ristians in Urban Development

TEAR FUND

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"When Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them".

Jesus saw the crowds. This is important as a start. If we do not see, we will not act.
Of course, we can look without really seeing, but especially for today's conference we should seriously try to see. What we should see are the crowds in the growing cities of the world. The images, statistics and figures which will be shown today are meant to see, to realize how these crowds are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. How they are put aside, uninteresting for the society, without future, seemingly without value. How they too are people like you and me, human beings created in the image of God.

When Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them. When we see them, we might be discouraged by the enormous numbers of people, the size and complexity of the problems. We may be frightened by the circumstances people live in.
But Jesus frequently said to people: "Do not be afraid". Our attitude should not be determined by fear but by love. Love leads to compassion and compassion leads to action. Jesus asked for workers in the harvest field. There is no fear in love, says the Bible in the first epistle of John.
The growing cities are a challenge for christians, for followers of Jesus.

Big cities have not attracted the major interest of mission organizations and development organizations. Some mission organizations show keen interest in evangelizing new tribes. Sometimes those are very small ethnic groups. The efforts made to reach them are in remarkable contrast to the efforts to reach the many millions in the cities.
Not too long ago, in the seventies, a conflict arose between a mission and a local church in Zaire, because the local church wanted to set up mission work in the city whereas the mission maintained the view that mission work should be done in rural areas.

The city is not yet familiar to many mission organizations, it is not the focus point of their activities.
Development organizations also tend to pay more attention to rural areas than to cities. A much larger proportion of their assistance goes to rural work rahter than to work in cities.
Still, we should be aware that a Sahel country like Burkina Faso has altogether 8½ million people, whereas several cities each have far more inhabitants than that. Mexico City alone has half of the population of all Sahel countries together!

If christians accept the challenge of the big cities, where do they start? Should they start to preach the gospel or should they start doing development work?
It would be wrong to see development work as being opposite to preaching the gospel, and preaching the gospel as opposite to development work. Witness and service is needed, service and witness.

The theme of this conference is 'Christians in Urban Development'. It is not 'Christian urban development'. I do not believe that such a thing even exists.
Urban development has its own dynamics, its own rules, its own problems, possibilities and limitations. If we want to be involved in urban development as christians, we will have to do a good job.
If a christian wants to build a house, he will have to apply the rules of architecture. If he does not, the house will collapse whatever excellent activities he had planned to start in that house.

If christians want to set up vocational training they should do it in such a way that an effective training is given. A training which offers proper means of living for those who have finished it. In the same way christians who work in urban development will have to observe the characteristics of urban development as a specific type of work. A type of work with its own records of failures and success. This requires that we must know the specifics of urban development, know about its failures and success.

Not very much has been established already. Much is still developing in a process of trial and error in the midst of changing circumstances. However quite some experience and knowledge does exist. An important aim of this conference and of the consultation of this week is to discover this experience and knowledge. Not in an academic way, but in a process of meeting and sharing. We look forward to hear Dr. Van der Poort, who will introduce this complex subject to us.

In the discussions we want to hear each other's experiences, views and visions to ask one another questions, to discuss important issues, to share ideas and concerns with regard to urban development. In this way we hope to be better equipped to continue the work in the disheartening slums of some big cities in the world.

Now if we hope to learn about the characteristics of urban development, what is special about christians in urban development? This is another important question we will consider in this conference and consultation.
I would like to make some short statements about this item.
Dr. Vinay Samuel will deal with the subject more thoroughly in his lecture this afternoon. We are very interested to hear his views as a theologian who has had many years of practical experience in this work.

A first specific characteristic of christians working in urban development is that there is a place of worship and praise in the slums. This is essential for christian work. The vertical line should be there. If not, then the horizontal line cannot be distinguished from any other horizontal line. Worship and praise are important to experience God's presence in a discouraging environment and to make that presence known. I refer to Paul and Silas, who were praying and singing hymns to God when they had been thrown into prison.

A second characteristic is the unity of witness and service. That unity should be maintained. Service without witness is not sufficient for christians in urban development. Jesus reminds the devil that it is written: "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God". If christians do not witness, who else would do it? Of course our witness should respect the identity and the circumstances of people, but it must be a clear and faithful testimony of God's love and authority.

A third characteristic is the emphasis on compassion. Preaching God's love is impossible without showing compassion. In the invitation leaflet to this conference the indomitable human spirit to survive in any circumstances is mentioned. This creative spirit of survival is an important point of entry for urban development, but it is not the same as the spirit of compassion. Compassion looks after those who cannot make it, those who do not count, those who need help: old people, disabled people, weak and vulnerable people in general.
Christians in urban development should not be primarily success-oriented, aiming at maximum results, but primarily they should be people-oriented, aiming at serving women and men and children.

Is there a contradiction between the goals and methods of urban development and the things which for christians should go together with it? I do not think so. At least not in the main objectives. If in local situations incompatibilities are seen in certain aspects, choices will have to be made.
In such cases we first need to examine if there is really a question of incompatibility. If so, a choice is necessary to be made. In this respect, sharing of views and experiences among christians involved in urban development in different situations is also worthwhile.

Brief introduction

BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE IN URBAN PROBLEMS

1. URBANIZATION

In order to give the participants of this conference a general idea of 'urban development', this paper offers a brief introduction. However it does not pretend to give a complete description. It is rather meant to provide a background against which problems can be discussed.

Introduction

Despite enormous differences between Third World countries, they have one thing in common: growth of city populations. By the year 2000 more than half of the world population will be living in cities. Cities over 10 million inhabitants will be common feature. One important cause of the rapid urbanization is natural population growth; another is migration. One can say that people are pushed from the countryside and pulled by the cities.

In the countryside lots of people are no longer able to secure a living for themselves for lack of land and income. Therefore they feel not having any choice but to go to the city; a place which will offer many opportunities as they tend to believe. Most of the time only one member (or part) of the family decides to leave in order to support the rest of the family.
Apparently the increase of the urban population goes along with an even more rapid growth in the number of people living in poor circumstances.
For example, from 1985 to 2000 the population of Mexico City is increasing by 500.000 persons a year. Under these circumstances no (municipal) government would be able to offer housing and facilities to its inhabitants year by year. In this way cities have become centres of severe competition. There is shortage of everything: adequate housing, employment opportunities, basic services (safe water, garbage removal), educational facilities, medical facilities as well as functional infrastructure (roads, electricity, pavements). People are forced to live their lives in an illegal circuit. Because there is no access to formal employment (government and commercial firms), the majority of the people are forced to earn their income through the informal sector. Whole families have to make both ends meet by unregistrated labour. Living conditions for these people are most of the time far from human. Every day is a struggle for life.

2. INCOME

2.1. Income-generation as prerequisite for uplifting urban poor

Generally spoken urban poverty is partly a consequence of lack of sufficient income of a lot of people. Debt crises and economic reform programmes decreased the amount of jobs in the formal sector. According to the ILO (International Labour Organization), approximately one half of the urban populations in Third World cities depends on the informal sector. Yet, liberalization and exchange rate policy often favours import goods above products from the 'informal sector'.

'Informal sector' is in fact a collective name including a wide variety of activities. Apart from street business lots of people are engaged in gathering food and useful waste materials, or are offering services like cobbling, cleaning and selling newspapers. Some work in (sometimes illegal) enterprises. When there is no alternative, women and children are driven into prostitution.
All these activities share two common features: unstability and insufficient income.

Banks are reluctant to grant loans to poor individuals, thereby delivering them to corrupt money lenders. Some of them use interest rates to 10% a month or more. Because their illegal labour the poor labourers cannot appeal on law for protection. As a consequence they are exploited: many have to make long hours doing unhealthy and dangerous work for a very modest salary and can be fired anytime.

It is very significant to notice that 40 - 50% of the urban poor consists of people aged below 20. Obviously little children also have to bear the burden of sustaining their family. Little time is left for education. Some children lost contact with their family and have to sort things out for themselves (with disastrous consequences).
The role of women is particularly important. Research has shown that a third or more households are headed by women; they have a triple role as household manager, child rearer and main income earner. Much of the 'welfare' of the family depends on success of women to provide income.

Traditionally most governments, when confronted with uncontrolled urban population growth, assumed (and still assume) a restraining attitude towards unregistrated activities in the informal sector.
Obviously these activities contravene any legislation on labour registration and do not meet standards on safety, health, wages and working hours. Often the government reacted by arresting and fining 'offenders' thus taking away their scarce capital goods. At the same time anyone realises that the poor have no choice.
This fact gave the impetus to another approach. Research began to perceive the informal sector as a potential basis for development. It is not only the basic source of income for many people, but it also plays an important role in the national economy.

Probably governments would do a good job if they create conditions to stabilizise these resources. The first step would be acknowledgement of the importance of the informal sector.
This means that legal prohibitions should be replaced by effective regulations regarding working circumstances. Moreover recent studies indicate that (as one side of the policy) the informal sector should be reinforced by (collective) credit and training programmes. The other side should be reinforcement of the domestic market. If the people (including farmers) have more money to spend, the demand for local commodities from the informal sector will increase, providing a more stable basis for income to the urban poor.

2.2. The housing problem

2.2.1. Background

Lack of income forces people to live on the street (pavement dwellers), rent a bed in slum areas, or settle in squatter areas.

Mostly these squatter areas are inattractive for their geografical position (remote from the centre) and their marginal position (riverbanks and steep mountain slopes).

In many cities industrialization took place without effective planning. As a consequence there is no sufficient regulation regarding waste disposal, which has as a consequence that the environment can be heavily polluted.

Practically all forms of housing for lower income groups are outside legislative framework. Some settlements are built on illegally occupied land. And if this is not the case, landuse, layout, (infra)structure and service standards still contravene official laws and city planning.

Therefore the people foster little hope that the government will provide necessary services in the near future and face the possibility of being removed by government order.

In fact this was the government's policy; they tried to control the housing problem by removing those settlements (which were- and are - an eyesore to them) by force and setting up ambitious housing programmes.

In the seventies more and more governments were forced to reappraise their traditional attitude. The housing projects were too expensive for both the government and the urban poor and their impact was only marginal. Squatter areas are simply a fact which has to be accepted. Yet housing policies are still defective.

Under the influence of alternative theories, people began to look differently to questions like "How are slums to be reappreciated?" and "What can be done to improve living circumstances of the urban poor?"

Looking to housing problems in Third World countries it is very important to understand the value of house construction, maintenance and upgrading within the economy. As the Report from the Round Table Meeting in Stockholm (1985) states, "urban housing and infrastructure often contribute around half of the national capital formation; government policies have to enable underutilized land, labour and materials to come into greatly aid national economic development".

Notably, self-built houses make use of national products, thereby aggregating national demand. For the dwellers themselves the significance of housing by far exceeds the one of having a shelter. Firstly the house is often the basis for activities within the so-called 'existence economy'. Secondly the dwelling is often the point from which generation of additional income starts. Thirdly it is a comparatively safe object of investment, as well as a security. Therefore housing is essential for urban development.

2.2.2. Enabling policies

To implement 'enabling' strategies the government should realize that it is the people who actually organize the construction work.

Therefore, individuals and community groups (CBO = Community Based Organizations) must be allowed to participate in decisions concerning the allocation of resources in their own squatters. In this process local governments should try to abandon their tradition contempt for poor people and to play a vital role in coordinating policies of several national ministries. These are far from uniform. Cooperation with and between governmental organizations and continuity of policy-making is absolutely necessary.

With regard to CBOs, the community is hard to unite for its mixed composition. Secondly it is difficult to involve people in a development process when they are hardly able to make a living.
The third problem is the traditional attitude of slum leaders, who more often than not are conservative and not willing to give up their privileged position.

