Lesson six teacher notes

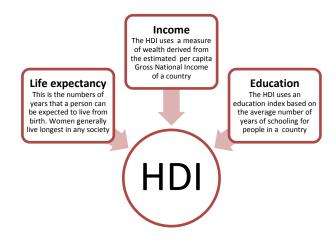This lesson aims to build student geographical capabilities as follows:

✓ **Data analysis** A range of different types of data are presented in the starter PowerPoint and worksheet. These include photographs, graphs (population pyramids), quantitative data and composite statistics (HDI data). Students may or may not have prior learning of all of these. If they have knowledge gaps it may be necessary to explain the basics of population pyramids, for instance. In the lesson, they will be required to draw comparisons and also to rank data in order of size. They should be encouraged to use **comparative language**. For instance, wages in Russia are 'twice the size' of those in Mexico.

✓ **Conceptual thinking** Development is a high-order concept, composed of many different strands (see below). Students will find that some indicators suggest Russia is a developed country whereas others do not. In the final written exercise they are asked to consider a viewpoint by drawing on a range of evidence. They should recognise that the statement cannot be agreed, or disagreed, because development is a complex concept.

Explaining development

Firstly, the development process involves meeting people's *economic needs* by increasing the money supply that is available to individuals or families. Secondly, it involves meeting their wider *human needs,* such as healthcare, education and human rights (which may include legal rights, the right to vote, the right to equality, *etc*). In an economically developed society:

- citizens enjoy health, long life and an education that meets their capacity for learning
- citizenship and human rights are more likely to be established and protected

Three important development criteria are included in the **Human Development Index (HDI)** as a teaching framework. The HDI is a composite measure that ranks countries according to economic criteria (GDP per capita, adjusted for purchasing power parity) and social criteria (life expectancy and literacy). The three 'ingredients' are processed to produce a number between 0 and 1. In 2013, Norway was ranked in first place (0.955) and Niger was ranked in last place (0.305).

Income
The HDI uses a measure of wealth derived from the estimated per capita Gross National Income of a country

Life expectancy
This is the numbers of years that a person can be expected to live from birth. Women generally live longest in any society

Education
The HDI uses an education index based on the average number of years of schooling for people in a country

HDI

Important themes for discussion

Getting students to think about how Russia should be categorised is an interesting synoptic task for them to conduct. Here are some possible avenues for inquiry and discussion:

- From an **economic development** perspective, the World Bank actually categorises Russia as a high-income country although it is at the lower end of the scale (and wages are less than half those in the UK).
- From a **social development** perspective, male life expectancy is only 64 (combined male/female is 70). This is lower than in some middle-income countries like Brazil and Mexico.
- From a **global development** viewpoint, Russia is one of the 'BRIC' group and is therefore regarded as being a high-growth 'emerging' (rather than developed) economy by economists. However, Russia is also a G8 member (a group which only contains developed countries).
- From a **historical** perspective, Russia is the only country with a similar nuclear capability to the USA (a legacy of the Cold War).

Clearly, there is no definitive answer here, although many people would take the World Bank categorisation as being definitive.

Russia's role in the world today

Russia continues to act in a similar way to many developed nations in terms of how it builds international influence. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia lost much of its global influence. Some status has since been regained on account of Russia's strategic control of oil and gas supplies. Fuel sales account for 30% of the country's GDP and delivers more than 40% of government revenues. However, wealth derived from sales of finite natural resources is not a long-term sustainable growth pathway. Mindful of its own vulnerability, Russia is now actively seeking out business partnerships amongst resource-rich African countries and with its own ex-Soviet neighbours.

According to the African Development Bank Group, the importance of Russia as a trading partner to African countries is fast-growing (although still small when compared to China, India, Brazil, the EU and the USA). Bilateral trade between Russia and Africa has increased ten-fold since the mid-1990s and is now approaching US$10 billion (*Africa Economic Brief*, 11 May 2011).

Russia's global strategic ambitions are strongly linked with energy security concerns. The general pattern of its trade with Africa is one of raw material gains alongside Russian investment in African energy infrastructure. Large Russian TNCs such as Lukoil, Gazprom, Norilsk Nickel, Alrosa, Rusal and Severstal have invested in the exploitation of oil, gas, diamonds, aluminium and iron ore in many African countries, including:

* Egypt - where Russia has signed an accord on nuclear co-operation (Russia possesses advanced nuclear technology, a legacy of the Cold War "arms race").
* Nigeria - where Russian gas TNC Gazprom is chasing contracts to build a new Trans-Saharan gas pipeline which would deliver Nigerian gas to Europe.
* Namibia and Angola - where Russian TNCs have invested in the mining of diamonds, metals, hydrocarbons and uranium.

Russian TNC	Host countries	Sector	Year
Norilsk Nickel	South Africa	Gold	2004
Sintez	South Africa, Namibia, Angola	Oil, gas, diamonds	2006
Gazprom	Algeria	Gas exploration	2006
Severstal	Liberia	Iron ore	2008
Alrosa	DR Congo	Diamond prospecting	2008
Lukoil	Ivory Coast, Ghana	Oil exploration	2010
Rosatom	Egypt	Nuclear energy construction	2010

Source: *Geography in the News*, 2012