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One of the most commonly used definitions of poverty is that which is provided by the United Nations reiterating that poverty basically entails the denial of choices and opportunities which then results into the violation of human dignity. Poverty can also be translated into the lack of basic capacity to be participatory in the society. Inevitably, the causes of hunger become as well the causes of poverty as the two problems are deemed to be closely linked to each other. In fact, one of the root causes of hunger, needless to say, is poverty itself. Different factors have been identified to be able to provide a clearer discussion of how poverty leads into hunger. Some of the most salient points about such issue will be provided in the succeeding paragraphs of this section.

Ownership of the land and the rights to control such property are two of the factors which are often overlooked when thinking about the main factors which can significantly lead into hunger. The issue on the buying and control of land is not at all helpful in the provision of solution to the problem. Instead of delivering the economic benefits it promises, it often leads into lack of food security and supply because the land is often used for reasons other than the provision of food products such as agricultural crops among others (Shah, 2010).

In addition to the issue of land ownership and control as being related to poverty and hunger, it ahs also been identified that war, famine, and the lack of democracy can be identified as the main causes of the problem (Shah, 2010). Because of teh war, there are many consequences which people have to suffer, and such leads into poverty. For instance, war destroys the food resources which then leads into shortage and result into hunger. War also leads into the death of many parents who are the main sources of income from different families. Because of their death, as brought about by war, many children tend to suffer from poverty and hunger.

Shah (2010) also attributes the diversion of land use as another reason on why people are suffering from extreme poverty and hunger. The land is often now used for dam projects and tobacco plantations. Because of these, lesser land is used for the purpose of growing food supplies, thereby also contributing to the problem of poverty and hunger. Because of the dam projects, many people were displaced from their homes and the project also resulted into flooding which causes damage to arable land. All of these factors, although may not prove to be as always highlighted prove to be contributory to hunger and poverty.

SPECIFIC BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE

Furthermore, Shah (2010) also noted some specific details about the problem which is generally related to the presence of hunger and poverty. One of the arguments raised by Shah (2010) is the fact that food has been seen and treated to be a commodity nowadays. Therefore, because of its nature as a commodity, only the people who have the necessary financial resources are the ones who are able to have and gain access to different food supply. On the other hand, those who are deprived of financial freedom are not able to find the appropriate means to gain access to sufficient foods.

Furthermore, to be able to have a better understanding on the specific background of the problem, it would also be useful to take a look at some statistics which is reflective of the extent of the problem which has been brought about by hunger and poverty. According to statistics, because of poverty, at least 50,000 people die everyday and 18 million deaths of the poor population die yearly because of poverty. This figure is very alarming as it constitutes to about one third of all the deaths of man, considered to be the factor which constitutes the most to human deaths. In addition to this statistics, it has also been reported that 39.5 million people are suffering from AIDS, and most of them, around 63%, are living in Sub-Saharan Africa. This resulted into numerous deaths in the region and continues to persist as one of the most pressing problems of today. In Africa, the problem with hunger and poverty has proven to be too extreme that everyone, even the government, finds it too hard to handle the said problem. Aside from the lack of access to food resources, contamination with water supply has also been a problem in Africa which generated many illnesses such as cholera and others. all of these can be attributed to extreme poverty which translates into lack of access to clean potable water as well as the food supplies with the appropriate nutritional contents (Cozay, 2010; Hearts & Minds, 2010).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As it is mentioned earlier, the main purpose of this research is to be able to present a significant discussion of hunger and poverty, including its root causes as well as some relevant suggestions in order to provide a remedy to the problem, with Africa as the geographical limitation of the facts and recommendations. To be able to complete the research, and to have a solid foundation and basis for the recommendations which will be stipulated in the latter part of this paper, the researcher will consider the use of different sources of information, specifically websites which offer substantial amount of information tackling hunger and poverty in Africa. For instance, one of the said sources would be the work of Anu Shah (2010) which presents the main thesis of this paper which reiterates that the causes of hunger are closely and directly linked to poverty. Furthermore, other websites and books will also be sued as references in order to provide a more succinct discussion of the issue. However, no surveys and interviews will be conducted in the completion of this paper. The sole basis of the facts and the recommendations will be retrieved from the critical review of various literatures which are assumed by the author as credible sources of information.

