



# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2002

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## New Wave of Democracy-Building Urgently Needed

“Democracy deficits” in many countries put human development and security at risk

**Manila, 24 July 2002**—The wave of democracy-building of the 1980s and 1990s has stalled, with many countries lapsing back into authoritarianism or facing rising economic and social tensions, warns this year’s ***Human Development Report*** (HDR), commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and released today. In response, it calls for a new emphasis on giving ordinary people a greater say in both national and global policy making.

“Development policies since the early 1980s have focused largely on economics and markets,” said Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP Administrator. “Those things are important. But the big lesson of this period is never ignore the critical role of politics in allowing people to shape their own lives. Political development is the forgotten dimension of human development.”

Going beyond arguments for ‘good governance’ that call for regulatory transparency and management efficiency for growth, HDR 2002 lays out a broad conception of what is good governance. It means not only ridding societies of corruption but also giving people the rights, the means, and the capacity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and to hold their governments accountable for what they do. It means fair and just democratic governance.

The Report looks at the advance of democracy in the 20th Century and how it has affected developing countries and poor people. It argues that democracy is neither a luxury nor a panacea for poor countries. It is intrinsic to the process of human development, the freedom and the choice that allows an individual or a group dignity and fulfillment within any society. But the links between democratic practices and institutions and social and economic progress are not automatic. For example, inequalities rose after the transition to democracy in the former Soviet Union, and persist in democracies such as Brazil.

FIGURE 1.1

### The world is becoming more democratic

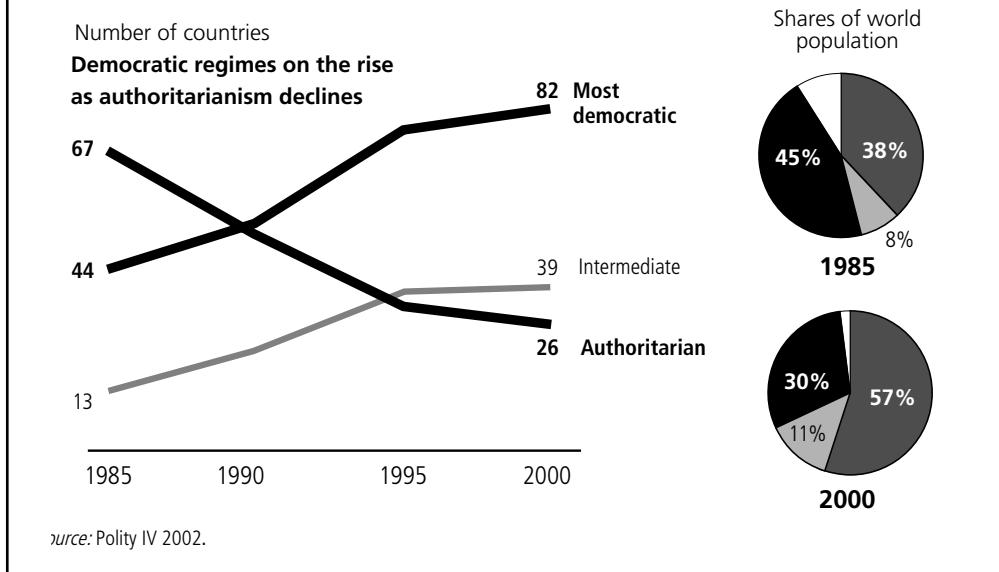


TABLE 1.1  
Most people can now vote in multiparty elections, 1999

Region or country group	Number of countries with multiparty electoral systems (countries with data)	Population of countries with multiparty electoral systems (millions)	Share of regional population living in countries with multiparty electoral systems (percent)
Sub-Saharan Africa	29 (42)	464	77.2
Arab States	4 (7)	115	48.5
East Asia and the Pacific	9 (16)	401	22.0
South Asia	4 (8)	1,170	85.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	25 (26)	468	94.9
Central and Eastern Europe and CIS	21 (25)	350	88.0
OECD	30 (30)	1,120	100.0
Low human development	23 (36)	527	64.4
World	140 (189)	3,923	65.8

Note: Low human development countries are also included in their respective regional groups. Regional data do not sum to the world total because some countries included in the world total are not included in a regional group.

