

As at 19 October 2015

Answers to the Question:

What does the term 'poverty' mean to you?

Poverty to me means going without the basic means to live happily. I don't think the term poverty is limited to a lack material resources such as money, a home, food and so on that make you poor, it could include limited access to education, or employment services. Whatever in their life that I lacking, a person living in poverty is reduced to feeling inferior, inadequate, and unhappy.

If poor health, domestic violence, abuse, bad nutrition, inadequate housing and lack of opportunity are the symptoms, poverty is often the cause. To me poverty is more than just a low household income. Poverty is a mind-set, a way of thinking that is self-deprecating and self-fulfilling. Poverty is often quiet to those who don't face it, but loud to those who do. In this sense poverty is actually relative. New Zealand does not have the same poverty as the third world, I have seen that with my own eyes. But we have significant inequality in our NZ society. This means inequal access to opportunities and creates unhappiness and feeling of deprivation. Lack of income aside, to me poverty is a FEELING that people have, caused often by their own sense of hopelessness that their situation can ever improve.

True poverty in my mind, exists on many levels. It's not necessarily the lack of money, rather, the imposition of barriers. Barriers to healthcare, barriers to education, barriers to choice. True poverty imposes a burden on its bearer to perpetuate patterns that binds the next generation to the same cycle inasmuch that the cycle becomes internalised. At that point when these ideas are embedded in a society, true poverty exists. This means that the individual is no longer deprived of choice, but deprived of thought, hope and imagination that any possibility exists outside of what they've inherited.

I believe poverty is defined as an area where you are held back because of a "lack of." This could include clothing, money, education or housing. I believe that poverty and development are closely interlinked and that the thing that hinders development for all individuals is the constraints that are put in place to restrict ones freedom. I believe that poverty is something that can be changed and it unfortunately places lives on an unequal footing to others. Poverty can put lives at risk and is something that desperately needs to be changed.

Poverty is about low living standards and is often measured in terms of income. However poverty extends beyond income to include factors such as health and education. Normally poverty is classified within two categories: absolute and relative. Absolute poverty refers to a set standard across countries while relative poverty refers to people being poor relative to those around them.

Poverty to me is not a lack of funds but a lack in hope, aspirations and drive. It's a state of mind or perception. I personally know a huge number of people that live 'below the standard' but the perception of capability and potential to do great things differs. I see intergenerational cycles of beneficiary dependency, unemployment and worst of all no aspiration to move away from this lifestyle. This to me is poverty.

When you say poverty – the first thing that comes to mind is Africa. In New Zealand I feel it is underprivileged or disadvantage families or individuals who lack the ability to deal with life's everyday trials. Temptations like alcohol and drugs help these families to cope with life, although the effects are devastating. I feel underprivileged it is not being able to provide the basic necessities. Instead of cooked meals - its cheap food from the takeaways. Instead of sending the kids to school with no lunch - it's no school until payday. Instead of dealing with health issues – it will have to wait until we have gas to go to the doctors. Instead of saving money to buy what you really need - you get a loan from a family member or ring the money shop or the home direct truck or take something into the pawn shop to trade for money. Some effects of drugs and alcohol is violence, abuse, self-doubt and an inability to interact with society. Children's health, education and financial stability are at risk. It is a generational cycle and it will not stop until someone finds a different path – explores or steps outside of what they are used to. Children will only learn from what they see.

Poverty is an affliction that lies largely outside of the hands of those afflicted, unless they create or are given the tools which with to tackle it. It is lack of access to basic necessities, it is the root of the deepest and darkest problems in society, and it is entirely unnecessary and absolutely changeable.

"Poverty" to me is a socially constructed and unnecessary state of being that is used to keep power imbalances in place. It may be a naïve opinion but it is my belief that improving benefits and the minimum wage would heavily diminish poverty in New Zealand, if not eradicate it completely. Poverty is hunger, isolation, disempowerment and uncertainty. Poverty does not exist in a bubble and is so often the precursor to many other social problems such as mental illness, crime and poor education. The stress that poverty causes truly

As at 19 October 2015

hinders the dream of social and class mobility.

I grew up in rural South Africa, and while my parents are privileged and educated, they are also selfless. Often I wouldn't know if there'd be grocery money, but that wasn't poverty. Poverty to me was the pale girl my age begging at the traffic lights, the defeat in her eyes and the rumble in her swollen belly. I still see poverty today; there is still a girl my age and she is still hungry, only now she's outside Countdown, not the traffic lights. Poverty cannot be ignored, and I aspire to one day develop solutions.

