GUIDANCE IAS
MORE THAN A COACHING
An Institute for GENERAL STUDIES and OPTIONAL PROGRAM

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Missing an inclusionary vision for the urban poor- The Hindu

> **What do you mean by urban poverty?**
>
> **As per Asian development bank**: 'urban poverty is complex and multidimensional—extending beyond the deficiency of income or consumption. Its many dimensions relate to the vulnerability of the poor on account of their inadequate access to land and housing, physical infrastructure and services, economic and livelihood sources, health and education facilities, social security networks, and voice and empowerment.

- **Syllabus- GS 1-** *Poverty and Developmental issues;*
- *GS 2- Issues relating to Poverty and Hunger.*

- In 2001, according to the **National Report (*India Habitat III* by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation)** about **23.5%** of urban households were **slum dwellers.**

- This percentage had decreased **to 17%** by **2011** even though the total number of households living in slums had **gone up** from **10.5 million in 2001** to **13.75 million in 2011.**

> **Kamona's Story:** Can be used as an **example** in **essay** and **GS4:**
>
> - *It was desperation that led Kamona to migrate all the way from her village in West Bengal to New Delhi. She had been saving to educate her three children, but her alcoholic husband ruined this dream by using all the money to feed his own addictions.*
>
> - *Uneducated yet determined, Kamona decided to contact her sister, who lives in New Delhi in a small one bedroom apartment in an overcrowded building on Govindpuri lane. She lives with her husband, a vegetable seller, and is expecting their first child. Kamona's sister advised her to take her children and move to the capital. Together, they would figure out where she could work and at least the children would be away from their father. One room would now host seven people, four of whom were children. This is just one amongst countless similar stories of India's slum-dwellers and the tales of their migration.*

Causes and impacts of urban poverty:

1. **Lack of opportunities and skills training for most of the working age population:** Over the years, a shortage of adequate investment in quality education and basic services like health, sanitation, waste management and skill training has had its consequences. It has led to generations of malnourished, uneducated, unaware and unskilled or semi-skilled people who find it difficult to find decent paying jobs.

2. **Agriculture is barely a lucrative option:** Millions migrate to the cities every day to take up informal jobs such as domestic help, driving cars for middle-class people, taxi driving, construction site work, etc. However, this creates overcrowding in the already packed urban infrastructure.

3. **Lack of affordable housing**: Due to this migrated poor settle wherever they can, but as more people join, a whole community of undocumented settlers emerges. This further complicates the procedure of accessing basic services like electricity, water and sanitation, etc. as the authorities and public utilities can only serve those registered on paper – **this is how poverty begins.**

4. **Overcrowding:** It is another major factor in informal settlements. There is often just one bathroom for 50 to 100 people in each illegal building, and lack of awareness of personal hygiene practices pushes families further into the waiting arms of diseases and infections.

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- **The low income of these communities** means that standard **medical help** is often a far-fetched dream, not to mention unaffordable. Therefore, on occasions when it rains or the neighbourhood is **flooded**, these <u>settlements become breeding grounds for various parasites and infections and the cycle repeats itself</u>.

5. <u>**Urbanisation affects regions at the urban fringe:**</u> Villagers living in the rural area near expanding cities are often benefiting from them because they become more connected to municipal life. However, these communities usually aren't prepared for the **"urban lifestyle".** Life rapidly becomes <u>too expensive for the villagers</u>; they don't have the <u>skill sets</u> required for higher paying jobs so find <u>themselves pushed into the informal economy to survive.</u>

> **Schemes of Urban Poverty Alleviation by the Government of India:**
> - *Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation.*
> - *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (National Urban Livelihoods Mission) .*
> - *Jal Jeevan Mission Urban .*
> - *Light House Projects .*
> - *Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme .*
> - *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Housing for All - Urban) .*
> - *Scheme to Augment City Buses & Urban Green Mobility.*
> - *Self-Employment Programme of urban poor .*
> - ***PURA** scheme for rural development.*

How to solve urban poverty problem?

