

## Very Short Answer Questions

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**Q.1. What kind of people in India are considered poor?**

**Ans.** Landless labourers in villages or people living in overcrowded jhuggis in cities, daily wage earners, beggars or child labourers.

**Q.2. Has India the largest single concentration of the poor in the world?**

**Ans.** In India every fourth person is poor. This means roughly 260 million (26 crore) people in India live in poverty. This illustrates the seriousness of the challenge.

**Q.3. What is the concept of social reclusion?**

**Ans.** According to this concept, poverty must be seen in terms of the poor having to live only in a poor surroundings with other poor people, excluded from enjoying the company of better off people in better surroundings.

**Q.4. What is the vulnerability of poverty?**

**Ans.** Vulnerability of poverty is a measure, which describes the greater probability of certain communities or individuals of becoming or remaining poor in the coming years.

**Q.5. How is vulnerability to poverty determined?**

**Ans.** Options available to different communities for finding an alternative living in terms of assets, education, health and job opportunities.

**Q.6. What is 'poverty line'?**

**Ans.** It is an indicator of poverty, i.e., it is a level of income which barely meets sustenance.

**Q.7. When is a person considered poor?**

**Ans.** If his or her income or consumption level falls below a given 'minimum level' necessary to fulfill basic needs.

**Q.8. How is the food requirement estimated in poverty line?**

**Ans.** The present formula for food requirement while estimating the poverty line is based on the desired calorie requirement; food items such as cereals, pulses, vegetables, milk, oil, sugar, etc., together provide these needed calories.

**Q.9. What is the accepted average calorie requirement in India?**

**Ans.** The accepted average calorie requirement in India is 2,400 calories per person per day in rural areas and 2,100 calories per person per day in urban areas.

**Q.10. Why is the calorie requirement of rural areas more than that in urban areas?**

**Ans.** Since people living in rural areas engage themselves in more physical work, calorie requirements in rural areas are considered to be higher than in urban areas.

**Q.11. How much amount is needed to fulfill minimum calorie requirement in rural and urban areas?**

**Ans.** On the basis of these calculations, for the year 2000, the poverty line for a person was fixed at Rs. 328 per month for the rural areas and `454 for the urban areas.

**Q.12. How is poverty line estimated periodically?**

**Ans.** The poverty line is estimated periodically (normally every 5 year) by conducting sample surveys. These surveys are carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).

**Q.13. Which social groups are most vulnerable to poverty?**

**Ans.** The social groups most vulnerable to poverty are scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

**Q.14. Among the economic groups which are the most vulnerable to poverty?**

**Ans.** Among the economic groups, the most vulnerable to poverty are the rural agricultural households and the urban casual labour households.

**Q.15. How are women, children and old people the poorest of the poor?**

**Ans.** Women, elderly people and female infants are systematically denied equal access to resources available to the family. Therefore, they are the poorest of the poor.

**Q.16. Which states of India are the poorest?**

**Ans.** Odisha and Bihar continue to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 47 and 43 per cent respectively.

**Q.17. Which states of India have seen a significant decline in poverty?**

**Ans.** There has been a significant decline in poverty in Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal.

**Q.18. How have Kerala and West Bengal reduced their poverty?**

**Ans.** Kerala has focused more on human resource development. In West Bengal, land reform measures have helped in reducing poverty.

**Q.19. How has poverty reduced in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu?**

**Ans.** In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, public distribution of foodgrains could have been responsible for reducing the poverty.

**Q.20. How are China and South-East Asian Countries able to control poverty?**

**Ans.** Poverty declined substantially in China and South-East Asian countries as a result of rapid economic growth and massive investments in human resource development.

**Q.21. How did unemployment lead to poverty?**

**Ans.** Unable to find proper jobs in cities, many people started working as rickshaw pullers, vendors, construction workers, domestic servants, etc. With irregular small incomes, these people could not afford proper housing and started living in slums leading to poverty.

**Q.22. How is economic growth linked with poverty reduction in India?**

**Ans.** Economic growth widens opportunities and provides the resources needed to invest in human development. This also encourages people to send their children, including the girl child, to schools in the hope of getting better economic returns from investing in education.

