

AN ADDENDUM TO  
TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper is an addendum to an earlier document, "Towards A Definition of Urban Development Policy." It is a summary of the reactions of several groups of people who have reviewed the original paper.

The addendum was prepared in order to avoid misunderstanding of the purpose of the paper and repetition of matters already sufficiently reviewed. It indicates points and areas which require further clarification, and is designed to elicit fresh thinking and discussion.

The original paper has been very favorably received. Those who have reviewed it already have commented on its positive flavor and the multi-disciplinary approach and attitude which prevail. They have seen it as going a long way toward getting a focus on complicated and elusive subject-matter.

Reviewers have noted the multi-faceted relationships of urban development. This characteristic makes it not only difficult to find clear-cut course and effect relationships at a high level of generality, but also constrains the disaggregation of urban development into smaller parts for analysis and planning. The reviewers have concurred in the idea that urbanization must be viewed from a perspective that takes large account of rural-urban interaction, among other factors.

Whereas the absence of shibboleths and a catalogue of horror stories was cited as a strength, there were others who felt that the content of the paper has little relevance for the problems of urban development in the LDCs. Thus, it was urged strongly that the proposed visits in the "field" seek redefinition and restatement of the critical issues and problems, not

only reactions to a revised paper.

A number of reviewers misunderstood the purpose of the paper and, therefore, were disappointed not to find a suggested course of action. Others felt that there was confusion between policy delineation and problem definition, and asked for clarification. Still others wanted to make a sharper distinction between urban problems per se and the urban aspects of general development problems.

Several reviewers urged that the Agency's goals and its anticipated role in urban development be made more explicit. They wanted to know the kinds of urban development problems which would enlist A.I.D.'s interest and resources.

The range of observations and reactions can be seen in the two sections which follow. "General Comments" has been divided into four sections, each of which contains a list of questions and a commentary, which reflect reviewer reaction and the Urban Development Staff's response. The second section contains a list of sixty specific suggestions. They have been identified primarily by the thirteen problem areas which are discussed in the original paper. One way of treating them may be to consider them as extended footnotes to the original paper. They are presented in a manner which will facilitate this approach.

General Comments

The review sessions to date have produced a number of questions and suggestions of a more general nature. They have been summarized below in four categories. In each category there is a list of questions and a brief commentary.

The four categories are as follows: purpose and goals of the paper, the selected approach to urban development, the role of AID in urban development, and urban development and national development.

Purpose and Goals of the Paper

1. To whom is the paper addressed: A.I.D.? The LDCs? Others?
2. No distinction is made between the scope of urbanization problems in the LDCs and A.I.D.'s interest. What are the implications for A.I.D.?
3. Is the paper intended to delineate policy or to define problem areas?
4. Should the paper be restricted to a differentiation between the building of cities and urban development? What tools are required and are available for both?
5. The paper lacks a conceptual framework and a sense of priorities. Is this a problem which is inherent in the subject matter, or does the paper need restructuring? What is a meaningful conceptual framework for A.I.D. and its Bureau for Technical Assistance? The range of alternatives is not defined. What are the options?

Commentary. The Urban Development Staff is not a parallel of A.I.D. Offices in the traditional sense. Its focus is more multidisciplinary. Consequently, the focus of this paper is on discovering how the process of urban development can be improved and the points at which it is appropriate and effective to intervene with aid for fruitful collaboration in the urban development efforts of LDCs.

The paper attempts to identify and to describe briefly the universe of important urban development issues and problems and to suggest some of their policy implications. We deliberately have not tried to cast them in a conceptual framework or to assess their priority. We deliberately chose to involve various groups of knowledgeable people in the USA and overseas in these tasks. The participants represent a wide range of relevant interests, disciplines, skills, and experiences.

The goal is to identify for the Urban Development Staff and the Bureau for Technical Assistance those issues and problems of urban growth and development which

- a. are of critical importance to LDCs,
- b. are not dealt with more effectively with the aid of external assistance,
- c. are not being addressed adequately, and
- d. are within the policy and resource capabilities of A.I.D., and whose inputs would make a significant contribution toward their solution.

