

2015 ANNUAL LETTER

A big bet for 2030

In our 2015 Annual Letter, Melinda and I wrote about what the future

By **Bill Gates** | January 21, 2015 • 18 minute read



Forty years ago, Bill and his childhood friend Paul Allen bet that software and computers would change the way people around the world worked and lived. It wasn't exactly a wager. It was an opportunity to make computers powerful tools for people through the magic of software. Some people thought they were crazy. But it turned out well.

Fifteen years ago, the two of us made a similar bet. We started our foundation on the idea that by backing innovative work in health and education, we could help reduce inequity. The progress we've seen so far is very exciting—so we're doubling down on the bet we made 15 years ago, and picking ambitious goals for the next possible 15 years from now.

Our big bet: The lives of people in poor countries will improve faster than at any other time in history. And their lives will improve more than a

lot. We see an opportunity and we want to make the most of it. We're putting our time, and money behind this bet—and asking others to join us—because it's never been a better time to accelerate progress and have a big impact on the world.

Some will say we're irrational to make this bet too. A skeptic would look at the problems and conclude that things are only getting worse. And we should acknowledge the fact that a handful of the worst-off countries will continue to struggle.

But we think the next 15 years will see major breakthroughs for most of the world's poorest countries. They will be living longer and in better health. They will have more opportunities to get an education, eat nutritious food, and benefit from new technologies. These breakthroughs will be driven by innovation in technology—ranging from renewable energy and harder crops to much cheaper smartphones and tablets—and by the fact that we will deliver these things to more people.