

The background of the entire image is a dark, gradient grey. It is decorated with numerous water droplets of various sizes, some appearing as simple circles and others as more complex, elongated shapes with highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The droplets are scattered across the frame, with a higher concentration in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

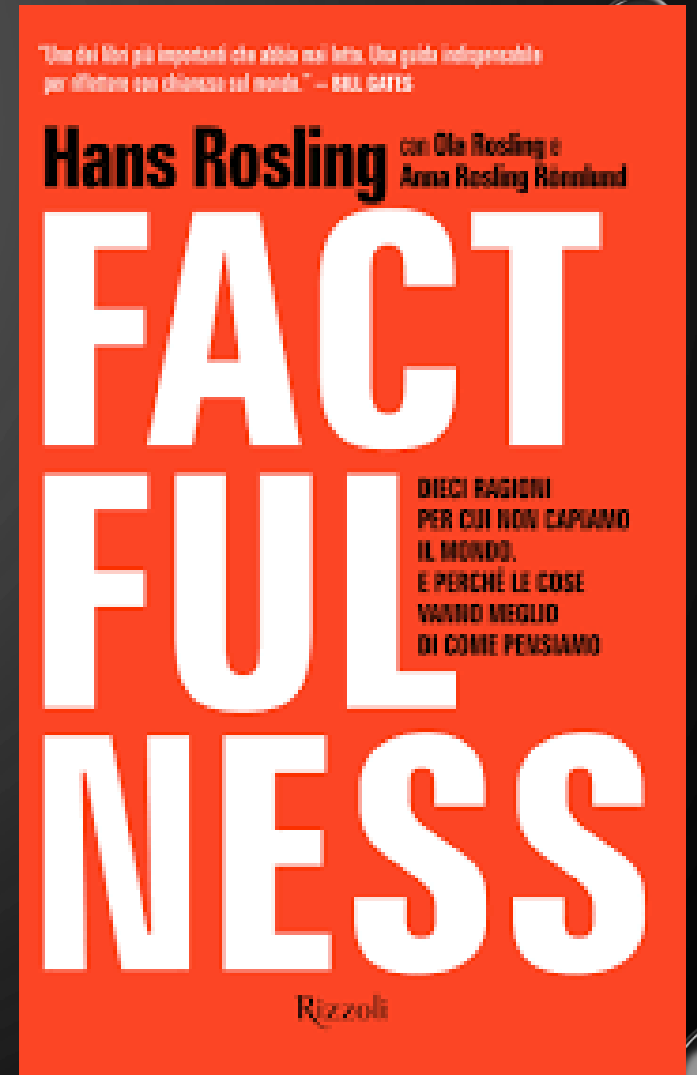
FACTFULLNES

HOW TO DEVELOP A FACT-BASED
WORLDVIEW

BASED ON THE BOOK

FACTFULLNESS

BY HANS ROSSLING



HOW MANY OF THE WORLD'S **ONE YEAR OLDS** HAVE BEEN
VACCINATED TODAY AGAINST SOME DISEASE

•20% **X**

•50% **X**

•80% **✓**

HOW DID THE **NUMBER OF DEATH** FROM NATURAL **DISASTERS** CHANGE THE LAST 100 YEARS

- MORE THAN DOUBLED **X**
- REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME **X**
- DECREASED TO LESS THAN HALF **✓**

SINCE 1997 THE % OF PEOPLE LIVING IN
ABSOLUTE POVERTY IN UGANDA

- HAS DOUBLED **X**
- HAS REMAINED THE SAME **X**
- HAS HALVED **✓**



TEN PITFALLS WHY SO

OFTEN WE HAVE OUR FACTS

WRONG



FACTFULLNESS **PITFALLS** IN SUMMARY

- THE **GAP** INSTINCT
- THE **NEGATIVITY** INSTINCT
- THE **STRAIGHT LINE** INSTINCT
- THE **FEAR** INSTINCT
- THE **SIZE** INSTINCT
- THE **GENERALISATION** INSTINCT
- THE **DESTINY** INSTINCT
- THE **TUNNEL VISION** INSTINCT
- THE **BLAME** INSTINCT
- THE **URGENCY** INSTINCT

