

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

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Over the past two decades the World Bank (WB) has positioned knowledge creation and dissemination as central to its mission. Here, its institutional lens is argued to have shifted from a focus on loans and lending towards an increased need for 'knowledge sharing' (World Bank, 2017a) as a means of achieving its developmental aims in a post-Washington Consensus era. The WB has situated itself as a leading figure in the construction and shaping of knowledge concerning development and prides itself on its ability to produce instructive conceptual narratives that frame what development is and how it should be sought.

In this context, it is necessary to assess the continued role of the WB in shaping understandings of development. This concerns not only looking at how the WB defines development but how such views are reflected within the ideas it produces. It is important to examine the power accrued within the knowledge produced by the WB and understand the role it, as a central multilateral governing institution, plays in 'set[ting] boundaries on the thinking' (Sachs, 1992, p. 4) surrounding what development can be. It is, thereby, necessary to question the 'self-evidences' (Foucault, 1991b, p. 76) expressed in WB research and unpack upon what understandings its 'knowledges, acquiescence's and practices rest' (Foucault, 1991b, p. 76) that legitimise its role as a producer of development knowledge.

Through this examination, it becomes clear that the intellectual dominance of the WB within development discourse is problematic. The WB plays a foundational role in reproducing an understanding of development that conflates ideas of progress with the facilitation of capital reproduction. The WB, and its rearticulation of itself as a 'Knowledge Bank', should be conceived of as being part of a wider governing framework that acts to reproduce and naturalise market-led conceptions of development whilst simultaneously delegitimising alternative understandings of how development might be achieved. Through this, it is not only clear that the WB plays a fundamental role in shaping understandings of development but the discourse produced by the WB cannot be separated from a wider framework that is built upon subjectivities and norms favourable to capitalist reproduction.

To understand how the WB builds understandings of development, this essay will firstly outline the emphasis on knowledge now placed within the WB. It will then look at some critiques of this, both in terms of the new role the WB has allocated itself and in relation to the motivations behind this. It will go on to outline a post-development theoretical framework with which to analyse the WB and its relation to knowledge creation. This will argue that the WB and the knowledge it produces, cannot be separated from a wider normative framework that facilitates the expansion of development within a purely economic framework with the purpose of capital reproduction. The World Bank Development Report 2015 will then be examined to illustrate this argument, specifically the areas of productivity and household income.

### Theory

To understand how the WB shapes conceptions of development it is necessary to initially outline how it defines itself in relation to knowledge production. For adherents of the WB, the institution has transformed from one characterised by its promotion of strict neoliberal market-led developmental standards, defined by a reliance on economic growth through unrestricted market mechanisms, financial lending and technological innovation, to become a 'Knowledge

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

Bank' (Wolfensohn, 1997, p. 9). Today it is argued to hold a 'special responsibility' (Stiglitz, 1990, p. 590) as a leader in the creation and distribution of materials that fill the 'knowledge gaps' (World Bank, 2011, p. 7) between the global North and South. This represents a supposed ideational shift in which the belief that 'knowledge, not capital, is the key to sustained economic growth' (World Bank, 2011, p. 1) represents a reshaping of the relations it holds with its 'under-developed' members. Through this the WB has acted to allocate knowledge as its 'core strategic asset' (World Bank, 2010, p. iii); it is an 'open' and 'diverse' (World Bank, 2011, p. 7) utility that facilitates the transfer of information for the global public good.

The extent of its knowledge production is provided by WB data. As indicated in Table 1 the WB has significantly increased the volume of literature it produces which is argued to position it above 'top universities and all other development agencies' (World Bank, 2012, p. 4). The application of such research is similarly measured by the WB in relation to the high volume of 'citations in top development journals' (World Bank, 2012, p. 4) it has achieved as well as its use by 'policymakers, the donor community, and institutions of education' (World Bank, 2012, p. 2). The WB, therefore, occupies a large space in the development arena as a rearticulated institution responsible for the 'creating, sharing and applying [of] knowledge for development' (World Bank, 2011, p. 1). This pairing of idea creation and circulation places the WB at 'the centre of efforts' (World Bank, 2012, p. i) in the directing of development discourse and undeniably assigns it a governing ability in the shaping of understandings concerning development.

