

Research on the Current State of Global Poverty and Directions for Improvement

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Abstract: In today's increasingly complex global poverty landscape, effectively reducing poverty remains one of the core issues for global sustainable development. The current state of poverty has transitioned from relatively simple single factors such as natural disasters, extreme weather, and conflicts to multidimensional poverty caused by the interaction of multiple factors. Due to the complexity and diversity of contributing factors, multidimensional poverty varies in severity, making it challenging to reduce effectively and resulting in a prolonged global poverty problem. Compounded by limited global resources and funds, as well as slowing economic growth, addressing multidimensional poverty requires sustained long-term efforts, posing challenges in resource allocation. This leads to a cyclical pattern of multidimensional poverty, wasting resources and affecting people's confidence and attention to poverty reduction efforts, thus hindering progress. This paper analyzes the current state, challenge and existing problems of global poverty, and explores effective and sustainable approaches for poverty reduction considering the methods currently employed and their shortcomings. Through analysis, it is found that effective poverty reduction could focus on coordinating resources, adopting a combination of natural and artificial approaches, updating technologies, strengthening local improvements, and analyzing cross-regional impacts to prevent factors leading to poverty and mitigate present and future poverty issues.

Keywords: Global Poverty, Sustainable Development, Multidimensional Poverty, Poverty Reduction, Improvement Measures, Environment

1. Introduction

Poverty has long been one of the major global issues receiving widespread attention. In the 2030 Global Sustainable Development Report, poverty remains a core issue. With the progress of global development, the nature of poverty has also evolved. Nowadays, poverty has shifted from being caused by single factors such as natural disasters, wars, and economic issues leading to income poverty, to multidimensional poverty. This means that households and individuals often suffer from various forms of poverty, such as income poverty, poor health, low educational levels, lack of water and sanitation facilities, and other overlapping factors. There is clear evidence that the reduction of multidimensional poverty is slower than that of income poverty[1]. Addressing multidimensional poverty poses more challenges than addressing single-factor income poverty. Therefore, how to effectively improve the current state of multidimensional poverty and prevent it from worsening is a

key area of research. This paper will analyze the current status, challenges and dilemmas of poverty, and based on this analysis, explore feasible solutions.

2. The Current State of Global Poverty Development

According to the Global Sustainable Development Report, significant progress has been made in human well-being over the past few decades, but extreme deprivation continues, and progress remains uneven. Extreme poverty is defined as living below the monetary threshold of \$1.90 per person per day. In 2018, 8.6% of the world's population lived in extreme poverty, with more than half of these individuals residing in five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. By 2030, fragile states affected by crises and conflicts are projected to be home to 85% of the world's extreme poor, approximately 342 million people. Without further initiatives, the global community will be unable to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Extreme poverty is now concentrated among marginalized groups—women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Gender inequality restricts opportunities and capabilities for half of the world's population, further exacerbating the situation of impoverished women. In many places, there are socioeconomic gaps between persons with and persons without disabilities, because persons with disabilities often experience lower levels of education, higher rates of unemployment and economic inactivity, and a lack of social protection in comparison with their peers[1]. In addition, 1.3 billion people live in households with overlapping levels of poverty. Nearly 1 billion people live on between \$2 and \$5.50 a day, just above the \$1.90 extreme poverty line. People just emerging from extreme poverty, and the 4 billion people without any form of social protection, remain highly vulnerable to economic and environmental crises, climate change, armed conflict and other shocks that could push them back into extreme poverty [1].

The data indicate that the global poverty issue persists and remains of significant concern. As global society develops, the degree and scope of poverty fluctuate repeatedly, and the various methods used to reduce poverty have not consistently stabilized poverty levels. Notwithstanding the substantial progress made in reducing extreme poverty and the number of people affected reaching its lowest point in recent history, thanks to the notable global extreme poverty reduction efforts undertaken over the past few decades. According to World Bank data, between 1990 and 2017, 1.22 billion people were lifted out of poverty, with the proportion of the global population living on less than \$1.90 a day, calculated in 2011 purchasing power parity, dropping from 36.2% to 9.2%, an average annual decline of one percentage point [2], reaching 8.6% in 2018 [1]. However, other forms of non-extreme multidimensional poverty have expanded the scope and complexity of poverty and offset some of the achievements in reducing extreme poverty, making it more persistent challenging to effectively reduce global poverty. Preventing and reducing the incidence of multidimensional poverty will therefore have a more positive and lasting impact on reducing global poverty, taking into account factors such as the greater proportion of other forms of non-extreme poverty, their wider impact, the risk of overturning gains made in reducing extreme poverty, the relative stasis of the population living in extreme poverty, and the slower pace at which multidimensional poverty is being addressed.

