

Redefining Progress

One Planet – One Habitation

Based on the Statement of the
Bahá'í International Community 2022

One Planet – One Habitation 4

Poverty shall disappear

The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty shall disappear, that everyone, as far as possible ... shall share in comfort and well-being.

— Bahá'í holy writings

Redefining progress

To fix humanity's relationship with the natural world, we need to redefine ideas of progress, civilization, and development. What are the qualities by which a person, nation, or corporation are judged successful? For what are they commended and appreciated?

Redefining progress

So long as our values prioritize possessions over relationships or acquisition over responsibility, and we expect infinite growth on a finite planet, a sustainable world will remain out of reach. Such values affect the human spirit, leading to excess, exploitation, and depletion, with extremes of wealth and poverty. Progress must be understood in new terms.

Redefining progress

No country is an example of sustainable development. We thought development was industrialization, technological capacity, and macroeconomic growth, but many living there are dissatisfied and in difficulty, while injustices face numerous other populations around the world. No one pattern of life and vision of society can be taken as the model for all of humanity.

(based on One Planet – One Habitation §19)

Redefining progress

Redefining progress requires an expanded understanding of ourselves as a species, including truths about the human spirit itself. The simplistic materialistic assumption that views the individual as a purely self-interested economic unit, competing with others to accumulate an ever-greater share of the world's material resources, still underlies the global order.

(based on One Planet – One Habitation §20)

Redefining progress

A more accurate understanding of human nature would include qualities such as trustworthiness, mutual support, commitment to truth, and a sense of responsibility, that are the building blocks of a stable social order, ensuring that our pursuit of prosperity includes the many other aspects of individual and collective well-being.

(based on One Planet – One Habitation §21)

Redefining progress

Redefining progress could include new approaches to ownership and usership, new forms of urban organization, new methods of agriculture, power generation, and transportation, with vast possibilities before humanity.

(based on One Planet – One Habitation §22)