

Why the poor are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change?

Climate change has become a critical global issue that affects many aspects, including economic growth, social welfare, and sustainable development. One of the most pressing challenges associated with climate change is its impact on poverty rates particularly in developing countries.

Climate change has both direct and indirect impacts on poverty rates. Direct impacts include the increased frequency and severity of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts, which can cause loss of life, displacement, and infrastructure damage. These events can severely affect economic growth and exacerbate poverty rates, particularly in countries with weak infrastructure and limited resources. Indirect impacts of climate change include changes in agricultural productivity due to temperature and precipitation changes, water scarcity, and changes in disease patterns. These impacts can also significantly affect people's lives, especially the poor.

The World Bank data shows that the number of people living in extreme poverty (i.e., those living on less than \$1.90 a day) has decreased from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 689 million in 2017. However, the effects of climate change pose a significant threat to the continued reduction of poverty rates. The IMF has estimated that the cost of climate change could be as much as 1-5% of global GDP per year by 2030, which will likely have a disproportionate impact on the poor.

One of the ways in which climate change affects poverty rates is through its impact on agricultural productivity. According to the World Bank, around 80% of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns can affect crop yields, leading to food insecurity and decreased incomes for farmers. The World Bank estimates that climate change could reduce agricultural productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa by up to 50% by 2040, leading to a significant increase in poverty rates in the region.



Another way in which climate change affects poverty rates is through its impact on health. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns can lead to the spread of diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and cholera, which disproportionately affect the poor. According to the World Health Organization, climate change is expected to cause an additional 250,000 deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress between 2030 and 2050.

In addition to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change, the poor are also more vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their limited resources, lack of access to credit and insurance, and weaker political voice. This vulnerability can lead to a vicious cycle of poverty and climate change, where the poor are disproportionately affected by climate change, which, in turn, exacerbates their poverty.

Some policy recommendations to address the issue in developing countries:

1. **Increase Investment in Clean Energy** Developing countries need to increase their investment in clean energy sources, such as solar and wind power, to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels. This will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also promote economic growth and job creation.
2. **Implement Climate-Friendly Agriculture Practices** Agriculture is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, but it is also an essential source of income for many people in developing countries. Therefore, implementing climate-friendly agriculture practices, such as agroforestry and conservation agriculture, can help to reduce emissions while promoting sustainable agriculture and livelihoods.
3. **Strengthen Climate Resilience** Developing countries need to invest in building resilience to climate change by improving infrastructure, water management systems, and disaster risk reduction measures. This will help to minimize the impact of extreme weather events and other climate-related disasters on vulnerable communities.
4. **Promote International Cooperation and Funding** Developed countries should provide funding and support for developing countries to implement climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. This can be achieved through international cooperation, such as the Green Climate Fund, which provides funding for climate change projects in developing countries.
5. **Raise Awareness and Education** Increasing awareness and education about climate change can help to change behavior and promote sustainable practices. This can be achieved through education programs in schools and community outreach initiatives.

Conclusion

Addressing the problem of climate change in developing countries requires a multifaceted approach that includes investing in clean energy, implementing climate-friendly agriculture practices, building resilience to climate change, promoting international cooperation and funding, and raising awareness and education. By implementing these policy recommendations, developing countries can mitigate the impact of climate change on their populations and promote sustainable development.