

# Sociology of developing countries



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Question The urban poor in developing countries have been subject to debate between those viewing them as conservative and those who consider them radical. Two research schools of thought, however, contradicted the radical notion. First, it was demonstrated that urban poor formed organizations that worked towards housing improvement. They are keenly involved in political aspects that are affecting their livelihood in a direct way. The urban poor are also responsive to varying parameters where they are in operation; they are aware of their position of vulnerability. As far as radical ideology is concerned, these were found to be largely absent. The urban poor are, generally, supportive of them and see the government as doing its best to understand their issues (Griffiths, 2011).

## Question # 2

In order to benefit the rural poor, it is important to encourage good governance via decentralization. While this alone cannot help the rural poor in achieving this, inclusion of the program will mobilize them; motivate the poor, as well as marginal households, to seek available resources and opportunities. External agencies, their resources, experience, and expertise are important to development of the decentralization process (Griffiths, 2011).

## Question # 3

Urbanization seems to be happening at an unprecedented rate, with most of the individuals now living in the cities, as opposed to the countryside. By 2050, the UN forecasts that seventy percent of the world's population will be urbanized compared to only thirty percent in 1950. Developing countries in Africa and Asia are the most affected, especially as opportunities for

employment shift to the city and agriculture's labor requirements decrease. Ultimately, this trend may prove destabilizing, as developing countries look set to achieve lower per capita income compared to developed countries at their point of urbanization. Countries with large urban populations of the younger generation are more prone to civil unrest compared to those with lower populations. These developing countries with increased urban population also have trouble in sustaining credible institutions of democracy (Handelman, 2011).

These poor and disorganized cities also create the perfect ground for the emergence of gangs, crime-lords, as well as senseless riots. Rapid urbanization of developing countries, therefore, is expected to bring with it magnified scenarios of what happened during the same phase in developed countries. Another consequence of this urbanization of developing countries is international terrorism, since the sprawling nature of these cities makes policing a difficult process (Handelman, 2011). With improved communication, neighborhood networks, and World Wide Web access, these cities act as breeding grounds for terror "gangs".

#### Question # 4

In the United States, farmers receive approximately \$3.4 billion every year, making the US the second highest producer of cotton in the world, as well as the highest exporter. This is made easy through the idea that they do not have to match cotton prices with production costs. While world cotton prices are dropping of increased production, taxpayers in developed countries pay their farmers to produce more for a non-expanding market. On production, their governments dump the product's surplus overseas in developing countries, which lowers prices of the commodity in the world market, as well

as destroying the market equity for developing countries. Developing countries, which cannot compete with these subsidies, suffer the brunt of the world market prices (Handelman, 2011).

#### Question # 5

Two challenges facing food demand are elasticity of price, as well as elasticity of income. Income elasticity is approximately 0.5, meaning that a twenty percent increase in income results in a ten percent increase in food demand. Price elasticity, on the other hand, is 0.1, since people have to eat regardless of food prices. Food prices would thus have to increase twofold if supply would be fixed to choke a demand increase of ten percent after an increase in income of twenty percent (Griffiths, 2011).

#### References

Griffiths, Robert. (2011). *Developing World 11/12*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Handelman, Susan. (2011). *The challenge of Third World development*. Boston: Longman - Pearson Custom Publishing.