More than a mere material lack or deficiency, poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand is the inability of real people to fully participate in the everyday life of our beautiful, unique and (once upon a time) egalitarian society, because of demanding structural constraints such as precariat jobs that prevent a flourishing family life, inadequate income for basic human needs or unhealthy environments that prevent children from thriving. But there is one Māori proverb that highlights where our priorities on this issue should always lie: "He kai poutaka me kinikini atu, he kai poutaka me horehore atu, mā te tamaiti te iho"

I understand poverty to be the temporary or long-term deprivation of necessary social, economic and political resources. I believe that poverty affects the lives of many households and individuals in New Zealand. Within our country, poverty disproportionately affects particular geographical, cultural, and socioeconomic groups. In doing so, poverty has a crippling effect on those that it touches, and impacts the development of our nation as a whole.

Poverty is deprivation, including of opportunity. It is often (but not only) acute, where a person is deprived of necessities (eg. food, shelter, and basic social connection) crucial for simple survival. When a person is deprived of necessities, it is hard to maintain psychological grit and physical health or care about the good things in life. Disconnection limits the ability for a person to achieve their goals—worse, sometimes it limits the desire to set goals. Where deprivation is of non-essentials, it is still possible to experience 'poverty of opportunity'. Poverty is not acceptable anywhere, least of all in New Zealand.

To me poverty represents the extreme of inequity in society. It is a multifaceted issue that places its sufferers at a disadvantage in every aspect of their life, development and career. It is not simply about a lack of money, but describes the cumulative effect that a lack of the basic necessities has on a person over an extended period of time, negatively influencing health, mental development, social and economic security and creating a barrier of negative societal perception and low self-esteem that prevents people leaving the poverty cycle.

For me, poverty is a lack of choice. Whether it be through not being able to feed your children or through ending up in a life of crime due to society expecting it. This is why I strive to empower those vulnerable groups to give them a voice and ultimately to give them choice over how they live their lives. Examples range from foster kids regardless of background being automatically labelled as delinquents to poorer communities being marginalised outside of the main economic hubs and unable to find work as a result.

I have to admit I come from privileged beginnings, I don't ever remember seeing poverty or being aware enough to notice it where I grew up. I may have been told, I may have been given data and stats and numbers. None of this computed until I saw it face to face. For me, poverty is going without. It's facing needs that you are unable to meet yourself and your community is unable to help with. It's not having the freedom to choose another option for your life because you are without the very things you need to get by.

Growing up within a middle class working family however growing up within a poverty stricken area I was able to see poverty full frontal from the young age of three. Poverty is not all about not having money, it's about not having the necessities to live, being unhappy and having constant worry. Poverty is about not having clean clothes on your back and breakfast on the table every morning. We can discuss relative and complete poverty however once you're in poverty it is hard to differentiate. Poverty is about having the happiness taken away, it is about waking up in the morning worrying that today my children won't be fed and today I have to worry about how I'm going to pay all the bills stacking up. Poverty is social segregation it is not a happy place and it needs to be changed by us. As Nelson Mandela said "Like slavery and apartheid poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings".

An interpretation that I sympathise with is that it is a restriction put on individuals or groups whereby it unfairly limits human potential. In my opinion, 'unfairly' does not necessarily mean that there is no way out of poverty, it just means that the determinants are so stacked against the individual or group that there is little chance to live a fulfilling life. The limits are often described in terms of a monetary value, however I believe it has the potential to be extended beyond that to environmental and societal factors for example. There is also an element of relativity to this which is weighed up against the society in which it exists - e.g. poverty in New

As at 19 October 2015

Zealand vs. poverty in Cambodia.

Poverty to me embodies a form of living which should not exist in today's society. It conveys abject squalor, whereby individuals struggle to not just cope, but to survive on a daily basis. The task to gain basic necessities such as food, shelter and warmth requires rigorous and arduous action. Hardship is not felt on a sporadic basis, but in a continuous and unrelenting manner. The failure to gain essentials can be critical, and it can impact not just on ones-self, but on others who depend on you.

