

I U R B A N

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How Shall We Think About Africa Today?

by Ray Bakke

In 1890 Henry Morton Stanley, sometime colleague of missionary explorer David Livingston, wrote his two-volume classic, "In Darkest Africa." Simultaneously, William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, with the help of W.T. Stead, produced his classic, "In Darkest England."

Stanley wrote graphically about how to get into the jungles of Africa; Booth outlined his scheme for "the way out" of England's concrete jungles. Read both together. These urban vs. rural mission traditions emerged in the Victorian era of industrial England. Missionaries could cross the Congo, Nile or Zambezi Basins or they could cross the streets of Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Birmingham or East London. For most Western Christians, Africa epitomized "real" missions.

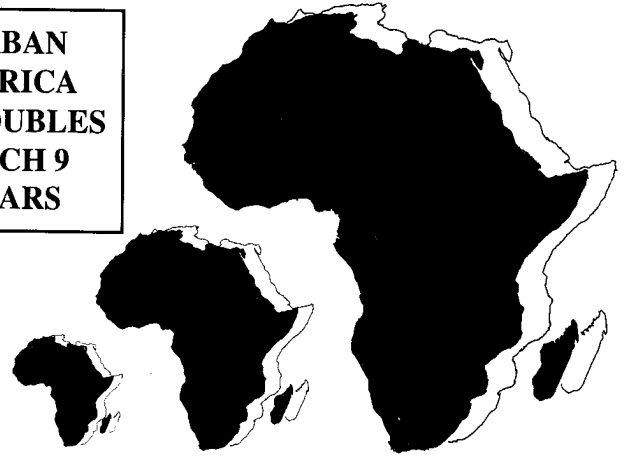


Jane Shepherd

Few will contradict me when I say that until recently, mission in Africa was largely an interior and rural enterprise, ... and for good reason. That's where the people were. Now, however, exploding birthrates and massive migration fuel some of the fastest growing cities in the world. More than a decade ago David Lamb wrote: "...25 percent of Africa is male, urban and **underemployed**." Therein

lies the problem; not only unemployment, but underemployment.

URBAN
AFRICA
DOUBLES
EACH 9
YEARS



...exploding birthrates and massive migration fuel some of the fastest growing cities in the world.

In his remarkable historical study, "The Anatomy of Revolution" (1952), Crane Brinton reminded us that revolutions do not occur when things are as bad as they can be. Rather, revolutions occur when people's expectations outpace realities. Drawn to cities by the hope of jobs, education or health care, the expectations of urban Africans far exceed the ability of economic or political systems to deliver. This is the overwhelming reality I experience each time I enter the cities of Africa, no matter which region I visit.

Africa is huge (roughly four times the size of the continental United States) and diverse. More than 50 separate countries are carving out their identity and viability in the first or second generation of post-colonial existence.

African urban pastors struggle valiantly with

(continued on page 2)

Thinking About Africa (from page 1)

migrating peoples, crushing poverty, religious pluralism, political oppression and an AIDS epidemic that generally exceeds anything we know in the West. They hunger for specialized ministry training and access to resources available in other cities.

** In sub-Saharan Africa, food production is 20 percent lower than in 1970, when the population was half its present size.*

** Only 37 percent of the people have clean drinking water. There is only one doctor for every 24,500 persons.*

** Population is growing at a rate of 3.2 percent annually, versus 2.1 percent for Latin America and 1.8 percent for Asia.*

** Average life expectancy is 51 years—12 fewer than for Indians or Chinese.*

** Half of the world's refugees are African, most of them fleeing drought and/or civil war.*

Time, Sept. 7, 1992

Not surprisingly, relatively few traditional missionaries are positioned to meet these emerging pastoral needs, for until recently, intentional urban internships were not part of missionary training. That's now changing. Moreover, ministry initiatives and partnerships are springing up all over Africa for

A Painful Note About Mission Priorities

In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell and within months many mission agencies refocused their strategies on Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. On a ministry tour in several East and South African cities, Rev. B. Herbert Martin and I heard comments of dismay and frustration about the seeming decline of concern for Africa in White America. One leader shocked me with this comment:

“Why should we be surprised? Isn't Eastern Europe nearly the only place in the world where Americans can still go to patronize the natives and not have to deal with people of color?”

