



# **Christian Community Development**

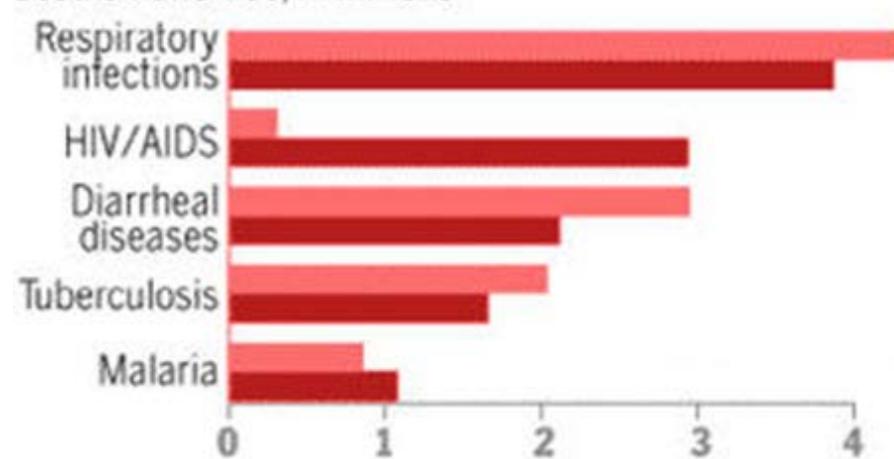


**Howard Culbertson  
Southern Nazarene University**

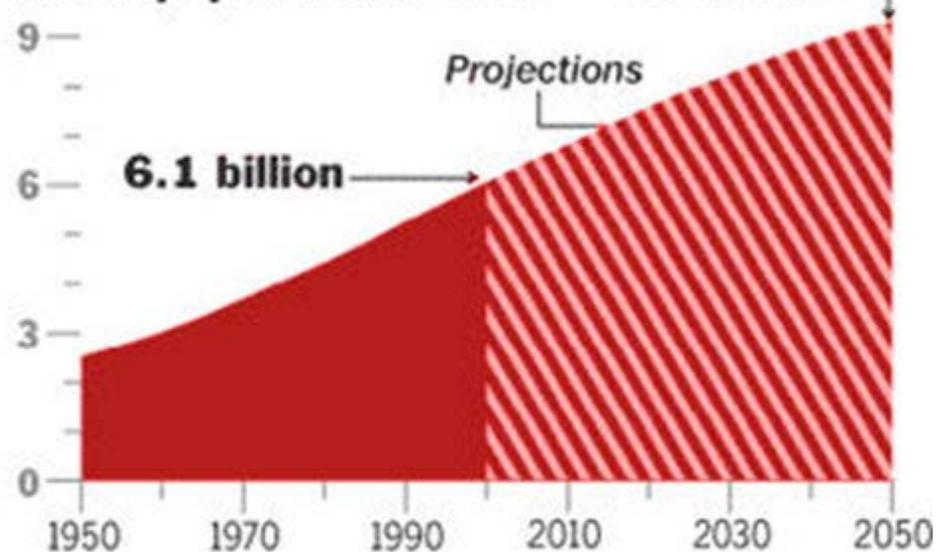


## Infectious diseases

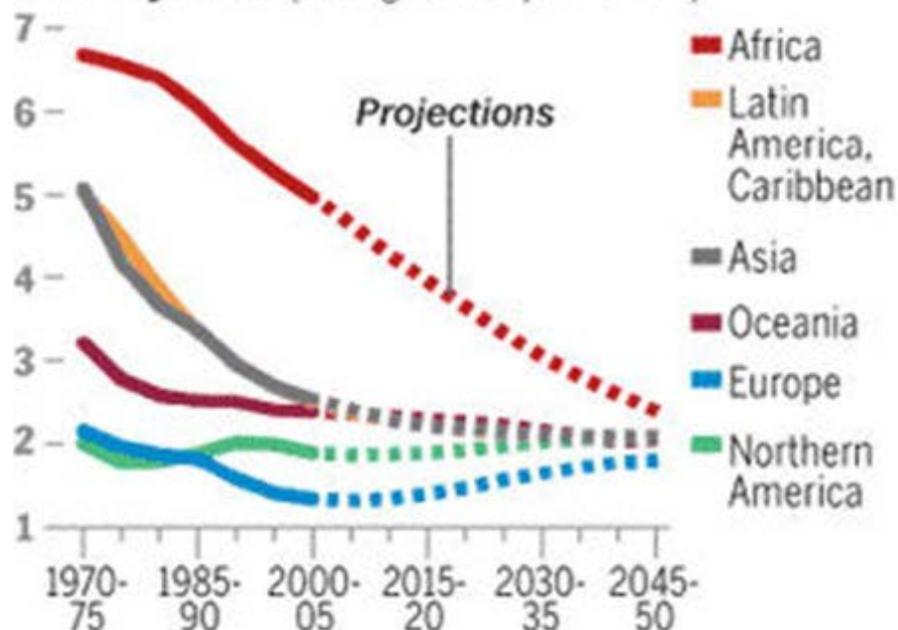
Deaths worldwide, in millions



## World population in billions



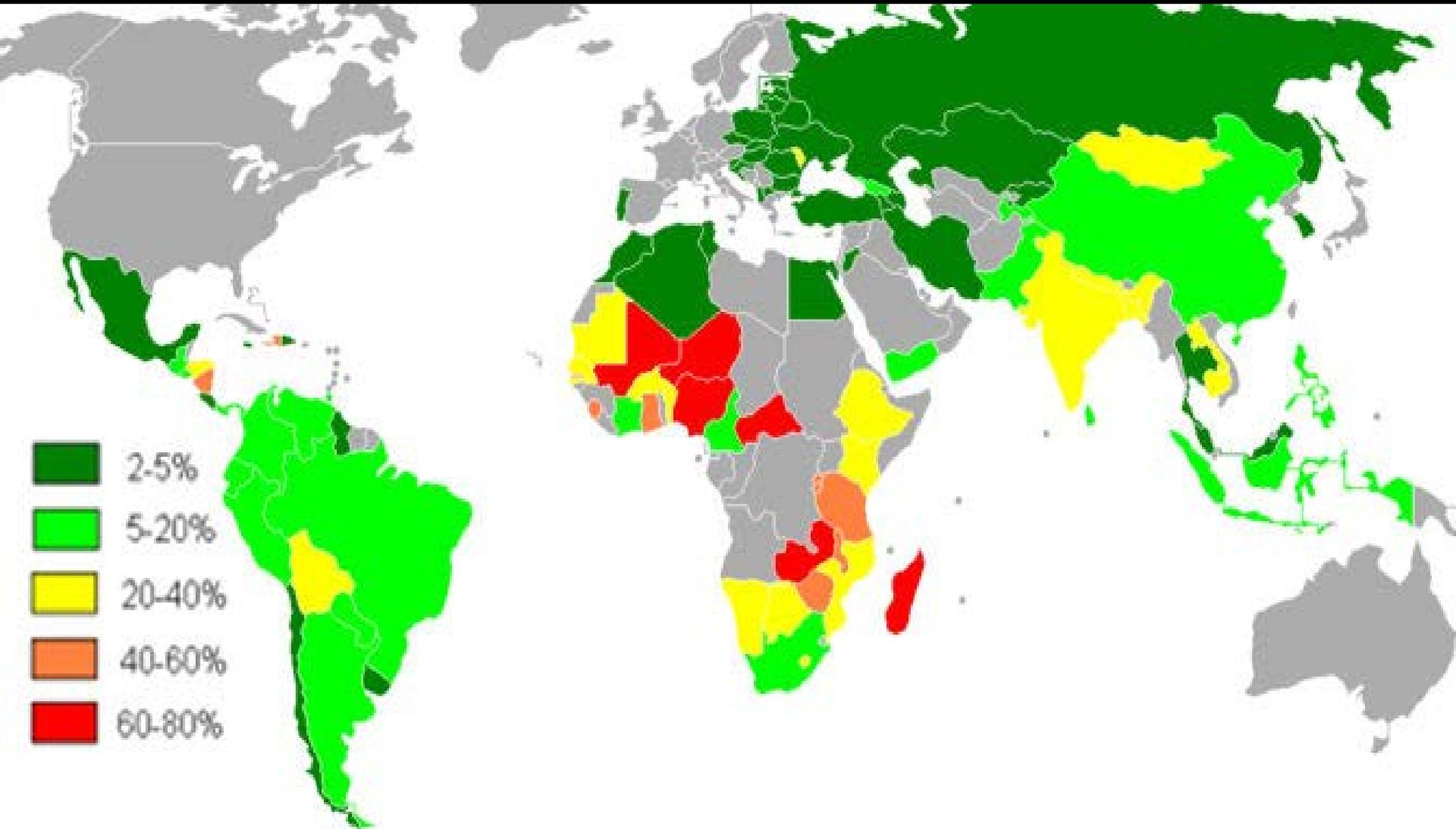
## Fertility rate (average births per woman)



