

## Human Settlements Planning

### Lecture 13

#### Urbanization

Urbanization is nothing but the process by which there is an increase in the population in the urban area or such areas known as cities or larger towns. So, there's the constant movement of population from rural or lesser developed areas to cities or better developed areas. So, urbanization occurs because people move from rural areas to urban areas in search of a better life opportunities, better livelihood. Amongst the first countries to become urbanized were Great Britain and some European countries. Their urbanization was relatively slow, allowing governments time to plan as well as provide for the needs of the increasing urban populations. Now, just for an idea of taking a look at the different rate of urbanization across the globe, in Hong Kong, the urban population is said to be 100% of the total population and all of this data is from 2010. The rate of urbanization is 0.9%. Qatar, urban population is 96% of the total population and the rate of urbanization is 1.6%. If you look at India, the urban population is 30% of the total population. So compared to the other countries in the world, it is very much smaller, but if you look at the rate of urbanization, it is 2.4% and that's the annual rate of change, it keeps increasing and so, again if you look at that, the rate of urbanization is one of the highest in the globe. So, as a trend you'd see India is constantly urbanizing. Different cities are getting more and more populated. If you look at Sri Lanka which is very close to India, the urban population is only 14% but the rate of urbanization is relatively much slower as 1.1%. So, an ideal situation is, having either a smaller number of urban population and even if the rate of urbanization should be relatively smaller. So, it allows for the government or the infrastructure to develop before the urbanization process occurs. So as to reduce the drawbacks of this process.

Now, as a case study, we will look into the urbanization in South Africa. In South Africa, the process of urbanization as such, is very rapid and it began in the 1950s. So, when the process is rapid, we will the drawbacks that occur because of that. Huge demands on land, water, housing, transport and employment. Not all people enjoy the same standard of living. There is a huge difference in the economic strata in society, you have a very low income group or below poverty line income group, as well as you have some very rich people and very high income or rich strata on society. Many urban people live in closely built shacks made of packing cases, sheets of plastic and corrugated iron. There is nothing as such as, a standardized dwelling unit. It leads to the formation of slums. Some urban people have a good supply of water and electricity. Again, not uniform. Waste from bathrooms and toilets go directly into the city sewers. Squatters however, lack these benefits and are forced to use the open drains and pit toilets. Obviously these cause a lot of health hazards and epidemic situations. In South Africa,

the whole concept of Apartheid was also going on. It has obviously made the problems even more complex as well as the process of urbanization is not as straightforward as it is in other parts of the Globe. For generations, urbanization of black people was made difficult by forcing them to live in areas far from the cities. Separation of families created many social problems. In addition, pass laws made it illegal for many black people to live in white cities. Their illegal status made it impossible for them to rent a house, so they often lived in a shack. So, there were a lot of social problems in society; class issues, race issues in society, that is obviously evident in the process of urbanization. If you look at the status of the squatters, the shortage in the accommodation of cities has forced them to live in shack towns or squatter camps on open land. If you actually see, there are a lot of similarities between India and South Africa. It is not as dire as it is there but again, here we have slums, squatters and even here, there is a very stringent caste system in a society based on different communities and based on different occupations. Although squatter settlements are seen to arise out of desperate need, the land owners are often unhappy that squatters are living on their land. Then the State will have to make provision for future emergency housing for poor people. So, from this you could actually get to some very general conclusions; The slower the urbanization process occurs, the easier it is to deal with it. Urban conflicts will be greatest where urbanization is greatest. In South Africa the most rapid urbanization is occurring amongst the largest cities. So, if the problems of Urbanization are not solved, social unrest and environmental pollution will get worse. Now, we will go on to the causes of urbanization. What began this phenomenon or process? Number 1, obviously its the Industrial Revolution. As a result of the Industrial revolution, happened, Industrialization where the importance actually shifted from agriculture to manufacturing and from manufacturing to a very important service sector. So, gradually the gears have been shifted and man has also found alternate occupations and along with alternate occupations come in, alternate towns and living arrangements. Emergence of large manufacturing centers, Job Opportunities, Availability of easy transportation and migration. So, man is the only animal on Earth who always has a sense of unrest. There's a sense inside man that what better lies beyond our boundary. It is because of this sense of unrest that, the whole process of migration happens and the sense of moving to a new town will give us better opportunities. That hope always keeps man moving from Place A to Place B. Now, we will move on to the Effects of Urbanization like anything it has two sides of a coin, it has positive and the negative. We will look into the positive aspects first. Benefits include reduced transport costs, exchange of ideas and sharing of natural resources. Cities act as beacons for the rural population because they represent a higher standard of living. Cities offer opportunities to people not available in the countryside or in the rural areas. Social and religious taboos or sanctions keep disappearing i.e the line of the caste system is obviously less felt in a city because they are other things that take precedence. Education is a tool to eradicate social evils. Industrialization, Urbanization, Education, Legislation, Secularization - sequence of development. Finally, diffusion of urban