Whether true or not, there is a perception on the part of many brothers and sisters that we in the West are thankless and careless about them. I pray this African leader is wrong about us.

Ray Bakke

theological education, evangelism and Christian community development.

Increasingly, African Christian leaders in the cities of the United Kingdom, the United States and France are linking directly with churches and missions back in Africa. That's a marvelous Sign of Hope.

Because International Urban Associates represents a network of urban leaders and partnerships, we're very much involved at each end of the many African migrant streams. We're linked to groups that proclaim the gospel, plant and renew churches and seek the social transformation of African cities so that the glory of God may be visible.

Urban Ministry—An Urgent Priority

by Fr. Alward Shorter, “The Church in the African City”

The whole trend of Christianity today is away from the “crowd church.” This is because it cultivates an impersonal and superficial form of commitment, and because it produces a notional and uninformed Christian faith. One reason for the success of indigenous religious movements among urban migrants is that they cultivate a close community bond among their members.

During my six years in Nairobi I faced a huge congregation in St. Teresa's Parish nearly every Sunday. The church could seat just over 1,000; even the central aisle would be half full! On weekdays I was frequently hailed by people quite unknown to me. They saw me regularly and knew me well by sight. They were part of the huge sea of faces I looked down upon from the altar steps. The experience was symptomatic of the “crowd church” created by urban migratory growth.

Secularism is a virus carried by modernization and urbanization. It betokens religious indifferentism, a loss of the sense of God and sense of sin. With the spread of urban social consciousness, towns and cities become role models for everyone. We should not therefore be surprised to see a spread of secularism from the urban areas to the countryside.

From these trends, the church must draw the conclusion that urban ministry is an urgent pastoral priority in Africa. No misplaced anti-urbanism should lead to a neglect of the ever-increasing urban populations. Tomorrow's leaders, teachers and parents are massively present in the towns and their Christian loyalties and convictions have to be strengthened if Africa is to fulfil its promise of becoming our most Christian continent.

African Cities Collide With Social Calamity

by John Stackhouse, Nairobi correspondent, The New York Times.

With the world's fastest-growing urban population, many of Africa's biggest cities find themselves on a collision course with chaos. "It's not the size of cities, it's the speed of urbanization," says Peter Ngau, an urban-planning expert at the University of Nairobi.

By 2000, about 400 million people will live in African cities—a four-fold increase in 30 years, says the Nairobi-based United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat). Unchecked, the urban population may reach 750 million by 2020.

Few of the continent's 22 major cities provide adequate urban services even now. The biggest, Lagos in Nigeria, has grown 16-fold since the 1950s. Others such as Nairobi, Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, Lusaka in Zambia and Dakar in Senegal have grown at least sevenfold.

In total, Africa's urban population has grown at the rate of 4.9 percent a year, ahead of Asia's 3 percent, which is the world's second-fastest growth rate.

	East Asia	South Asia	Latin America	North America	Europe	Africa	WORLD
1950-1975	4.06	3.92	4.29	2.16	1.56	4.89	3.11
1975-2000	2.60	4.07	3.45	1.38	1.16	4.56	2.76

Source: *Cry of the Urban Poor*, Viv Grigg

There has been a conspicuous failure to predict and plan for urban growth," says R.A. Obudho, editor of the Nairobi-based African Urban Quarterly. "Most urban governments have been unable to grasp the implications of a population that doubles every nine years."

Unable to cope, Nairobi cut its capital spending on water and sewage services \$28 (U.S.) per person in 1981 to \$2.50 in 1987. In Ghana, government layoffs have been so great that demographers noted a net urban outflow as people returned to their villages for jobs.