The 'enabling' strategies which governments should implement (and are implementing) include appropriate land use and tenure policies, strategies for the provision of basic services and appropriate forms of credit, material and technical assistance.
Settling land use and tenure issues is a very complicated process. It goes without saying that there must be legal, affordable alternatives to squatting or illegal urbanizations. Otherwise cities expand in a haphazard and chaotic way, making infrastructural services very expensive. Next to this, the tenure of those who have already built homes in squatter settlements must be regularized. Yet there are no easy solutions. The way governments tackle this problem varies with their political view, existing laws and practices.

With regard to provision of basic services, there are two possibilities. In case of new settlements, governments, encouraged for instance by The World Bank, often offer sites & services programmes. This means that it provides basic infrastructural services whereas the population bears the responsibility of building its own houses. In existing settlements however, upgrading programmes are implemented.
In both cases there are a lot of variables concerning level of infrastructure and cost recovering. Practice shows that the poorest members do not benefit from infrastructural services for which they can bear no financial responsibility. The extent to which costs can be recovered from urban dwellers determines, along with other factors like inflation rate, whether reinvestments can take place into other plots (revolving funds).

It may be clear from above description that implementation of policies concerning land and basic services is very complicated. Effects sometimes turn out to be different from those intended. It may happen that after upgrading a slum area the land prices rise to an extent that it is more profitable for the inhabitants to leave, in order to rent it to higher income households. Alternatively land increased in value can become object of speculation for all kinds of illegal brokers.
Or, if the occupants of a plot are tenants of a superior tenant to whom tenure is granted, he may ask a higher rent, thus evicting the tenants who cannot afford it. These examples show how difficult implementation actually is.

As has been described above, urban poor living in squatter areas, have a lot of urgent needs. Infrastructural facilities, housing, education, income generating projects, health care, security of tenure and financial management form prerequisites for community development. In these areas Non-Governmental Organizations can play a vital role.

3. ROLE OF NGOs

Non Governmental Organizations aimed at uplifting the poor, are important actors within development work in urban areas. As NGOs are close to the local participants, they can form a better idea of the possibilities. Moreover decision-making is less hampered by time-consuming bureaucratic procedures. They can serve as intermediaries between the population/communities and the government; they can stimulate the target group to be formed into CBO's (Community Based Organizations). Most obviously in cooperation with the people they set up and implement all kinds of projects concerning income generation and housing and so on.

In urban development several aspects are interconnected with each other. To break through vicious circles the local NGOs must find a point of entrance for their programmes. It is hoped and experienced that by this way it will have some impact on the general situation, and open up the way to relative 'welfare'.

For example, physical infrastructural upgrading is a prerequisite for many other programmes. Good off-site services are important for transport as well as access to markets, cultural centres and educational institutes. Thus there is a close relationship between off-site services, income generating projects and education.
On-site improvements (parements, sewerage, provision of drinkwater etc) have a huge impact on the health situation. Therefore health services programmes, essential for any activity, are hard to implement without functional on-site facilities.
The same is true for housing in connection with income-generation. NGOs can implement programmes aimed at producing building materials locally at low cost. A good dwelling is often the basis for additional income. Cheap loans are indispensible in whatever project one may implement. NGOs must try to find the right point of entrance to play an important role in complicated urban development processes.

There are some fundamental problems NGOs often have to face.

- As stated above, NGOs must find a point of entrance. How should they weigh the criteria (Government advice as a part of its developmental strategy needs, as expressed by the local poor, existing expertise and experience, physical possibilities - for example availability of building materials)? Is it advisable to move to an integrated programme as fast as possible?

- Cooperation with governments. For example, in slum upgrading programmes, governmental participation is indispensable for building infrastructural facilities. The question is: how do NGOs 'cooperate with all kind of governmental organizations and departments, who generally spoken lack a concrete consolidated policy?

Moreover, more often than not other interests come into play
(industrial, political etc.) If governments pursue another
policy, which enable rich to benefit from the projects, NGOs seem
too small to protect the poor. What should NGOs do with respect
to this? To what extent is cooperation possible at all?

- NGOs act on grassroot level. For urban poor, in order to improve
  living circumstances, it is essential to be organized in a
  homogeneous community (CBO). What role has to be played by NGOs
  in this respect? What is the role of the local church? If local
  political, economical and social structures are a hindrance, what
  attitude should NGOs assume?

- A lot of programmes fail partly because of unforeseen problems
  concerning funding and financing, as well as personnel and
  implementation. For example, long term financing is not guarant-
  eed. Moreover personnel management of CFO's (co-financing
  organizations) is often inconsistent. How can this be prevented?

- Programmes are part of complicated processes. It is hard to
  assess the relationship between several factors. Therefore it is
  not easy to achieve the desired results. Due to severe competit-
  ion, reverse effects may occur. As has been described above,
  middle income classes often benefit from programs designed for
  the urban poor. What can be done in the area of project managem-
  ent by NGOs to prevent such occurences?

4. CITIES AND MISSION

Looking at the enormous growth cities have gone through and will
have to face, one can say that 'cities are becoming the mission
field of tomorrow'. It is rejoicing to notice that churches are
being moved by needs of their society, and are ready to commit
themselves in the field of evangelization and development work.
For the purpose of this paper christian commitment will be categor-
ized into three views.

The first attitude/view emphasizes preaching of God's Word and
evangelization in cities. Taking into consideration that by 2000
AD, 56% of the urban dwellers will not be christians, as much as
possible must be done to win souls for Jesus. Therefore the main
task of christians is to bring the Gospel everywhere. It addresses
both poor and rich. Although the supporters of this approach
acknowledge that development is an urgent need, generally spoken
their work does not include a development component.

The second view stresses 'deeds' as the way of bearing witness to
Christ. Christians, seeing the despair of lots of people, must be
moved. According to this view Christians working for the spread of
the Kingdom of God can help improve living standards, slow down
migration and stimulate secondary cities and towns. A society
living by biblical standards will improve basic social services and
upgrade urban facilities. The call of the christian is to provide
insight and action to meet the needs for housing, improve schools,
hospitals, transportation and market facilities.

Both visions represent only a part of the biblical message.
The third view points to the fact that Jesus both preached and
helped the poor. Apparently there is no antithesis between
'development' and 'evangelization'. Following Jesus means loving
God and your neighbour. This implies that you are touched by the
misery of others and want to help them practically. This is just
as important as evangelizing and discipling. However, there are
some problems to be discussed.

- What should be the principal motivation of christian NGOs? In
  practice, can development work and proclamation of the Gospel go
  together? Does not development work tend to dominate evangelizat-
  ion? How can man be approached as a total being, with physical as
  well as spiritual needs?
  Moreover, development work is directed to the poor whereas
  evangelization is directed to all urban dwellers. Therefore, are
  not these aims incompatible? What would be the best organizat-
  ional structure?

- Most partners of TEAR Fund are development (agencies of) organ-
  izations, which are alliances of local churches. To what extent
  is the local church at the basis used? Can it bear the burden of
  both development work and evangelization? Do local churches
  (especially those in Africa) have enough experience in cities? Is
  the local church mainly composed of poor and directed to the poor
  (so that rich dwellers cannot be reached)? Do they have enough
  expertise and financial means? Should not however, these
  grassroot churches (close to the target group) be regarded as the
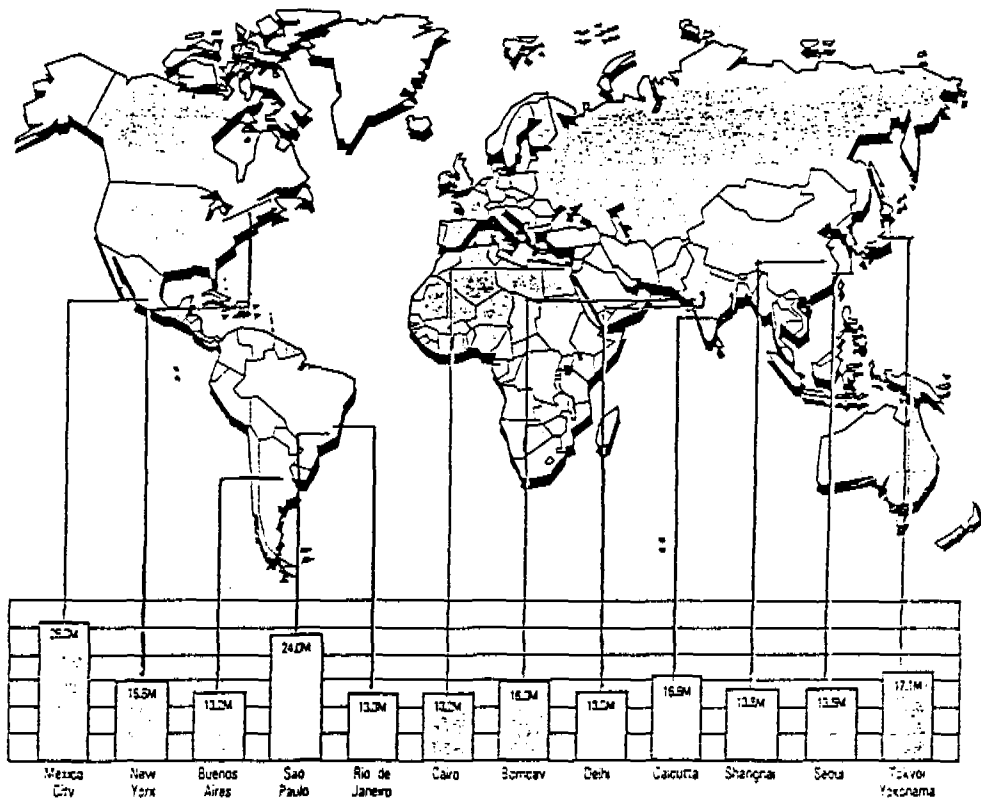 main tool for development and evangelization?

Outline speech
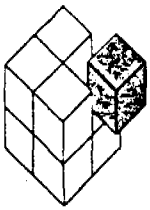
MATRIX

Consultants in
Development Management

Source: United Nations Fund for Population Activities.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT,
POSSIBILITIES AND
LIMITATIONS

On the occasion of
the Tear Fund Congress
on Urbanisation
Zeist, the Netherlands, 8 May 1990

Kees van der Poort

Utrecht, 8 May 1990

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1.   INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1   Definition of Urbanisation

Urbanisation is by far the most important social transformation of our time. In 1800 no more than 3% of the world population lived in cities. However, urban dwellers will outnumber the rural population by the year 2000. To make this statement a bit more concrete, between 1950 and the turn of the century the world urban population will have doubled twice. If we look at the so-called third world (the developing countries), its urban population is estimated to increase from 1950 to 2025 almost 16 times from 200 million to 3,2 billion people. By comparison the urban population in industrialised countries increased only about 5 times between 1840 and 1914.

There are different ways to define the phenomenon of urbanisation; for our purpose of today it suffices that we define urbanisation in the way we have just described it: we understand by urbanisation the phenomenon that an increasing part of the population (of a region or a country or this globe) lives in urban centres. We normally take as the criterion for an urban centre that its population is over 20.000. 20.000 people in itself is not so much; a striking feature of the urbanisation trends in the third world is, however, the increasing relative share of large and metropolitan cities. Nowadays, there are about 250 cities in the world with a population of 1 million or more. By the turn of the century there will by about 440, of which more than 280 in third world countries. According to the FAO by the year 2000, 22 of the world's cities will have populations over 10 million. Half of them will be in Asia. At that time Mexico City will have more than 25 million people; Sao Paulo with 24 million will not be far behind.

The table in Appendix I gives an impression of the increase of the urbanised part of the world population and the expectations fore the future. The second table shows the increase of the population of a number of 'metropolitan cities'.[1]

1.2   Different Patterns of Urbanisation

Although urbanisation is nowadays a worldwide phenomenon the patterns and the dynamics of urbanisation differ considerably from place to place.

First of all it is good to realise that in the so-called 'developed' countries in Europe, Northern America and Oceania the rates of urbanisation were already over 70% in 1980 and are expected to increase to about 85% in the near future. So rapid urbanisation is by no means a phenomenon that is primarily related to the third world. And as far as the third world is concerned the differences between the different continents are important.

