

Debt crises affect people

Germany ♀

You have two kindergarten-aged children and you are a single parent. You live on Hartz IV unemployment benefits. There is not enough money on all fronts. You had no vocational training after you left secondary school. Luckily, there is a food bank near where you live.

Your country is one of the richest countries in the world and grants loans to poorer countries.

Pakistan ♂

You fled from Afghanistan a few years ago. You barely have the necessities to live. Besides that, you are always afraid that you are going to be sent back to Afghanistan. You would like to go to Europe, but you don't have the money.

Your country is poor. Economic growth is low. It is heavily in debt. The financial crisis and a devastating flood forced the government to get further into debt. Many people flee from terror and religious persecution.

Brazil ♀

You have a large family. Your husband works on a soy plantation. You work as home help in a well-off household. It takes you more than an hour every morning to get into town. When you come home at night, you are very tired. Your eldest daughter takes care of the little ones while you are out.

Your country, an emerging nation, is the strongest economy in Latin America. Key export goods are cocoa, coffee, soya beans, sugar and iron ore. A decline in economic growth can currently be seen.

Sweden ♂

You are a doctor in a small town. You have a wife who is a lawyer and two children. You are doing well.

Your country belongs to the European Union. Important international companies have their headquarters there. The country is rich, and has high social standards and low unemployment. The quality of education is high.

Mongolia ♂

You work in a copper mine. The work is hard. Your wife lives a nomadic life with her parents in a yurt. They breed horses and yaks (cattle). The children go to boarding school and are good students. You do everything you can to ensure that they can go to university one day.

The economy in your country is based on livestock farming and agriculture. It is very rich in raw materials. The financial crisis has plunged the country into a serious debt crisis. Further loans are needed to develop mines. The government relies upon the copper price remaining high and on the economy growing.

Democratic Republic of Congo ♂

You work in a coltan mine. The dust and the heavy metals are damaging your health. You can no longer live as a farmer, because your land is in a war zone.

Your country is rich in natural resources. However, it is shaped by corruption, civil wars and weak public organisations. Despite debt relief in 2011, the country has an extremely high level of debt, a poor investment climate and an inadequate infrastructure. It is politically unstable.

China ♂

You are a farmer with little land. Your wife works in the town, assembling mobile phones. Your daughter goes to the village school and helps you on the field.

Your country is the second largest economy in the world and an important trading partner for Germany. There are enormous regional and social disparities in the country.

Georgia ♀

You are a student and live in the capital city, Tbilisi. You are studying business management. Your parents have no money to support you. To finance your studies, you work in a restaurant. You share a room in a hall of residence with three other students. You know it will be hard to find a job when you have graduated.

Your country's economy is based on agriculture, tourism and mining, but it is industrially underdeveloped. There are conflicts with Russia and unrest in the country due to a high degree of social inequality. The debts are high.

Somalia ♂

You are a 13-year-old boy. You lack even the most basic necessities. You have fled from the Islamic Al-Shabaab militia. Since then you have been constantly on the run, living in fear of being forced into armed battle by some form of militia.

Your country is one of the poorest in the world. The long civil war and frequent droughts and floods have resulted in a shortage of food and drinking water for many people. There is a lack of medical care and educational facilities. Many people have fled their homes.

Greece ♂

You are a Greek shipowner. The economic crisis does not affect you because you have long since feathered your own nest. You have a wife and two lovely children whom you have sent to boarding school in Switzerland. Besides with your family, you spend your time with a couple of girlfriends.

Your country is a member of the European Union. It is heavily in debt. New loans are linked to the sale of state-owned property, pension cuts, redundancies and savings in the public sector. The economy is in a downward spiral.

Ghana ♀

You come from northern Ghana. You are currently living with relatives in the capital city, Accra. Your extended family pools resources to enable you to attend a vocational school that trains cooks. Since the school is expensive, you do not know whether you will be able to complete the course.

Your country is experiencing good economic growth, is politically stable and has many natural resources. More than a third of the population here lives below the poverty line. Despite debt relief in 2004, the country is now once more heavily in debt.

Venezuela ♀

You are a lawyer. You and your husband run a law firm. You have been doing well. Now, in light of the country's economic situation, you are worried whether you will continue to be able to find enough clients. At the moment you are still managing. Your children are studying at a good but expensive university.

Your country's economy depends on oil. The low price of oil has plunged the country into a severe crisis. Many everyday necessities are in short supply. Spare parts are unobtainable. The inflation rate is very high.

Philippines ♀

You work as a household help for a rich family in the capital city, Manila, and support your child and your parents on your earnings. Your child lives with his grandparents in the country. You only see him once a year. Your employers do not treat you well. You long for your family.

Your country is poor, population growth is high. Many Filipinos work abroad and send part of their wages to their families. Climate change and natural disasters threaten the country. National debt is being kept in check.

Egypt ♂

You are a banker living in Cairo in a trendy district. You have several expensive cars and a driver. Your wife is a pharmacist. Your two children go to an expensive private school. At home, they are looked after by a maid. You spend most of your holidays in the USA.

Your country is relatively rich, yet the debt is high. Tourism has declined because of the unrest. Food has to be imported.

Argentina ♀

You are a household help in a rich house, where you also take care of the children. Your own children are with your grandmother. There is only just enough money for you and your family. You have no social insurance. So you cannot afford to be ill.

Your country's sound economy is based on raw materials, agriculture and livestock farming. It was severely affected by the financial crisis in 2007.