WHAT UNDP REALLY MEANS BY DEVELOPMENT AND WHY IT MATTERS – CASE STUDY OF THE 2020 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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Abstract

Development as a concept is heavily contested within the international community. In this sense, what the UN Development Programme means by development matters gravely. The narrative that policymakers, researchers and development specialists build around international development implies divergent conceptualizations of human progress and legitimizes actions that aim to create a better future for humankind, hence having a crucial role in how we think and act regarding development. Through a multi-method approach- combining computer-assisted content analysis and discourse analysis – in the present study, by scrutinizing the Human Development Reports from 1990 until 2022, I identify four distinct narratives, namely: "development defined in social terms," "development as political and institutional reforms," "development and climate change" and finally, "development defined in economic terms." Currently, the most dominant narrative being "development and climate change", my analysis covers the changes that happened in the language that describes human progress in relation to climate change. In this thesis, I argue that the current conceptualization of development in the context of the Anthropocene does not meet the requirement of an inclusive development agenda, since it solely allows one cultural framing, in this case the framing of a Western-centric, technocratic description of human-nature relations. Whereas the reimagination of the human development journey should be sensitive toward social inequalities, and critical toward gender, race and class disparities globally.

Key words: development, narratives, UNDP, the Anthropocene, critical development studies

Acknowledgements

The discourse around international development has always been a topic very close to my heart. Human progress - and just the mere idea of the building of a better future - has been something that set me on the journey to explore the narratives that researchers, policymakers and development specialists build around the betterment of the future of humankind. However, I have to admit that it is a challenging field of observations since at the core of my thesis there is the idea of the creation of a grand narrative that connects rather than divides people in the journey of human progress. I hope my small contribution to the topic will make a positive impact and present a meaningful perspective to the studying of narratives around international development. But most importantly my work could not come together without the remarkable people who surround me.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Andrew X. Li – my supervisor – who proved to be a great source of inspiration through his insights and remarkable knowledge of the nuances of international development and the intricacies of political economy. His constructive feedback and constant positive attitude towards my performance always pushed me further.

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professionally and personally. I will never forget the inspiring debates during classes or the late-night talks where we just could not escape that we study IR.

I believe I should thank the most my family and friends, who will laugh at my acknowledgements at this part and will tease me about the length and depth of it, saying that I did not win a Nobel Prize. I love them for that. Lastly, I would like to thank Dávid, for all his support, patience and love. You are the greatest source of my happiness.

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Introduction

The stories that we tell through narratives are key forces shaping our reality. In social sciences, narratives based on different metaphors, analogies and vocabularies determine not only our daily actions but more specifically the policies of different fields in decision-making processes.[1] The proper development of a coherent narrative can help to convey values and norms, realize feasible objectives and adequate toolkits, "*hence they can justify and legitimize political actions and social practices*"[2] while also making them suitable to achieve desirable future developments.

When it comes to the field of Political Economy of Development, even the focal point of studies, the word development, is in itself, heavily contested. As Sanch argues, development "*is a concept of monumental emptiness, carrying a vaguely positive outcome*"[3] which provides a fertile base for conflicting perspectives to take place. Development can reiterate the hegemony of the economic world-view by specifically identifying it with economic growth, however it can also be conceptualized as the tool to provide more resources and rights for the powerless by highlighting the necessary greater autonomy of communities.[4] Hence, we can observe that the conceptual fluctuation of development can mean different desired objectives, which would imply various tools that are needed to achieve those goals.[5]

In this sense, the way how the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conceptualizes development matters gravely. Through an in-depth analysis of the published

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[1] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by: With a New Afterword*, 6. print (Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2011).

[2] Anna-Lena Guske et al., "Stories That Change Our World? Narratives of the Sustainable Economy," *Sustainability* 11, no. 21 (2019): 1 p., https://doi.org/10.3390/su11216163.

[3] Wolfgang Sachs, ed., *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (London; Atlantic Highlands, N.J: Zed Books, 1992), 12 p.

[4] Sachs, *The Development Dictionary* 12 p.

[5] Henry Veltmeyer and Raúl Delgado Wise, *Critical Development Studies: An Introduction*, Critical Development Studies 1 (Halifax Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2018); Kari Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," in *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies, Second Edition, Edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles*, 2nd edition (2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: Routledge, 2022).

Human Development Reports since 1990, I identify four existing narratives that dominate the conceptualization of development. Defining clusters of words help me to identify what human development really means for UNDP and what the main issues UNDP considers as threats to this process.

The main objective of my thesis - through the theoretical lens of Critical Development Studies (CDS) - is to highlight that even though UNDP claims to advocate for a more human-based development narrative, the organization occasionally - through its language, and narrative – fails in the establishment of an inclusive global narrative of human development and represents a Western-based, technocratic language that is more exclusionary in its nature, and reiterates global power asymmetry and societal inequalities. While the transformative nature of the concept may suggest systematic change, the exclusionary nature of the cultural framing of the Anthropocene,[6] i.e., does not support the diversification of development narratives by bringing in indigenous perspectives or highlighting gender, racial or class disparities, that can be key in the reimagination of the human development journey, in which a more active human agency is needed to tackle climate crisis globally.[7] Such active agency can be realized through the reiteration of concepts like "instilling a sense of stewardship for the planet," which builds on collective actions and a reimagination of human-nature relations in this new epoch.[8]

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[6] The concept of the Anthropocene is defined as a new geological epoch, in which feedback loops between human actions and Erath system reactions are shortened, meaning that human-nature relations are redefined in a sense that human actions became the major forces of shaping of the Erath system as a whole. Later, this thesis specifically talks about the relevance of the appearance of the concept within the field of international development and elaborates on the implications its usage has on the narrative of the emancipatory claims of it.

[7] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 1. Anchor Books ed (New York: Anchor Books, 2000); David Chandler, "International Statebuilding and the Ideology of Resilience," *Politics* 33, no. 4 (2013): 276–86, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12009; Yadvinder Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 42, no. 1 (2017): 77–104, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102016-060854; Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative," *The Anthropocene Review* 1, no. 1 (April 2014): 62–69, https://doi.org/10.1177/2053019613516291.

[8] UNDP, ed., *The next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene*, Human Development Report 2020 (New York, NY: United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

Methodologically, the combination of a detailed discourse and content analysis[9] is the most suitable for my research, since it provides a possibility to identify key themes, clusters of words and metaphors that are the backbone of a coherent narrative. Conducting a computer-assisted content analysis allows me to create a topic model,[10] which investigates not only the frequency of the words, but also their likeliness to belong together within a digital corpus, hence it is able to identify distinct narratives through the annually published Human Development Reports. Through the validation process of the narratives, I argue that the most relevant current narrative of human development by the UNDP belongs under the topic of "development and climate change" and with another model, the TF-IDF (term frequency-inverse document frequency) I observed a change in the approach of the conceptualization within this topic in recent years. While previously the topic "development and climate change" was overly busy with specific climate issues and solutions were offered within the same institutional setting, currently the discourse turned to a more abstract interpretation of planetary pressures, and solutions were proposed more on the systematic level than before. To further strengthen my point, I turn to discourse analysis and present the key themes used in the 2020 HDR that aligns with this new conceptualization of human development in the Anthropocene.

This thesis proceeds as follows. Firstly, I argue, that narratives have a prominence in social sciences, due to their determinant and legitimization nature on human actions, after which I present the conceptual fluctuation of international development by going through the evolution of the mainstream development discourse since its launch in the 1940s. Secondly, through the lens of CDS, - as a theoretical framework, - and the methodological assistance of computer assisted content analysis I identify four distinct narratives of development in the UNDP's

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[9] Andrew Bennett, "Found in Translation: Combining Discourse Analysis with Computer Assisted Content Analysis," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (2015): 984–97, https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829815581535.

[10] Margaret E. Roberts, Brandon M. Stewart, and Dustin Tingley, "Stm : An *R* Package for Structural Topic Models," *Journal of Statistical Software* 91, no. 2 (2019), https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v091.i02.

HDRs. Thirdly, based on an in-depth discourse analysis, I argue that the narrative around human development and climate change underwent conceptual changes and I highlight a recent appearance of a Western-based technocratic vocabulary, which undermines the claims of systematic changes in response to the climate crisis. Lastly, I conclude the key findings and emphasize their relevance in future research projects and policymaking.

Narratives and their prominence in social sciences

The (Google) dictionary definition of narrative is *"a spoken or written account of connected events; a story."*[11] More academic approaches define narratives *as "social constructions that describe reality in a teleological way."*[12] That is, they provide a more or less coherent framework of meaning that allows people to *"locate, perceive, identify and label"*[13] objects, concepts and events in the world.

Consequently, narratives have a profound influence on the way we think about ourselves, our attitudes to the world and our possible actions. The role and significance of narratives in shaping "reality" has been demonstrated in countless fields. Randall et al., for example, have shown that there is a strong connection between the complexity of individual narratives and psychological resilience.[14] Daniel C. Dennett emphasizes that scientific discoveries are significantly influenced by different narratives and metaphors.[15] In the field of economics, Nobel Prize-winning economist Robert J. Shiller, among others, points out that *"narratives are major vectors of rapid change in culture, in zeitgeist, and in economic behavior."*[16] In the field of political science, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have shown how different conceptual metaphors and the narratives they constitute frame and implicate specific policy agendas.[17]

Linus Hagström and Karl Gustafsson specifically elaborate on the relevance of narratives within the field of International Relations and foreign policy decision-making. The

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[11] The Google's English dictionary is provided by Oxford Languages.

[12] Guske et al., "Stories That Change Our World?" 2019, 2 p.

[13] Guske et al., "Stories That Change Our World?" 2019, 2 p.; Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1974).

[14] William Randall et al., "Narrative and Resilience: A Comparative Analysis of How Older Adults Story Their Lives," *Journal of Aging Studies* 34 (2015): 155–61, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2015.02.010.

