Key Messages

Many candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge of the breadth syllabus with a good depth of understanding and maturity, and they put forward developed, coherent responses throughout the paper.

Although some candidates appeared to be familiar with the technical aspects of the paper such as graph analysis, subject-specific vocabulary and command words, some candidates were not.

It is vital that candidates read the question very carefully to ensure the correct approach in their answers.

General Comments

Many candidates appeared to be very well prepared, especially for the questions requiring descriptions or explanations. Excellent answers to the question on how an education helps families to reduce poverty and improve living standards covered not only the ideas of increased knowledge but also increased earning ability. Clearly education helps people to understand the importance of a balanced diet and clean water supplies but it is equally important to be able to afford them. Candidates appear to be more confident with the social and environmental aspects of development than the economic ones and this is an area which would benefit from improvement.

Candidates should be able to give examples of actual case studies to illustrate topics. This was particularly appropriate in Question 2(d) where those who had made a study of a local aid project, rather than a type of aid, were able to use their knowledge of the scheme to good effect and often gained high marks. Similarly, a case study of a cooperative would have helped candidates to answer Question 4(d). Even where a specific project is not mentioned in the question, it is acceptable for candidates to illustrate their answers with knowledge of a local study. The role of case studies drives understanding forward from the local to the global in terms of learners being able to make links with what happens at local, regional, national and international levels.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

(a) (i) On the whole this was answered well, with the majority of candidates gaining credit. However, there were a variety of incorrect responses from the graph.

(ii) Some credit was given to candidates who, from their own knowledge, understood that the Millennium Development Goal 2 was unlikely to be met for reasons such as a lack of enough schools in many countries. Several candidates did not appreciate that Goal 2 refers to universal primary education and wrote that the goal might be met in some regions but not in Sub-Saharan Africa. Many candidates answered this in a positive vein without looking at the reality of the data. Common statements outlined the fact that the number of children who did not attend school was decreasing and therefore the goal was likely to be met. This is why it is so important when reading data, that the candidates remain objective. There is no need to bring in wider knowledge unless this is specifically requested in the question. Having studied Fig. 1 for part (i) it should have been clear that although 50 million more children attended school in 2011 compared with 1990, this improvement took place over 21 years. With numbers still high in 2011, a further reduction of over 50 million in just 4 years was unlikely. The more able candidates suggested that the Goal might be achieved, but not by 2015 considering the rate of decrease since 1990 and the fact that numbers...
were still high in 2011. Relatively few candidates were able to appreciate the trend shown in Fig. 1 which makes achieving the goal unlikely.

(iii) Candidates appeared to be well prepared for this question and answers were generally of a very high standard. Ideas were developed and coherent with very few instances of listing. Candidates gave a wide range of responses, showing a good understanding of the issues involved.

(b) (i) A large majority of candidates were confident in their interpretation of data shown in this format. Many candidates produced answers that demonstrated they had analysed and understood the graph and what was being represented. There were many comparisons that could have been made but most recognised that in 1990, literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa were higher than those in Southern Asia, but by 2011 the situation was reversed.

A concise answer worth full marks stated: ‘In 1990, literacy rates in Sub-Saharan Africa were greater than those in Southern Asia but then Southern Asia’s rate sprinted forward in a great leap surpassing those of Sub-Saharan Africa by 2011, which had only increased a little.’ Another concise full mark answer stated: ‘In both regions literacy rates for women are less than for men in both years, the increase in literacy rates between 1990 and 2011 was greater for women and those in Southern Asia increased more than those in Sub-Saharan Africa.’

However, a few candidates just gave the figures with no attempt to draw comparisons. It is important for candidates to fully understand the command word – they were asked to compare the literacy rates, not merely to state them. Some compared the two genders within one region. Again, the question clearly asks for a comparison between the two regions not the two genders.

(ii) The Development Studies syllabus encourages the teaching of solutions to problems that may be restraining development. This was being tested here and on the whole the question was very well answered with many key ideas being represented. Common answers considered laws to make education compulsory, reducing the cost of education and the importance of positive, female role models in girls’ lives. Other answers included wide ranging issues such as the provision of electricity/clean water in homes as well as the idea that the provision of food in a school has been shown to lead to increased attendance.