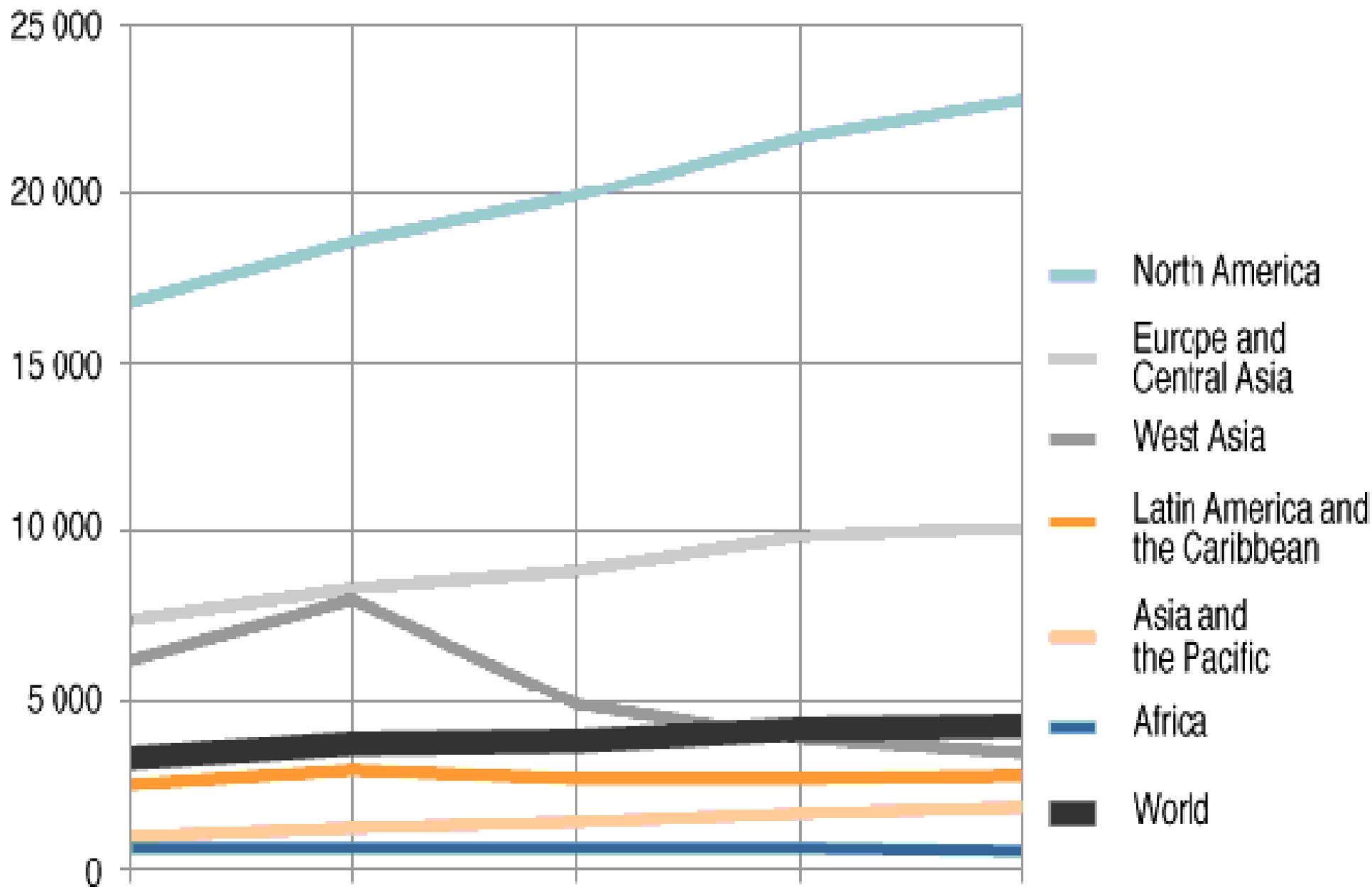
## Life expectancy at birth



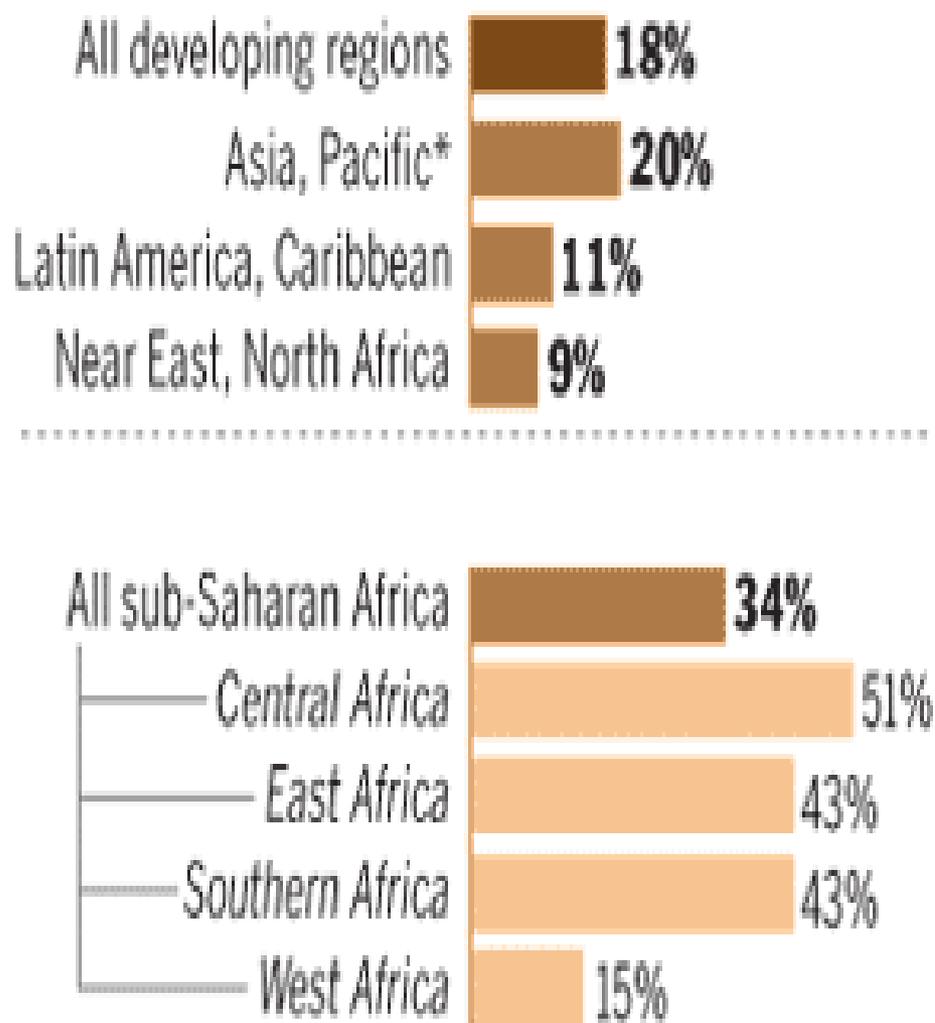
# Percentage of population living