



Welcome to the workshop

“Rethinking Development”

Introduction

It is difficult to determine how to measure a country's development and which countries are more developed than others. It can be observed that the general mood in a country is closely linked to (current) economic development. But is a country's economic growth sufficient to measure a society's well-being?

Indicators that show a country's total annual output or total income, for example, say nothing about its distribution. Factors such as income distribution, health, education and environmental pollution are not taken into account. Yet these factors have a significant impact on living conditions.

So, what exactly is development?

In the broadest sense, human development encompasses all aspects of quality of life. Economic growth supports human development, because without the satisfaction of basic material needs, it is difficult to imagine anything else.

In the context of a socially and environmentally sustainable economy, gross national product (GNP) is increasingly being criticised as a measure of a society's prosperity.

The task

There are already many alternative approaches and indicators that could 'compete' with GDP or usefully complement it. As part of the workshop “Rethinking Development”, you will work in small groups on the GDP and on one of the alternative indices. You can choose from the following:

-  **1 Gross Domestic Product**
-  **2 Human Development Index (HDI)**
-  **3 Happy Planet Index (HPI)**
-  **4 Gini Index**
-  **5 Big Mac Index (BMI)**
-  **6 Gender Inequality Index (GII)**



1) Reading and discussion in small groups (90 min)

Read the information on your index individually.
Then discuss the index as a group.

Key questions for discussion:

- *What picture does it give of the wealth of our society(s)? Are there differences between different regions of the world?*
- *For which questions is it best suited?*
- *What understanding of development and progress is "behind" the index?*

2) Presentation

Station Run (45-60 minutes)

Prepare a 5-minute presentation on your index. Try to explain to the other groups as clearly as possible what this index is about and what its strengths and weaknesses are.

The groups present their index as part of a station run. There is an opportunity for short questions and additional comments.

3) Final discussion: Perspectives - "Development 2050" (30-45 min)

The group then discusses the 'big picture' of the indices presented again as a class.

Which index do you find most convincing and why?

What is most important for you personally?

What does your index measure and how does it differ from GDP? How is it calculated?

"Better than GDP? - What are the index's strengths and weaknesses?"

The discussion will also focus on how the economy(ies) needs to change in order to be both environmentally and socially sustainable in the long term.