Economic Prospects 2018: The Turning of the Tide?

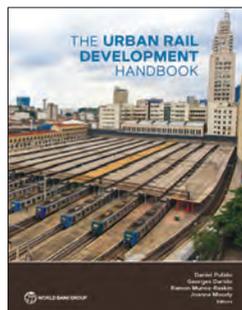


By the World Bank
Available On-Line
 Published: June 2018,
 180 pages
English Version, Paperback
 ISBN: 978-1-4648-1257-6

Global growth has eased but remains robust and is projected to reach 3.1 percent in 2018. It

is expected to edge down in the next two years, to 2.9 percent by 2020, as global slack dissipates, trade and investment moderate, and financing conditions tighten. Growth in advanced economies is predicted to decelerate toward potential rates as monetary policy normalizes and the effects of US fiscal stimulus wane. In emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs), growth in commodity importers will remain robust, while the rebound in commodity exporters is projected to mature during the next two years.

The Urban Rail Development Handbook



Edited by Daniel Pulido, Georges Darido, Ramon Munoz-Raskin, and Joanna Moody
Available On-Line
 Published: September 2018, 794 pages
English Version, Paperback
 ISBN: 978-1-4648-1272-9

This Handbook synthesizes international 'good practices' and recommendations that are independent of commercial, financial political, or other interests. The material presented is intended to maximize the impact and manage the challenges of urban rail systems in cities in both developed and developing countries.

The Voice of Travelers: Leveraging User-Generated Content for Tourism Development 2018



By Talia Malvina Salem and Louise D Twining-Ward
Available On-Line
 Published: October 2018,
 64 pages
English Version, Paperback
 Report No.: 130052

Facilitated by digital platforms, user-Generated Content (UGC) is fast

becoming the most important and widely used source of travel information. This impacts the traveler's path to purchase and disrupts established travel agencies, guidebooks, conventional marketing approaches and star rating systems. It also presents new opportunities for developing destinations to leverage these platforms for big data and cost-effective performance improvements.

The World Bank Group and TripAdvisor collaborated on this report to support destination management organizations and local suppliers to extract the most value from UGC, while avoiding its pitfalls. This body of work aims to highlight good practices and suggest tools to consider when building plans for managing online reputation. It also provides case studies that illuminate effective campaigns and investment.

GRI Index 2018 – A Report



Available On-Line
 Published: October 2018, 77 pages
English Version, Paperback

The World Bank GRI

Index 2018 provides an overview of sustainability considerations within the World Bank's lending and analytical services as well as its corporate activities.

This index of sustainability indicators has been prepared in accordance with the internationally recognized standard for sustainability reporting (<https://www.globalreporting.org>). The GRI Index covers activities from fiscal year 2018, July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018.

Digital Jobs for Youth: Young Women in the Digital Economy

By Danielle Simone Robinson, Namita Datta, Emily Massey, Tshogofatso Kgasago and Mishkah Jakoet

Available On-Line

Published: September 2018, 270 pages

English Version, Paperback

Report No: 129757

Using a newly developed digital jobs typology, the report identifies drivers of demand across various categories of digital work. It then extracts lessons learned in overcoming supply and demand-side barriers to youth digital employment, based on past and ongoing programs implemented by Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) coalition members.

In doing so, *Digital Jobs for Youth: Young Women in the Digital Economy* identifies design elements and strategies that will be especially helpful in connecting young women to the digital economy.

India Project Documents

India Digital Financial Inclusion of Informal Sector Project

Date 09 October 2018
Project ID P167886
Report No. PIDC161650 (Project Information Document)
ISDSC25028 (Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet)

Chhattisgarh Public Financial Management and Accountability Program

Date 03 October 2018
Project ID P166578
Report No. PIDA169256 (Project Information Document)

Towards Elimination of TB Program

Date 25 September 2018
Project ID P167523
Report No. PIDC168763 (Project Information Document)

Biodiversity Conservation and Rural Livelihoods Improvement Project

Date 25 September 2018
Project ID P088520
Report No. ICR4510 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

Jharkhand Power System Improvement Project

Date 07 September 2018
Project ID P162086
Report No. PAD2721 (Project Appraisal Document)

Third Elementary Education Project

Date 28 August 2018
Project ID P144447
Report No. ICR4464 (Implementation Completion and Results Report)

Second Gujarat State Highway Project

Date 23 August 2018
Project ID P114827
Report No. ISDSR24678 (Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet)