The Selected Approach to Urban Development

1. What are the policy and resource constraints that will impinge on our final strategy? They should be stated at the outset so that problems may be considered within these limitations.
2. Shouldn't the paper begin with a set of definitions and a statement of values? For example, what is urban, rural, urbanization, urban development, progress, development, costs, benefits, etc? Is urbanization good or bad in A.I.D.'s judgment? Why? The point is that issues of definition and interpretation could conflict with issues of policy.
3. Can useful policy generalizations be made in this area? Wouldn't it be more appropriate to start from a country-specific or even a city-specific basis and generalize from there? Even if this were to be done, what would be a meaningful level of abstraction? The problems and issues should be structured in terms of the realities in the LDC's.
4. Is the dichotomy between the two sets of problems, real and practical? If so, are they really properly characterized as "basic controversies" and "practical problems"? Or "fundamental" and "short-run"? Doesn't this characterization tend to downgrade unnecessarily and unjustifiably the second set of problems?

Commentary. Policy and resource constraints were set aside at this stage of our analysis, although we recognize their dynamic nature. Urban development represents a new emphasis for AID; indeed, it is relatively new to the entire schema of development. It is not burdened by past history or vested interests, and preconceived notions are relatively few. In light of these rather fortuitious circumstances, we felt that discussion of the topic and priorities should be full blown. On the basis of a full awareness of the larger picture, constraints are cast in a different perspective.

Obviously there are definitions for the terms employed, and we do have values. It may have been an error not to have stated these in the text; on the other hand our approach does tend to keep controversy over definitions to a minimum. Nonetheless, we recognize this as a criticism that will have to be reckoned with at some stage of the analysis. Meanwhile, we favor a fairly flexible approach to this question.

We have asserted from the outset that useful generalizations can be made and that these can form the basis for policy and program development that will be relevant to specific country situations. We are searching for broad outlines, not hair-splitting precision. Therefore, while recognizing that this question could be the subject of endless debate, we stand by our initial assertion.

We feel that the dichotomy between the two sets of problems is useful, but concede that it is misleading as characterized in the paper. A clearer statement is required. There definitely are some strong linkages between the two sets of problems, although this point is not made clear in the

basic paper. We recognize also that there are linkages between problems and issues throughout the paper, and we hope that further discussion will help to clarify these for us. In the final analysis, these linkages will have to be set out clearly.

#### A.I.D. and Urban Development

1. Is A.I.D. really "at sea" in the field of urban development? Should it get on with the necessary research, and not worry now about action-oriented or operational programs? What can be drawn from the Agency's past experience with research, experiments, etc. in various aspects of urban development? What can be learned from experience elsewhere: From other donors? In the USA? In the LDCs? Are there any universals?
2. What are the problems which are of more immediate relevance to A.I.D.'s current programs? The use of some of the more common sectoral labels would help to show the relationships between the Agency's program emphases and urban development? How can urban development programs serve other sectors whose programs affect the urban sector? What hypotheses can be tested? Which are appropriate ones for an A.I.D. focus?
3. What criteria will be used in deciding the relative emphasis on research, technical assistance, and other activities? What techniques will be used, what statistical data will be gathered, and what analytical instruments will be employed?
4. How will A.I.D. coordinate its urban development activities with those of other donors (e.g., Peace Corps, United Nations, World Bank Group, etc.)? How can these activities be used to strengthen the capability of international institutions as one role of American foreign aid? What are the

technical resources in various organizations and geographical areas?

5. How much are the LDCs involved in urban development? Do they have policies, priorities, and programs? What are their needs, requests, and technical assistance research requirements?

Commentary. To some extent A.I.D. is still "at sea" in the urban development field. A.I.D. has done little to address urban growth problems per se and in other than a sectoral approach. It is not known yet what A.I.D. should or can do. In fact, the search for answers to these questions is a primary purpose of our current work.

In addition, there are hypotheses and theories of urban growth which have not been tested. There are problems of urban growth which lend themselves more immediately to solution-seeking activities and action-oriented programs. There also are many issues, still ill-defined, about which there is insufficient information. Considerable controversy prevails over these issues. We tried to recognize these realities in our differentiation between two sets of problems, basic controversies and practical problems.