In some instances however, candidates gave responses which would not be effective – for example ‘making girls aware of the importance of education’. The people with the power in the girls’ lives are the parents and so ‘education of parents on the importance of education’ would have been more appropriate. Some answers were rather unrealistic such as government policies to ban cultural traditions. Many candidates suggested that governments should encourage gender equality but the method used to achieve this, such as by the government introducing laws or supporting women empowerment groups, was needed for credit.

Candidates also considered here the need for the education of young girls in the use of contraceptives in order to reduce the levels of teenage pregnancy, an important cause of girls not completing their education. (The notion that girls are usually solely responsible for becoming pregnant at an early age is an attitude that might need to be confronted and addressed.)

(c) This question was generally very well understood and answered, with many excellent responses that covered ideas of higher income, improved living conditions, health care, diet and family planning which were often well linked in high level answers.

There was a good understanding shown of the link between education and wider development issues such as the lowering of infant mortality/maternal mortality and the increasing of life expectancy.

There were generally two main themes in the answers. Firstly, with education, a better paid job means that more and better goods and services could be purchased such as a greater quantity and variety of food, improved sanitation etc. Secondly, education gives families the understanding of the importance of a balanced diet, the knowledge of how to prevent diseases etc. However, other issues were often considered in answers in the higher levels, such as the ability to make choices and appreciate the need to budget responsibly for a sustainably better lifestyle.
**Question 2**

(a) (i) Candidates were asked to use two examples to show how the data in Fig. 3 supported the statement that Mozambique is one of the least developed countries in the world. Many candidates selected the correct indicators but just listed them rather than saying how they supported the statement. E.g. ‘47% have access to improved drinking water’. The question required candidates to show that, for example, they recognised that a life expectancy of 52 years was low (indicating a low level of development). A large national debt and negative balance of trade are not necessarily linked to the least developed countries.

(ii) This question was not answered well. Quite a few candidates were unable to give the correct economic term and used words such as ‘unfavourable’.

(b) (i) Many candidates were able to gain credit for the ideas that interest has to be paid on the loan and that this would lead to the debt increasing and eventually becoming unpayable if the country took too long to pay it back. Candidates are also aware that a new loan is often taken out to pay off the existing loan, or at least the interest on it. Common answers focused on why a country might get into debt such as the need to borrow money to build schools, rather than why the debt grows. There were references made to corruption and the building of palaces by corrupt officials, but this was not linked to why a debt grows. For instance, candidates needed to state that if loans were misused, then more money had to be borrowed to finance the project for which the loan was originally provided.

Many candidates merely stated that the country imports more than it exports but that on its own does not explain why a debt grows. Difficulties arise in connection with increasing debt, for example, because of governments spending money gained from taxes on importing large amounts of essential raw materials such as oil – imports used for the industrial development of a country – instead of using the money to pay back debts.

(ii) There were some excellent answers that covered a range of issues such as Structural Adjustment Programmes, the inability of the country to attract foreign investment and the need to exploit resources unsustainably. More basic ideas such as the fact that social services such as health and education would be cut which would increase unemployment and exacerbate poverty showed a good understanding of the problems caused by a country having large debts.

Some candidates merely stated that debt slows development but needed to explain how to gain credit. Many candidates recognised that money earned was used to pay off the debt and so there would be little to spend on schools, hospitals etc. However, there was rarely any extension of this point to show how development would be impeded without these investments. In a question that considers impacts on development, candidates should seek to consider the development indicators, such as life expectancy, infant mortality rates and literacy together with other aspects of standard of living.

For example, a candidate stated that a large debt would mean the country could not afford to import medicines and build hospitals but there was no reference to the influence on development of a lack of medicines and health care. The candidate needed to continue the argument with a sentence such as: ‘therefore diseases cannot be cured, people remain unhealthy and life expectancy falls.’ Further marks could have been achieved if the candidate had continued by stating that people would be unable to work and so the economy would slow down and exports would be reduced. The government would receive fewer taxes and so would not be able to fund more schools which would result in the literacy rate falling.

(c) (i) A large minority of candidates did not read the question properly and named something which was not equipment such as food, money or doctors.

