

WHAT IS URBANIZATION?

- ☞ A process whereby populations move from rural to urban area, enabling cities and towns to grow.
- ☞ The progressive increase of the number of people living in towns and cities.
- ☞ It is highly influenced by the notion that cities and towns have achieved better economic, political, and social mileages compared to the rural areas.

CAUSES OF URBANIZATION?

- ☞ Nature of the increasing migration from rural areas to urban.
- ☞ Annexation and reclassification of previously rural areas as urban and existing increment with in spatially and population ally
- ☞ Urban growth is primarily due to industrializations, commercialization, social benefits and services, employment and modernizations and changes in the mode of living.

1. INDUSTRIALIZATION

- Industrialization is a trend representing a shift from the old agricultural economics to novel non-agricultural economy, which creates a modernized society.
- Industrialization has increased employment opportunities by giving people the chance to work in modern sectors in job categories that aids to stir economic developments.

2. COMMERCIALIZATION

Commerce and trade play a major role in urbanization. Commercialization and trade comes with the general perception that the towns and cities offer better commercial opportunities and returns compared to the rural areas.

3. SOCIAL BENEFITS AND SERVICES

There are numerous social benefits attributed to life in the cities and towns. Includes

- Better educational facilities,
- Better living standards
- Better sanitation and housing
- Better health care

- Better recreation facilities, Better social life in general.

Due to this, more and more people are prompted to migrate into cities and towns to obtain the wide variety of social benefits and services which are unavailable in the rural areas.

4. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In cities and towns, there are sample job opportunities that continually draw people from the rural areas to seek better livelihood. Therefore, the majority of people frequently migrate into urban areas to access well-paying jobs as urban areas have countless employment opportunities. Services and industries generate and increase higher value-added jobs, and this leads to more employment opportunities.

5. MODERNIZATION AND CHANGES IN THE MODE OF LIVING

Modernization plays a very important role in the process of urbanization. As urban areas become more technology savvy/perceptions together with highly sophisticated communication, infrastructure, medical facilities, dressing code, enlightenment, liberalization, and other social amenities availability, people believe they can lead a happy life in cities. As a result, people migrate to cities and the cities grow by absorbing the growing number of people day after day.

URBANIZATION PROBLEMS

Urbanization yields several positive effects if it happens within the appropriate limits. Some of the positive implications of urbanization therefore include creation of employment opportunities, technological and infrastructural advancements, improved transportation and communication, quality educational and medical facilities, and improved standards of living. However, extensive urbanization mostly results in adverse effects. Below listed points are few of them.

A- Housing problems

Urbanization attracts people to cities and towns which lead to high population increase. With the increase in the number of people living in urban centers, there is continued scarcity of houses. This is due to insufficient expansion space for housing and public utilities, poverty, unemployment, and costly building materials which can only be afforded by few individuals.

B- Overcrowding

Overcrowding is a situation whereby a huge number of people live in a small space. This form of congestion in urban areas is consistent because of overpopulation and it is an aspect that increases day by day as more people and immigrants move into cities and towns in search of better life.

C- UNEMPLOYMENT

The problem of joblessness is highest in urban areas and it is even higher among the educated people. It is estimated that more than half of unemployed youths around the globe live in metropolitan cities. And, as much as income in urban areas is high, the costs of living make the incomes to seem horribly low. The increasing relocation of people from rural or developing areas to urban areas is the leading cause of urban unemployment.

- ❑ In the developed countries the problem is primarily unemployment, with the greatest burden felt by the poor and unskilled. In most of these countries unemployment continues to be borne by the marginal labor forces such as teenagers' older workers, racial minorities and unskilled workers.
- ❑ However, because the cities of Less Developed Countries are far more overcrowded as a rule than those of More Developed Countries, a huge proportion of the population is young in the early employment period of 15-30 years of age
- ❑ The lucky ones to get jobs and up with a job that are below their capabilities in effect underemployment will be caused. The unlucky ones may resort to self-employment, such as howling opening up small food stands or small-scale shops (repair manufacturing retail...). Such members of the informal sector cluster the street of LDCs.

D- DEVELOPMENT OF SLUMS AND SQUATTERS

The cost of living in urban areas is very high. When this is combined with random and unexpected growth as well as unemployment, there is the spread of unlawful resident settlements represented by slums and squatters or sprawl. The growth of slums and squatters in urban areas is even further exacerbated by fast-paced industrialization, lack of developed land for housing, large influx of rural immigrants to the cities in search of better life, and the elevated prices of land beyond the reach of the urban poor.

