Getting richer will not solve the world’s problems

In September 2015, 193 world leaders at the United Nations committed to 17 Global Goals to achieve three things in the next 15 years: end extreme poverty; fight inequality & injustice, and fix climate change. Economic growth alone won’t help us achieve this. Instead we need business not as usual.

Global Goals range from “global access to clean drinking water” to “peaceful more inclusive societies”.

By 2030, expected growth will likely raise the world average GDP per capita from $14K to $23K.

Cultural shift is critical. Changes in policies, institutions or investment will not reach their potential in many contexts without cultural change. Organizations will need to work hard to understand how cultural norms are shaped and can be adapted.

The world’s social progress score needed to achieve the Global Goals. Business as usual will not get this done.

Luckily, a number of countries are showing us the way: Uruguay and Rwanda out perform in terms of social progress.

Costa Rica with a GDP per capita of just $13K, has achieved a score of 77.9.

If all countries could over perform to Costa Rica’s level, global social progress could reach 67.2, equivalent to Italy’s score today.

So what does business not as usual look like?

The Big 6 will have 47% (3.9 Bn) of the global population in 2030. If they over perform and achieved 5% above the trend line they could boost global social progress by 4%.

What they need to focus on to see the biggest improvement:

Brazil
Personal safety + Access to advanced education

China
Personal rights + Tolerance & inclusion

India
Tolerance & inclusion + Access to advanced education

Indonesia
Water & sanitation + Tolerance & inclusion

Nigeria
Water & sanitation + Personal safety

Pakistan
Tolerance & inclusion + Access to basic knowledge

Sectors must work together

Businesses
Support provision of education, healthcare and infrastructure.

NGOs
Highlight the challenges facing society and play a critical role in solving them.

Governments
Implement new policies and solutions.

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