on \$1 or less per day



# Per capita gross national product



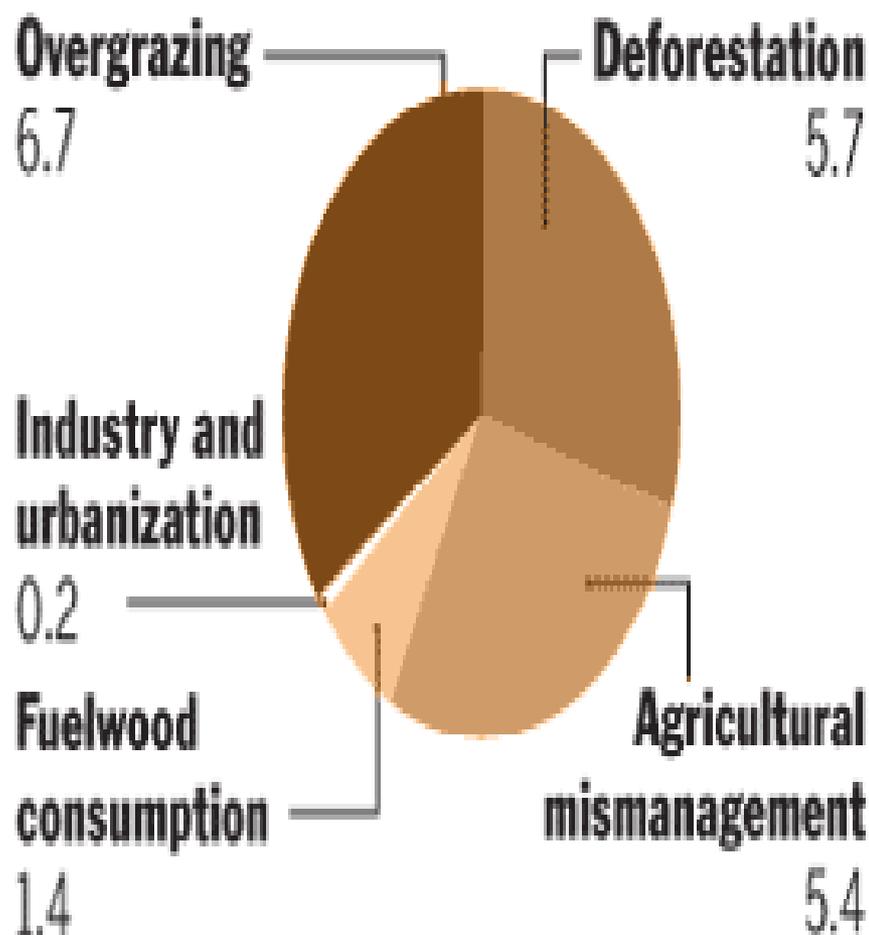
## Percentage of population undernourished

