



Forum: Sustainable Development Goals 1

Issue: Addressing the issue of poverty in the sub-Saharan Africa

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Introduction

There are specific overarching factors that make sub-saharan Africa more susceptible to poverty than the rest of the world, making it the slowest to fight against the issue of poverty for decades. The Sub-Saharan region of Africa consists of countries in the South of Africa, under the Sahara, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. This region of Africa in particular was blessed with tropical land and precious metals, however some countries were also a victim to colonisation, corruption, inequality and more, bringing down its overall living lifestyle and increasing the possibility of living in poverty; making them twice as more likely to live in poor conditions compared to other regions around the world, with them building up 60% of the global population living in poverty in 2020.

The amount of people living in such unfortunate situations increased from 278 million in 1990 to 413 million in 2015 as the population rapidly grew and the region became even more vulnerable. Sub-saharan African region remains to be the only developing region where the first sustainable development goal has yet to be achieved, the World Bank estimated that 20% of all people in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) will still be living in poverty in 2030, as roughly 40% of people continue to live under updated poverty line, \$1.90. These unbearable conditions will continue to consume lives in SSA unless the governments and allied countries significantly step up their poverty reduction efforts.

Neglected by its own leaders, this portion of the population are not provided with basic necessities, the following significantly feeding poverty in the region; income inequality, the dependence on oil, frequent cases of HIV especially in young women, increased civil war phases, corruption, poor management of land (exhausted and infertile land). On the other hand, some progress is still quite visible, economic development, higher official development assistance and aid received, urbanization and access to clean water sources.



Though, Coronavirus, a pandemic affecting the development of hundreds of countries, is possibly another great hurdle that stands between us achieving the first SDG and the endless downfall deeper into the complex situation of poverty, slowing down 2020's GDP per capita growth drastically while also posing challenges on the health systems in SSA. An addition of 26 million people in SSA, 58 million in total, may fall into extreme poverty defined by the international poverty line. Poverty rates will most likely increase in the future as the pandemic continues to be an issue, setting back the poverty reduction by around 5 years. Countries in this region will continue struggling for many years if nothing is done today, the following research report will help you conclude on a resolution that may be the next step towards achieving our target of no poverty.

Definition of Key Terms

Liberalisation:

process of the elimination of the control of the state over economic activities

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA):

The countries that lie south of the Sahara in Africa

Geopolitics:

The international relations between two or more countries as influenced by geographical factors like location

Least Developed Country:

Low income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development, highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks with low levels of human assets.

More Developed Country:

Countries that are advanced socially and economically,

Human Development Index (HDI):

A method to measure an average achievement in a country involving key dimensions in human development

Democracy:

a system of government by the whole population, typically through elected representatives



Unconstitutional:

not in accordance with the political constitutions (procedures)

Desertification:

the process by which fertile land becomes desert typically as a result of drought or inappropriate agriculture

Background Information

Democracy

Africa experiences a wave of democratization over the past 30 years (following the independence in 1989) the increase in democracy significantly affecting the income per capita in sub-saharan Africa. However, the democratic downfall negatively impacted the population of the countries as each country experiences political back-sliding, where elections are won by the use of illicit tactics and unconstitutional seizures of power, instead of the rightful votes of the people. The corruption in the government therefore led to the unfair pays, rise of inequality, increased rates of unemployment and useless healthcare system.

The illicit acts

Africa learnt how to win elections through intimidation at the polls (like in Nigeria in 2007, where the controversial general elections were won by Umaru Yar'Adua as Human Rights Watch observed a widespread of violence and vote-rigging all around the country, intimidating people to vote for a specific party, yet nothing was concluded and no changes were made after the elections as the President continued to rule for three more years);

the manipulation of vote counts (The Kenyan elections in 2007 were an example, as Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner on December 27, 2007, creating a government that took part in the most brutal killings witnessed in Kenya after they had won after a series of *confusing* events. The rival at the time, Raila Odinga, was on the path to win, even being declared the winner behind closed doors, however suddenly as the voting continued, Kibaki's results became much stronger as it slowly surpassed Odinga and won the elections);

the repression of the opposition (Zimbabwe in 2008 had a war disguised as the elections, more than 100 people had died and thousands had suffered beatings as the elections continued before declaring the former president as the winner of the 2008's general elections. The violence during this election repressed the opposition and intimidated them, forcing people to vote for the man responsible for the violence, Robert Gabriel Mugabo).



