

General Information:

Syllabus definition - very large agglomeration of at least 10 million inhabitants

Development results in increasing levels of social, economic and political issues. However, development within a city can be very unequal, with some parts advancing at a much quicker rate than others.

Growth in mega cities has been very rapid over the past 50 years.

Reason for growth in mega cities in the developing world

Push factors: (negatives of rural areas)

- Lack of employment
 - Modernisation of rural areas
 - Natural disasters
- Lack of health and education facilities
- High rural fertility rates

Pull factors: (positives of city areas)

- Perceived opportunity for work in the city
- Health and education facilities

Nature and Character

- Often major centres of manufacturing (labour intensive)
 - High population / unemployment = cheap labour
 - Attractive destination for TNCs to operate and produce in
 - Eg. Bangkok and Jakarta 35-40% of employment is in manufacturing
- Over Urbanisation - the city is growing too rapidly so there is:
 - Insufficient employment in formal sector, creating high levels of unemployment
 - Insufficient tax revenue - government does not have the funds to provide adequate services and infrastructure
- Shanty towns / slums
 - Insufficient housing often leads to illegal towns setup within city
 - Can have over 1 million inhabitants
 - Poor infrastructure
 - Possibility of eviction at any time by government
- Large informal economies (black market / illegal economies)
 - Lack of jobs in formal economy leads to larger informal economy
 - Life in shanty town leads to creation of informal jobs (do not pay taxes)
 - Beggars
 - Prostitutes
 - Street vendors

Spatial Distribution

- Mostly concentrated in the developing world - recent growth of mega cities has been in the developing world
- Africa and Asia have seen the fastest growth of mega cities

The Challenges and Responses of Living in Mega Cities

Includes:

- Housing
 - Employment
 - Water and sanitation services
 - Traffic infrastructure
 - Waste disposal
 - Other social and health issues
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- **Access to Employment**

- **Challenge**

High levels of unemployment and underemployment are features of mega cities. Urban labour markets are unable to absorb the burgeoning population. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates 20-25% of adults in developing cities are unemployed. World bank estimates 25% of urban population living in the developing world live in absolute poverty.

The formal sector refers to workers who pay taxes and have a right to workplace insurance. The informal sector is unregulated, workers don't pay taxes and have no legal right to workplace insurance. The informal economy provides cheap goods and services for the urban poor. However, the informal economy exploits child labour and does not provide income for the government. The UN believes that 37% of people living in mega cities in the developing world are employed in the informal sector.

- **Response**

Micro-finance:

Micro-finance institutions are bank-like institutions that cater for the needs of the urban poor. Small loans, or the provision of credit, have allowed impoverished people to engage in self-employment projects to lift them out of poverty. These institutions are set-up largely by NGOs. Loans are used to help women become entrepreneurs from home, educates impoverished people about the importance of saving, and helps lift them from poverty.

The Grameen Bank is a community developed bank based in Bangladesh. It provides credit to the poorest in the country, with no need for collateral. The loans are trusted to be used to start small enterprises. The bank has more than 8.8 million borrowers, 97% of whom are women.

- **Housing / Provision of Shelter**

- **Challenge**

Population growth (natural and rural-urban migration) is greater than the growth in housing supply. People are forced into slums or squatter settlements. In developing countries, almost 30% of the urban population live in slums.

40% of the population of Karachi, Pakistan, live in slums and squatter settlements. In Mumbai, India, that statistic is 66%, Mexico City is nearly 50%, and Lima, Peru, is 55%. In Zambia, the informal housing sector provides 60-70% of urban housing. This is up to 90% in Ghana.

Problems of Informal Settlements

Informal settlements are mostly unplanned and lack basic services such as water and electricity supply. There are a lack of toilets with many residents having to defecate on the street or in improvised toilets. They lack security with governments enforcing evictions due to illegal occupation of public and private land.

- **Response**

- 1) Site and service Projects

- a) Large tracts of urban land is divided into plots and provided with basic services. Plots are then sold or leased to people to build on.

