



BRIDGING THE URBAN DIVIDE



Towards Inclusive Cities

by
Babar Mumtaz



URBANISATION, THE GROWTH OF CITIES AND THE RESPONSE OF GOVERNMENT

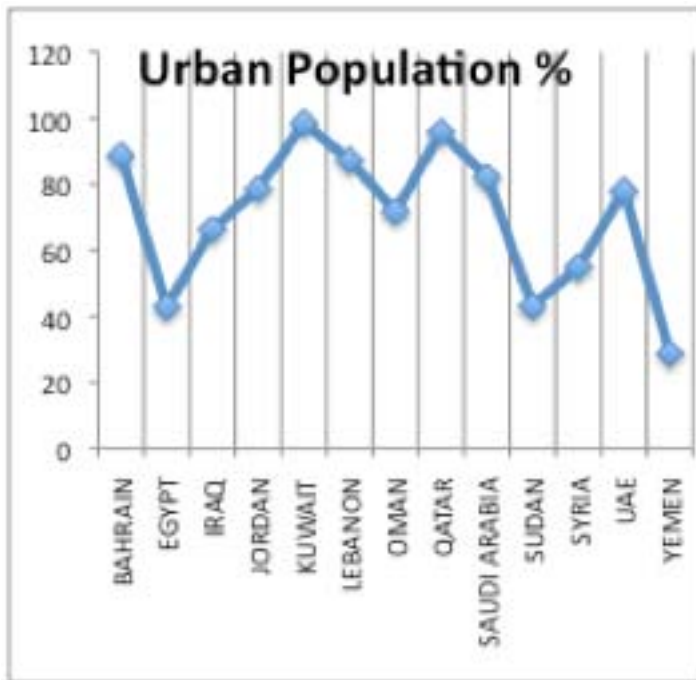
The Global Urban Transition

1. After the 1970s there has been a marked increase in the rate of urbanization
2. Between 2007 and 2025, almost all of this growth will take place in developing regions.
3. City sizes and the number of megacities and “hyper-cities” will increase –
4. Most of the increase will be in
 - the smaller, secondary cities
 - the creation of urban agglomerations
 - and the re-designation of rural settlements as cities and urban centers.
5. Thus, the majority of the increase will be in settlements that are neither used to, nor have the capacity to deal with the management and servicing of large and growing populations.
6. Unless there is a change in the way we manage cities, this is likely to lead to
 - the increase and extension of “informal” settlements in and around cities.
 - create slum-like conditions for about 60% of most cities in the developing world.



URBANISATION, THE GROWTH OF CITIES AND THE RESPONSE OF GOVERNMENT

Overview of the ESCWA Region



- All of the ESCWA countries except Egypt, Syria and Yemen have urban majorities
- In some, eg Kuwait, Qatar, virtually all the population is urban
- Many of the countries have one large primate city
- ESCWA populations are growing at a fast rate, through both natural growth and rural-urban migration
- In many of the ESCWA countries, there is a large immigrant population – 30% or more.
- Despite their range and variety in terms of size population and resources, they have much in common as regards the general processes and trends of urbanisation and particularly their treatment by government and urban authorities



THE IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS

Making the City Work

A “city” requires a certain level of provision of facilities and amenities
Cities need people to make that possible
Countries with large rural populations have rural-urban migration
Smaller countries rely on immigrant labour to provide services and fill gaps in the work force





THE IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS

Making the City Prosper



A city needs people not just to make it function but to make it prosper

A large number of people are required to generate the variety of goods, services

People act as both producers and as consumers, creating their own demand and supply

The more people in a city. the more likely it is that the city will be vibrant and have variety



THE IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS

Overloading Urban Services

Growing population inevitably imposes stresses on urban services
All forms of infrastructure, from public transport to water and electricity, solid waste management, all tend to become overcrowded
The quality of life in the city begins to deteriorate
Unless properly managed, the city becomes inefficient and the urban economy suffers





THE IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS

Outstripping Housing Supply



Like other services, housing in the city is unable to keep up with the increasing demands of a growing population. Houses get subdivided and shared between more households than they were intended for.

Upkeep and maintenance are neglected, and a vicious spiral sets in.

Once acceptable housing areas become slums – underserviced and overcrowded. New households cannot find affordable housing.

Migrants settle in informal areas.



