



IRAN

NATIONAL REPORT

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THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT OF

IRAN

MINISTRY OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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National Committee for Human Settlements

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IRAN

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I. Background

With an average altitude of 920 meters the Iranian Plateau is enclosed by mountains virtually on all sides. Two of the major ranges are the Alborz mountains running east and west in the northern half of the country and the Zagros mountains running north and south in the west and south central regions. There are two long, narrow strips of lowland, one bordering on the Caspian Sea and the other in the south of Iran covering the eastern portion of the Mesopotamian Plains and bordered by the Zagros mountains, the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman. On the enclosed Plateau in the centre there are two deserts, Dasht-e-Kavir and Dasht-e-Lut.

More than 70 percent of the present population of 34 million live at an altitude of approximately 1330 meters. This is also the altitude of the 40 major urban places including Tehran, Mashhad, Esfahan and Shiraz, which constitute the most populous urban centres in Iran.

Iran has a semi-arid climate, and only one percent of its total 1,648,000 square kilometers of land area enjoys precipitation of over 100 cm. per annum. Variation of climate and geography is not regional in character. This diversity is reflected also in the microclimatic conditions of various sub-regions and localities. The mountain areas are generally characterized by cold winters and mild summers. The Persian Gulf and the Caspian Coast regions

are humid in summer and mild in winter. The central plateau has a cold winter and hot dry summer with an annual rainfall averaging about 22 cm. The poor water resources, combined with a low annual rainfall, have been Iran's major constraint on an agriculture dominated economy throughout her history.

Iran is a country with considerable economic potential. Despite a high rate of population growth, currently estimated at 2.9 percent per annum, the capacity for raising living standards is substantial.

Industrial development is going ahead rapidly, and attempts are being made to modernize agriculture to reduce reliance on food imports, but by far the most important factor placing Iran in a favourable situation compared with most countries is her oil industry. Oil, by virtue of its foreign exchange earning capacity leads the line of other resources such as the enormous reserves of natural gas, and copper, which is estimated to become one of the most important foreign exchange earners with an estimated annual production capacity of 245 000 tons by 1978. The recent discovery of iron ore has added at least another 40 years supply of ore to the previous discoveries in seven different fields.

The national income following the accelerated increase in the oil revenues had a high rate of growth in 2532 and 2533(1974-75) , amounting to 34 and 42 per cent per annum respectively.

In 2534 the GNP grew by 17 per cent at constant prices ,

reaching \$ 50 billion, and the per capita income rose to \$1500.

The rapid economic development of the country, associated with the high rate of population growth and urbanization poses serious questions with regard to future development of human settlements, the desired pattern of population distribution, the concentration of economic activities and in short the fabric of the future Iranian society.

Various strategies and policies have been adopted by the government to cope with the problems associated with rapid development, and this paper would attempt to review these strategies and policies; and organizations responsible for their implementation.

II. National Spatial Planning

1- National Goal

The rapid economic growth in Iran over the last decade has brought much closer the advent of the "Great Civilization " the national goal calling for the integration of Iranian traditions and values within a modern society based on advanced technology. Iran is committed to achieving this monumental goal within the next two decades.

2- National Development Objectives

The rapid economic development, however, generates profound demographic and social changes. In spite of the country's remarkable ability to adapt, these changes are preludes to tensions and problems which will undoubtedly prove extremely difficult to overcome. The probable doubling of the Iranian population over the next forty years will be accompanied by a high volume of rural emigration and four-fold increase in the total urban population. The population will tend to be concentrated in a fewer densely populated areas where numerous problems are foreseen; over-exploitation of natural resources, damage to the environment, deterioration of the quality of life and competition over land use. At the same time, vast areas with less favourable geographic characteristics are threatened with depopulation and marginalization. The modernization of the economy and society as a whole will cause radical changes in traditional structures which may be injurious to the individual values and to the national culture.

Since the advent of modern development planning in Iran-commencing with the First 7-Year Plan in 2508 (1949), planners have attempted to find answers to these problems and to define a path of development for the economy and society. However, in the past, national development plans have been limited to defining a development path towards strong economic growth. Only recently in the Fifth 5 Year Plan, has attention been given to the setting of major social and regional development objectives.

