

# WORLD YOUTH ALLIANCE BOOK LIST

## The Bottom Billion: Why The Poorest Countries Are Falling and What Can Be Done About It

By Paul Collier

Why are the poorest countries failing and what can be done to fight global poverty? What is the secret to igniting successful economic development in developing countries? In his work, “Bottom Billion”, Paul Collier identifies four factors common to countries most severely experiencing a decline in per capita income. Collier analyzes key ideas for sustainable and economic development, a key topic for the world of international policy-making, which the World Youth Alliance has examined in its International Solidarity Forum.

### Why The Bottom Billion

The Bottom Billion touches on many ideas that form the core of WYA’s person-centered positions. For instance, the emphasis that Collier places on technical assistance points to the importance of harnessing human innovation, just as his discussion on good governance parallels WYA’s [Declaration on Good Governance](#) that “each person has the responsibility to participate in the building of a free and just society rooted in the intrinsic and inviolable dignity of the human person”.

### Guide questions for discussion groups

- Explain how each of the four major traps that Collier identifies, cause the “bottom billion” to be left behind?
- Describe the difference between technical assistance and aid, and their impact on a country’s development?
- Why are human innovation and creativity, as referenced in WYA’s [Declaration on Sustainable Development](#), and environmental stewardship, as referenced in WYA’s [Declaration on Responsible Stewardship](#), a solution to the problem of the natural resources trap that Collier identifies?

- Drawing on WYA's *Declaration on Good Governance*, what does good governance look like?
- What can one do on an individual level to transform the bottom billion?
- Why is it important to have locally driven, culturally appropriate interventions aimed at reducing the spread of HIV?