THE IMPACT OF URBANISATION ON CITIES AND THEIR POPULATIONS

Creating an Urban Divide



Faced with “unmanageable growth” governments seek to reverse or stop urbanisation

Instead of responding creatively, governments often insist on the application of outdated, ineffective rules and regulations

On the one hand facilitating the development of new shopping malls and landmark projects, and on the other, leaving the poorer households to fend for themselves or be exploited by unscrupulous developers

The result is a divided city – parts of the city, often next to each other, but far removed in terms of services, facilities and amenities





SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS FOR IMPROVED URBAN AREAS

EGYPT - Cairo



Urban planners were slow to react to the influx of populations from war-affected zones in the 1950s and 60s and then from rural to urban areas in the 1970s onwards. These were seen as temporary phenomena, and housed accordingly. Government housing schemes, and later a whole programme of cities in the desert were built to divert migration from Cairo.

Instead, migration continued, and inner city areas and later agricultural land were turned into informal settlements with poor planning, construction and provision of services

Initially subjected to “clearance” because of the perceived security threat, the inevitability of informal areas has been accepted and efforts made at upgrading them

Now, more holistic efforts at upgrading are being made with physical and social enhancement strategies along with pre-emptive strategies to prevent new informal areas

However, parallel efforts at modernising Cairo with large infrastructure are cutting off and isolating many areas





SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS FOR IMPROVED URBAN AREAS

SYRIA - Aleppo

State control of land and land development has been a central plank of Syrian urban policy. Unfortunately it has not had the capacity to provide developed land or housing at the rate and pace it is needed, and especially not where people wanted to be: in Damascus, Aleppo and other centres

As a result, informal settlements developed around the cities, usually on public lands, with poor construction standards and very few urban services

After years of ignoring the phenomena and therefore preventing the incremental upgrading of these areas, recently this has begun changing with the recognition that the processes of the informal settlement and their outcome do have something to contribute to and inform the formal processes – and most importantly that the designation of “informal” is arbitrary and is itself the biggest obstacle





SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS FOR IMPROVED URBAN AREAS

SUDAN - Khartoum

Land allocation and designation policies and processes designed for households with different incomes to access residential land, by relating length of tenure, size of plot and degree of permanence in the permitted construction materials – the resulting price and use of land and level of infrastructure provision has led to urban sprawl and leapfrog development – creating a patchwork of sharply defined and differentiated areas with segregated populations which have, over the years, created divided cities

Pro-poor solutions are being proposed to upgrade informal areas using more holistic approaches – often reversing the original stipulations regarding density, development and designation





FROM DIVIDED CITIES: Lessons

1. An effective, productive agriculture sector does not depend on a large labour force.
2. Larger settlements can provide more employment and social facilities and amenities.
3. Urbanisation and urban growth are inevitable, and bring more benefits than costs.
4. The quality of life in a city depends on how it is managed, not on its size.
5. Divided cities are not inevitable.
6. Informal settlements can be upgraded effectively.
7. Resources (financial or technical) are not the constraint, but the lack of political will that needs to be overcome in order to ensure inclusive cities
8. Inclusive cities are likely to be more productive and generate the financial and technical resources required for their and the city's development.
9. Inclusive cities require taking into consideration the needs of all the citizens and make appropriate provision in terms of the rate and scale of development.
10. Developed land, infrastructure, urban services and amenities need to be planned for all and provided at affordable rates and in acceptable forms.



TOWARDS INCLUSIVE CITIES: Recommendations

1. Governments should acknowledge the “right to the city” of all who live there
2. Urban authorities should make provision for the changing size of the city population and identifying land and infrastructure needs in advance.
3. Land development plans should aim at integrated “mixed-use” rather than segregated in terms of functions including housing types and categories.
4. The emphasis of land-use plans should not be the zoning of permitted functions so much as their prohibition or restriction in designated areas.
5. Participation and user-feedback should be an integral part of the decision-making and planning processes.
6. The process of “subsidiarity” should be applied to planning
7. The process of incremental development should be incorporated into the planning and development processes and facilitated and supported to reach desirable conclusions.
8. Dense, pedestrian friendly neighbourhoods allow for social and economic efficiencies, that car-based planning cannot usually achieve.
9. Governments should facilitate and support the housing and development processes of communities rather than providing ready-made, built solutions.
10. The role of rental housing should be creatively examined and augmented, and not left merely to the private sector to exploit.