First of all the figures for **Latin America** show that there is hardly a difference between the rate of urbanisation in that continent and the 'northern' countries. It is expected that in the year 2000 more than 75% of the population of L.A. lives in urbanised areas. This figure does not differ significantly from those for Northern America or Europe.

For some Asian countries there exists an acceleration in the urbanisation process. In India, for example, the urban population tend to grow twice as fast as the overall population. To make these figures more concrete the migration to towns in India in 3 years is about 15 million people (the total population of the Netherlands).

In Africa urbanisation is a rather new phenomenon, which leads to the highest urban population growth in the world, although the number of people living in towns is relatively still small. As a consequence the urban population of Africa may grow 6 times between 1980 and 2025.

That **urbanisation patterns** may vary from continent to continent and from country to country may be clear from the following examples.

In India again, today about 30% of its population of more than 700 million is living in urban areas. There are today 12 cities with more than 1 million people; the three 'giants' Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi have respectively 10 million, 9 million and 7 million inhabitants. In 1985 the Indian government estimated a shortage of about 9 million housing units in the country.

Senegal had in 1985 a population of 6,5 million inhabitants. The population density in that country is 33 per square km. Urban population concentrates in Great Dakar with a density of 1271 per square km in 1985. The urban population in Great Dakar is over 1.5 million. Senegal is one of the many examples of a country with a primate city, that means one great city where nearly all the urban functions are concentrated. The second city, Thiès, has only 150,000 inhabitants. And people are still migrating from the rural areas due to the agricultural crisis and drought.[2]

1.3 Causes of rapid Urbanisation

Rapid urbanisation is - as we have just seen - one of the most striking phenomenon of our time and especially in most countries of the third world. If we try to formulate some of the main causes for urbanisation we have to take into account the different patterns of urbanisation. However, the main causes of rapid urbanisation are probably of an economic nature. As we have seen in the example of Senegal, people leave the rural areas for reasons such as lack of suitable land, drought, lack of other employment opportunities, etc. In the cities people expect to find better opportunities , such as employment, housing, schooling, medical care, etc. Even if the people will often not find the things they expect, these expectations are one of the main dynamics behind the rapid urbanisation in many countries. Of course rapid population growth as it exists in many developing countries will reinforce the rapid urbanisation in densely populated countries. But in countries with a low population pressure urbanisation does not have the tendency to stop as we all know from experience and as population figures teach us. This world will increasingly get an urban character, not only physically or economically, but also socially and culturally.[3]

1.4 Urbanisation and urban Development

What we have just observed as one of the main causes of the present rapid urbanisation, viz. the lack of opportunities of the rural areas to provide its population with a decent living seems in striking contradiction with the theoretical concept which explains the origin of the urbanisation process from the 'rural surplus', making it possible that a group in the community is no longer involved in agriculture. Of course this 'rural surplus' still always exists. It is primarily the tremendous increase in agricultural productivity which has laid the economic basis for the urbanisation process.

The history of urbanisation makes clear that from the very beginning an urban society tended more than the rural society to be a class society. It was the urban poor who were later - in Marxist theory - called the proletariate, the people whose only capital consisted of their children. But it is also in the cities that the new class of the 'bourgeois' (literally those who live in a 'bourg' in a city) developed; the class which is involved in commerce, trade and industry, but also in scientific and cultural activities which are so characteristic for the development of the 'culture of the cities'.

This class structure which has been so evident in the early industrial cities in Europe and Northern America is also found in most of the cities in third world countries. In many of these countries the distinction between higher and middle class areas on one hand and lower class areas, squatter districts, bidonvilles, etc., on the other hand is very manifest. The complete segregation of people on basis of class or even race is realised in South Africa where racial and often at the same time class barriers in towns have got a legal basis and have been made very manifest, not only by separating the different quarters and 'townships' but also by creating physical barriers by means of canals, highways, railways, or simply distance!

Urbanisation - as we have seen - can be defined as the phenomenon that an increasing part of the population lives in urban centres. This urbanisation presupposes urban planning. The planning of the physical, economic and service structures which are the prerequisites of a fair urban development.

However, the reality is that **urban planning is in many cases lagging behind the urbanisation** which seems to take the shape of a more or less **autonomous process**.

A sound **urban development** can be defined as a process in which urban planning and the urbanisation are in balance. Urban development can be considered at macro-level (a country as a whole), at the meso-level of a city and at the micro-level of a district or a quarter of a city.

A phenomenon which we often see in cities in the third world is that the levels of urban development are quite different for the different parts of the city which leads to a rather unbalanced development of the city. The middle and higher class districts are well planned and have all the adequate services required. However the so-called 'popular' quarters often lack the most elementary services and facilities.

A good example of such an unbalanced development is Cairo. According to a study realised by the Leiden University the poorest quarters of Cairo have reached a density of 100.000 per square km. In Cairo there is no creation found of shanty towns as in other countries in Asia and Africa but an overcrowding of the existing low-income districts. Some housing units have been found to house as many as 20 people in two rooms.[4] At the same time the number of luxurious tourist hotels and high class apartment buildings alongside the Nile-front is still increasing.

In the third part of this presentation dealing with the role of the government we will come back to the role of the government and the municipal authorities in urban planning. We will also have to consider to which extent urban planning can be left over to private (commercial or non-commercial) initiative.

2. SOME BASIC URBAN PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Although the title of this conference 'Christians in Urban Development' does not limit our subject to developing countries it may be useful for the sake of efficiency to concentrate primarily on those countries. On the other hand, I am happy that I have read in the programme of this day that project directors of TEAR-fund counterparts will also have the chance to get acquainted with some of the problems of urban planning and urban development in this country.

It is of course not possible to deal in detail with the urban problems in this presentation. Therefore I have to limit myself to a brief enumeration of some of the main urban problems as they exist today in developing countries. The purpose of this enumeration is not to give a complete view, but rather to outline the context in which possible interventions by non-governmental organisations in urban development have to be placed. And I think that a discussion of the possibilities and the limitations of such interventions is the main purpose of this conference.

2.1 Urban Infrastructure

When we think of 'urban infrastructure' in the growing cities in the third world, we may all have our own frame of reference in our mind. In the 1988 'World Development Report' of the World Bank the problem of urban infrastructure is approached as one whole in the sense of the planning and the realisation of its major components, viz. the basic services such as urban road construction and transport, water supply and waste collection, power and housing. Traditionally, the realisation of these basic services is seen as a task of the governmental and municipal authorities. The quoted World Bank's report concludes three important features within this respect.

First of all that an adequate and effective realisation of these services presupposes an effective working public administration and management structure and the availability of financial resources which make it possible to cope with the growing need for public services; these conditions are quite often not fulfilled. I think that it will not astonish us that the World Bank is pleading for more competitive private market services. The report states: 'Where a competitive, private market is viable, such as in urban transport and housing, narrowing public involvement will release resources for better use elsewhere.' And further: 'Where direct (public) provision is most efficient as in water, power and roads - the public provider should apply user charges or cost covering benefit taxes'.[5]

The second observation the World Bank's Report makes is that public providers, even if they are heavily subsidised, produce urban services inefficiently. They have little incentive to be cost-effective or to respond speedily to changing conditions. The report gives the example of the public bus corporation in Calcutta, India which requires about US$ 1 million subsidies a month as revenues cover only half of the operating cost. Yet private non-subsidised bus operators (in Calcutta as in many other cities) can operate their systems at the same, sometimes even lower fares and even make profit.

The third observation from the World Bank's Report I think useful to share here is that heavy subsidies in urban infrastructure do not reach the urban poor. The report gives the example of the Caracas metro in Venezuela that will be completed this year, and that will mainly serve the middle income groups.

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The 'message' from these quotations from the World Bank 1988 Report is quite clear. The urban authorities should leave the basic urban services as much as possible to the competitive market and be restrictive as far as subsidies to public services are concerned.

Direct public interventions for the very poor will, however, continue to be needed but should be limited on providing basic services and security of tenure rather than on dwellings.[6]

As the World Bank has to be considered as one of the main providers of capital for infrastructural works in developing countries and regional development banks, such as the Asian Development Bank generally conform their policies to the World Bank it is still to be expected that less than in the past the urban poor may benefit of infrastructural facilities that are financed by the World Bank. Besides a development is promoted where public services, such as water, sewage collection, etc., have to be run on a no-loss, or even a profit basis. In itself this may be a sound development as far as it will stimulate public services to operate in a more cost-effective way. On the other hand, the risk is obvious that the less privileged, especially in the poorer urban areas will still see the services rendered to them decrease or diminish.

During a recent visit to Egypt in order to discuss different aspects of the possible financing of water supply systems through the Netherlands' Ministry for International Cooperation I came across a recent decision of the Egyptian government to privatise the water supply companies. This means that they will no longer receive any governmental subsidy for their running cost. These companies will in the future have to set a water price which covers their cost. Again in itself this is justified development especially when one realises that an inefficient use of drinking water and a low fee, which is often even not collected leads to tremendous losses of drinking water. But this development may also include that the number of public water taps, where the poor people can get their water free or at a nominal fee will be reduced.

I came across a similar development in Bangladesh where the Netherlands Ministry for International Cooperation is involved in the financing of the extension of the water supply systems for a number of district towns. It is one of the conditions of the Netherlands government's development aid policy to guarantee the drinking water supply for the poorest groups in these towns. But at the same time the local water authorities are required to run their water supply systems at a no loss basis. This implies that all the time there is a pressure to reduce the number of public taps, which serve the poorer parts of the towns and to increase the more profitable house connections.

These examples on drinking water supply could be multiplied by more examples related to sewage, solid waste disposal and environmental conditions. In general we can conclude that the present policy of institutions like the World Bank and similar international financing organisation leads to a situation where even less capital is available for investment in urban infrastructure of which the poorer groups can benefit than was the case say 10 or more years ago. A situation that may have its consequences for the policy options of Non-governmental organisations.

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2.2 Other urban Services

What we have just discussed in relation to urban infrastructure is to a certain extent also true for other urban services. It is generally known that the provision of education and health facilities by the authorities in the poorer parts of the cities both qualitatively and quantitatively are lagging behind the same facilities in middle and upper class quarters of the same cities. Government schools may offer 'free education' but in the poorer parts of the cities this 'free education' often takes place in overcrowded classes lacking basic educational equipment. Public health services often encounter the same problems such as a lack of adequate facilities and drugs. But paradoxically, even in the poorer parts of many cities there are not seldom some private schools and private medical practitioners, serving a restricted part of the population, viz. those who can afford it.

Practically, this means that the targets of UN and governmental slogans such as 'Health for all in the year 2000' and 'Educating the Nation', etc., are in certain urban areas rather getting further behind the horizon than that they are coming closer by.

3. THE SOCIETY OF THE URBAN POOR

3.1 The 'Culture of Poverty'

'Mrs C. is a single mother with 6 children; the oldest child is 14 year old, the youngest is still a baby. Mrs. C. was born in the countryside, but her father died at young age. Then her father's brothers seized the land they had and thus C. came to Mathare Valley together with her mother and the other children. Mrs. C. declares the best thing the church could do for her is to give her her own field, so that she could earn a living for herself and her children.'

This quotation stems from a survey I did on behalf of the Redeemed Gospel Church and Tear Fund in Mathare Valley in March 1988. It makes, perhaps more than any statistic, clear what the situation is for so many of the urban poor. They have come to the city because of the lack of land or agricultural opportunities in the countryside.[7]

Slum areas such as Mathare Valley and Korogocho in Nairobi are found as a part of many cities in countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Although they may have many differences they have as a common characteristic a clustering together of unskilled and hence to a large extent unemployed or irregular employed people in an area with rather poor housing, basic services and other utilities. It is these areas which are sometimes characterised in sociological literature as belonging to the 'culture of poverty' (Oscar Lewis).