[15] Daniel C. Dennett, *From Bacteria to Bach and Back: The Evolution of Minds* (London: Penguin Books, 2018);

[16] Robert J. Shiller, *Narrative Economics: How Stories Go Viral & Drive Major Economic Events* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

[17] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 2nd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

special issue[18] in which they published talks about how story telling shapes East Asian international politics, with the certain example of the narrative of "*China's rise*" or "*global power shift*", which overlaps with other more general narratives, such as the realist theory of the rise and fall of great powers, that ends with lessons for the West to be learnt and propose policies to either contain the rising power or adapt to the new global order. Moreover, the authors also emphasize the importance of narratives in IR since they not only legitimize foreign policies, but in recent decades narratives also became a major tool in the hands of politicians. Through using the power of storytelling leaders can legitimize political actions, like international interventions, wars and overall can gain unprecedented devotion from their voters through political mobilization.[19] These approaches are based, implicitly or explicitly, on the premise that the world - and ourselves in it - can be framed by a myriad of different descriptions.[20]

In other words, there is no single valid description of the world, but rather several different, even radically different but equally valid, narratives of it. These different descriptions, however, also constitute different ontologies.[21] This is particularly well captured in the narratives of divergent development policy theories, where different narratives define different modes of actions. The narrative of the so-called top-down approaches is that catching up requires the "Western" export of liberal institutions, the rule of law and the free market. In contrast, bottom-up narratives describe the functioning of social reality from below - from the

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[18] Lucia J. Linares and Lucas de Oliveira Paes, *Narrative Power in International Relations*, vol. Volume 32, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Issue 4 (Cambridge; New York: Routledge, 2019).

[19] Linus Hagström and Karl Gustafsson, "Narrative Power: How Storytelling Shapes East Asian International Politics," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 4 (2019): 387–406, https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2019.1623498.

[20] Dávid Kollár and Ádám Stefkovics, *"A pártválasztás hátterének érték- és ideológiai szerkezete Ma*gyarországon," ["The value and ideological background of the electorate behavior in Hungary"] in Századvég Riport 2021, ed. Péter Pillók and Olivér Hortay (Hungary: Századvég Kiadó, 2022), 67 p.

[21] Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

level of actors and local culture.[22] While the former (top-down) ontology includes institutions, laws etc., the latter (bottom-up) includes people and local cultural practices. These different conceptualizations imply different "agendas" for action: the top-down narrative focuses on the development of institutions and legislation, while the bottom-up narrative focuses on local actors and local capacities.

In conclusion, I argue that a certain organization's commitment to a specific narrative around development defines the conceptualization in which policy agendas are formulated. As Guske et al. argue, "*Narratives are shaping our understanding of the world. They convey values and norms and point to desirable future developments. In this way, they justify and legitimize political actions and social practices.*"[23] Hence, researching narratives are crucial due to their prominence related to the constructed reality in which social practices and policy actions are taking place.

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[22] David Chandler, "International Statebuilding and the Ideology of Resilience," *Politics* 33, no. 4 (December 2013): 276–86, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12009; Ana E. Juncos and Jonathan Joseph, "Resilient Peace: Exploring the Theory and Practice of Resilience in Peacebuilding Interventions," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 14, no. 3 (May 26, 2020): 289–302, https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2020.1745445.
[23] Guske et al., "Stories That Change Our World?," 2019, 1 p.

Mainstream development approaches

The ambitious goals and emancipatory claims of development have been set in the post 1945 period, when - as Bowles and Veltmeyer formulated it, - these projects were aimed to "*set developing countries on the path to capitalist modernity.*"[24] The main agenda of development in the third world was focused on substantive social change, like institutional reforms, and deep international cooperation. The initial development project through international cooperation "*was preoccupied, policy- and research-wise, with how the Global South could – as fast as possible – emulate the Global North.*"[25]

For a better understanding of the processes of changes in the mainstream development project, development epochs are usually introduced. Even though it is nearly impossible to establish undebatable borders between these epochs, a timeline can help in locating the focal points of development programs, hence would provide a better understanding of the approaches that dominated - sometimes for decades - the discourse on mainstream development scholarship. Moreover, such a systematic presentation of development decades can shed light on the fluctuation of the concept, and the strategic responses on changing international conditions, that urge these programs to redesign their agenda based on the most imminent social or economic issues. It has also been repeatedly used by development organizations to describe their ambitious for which a decade seems to be a reasonable timeframe.[26]

In the 1950s the world economic order was established on the Bretton Woods system, which consequently meant that development in structural terms was all about industrialization

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[24] Paul Bowles and Henry Veltmeyer, "Introduction to Critical Development Studies - Four Characteristics with Illustrations from Seven Decades," in *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies, Second Edition, Edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles*, 2nd edition (2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: Routledge, 2022), 3 p.

[25] Peter Kragelund, "International Cooperation for Development," in *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies, Second Edition, Edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles*, 2nd edition (2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: Routledge, 2022), 122 p.

[26] Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, "*Critical Development Studies*," 10 p.

and modernization and was dominantly described through economic terms.[27] Prominent universities institutionalized development studies and preached development though the modernization approach, which suggested *"that any countries could engage in an aeronautical assent from "take-off" to self-sustaining growth and mass consumption, provided cultural and historical obstacles to modern business practices were overcome."*[28] Economic growth in this context was heavily reliant on the states and their functionaries and was only feasible with the adoption of the cultural and institutional practices of the West.[29] This modernization-based development approach dominated the first two decades of the modern international development project.

Around the 1970s, the proponents of change gained broader popularity and the fluctuation of the meaning of development took place. Due to the conditions of a worldwide economic production crisis, development specialists realized the importance of social reforms, and instituted a new discourse around development, which was majorly defined through social terms and ambitions. Liberal reforms appeared in the mainstream development project, which proposed an enhanced role of the state regarding the implementation of social agendas that supported the conditions in which economic growth could be achieved. These programs included agrarian reforms, widened accessibility of education and health care and initiatives also promoted a more equitable way of redistributing the market generated income through a set of taxation reforms.[30]

In the 1980s, due to the conservative counterrevolution, the proponents of free market capitalism gained significance in the shaping of the current development narrative. The role of the state had been turned up-side down from the previous articulation and it was perceived now

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[27] Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, "*Critical Development Studies*,"11 p.
[28] Kari Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," in *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies, Second Edition, Edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles*, 2nd edition (2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: Routledge, 2022), 14 p.
[29] Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, "*Critical Development Studies*," 11 p.
[30] Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, "*Critical Development Studies,*" 13 p.

as *"a problem rather than an agency of development."*[31] Leaders of the developed countries aimed to reduce the power of the developing world and the Washington consensus overrode the policies of domestic industrialization. Export-oriented development became the universal prescription with the focal points of deregulation, liberalization and privatization, that in many cases nullified such principles such as for example the comparative advantage in international trade.[32]

Major international organizations also underwent reforms, such as the staff swap in the World Bank, through which liberal-minded economists were dismissed for neoliberals and trade experts, who brought the technocratic language and economic focus once again back to the mainstream development project[33] and triggered another fluctuation in the meaning of development in the international arena. Through Elliot Berg's report to the World Bank,[34] the donor-recipient relations also underwent a total change. The report argued that development results are lacking when policies are not efficient, which gave a green light for donor interventions into national affairs for the sake of delivering the long-awaited grand results of development projects.[35]

The end of the Cold War brought changes in the approaches and narratives of development. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western powers tried to secure their economic dominance, access to markets and natural resources and aimed at protecting their foreign investments against the regulations of the host countries in the developing world.[36] In the 1990s, globalization became the buzzword in the mainstream development project and an

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[31] John F. J. Toye, *Dilemmas of Development: Reflections on the Counter-Revolution in Development Theory and Policy*, Repr (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, *Critical Development Studies*, 14 p.
[32] Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," 15 p.
[33] Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," 15 p.
[34] Elliot Berg, "Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action" (Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, Accelerated development in sub-Saharan Africa: an agenda for action).
[35] Elisa Van Waeyenberge, "The Post-Washington Consensus," in *The Essential Guide to Critical Development Studies, Second Edition, Edited by Henry Veltmeyer and Paul Bowles*, 2nd edition (2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN: Routledge, 2022).
[36] Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," 17 p.

inevitable trend towards a more integrated economic world appeared. The TINA effect (there is no alternative) arose in regards of the developing countries, which propagated that economic growth can only be achieved if they open their markets.[37] The World Bank itself in a 1995 report, also promised unseen prosperity for the less developed countries that considered opening their economies to unrestricted imports and free capital flows.[38]

This unseen prosperity still has not been realized. A more integrated economic climate means that shocks can more easily spread across economies and crisis can spiral up more gravely in countries that are more vulnerable than others. Such vulnerabilities can come from the lack of economic resilience, that includes extensive export concentration, the lack of economic diversification and the overall dependence on importing foreign goods. Economic openness paired with the absence of economic resilience and a low institutional trust can create such an economic climate in which states' economies fall into an "impossible to escape" vicious circle.[39] After experiencing a couple of years of free market capitalism criticisms emerged that were directly addressing the one-size-fits all nature of development approaches and the neglected role of the state in the mainstream development project.

A discursive fluctuation can also be revealed, – which is intertwined with the Foucault inspired governmentality literature – namely, that in the neoliberal development agenda the subject of development should be empowered and freed through the societal interventions of progress. David Chandler nicely captures the transformative change when he says:

> Whereas liberal frameworks of governmentality focused upon how governments might regulate and control specific levels of the economy – inflation levels, unemployment rates, interest rates, and such – under neoliberal approaches, the governance of economic processes is displaced by the enabling of societal processes, particularly of knowledge and communication, facilitating the adaptive capacities of individuals, enabling them to make better or more

[37] Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," 17 p.

[38] The World Bank, ed., Workers in an Integrating World, 1. print, World Development Report 1995 (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995); Polanyi Levitt, "Unravelling the Canvas of History," 17 p.

[39] Bernadett Miskolczi, "Intézményi Bizalom És Gazdasági Ellenállóképesség: Finnország Esete," [Intitutional Trust and Economic Resilience: The Case Study of Finland], Unpublished BA Thesis, (Budapest: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem, 2020).

efficient lifestyle choices. Recasting development in terms of societal processes and problematic individual and collective choice-making removes poverty and inequality from the macro or state-level of policy-making. Rather than liberal macroeconomics policy-making based on government programmes and goals, development becomes a question of the efficiency of societal adaptation. The liberal programmatic of government becomes hollowed out as liberal economic policy goals are displaced by the societal goal of knowledge empowerment or 'capacity-building', often presented in terms of 'human-development'.[40]

This shift from the liberal to the neoliberal agenda, glued to the emergence of the "human-development" discourse is tied to capacity building which can be understood as the extension of choice-making capabilities.[41] This discourse is majorly built on Amarty Sen's -Nobel Prize winner economist and philosopher – "*Development as Freedom*"[42], that conceptualizes effective development as the widening of the individual capabilities and choices – that is why it is commonly referred to as the "*Capability Approach*"[43] - which greatly inspired the UNDP's Human Development approach.

