

6

GLOBAL INEQUALITIES

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- The world is characterized by inequalities from place to place.
- Human geographers often focus upon questions about cultural development, the technology of agricultural domestication, and the relationship of that technology to diffusion.
- A measure of global equality is the stage, or level, of development of a country.
- Issues related to poverty and human development are affected by issues of distribution.
- Due to financial and human development factors, less-developed countries are also more likely to be negatively impacted by natural disasters.
- The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aimed at lowering levels of poverty.
- What is needed is better government (i.e., democratic institutions) and security for the poor.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to

- describe the factors that affect the population density of different regions;
- understand the factors underlying migration, including the different types, stages, and typical distances of migration;
- understand the global distribution of income, debt, population density, and factors related to quality of life;
- understand some of the underlying causes of food shortages and debt in poorer regions of the world;
- describe some of the main differences between developed and developing countries; and
- understand the alternate theories explaining why less-developed countries remain so.

KEY TERMS

Civilization A contested term, because it can be understood to mean that some groups are civilized while others are not. Traditionally understood to refer to a culture with agriculture and cities, food and labour surpluses, labour specialization, social stratification, and state organization. (p. 174)

Colonialism The policy of a state or people seeking to establish and maintain authority over another state or people. (p. 175)

Dependence, dependency In political contexts, a relationship in which one state or people is dependent on, and therefore dominated by, another state or people. (p. 175)

Dependency theory Centres on the relationship between dependence and underdevelopment. (p. 176)

Malnutrition A condition caused by a diet lacking some food necessary for health. (p. 184)

Paris club An ideologically neo-liberal grouping of financial officials from 19 of the biggest developed economies—15 European countries plus the US, Canada, Japan, and Australia—loosely formed in 1956 and more formally structured in the 1970s, which provides financial services and organizes debt restructuring, debt relief, and debt cancellation for indebted countries and their creditors. (p. 203)

Undernutrition Diet inadequate to sustain normal activity. (p. 184)

World systems theory A body of ideas that suggests a division of the world into a core, semi-periphery, and periphery, stressing that the periphery is dependent on the core; has numerous implications for an understanding of the less developed world. (p. 176)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do governments respond to migration? Consider situations of forced, mass, primitive, and free migration.
2. What is the relevance of world systems theory? How is this theory typically applied to the study of development? Give examples.
3. Good governance is associated with improved living conditions in many less-developed countries. Should good governance be a core policy goal of international aid? Illustrate your argument with examples.
4. Some scholars say that food shortage and famine are associated with a lack of good governance. To what extent is this accurate? Are there other underlying factors influencing food shortage and famine?
5. Why are developing countries vulnerable to disaster and diseases? Illustrate your argument with examples and case studies.

LINKS OF INTEREST

- UNHCR
<http://www.unhcr.ca/>
- Make Poverty History
<http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca/>
- The World Bank
<http://www.worldbank.org/>
- The Grameen Bank
<http://www.grameen-info.org/>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.asp>
- Canadian Council on Social Development
http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic_security/poverty/index.htm
- Global Migration Group
<http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/>

SUGGESTED READINGS

Dickenson, J., et al. 1996. *A Geography of the Third World*, 2nd edn. New York: Routledge.

An excellent overview that employs a developmentalist perspective to explore population and economic issues; relevant also for Chapters 10, 13, and 14.

Guest, R. 2004. *The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption and African Lives*. Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press.

Very readable account of Africa today, stressing that the principal problems are political.

Peet, R., and E. Hartwick. 2009. *Theories of Development: Connections, Arguments, Alternatives*, 2nd edn. New York: Guilford.

A critical examination of theories of economic development in the context of current events and policy discussions.

YOUTUBE VIDEOS

- DeeJayAllah. 2012. "A Brief History of European Colonization in Africa." YouTube video, 4:01. Posted August 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pis5f085P3M>

1. What motivated the colonization of Africa?

- Colonization was motivated by the European hunger for resources. The mind-set of backwardness and that European expansion was propelling Africa into civility.
 - 2. How did the British exploit ethnic and linguistic difference to help them keep British rule across the continent?
 - The British arbitrarily divided countries into areas. In Rwanda for example, the country was divided into North and South based on language ethnicity, and cultural differences. This created internal tensions which helped British remain in rule.
- khanacademymedicine. 2013. "Cycle of Malnutrition." YouTube video, 4:24. Posted May 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yL8ejNmJII4>
1. What is the relationship between malnutrition and child health?
 - There are currently about 160 million children who are malnourished. One concern about malnutrition is that if a child born malnourished, his or her immune system may be weakened and unable to fight off diseases. A compromised immune system will increase to both the duration and number of diseases that a child lives with.
 2. How is malnutrition related to physical and mental growth of a child?
 - Malnutrition slows both the physical and mental growth of a child. That results in decreases in "normal" physical development and slows the natural maturation of a child.