

Villes en développement



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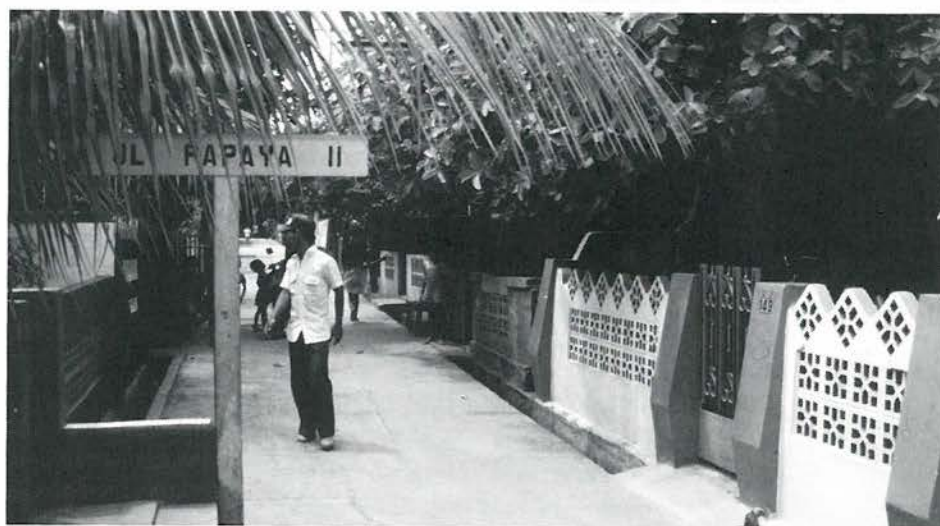
The urban environment

1992 will be the year of the environment. The concerted effort in the North by Environment and Development Ministers organized by the OECD and backed by the Non-Governmental Organizations who are preparing the United Nations environment and development conference for June 1992 in Rio, expresses the will of the international community to make durable development a shared aim.

By choosing the urban environment theme for its information and meeting Day in September 1991, the ADP sought to contribute to this thinking. Actually although leading donors are once again taking the environmental dimension of urban development into consideration, projects and programs in the sector are still at an embryonic stage.

The various contributors whose papers are resumed in this issue throw new light on the environmental approach to cities; thus a real change of method is being put forward. Forecasting catastrophes natural or linked to human activities propagating appropriate techniques, getting local bodies into action, adopting principles, methods or procedures born of an environmental approach; these are the challenges specialists must meet.

This extract from the report presented at the general assembly of the United Nations in the fall of 1987 by Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland could well sum up the conclusions of the Day : "Very few of those responsible for local authority management in developing countries have the power, the resources and the skilled personnel they need to make available to ever growing numbers of city dwellers the land, the services and the utilities that human beings need to live decently : healthy water, sanitary installations, schools and transportation.



Bogotá : Improvements to a pedestrian street

Sustainable development in towns will depend on closer cooperation with the poor element of the population who make up the majority and who are the real city builders." We hope that these ideas suggested to our partners in the South will be favorably received and translated into action at political level and through programs initiated in city

contexts that will reposition them by a logic that links environment to development.

Xavier Crepin,
President of the ADP (Association of
urban development and cooperation
experts)