- b) Positives:

- i) Safe - no eviction by government
- ii) Basic services
- iii) Infrastructure

- c) Negatives:

- i) Too expensive for urban poor

- 2) Upgrading Projects

- a) When governments provide existing slums with infrastructure such as water and sewage. This can be expensive, however, is preferred by many slum dwellers as they are able to stay in their existing homes/communities

- b) Eg. NGOs in Delhi, India

- i) NGOs in Delhi encourage poorer communities to become involved in programs to improve their own living standards (self-help programs). NGOs pressure governments to reduce 'evictions' and to instead upgrade slums. Emphasising the need for slum renovation and improvement rather than demolition.

- c) Eg. Dharavi, Mumbai redevelopment program

- i) \$2 billion redevelopment project aimed to reduce the slums in Mumbai, primarily Dharavi. The slum will be demolished and replaced with high-rise apartments. Slum dwellers who have resided in the slum for more than 10 years will be provided with an apartment.

- **Sanitation Services - Water and Sewage**

- **Challenge**

Water:

- Generally the proportion of dwellings with running water is an indication of whether a city is located in a developed or developing country.
- Jakarta - 40% of residents need to buy water, 80% don't have access to piped water and rely on pumped groundwater.

Sewage:

- Sewage facilities in mega cities are often ancient and inadequate and can't keep pace with the rapid population growth.
- The proportion of the population connected to the sewage systems ranges from 11% in Manila to 20% in Karachi to 80% in Mexico City

- **Response (to sewage)**

69% of India are without toilets. This poor sanitation can lead to diseases such as Cholera (waterborne). The government in India has built private toilets for \$0.10 per use near some slums and attempted to build more toilets but never completed these projects. This response thus far has been minutely effective due to the high cost for the poorest slum dwellers and the still inadequate number of toilets.

- **Waste Disposal**

- **Challenge**

The proportion of solid waste collected in Jakarta is just 25%, in Karachi is 33%, and in Sao Paulo is 36%. This figure is as high as 70-80% in other mega cities such as Bangkok and Mexico City.

- **Response**

Recycling provides the poorest with income and reduces waste. As government's aren't usually able to treat and collect solid and liquid waste due to inadequate resources, recycling initiatives are put into place. The urban poor in Beijing scavenge through the 20,000 tonnes of waste produced per day to earn about US\$50 a month.

- **Other Social and Health Issues**

- ***Challenge***

Atmospheric Pollution:

One of the major problems facing mega cities in the developing world is the atmospheric pollution that has resulted from the unregulated consumption of coal and petroleum in industry and transport. This is associated with health problems such as asthma and bronchitis.

- ***Response***

Atmospheric Pollution:

In Beijing, China, half of the city's cars are forced off the roads each day and production restricted during a red pollution alert. The government was initially accused of avoiding red alerts due to the economic costs.

- **Traffic Infrastructure**

- **Challenge**

Congestion in mega cities worsens as its population increases.

- Jakarta - 3 and a half million people a day commute into the city from wider metropolitan areas, many by car
 - 70% of the air pollution is emitted from vehicles
- Mumbai - 18 million, 1.8 million motor vehicles
 - AS middle class expands, more people are buying cars
 - Rapid population growth is putting real strain on infrastructure such as public transport
 - 90% of commuters use the railways

- **Response**

Three Phase Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project (MUIP)

- Funded by World Bank
- Seeks to strengthen the city's mass transport infrastructure and improve the efficiency and capacity of the suburban railway services
- 4 km sea bridge, 8 lanes
- Phase 1:
 - Commenced in 2002 and completed in 2011
 - US\$700 million
 - Focus on eco-friendly buses, air quality monitoring and railway projects
- Phase 2:
 - Further railway improvement
- Phase 3:
 - Scheduled to finish in 2031
 - US\$8.1 billion
 - Fast transport corridor from city's principal rail terminal to the city of Panvel