

Statement on Poverty for Religious Leaders' Consultation on Poverty

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The fact that nearly two-thirds of the world's population live close to absolute poverty is a moral scandal that shames all civilised societies. The Religions of the world have a moral duty not only to draw attention to the obscenity of the many millions who go to bed without food, but the indignity of millions of children who have no education, no health care and no certain future. But we are part of the problem too because although we have vast networks working with the very poor we are not doing enough to bring aid to those who need it most. The three most urgent needs, in my opinion, are (1) to assist women and children in healthcare and education; (2) to challenge corrupt governments and to overcome regional conflict; (3) to implement the G-8 call for 100 percent debt relief for Highly Indebted Nations.