The distinction was not an attempt to assign an order of importance or relevance to problems of urban development.

The task has been postponed deliberately, in order to benefit from the thinking of others.

A cross-sectoral approach, avoiding sectoral labels, has been adopted as a method of defining the parameters of the problems and the linkages involved. It will be essential, at some point

in selecting the appropriate problem areas on which to focus, to delineate their relationship to the Agency's program emphases and to activities in the various sectors.

It is not now possible to determine how much of what kinds of activities the Urban Development Staff will develop. The nature and scope of the key problem areas which are chosen will be factors, as will budgetary and policy considerations. It is possible, for example, that the only role for A.I.D. is research in some of the difficult areas of policy. Anything other than this might be termed meddling in internal affairs. At the same time, it must be recognized that there is antagonism in some LDCs about U.S.-sponsored research, particularly where it is seen as a means of keeping U.S. researchers employed. The most desirable approach may be to make available more research opportunities and financing for LDC researchers in their own countries.

Whatever the ultimate answer, the program of the Urban Development Staff will include only selected and limited parts of the overall problem. A better knowledge base not only can help to illuminate that problem and its relationships, but also can help A.I.D. and its successor agencies as they seek profitable points of focus for the application of admittedly limited resources.

The appropriateness, capabilities, and activities of other sources and instrumentalities of assistance also are important considerations in making decisions about the nature and scope of the U.S. role in this field. Contact and consultation have been established with other donor organizations, and it is expected that they will be ongoing.

Likewise, other major factors in determining the why, what, and how of American involvement in urban development overseas are the perception of needs and the urban development policies, programs, and resources in the LDCs, as well as the credibility of U.S. help. Perhaps one of the distinctive aspects of our participation in collaborative efforts in urban development with the LDCs is the mutuality which is involved. We have much to learn about effective ways of addressing our own problems of urban growth!

#### Urban Development and National Development

1. What kinds of problems are peculiarly generic to urban development? What is the distinction between an urban development problem and a problem which is related to urban development? What are the relationships?
2. What is the relationship between urban development and national development? This interface is neither widely recognized nor well established. There are many relationships and they are multi-faceted. But how can generalizable cause and effect relationships be established? Where can you begin to affect the chain of causality? In what situations is urban development the dependent or the independent

variable? What factors within urban development are dependent and which are independent?

3. Assuming that urbanization is an inevitable force, what are the consequences of ignoring it? Are there no alternatives to urbanization?

Commentary. We are not convinced that making a distinction between urban development problems and urban development-related problems is a useful exercise at this stage of the art. It would have dubious merit until the relationships between urban development and other facets of development are understood more fully. Moreover, we purposely have avoided a sectoral approach in order to get at these relationships, and it is conceivable that a clear distinction between urban development and urban development-related problems will prove neither useful nor possible. The core of urban development is the dynamics of human location and settlement. It is a phenomenon which is influenced by every facet of human existence. The questions asked in point 2, as those in point 1, are central to much of our analysis as set forth in main paper. That the relationship between urban development and national development is neither widely recognized nor well established is part of the challenge of this assignment. It is significant and a sign of

forward motion that such penetrating questions are being asked. This kind of question is relatively new to developmental disciplines and will be a focus which we will share with other individuals and organizations in this field. We have no ready answers.

We join those who are convinced that urbanization is an inevitable force and that there are as yet no viable alternatives. We are also persuaded that man can turn urbanization to his own purposes, maximizing the positive and minimizing the negative. The consequences of ignoring it, we believe, are more serious problems (and more missed opportunities) than would result by dealing with it. This question is more than academic in its implications, and careful analysis can lead to a wiser selection of priorities.

#### SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

Among the many specific suggestions which have been made in order to strengthen the paper for its intended use, are the following:

##### A. Headings

1. The headings create problems and tend to be obscure. For example, "Skilled Manpower" is used when what is meant is the development of the skills which are needed to carry out urban development activities.
2. Play down "Basic Controversies." This emphasizes doubt and uncertainty, and encourages postponement of action or the ignoring of those problems.

