

Date: _____

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Urbanization poses greater threat than climate change.

Outlines:

Thesis Statement:

Urbanization poses a greater and direct threat than climate change. But with smart planning and resilient infrastructure, cities can turn these challenges into safer and liveable future.

(2) Urbanization creates higher heat and health risks more than climate change.

(2a) Cities are heating faster than rural areas.

(Urban areas are heating up 2-3°C than rural areas.

(UN-Habitat).

(2b) Deadly urban night temperature (Crowded neighbourhood faces the harshest night, leading

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to cardiovascular & respiratory diseases
(UCAR & Resources for future)
(2023) (2024)

(2c) Air pollution causes deaths:
millions of people die each
year due to breathing dirty air
(WHO).

(3) Urban Flooding and Infrastructure collapse:

(3a) Weak Urban drainage system.

Weak drainage system and
fast and unplanned urban growth
is responsible for major floods
(World Bank 2024).

(3b) Floods causing massive displacement
33 million people were displaced
in 2022 floods. (UN OCHA / NDMA)
2022)

(3c) cities are sinking faster
from underground water loss.
Major cities like Dhaka, Jakarta
and Mexico are sinking
due to extraction of water

(Peer reviewed study in journal)

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1) Urbanization Driving Resource Crisis and Energy Shortages.

(a) cities are the major contributors to global emissions

(cities use two third of total world's energy) (UN-Habitat)

(b) Energy demand Rising uncontrollably.

(Rising demand of energy ~~increasing~~ causing electricity shortages. (IEA 2023).

(c) slums facing extreme inequality.

Around 1 billion people in slums facing severe heat and pollution.

(World Bank

on + change. A long-term

(4) Climate change: A long term challenge but slower than Urbanisation:

(4a) slower agricultural shifts vs. immediate urban flooding
(food crisis ^{grows} faster in cities due to expansion of population)

(World Bank 2025)

(4b) Melting glaciers and rising seas.
(Among 3000 glaciers, 33 are highly dangerous, threatening seven million people.)

(~~WMO~~ 2025)

(ministry of climate change)

(4c) Extreme weather pattern
(climate disaster have grown 5 times since 1970).

(WMO 2025)

5. Way Forward: Building Safer And Greener cities:

(5a) Resilient urban infrastructure

(Government should invest in climate-smart urban drainage, housing and transport)

(World Bank 2025)

(5b) cleaner energy and transport shifts

(need of renewable energy integration and green mobility to reduce urban emissions)

(IEA 2025)

(5c) Equitable urban planning

(sustainable planning with community participation)

(UN-Habitat
Urban planning)

6 Conclusion:

The danger we fear in the skies
may already be taking shape beneath
the roofs we raise.

Cities are expanding
at a speed never seen before.
This fast Urbanisation growth
brings bigger and quicker
danger to human life more
than climate change. It basically
makes life harder for millions
of people. On one side cities
are becoming hotter and crowd-
ded every year which created
difficulty in ^{living} especially for poor
and crowded neighbourhood.
On the other side weak
drainage system and poor
urban planning have turned
many cities into flood-prone
zones where heavy rains
can cause massive destruction
as recently seen in Pakistan
(~~2025~~) different provinces. that
destroyed numerous homes
and displaced millions of
people. Along with that fast
urbanization growth also creates
severe health issues, power
demand rises beyond its safer
limit, and slums suffer.
The most waste and unsafe

living ~~however~~ ^{while} climate change is a long-term challenge with heavy rains, rising sea levels, and deadly heat waves however its effects are slower than that of urbanization. It does not hit people as quickly as urbanization problems do. Still, they both are interlinked, and cities are first which feel climate shock such as floods, heatwaves. But these severe challenges can be managed with wise policies. Planting trees, building green roofs, stronger drainage system, using renewable energy and ensuring fair and stronger planning of urban areas can reduce these risks and ensure safer lives.

To begin, cities are turning quickly to heat-trap which are creating a big danger for living organisms. According to UN-Habitat (2024), urban areas are heating up 2-3°C faster than ^{living in} the rural areas. It means ^{those} cities are facing a bigger danger and critical conditions than rural livings. This phenomena is called Urban heat Island effect. The result is

in hotter summers, health issues and heavy energy bills as families depend more on cooling appliances. Therefore, this rapid rise in urban heat showed how unplanned urbanisation growth can create bigger and quicker danger than climate change, placing cities at the corner of this silent crisis.

