Age of Sustainable Development (Sachs) Reading and Study Questions (Chapter 2)

Instructions: These reading questions will be the basis for most quiz questions. You will do best on the quizzes if you print these out, and then as you are doing your reading, to write down complete answers for each question. I will ask very specific questions that will assess how well you have taken notes.

Please note that the reading questions below contain much prose that is lifted directly from Sachs. I have done this intentionally so that it will be easier for students to locate such sections. Therefore, I will make no attempt in all such cases to identify which questions contain exact quotes, and which ones do not.

When there are blanks for you to fill in, please fill them in exactly as they appear in the reading, as I may later have questions that request these in their exact original form.

While most quiz questions will be based on the reading questions, there will be some questions that are not. In addition, the context for the answers to some of the reading questions may surround their actual answer – thus for a full understanding comprehensive reading is required. Thus if you skip over parts that are not directly addressed in the reading questions, you quiz scores will suffer.

Chapter 2 AN UNEQUAL WORLD

What are the words, and meanings of each word, represented in each of the three letters of the acronym GDP?

What is the difference between GDP and GDP per capita? Which would better represent the standard of living in a country?

In GDP per capita terms, what is the daily income of people in the “low income” group of countries?

Identify the two regions that have most of the low income countries.

What percentage share of all humanity lives in middle income countries?

What are LDCs, and how many countries are in this group?

Many of the LDCs are either land\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ed or small \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ economies. Nonetheless, is it the case that all countries that have either one of these disadvantages is necessarily going to be poor? Be aware in general terms what Sachs writes about this, together with a few country examples (hint: one starts with an “S”, another with an “A”.

What is the meaning of PPP as it pertains to making average income comparisons across countries?

In making the GDP per capita versus GDP in $PPP, which more realistically allows standard of living comparisons?

In comparison the difference between GDP per capita and GDP in $PPP, what is it about countries like Malawi that makes this difference larger than it is for countries like Mexico?

Just to see if you are getting the idea, where would a haircut likely be cheaper, in tropical Africa, Mexico, or Austria, converting national currency (money) into US dollars?

Sachs writes “Perhaps the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ kind of variation within countries is the difference between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ life.”

Before the Industrial Revolution, what share of the global population was living in “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ areas” and doing what activity to survive?

Sachs writes that with urbanization a declining share of the labor force is in agriculture. (true/false)

Sachs writes that with urbanization a declining amount of agricultural production is typically experienced. (true/false)

Sachs describes a force that drives rural-to-urban migration. Summarize.

“Urban areas tend to be located at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

“As countries urbanize, they tend to also to become more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in orientation.”

Urban areas tend to have denser populations than rural areas. As a result, Sachs writes that “the quality of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ also tends to differ.”

From this, what three other indicators of living tend to better in urban areas?

And finally, in this section, fertility rates tend to be higher in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ areas than in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ areas.

Give five reasons why.

Global Trends in Urbanization

“The richer parts of the world tend to be more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

What percentage of tropical Africa is urban? (Sachs gives a range in the narrative) What region of the world is the most rural?

Sachs writes that “Africa’s urban areas are often growing at around \_\_\_ percent a year.

For your own calculation: there are some parts of tropical Africa that are seeing urban populations growing at 7% per year. How many years will it take them to double their urban populations?

Rural areas have (higher/lower) fertilities than urban areas.

The world population is projected to grow to \_\_\_\_ billion by 2040. What % share of that increase will be found in the rural areas?

The farm population of the United States is under \_\_ percent of the entire labor force, even though rural areas have \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the total US population.

Sachs writes at the end of this section on urbanization that “along the way, societies and cultures are deeply divided between rural and urban interests, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and ways of life. Do you see this to be the case for the United States? Possible forum here…?

**III. Income Inequality Within Countries**

What does the Gini coefficient measure, for the purposes of this chapter?

In what region are the most equal countries found? Where do tropical African and Latin American countries fit overall in their Gini-measure inequalities?