1. Improving life in rural areas: PURA scheme

- In order to control large-scale migrations from rural to urban areas, the current state of rural infrastructure must be addressed. What's also important is **giving slum-dwellers access to some form of credit and resources**, if not the causes of urban poverty will continually wear down on generations to come.

- India is taking the right step in promoting small and medium scale industries in rural areas, as well as promoting other income-generating opportunities. However, more investment into satisfying the demand for more jobs, equal pay, more career and movement opportunities in the tertiary or agriculture sector, could ease the increasing pressure on urban infrastructure services.

- Instilling research and proper training into agriculture so that it could work effectively alongside rural area development. Also, more investment into basic services both in rural and urban areas, such as health care, education and skills development could be the long-term solution to issues related to economic distribution.

2. Better urban planning & slum rehabilitation:

- As India ambitiously progresses in line with other rapidly developing cities, informal settlers are increasingly left behind. Although considered a persisting problem, slums weren't just born overnight. They are a product of decades, even centuries of neglect and lack of development planning.

- Successful urbanisation takes time, but life in the slums will only improve when its residents' living situations are upgraded or bettered on a basic level.

- Through rehabilitation, these families will have access to clean water, electricity, better jobs (via skills training), and the right to live in their homes. Land rights are indeed a hot topic for most slum residents, who are at constant risk of eviction (informal settlements are after all informal). This causes further extreme poverty and instability in the country.

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1. Case study:

Slum Rehabilitation on PPP mode Case Studies from Rajkot, Gujarat - Raiyadhar slum:

Decentralized Decision Making:

Under this policy, the decision making for the Slum Rehabilitation Projects is decentralized. At City Level, a prescribed authority for Slum Rehabilitation is formed which examines the issues in meeting.

The slums are identified and after thorough discussion in prescribed authority, the details are published in government gazette. All such slums identified are covered under SFCPoA (slum free city plan of action) and are categorized into three groups- Slums on Government land, Slums of Municipal Corporation land and Slums on Private Land. Initially, the slums of Government land and Corporation land are identified for calling of tenders.

Outcomes:

- RMC (Rajkot Municipal Corporation) has rehabilitated about 3000 slum households, received about Rs. 400 Crores as premium and also got land area of about Rs. 100 Crore freed. This is because where there is extra land, the Municipal Corporation ensures that where there is land in access of what is required to make the project viable, is returned to Municipal Corporation after clearance.

- The slum dwellers get the house at free of cost in addition to the rent for their transit accommodation.

- The redevelopment project has also the components of provision of play house, common areas for recreation, enough parking spaces etc.

2. Case study:

Mera Thela pilot project for poverty all eviation :

Mera Thela is scheduled to be piloted in Pune Smart City with support from Pune Municipal Corporation.

Street vendors are an essential part of the urban economy and traditionally, they have been the main source of supply to the citizens before the onset of the online retail and modern retail chains. With changing lifestyles and building types, it is becoming difficult for vendors to communicate their presence to the customers. **To bridge this gap, Fellows from the India Smart Cities Mission of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, designed Mera Thela project that intends to amplify the link between street vendors and citizens via a mobile application:

Benefits:

- Customers can see real-time location of street vendors

- Customer can check the list of items and their prices

- Vendor's market reach will be enhanced

- More seamlessness and efficiency is brought into the informal system

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Mains question:

Q.1 Explain the cause and effect of urban poverty in India? What are the solutions to handle urban poverty in India? Explain with examples?

Prelims questions:

1. Which of the following are schemes for urban poverty alleviation:

   1. Jal Jeevan Mission Urban

   2. Light House Projects

   3. Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme

   4. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Housing for All - Urban)

   5. Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee scheme

Which of the following is/are the correct?

   (a) All the above

   (b) 2,3,4,5 only

   (c) 1, 2, 3, 4

   (d) 3, 4, 5.