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## Academia Engelberg: 7th Dialogue on Science – Growth in developing countries

### **Growth with obstacles**

**What kind of challenges do India, Kenya and Colombia face? What is needed, so the majority of the population can also benefit from growth?**

Six young scientists from Africa, Asia and South America analyzed what obstacles to growth exist in their countries of origin. What are the causes and what changes need to be made, so the general public can really benefit from it? There are as many problems as there are countries.

#### **India: less bureaucracy**

India is a highly complex country full of contrasts between industrial metropolises such as Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi and the rural developing areas such as Bihar. Archi Rastogi and Manish Jain presented a country that registers GDP growth rates of 7.3 percent per year. The poorest, however, have benefited the least from this development until now. Due to the economic misery, more than 150,000 peasants committed suicide over the past nine years. The country is on position 128 of the UN Human Development Index (HDI), after Cameroun, Chad and Botswana. For the young scientists, the solution to this is a wide-spread democracy. According to them, it is also important to reduce bureaucracy and improve living standards in rural areas. This leads to the targeted economic growth, on one hand, while it curbs the population explosion, on the other hand. The removal of social differences (caste system) will be another key element.

#### **Kenya: care for the environment**

In Kenya, roughly fifty percent of the 38 million people still live on less than a dollar per day. Muthoni Ngatia and Philip Osano showed Kenya's dependence on natural resources. In this country where energy consumption rapidly increases due to the fast industrialization process, 65 percent of the electricity is produced by hydroelectric power plants. The depletion of natural resources is a serious threat to economic growth. Half of the water used in Kenya comes from the Mau Forest Complex, a large forest area in the East of the country. It feeds the Lake Nakuru and supplies water to the ecosystem of the Mara National Park, amongst others. The area is constantly shrinking; from over 400,000 ha in the mid-70s to 250,000 ha in the year 2005. The government aims at a growth rate of 10 percent until the year 2030. The young scientists fear about it if natural resources do not receive better protection. The assistance to rural population through education and creation of industrial jobs is of equal importance, in order to reduce inequalities between the cities and the countryside.

#### **Colombia: crime blocks everything**

Maria Navas and Mario Gomez presented a country that faces massive crime. The crime paralyzes the whole economic growth. During the past four years, more than one million people had to leave their habitat and are living today in miserable conditions in one of the slums of Bogota. Unemployment has reached 11 percent. And all this despite the fact that the conditions for economic prosperity are not bad at all: The country has a lot of natural resources. As for biodiversity, the country ranks fourth



worldwide. When it comes to GDP, Columbia is third in Latin America, behind Panama and Peru. The young scientists came to the result that economic growth is not enough to solve complicated social and ecologic problems being the main objectives of sustainable development.

**Bridge between science and society**

On Thursday, specific issues regarding the three regions were discussed in workshops and additional solutions were thereby drawn up. Fundamental scientific findings are likely to meet strong reservations and encounter mistrust among the general public. Academia Engelberg ([www.academia-engelberg.ch](http://www.academia-engelberg.ch)) contributes its share to the creation of a new foundation of trust through interdisciplinary dialogue between the scientific community and the general public. Every autumn, personalities from science, industry, culture, politics and society meet in Engelberg.

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