

Urban Poverty and Development

Modular value: 20 credits

Module Convenor: **Philip Amis** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government-society/staff/profiles.aspx?Referenceld=4442>)

Aim of the Module

The World is increasingly urbanizing –thus already over 50% of the world's population is now lives in urban centres. Furthermore this process is happening most quickly in the South; already the world main urban centres are in the South (Mexico City, Mumbai and Shanghai). In addition recent research has shown that urban poverty now accounts for a growing proportion of the worlds poor. The challenge of poverty reduction is becoming an urban phenomenon. Finally processes of political change are increasingly being played out in the urban centres of the South; nowhere is inequality more apparent than in these cities.

The course is designed in to halves the first part explores the questions of why urbanization happens and why cities grew; the policy response and the dimension of urban poverty both "normal groups" associated with poverty but also new groups such as street children, the elderly and those with HIV/Aids. The second half of the course examines policy options available to confront urban poverty these include the role of economic growth; the provision of infrastructure; microfinance and managing the informal sector; increasing community development and participation and finally explores the implication of climate change for recent urban settlements. Throughout the aim is to critical asses the strengths and weakness of each approach.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module you will be able:

- Identify and critically analyse the main socio-economic changes that cause urban growth in the developing world.
- Understand the importance of the urbanization in terms of the changing nature of poverty reduction and poverty alleviation strategies
- Develop a good understanding of the impact of urban growth and change upon the societies of the developing world, and awareness of the condition of urban poverty and the range of possible policy options.
- Develop a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of different policy options to address urban poverty,
- Judge and evaluate between different policies in different contexts.
- Have a critical understanding of the issues and policy responses to climate change in urban areas.

Teaching and learning approach

The course consists of ten two hour sessions. Each session will consist of one lecture introducing a specific topic and one tutorial and/or discussion session. However there is a degree of flexibility in how each week is organised; usually each session will be self contained. Considerable emphasis and importance is placed on students learning for themselves in a structured environment. This is primarily focused on contemporary policy and project documentation.

Topics covered include::

- Urbanization trends and implications
- Policy responses to urbanization and concepts
- Urban poverty characteristics and causes
- New groups of the urban poor, street children, the elderly and persons
- Urban Economic growth causes, impacts and role of government
- The provision of infrastructure; lessons and questions of sustainability
- The challenge of managing the informal sector and micro credit as a poverty
- Urban community development and conflict
- Increasing participation for the poor and the role of urban democratic issues.
- The impact of Climate change on urban areas and other environmental issues

Assessment

The assessment for the module will consist of two assignments:

- A 2,000 word essay on the first four sessions worth 40% of the marks.
- A 3,000 word essay, worth 60% of the marks primarily based on the last six sessions.

You may be interested in these modules:

- 20 credits - **Rural Poverty and Development** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/rural-poverty-development.aspx>)
- 20 credits - **Poverty Inequality Interventions and Approaches** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/modules/poverty-inequality-interventions-approaches.aspx>)

You may be interested in these degrees:

- **International Development (Urban Development)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-development-urban.aspx>)
- **Development Management (with specialist pathways)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/development-management.aspx>)
- **International Development (with specialist pathways)** (</postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/international-development.aspx>)

