



## Topic Synopsis

### 3<sup>rd</sup> SCH, Challenges in Urban Slums

#### Background

Slums are a product mainly of poor government and economic policies. Many things such as unresponsive financial systems, corruption, and poor distribution of wealth lead to the presence of slums in cities and impoverished neighborhoods. An unfortunate reality is that those already burdened by poverty and living in slums are often more affected by failures in the economy. Undoubtedly, many problems exist in slums from poor sanitation to social issues and more. Lack of basic needs such as clean water, proper drainage, and proper housing make living conditions in slums terribly unsafe and unhealthy. Many infections and illnesses are found in dirty water and because slums are often packed and overcrowded, the diseases spread amongst the population without fail. Besides the terrible health conditions, there are also many social problems present in slums. With frustration largely at high levels in men who cannot find jobs, domestic violence is always a lingering issue in slums. In other cases, people are often deceived and lured into the world of drug and alcohol abuse and then have even harder times finding jobs and escaping the poverty cycle. Slums are also often a hotspot for trafficking grounds where human and drug traffickers abduct children and force them into illicit drug dealership, slavery, or prostitution. With even more struggles in gender inequality and external corruptions, slums are a growing problem and must be addressed in order to improve lives.

#### UN Involvement

Just one example of UN's attempt under the UN Development Programme to combat slums and poverty is its MDG's, or Millennium Development Goals. These goals specifically



target poverty, hunger, maternal and child mortality, disease, inadequate shelter, gender inequality, environmental degradation and the Global Partnership for Development. Adopted in 2000 and set to be achieved by 2015, the MGD's are based on both a global and local level with each country implementing plans according to its own specific development needs. The MGD's have already made great progress in combating poverty. With the exception of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, primary school enrolment is at least 90 percent. One point six billion people have gained access to safe drinking water since 1990.

### **Possible Solutions**

As this is an issue that people are affected by every second of the day, action must be taken now. With the help of NGO's and other programs, providing temporary health clinics and care packages while spreading awareness would greatly combat the health issues in slums; however, these solutions are called short-term for a reason. In order to reduce poverty as a whole, its roots and causes must be taken care of. Monitoring government activity and increasing transparency may be the first step in solving the problem of poverty and slums. Vocational training and a basic education are also steps to help people escape the poverty cycle and help them in the long run. There are countless solutions to this problem, many of which are uncovered, yet so practical.

### **Questions to Consider**

Does your policy consider the side effects and byproducts of slums?

Does your country have a history with slums? How does that affect your policies and solutions?

How can your solution tie short-term and long-term goals together?



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[http://rameshkumar.co.in/a\\_look\\_at\\_slum\\_problem.php](http://rameshkumar.co.in/a_look_at_slum_problem.php)

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