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The ADP day 1991

The subject of the traditional September ADP Day held in the lecture-room of the National Bridges and Highways School (ENPE) was "Environment and Development". The Day was intended to give members of the Association an up-to-date viewpoint on new aspects of town planning in developing countries, at the same time giving the Association's well-wishers the opportunity to take part in an enriching debate. It lived up to its promises. Basing his ideas on a study of the La Paz environment, Mr. Mazure of the Geological and Mining Research Bureau (BRGM) firstly showed just how rewarding town planning can be when placed in the framework of a master program with well orientated factual information. We look forward to an interpretation of scientific data in terms of constraints or opportunities, faced with the needs, the nuisances, and the inhabitants — a real mapping out of land potentials and pressure on the natural milieu. Mr. Y. Chéret is a Bridges and Highways Engineer (IGPC) who started his career in Africa dealing with water problems and was a founder of the Basin Agencies in France. In the light of his experience he wanted to show the advantage — or even the necessity — of standing back a little when looking at simplistic transpositions of techniques and methods used in rich countries to solve hygiene and health problems through the distribution of drinking water, without considering investment capabilities and particularly maintenance and the management of communities on the receiving end. Performance levels are counterproductive when drinking fountains are surrounded by stagnating water, and dirty cans are used for transportation or storage. A wider approach to the sanitary environment, leaving more scope for the education of inhabitants — especially women — can both increase the chances of improving real service quality and lower the costs of reaching the required target. Mrs. Ta Thu Thuy conducts and formalizes work in the field of urban environment for the ministry of Cooperation and development. She endeavored to point out the close relationship that exists between progress in environmental management and the more general idea of making local authorities — starting with the smallest — aware of their responsibilities in all their living conditions. Environment and democratization are two aspects of the same

reality, she said, and must go hand in hand if they are not to be mixed up in too global an approach.

Mr. Y. Cannat, author of the book "The Town behind the Shanties", inspired by a long experience of social enquiries and two "world tours" of urban minorities, testified to the reversal of perspectives clearly seen at present in the world in favor of social categories that have seen their social status suffer the most from the dramatic pressures of the western consumer society. Whether or not helped by Non-Governmental Organizations, many oppressed minorities are organizing themselves and taking control of their destiny again thanks to this very mastery of their environment, considered here as all the physical, economic and political conditions which make up the close-knit context in which they have to live. In his opinion great hope is dawning.

Messrs. François Lecarpentier and Louis Lhopital, both members of the French Association of Volunteers for Progress, gave practical proof of the validity of an overall approach to small communities, in this case a little town on the Ivory Coast. They recounted their experience of an intervention in the setting up of an urbanization plan to help various social categories, backed up and informed by freely-formed youth associations and non-native groups so as to take their particular wishes into account and to encourage suitable adaptation to their way of life and greater self-sufficiency.

In response to questions from conferees speakers had to specify a number of points. Many gave their own interpretation of the word 'environment' but there was general agreement that the environment is clearly an unavoidable basis for development action. This was also an opportunity for Mr. Castella of the Ministry for Cooperation and Development to reply to a request for information about ministry policies, in line with the La Baule (on the Atlantic coast, 50 km west of Nantes) speech — less intervention and more backing for local initiatives, both to basic communities and to decentralized relationships. We heard a timely reminder about the long established tradition of "community development" in English-speaking countries, which has no equivalent in French Cooperation in spite of joint action attempts at all levels and the growing role of Non-Governmental Organizations (ONG).

Mr. Arnaud wound up the Day on behalf of the Association. While avoiding taking sides in the debate about the 'environment' definition he nevertheless pointed out the risk of removing the word's real meaning through overuse. But the importance of close environment management has to be recognized in the learning of self-sufficiency and the construction of a society capable of mastering its own future.

Antoine Olavarrieta, SCIC-AMO

The physical instability of mega-cities : a beacon program in the international decade for the prevention of natural catastrophes.

Backed by the international union of scientific consultants (UICS) and the Metropolis Association, the aim of this program is the design and testing of natural disaster warning and prevention systems. Based on studies of existing systems in four capitals, the program includes a research section and the development of pilot programs in capitals badly (or not at all) equipped to deal with major risks. A priori it should concern major cities in developing countries. A budget of 10 million dollars is envisioned.

The town of La Paz, very susceptible to landslides and flooding, was selected for the phase 1 "case study", along with Los Angeles, Tokyo and Moscow. As part of the master program preparation in 1976 and 1977 for this capital city a very detailed study of urban milieu environmental factors was carried out by BRGM and BCEOM, backed by SMUH. This led to a novel environmental planning method for urban development. Since then the World Bank has financed the installation of flood prevention and geotechnical instability devices, allowing the reclamation of 17 % of potential urbanization surfaces.

