

URBAN TRENDS: CHINA, INDIA IN GIANT STRIDES TO IMPROVE SLUMS

China and India, the world's most populous nations, have improved the lives of more slum dwellers than any other country, according to UN-HABITAT's *State of the World Cities 2010/2011: Bridging the Urban Divide*. Together, they have lifted at least 125 million out of slums between 1990 and 2010.

China's achievement has been the most spectacular, with improvements to the daily conditions of 65.3 million urban residents who were deprived of shelter. Proportionally, China's urban population living in slums fell from 37.3% in 2000 to some 28.2% in 2010, a relative decrease of 25%.

Despite growing inequality due to the country's rapid economic advance, China has improved living conditions by embracing economic reforms and implementing modernization policies that have used urbanization to drive national growth. Its pro-growth policies, among which is a focus on improving the lives of the poor, have resulted in a reduction in the number of slum dwellings. Programmes aimed at old villages within the limits of expanding cities and new slums have used a mix of regulation and development mechanisms to spur modernization and provide cheap homes for at least eight million migrant workers who flock to the cities yearly.

Particularly successful has been a strategy to enable slum dwellers to gain access to more than 20 million new and affordable housing units. The State did this by using equity grants (as a mortgage) to get leases on cheap housing built by developers and by giving developers special tax rates to encourage development of cheap homes.

India has lifted 59.7 million people out of slum conditions since 2000. Slum prevalence fell from 41.5% in 1990 to 28.1% in 2010. This is a relative decrease of 32%.

Lessening poverty and improving conditions in slums are part of India's urban development policy. It has achieved this, **first**, by building the skills of the urban poor in their chosen businesses, and by providing them micro-credit; **second**, by providing basic services and development within slum settlements, thus improving living conditions; **third**, by providing security of tenure to poor families living in unauthorized settlements, improving their access to serviced low-cost housing and subsidized housing finance; and **fourth**, by encouraging the poor to take part in decision-making and community development efforts.

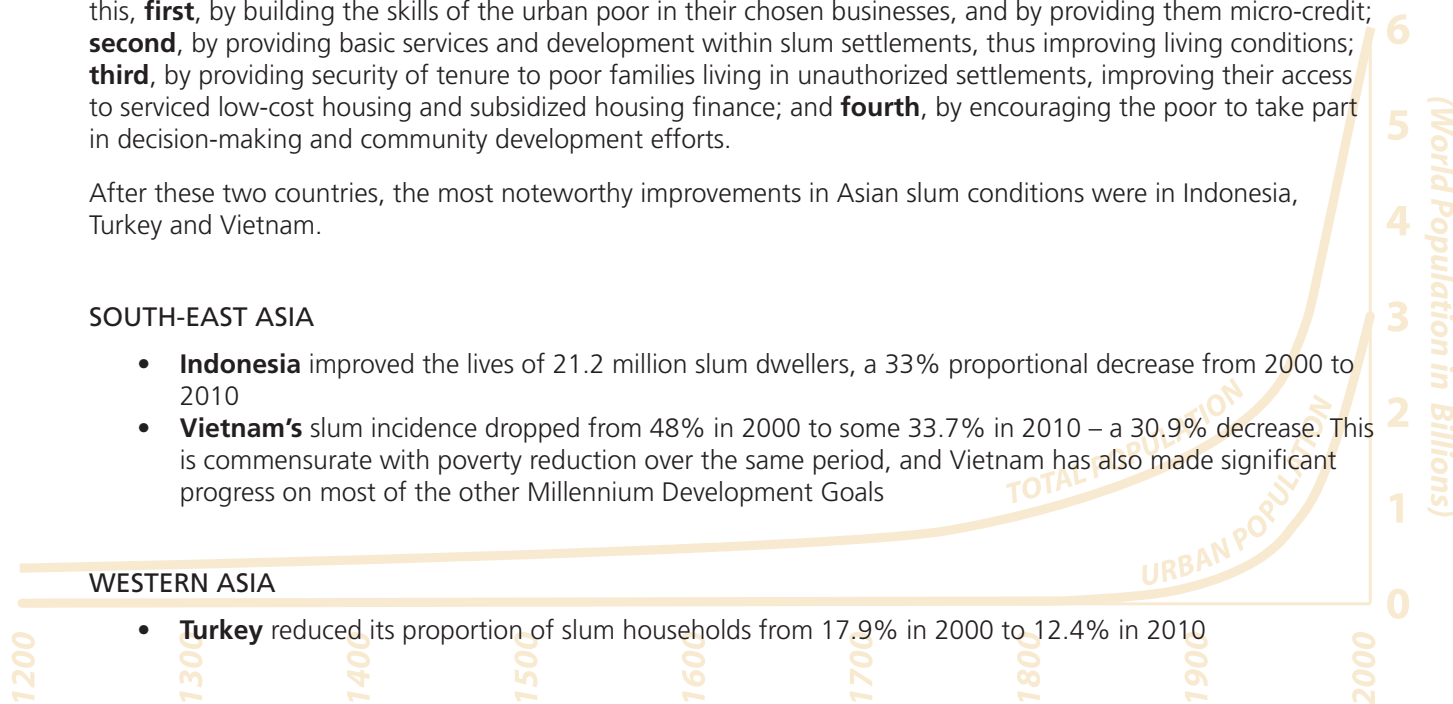
After these two countries, the most noteworthy improvements in Asian slum conditions were in Indonesia, Turkey and Vietnam.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