Poverty is strongly linked to two economic measures: standard of living and disposable income. The first definition of poverty is material deprivation, meaning a person does not have access to key consumables (e.g. food, clothing, shelter) that are crucial to maintaining an acceptable standard of living. The second approach to define poverty is a family whose disposable income (income less tax plus welfare assistance) falls below the income poverty threshold. Determining where the poverty line lies is a subjective task. In both cases, it is set by the Government reflecting their responsibility to not only use public policy to address poverty in society, and also determine who will benefit from those policies.

To me, poverty is not only a state of financial adversity. It represents a small child walking to school with no shoes and nothing to eat. It represents an alcoholic parent suffering from addiction. It represents a young man caught in the cycle of violence and crime. Poverty, to me, is also a community problem. It is a consequence of the system, a lack of understanding and support. For example, a large proportion of NZers living in poverty are Maori. Arguably, our individualist national systems can be alienating to Tikanga, which is based on community and obligation, disadvantaging Maori.

Poverty, on the surface, is not being able to provide basic life necessities for yourself or your family. However it goes much deeper than this. Poverty is a stigma; it's a burden that weighs on your shoulders day in and day out. It can lead to feelings of insecurity, inferiority and depression. The poverty stricken population in NZ is one of the most vulnerable sectors of our society. They are deprived of security and safety on a daily basis. I am particularly passionate about protecting the children of NZ from the grim effects of poverty; the statistics are shocking.

Poverty for me means deprivation of opportunity and the inability to live a safe and healthy life. This can be seen as unemployment, homelessness, financial hardship, inadequate access to health and education etc.

Poverty means people experiencing the consequences of underlying determinants of inequities that have contributed to their inequitable access to housing, income, education, health, social cohesion and culture. Having no access to these determinants of health creates an inequitable difference in individuals, thus increasing the line of poverty between those who are poverty-stricken and those who are not. Often described as a state of inferiority, being poor or having nothing, but seldom described by the underlying determinants which cause this inequitable difference.

Poverty to me means that there's a lack in resources, and therefore a lack in opportunity across the board. This lack is due to class inequality and therefore needs to be addressed accordingly. I believe that poverty is not based on race, gender or the age but influences plenty of different people in society due to different types of circumstances, therefore the approach to it also needs to encompass the complexities of the make-up of our society specific to New Zealand.

Poverty causes a compromised standard of living within a context of limited resources, accessibility social standing. This harsh cycle clutches people tightly in its hands of hardship and gently places them in an area of hopelessness from being free from this oppression. The major trouble with poverty is that it is a cycle which leaves many people unable to advance to a more abundant living, or the transition becomes extremely difficult.

Poverty has a snowball effect, impacting, for example, how much food someone can afford, which in turn affects their health, which is then difficult to treat due to a lack of access to often expensive healthcare services. Poverty is also characterised by an inability to participate fully in society: those in poverty are often unable to engage in small everyday 'luxuries' such as going to a movie. This social isolation further contributes to a feeling of destitution, and puts individuals at a greater risk of experiencing mental illnesses. Poverty, in essence, is a barrier to full enjoyment of one's life.

To me poverty means having no real choices, instead living day to day in 'survival mode', struggling to make ends meet. Poverty leaves you vulnerable to small changes in your situation, even small problems such as getting sick and needing to see a doctor can be enough to push someone over the edge. Reflecting on my own experience working with people living in poverty I think of a previously homeless client who was housed but ended up back on the streets as she couldn't afford to pay for rent, food and other expenses as well as her

As at 19 October 2015

medication. Even small extras can leave people forced to make incredibly difficult choices - medication or a home, food or heating. My experience seeing poverty first hand has taught me that poverty impacts on every aspect of daily life, nothing is left unaffected.

Poverty to me is more than financial poverty. Poverty can include cultural poverty. For example the NZ education system promotes individual achievement, which conflicts with collectivist cultures. Poverty can be physical and emotional violence or circumstances that prevent a person from succeeding. A person who lives without a roof over their head and a young person that's couch surfing because they don't have a stable home environment are both experiencing poverty. One is just more visible than the other.

For me poverty means lacking the ability to fully participate in life, whether that is through social exclusion because you do not have the "cool" things or whether that is because you do not have access to what is required to succeed in life due to circumstances beyond your control.