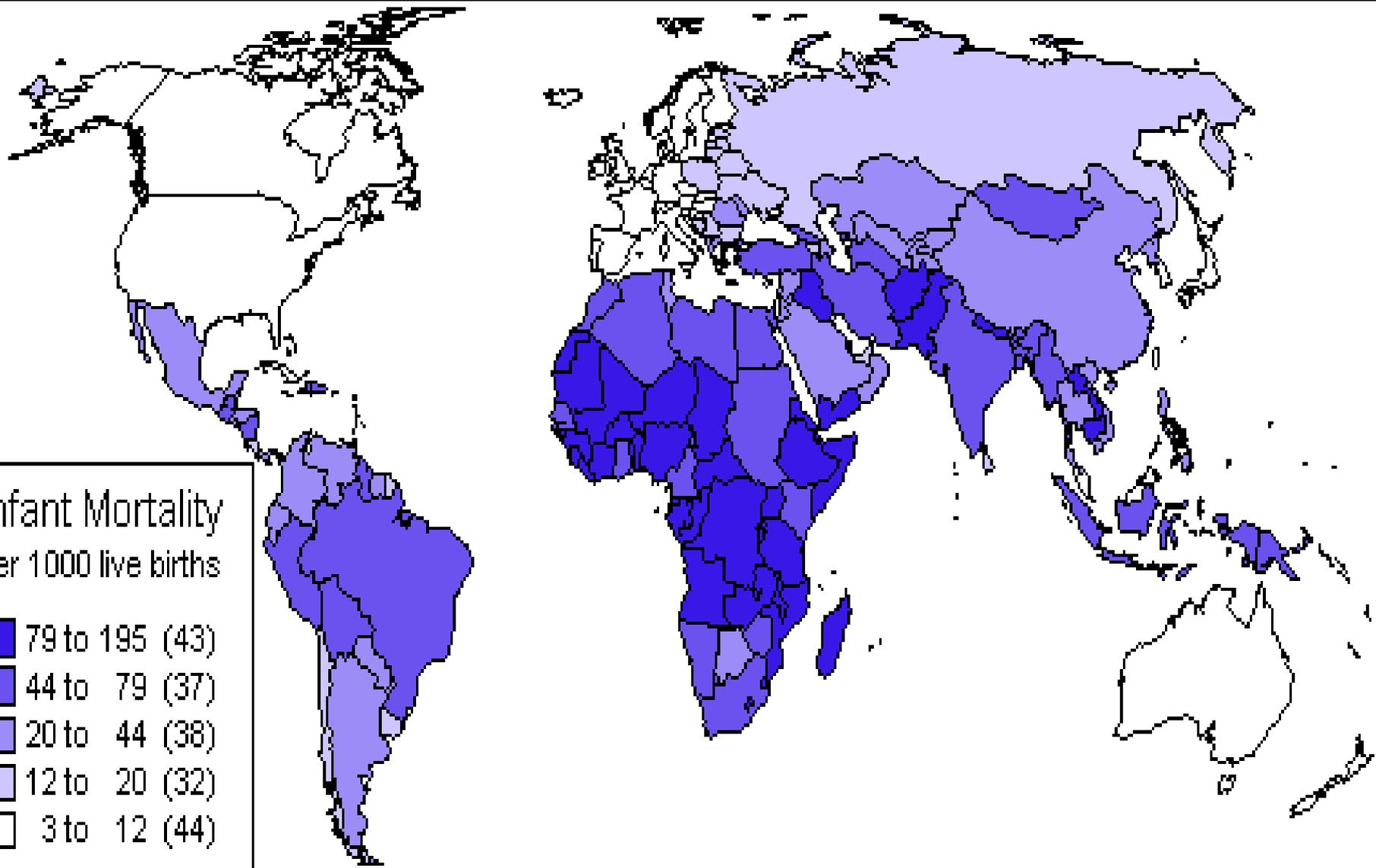
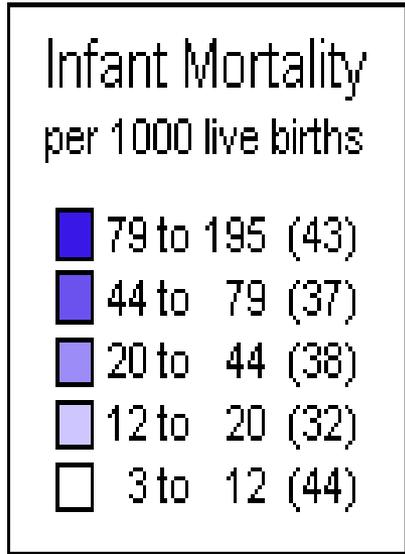


\*Excludes China

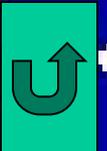
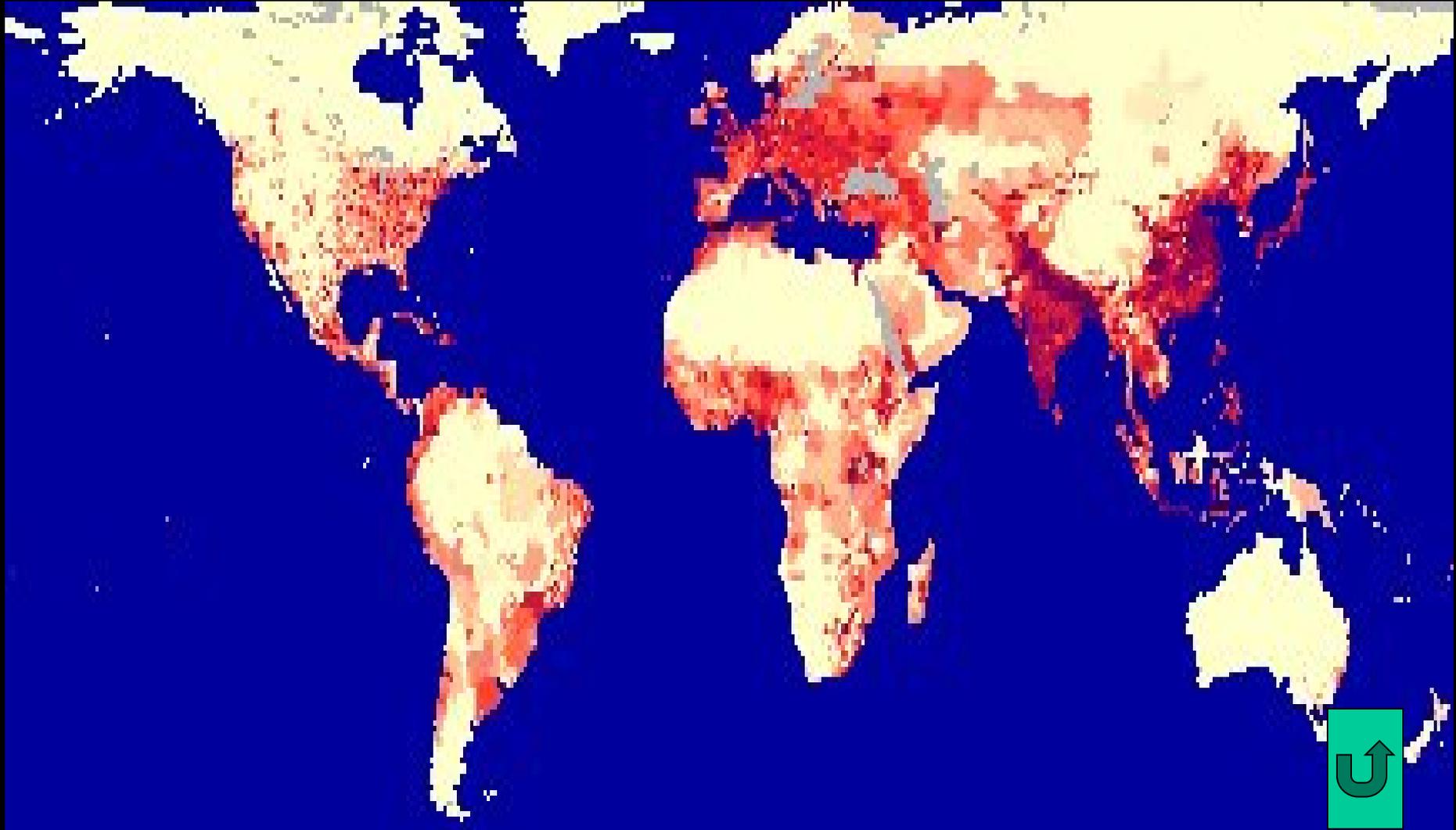
## Extent and causes of land degradation