**Q.23. What is the full form of MGNREGA?**

**Ans.** MGNREGA is Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of 2005.

**Q.24. What does PMRY stand for?**

**Ans.** It stands for Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana, started in 1993. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns.

**Q.25. What is Rural Employment Generation Programme?**

**Ans.** Launched in 1995, the aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns.

**Q.26. What are the bigger challenges before India?**

**Ans.** Providing health care, education and job security for all and achieving gender equality and dignity for the poor are the bigger challenges before India.

## Short Answer Questions

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### **Q.1. What are the dimensions of poverty?**

**Ans. (i)** Poverty means hunger and lack of shelter.

**(ii)** Poverty means lack of clean water and sanitation facilities. It also means lack of a regular job at a minimum decent level.

**(iii)** Above all, it means living with a sense of helplessness.

### **Q.2. What are the social indicators of poverty as seen by social scientists?**

**Ans. (i)** Prevalent factors like illiteracy levels, lack of general resistance due to malnutrition.

**(ii)** Lack of access to health care, lack of job opportunities, lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, etc.

**(iii)** These are the social indicators of poverty as seen by social scientists.

### **Q.3. How does a country measure its poverty?**

**Ans. (i)** Each country uses an imaginary line that is considered appropriate for its existing level of development and its accepted minimum social norms.

**(ii)** For example, a person not having a car in the United States may be considered poor. In India, owning of a car is still considered a luxury.

### **Q.4. How is poverty line determined in India?**

**Ans. (i)** The present formula of deciding poverty line in India is based on calorie requirements.

**(ii)** The accepted average calorie requirement in India is 2400 calories per person per day in rural areas and 2100 calories per person per day in the urban areas.

**(iii)** The monetary expenditure per capita needed for buying these calorie requirements in terms of food grains gives us poverty line in terms of money. Based on these calculations, for the year 2000, the poverty line for a person was fixed at Rs. 328 per month in rural area and Rs. 454 in urban area.

### **Q.5. What are the causes of huge income inequalities in rural areas?**

**Ans.** One of the major reasons for this is the unequal distribution of land and other resources. Major policy initiatives like land reforms, which aimed at

redistribution of assets in rural areas, have not been implemented properly, leading to poverty in India.

**Q.6. Which are the two planks on which anti-poverty strategy of the government is based?**

**Ans. (i)** Promotion of economic growth.

**(ii)** Targeted anti-poverty programmes.

**Q.7. What are the conditions of MGNREGA?**

**Ans. (i)** The Act provides 100 days assured employment every year to every rural household in 200 districts.

**(ii)** Under the programme, if an applicant is not provided employment within 15 days, he/she will be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.

**Q.8. What was the National Food for Work Programme?**

**Ans. (i)** It was launched in 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country.

**(ii)** It is a centrally sponsored scheme, in which foodgrains are provided free of cost to the states.

**(iii)** The programme is open to all poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual unskilled work.

**Q.9. What were the targets of SGSY?**

**Ans. (i)** The Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana was launched in 1999.

**(ii)** It aims at bringing up the assisted poor families above the poverty line by organising them into self-help groups through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy.

**Q.10. What was PMGY?**

**Ans. (i)** It was Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojna, launched in 2000.

**(ii)** Accordingly, additional central assistance is given to the states for basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and rural electrification.

**Q.11. How is poverty viewed by social scientists?**

**Ans.** Since poverty has many facts, social scientists look at it through a variety of indicators. These social indicators are:

**(i)** Illiteracy level.

- (ii) Lack of general resistance due to malnutrition.
- (iii) Lack of access to health care.
- (iv) Lack of job opportunity.
- (v) Lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, etc.

**Q.12. What does 'social exclusion' mean?**

**Ans. (i)** According to this concept, poverty must be seen in terms of the poor having to live only in a poor surrounding with other poor people, and excluded from enjoying social equality with better-off people in a better surrounding.

(ii) Social exclusion can be both a cause as well as a consequence of poverty in the rural sense.

(iii) It is a process through which individuals or groups are excluded from facilities, benefits and opportunities that others enjoy.

An example is the prevalence of the caste system in India in which people belonging to certain castes are excluded from equal opportunities.

