

## Poverty in Africa: Natural or Human-made?

Today, the earth's population is 7 billion. One-sixth of this figure go to bed on an empty stomach every night. More than half of the people on earth live in poverty, unable to sustain an independent livelihood. For some, the reason for his poverty is the inefficient use of natural resources that leaves people hungry or poor. Nevertheless, there is a surplus in food production on earth.

Poverty technically means living on an average of \$2 a day. Beyond the technical conceptualization, poverty is a series of conditions in which people are permanently deprived of their basic needs, such as food, clean water, and medication. Not only are they affected, but also their children suffer due to a lack of material resources. Those are poverty-stricken are also victims of epidemics, low-level education and normally have a short lifespan.

There are different reasons behind poverty. Impoverishment can be an outcome of natural conditions, or can be a produced situation, or even a result of some international politics.

First of all, because their geographical situations are not kind, some countries in the world are naturally poor such as Mali and Chad. The people who live in these inhospitable parts of the Earth, do not have enough natural resources for sustainable life. The natural conditions such as sporadic rains, drought, desertification or heavy and long winter seasons play their parts in impoverishing these particular lands. So, it can be called natural poverty due to uncontrollable and insurmountable causes.

Secondly, although some countries, on the other hand, have economic circumstances and geographical conditions that are good, some part of the populace still suffer from poverty. But this time, the cause of the poverty is not natural. Rather, it is sort of man-made. Some economic policies, unjust social systems and the lopsided distribution of wealth as can be found in these countries, such as Egypt and Nigeria, are the main reasons for impoverishment.

Thirdly, some countries have quite positive economic and political structures. However, their people, or some of them, are living in poverty due to the dealings of their governments with the international creditors. Many countries today have to allocate a good part of their budget to pay off international debt, such as Angola, South Africa. To make this possible, the governments have to cut some expenses that are directly linked to the quality of lives of citizens such as social grants, agricultural subsidizes and tax relief. Notwithstanding, there are enough natural resources to feed all population on the African continent, the poverty rate is very high. What makes things worse is, the majority of the poor are in these conditions because of the aforementioned "non-natural" factors and policies. Additionally, unbalanced modernization programs produce new greater poverty in the suburbs of big cities, such as Darussalam of Tanzania. Commodity trading in the modern age does not put the benefit of the people first. Rather, the economic interests of corporates are more important. Unfortunately, the most blatant manifestation of this is that is in Africa.