This short summary of the evolution of the mainstream development project from its launch can reveal that the narratives, hence the main ambitions of the development agenda and its conceptualization has been fluctuating in history. Development served as a rather "empty signifier," which made sense through the narrative that has been built around it. These changing narratives repeatedly highlighted divergent focal points, or goals of the original emancipatory claims. The role of the state was occasionally contested, and the donor-recipient relations has also been formed over time.[44]

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[40] David Chandler, "Development as Adaptation," in *The Neoliberal Subject: Resilience, Adaptation and Vulnerability / David Chandler and Julian Reid* (London; New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016), 77 p., http://lccn.loc.gov/2015044202.

[41] Chandler, *Development as Adaptation,* 78 p.

[42] Sen, *Development as Freedom*.

[43] Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

[44] Kragelund, "*International Cooperation for Development,*" 124 p.; Emma Mawdsley, "DFID, the Private Sector and the Re-Centring of an Economic Growth Agenda in International Development," *Global Society* 29, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 339–58, https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2015.1031092.

In the following section, I introduce Critical Development Studies (CDS) as the framework of my analysis, when it comes to the conceptualization of development specifically by UNDP after the 1990s. Through the lens of CDS, I aim to highlight the concepts used to fill in such an all-encompassing term as development, that underwent great changes, and fluctuated, reacting to the structural changes that were taking place.

Critical Development Studies

Whether success has been achieved through the mainstream development project, - launched in the mid-1940s – can be easily questioned from many perspectives. As Bowles and Veltemeyer put it neatly, "*we live in a world disfigured by poverty, inequality, multiple injustices, and planetary threats.*"[45] Giving such a diagnosis of the current state of human progress suggests that the initial intention to bridge the gap between the more developed and developing world has been failing in many aspects. Critical Development Studies (CDS) emerged specifically to highlight shortcomings of the mainstream development narratives and aims to look at development projects from a more integrated, multidisciplinary perspective, hence getting a more nuanced understanding of the core of development issues and of where alternative solutions can be found for such systematic deficiencies.

To provide an example for comparing the differences between mainstream development approaches and the critical ones, the discourse around international migration is intriguing. Mainstream literature treats the phenomena as a single decision of individuals and analyses the impacts this decision has on the international level, studying the skill sets of migrants, their possible contribution to national economies, and remittances. From a CD perspective, questions focus on the origin of the market mechanisms that produce the 'surplus population'; on wars, rivalries creating impossible life situations; or on state strategies that repeatedly promotes/promoted migration. Critical scholars also emphasize disparities between gender and racial binaries and the possible practices of prospects and resistance.[46]

A dominant strand within CDS also puts great emphasis on deconstructing capitalism as the default system of economic growth. As Veltemeyer and Wise formulate,

> Within the mainstream of development thought and practice the capitalist system is so taken for granted that it is not the subject of scientific enquiry and never even appears in theoretical discourse. It is simply assumed that capitalism

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[45] Bowles and Veltmeyer, "*Introduction to Critical Development Studies,*" 3 p.
[46] Bowles and Veltmeyer, "*Introduction to Critical Development Studies,*" 8 p.

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provides the system requirements for activating the development process, and that both the theory and practice of development can be constructed and reconstructed without any reference to an alternative system. Thus, development and capitalism are not only coterminous, but they are virtually synonymous. This is where cds plays an important role since it is founded on the contrary idea that capitalism is the problem and that development, understood as progress in the direction of improving the social condition of an identified population — requires either transformative change (an overhaul of the system) or abandonment of capitalism in favour of an alternative system. With this understanding, the aim of cds is to unveil and deconstruct the ideology of capitalism and the supposed benefits of economic liberalization, comparative advantage, free markets, deregulation and privatization.[47]

This formulation captures the graveness of having only one single dominant narrative, which eliminates the possibility to establish alternatives, let alone to theorize the possibility of other default systems. CDS highlights the necessity of systematic change that creates space for alternative development narratives, that promotes economic growth, while also securing social and environmental justice by operating outside of the current world order.[48] These alternative development narratives can only be feasible by paying close attention to gender and class relations in social mobilization and political movements.[49]

However, for the sake of my analysis, I feel it is worth mentioning that CDS does not necessarily have to mean the complete disregard of capitalism, at least not from my perspective. The creation of alternative frameworks, even if they do not reject capitalism completely, can still play a significant role in shaping the world. Even if we cannot create an ideal system, these alternatives can make it possible to realize a better future.[50] Hence, the significance of the field for my argument, comes from its critical questioning of factors that have been previously overlooked by mainstream scholarship. Questioning gender or social hierarchies does not have to implicitly break down capitalism as a default system, however it has a potential to theorize

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[47] Veltmeyer and Delgado Wise, *"Critical Development Studies,"* 2-3 p.
[48] Bowles and Veltmeyer, "*Introduction to Critical Development Studies,*" 3 p.
[49] Bowles and Veltmeyer, "*Introduction to Critical Development Studies,*" 7 p.
[50] Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, 1. Harvard Univ. Press paperback ed (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2011).

dominant mechanisms in it. By theorizing development from a critical perspective on the dimension of its narratives, researchers gain access to a better understanding of the complexity of the World and the relations that constitute its transformative nature.

In my paper, I argue that the UN Development Programme's Human Development Reports (HDRs) and specifically its most recent 2020 HDR provide a cultural framing that does not support a more inclusionary narrative of human progress, hence is not being reflexive about the issues Critical Development scholars emphasize. However, some ambitions appear for systematic changes that aim at reimagining development, more specifically human-nature relations in a way that is more sustainable for generations to come.

Methodology

Since my enquiry is about narratives of international development, the main source of my analysis is heavily based on digital texts. UNDP, since 1990 has been consistent in publishing the HDR annually, which aims to cover global issues and provide data and best-practices to overcome these challenges. The digital texts of these reports are useful in the analysis of how the conceptualization of development changed overtime and to identify the main issue areas that shape this discourse. However, I came across an issue whether to apply discourse analysis or content analysis for my investigation. The increase in the availability of researchable and machine-readable digital texts with more and more sophisticated computer algorithms[51] provide a great asset to researchers for data analysis, while the complexity of social reality and the fluidity of it still raises skepticism about the possibility to trust content analysis to snapshot the social in which we live.

As Andrew Bennett argues in his piece, *"Found in Translation: Combining Discourse Analysis with Computer Assisted Content Analysis,"* these methods are not radically different since both are primarily text-focused methods, however traditionally they have been perceived as contrasting due to the perceived assumption that content analysis is solely quantitative, while discourse analysis is qualitative in its nature. He adds that "*analysts using content analysis are comfortable with the idea of a fixed and objective reality, while discourse analysis treats the social construction of reality as a core assumption.*"[52] Another point about the distinction of the two methods is how they relate to the situatedness of knowledge and the role of context in knowledge production. It is argued that scholars using content analysis are comfortable to a certain degree with the assumption of objectivity, while the propagators of discourse analysis believe that the prior understandings of the researchers and their social role immediately shape

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[51] Bennett, "Found in Translation," 986 p.
[52] Bennett, *"Found in Translation,"* 989 p.

the knowledge they produce. Bennett finally also mentions that the two methods also differ on the degree of the importance they assume for relations of power[53] and their constituent role on the social.

Discourse analysis "*grows out of the belief that meaning, and hence social reality, arise out of interrelated bodies of texts – called discourses – that bring new ideas, objects and practices into the world.*"[54] As Hardy, Harley and Phillips argue, discourse analysis is based "*on a strong social constructivist epistemology,*"[55] namely that social reality is being actively created through meaningful interactions, and it is not something that is possible to uncover or unveil. Hence discourse analysis becomes the systematic study of texts to find meanings of discourses embedded in texts and their role in the construction of the social.[56] On the other hand, content analysis is perceived to adopt a positivist approach, and treated as "*the study of the text itself not of its relation to its context, to the intentions of the producer of the text, or of the reaction of the intended audience.*"[57] While discourse analysis focuses on the shifting and contested nature of language and meaning, content analysis treats meanings as consistence that allows coding and counting.[58] Establishing such stark distinction can be treated as the main source of skepticism regarding social science projects that apply a multi-method approach.

The definition of discourse in itself can hinder or nurture the possibility to believe that discourse and content analysis can get along in the same research project. Laffey and Weldes define discourse as "*the structures and practices that are used to construct meaning in the*

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[53] Bennett, *"Found in Translation"* 989 p.; Yoshiko Margaret Herrera, "Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis," March 1, 2004, 16-19 p.

[54] Chyntia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?," *Qualitative Methods* 2 (2004): 20 p.

[55] Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?,"20 p.

[56] Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?"; Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Hardy, *Discourse Analysis* (2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320 United States of America: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2002), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412983921.

[57] Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?," 20 p.

[58] Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, "Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?"

world,"[59] treating it as a constitutive set of structures and practices, not only as a mere collection of words that reflects realities or thoughts. Even though I agree with their definition, I believe that Lowe's definition which identifies discourse as "*a theory of what is more or less likely to be said, and of what the conceptual elements are that generate and constrain these possibilities*"[60] is equally valid. Lowe's definition seems to nurture the legitimacy of the complementary nature of discourse and content analysis. Bennett argues that,

> as in many potential pairings of qualitative and quantitative methods, a key potential benefit is that the qualitative side of the analysis can contribute to conceptual validity and an understanding of individual cases or texts, while the quantitative side can help identify cases or texts worthy of close study and address whether the findings of individual cases or texts are also evident in populations of cases or texts.[61]

Researching the conceptual inflation of development in the HDRs can benefit from applying both discourse and content analysis. Computer assisted content analysis, more specifically topic modelling is able to observe evolutions in language and it can reduce the complexity of corpus by dividing them into topics, which are clusters of words that are repeatedly can be seen together through the corpus. These clusters then can be interpreted as representations of different modes of speech about a specific subject.[62] Topic model analysis can complement discourse analysis in several ways. First, by identifying the top words, the list can be treated as representing a certain type of narrative in the corpus and it also allows researchers to study the relations between these. Moreover, a document-topic matrix can also be created, which provides a better understanding of "*how much of each text is made up of each topic.*"[63] By assigning words to specific topics, researchers can also establish – and this is where

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[59] Yoshiko Margaret Herrera and Bear F. Braumoeller, "Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis," *Qualitative Methods* 1 (2004): 16 p.; Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes, "Methodological Reflections on Discourse Analysis," *Qualitative Methods* 1 (2004): 28–30.