We should not only allow ourselves to have too negative feelings about the 'culture of poverty'. Slum and squatter areas have their own vitality, creativity, and a strong desire for survival. Although slum areas know a lot of problems various studies have shown that integrating factors are often stronger than the disintegrating ones. During my own survey in Mathare Valley which I mentioned already, I was told by one of the local leaders that social cohesiveness in the different quarters of the slum area for example always became manifest in the case of death. I was told that notwithstanding the poverty of the people it was never a problem to collect some thousands of shillings for a coffin and if necessary the transport of the body to the native region.[8]

But of course these more positive observations should not lead us to a kind of romanticism. Life in poor urban areas is mainly hard; lack of basic services and high child mortality rate are generally more characteristic for the slum areas of the cities than the limited number of positive factors we can enumerate.

But at the same time also in the slum areas of the cities there are both individuals and small groups of people who are working and struggling for alternatives and for change.

3.2 The informal Sector

Since the seventies we are accustomed to talk of the 'informal sector' in the cities of the third world. The concept of the 'informal sector' was introduced by the International Labour Organisation and is generally defined as the sum of small productive and commercial activities that take place in the big cities of this world. The informal sector is often considered as being the 'secret of survival' of big groups of people in slum areas and squatter districts. We all know the little workshop of the carpenter or the blacksmith alongside the road and, not to forget, the informal trade of selling vegetables or cooked food mainly executed by women at the doorsteps of their houses. Studies affirm the importance of the informal sector.[9]

Notwithstanding these studies it is quite difficult to measure in a more specific way the relative importance of the informal sector. But there is a consensus that this sector contributes in a significant way to the economic activities and the income of the city population.

However, the success of the informal sector implies at the same time its risks. In different publications the risk has been mentioned that the informal sector has the tendency to absorb more people without a real increase of its production, which means that the productivity per head decreases, a situation which is often indicated as a situation of involution.[10]

I would like to refer back once more to the survey I did in Mathare Valley. One of the activities the Redeemed Gospel Church is promoting in Mathare Valley is income generating activities. All the women groups or individual women whom I interviewed had on their mind to start an income generating activity on the basis of a credit they hoped to receive through the RGC. But without exception these people thought of selling charcoal, petrol, vegetables, soda-drinks or second hand clothes. And it is these types of selling-activities which are already so manifestly present. This means that the risk of the situation which I have just called 'involution' is quite manifest. I think that we come back to those risks especially for NGOs that would like to stimulate employment projects, during our discussions today.

3.3   The Role of Politics and the Authorities

A detailed discussion of the role of politics and the authorities in the urban settings goes far beyond the purpose of this presentation. But it seems useful to mention the importance of the authorities especially for the activities of self-help groups or NGOs. In many third world countries where one party systems exists, the ruling political party and the local authorities sometimes coincide. In Kenya e.g. the local KANU (Kenya African National Union) divisions and the local authorities coincide de facto. In an Asian country like Indonesia the ruling party the Golkar is omnipresent at local level.

A good and creative cooperation with authorities, especially the local authorities is generally quite essential for the success of urban development activities of local groups and NGOs. On the other hand NGOs should be aware of the fact that the interests of local or other authorities may go hand in hand with other interests as we know both from literature and from concrete examples. In the literature some authors are quite pertinent on this issue, and we may also know of examples ourselves.[11]

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4. NGO-INVOLVEMENT IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Urban Development and Change

So far we have discussed a number of issues related to urban development. Maybe that negative factors that may form hindrances for real development have got too much attention. I have given them so much attention because I think that they form a very serious complex of boundary conditions that may hamper the development of the urban poor. However, if we did not believe in the possibilities of real change there would be no need to sit here together today. Maybe that the quotations I gave from the literature were not too optimistic. Let me therefore, now that we have to discuss the NGO involvement in urban development, quote another author, namely Janice Perlman who made extensive studies in slum areas of Rio de Janeiro. 'In short the 'favelados' (inhabitants of the favelas) have the aspirations of the bourgeoisie, the perseverance of pioneers and the value system of patriots. However, what the don't have is the chance to realise their aspirations.'[12]

Maybe that it is not by accident that this quotation stems from a woman. If I think back to the urban development initiatives and projects I have visited or studied through the years, either in Asian, African or Latin American countries, I mainly remember my contacts with active and enthusiastic women. Such as the leader of a nutrition project in one of the barrio's of Manila whom I met last year February. She was herself stemming from a family of 18 children and was, despite all the difficulties she had encountered, enthusiastically busy organising nutrition and health care groups.

Let me come back to Janice Perlman's quotation, 'they don't have the chance to realise their aspirations'. Perhaps this opinion may to a certain extent be considered as an exaggeration, but I think that it implies a nucleus of truth. The truth that notwithstanding the growth of urban population, the 'culture of poverty' and the limited resources that governments or institutions like the World Bank make available for projects of which the poor may benefit there is enough potential in the urban situations for change. But the change will have to come primarily from the people themselves. NGOs can try to promote processes of change, they can try to act as catalysts but after all it is the people themselves who have to be the agents of change.

4.2 Self-organisation versus intermediate Organisations

This brings us to the problem which is as old as the development work. To which extent can the people in e.g. slum areas organise themselves or do they need intermediate organisations. I think that it is not so easy to draw general conclusions. Situations may be different from country to country and from city to city. But in general I think that - referring back to Janice Perlman- self organisation of the people will have to be the prime objective and starting point, also for urban development programmes.

This means that intermediate organisations and donor-organisations - and that is the group sitting together today - should be very careful in formulating possible solutions. Also during this conference we again run the risk that we think we have contributed to the solutions without having listened carefully enough to the people who should not be the object but the subject of urban development projects. Or to put it as a question: We probably all opt for community organisation as a basic step in urban development. But do we know the community enough and do we have the right entrances to the community? I think that local church congregations and christian basic communities as they have developed in some countries e.g. in Latin America can play an essential role here.

In some African countries the church is one of the few forms of 'community organisation' apart from political organisations. That's why the church can play an important role in community organisation provided that intermediate and donor organisations give the community a chance to develop their own ideas and do not interfere too early by means of forced advice or funds. On the other hand, the communities will need a professional guidance, especially if we are talking about income generating projects. The examples I gave about the women's groups in Nairobi that all wanted to go in the same business makes clear that guidance and advice for community groups and community organisations will be needed. It will be quite important for intermediate and donor organisations to find here the right balance.

4.3   The Impact of NGOs

Let us first of all be realistic. I have tried during this presentation to sketch some of the most important issues and problems related to urban development. And as far as I can see NGOs can make some contributions to the solution but they will not be in a position to solve problems related to urban development financially or organisationally. If - as we have seen - even institutions like the World Bank do not make the adequate funds available for real and balanced urban development how could NGOs ever take over that burden.

That means that NGOs having only limited resources available should in principle not opt for direct involvement in the financing of urban infrastructure. About 15 years ago NGOs were quite involved in the so-called 'sites and services' projects. It is my impression that the involvement of NGOs in these quite large scale approaches has decreased. I think that is a logic development. NGOs should perhaps do best to make a choice for strategic positions in relation to urban development. It may be useful to enter deeper in this concept of strategic positions in urban development during the discussions of today. But I can try to mention a number of points that may help to orientate the discussion.

I think that we can distinguish three groups of activities.

I.   Community Organisation

I.1   NGOs - both local (intermediary) NGOs and international donors - should first of all orient their activities towards initiatives of the local community. They should at any cost prevent to parachute programmes which do not correspond to the aspirations and the possibilities of the local people.

I.2   Local church congregations and other organised groups of the local community can often act as agents of change. Local and international NGOs should look for partnership relations with these local actors of change.

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I.3 Local and international NGOs - opting for a long term strategy - should first of all try to **contribute to the reinforcement of local groups and structures.** By means of facilitating training activities local groups and initiatives may be strengthened.

I.4 NGOs can be instrumental to local community groups and the inhabitants of certain urban areas to **opt for their legal rights as inhabitants of their area** as a part of the city. These legal rights may include matters such as:
- the right to live in the area;
- the right for basic services such as street lightning, solid waste evacuation, etc.;
- title deeds for land and/or houses in the urban areas.

These points include what is often called 'community organisation'. I am of the opinion that a contribution to community organisation, mobilisation and awareness building in poor urban areas is one of the most important contributions NGOs can give to urban development.

The points stated above will of course imply a certain cooperation with the urban authorities; however, the local communities and the NGOs involved should keep their independence with respect to the authorities. Community organisation and awareness building of poor urban groups or slum dwellers may have as a consequence that certain tensions in the relations with the urban authorities cannot always be avoided.

II. Economic oriented Activities

Economic oriented activities should be considered as a second step, as a kind of follow-up, of the community organisation I have just mentioned.

Among these economic oriented activities the most important are:

II.1 Certain **credit facilities** can be of great importance for the members of a community as they normally don't have access to the 'official' credit through government institutions or commercial banks.

Credit may be available for:
- improvement of existing houses or construction of new ones;
- small scale economic activities on individual or cooperative basis in the 'informal sector'.

II.2 Credits can in principle only be made available to people who have a minimum of technical and managerial skill; this may imply that certain forms of formal or informal **training programmes** to prepare groups or individuals to be eligible of a credit will be organised.

II.3 Local communities organisations or NGOs can be instrumental for the **purchase of building materials** for the improvement of houses at lower prices than in the commercial market. Further, a certain advisory building service for individuals or groups who would like to improve their existing houses or to build new ones can be very useful.

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III.   Assistential activities

Assistential activities have a quite different character and will - contrary to economic activities - not lead to a situation of self-reliance.

The question that may be raised in this respect is whether the choice of 'strategic positions' as I have indicated above can go together with 'assistential activities' such as family sponsor programmes or scholarship programmes. Although the idea may be that families become 'self reliant' through a family sponsor programme, this will practically happen quite seldom.

Of course there may occur emergency situations where direct assistance is needed. But assistential programmes have in principle no development potential.

If it may be one of the challenges to this consultation to define the 'strategic options' in urban development more precisely, it would also be useful to pay some attention to the 'assistential activities' in relation to the more development oriented activities.

5. TO CONCLUDE

In this presentation I have tried to draw some main lines in the issues related to urban development. At macro-level the picture is not optimistic. Urban growth will continue and the financial resources to create adequate infrastructure, housing and employment opportunities are increasingly lacking.

There are enough reasons for being pessimistic but at the same time we can be optimistic as even in the poorest urban areas we meet time and again people and groups who continue to struggle for a better life. **And as long as the people themselves will continue, it is a challenge to us to continue too.** I sincerely hope that our discussions of today may help all of us not only to be prepared to continue our efforts for urban development but also to find together new and creative ways towards real 'cities of men'.

8 May 1990

NOTES

1. Figures from UN Population Division, reprinted in 'Development Journal of the Society for International Development', 1986:40.

2. Prins and Van der Laan, 'Housing and Urban Development in Egypt, India and Senegal', Leiden, 1987.

3. In urbanisation theory the distinction is sometimes made between: the 'pre-industrial society', 'the industrial-urban society', and 'the neo-industrial-service society' (cf. Sjöberg: 'the Pre-industrial city', 1960). According to Sjöberg, the western society is economically, socially and culturally dominated by the cities; the national values are primarily the urban values; see also G.A. de Bruijne: 'Over de urbane problematiek van ontwikkelingslanden' and W.R. Armstrong and T.G. McGee: 'Revolutionaire Verandering in de Derde Wereld: 'Een stedelijke involutietheorie' in G.A. de Bruijne et al: 'Perspektief op ontwikkeling', Bussum, 1976.

4. Maan and Van der Laan, 'Housing and Urban Research in Egypt, Leiden, 1987, pp. 7 and 8.

5. World Development Report, 1988, pp. 145 and 146.

6. Ibid. page 147.

7. Kees van der Poort, From Relief towards Development? An evaluation of the collaboration between the Redeemed Gospel Church in Nairobi and TEAR-Fund Holland, on Social and Health Programmes in Mathare Valley and Korogocho, 1988, page 33.