Within the context of modern development planning, one can

consider this planning to consist of three major areas:

- 1) Economic and financial planning;
- 2) Social planning, with some over-lapping with the first category; and
- 3) Spatial planning (the distribution of resources and activities over space including physical and infrastructural planning).

It is evident that efforts so far made to deal with the problems of development have been much more concerned with the first two categories of development planning, with a somewhat greater emphasis on economic planning.

Spatial planning proposes to introduce a new dimension into planning . The way in which men and activities are distributed and organized over the national territory plays an essential role in determining the well-being of the individual and of society , as well as the efficiency of the economy itself. This spatial distribution of people and activities should no longer be assumed to be an inevitable consequence of economic decisions but rather should be treated as a goal of development in itself.

3. National Spatial Strategy

In striving to achieve political unity and optimization of national development through national spatial planning two dimensions of this effort will be of special importance, namely:

- 1) The consideration of physical and infrastructural development at the national level; and

- 2- The consideration of the country's spatial development as it relates to the distribution of resources and activities throughout the national territory with the perspective of space as a common denominator for all aspects of planning; economic- social -physical.

This type of planning basically involves a futuristic outlook and its expected results are reflected more on a long and intermediate dimension of time, with the objective of coordinating all work carried out by the government and private organizations which will have an impact on the structure of the spatial development of the country. Its first priority is the achievement of national goals and, within this context, response to regional potentials and requirements. Its aim is the creation of a balanced development of population centres and their environments through the judicious exploitation of resources by discouraging over-development as much as under-development. A comprehensive and inter-sectoral approach is an absolute necessity in solving problems of spatial development, in contrast to sectoral solutions to these problems.

Iran's launching of a national long-range spatial strategy plan is a pioneering attempt towards the development of a formal and systematic approach to the problems of spatial distribution of population and economic activities within the framework of a long-range national development plan.

4- Guidelines for Future Development

Envisaging an urban industrial society in the future and

desiring not to repeat the mistakes of today's industrialized societies, Iran places a great deal of importance on the development of a long-range spatial strategy plan to guide short-term national development planning. The realization of the necessity for giving attention to short, intermediate and long range planning time frames, and the adherence to the principles and guidelines set by the national spatial strategy plan, brings about a constant need for the resolution of conflicts between short-term objectives and the long-range goals of national spatial planning. Thus, the national spatial strategy Plan among other things, will provide a guideline for future development, both economic and spatial. In doing so, it will particularly emphasize and provide development guidelines in the areas of natural resource utilization, population distribution, rural settlement planning, urban development and agricultural and urban land use, industrial zones, transportation and infrastructure.

III. Housing

"Our housing and house ownership policy is a two-tier policy distinguishing between public and private housing. My Philosophy is that any individual, firm or factory that hires a labour should ... (provide him or her) with housing, sports facilities and recreation.

To achieve this objective expeditiously and also not to overburden the economic establishment, if necessary, the Government will make easy term housing loans available to the public"

SHAHANSHAH ARYAMEHR

1- National Goal

The national goal for housing follows the biological and

social criteria of providing a decent residential unit for every Iranian family wherever it lives.

Traditionally the government had never been involved in house construction activity and intends to adhere to this policy. Iran with a strong private sector willingly investing in construction of houses (16 percent of the total private sectors investments during the 3rd plan, 2526-2531 and 11 percent during the 4th plan, 2531-2536) sees no need for the government intervention in this sector. Instead, the government through its administrative and financial mechanisms is helping the private sector in its housing activities.

Considering the major factors contributing to the increased demand for housing such as natural growth of population, urbanization and increase in national per capita income, Iran is expecting a tremendous upsurge in the housing activities.

In 2531 (1973) the average number of families per dwelling unit in urban areas was 1.82. The national target for urban areas is to achieve the ratio of 1.0 by the year 2551; i.e. one housing unit for each urban family.

2. Constraints

There are, however, major constraints in achieving this national goal, such as manpower limitation, shortage of construction

materials, low rate of returns on housing investment, legislative and regulatory measures governing the landlord-tenant relationship and land speculation.

3. National Housing policies

The Government, cognizant of these constraints and bottlenecks, has taken many steps to alleviate these problems and assist the private sector in the successful fulfilment of the national need for housing. Although these efforts are very recent, but by attacking the problem from all directions they have had a significant impact on house construction activities and housing market.