**Q.13. How is vulnerability to poverty measured?**

**Ans. (i)** Vulnerability to poverty is a measure which describes the greater probability of certain communities or individuals of becoming or remaining poor in the coming years.

(ii) Vulnerability is determined by the options available to different communities for finding an alternative living in terms of assets, education, health and job opportunities.

(iii) Vulnerability describes the greater probability of being more adversely affected than other people when bad times prevail for everybody, whether a flood or an earthquake or simply a shortage in the availability of jobs.

**Q.14. How do income inequalities exist within a family?**

**Ans. (i)** In poor families, all suffer, but some suffer more than others.

(ii) Women, elderly people and female infants are systematically denied equal access to resources available to the family.

**(iii) Therefore, women, children and old people are the poorest of the poor.**

**Q.15. Which states are most vulnerable to poverty in India?**

**Ans. (i)** The proportion of poor people is not the same in every state.

**(ii)** Poverty is still existing in Orissa, Bihar, Assam, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh.

**(iii)** Bihar and Orissa continue to be the two poorest states with poverty ratios of 47 and 43 per cent, respectively.

Along with rural poverty, urban poverty also exists in these states.

**Q.16. Which states report a significant decline in poverty?**

**Ans. (i)** There is significant decline in poverty in Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal.

**(ii)** States like Punjab and Haryana have traditionally succeeded in reducing poverty with the help of high agricultural growth rates.

**(iii)** Kerala has focused on human resource development.

**(iv)** In West Bengal, land reform measures have helped in reducing poverty.

**(v)** In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, public distribution of foodgrains could have been the cause for the decline in poverty.

**Q.17. What challenges are ahead of India with respect to poverty alleviation?**

**Ans. (i)** Wide disparities in poverty are visible between rural and urban areas and among different states.

**(ii)** Certain social and economic groups are more vulnerable to poverty.

**(iii)** Poverty reduction is expected to make better progress in the next ten to fifteen years.

**Q.18. How is poverty reduction expected to be better?**

**Ans. (i)** This would be possible due to higher growth in income.

**(ii)** Universal free elementary education would make people literate and enable them to earn.

**(iii)** Increasing empowerment of the women and the economically weaker sections of society.

**Q.19. What are the main features of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005?**

**Ans. (i)** MGNREGA 2005 was passed in September 2005.

**(ii)** The act provides 100 days assured employment every year to every rural household in 200 districts.



**(iii)** Later, the scheme will be extended to 600 districts. One-third of the jobs could be reserved for women.

If government failed to provide employment, the salary for 100 days would be given.

**Q.20. Describe the term 'NFWP'.**

**Ans. (i)** This scheme is known as the National Food for Work Programme, launched in 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country.

**(ii)** The programme is open to all rural people who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual unskilled work.

**(iii)** It is implemented as a 100 per cent centrally sponsored scheme and food grains are provided free of cost to the states.

**Q.21. What is the status of poverty in scheduled caste, or scheduled tribe?**

**Ans. (i)** 50 per cent of casual workers in urban areas are below poverty line. About 50 per cent of landless agricultural workers and 43 per cent of scheduled castes are also poor.

**(ii)** The double disadvantage of being a landless casual wage labour household in the socially disadvantaged social groups of the scheduled caste or the scheduled tribe population highlights the seriousness of the problem.

**(iii)** Some recent studies have shown that except for scheduled tribe households all the other three groups that is, scheduled caste, rural agricultural labour and the urban casual labour have seen a decline in poverty.

**Q.22. Give five indicators of poverty.**

**Ans. (i)** Landlessness

**(ii)** Unemployment

**(iii)** Illiteracy

**(iv)** Child labour

**(v)** Malnutrition

**Q.23. What is the criteria for poverty measurement in India?**

**Ans. (i)** Low level of nutrition

**(ii)** Minimum level of subsistence does not exist

- (iii) Calorie intake is low
- (iv) Per capita income is low
- (v) Basic needs should be satisfied

**Q.24. Can you give five measures taken by the government to alleviate poverty?**

- Ans. (i)** MGNREGA
- (ii) Food for Work Programme
  - (iii) Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
  - (iv) Pradhanmantri Gramodaya Yojana
  - (v) Antodaya Anna Yojana

**Q.25. What challenges do you think will India face in years to come?**

- Ans. (i)** Healthcare
- (ii) Job security
  - (iii) Gender discrimination
  - (iv) Human misery
  - (v) Education

## Long Answer Questions

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**Q.1. Mention some anti-poverty programmes undertaken by the government.**

**Ans. (i)** The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed in September 2005. The act provides 100 days assured employment every year, to every rural household, in 200 districts.