Philippe Mazure

The impact and prevention of natural catastrophes in urban areas

A roundup by François Noisette of the paper presented at the ADP day - Cooperation and urban environment, september 6, 1991, by Philippe Mazure (of the Geological and mining research bureau)

The development of mega-cities directly increases the consequences of dangerous major natural phenomena on human societies. City sites a few hundred or thousand years ago were not chosen as a result of risk analysis. In the year 2000 cities will house 50 % of the world's population, or 3.5 billion humans, on 0.7% of emerged land surfaces. The number of exposed city sites, the loss of inhabitants' sensitivity to natural phenomena, the impact of human activities, and modifications to the environment all combine together to lead to a rapid increase in the number (6 % per annum) of people affected by major catastrophes, 90 % of which have natural causes. The phenomena involved are earthquakes, storms (cyclones, hurricanes or tornados), tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, subsidence, erosion, floods, landslides, and fires. Taking these phenomena into account, as much from the technical as from the economic standpoint, leads to the drawing up of strategies for handling the corresponding risks that environmental studies must try to estimate before launching firm projects.

A risk (R) is defined as the product of foreseeable damage (D) which is a function of social, economic or institutional vulnerability by a hazard (H) or probability that the phenomenon will occur, considered over a given period - $R = D \times H$. Vulnerability (V) is the quotient of damage costs (C) by the value of the patrimony (P) exposed to the phenomenon - $V = C/P$.

In developing countries, natural catastrophes may put a real brake on development. Vulnerability is much greater there than in industrialized countries : for phenomena of comparable intensity the number of victims is 150 times higher, while losses borne by the GNP are 20 times more costly. A specific example is the damage caused by the 1972 Managua earthquake which represented 209 % of the gross national product. The majority of the 450 towns with a population topping the million mark in the year 2000 are situated in developing countries.

Urban growth management is where disaster



Yaoundé : flooding in the railroad station area

prevention can be taken into account, as much technically as financially. It is a question of limiting brutal investment and production losses, but also of significantly improving population safety a fundamental human right. Risk management can quite naturally be built into strategies of long term integrated development and can ensure a stable balance between cities and their environment, offering inhabitants acceptable social and economic safety levels and quality of life. These strategies must favor the common interest in difficult contexts that encourage short term and private interests (the classifying of land promised to profitable speculative land deal operations into non-building zones). They must take into account the psychological resistance of poor populations who know little about the risks, and are consequently very fatalistic. From the strictly technical point of view, the most frequent hazard analyzing methods have now become standard (e.g. soil instability, flooding). For more unusual or more complex phenomena such as volcanoes and earthquakes, the analytical programs suppose the development of more sophisticated methods little known in developing countries which greatly increase the costs of studies before a real North-South training and technology transfer policy can be set up.

These technical evaluation hazard analyses plus vulnerability (social, material, institutional, economic and environmental)

must be carried out as part of global thinking on urban and regional development. They lead to the specifying of preventive measures and information which can then be included in documents and planning policies. This approach supposes a genuine local political desire to prevent and reduce natural catastrophes.

The cost of such studies may seem high, but it should be noted that there is no shortage of emergencies. Although overall "profitability" of these investments is difficult to demonstrate a priori, it is however broadly confirmed by an examination of the consequences of catastrophes which have occurred in different parts of the world.

Once preventive measures have been adopted, the handling of catastrophes that cannot be completely forecast has to be prepared for. The main factors are how to coordinate public and private services at crisis time, procedures for informing and alerting populations possibly accompanied by a training program putting emergency plans into operation and mobilizing emergency services.

Philippe Mazure, BRGM

Improving the Sokoura neighborhood district, from initial participation to environmental problems

In 1987 the Ivory Coast commune of Aboisso and its 18,000 inhabitants situated 80 km east of Abidjan was chosen, along with 12 other provincial towns, to benefit from a program of support to Ivory Coast local authorities, financed by US AID.

