

LESSON 1 Does the rise of the 'global middle class' mean that poverty is becoming a thing of the past?

Teaching activities	Learning outcomes	Resources
<p>Starter</p> <p><i>What does 'middle class' mean?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A brief refresher on key terms: absolute poverty, purchasing power Investigating what 'global middle class' and 'fragile middle' mean (the 2-min BBC film can be used) <p>Main activity</p> <p>(1) <i>Rise of the global middle class</i></p> <p>How many people have escaped poverty and why is it happening now? The big picture of global development is outlined, using a range of contemporary evidence. Special consideration is given to the groups that Jim O'Neill christened BRIC and MINT. In each case, their 'middle class credentials' are outlined as the starting point for a possible extension research activity by students.</p> <p>(2) <i>Global poverty reduction</i></p> <p>Does the growth of the global middle class mean that the MDG (Millennium development Goal) targets will be reached in 2015? Key evidence is examined and conclusions drawn. A case study of China is included, which charts key trends in poverty, incomes consumption and urbanisation since 1990. Finally, the precarious state of the fragile middle is examined, showing students that some recent human gains could be difficult to sustain, due to physical challenges</p> <p>Plenary</p> <p><i>What challenges could harm the future prospects for the 'fragile middle'?</i></p> <p>The 'fragile middle' have not fully consolidated their middle-class status yet. What are their main security and sustainability challenges?</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> think critically about the meaning of the global 'development gap' and recognise that several global wealth divides now exist; investigate the great leaps forward made by the BRIC and MINT groups and the global progress that has been made towards meeting MDG poverty targets, especially in China identify some possible limits to further growth that could hinder further closing of international development gap(s). 	<p><i>This lesson is fully supported with the following resources:</i></p> <p>(1) A magazine-style case study article covering the main themes covered by this lesson (Word / pdf) (2) Lecture given by Felix Preston (Senior Research Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources at Chatham House): http://www.21stcenturychallenges.org/challenges/mobile-middle-class/media-gallery/video/felix-preston/</p> <p><i>External links</i></p> <p>BBC short film on the global middle class: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-22956470</p> <p>Resources Future interactive website: http://resourcesfutures.org/#!/introduction</p>