*Table 1: World Bank Publications 1973-2006*

Source: *Research at Work: Assessing the Influence of World Bank Research* (World Bank, 2012)

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

The reframed status of the WB is subject to criticism. For many, viewing the WB as a 'knowledge bank' represents a continuation of the institution's strict economic focus. For Ben Fine, Elisa Van Waeyenberge and Kate Bayliss, the supposed rearticulation of the WB 'has been indicative of a new phase of neoliberalism' (Bayliss and Fine et al, 2011b, p. 7) in which research that is 'deeply grounded in mainstream economics' (Bayliss and Fine et al, 2011c, p. 263) is packaged as representing new knowledge. These writers argue that far from moving away from a conception of development that equates progress with market-led growth, the WB's knowledge both reinforces these ideas and acts to limit 'alternative ideas and approaches' (Bayliss and Fine et al, 2011c, p. 266). Moreover, through a 'subordination of development studies to development economics' (Bayliss and Fine et al, 2011c, p. 264), the WB projects an image of development that discounts the 'power, class, conflict and economic and social transformation' (Bayliss and Fine et al. 2011c, p. 266) that would challenge its uniformity of approach. This view is furthered by Lyla Mehta who argues that the reframed status of the WB is 'nothing more than the rebottling of old modernization wine' (Mehta, 2001, p. 189) whereby the repackaged WB reiterates its former stance. For these writers, therefore, the WB uses knowledge as a tool of 'paradigm maintenance' (Fine and Van Waeyenberge, 2011, p. 32) to reinstate its 'command [...] over development discourse' (Bayliss and Fine et al, 2011a, p. 2) and further entrench economic conceptions into developmental understandings.

These writers offer an accurate assessment of how the WB has rearticulated itself. The WB maintains a reliance on a neoliberal, strict pro-market stance which undermines its argument to represent 'a more 'holistic' and 'broad-based' approach to development' (Bayliss and Fine, 2011b, p. 3). This argument is undeniably important in an evaluation of where the WB situates itself and has important consequences for the use of such research. Such understandings do, however, need to go further in an analysis of how knowledge and power interact. Furthermore, it is crucial to view the reframing of the WB as a method to 'gain acceptance' (Foucault, 1990, p. 83) through the rearticulation of 'discourse and representations' (De Goede, 2006, p. 5) that reallocate dominance to capitalist reproduction, albeit under a different guise. It is only by uncovering how discourse is shaped via such channels that the power of the WB in shaping understandings of development can be realised.

Similar questions relate to the motivations behind the direction of the WB. In line with Robert Wade's assessment of the WB as an actor over which 'the US maintains discreet but firm institutional control' (Wade, 2001, p. 127), it is argued that the knowledge produced by the WB is biased. Guy Standing, for example, argues that not only is the WB 'dominated by US economists' (Standing, 2000, p. 752) but this entrenches a '*knowledge hegemony*' (Standing, 2000, p. 752) whereby 'views emanating from Washington DC and US-based institutions are taken more seriously' (Standing, 2000, p. 752). Standing believes this means understandings of development will be 'manipulated by dominant interests' (Standing, 2000, p. 754) and the knowledge will be indivisible from the Westernised visions that inform it. Standing's argument is furthered by Jonathan Pincus and Jeffery Winters who highlight the 'narrow political and ideological confines within which the intellectual work at the Bank takes place' (Pincus and Winters, 2002, p. 14) which creates knowledge that is intentionally 'appealing to U.S policy makers' (Pincus and Winters, 2002, p. 14). Through this Pincus and Winters, like Standing, argue there is a distinctive political and ideological dimension to the creation of 'acceptable knowledge' (Pincus and Winters, 2002, p.14) within the WB that has obvious consequences for how it constructs understandings of development.