(ii) Answers covered a variety of topics including problems of access caused by damaged roads during disasters, the misuse either for personal gain or for other projects as well as bias in the distribution based on religious, cultural or urban groups. Many candidates understood the importance of trusted, local NGOs delivering the aid directly to the people in need rather than sending it through government departments.

Reasons for aid not reaching people were generally well understood, but the solutions given were often too simplistic. Corruption was a dominant theme in the reasons section of the answers but as
a solution – ‘get rid of corruption’ was insufficient to gain credit. Answers that suggested the election of trustworthy politicians through the ballot box were acceptable.

The solutions required were those that would help with aid distribution immediately, both practically and effectively, rather than in the long term. So if candidates had stated that aid could not reach the people in need because the communications were poor, then a solution would not be to build good roads.

Some candidates did not read the question properly and only gave one reason. Others considered the technology that was sent was not appropriate – but the question asked why aid did not reach people, not why it was not suitable.

(d) The strongest responses were well-written accounts of real-life projects that had clearly been well learnt as case studies. They were typically but not exclusively small-scale in nature. The fact the question asked for the benefits on the community was directing candidates towards a more local project. Water Aid in the Sahel, the Upland Holistic Development Project in the Golden Triangle of South-east Asia, specific HIV awareness programmes run by NGOs and the Haiti earthquake relief effort were all well represented. There were many lesser known examples of small NGO projects, frequently in home countries or even the candidates’ own communities, which often gained high marks. Schemes that were not clearly identified tended to gain lower marks. Candidates were asked to describe ‘an aid project’ but often the aid was too generalised, such as money aid, or covered too many projects such as schools, clinics, road building, as well as money for food and housing. Sometimes it was not clear that the project was an aid project as the government was providing either grants or building the services.

Those candidates that identified aid projects where NGOs were working with the community gained good marks for well-developed, well-exemplified responses that gave details of what the aid project entailed and what the benefits to the community were. The benefits described were not just physical ones such as clean water or new seeds but also intangible ones such as the hope that the aid had given people.

Some candidates were aware of the terminology of aid, for example bi-lateral aid, but would have benefited from a deeper understanding of the role of NGOs and governments, and what constitutes community and grass roots aid projects and what constitutes top-down, government intervention in terms of construction of infrastructure.

Question 3

(a) (i) Most candidates gained marks here. A minority of candidates referred to one chart only but needed to identify differences between the charts to gain credit. Some candidates gave incorrect figures, for instance tourism was often quoted as contributing 75% or manufacturing over 50% to the GDP of Country B. A comparison between ‘others’ was usually meaningless as the number of economic activities within that group is unknown.

(ii) Many candidates recognised the likelihood that mineral products will eventually run out and so this is a major economic problem if a country relies upon them. The issues of falling demand and fluctuation in prices were generally well considered although many candidates suggested that prices for mineral products are low. This may be so for some minerals, but others, such as diamonds, are rare and therefore command a high value.

(iii) A common error here was to identify environmental problems in general but not link them to the extraction of minerals. So, although deforestation was mentioned frequently, few candidates stated why it was necessary or described the problem in terms of its negative effect on wildlife habitats.

Most candidates understood the command word ‘describe’ and did not just respond with a list. The different forms of pollution that arise, as a consequence of the operations themselves or the waste products generated, were described comprehensively.

(b) (i) Most candidates gained full marks here and picked out the main features of the tourist resort. The weaker answers did not demonstrate that candidates had looked at the photograph, and a typical tourist resort was described in general terms. Some answers showed that the photograph had been studied but consisted of features that could not be seen, such as boats.
(ii) This is part of (b) and candidates have previously studied a photograph of an example of mass tourism where, apart from the sea, there is little natural environment left and the scale and nature of the resort is representative of an unsustainable industry. This should have helped them to answer this part of the question which is in complete contrast.

Although candidates have a general knowledge of sustainable tourism and the actions that might be taken to reduce the impact of tourists and tourist facilities on the natural environment, often they needed to be more specific in their answers in terms of how the necessary actions might be achieved. For example, candidates suggested that tourists should be educated on the importance of conserving the natural environment but did not say how this might be done. Some suggestions were unrealistic such as insisting tourists attend lectures. Some of the actions proposed could not be effective in the real world and would have destroyed the tourism industry in the country, for example, ‘stop tourists coming and do not build any hotels’. However, reducing the number of tourists by creating small-scale or high-cost resorts gained credit, as did the way this method reduced impact on the natural environment by minimising the waste produced or the use of precious resources such as water.

