

Poverty

Ch. 12 (p. 394-399, 409-412)





Poverty

- Definition: not being able to afford the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter
- Approx. 8 million people a year die from preventable poverty-related conditions, such as malnutrition/starvation or disease
- The world's poorest 3 billion people have less money combined than the richest 50 people

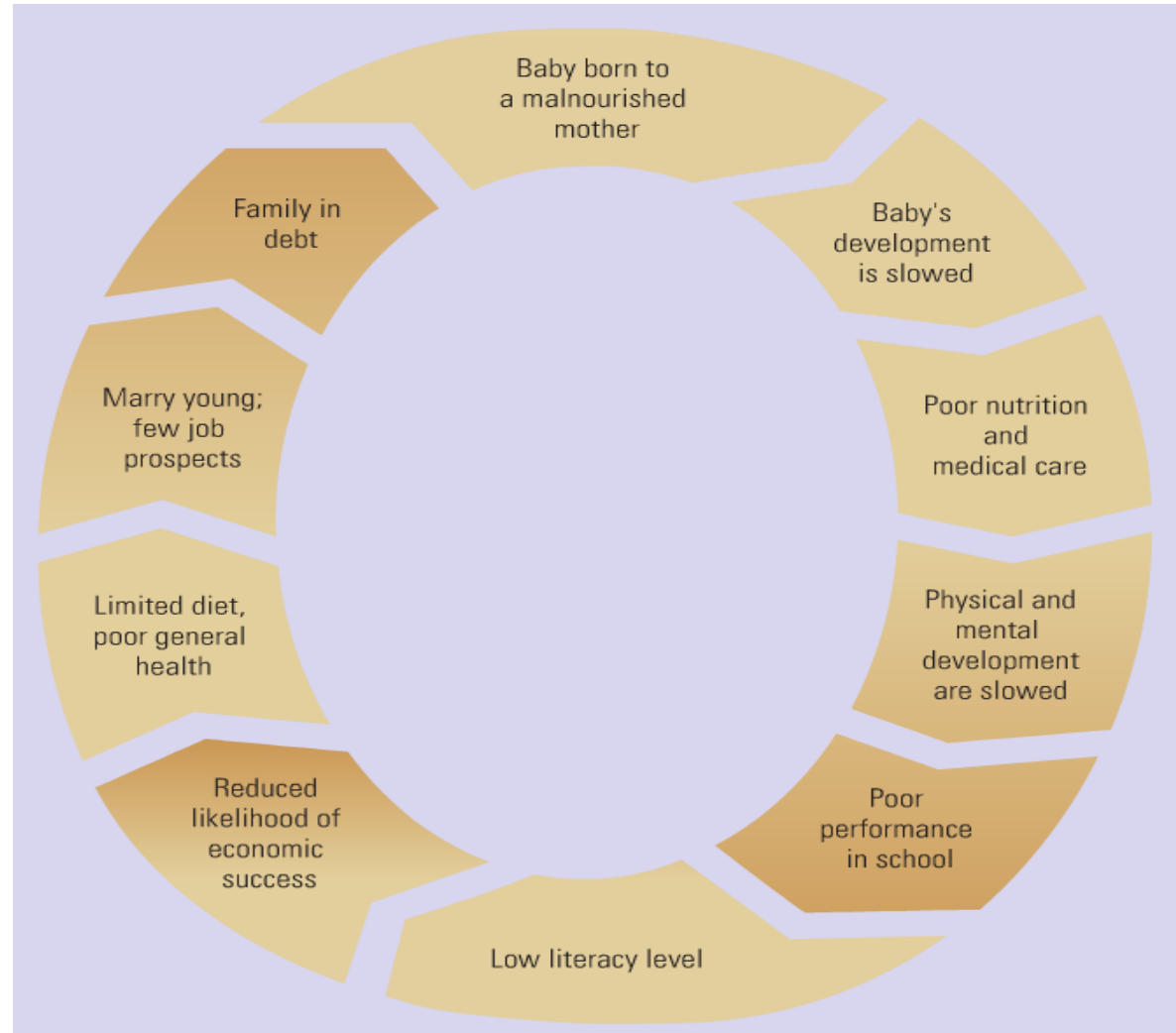


How is Poverty Measured?