[60] Will Lowe, "Content Analysis and Its Place in the (Methodological) Scheme of Things," *Qualitative Methods*, no. 1 (2004): 27 p.

[61] Bennett, "Found in Translation," 987 p.

[62] Thomas Jacobs and Robin Tschötschel, "Topic Models Meet Discourse Analysis: A Quantitative Tool for a Qualitative Approach," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 22, no. 5 (September 3, 2019): 469 p., https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2019.1576317.

[63] Jacobs and Tschötschel, 472 p.

I believe discourse analysis can be complementary – topic specific meanings to words that re-appear across several topics. Introducing contextual data to the analysis can help in the establishment of a diachronic analysis,[64] which further opens the possibility for analysts to observe trends or evolution in language, namely in my case, to capture the conceptual fluidity of the term development by the UNDP.

More specifically, in my research, the method of topic modelling was the following. I used R[65] as an assistant technological tool for structural topic modelling[66] to run through the merged document of the HDRs published since 1990 until 2022, that included twenty-nine documents in total.[67] A topic modelling algorithm aims to detect if terms "*tend to occur in documents together more frequently than one would expect by chance*."[68] The repeated usage of words together suggests that those words have a specific meaning in relation to each other, hence clusters of words become observable which the programs names as "topics".

The concrete model I used, was built in eight steps. In the first step, the reports for each year were merged into a simple text file (txt) and each report was given an identifier-term to distinguish the reports for each year. In the second step, I read the text corpus line by line using the *readLines* function. In a third step, I converted the text into a data frame and provided it with an ID variable containing the number (order) of each line. As the fourth step, I created a

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[64] Jacobs and Tschötschel, 472 p.

[65] Julia Silge and David Robinson, "Tidytext: Text Mining and Analysis Using Tidy Data Principles in R," *The Journal of Open Source Software* 1, no. 3 (July 11, 2016): 37, https://doi.org/10.21105/joss.00037.

[66] Roberts, Stewart, and Tingley, "Stm."

[67] UNDP has been publishing Human Development report since 1990 annually, without any disruption until 2007, when the 2007 and 2008 reports has been combined. Moreover, there has been no published reports in 2012, 2017, and 2021, hence these documents are missing from the analysis. In 2022 their development publication has been titled, 2022 Special Report, which even though does not run on the same title is included in my analysis, since content wise, it is rather similar to previous Human Development Reports and its inclusion also provides me a better chance in establishing my topics and the possibility to observe trends in my time sequential analysis.

[68] Paul DiMaggio, Manish Nag, and David Blei, "Exploiting Affinities between Topic Modeling and the Sociological Perspective on Culture: Application to Newspaper Coverage of U.S. Government Arts Funding," *Poetics* 41, no. 6 (December 2013): 578 p., https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2013.08.004; Tuukka Ylä-Anttila, Veikko Eranti, and Anna Kukkonen, "Topic Modeling for Frame Analysis: A Study of Media Debates on Climate Change in India and USA," *Global Media and Communication* 18, no. 1 (April 2022): 92 p., https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766521102398.

variable that indicates to which specific report each line belongs. In step five, I removed the numbers from the text using the *tm* package *removeNumbers* function. In step six, I used the *tidytext* package's *unnest_token* function to break down each line into words (tokenization). At the same time, I excluded from the corpus the terms that are meaningless for the analysis, such as stop words (e.g., articles), and terms that are irrelevant for the analysis (e.g. Report). Of course, the exclusion of meaningless words was not a one-step process, but an iterative one. After each run, I checked to see if there were any words left that were meaningless or inappropriate for the analysis and used these to expand the list of words to exclude. Then, as the seventh step, I converted the database into a document-term matrix using the *tidytext* package *cast_dfm* function. Finally, in step eight, I created the topic models using the *stm* package.[69]

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[69] STM in R provides a tool for researchers for machine-assisted reading of text corpora, with the key innovation that it permits researchers to import arbitrary metadata let it be international newspapers, online class forums or Twitter feeds. While STM is still a word count generative model, Roberts et al.'s innovation exceeded the traditional probabilistic topic models, like the LDA (Latent Dirichlet Allocation), by David M. Blei, Andrew Y. Ng and Michael (2003), or the CTM (Correlation Topic Model), by David M. Blei and John D. Lafferty (2007).

Structural topic model results and the validation of narratives

As I describe STM just above, topic modelling does not include the active reading of the text or does not rely on observational schemes per se. As Henk Roose, Willem Roose and Stijn Daenekindt argue, in topic modelling "*the input is the corpus; the output is a list of words along with their probabilities of belonging to a certain topic. Topics are like a bag of thematically related words from which authors select words to compose their texts.*"[70]

Step one: validation from the surface

After the creation of the topic model, deciding the optimal number of the analysis, - which is the first step in the validation process, - is critical for a coherent interpretation of the findings. To select the optimal model, I trained models consisting of 3, 4, 5 and 6 topics, through which the criterion for the selection was the interpretability of the results. This process requires the discretion of the researcher and a certain knowledge of the field in which the analysis is about to be made. Constant trials with different numbers of topics helped me to distinguish the ideal number of topics, - which was in my case four, -that are still coherent, resonant and distinct and do not overlap with each other gravely.[71] The algorithm only produces the topics but does not name them specifically, hence once again labeling falls into the discretion of the researcher. For this there are different practices established by scholars, for example to apply posthoc manual labeling based on background knowledge of the certain field and subjective interpretation – which is the one I applied in my case – or selecting a specific word from the

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[70] Henk Roose, Willem Roose, and Stijn Daenekindt, "Trends in Contemporary Art Discourse: Using Topic Models to Analyze 25 Years of Professional Art Criticism," *Cultural Sociology* 12, no. 3 (September 2018): 310 p., https://doi.org/10.1177/1749975518764861.

[71] Sara Wallace Goodman, "'Good American Citizens': A Text-as-Data Analysis of Citizenship Manuals for Immigrants, 1921–1996," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 47, no. 7 (May 19, 2021): 1482 p., https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2020.1785852.

list produced by the algorithm to best describe the topic analyzed and to instruct topic assignment.[72]

In this process I mainly built on my literature review about the fluctuations of the conceptualization of development. I labeled the four "topics" as: "development defined in social terms," "development as political and institutional reforms," "development and climate change," and finally "development defined in economic terms." To qualitatively interpret the result of the STM, from now on I will interchangeably use the word "topic" and "narrative" to go around the themes that emerged and establish overarching narratives of development agendas and goals since the first published (1990) Human Development Report to the most recent Special Report (2022).

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[72] Goodman, "Good American Citizens," 1482 p.

Highest word probabilities for each topic
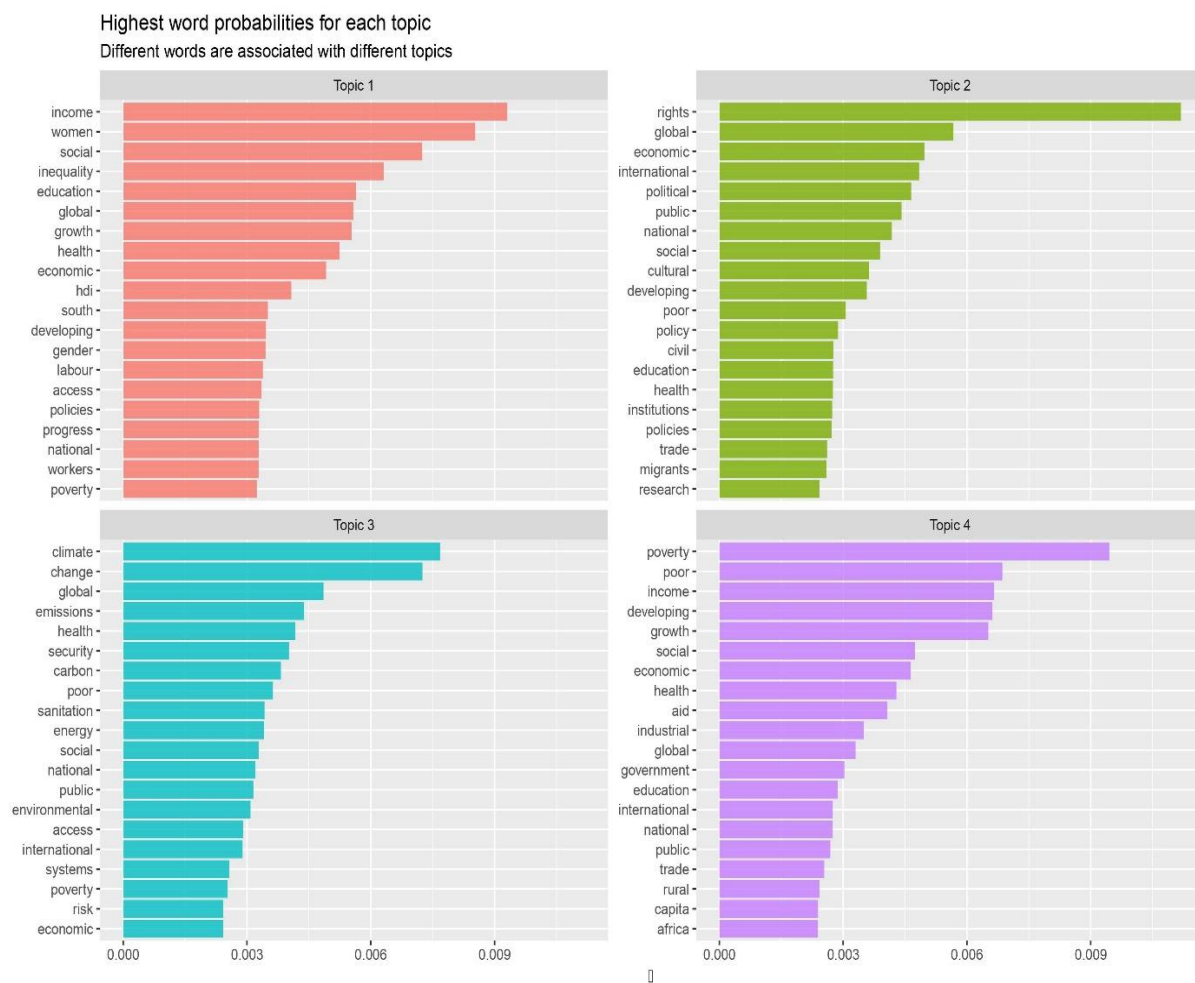Different words are associated with different topics

Figure 1: Structural Topic Model

Step two: internal validation

In Figure 1 above, we can see the four distinct topics that STM created, meaning that these are clusters of words that repeatedly go together within the corpus. The scale on the bottom represents the per-topic-per-word probabilities, while the list of words together defines the focal point of the narrative of a certain topic. However, to interpret and validate my claim that topics can be interpreted as the narratives I labeled above, I apply a three-stage validation process. This is crucial when researchers aim to use this statistical tool to observe or explain certain social phenomena or a conceptual evolution of a specific term.[73] My validation process is based on Yla-Anttila, Eranti and Kukkonen's work which distinguishes the three stages as: 1; looking the produced model from the surface, establishing the ideal topic number, 2;

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[73] Ylä-Anttila, Eranti, and Kukkonen, "Topic Modeling for Frame Analysis."

