

Book Review

Ernst G. Frankel. *Managing Development: Measures of Success and Failure in Development.* Palgrave, USA. 2005. 303 pages.

In this book, Ernst G. Frankel has reviewed development programmes, plans and agendas, initiated by the developed world for the developing countries. He has recounted numerous examples from the developing world to provide a well-structured commentary, which helps the reader to appraise the practical application of development theory, development financing and development management over the last fifty years.

Author has himself been involved in development projects and missions for a long time therefore, he explicitly accounts for the causes of the enormous failures and the meagre success rate of development projects. He primarily forms his argument on the call of incorrect perception of local context and thus inappropriate planning, funding and implementation of development projects. Overall, he has taken an unconventional view of development and making development happen. He describes development as a *dynamic process*, which is flexible and iconoclastic in nature and, thus, should incorporate the mutable nature of human behaviour, culture, science and technology over time.

This book has eleven well-defined sections, each focusing on a number of relevant issues.

The Section 1 (“Development Economics or Unrealistic Dream?”) begins with historical perspective of development, its definition and deficiencies in practices. It questions the assumption of considering monetary gains as an indicator of happiness and tranquillity and also the conventional approach of concentrating all development funds into building physical infrastructure and provision of civic facilities while ignoring the need to develop individuals economically and socially. Basic dilemma, as he points out, is the infiltration of Western capitalism that has caused a rift between idealism and individualism in the Eastern and Asian societies.

Similarly, Section 2 (“Economic Trends”) talks about how rich nations can help the poor world become independent and productive instead of becoming handicapped due to utter reliance on international aid and welfare funds. It presents democracy and free market as ends rather than means to development. Furthermore, author takes economic growth as one of the factors that lead to development but stresses profoundly on human development, cultural preservation and good governance as a means of longstanding growth and success.

Section 3 (“Asia – The Future Center of the World Economy”) is a broad study of Asia and Japan in particular. It refers to adaptation strategies, which can help a country grow. It also depicts how lesser reliance on West is needed for future prosperity of developing world. Section 4 (“Developing Africa – The Global Basket Case”), on the other hand, concentrates on Africa and using Congo, Chad and Nigeria as examples,

shows that Africa's root cause of underdevelopment is internal conflict, lack of human values and extensive dependence on the rest of the world.

Interestingly, in Section 5 ("Developing Europe") Frankel discusses Europe and its process of development. This section is consistent with the writer's earlier comment that even economically prosperous countries cannot be labelled as fully developed since they too face issues such as demographic transition, distribution and heterogeneity.

In Section 6 ("America's Achievements and Hopes") the author provides a detailed account on America's economic growth and development. This study shows the contrast between two regions' development (central and south America) due to the differences in their factor endowments and political institutions.

Sections 7 and 8 ("Development Financing or "Take from the Poor and Give to the Rich"" and "Actors in Public Development Financing", respectively), knit together the financing agencies and financial management of development projects. These chapters show how development investment goes wasted because conventional approach has ignored the effects of packaged policies on culture and lifestyles of the local masses. It is vital to understand the relationship between government and society. Moreover, corruption, wrong assessments of local realities and use of top-down approach are also evident reasons for causing failures of development projects.

Section 9 ("Strategies for Future Economic Development") and Section 10 ("The Future of Development"), signify the importance of sustainable development which can be achieved through cooperation and effective management. He views globalisation, especially in bondage with technology and communication spree, as a bundle of opportunities, which can help bring *progress and prosperity* for all. However, this success is conditioned to competent and transparent governance, greater cooperation, and efficient management. Author highlights the need to understand the value system and priorities of a country before formulating any strategy and also to make sure development projects are *stand-alone activities* that generate further input resources on their own.

Section 11 ("Postscript") concludes the entire thesis presented in the previous sections and so discusses the need to change development management procedures, identify the success in private sector led indigenous growth and giving importance to human development and institutional setup. Writer, in this section, demonstrates China and India as a success story.

"Managing Development" confers to the contemporary school of thought and hence advocates investment in human development as a means of long-term achievement. It focuses on people and institutions of the nations, which are caught in the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment. It advises to emphasise on other problems mentioned such as growth of sectarianism, religious intolerance and racism. It points out the dilemma of unavailability of a comprehensive, universal definition of development, which can help determine its scope and nature of development interventions. Moreover, the writer briefly hinges the characteristics of those countries, which have shown growth over the period and are no more underdeveloped. It also shows a reliance on geography and historical events, which shape a country's boundaries, cultures and institutions. This book reinforces the theses presented by Jeffery Sachs (2005) that development has to be attained through human, business and knowledge capital building along with strengthening physical infrastructure and governance; and Paul Collier (2007) that *factor*

endowments do determine a country's development path and *geography matters*. It further propagates the usefulness of adaptation, bottom-up approach, trade and cooperation for encompassing inherent diversities.

Ernst G. Frankel, however, presents a slit-eye view of cultural perspectives since I find it based on the evidence gathered from Africa and west America, mainly. While he provides recommendations for new process of development, he emphasises on the need of "untraditional approaches including direct interference in their national affairs and governance." This approach, certainly meant for good, poses an open challenge to developing countries' sovereignty and authenticates the existence of western ethnoscience in development paradigm. The concept of "*rational countries*" is not only abstract but also misleading, and I believe utopian.

Similarly, the structural changes suggested seem to be a legacy of Washington Consensus and Structural Adjustment Programmes. And the fact that they need to be aimed at changing the very foundations of a society puts writer's earlier suggestion, to consider local preferences and informal structures, in irony.

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REFERENCES

- Collier, P. (2007) *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Oxford University Press.
- Sachs, Jeffrey D. (2005) *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Books.