B. Introduction

3. The introduction (pp 1-2) does not set the scene adequately. There should be a brief contextual comment on some of the pressures for urbanization, such as the population explosion, the green revolution, etc.
4. Recognize that there are various forms and patterns of urbanization which will need to be disaggregated, in order to get a better grasp of the subject.
5. Sharpen A.I.D.'s concern for and interest in urban development, in order to avoid the possible misconception that urban development is seen as an A.I.D. problem. A definition of A.I.D.'s interests is an appropriate concluding paragraph.
6. There are many assumptions made, and some of them are not so labeled, especially in paragraph 4 on page 2.
7. The paper contains a number of ambiguities. Note especially page 2: "urbanization", "social and economic progress"; page 3, paragraph 2: more than economics affluence is needed; etc.
8. What is meant by a "comprehensive systems approach" (p. 2, last sentence)?

C. #1 - Growth (pp. 5 - 7)

9. The question should be rephrased: What are the goals of urbanization? Certain types of urbanization are amenable to certain types of growth. Growth and urbanization patterns are determined by the goals of soci-economic development.

10. Perhaps #1 should be amalgamated with #2, and should not stand alone. The examples of policy options and implications are considered elsewhere in the paper, too.
11. The universe of conceptualization is limited, for example, by the implied definition of the rate of urbanization on page 6, paragraph 2. How does rapid urbanization influence development?
12. What controls are appropriate in democratic countries to deal with the rates of urbanization?
13. Are there really "push" and "pull" factors (p. 7, para. 1)? Is "keeping them down on the farm" still a viable alternative?

D. #2 - Determinants of Growth (pp. 7 - 9)

14. A better way to state the question is "Will urban growth continue?" The paper seems to assume that it will.
15. The course of urban growth is almost a trival question, even though it is a determinant of policy. Of more consequence are the following factors: rural-urban interaction, migration, fertility, etc.
16. In order to get at the root causes of urban growth, population and economic base studies are needed. Are there non-functional reasons for urban growth?

E. #3 - Distribution of Growth (pp 9 - 11)

17. The "for instance" which is used on page 10, paragraph 3, is not clear. It also contains assumptions about rural-urban relations which take as givens certain rates of productivity. The example distracts from and does not clarify the basic issue.

F. #4 - Structural Pattern of Growth (pp. 11 - 13)

18. Should #4 and #7 ("Structure of the Urban System") be combined?

Is the primate city a point of sufficient worth or controversy to stand alone?

19. Structure is a more basic concern. Its focus is not only the primate city, but also geographical factors, transportation, etc.

20. The question is, "Why the primate city? It is not a question of its relative merits.

21. Omit value-laden words and phrases (such as "optional", "efficient urban growth", etc.) and technical terms (such as "primacy", "Backwash effect", etc.).

G. #5 - Consequences of Growth (pp. 13 - 15)

22. Is it really a controversial issue? Should it be placed in the second set of problems?

23. Economic factors and ecological considerations should be included.

24. The readiness of the new immigrant for change and new ideas should be stressed.

25. The idea of "planned slums" should be included; that is, areas with some standards, if not many amenities.

H. #6 - Management of Growth (pp. 16 - 18)

26. Is this really a controversial matter, or does it belong in the other set of problems?

27. The potential in LDCs may or may not be greater. The comment in the paper (p. 6, para. 1) may stir up arguments which are tangential to the purpose of the paper.

28. Stress the potential in LDCs for doing more in urban development because of the fewer legal and governmental jurisdictions (e.g., in contrast to the federal-state-local diversity in the USA). See further, suggestion #49, infra.
29. There is no generalized approach to civic participation or administrative coordination (p. 17). Planning must be done on a case-by-case basis.
30. The points are insufficiently linked. For instance, there is a gap between individual behavior and government policy in the management of growth. Can dealers continue to sell cars, for example, and at the same time not be required also to sell a piece of the road which that car requires? What is the relationship of low mortgages to encourage home ownership and the cost of the required services for that home? Urban living has more than linear dimensions and proportions.