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observing the top words for internal validity and finally 3; inspecting the metadata and paying a closer look at the most relevant source materials for each topic that can be a trace of external validity[74] and can legitimize the narrative claim of the STM from outside. I already made the first step in the previous section, and identified four distinct, but still coherent topics that serves as my first step in the validation process. Secondly, I focus on the most relevant words for each topic, going one by one to back up the internal validity of the STM model and my established labels for each narrative.

Within the first cluster of words, - the narrative labeled "development defined in social terms" – the most frequent words are "income," "women," "social," and "inequality", and these terms usually go together with others, such as "education," "growth," "gender," "access," or even "progress." Reading the list gives a solid impression that within documents that are heavily built on the topic number 1, mentions social inequalities, gender issues, touches upon policies, social progress and accessibility.

Secondly, in topic number 2 the most frequent term was "rights." This term is usually repeated connected to other words like "global," "political," "public," and "policies." Labeling this topic was heavily reliant on the following words: "rights," "political," "policies," "cultural" and "institutions," since these are terms that are key concepts when development is being discussed along the lines of political and institutional reforms and progress.

Another distinct cluster was topic 3 which focuses on "climate," "change," "global," and "emissions." Other than that, other terms are appearing as well, such as "energy," "environmental," and "systems." Such terms are suggesting that climate issues within the discussion of development appears as a relevant, distinct and coherent topic within the Human Development Reports.

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[74] Ylä-Anttila, Eranti, and Kukkonen, "Topic Modeling for Frame Analysis." 98 p.

Lastly, I interpreted the fourth cluster as "development defined in economic terms." The reason for such labeling was based on the frequent use of words, like "poverty," "poor," "income," and "growth." These are less unique concepts overall in the international development discourse and since they also repeatedly appear with other terms such as "aid," "industrial," "trade," and "capita," this topic very much reminded me of the dominant narrative of development right after the launch of such an emancipatory ambition that was focused on helping the developing world to catch up with the western modernity and when success was majorly defined in economic terms.

Step three: external validation

As the last step of the validation process, I converted the STM data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and created a timeline to inspect the most relevant source materials, that are those inputs which are heavily based on a certain topic, hence can further support my arguments about the labels I used for the distinct narratives. The timeline will not only showcase the composition of the topics for each years' Human Development Report but will also provide a sequential insight of the perceived to be most relevant issues of development or the evolution of the conceptualization of development per se.
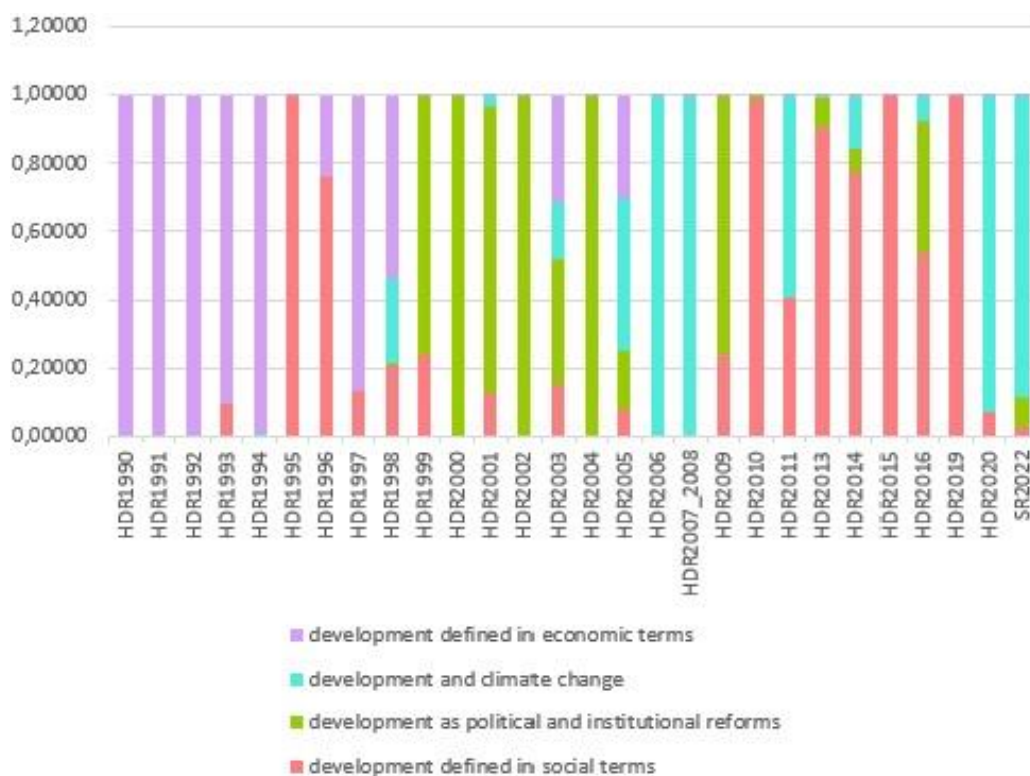
Figure 2: Sequential chart of the HDR topics

Figure 2 is an annual break down of the Human Development Reports and shows the composition of the above established topics in each year. To further my validation process I use this chart to pinpoint the reports in which a certain topic dominates the narrative, hence with a closer look at the texts external validation can be realized regarding the labels I choose to identify dominant narratives of development by UNDP.[75] The selected documents are all above a 0,9 index[76] (where 1 means the complete domination of a certain topic within the corpus of a certain years' metadata) and due to the limits of this paper I restricted myself to elaborate on the three highest ranked annual documents in my external validation process.

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[75] Through the sequential chart we can observe that another interesting trend can be outlined. While in the beginning, the dominant narrative has been focused on economic terms, between 1999 and 2004 political matters, rights and institutions were highlighted. After that in 2006-2008 climate change made an appearance, however social ambitions overrun it and climate change as determinant of development reappeared in 2020. Another analysis could have been done by only focusing on the outside factors that made these conceptual fluctuations happen, but due to space restrict I am not able to conduct that analysis within my thesis.
[76] Except the 2022 Special Report, which stands on a 0,88 index, however I did find it useful for the sake of my analysis to include it since it supports my argument that the current overarching narrative within the Human Development Reports is „development and climate change."

Starting with the previously first discussed narrative "development defined in social terms" we can see that this specific frame was dominant in the report 1995, 2010 and 2019. The title of the 1995 HDR is "Gender and Human Development" and in its abstract the following statements are the first: "*Human Development, if not engendered, is endangered. That is the simple but far-reaching message of Human Development Report 1995. The Report analyses the progress made in reducing gender disparities in the past few decades, highlighting the wide and persistent gap between women's expanding capabilities and limited opportunities.*"[77] It has a specific focus on asymmetric gender hierarchies in development and pays special attention to the legal equality of the sexes, female education and also improved reproductive health for women. In the 2010 HDR, claims like, "*individual's well-being cannot be evaluated by money alone*"[78] appears and the document also introduces three new indexes: the Inequality-adjusted HDI, Gender Inequality Index and Multidimensional Poverty Index, that aims to inspect gender disparities, social deprivation and the multidimensional nature of inequalities.

Finally, the Human Development Report 2019 also focuses on inequalities in human development, and it goes beyond inequalities of income and wealth by mentioning that people's opportunities in life is still heavily influenced by not only money but also ethnicity and gender.[79] Overall, the documents seem to support the validity of the social narrative of development as a legitimate topic with the development narratives of the HDRs. It focuses on concepts that can be traced back to the "top-words" of this topic, such as "income," "women," "social" and "inequalities", hence both the internal and external validation of this certain topic stands.

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[77] UNDP, ed., *Gender and Human Development*, Human Development Report / Publ. for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 1995 (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 1 p.

[78] UNDP, *The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development*, 20th anniversary ed, Human Development Report 2010 (New York, NY: United Nations Development Programme, 2010), iv.

[79] UNDP, ed., *Beyond Income, beyond Averages, beyond Today: Inequalities in Human Development in the 21st Century*, Human Development Report / Publ. for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2019 (New York, NY: United Nations Development Programme, 2019).

Secondly, the topic of 'development as political and institutional reforms" are dominant in the years 2000, 2002 and 2004. In 2000 the HDR clearly states that it looks "*at human rights as an intrinsic part of development—and at development as a means to realizing human rights*."[80] The heavy focus on human rights in 2000 also aligns with the discourse mentioned in the report that human progress in the future will have to break with entrenched economic and political interests, hence supposes political and institutional reforms. To further support the relevance of this topic, the 2002 HDR goes as far as saying that: "*This Report is about politics and human development. It is about how political power and institutions—formal and informal, national and international—shape human progress. And it is about what it will take for countries to establish democratic governance systems that advance the human development of all people—in a world where so many are left behind.*"[81] This suggests that politics, - and directly the capabilities it propose - matters for development greatly, since it provides freedom for people to determine their destinies, hence it is an unquestionable part of human progress.

From less of a political perspective the 2004 report also talks about the increase of individuals' capabilities through social inclusion, and it offers policy solutions to prosper in cultural diversity. It primarily focuses on offering policy solutions, ideas to implement a political culture in which the politics of identity and culture is managed consistent with the principles of human development.[82] The closer inspection of the three most relevant document further supports my argument that a dominant narrative of "development as political and institutional reforms" is prominent in the development discourse in the last two decades.

Another distinct topic has been labeled by me, "development and climate change" based on the STM model. Regarding this narrative the years in which it appears to be exclusively

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[80] UNDP, ed., *Human Rights and Human Development*, Human Development Report / Publ. for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2000 (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), i.

[81] UNDP, *Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, Human Development Report 2002 (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 1 p.

