

<b>Committee:</b>	Social Humanitarian & Cultural Committee
<b>Issue:</b>	The issue of slum dweller and social exclusion
<b>Student Officer:</b>	Riana-Leah Byrne
<b>Position:</b>	Co-Chair

## INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Riana-Leah Byrne, and I will be serving as a co-chair in the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee for the 6<sup>th</sup> PS Model United Nations Conference. I'm 15 years old and a student of Costeas-Geitonas School. This will be my second time chairing. The following study guide provides information on the topic for which I will be the expert student officer.

This study guide attempts to elaborate on the issue of slum dwellers and social exclusion. This is a worldwide problem since many countries all over our planet are affected by it. One of the most abiding physical demonstrations of social exclusion is the expansion of slums in many cities. Living in settlements like these, give rise to many problems, that can't be solved without our help. The most common problems are the following:

- deficient water supply,
- very poor conditions of environmental sanitation,
- non-existence of waste disposal and drainage
- overcrowded and dilapidated habitation,
- dangerous location,
- insecurity of residence,
- susceptibility to serious health risks



The social exclusion is the “after-effect” of this way of life. Women and girls are often illiterate or have restricted access to education. They are weighed down with carrying water for long distances on a daily basis. Some children are privileged to receive just primary education, while most don't receive any education at all throughout their lives.

Diseases spread rapidly since the people who live in slums are very close to each other and sanitation is extremely poor. For example, [in the Kibera slum in Kenya, HIV infection is twice the national average, and diarrhea is the leading killer of children under five] ["5 Negative Impacts of Slums." The Borgen Project RSS2. N.p., 06 Sept. 2013. Web.]

Furthermore, banks do not offer financial support to the residents of slums, their refusal often based on the fact that they consider them 'unbankable.' As a result, slum dwellers often resort to the use of loan sharks that charge them enormous rates of interest, only to further impoverish them.

Governments ignore slum dwellers on a regular basis, since in many cases; they don't have a right to vote. More than often, those areas and people are not included in their government's plans and they are not provided with full law protection.

It can be easily understood, that natural disasters affect them the most, as they often experience floods, earthquakes and hurricanes, leading to even poorer conditions and the destruction of their slums, since the buildings are made out of insubstantial materials, which are inclined to collapse, leading to serious injuries or even loss of life.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

### Slums

- Court, alley or street of small badly-built, dirty, crowded houses

A squalid and overcrowded urban street or district inhabited by very poor people ["Slum." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web., Hornby, Albert Sydney., Anthony Paul. Cowie, and Jack Windsor Lewis. "Slum." *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. 1974 ed. London: Oxford UP, 1974. 811. Print.]

### Slum Dweller

Someone who lives in a slum

### Loan Sharks

A moneylender who charges extremely high rates of interest, typically under illegal conditions

["Loan Shark." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web.]

### Social Exclusion

Exclusion from the prevailing social system and its rights and privileges, typically as a result of poverty or the fact of belonging to a minority social group

["Social Exclusion." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web.]

### Security of Tenure

The right of a tenant of property to occupy it after the lease expires (unless a court should order otherwise).

["Security of Tenure." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web.]

### Favela

A Brazilian shack or shanty town; a slum

["Favela." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web.]

### Digital Divide

The gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the Internet, and those who do not.

["Digital Divide." Oxford Dictionaries. N.p., n.d. Web.]



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### History

At first the word slum was used in a slang way and meant room, then back room meaning back alley, street of poor people and in the end it described bad housing.

Before the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, slums were mostly met in Europe and the United States. It is thought that the first slum was created in New York City, in 1825, near Lake Collect. It was called Five Points and it evolved into a large urban settlement that was surrounded by many slaughterhouses and tanneries. The slum dwellers emptied their waste into the lake and the result was to create hazardous conditions for their health and sanitation. By early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many slums were found in every major urban region of the US.

In 1913 there was a slum in Ivry-sur-Seine, France and by the 1950s, slum dwellers were already spread around Paris.

Cardinal Wiseman described the slums of London as following:

*"Close under the Abbey of Westminster there lie concealed labyrinths of lanes and potty and alleys and slums, nests of ignorance, vice, depravity, and crime, as well as of squalor, wretchedness, and disease; whose atmosphere is typhus, whose ventilation is cholera; in which swarms of huge and almost countless population, nominally at least, Catholic; haunts of filth, which no sewage committee can reach – dark corners, which no lighting board can brighten."*



## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

### Brazil

The slums of Brazil are called Favelas. It is not a new issue, as even before the first Favelas were created, poor people were pushed away and were forced to live near the suburbs. In recent years, according to the 2010 Census, around 6% of Brazil's population lives in slums, called Favelas. One the worst issues that have arisen since

their creation, is criminality. Many gangs have overtaken the Favelas, thus resulting in serious problems regarding the country's security. Another major issue that has affected Brazil as a whole and was enlarged by the existence of Favelas is the spread of diseases.