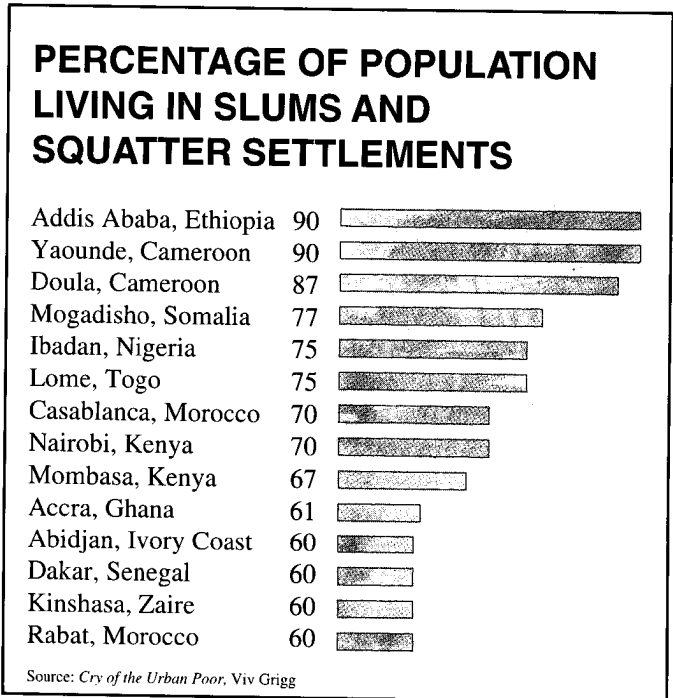
In most African countries, however, the rural push of low incomes, rapid population growth and soil degradation continues to move successive generations from farm to city. "When people come to cities they're looking for jobs, not housing," Mr. Obudho says.

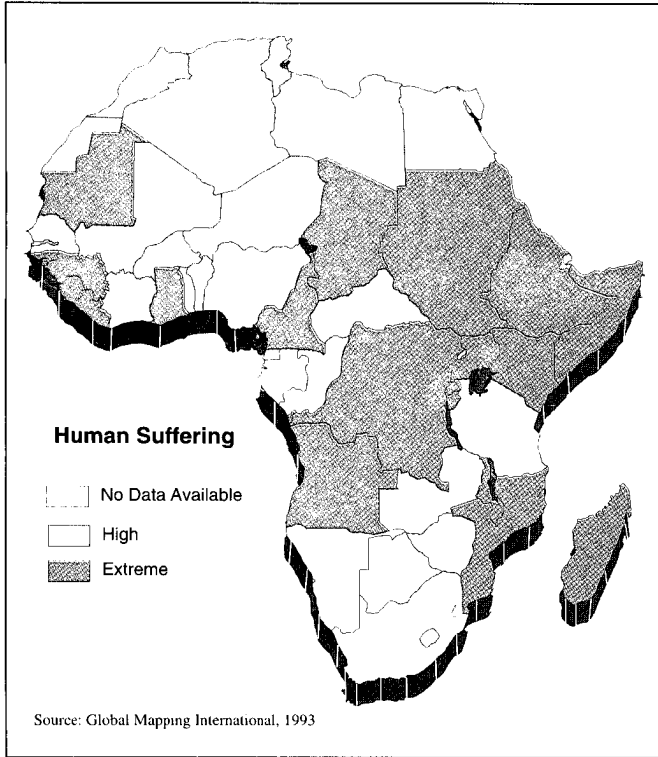
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"Africans are very organized people," says Diana Lee-Smith, an urban planning expert with the Nairobi-based Mazingira Institute. "We have to recognize their groups and support them as viable management institutions." She added that African cities must overhaul their municipal laws and build new urban institutions. As a start, cities should recognize in local cultures the co-existence of rural and urban lifestyles in many centers. In Nairobi, nearly one-third of all households grow crops or raise small livestock.