[82] UNDP, *Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, Human Development Report 2004 (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004).

dominating the Human Development Report are 2006, 2007-2008 (joint publication), 2020 and
- with a bit of diversity - in 2022. The 2006 report has been dedicated to the global water crises
and it emphasizes that it is rather a threat not occurred by scarcity but rather because of extreme
poverty and social inequalities. It talks about issues such as sanitation, marginalization in the
agricultural sector and international water management.[83] This report is less entrenched in the
climate discourse however, with putting water crisis in the forefront I believe that it has a crucial
role in conceptualizing development as a tool in providing environmental stability and well-
being for humans.

The 2007/2008 joint report, on the other hand is titled, "*Fighting climate change:
Human solidarity in a divided world,*" and the narrative in it has repeatedly included words that
are top ones in the "development and climate change" topic, like "climate," "change," "global"
and "emissions." The report highlights that actions, or inactions regarding the response to
climate change will profoundly define human development in the future and it emphasizes the
global nature of the threat.[84]

The last two publications of the Human Development Reports were also dominated by
the climate narrative, however major changes appeared regarding the used concepts of the
prominent discourse. Since later I focus on presenting this conceptual change through a more
in-depth qualitative analysis, here, I just outline the main themes that occur in the 2020 and
2022 documents. Since 2020, the concept of the Anthropocene emerged, - meaning that since
we entered this new geological epoch "*human activity has become a dominant force shaping
the planet*"[85] - and dominates the discourse around climate change and human progress. The
two most recent publications are focusing on stewardship of the planet, human-nature relations

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[83] UNDP, ed., *Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis*, Human Development Report 2006
(New York, NY: UNDP, 2006).
[84] UNDP, ed., *Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, Human Development Report
2007/08 (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
[85] UNDP, *The next Frontier*.

and it is also heavily built on the capabilities approach and preaches individual freedom as the ultimate goal of human development. Here, individual freedom is greatly intertwined with a life free from planetary pressures, anxiety and inequalities which are further exacerbated by climate change currently.[86]

Lastly, the narrative of "development defined in economic terms" is most relevant in the corpus of the first publications, more specifically in 1990, 1991 and 1992. The first HDR can be majorly seen as an introduction into the discourse of human development. From the get-go it states that people should be the focus of development in the long-run, and due to its introductory nature, it contains economic terms dominantly. For example, it highlights the access to income as not the end of human development, but as a tool to acquire human well-being and also mentions changing economic structures in the global economic climate.[87]

The second publication specifically themed around financing human development and it says that: "*a single powerful idea runs through it-that the potential is enormous for restructuring national budgets and international aid in favour of human development. The Report concludes that much current spending is misdirected and inefficiently used. If the priorities are set right, more money will be available for accelerated human progress.*"[88] Within this report top words, such as "poverty," "income" and "aid" repeatedly appear, which supports the labeling of the topic as a heavily economic focused cluster of words.

The first two reports argue that on many occasions the root causes of poverty come from the poor national policy actions of developing countries for which the third publication can be seen as a supplement that talks about the global dimensions of markets. The 1992 Human Development Report talks highly about international competitive markets; however, it stresses

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[86] UNDP, *New Threats to Human Security in the Anthropocene Demanding Greater Solidarity*, Special Report (1 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017 USA, 2022); UNDP, *The next Frontier.*
[87] UNDP, ed., *Human Development Report 1990. Published for the United Nations (New York) Development Programme* (New York: Oxford Univ. Pr, 1990).
[88] UNDP, ed., *Financing Human Development* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991), 1 p.

that they should be open to everyone and that "*they must be supplemented by judicious social policy action.*"[89]

With the three-step validation process of the computer-assisted STM – looking at the model in the surface, and then tracing internal and external validity, through observing the top words and then the texts that are dominated by these words – I inspected four distinct narratives that overruled the international development discourse of the Human Development Reports since 1990. These are "development defined in social terms," "development as political and institutional reforms," "development and climate change" and finally, "development defined in economic terms." Since my research question specifically focuses on what the current dominating narrative of development is, my analysis now turns to the narrative labeled "development and climate change." Presented in Figure 2, this topic overrules the last two years' publications; hence I argue that the current issue through which development is conceptualize is heavily built on the discourse around planetary pressures, human-nature relations and sustainability in the long-run.

TF-IDF - Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency

To bridge my quantitative and qualitative analysis, I introduce another model, namely the TF-IDF - Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency – which weights rare terms across all the corpus more than frequent ones. So, while a simple term frequency, which is the main mechanism of the STM is rather a word frequency calculation, TF-IDF weighs the rarity of keywords within the corpus of the inspected texts. This method enables researchers to investigate unique words in a specific corpus and detect differences in languages even in seemingly similar contexts. For my analysis, TF-IDF is highly useful since it provides the tool for me to trace differences between documents of Human Development Reports that are based

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[89] UNDP, ed., *Human Development Report. 1992: Global Dimensions of Human Development* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992), 1 p.

on the STM is perceived to be under the same overrunning narrative, however a change can be observed if we focus not only term frequency calculations, but the repeated appearance of unique words within the corpus of the metadata.

I constructed the list of unique words for each report by controlling each document for all others.[90] As McHugh et al. argue the TF-IDF model does not provide in itself a solid base to identify a conclusion of a certain input. In what it helps is observing keywords within the metadata and hence "*providing a preliminary look at the shape of the data. Researchers can use TF-IDF with any large set of discourse data to swiftly identify likely areas for further exploration.*"[91] I treat my results in such manner in the following presentation.

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[90] It could be argued that a more accurate result would have been obtained if I had not examined all the documents, but only the four that belong to the relevant narrative. For this reason, I ran the model in this way, but the results showed that there is no significant structural difference (see Appendix). Due to this I kept the first option since it was more coherent for interpretation.

[91] David McHugh et al., "Uncovering Themes in Personalized Learning: Using Natural Language Processing to Analyze School Interviews," *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 52, no. 3 (July 2, 2020): 394 p., https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2020.1752337.
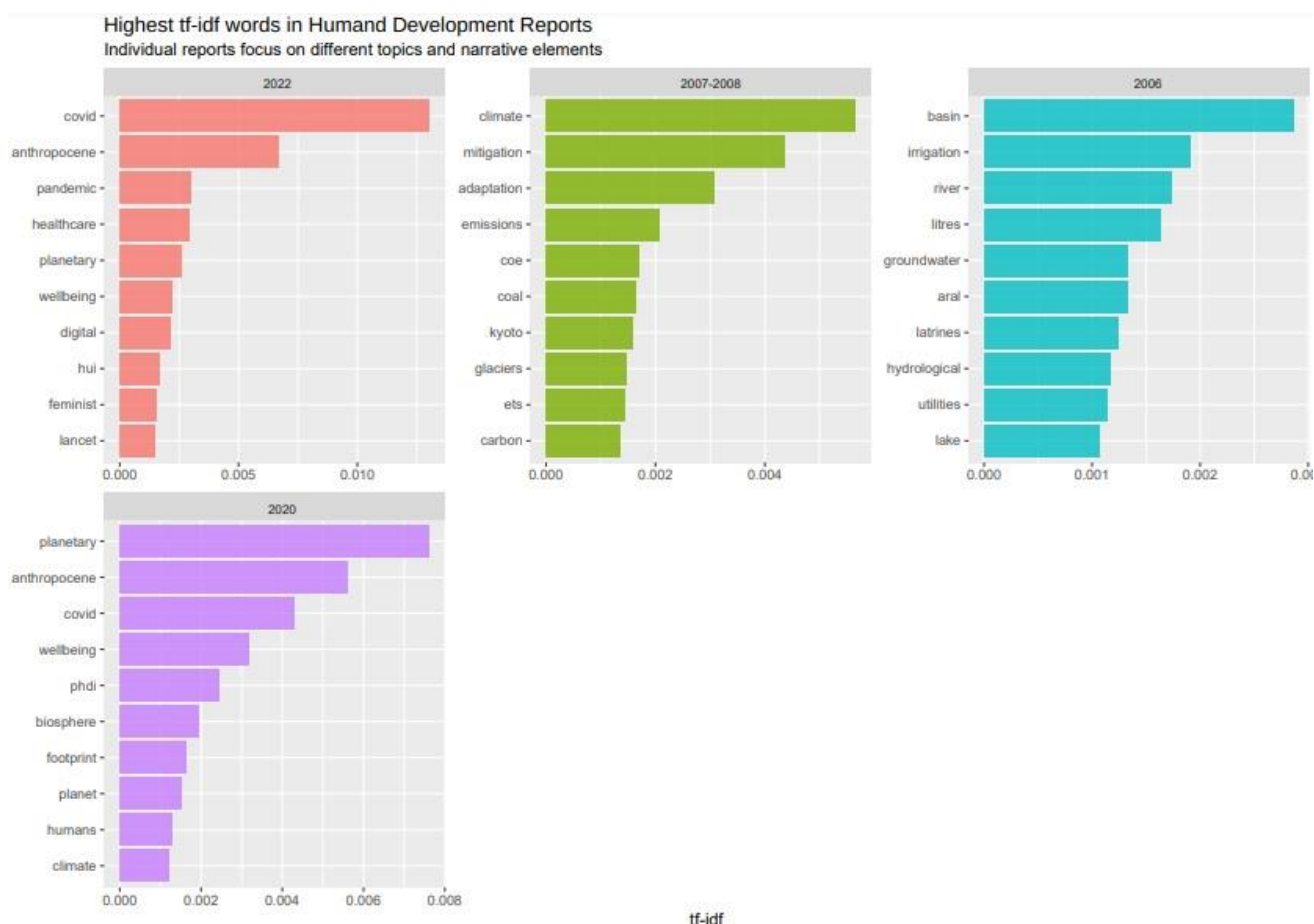
Figure 3: TF-IDF

Based on the TF-IDF model, a shift can be observed between the unique words used in the 2006, 2007-08 and the 2020, 2022 reports of UNDP. First and foremost, the 2006 Human Development Report once again stands out because of its special focus on the water crisis. Frequently repeated unique words are "basin," "irrigation," "river," "litres," "groundwater," "aral," "latrines," "hydrological," "utilities" and finally "lake." All the above-mentioned key terms are related to either water management or water supply in different contexts. However, a more interesting insight can be identified by paying a closer look at the joint publication of 2007 and 2008. Frequent unique words were the following: "climate," "mitigation," "adaptation," "emissions," "CO_2," "coal," "Kyoto," "glaciers," "ETS," and "carbon." The two nouns appearing "mitigation," and "adaptation" supposes active agency from the humans'

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perspective. Another cluster appearing is regarding the issue around emissions connecting the words "emissions," "coal," "carbon," "Kyoto," "CO2" and "ETS"[92] together.

