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Urban Infrastructure: Keeping Economies and People Healthy:

The way we live and, crucially, where we live, is changing fast. This rapid urbanization presents many challenges. One of the most urgent is how to provide infrastructure solutions that can cope with the stress caused by this massive expansion of populations in concentrated spaces. Established cities must build, maintain, and upgrade extensive transport, power, water and telecommunication networks, in order to keep up with the demands of economic development and population growth. This infrastructure is necessary to continue to progress societies and improve living standards.

Avoiding the potential negative economic consequences of insufficient or failing infrastructure should therefore be considered a core business and societal concern – one that requires long-term planning and investment.

✓ The Challenges of Aging Urban Infrastructure

In developed economies, it can be easy to take infrastructure for granted: Something that’s always been there and always will. But that is not necessarily so, as years of underinvestment in critical areas is now catching up with countries around the world. If the lack of investment isn’t addressed, it could erode future growth, causing challenges for millions of people that could impact businesses with lost worker productivity, decrease quality of life for the general public, and even cause – or exacerbate – health issues.

Putting aside for a moment the need to renew and expand our infrastructure, even maintaining current infrastructure is a challenge.

Many major cities in the developed world are reliant on transport networks originally built decades ago, and face a continual process of maintenance and improvements.

The problems of integrating new improvements or systems with existing infrastructure are complex, and require significant investment in time, planning and money to ensure essential services can be maintained alongside major engineering works. What's more, new projects have been hampered by constraints to public sector budgets following the financial crisis, and so finding alternative funding models may prove vital to their success.

- ✓ Connecting cities for growth

The challenge of modern transport is not just about what happens within city limits. Just as important is the need to connect major urban centers to facilitate economic activity – as well as to ensure that vital supplies can make it through to expanding urban populations and businesses.

For emerging economies, ensuring the efficiency of the supply chain is essential for continued export-based growth. With the economy slowing, being able to transport raw materials, components and products with speed is increasingly important. Just as no business can succeed if it can't gain access to the supplies and customers it needs, neither can today's rapidly-growing cities succeed without reliable links to sources of raw materials and markets. To maximize the potential of urban economic growth, investment in extra-urban supply chain routes, including transport links, is vital.

- ✓ The need for long-term investment

Whether it's in funding new projects to improve transport links, mobility, connectivity and supply chain logistics, or in updating aging systems to address similar needs, significant long-term planning and investment is vital to help cities evolve to meet the needs of the future.

Given the current relatively low cost of borrowing, public financing remains central to addressing the infrastructure shortfall, especially for higher risk projects such as high-speed rail networks, but governments around the world will increasingly need to rely more on private sector investment.

In addition to responding to the shifting needs of urbanizing populations, one of the outcomes of rapid urbanization may be to facilitate a more focused and concentrated approach to infrastructure investment. If approached well, risk and return on infrastructure investment will become better managed and boost economic growth. This in turn should stimulate further investment, creating a virtuous circle of development and improvement.

There are many challenges caused by aging infrastructure and rapid urbanization – but also much opportunity. The sheer scale of the need means that new, creative approaches to development and financing are required, which, in turn, will lead to more efficient, productive and healthier cities – and people – around the world.

Infrastructure for Keeping Economies Healthy and Sustain

Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" and "Revitalize the partnership for sustainable development" are incorporated throughout our work, we especially focus on the areas:

- ✓ HOUSING

  "Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation"
  "Reduce inequalities within and among countries"

- ✓ MOBILITY

  "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"
  "Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation"

- ✓ WELLBEING

  "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"
  "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages"
  "Reduce inequalities within and among countries"

- ✓ ENVIRONMENT

  "Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation"
  "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts"

Various Causes of Urban Growth

1. The natural increase in population

The rate of death and births characterizes the natural expansion of an area. In areas where births are more than the deaths, the population is bound to increase. People who migrate to town and cities tend to be young people who are in search of housing, jobs, or better education.

2. Migration

Immigration is a major contributor to the increase in the population of a place. Many people are forced to move to urban areas in search of jobs, education, and housing. Inadequate funding and social infrastructure have also driven people to urban areas. In other cases, political, racial, economic, or religious conflicts have forced people to move to neighbor urban areas.