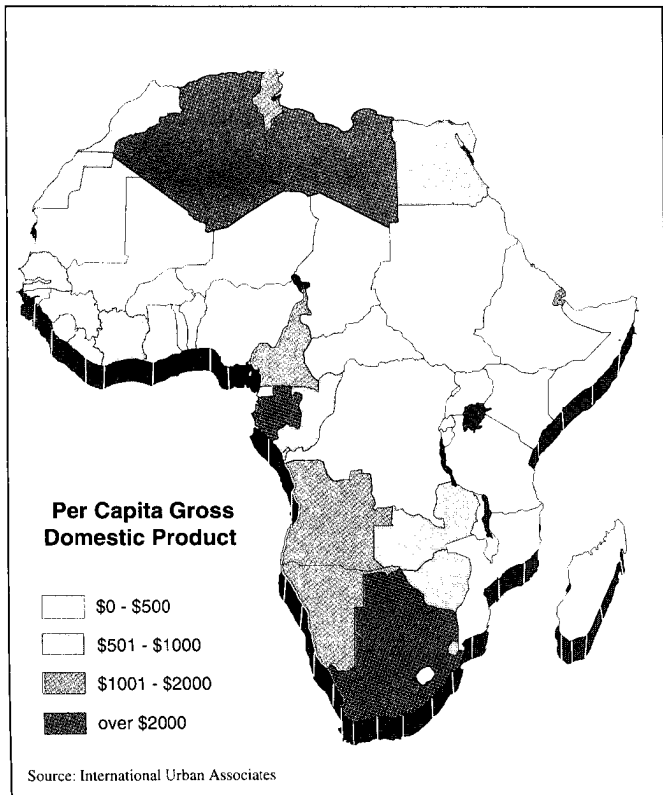
There also is a need for building standards to reflect the local economy, she said. Rather than Western-style bricks and plumbing, most city-dwellers can afford only mud walls and pit latrines. "There is a great mismatch between laws and reality," she says.

The mismatch has resulted in the seemingly unstoppable spread of illegal slums and shantytowns, which according to the University of Nairobi, are growing by 15 percent a year in Africa. To ease the strain, Malawi in central Africa has adopted a houses-that-grow concept, allowing urban residents to start small and build, regardless of past bylaws. Zambia and Botswana have also designated improvement areas for slum-dwellers. For broader development, urban planners cite a pitiful lack of skilled managers, in part because most central governments retain firm control over municipal affairs.





Keep us, God, from panic when crisis and panics arise. Help us to know that though you do not always remove troubles from us you always accompany us through them.
 —A prayer from Uganda



African Cities of One Million-plus



Africa: Armed to the Teeth

It is strikingly clear that a primary reason for the economic and humanitarian crisis that faces Africa is the increasing militarization of the continent, the origins of which lay in superpower rivalries. Africa has increasingly become a continental arms bazaar. By 1978 the value of arms imports was 21 times higher, in constant dollars, than in 1969. A similar geometric increase occurred over the following decade.

“Africa and the West”

Although Cold War financing no longer subsidizes Africa’s wars, conflicts driven by concentrated control of resources, distrust, ethnic rivalry or popular resentment of authoritarian governments continue. Where fighting ends, war leaves a brutal legacy of destruction and distress that will take years to repair.

“Hunger, 1993”

The superpower withdrawal creates a political vacuum that is being filled by other regional players, thus prolonging the conflicts. For example, Iran has become Sudan’s major military supplier and supports a strong Islamic agenda in this multicultural country, against nationwide opposition.

“The Horn of Africa in Transition”

Food shortages continue to persist in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zaire due to civil strife. Liberia’s civil war rekindled late in 1992; 1.2 million people remain internally displaced and threatened by famine.

Hunger, 1993”



Francophone Update: Ray Bakke

God at Work in Africa's Francophone Cities

God is working powerfully in the large cities of French-speaking Africa. On July 31, IUA's Steve Ujvarosy and I met with 65 African pastors in Bordeaux, France. They represented each of these cities:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dakar (Senegal) | Kinshasa (Zaire) |
| Kananga (Zaire) | Cotonou (Benin) |
| Abidjan (Ivory Coast) | Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) |
| Kisangani (Zaire) | Bangui (Cent. African Rep.) |
| Yaounde (Cameroon) | Lome (Togo) |
| Lubumbashi (Zaire) | Libreville (Gabon) |
| Bouake (Ivory Coast) | Douala (Cameroon) |
| Porto Novo (Benin) | Boma (Zaire) |
| Brazzaville (Congo) | Bujumbura (Burundi) |

Among the specific reports Steve and I have heard are:

Kinshasa, Zaire—Accelerated church planting progress as never seen before in the midst of a social and economic crisis

Cotonou, Benin—A spiritual revival with conversions among the political elite

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso—Great joy over a new Christian radio station and Christian prayer cells in some Islamic schools

Bangui, Central African Republic—Church planting in every urban district and conversions of both rich and poor

Lome, Togo—Miraculous deliverance amidst civil war

Libreville, Gabon—Media evangelism and prayer cells in every district of the city

Lubumbashi, Zaire—Spiritual deliverances and marvelous results in prison ministries

International Urban Associates is planning a major urban evangelization strategy consultation for cities in the French-speaking countries of Africa late in 1994. Please pray!