culture to rural areas. Now, moving on to the negative aspects; Industrial cities were difficult places to live in due to - Public health issues resulting from contaminated water and air and the spread of communicable diseases due to overcrowding and because of too many people moving into a city simultaneously and with no control, it leads to a lot of unemployment and underemployment. Severe shortage of housing, again leads to squatters and illegal settlements. Transportation commuting issues, lack of public transport as there is no adequate investment either from the public sector or even from the private sector because the urbanization as a process was not scheduled or did not happen in a scaled manner. Social effects poverty, lack opportunities, physiological problems, psychological problems, alcoholism, drugs, crime, violence and other deviant behaviours. All of these result from, inadequate urbanization in the sense, without having the proper backing or infrastructure, if suddenly crores of people move into the city, all of these problems arise. With respect to public health, Sanitation is the main issue. The settlements were ill equipped to handle large populations and their sanitation needs. Pollution which is caused by emissions from factories and other industries and that mixed with the pollution from transportation leads to smoke and smog. Fire Hazards - due to the use of flammable materials and proximity and over congestion. Epidemics, due to the spread of communicable diseases caused by contaminated water and air. Unemployment is the condition where living workers lack jobs or gainful employment. Before industrialization, unemployment has not said to have been recognized as an issue in rural areas because families used to work together. So, if one person is not employed as such, you will not recognize that as a sense of unemployment. So, it was referred to as, disguised unemployment. When an entire family is working in the field, that field might require only four adults to work in but all the 10 members would work in the same fields. So, actually having 6 adults extra was considered to be disguised unemployment because it considered extra and not required. But in the rural scenario it is not felt like that. It was only when urbanization occurred and you had the manufacturing jobs and the service sector jobs arising that you realize that, these people are not required and only so many people are required to do certain things because the machines were there and you could quantify the amount of labour that was going to be outsourced to human beings. So, the rural situation actually helped us prevent the whole concept of unemployment and what was the impact of unemployment on society. On individuals, there is a failure to meet financial obligations such as purchasing food to feed oneself and one's family and paying one's bills, failure to make mortgage payments or to pay rent may lead to homelessness. Societal, what happens at the level of society is, rising unemployment increases the crime rate. Its because of unemployment that poverty happens and because of poverty, man is forced to enter some illegal activities to obtain the same amount of money he would get by doing a legal profession. With respect to housing, overcrowding like we discussed, loss of privacy because in one dwelling unit where one family is supposed to live because of overcrowding you would have four to five families living. Lack of housing contributes directly to crime, stress and breakdown