This program concentrated mainly on implementing economical installations such as bus stations or central markets. In the Aboisso case a pilot reorganization scheme of the biggest problem neighborhood, Sokoura, completed the land status regularization program. In June 1991, 17 months after the start, the Sokoura district rehabilitation project started the pre-allocation of plots to the 600 households living in the neighborhood. Seventy-five of them moved to new sites specially prepared because of the new road layout or the unhealthy conditions of their old dwellings. Fifty-five others, affected by the realignment of their house fronts willingly undertook the demolition of their homes so as to rebuild within the new demarcation lines. This stage is particularly symbolic as regards the history of this neighborhood from which the inhabitants have already been driven out twice in 1977 and 1987. It took place jointly between the town hall and the inhabitants on the basis of a negotiated priority checklist. The following month the first major road works started.

Although not very striking in terms of physical construction, this operation is however remarkable in the sense that between these two dates (1987 and 1991) the nature of the objectives changed. Going from a reorganization to a rehabilitation project and letting drop a regularization procedure in favor of a legalization one is no small step. It was originally planned to regularize only what complied with the law, whereas in the end the law was revised without altering its spirit, so that existing features could be preserved as much as possible. The reasons for this "mutation" should be sought in the converging behaviors of the three main partners of the project, who had however distinctly different reasonings. They were: the Aboisso town council, the State technical services who were also the on-site operators, and the French Association of Volunteers for Progress (AFVP).

Firstly the town hall showed a clear desire to dialog with the inhabitants of Sokoura. It was not simply a question of having them agree to the project strategy, but rather to work together and - to a certain extent - to negotiate with them about what the neighborhood rehabilitation was to be.

By adhering to decentralization procedures, the State technical services for their part - especially the Control Board for Major Works (DCGTX) - were eager to show that they could play a new, active role with municipalities in the technical and legal fields.

For the Volunteers for Progress it seemed essential to understand what the Sokoura neighborhood was all about, what its history and its aspirations were. Such on-site knowledge appears vital if a coherent, apposite organization project mode is to be implemented.

The event that triggered this evolution was undoubtedly the updating of urban data collected in 1987 by the AFVP volunteers during the first five months of their stay. With a deeper understanding of Sokoura, this work allowed politicians and technicians to become aware that the operation could only succeed if inhabitants' real estate interests were truly guaranteed. This supposes that regularization formalities develop into legislation that allows not only real estate but also social contacts in the neighborhood to be preserved.

Thus the whole Sokoura land development project design submitted to the town hall in September 1990 was guided by this consideration. It required a lot of to-ing and fro-ing of technicians between their drawing offices in Abidjan and the neighborhood streets. An almost permanent liaison between the town hall and its technical services, the inhabitants, a neighborhood association (the AFUAS - Association of the United Brothers of Aboisso Sokoura) and the Volunteers for Progress was essential. Finally it allowed the society of Sokoura, represented by its town councilmen and traditional chieftaincy, not only to promote its interests and its constraints but also to strengthen its political and social cohesion.

This first phase, which still has to be officially endorsed by the prefectural department,

should now lead on to the real improving and fitting out of the neighborhood. There are already signs of initiatives and goodwill, but this relative success should not overshadow some shortcomings shown up in the first evaluations.

The environmental point of view for example was no doubt insufficiently taken into account the appearance of new gravel pits in the poor parts of the district, thus preventing agricultural use or pedestrian movements, is regrettable. As the rainy season approaches families have to rebuild their homes, maintaining an urgent demand for sand and gravel, taking turns with neighborhood jobbers, the "cinder block cadgers" who work the local diggings.

Improvements to new rehousing areas and the opening of access roads have caused deterioration of plant life and erosion phenomena caused by water. The families only accepted rehousing on condition they remained in Sokoura.