8. It is not possible here to enter more in detail in the sociological theory on social consciousness in poor urban areas. In a sociological study on squatter settlements in Bogotá, Colombia, Janssen distinguishes: submitted conscience, dependent conscience and liberating conscience. Although most people will have a 'submitted conscience' their 'rationality of survival' will lead them to organise themselves in a most rational way but without the risk of confrontation with the authorities, cf. Roel Janssen: 'We don't even have a right to the city', Amsterdam 1978, pp. 176-188.

9. Different ILO reports on employment, income and small enterprise development; see also: M.P. van Dijk: 'De informele sector van Ouagadougou en Dakar, Ontwikkelings-mogelijkheden van kleine bedrijven in twee Westafrikaanse hoofdsteden', Meppel, 1980.

10. However, more recent studies are again quite optimistic on the further growth capacity of the informal sector. In Latin America the number of people in the informal sector is estimated at 30 million of which a substantial part is women: cf. V.E. Tokman: 'Policies for a heterogeneous sector in Latin America', in World Development, Vol. 17, no. 7, 1989, page 1067 vv.

11. Janssen, op.cit. indicates that 'urban renewal' in Bogota which is mainly propagated as being of interest for the poor squatter population is in reality rather serving the interests of politicians, construction companies and financial institutions (Janssen, op.cit. pp. 202 and 203). Vellinga states that the so-called 'sites and services approach'

which was quite popular in the seventies is based on the 'neo-liberal ideology' that individuals might be able by constructing their own house to contribute to the solution of a structural problem, M. Vellinga 'Ontwikkeling en stedelijke armen', in Dirk Kruyt and Kees Konings 'Ontwikkelingsvraagstukken, Theorie, beleid en methoden', Muiderberg, 1988, pp. 231-233.
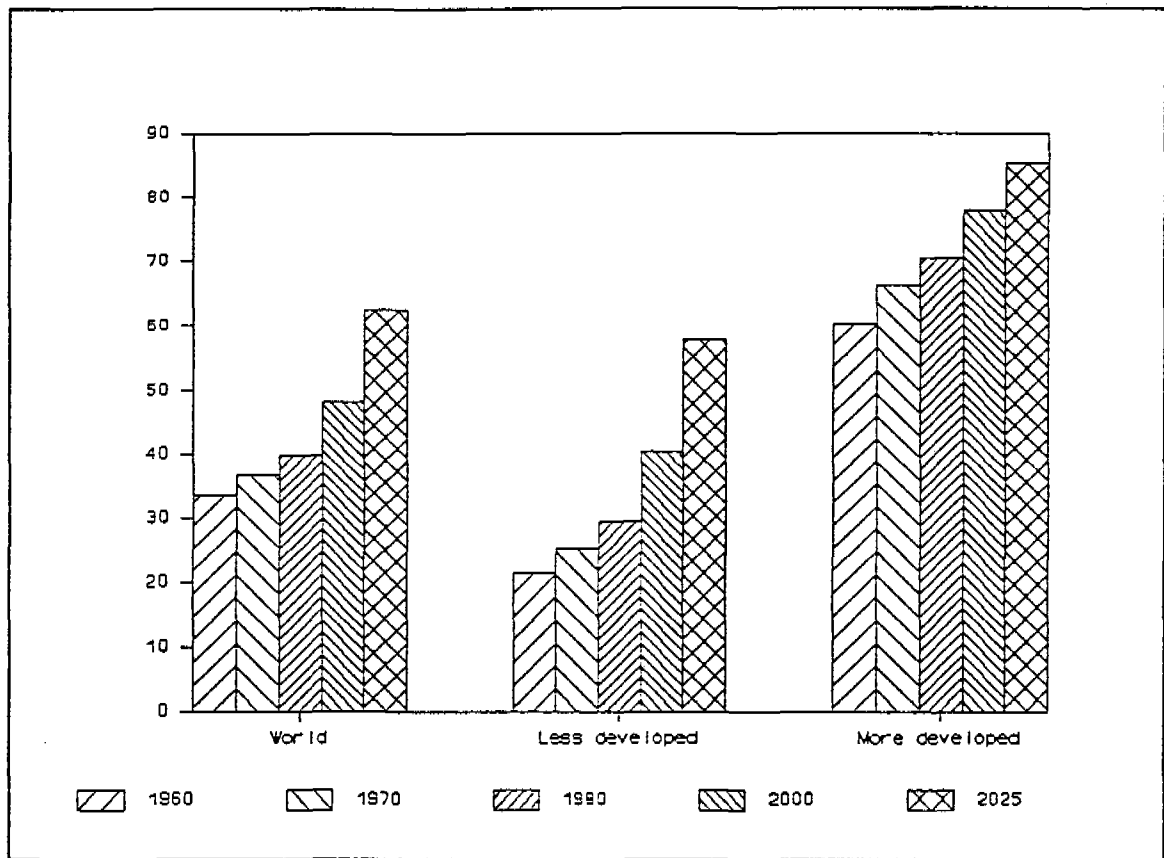
12. Quoted by Janssen, op.cit. p. 19.

Table 1.   Per cent urban population by major regions, 1960-2025

| Region	1960	1970	1980	2000	2025
World	33.6	36.9	39.9	48.2	62.4
Less developed	21.4	25.2	29.4	40.4	57.8
More developed	60.3	66.4	70.6	77.8	85.4
Africa	18.4	22.9	28.7	42.2	58.3
Latin America	49.3	57.4	65.4	76.9	84.4
Northern America	69.9	73.8	73.8	78	85.7
East Asia	23.1	26.3	28	34.2	51.2
South Asia	18.3	21.2	25.4	36.8	55.3
Europe	60.5	66.1	71.1	78.9	85.9
Oceania	66.3	70.8	71.6	73	78.3
USSR	48.8	56.7	63.2	74.3	83.4

Table 2. Average annual percentage rates of urban population growth by major regions 1960-2025

| Major Area	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-2000	2000-2025
World	3.00	2.70	2.50	2.20
Less developed	4.10	3.80	3.50	2.80
More developed	2.00	1.40	1.10	0.70
Africa	4.70	5.10	5.00	3.80
Latin America	4.20	3.70	2.90	1.80
Northern America	1.90	1.10	1.20	1.00
East Asia	3.30	2.50	2.10	2.20
South Asia	4.00	4.20	3.80	2.80
Europe	1.70	1.20	0.80	0.40
Oceania	2.70	1.90	1.50	1.30
USSR	2.70	2.00	1.60	1.00

