The Pursuit of Human Wellbeing

A Halloran Book Project
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Major Findings and Discoveries!
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Life Expectancy

Today, two things are true: there is a continuing high rate of child fertility combined with high rate of population aging.

• The dramatic increase in life expectancy during the 20th century ranks as one of the world’s greatest accomplishments.

• Life expectancy rose to 71.5 years, an increase of almost 20 years from 1960. Life expectancy was 31 years in 1900.

• In Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania, the length of life has increased by 50%.
Infant and child mortality, which have posed major threats to child survival worldwide, are now at historically low levels, down over 90% from 1990.

Infant & Child Mortality

- Most babies born in 1900 did not live past the age of 50.
- Over the last 45 years: infant mortality declined 58%; child mortality declined 62%, maternal mortality declined 27%.
- There were 11 million fewer child deaths in 2012 than in 1970.
- Vaccinations against crippling childhood diseases—now reach nearly 80% of the world’s infants and children.
- Already 17 years ago, average child deaths due to AIDS had declined from 40% to 12%.
- We’ve seen nearly 50% reductions in malaria mortality rates in Africa; there’s been an 88% drop in measles-related deaths.
- In 40 countries in Africa, at least 25% reductions in child mortality have been achieved since 1990...
- In Eastern Asia, maternal mortality rates have fallen by 65%
Education is a cornerstone that advances individual and community wellbeing. Governments today are now investing more resources to educate their citizens.

**Education**

- Enrollment in primary education has become almost universal, and secondary education reached 74% in 2012... and great progress has been achieved in the enrollment of women and girls. Education of women is the best way to save the environment and indeed... is a major drive of economic productivity.

- One of the most remarkable results in education is the progress in adult literacy. Adult literacy reached 85.3% in 2012.

- The literacy rate in 1900 was about 20%. Adult literacy has become the norm in our world.

- Africa has seen enrollment increasing to 77% by 2012.
40% of the world lived in poverty in 1990. Twenty-five years later poverty dropped to 10% in the world. Imagine... poverty was reduced by 1 billion people in 25 years!

Poverty reduction was driven primarily by the economic and social progress of China, India and Southeast Asia.

The reduction of poverty is one of the world’s greatest humanitarian achievements.

Poverty fell yesterday by 137,000 people and it fell every day by 137,000 people for the past 25 years.
The biggest gains in life satisfaction are found among African countries. This is likely related to access to energy, health, education and infrastructure services.

Happiness and life Satisfaction

- A larger share of the world’s population need no longer depend on a single light bulb (or candle) to light their homes after dark. Even low-income urban dwellers in many places are beginning to have multiple outlets for receiving and using electrical services. And if they don’t yet, there is a social entrepreneur out there working on it.

- Slowly, more of the world’s women are able to vote and participate more fully as members of government nearly everywhere in the world.

- Women and other members of historically disadvantaged population groups are also receiving increasing levels of legal protection against occupational discrimination, although the incomes of most women have not yet achieved full parity with those paid to men performing the same jobs.

- According to the Gallup World Happiness Report, 10 of the top 11 happiest countries in the world are in Latin America.