

Rostow's five stage model of development

Stage 1 – Traditional societies whose economies are dominated by subsistence farming. Such societies have little wealth to invest and have limited access to modern industry and technology. Rostow argued that at this stage there are cultural barriers to development (see sheet 6)

Stage 2 – The preconditions for take off – the stage in which western aid packages brings western values, practises and expertise into the society. This can take the form of:

- Science and technology – to improve agriculture
- Infrastructure – improving roads and cities communications
- Industry – western companies establishing factories

These provide the conditions for investment, attracting more companies into the country.

Stage 3 – Take off stage – The society experiences economic growth as new modern practices become the norm. Profits are reinvested in infrastructure etc. and a new entrepreneurial class emerges and urbanised that is willing to invest further and take risks. The country now moves beyond subsistence economy and starts exporting goods to other countries

This generates more wealth which then trickles down to the population as a whole who are then able to become consumers of new products produced by new industries there and from abroad.

Stage 4- the drive to maturity.

More economic growth and investment in education, media and birth control. The population start to realise new opportunities opening up and strive to make the most of their lives.

Stage 5 The age of high mass consumption. This is where economic growth and production are at Western levels.