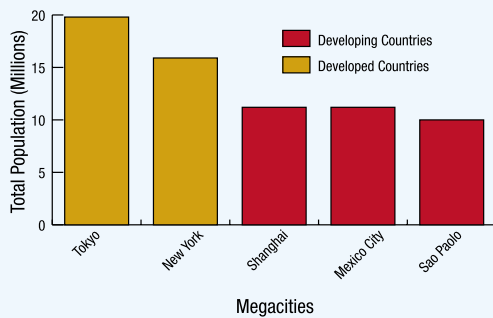


**Box 2: Mega-cities and slum incidence**

*Mega-cities are primarily a phenomenon of the developing world. The combination of high population density amid poverty and limited resources makes an environment which favors the rapid growth of slum areas.*

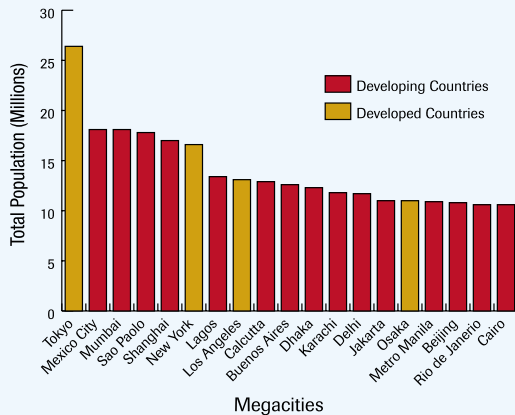
- Defining a mega-city is clearly arbitrary due to the fact that the population size, which distinguishes mega-cities from other urban areas, varies over time. In the past, the city of Rome, with its over 1 million inhabitants, was a mega-city, while today, 348 cities would be considered mega-cities using the same parameter.
- In 1970s, the UN defined a mega-city as one agglomeration with a threshold of 10 million people. In 1975, there were five large cities in the world with a population above this threshold. The combined number of inhabitants in these cities accounted for 68.1 million people that represented 4.4% of the world's urban population: Tokyo (19.8), New York (15.9), Shanghai (11.4), Mexico City (11.2) and Sao Paolo (10), the latter three of which were located in developing countries.

**WORLD MEGA-CITIES IN 1975**



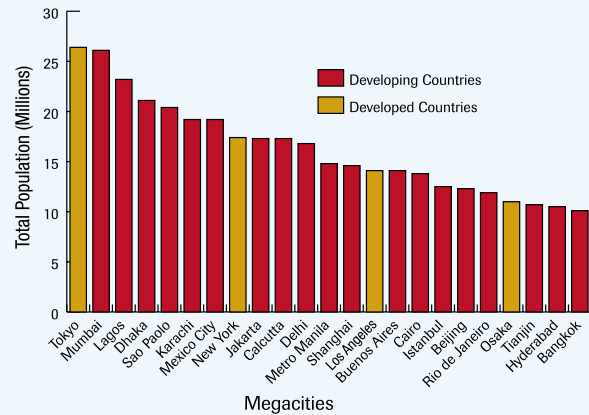
- At present, there are 19 mega-cities in the world with a total population of over 275 million and 8.8% of the world's urban population, four of which are from the developed part of the world: New York (16.6), Los Angeles (13.1), Tokyo (26.4) and Osaka (11). The other 15 mega-cities are from the developing world: Mexico City (18.1), Mumbai (18.1), Sao Paolo (17.8), Shanghai (17), Lagos (13.4), Calcutta (12.9), Buenos Aires (12.6), Dhaka (12.3), Karachi (11.8), Delhi (11.7), Jakarta (11), Metro Manila (10.9), Beijing (10.8), Rio de Janeiro (10.6) and Cairo (10.6).

**WORLD MEGA-CITIES IN 2000**



- Based on world urbanization prospects, the projection of the urban population in 2015 exhibits a dramatic increase in the number of mega-cities to 23. The combined population of all these agglomerations will reach 9.6 per cent of the world's urban population, accounting for slightly over 374 million people. Nearly 85 per cent of this growth will occur in the mega-polis from the developing regions: Mumbai (26.1), Lagos (23.2), Dhaka (21.1), Sao Paolo (20.4), Karachi (19.2), Mexico City (19.2), Jakarta (17.3), Calcutta (17.3), Delhi (17.3), Metro Manila (16.8), Shanghai (14.8), Buenos Aires (14.1), Cairo (13.8), Istanbul (12.5), Beijing (12.3), Rio de Janeiro (11.9), Tianjin (10.7), Hyderabad (10.5) and Bangkok (10.1).
- There is currently an extremely rapid displacement of developed country cities on the list of the world's largest cities by those in developing countries.

**WORLD MEGA-CITIES IN 2015**



Source: World Urbanization Prospects, 2002.

- The rapid trend of urban growth exhibited implies that mega-cities are primarily a phenomenon of the developing world. Growth of this scale and trend will have severe consequences for the quality of life and surrounding environment. The combination of high population density amid poverty and limited resources makes the developing world's mega-city an environment which favors the rapid growth of slum areas.

Source: UN-HABITAT, "The State of the World's Cities", 2001. UN, World Urbanization Prospects, 2001.