Socially speaking it can be seen that the point of view and the hopes of certain population categories in Sokoura - women and religious minorities in fact - were not sufficiently taken into account. But once the principle had been adopted that Sokoura society was adult and responsible enough to decide for itself who should represent it, what else could have been done? How far should the volunteers have gone in their main function as mediators between all parties without being accused of meddling? The problem cannot really be solved by this sort of question.

The stakes in this neighborhood project should be situated more at decision level - decisions which, without exception, inevitably have both positive and negative consequences. These are consequences that must not only be assessed but above all explained straightforwardly to deciders, whether they be local officials or simple citizens.

This is certainly the aspect which still needs to be developed in Sokoura.

François Lecarpentier, AFVP

The urban environment : objectives and methods

Behavioral mutation : environmental transition

The past two decades have seen the environment emerge as a major planetary preoccupation that started in a slow disorganized way in a philosophical and political climate of conflict. It is at present in an acceleration phase permeating among all fields of thinking. But above all it is entering a structuring rather than an action phase. Today is as much the time of debates of belief as it is of the search for actions to undertake in the field of development.

In terms of behavioral consequences one of the most fruitful ideas produced by this preoccupation with the environment is the notion that we live in a world of finite rather than infinite natural resources.

Renewing the social debate and the organization of city life : bringing awareness home.

Awareness of responsibility is a basic principle of environmental action. On the one hand, there is no "truth" and so no defensible, authoritative, environmental behavior. On the other hand, understanding the finite nature of resources leads to stimulation of everyone's imagination, intelligence and citizen's participation. This brings out important uncertainties about the future and the long term impact of decisions. An effort to improve technical and scientific knowledge and the popularization of information are preconditions to responsible awareness which grows through information and concerted efforts. Concerted efforts should not however mean disorganized opinion and suggestion swapping, but rather an organized and productive well defined "role playing" framework. All have to know their own rights and duties as well as those of the others, the rules of course evolving in line with open transparent social consensus.

Bringing awareness to city societies comes about through the acceptance and impetus of new community partners. Thus huge efforts, and not just financial ones, are possible. Increasing the number of partners must be carried out imaginatively, credibly and harmoniously.

These partners may be new institutional structures (from local authorities to State communities depending on the scale of the problems), the populations themselves (neighborhood committees) or associations, a major mobilization device in advanced democracies.

Methods for environmental action in urban development in Africa

Generally speaking, environmental action has two distinctly different types of goal: supporting development activities on the one hand and the protection of physical and biological milieus on the other hand.

Action can be specified in respect of four pragmatic principles :

- Scientific knowledge and constant attention to assessment.

- Distribution of information, its implications such as awareness, education, communication, etc., great care being taken to prepare the following stage.

- Bringing awareness to a maximum number of individual and community interlocutors.

- Regulations, and the means of control and operation. This last principle is nothing more than the formal written account of the state of scientific knowledge and social consensus at a given moment, and so must constantly evolve. It gives valuable guidelines for the construction of environmental action.

The procedure proposed for introducing an environmental dimension into African urban

areas is based on two approaches :

- A functional approach : this is city management and questions that are included in urban environment in the strict sense of the term.

- An anticipatory approach: this deals with the impact of development brought about by a town on the regional environment and natural resources.

Cities are generally defined as a concentration of people and goods where economic transfers are accompanied by demographic, social, cultural, political and environmental transfers. These are considerable factors that make cities places from where a future world's behavior patterns will emerge. Cities also look like "the place for all dangers", precisely because of this concentration of inhabitants, wealth, and flow which explains both why there is a high potential for catastrophes to happen and a high potential impact when they do.

African towns and their populations have fragile, evolving situations that we must endeavor to know and understand if we are to deploy and not destroy what may be trump cards in the future. The development schemes proposed, as well as environmental actions, are mostly the result of western experience. Without going to extremes either of technical transfers because of the progress they offer, or of immobility that just preserves and questions, we have to be aware of the differences of urban context between European and African countries.