Poverty means restrictions / Poverty means limited resources / Poverty is like a stigma or a bad smell / It follows you everywhere / It's a label that's been forced upon you / And there's nothing you can do / It's a gloomy time that makes you feel blue / And in a neo liberalist society limited people / Understand you / I understand individual responsibility / And individual determination to succeed / However I don't agree that we are guaranteed the same opportunities / Life is not black and white we are not all given the same start to begin / The struggles of my minority working class the upper would not understand / Or be able to comprehend

To me, 'poverty' means living below an income level that is essential for accessing the basic necessities of life. I would define these necessities as food, water, shelter, clothing and sanitation. I have chosen these things because the life of a human being is likely to be at risk in the prolonged absence of any of them. The income threshold will vary between countries according to the cost of living. I would calculate income on the basis of gross domestic product per capita.

To define poverty I would apply the basket of goods approach to defining poverty and say those who have to go without common goods and services that most New Zealanders have daily access too are living in relative poverty. Any individual who has to go without common goods and services because of financial reasons, to me, are living in poverty. To me poverty is more than not having access to food, water, and shelter. To me poverty includes lacking goods and services that are needed to participate in society. This would include transport, and internet access.

I feel that 'poverty' is used in the media and communities to represent things like being poor, or not having enough food. However I believe that poverty is, and should be a term that refers to a much more complex and deeper issue. To me, poverty means having the right of everyday basic necessities taken away from you. Not only does this include money, but also things like healthcare and education. The issue of poverty not only relates to a lack of initiative from both sides of the problem, but also the framework in which inequality is facilitated today.

Poverty means to have less than the basic necessities and those necessities are less than adequate in their standards. First and foremost it means not enough food on the table, poor housing (and heating), clothing that is not suitable for the climate (particularly in winter months) and an inadequate income. Poverty can be experienced on both own income or government income. Poverty also includes a lack of access to healthcare (and other human services) and education.

Poverty is the failure of society to redistribute wealth equally. This can take place on a Governmental level through the effect of economic and regulatory policy as well as on a more individual level such as the failure of individuals to mitigate social injustice by activism or take actions such as charity. The term 'poverty' is usually connoted to describe a situation of financial deprivation but this is a rather narrow interpretation of what is for me a cyclical endemic that is perpetuated and entails a loss of life opportunities amongst certain segments of the population.

To a large extent, the poverty, in the context of New Zealand is relative. The extent of relative poverty is defined in relation to what other members in society have, whether it be material items, economic status or even social or cultural capital. In this sense, I think that poverty in New Zealand, although it is not usually considered in this way, can be applied to the overall inequality and disparity of wellbeing in our society.

To be in poverty, and the reason why poverty is so important, is for one to be deprived of the resources necessary for them to make truly voluntary choices about their life, and not to have such choices determined by imperative concerns of subsistence. Poverty in this sense inhibits freedom, as freedom entails a degree of self-reliance and an ability to pursue meaningful interests. In my mind, poverty also relates to the perceived gap,



As at 19 October 2015

beyond the statistical analysis, between the well-off and others who are not,

Poverty means being unable to provide yourself or your family with basic necessities. It means being constrained by your financial circumstances, and being restricted in your choices. However, poverty is not merely financial, but is a complex social, political, and economic issue.

The deprivation of living standards regarding ones access to common goods and services such as health, housing, education, mental wellbeing and social freedoms. Please note that poverty does not just mean economic limitations to me, it relates to social hierarchies whether it be gender or race and it relates to the preservation of one's mental health. Studies show that those in economically deprived communities are more likely to suffer from mental issues, and this is a shame for their prospects to lift themselves out of a vicious cycle. This is among one of the reasons my policy project report presented to a panel of experts for the make a difference with economics organisation at my university, was a topic I delved into and took seriously.

Poverty is the societal cancer. It is invisible until it escalates; it has complex causes; it has many alleviating remedies but no 100% effective cure as of yet; it affects everyone (everyone knows of someone affected by it); everyone hopes they don't have to suffer it; and people are not very comfortable talking about it. At the same time, poverty is NOT cancer because there are real ways to "defeat" it if everyone puts a concerted effort into doing so.

Poverty is a paradox. Essentially, poverty is a hardship, where the victims live without the basic necessities for survival. Everyday life is a struggle and the prospects of life outside of poverty are slim. The cycle of poverty is a hydra, with each obstacle severed, two more fit into place, leaving the victim feeling trapped and unaware of how to escape. The ease of poverty follows the hydra. As the victim accepts their circumstance and lives within their limited means the stress of the struggle begins to fade as the victim slowly accepts their fate. It seems, poverty has no end.

