



How can slums be improved?

## Description

### What is a slum:

- A slum is an urban informal settlement that is unfit for living because it lacks access to basic sanitation, drinking water, electricity etc.

### The situation of slums:

- Unhygienic conditions.
- Lack of medical facilities.
- Lack of sanitation.
- Congested.
- No access to drinking water and electricity.
- Most of the inhabitants of the slums can't be beneficiaries to Govt schemes.
- Only a few slums are recognized by Govt. Conditions in unrecognized slums are even worse.
- No drainage system. In most slums, wastewater flow in between houses.
- The little medical facilities available in slums is provided by NGOs.

### Causes of the formation of slums:

- Increasing rural to urban migration.
- Urban areas are not being improved enough to accommodate the new inhabitants.
- Poor planning of cities.
- Poverty and lack of job opportunities in rural areas are the push factors of migration.
- The high cost of living in urban areas.
- Natural disasters.
- Increasing population.
- Urbanization – Pull factor of rural migration.
- Social exclusion.

- Informal economy.
- Some politicians use slum inhabitants as their vote banks. Though they give fake promises of improving the living conditions, they encourage slums.
- Social conflicts – civil wars.

### Effects on the people living in slums:

- The reduced life expectancy of slum inhabitants.
- Health problems due to drinking contaminated water.
- Environment pollution.
- The low standard of living.
- Degraded health conditions.
- Those living in slums get victimized easily by alcohol and drugs.
- Slums inhabitants will become the worst victims of natural disasters.
- Slums breed violence, crime, diseases, epidemics and psychological illnesses.
- Preterm births.
- Malnutrition in children.
- Child labour.
- No safety for women living in slums due to high no. of drunkards.

### Failed Solutions:

- Slum removal – It made slum inhabitants homeless.
- Slum relocation – It moved poor people further away from their workplaces.

### Successful strategies:

- Slum upgrading. It improved slum's living conditions. But it does not address poverty and low wages of the informal economy.
- Organized urbanization – Planning & Modifying urban areas to accommodate newcomers.
- Legitimizing slums instead of driving them out of their homes.
- Improving job opportunities in rural as well as urban areas.
- Planning rural development along with urban development.
- Economic development.
- Better transport facilities.
- Affordable housing in urban areas.

### What India is doing:

- Govt of India launched – National Urban Health Mission – to improve health care facilities for urban poor.
- India implemented – slum upgrading – in a few recognized slums.
- In 2015, the Indian Govt allocated budget to replace crowded slums with 2 crore homes.

### Conclusion:

Besides improving the living conditions in slums, the causes of slums creation should be addressed. Distributive development will serve the purpose and thereby everyone can have a dignified and healthy life.

### **Your Turn!**

How can we transform slums into better places to live in? What are your thoughts on slums? Express your opinions through the comment section below.

**Photo Credits :** [Michal Huniewicz](#)

---

Copyright @ Group Discussion Ideas.