Indices of Social Development

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With thanks to Roberto Foa (Harvard University) and the World Bank
What are Indices of Social Development?

- Indices = composite measures consisting of various individual measures ranging from 2 or 3 to over 20.

- Social development refers to the institutions of societies through which development is enhanced: the ‘soft’ dimensions of development, often invisible and difficult to measure
  - Social capital
  - Discrimination
  - Exclusion

- Institutions = formal and informal social norms that structure behaviour
  - Formal institutions: created by states and other entities such as laws, regulations, rules
  - Informal institutions: behavioural norms, attitudes, beliefs, rules of thumb
Why Indices of Social Development?

- Show that the social development is something that we can define, measure, and ultimately advance

- Help development practitioners identify countries with particular social development needs and concerns

- Explore the research link between social development and other development outcomes, such as growth, governance, stability, and poverty reduction
### 6 Indices of Social Development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic Activism</strong></td>
<td>The strength of civil society – levels of civic activism and access to information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Safety and Trust</strong></td>
<td>Norms of nonviolence between persons in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-group Cohesion</strong></td>
<td>Relations of trust and cohesion between defined ethnic, religious, or linguistic identity groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clubs and Associations</strong></td>
<td>Relations of trust and cohesion within local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Equity</strong></td>
<td>Non-discrimination against women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusion of Minorities</strong></td>
<td>Non-exclusion of social minorities &amp; indigenous peoples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Social Cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>n</th>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Log) Number of reported incidents of violent riots, per capita</td>
<td>Databanks</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Level of ethnic minority rebellion in country, aggregated by group</td>
<td>Minorities at Risk</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Log) Number of reported incidents of assassinations, per capita</td>
<td>Databanks</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Level of economic and political discrimination against minorities in country, aggregated by group</td>
<td>Minorities at Risk</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Log) Number of reported incidents of terrorist acts, per capita</td>
<td>Databanks</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Economic and political disparities between minorities in country, aggregated by group</td>
<td>Minorities at Risk</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Log) Number of reported incidents of guerrilla activity, per capita</td>
<td>Databanks</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>% of respondents who don't want people of a different race as neighbors</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating on likelihood of violent demonstrations</td>
<td>Economist Intelligence Unit</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>% of respondents who don't want people of a different race as neighbors</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating on potential for terrorist acts</td>
<td>Economist Intelligence Unit</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>% of respondents who don't want people of a different language as neighbors</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating on the &quot;legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or group paranoia&quot;</td>
<td>Fund for Peace</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>% of respondents who &quot;not very much&quot; or &quot;not at all&quot; trust people of another religion</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rating on level of uneven economic development along group lines</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>% of respondents who &quot;not very much&quot; or &quot;not at all&quot; trust people of another nationality</td>
<td>World Values Survey</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of uneven economic development along group lines</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>Combined percentage citing discrimination against certain groups</td>
<td>Latino barometer</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of civil disorder,</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>% reporting that their economic situation is the 'same' as other ethnic groups</td>
<td>Afrobarometer</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of internal conflict</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>% reporting that their political situation is the 'same' as other ethnic groups</td>
<td>Afrobarometer</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of terrorism</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>% population reporting that their ethnic group is 'never' treated unfairly</td>
<td>Afrobarometer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of ethnic tensions,</td>
<td>ICRS</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

- The project combines over 200 indicators from 25 independent sources.

- We use the matching percentiles method used by Lambsdorff et al. (1999).

- Produces similar results to the unobserved components model used by the Worldwide Governance Indicators.

- In brief:
  
  i) we order all of our indicators from the most to least reliable and representative.

  ii) Scores from the second indicator are matched to the first indicator based on ranking of shared countries.

  iii) These are combined with the first indicator to produced refined scores.

  iv) We continue through all of the available indicators, reducing random error with each iteration to arrive at a final score.
Matching Equally Ranked Values

% respondent participation in demonstrations, petitions, boycotts (WVS)

Respondent has often attended meetings of a local development association (Afrobarometer)

Botswana 0.24
Nigeria 0.22
Tanzania 0.08
Burundi 0.05
Congo, DR 0.04

Other countries
Creating an Averaged Estimate

% respondent participation in demonstrations, petitions, boycotts (WVS)

Respondent has often attended meetings of a local development association (Afrobarometer)

Botswana
Nigeria
Tanzania
Burundi
Congo, DR

Other countries
Social Cohesion and GDP

Social Cohesion vs. Log GDP per capita graph

Countries: Japan, Guinea-Bissau, Sudan
Social development progress

For example, levels of gender equity in Southern and Eastern Africa are higher than their GDP would lead us to expect.
Gender Equity in Africa

[Graph showing the relationship between gender equity and log GDP per capita for various countries in Africa.]
Social development progress

But levels of interpersonal safety and trust in Latin America and Caribbean are lower than their GDP would lead us to expect.
Interpersonal Safety and Trust – Latin America and Caribbean
Individual measures and policy objectives: an example

- Protest behaviour: indicator of free speech
- Democracy: policy objective
Protest Behaviour and Democracy

Average Percentage of Respondents Taking Part in Demonstrations, Petitions, and Boycotts vs. Polity IV Democracy Score
Possible use for development policy evaluation

- Helps to measure country-level and regional level progress in social development and enables policy makers to compare countries and regions.
- Helps to monitor social development of countries and regions over time.
- Helps to measure invisible dimensions of development at the meso and macro level: levels of social cohesion/social capital, degree of discrimination, extent of social exclusion, governance issues.
- Suitable as a variable in macro level policy evaluation and institutional policy such as budget support and institution building and governance support.
Limitations of ISD for policy evaluation

- Not applicable at intra-country level
- Time periods are averages for several years of available data so it is not possible to link data to a specific year for a series of countries
- They do not distinguish between social development changes arising from aid and from trends or external factors
Conclusion

- Indices of Social Development may be useful for macro-level policy evaluation.
- Indices of Social Development may complement ‘hard’ measures of development such as economic (GDP growth, credit deepening) and biological (BMI) indicators.
- Indices of Social Development provide quantitative variables for policy analysis, which may inform policy priorities (from country profiles showing scores on each index) and country selection (from country or regional scores or correlations of index scores with measures for policy objectives).
- 16 March launch www.IndSocDev.org where all the indices data can be downloaded through free access.