I. #7 - Structure of the Urban System (pp. 18 - 21)

31. Should #7 be combined with #4 (Structural Pattern of Growth)?
32. This issue may be the key to the concern which was expressed in problem #6, supra; i.e., reducing the dissonance between planning and implementation.
33. What is the role of regional (sub-national) economics in addressing this problem area?
34. It might be useful to generalize on the basis of various forms and patterns of urbanization (problem area #4, supra), and then disaggregate in order to find the developmental handles.

35. Stress the nature of the administration and coordination within a governmental system and the relationship to the structure among municipalities within a country.

J. II - #1 - Skilled Manpower (pp. 23 - 25)

36. The heading is misleading. (See suggestion #1, supra.) The concern is about skilled manpower which is needed to address urban development problems, not skilled manpower in the usual sense.

37. There should be included among the recommended actions on pages 24 - 25: para. (a), a search for significant strategic opportunities to improve urban planning and management skills; and para (c), grants to international organizations (e.g., International Federation for Town and Country Planning, Inter-American Planning Institute, etc.).

K. II - #2 - Application of Scientific Knowledge and Technological Innovations  
(pp. 25 - 27)

38. The U.S.A. must come to grips with the potential problem of an enlightened self-interest which could encourage the curtailment of rapid urbanization and/or industrialization overseas.

39. The dangers of overpopulation are beginning to be matched by the dangers of overindustrialization, in terms of the ability of earth's resources to cope with the demands, exploitation, pollution, and other consequences.

40. Environmental concerns (pollution, waste disposal, etc.) may be premature for some regions and some countries, in terms of conscious needs and priorities. One of the ways of creating awareness is to

have urban development personnel from LDCs do environmental and pollution research projects in the U.S.A. and other more developed countries.

41. There may be political reasons for encouraging capital-intensive, rather than labor-intensive, technology in some countries. The strength of labor unions and the nature of their leadership and orientation may be constraints.

L. II - #3 - Use of Improved Techniques and Approaches for Decision-Making  
(pp. 27 - 29)

42. How the LDCs make decisions is important. If the priority is on economic development, then this become the structure for decision-making. Urban development would be added to that conceptual framework.

43. It is inadvisable for TA/UDS to become operational until the analytical tools are in hand for determining the nature and magnitude of urban development problems.

44. Risk decisions must be made on the basis of fingertip statistics. The essential ingredient is a continuing evaluation of those decisions and their consequences.

45. Beware of cost-benefit analysis, a much-abused engineering concept which is not consistent with a systems approach. A capital expenditure budget would be a better technique.

46. Section (e), page 29, on standards needs clarification. What is the thrust of the comments.

M. II - #4 - New Modes of Analysis (pp. 29 - 31)

No suggestions made.

N. II - #5 - Socio-Economic Inputs in Planning (pp. 31 - 33)

47. The heading should be the "Social, Political, and Economic Inputs in Planning."

48. Beware of the dysfunctions of urban planning, especially when it is too narrowly conceived and/or implemented.

O. II - #6 - Service Systems (pp. 34 - 37)

49. A strong, centralized form of government was inherited from colonial days and has continued for good reasons in many LDCs. However, there is need now to aid in the development of urban government; not only the necessary skills and competence, but also the required powers (e.g., the power to tax). Urban government is essential to meaningful national development.

P. Omissions

50. An evaluation of national policies, as they relate to urban development.

51. A functional analysis of cities in LDCs.

52. A more direct confrontation with the rural-urban dichotomy.

53. Sufficient focus on the economics of urban development; i.e., taxation, pricing of goods, fiscal policies, sources of revenue at various levels, etc.

54. The role of the private sector in urban development.

55. The transfers and trade-offs within urban development and the urban sector and between them and other sectors and considerations.

56. The importance of training in urban development.

57. ~~Hard-biting~~ facts and figures.

Q. Program Approaches

58. Fund faculties and schools in urban planning in LDCs, in order to strengthen training and research. Encourage development of research opportunities for technical and professional people in the LDC's, not for U.S. researchers to do research in the LDCs.
59. Support research in the U.S.A. and overseas with a sense of mutuality and openness and independent of political and policy restraints.
60. Develop a tool kit for problem-solving in urban development at the policy-making level. (For example, if one wants to do X under ABC conditions, these are the tools to use). The current state of the art permits little more than that to be done.