

The prevailing poverty and inequalities in the world



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How does the UN define poverty The United Nations is very concerned about the prevailing poverty and inequalities in the world, and has brought forth several measures to reduce poverty. The meaning of 'poverty', as defined by the UN may be understood as " the total absence of opportunities, accompanied by high levels of undernourishment, hunger, illiteracy, lack of education, physical and mental ailments, emotional and social instability, unhappiness, sorrow and hopelessness for the future" (Blanco, 2002). It is typically identified by prolonged periods in which lack of economic, social and political opportunities for participation and progress are either non-existent or short-lived. This pushes individuals to leading marginal lives, at the lower bottom of the social ladder. More specifically, the Summary Report of the Social development: implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly states (2006) that around the world some of " those working did not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the \$2-a-day poverty line" (p. 3) In other words, it has quantified economic impoverishment as an earning below the amount of two USD. Hence those people who do not have opportunities to earn a minimum of 2 USD per day, as said to be in a state of poverty.

According to the UN, how many people in the world are poor

According to the Summit Report of the United Nations General Assembly (2006), the approximate estimate of those living below the poverty-line globally, was about 1. 4 billion. This is despite the fact that this 1. 4 billion is a working force. According to the report " although the share of the \$2-a-day working poor in total employment had decreased to 47. 4 per cent in 2006, from almost 55 per cent in 1996" (p. 3). Moreover, other categories of aged <https://assignbuster.com/the-prevailing-poverty-and-inequalities-in-the-world/>

unemployed, women and children unemployed also fall into the category of 'people living below the poverty line, according to the Summit Report (2007, p. 2-3).

Is world poverty increasing or decreasing

The overall figures of the various figures show a marginal decrease in poverty - from 55% in 1996 to 47. 4% in 2006 (p. 3), even though the gulf between the better employed and the unemployed is widening (pp. 6-8). However, this may be misleading, and the Summit Report (2007) appears to be giving a warning note that, it may not be a cause for celebrations, since it was founded on " jobless growth" (p. 3). It points out that during the 1996-2006 period, the working force in the world rose by 16. 6 % to 2. 9 billions, and at the same time " the unemployment rate worldwide rose from about 6. 0 to 6. 3 per cent, with the number of unemployed increasing by 34 million, to 195 million people in 2006. This increase occurred as global economic output grew, at the rate of 3. 8 per cent per annum, giving rise to the phenomenon of 'jobless growth'" (p. 3).

What are some of the UN's programs aimed at reducing poverty

Some of the programs promoted by the UN to reduce or eradicate poverty and inequalities by creating demand for labor, as given in the UN Summit Report (2007) are as follows: Employment subsidies- rewarding employers with financial support for extra job opportunities they create (p. 17); Micro-insurance and micro-credit schemes- helping the poor to increase their incomes, and also contributing to the equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth. This scheme has proved very popular amongst the poor, though it has come under criticism for being difficult to manage, being unsustainable and having limited scope (p. 18).

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References

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