These writers offer valid critiques. U.S dominance in the WB is demonstrable today with figures showing it holds 17.29 per cent of voting power followed by China who hold just 4.79 per cent (World Bank, 2017c). It is, however, problematic to allocate such a prominent role to the U.S or any singular Western country in analyses of knowledge creation. It is necessary to understand the role of knowledge within the WB in terms of the dominance of capital, currently in its neoliberal form, which cannot be confined to one country alone. Moreover, the use of knowledge cannot be reduced to the furtherance of US interests but rather needs to be understood as part of a wider framework that acts for the reproduction of capital. It is important, therefore, to understand the power imbued within the knowledge produced by the WB that, while conducive to US interests, must be viewed as fundamentally directed towards furthering the normative strength of development as a necessity of capitalism. It is important, therefore, to further explore the relation between knowledge and power and interrogate the role this plays in constructing understandings of development.

## Framework

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

It is necessary to interrogate this relationship between the WB, the knowledge it produces and the power this creates in order to create a framework through which to examine the WB. To do this, the WB must be situated within a wider normative context in which development is used to articulate and rearticulate 'a very specific... form of power' (Foucault, 1991a, p. 102). Moreover, it becomes clear that the idea of a 'Knowledge Bank' cannot be separated from a wider development discourse that facilitates the expansion, penetration and governance of capital into all parts of life.

Fundamental to an exploration of the WB is an interrogation into how the wider idea of development should be understood. The project of development cannot be separated from the historical and political context in which it was constructed. For post-development theorists, the ideas, aims and outcomes of development represent an 'unconscious structure' (Sachs, 1992, p. 4) that shaped post-1945 interactions between Western countries and those they framed as 'under-developed' (Sachs, 1992, p. 2). Wolfgang Sachs argues that this emergence of 'development' was firmly linked to the creation of a world order favourable to capital. For him, the idea of 'development' facilitated the domination of a framework in which a Western, specifically US, 'standardization of desires' (Sachs, 1992, p. 4) was promoted alongside a densely economic conception of how to achieve such 'dreams' (Sachs, 1992, p. 4). Moreover, the emergence of development, whilst built upon Westernised policy formation, was validated through perceptions of 'right' and 'wrong' that promoted an expansion of capital. 'Development', through its language of progress and 'goodness' (Ferguson, 1994, p. xiv) became, as termed by James Ferguson in his study of Lesotho, an 'anti-politics machine' (Ferguson, 1994, p. xv), a method of shaping knowledge, understandings and subjectivities in relation to the 'other' (Esteva, 1992, p. 6) through the creation of a seemingly depoliticized space (Ferguson, 1994, p. xv). 'Development', therefore, cannot be conceived of as a neutral term but one that is utilized to channel a very specific worldview.

Key to development as both an institutional aim and a normative framework is the centrality it places on economics. For Gustavo Esteva the 'semantic constellation' (Esteva, 1992, p. 8) of development was 'married to a political design' (Esteva, 1992, p. 17) that pivoted on the 'economic sphere, and installing it at the centre of politics and ethics' (Esteva, 1992, p. 7). Esteva argues that a 'universality of economics' (Esteva, 1992, p. 19) was turned into the dominant 'truth' (Esteva, 1992, p. 18) whereby the reproduction of capital, understood as an extension of a reliance on productive means to sell wage labour and the highly exploitative relations this creates, was absorbed into all aspects of society. In its most basic formulation, development can therefore be conceived of, as articulated by Arturo Escobar, as 'the straightforward application of savings, investment, and productivity increases' (Escobar, 1995, p. 83) within underdeveloped countries. For Gérald Berthoud, this has allocated 'the market' (Berthoud, 1992, p. 70) an unchallenged position as the only mechanism able to produce 'the good life' (Berthoud, 1992, p. 72). This 'reliance on 'technoscientific truth and the laws of the market' (Berthold, 1992, p. 71), has acted to facilitate the expansion of a framework that views 'everything as... commodities' (Berthold, 1992, p. 80). The indivisibility of development from its economic focus has allowed it to normalise the expansion of capital through the validating framework of 'development'.