Amaravati Sustainable Capital City Development Project

Date 23 August 2018
Project ID P159808
Report No. SFG4616 (Resettlement Plan)

Kerala Local Government Service Delivery

Date 09 August 2018
Project ID P102624
Report No. ICRR0021294 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

Rajasthan State Highways Development Program Project

Date 09 August 2018
Project ID P157141
Report No. SFG4550 (Resettlement Plan)

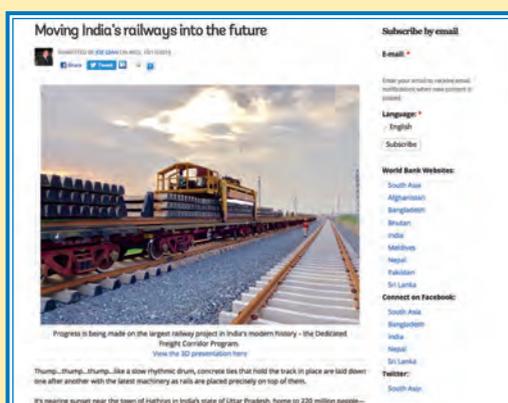
Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project

Date 30 July 2018
Project ID P101650
Report No. ICRR0021262 (Implementation Completion Report Review)

From the Blogworld

Moving India's railways into the future

By Joe Qian



Progress is being made on the largest railway project in India's modern history – the Dedicated Freight Corridor Program.

Thump...thump...thump...like a slow rhythmic drum, concrete ties that hold the track in place are laid down one after another with the latest machinery as rails are placed precisely on top of them.

It's nearing sunset near the town of Hathras in India's state of Uttar Pradesh, home to 220 million people—more than the entire population of Brazil.

Progress is being made on the largest railway project in India's modern history that will increase prosperity by helping move people and goods more safely, effectively, and in an environmentally-friendly way.

India's Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) program is building dedicated freight-only railway lines along highly congested transport corridors connecting the industrial heartland in the north to the ports of Kolkata and Mumbai on the eastern and western coasts.

Passengers and freight trains currently share tracks in India which can cause congestion and delays. The project will help increase the speed of freight rail to up to 100km/h from the current 25km/h average.

Through these efforts, DFC is expected to improve transport and trade logistics – bringing much needed

jobs, connectivity, and urbanization opportunities to some of India's poorest provinces – including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh while helping protect the environment. The electric locomotives will help ease India's energy security issues and escalating concerns about traffic accidents, congestion, carbon emissions, and pollution created by road traffic.

Near Hathras and simultaneously in different sites in the country, workers equipped with modern equipment and techniques efficiently lay 1.5 km of new track per day in different weather conditions. Once completed, electric cables are stretched above and signaling is installed, all in preparation for the electric locomotives reliably to carry their cargo across the country at maximum speed of 100km/h, compared to an average current speed of 25 km/h.

Workers are stretching electric wires above recently laid tracks – to soon allow for reliable and environmentally friendly movement of goods and freight.

DFC will also free up current railway lines, many that have been in existence for over 100 years, to be able to carry more passenger traffic at potentially higher speeds to meet rising demands for quality and comfort. This need became more apparent while I stood on the new DFC tracks; like clockwork, trains on the existing parallel track would ring their whistles and zoom by every 6 minutes at different speeds, with the slower trains having to make way for faster ones at stations, which can delay the system. It will also reduce the need for freight to be carried on India's roads, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve road safety.

Of the two corridors currently under construction and expected to be completed within the next two years, the World Bank is supporting the Eastern Corridor with \$2.36 billion in support through a series of three projects covering 1,200 kilometers. The 343km-long line I visited between Bhaupur to Khurja is expected to be completed within the next year, as a segment of a larger project connecting Ludhiana to Dankuni, near Kolkata expected to be completed in 2020.

From the Blogworld

The Project has been designed and being implemented with advanced technologies such as this automatic signaling station which helps conductors automatically monitor their position in relation with other trains.

In addition to financing and technical support, the Bank is working with the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd (DFCCIL) – created to implement the project – with research and development, long-term commercial and marketing

planning, approaches to non-discriminatory access, track safety, locomotive and wagon specifications, pilot projects on energy optimization and freight logistics, and skills enhancement.

Through DFC and other projects on the horizon such as high-speed rail, Indian railways are truly taking major steps to emerge as a world class operator in the 21st century. 🌐

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y92a96z5>

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