In millions of square kilometers

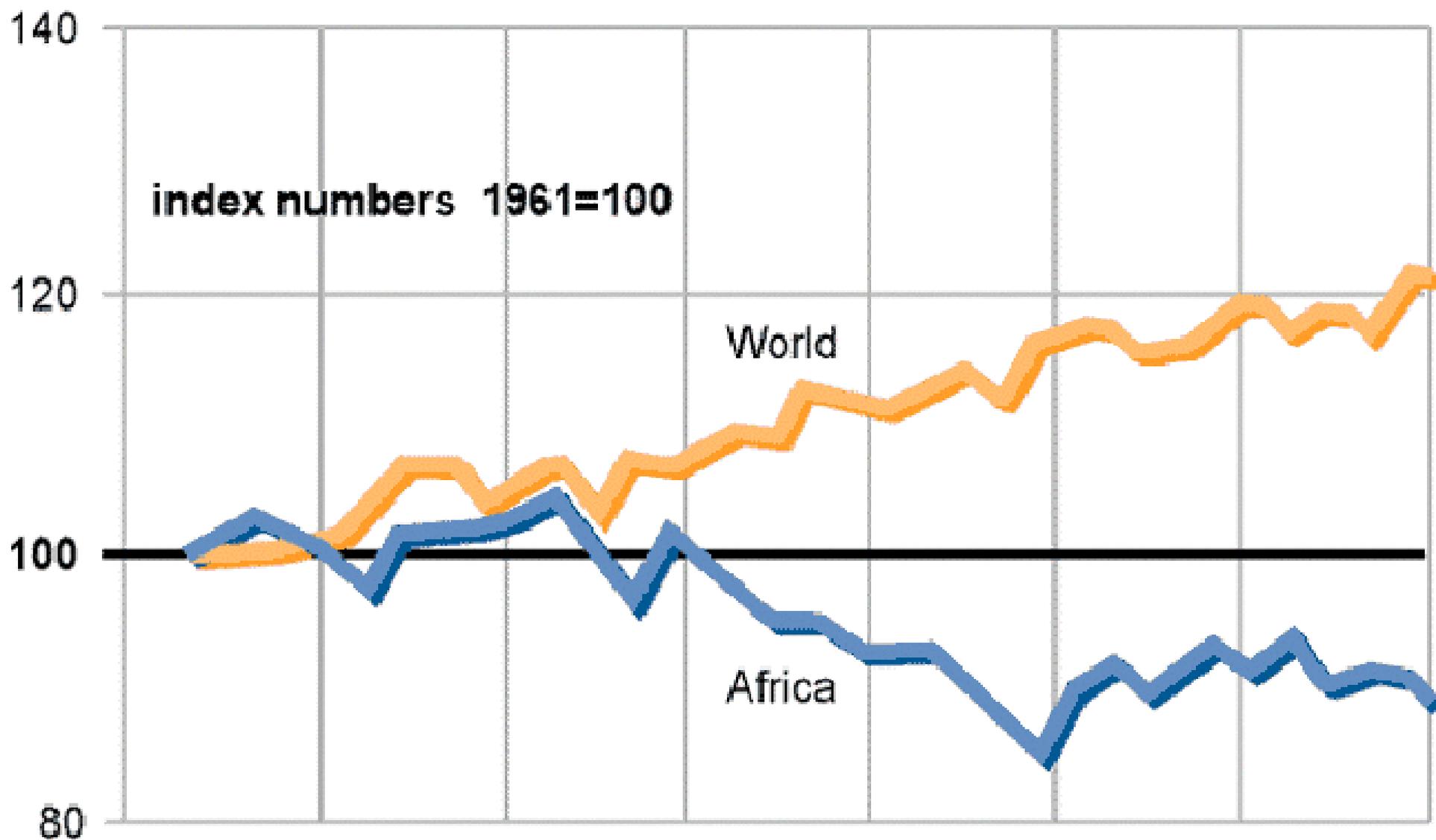




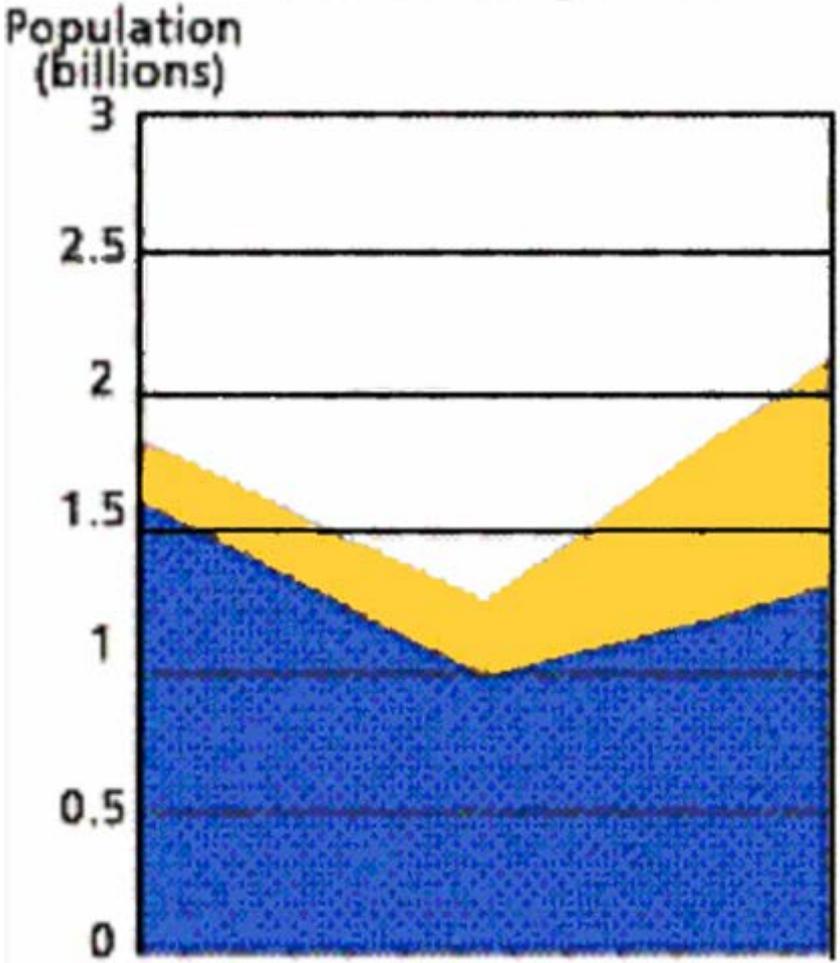
# Population density



# Per capita food production

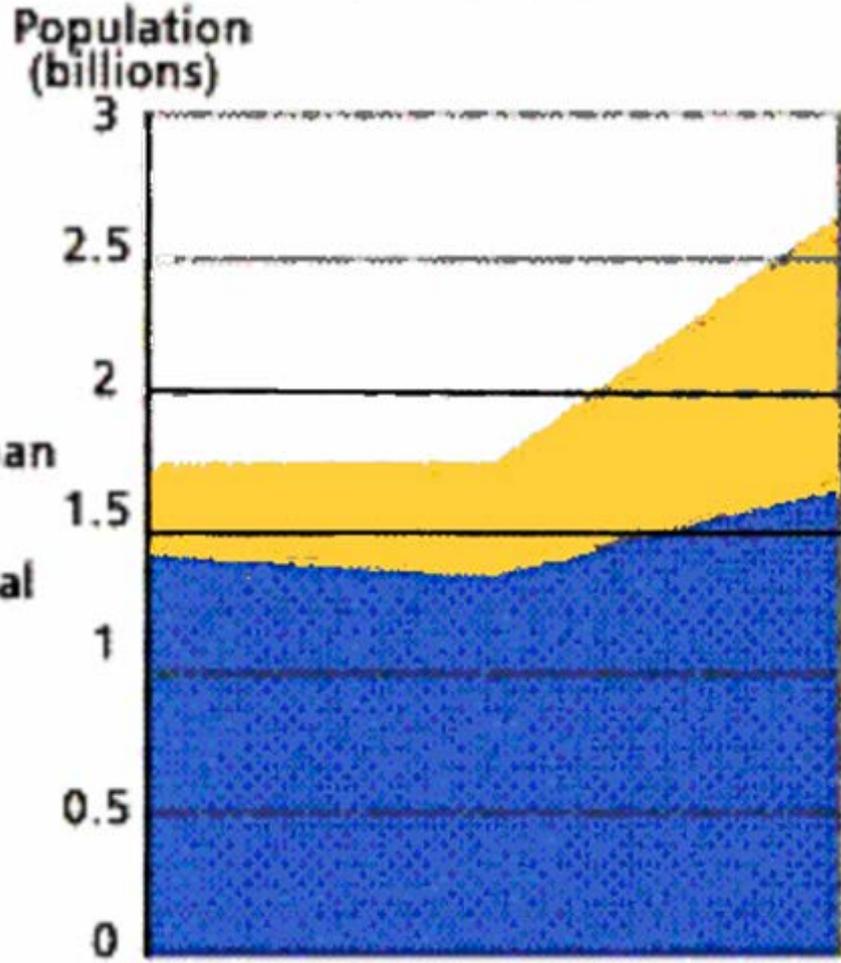


### Population Lacking Access to Safe Drinking Water



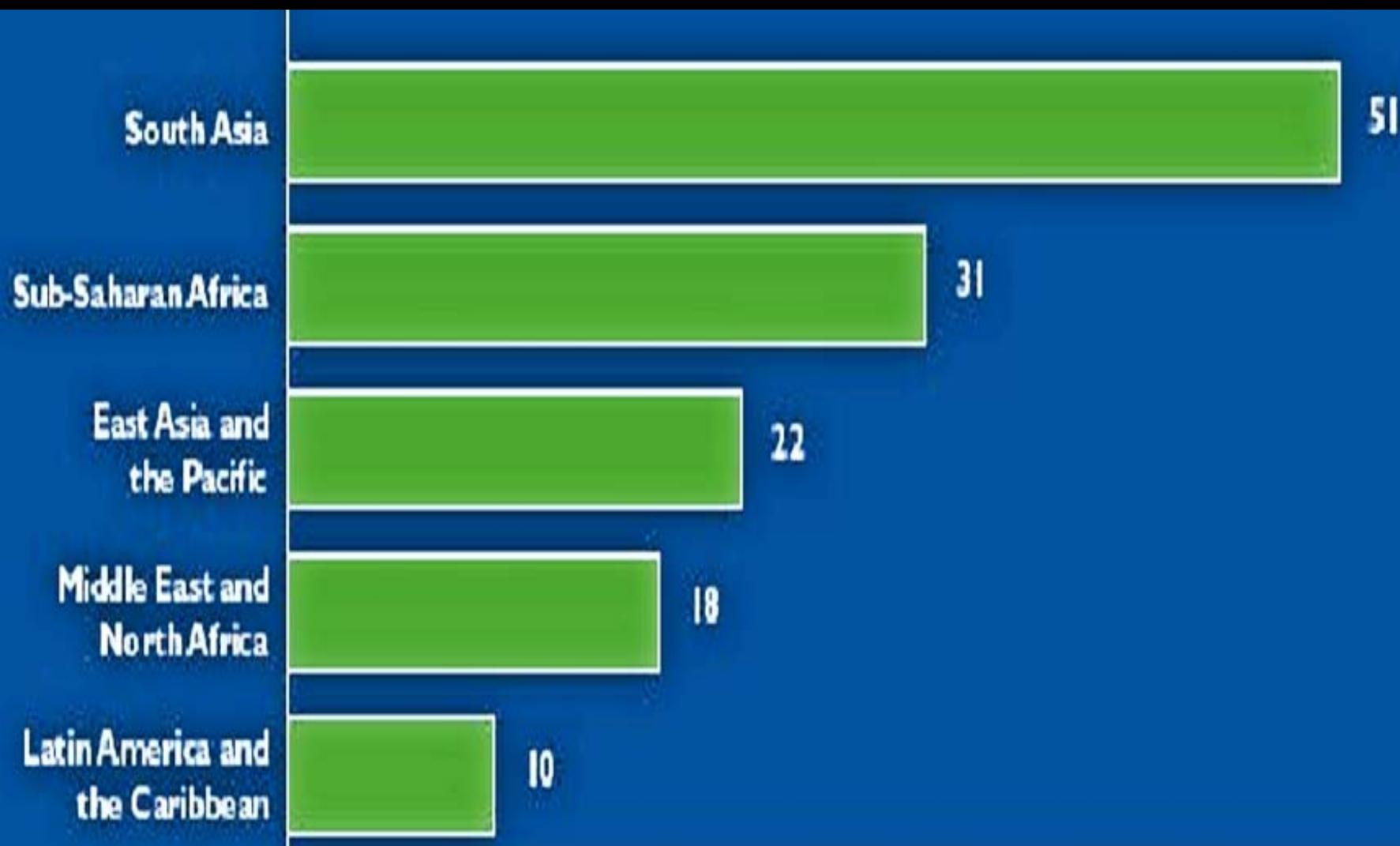
← 25 years →

### Population Lacking Access to Sanitation



← 25 years →

# Percent of underweight children under 5

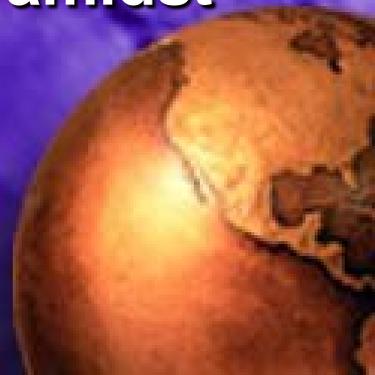




# Six plagues of our mis-developed world



- **Poverty**
- **Illiteracy:**
  - The curse of not knowing
- **Dispossession:**
  - The hungry travelers
- **The calamities of nature**
- **Urbanization:**
  - The fatal lure of the city
- **“The System”:**
  - Hunger amidst plenty





# How do we react to such huge, complex problems?



- “If *they* would just . . . .”

- “It’s not my business”



- “There’s nothing I can do about it”



- “I want to think about it in the light of the gospel”





# Should we be involved?



- Shouldn't we be pouring all our resources into saving souls for eternity?



- Is there any mandate beyond that of announcing the Good News?





# Biblical basis

- Old Testament
  - Examples?
- New Testament
  - Examples?



– <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/poor.htm>





# **“Are you the Messiah?”**

- **Tell John what you see**
    - **Blind receive sight, lame walk, lepers are cleansed, dead are raised and Gospel is being preached to the poor**
- 



# How can we be the “light” of a mis-developed world?

- **Motivation**

- “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God”  
-- Bob Pierce, World Vision

- **“How”**

- Inappropriate
  - Appropriate
- 



# Christian Community Development

- What is it?
  - What it is not.
- 
- 



# What community development is not . . .



- 1. Redistribution of wealth
  - “Eat your broccoli!”
- 2. A multitude of “projects”
  - Enthusiasm and goodwill are not enough





# What community development is not . . .



- 3. Simply an increase in the gross national product

- Haiti's economic problem: "Too much capital" to absorb





# Community development aims

- **1. Meeting minimum standards**
  - Food / nutrition
  - Health
    - Preventable diseases
      - Every 8 seconds, child dies from water-related disease
    - Pollution
  - Education





# Community development aims

- 2. Empowerment
- 3. Giving dignity and respect
- 4. Promoting peace and harmony (the *shalom* of God)