The policies adopted by the Government are:

- a) To increase the supply of inexpensive land for housing and building construction activities;
- b) To acquire land for future housing, public facilities and urban infrastructure requirements by establishing a Land Bank;
- c) To facilitate house construction and purchasing of housing units through large volume credit availability;
- d) To increase the manpower supply in the housing construction sector by training adequate number of specialized and skilled workers.
- e) To increase the supply of locally produced construction materials and replacing the conventional methods of materials production with the modern industrialized techniques; and

- f) To enact legislation facilitating new house construction:

IV. Urban Development

" Our cities should be renovated. The filthy and unsanitary slums should be eradicated and in their place new housing units with adequate open space and sports arenas be constructed."

SHAHANSHAH ARYAMEHR

1. Introduction

Iran has long been a relatively urbanized country, and its urban concentration is relatively dense. In the year 2531(1973), 13.2 million people (43% of the total population of the country) lived in 296 towns with more than 5000 inhabitants. The percentage urban population changed to 44% in 2533 and it is expected to reach 46% level by 2535.

The principal city is Tehran accounting for 13% of the total population or 32% of the urban population, but 60% of industrial investments, 84% housing loans, 68% of car registrations, 55% of students, and with an average per capita income over 3 times that of the rest of the country. The urban structure in terms of population is characterised by three distinct types. In 2531, there were:

- 19 towns with more than 100 000 inhabitants, accounting for 62% of the urban population.

- 55 medium-sized towns of between 25000 and 100 000 inhabitants, accounting for 20% of the urban population.
- 225 small towns of less than 25 000 inhabitants, and steadily growing accounting for 18% of the urban population.

Unlike many other countries, Iran has emerged successfully from its initial urbanization period. The general urbanization principles applied for more than 50 years following the impetus given by Reza Shah have resulted in a noteworthy control of urban development until quite recently.

But, considerable changes are occurring in the urban pattern. The urban population according to a low assumption is likely to increase 1.6 fold (20 million) by 2541 (1982), 2.5 fold (34 million) by 2551 (1992), 3.5 fold (44 million) by 2561 (2002), and 4 fold (50 million) by 2571(2012).

2. Urban Growth Strategies

The way Iranian towns are changing reveals a series of dynamic trends which will accelerate the process of achieving a better city size distribution.

a. Industrial Decentralization and Industrial Growth Poles

These trends are the results of deliberate policies adopted by the Government and mainly due to the policy of decentralized industrialization.

This policy has particularly aimed at the diversification of economic activities in the "largest cities" category which includes Tabriz, Esfahan, Ahvaz, Bandar Abbas, Arak and to a lesser extent Mashhad, as well as certain medium or even small size towns such as those located on the Caspian Sea shores. This diversification is largely due to the initial wave of industrialization which has since been strengthened and amplified.

The promotion of industrial growth poles has centred either in regions of high economic potentials like Ahvaz and the Khouzestan triangle, or areas rich in natural resources such as Abadan and Masjed-Soleiman, centres of oil production; or the new ports of the Persian Gulf, Bandar Abbas and Bandar Shahpour.

b. Satellite Towns

Another urban growth strategy adopted by the Government is the creation of satellite industrial towns around Tehran to prevent further concentration in Tehran by strengthening the industrial base of such cities as Qazvin and Saveh. In the provinces, the creation of Arya Shahr, the Reza Pahlavi Project and Marv Dasht, Shiraz are among urban development efforts based on this strategy.

c. Special-Function-Towns

Yet another urban strategy is based on provision of high level public services and amenities in the existing large urban

centres to create specialized functions for these cities other than industrial and economic functions.

Mashhad and Tabriz which are already among highly industrialized cities are serving their respective large regions as service centres.

Esfahan in addition to its highly developed industrial administration and commercial functions, serves as an important tourist centre.

Shiraz is becoming a cultural and educational centre and at the same time developing a series of clean industries based on advanced technology.

d. Urban Regions

The new dimension of urbanization, the deliberate policy to create industrial satellites, or even the increasingly marked trend towards establishing activity centres beyond the scope of the 25 year plan in the case of certain large cities (e.g. Esfahan) entails the creation of urban regions or conurbations. This phenomenon is observable in the vicinity of certain large towns such as Tehran (The Tehran-Karaj- Qazvin Axis), Esfahan-Shiraz, and Andimadkh- Dezful - Khorramshahr- Abadan.

