

Poverty

Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not being able to go to a school, not knowing how to read, not being able to speak properly. 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”.

The World Bank Group

Until recently, poverty was defined as an income that is too low to purchase a “minimum basket of goods”. However, this simple measure does not fully portray the extreme social, health and economic disadvantage suffered by people living in poverty. Nor does it reflect the dispossession, marginalization and inequity suffered by Indigenous peoples. Today the term poverty is broadly used to describe the deprivation, social exclusion and vulnerability that burden many millions of people throughout the world.

Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, May 2001

Poverty is the condition of lacking economic access to fundamental human needs such as food, shelter and safe drinking water. While some define poverty primarily in economic terms, others consider social and political arrangements to be intrinsic. Poverty is generally considered to be undesirable, because of the pain and suffering it is associated with. Poverty is a condition which may affect individuals or collective groups, and is not confined to the developing nations. In some developed countries, examples include homelessness and ghettos. Rubbish picking is a common livelihood strategy for people living in poverty around the world, with many communities growing around garbage dumps

From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia



Over one billion people in developing countries live in extreme income poverty, surviving on less than US \$1 a day. Recent reductions in global poverty levels have not been shared equally across the developing world. While some regions have benefited from economic growth, others have slipped further into poverty. Nearly one-third of people in South Asia and half of those in Sub-Saharan Africa live in extreme poverty. The gap between the rich and poor has increased within most developing countries, even those that have benefited from economic growth. Children living in poverty are more likely to suffer from malnutrition, receive less health care and are at much greater risk of dying before the age of five. Women and girls are more likely to be affected by poverty than men and boys, because of their unequal access to economic and political opportunities. Those living in poverty suffer lower life expectancy. Every year nearly 11 million children living in poverty die before their fifth birthday. Those living in poverty often suffer from hunger. 800 million people go to bed hungry every night.

Famous quotes about Poverty

Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.

Aristotle (384 BC - 7 March 322 BC), Greek philosopher and scientist

The greatest of evils and the worst of crimes is poverty. The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that's the essence of inhumanity.

Bernard Shaw, an Irish playwright, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1925

The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize in 1986

We must address the root causes of terrorism to end it for all time. I believe putting resources into improving the lives of poor people is a better strategy than spending it on guns.

Muhammad Yunus, Indian diplomat and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2006

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1984

Cause and Effect of Poverty

Economic aspects of poverty may focus on material needs, typically including the necessities of daily living, such as food, clothing, shelter, or safe drinking water. Poverty in this sense may be understood as a condition in which a person or community is deprived of the basic needs for a minimum standard of well-being and life, particularly as a result of a persistent lack of wealth and income, or wealth and income disparities.

Analysis of social aspects of poverty links conditions of scarcity to aspects of the distribution of resources and power in a society and recognizes that poverty may be a function of the diminished capability of people to live the kinds of lives they value. The social aspects of poverty may include lack of access to information, education, health care, or political power. Poverty may also be understood as an aspect of unequal social status and inequitable social relationships, experienced as social exclusion, dependency, and diminished capacity to participate, or to develop meaningful connections with other people in society.

In Sub-Saharan Africa extreme poverty increased from 41 percent in 1981 to 46 percent in 2001, increasing the number of people living in poverty from 231 million to 318 million. What are the underlying factors that detrmines poverty?

- In a wage-based economic system, lack of access to jobs at appropriately skilled levels can deprive individuals of essential income and undermine human dignity and sense of worth.
- Developing countries face a range of obstacles to trading competitively on international markets which are the focus of the 'fair trade' campaign associated with the global *Make Poverty History* campaign. Unfair terms of trade, in particular, the very high subsidies to and protective tariffs for some sectors in the developed world, is seen as a major cause of enduring poverty in developing countries heavily reliant on commodity exports.
- Low wages can undermine the ability of households to save and thus make them less resilient to shocks in the economy and more vulnerable to poverty.
- Poor access to affordable health care makes individuals less resilient to economic hardship and more vulnerable to poverty. Lack of dental care leads to edentulism and lack of teeth restricts nutritional options.
- 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 vulnerable to poverty. Lack of essential minerals such as iron and iodine can impair brain development. In developing countries, it is estimated that 40% of children aged 4 and under, suffer from anemia because of insufficient iron in their diets. An estimated 2 billion people (one-third of the total global population) are affected by iodine deficiency, including 285 million 6- to 12-year-old children.
- Disease, specifically diseases of poverty: AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis and others overwhelmingly afflict developing nations, which perpetuate poverty by diverting individual, community, and national health and economic resources from investment and productivity.
- Similarly substance abuse, including for example methatemine (tik), alcoholism and drug abuse when not properly treated undermines resilience and can consign people to vicious poverty cycles.
- Other factors are historical based, for example imperialism and colonialism and discrimination of various kinds, such as age discrimination, stereotyping, gender discrimination, and racial discrimination.

From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia

Poverty and Blindness



Australian philanthropist, the late Professor Fred Hollows, who had a vision for a world where no one was needlessly blind, inspires *The Fred Hollows Foundation*. In ±40 developing countries, *The Foundation* offer help to restore sight to people and their families. They help communities to forge their own path out of poverty, through integrated programs that focus on nutrition, literacy, aural health, eye health, women's and family health, training and development and community engagement. These programs have made a significant impact in helping to break the cycle of poverty, improving the health and well being of families and empowering the communities to help themselves.

Many of the causes of blindness in developing countries can be linked to poverty. Adults and children living in poverty are more likely to suffer from malnutrition, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation. This places them at much higher risk of contracting or developing eye diseases. People affected by blindness fall further into poverty. They are no longer able to work and provide for their family. Simple daily tasks become impossible and they must rely on others to care for them. Many people fall into despair. A cycle of poverty and disability begins. Studies show that around 82% of the world's disabled people live below the poverty line.

