The general goal of society is to benefit the majority of people. The flooding of markets with new goods and services, more choice and better education and better health care for example has increased our material well-being. The world is seeing an increasing gap between rich and poor. However it is largely due to government decisions and economic policies that create winners and losers in society, even though a significant role for government is to carry those members of society with limited ability and limited capacity to enjoy a comparable standard of living and quality of life. As a generalisation, the groups that are the most likely to benefit from change are:

- **Younger people** - because they are more willing to embrace change. They have become accustomed to a rapidly changing world with exponential developments in technology, efficient means of production, new growth industries and different forms of social interaction. Younger generations have grown up with personal computer and electronic devices which was once considered a desirable skill but is now an expectation for completing assignments, social networking and entering the workforce.

- **Educated people** – because they are able to better understand the need for change. They have a greater sense of awareness and capacity to grasp rationale for change as they are better informed and often keep abreast of new developments, demands, policy options, economics and politics. Those who demonstrate an ongoing interest in the world around them and related contemporary issues and/or those who continue to university and have a genuine affection for learning are better equipped to understand the reasons and the need for change.

- **Wealthy people** – because they can afford change. Many changes cost money, such as higher taxes, integrated public transport, private education etc. So, as many governments engage in privatisation (selling government utilities) of once public resources, it usually costs the taxpayer more money.

- **The wealthy** are best placed to be able to afford technological change and therefore benefit earlier from digital television, fast internet and telecommunication for example, than others do. They also have the financial capacity to resist change should they choose to and maintain their interests and hobbies that may have been adversely impacted.

- **Urban people** – because cities are where the most rapid changes and developments take place. They are the first to experience the benefits of sound political and economic decisions that positively affect daily life such as better education systems, better employment prospects, better transport facilities, better entertainment and more choice in everything. They are in close proximity to services and centres of administration and usually have a higher standard of living than their rural counterparts.

- **Powerful people** – because they can initiate and influence the change. They are most likely to be in the ethnic majority and make decisions that benefit like-minded people. They have the capacity to direct the change through their economic, referent or political power for an outcome that serves their interest. Altruistic people with power are a definite exception to this.
And which do not?

Think about the opposite groups to those who benefit from change. Why are some groups left worse off after change than they were beforehand? Discuss with a partner why the following groups in China would not benefit from change and using your knowledge about China, think of an appropriate example:

- The elderly – 

- The unskilled – 

- The poor - 

- The rural - 

- The disenfranchised -

Evidence based writing

Now source 5 articles and jot down evidence of those groups who benefit from change in China and those who do not. Share your results with 3 – 4 other students so you can build up your knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the change?</th>
<th>Name the group affected</th>
<th>Why do they benefit or not?</th>
<th>Evidence (source of article)</th>
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Now you’re well equipped to complete Question 3 from the 2005 HSC Exam! Have a go...