As for the 2020 report, a major shift can be seen. Repeated words were "planetary," "Anthropocene," "covid," "wellbeing," "PHDI,"[93] "biosphere," "footprint," "planet," "humans" and "climate." These keywords are supposing a different conceptualization of development in the context of the climate change. Human-nature relation became a focal point of discussion connected by words such as "Anthropocene," "planet," "planetary," "PHDI" and "humans." It means no surprise that the pandemic also appears in the discourse and words such as "covid" and "wellbeing" traces meaning through the hardship that this global health crisis created in the past years. Finally, the 2022 Special Report, we can observe overlaps with key terms such as "covid," "Anthropocene," "planetary," and "well-being." Moreover, new words appear which are still related to the threat of Covid-19 – connecting well with the title of the Special Report, "*New threats to human security in the Anthropocene: Demanding greater solidarity*", - like "pandemic," "healthcare," and "HUI."[94] The remaining words are "digital," "feminist," and "LGBTI."[95]

Based on the results of the TF-IDF model, a difference can be observed based on the language of the discourse between the reports of 2006, 2007-08 and 2020, 2022 that all belong based on the STM into the "grand narrative" of "development and climate change." While the first group are more focused on issues around emissions, water management, sanitation and policies around mitigation and adaptation, the latter apply a more abstract approach to conceptualize development in times of the climate crisis. This more abstract approach is heavily dominated by the literature on human-nature relation, the new geological epoch of the

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[92] „ETS" refers to the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme.
[93] „PHDI" refers to the Planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index.
[94] „HUI" refers to the Healthcare Universalism Index.
[95] „LGBTI" refers to the LGBTI+ community (specifically in the document stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or another sexual minority).

Anthropocene, human wellbeing, and planetary pressures. In the following discourse analysis section from a qualitative perspective, I focus on the 2020 Human Development Report showcasing the conceptual change that development underwent.

Discourse analysis

After identifying four dominant narratives of international development by UNDP and distinguishing the most unique words of the specific narrative of "development and climate change," now I turn to a qualitative analysis to showcase the specific features of the most recent conceptualization of development through an in-depth analysis of the 2020 Human Development Report. I focus on key metaphors, expressions, - such as the Anthropocene and the stewardship of the nature – and the "reimagining the human development journey jargon" from a critical perspective to gain more insight about the narrative that has been dominant within the organization, hence shapes the discourse around sustainable development and climate change across borders.

Reimagining the human development journey

First of all, the Human Development Report 2020 has an overriding metaphor namely, referring to development, human development as a *journey*. Moreover, within this corpus, it usually goes strictly together with the verb, reimagining, which implies the need for a new conceptualization of human development within today's context. Franz Baumann specifically refers to the frequent appearance of this metaphor as the *"reimagining of the human development journey jargon,"*[96] that I believe is very telling regarding the relevance it has in the building of the overrunning narrative. The report addresses the lack of a systematic approach to human-nature relations and aims to reimagine human development in a way that it is reoriented "*from solving discrete siloed problems to navigating multidimensional, interconnected and increasingly universal predicaments.*"[97] Statements like the above-

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[96] Franz Baumann, "The Next Frontier—Human Development and the Anthropocene: UNDP Human Development Report 2020," *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 63, no. 3 (2021): 35 p., https://doi.org/10.1080/00139157.2021.1898908.
[97] UNDP, The next Frontier, 5 p.

mentioned one gives away the impression that UNDP advocates for systematic change, which would parallelly ease planetary pressures, while also expand well-being for all.

The report argues that "*we gave voice to a new conversation on the meaning of a good life and the ways we could achieve it.*"[98] However, based on my assessment even if the discourse around the meaning of a good life may be expanded by the report – by highlighting the need for a World free from planetary pressures – the way to achieve it has been pushed into the background on the level of accessibility as for now. On accessibility, I specifically mean that this reimagined development journey has been conceptualized on such dimensions as the Anthropocene, which as I argue, is a heavily western-centered, technocratic concept, that lacks not only differentiations between the responsibilities of humankind, the mechanisms that are causes of the environmental state we are in, but also exclusionary in its nature towards other cultural framings of human development.

Who can cross the next frontier?

The 2020 Human Development Report already in its title gives away a hint about the context in which human-nature relations will be assessed. Titled, "*The next frontier: Human development and the Anthropocene*" the report aims to reconceptualize human progress due to the changing environmental stage that humanity found itself in, the new geological era of the Anthropocene. The term itself appears more than 280 times, it spreads across the document evenly and it is tied closely to the jargon of "reimagining the human development journey," that can also be treated as a main semantic theme in the 2020 report. In its foreword states: "*advancing human development while erasing such planetary pressures is the next frontier for human development, and its exploration lies at the heart of this 30th anniversary edition of UNDP's Human Development Report.*"[99]

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[98] UNDP, The next Frontier, iii. p.
[99] UNDP, The next Frontier, iii. p.

To better understand what UNDP currently really means by development, first the concept of the Anthropocene has to be understood from a critical perspective. As Malhi formulates it: *"The core concept that the term (the Anthropocene) is trying to capture is that human activity is having a dominating presence on multiple aspects of the natural world and the functioning of the Earth system, and that this has consequences for how we view and interact with the natural world—and perceive our place in it."*[100] This means that within the context of the Anthropocene a re-examination of the role of humanity in the natural world is necessary.

Moreover, the fundamental assumption that nature serves as a "background" for human agency is also knocked down due to the shortened feedback loop that exists between the human and non-human systems. Specifically meaning that, although human actions and societies have always been related closely to local environmental conditions, currently – in the Anthropocene – actions in food consumption, energy and land use not only have an immediate impact on local scales, but it can have a destabilization effect on the Earth system as such.[101] The term gained popularity in the early 2000s based on the scientific achievements of Crutzen,[102] and it was primarily occupied with the impact human activities had on the Earth system discussed in the context of climate change and supposed solutions how to optimize climate through large-scale geo-engineering.[103]

However, from the 2010s the concept of the Anthropocene became even more popular as reflected by the growing number of publications on it, and it also became widely used within social sciences by appearing in the context of transformative global studies, international relations and even in political science since it presupposes a new worldview based on new forms of global and national governance.

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[100] Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene," 2 p.
[101] Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene."
[102] Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, "The 'Anthropocene,'" *Global Change Newsletter*, no. 41. (2000); Paul J. Crutzen, "Geology of Mankind," *Nature* 415, no. 6867 (January 2002): 23–23, https://doi.org/10.1038/415023a.
[103] Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene," 12 p.

Some scholars, such as David Chandler, - however, - already started highlighting the transformative power such a concept as the Anthropocene has. He states that

> this attention to a new epoch in which humanity appears to have impacted the earth in ways which mean that natural processes can no longer be separated from historical, social, economic and political effects has powerfully challenged the modernist understanding of the nature/culture divide, separating social and natural science, destabilising the assumptions of both.[104]

To put it into simpler words, the concept has the potential to bring in systematic changes, specifically when it comes to policies of climate change by highlighting that humanity must stop treating the environment as a distinct system parallel to humans' activity, however it is also a tricky concept since it requires individuals to fundamentally change their perception of, for example, the long standing "agency-structure" dilemma within social sciences.

As stated in the report: "*like a three-legged stool, capabilities, agency and values are inseparable in how we think about human development in the context of the Anthropocene.*" However, regarding this question the 2020 Human Development Report is rather inconsistent. Since the beginning of the publications, Amarty Sen's capabilities approach has been heavily dominating the human development discourse by UNDP. A simplified formulation is that people provided with freedom can best decided what is the best for their progress, hence in the process, freedom becomes the source of capability that enables human development. This approach theoretically is heavily built on the "agency-structure" dilemma, since it propagates that extending human agency as key for development, while on the contrary, the concept of the Anthropocene seemingly bypasses the "agency-structure" division by highlighting the intertwined nature of the Human and the Earth systems.

Above all, some argue that certain social and economic mechanisms are responsible for this new ecological epoch and highlight the particular role of modern capitalism in this process,

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[104] David Chandler, "*Ontopolitics in the Anthropocene: An Introduction to Mapping, Sensing and Hacking,*" Critical Issues in Global Politics (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), 5 p.

and propagate for a fitting name for it by replacing the Anthropocene with Capitalocene, which better capture the background forces that are shaping this era.[105] Other criticisms - that are significant regarding the narrative that the 2020 HDR provides – highlight that an all-encompassing term might do more harm than good by not having the ability to best capture a complex changing world. Moreover, its accessibility can disregard key points of this complex world that undermine nuanced conversations about human-nature relations.[106]

Furthermore, another point has also been mentioned, which nicely aligns with the approach of CDS, namely that the heavy use of such concepts as the Anthropocene are particularly encouraging a typical Western and technocratic view in the way of framing the World. As once again, Yavinder Malhi concludes:

> Almost all writing on the Anthropocene has emerged from Europe and North America, most of the committees deciding on the Anthropocene are made of representatives of this cultural mindset and as such, it tends to favor a technocratic, materialistic conceptualization of and response to the contemporary environmental challenge, particularly so in arguments for a recent start date for the Anthropocene.[107] This world view may also encourage macroscale systems views of managing the Anthropocene, such as planetary geoengineering guided by a global enlightened elite community of scientist-managers, rather than approaches that better recognize the complexity and heterogeneity of cultural and natural systems.[108]

This specific cultural framing does not support inclusion of for example indigenous perspectives or reflect on gender, racial and class disparities and it does not diversify knowledge production which can be a significant problem regarding the ability for humans to understand the complexity of the changing World.

Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg also offer well-known critiques of the concept of the Anthropocene saying that its grand narrative undermines actions to avoid further environmental

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[105] Jason W. Moore, ed., *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, Kairos (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2016).

[106] Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene," 20 p.; Malm and Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind?"

[107] Erle Ellis et al., "Involve Social Scientists in Defining the Anthropocene," *Nature* 540, no. 7632 (December 2016): 192–93, https://doi.org/10.1038/540192a; Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History, and Us* (London; Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2016).

[108] Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene," 96 p.

degradation, since the concept is interpreted as a part of human progress – suggesting a historical inevitability - and not as a consequence of certain economic mechanisms and power asymmetry.[109] From a social scientific perspective, the universalistic nature of the concept can be seen problematic since it treats all individuals under the same name of humanity, even though global inequalities matter in the creation as well as on the impact this new geological epoch is holding for humanity.[110] All these criticisms are relevant to the 2020 Human Development Report. It might aim to reimagining the human development journey, but from its narrative it seems like the road is not for everyone to walk on. Those who are not comfortable with the framing of the Anthropocene are seemingly excluded from this journey.

