



# Cheat Sheet

## Understanding Poverty

Use this cheatsheet to navigate your way in understanding the different aspects of poverty, as well as attain useful tips in searching and finding information on this topic.



### Defining Poverty

#### Basic Definition

Poverty is largely associated with the lack of money or material possessions. It involves not having enough means to afford basic necessities such as food, shelter and health access.

'**Poverty Line**' refers to amount required for people to have minimum standard of living. The amount varies from country to country.



#### Types:

##### Income Poverty:

Income fails to meet an established threshold (also known as poverty line)

##### Extreme Poverty:

Possession of less than US\$1.25 per day, applicable across international standards (World Bank, 2008)

##### Absolute Poverty:

State of not being able to afford basic necessities, such as food, clothing and shelter

##### Relative Poverty:

State of not being able to afford things that most people in the society possess



### What are some causes?

There are a variety of reasons that can lead to the situation of poverty. They are often inter-related. You can consider the following factors:

#### Economic

Financial crisis  
Employment opportunities

#### Social

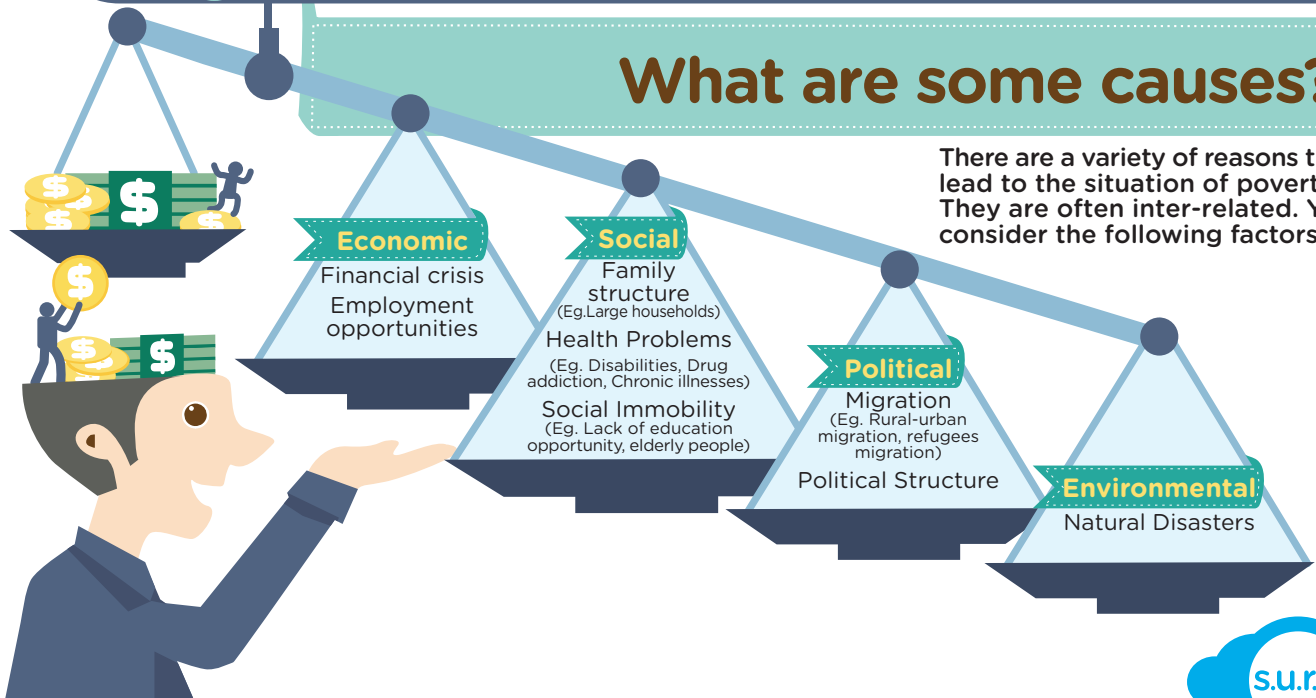
Family structure (Eg. Large households)  
Health Problems (Eg. Disabilities, Drug addiction, Chronic illnesses)  
Social Immobility (Eg. Lack of education opportunity, elderly people)

