



UN HABITAT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS 2009

BACKGROUND

EMERGENCE & SPREAD OF MODERN PLANNING

- Urban Planning may be as old as humanity but it was the emergence of chaotic and polluted cities of Western Europe's Industrial Revolution that prompted radical concepts of urban management.
- The first of these concepts was termed "modernist planning" which emerged in the latter part of the 19th century and was influenced by technical and ideological considerations. The state or the ruling class were more concerned with the ideological: using planning to maintaining their property values and excluding 'less desirable' low-income residents, ethnic minorities and traders from their areas.
- In the 20th century the concept of the master plan emerged as the key aspect of modernist planning. The master plan detailed the city layout from its built form to its ideal end-state. Master planning still survives all over the world, albeit with some variation.
- Among the greatest masters of this planning form was the Frenchman, Le Corbusier. His ideas in the 1920s and 1930s established the ideal of the 'modernist' city: the ideal city was neat, ordered and highly controlled. Slums, narrow streets and mixed use areas were to be demolished.
- In the United States, Frank Lloyd Wright's version of this differed. His solution to the problems of rapid industrialization in New York was for low density, dispersed cities with each family on its own small plot.
- In the 20th century, in England, Ebenezer Howard developed the Garden City, which represented an attempt during the Industrial Revolution to recreate village life by bringing 'green' back into the towns made up of winding roads and separate cottage residences, and through controlling the size and growth of the town.

THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF MODERNIST PLANNING

TRANSITIONAL COUNTRIES: EASTERN & CENTRAL EUROPE

- Eastern Europe industrialized and urbanized later than in the West from which it sought solutions. However the Soviet Union, keen to avoid the uncontrolled urban growth of the West and its planning ideas, favoured decentralization, low density and even shrinkage.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

LATIN AMERICA

- French planning ideas held most sway in major Latin American cities during the 20th century. Traces of Le Corbusier's ideas are visible in many urban structures in the region. One of the best known projects influenced by Le Corbusier was Lucio Costa's plan for Brasilia. Costa also incorporated the ideas of Le Corbusier into the design of the Gustavo Capanema Palace (Palacio Gustavo Capanema) in downtown Rio de Janeiro, and his plan for Brasilia, the new Brazilian capital.
- In order to remedy the sprawling suburbs of the 1900s, as the middle class developed and sought new residential locations, Latin American authorities modified the Garden City model to take the form of the 'garden suburb', located within cities rather than outside them.

SOUTHEAST & EAST ASIA

- While most of the Western urban planning models came to Asia during the colonial period, some of the more important influences arrived through non-colonizing powers. Prominent among these is the United States, which maintained strong ties with territories and countries in Asia and the Pacific region. The City of Baguio, Philippines, was the first major human settlement with design roots in the United States to be established in Asia. It was designed by the famous Chicago architect, Daniel Hudson Burnham, the founder of the City Beautiful movement.
- The British introduced urban forms previously unknown in the region. Thus the concept of racial spatial segregation,

PLANNING SUSTAINABLE CITIES

which sought to separate Europeans from 'racial others,' was foreign in the region, even in societies such as India that practiced caste-based segregation. Institutionally, the British contributed to the development of urban planning in the region by introducing their legal and institutional frameworks for formulating and implementing planning policies.

MIDDLE-EAST & NORTH AFRICA

- Encountering well-developed densely populated Islamic walled cities with no room for expansion, European colonialists developed new layouts based on European principles to serve as exclusive European enclaves. In Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, the layouts reflected the French urban planning style. These Western urban planning models usually resulted in two separate urban entities: the pre-colonial Islamic towns (medinas) and the new towns (villes nouvelles or villes européennes) served the needs of the European community. This brought about de facto racial residential segregation.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, diffusion of planning ideas occurred mainly through British, German, French and Portuguese colonial influence. Imported planning systems were not applied equally to all sectors of the urban population. For example, towns were zoned into low-density residential areas for Europeans; medium-density residential areas for African civil servants or, in Eastern and Southern Africa, for Asians and mixed-race people; and high-density residential areas for the indigenous population.
- Planning laws and zoning ordinances in many cases are exact copies of those developed in Europe or Britain in the early 20th century. Many African countries still have planning legislation based on British or European planning laws from the 1930s or 1940s, which have been revised only marginally. Post-colonial governments tended to reinforce and entrench colonial spatial plans and land management tools.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO URBAN PLANNING

Growing criticism of modernist planning has emerged from the same part of the world in which it originated (Western Europe and the United States) and some countries have made concerted efforts to develop alternative approaches. The following are some recent innovations:

- **Strategic spatial planning** emerged in Western Europe in the 1980s and 1990s partly in response to the problems of master planning and contains a directive, long range, spatial plan, and broad and conceptual spatial ideas, rather than detailed spatial design. The new British planning system, which introduces Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks, focuses on decentralized solutions.
- **Participatory Processes and public-private partnerships** have become important elements in all the innovative planning approaches. Potentially, participation in planning can empower communities and lead to better design of urban projects.
- **The Urban Management Programme:** Over the past two decades, several international agencies have attempted to take up the problems of modernist urban planning by introducing special programmes and processes into local government systems. For example The Urban Management Programme, established in 1986 by the World Bank in partnership with UN-HABITAT, is the largest global urban programme to date. The programme focused on providing technical assistance and capacity-building in urban land, urban environment, municipal finance, urban infrastructure and urban poverty.
- **New forms of Master Planning:** In Brazil, 'new' master plans are seen as different from the old ones, in that they are bottom-up and participatory, oriented towards social justice and aim to counter the effects of land speculation.
- **The 'Compact City':** While low-density, sprawling cities are the norm in most parts of the world, there is growing support for 'compact city' and 'new urbanism' ideas. At the city-wide scale, the 'compact city' approach argues for medium to high built densities.
- **New Urbanism:** promotes a vision of cities with fine-grained mixed use, mixed housing types, compact form, an attractive public realm, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, defined centres and varying transport options.

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