- **Indonesia** improved the lives of 21.2 million slum dwellers, a 33% proportional decrease from 2000 to 2010
- **Vietnam's** slum incidence dropped from 48% in 2000 to some 33.7% in 2010 – a 30.9% decrease. This is commensurate with poverty reduction over the same period, and Vietnam has also made significant progress on most of the other Millennium Development Goals

WESTERN ASIA

- **Turkey** reduced its proportion of slum households from 17.9% in 2000 to 12.4% in 2010



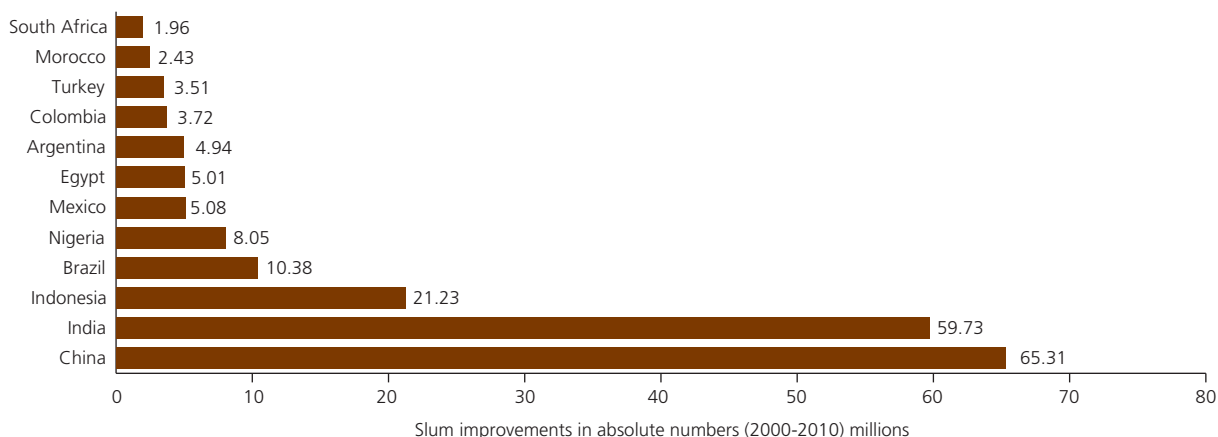
AFRICA

- **Morocco** has moved 2.4 million out of slum conditions over the past 10 years, a 45.8% reduction in slum prevalence due to strong political leadership, clear targets and adequate budget resources
- **Egypt** reduced its proportion of slum dwellers by 39%; slum prevalence fell by 28.1% of the urban population in 2000 to some 17.1% in 2010. In absolute numbers, the Government of Egypt improved the living conditions of five million people
- Together, Morocco and Egypt account for two-thirds of progress in this African subregion

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

- **Argentina, Colombia, Mexico** and **Brazil** – the most populous countries in the region – account for 79% of the region's improvements in the lives of slum dwellers due to improved housing and better access to water and sanitation
- **Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua** and **Peru** achieved reductions ranging from 21% to 27%
- Emerging from the economic crisis of the late 1990s and early 2000s, **Argentina** improved the lives of nearly five million slum residents
- Some 3.7 million **Colombian** slum dweller have benefited from well-targeted slum upgrading and prevention efforts, lowering slum prevalence from 22.3% in 2000 to some 13.5% in 2010
- **Mexico** improved conditions for five million slum dwellers in the last decade; slum prevalence dropped by more than one-third – from 19.9% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2010
- **Brazil** reduced its slum population by 16%. It improved living conditions of some 10.4 million between 2000 and 2010. Slum incidence regressed from 31.5% to 26.4% due to:
 - economic and social policies that have improved the income of poor urban homes
 - a decreasing population growth rate and slowing rural-urban migration
 - development of low-income housing policies that subsidize building material costs, sites and services, and provide slum upgrading and land tenure regularization
 - new social housing and urban infrastructure projects
 - the creation of a Ministry of Cities
 - the adoption of a constitutional amendment safeguarding citizens' rights to housing

BRIDGING THE URBAN DIVIDE THROUGH SLUM IMPROVEMENT: THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COUNTRIES



Source: UN-HABITAT - GUO, 2009. Note: 2010 data are predictions.