#### Political

Migration (Eg. Rural-urban migration, refugees migration)  
Political Structure

#### Environmental

Natural Disasters



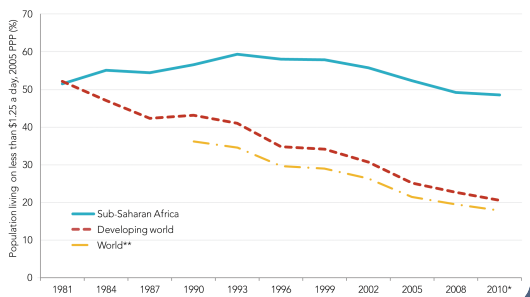
# Around the World



## Globally,

the number of extreme poor has dropped between 1981 and 2010.

Figure 2: Poverty has fallen steadily since the 1980s except in Africa where the decline began later



Source: World Bank, 2013

### The road ahead

**United Nations Development Programme** has a set of Millennium Development Goals, one of which is to 'halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than US\$1 a day' (UNDP, 2013)

The **World Bank** has also set itself to push extreme poverty to 'no more 3 percent by 2030, and to promote shared prosperity and greater equity in the developing world'.

(World Bank, 2014)

## Regionally,

The figures for extreme poverty has also changed from 1981 to 2010.

Figure 1: Regional changes in the population of extreme poor over the years



Source: World Bank, 2013

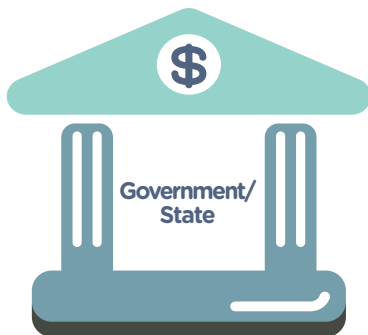
## Locally,

Singapore does not rely on a single national poverty line to measure poverty. In considering the diverse and complex nature of the needy, the Ministry of Social and Family Development takes an approach of 'tailoring (the) social safety net to different groups, depending on their needs and circumstances' (Ministry of Social and Family Development, 2011)



# Who is involved?

There are various parties that can be involved to alleviate poverty:



# What can be done?

Some solutions include:

Public Policies

Foreign Aid

Educational and Training

Community Development Programmes

## Useful Links

You can find out more on this topic by browsing through the following websites:

### • International Databases

The World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/overview.html>

United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/poverty/>

### • Regional Examples

Case studies in Asia-Pacific:

- Hong Kong

News.gov.hk (2013) 'Poverty Line set for Hong Kong', Retrieved from:

[http://www.news.gov.hk/en/categories/health/html/2013/09/20130927\\_191059.shtml](http://www.news.gov.hk/en/categories/health/html/2013/09/20130927_191059.shtml)

- Philippines

Corren, A. (2010) CNN 'Scratching out a life on Manila's Smokey Mountain', Retrieved from:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/04/05/philippines.smokey.mountain/>

### • Singapore context

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Ministry of Social and Family Development (2014) 'National Definition of Poverty Line', Retrieved from:

<http://app.msf.gov.sg/PressRoom/Nationaldefinitionofpovertyline.aspx>

## Quick Searching

### • File-specific search

In your research, you may have come across online publications that are made into pdf files.

Here is a quick tip on how you can retrieve these files more quickly:

In your search engine searchbox,

- Enter 'Poverty AND filetype: .pdf'

The results list that appears will be solely that of pdf files that are related to the topic of poverty.

Other examples of filetype that can be found online include **Powerpoint (.ppt)** and **Word documents (.doc)**.

You can try combining the search terms—'filetype: .ppt' or 'filetype.doc' to narrow your search results to these specific web sources.

### Sources:

Barber, N. (2012) Fighting Poverty, Chicago: Heinemann Library

Griffin, G. ed (2006) How can the poor be helped?, Detroit: Thomson Gale

Senker, C (2007) What if we do nothing?: Poverty, London: Franklin Watts

The World Bank (2014) 'Poverty', Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>

United Nations Development Programme (2014) 'Poverty Reduction', Retrieved from:

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/overview.htm>