# What is and What Will Be

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Course: Culture, Development and Globalisation

If I sat to define development, firstly I have no clue as to how to get about doing that and secondly it would take up all the 800+ words in allotted for the essay! So what have I learnt from this course? Well ... to be honest I was surprised as to how much I was oblivious to the world around me. Before this course I was under the impression that development meant new roads, transportation systems and development of infrastructure. What I didn’t know was that this development was suitable for an urban area but what about the rural areas? How does one go about with the entire concept of development in a rural area keeping in mind the culture and the entire concept of globalisation!

So how is development in rural areas different from that in urban areas? For one ... there is women empowerment. Women in rural areas are often restricted to household duties and field work. To uplift women from these conditions is very important as they can be a secondary source of income to the household! A rural area’s requirement is very different from that of an urban area. Where urban areas need improved infrastructure a rural area needs income!

Uravu was a brilliant example of women empowerment for the betterment of the lifestyle of the family! Employing women into the bamboo handicrafts industry, I feel, gave women the feeling of self reliance and a feeling of being in a position of power. Improving the lifestyle of the rural area by using its resources to bring back money into its own economy is the essence of development in that area.

The stark contrast of the nature of development in an urban “booming metropolis” such as Bangalore and a rural area such as Wayanad was eye opening and a brilliant way to learn what development is actually all about! I needed to have a more “over-all” look at what development dealt with and who it affected.

In a class exercise which Saurabh, Ilona, Kate, Sudha and I were in, we came up with the concept of development being a pumping heart and through a simple illustration we showed all those affected by development; in a good or bad way. This for me was really eye opening as I thought that the current model of development was benefiting all. It’s taken me time, but I have come to a conclusion that for someone to gain, someone must lose. But who loses and what they lose is up to the Government of that country.

In India, the development model hasn’t concentrated on rural areas at all. The Government needs to have a more holistic view on development. The entire discussion on the 2004 ` General Elections in India, where the BJP lost power to the Congress was a good example of this. The “India Shining” Campaign literally meant India was shining because of the glass and chrome structures in urban areas. The B.J.P. and the N.D.A. did not develop urban areas at all and when The Congress came in with their “Aam Aamdi” slogan, it got a majority of rural India backing them, giving them 37% of the 70% backing from rural India.

“Arguing against globalisation is like arguing against the laws of gravity.”  
-Kofi Annan

So unarguably, globalisation is inevitable, but where do you draw the line? When does it become “aping” and not developing? When does it influence and not entirely change culture? In India, instead of learning from the mistakes the West has made (not staying green), we are aping them and going on the same route. Following a development model which is not sustainable, eradicating forests to make way for cities is not what globalisation should be, but instead taking into consideration the issue of Climate Change (and other important issues) and creating new development models to follow!

I would like to conclude by saying that what we learnt in this course is not even a scratch on the surface of this issue! Where this takes us in the future, we don’t know! What is the role of “power hungry” capitalists in the entire issue is yet to be uncovered. Experts said in 2000 that by 2010 India and China will be world superpowers. Now the same experts are saying that it’ll happen by 2015. So is this a case of “tomorrow never comes”?