The same pattern can be seen on the shores of the Caspian Sea,

particularly the stretch connecting cities of Amol, Bobol, Sari and Shahi.

e. New Towns

The policy of creating new towns in various forms has been implemented. The creation of the new towns centred around Arya-Mehr steel works near Esfahan or grouping of several processing plants like Alborz near Qazvin has started by developing housing estates around industries.

Creation of other new towns like Mah-Shahr in Khuzestan is another attempt in providing for the present and future urban population of Iran.

f. Tehran Development Strategy

Within the framework of the national urban growth strategy the problem of rapid growth of Tehran is receiving a special attention. It is only obvious that the future growth of Tehran must be based on a clear strategy for development and a set of coherent and consistent policies to guide the development in the short-run as well as in the long-run.

The population of Tehran is approaching five million mark and it seems unlikely to stop at the 5.5 million suggested as the limit to which Tehran must be allowed to grow.

The reason for the growth of Tehran as Iran's primate city are numerous and to a large extent the by-product of the rapid economic growth of the nation and the lack of intervening opportunities elsewhere.

Therefore, the problem of the growth of Tehran is more of a structural problem related to the economic forces at the national level and the overall city-size distribution in Iran than of a problem concerning the city of Tehran itself.

Through the past decade the Tehran's city limit according to the Master Plan has been kept unchanged, thus pressuring the city's infrastructure and services by increasing the density within the city proper. This restriction just recently was lifted.

The growth of the Iranian automobile industry, coupled with the growing family income of Tehranis has brought about a tremendous physical mobility of population in Tehran Metropolitan area causing a monumental traffic and parking problem for the city.

The construction of Tehran Metro which will take nine years to finish would not solve Tehran's immediate traffic problem, but it is certainly a rational step towards solving the traffic problem in the long-run.

Although, Tehran compared with the other Metropolitan areas in the world is well kept and run, yet the ever increasing pressure

on the city to provide public services, if not checked at a certain critical point would have grave consequences.

It is now widely believed that in addition to extending the city limits the following measures should immediately be taken:

Efforts must be made to curtail the growth of Tehran by adopting the appropriate mechanism to discourage migration to Tehran or encourage emigration from Tehran through a deliberate policy for decentralization and deconcentration.

A policy should be adopted for the creation of satellite towns around Tehran as a step toward localized deconcentration and the creation of intervening opportunities to absorb the new migrants before reaching Tehran.

At the same, the quality and level of services in Tehran should be up graded and this should continue while the other policies are being followed.

It is hard to foresee with a reliable degree of accuracy the success of such policies, but the most important part of the entire effort is the commitment by the Government to the cause which will undoubtedly contribute to the realization of the objectives.

3. Spatial Problems

a. Site Limitations

There are serious site limitations in Iran for further development of existing cities and the creation of new towns. The nature of the soil (e.g., salt zones or hydromorphous zones and the climate are among these limitations.

b. Encroachment

Urban development has in the past encroached on rich agricultural and orchard land and poses a serious threat in the future.

c. Transport Network

The lack of fully developed transport system commensurate with the concentrated urban expansion is a major bottleneck, in the short-run giving way to the expansion of highways for motorists and assigning less priority to the development of mass transit systems.

The need and the urgency for development of modern mass transit systems is fully recognized, and Tehran will be the first Iranian city to have an underground system in a near future.

d. Water Resources

The general water shortage in Iran is a known fact. However, the problem of water supply for the urban use is more related to the complexity and the cost of adding new structures and systems to respond to the increasing requirements of urban areas than to

the availability of water.

The provision of adequate water supply for urban areas is a challenging task for the Government to which a long term commitment to meet the requirements of the future has already been made.

In southern Iran in areas where desalination is the only method of providing drinking water, efforts in this direction are being made and such systems are already at work.

V. Rural Development

" In follow-up to the previous efforts in achieving the socio-economic objectives of the Land Reform programme (we are now in a position) to move in the direction of building and improving the rural life. (This we can achieve) through development and strengthening of a network of rural cooperatives, the establishment of the Law of Cooperative Production, the consolidation of the farm lands within the operational domain of the rural cooperatives, the establishment of the rural educational centres, the implementation of the Law of Rural Social Insurance, the development of the non-agricultural activities and rural handicrafts, the development and renovation of villages, the appropriation of needed funds for farmers and especially through elevating the spirit of the collective work and expanding the social and technical knowledge of the rural population and increasing the quantitative and qualitative levels of productive employment.

