

## Killer facts

### *The unequal world*

- The income of the world's 500 richest billionaires exceeds that of its poorest 416 million people.<sup>1</sup>
- Every minute of every day, somewhere in the developing world, a woman dies needlessly in childbirth or pregnancy. Meanwhile 20 children are killed by avoidable diseases such as diarrhoea or malaria.<sup>2</sup>
- Black Brazilians are twice as likely as whites to die a violent death, and are only one-third as likely to go to university.<sup>3</sup>
- Discrimination against girls and women, which starts even before birth through selective abortion, means that the world is short of an estimated 101.3 million "missing" women.
- Poor nutrition means that, each year, 30 million children are born with stunted growth and face a lifetime of sickness and poverty.
- Half of global cancer deaths are in developing countries, including (due to late diagnosis and lack of treatment) 95 per cent of deaths from cervical cancer.<sup>4</sup>

### *Politics and Power*

- 170 million people were killed by their own governments in the twentieth century, four times the number killed in wars between states.<sup>5</sup>
- For every person that dies from terrorist attacks, approximately
  - 25 women die unnecessarily in childbirth
  - 60 die in traffic accidents
  - 175 children die from hunger
- People living in the slums of Jakarta, Manila, and Nairobi pay five to ten times more per unit for water than those in high-income areas in their own cities – and more than consumers pay in London or New York.

---

<sup>1</sup> UN Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2005*.

<sup>2</sup> The risk to women of dying from pregnancy-related causes ranges from one in 18 in Nigeria to one in 8,700 in Canada. In poor countries, as many as 30 per cent of deaths among women of reproductive age (15–49 years) may be from pregnancy-related causes, compared with rates of less than 1 per cent in developed countries. Sources: UNDP, *Human Development Report 2005*; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Report on the World Social Situation 2005*.

<sup>3</sup> A. Ciconello (2007) 'The Challenge of Eliminating Racism in Brazil: the new institutional framework for fighting racial inequality'

<sup>4</sup> [www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/cervical\\_cancer\\_gep/text.pdf](http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/cervical_cancer_gep/text.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> G. Mulgan, op. cit.

- In Uttar Pradesh in northern India, close to 80 per cent of women require their husband's permission to visit a health centre. 60 per cent have to seek permission before stepping outside their house.
- Women grow between 60–80 per cent of the food produced in most developing countries, yet own less than two per cent of the land.<sup>6</sup>
- In Kerala, India, almost 50 per cent of women who owned no property reported physical violence, compared with only 7 per cent who did own property.
- Estimates of the value of household work as a proportion of GDP vary from 35 per cent to 55 per cent.<sup>7</sup>
- In Pakistan, the evidence in court of a Muslim woman is worth half that of a man.<sup>8</sup>
- It is estimated that there will be more than 150 million environmental refugees by 2050 due to the likely effects of global warming
- Poor countries are missing out on an estimated \$385 billion each year due to the evasion and avoidance of existing taxes. This is four times the volume of global aid.
- Banking and financial crises have wiped 25 per cent off the economic output of developing countries over the past 25 years.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, Wal-Mart's sales came to \$345bn, more than the GDP of all 49 least developed countries put together, or of major economies such as Saudi Arabia, Poland, or Indonesia.
- \$300bn a year would lift everyone on the planet out of extreme poverty<sup>10</sup> - just a third of each year's global military spending.

*Change...*

- In 1900, New Zealand was the only country with a government elected by all its adult citizens. By the end of the century, there were ostensibly 120 electoral democracies in place.

---

<sup>6</sup> UNFPA, *State of World Population 2005*.

<sup>7</sup> A. Latigo (2005) 'A New Round of Time-use Studies for Africa: Measuring Unpaid Work for Pro-poor Development Policies', paper presented at UNDP/Levy Economics Institute Global Conference on Unpaid work and the Economy, 1–3 October 2005. Available at: [www.levy.org/undp-levy-conference/papers/paper\\_Latigo.pdf](http://www.levy.org/undp-levy-conference/papers/paper_Latigo.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> DFID (2005) *Reducing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion*, p.4.

<sup>9</sup> UN World Economic and Social Survey 2006: Diverging Growth and Development, p.xii.

<sup>10</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 2005*.

- The most equitable parliament in the world at present is Rwanda's lower house, where women hold nearly 49 per cent of the seats.<sup>11</sup>
- By 2007, there were twice as many mobile phone owners in developing countries as in industrialised countries, and subscriber growth rates in Africa were running at 50 per cent per year.
- Levels of illiteracy have halved since 1970 as a result of the spread of primary education
- Thirty years ago, almost 400 people died every day as a result of disasters. That number has now halved, thanks to a combination of more effective early warning systems and better preparedness at community level.
- Fifty years ago, Korea was poorer than Sudan, with a main export of wigs made from human hair. Today it is an industrial leader with a GDP per capita more than nine times greater than that of Sudan.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> International Women's Democracy Centre, [www.iwdc.org/resources/fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.iwdc.org/resources/fact_sheet.htm).

<sup>12</sup> Figures for 2003, from *Human Development Report 2005*, using statistics from World Bank 2005c.