Knowledge plays a crucial role in the construction of such an economic discourse. As Lyla Mehta outlines, knowledge is defined by 'the specific socio-political, historical, and economic circumstances' (Mehta, 2001, p. 190) it was created in and 'which are key to an analysis of knowledge claims' (Mehta, 2001, p. 190). In relation to the WB, while presenting 'knowledge as something neutral and delinked from issues of power' (Mehta, 2001, p. 189), it is firmly linked to a project that has, since 1945, had the 'regulation of populations in ways consistent with the movements of capital' (Escobar, 1995, p. 60) at its core. Moreover, the knowledge produced by the WB must be recognized as constituting a new form of power that legitimises its continued centrality in development discourse and the 'certain reality' (Sachs, 1992, p. 5) it favours. The knowledge produced by the WB thereby contributes to the formation of a 'mental structure' (Sachs, 1992, p. 1) in which societies are constituted by 'economic man' (Esteva, 1992, p. 18); both shaped by development as a capitalist mechanism, and acting to reshape development via their renewed relation with capital. Knowledge has acted in a way to construct development as 'a rule of law' (Foucault, 1990, p. 83) meaning it is unquestioned, as are the assumptions it is based upon. Knowledge is thereby active in the inclusion and exclusion that creates a certain 'consciousness' (Escobar, 1992, p. 139) that legitimises developmental understandings that are conducive to capital reproduction.

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

This understanding of development has significant consequences for how the WB should be viewed. Development has been constructed and imposed by structures such as the WB with the 'explicit objective [...] to inculcate solely economic motivations in the rich as well as in the poor' (Berthoud, 1992, p. 73). It cannot, therefore, be separated from the system of 'regulation, arbitration, and demarcation' (Foucault, 1990, p. 86) that both shape what development is and the methods through which it is implemented. The knowledge produced by the WB must, therefore, be viewed as part of a wider mechanism of 'control' (Foucault, 1991a, p. 92) that dictates how development is conceived and how such conceptions centralise economics. The research circulated and promoted by the WB is indicative of this strict, yet increasingly introverted adherence to economism.

## Empirical

The most instructive pieces of research that demonstrate how the WB shapes understandings of development are its annual development reports. Argued to be an 'invaluable guide to the economic, social, and environmental state of the world today' (World Bank, 2017b), the World Bank Development Reports (WBDR) are indicative of the WB's 'global knowledge products' (World Bank, 2011, p. 2). Upheld as an influential point of reference for many major organisations and governments, with over 20,000 copies downloaded per month in 2017 (World Bank, 2017b), its influence within wider development networks is indisputable. Of its most recent reports, the 2015 WBDR *Mind, Society and Behaviour* is held as an example of the WB's supposed new holistic approach that facilitates the transfer of knowledge for development. It is through an examination of this report that an illustration of how the WB shapes understandings of development can be built.

The WBDR 2015 is emblematic of the WB's new approach. In line with its new role, the WBDR 2015 argues to promote a move away from 'standard economics' (World Bank, 2015, p. 3) towards an approach that incorporates 'human factors' (World Bank, 2015, p. 4) into its conception of development. The report opens with its central argument: 'that paying attention to how humans think and how history and context shape thinking can improve design and implementation of development policies and interventions that target human choice and actions' (World Bank, 2015, p. 2). Borrowing from behavioural economics, the report highlights 'the psychological and social underpinning of behaviour' (World Bank, 2015, p. 3) that needs to be understood to overcome the 'cognitive, psychological and social barriers' (World Bank, 2015, p. 128) to development. Moreover, the WB highlights the need to target the social norms and 'mental models' (World Bank, 2015, pp. 12) that generate unfavourable thinking and behaviour. The report is therefore a knowledge product through which the WB provides 'new tools that practitioners can draw on' (World Bank, 2015, p. 4) when designing development strategy.