3. Challenges to Global Multidimensional Poverty Reduction

The challenges to global multidimensional poverty reduction are numerous and complex, involving environmental and political spheres, the economic, social, which mainly include:

3.1. Environmental Aspect

First, there are environmental issues and climate change. Climate change has led to an increase in natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and storms, which directly affect agricultural production and residents' lives[1]. Overexploitation and poor resource management have caused land degradation, water shortages, and other issues related to resource depletion[2]. Agricultural yields have declined[2]. Many impoverished areas rely on agriculture for survival. Natural disasters and climate change have led to reduced crop yields, exacerbating food insecurity. Additionally, environmental degradation caused by climate change has resulted in ecological refugees, forcing people to migrate and further aggravating poverty[3].

3.2. Political Aspect

In terms of the political context, two main components can be identified: conflict and instability, and inadequate funding and policy support. Firstly, conflicts and civil wars result in the forcible displacement of millions of people, the disruption of economic activities and the destruction of infrastructure [1]. An unstable political environment presents significant challenges to the implementation and sustainability of long-term development policies [1]. The consequences of conflict have been particularly severe for refugees and migrants [2], who have been exposed to extreme poverty and existential challenges. Consequently, protracted conflict and instability impede the initiation and continuation of poverty reduction programs. Secondly, there is a shortage of aid funding, which is reflected in the fact that the funds needed to reduce poverty globally are far from adequate, and the scale and effectiveness of international aid need to be improved [4]. Inadequate implementation of policies. The absence of effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms for poverty reduction policies in numerous countries has resulted in the inefficient use of resources. Insufficient financial and policy support has resulted in the unsustainability of numerous poverty reduction programs, which struggle to achieve long-term effects. Furthermore, the provision of inappropriate forms of assistance may result in recipient countries becoming overly reliant on external assistance, thereby impeding their capacity to develop independently.

3.3. Economic and Social Aspects

In terms of the economy, unequal economic growth[1] has led to an uneven distribution of the benefits of global economic growth, resulting in a lack of sufficient economic opportunities in many impoverished areas. Particularly in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, which remain the most concentrated areas of global poverty[1].

On the social front, the unequal distribution of resources such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare exacerbates poverty[2]. Many impoverished areas lack educational resources, preventing people from acquiring the skills and knowledge needed for better employment opportunities. Gender inequality, in particular, results in women in many regions facing inadequate education and employment opportunities, as well as lower incomes[1]. This lack of education perpetuates poverty across generations within families, creating a vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty that is difficult to break. Furthermore, gender inequality and other social injustices make it difficult for certain groups to escape poverty, leading to social exclusion[1].

In addition, in the identification of poverty, due to different definitions of poverty and different methods of calculation, the results obtained are different and uncertain, making the data collected and the results analyzed unable to fully and accurately reflect the actual situation of poverty, and thus continue to reduce poverty by using inappropriate or erroneous methods. Thus leading to the persistence of the poverty problem that cannot be solved completely [5].

4. Poverty Reduction Measures and Their Problems

4.1. Poverty Reduction Measures and Strategies

Firstly, in response to the fact that poverty is mainly caused by natural environmental factors, such as various natural disasters, extreme weather, climate change and other environmental crises [2], which often result in widespread, one-time destructive consequences that seriously affect the personal and property safety of local residents, current approaches include the use of various technological means to monitor and prevent natural disasters and climate change. In addition, technologies are utilized to actively mitigate and adapt to the natural environment, thereby reducing or controlling disasters and poverty caused by environmental problems.

Secondly, for poverty caused by social factors such as wars, economic issues, countries around the world have formulated corresponding plans and improvement measures in response to poverty and sustainable development [1]. On the one hand, strengthen social development planning and infrastructure construction to enhance society's ability to withstand risks. On the other hand, vigorously promote economic development by enhancing economic cooperation and trade investment with other countries, supporting businesses and entrepreneurship, and increasing employment opportunities. This approach aims to raise local residents' incomes and improve their economic conditions, thereby reducing the existing impoverished population from an economic perspective.

Furthermore, in terms of disease and health, the formulation and improvement of various policies can be employed to enhance the health levels and quality of life of residents, as well as to reduce poverty caused by health issues and diseases. These policies include increasing investment and management in healthcare services, establishing relevant medical insurance measures, implementing social security and welfare programs, and improving the overall health level of society. Additionally, increasing education and training opportunities, promoting basic education, enhancing people's skill levels, ensuring gender equality, and providing more development opportunities for the educated are crucial [1]. The provision of economic support to vulnerable groups can mitigate the poverty situation of some households and reduce the probability of falling back into poverty, thus enhancing overall social well-being, increasing the population's resilience to risks, and preventing and reducing the likelihood of future poverty.