Mrs. Ta Thu Thuy, OPTIME

Caracas : Buildings on Steep Slopes



Urban sanitation

Study on the management of solid and liquid Waste in African urban areas.

Some dynamic thinking

Many initiatives aimed at improving the sanitary conditions of urban and semiurban populations have been launched by various professional training and development study organizations. The African union of water distributors (UADE), considered that the weighty problems of urban sanitation were inseparable from those of drinking water supplies. It therefore initiated several activities in this field including the creation and setting up of a working group. This group includes representatives from African bilateral (France and Germany) cooperation countries, the International cooperation Board of the International water office (DCI-CEFIGRE), the Inter-African Committee for hydraulics research (CIEH) and the Regional water purification group for West Africa (GREA). It drew up the following study project on urban sanitation in Africa.

A Novel View

Sanitation improvements to an urban environment are not only a consequence of economic growth, but also one of its causes. To reinforce this growth we therefore have to imagine means of improving sanitation for the whole town with limited financial, human and technical means.

The question that springs to mind is: **Is it possible to let go of the standard model of two overlapping towns, the "modern town" and the "town left to its own devices", the one with normal service and the other with a cut price service ?**

To answer this question alternative ideas have been, and still are being, attempted. The language testifies to this — adapted technology, soft technology, intermediate technology. But these expressions all refer to technical aspects, **whereas cleaning up a town is no doubt more economic, urbanistic, sanitary, cultural, social, educational, political and and statutory than technical.**

These questions also have institutional, legal

and economic repercussions. Whereas it is in the nature of a sewerage system to need centralized management, other sanitation questions in an urban environment which require not one but several techniques may be suitable for a decentralized approach that takes into account **all the intervening parties : state and municipality, private and informal sector, populations. This type of approach is the opposite of technocratic and economic approaches and the simplistic policies they originated; it requires population participation, with government bodies no longer intervening except to lend support. For the gamble is to coordinate the actions of bodies hardly used to working together, and to recognize the non negligible role that certain sectors of activity in "sanitation action" can play, and to develop them.** Lastly, the task is to train these new partners and make them sensitive to a novel vision of urban sanitation. All these approaches should be examined through project studies that have varying degrees of innovative features. It is only by examining what has actually been done and by analyzing what works that the designing of new sanitation strategies for African urban environments can be attempted.

Objectives and Methodology

The aim of the project is to give deciders in African countries elements of information that allow them to draw up development strategies for environmental urban sanitation, and to identify priority programs. Through the identification of institutional or investment development projects, the aim is also to supply elements capable of making easier the setting up of social, technical, administrative and financial schemes.

The program as planned will be carried out under the supervision of the working group, to which will be associated representatives of countries, finance organizations and specialists in the sector. The financing of the project is underwritten by the French Cooperation and, very probably, by the German Cooperation.

This project has 4 phases the first two of which have already been completed :

Phase 1 includes for all African countries : (A) The drawing up and sending by UADE to all the national institutions concerned of

a questionnaire relating to the sector. (B) The collecting by UADE, with the assistance of DCI-CEFIGRE, of national or regional documents relating to the sector, to research work and to projects, concerning countries, documentation centers, funding and cooperation organizations and study and training organizations.

Phase 2 consists of an analysis by DCI-CEFIGRE of the elements assembled during the first phase and a proposition for a methodological approach for phase 3.

A reasonable response rate of 50% confirms the interest of the reflection involved.

Phase 3 consists of the drawing up of case studies and identification sheets by DCI-CEFIGRE and UADE of "pioneer projects" covering the management of liquid and solid wastes in Africa. So far 19 projects throughout the whole African continent have been selected.

Even before analyzing these projects in detail it is clear that innovation is taking place at present in institutional and organizational spheres, while the techniques proposed remain very traditional. France's poor financial efforts are unfortunate.

Phase 4 concerns the dissemination of training and also sensitization. The final report will serve as the basis for two information and sensitization seminars, organized by DCI-CEFIGRE and UADE for national, governmental or municipal deciders in the field of liquid and solid waste management, with the active presence of funding organizations and specialist agencies.