Far from offering a new conception of development, the WBDR 2015 offers both a reiteration of the economic understanding the WB argues to be distancing itself from and demonstrates a new discourse through which it enacts this. By focusing on thinking-patterns as a tool for decision making, the WB incorporates a new subtle platform of interference that has 'transformed the mode of existence of economic discourse' (Escobar, 1995, p. 84). By focusing on the 'mind' (World Bank, 2015, p. 2), which is argued to 'serve as the basis of new kinds of intervention' (World Bank, 2015, p. 11), the WB has acted to adopt new strategies that shape thought processes in ways favourable to capital. Moreover, by targeting 'social networks and social norms' (World Bank, 2015, p. 11), the WB is actively shaping the frameworks through which both understandings of capital and its relation to development are conceived, thereby creating a discourse that meets the agenda of capital accumulation. The emphasis placed on existing knowledge allows the WB to form new channels with which to challenge old understandings and a new 'means to achieving [...] an extension of market economics' (Berthoud, 1992, p. 73). This, therefore, demonstrates a new form of governance, firmly linked to 'processes of domination and social control' (Escobar, 1992, p. 132) through which the WB challenges understandings that underpin thought and behaviour in relation to capital. To further investigate how the WB shapes understanding of development, two of its chapters, on productivity and household income, will now be assessed.

## Productivity

The chapter on productivity is indicative of the continued economic approach adopted by the WB. The report argues that changes in how employees and employers view work will bring about improvement in levels of productivity. Here

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

it focuses on how 'cognitive, psychological and social barriers' (World Bank, 2015, p. 128) to productivity are present within the thought processes and behaviour of individuals. It highlights how 'overcoming procrastination' (World Bank, 2015, p. 129) and 'improving effort among employees' (World bank, 2015, p. 129) are key to enhancing both physical production and the mental understanding individuals hold towards work. Within this, it offers numerous examples for how employers should 'frame' (World Bank, 2015, p. 130) contracts or tasks in ways to make workers increase their productivity. Examples of how employees could change the discourse surrounding work include a software company in India in which 'decreased turnover and improved satisfaction among company clients' (World bank, 2015, p. 130) was achieved by including 'self-reflection and group exercises that focused on [...] unique attributes' (World Bank, 2015, p. 130) whilst training new employees. Similarly, to demonstrate how reciprocity 'can alter how employees perceive they are being treated' (World Bank, 2015, p. 130), the WB offers the example of a book being given as a gift to care workers in Tanzania who then 'improved their adherence to medical protocols for many weeks afterward' (World Bank, 2015, p. 131). Through its analysis of productivity, the WB, therefore, promotes the rearticulation of employee subjectivities in relation to their working environment. Increased productivity can be promoted by altering how work is framed by employees, therefore challenging the normative understandings of how labourers perceive their working environment.