**The most successful development efforts are directed at single communities**



**• Successful ones I've been involved in:**

- Vegetable gardening**
- Well drilling**
- Pigs**
- Roads**
- Tree planting**





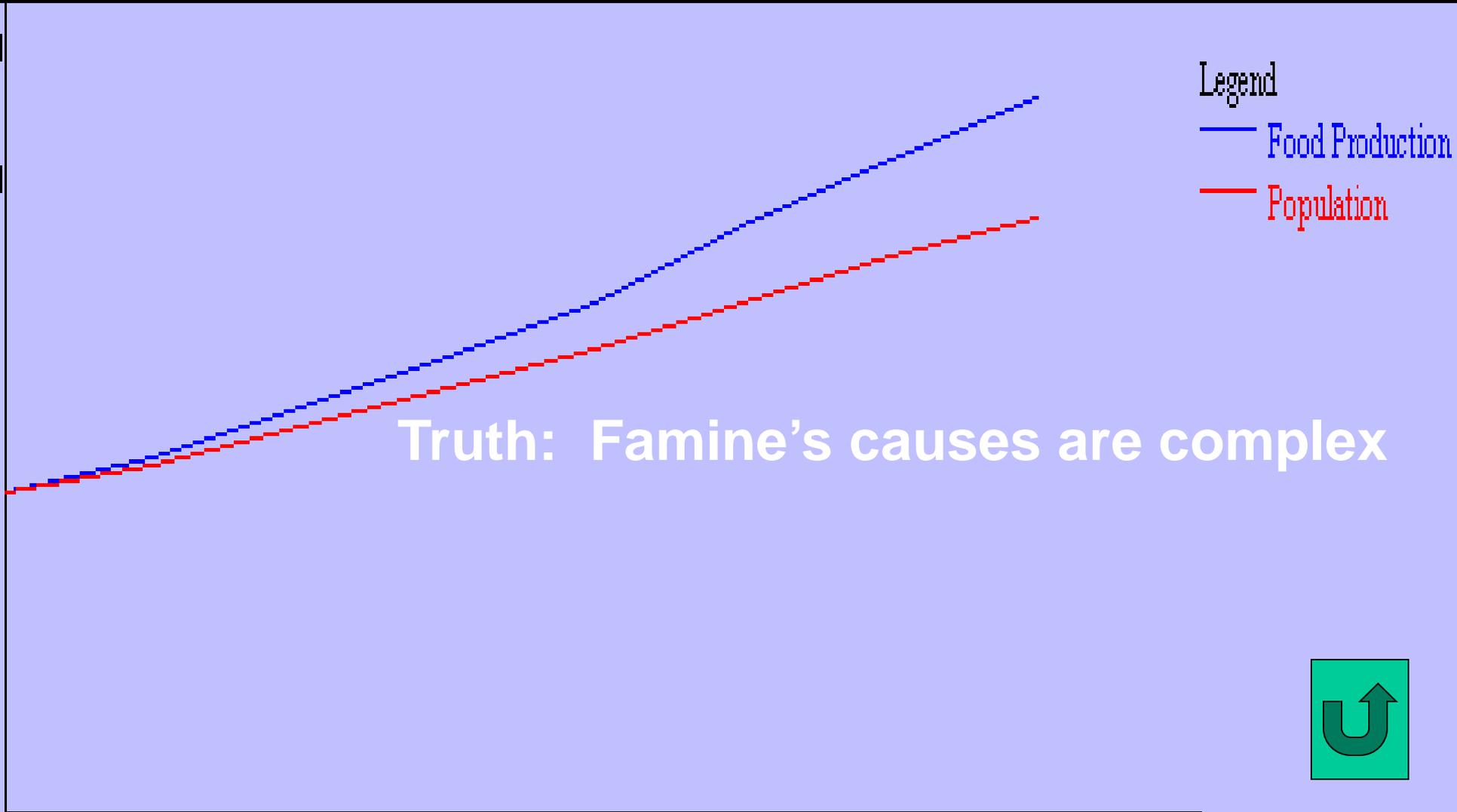
# 7 pitfalls and detours



- **1. Demagoguery based on myths**
  - **Myth: Food production is lagging behind population growth**
    - **Some say: “There simply isn’t enough food.”**



# Myth: Global overpopulation is the main cause of famine





# Myth: The amount of “X” is finite and fixed.

- We’re in a zero-sum game. What one person gets/uses of “x” means there is less for every other person
  - Result: brief guilt trips for developed nations
    - Example: Boycotts of Haitian industries
- 

**Myth: We have to solve people's material needs before spiritual needs can be addressed**





# Pitfalls and detours

- **2. Ethnocentric attitudes of aid-givers themselves**
    - We can solve your problem. We have the answers.
      - Railroad car of corn
    - **Authoritarianism**