The bridge between framings – the stewardship of nature

Another frequently chosen expression is the stewardship of the planet/nature. Throughout the report it is highly intertwined with the expansion of human agency within the context of the Anthropocene. Even though the role of human agency is paradoxical in this interpretation of human-nature relations to further my analysis it is a must for me to follow the logic of argumentation of the 2020 HDR. As the Report argues, transformative change is possible via three ways: "*by enhancing equity, by pursuing innovation and by instilling a sense of stewardship of nature.*"[111] The notion of the stewardship of nature, implies a significant human agency, which argues against the previous criticism I mentioned about the grand narrative of the Anthropocene, which seems to be inevitable in the process of human progress. The report highlights the importance of instilling a sense of responsibility of humankind towards nature, which can be treated as a pillar of this newly reimagined human development

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[109] *Malhi, "The Concept of the Anthropocene,"* 20-21 p.; Malm and Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind?"
[110] Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015).
[111] UNDP, The next Frontier, 71 p.

journey. The discourse around stewardship is also defined and expressed in a more inclusive manner, as the report argues:

> People can be agents of change if they have the power to act. But they are less likely or able to do so in ways that address the drivers of social and planetary imbalances if they are left out, if relevant technologies are not available or if they are alienated from nature. Conversely, equity, innovation and stewardship of nature each—and, more importantly, together —can break the vicious cycle of social and planetary imbalances.[112]

This formulation specifically addresses the issues Critical Development scholars repeatedly highlight regarding the practices of projects of international development. It advocates for awareness regarding the inequal access of resources and technologies that are crucial in an equitable future without social disparities.

Practices of stewardship are usually intertwined with practices of indigenous people and communities, who are more prone to see humankind and the planet as part of a web of life. It talks about the indigenous people of the Amazonas whose act of stewardship of the rainforest offsets, - as they note - the carbon emissions of an individual who is coming from the richest one percent of the world.[113] Shaping the narrative in such way, that mentions different cultural framings of the world, let alone mentions them as desired values, best practices, projects a promising change for the future. Moreover, equity is also a focal point of this discourse. As stated in the Human Development Report,

> the unequal distribution of nature's contributions to people and of environmental degradation's costs are often rooted in the power of a few to benefit without bearing the negative consequences—and in the disempowerment of the many that disproportionally bear the costs. The former group represents a minority of humans that biases collective decisions. Equity can rebalance these power asymmetries so that everyone can benefit from and contribute to easing planetary pressures. There is great potential to capture solar energy and to expand forest areas to protect biodiversity and store carbon—if people are empowered to make those choices.[114]

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[112] UNDP, The next Frontier, 71 p.
[113] UNDP, The next Frontier, iii p.
[114] UNDP, The next Frontier, 71 p.

Within this formulation not only equity appears as a focal point of discourse, but once again human agency pops up as the key to achieve it. In the context of Amarty Sen's capabilities approach empowerment comes from the extension of human freedom, which is then treated as still a dominant theme of this reimagined human development journey.

Overall, the discussion around the notion of the instilling of the stewardship of the planet is more promising than the overly alienating concept of the Anthropocene. If the report really aims to advocate for reimagining human development, then the opportunity for everyone to imagine it should be accessible, specifically if we are about to face such common threats that are detrimental for humankind as a collective. Based on my analysis, the concept of the Anthropocene might not be the most suitable tool for this reimagination journey. As the collected criticisms emphasize, it can undermine the feeling of empowerment, can suggest an inevitable narrative and it also disregards huge power imbalances existing in our society. However, - as I argue - the appearance of the concept of stewardship provides a more inclusionary approach and it encourages future conceptualizations of human development to be accessible for all and open to different cultural framings that are not predominantly western-centered in their vocabulary.

Conclusion

Through a multi-method approach, combining computer-assisted content analysis with discourse analysis I made the following observations about the conceptualization of development by UNDP[115] in their annual Human Development Reports. Using a structural topic model, and a three-stage validation process I identified four distinct, dominant narratives in the corpus of HDRs since 1990 until 2022: "development defined in social terms," "development as political and institutional reforms," "development and climate change" and finally, "development defined in economic terms." Through another quantitative method, the TF-IDF, I analyzed the changes in the clusters of words that appeared in documents that were predominantly focused on the narrative "development and climate change," since it proved to be the most current narrative in the HDRs in the last three years. I argued that there has been a conceptual change between documents of 2006, 2007-2008 and 2020 and 2022, meaning that while in the beginning climate change was treated more on an ad-hoc basis, by focusing on certain issues, such as water management later publications treat the phenomenon in a more abstract way.

Publications of the last three years brought in the discourse around the Anthropocene as the focal point of reimagining the human development journey and redefine human-nature relations. From a critical perspective, the usage of such a term might do more harm than good. Not only it is an extremely complex and ambitious concept, but it might also convey the message of the inevitable nature of climate change as part of human progress and it also narrows down the accessibility of discussions around development, since the concept of the

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[115] Through the lens of CDS, I aimed at pinpointing the narratives around international development that UNDP establishes. Such a huge international organization, with its tight connection to major monetary institutions, like the World Bank or the IMF, is prominent regarding the propagation of a certain narrative of development programs.

Anthropocene is a term heavily based on the cultural framing of the Western, technocratic world.

However, the propagation of other concepts in the 2020 HDR might address the criticisms of researchers or development specialists that advocate for the reimagination of human development in a way that treats global inequalities with adequate attention, and frames human progress as a journey in which human well-being is persistent without the planetary pressures of today. Such ambitions can be showcased by the repeated usage of such expressions as the stewardship of the planet.

There are a number of limitations of my research, for example the number of documents that I analyzed in greater detail, which is the 2020 HDR. Moreover, a possible concern might be to see to what extent UNDP uses such documents for image building and does not use these reports as a basis for adjustment and in the development of toolkits for future development programs. However, this limitation would be relevant if my research could also specifically investigate certain development programs and projects which is not possible due to space constraints.

Summing it up, my objective was to shed light on the current narrative the UNDP is building and highlight the paradoxes that are prominent in it. Occasionally, questioning what the narrative is good, but questioning what narratives do matter even more. The empirical research that I have carried out can give insight into how tools could be more tailored to country and regional specificities and how ownership and local capabilities could be more enhanced through UN development programs in the context of a future research project. Development specialists, researchers and policymakers all can benefit from studying narratives within their respective fields. As critical scholars argue, such a word as development can be filled up with meanings of all kinds. In this sense a coherent narrative, and story-telling becomes the source of theorization of ambitions, goals and desires. As I reiterated in my thesis, UNDP should focus

on reimagining a human development journey which is inclusive in its nature, is aware of disparities in our societies and is accessible to all for easing planetary pressures. This means the diversification of the knowledge production processes, broadening theoretical horizons beyond a single cultural framework, and supporting practices of resistance and prospect that do not only come from a specific part of the World.

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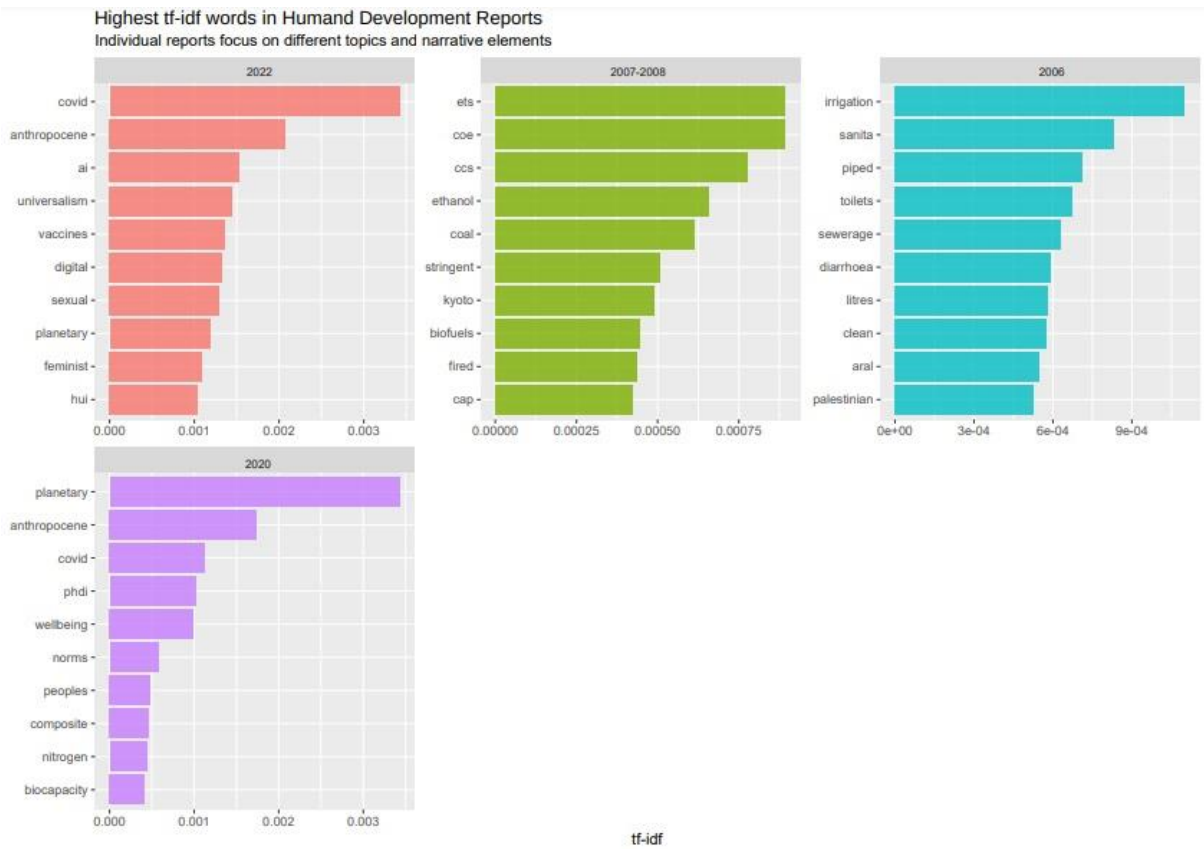
Appendix

Figure 4: TF-IDF within the four identified publications relevant for the narrative "development and climate change"