(We hope that these efforts) will break new grounds in providing a better living and welfare of the rural society"

SHAHANSHAH ARYAMEHR

1. Introduction

Although the population engaged in the agricultural sector and related activities constitute about 57% of the total population of Iran-i.e., 19 million today, - this figure is expected to decrease considerably, to reach a low of about 25-30% by the end of this century. However, due to overall population growth and geographical characteristics, the number of people living in the rural areas in the year 2000 will not be less than the present numbers.

Iran has 66000 scattered rural hamlets and villages. The dispersal of these settlements is due to availability of two factors, namely cultivable land and water, neither of which can be found in large quantities in one location. Therefore, some degree of dispersal of rural settlements is unavoidable and even desirable. But it is equally important to note that the increasing population pressure on land with little hope of expanding the cultivable land is unproductive and even harmful to the existing agricultural activities.

Moreover, providing public services to 66000 hamlets and villages separated from each other and from the main cities and major highways by great distances is uneconomical, if not impossible.

The population pressure in our rural areas has the danger of expanding the existing agricultural centres over the adjacent agricultural land and consuming the water resources needed for increasing the agricultural productivity.

The country's water resources are located in the valleys of the mountainous regions and at the heads of such valleys where the farms and fields are located. Water can reach very limited areas as these fields are disconnected.

Other than areas in the province of Khouzestan to the south and the Caspian Sea coastline to the north, there are no sizable tracts of land with adequate water resources in Iran.

The implications of these realities on the selection of strategy for industrial development and the pattern of human settlements in Iran are serious. The spatial strategy Plan for Iran has taken these constraints into account.

The studies carried out so far suggest that the system of settlement and habitation must be based on a network of small or medium-sized towns, the economic activity of whose inhabitants should depend on the existing natural resources accessible within the boundaries of their respective hinterlands.

2. Rural Development Policies

The Government's declared policy is to provide public services including medical and educational, potable water, electricity, feeder roads, adequate marketing opportunities for the rural products and community facilities for the rural settlements. Confronted with the technical and financial difficulties in implementing this

policy, the government through in depth studies has established that the services needed by over 80 per cent of the population of the 66000 rural settlements could be provided by centres created in 3000 rural districts.

These rural districts which are served by a central place, constitute a Rural Development Area of which the central place and its surrounding hamlets and villages are labeled "Service Centres or Rural Development Centres" and "Satellites," respectively.

Each Rural Development Area will consist of an average of 15 rural settlements with an average population of 6000. The maximum distance of any satellite village from the "Service Centre" does not exceed 10 kilometers.

The necessary infrastructure and basic requirements for social and economic activities of each rural development area will be created at its "Service Centre". Based on local requirements a plan is prepared for each Service Centre's development. The Plan includes the activities to be carried out by the Public as well as the private sector.

All the satellite villages will be connected by roads to the service centres and the latter to the major highways.

In the guideplans prepared for the rural development areas provisions are made for potable water; sewerage system; renovation

of the villages; establishment of clinics , high shools,vocat-
ional schools, rural cultural houses, library, public bath and
storage facilities, public servants working places and housing;
PTT; veterinary; sports arenas and open space.

VI. Land

" The Government should acquire land
and preserve it in a land bank to
be used in the future for provision
of basic services to the people in
the era of the Great Civilization."

SHAHANSHAH ARYAMEHR

1. Introduction

The majority of population and bulk of economic activities
and infrastructure in Iran are concentrated in six plains which
make up 21.2 per cent of the countries total area of 1.648.000
Sq.Km. Remaining portion is comprised of henchlands, 15.6%: pla-
teaux, 21.2 % ; mountains of over 2000 m. which receive greater
part of the precipitation, 15.8 % ; deserts with less than 100 mm.
rainfal, 27.3 % ; and finally salt lakes, 0.9% .