The word ‘encourage’ could have been better utilised in responses to this question. Encourage tourists to use public transport, use resources wisely and reduce litter were statements that hinted at characteristics of sustainable tourism, but gave no indication of how these could be achieved. Many answers were concerned with wider issues such as poaching and hunting which were not closely linked to tourism.

(c) The introductory sentence before this question was included here to draw candidates away from the focus on mining and tourism in earlier parts of the question in order to embrace the wider principle of industrialisation. This should have given candidates a greater scope to use any industries with which they were familiar to help them in answering this more general part to the question. The question on industries’ use of infrastructure and services was testing knowledge of the linkages between the sectors of production of a national economy.

The candidates who read the question carefully generally gave well developed and coherent answers as to how industries use the full range of infrastructure available to them, such as warehousing/roads/ports/railways/power supplies, and services available to them, such as internet/insurance/schools/hospitals/banks/transport. The use of the internet for contacting suppliers as well as customers was explained in detail as were the uses of electricity for the working of machines as well as lighting for the workforce.

Many candidates did not read the question in full and gave responses based on how industries lead to the development of infrastructure, rather than how they use it. For example, candidates explained that industries provide taxes and revenue to the government so that it has money to develop schools and education. The candidates should have considered how the industries use the education services such as by acquiring labour that is literate and skilled. There was much written about the factors of production and it was also common for employment structure to be described, with primary, secondary and tertiary differences being given along with the links between the first two sectors. Neither of these are explanations of how industries use infrastructure and services.

Question 4

(a) (i) The majority of candidates gained marks here.

(ii) Candidates often only gave one reason here, such as the town needing the farmland to build houses/infrastructure, or the fact that the farm labourers often left to seek jobs in the growing town. There was little mention of the wider problems of the urban population putting pressure on the water supplies.

(iii) Generally candidates were aware of the measures traditional farmers use to reduce soil erosion such as the control of grazing or ploughing across the slopes but needed to explain how these methods worked. Some of the explanations merely stated ‘so when it rains the soil is not washed away’, but this was merely stating that soil erosion was prevented, not how the method works. Several candidates considered the method of ensuring the soil stays fertile, either by the addition of manure or by crop rotation, but there was no full explanation of how this would prevent soil erosion. Candidates could have stated that if the soil is kept fertile, then crops can be grown and the soil is not left bare which makes it vulnerable to being washed or blown away. An alternative acceptable
explanation would have been that if a good structure to the soil is maintained, it is less prone to erosion than soils which are tired and loose. The general principle that degraded soils are more vulnerable to erosion was missing. However, many candidates demonstrated their knowledge of agricultural practices well with statements such as ‘don’t let livestock overgraze as this means there is more grass to cover the ground and this makes erosion of soil difficult,’ and ‘trees are planted to shelter the fields from the wind so the soil is not blown away.’

(b) (i) There were very few direct lifting of text from Fig. 7 with the vast majority of candidates demonstrating that they understood the problems that the farmer was facing. A concise answer worth full credit was ‘the farmer is worried that he might be pressurised into selling his farm as he will no longer be able to take care of his family as jobs are hard to find in town’.

(ii) Many development issues are related to each other and although the syllabus is written in different sections, there is considerable overlap amongst them. The analysis of health issues, such as nutrition, facing developing countries is a vital aspect of development and this was being tested here in relation to the products of traditional farms. Candidates were given, in Fig. 7, examples of the food grown on these farms but very few candidates used this information. There was little reference to the different elements of nutrition such as proteins, vitamins etc. and even fewer candidates mentioned the source of these or how these keep the body healthy in terms of repair of tissues or prevention of disease.

Most candidates, however, gained some credit by identifying correctly that the food is grown naturally/organically without the application of chemicals which can be harmful to the body. Some mistakenly stated that by growing the food organically it contained all the nutrients needed for a balanced diet. It is, however, the variety of food grown that supplies the balanced diet.

