

Poverty in Africa

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Africa is a continent with plenty of natural resources is indisputable. Yet people in Africa are characterized and decrepit by endemic hunger, genocides, wars, corruption, massive underdevelopment and all sorts of countless sufferings. Judging this beautiful continent from its natural resources, one would expect to see people cruising in an age of high mass consumption. Instead, Africa is full of people still struggling with their take-off process. Much of the population lies in poverty, hopelessness and underdevelopment that have remained a constant even in a 21st century experiencing huge technological advancements and globalization.

Poverty is the deficiency or lack of access to those things which improves the quality of life, including food, shelter and safe water, but also such as 'intangibles' as the opportunity to learn, to engage in meaningful employment or to enjoy the respect of one's fellow citizens. While some define poverty primarily in economic terms, others consider social and political factors to be intrinsic. Although poverty is generally considered to be undesirable due to the pain and suffering it may cause, in certain spiritual contexts, 'voluntary poverty' involving the rejection of material goods, is seen as virtuous by some. Poverty is a condition which may affect individuals or collective groups, and is not confined to the developing nations.

Many different factors have been cited to explain why poverty occurs. However, no single explanation has gained universal acceptance.

Environmental Factors

Erosion, intensive farming is often leads to cruel cycle exhaustion of soil fertility and decline of agricultural yields and hence increased poverty to the people, since most of the economic in Africa depends on agricultural. This erosion is also caused by much removal of trees due to lumbering activities, and other domestic activities such as fuel, this is mostly done by the women of Africa.

Desertification and overgrazing. About 40 percent of the world's agricultural land is seriously degraded, due to keeping of more number of livestock in one area, this is hence cause destruction of the land and thus unable for agricultural.

Geographic factors, for example access to fertile land, fresh water, minerals, energy, and other natural resources. Presence or absence of natural features helping or limiting communication, such as mountains, deserts, sailable rivers, or coastline. Historically, geography has prevented or slowed the spread of new technology to areas such as the Americas and Sub-Saharan Africa. The climate also limits what crops and farm animals may be used on similarly fertile lands.

On the other hand, research on the resource irritation has found that countries with an abundance of natural resources creating quick wealth from exports tend to have less long-term prosperity than countries with less of these natural resources.

Economics

Unemployment. Many people in Africa are not employed due to scarcity resource, this make African people to have poor standard of living.

Capital flight by which the wealthy in a society shift their assets to off-shore tax havens deprives nations of revenue needed to break the cruel cycle of poverty.

Unfair terms of trade, in particular, the very high subsidies to and protective tariffs for agriculture in the developed world. This drains the taxed money and increases the prices for the consumers in developed world, decreases competition and efficiency, prevents exports by more competitive agricultural and other sectors in the developed world due to corrective trade barriers and undermines the very type of industry in which the developing countries do have comparative advantages.

Tax havens which tax their own citizens and companies but not those from other nations and refuse to disclose information necessary for foreign taxation. This enables large scale political corruption, tax evasion and organized crime in the foreign nations.

Health Care

Poor access to affordable health care makes individuals less resilient to economic hardship and more vulnerable to poverty.

Inadequate nutrition in childhood, itself an effect of poverty, undermines the ability of individuals to develop their full human capabilities and thus makes them more susceptible to poverty. Lack of essential minerals such as iodine and iron can impair brain development. Disease, especially AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and others tremendously trouble developing nations, which perpetuate poverty by diverting individual, community, and national health and economic resources from investment and productivity. Many tropical nations are affected by parasites like malaria, schistosomiasis, and trypanosomiasis that are not present in moderate climates. The Tsetse fly makes it very difficult to use many animals in agriculture in afflicted regions.

Clinical depression undermines the resistance of individuals and when not properly treated makes them vulnerable to poverty.

Similarly substance abuse, including for example alcoholism and drug abuse when not properly treated undermines resilience and can consign people to cruel poverty cycles.

Governance

Lacking democracy in poor countries: For example, in terms of life expectancy, poor democracies typically enjoy life expectancies that are nine years longer than poor autocracies. Opportunities of finishing secondary school are 40 percent higher. Infant mortality rates are 25 percent lower.

Agricultural yields are about 25 percent higher, on average, in poor democracies than in poor autocracies—an important fact, given that 70 percent of

the population in poor countries is often rural-based. Poor democracies don't spend any more on their health and education sectors as a percentage of GDP than do poor autocracies, nor do they get higher levels of foreign assistance. The governance effectiveness of governments has a major impact on the delivery of socioeconomic outcomes for poor populations.

Weak rule of law can discourage investment and thus perpetuate poverty. Poor management of resource revenues can mean that rather than lifting countries out of poverty, revenues from such activities as oil production or gold mining actually leads to a resource curse.

Poor access to affordable education traps individuals and countries in cycles of poverty.

Demographics and Social Factors

Overpopulation and lack of access to birth control methods. Note that population growth slows or even become negative as poverty is reduced due to the demographic transition

Historical factors, for example imperialism, colonialism made great exploitation of African's natural resource, man power and left African nothing.

The effects of poverty may also be causes, as listed above, thus creating a "poverty cycle" operating across multiple levels, individual, local, national and global, those living in poverty and lacking access to essential health services, suffering hunger or even starvation.

However these problems in Africa can be reduced or little eliminated by these some alternatives, African are supposed to participate more in economic activities, this can be done through their government by asking loan. Apart from that the governments of African should asking for the loan, grants and other services to the developed countries so as to reduce problem of health services. Also the leader should be fully committed, this result to reduce problem of corruption, the problem of unemployment can also be solved through foreign investment.

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