of families. Shortage of livable housing leading to the growth of slums. Human beings have a right to lead a life of dignity which again was slowly deteriorating because of all of these above factors. With respect to transportation, it is the movement of people as well as goods, from one place to another, because of the much higher densities of people and activities in cities, transportation has always been a key issue, inadequate or either lack of public transportation creates commuting problems leading to a loss of efficiency and if you do not have a very good transport infrastructure. People will tend to live right next to the factories, all the people because they don't have a good transportation system. Okay, my place of employment is in this factory, they will all end up living around the factory leading to very bad level, they will be exposed to bad effluence from the factory, bad air and be exposed to a general level of pollution which causes again a lot of epidemics and other health hazards. One of the main problems; poverty - it is generally defined at the individual or family level as not having enough money to buy basic necessities. But ofcourse the word poverty has been redefined in different countries in different ways because the concept of basic necessities changes from one society to another. In a developing country like India, basic necessities are considered to be different versus in an urbanized society like Europe and United States, the concept of basic necessities are entirely different. So, the level of poverty is obviously again very strategically different in different parts of the world. Poverty is caused by a lack of opportunities, poverty causes malnutrition and illnesses, it is the major source of mental stress, loss of self esteem which may lead to depression and may have a further negative impact on the health. Crime again, because of financial insecurity, no welfare systems in place by the government or private sectors together. Lack of meaningful work i.e low importance is given to meaningful work and high importance to higher profits and greater efficiency. So, what happened with industrialization is, all the small jobs which were not considered or looked down upon in rural areas, once industrialization happened and people moved to cities and they saw that machines could do certain jobs, they started looking down upon certain jobs and those again, because of that the whole concept of lineate work came into being. Certain jobs were not given respect and people who performed those jobs obviously felt very demotivated and were burdened with very low self esteem. Anonymity - direct correlation between higher crime rate and higher rootlessness. Where one moves from the village, hoping for a better life and moves into a nameless city. So, the whole person is uprooting his family and moving to a new place in search of a better livelihood and he becomes anonymous in the sense, no one knows him. In the rural area when they are only 500 people, the chances that they know each other, they would be known by name or by profession or by family heritage, that does not happen in a city. One becomes nameless or anonymous in a city where we are talking about lakhs of people, you are just one among the thousands or ten thousands. So, when that happens you do not have the self respect that you used to have. You have moved to a place you are not familiar with. So, all of

this adds to the phenomenon of anonymity which leads to higher crime rates and higher levels of anti-social activities.

### **Urbanization in India**

Moving on to, urbanization in India. If you actually look at the proper definition of urbanization, it is the process of society's transformation from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban population is defined as 'urbanisation'. It includes two things - an increase in the number of people living in urban settlements, and an increase in the percentage of the population engaged in non-agricultural activities, living in such places. So, in India if you look at it, the urbanization process is moving away from agrarian activities, it is not enough that you move to a city, you should not even be involved in a particular profession related to agriculture, that is an added element of urbanization in India because here in India, rural areas are always predominantly referred to as 'agricultural areas' vs urban areas are referred to as either the 'manufacturing sectors or the service sectors'. Urban in India is defined as a human settlement with a minimum population of 5000 persons with 75% of the male working population engaged in non-agricultural activities and a population density of at least 400 people per sq.km. Further, all statutory towns having a Municipal corporation, Municipal Council or Nagar Panchayat as well as Cantonment Board are classified as "Urban".

So, **what are the prerequisites for an area or a town to be referred to as 'urban'?** If you look at the trends in rural or urban distribution of population, this was in 1901. the census taken in India, 89.2% vs 10.8%, so the urban was only 10.8%, in 1951, it has grown to 17.3%. So over 50 years, it has only grown 7% nearly vs in 2011, the urban population has grown to 31.2%. So you can see there is an exponential growth and because of this, when the rate of growth is slow, the government can be prepared, the public and private sector can be prepared and they can make the necessary requirements for this development. But when the growth is sudden or haphazard, it is difficult to do so. If you look at the other highlights with respect to India, you have a rural population difference, you can look at the difference in population vs in 2001 - 2011, the percentage has tremendously increased from 28.6% to 37.7%. So, even though there is a constant growth, where does this population keep moving and in our country, even the rural population is constantly growing, it is not like the rural areas are emptying out and moving to cities. As and when the rural population is simultaneously increasing, the urban population is also increasing. So, we look at the rural - urban distribution, it is 68.84% and 31.16%, its nearly half and level of urbanization has increased from 27.81% in 2001 vs 31.16 in 2011, so this change has happened in nearly a decade. Now, growth of population again, there is definitely a slowing down of overall growth rate of population and this is basically a sharp decline in the growth rate in rural areas, while the growth rate in urban areas remains about the same.