Additionally this issue becomes worst at night. When body needs rest but deadly night temperature refuses to go away. As UCAR (2023) and Resources for the future (2024) highlight that crowded neighbourhood faces the harshest night. because they live in small and crowded houses with tin roofs that store heat through out the day. so at night, instead of cooling down, these homes release that stored heat waves which cause extremely discomfort. This deadly night heat also cause numerous diseases because it puts extreme pressure

on heart, lungs, and kidneys, leading to severe illness and even sudden deaths, which show that urbanization does not merely create discomfort but it is killing people day and night, proving to be a faster threat to live than climate change.

Moreover, air pollution is ^{considered} another reason for ~~the~~ creating discomfort in human life. It is also as dangerous as other factors. When more people shift into cities, more cars, factories, industries and transport will use which releases harmful gases and add fine dust into the air, making environment polluted to live in. World Health Organization reported that 7 million people die each air due to breathing polluted air. cities are affected the most due to heavy buildings because the ~~heat~~ ^{air} trap between the heavy buildings, mixes with heat, making the air more polluted which is extremely harmful for human health. Poor people suffer the most

Peer reviewed study in journal, major cities such as Dhaka, Jakarta, and Mexico are sinking very fast. This happens because a lot of water is extracted to supply homes, factories, and even farms to fulfill the requirement. When the land becomes weaker; even the strongest building and roads can sink easily that disturbed the lives of millions of people living there. Such issue is considerable because it can cause huge destruction.

Moreover, cities today are not merely heating up but it also produces some harmful gases that makes the planet warmer, causing extreme discomfort. As UN-Habitat states that cities are using two-third of the world's total energy and are responsible for 70% of global emission. It means that urban areas are the major cause of climate change. When more cars, factories, and building rise appear, they need fuel, electricity, and transport, which quickly adds to pollution, making

the air more harmful. Therefore, urbanisation is not merely a local problem but a global driver of environmental harm making it more dangerous in a short run...

Furthermore, cities demand more and more electricity each year which is very difficult to control. According to International Energy Agency (2023) "cooling demand is rising which directly effect the use of electricity beyond its safe limit. In hot summer seasons many cooling appliances use to get rid of deadly heating. millions of air conditioners and fans run which also create power cuts and heavy energy costs, showing that climate change does not effect the power shortages as immediately as urbanization. Hence such crisis are putting extra pressure on national grids, proving that urbanization poses greater and urgent harm than climate change.

Additionally, all the people living in cities do not face these problems. Some people live in slums who do not have such facilities. As World Bank

because they live near busy roads, industries, and factories which face such dangerous air everytime. Such disturbance shows that urbanization put greater pressure on human life than climate change, from which no one can escape.

Furthermore, Urban flooding and infrastructure collapse are also considering issues. because apart of health and heat crises, urban flooding and weak urban drainage system cause enormous danger. ~~because~~ ^{As} urban's concrete buildings and roads ~~let~~ do not let rain water sink or absorb. Therefore, even a short period of rain can turn streets into rivers as drainage systems also not working properly. They cannot afford huge amount of water due to poor urban planning. According to World Bank 2024 "Weak drainage system and fast but unplanned urban growth is the major reason behind growing of floods. Rural areas also face rains but people living there are far apart while urban livings

face all at once, showing that urbanization itself is a greater threat, transforming human actions into human tragedies.

In addition, floods are also the biggest reason for causing tension and destruction. According to NDMA (National Disaster Management Authority 2025), flash floods in KPK, Punjab, Sindh have caused massive destruction due to lack of proper arrangements and awareness.

Similarly UN OCHA 2022, mentioned that 2022 floods have affected 33 million people by destructing several homes and displacing millions of people. Such floods occur in and around cities more than rural areas. Therefore massive urbanization without proper planning is the main reason behind such huge destruction, rather than climate change which takes longer to show its effect.

Equal is important the issue of sinking cities to consider due to the extraction of underground water. As per

(3)

2023 highlighted 1 billion people are living in slums facing the extreme negative impact of heat, pollution and contaminated water. As the poor ~~face~~^{suffer} the most because they live in small and crowded homes where they do not have equal facilities to meet their need. Also they cannot afford the expenses of electronic appliances such as air conditioner, room coolers to lessen the severe heat, and most importantly their habitats are near busy roads and waste dumps which creates health issues when breathing such polluted air. Therefore urbanization creates inequality among people while suffering. Unlike climate change which impact people equally but takes longer to show its effect.