- Canada
 - Statistics Canada classifies living in poverty as having to spend >70% of household income on food, clothing, and shelter
 - Low Income Cut-Off (LICO)
 - 2007: 9.2% of Canadians live in poverty (~3 million)
- World Bank
 - Moderate poverty = living on less than \$2 a day
 - Almost half the world's population
 - Absolute poverty = living on less than \$1 a day
 - Over 1 billion people

Cycle of Poverty

- P. 404
- Poverty is a vicious cycle that is very difficult to break
- Often requires help from outside





Causes of Poverty

- **Burden of Debt**

- After WWII, many African countries are given loans by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to help modernize them
- Some are unable to pay loans back, banks make them restructure economies, countries end up spending almost all their money to pay off debt, little left over for social services
- Canada has national debt, but not enough to impoverish the country <http://www.debtclock.ca/>
 - Less money to spend on services, though

Causes of Poverty

- **Foreign Occupation**
 - Example: Tibet
 - Region claimed by China in 1949
 - Tibetans oppressed and persecuted
 - Chinese government takes Tibet's natural resources, Tibetan economy suffers



Cause of Poverty

- War

- Example: Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Part of Yugoslav civil war in early-1990s
- War disrupts economy and trade
- Leads to unemployment and poverty
- Infrastructure (roads, telephone and power lines, etc) severely damaged
- Country still recovering, even years after war



Causes of Poverty

- **Natural Disaster**

- Example: Pakistan
- Oct. 2005: massive earthquake in N. Pakistan
- 80,000 killed, hundreds of thousands homeless
- International aid difficult to get to people in need because of mountainous terrain, weather
- Many live in poverty without electricity, sanitation, proper shelter until help arrives



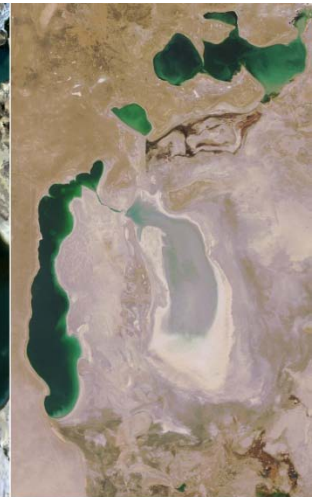
Causes of Poverty

- **Environmental Degradation**

- Example: Uzbekistan
- 1950s: as part of USSR, exploited by Soviet Union for its farmland
- Farmland destroyed by harmful chemicals and fertilizers, over-farming
- Chemicals pollute lakes and rivers
- Land no longer fertile, little clean drinking water, high cancer rates



July - September, 1989

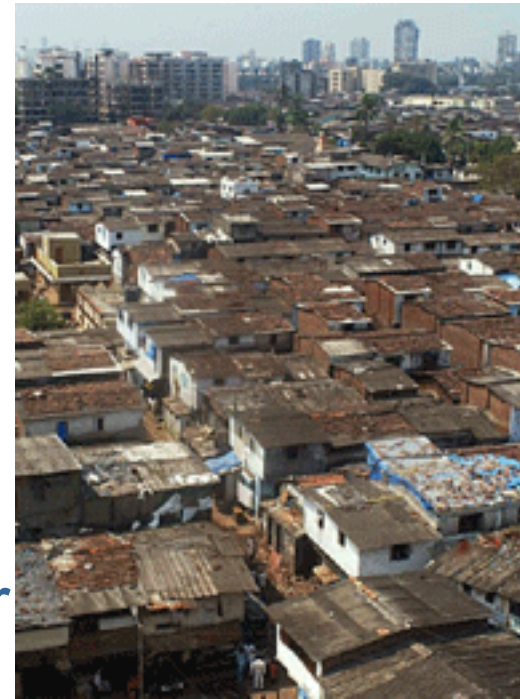


October 5, 2008

Causes of Poverty

- **Lack of Infrastructure**

- Example: Mexico City
- Infrastructure = communication and transportation systems (ie. roads, power grid, sanitation and water systems, schools, hospitals, telephone lines, etc.)
- Mexico City: 22 million people, poor infrastructure, sprawling shantytowns, poor unable to improve living conditions, much poverty



Causes of Poverty

- **Unemployment**

- Example: Kiribati
- As a British colony, main export was phosphate until it ran out
- Now independent, main industry gone, much unemployment (70% unemployment rate)
- People unable to earn money, live in poverty





The Health Crisis

- Many poverty stricken countries also have severe health problems
- Clean Water
 - Lack of clean drinking water leads to disease
 - 1.2 billion people lack access to clean water
 - 2 billion people lack proper sanitation
 - Over 5 million people die every year from diseases spread by dirty water
 - Children are especially vulnerable



The Health Crisis

- HIV/AIDS

- Because of burden of debt in Africa, many nations have little money to spend on health care
- Doctors go to more prosperous countries
 - Canada: 1 doctor for every 400 people
 - Zimbabwe: 1 doctor for every 17,000 people
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 7% of adults have HIV/AIDS
 - Swaziland: 26% of adults
 - Over 4 million orphans because of AIDS



The Health Crisis

- Because there's no cure for AIDS yet, prevention is the key
- Much misinformation and ignorance about AIDS prevention, including some politicians
- Medication to prolong life/prevent spread is expensive, very few poor able acquire it
 - In 2004, only 12% of those infected living in a developing country received medication