Since the poverty rate in the country has increased over the past few years, the majority of people aren't able to have the basic things that are needed in order to live a healthy life. The Brazilian government has taken a number of different approaches in order to solve the problem of Favelas. Such approaches were programs concerning the eradication of Favelas and the improvement of the infrastructures. Rocinha is the largest Favela in Brazil with an estimated number of 180.000 slum dwellers.

In 1995, Comitê para Democratização da Informática (part of the Center for Digital Inclusion) started computer schools to reduce the differences between people. In 2007, President Lula announced the "Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento", which was a four-year investment plan and included the promotion of urban development for the Favelas. Local Governments have also introduced public policies aimed at the improvement of life in the Favelas. In Rio de Janeiro, programs have attempted to mitigate the problem, for example the "Favela-Barrio" and "Rio Cidade" programs.

### South Africa

South Africa is another country that has some of the worst slums worldwide. Cape Town has approximately 147 urban slums. People living there are affected by poverty and they face problems arising from the fact that they live in slums, where there is not enough water supply, sanitation, and other basic needs.

The residents of these deprived areas are typically poor and often unemployed. As a result they are estranged from any economic development taking place in their country. They do not have basic provisions, such as sanitary facilities and houses built out of bricks. They do not even have access to land. Criminality is rampant and it is too often that clashes with the police occur.

An organization called Cordaid has been developing help regarding the improvement of the slum dwellers' living conditions and it is also applying a result-based project management in the country's capital. This organization is exploiting any relevant urban development experience gained in other countries.

### Kenya

Kenya has also a major issue concerning slum dwellers, making it to the top 5 countries with worst slums around the world. A slum called Kibera has a population of 170.000 (by a 2009 Census), and only a thousand toilets. The slum dwellers haven't yet been a part of their government's plans. Slum residents live with less than \$1 each day. Problems such as rape and assault are very common. Many

attempts by various organizations have been made in order to minimize some of their problems or even eradicate them.

### India

According to the Indian government the slum dwellers in India are more than Britain's population. The situation has been getting worse as time goes by and almost 1.1 billion slum dwellers manage to live on less than a dollar a day. As the country's population grows, more and more people end up in the country's major cities and a lot of them end up in slums.

India has one of the largest slums in the world, located in Mumbai; it is called Dharavi. It houses 6.5 million slum dwellers. There have been many efforts made to resolve the issue, such as a project proposed by an American architect named Murkesh Mhata who plans houses, schools, parks and roads for 57,000 slum residents. The people who live in Dharavi suffer from some life-threatening diseases such as lung cancer, mainly due to very heavy air pollution.

### Mexico

Mexico City is the second largest megacity in the world and, as is expected, it faces many problems such as poverty. Unemployment is the main cause of this problem (and even formal employment has a wage average of approximately \$4 per day, not giving much room to minimize poverty). As a consequence, many people build squatters, also known as Colonias Proletarias. As expected, criminality plays a major role in the dangers of Mexico City. The Mexican slums date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century where the landlords were (and still are) slum dwellers themselves.

### Pakistan

The capital of the country Islamabad is also facing the problem of slums in its outskirts. The Pakistani government has decided to demolish the slums, in order to use the land to develop commercial properties and thus hundreds of homes have been destroyed. ["It is a national crisis," says Dr Murtaza Haider, an associate professor at Canada's Ryerson University whose research interests include urban development in South Asia.] [Khawar, Amna. "Surviving Pakistan's Slums: The Extraordinary Story of Mohammad Sabir." Dawn. N.p., 16 June 2015. Web.]

The Pakistani slum dwellers are estimated to be between 23 and 32 million people. Women and girls can't be educated in most cases, and some go through only primary education, as they have to work in order to earn money to help their families. Another issue concerning girls is that they are often assaulted (e.g. beaten, sexually mistreated and often emotionally abused and threatened). Furthermore most schools are located near markets, which makes girls insecure about themselves, since they have to walk back to their homes through the crowds. It is believed that around 337,000 girls are violated at school or on their way to school.

## UN Habitat

UN Habitat is an organization that tries to offer solutions to the above mentioned issues. It is a fact that rapid urbanization places a remarkable strain on housing and serviced land of all major cities in the world. It is believed, that by 2030, about 3 billion people, which will represent approximately 40% of the world's population, will be in need of proper housing and access to basic infrastructure and services (such as water and sanitation systems). This means that it would take the completion of 96,150 housing units per day from now till 2030.

In some cities, it is thought that up to 80% of the population lives in slums. Since 2000, 55 million new slum dwellers have been added to the global population.

