



Global Poverty

BLOCK 5 TEAM 6

PUBLISHED MARCH 24, 2008

Exploring Global Poverty

“Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom.” —World Bank

A mother gives medicine to her baby at the hospital in Manica.



Ensuring the survival of future generations is one of the most urgent problems facing Africa. That means saving the lives of both mothers and their babies. One out of every six children in the continent dies before the age of five. For women, the chance of dying in childbirth is three times higher in Africa than in industrialized nations.



A 14-month old boy lives in the outskirts of Erdenet, Mongolia.

On this small strip of land—bordered by a copper mine, a lake of toxic waste, and a garbage dump—about a dozen families are raising children. Clean water is a 90-minute walk away, and like other children this boy is often filthy and sick. One out of every two children in the world live in poverty. Over 1 billion people live without clean water. Each day 4,400 children die from disease related to poor sanitation and access to water.

How do you measure poverty?

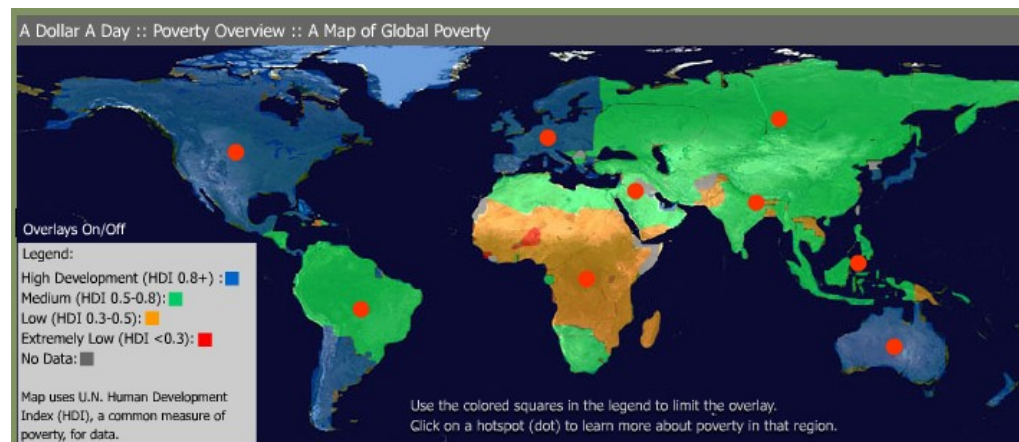
[Relative poverty](#)

[Absolute poverty](#)

Did you know?

The GDP of the 41 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (567 million people) is **less than** the wealth of the world’s 7 richest people **combined**.

Extent of Poverty



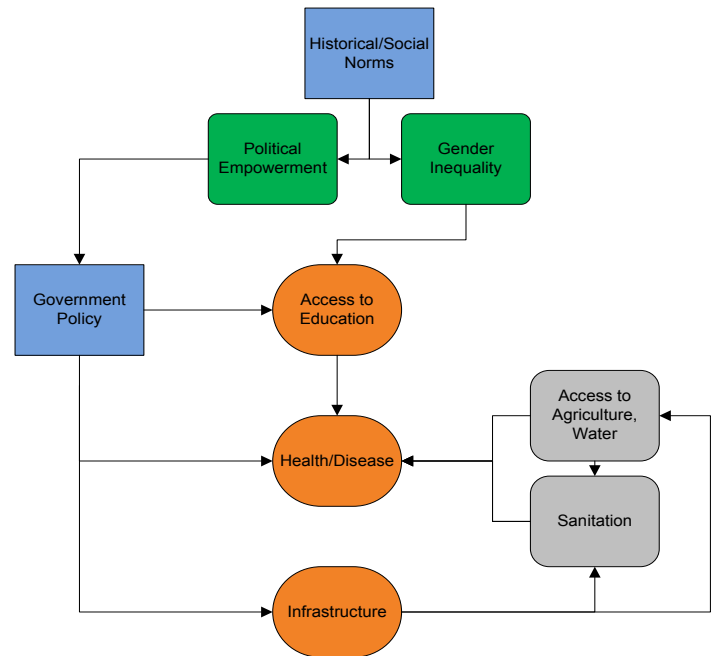
The regions with the highest levels of poverty overlap with the developing world. Almost one-half of the world’s population lives in poverty, mainly in [sub-Saharan Africa](#) and [South Asia](#). Africa has the highest percentages of poverty per country in the world. Southeast Asia has the largest number of impoverished people in the world.

Explaining Poverty's History

Much of the present history of poverty results from the legacy of colonialism. During this era, wealthier countries exploited poorer, more resource-rich countries.

Once colonialism ended, former colonies were unable to sustain themselves. These newly independent countries, who had once relied on the colonizing country for infrastructure, development, and government, began to fall into poverty. This legacy has been felt throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.

Controversially, some critics have called present-day globalization “neocolonialism,” in which multinational corporations have taken the place of colonizing countries. These companies are taking advantage of cheaper materials and labor from developing countries, thus increasing the reliance of the impoverished on the wealthy.



Extending a Helping Hand



Click on the camera to watch a video outlining these goals.

1. [International Monetary Fund](#)– established to promote international monetary cooperation and orderly and stable exchange arrangements, to foster economic growth and high employment, and to provide temporary financial assistance to countries with balance of payment problems.
2. [World Health Organization](#)– has a six-point mission to promote development; foster health security; strengthen health systems; harness research, information, and evidence; enhance partnerships with other organizations; and improve performance.
3. [World Bank](#)– provides financial and technical assistance to developing countries. The International Development Association (IDA) serves the world’s poorest countries. The International Bank for Development & Reconstruction (IBRD) serves middle-income nations.
4. [UN Millennium Project](#)– established to direct the countries of the world towards reducing poverty, hunger, and disease. Eight goals were established to allow surveillance and monitoring of progress. These eight goals are illustrated by the icons below.



Click on each of these buttons to view a more in-depth analysis.