      - **Whoever pays the bills calls the shots**
        - Village relocation after flood
        - Rainwater catchment systems
- 



# Pitfalls and detours

- **3. Expectations of easy answers and immediate results**
    - “Crash” programs tend to crash
    - *Relief and development are different strategies*
- 



# Pitfalls and detours



- 4. Temptation to bulldoze through local opposition



- 5. Inflexible administrative systems





# Pitfalls and detours

- 6. “Rice Christians”
    - How serious a problem?
  - 7. “Compassion fatigue”
- 

# Pontius' Puddle – The Preacher's Magazine



WHAT CAN ONE  
PERSON DO?

WHAT CAN ONE  
PERSON DO?

WHAT CAN ONE  
CHURCH DO?

WHAT CAN ONE  
PERSON DO?

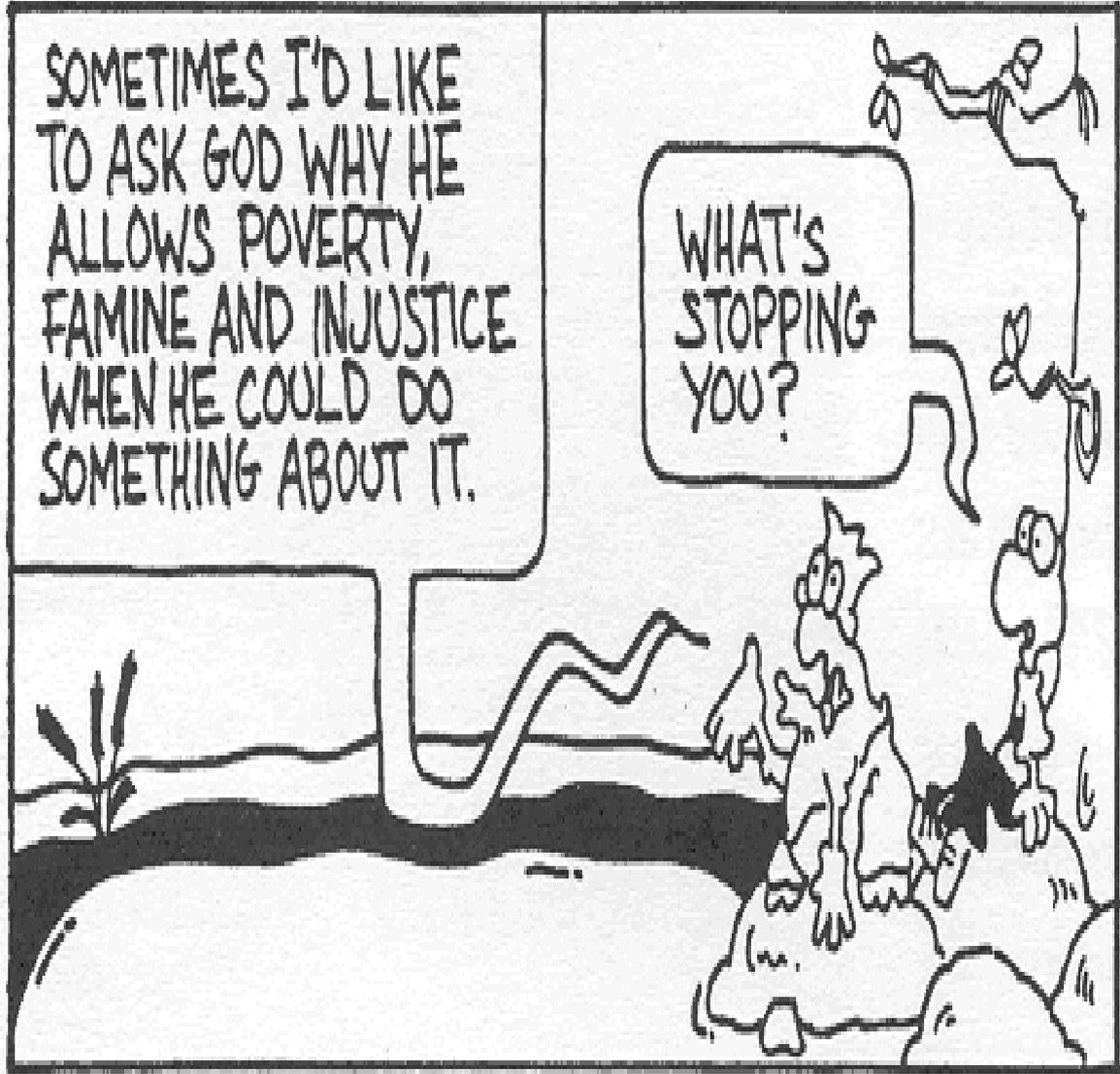
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NATION DO?

WHAT CAN ONE  
PERSON DO?

WHAT CAN  
ONE PERSON  
DO?



# Pontius' Puddle





**This PowerPoint presentation is available along with related materials and other PowerPoint presentations at <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/ppt.htm>**