Poverty to me is not only having to forage food from a dumpster but is also turning up to school in a soaking wet uniform while your peers are warm and dry in their raincoats and eating jelly crystals for lunch while your mates enjoy Molenberg sandwiches. Here in New Zealand we have both, but by some strange mechanism we only consider the former scenario as poverty whilst the latter is retorted by a finger pointed at the parents for not working hard enough to provide for their kids. Poverty is a multifaceted issue that has long gone ignored and side-lined by our government, something we have allowed yet something we can help change.

Through fostering children from poor backgrounds I've seen what poverty looks like, including going without basic essentials like nutritious food, bedding, and a healthy environment to grow up in. I also know what poverty is first hand. In the past I've had to rely on food parcels from University to eat, and have spent time in hospital through having no money to go to a doctor and my condition worsening. Poor health often results from poverty, whether through insufficient finances to buy healthy food, damp or mouldy housing. Poverty is when you work hard but cannot change your situation.

At a recent panel discussion I attended on child poverty in NZ, one of the speakers made a comment that changed my whole view. He said that child poverty as an isolated phenomenon "does not exist" and instead it was the families in poverty, which caused the children to experience poverty. I discovered that poverty in NZ is not only a lack of money due to the loss of a job or lack of income. It is the experience of vulnerability because of lack of support and knowledge of resources that are available. Poverty is a debilitating cycle, which causes inequality and hardship, but can be lessened in NZ.

Poverty is the inability to reach an individual or group's maximum potential; where opportunities and outcomes available to them are materially, socially and culturally limited. Poverty is where individuals and groups are deprived of access to a certain level of living. Here, those in poverty are unable to be active citizens within society, limiting their connectedness to others and providing little options to get ahead. The collective lack of wellbeing is a societal issue, as it is imperative to ensure all fellow citizens are able to have an independent life in which they can participate, engage and contribute.

Poverty in New Zealand to me is the relative inability to afford basic necessities such as food and housing, when compared to other households of New Zealand, to a material extent, and the inability to improve your current situation. In addition to income and wealth related poverty, factors such as time and health play a large part. Without the free time to better ones self through means such as education, and if you are unable to lead a healthy life, it is difficult to escape a continuous cycle of poverty.

Poverty is not just material deprivation or inadequate living conditions. More so, poverty is a process of restricting any individual or groups' ability for self-development: materially, mentally and spiritually. Education

As at 19 October 2015

is provides one such example. Children who live in poverty are more likely to live in overcrowded or unstable living conditions as well as not be provided with proper meals. All of these affect a child's ability to learn. Furthermore, lower decile schools have less access to certain networks and therefore students are not exposed to opportunities that may be available to them in the future.

The lack, or absence of a solid community that nurtures the strands of Te whariki. Moreover, the holistic surroundings of a child is run down, i.e. the housing, clothes footwear, family members, and schools. All of the above equate to a harder upbringing for a child, where in some cases they never get the childhood they deserve, and instead, worry about the necessities of the family and themselves, on a daily basis

I have experienced hardships in my transition into adulthood, but nothing of the kind that compares to the true meaning of poverty. Poverty, to me, means going without basic human necessities to get by. It is a state of inability, incapability, and desperation. Poverty affects families and people whose everyday livelihoods are limited and effectively constrained. It is something that is debilitating, and heart-breaking to continuously witness in New Zealand communities.

Poverty to me is synonymous with an extreme "lack of" something. This lack leads to disadvantages and unequal treatment. Lack corresponds to a scarcity which can be across a broad range of categories within economic, social, cultural and political headings.

Poverty is multi-faceted concept. One way to look at it is to assess how limited someone's choices are due to a lack of resources. The degree to which people can or cannot pursue a reasonable livelihood is the result of what choices they have. What constitutes a reasonable livelihood has objective and relative elements. These include the ability to live with personal security and what their society should be able to allow them. The resources that give people choices are multifarious. These might include combinations of educational, communal or material resources.

Poverty is not simply the absence of material wealth. It is about the capacity for us have access to, and to realise a meaningful and fulfilling life - meeting both basic physical and mental human needs. Interning in hospitals and working with youth has shown me this. When tackling this issue, we need to not only address what is not only material 'lack', but also the question of providing access to 'mana' building foundations – a sense of identity and the belief in shaping our own lives –poverty is the absence of being able to allow this to be possible.