At present Urban population of about 16 million and their ac-
tivities are concentrated at 1600 Sq.Km. of land. With a projected
urban population of 40 million in year 2000 there will be a need
for 4000-10.000 Sq.Km. of land for the total Urban living space .
At the macro level such a requirement represents no problem since

it is a small proportion of the available land. But at the micro
level there will be problems and difficulties. Existing settlements
are in the areas where topographic conditions do not allow expan-
sion of the towns and cities except at the expense of using valu-
able agricultural lands.

The "White Revolution" and the land reform of January 1962
eliminated the vast land holdings of the feudal land-lords. Excess
land over and above the legal entitlement was purchased by the go-
vernment and distributed among individual farmers.

These lands are solely used for agricultural purposes either
by individual farmers or government itself for agro-industrial
complexes. From the economic standpoint protection of these lands
as agricultural lands is crucial to the future of agricultural
sector and food production in Iran.

The problem of urban land comprises of two distinct aspects of
land development, namely the external problem related to the ex-
pansion of urban area into agricultural land and the internal pro-
blem caused by the fixity of land within the city limits and by the
speculative practices.

In order to solve the latter problem, a Land Transaction Act was
passed on 4 May 1975, indicating that any unutilized land purchased
after this date can not be sold again unless sufficient improvement
has been made on it. The Law as was expected has been very effective
in preventing further speculation in the land market. However, the
Price of land has not been reduced substantially due to the rising
personal income, high demand for urban land and shortage of unutili-
zed land within the city limits.

In order to solve the land problem the government has taken different measures which is hoped to stop speculation and the rising land prices:

- 1: Introducing new Land Transaction law.
- 2: Purchasing unutilized land in great volumes outside the boundary lines of the cities, developing them in an orderly manner and sell them to private developers to build houses and needed city facilities.
- 3: Encouraging apartment building by providing land and tax exemptions and also better financial & loan subsidies.
- 4: Establishing Town Development Councils in different provinces to build satellite towns.
- 5: Arrangements for Land Data Bank and management in order to collect and classify all government lands.

2- Land Problems & Policies:

The legal measures taken to deal with the urban land problem and specifically land speculation have not been very successful in the past. Indeed, in some cases they have an adverse effect, due to fact that the purpose of the charges stipulated was primarily to earn government revenues. These charges were not aimed at controlling the high price of land and they did not distinguish between utilized and unutilized land. Moreover, the municipalities did not have an effective mechanism to collect charges from the owners except during transfer of property or starting of construction. Therefore these charges caused an increase in the cost of land.

The definition of city limits in the Master Plans, although useful and necessary from the standpoint of an urbanization policy and preventing the disorderly expansion of towns, has also been instrumental in raising the land prices and consequently the construction costs in several cities.

Contrary to what is widely believed the ownership of unutilized land and speculation on it is not solely confined to a small number of speculators, but also a large mass of middle class has been involved in the speculative transactions on land.

VII. Environment

" We do not want the horizon of our cities to be poisoned by polluted air and our rural areas to have degenerated soil and polluted water. We do not want our citizens to be deprived of the aesthetic amenities of nature.

We will make our cities and villages productive and clean and protect the natural endowments of this land for future generations."

SIYAHANSIAH ARYANMIR

1. Introduction

Iran today faces the problems which most other countries must also sustain, of growth in population, over consumption of resources, waste and pollution.

Adding to the gravity of these problems in the Iranian context

is the high rate at which the nation's economy grows, the rising per capita income and consumption, the rapid rate of migration, concentration and congestion.

Iran cannot afford to curb its growth, nor it can postpone the distribution of the national income among the people. There is no other alternative, but to confront the problems with foresight and determination, and to develop Plan of action for protection and enhancement of the human environment.

Yet, there are serious constraints on efforts to achieve a meaningful growth while simultaneously maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

This is a challenge and a task that the Government of Iran has announced it is prepared to undertake, and it has made them major functions of the state.

2- Quality of Life and Human Settlements

Although, the environmental concern has a much broader field of coverage, the primary concern is with the environmental conditions of where people live; i.e., human settlements.

Iran, recognizing that much of the parameters of reduced "quality of life" in human settlements can be directly attributed to environmental indices such as population growth, consumption of natural resources, pollution and waste, has taken the initiative

to design programmes for identifying the magnitude of the malaise which act to reduce the "quality of life" in the human settlements. Recognizing further a great distinction between the parameters which affect rural as opposed to urban deterioration of environmental conditions, separate programmes designed by various governmental agencies have been started to improve the environmental quality.

