

Mexico.

Over 250 million people live in squatter settlements or Shanty Towns, which have rapidly grown on the edge of many cities in developing countries.

Rapid growth of these Shanties, is a result of various push and pull factors.

Push Factors include, Lack of food due to crop failure causes people to move away from the countryside. Extreme physical conditions in the countryside e.g. drought. Lack of services and amenities such as clean water and electricity. Lack of employment, investment by the government and poverty is apparent. Labourers being forced off land and have nowhere else to go. Pull factors consist of the following, Prospect of employment official and informal. Possibility of having better housing, health services, education and water and electricity supply. Hope of a reliable source of food. Thoughts that the government is willing to invest money to improve conditions in the city.

The Shanties effect the environment in various ways. The Shanties occupy land that people do not want, such as areas on hillside. Because Shanty settlements are built of scrap material the residents cut down trees in order to build their homes. The clearing of the tree's for the area of Favelas on the slope can result in the occurrence of mudslides, as nothing is apparent to hold the soil in place. These mudslides can devastate communities living in Shanty Towns. Pollution of the air caused by the factories that employ cheap labour from the shanties, it can cause respiratory diseases. Pollution of the river and water supplies also causes ill health, and the pollution effects the environment by making the river dirty, and stopping the river being homes to fish and plants. The factory is not the only cause of pollution. The lack of sewerage systems means all waste and rubbish is left around the Shanties, polluting the air, and the rubbish also causes the spread of germs and disease.

The government is trying to overcome problems in the Shanty areas in various ways. The government has introduced and self help scheme. This means that the council provides basic amenities such as water and electricity, and also a cheap price for building materials. This means that the poor inhabitants in the shanties have and opportunity to create themselves more permanent housing. The Government has also tried developing low cost government housing, high-rise blocks, but these are often still too expensive for the Shanty people to afford. Despite these steps taken by the government problems are still apparent. The government has tried to create jobs in urban industry for the unemployed. But because the people who inhabit the Shanty Town often find it hard to get work as any job opportunities are too far from the Favelas where they live.