

Fast Facts: The Faces of Poverty

More than **one billion people** in the world live on **less than one dollar a day**. Another 2.7 billion struggle to survive on less than two dollars per day. Poverty in the developing world, however, goes far beyond income poverty. It means having to walk more than one mile everyday simply to collect water and fire-wood; it means suffering diseases that were eradicated from rich countries decades ago. Every year **eleven million children die**—most under the age of five and more than six million from **completely preventable** causes like malaria, diarrhea and pneumonia.

In some deeply impoverished nations less than half of the children are in primary school and under 20 percent go to secondary school. Around the world, a total of **114 million children** do not get even a basic education and **584 million women are illiterate**.

Following are basic facts outlining the roots and manifestations of the poverty affecting more than one third of our world.

Health

- Every year **six million children die** from malnutrition before their fifth birthday.
- More than **50 percent of Africans** suffer from water-related diseases such as cholera and infant diarrhea.
- **Everyday** HIV/AIDS kills **6,000 people** and another **8,200 people** are infected with this deadly virus.
- Every 30 seconds an **African child dies of malaria**—more than one million child deaths a year.
- Each year, approximately **300 to 500 million** people are infected with malaria. Approximately three million people die as a result.
- **TB is the leading AIDS-related killer** and in some parts of Africa, **75 percent** of people with HIV also have TB.

Hunger

- More than **800 million people** go to bed hungry every day...300 million are children.
- Of these 300 million children, only **eight percent** are victims of famine or other emergency situations. **More than 90 percent** are suffering long-term malnourishment and micronutrient deficiency.
- **Every 3.6 seconds** another person dies of starvation and the large majority are children under the age of 5.

Water

- More than **2.6 billion people**—over 40 per cent of the world's population—do not have basic sanitation, and more than one billion people still use unsafe sources of drinking water.
- **Four out of every ten people** in the world don't have access even to a simple latrine.
- **Five million people**, mostly children, die each year from water-borne diseases.

Agriculture

- In 1960, Africa was a net exporter of food; today the continent **imports one-third of its grain**.
- **More than 40 percent of Africans** do not even have the ability to obtain sufficient food on a day-to-day basis.
- Declining soil fertility, land degradation, and the AIDS pandemic have led to a 23 percent **decrease in food production per capita** in the last 25 years even though population has increased dramatically.
- For the African farmer, conventional **fertilizers cost two to six times more** than the world market price.

The devastating effect of poverty on women

- Above **80 percent** of farmers in Africa are women.
- More than 40 percent of **women in Africa** do not have access to basic education.
- If a girl is educated for six years or more, as an adult her prenatal care, postnatal care and **childbirth survival rates**, will dramatically and consistently **improve**.
- Educated mothers immunize their children **50 percent more** often than mothers who are not educated.
- AIDS spreads **twice** as quickly among uneducated girls than among girls that have even some schooling.
- The children of a woman with five years of primary school education have a survival rate **40 percent higher** than children of women with no education.
- A woman living in sub-Saharan Africa has a **1 in 16 chance of dying** in pregnancy or childbirth. This compares with a **1 in 3,700 risk** for a woman from North America.
- **Every minute**, a woman somewhere dies in pregnancy or childbirth. This adds up to **1,400 women dying each day**—an estimated 529,000 each year—from pregnancy-related causes.
- **Almost half** of births in developing countries take place without the help of a skilled birth attendant.