

Urbanisation in the LEDW

The world today is becoming more urban. People move to the cities and towns thinking that it is a great opportunity to live a better life. 50% of the world population live in urban areas. This is still growing at a rate of 2 and a half times more than in rural areas. It is estimated that 25 years from now, urban areas will contain more than 75% of the world's population.

Shanty towns

Shanty towns are built wherever there is space on the edge of the city. The homes have no running water, sanitation, drainage or energy facilities. Open sewers run down the middle of them which carries water that can pollute their water supply. There is no rubbish collection so rubbish builds up. Dogs then scavenge through it and it is also creating a breeding ground for bacteria. Overcrowding in the small and appalling conditions makes disease spread more quickly.

Despite all of this, life in the shanty towns isn't always so bad. Celebrations, feast and saint days bring life to the community. The Government is working with voluntary agencies such as NGOs to reduce death rates and population growth. More has to be done but this may be this is a good start to reducing the number of people in poverty all over the world.

Families move towards the CBD (central business district) to look for job opportunities to make money for their families. The people think that the 'streets paved with gold' is actually true but really, when families get there, they discover that none of this is true. It is a place where hunger, crime, disease and death are everyday life for people that live there.

The number of poor people moving to the cities continues to increase. But when people move to the cities, they are bringing a number of problems that authorities are forced to sort out. Some of these things are:

- Natural disasters
- Pollution
- Disease
- Dirt

The amount of people also puts a lot of strain on the health services. Although it has been proved that good health care can actually reduce population growth and enhance living conditions, further education will be needed to inform people of a change. Most people find health care very expensive, far away from their shanty town or they're too busy trying to earn a living to travel to health centres and hospitals.

There are very high levels of unemployment which means that most families do not have enough money to be able to afford a decent amount of food. Also, because of “fast-food chains” people have stopped attempting to grow their own food even though there is land available. This is making their diets even worse, leaving children prone to illness. Infant mortality and life expectancy is overall low. HIV/AIDS has left many children orphaned and living on the streets with no one looking after them.



Case Study: Nairobi

Most of Nairobi's urban population of 1.9 million live in shanty towns around the CBD

Most of the land was unused and was prone to flooding. This made the dirt tracks become mud tracks in the rainy seasons and in the dry season it was full of potholes.

Lack of basic amenities led to the start of projects to improve urban services in 5 shanty districts supported by the World Bank.

The poor's access to treated water has improved but crime and corruption kept the price sky high. To make the water more accessible and affordable, water kiosks are used. These have increased in low-income areas from 150 to nearly 1,500. The increase in the amount of kiosks reduces the distance for people to travel to water sources.