Development of urban population (in %) in the World, less developed and more developed countries, 1960-2025.
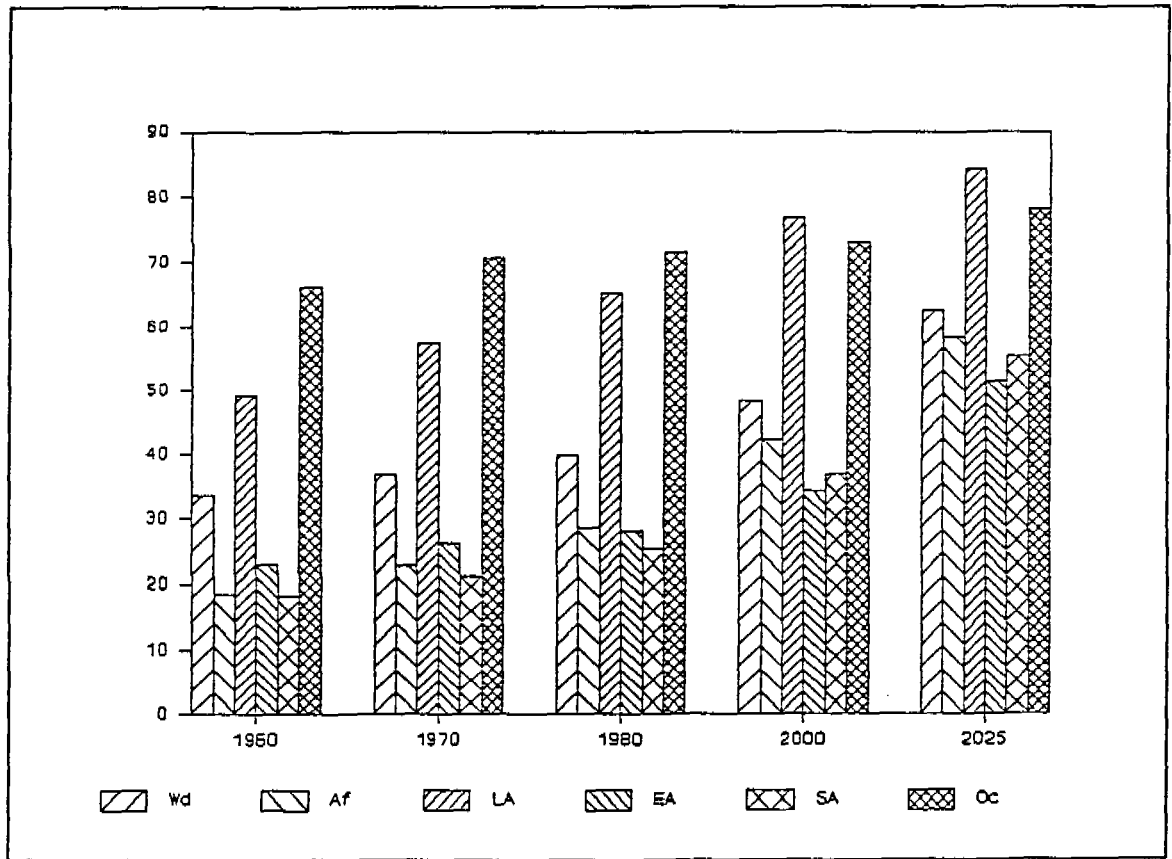
Comparison of urban population (in %) in the World, Africa, Latin America, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania, 1960-2025.
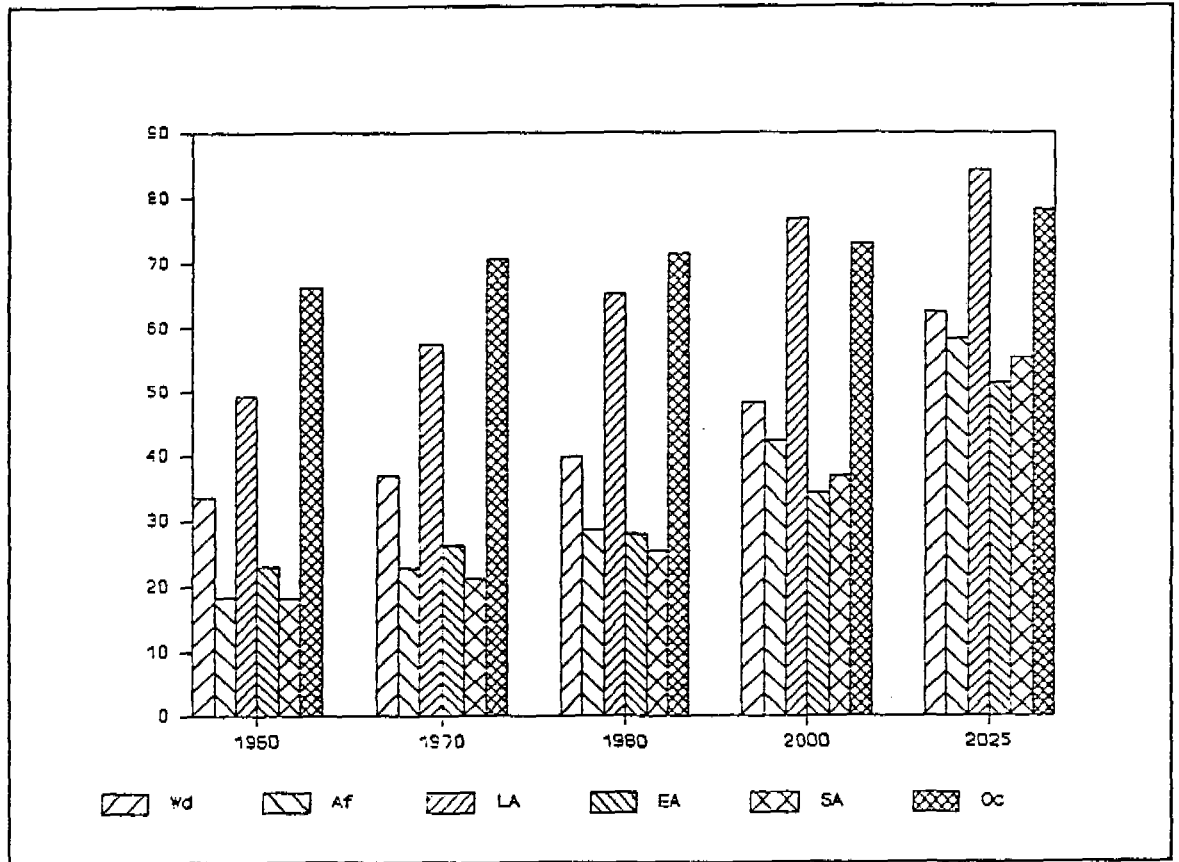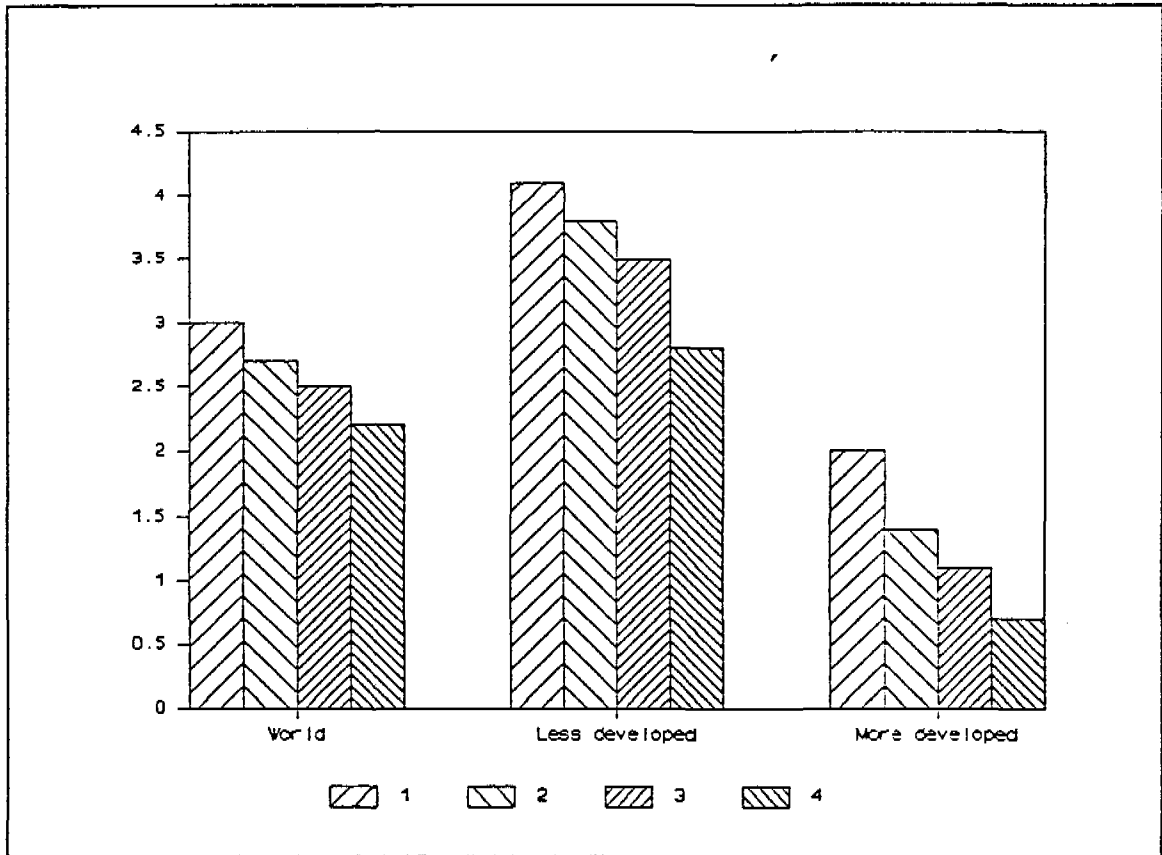
Comparison of urban population (in %) in the World, less developed and more developed countries, 1960-2025.
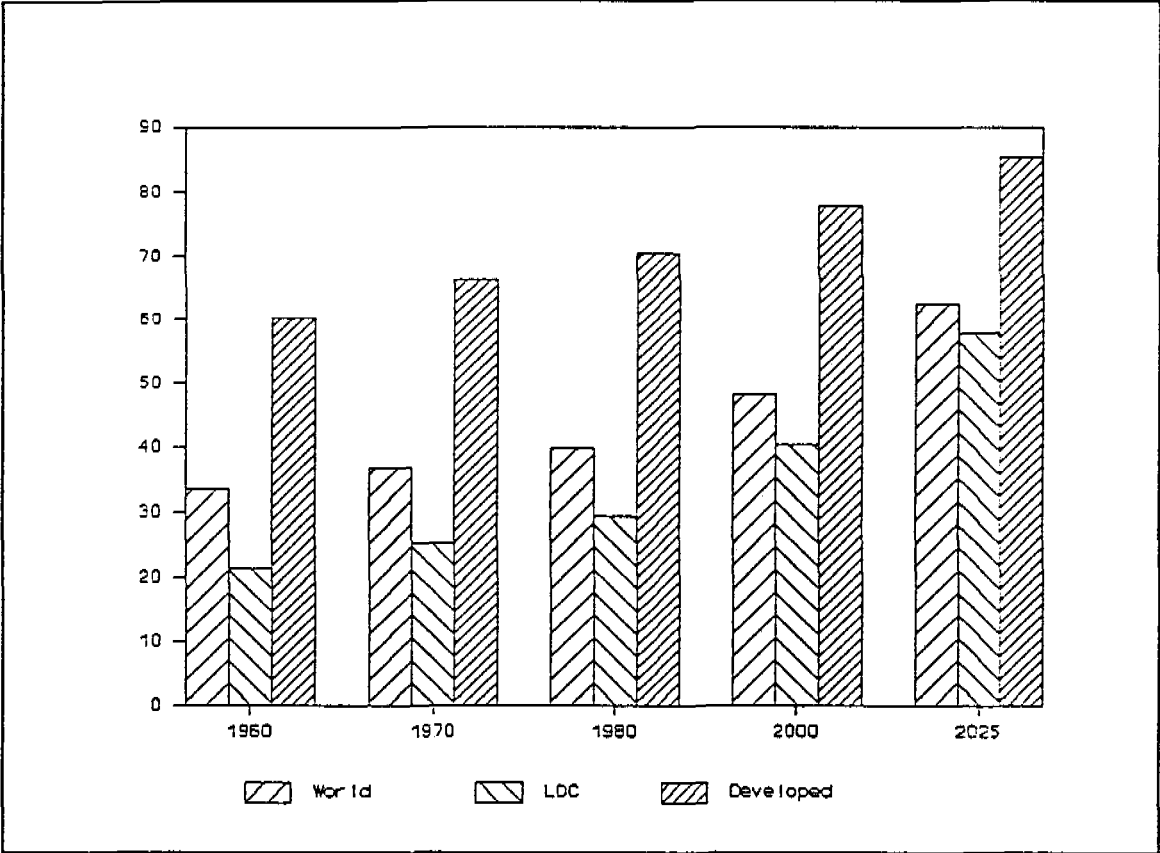
Comparison of urban population (in %) in the World, Africa, Latin America, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania, 1960-2025.
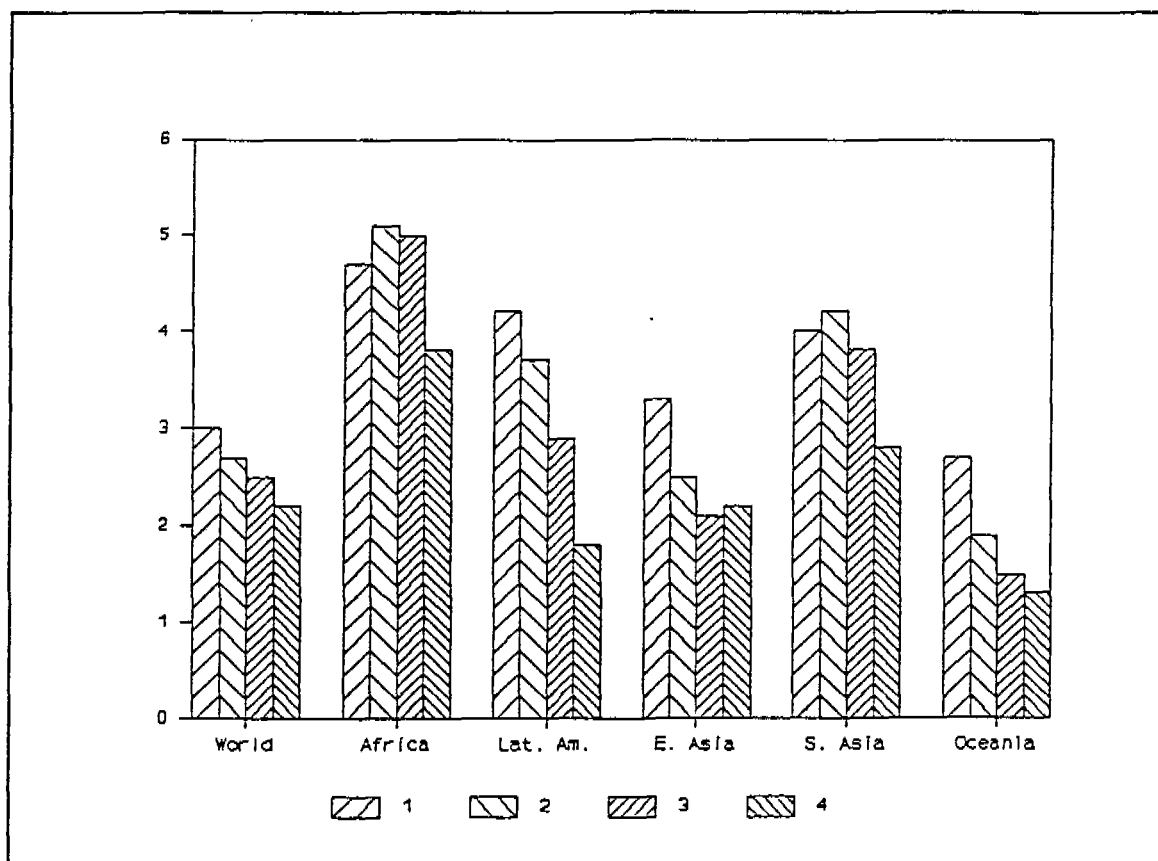
Development of urban population growth (annual percentage rate) in the World, less developed and more developed countries, 1960-2025.