Former President Julius Nyerere, using his own country (Tanzania) as an example, points out that many African nations have made great strides despite continuing in poverty. "We were under the Germans and British for nearly 80 years. But when we gained our independence, 85 percent of our people were illiterate. We had only two university-qualified engineers and 12 doctors. Now, 30 years later, although we still don't have enough doctors, we have thousands. Though we don't have enough engineers, we have thousands. We still have education problems, but 90 percent of our adults are literate. Unfortunately, Tanzania is still one of the poorest countries in Africa."

"Africa on the Bright Side" (Maryknoll)

Inter-Church Urban Congress



The Inter-Church Urban Congress is to be held January 20-24 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The congress is being planned by a local ecumenical team with the assistance of International Urban Associates. If you are interested in participating in this major international congress, call Steve Ujvarosy at IUA, 312/850-9000.

“What I have learned about Africa in the last five years and what do I see happening in the near future?”

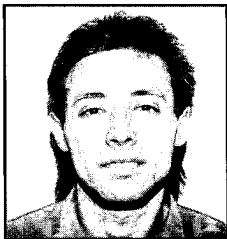
by Michael Cassidy, African Enterprise, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

The recent lessons of Africa all point to the categories and dynamics of crisis. The crises from north to south and east to west are political, economic, agricultural, moral, spiritual and relational. The AIDS crisis has assumed epidemic proportions. Africa is hovering between two worlds, one which has died and the other which is refusing to be born. In the past Africans of all colors were reluctant to face this reality, but in recent years the truth of the matter has become painfully evident.

It is also becoming evident that Africa is being marginalized in terms of the aid and compassion priorities of the rest of the world. Africans are seeing that we are basically on our own and unless we fix things ourselves, they will not be fixed for us by other people. This means a new sense of responsibility for our own destiny.

All of this presents a massive and historic challenge to the Christian church. It is also evident that the heart of black Africa is open to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. If present conversion trends continue and if effective discipling is done, Africa may well become the fulcrum of world mission in the 21st century.

by Stephan de Beer, Pretoria Evangelism and Nurture, Pretoria, South Africa



Stephan de Beer

As a white person ministering in the cities of South Africa, I have to wrestle with the question: “What does it mean to be an African?” I have to be liberated from western, middle-class theology and practice in order to develop an incarnational theology. I must draw from the cultural diversity with which God has blessed our nation if I want to develop an authentic urban theology.

In the midst of immense socio-political changes, we have to build new models of multicultural ministry, face our own racism and work toward signs of God’s new city—in the heart of violence and divisions.

Over the last months I’ve come to appreciate the unique context of South African cities as some of the most exciting training grounds for urban ministry and world missions. We have all the ingredients of urban diversity and brokenness, but also all the potential of healing and redemption.

Right now we experience the worldwide trend of people from all nations coming to the city. Recently we were blessed by a commissioning service that sent out a team of black, brown and white people speaking five languages and coming from six different denominations—to minister in the city. In the traditional bastion of apartheid, Pretoria, this is a miracle of God’s Spirit. The dream can come true, if only God’s people will be faithful.

Africa by the Year 2000

by Tokunboh Adeyemo, (excerpted from the January 1993 edition of *Transformation*).



Tokunboh Adeyemo

As the Bible says, the entrance of God’s Word to Africa brought light (Psalm 119:130). By 2000, three-fifths of the world’s over two billion Christians will live in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Africa with the largest total).