The WBs approach to productivity is problematic both in its articulation of what it understands problems of productivity to be and how it argues to address them. Issues surrounding productivity are defined in the report by the extent to which conditions and human behaviour act as 'deviations to its rationality assumption' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2016, p. 650). Here the WB acts to amount ideal productivity to the maximum reproduction of capital within a certain context and then individualises inadequate productivity by equating lower-levels with the bad individual choices of workers. Development, in this line, is 'based on improving individual choices' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2016, p. 648), thought process and behaviour which need to be 'corrected as far as possible towards perfect rationality' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2016, p. 650). 'Imperfect' employees and employers are, therefore, projected as the cause of underdevelopment at the expense of examining the multitude of factors that hinder levels of productivity within specific contexts. Moreover, there is no mention in the report of the structural effects 'power, conflict, class, gender, [or] race' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2016, p. 652) have on levels of how or to what extent employees engage with their work. This understanding, therefore, both legitimises the contextual constraints that those living in developing conditions face and allocates blame for failures to meet the WB's understanding of productivity at the 'micro-level' (World Bank, 2015, p. 648). Furthermore, this focus on productivity acts to create a normative understanding whereby individual thought processes are tailored towards increasing production not for their own benefit but for the expansion of capital reproduction, thereby further embedding the economic understanding the WB has of development.

The way the WB frames improvements to productivity exacerbates this. Here, it argues for a rearticulation whereby workers understand their role within a new thought framework in which the selling of labor is endowed with more than just financial remuneration. The example of the Indian software company exemplifies this. Through this, workers are made to feel important and therefore their understanding of work is altered to include more than just selling their labor for monetary benefits. Within this, a discourse is constructed whereby the exploitation that wage labor is based upon is obscured by the seemingly benevolent acts of employers. By challenging how individuals relate to their working environment, the WB is advocating for the extension of market principles into individual decision-making and the normative perception workers have when selling their labor. What this calls for is the normalisation of understandings of employment whereby worker subjectivities in relation to their labor are produced in terms favourable to capital, therefore, legitimising the further exploitation of labor through workers own self-regulation.

## *Household Finance*

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the assessment of household income put forward by the WB. The report offers up ways in which the behaviour and thinking of those living in poverty in relation to their personal finances can offer developmental opportunities. Here a major source of 'bad' financial behaviour and the 'underutilization of financial products' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114) is argued to be caused by '*present bias*' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114) whereby 'overconsumption and procrastination' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114) cause difficult financial decisions or those without immediate returns to be neglected. This is argued to be to the detriment of the 'savings, investment,

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

and insurance' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114) that the report highlights to be 'important development goals' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114). Here individuals are perceived as 'impatient' (World Bank, 2015, p. 114) with inability to make rational decisions, based on 'willpower and attention' (World Bank, 2015, p. 115) that are needed for long-term financial health. Examples are given such as Indian farmer Suresh, who invested in a risky but more profitable crop but 'forfeits potential for more learning and higher growth' (World Bank, 2015, p. 113) by terminating after the first harvest is killed by drought, thereby demonstrating a lack of determination and entrepreneurial spirit. Similarly, Sonja in Uganda is highlighted as an example of the procrastination of the poor in making long-term financial commitments because she has not 'invested the time to decide' how much she should be saving in a local subsidised bank account (World Bank, 2015, p. 114). Again, these examples demonstrate both the individualisation of conceptions of poverty and a commitment to shaping developmental understandings through an economic lens.

By examining household finance at the micro level the report acts to further an understanding of development as an individual problem. The WBDR allocates ineffectual household finance to the irresponsible thinking and flawed mindsets of those in low income settings. By arguing that 'poor people need to be even more attentive to financial decisions' (World Bank, 2015, p. 112) the report neglects to incorporate the structural causes of poverty into its assessment. The example of Suresh insinuates that his own lack of initiative or business thinking to invest in new crops is cause of his inability to move out of poverty. This ignores the multitude of factors that have encumbered rural development in India. For example, Raghbendra Jha highlights the structural effects liberalization has had on 'shift[ing]... earnings from labour to capital income' (Jha, 2004, p. 2), creating 'a rapid growth in the service sector' (Jha, 2004, p. 2) and 'a drop in the rate of labour absorption' (Jha, 2004, p. 2) that have caused 'relatively modest' (Jha, 2004, p. 2) changes in rural inequality in India. By the WB's standards, therefore, Suresh and others like him should be able to make the right financial decisions to bypass these structural hurdles and overcome his low-income setting. By situating problems of household finance in this way the report allocates blame for underdevelopment onto the poor and facilitates an understanding that focuses on 'the management of choice within a given set of socioeconomic constraints' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2016, p. 648). Moreover, this acts to emphasise a 'privileging of the economic' (Fine and Johnston et al, 2015, p. 651), whereby rational thinking and behaviour favourable to savings and investment are ingrained into the knowledge the WB produces.