Does the Gini coefficient of the United States more resemble that of the developed countries such as: 1) in much of Europe, Canada and Australia…or rather 2) middle income and poor countries? How did and does China compare?

Sachs implicates a three inter-related historical forces as possible factors causing the relatively high inequalities of the Americas. Summarize.

“Education can become an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ if everybody has the same \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_opportunity, but it can also become a source of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as well if only the children of the rich are able to obtain a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ education.”

“The rural-urban divide is another key to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”. Explain.

Women are part of a pattern of inequality that is caused by d\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Racial, ethnic, and religious minorities are also part of the pattern of unequal employment and/or compensation. Some of this is because of “conditions that hinder their \_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_...”

The “natural resource curse” describes countries that end up with what characteristics?

The Scandinavian region has governments that narrow income inequality “while also raising overall economic efficiency”. What specific example is given, and what three results are listed by Sachs?

**IV. Measuring Wellbeing**

Three concepts, closely related and including wellbeing, are listed. What are the other two?

Sachs contrasts the value of an extra dollar for a poor person and a wealthy one to later make a point in paragraph three of this section about what is necessary for achieving sustainable development. It’s not just income, but raising human \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

What is the metric called that is used by the UN Human Development Programme for measuring wellbeing?

List and describe briefly each of its three components.

Why does it use the logarithm of income per capita, rather than simply income per capita?

Sachs compares the usefulness of the HDI with per capita GDP. Can countries with relatively low GDP still do well on HDI? Explain.

Describe the HDI map patterns by overall levels seen on the world’s continents.

Equatorial Guinea is an example of a country with relatively high GDP per capita yet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in wellbeing. Describe how it got there. List two other countries with similar discrepancies between GDP per capita and the other components of HDI, from Sachs.

Be aware of the differences in the South Korean GDP and HDI, and complete the statement: “…Part of that has resulted from its remarkable focus \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”(*please complete the sentence, many more words needed*)

Describe what the Cantril ladder is used for.

Describe the difference between effective happiness and evaluative happiness. Which of the two is utilized by the Cantril ladder?

In addition to the role of GDP, the second major reason for unhappiness or happiness is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ capital.

Physical and mental health contribute to happiness. We will later look at the various degrees of commitment that different governments make to this.

Summarize the orientation of materialism prevalent in societies and for individuals…in self-reported happiness.

“If we as individuals simply pursue income per capita as our main goal in life, we will lose out on many counts.” Sachs identifies three outcomes of such a focus, all in the same paragraph as the first sentence quoted here. Summarize each.

And yet, Sachs writes that societies should pay attention to higher income per person. What kind of societies in particular is he referring to here?

**V. Convergence or Divergence?**

What is one of the most important questions in the study of economic development? The “gap” referred to here also has to do with “other important aspects of life” such as “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ attainment, and life \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

Be familiar with how the terms convergence and divergence are used here.

The period from roughly 1750 to 1950 was characterized mostly by which of the two terms above, describing global economic growth and its effect on gaps?

What was it that launched modern economic growth, beginning around 1750? Lay out where it started, and where it spread to first.

The emerging military and industrialization of Western Europe made possible imperialism. What three regions were particularly impacted in this process that set back the possibility of convergence?

Why was divergence the tendency in the imperialized regions – as per the last sentence on page 67? (in other words what were the dominant countries focused on in their colonized regions, and what were they generally not interested in?)

But with the question of imperialism, what happened after World War II?

With that change…”faster \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the poorer countries became much more of a typical condition than it had been in the imperialist era.

The past half century has seen a tendency toward (convergence/divergence).

Fill in the blanks with per capita income for the year 1980 (expressed in 1980 dollars):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1980 | 2010 |
| United States |  | data not needed |
| China |  |  |
| Niger |  | below |

Understanding why some countries have experience divergence compared with the wealthy nations, while others have experience convergence, is a key question raised in the field of sustainable development.