For further information or any suggestions concerning this project, please contact : Pierre de Rancourt, division Africa, Office international de l'eau, DCI-CEFIGRE, Sophia antipolis, BP 113, 06251 Valbonne Cedex. Phone : 9294 5800. Fax : 9365 4402.

Pierre de Rancourt, CEFIGRE

Cooperation News

■ Training for urban management

In september 1992 the Erasmus University in Rotterdam and the IHS are to create a master's degree of urban management in developing countries and Eastern Europe. The curriculum will be over three semesters : the first being devoted to economic and institutional aspects of urban development and change. The second will concentrate on translating concepts into urban management operations and their practical problems. The third semester will be given over to the writing of a thesis.

Contact : Urban management center, PO BOX 1935, 3000 BX Rotterdam, Netherlands

■ Think tank and prospectives

A group recently created by the Minister for Cooperation and Development has been charged with defining new medium term strategies, based on African cultural considerations. It is chaired by Serge Michailof, the present CCCE director in Senegal, and includes Gilbert Comte, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs; professors Guillaumont and Hugon; specialists Jacques Giri, Christian Joudiou, Claude Siccard, Pierre Jacquet (IFRI), Pierre Ruellan; businessman Hervé Prat (Optorg); banker Lionel Bordarier (BNP), and journalists François Gaulme (Marchés tropicaux) and Eric Fottorino (Le Monde).

■ School for advanced urban studies

The preparatory report on the School for Advanced Urban Studies was handed to Michel Delebarre, Minister for Town and Country Planning in July 1991.

The school will operate in five specialized inter-disciplinary fields.

Workshops will accept 60 pupils, chosen from their record plus a project, for two year courses.

The school will welcome researchers and "visiting" practitioners.

The school will organize major public courses and dialogs about towns every two years.

The grand ORSTOM conference

Held on the 10/24/91 it had a double viewpoint : relations between research and operational practice on the one hand, and progress in North-South cooperation policies on the other. The guests were chosen in the light of this double topic.

Emile Le Bris started the debate by explaining the desire of cities for emancipation, social growth, increased power, or simple survival. But signs of precariousness and degradation are on the increase everywhere in these unmanageable mega-cities.

Could it be that the inefficiency of policies is caused by the poor quality of thinking about towns today, in turn brought about by technical progress ?

Gustave Massiah organized his talk around the question : Why think about towns ? A breakdown in the quality of urban development can be seen, with a strong tendency toward universality of migratory movements, consumption models, labor markets. At the same time there is increasing inequality and aggravated exclusion problems.

Thinking about cities is therefore not simple, and guidelines are getting mixed up. Examples are : social classes as indicators of social contacts, salaries as a central social feature, work as a primary cultural value. It is true that new thinking is coming in about work categories, ownership and identity, but the theoretical renewal horizon is still a long way off.

Speaking as a town planning specialist rather than as a representative of the Ministry of Cooperation and Development Xavier Crepin noted that there has been growing general awareness of the urban explosion for several years with traditional approaches to the phenomenon becoming outdated. It is high time we got all interested specialists moving to swap their sectorial keys for global instruments such as management, decentralization and the environment.

In this modernization movement, the ministry of Cooperation and development, and more generally the leading national and international deciders, are not sufficiently backed by research institutions, often considered out of step and inward-looking. Expressing his point of view as a practical specialist from the South, J. Guiebo underscored the integrable character of urban growth and the repeated failures of urban projects which are nevertheless abundant. The insufficiency of household and local authority resources jeopardizes the success of these projects in which populations, and also those responsible at national level, are not closely enough involved. The order of the day for the World Bank and the French Cooperation now is "transfer power to local authorities", but where are the people with the necessary skills ? All too often the "training for decentralization projects" factor is forgotten. Lastly, J. Guiebo deplores the weakness of relationships between research and practice and also the short memories in

this respect. He calls for reinforcement of networks and improvement in South-South cooperation.