Presidents also found ways to prolong their rule, some holding their presidency of their respective states for an average of 19 years, (the controversial president of Zimbabwe as mentioned before could be the perfect example for this, Robert Gabriel Mugabe was a part of the government since 1980, Minister until 1987 before being elected to be president in 1987 and continuing his rule until 2017. Along his path, he had done almost everything mentioned above to make sure he won the elections every single time, stretching out his ruling years as much as possible. Mugabe used his power as president to control the results of the future elections, effecting the conditions of his own country by neglecting his duties for power.

Income inequality

The high levels of income inequality found in the sub-saharan African regions were shaped by the natural endowments in the regions, its history politically and economically formed a society where income equality is the norm, where the lower class are not paid with their rightful incomes and men are more prioritised than women in terms of receiving wages, causing an imbalance in the countries, widening the class gap and making the poor even poorer and the rich even richer

Distribution of assets

First reason being the distribution of major economic assets, particularly the ability to own lands, not being able to personally earn money or be given the right proportions of incomes/profits through businesses on that piece of land. Assets distribution can potentially be a platform for most to improve their lifestyle, using it as a background income to keep their families fed in unpredictable circumstances.

Colonisation

Early colonialism in the second half of the nineteenth century also shaped the ideas of inequality. Europe viewed the African colonies as a source of wealth and natural resources, this colonization severely disrupted the natural nation-state development process in Africa as the westerners brought in ideas that interjected Africa's process of being independent and earning their way to the top, using their land for their benefits. However, the disruption caused the countries to marginalise certain groups of people, providing them with a lower income

Conflicts

Conflicts negatively impact the economic growth of a country while poverty also remains the major cause of conflict. Armed conflicts have affected over half of the Sub-saharan African countries in the last 20 years, affecting economic, social and political structures, all leading to poverty. The damage of agricultural land, housing, infrastructures and relations between societies within a country or with



foreign communities are drastic, feeding to the issue of poverty in already very vulnerable countries. (Chad's GDP per capita fell to half its 1960 level after the 1979-80 civil war, Sierra Leone)

Agricultural industry

With an abundance of natural resources, SSA 's number of undernourished people has increased substantially, an estimated 180 million from 1995 to 1997. The misuse of fertile land, probably caused by the colonisers, the soil is exhausted through overfarming (overgrazing and overcultivation), catalyzing the process of desertification, a risk of losing all fertile land and making it completely useless, unable to produce crops. With a limited budget, farmers are unable to buy fertilizers to help promote growth, causing the soil to wear out, also causing desertification.

Migration

The threat of desertification pushes people further south in Africa, looking for land to settle in with enough resources, this causes overpopulation, and therefore the increase in demand on usual necessities which causes sellers to increase prices, causing an imbalance in the community, forcing people to live in harsh conditions.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Action Against Hunger

An organisation providing aid for malnourished children and adults while also seeking a solution to the universal issue of poverty, currently helping around 20 countries alone in Africa and providing them access to clean drinkable water and sustainable solutions to hunger, avoiding the countries from staying dependant on them and instead teaching them how to be independent to help themselves during times of need.

World Bank (WB)

An organisation and a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world, creating unique partnerships to reduce poverty and support development. Particularly in Africa, their goal is to connect every individual, business and government by 2030, something that can potentially boost growth and development by 2 percentage points each year and reduce poverty by 1 percentage point in SSA as stated by the World Bank itself.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

An international organisation that promotes policies to potentially improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. They provide a platform in which governments can



discuss to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems such as poverty or financial issues in this case

World Relief

Provides medical training and supplies to those affected by the outbreak in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia during the pandemic. Empowers communities to break through poverty by introducing programs associated to savings, health, nutrition, agriculture and even more by targeting churches, a trusted and respected group of people with access to many vulnerable communities

Oxfam International

A non-governmental organisation that collaborates with cotton producers to grow a range of crops and avoid being dependent on a single crop that could potentially fail in times of drought. They also work with local authorities to provide clean water, therefore reducing waterborne diseases. Oxfam is also helping build a dam on the Niger river to help manage desertification by collecting water and preventing over water flow.