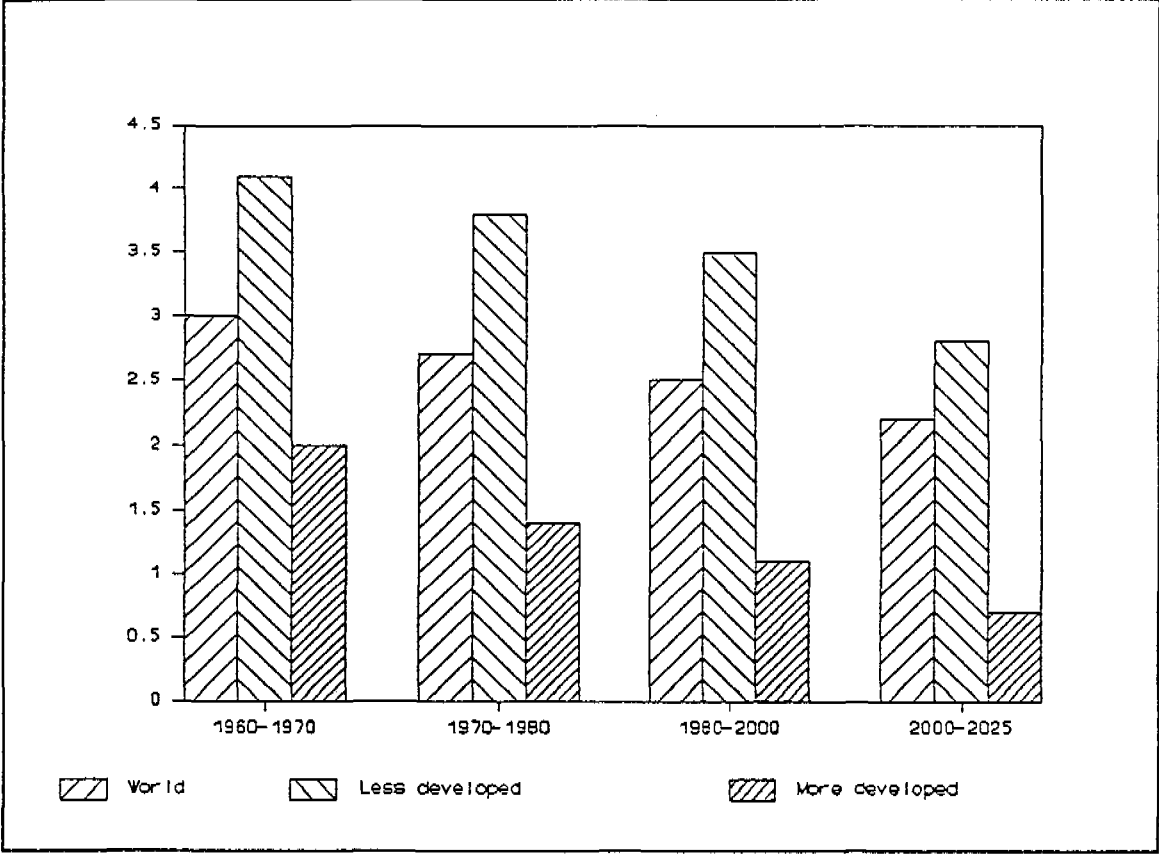
1 = 1960-1970
2 = 1970-1980
3 = 1980-2000
4 = 2000-2025

Development of urban population growth (annual percentage rate) in the World, Africa, Latin America, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania, 1960-2025.
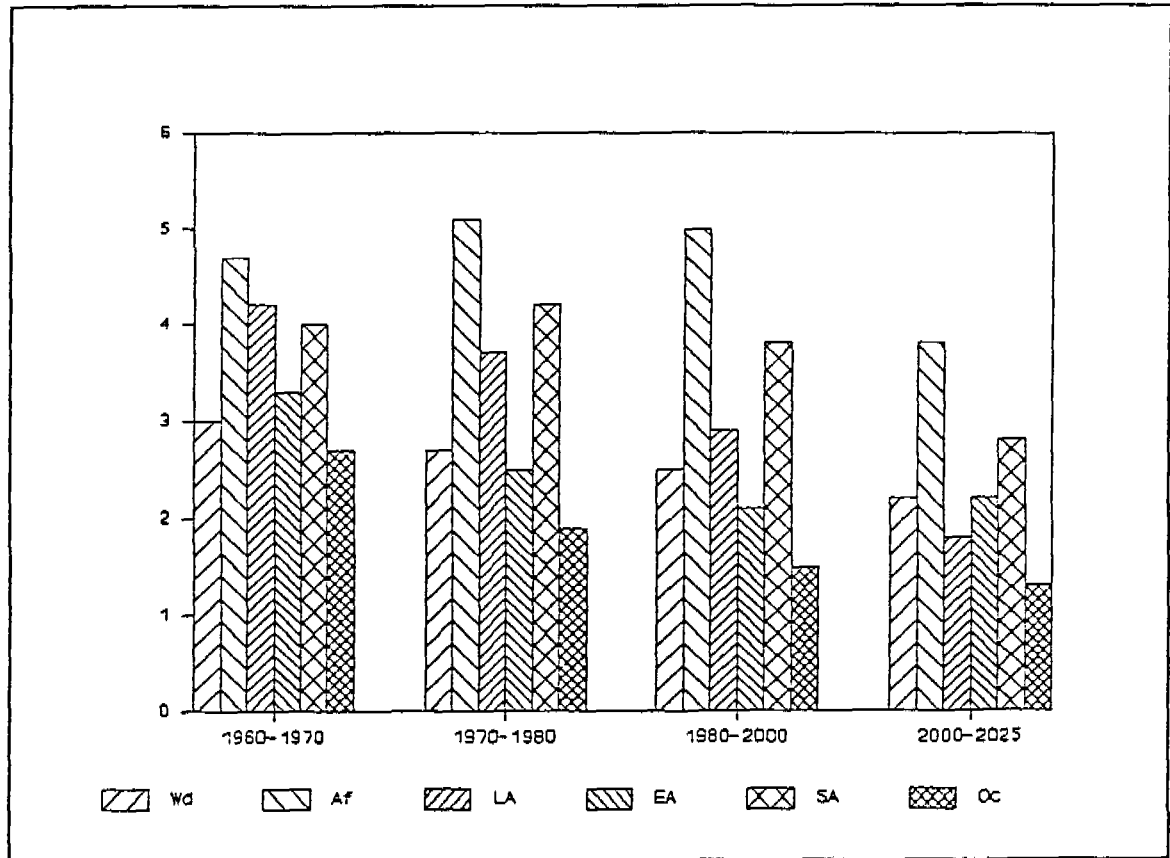

1 = 1960-1970
2 = 1970-1980
3 = 1980-2000
4 = 2000-2025

Comparison of urban population growth (annual percentage rate) in the World, less developed and more developed countries, 1960-2025.

Comparison of urban population growth (annual percentage rates) in the World, Africa, Latin America, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania, 1960-2025.

<u>Miss Atieno (Kenya)</u> : I always have hope for people in urban slums. My motivation for it is my own background. I grew up in a slum, my father was an alcoholic. Yet I made it: I have a university degree in social studies. The fact of being a young christian made a great difference to me. It gives other women like my mother also hope. It is hard to reach men because they are hardly at home.

<u>Mr. Diokno (Philippines)</u> : Is the tendency towards privatization of public services right?

<u>Mr. Whisker (SEL France)</u> : Government authorities seem to have a lack of appreciation for the market potential of poor sections of the city. Why is this?

<u>Mr. Vinay Samuel (India)</u> : Privatization of garbage collection, road maintainance, etc. would be most effective if done by the benificiaries themselves. But that is illegal. Governments must provide legal means for the poor to do it themselves.

<u>Mr. Adeney (TF UK)</u> : How do we avoid victimasation when the government comes with reaction to such initiatives?

<u>Mr. Van der Poort</u> : Public services are very often not cost-efficient. Example: 80% of water from public taps in Bangladesh leaks away or is wasted. Nobody cares about it. Governments are able to make all sorts of services available. Yet, their recommendation is to leave it to the private market. That brings in elements of cost efficiency and competition. But it always sets poor people back. You can buy anything in the third world if you have the money. The same is true for the western world. Example: the British government privatised the whole public housing scheme. People are going bankrupt because they had no choise but to buy a house.
How should N.G.O.'s relate to this tendency?
Churches should not get involved in setting up urban infra-structure, they should choose strategic positions.

<u>Mrs. Samuel (India)</u> : We must make the community we work with aware that they represent an important number of votes for politicians. Our community was silent for 5 years but during election time we made them now visible. We organized political meetings and invited politicians. That made them clear that they could get 30.000 - 40.000 votes. Now the politician who was chosen knows that he has votes in this community. We do not knock on his door anymore, we just walk in.

<u>Mr. Sobhi Zakian Ouida (Egypt)</u> : We must teach the poor about political power. If we do not, they will forget the poor when they themselves come to political power. They only will want to take revenge on the rich, neglecting their poor brothers and sisters. This is a real danger, there is a need for education in this field.

<u>Miss Gutierrez (Philippines)</u> : The Philippine government should do away with the anti-squatting law. Politicians exploit the poor. When they have come to power, they do not do anything anymore for the poor. NGO's can help in helping the people to become more organized. Roman-Catholics are politically more and more influential in the Philippines. Unfortunately they are becoming increasingly antagonistic towards evangelicals. This puts evangelical NGO's in a difficult position.

<u>Miss Atieno (Kenya)</u> : Mathare Valley in Nairobi is regarded as an unplanned settlement. There is no official interest for its development. It is difficult for the government to come with plans for an improved infrastructure. Only during elections or during visits of political VIPS something is done. After that they forget about the people in Mathare Valley. National NGO's could talk on their behalf to the government. In doing so they may become a threat to politicians.

<u>Mr. Titus (India)</u> : We are lobbying with bureaucrats, not with politicians. Politicians come and go, but bureaucrats stay. This kind of lobby is a service NGO's can give. We also build up savings from within the community before starting a credit system. With the savings we go to the bank for loans and we show them that poor people can save money.

<u>Mrs. Mesach (Indonesia)</u> : What NGO's do is always cheaper than what governments or businessmen do.

<u>Mr. Van der Poort</u> : It is far beyond the capacity of NGO's to take over major tasks of the government like sanitation, water provision, etc. In rural areas NGO's can sometimes easily be involved in water supply, but in cities such a task is too vast. In cities they may take care of certain aspects. For example: maintenance of water systems, detecting leakages, illegal taps, etc. could be the task of local committees and a NGO could be responsible for it. What is important in this context is to determine what the boundary conditions are within which NGO's can do such things.

<u>Mr. de Bruijne (chairman)</u> : In his opening speech, Jaap Bogaards, mentioned compassion as a necessary attitude of christians working in urban development. Does that not mean that we should 'go a second mile' with weak people, even if that would mean some kind of dependence?

<u>Mr. Van der Poort</u> : The question is what the developmental impact is of the so-called Family and Society Programmes. Are they more than assistential services?

<u>Mr. Jaap Bogaards (TF Holland)</u> : Compassion is not only reflected in an attitude. It also means interest and care for vulnerable people who cannot stand on their own feet.

<u>Mr. Nieuwenhuis (ZGG)</u> : If the poorest of the poor are helped they become more and more aware of their situation. As a result they rightly ask more and more help. How can we avoid that this approach collapses?

Mr. Van der Horst (DVN) : Is our fear for dependence not a western feature?

Mr. Whisker (SEL France) : Parents help their children to grow towards independence. A time of dependence is unavoidable to reach the stage of independence. Is not there a parallel for a christian duty in a worldwide christian cooperation?

Miss Gutierrez (Philippines) : Help is often a point of entry. In such cases we need to help first before we reach the point where we work towards independence.

Mrs. Samuel (India) : There is a need for evaluation how we can avoid dependence and if we succeeded in that. If someone's income has been raised, we do not need to give support anymore. We should encourage such persons in their compassion for their neighbours.

Mrs. Mesach (Indonesia) : In western society exists more dependence than in our countries. People in the West just wait for money from the government in stead of trying to look after themselves.

Mr. Van der Poort : I am not so sure that the Gospel teaches us to continue to indefinitely help the same poor. We must help them to become independent of our benevolence.
Many family help programmes do not help the benificiaries towards development. If TEAR Fund and its partners want to work towards development, they should try to develop criteria. In doing so, they should consider how to link such criteria with the strategic positions of NGO's. In that way, family help programmes might develop into more development oriented programmes.

Outline speech

THE CHURCH AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Outline of the lecture by Dr. Vinay Samuel.