I believe the definition of poverty extends beyond the lack of food, shelter and clothing. The impoverished have a lack of access to institutions which would enable them to escape their financial crisis. Simply enabling a citizen to survive is not a solution to the problem. Truly tackling poverty would involve enabling citizens to become self-sufficient beyond assistance from the government. The struggles that those in poverty face are not limited to the daily struggle for food and water. In developed countries such as New Zealand, the impoverished face daily discrimination from those who refuse to accept that their way of "life" was not a choice.

I grew up in a privileged household and since leaving home I have come to realise just how fortunate I was. I'm actively seeking out information and discussion about issues that I do not have any experience in. I understand from my university studies that major issues – eg. Climate change – disproportionately affect people who live in poverty. It seems unfair to me to ignore how solutions will burden people who are not easily able to bear those burdens. I think it is important that solutions are bipartisan – I do not think any political party has a monopoly on right answers.

Poverty means the lack of freedom and ability to make decisions due to either a lack of income or wealth or the run off effects of this lack of money. I think that poverty should not be able to control any New Zealanders life as it does currently. Inequality doesn't allow many young New Zealanders to achieve all that they have the ability to achieve and doesn't let older New Zealanders recover from earlier injustices forced by poverty. Poverty leads to a huge number of negative social effects on our people.

Poverty was invisible to me for the first 14 years of my life. Once I grew up and got a bigger world view, I understood poverty in retrospect. Poverty for me was rice and butter for dinner, walking as a 3 year old because we only had one car, lying to my friends that I wasn't allowed to come out when we actually just didn't have any money for movies or lunch, feeling scared and tense at my parents yelling over bills, hardly seeing my Dad because he was always working, seeing my Mum suffer from mental illness in ways a child should never have to see or deal with, feeling guilty after asking for Le Snacks at Pak'n'Save when my Mum would cry that we had no money left for the week, dreading telling my parents about a school trip because we couldn't afford it. Most of all, poverty was a feeling of shame, a hunger for a standard of living that I could never have, unmet desire, frustration, anger, disappointment, and confusion at the unfairness. Poverty robs children of their

As at 19 October 2015

childhood: their innocence, irresponsibility, carelessness, freedom and joy.

Poverty, involves the inability to have an adequate standard of living. Compared to third world countries, our country is already quite developed. But in New Zealand, poverty can range from having no home to the inability to afford gas or electricity. Poverty, in my opinion not only incorporates the homeless, but also those that have unsustainable income. Or those who do not have the ability to dress their children in cold weather. Poverty includes people who have just enough, but not quite enough.

To me poverty means not being able to meet basic living needs to sustain an acceptable quality of life. This goes beyond the lack of access to the bare necessities such as food, water, shelter and clothes but also the standard of these as if they are inadequate this leads to further health and social implications that cause great disadvantages and severely limit peoples' opportunities in life, making the cycle hard to break.

Poverty is like a crevasse between human rights and the ability to exercise those rights in freedom. Poverty is a product of social inequity and inequality which is man-made by elitism and cycles of repeated and imposed ways of life. People living in poverty are not 'The Poor', are not criminals, are not failures, are not dream-less, and are not incapable of greatness. People living in poverty do not need 'charity' nor do they need to be 'cured'. Poverty is a label we are guilty of using in order for us to reproduce a social structure that favours those who have privilege and are blind to their privilege.

Poverty to me means people living in an environment where there is a lack of material or financial security, where resources are either consistently scarce or unpredictable. Poverty places physical restrictions on what people are able to achieve, as well as having significant psychological effects. I do not see poverty as 'natural', but hugely imbedded in global processes and developments, with distinct historical roots. Poverty to me is something that can be tackled, but it will take significant change on multiple levels, such as government policy, community initiatives and individual action.

Poverty to me means two different things. I have seen extreme poverty in Rwanda where children go without food, and families go without water, because of poverty. I have also seen poverty in New Zealand. Poverty in New Zealand, looks different, but has the same outcomes. Poverty in both countries ostracizes and disempowers families. Poverty in New Zealand means that families and people are not able to access the same goods and services that the majority of the population do. This results in negative outcomes in health, education and other fields as well as those who live in poverty feeling that they have no voice, no power and no future.