This allocation of individualised decision-making as central to developmental progresses is similarly emphasised by the solutions proposed. The argument that individuals need to change their thinking in ways conducive to their own accumulation of capital and their further integration into capitalist structures demonstrates the WB's role in the governance of 'the wholesale modification of existing human and social structures and their replacement with rational new ones' (Escobar, 1992, p. 135). This centralization of rationality within human thinking and behaviour is demonstrated through the report's emphasis on 'self-control' (World Bank, 2015, p. 120) and 'utilizing emotional persuasion' (World Bank, 2015, p. 121) to shape the normative frameworks through which people perceive saving mechanisms. Through this, the report advocates the use of value shaping tools such as soap operas and television broadcasts (World Bank, 2015, p. 121) to normalise favourable economic behaviour into everyday decision-making by creating a 'particular cast of mind' (Sachs, 1992, p. 1) conducive to capital reproduction. By emphasising the importance of individuals in both the cause and solution to underdevelopment the WB acts to use its knowledge to reframe development as dependant on economically minded behaviour. This both legitimises its strictly economic conception of development and, through its governing role, constructs a discourse that acts to align development with capitalism.

## Conclusion

The WB, thereby, uses its knowledge production to forward an understanding of development that is conducive to the extension of capital. As highlighted in this essay, whilst the WB has acted to realign its role within the development arena as one more favourable to the non-economic aspects of developmental causes and strategies, it remains committed to a conception of development that is solely based around economic conceptions. Furthermore, by shaping itself as a 'knowledge bank' rather than an institution focused on capital lending, the WB maintains its position in the governance of development and the creation of discourse that equates development with capitalism.

Post-development theory is an effective tool through which to fully analyse the power that knowledge production has

# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

provided the WB. Whilst critiques are correct in their assessment of the WB as an institution focused on economics derived from Western interests, it is necessary to understand the power that the WB now maintains through its role in framing understandings of what development is and the discourse of how to achieve it. Moreover, 'development' cannot be separated from the historical context in which it was created and its understanding of development as firmly linked to a project of post-war capitalist expansion. The reframed status of the WB is thereby demonstrative of the necessity of new channels through which to achieve this in a post-Washington Consensus era. Here, it is not only understandings of development being shaped but subjectivities of how people relate to production and capital.

The WBDR 2015 is demonstrative of the WB's continued strategy. The report highlights not only the continuance of economics in guiding how the WB thinks about development but shows its new strategies whereby thought and behaviour are subject to both analysis and adaptation. Moreover, the WBDR is demonstrative of the type of knowledge put out by the WB which provides a clear indication of the type of research conducted by the WB and the strategies of development they wish to be built from it. This not only entails the shaping of how development is perceived but is directly linked to how the WB envisages subjectivities to be built and how they should engage with capital. Far from challenging its centralism of economics, this clearly demonstrates a renewed effort by the WB to allow capital, its reproduction and extension to be facilitated at the expense of other developmental outcomes.

If channels of resistance to the overwhelming economism of development are to be built then understanding the relationship between knowledge and power in the WB is crucial. Most importantly, this concerns the need to challenge the normalisation and channelling of discourse that rests on conceptions of development that equate it with capitalism. Furthermore, if knowledge is to be utilized in a way that benefits people over capital, the WB needs extensive reform that acknowledges both its historic creation and the understandings it continues to champion through its power.

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# Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank

Written by Ruby Utting

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# **Building New Understandings? Development and the World 'Knowledge' Bank**

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