

# URBAN INDUSTRIAL MISSION: A RESPONSE AND COMMITMENT

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## Issue



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## URBAN INDUSTRIAL MISSION : A RESPONSE AND COMMITMENT

by the UIM ADVISORY GROUP \*

### **Larger Horizon of Mission**

At Uppsala it was said, "the most significant development (in Urban Industrial Mission) has been that churches begin to realize that these ministries ... must become the key part of a total strategy for mission in modern society".<sup>1</sup> Since 1968, this recognition has come to characterize a major operational concern of UIM. The Advisory Group now calls for a comprehensive mission strategy for change.

*Becoming Operational in a World of Cities*<sup>1</sup> in relation to a single WCC office is far too narrow a perspective in the effort to empower the powerless with responsible participatory and decision-making roles in the world.

Beyond the cities there is a rural poor, passed over by the advance of a "fine, sparkling urban civilization". In the cities themselves there is an ex-rural poor, attracted by the glitter and the promise but finding only the lowest tiers of a hierarchical society open to them and further advance banned by social and often also legal impediments that tower over them. This "rural-urban nexus" is of great concern to us.

Interdependency is discernable in many dimensions : rich nations and poor nations, elites and peasants within a nation, rural poverty and stagnation and urban immigration, urban-dominated market systems, international trade arrangements. All these and many other structures make an isolated "project" approach to urban-industrial mission no longer tenable. Instead, we must work towards a comprehensive approach getting down to causes rather than shying at symptoms. Rural causes of urban problems, urban causes of rural problems, rich world/poor world, exploitation of workers and resources alike — all must become part of our programme for change.

So the Church, WCC, and secular institutions of power must be challenged to respond suitably to the needs of the powerless in all their struc-

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\* This statement is part of a longer report drawn up by the Urban Industrial Mission Advisory Group at its meeting at Cartigny, near Geneva, 21-29 March 1972.

<sup>1</sup> *Becoming Operational in a World of Cities, a Strategy for Urban and Industrial Mission*, World Council of Churches 1968, p. 5.