

B

Human Development

The Neglected Dimension

Edited by

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Recent economic pressures, national and international, have led to a serious neglect of the human dimension in development. Unless corrected, this neglect will distort and handicap the future development of a whole generation to come."

This strongly worded message emanated from the Roundtable on Development and the Human Dimension, jointly convened by the North Atlantic Council and the UNDP Development Study Programme on December 14-15, 1985, in Istanbul, Turkey. It brought together a group of more than fifty leading national and international personalities—politicians, development experts and business leaders from developed, developing and socialist countries, to take a fresh look at the human dimension in the economic and social development process in order to identify the major issues and to mobilize international support for required policy changes.

The history of the development process over the last thirty years shows that the transfer of financial resources for physical investment has not in itself created an adequate foundation for self-sustaining development. The experience acquired during this period clearly demonstrates that one of the major obstacles to economic growth in developing countries is the insufficient attention given to the development of human resources. Also, in the midst of an ongoing world financial and debt crisis, the adjustment measures in these developing countries have been secured at unfortunately high human costs—high in terms of lost output, depressed employment and rising poverty levels. Austerity programs at their implementation level have resulted in a serious curtailment of investment in human resources. The attention of national and international policymakers has shifted from long-term goals to short-term financial and adjustment concerns. The international community is more interested in