Source: Human Development Report Office calculations based on Alvarez and others 2002.

"Around the world, there is a growing sense that democracy has not delivered development such as more jobs, schools, health care for ordinary people," said Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, chief author of the Report. "Politicians often use this to justify authoritarianism and curtailment of human rights. But history and academic research provide no evidence that authoritarian regimes are better at promoting economic and social progress."

In theory, the world is more democratic than it has ever been, notes the Report. For example: 140 of the world's nearly 200 countries now hold multi-party elections. But in practice, only 82, with 57 percent of the world's people, are fully democratic in guaranteeing human rights, with institutions such as the free press and an independent judiciary. And 106 countries still limit important civil and political freedoms.

Of the 81 countries that embraced democracy in the latter part of the 20th Century, the Report points out that only 47 have gone on to become fully functioning democracies. Several have since returned to authoritarian rule: either military, as in Myanmar or Pakistan, or pseudo-democratic, as in Zimbabwe in recent years. National armies have intervened to varying degrees in the political affairs of 13 sub-Saharan States since 1989: nearly one in four countries in the region. Many other countries have got stalled somewhere between democracy and authoritarianism.

In response to these problems, the Report urges a new emphasis on "deepening democracy" at the local, national and international level.

This would focus not only on strengthening democratic institutions, such as free and fair elections and a representative legislature, but also broad-based political parties, a judiciary that is independent, media that are ethical and professional and free of both state and corporate control, and a vibrant civil society.

On the international level, the Report calls for deepening democratic practices in international institutions where power is concentrated in the hands of the wealthiest countries. "Global pluralism has not accompanied global economic integration," said Fukuda-Parr.

Though strong democratic institutions will be crucial to advancing development in the 21st Century, they are not enough, concludes the Report. Countries will also need to promote "democratic politics"—by supporting the new wave of civic involvement and popular participation that is sweeping the world. In Madya Pradesh and Rajasthan, for example, two of the poorest states in India,

**TABLE 4.1  
Who's guarding the guards? Countries experiencing armed interventions in the 1990s**

Algeria, 1992
Burundi, 1993
Central African Republic, 1996
Comoros, 1998
Congo, 1993 and 1997
Congo, Dem. Rep., 1997
Côte d'Ivoire, 1999
Ethiopia, 1991
The Gambia, 1994
Guinea-Bissau, 1999
Haiti, 1991
Lesotho, 1994 and 1998
Myanmar, 1990
Niger, 1995
Nigeria, 1993
Pakistan, 1999
Rwanda, 1993
Sierra Leone, 1997
Somalia, 1991

*Source:* Chege 2001; Economist Intelligence Unit 2002; Eldis 2002; World Bank 2002a.

greater community involvement in planning local education since 1991 has helped raise the local literacy rate by 20 percentage points. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, direct citizen involvement in preparing municipal budgets has nearly doubled the share of the population with access to sanitation since 1989.

**ABOUT THIS REPORT:** Every year since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has commissioned the ***Human Development Report*** ([www.undp.org/hdro](http://www.undp.org/hdro)) by an independent team of experts to explore major issues of global concern. A worldwide advisory network of leaders in academia, government and civil society contribute data, ideas, and best practices to support the analysis and proposals published in the report. The concept of Human Development looks beyond per capita income, human resource development, and basic needs as a measure of human progress and also assesses such factors as human freedom, dignity and human agency, that is, the role of people in development. The HDR argues that development is ultimately a process of enlarging people's choices, not just raising national incomes.

The ***Human Development Report*** is published in English by Oxford University Press, 2001 Evans Rd., Cary, NC 27513, USA. Telephone (919) 677-0977; toll free in the USA (800) 451-7556; fax (919) 677-1303.

**ABOUT UNDP:** UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.