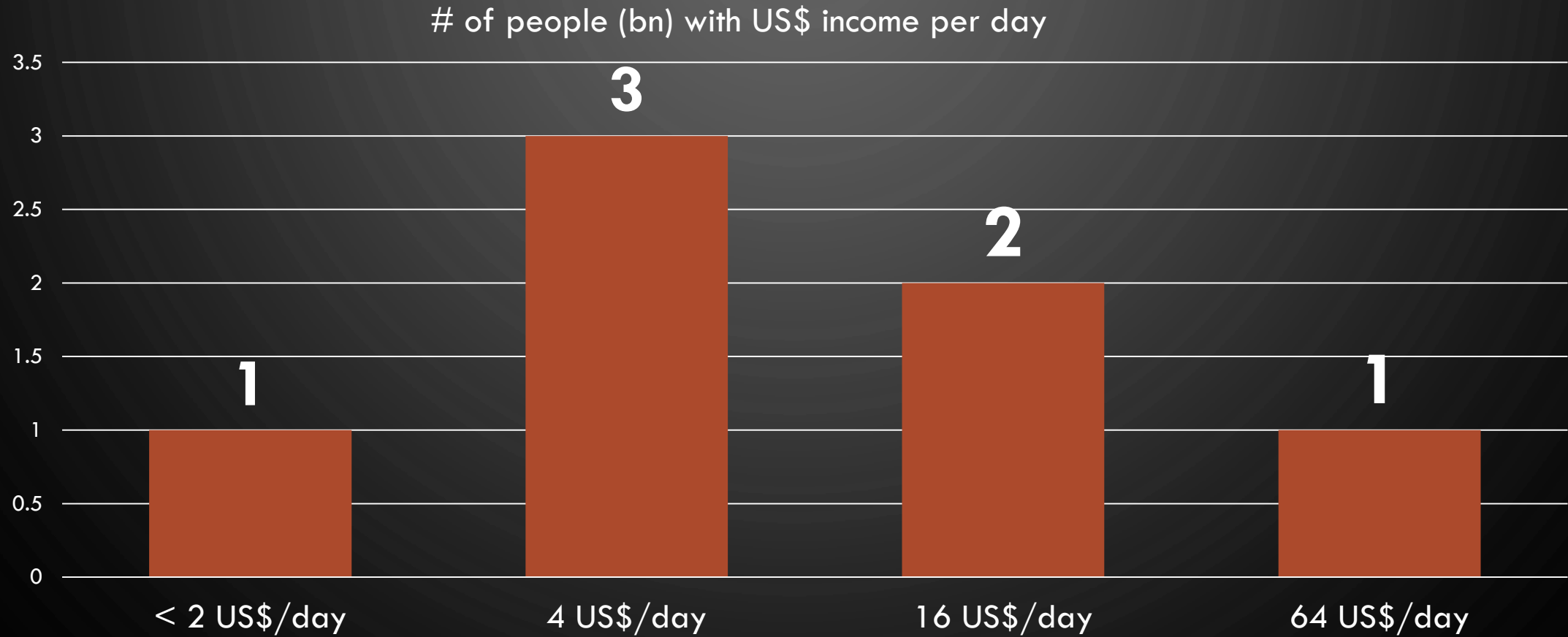
PITFALL 1: THE GAP INSTINCT

WE THINK IN EXTREMES:

- TRUE - FALSE
- GOOD - BAD
- US - THEM
- POOR - RICH

**BUT THE TRUTH IS
OFTEN IN THE MIDDLE**

FOR EXAMPLE: A FACT ABOUT POVERTY



PROTECTION AGAINST THE GAP INSTINCT

- Be aware of your tendency to think in extremes
- Check the numbers
- Be careful with averages and scales, look for spreads instead

PITFALL 2: THE NEGATIVITY INSTINCT

- We forget **bad** things from the past (the good old days fallacy)
- News and activist information prioritize the **sensational** and **dramatic**
- Negative facts come **quick** and **fast**, while most improvements are **slow** and **gradual**

PROTECTION AGAINST NEGATIVITY

- Remember that if things are not (yet) **good** does not mean that they are not **improving**
- Constantly **refresh** and **update** your education and facts
- Don't fear the label of being **positive** or **naïve**
- **But:** remain vigilant on bad trends

PITFALL 6: THE GENERALISATION INSTINCT

OR: THE **DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS**

FOR EXAMPLE:

- Images and ideas about 'poor' or 'rich' countries
- The example that 'proves' the rule (my neighbour)
- The sweeping statement (we all know that...)

PROTECTION AGAINST GENERALISATION

- Be aware that the extremes are more often shown than the (much larger) middle
- Look for the numbers behind statements like 'most people think'
- Avoid sweeping statements 'chemicals are poisonous'
- Look for the logic or reason behind a (for you) unusual phenomenon