(c) Most candidates gained marks here, with the better answers identifying the sharing of equipment, ideas and transport to market as key features and developed these points by stating how farming communities would benefit. Other common themes considered the value of bulk buying and how cooperatives could access loans more easily and therefore use stated inputs bought with loans to increase output. Weaker answers merely listed things that cooperatives could provide farmers with and their answers were more suitable for the task “describe how output could be increased on traditional farms”.

Candidates were not always clear about what cooperatives are, with many candidates thinking that the cooperative was an external organisation that helped the farmers, rather than a group that is managed by the farmers who are a part of it.
Key Messages

- Candidates should read the question carefully and take time to understand what they are being asked to do. In order to do this they need to be aware of how to respond to the command word used. Underlining or highlighting key words in the question, especially command words, is a useful strategy.
- The mark allocations, given at the end of each question, are a useful guide to the amount of detail to include. In responses which are worth only a small number of marks this will usually be equivalent to the number of points which candidates need to make.
- In questions involving extended writing, typically worth 6 marks or more, candidates should aim to develop the points which they make rather than briefly listing simple points. These are marked using levels of response marking, where the focus is on the quality of the response rather than just the number of points made. Developing answers and linking ideas enables candidates to show the depth of knowledge and understanding required for higher marks.
- Candidates need to learn all key terms and be able to not only define them precisely but also use them with confidence in an appropriate context. Building up a word glossary during the course is a helpful strategy to achieve this.
- As the examination provides opportunities for candidates to draw/complete and interpret various types of graph, candidates need to be familiar with how to use them all and practising that during the course is important. All graphs and other presentation methods (e.g. photographs) should be used regularly and the skills revisited until candidates are confident in their use. When using graphs, either completing them or reading information from them, candidates need to be accurate. An answer ‘around 25%’ or ‘over 60%’ is unlikely to be creditworthy. If statistical evidence from graphs is used in answers it is more effective if that data is interpreted and used to back up points made rather than simply listed. Depending on the question, paired data may be required or statistics linked with years.
- It is important for candidates to experience the different stages of enquiry. They should experience planning and carrying out investigations – this should initially involve deciding on research questions or hypotheses, followed by collection of data, presentation of results, along with their analysis. They should be able to draw conclusions based on their results.

General comments

A full range of responses was seen. Most candidates made an attempt at all questions, showed sound understanding of a range of development issues and demonstrated appropriate subject-related skills. The extent to which candidates do this will always vary, however for the vast majority of candidates this examination was a positive experience, enabling them to show what they know, understand and can do.

There was no evidence of candidates being short of time and good use was made of the combined question and answer booklet, such that the length of answers was appropriate in most cases.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a) (i) This was generally well answered and most candidates gained full marks.

(ii) Most candidates scored marks for recognising that growth rates in Africa were generally higher and backed this up with appropriate statistics. Only a minority commented on the immense variation of growth rates in Africa in comparison to those in South America.
Many candidates knew how natural population growth rates were calculated and scored both marks. A small number lost a mark by not showing their calculations whilst others either used the wrong data from the table or incorrect formulae.

Whilst most candidates were able to comment on birth rates being higher than death rates, others went further, recognising the significance of changes in these rates and backing up their comments with appropriate and accurate data. The period between 1951 and 1961 was referred to effectively by many candidates as birth rate was still rising whilst death rate was falling. Answers stating that ‘there was a difference between birth rate and death rate’, or those simply quoting natural growth figures were not creditworthy as they did not answer the question.

Whilst there were some irrelevant answers focussing on high birth and death rates, most candidates did write about the reasons for changes as required. Many answers showed a good knowledge and understanding of the reasons for falling birth or death rates, differentiation being achieved through the level of detail. Simple, brief statements achieved limited credit, however the best answers contained developed ideas and a balance, referring to both birth and death rates.

Correctly answered by the vast majority of candidates.

Whilst there were some good definitions such as ‘the number of babies who die in their first year per 1000 live births’ many were either incorrect or incomplete.

Generally well answered, with most candidates recognising that death rates are higher in rural areas. Some gave statistics, which were not required, indeed some did this rather that identifying the main difference as the question asked.

There were some good answers here with many different reasons used to explain high infant mortality rates in rural areas, most focussing on the lack of adequate health care and its implications. Some candidates wrote about high birth rates instead of infant mortality rates – this key term was not known by all candidates.

