

There has been a lot in the news lately about inequality. Where children will land on the income chart as adults can be predicted quite well by the income of their parents. Upward mobility is becoming more difficult. The great leap of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was not all the technology we now take for granted but the huge movement of millions out of poverty in one generation.

What defines a poor or developing country is the inequalities in the society, I know this as someone who grew up in a poor developing country. Every country has its billionaires and some middle class, it's just that the majority in these countries barely get by everyday. I am the product of movement from extreme poverty in one generation, my father grew up with barely enough to eat and rose to lead his country. As the world is struggling to reduce inequality in poor countries and make extreme poverty a thing of the past on our planet, a new front is opening up in the US where this same inequality is widening.

Many seem to interpret reducing inequality to mean give me yours to give to others. But In the past as the economic pie expanded, whole societies moved along the distribution curve with the upper end moving higher, the lower end moving up as well. Now as the upper end moves up the lower end stays stuck flattening the curve into one with a long right tail. This is not a good sign or example for the developing world.

Driving on a December morning, I heard on the radio that fast food workers were going on strike that day for a day and I thought about how this information would affect my day. I concluded it wouldn't. Later on the same day I met up with a friend for lunch and I mentioned my observation and she said "people who eat at fast food places tend to be the people that work at fast food places". My friend is a kind hearted and socially conscious human being but she was making an accurate objective observation. In January 1914, based on an observation that his workers could not afford the product they made, Mr. Henry Ford decided to double his workers salary so they would be able to afford to buy the cars they made thereby igniting the great American economic transformation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When people now have to strike to be paid more to make food only people with low wages tend to eat there is something seriously wrong. The self-serving option of Mr. Ford in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century does not seem to be working in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this 100<sup>th</sup> year of Mr. Fords generosity, may there be another businessman that changes the course of inequality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.