3. Industrialization

The industrial revolution brought about new production techniques. By this, manufacturing has created more job opportunities by providing people with the opportunity to be employed in new sectors.

4. Commercialization

Whereas industrialization has played an essential role in the growth of urban areas, commerce and trade have profoundly influenced the growth of cities. In ancient times, cities like Athens, Sparta, and Venice were great commercial centers. In modern life today, the commercial activities in city and industrial areas continue to attract more and more people as traders and workers, thereby contributing to the growth of cities and town areas. Businesspeople prefer going to the cities to sell their commodities and in search of higher profits. The kind of economic pull urban centers have is one that attracts more and more people to move to urban areas.

5. Advancement of transport and communication

When factories were introduced, the local transportation was weak, forcing the factory laborers to reside near their place of work. The cities were partitioned into dwelling areas, market area, factory area, slums, and so on. Increased population led to congestion of housing and added to the already existing community by extension of boundaries.

6. Availability of educational and recreational facilities

Most training institutions, colleges, elementary schools, and technical institutions are in urban areas. Also, most libraries are located in the cities. Recruiting agencies, as well as the examination councils, are situated in the cities. Clearly, due to the location of these facilities, most students and adult learners are attracted to the town for easy accessibility of higher education. Opera and Amusement Theaters are also in urban areas, drawing more people to the cities.

7. Urban planning policies

Urban planning typically forces city leaders to find ways of making a sustainable city, including proper town development and expansion plans. As a strategy aimed at converting vision into implementation, it acts as a guide for making the most out of a city by improving infrastructure and building its economic growth and enhancing the city's living standards as well as the resident's well-being.

8. Topographical factors

The topography of an area can have huge impacts on the growth of a city. An area with a suitable topography is usually easy to develop and expand. Urban areas in or around an excellent topographical area are easily extended and refined, thus drawing more people to such areas.

9. Unbalanced spatial development

In many countries around the world, there are developed regions and less developed regions. Many people tend to move to more developed areas. Occasionally, urban centers (cities) are more developed than rural areas because of the available facilities and opportunities offered in urban areas. On this account, the population and size of the metropolitan area will automatically increase within a given period.

10. Transformation and modernization in the way of living

Transformation and modernization play a very significant role in attracting people to the cities. As technology improves, together with highly sophisticated infrastructure, liberation, communication, dressing code, medical facilities, and other social services offered; people tend to believe they can live a more comfortable life in the cities.

11. Mining and investments

As more urban areas continue being successful and well-off due to the discovery of minerals, resource exploitation, agricultural activities, or business operations, urban areas continue to grow economically. Societies continue being financially liberal due to the availability of jobs in urban areas. As a result, more investors are attracted to invest in such cities, promoting their growth.

12. Presence of functional administrative and social support offices

The presence of administration dominance in an urban center promotes its growth. Many cities today hold offices for various administration and governance functions, which influence people to live in these areas for access to better governance and social amenities like security, sanitation, housing, education, and healthcare.

Urban Infrastructure: Keeping Economies and People Healthy

1. **Political Infrastructure –** All governmental institutions such as regulatory bodies, administrative units, law courts, and public security services such as defense, police force, etc.
2. **Transportation Infrastructure –** Roadways, railways, airways, waterways, and all other mediums of transportation fall under transportation infrastructure.
3. **Power and Energy Infrastructure –** Solar panels, wind turbines, power grids and stations, gas pipelines, and other sources of power and energy.
4. **Telecommunication Infrastructure –** Wi-Fi services, broadband network, telephone network owned by government bodies.
5. **Educational Infrastructure –** Public academic and training institutions, public schools, libraries, and universities.
6. **Health Infrastructure –** Government hospitals, subsidized health clinics, etc., are included in public health infrastructure.
7. **Water Infrastructure –** Drainage and sewage systems, water supply, water resource management, postal restoration, and flood management.
8. **Recreational Infrastructure –** Natural reserves such as national parks, botanical gardens, natural parks, public gardens, historical sites, and beaches.