E- WATER AND SANITATION PROBLEMS

Because of overpopulation and rapid population increase in most urban centers, it is common to find there are inadequate sewage facilities. Municipalities and local governments are faced with serious resource crisis in the management of sewage facilities. As a result, sanitation becomes poor and sewages flow chaotically, and they are drained into neighboring streams, rivers, lakes, or seas. Overcrowding also highly contributes to water scarcity as supply falls short of demand.

F- POOR HEALTH AND SPREAD OF DISEASES

The social, economic and living conditions in congested urban areas affects access and utilization of public health care services. Slum areas in particular experience poor sanitation and insufficient water supply which generally make slum populations susceptible to communicable diseases such as typhoid, dysentery, plague, and diarrhea. And the environmental problems such as urban pollution also cause many health problems namely allergies, asthma, infertility, food poisoning, cancer and even premature deaths.

G- TRAFFIC CONGESTION

When more people move to towns and cities, one of the major challenges posed is in the transport system. More people means increased number of vehicles which leads to traffic congestion and vehicular pollution. Many people in urban areas drive to work and this creates a severe traffic problem, especially during the rush hours.

- Another obvious effect of overcrowding, produced in part by the appearance of the automobile society in most large cities of the world today, is traffic congestion
- Superficially, this might be viewed as merely a nuisance of urban life, an aggravation of much less consequence than survival level problems of employment, housing social services etc.

H-URBAN CRIME

Issues of lack of resources, overcrowding, unemployment, poverty, and lack of social services and education habitually leads to many social problems including violence, drug abuse, and crime. Most of the crimes such as murder, rape, kidnapping, riots, assault, theft, robbery, and hijacking are reported to be more prominent in the urban vicinities. Besides, poverty related crimes are the highest in fast-growing urban regions. These acts of urban crime normally upset the peace and tranquility of cities/towns.

I- EXCESSIVE SIZE

- Excessive sizes both in population and in geographical area occupied by cities might more probably be described as a cause of problem than a problem in itself
- Even though, excessive size exists worldwide as a problem of condition, the greatest severity is now in the developing world, and where the economic base of the cities is inadequate to cope with the problems created by their excessive size.

J- SHORTAGE OF URBAN SERVICE

- With too many people in cities, city government is hard pressed to provide all human service that the residents should have or expect.
- Basic service needed such as piped water, sewage system, reliable electricity supply, garbage disposal systems, education, health care and recreational facilities are commonly inadequate in the large cities of the world, especially in the developing world.

K- SLUMS AND SQUATTERS

- ☞ **Slums-** are authorized areas of usually with **older housing**, which are **deteriorating or decaying** in the sense that they are under serviced, overcrowded, and dilapidated. They are usually located on valuable land adjacent to the central business district (CBD) (i.e. near the center of cities). However; in some LDCs cities slums can be found throughout the urban areas.
- ☞ **Squatter settlements**, on the other hand refer to settlements erected or established without official permission (i.e. unauthorized settlements established on land which the squatters do not own)
 - They are usually located at the periphery of cities. They can be new settlements created by the inhabitants to protect themselves and mobilize minimum resources available.
 - There is no minimum construction, sanitation is primarily uncontrolled and these areas generally lack essential services of an urban environment.

L- LACK OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Perhaps one of the most insidious effects of the overcrowding of cities throughout the world, especially in the 3rd world countries, is to reduce people sense of social responsibility. As more and more people compete for space and services, the competition tends to breed an everyman-for-himself attitude

M- ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

- ☞ Pollution of air and water, excessive noise levels, the qualification of the landscape through lack of planning and urban poverty is another serious worldwide problems concentrated in cities

N- URBAN EXPANSION AND LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

- Part of the process of urbanization and environmental degradation is the tremendous amount of land being consumed up by sprawl and expansion of cities, especially the giant cities
- In countries where land resource in relation to population is less favorable, the loss of agricultural land to urban or industrial sprawl is of grave concern.
- These countries use land for industrial growth and economic advancement while at the same time losing part of their ability to feed themselves. Unfortunately the best agricultural land is conventionally found close to the major cities, since this was one of site factors that accounted for the initial founding of those cities in the pre-industrial era