**(ii)** The central government will also establish National Employment Guarantee Funds. Similarly, state governments will establish State Employment Guarantee Funds for implementation of the scheme.

**(iii)** Under the programme, if an applicant is not provided employment within 15 days he or she will be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance.

**(iv)** Another scheme is the National Food for Work Programme (NFWP) which was launched in 2004, in 150 most backward districts of the country. The programme is open to all rural people who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual unskilled work. Under this scheme, foodgrains are provided free of cost to the states.

**Q.2. State the various Poverty Alleviation Programmes introduced by the government to remove poverty.**

**Ans. (i)** Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY): It is a scheme started in 1993. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities for educated unemployed youth in rural areas and small towns. They are helped in setting up small businesses and industries.

**(ii)** Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP): It was launched in 1995. The aim of the programme is to create self-employment opportunities in rural areas and small towns. A target for creating 25 lakh new jobs has been set for the programme.

**(iii)** Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): It was launched in 1999. The programme aims at bringing the assisted poor families above the poverty line by organising them into self-help groups through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy.

**(iv)** Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY): It was launched in 2000. Under this programme, additional Central assistance is given to states for basic services such as primary health, primary education, rural shelter, rural drinking water and rural electrification.

**Q.3. What is the concept of poverty line? How does it vary with time and place?**

**Ans. (i)** A poverty line is an indicator of poverty, i.e., it is a level of income which barely meets sustenance. A common method used to measure poverty is based on the income or consumption level.

**(ii)** A person is considered poor, if his or her income or consumption level falls below a given 'minimum level' necessary to fulfil basic needs.

**(iii)** What is necessary to satisfy basic needs is different at different times and in different countries.

**(iv)** Therefore, poverty line may vary with time and place. Each country uses an imaginary line that is considered appropriate for its existing level of development and its accepted minimum social norms.

**(v)** For example, a person not having a car in the US may be considered poor. In India, owning of a car is still considered a luxury.

## HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

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**Q.1. Mention Social & Economic groups who are more vulnerable to poverty in India. Explain only two reasons of poverty in such communities.**

**Ans. (i)** Social groups which are most vulnerable to poverty are scheduled caste and scheduled tribe households.

**(ii)** Similarly among economic groups, the most vulnerable groups are rural agricultural labour households and the urban casual labour households.

**Two reasons of poverty:**

**(i)** In India, people from scheduled castes & scheduled tribes get in the vicious circle of poverty. In this system, people from such communities are excluded from equal opportunities and facilities that others enjoy.

**(ii)** Illiteracy is also one of the main causes for not getting better employment opportunities and they do migrate to cities in search of jobs and end up as Rickshaw Pullers or casual labourers.

**Q.2. What are the reasons for the ineffectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes?**

**Ans. (i)** One of the major reasons for less effectiveness is the lack of proper implementation and right targeting.

**(ii)** Moreover, there has been a lot of overlapping of schemes.

**(iii)** Despite good intentions, the benefits of these schemes do not reach the deserving poor completely.

**(iv)** Therefore, the major emphasis in recent years is on proper monitoring of all the poverty alleviation programmes.

**Q.3. Why poverty still remains a challenge for the Indian government?**

**Ans. (i)** Though poverty has declined in India, but despite the progress, poverty reduction remains India's most compelling challenge.

**(ii)** Wide disparities in poverty are visible between rural and urban areas and among different states.

**(iii)** Certain Social and Economic groups are more vulnerable to poverty.

**(iv)** Poverty reduction is expected to make better progress in the next ten to fifteen years.

**(v)** This would be possible mainly due to higher economic growth, increasing stress on universal free elementary education, declining population growth, increasing empowerment of the women and the economically weaker sections of the society.