RESULTS

The next section reflects the findings of the authors based on a critical evaluation of the issue as well as the findings which are demonstrated by the literatures which were examined. The results section of this paper will be divided into two parts. The first part will discuss how the government can be able to help solve the problem, while the second part will discuss how the government cannot help to the solution.

The Government Can Help

One of the sides of the issue which should be examined is the notion that the African government could be of help to be able to provide a set of substantial solutions and can be able to alleviate the problems brought about by poverty and hunger. This belief is grounded on the notion that the government is equipped with the necessary authority to be engaged in practices and policies which can prove to help remedy the situation which continues to grow worse in the recent years One of the ways by which the African government can be of help in the provision of solutions to the problem is through the implementation of policies and legislations which will be geared towards the improvement of the quality of life and the reduction of poverty. For instance, agricultural improvements such as through biotechnology can be initiated by the African government. Policies regarding such agricultural practices can prove to be helpful in the improvement of food security and in generating additional food supply to meet the demands of the general population. The African government must be able to engage themselves into decisions concerning agricultural technologies, policies, and institutions, along with the full support of civil societies, to be able to formulate strategies and legislations which can be able to help them solve the problem of poverty and hunger through the provision of a more dynamic food supply (Mkhize, 2004).

Moreover, the Facts on World Hunger and Poverty released by Hearts & Minds (2010), reiterate that the problem with access to clean and safe potable water is among the causes of many of the child deaths in the African setting. Without the doubt, government intervention can prove to an effective way to be able to remedy this problem. Because of poverty, many people are not able to have access to clean drinking water. Many of them merely rely on whatever water source is available, without paying any attention to its health consequences. Lack of financial resources leads into having water without proper sanitation, and inevitably leads diseases and even to 1.8 million child deaths recorded annually for children who die of diarrhea basically because of drinking dirty water. On this note, the government can be part of the solution by being more active in the pursuit for having clean and sanitized water in order to prevent contamination. The government must be able to extend the necessary financial aid and help to the Africans allowing everyone to have access to a drinking water which is safe and free from any disease-causing bacteria. According to Hughes (2010), the task of removing the evident water poverty is not at all that too hard to be addressed by the government. In fact, all that is needed to be accomplished by the government is to repair and build different infrastructure to keep water clean and to ensure its safe delivery to different households. Furthermore, the author also reiterates that the government can be more helpful in abolishing the problems with dirty water and diseases from such by being able to improve educational programs at schools. This means that the African government can be able to urge educational institutions to teach the children, especially those who are from the younger population, proper hygiene and water sanitation in order to prevent further problems brought about by water poverty.

The Government Cannot Help

Furthermore, the other side of the issue which the researcher wishes to investigate on this paper is the belief that the government cannot help in the solution to the problem. This belief is grounded on the notion that the problems are naturally occurring and that its remedy is outside the functions and limitations of the African government. For instance, one of the issues which have been raised as the main causes of hunger is overpopulation. Governments which fail to demonstrate efforts and policies to regulate the growth of households will not be able to remedy this problem. Reproductive health bills, for instance, are often not part of government legislations. Because of this, families are normally given the freedom to choose as to the size of the family that they desire. Inevitably, some go overboard and are ballooning at a rate which parents could no longer sustain, thereby resulting to the inability to have access to food. The problem with overpopulation has grown too fast that it becomes too hard for the African government to handle, characterized by lack in existing policies to regulate population growth.

However, there are some people who argue that overpopulation is not the ultimate cause of hunger, or at least a significant reason for majority of the Africans to be hungry. There are certain studies which conclude that the rapid growth of population is in no way associated with the suffering from hunger. Rather, the study concludes that the population of the poor countries in the world has lesser to eat. This means that there are limitations with regards to access to food resources, and such is the reason for hunger, and not directly associated to overpopulation (Lappe et al., 1998).