Yet, most blindness in developing countries can be prevented or treated. With simple intervention, many people can have their sight and livelihoods restored. *The Fred Hollows Foundation* works in some of the poorest developing countries in the world. Their work has lasting benefits for individuals, their families, and whole communities. Many developing



countries do not have the resources to properly treat, support and rehabilitate people with disabilities, particularly those who live in isolated regions. A family member must often stay home to care for their blind relative, and another source of family income is lost. Very often the carer is a child who is unable to attend school, thus reducing their future options for work and life. *The Foundation* develops sustainable programs, which act as a catalyst for change. They partner with local blindness prevention and other health organisations in more than 38 countries throughout Africa, Asia (South and South East), Australia and the Pacific to support and develop eye health systems.

In South Africa an estimated 225,000 people are needlessly blind from cataracts of which 30,000 live in the poorest province, the Eastern Cape. In November 2001 *The Fred Hollows Foundation South Africa* signed its first Memorandum of Agreement with the Eastern Cape Department of Health to restore sight to the tens of thousands of South Africans and to act as a catalyst for improving health, with special focus on rural communities.



The Fred Hollows Foundation South Africa is also fortunate to have the backing of the following program partners:

- The Atlantic Philanthropies
- GoldFields Ltd
- South African Airways
- Donators to the adopt-a-patient sponsorship program.

The success of the *Fred Hollows Foundation South Africa* project is based on a number of key objectives, including; expansion of available services, securing space and equipment at strategic regional hospitals, the establishment of a training centre of excellence and the acceptance of a training curriculum for appropriate clinicians.

Fred Hollows Foundation <www.hollows.org/>

Poverty and Edentulism



A substantial segment of the population will continue to become partially and fully edentulous due to neglect and a lack of financial resources to access basic dental services to have their natural teeth attended to. The structure of the teeth and soft tissues that were once there needs to be replaced; otherwise your health and quality of life will be compromised. An inadequate denture or lack of dentures may both result in poor oral health. The fact that “quacks” are providing a denture service under unhygienic conditions to the indigent population creates a threat of transmittable diseases, including TB, Hepatitis B and possibly HIV/Aids. These quacks only came into existence because of economic reasons and the costs of dentists. Suitably qualified denturists should displace this unsavoury service.

The rehabilitation of toothlessness is not only a health care problem, because needs and demands for dentures are influenced by values and beliefs, as well as social, demographic and economic background of an individual or society. The affordability of the most basic of all dental services, artificial dentures, is beyond the economic ability of large numbers of denture wearers. A major portion of denture wearers in South Africa count amongst pensioners and the poor, of whom many do not have access to Medical Schemes and already mostly falls outside the market that can afford the services of privately practicing dentists.

The Society for Clinical Dental Technology agrees with the principles adopted by *The Fred Hollows Foundation* that destitute communities need help to forge their own path out of poverty, through integrated programs that focus on nutrition, literacy, aural health, eye health, women’s and family health, training and development and community engagement. We have an important addition to add to this concept and that is the supply of dentures to rehabilitate the edentulous, in order to restore their human dignity, self-esteem, employability capacity and social acceptance. These programs have made a significant impact in helping to break the spiral of poverty, improving the health and well being of families and empowering the communities to help themselves.

There is a parallel between training appropriate clinicians to perform Cataract operations to serve the poor in rural Eastern Cape, and the clinical training of dental technicians to provide direct denture services as licensed denturists to the poor and the elderly who can not afford the services of a dentist or specialist dentist.

In the rural areas many marginal dental practices cannot really exist economically as a result of the average income and size of those communities. With the sustainability of such private dental surgeries in jeopardy, it makes good economical sense to deploy state dentists and/or dental therapists doing emergency and basic oral health procedures through weekly sessions in rural district clinics. Denturists can serve denture needs directly in these rural areas, working in a spirit of co-operation with other health professionals in the supply of basic oral health and removable prosthetic demands.



The Society of Clinical Dental Technology may be able to take the (moral) lead and provide more cost-effective denture services to the underprivileged communities in SA, without undergoing a Dentistry degree. The Society are currently looking into the concept of providing free dentures to people in a destitute area, possibly through a district clinic and getting sponsors from dental suppliers and manufacturers to provide materials and teeth for this project. Dental technicians with ambitions to become Denturists will be making the dentures and doing the clinical work under the supervision of a qualified Denturist in a Humanitarian Outreach Program, which will prove competence and need to our Government. Possibly this work could be evaluated as part of a practical module of a training program in a specific formal education track connected to a distance learning program from a recognized Denturism Training Institution with International accreditation. The intra-oral procedures, which experienced dental technicians understand better than many newly qualified dentists (only superficial exposure to prosthetics) will be carried out under supervision of a Denturist registered elsewhere.



The ideal location of such a project would be on the Cape Flats area of Cape Town in the Western Cape, dubbed: the *Toothless Capital of Africa*, where the headquarters of *The Society for Clinical Dental Technology* has been established.

The Society has received interest from a number of practicing denturists overseas to come and do voluntary work on this project (and possibly sponsorships too). This project is not about a license to practice illegally in the open market without control, or in competition with registered professionals, it is about FREE humanitarian services to destitute people in need, who is served neither by the monopoly holder in private practice nor by the State. It is about restoring human dignity, helping to break the spiral of poverty, improving the health and well being of individuals and empowering communities to help themselves. It is about changing hopelessness into a smile, because somebody cares enough to make a difference!