HOW DO WE MEASURE DEVELOPMENT?
A COMPARISON OF FRANCE AND ZIMBABWE

In this assessment, I will be comparing two very different countries: France and Zimbabwe. I will be comparing their development using development indicators. I have chosen a MEDC (More Economically Developed Country) which is France, and I have chosen a LEDC (Less Economically Developed Country) which is Zimbabwe. I will be using development indicators to show how they relate to the country's development and how the two countries are different. The development indicators that I have chosen are: Life Expectancy, GDP per capita, Mortality Rate, and Unemployment. These indicators are very different from each other and will be excellent in comparing France and Zimbabwe. The North – South Divide is the division in the World between developed countries and undeveloped countries. This is an indicator to wherever of not a country is a MEDC or LEDC. There is a development gap between the MEDC's and the LEDC's which is the difference in economic wealth that exists. The gap is largely due to the fact that developing countries have not undergone modern industrialization.

There are eight main characteristics that identify a less developed country: Little or no modern industry, High Birth Rate or rapidly increasing populations, Farming is the main economic activity, High poverty, High illiteracy rate and low technological levels, Poor diets which causes starvation, malnutrition and other diseases, Poor Transport facilities, Lack of sufficient services. I will use the eight main characteristics above in my assessment when explaining the indicators as a confirmation to why Zimbabwe is a LEDC and why France is a MEDC. I will now start my assessment by providing background knowledge about my two chosen countries: France and Zimbabwe.

France is located in Western Europe and also has various other territories in North America, the Caribbean, South America, the southern Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, and Antarctica. France covers 547,030 square kilometres (211,209 square miles), and has the largest area in the European Union and second largest in Europe. France has a variety of landscapes, including the low-lying wetlands and the high mountain ranges known as the Alps in the south-east. Across France there are rivers, lakes, salt marshes, gentle hills as well as mountains, flat plains and coasts. France has four main rivers, the longest of which is the Loire. Most of France has mild winters and warm summers however the mountainous areas such as the Alps have much colder winter and bring heavy snow falls. In France there are many historic towns, such as Chartres, Orleans and Reims, with lots of historic castles in the Loire Valley, which attract tourists. The capital city of France is Paris and is famous for the Louvre museum and Notre Dame Cathedral. France is also known worldwide for the wood that it produce, in particular its wine and cheese.

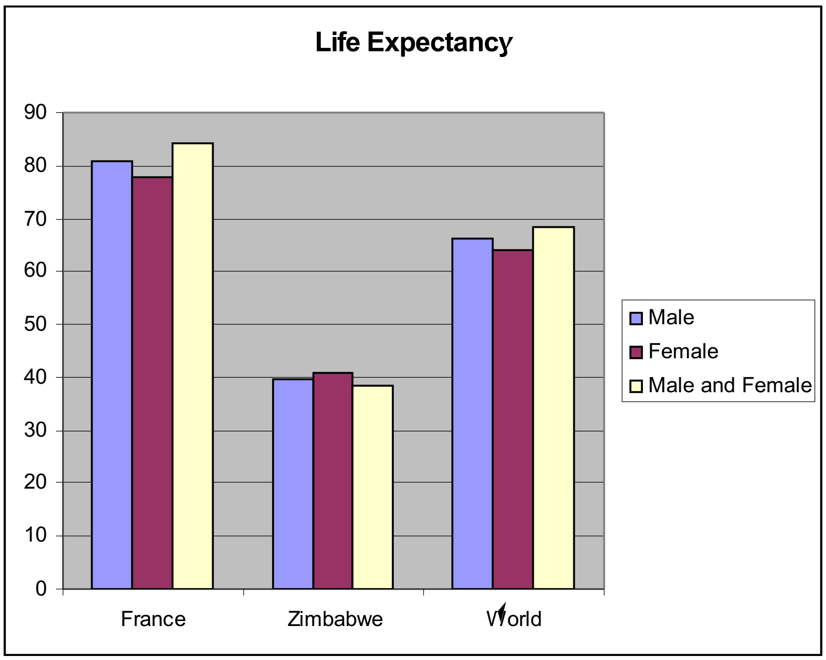
France is a very developed country and it possesses the fifth largest economy in the world. It receives 82 million foreign tourists annually and is a member of the European Union, United Nations, G8, NATO, and the Latin Union. France also owns the largest number of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants in the European Union. France is a democracy in which the people elect member of the National Assembly and Senate, which together make up the Parliament. France does not have a royal family since it became a republic in 1789. Every seven years, a President is elected for the French Republic. France's economic wealth is created by different types of production: Primary (farming and mining), secondary (manufacturing industries) and tertiary (high- tech industries and services). Until recently, manufacturing industries provided most of France's wealth and jobs, but this has now changed. Since the oil crisis in 1979, the secondary sector in the employment structure has been decreasing while the tertiary sector has been increasing. This has resulted in huge numbers of unemployment and France is now the country with the second highest unemployment rate, which has deeply affected the country's wealth. France was issued the single European currency, the euro, in 2002, together with 15 other EU member states. This forms the Euro zone.