Lastly, for those who believe that the government could not be of help to the provision of a sustainable set of solutions to combat hunger, it is argued by some that the presence of different economic policies and programs along with immense poverty inevitably leads into lesser access to food resources. The believers of this notion also reiterate that overpopulation is not the main reason for hunger. The problem is therefore assured to be political and not due to food shortage alone (Shah, 2010). It is argued that this cannot be given full remedy by the government alone. This should include the efforts of the greater portion of the population to provide resolution to the problem.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMEMNDATIONS

Without a hint of doubt, poverty and hunger are indeed present in the African setting and continue to be among the worst of the problems haunting its citizens. The consequences of the problem have already been felt widely by the general population, and worst, even lead into deaths especially among the younger generation. It is, however, not yet too late to implement a set of solutions which can be able to help alleviate the predicament. The African government might have already demonstrated its efforts to fight poverty and hunger but there needs to be a set of stronger strategies to combat the problem. Since hunger and poverty prove to be two of the most persistent problems in the African region which proves to be morally unacceptable, there is an urgent need for both short term and long term practices which can be able to help lessen the burdens of such problems.

One of the solutions identified to be able to remedy poverty and hunger is to facilitate different programs within smaller communities in order to provide education about the problem. Through these programs, it will be possible to teach the citizens how to approach poverty. Simple things can be thought. For instance, they can be thought how to properly take care of their health in spite of suffering from poverty. Because of this, undesirable health issues can be lessened. In addition, they can also be taught sanitary techniques, especially in the treatment of contaminated water. Because of this, they will be able to have clean and safe drinking water despite the limited access to such resource.

Furthermore, there is also a need to improve food supply. Majority of the African population are farmers and they earn a living through cultivating and rearing their lands. However, because land is often dedicated to other commercial purposes, these farmers do not have enough area of land to farm. The government must then be able to provide enough space for farming. Moreover, the government should also develop agricultural techniques and improvements which will be both essential in increasing food production in Africa.

There should also be the demonstration of the willingness of the government to provide more job opportunities for the people of Africa. To make this possible, the education system should also be improved to make the citizens more competent and therefore more able to handle professional work. Once employment opportunities confront the Africans, they will have a sufficient source of income and can therefore be translated into the ability of having the financial resources which will be required to have access to food.

Moreover, people should also be taught not to waste food. Everyone should be encouraged not to buy in excess and prepare only what can be consumed. Through this, it will be possible to help others by giving them any excess which can no longer be consumed. This also promotes a sense of responsibility to properly management scarce resources such as that of food. Furthermore, charitable institutions, donations, and foreign aids should also be encouraged by the government to possibly provide them with the financial assistance which will be required to be engaged in various poverty and hunger reduction measures.

Furthermore, according to Runge (2003), to be able to possibly solve the problem which is associated with poverty and hunger, there is a need for scientific innovation, renewed structures of various institutions, presence of new investments in order to generate more financial resources, and the demonstration of responsibility to the environment. The latter, being more responsible to the environment, is very important because it can assure sufficient supply of food resources in the future and can also help solve the problem with water contamination which is also one of the most pressing problems which is experienced in Africa.

Many people believe that it is impossible to end poverty. However, such false beliefs should be stopped. It is possible to end poverty. Through the collaborative efforts of all parties concerned, especially between the African government, the African citizens, and with the help of the global landscape, it is possible to end poverty in Africa and prosper as a country free from the wrath of hunger. With the renewed efforts of all the parties which are concerned, it would be possible to put an end to the problem of poverty and hunger. However, the process is gradual. Like in the achievement of any specified goal, these things cannot be rushed. The leaders of the African government must demonstrate better capabilities in order to provide solution to the problem. Corruption in every aspect should be removed. The people of the country should be more participatory in the efforts of the government. Foreign countries and government must also be able to demonstrate willingness to help, especially those nations which are already rich.

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