- Sub-Saharan Africa has a slum population of 199.5 million,
- South Asia 190.7 million,
- East Asia 189.6 million,
- Latin America and the Caribbean 110.7 million,
- Southeast Asia 88.9 million,
- West Asia 35 million and
- North Africa 11.8 million.

Unfortunately, in the developing world, inadequate governance systems and human resource deficiencies place a burden on an already limited supply.

Furthermore, government institutions and regulations are often lacking in capacity, or are poorly informed and managed. The failure of urban planning and the fact that the construction sector does not match demand for homes has resulted in a huge housing backlog, resulting globally in the development of slums in a variety of contexts. Too often, due to constraints in formal housing and land delivery systems, an increasing number of residents, who would otherwise qualify for housing programs, are resorting to slum settlements.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

The following events are associated with slum dwellers:

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
1760-1850	Industrial Revolution (there was an influx of people towards the large cities of many countries and this led to the creation of slums in especially poor countries and those who went through a phase of economic crisis)
1947-today	World Bank's and IMF's Yearly Conference (including a discussion on the problem of slums)
April 2015	Second session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III. Nairobi, Kenya

## UN INVOLVEMENT

The United Nations have helped throughout the years with resolving some of the issues arising from the slum and the social exclusion of their dwellers. The UN-Habitat has assisted some suffering countries in order to develop strategies and policies. In many countries, an improvement in their government has automatically improved the residents' lives.

The Housing Profile Tool is one of the proposed and offered solutions and it has been successfully applied since 2008 in at least 10 countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. This tool enables governments and their national and local authorities to better understand the constraints people face when trying to access adequate housing. Its other efforts concentrate on:

- facilitating the design of policy responses in order to boost housing delivery,
- improving land and infrastructure supply,
- mobilizing private and public finance for housing and
- Various country specific measures.

UN-Habitat also offers technical aid, comprising of a review and analysis of current local, regional and national legislation. In this way, national and local authorities' understanding of housing issues and compliance with international law is much improved. Bearing in mind that the adequate housing for all needs to be achieved, it also provides a review and analysis of policy implications. Furthermore, it convenes national and local stakeholders to international expert meetings, in order to discuss all analyses related to the right to adequate housing for all.

UN-Habitat is currently developing a Global Housing Strategy up to the year 2025. This strategy takes into account the challenges of providing adequate and sustainable housing and basic infrastructure to the slum dwellers. The strategy points out the need to integrate housing policies into a broader urban planning strategy for each country. All governmental actions must thus be aligned with other social, economic and environmental policies of the country in question.



## Resolutions

2011.21 : 27 July 2011

66/207 : 22 December 2011

## PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Cordaid has helped with the improvement of the problem.

[Cordaid incorporated the expertise of the Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC), a key stakeholder, in the study “*Integrated Inner-city Redevelopment Plan in Woreda-01 of Lideta Sub-city of Addis Ababa*”. The study constitutes of neighborhood reading (diachronic and synchronic analysis), case studies (past practices by different parties) and a proposal of a Local Development Plan.] ["Exploring Housing Solutions for Addis Ababa." Cordaid. N.p., 10 Dec. 2014. Web.]

This first phase report was presented to urban development professionals and officials from the Federal Ministry of Urban Development, Housing and Construction, the Addis Ababa City Government and NGOs, aiming to secure technical feedback. All participants appreciated the report and promised to support the initiative in their areas of specialty.

Following the approval of the first phase of the programme by authorities, the second and final phase of the program development will resume. This phase constitutes detailed consultations between the policy makers and the slum dwellers. Additionally, the land use and developing neighborhood design must be refined (e.g. residential housing typologies, decentralized sanitation, sport facility design, cost estimation etc.). Furthermore, relevant financing strategies, funding and management proposals must be presented to the local and international stakeholders.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. The governments ought to agree upon the equality of rights of both genders so as to eliminate social exclusion.
2. Each troubled country’s population should be given initiatives to settle in various locations of the country in order to avoid the problem of slums.
3. Public awareness should be raised in order for people to be informed on the aforementioned issue regarding slum dwellers and social exclusion. It should be raised through campaigns, advertisements etc. Since the topic has been crucial for the past few centuries and is forecasted to increase in intensity, it is extremely

important to improve education attendance of populations of the slums. It is also important to raise awareness of the specific issue to those that aren't affected.

4. All member states should sign treaties regarding the topic which will strive to improve areas where slum dwellers live so as to eliminate the derivative problems.

5. It is of vital importance to address every day issues, by delivering basic infrastructure services for safe water, sanitation, better housing, waste removal, access to land tenure rights. All this can be achieved through collaborative efforts with local people and municipal authorities.

6. It is crucial to enable households to secure funds for the improvement of physical facilities and this can be done by supporting income-generation activities and community-managed savings, as well as offering credit schemes.

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