

THE STATE OF THE WORLD'S CITIES 2004/5: GLOBALIZATION AND URBAN CULTURE

This report was published at the recent World Urban Forum meeting in Barcelona by UN-Habitat and is essential reading for anyone with an interest in cities at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In a well illustrated volume we encounter many of the trends and dynamics that connect cities across our planet – the privatization and 'cherry picking' of public services; the impact of migration across continents and the burden borne by some of the poorest cities; the effect of free trade and dispersed production; the drive for urban renewal and the development of cultural and other strategies. Urban governance 'metropolitanization' is given significant treatment as city administrations struggle to engage citizens and develop new forms of civic infrastructure.

The editors have assembled an excellent team of writers, photographers and statisticians. Parts of the text, however, do reveal some of our contemporary difficulties with describing what is happening to our cities. Putting sections on culture and consumption at the beginning of the volume might suggest a disorientated set of priorities compared to the majority of world's experience of cities as places of migration, overcrowding, poverty and environmental risk.

Published by Earthscan

ISBN 184407160x

http://www.unchs.org/report_celebrates.asp

Summit 2005

Delivering Sustainable Communities

between 31 Jan - 2 February, 2005
at the GMEX Manchester

Two thousand delegates from the UK, Europe and the wider world are expected to take part in the Delivering Sustainable Communities Summit. Senior Government Ministers and leading national and international experts will attend and speak at this unique event, organised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The Summit is a follow-up to the 2002 'Urban Summit' held in Birmingham and develops the government's emphasis on issues of sustainability in urban renewal and the creation of urban areas particularly in areas of high economic activity and population growth. Registration for the Summit is online, where details will also be found of a limited number of discounted tickets for delegates from community and voluntary groups, black and minority ethnic groups, faith groups, students and senior citizens. <http://secure.symphonyem.co.uk/odpm2005/default.asp>

Courtrooms to Boardrooms

Ray Lewis gave up a promising career as a prison governor to set up a project for young black boys at risk of social exclusion. He was tired of receiving these intelligent, gifted boys into his care and decided to set his first aid tent at the top of the cliff instead of the bottom.

Ray and his team identify bright, creative boys with leadership potential who are heading down the wrong path, and take their energy and channel it in a positive direction. Most are referred by their schools or other agencies and start the programme from as young as eight years of age.

Based on a unique, dynamic and strict regime with clear boundaries, the boys are taught leadership skills and are given opportunities to raise their aspirations and academic attainment.

Eastside Young Leaders' Academy is the only such project in the UK and after two years in existence the results of Ray's innovative work is set to inspire and encourage the business community, politicians, teachers, parents and black boys who dare to dream dreams.

The work is made up of six core components: 'After School Tutorial' Programme which operates three days a week to raise academic standards through regular assessment and small tutorial groups; a 'Saturday Academy' where the boys learn leadership skills eg teamwork, oratory skills, etiquette and more; 'Mentoring Plus' which encourages the business community to get involved and

share the secrets of their success with our young leaders; a 'Holiday Programme' including a summer residential which affords the boys the opportunity to raise their aspirations and broaden their horizons through visits to and from high profile people and corporations; 'Community Service' which gives the young leaders the opportunity to give back to their community, to empathise and to care through volunteering and civic activities; 'Family Support Network' for the parents to get involved, for example a monthly family meeting with high-quality guest speakers; in addition the boys demonstrate their oratory skills and receive awards for excellence.

The project relies on charitable funding for sustainability and input from the business community for the purposes of mentoring. We recognise that some members of the business community take their commitment to corporate social responsibility very seriously. In such instances small organisations like ourselves benefit much. We also accept donations under the gift aid scheme.

We currently work in Newham but have received numerous requests to roll out the programme to different parts of London and the country. The Academy has attracted much interest from press and politicians alike. Though relatively new, over the past 2 years we have seen both gradual and dramatic changes for the better in these young leaders as they are learning to focus more on their studies and reach for the top.

Contact: John Hayward, Scripture Union's Urban and Justice Ministries Co-ordinator, 7 Horsell Road, London N5 1XL

The Bus Stop Church on Route 106

Colin Smith

It's 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning and the streets of Banana – a small town on the outskirts of Nairobi – are already busy with people heading for work and church. The local vicar Susan Ndungu arrives at the bus stop and immediately a crowd begins to gather. 80-100 young men, many in jeans, tee shirts and baseball caps gather at the bus stand. A simple service begins: prayers, testimonies, perhaps a song, and a short sermon. Susan turns to me to announce that I am the preacher (first I knew of it!). "More than ten minutes and you lose the lot" she whispers, by of moral support.

Within half an hour the service is over and the crowd disperses. This is church with a difference, an unselfconscious expression of what it means to be the body of Christ in a very untraditional way. The congregation is made up of matatu drivers and touts, the purveyors of Nairobi's notorious and anarchic transport system. These are the people you don't find in church. But this is their church, out in the road amidst the diesel fumes and the passing traffic. Here is a church stripped to the bare essentials. Yet as

baseball caps are removed for the final blessing and the congregation walk away to their vehicles I sense that here is a church that is finally having the courage to reach out to meet people where they are, in their own space; a church willing to lose the trappings that so often form our security in order to be a sign of the Kingdom on route 106.

The church began through the death of a matatu driver last year. The funeral was chaotic with most of the mourners being drunk. However it was an experience which left a deep impression on Susan, "I heard God speak to me 'Every man is created in my image and if Jesus saw Zacchaeus as a sinner he could not have dined with him and salvation would not have found a place in the tax collector's home.'" Susan responded by inviting all the local matatu drivers and touts to dinner with the bishop as host. 250 turned up. Next there was a football match against the clergy. The clergy lost six nil but three drivers came to faith ("that's three nil to us" claimed Susan!) after that came the bus stop church.

Colin Smith is a CMS mission partner in Nairobi and Director of the Carlile College Centre for Urban Mission, Kibera