Now, we will go on to discussing **how the urban areas have changed**. If you look at an Urban unit or a town. Strategically when we are talking, we call them towns but geographers and other people refer to them as an 'urban unit' like how we have a dwelling unit. All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee is referred to as a Statutory Town. All other places which satisfied the following criteria are referred to as a Census Town. Minimum population of 5,000, at least 75% of the male main workers are engaged in non-agricultural pursuits and a density of population of at least 400 per sq.km. So, if you look at it, now we have further defined the town, you have the statutory town and a census town. Now, if you look at the urban population and states within our country. The top three states are; Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Where you have an absolute population of 50.8 million and Tamil Nadu drops down to 34.9 million. So, you can see there is a huge difference that is there and bottom three states you have; Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

**Now, what are the problems of urbanization within our country?** Problems of urbanization remain the same throughout the globe to a certain extent, except for small pertaining things that are prevalent only specifically in our society. So, problem in urbanization is actually a manifestation of lopsided urbanization. Urbanization as a process does not have to have drawbacks because it is only mere movement of population. It is only when it does not happen in a regulated period of time with a regulated support of infrastructure that these following problems occur. So, you have unemployment, housing, Slums and squatter settlements, Transport, water supply and sanitation, water pollution and air pollution and now even soil pollution because all of these effluents from industries finally enter the water table or the soil which again affects the plants, the vegetables and whatever that we eat, inadequate provision for social infrastructure like schools, hospitals, etc.

Now if you look at the problems specifically in the central business district or the so called inner city. As more and more people move to the edge of towns and cities, traffic congestion may get worse. Many people will drive their cars into the city centre to get to work. This is further compounded by people being brought from the city on these huge highways or motorways and these roads then link up with smaller, older narrower roads in the city centre. This causes a bottleneck. The highways and the roadways that are currently being designed are all six lane, eight lane, all of that is not issue with respect to supporting the population. It is only when it is getting connected to the older roads within the city limits that these congestion in traffic issues occur. Some cities have tried to manage this problem by introducing traffic management schemes. These schemes may include; Park and ride schemes, cycle lanes, congestion charging schemes such as those in Durham and London, Car-pooling as used in the United states, to encourage people to share cars, Low emission Zones as in London. Now, looking at all of this,

even our own very capital city is adopting a few of these like carpooling and developing/ congestion charging system. Local councils have also tried to make the roads in urban areas safer by introducing traffic calming, pedestrian roads, vehicle-exclusion zones and permit-only parking schemes.

**How do we go about reducing congestion in cities?** The Park and Ride scheme is where people park their cars on the edge of a settlement and then take a regular shuttles to the centre. So, that way all of these narrower roads do not have to support individual car traffic. In the periphery, you can actually have these designed car parks, multilevel parks where the cars can be parked and then these shuttles which are battery operated which will even reduce fuel consumption, can shuttle in and out every fifteen minutes. Pedestrian areas : Pedestrianized areas are designated as only pedestrian friendly zones. This will even enable people to have a better and healthy lifestyle. **Permit holder parking** : This means that people must have a permit to park in that particular area. This reduces the number of people driving into towns and cities as there are parking opportunities being restricted. **Vehicle exclusion zones** : Certain types of vehicles are excluded from certain parts of the city. Like large trucks may not be allowed to enter the narrower roads or the residential areas. Car Pooling : Where people are encouraged to share cars. This has happened a lot since the 1970s and 1980s in the US. **Traffic Calming**: which is nothing but roads narrowing, adding speed bumps, make traffic move slower around narrower streets which will ensure safer driving and even less road rage. Narrow roads may restrict this type of vehicle that can enter certain parts of the city. Certain other problems in the CBD, another recent problem that we find is, the city centre retailing declined. As out of town shopping centers had become more common because of congestion people prefer going outside the city and shopping where they can park their car without hassles, shop in peace and again come back to their homes. So, this ended up having a hollow or an empty area called the 'Doughnut effect' where all the buildings that were occupied previously are no longer being occupied and becoming redundant and this leads to a lot of neighbourhoods getting degraded.

**Problems in the inner city** - because of urbanization, there are inequalities in all urban areas. Inequality means extreme differences between poverty and wealth, as well as in people's well-being and access to things like jobs, housing and education. Main inequalities occur in; Housing, access to services, access to urban land, safety and security. Now, you often see people who live in inner city areas experience a poor quality of life which is ironic because commercial areas to work in the inner city, they have to pay a very high rent. So, this is because the inner city is typically a zone with an older housing and declining industry. Here we can see how governments and planners often have to step in to help redevelop run-down inner city areas. Inner city redevelopments may improve the physical environment of the area and improve the quality of housing. However, it can also create even greater inequalities because the local

residents may not be able to afford to live there anymore. Often the old industrial jobs are replaced by skilled jobs and new people move into this area.