Zimbabwe is located in Southern Africa, between South Africa and Zambia. Zimbabwe covers an area of 390,580 square kilometres. The terrain of Zimbabwe is mostly high plateau and mountains in the east of the country. The terrain is therefore highly useful for the primary industry especially farming. Like many countries in Africa, primary industry is the main economic activity in Zimbabwe. It generates most of the country's income, however to reach development, industrialization is need but the country cannot afford this. The climate is tropical but a rainy season occurs between November to March. The official language of Zimbabwe is English, but the majority of the population speak Shona which is the native language of the Shona people. The other language that is spoken widely in Zimbabwe is Sindebele by the Matabele people.

In a full flood, the massive Victoria Falls on the river forms the world's largest curtain of falling water. The population of Zimbabwe is 13,349,000 million although the life expectancy is only 38 years which is extremely low.

Life Expectancy and Infant Mortality Rate:
Life Expectancy is the number of years that an individual is expected to live as determined by statistics gained over a year for a selected country. It is calculated for men and women separately as well as together. Generally women live longer than men in most countries but that is not always the case in some countries. Many simple things affect life expectancy which is the main problem in developed countries such as France where the main problems are smoking, obesity, and drugs. However, these problems are in people's control and are mostly people's actions. However in undeveloped countries like Zimbabwe, the main problems would be AIDS, malnutrition, curable diseases, and civil strife. These factors take a tremendous toll on human life. The Life Expectancy for France and Zimbabwe are:

	France	Zimbabwe	World
Male	80.87	39.73	66.12
Female	77.68	40.87	64.18
Male and Female	84.23	38.55	68.2



It is very clear that the life expectancy is significantly lower in Zimbabwe than in France. Zimbabwe's population has such a low life expectancy because of the variety of diseases and also the climate. The warm welcoming climate attracts mosquitoes which carry the disease, malaria. Hepatitis A and typhoid are also common in Zimbabwe because of the poor hygiene standards and unclean water. In Zimbabwe there is not much clean water around therefore people are forced to drink this unclean water and combined with poor health care this gives Zimbabwe its low life expectancy. Another explanation to Zimbabwe's low life expectancy is its high infant mortality rate. Infant Mortality Rate is the death rate during the first year of a newborn baby's life. Over one tenth of every newborn African dies within its first year. Infant Mortality Rates greatly affects a country's life expectancy because every newborn baby dieing in its first year still applies to the number of years an individual lives. Compared to France, the life expectancy of France is higher because of its good health care and constant supply of clean water. The Infant Mortality Rate of France is 3.36 deaths/1,000 live births which is very low compared to Zimbabwe.

The population per doctor in Zimbabwe is 16,667 therefore treatment in Zimbabwe is extremely limited and most people relying on natural healers who provide sick people with herbs and plants which usually don't have much effect on curing diseases. The Life Expectancy is higher in France because France provides excellent healthcare whereas in Zimbabwe the healthcare is very poor and there are only a few hospitals. Because the healthcare is poor many of the people die or they refer to tribal healers who use ancient healing methods which most of the time fail to work. They can also make the illness worse. The Infant Mortality

Rate is also low in France because of the excellent services that hospitals provide during the operation and after the baby is born. In France there are 303 people per doctor and so this confirms that healthcare in France is widely available. Also the climate in France is perfect to avoid catching diseases, resulting in less early deaths increasing the life expectancy. Clean water is supplied to houses through safe taps whereas people in Zimbabwe live in huts and have to collect water from lakes which are usually infected.