Poverty means low household income, inadequate diet (leading to obesity or malnutrition), medical issues and hospitalization due to preventable illnesses caused by poor housing standards for a long period of time. This puts an unnecessary stress in individual's lives. In children it means no bed or food, poor education (concentration issues) and an unstimulating home environment, old/ no clothes while living in a cold, damp home with no heating or insulation giving children a difficult start in life. Poverty in my opinion is caused by lack of education, lack of support from the Government and communities.

Poverty is the material expression of social inequalities; it is the reflection of a social and political failure in supporting a more even access to wealth. However, it is a relative term, and its precise definition depends on different elements of the cultural and policy environments of any given nation

Poverty is inequality of opportunity for youth. Poverty is the result of talent and initiative being suppressed rather than encouraged and nurtured. The same Educational pathways aren't available for all- starving the national talent pool, inhibiting labour productivity and trapping communities. NZ has one of the best educational systems in the world but yet there is a huge disjoint with what employers want. Because of these issues hundreds of thousands of our children and families are lacking the necessities and going hungry. I have seen entire communities trapped in the same cycle. It is part cultural, part structural and part educational.

To me poverty is: being unable to participate in life on an equal footing as others, potentially leading to social exclusion. This may mean poverty related to food, housing, mental stimulation, education, employment opportunities, health, or something else. It has a stigma of inequality and may be something that it is not possible to get out of by one's self. Poverty therefore, informs ideas of endemic and cyclical differences within communities.

Poverty is relative to a person's environment. A person who might be considered poor in a developed country, may be considered well-off in a third world developing country. It might be argued, therefore, that poverty means not having enough to provide for a standard of living that is considered basic in the society you live in. The definition of poverty is variable.



As at 19 October 2015

Poverty has a different definition depending on the person you talk to. Poverty is the constant struggle to meet the needs of everyday necessities that those who are not in poverty take for granted. There are many reasons poverty can occur from the inability to maintain work, suffering from mental illness, or something as simple as an oversupply of candidates for a position. Poverty by definition is not a choice an individual makes and for children who come from poverty it something that they are born into. The new definition of poverty has come to mean the working poor, those who work multiple minimum paid jobs to make ends meet, and where housing pricing are just too high for the rates of pay, these people are receiving. With the current decentralising of government, declining unions, disparities with gender pay equity and the neo-liberalist agenda in mind; it appears that poverty is only set only to increase. However it does not mean that poverty needs to be ignored and the answers often lie with civil engagement between the government and the community initiatives such as Kid Can, which is a good example of the coming together of the community for a humanitarian issue.

to be living outside one's means. More debt than income. Need vs want? Local vs national.

Not having the financial means to live securely. Not having the opportunity to eat healthily. Not having access to modern-day necessities such as clean water, electricity, transport, and so on. Having a perpetuating generational history of deprivation. Not being able to support your child in their growth (lack of access to education, clothes, medicine, and the right foods). Finally, not having an opportunity to get out of one's destitute circumstances. That is poverty to me.

Poverty is a term used to describe extreme indigence. Poverty is also a term that is used to describe inferiority. In essence, poverty is an elusive term and is one that insinuates the lack of basic human rights. There are many extreme connotations that come with this term, and tends to be widely associated with developing countries. When in reality, poverty comes in many forms and New Zealand is no exception to these. New Zealand has a shockingly high rate of poverty amongst children in the developed world, indicating the existence of inequality and inequities within society.

Poverty to me is a living standard that exists below the line of a healthy living standard. A healthy living standard does not merely include the "necessities of life" but instead incorporates further facets that create healthy and happy New Zealanders. To have sustenance and shelter is simply not enough, especially for a child. People far too often mistake poverty as a situation that someone creates for themselves, when often this is very far from the truth.

Poverty, I think, means inequality, and stems from structural problems in New Zealand. At its most basic it comes from lack of access to social structures. For example, a child in poverty may not be able to access the education system effectively, and as such will be shut off from accessing university. Similarly, poverty and poor education shuts off access to our legal system to those who lack the money, time, and knowledge to make use of it.

Poverty is a term used for those in society who are struggling to meet day-to-day needs. It is used to measure the social and economic inequalities in society based on commodities and financial stability. Poverty highlights what unfortunate people don't have, and matches it to what people should have. Therefore not only killing the self-esteem of parents, but also widening gaps between societies. Being used more frequently than ever before.

What the term "poverty" means to me? Plain and simple being poor, having no supporting yourself financially, having little hope for a secure future. Poverty of spirit is more debilitating than having no money, it is not a chosen lifestyle.