

Population growth spurs development on land that was once reserved for agriculture. In China, farmers brought in a record harvest of 480 million tons of grain in 1995, yet experts predict that by 2025 the nation will need more than 640 million tons annually to feed its growing population.



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caused thousands to flee their homelands and created widespread famine.

Although grain production worldwide has increased in recent years, rising prices have made much of this food inaccessible to the world's poorest people. Rapid population growth has also caused food shortages. In China, for example, land previously used for farming has been transformed into cities and towns, leaving many without a reliable and nearby source of food.

In November 1996, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization held a World Food Summit in Rome to discuss strategies for combating hunger in the next century. Items on the agenda included developing more family planning programs, promoting more efficient farming methods, and sponsoring larger international assistance programs. Despite these new and ongoing efforts, experts estimate that approximately 40,000 children die each day from sickness and malnutrition.

U.S. Foreign Aid. American leaders have often acted on the belief that giving aid to other nations in need is not only a good humanitarian effort, but often is in the national interest of the United States. For example, after

9 billion by 2030, with the highest growth rates in the less developed nations. Two-thirds of the world's impoverished people are less than 15 years old. While women in developed countries have, on average, two children during their lifetimes, women in some less developed regions average more than six children.

Rapid population growth places a burden on a nation's economic and natural resources. Many advocates for helping people in need around the world recommend making birth control and family planning techniques widely available to couples in developing countries. The birth rate is generally lower in countries where the population achieves higher levels of education. Thus, many developing countries are trying to improve literacy rates and general education.

World Hunger. Hunger is a major problem in developing countries. Despite advances in agricultural technology and years of international aid programs, 800 million people worldwide do not get enough to eat each day. Nowhere are hunger problems like these more evident than in sub-Saharan Africa. For example, recent tribal warfare in Zaire and Rwanda has

Recent statistics indicate that the global income gap is getting worse. The richest 20 percent of the population controls nearly 80 percent of the world's wealth. Meanwhile, more than half the world's people have incomes of less than \$2 a day and live in deplorable conditions like these in Brazil.



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