To conclude, life expectancy is an good indicator in measuring the development of a country, because it takes into account healthcare, standards hygiene i.e. food and water, disease, and infant mortality rate, and the availability of medical services. However, it is not a brilliant indicator because diseases in Zimbabwe like malaria are unavoidable due to the fact that mosquitoes are found in Zimbabwe because of the hot weather. Zimbabwe has a much lower life expectancy because it suffers from problems like malaria, malnutrition, unclean poor, and poor healthcare which developed countries like France do not suffer from. However developed countries like France suffer from minor problems that can be easily prevented such as obesity, smoking, and drugs. These minor problems are increasing in the modern world. It is already affecting many countries and therefore needs to be prevented. I have mostly explained the difference between the countries of Life Expectancy and Infant Mortality Rate but there is one important similarity and that is that both countries have problems that need to be extinguished.

GDP per Capita and Unemployment:
GDP per Capita is a commonly accepted measure of development and stands for Gross Domestic Product per Capita. It is used to help identify the standard of living for a country by measuring a countries wealth. So GDP per Capita is the net value of all goods and services produced by a country in that specific country only in one year divided by the population of that country.

France has a GDP per Capita of $32,700 whereas Zimbabwe's GDP per Capita is $200. This is a considerable difference and there are many reasons for this. Human factors as well as physical factors both affect Zimbabwe, resulting in the low GNP per capita. Since Zimbabwe's independence, it has been through many wars. The most recent war with Congo took millions of dollars out of the economy and reduced Zimbabwe's chances for development. Zimbabwe's low GDP per Capita is the result of low industrialization in the country. For this to occur the country needs money to spend on the machinery and Zimbabwe doesn't have a vast amount of money to spend. This is the reason why Zimbabwe's economy is based around the primary industry of farming and mining as the country has a large quantity of expensive minerals. However many of the mines are owned by foreign companies and not by the Zimbabwe Government, resulting in no change in wealth. Also, developed countries like France trade with primary-based countries like Zimbabwe because France doesn't have enough primary resources in the country. However, MEDC's purchase the crops and minerals at an extremely low amount. Zimbabwe cannot refuse because the country needs the money to avoid falling in debt. France would then use their advanced manufacturing industry to produce secondary products. France has the wealth to do this because the economy is high. Zimbabwe would then purchase the secondary goods from MEDCs like France at an extremely high amount. Zimbabwe has no choice but to purchase the developed goods because the country doesn't have the machinery to convert its primary goods into secondary products.

Zimbabwe in the past have tried many National Plans to industrialize the country which is a step towards development however to do this Zimbabwe needs Capital and the only say to get this is to barrow huge sums of money from the world banks. In the end, the plans did not work out because the country could not afford to pay back the loans and the factories were never complete. With huge loans to repay and no complete factories, the country fell into the "Third World Debt". Through trying to industrialise, the country's economy collapsed resulting in an even worse state than before the plans proceeded. Zimbabwe is therefore stuck in the vicious circle of development at the step where they have no money left and so the output per person is low.

Another reason why the GNP per Capita of Zimbabwe is so low is because the education system is very poor. Without education, people cannot achieve high paid jobs. At the moment in Zimbabwe, most of the jobs are based around farming and mining which doesn't need education and leads to low payment. However most of the population in Zimbabwe is unemployed with the rate being 80% which is roughly 9 million people. As I have mentioned earlier, the war with Congo took millions out of the country's wealth. This money could have been spent on the education system in Zimbabwe which would have over time increased the GNP per Capita as well as reducing the unemployment rate. Now due to the country debt situation, it cannot afford to spend money on the education. This is the main reason why Zimbabwe's GNP per Capita is extremely low.

France differs greatly from Zimbabwe however the two countries have some similarities. France's high economy is the reason for the vast amounts of money entering the country. This wealth is spent to improve the country to continue its advanced development. France takes a keen interest in the education system resulting in high paid jobs, increasing the money injected into the economy. This gives the country a high GNP per Capita. A similarity is that France unusually has the second highest unemployment rate in the industry. The percentage is 12.6% which is extremely high even though the economy is well- developed. I conclude this section by stating that even though France has an advanced economy, it has some problems. In the future, Zimbabwe needs to consider all its possibilities for development before making a definite decision because the country could just keep shrinking in terms of its economy.