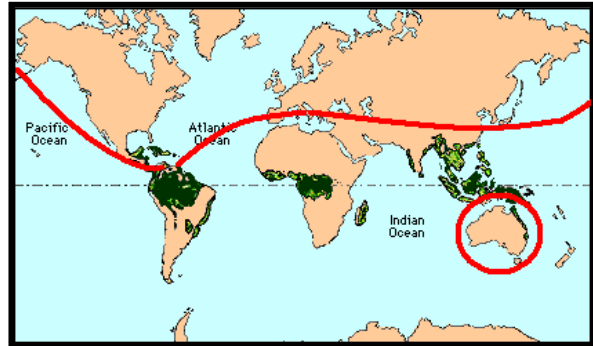


## Year 11 Development a.f.I

### ***"Why are some countries LEDC's and some MEDC's?"***

Across the world there are many different countries that are currently in different states of development, some major developed and some unfortunately less developed. However it has become easier to separate these countries into two categories – LEDC's (less economically developed) and MEDC's (more economically developed).



As this map shows, the majority of MEDC's are north of the equator; most of Europe, USA and Asian countries such as Korea. South of the equator sits nearly all LEDC's such as South America (Brazil could be debated due to rising levels of secondary trade); however some countries such as Australia disturb the trend.



One of the reasons that nearly all LEDC's lay south of the equator could be that climate could effect, prevent development in the forms of natural disasters. The most recent large scale disaster being the Boxing Day tsunami 2004, known by the scientific community as the Sumatra-Andaman earthquake. A huge undersea earthquake occurred at 7:58: local time December 26, 2004 with an epicenter off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. The earthquake triggered a series of devastating tsunamis

along the coasts of most countries bordering the Indian Ocean, killing large numbers of people and inundating coastal communities across South and Southeast Asia, including parts of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand. Although it was first thought the worldwide death toll was over 275,000 with thousands of others missing, more recent analysis lists a total of 229,866 people lost, including 186,983 dead and 42,883 missing. Event likes this and others such as hurricanes, floods and volcano eruptions cause devastation and sometimes take many years to recover from, which may bring huge finances to do so. These finances often result in a country un-developing or prevent development.

However MEDC's are not immune to natural disasters which shown during the time of the Irish Potato Famine (1845-1849). The Famine was due to the appearance of "the Blight", it almost instantly destroyed the primary food source for the majority of the island's population. The immediate after-effects of The Famine continued until 1851. Much is unrecorded, and various estimates suggest that between 500,000 and more than one million people died in the three years from 1846 to 1849 as a result of hunger or disease. Some two million refugees are attributed to the Great Hunger, and much the same number of people emigrated to Great Britain, the United States, Canada, and Australia. The immediate effect on Ireland was devastating, and its long-term effects proved immense, permanently changing Irish culture and tradition. Though human suffering during the famine was never photographed, the event immediately and profoundly altered the course of generations of Irish.

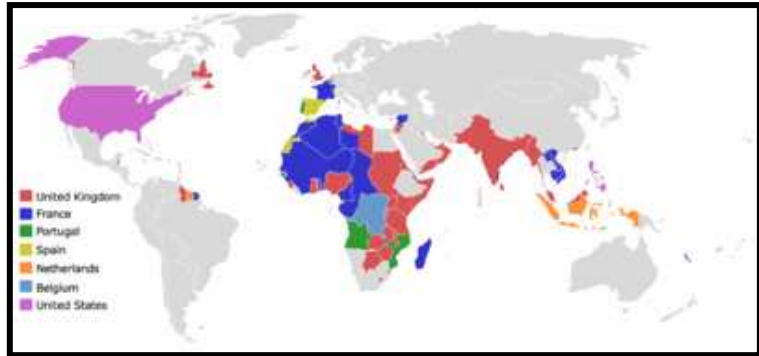
Other environmental factors e.g. heat and Guinea Worm could also be an explanation to the diversion between MEDC's and LEDC's. Guinea worm disease (GWD) is an infection caused by the parasite *Dracunculus medinensis* (also known as "Guinea worm"). *Dracunculus* comes from the Latin "little dragon". The female worm emerges through the skin of its human host one to two years after infection. Often, persons with emergent worms enter sources of drinking water and unwittingly allow the worm to release larvae into the water. These larvae are ingested by water fleas. Inside the fleas, the larvae develop into the infective stage in 10–14 days. In turn, humans may then become infected by drinking water containing infected copepods. Once



inside the body, the stomach acid digests the water flea, but not the guinea worm larvae sheltered inside. These larvae find their way to the small intestine. During the next 10–14 months the worm develops into its full length of 60–100 centimeters (2-3 feet) long and a narrow. The worm migrates to the area of the body from which it will emerge, which, in more than 90% of all cases, is on one of the lower limbs. A blister develops on the skin at the site where the worm will emerge. This blister causes a very painful burning sensation, and, within 24 to 72 hours of its appearance, will rupture, exposing one end of the emergent worm. To relieve the burning sensation, infected persons often immerse the affected limb in water. Infected individuals usually wind the emergent worm around a small stick; however, they dare only pull out a few centimeters of worm each day, lest the worm break. If the worm breaks, the individual will experience a painful and serious reaction that may include anaphylaxis. Without surgical intervention, the process of removing the worm usually takes weeks or months. Again there are more conditions similar to the Guinea Worm, that are very costly to take care of, especially when water close to locations that are densely populated.