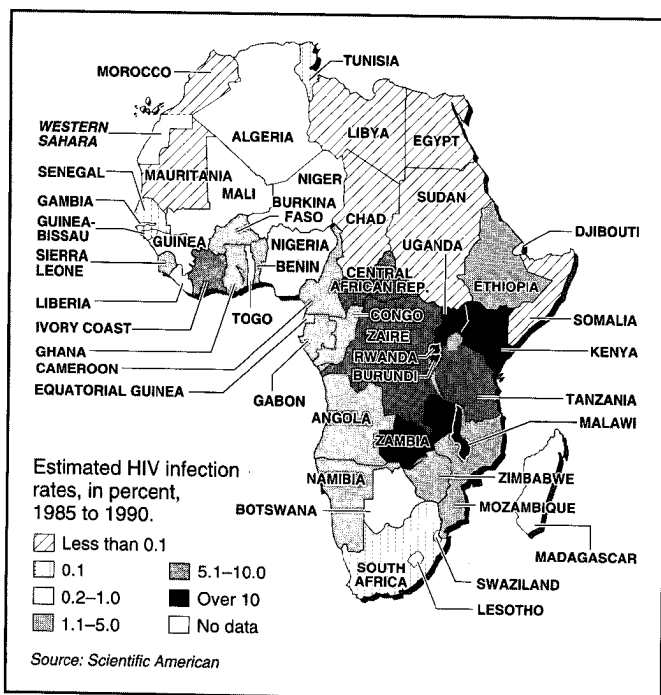
Dick France warns: “African Christianity needs more than numbers. It is a credulous church, wide open to any appealing new teaching which can quote a biblical verse or a miraculous cure in its support. It needs teaching and direction from within not from without. It needs theology, its own African Christian theology. Until it has, while it may continue to grow in numbers, it will not grow in influence on the new Africa, and it will be increasingly dismissed as a hangover from the colonial past.”

We need Christians at the highest levels of national policy-making establishments. The church must intensify its revolutionary teaching on justice for all and its service of compassion to the poor, the widows, the orphans and the destitutes. It is righteousness that exalts a nation.

Africa by the year AD 2000—where shall it be?

The answer depends upon the people of God. The future of Africa is not in the hands of secular politicians, economists, developers or financial institutions, but in your hand as a woman or man of God and of prayer. For it has been said: “They who know their God shall be strong and do exploits (Daniel 11:32). Jesus is the only hope for Africa! The bottom line is fourfold: Proclamation of Jesus as Lord; Prayer that taps into the supernatural; Participation that gets Christians involved as salt and light; and Power of the Holy Spirit in all wisdom and righteousness.

HIV in Africa: Picture of an Epidemic



by Jane Perlez (excerpted from *The New York Times*, June 22, 1992)

Because of the AIDS epidemic, populations in the worst-afflicted African countries will within 20 years switch over from their present high rate of increase to an actual decrease in numbers. In Uganda, where 1.5 million people out of a population of 16 million are thought to be infected with the HIV virus, the current three percent population growth rate is likely to fall to below zero after 2002, with more people dying than being born.

In 15 years, Uganda would have 20 percent fewer people than if the AIDS epidemic had not occurred. The population would be 20.28 million, instead of 24 million. Tanzania, Malawi and Rwanda, all in the central and east African belt where AIDS has hit hardest, would be similarly affected.

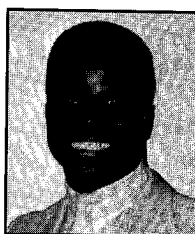
There are already six million Africans infected with the HIV virus, and according to what are generally considered the conservative estimates of the World Health Organization, 10 million will be infected by 1995. In contrast with the pattern in the United States, AIDS in Africa is spread mainly through heterosexual intercourse.

African leaders have generally been reluctant to take the AIDS epidemic seriously. Other than some education programs and attempts to distribute condoms, there is little evidence that Africans have changed their behavior in a way that would lead to a slowing of the epidemic.

The most clear-cut changes in population would occur in Central African countries where the epidemic started earliest. Some areas like the Rakai district in southern Uganda, where there are more than 20,000 children orphaned by AIDS, could see their population almost wiped out. In countries like Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda, where there is wide distribution of HIV infection, it is probably too late to reach already sexually active people. Rather, educators should focus on teenagers who are not yet sexually active.