Moreover, Furthermore, climate change often describe as a big threat to humanity, its effects mostly appear slowly over decades. Agriculture, for example is changing due to shifting rainfall and warming soils, but these impacts are gradual and usually give governments time to adjust. While urbanization brings sudden food crisis as crowded cities

often struggle with weak and unplanned urban systems and food supply chains. People living in slums face different problems such as instant shortages of food, due to higher ^{rise} prices and breakdown of transport. According to World Bank (2023), food insecurity grows fastest in cities where population expand quickly, proving that urbanization harms food more urgently than climate change.

Moreover, melting glaciers and rising seas are real and more worrying effects of climate change. Yet, they are expected to unfold over the next decades. In Pakistan, especially in Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ^{glaciers} are melting rapidly, approximately 3000 glacial lakes are formed, out of which 33 are highly dangerous, threatening over seven million people. (Dawn May 2025 - Ministry of Climate Change). However, while climate change effects over years, urbanization causes destruction on daily basis. Rapid construction blocks water flow, increase floods chances, and infrastructure collapse which shows that urbanization leave no ~~recovery~~ of time for recovery.

Along with glaciers melting and rising seas, climate change also drives extreme weather patterns such as droughts, storms, and wildfires, which have indeed increased over years.

According to World meteorological organization (2025), climate-related disasters have grown five times since 1970.

Unlike, these gradual changes of climate, urbanization creates serious issues such as daily struggle with poor planning, weak drainage system, water shortages, unhealthy and polluted air. This cause is not a rare storm for poor and marginalized communities, but everyday's survival. Therefore while climate change is a serious problem, and urbanization put higher pressure at a constant speed without any pause.

To address these growing problems, the main step that should be taken is building safer and resilient infrastructure because the poor urban such as poor housing, water shortages, weak roads, and unplanned drainage systems cannot survive in critical conditions.

According to the World Bank (2025) - (Urban resilience), government should invest in climate-smart urban drainage, housing and transport system. Such policies related to building resilience infrastructure do not merely fight with extreme climate change but also ensure safer, and healthy lives on daily basis.

Additionally, ^{switching to} cleaner energy and ^{shifting} ~~around~~ to ^{greener} modes of transport is critical. The world should use and add renewable energy instead of using fossil fuels because more dependence on fossil fuels made the air polluted and unhealthy which is very harmful for all living organisms, living on this planet. Policies regarding transport shift ought to be ensured. Instead of fuel buses, electric buses should

used as well as cyclic hacking can also be used to avoid pollution. According to International Energy Agency (2023), urged renewable energy integration and green mobility. Because these both are the sources that can effectively reduce urban emissions and can ensure sustainable and protected lives.

In parallel, equitable urban planning is as crucial as other factors. According to UN-Habitat - Urban Planning, sustainable planning with community participation can reduce slum vulnerabilities and prevent future crises. poor communities and marginalized group should be included in planning, because it can lead them to fairer access to housing, energy, water and different services. their participation ensures that urbanization does not always have to be destructive. With justice and fairer planning cities can be effectively transformed into safer and resilient lifestyle.

In conclusion, it is become clear that urbanization poses more immediate and visible threat than climate change, as its effects are already disrupting human lives, not merely human lives but also animals and plants. cities are heating up faster, roads and buildings are sinking, serious health crises rises, pollution is choking millions of people, extreme floods have broken the infrastructure and leaving people displace, severe weak drainage system and unplanned expansion causes terrible condition. Unlike climate change, which shows its impact oftenly gradual but urbanisation hits immediately causing extreme destruction. The effects of urbanization are far more than climate change. Studies and Reports from UN-Habitat, World Bank, and World Health Organisation show that cities consume most of the world's energy, generate the majority of green house gases, and

concentrate risk in away
that no other space does.
This issue of urbanization
and also climate change
can be resolved through
the wisest policies. because
merely focusing on global
climate change while ignoring
the crises inside cities
would be an incomplete... approach.
Therefore, the path forward lies
in planning cities properly
that are not only resilient
but also fair and effective
for the communities. Using
renewable energy resources
because dependence on fossil
fuels can pollute the air, also
creates serious health crisis.
Transport system should improved
, and through planned housing creates
sustainable living style. All these
changes can also play a crucial
role in slowing climate change.
Thus, while both urbanisation
and climate change are serious
issues but if different institutions
, organizations, and government
work together, then cities can
transform from being risk centers
to hope centers.