PITFALL 8: THE SIMPLICITY INSTINCT

OR: THE TUNNEL VISION

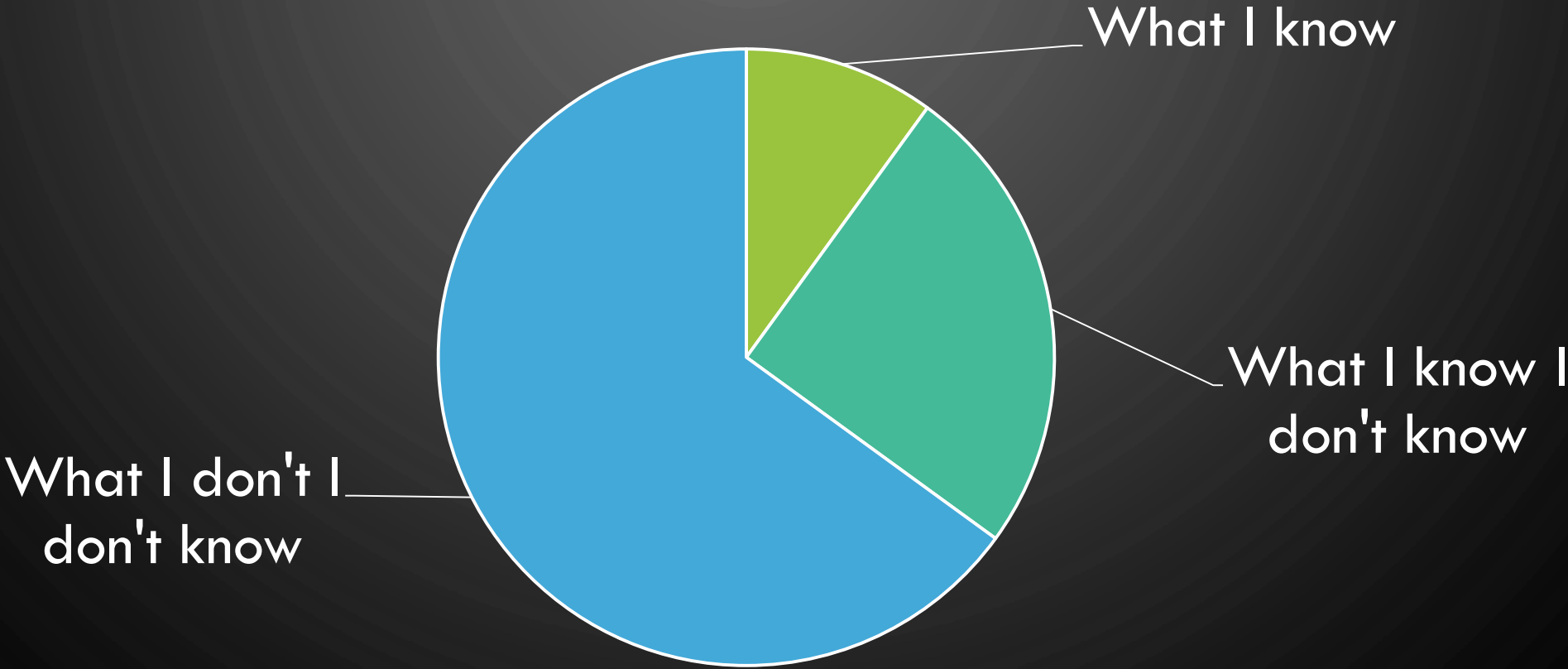
FOR EXAMPLE:

- Central planning bad – Free market good
- Government good – Opposition bad (or vice versa)
- THE problem is simple and like thus
- The 'only' solution to this problem is

PROTECTION AGAINST TUNNEL VISIONS

- Be suspicious of **SIMPLE** solutions for **COMPLEX** issues
- Step out of your **INFORMATION BUBBLE**
- Research the interests and motives of single minded persons
- Know the limitations of your own knowledge and expertise (**UNKNOWN UNKNOWNNS**)

UNKNOWN UNKNOWNNS



PITFALL 9: THE BLAME INSTINCT

OR: IT IS NEVER MY FAULT

FOR EXAMPLE:

- Externalising problems and solutions
- Conspiracy thinking
- Groupthink: tribalism and nationalism > blaming foreigners

THE BLAME INSTINCT IN PRACTICE

Nobody realised that everybody could do it.
In the end everybody blamed somebody when
nobody did what anybody could have done.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE BLAME INSTINCT

- Protect yourself against the **SIMPLICITY INSTINCT**
- Look for solutions within your own sphere of influence
- Be aware that big **PROBLEMS** and **SOLUTIONS** are most often caused by **STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS** rather than individuals
- **SHIT HAPPENS**

PITFALL 10: THE URGENCY INSTINCT

OR: WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING **NOW**

FOR EXAMPLE

- Buy now, limited stock (marketeers)
- We need to write back immediately (managers)
- Act now or you/the world will come to an end (activists)

• PROTECTION AGAINST THE URGENCY INSTINCT

- Protect yourself against the FEAR INSTINCT
- Protect yourself against the SIMPLICITY INSTINCT
- Insist on or look for data and advice
- Count to ten (or 100 or a day or two) before you act

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