Generally well answered, with most candidates scoring full marks.

Whilst some candidates missed out these tasks completely, those who attempted them were generally successful in plotting the cross for Siddharthnagar. The best fit line should have shown positive correlation – in most cases it did though some candidates did not appear familiar with this skill, joining the crosses like a line graph.

Most candidates were able to indicate their understanding of ‘positive relationship’ by describing the link in some way and many used paired data from Fig. 6 to illustrate this. Some just referred to one district or one indicator only, which was not sufficient to illustrate the relationship shown by the scatter graph.

There were many excellent answers to this question, showing an understanding of a wide range of reasons for the high birth rates in rural areas. Weaker answers tended to focus only on the lack of contraception.

Answers varied in quality and the whole range was seen. Any combination of two of the options could have been chosen and the key to success was to justify the choice with appropriate reasoning. At best, answers were superbly developed and perceptive, showing a real understanding of the varied and complex issues involved, whilst weaker answers lacked development or were simply descriptions of the methods chosen and how they would work.

This was only well answered by a small number of candidates. The idea was that if several methods are used together they are likely to complement each other and deal with some of the multiple causes of high birth rates. For example, there is no benefit in offering free contraceptives if people do not realise the importance of using them. Similarly free food vouchers for small families would be of little use if people are not aware of how they can prevent conception to achieve this. Many candidates gave simplistic answers, suggesting that several methods were useful so that people had choice, or that if one failed another might succeed.
Question 3

(a) (i) The photographs needed to be used to ‘describe the characteristics of the area where the study was carried out’. The task was based on simple observational skills and candidates who demonstrated these, scored high marks. Some candidates wrote about potential health problems which were likely in such an area rather than answering the question set, whilst others lost marks by writing vague statements and value judgements rather than describing characteristics which they could see in the photographs.

(ii) In order to explain three likely risks, candidates needed to refer to the source along with the risk to health. For example the areas of polluted water might lead to waterborne diseases or smoke being given off in the area might lead to chest or lung problems such as bronchitis or asthma. There were some very perceptive responses, using the evidence in the photographs well. Candidates needed to explain, rather than simply list the source or the risk to health.

(b) (i) Most, but not all, candidates were able to define ‘primary data’.

(ii) Many candidates were able to refer to ideas such as the importance of the people taking part in the investigation being informed about the purpose of the investigation, along with the assurance of privacy which would build up trust. Weaker answers tended to be just one simple point despite three marks being available, and a few candidates copied out part of the letter, showing no understanding.

(iii) Quantitative data is based on statistics as it is numerical whilst qualitative data can be observed but not measured. These definitions were known by some candidates but many others were not familiar with them, making incorrect guesses, typically about the ‘quality and quantity’ of data.

(iv) There were many good answers, especially from candidates who chose systematic or stratified sampling, describing and justifying its use well. Some candidates who chose random sampling found it difficult to describe and justify without simply repeating the word ‘random’ and others referred to data collection methods (e.g. questionnaire) rather than a type of sample, or chose an inappropriate sampling method such as snowball sampling.

(v) Many candidates answered this well, the best responses being those where ideas were developed and an appropriate balance was achieved between advantages and disadvantages. Weaker answers listed simple ideas, often in bullet form, though most candidates showed some appropriate knowledge and understanding here. It was clear that the answers which were most fully developed came from candidates with personal experience of carrying out such fieldwork. Whilst it is not always possible to carry out investigations, if it is practical to do so it is an invaluable experience for candidates.

(c) There were some superb responses from candidates who skilfully interpreted the data, making general conclusions and supporting them with appropriate statistics. Weaker responses just quoted statistics, without a clear point, and without any attempt to make any conclusions.

(d) (i) Many candidates were able to complete the pie chart within the tolerance allowed though some reversed the order of the segments.

(ii) Many candidates scored the mark, though there were some wrong answers.

(e) (i) Accuracy was variable here with many candidates plotting the bar at 21% rather than 22%.

(ii) A full range of answers was seen here with the strongest candidates suggesting and fully justifying possible solutions which would be pertinent to address the problem of non-treatment of illness. A significant number however went no further than making unsubstantiated references to more doctors, clinics and free health care. Many candidates did attempt to justify their solutions, though they needed to further develop their justifications.