The Eden Foundation

The Eden Foundation is an NGO set up in Sweden in 1985, which helped 20,000 households in the Dalli region of Niger. They help farmers and their families achieve a sustainable Lifestyle with the resources that are available to them.

United States of America

The relationship between the US and sub-Saharan Africa remains underdeveloped. The U.S trade with Africa had been declining since 2011, with only 1.5 percent of US exports to Sub-Saharan Africa. The U.S. supports the expansion and scale-up of lifesaving, high impact, health interventions in the areas of maternal and child health, family planning, tropical diseases, and malaria prevention and control. The U.S. also provides technical assistance, commodities and equipment to Sierra Leone's primary health care delivery system and the community health worker program.

United Kingdom

The UK has long been involved in Africa, and began providing aid since 1929 for many reasons. Though it was mostly for reasons such as the promotion of British commercial interests, they still had their focus on reduction of poverty in developing countries.

Uganda



Uganda's population living beneath the international poverty line declined from 53.2% in 2006 to 34.6% in 2013, one of the fastest in SSA to drive themselves out of poverty. One of their biggest achievements was the growth in the agricultural sector, the incomes through this sector were blooming due to favourable food prices and good weather, favouring the farmers even more, therefore enabling them to receive larger incomes. Road infrastructure, education, growth in urban centres, promotion of trade and access to new regional markets were all factors Uganda's government focused on in order to promote their development, a method that has clearly been proven to be effective

Tanzania

Tanzania is another country that used to be deep in the depths of poverty, however through recent acts to fight against the issue, it has certainly seen growth and development. The results from the 2019 Tanzania Poverty Assessment proves this as it recorded sustained economic growth and a decline in poverty persistently over the last 10 years. The continued government efforts to improve living conditions and lifestyles of an average citizen showed an increase in access to basic services and improvements in income, overall helping to reduce poverty

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1985-97	Impact of liberalization on markets in the Sub-Saharan Africa Globalization where businesses or other organizations develop an international influence on finance or growth in economy Economic shocks, unpredictable events that have a widespread impact on the economy
1998-1999	The decline in economy in the SSA region, which adopted the Soviet style planning in the 1970s. These policies emphasized on state intervention in agriculture and capital-intensive industrialization. These countries also experienced extreme levels of political violence and conflicts as a result of either internal or foreign tensions.
2002-2003	Impact of WTO agreement on low income countries, making recommendations to improve the participation of the least



	developed countries in international economic policy to promote economic growth
2004-2005	Hunger and food security continue to be an issue
1985-97	Impact of liberalization on markets in the Sub-Saharan Africa Globalization where businesses or other organizations develop an international influence on finance or growth in economy Economic shocks, unpredictable events that have a widespread impact on the economy
1998-1999	The decline in economy in the SSA region, which adopted the Soviet style planning in the 1970s. These policies emphasized on state intervention in agriculture and capital-intensive industrialization. These countries also experienced extreme levels of political violence and conflicts as a result of either internal or foreign tensions.
2002-2003	Impact of WTO agreement on low income countries, making recommendations to improve the participation of the least developed countries in international economic policy to promote economic growth
2004-2005	Hunger and food security continue to be an issue
2012-2013	After decades of research and advances in data and methods, measuring poverty and relating it with patterns of economic growth remains to be a complicated issue. UNI-WIDER's Growth and Poverty Project (GAPP) re-examines Africa's inequality, poverty and growth.
2020	Coronavirus outbreak

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa, 3 December 1984 (**A/RES/39/29**)
- Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, 30 January 2018 (**A/RES/72/233**)



- Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, 8 June 2015 (**E/RES/2015/3**)
- Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, 16 December 1998 (**A/RES/53/90**)
- New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support, 15 August 2013 (**A/RES/67/294**)
- The right to food, 17 December 2015 (**A/RES/70/154**)
- The right to development, 19 December 2011 (**A/RES/66/155**)
- Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, 19 December 2019 (**A/RES/74/220**)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Combating Desertification

The resolution (**A/RES/74/220**) encouraged public and private sectors to continue investing in development, adaptations and continue the scaling up of applications of technologies, to enable policies and methods along with tools to combat desertification, an issue that caused famine, malnutrition and rise in death rate in many sub-saharan countries. The process of combat is effective yet inefficient. The resolution also called upon parties and invited them to legally recognise rights to equal use and ownership of land for women and the *enhancement of women's equal access to land*.