Throughout history many MEDC's took opportunity to expand on their empire and the land they owned. They had done this by often creating new settlement at LEDC's which were not prepared to take the action in preventing this. The new settlements were labeled colonies. These

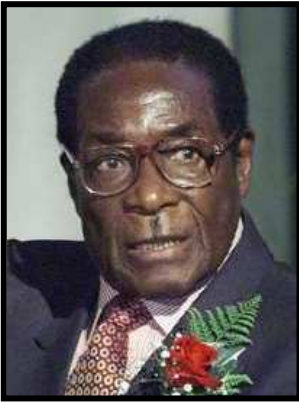
colonies usually focused on natural resources that could be made useful (in manufacturing or finance). An example of this would be during the slave trade when USA and parts of Europe settled in Africa and took and traded resources such as Chocolate, Cotton, Coffee, Tea, Tobacco and Sugar. This, like other colonies/settlements could have stopped certain countries from developing, not just the countries directly involved but other countries indirectly as their trade levels could have dropped as the resources were more easily available/cheaper elsewhere.



Although all the above have good arguments to explain the segregation of LEDC's and MEDC's, there is one factor that most likely gives the largest contribution to this, this factor is trade. There are two different types of trade; secondary resources, which are items such as cars, electrical goods and metals e.g. steel, and primary resources which tend to be raw materials such as coffee, cotton and fruit. The trade that most MEDC's deal with is secondary and the trade that LEDC's deal with tends to be primary. However some LEDC's have progressed in recent years to produce both primary and secondary, Brazil would be an example of this. Although this does not sound as easy as it seems otherwise all LEDC's would be trading in secondary goods. The EU (European Union) introduced trade barriers which means that countries outside the EU cannot freely trade with EU countries, therefore taxes (often high) have to be paid to trade. A country that managed to switch from extreme poverty to major development despite taxes was South Korea. They managed this by strict government policies and a determined nation of people. Park Chung Hee is generally credited as playing a pivotal role in the development of South Korea's economy by shifting its focus to export-oriented industrialization. When he came to power in 1961, South Korean per capita income was only USD 72, and North Korea was regarded as the greater economic and military power because North Korea was industrialized under the Japanese regime due to its location and merit in terms of natural resources. During Park's tenure, per capita income increased twenty fold, and South Korea's rural, undeveloped economy was transformed into an industrial powerhouse. The strength of Park's leadership was shown by the remarkable development of industries and rise in the standard of living of

average South Korean citizens during his presidency. Many still question Park's judgments, however, as his 1965 brutal colonization of Korea proved vivid. However, by normalizing relations with Japan, Park allowed Japanese capital to flow into the country. These aids and loans along with American aid, helped to restore the capital of South Korea. Nonetheless, it must be noted that with North Korea's economy at the time being bigger and more vibrant than that of South Korea, Park did not have many options or much time to negotiate for more fitting reparations and apologies. This issue still shows Japan and South Korea's relationship today.

The South Korean economy has advanced rapidly since the 1950s and is now the 11th largest economy in the world. South Korea is also one of the world's most technologically advanced and digitally-connected countries; it has the third most broadband Internet users among the MEDC countries and is a global leader in electronics, digital displays, and mobile phones. South Korea is the largest shipbuilder in the world in terms of tonnage.



An example of a president that is quite the opposite of how Park Chung Hee worked is the current prime minister of Zimbabwe – Robert Mugabe. A Zimbabwe politician he has been the head of government in Zimbabwe since 1980, first as Prime Minister and later as first executive President. Throughout his career, Mugabe has espoused pan-Africanism and African independence and unity. In recent years, Mugabe has attracted international criticism for alleged mishandling of land reforms, economic mismanagement, and a deteriorating human rights situation in Zimbabwe. Mugabe, however, attributes the country's current hyperinflation and negative growth to Western sanctions and the legacies of white minority rule. It seems that Mugabe has his priorities in the wrong order and prefers to take care of his personal lifestyle/finances meanwhile the country he leads is in a state of uncertainty. Not a good example of developing a country.