INTRODUCTION

The Bible describes cities as centres of human enterprise and culture. The city of Sodom represents the depth of decay, Babylon stands for the State power incarnate. In contrast Jerusalem stands for the centre of God's power.
In the New Testament, cities are the places where the Gospel clashes with pagan culture and where the process of transformation begins.
Jezus' witness of God's presence in the city is a witness in humility. Jesus is involved in the city, in a very complex structure. This gives me my mandate to do this work with urban poor in which I have been involved for over 8 years now.

A. THE URBAN CONTEXT
   By 2000 A.D. it is projected that 43,5% of Asia will be urban. The figure of my own country India is 35%. Half of the urban residents of third world cities live in slums and shanty towns deprived of basic civic amenities.

   I wish to highlight aspects of urban culture that relate to christian mission:

   1. The city is a place of plurality.
      The plurality in lifestyle, values, etc. introduces a real crisis of identity for rural people coming to live in cities. Rural people want to save their identity. They are under constant stress in a city where they are not even a number. This easily leads to inwardness.

   2. The city is a place of power and powerlessness.
      Their is real power in the city. In Bangalore e.g. hundreds of young university graduates earn about $1,000 or so per month, whereas their parents struggle with $300 per month. At the same time, there is a strong and real experience of powerlessness, leading to alienation, marginalisation, denial of choise and access, restriction of human creativity, survival at any cost. People feel that nothing can bring change. The Bible has a message about power and powerless people!

   3. The city is a place of conflict.
      Conflict in relationships, between power groups, between structures, conflict to close the gap and maintain the gap between groups.
      E.g.: organized labour has real power, unorganized labour suffers a great deal. Organized labour will defend itself against attempts of unorganized labour to diminuish that power. We know that human divisions are broken down in Christ. What does that mean in conflicts?

   4. The city is a place of ghettoisation - changing alignments, effect on family relationships, definition of neighbours and enemies.

5. The city is a place of <u>success</u>. That means pride, success at any cost, competition, rejection of failures. You are rejected if you fail in a city. This is a contrast with rural areas.

6. The city is a place of <u>poverty</u>. That causes present time orientation, lack of impulse, control, fear, insecurity, low aspirations, pessimism, fatalism, family breakdown, also breakdown of friendship, trust, mutual help, resilience to stress, resourcefulness creativity.
Solidarity also exist, but is often restricted to situations of stress.

7. The city is a place where the <u>law</u> functions in a <u>different</u> way. There is much anomie. Law is used as a means: people use the law for what they want to reach. law does not function as a measure for protection. The life of poor people is looked upon as illegitimate – they do not pay taxes, etc. This whole feeling of informality and illegitimacy affects the poor a great deal in terms of dignity, etc.

B. THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE

Not only the church has an answer. Practically and realistically others can act as well.
In Isaiah 65:20-23 a picture is given of the city as God wants it to be. It does not change all existing structure, but some striking features are mentioned. Children will not die any more; in Bangalore I often must conduct the funeral of a child. Every time I do it, I myself am dying a bit. ^People will build houses and dwell in them. Many houses in Bangalore are built by the poor but they built them for the rich. Isaiah 65 gives a simple approach but it is very understandable for the poor.
The church's response presupposes the existence of a body of believers in the city. It is their duty to share and demonstrate the Gospel and to respond to human need.

1. Sharing & demonstrating the Gospel
   a) The wholeness of the Gospel.
      The scope of the Gospel, the struggle of the Gospel, reconciliation in Christ, abundant life, God's rule and the Gospel.
      The Gospel speaks about wholeness. We should not only try to comfort when a child dies, we must also do something about the cirsumstances causing the death of children. For a christian it is a struggle to see so many children die. That does not lead me to stretch the Gospel, but it deepens the Gospel. For me as an evangelical, the Gospel became an ideology of comfort. We can use the Gospel to legitimate our own priorities and lifestyle. But the Gospel causes struggle. Struggle against all powers which threaten life. The Gospel disturbs us when we look around in the reality of city life.

   b) The empowerment of the Gospel
      Gift of identity, child of God, family of God, restoration to stewardship of creation, enabled to be servants.

Poor city people can happily stay 4 to 5 hours in a
worship service. Outside the church they are objects,
totally powerless. In the christian community they
experience the gift of identity given to them as children
of God.
The question arises: does my being a child of God mean
anything in an urban context?
The Gospel is offered to very rich and to very poor. The
identity given by God implies that I am not only a child
of God (1) belonging to the family of God, but I become a
steward of God (2) who has access to resources and that I
become a servant of God (3). being a servant goes beyond
looking after myself, it makes me powerful.

2. Response to human need

   a) Focus on community - total need of the community, needs,
      issues, structures, groups of people, value system,
      drawing a profile of the community.
      Creating community is a real need for the city.
      The Gospel does not make sense if focussed on individuals
      only. In Western theology, there is so much focus on
      individual salvation. But the one who accepts Christ
      becomes part of a community! A community is absolutely
      needed. We have to create it: it does not exist. Where it
      exists, we have to encourage it. In the middle clase
      church where I was a pastor, we only greeted eachother at
      first and lived our own lives. We had to learn what it
      meant to be a community. It means a lot!

   b) Focus on family - working for the viability of families
      under stress. Developing support structures for families.
      The place of mutuality.
      A family is one of the most vulnerable thnings. We must
      recapture the sense of being a family. In our Indian
      context that means 4 or 5 adults and 8 to 9 children.

   c) Focus on the most vulnarable - children, disabled and
      women, in an environment where there are no welfare
      services, etc.

   d) Focus on steardship - developing right relationship to
      resources, access to resources, skills to use resources,
      opportunity to use resources, creation and development of
      resources.

   e) Focus on equity - justice & equality.
      Essential to urban development in removing obstacles to
      freedom and access, providing opportunities for a fresh
      start, address unfair advantages, rectifying unjustified
      disadvantages. Focus on providing basic needs of shelter,
      health, food, education and work opportunity.
      Giving a fresh start, which is so vital in the Gospel, is
      in contrast with the sense of Karma. A fresh start is the
      essence of jubilee. This refers to women and children too.
      Karma means acceptance of the situation because of sin in
      the past, etc. But God does not look upon sins of our
      parents in His relationship to us.

f) Focus on partnership - The church partners the poor in their own efforts at bringing transformation to the situation. The poor need partnership, not liberation from outside.

g) Focus on process - Development is a process. The church is a partner in the process. Struggle is an essential part of the progress. Struggle against all forces that seek to destroy the poor. The church's role in the process is to facilitate change with wholeness and peace. The church brings into the process values of the Kingdom of God such as forgiveness, restored relationship, sacrifice, servanthood.

C. AN INCARNATIONAL MODEL OF THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE

Emphasis on presence - sharing and responding to need.
Do not abaandon the city! This transcendent reality is not understood by post-Enlightenment Europe. We are not looking for a refuge in the city church, but we are seeking there joyful worship!

1. Establishing a presence, developing a local worshipping group.

2. Identifying a core group from the community. partnering the group in addressing the needs of the most vulnarable with local resources.

3. Relief and Welfare - responding to immediate needs - health, shelter, education, etc. building relationships, gaining acceptance and trust, learning being ourselves.

4. Building community - rejecting class-conflict, building community not by conflict or confrontation but by sharing and learning.

5. Self reliance and stewardship - skills training, employment generation, micro enterprises, etc.

6. Struggle and structural change - focus un human rights, working for change, developing just structures.

7. Servanthood - enabling the community to serve others sacrificially.

DISCUSSIONS AFTER SPEECH BY DR. VINAY SAMUEL

Mr. Jaap Bogaards (TF Holland) : There is much human concern among non-christians as well. If we enter the work, we do it with our christian attitudes and priorities.

Mr. Vinay Samuel : We make a unique contribution, let us not hide it! Others may have a unique contribution as well, but ours is a unique christian contribution.

Mr. de Bruijne (chairman) : Could not christians be part of a secular organization?

Mr. Vinay Samuel : The church has a role in modelling what society should be like, it also has a role in society.

Mr. Titus (India) : How can we translate servanthood in an organization?

Mr. Vinay Samuel : Servanthood is often invisible. A NGO becomes more and more part of the community. It is not their agenda they are filling as NGO's, they must develop a sense of the others, of their neighbours. This is a very critical point. problems in India are directly linked to the concept of the understanding of neighbours.

Mr. Zakian Ouida (Egypte) : The church is not an organization, working on the basis of organization principles. It is an organism, working on the basis of a vision. We want to serve Christ. That means that we want to serve captives of Christ' enemy. For that reason we have to serve them better, because they need to see love more than those who are not captured.

Mr. Jaap Bogaards (TF Holland) : Vinay Samuel takes the church, the local christian community as starting point for urban work. If no church exists, should we wait until a church has been planted before starting to work in the poor community of the city?

Mr. Vinay Samuel : We should not wait until then. We trained over 500 community workers. Several went into areas without a church, working with the community itself. Their christian identity does not give rise to conflict. They are deeply involved with the community and at the same time they are committed to plant churches. This is a way to start a church. It has not always been succesful. But do not wait for a church to be formed in order to be involved in a community!

Question: Should the church also be involved in politics?

Mr. Van der Poort : It is not a question of the church going into politics, but of the church making a choise for the poor. In making such a choise, the church may find the government on its way. It should not fear the conflict which may be involved in making the choise.

Mr. Vinay Samuel : We are not directly involved in politics. We took the side of the poor community. That was regarded by others as politics. What is meant by 'politics'?
It took us in our work 10 to 12 years before we got into politics like now. It just came. National NGO's should be involved in political action. They should encourage the government to legitimize the informal market. They may be backed up by international NGO's. Our own organization is presently simply claiming that the government provides space for a local market.

Mrs. Mesach (Indonesia) : It is not only a question of involvement of individual christians in politics. We should not miss the prophetic voice of the church!

Mr. Baak (OMF) : Is not there a danger that we only want to reach out to the poor, the have-nots? There are so many needy people in cities who need attention.

Mr. Vinay Samuel : That is quite true. As an example, elderly lonely people in western society are objects. Decisions directly regarding their lives are taken without them. They are powerless. An example in our society are single women becoming mothers. Their parents do not want them back home. They can not go anywhere. A choise for these people is a gospel activity. It is not only an act of compassion. The help is very real for them if they can finish their education, get trained for a job or have their child cared for while they are working.

Mr. Zijp (TF Holland) : In western society we must take responsibility for the powerless even if there are no really poor in our society.

Mr. de Bruijne (chairman) : Our western system of society security is a system of dependence as Dr. Mesach said earlier in the discussion.

Mr Van Roest (GZB) : Education can be a difficult issue if government funds are lacking. Should not foreign NGO's supply funds in such cases? If they do not, poor people will not be able to go to school.

Mr. Van der Poort : What is the primary aim of foreign funding? Is it evangelization via a school or is it development through education?

Mr. Vinay Samuel : There is no way that the government will ever support the schools that are needed. The people wants us to do it. We see real changes in their lives through education. But we remain dependent on foreign agencies for funding. There has to be education at all levels. We start to learn numbers so that people are no longer cheated at the market. This has to do with awareness-building. Priorities in education are not so easy.

Mr. Jaap Bogaards : We should distinguish between formal and informal education. Formal education leading to unemployment means a lot of frustrations afterwards. Informal education seems a higher priority.

Mr. Van der Poort : For whom is education a strategic position in urban development? Taking into account strategic choices of NGO's in urban development. Primary education is a responsibility of the government.

Mr. Oskam (ICCO) : I do not agree. We can not deny any child the right to have formal education. The issue of informal education is different. Development starts with children. Where do we go if we deny children the possibiliy of formal education? We cannot hide ourselves behind a wall called 'informal education'. We as NGO's waste much of our education funds in besidings. If we supported only simple buildings, the rest of the funds could be used for salaries. There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr. Vinay Samuel : I agree. There is no admission for many jobs without formal education.

Mr. Van der Poort : As a final remark, I want to express my fear that the development issue and the theological issue continue to be separate streams among evangelicals. I do hope for an integration!