Providing education to farmers

The Eden Foundation helps farmers and their families achieve a sustainable lifestyle with the resources that are available to them. Planting trees and bushes that can grow naturally without the need of fertilisers while also providing food were their main priorities. These specific plants stabilise the soil and prevent erosion and also shelter crops, further preventing erosion and increasing the yields. The project made farmers take responsibility for their own welfare after they are provided with free seeds and the right instructions on how to plant them, stimulating self growth. Using the project to make farmers independent instead of shaping them to rely on non-profit organisations to help them out of poverty, making them use their own knowledge and the education provided to them to implement their ideas and effectively climb their way out of poverty (solving issues like hunger that create a domino affect in solving other issues that are all linked to poverty)

Possible Solutions

Using online school to end poverty



Education plays a key role in ending poverty, though without access to education at the moment during the pandemic, online schooling in sub-Saharan Africa may be the solution, not only for today but for the future, avoiding the issues of teachers unable to attend classes, wasting the day of a student who arrives at school and affects their average grade at school. All hurdles that may be difficult previously can be avoided completely, like fees, ways and time to get to and from school. Online school, a cost-effective alternative to formal education, has been on rise in the sub-saharan region. However, the only downfall is the access to technology, devices to actually attend online classes. Students would need the internet with a sufficient speed and a device to use the internet on. With unpredictable patterns of electricity, this may seem unrealistic, however once implemented, online school will revolutionise education and help Africa grow economically.

Create Jobs

The first main path to get out of poverty is an opportunity to get a well-paying job. Creating jobs by building infrastructures or factories for example will not only develop the country physically, but the creation of jobs will decrease unemployment rates, increasing the amount of people who are provided with a sufficient income. This therefore will promote activity in the market, where more of the population will buy products, enabling the companies to earn profits, eventually helping the country out of poverty and boost national economy,

Improve healthcare systems

Improving healthcare systems will promote recovery in patients and decrease death rates, avoiding scenarios where the working member of the family is unavailable to provide income for the family due to health issues. Access to quality, affordable health coverage for millions is crucial for a developed country to free up income to be used on basic necessities or just improve the overall lifestyle of an individual.

Basic education on finance

Educating the population about finances and where to use your money, what to avoid, who to trust and where to store cash is very important in the maintenance of income. The 'dos and don'ts' of money can potentially help someone from a financial crisis, and prevent them from choosing an illegal lifestyle to provide for their families, a route that not only puts people deeper into debt and poverty but also impacts the overall economy of the country along with its reputation. Access to credit in poor countries can also help create sustainable industries that combat poverty and help develop nations.

Guiding Questions

1. To what extent is your delegation affected by this?



2. Where does your delegation stand in the issue? Are they providing aid or are they the ones suffering from poverty?
3. Is your delegation developed, underdeveloped or developing?
4. Is your delegation a modal example of a country that achieved the first SDG?
5. Has your delegation been involved in this issue in the past? If so, how so?
6. What limitations do your solutions have?
7. What organisations/countries could your delegation partner with to implement your solutions?

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Appendix or Appendices

- I. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-01/>

Explains sustainable goal 1, no poverty

- II. www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/poverty/

Explains poverty in depth

- III. www.dw.com/en/africa-more-poverty-despite-economic-growth/a-52840817

Clears out the confusion as Africa goes through a rise in economy along with the increase of poverty

- IV. hir.harvard.edu/ending-poverty-via-online-education/

An alternative technique to end poverty, interesting to add in resolutions (online school to end poverty)