Luis-Cesar Queiroz-Ribeiro is a Brazilian researcher and practitioner of "urban reform". This novel experience contradicts liberal tendencies and poses a certain number of theoretical questions. Unlike the situation in the 70s, there is today an "urban question" in Latin America. The obligatory path to integration in the world market is presented as the way to economic revival but such revival may very well disable the present major urban concentrations. In the meantime both the peripheral expansion model that has led to urban growth, and increased home ownership have reached their limits. The breaking down of the social fabric and the general spread of poverty leave cities open to increasing levels of violence. Having concentrated our interest on the "people's movement", we have forgotten to think about a real public urban management alternative that is however necessary in these times of minimum State !

The discussion showed up the extreme complexity of the urban question, but also its urgent nature. Urbanization that depends on demographic growth interacts with the difficulties of the employment market and cannot be dealt with independently of the transition toward democracy.

Contact : Emile Le Bris - ORSTOM, 72-74 route d'Aulnay, 93143 Bondy Cedex, France.

Conferences

May 20 to 23, 1992
Rennes, France

"CITEXPO 92" national salon of territorial community techniques and amenities.
Contact : Mr. Loïc Divanac'h, Services techniques de la ville de Rennes, 5 bd Laennec, 35000 Rennes, France, Phone : (33) 9928 5640, Fax : (33) 9928 5843.

May 25 to 27, 1992
Strasbourg, France

Fi3G 92 International Geographic Instrumentation and Information Forum "Geographical Information without Frontiers" twinned with the 31st World Congress of the Order of Chartered Surveyors.
Contact : AFI 3G, Mrs. Isabelle Petit-Rousset, 136 bis rue de Grenelle, 75700 Paris, France. Phone : (33.1.) 4398 8312, Fax : (33.1.) 4555 0785.

June 1 to 12, 1992
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

"Summit Planet Earth". United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development. Summit of heads of governments, and parallel meeting of non-governmental groups.
Contact : Secretariat du CNUED, Case Postale 80, Conches, Switzerland. Phone : 41.22.789.1676, Fax : 41.22.789.3536.

July 7 to 10, 1992
Montréal, Canada

5th international conference on housing research "The Meeting of the Ways".
Contact : INRS Urbanisation, 3465 rue Durocher, Montreal Oc Canada H2X 2C6. Phone : (514) 499 4056, Fax : (514) 499 4065.

Books

- **References : Urban environment in developing countries.**

ADP Day, September 6, 1991, by Genevieve Noisette. Paris, ADP, 56 pages, bibliography.

A collection of texts, prepared for the 1991 Day of the Association of urban development cooperation specialists, that traces the history of changing international attitudes toward urban environment since the 70s and the strategies of international organizations, the World Bank, CNUED, etc. in this field in developing countries.

Contact : Centre de documentation et d'information «Villes en développement», Arche de la Défense, 92055 Paris la Défense Cedex 04, France. Price : 100 FF.

- **Cooperation and urban development. summary of urban policies of bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies,**

by I. Milbert, Geneva : IUED, 1991. - VIII-151 pages. (Study carried out for the Department of Cooperation for Development and Humanitarian Aid (DDA) of the Swiss Confederation).

As urban sector donors are now in agreement over the necessity for better international coordination, this booklet aims to make better known the strategies and interventions of the various OCDE country agencies in the urban sector.

Contact : IUED, 24 rue Rothschild, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland. Price : photocopy on request 120 FF.

- **Water and towns in mediterranean Basin countries and the black sea.**

Tours: Urbama, 1991.- 313 pages. (Research Volume no. 22)

Proceedings of the Rabat conference (October 20 through 22, 1988) organized by the URBAMA studies and research center "Urbanization of the Arab World" and the European Center for Research Coordination and Documentation in Social Sciences. The discussions were centered on "upstream" drinking water supply problems for towns : potentials, movements, needs, consumption, competition, etc.

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