4.2. Problems with Poverty Reduction Methods

In terms of technological measures, renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and hydro are being developed and utilized to reduce dependence on fossil fuels [6]. The promotion of electric transportation through the development of electric vehicles and public transport systems aims to reduce carbon emissions in the transportation sector. While these new technologies have made some progress in addressing environmental issues, they also present certain problems. Many new technologies are expensive in their initial stages, making large-scale adoption challenging, especially for economically underdeveloped or developing countries, which may lack the necessary funds for planning and execution. Additionally, some technologies depend on specific geographical and climatic conditions, limiting their widespread application. As a result, certain regions and countries may have to resort to less efficient and more conservative methods to tackle environmental issues, leading to slower and less uniform progress in addressing these problems. Furthermore, the inherent limitations of scientific and technological solutions can cause secondary effects, leading to new problems that hinder effective resolution.

In terms of policy measures, international agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, aim to promote global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Countries also advance domestic environmental protection through the formulation and implementation of regulations like carbon

emission limits and renewable energy standards[7]. However, there are issues with policy implementation. On one hand, some regions and countries face inadequate enforcement due to subjective awareness and objective economic challenges, coupled with a lack of effective oversight and punitive mechanisms. On the other hand, political and economic resistance from various stakeholders hampers the execution and advancement of international agreements, weakening environmental protection regulations. Social unrest and funding shortages in certain areas further impede the realization of coordinated global policy efforts, preventing the achievement of established targets.

In terms of public participation, environmental issues require long-term, sustained collaborative efforts, and many actions do not yield immediate results. The lack of immediate results can lead people to gradually lose focus on environmental concerns and related issues over time, making sustained improvement of environmental problems unattainable and ultimately resulting in the failure to achieve the desired outcomes.

5. Possible Directions for Poverty Reduction Improvement

Given the prevalence of poverty reduction concerns across various countries and regions globally, and the scarcity and instability of resources, advancing the global poverty reduction process could involve enhancing the coordination of available global resources while combining local improvements in different regions.

From a policy perspective, the first is international cooperation and assistance. Resources should be allocated on the basis of relevant data and scientific analysis to determine the extent of poverty, assess the feasibility and scope of current interventions, and then allocate resources across regions in a phased and hierarchical manner. This approach aims to reduce financial pressures and increase the sustainability of results, rather than implementing all programs simultaneously in all regions. The second is local poverty alleviation. Area-specific poverty reduction strategies should be developed based on natural and geographical features. These strategies should incorporate local and indigenous knowledge and technologies to restore and manage the natural environment [8]. A combination of natural and human interventions can help slow down the rate of environmental change. Strengthening environmental monitoring in different areas is important to prevent potential risks and minimize the loss of livelihoods and economies caused by such risks. The third is livelihoods and well-being. Along with infrastructure development, efforts should be made to strengthen sanitation, epidemiology and social health systems to ensure basic health security for the population. Education should be promoted to increase employment opportunities and household incomes in order to increase individual and household resilience and awareness of environmental protection. Finally, due to the frequent and close economic interactions between different regions of the globe, it is crucial to study the long-term potential impacts of inter-regional economic exchanges and cooperation. Enhanced research, such as remote coupled system[9] analysis, can help prevent cross-regional impacts and mitigate emerging issues affecting the environment and poverty alleviation.

From an economic perspective, the first priority is economic development and infrastructure. Promoting local economies and expanding regional and global economic cooperation can enhance economic resilience to prevent direct poverty resulting from economic issues and ensure the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. Infrastructure development should be prioritized and integrated with new technologies to enhance resilience and sustainability, reducing redundant investments and construction. Besides, there are financial considerations. Since poverty alleviation requires significant financial investment from various sources, it's crucial to improve supervision and evaluation of resource utilization to ensure effectiveness and long-term impact. Accurate data, especially in remote and impoverished areas where infrastructure and communication are lacking, should be a focus. Transparency in data and supervision should be enhanced to evaluate cooperation

effectiveness and ensure the rational use of funds. The third point is private resource management. A portion of poverty alleviation resources comes from private donors and organizations. Their usage often involves expected returns. Careful attention should be paid to ensure that expectations of returns from private resources don't negatively affect sustainable poverty alleviation. Coordinating entry requirements and return expectations of private donor groups can help minimize risks to overall poverty alleviation progress and ensure the rational and effective utilization of local resources.

6. Conclusion

Through the analysis of the current situation and challenges faced by poverty, it is evident that although the causes of multidimensional poverty are complex and challenging to address, effective reduction is possible through gradual and appropriate measures. The key lies in coordinating resources, effective implementation, and paying attention to interconnections. Once multidimensional poverty is effectively reduced, it not only enhances the survival and quality of life for the global population but also significantly contributes to the achievement of other sustainable development goals. Therefore, addressing multidimensional poverty is one of the most important ways to realize global sustainable development. Due to the complexity of data regarding global poverty, this analysis and conclusion mainly focus on summarizing existing research and findings. Further data analysis is needed to determine the details and feasibility of specific improvement directions. Additionally, specific regional analysis is required to identify actionable steps and draw practical conclusions. Hence, the feasible directions for improvement ultimately require further analysis and research.

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