



What caused the gap between North / South ?



There are several factors that contribute to the differences between nations; some are things that exist in a country, others are factors outside a country. To understand the present we need to also look at the past.



- A) **RESOURCES AVAILABLE:** some countries have more resources than others. For example Kuwait has large oil reserves from which it earns income. Some countries have few such resources and poor soils and limited rainfall. This even dates back to the very beginning of human civilisations and geographic luck on whether you had access to crops with high nutritional value and animals that could be domesticated
- B) **POLITICAL INSTABILITY:** the government frequently changes due to military coups - government changing through force of the military and taking over. Or perhaps there is civil war or conflict as in Rwanda and so people do not invest money in industry etc so there are not enough jobs so people can not earn money.
- C) **POPULATION GROWTH:** people are a major resource but if there are too many for a country to provide for the environment may suffer as people try to find land to live on or wood for cooking fires. How does the government educate children, healthcare services etc?
- D) **ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION:** as people struggle to survive, land is cleared of trees, tall grasses and may also be overused until the soil has lost its fertility. In parts of Africa (the Sahel) the desert is spreading due to overuse of the land.
- E) **CULTURAL PRACTICES:** some cultures such as some groups of Hindus in India will not change how they do things even if the change would benefit people. Places with strict gender roles - workforce 50% less



- A) **DEBT BURDENS:** many poor nations have borrowed money from richer nations or institutions such as the World Bank to pay for better roads, hospitals and factories. But they have to pay interest on these loans and in the 1980s interest rates went up a great deal while what they earned from selling products such as tea went down. More and more of their money was spent paying off the interest on their loans rather than on facilities to improve peoples lives.
Many developing nations have also spent a lot of money on arms for their military forces, often paid for with loans. In 1985 it was calculated that every 2 days the world spent more on arms than the UN spent on health, food and education in a year.

B) TRADE IMBALANCES: as we have seen many developing nations export raw materials such as bananas, cotton, but have to import manufactured goods which cost more. To try to earn more, governments may encourage farmers to plant cash crops such as coffee or flowers that earn more rather than grow the food that they need. What happens if there is a plague of insects that eats the coffee or the price for flowers drops?

C) TRANS NATIONAL CORPORATIONS: are large companies that operate in several countries. Name some examples. They set up factories in developing nations because labour is cheaper and laws are not so tough about working conditions. Often what they make is sold in wealthier countries and the profit they make is sent back to their country of origin. Does a developing nation benefit?

D) COLONISATION: when one country rules another country or region.