Liberia: Purpose Out of Chaos

by Gonwo Dahnweih, General Secretary, Evangelical Association of Liberia



Gonwo Dahnweih

It was August, 1990 (the height of Liberia's civil war) and being of Northern Liberia's Gio tribe, I had fled for my life when men of any significant status were rounded up and executed (without trials) for allegedly supporting rebel fighters. The war had become very bloody with high civilian casualties. All communications were cut off. Were my wife and children alive? "God, I know you are there and you hear my plea. Do you want me to doubt?" I would weep, gazing into the sky during many sleepless nights.

God indeed heard! My wife and children journeyed by foot, dodging bullets and witnessing executions as they made their way to our neighboring country—the Ivory Coast. Now we are reunited through the kindness of American Christian friends. I have learned that our God is indeed a deliverer!

A peace accord is now taking affect in Liberia. We have senselessly destroyed approximately 150,000 of our 2.5 million population. Infrastructure development is reduced to nothing. About a third of all Liberians are refugees in other countries. Political differences and tribal hatred have consumed our people. "Sores" are fresh and will probably "scar" over the next decade or two.

However, many people have experienced God. Denominations are fellowshipping and praying together. Liberia, a nation officially founded by U.S. freed slaves (1822) solely on Christian principles, has been hard hit but it shall stand. It's strength shall be renewed and Liberians, having learned war, will embrace a long-sought and costly peace.

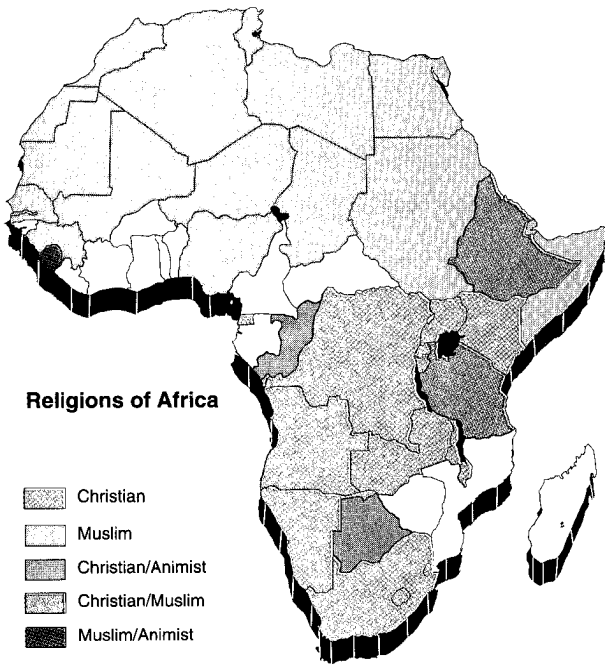
Pray for a post-war Liberia in which our people are not Gio, Grebo, Krahn or Kru, but primarily Liberians. Pray that Christians might co-exist with Muslims (and vice-versa). Pray that revival might sweep across Liberia, pouring intonations in which Liberians survive and minister.



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In 1970 there were only five cities on the continent of Africa with more than one million people. By the year 2000 there will be over 95 African cities of one million or more inhabitants. Churches, mission agencies, parachurch agencies and Christian laity are unprepared for the realities of this urban explosion.

The church and society at large struggle with overwhelming problems: famine; war; AIDS; the breakdown of traditional social and political systems; the continuing spread of militant Islam throughout Africa. To a large extent, they struggle alone. For example, although more than 40 percent of African countries speak French as their primary language, according to a recent study, there are more missionaries in the East African country of Kenya than in all of the 46 French-speaking countries worldwide, including the 26 West African countries. Today, the church and the people of Africa seem to be largely forgotten by Americans who are bombarded with images of need and opportunity in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Yet Somalia, Sudan, and South Africa remind us that Africa's struggle for social justice and economic survival are of utmost significance to the world community. This issue is devoted to the exploding urban realities faced by fellow Christians in this historic land.

—Stephen J. Ujvarosy

And in random scorching flame of wind that parches the painful throat and sears the flesh, may God, in compassion, let you find the great-boughed tree that will protect and shade.

—From a Somali prayer

INTERNATIONAL URBAN ASSOCIATES

MISSION STATEMENT

International Urban Associates seeks to empower God's people in the largest cities of the world by means of leadership consultations that generate vision, partnerships, motivations and resources, so that the "whole church can take the whole gospel to the whole city."

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