

Poverty: A Global Perspective



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What is Global Poverty?

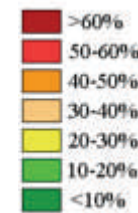
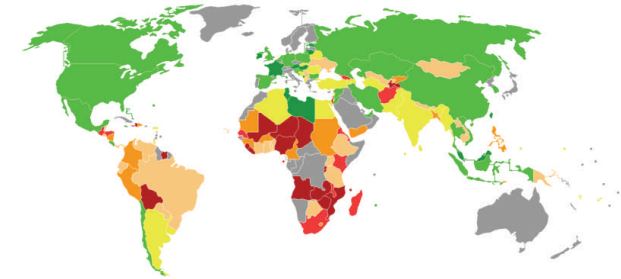
People who live in absolute poverty cannot afford the basic resources to maintain a livelihood. The World Bank defines living in absolute poverty as existing under either one or two dollars a day, depending on the country's level of development. In 2001, the world bank estimated that approximately 1.1 billion people live on less than one US\$1 a day and 2.7 billion live on less than two dollars a day.

Over the past century, there has been an improvement in the number of people living under one dollar a day. However, much of this progress has been regional. Even though 400 million people living in East Asia have moved above the absolute poverty line within the last 25 years, poverty has almost doubled in sub-Saharan Africa.



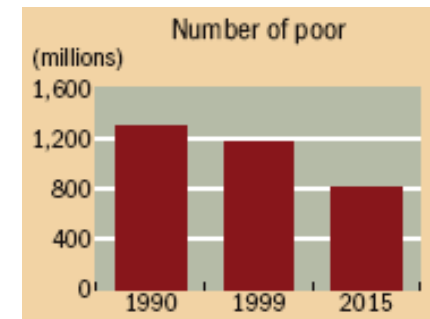
Facts and Figures

Percentage of population living in poverty shows widespread problem



Source: CIA World Factbook, 2008

The number of people living under \$1 a day is declining



Source: World Bank, 2003

Consequences of Global Poverty

People living in poverty have lower life expectancy, higher levels of child mortality, and malnutrition. Furthermore, these problems are exacerbated by a lack of education amongst the working young and a shortage of quality health care services. On a national level, some least developed countries owe high levels of debt to the richest countries, limiting their ability to foster national growth.



Due to extreme poverty, of the world's population:

- 13% lack adequate nutrition
- 17% lack access to safe drinking water
- 15% have no access to basic medical care
- 17% lack adequate shelter
- 17% are illiterate

What's Being Done

The international community believes there can be an end to extreme poverty. The following are the some of those most notable initiatives and organizations:



United Nations Millennium Development Goals: There are eight millennium development goals that establish concrete targets for reducing extreme poverty and its related consequences by 2015.



World Bank and the IMF: The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are important sources of funding and technical assistance to developing countries. In order to receive a low-interest loan from one of these institutions, countries have to implement "structural changes" that will improve a country's economic prosperity and competitiveness.

Other Programs: Other well-known organizations that promote poverty reduction include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Compassion International, the Clinton Global Initiative, and the ONE celebrity campaign.

Joining the Cause is Easy

Today, Globalization has created a sense of "One Society," where the world's problems are all connected, and affect people of all nations. As a result, the movement to tackle the world's most difficult problems of disparity has grown in strength and magnitude. Each individual can do their part by:

Getting Involved

By volunteering with established organizations, or working for a non-profit organization, you can directly impact the lives of the world's impoverished.

Websites like the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation* are a great source for finding where you may be needed.

Staying Informed

The problems of global poverty are complex and dynamic. Knowing what is happening around the world, and staying current with the issues, is important.

Raising Awareness

Make people aware of their ability to help. By coming together, we are in a position to combat global poverty in new, innovative ways.