

# **POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Mohamed Saleh**

*Kharkov National University of Radio Electronics, Kharkov, Ukraine*

The future of the environment in the world is in the hands of its people estimated about 7 Billion in which over one billion are poor, 925 million (13.1% of population) are hungry, half of 2.2 billion children live in poverty around the world and in less than 10 years 1 Billion of the population will be 60 years and so how much of this older person can contribute back to the society?, when the birth to death ratio is about 2.34:1. [1]

Poverty is the major cause and consequence of environmental degradation that threatens the world's health status. The major global environmental challenges include global warming, state of oceans and rivers, air pollution. Growing environmental debts is the major concern to many countries because the cost of remedial actions will be far greater than preventive actions.[3]

- Poverty: is the situation where people and/or community lack basic needs, the resources and essentials to enjoy a minimum standard of life and well being that is considered acceptable in the society.

- Environment: is the sum total of all surroundings of a living organism, including natural resources and other living things which provide condition for sustainable development and growth, as well as the source of danger and damage.

Environment-poverty is a two-way relationship which represents the two global challenges, the mystery as whether to link them or not; it is rather undisputable that poor often become victims of environmental destruction. They depend heavily on the resources provided by natural resources, they utilize less than what they consume. (UNDP (1998'66)).

The major causes of poverty are:

1. Illiteracy: Victor Hugo said that "he who opens a school door, he closes a prison". For those people who have developed, they have learnt how to read, how to write, and to be disciplined; and the price for those who have refused education or been denied of it is poverty.

2. Income: for a country to create a comparative advantage, it needs to retain its best people by providing a reasonable income.

3. Health: different diseases, endemic, pandemic and epidemic are the source of huge spending and have been for many years, depriving poor people of their basic requirements.

Poverty is the root cause of war and conflicts starting from the Americans, Chinese, and Bolshevik revolution, Rwanda genocide, to the current Arab world situation. War, in turn, produces profound environmental degradation; and renewed cycle of poverty by the loss in labor forces and other productive resources. Not to mention terrorism, It is important to note that most of the time terrorist do come

from poor countries with high unemployment and that terrorist organization often provide much higher salaries than any other job. If any job is available at all.

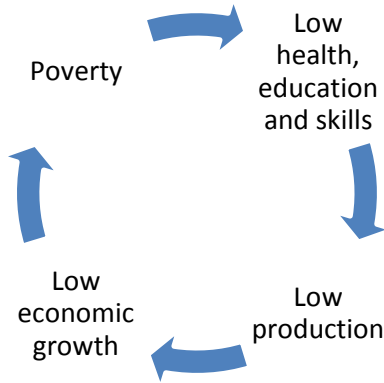


Figure 1. Poverty cycle

It starts when a nation or people are struck by poverty that leads to low health and education, which is the necessary tool for a healthy economy. In developing countries, a low level of technology results in decreasing production, investors run away, no real income, and people save more for the future. The economy deteriorates, violence starts, and the level of poverty increases.

In conclusion, environmental protection and poverty alleviation are not someone's or a particular country's work, but it's a war that everyone should win by providing environmental education from school. A higher level of education should be taken seriously, as failing in exams drops the overall average credit, and income distribution should be allocated and invested wisely to sustain economic development because our lives and the future of our world depend on it.

**References:**

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