Special attention has been given to Tehran, where the severest environmental problems manifest themselves in the forms of air pollution due to vehicular traffic, congestion, aesthetic deterioration, lack of privacy, the destruction of neighbourhood structure and an undesirable land use pattern.

In the area of air pollution peripheral monitoring has been done and is determined that the motor vehicle emissions contribute as much as 70-80% to the level of air pollution in Tehran.

Air pollution aside, sound levels are also a major threat to the health of Tehranis.

In response to the pressing problems facing Iran as a whole and Tehran in particular many environmental programmes have been launched including soil analysis projects, industrial surveys, wastes and effluents survey, the pesticide ecology project, the study of the ecological impact of Reza Shah dam, and the like.

VIII- Institutions

There are numerous institutions in Iran dealing with the problems related to spatial planning, including national, regional and urban planning; environment; housing and building including house design, construction and technology; land including land-use planning, land acquisition, sale and development. These institutions, organizations and agencies are performing different tasks including research, policy formulation, planning and implementation.

The institutions listed below form only a fraction of the total number of organizations dealing with the habitat problems:

1- Ministry of Housing & Urban Development

Ministry of Housing & Urban Development was established in 2522 (1963) to prepare and implement development programmes for cities and rural areas.

At the beginning the purposes of this Ministry were, preparing technical specifications for housing development, urban planning, government buildings, urban public facilities and roads.

In 2526 (1969) for the purpose of developing urban development policies and control of urban growth in Iran the " High Council for Urban Planning " was established.

The members of the Council which is now attached to a newly

established Department of Urban Planning and Architecture are the Ministers of Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Agriculture and National Resources, Art & Culture, Tourism & Information, War, Economy, Power and the Head of the Plan and Budget Organization.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has several specialized agencies and affiliates as described below:

a) Housing Organization

Housing Organization is an independent state corporation under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Development. Its capital currently totaling about \$ 12.6 millions, is wholly owned by the government. The Government is represented by the Minister of Housing & Urban Development and five other Ministers.

The Housing Organization is governed by a three-man board of directors.

The purposes of the Housing Organization are:

- a- Construction and sale of housing units;
- b- Construction and management of subsidized rental housing units for government employees;
- c- Provision of consulting engineering services; and
- e- Production of construction materials (at present is constructing prefabricated housing factories).

b) Iran Mortgage Bank

Iran Mortgage Bank was established in 2497 (1938) by the order of H.I.M. Reza Shah the Great, for the purpose of providing easy term loans for housing construction, purchase and improvement.

The IMB in addition to housing loans through its Housing Savings Funds, is also making loans available for construction materials and implementation of cooperative and condominium housing projects.

The increase in the savings and the volume of loans provided in 2534 amounted to Rls. 30.8 billion and Rls. 20.0 billion respectively.

The housing construction activities of the IMB started mainly in 2521. Among housing projects completed are Nazi-Abad, Farah complex, Low-cost housing in Arya-Mehr complex and 4th of Aban complex and the apartment building in South-eastern Tehran.

Only in last year the IMB started the construction of 480 units in Esfahan, 1000 units in Bandar Abbas, 170 units in Hamedan and 1000 units in Boushehr, all through housing savings deposits.

The IMB has also succeeded so far in the establishment of seven Housing Savings and Loans Associations in Iran.

Another activity of the IMB is the assistance to the individuals

housing cooperatives through making low-interest loans available to them for the purchase of houses.

c) Land Organization

Land Organization is an independent state corporation under the general supervision of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Development, and has been established since August 1974.

The Purposes of the Land Organization are:

- 1- To protect the " Dead" ^{*} & " Crown" ^{**} lands which are located within 30 kilometers of city boundaries;
- 2- To buy land and develop it for sale or rent;
- 3- To sell or rent land according to the city master plans;
- 4- To implement any legal action or affairs in pursuing land protection;

* Dead lands are defined as lands which, on Dec. 31, 1961
(1) did not have a clear registered title and
(2) were not in use

** Historically, these lands were acquired through past dynasties from various regions as a compensation for not being able to provide them with militia. These lands are now the property of the Land Organization.

d) Building and Housing Research Center (BHRC)

The BHRC as a research arm of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development was established in 2533 (1974). The objective is to assist the building industry through the exchange, assessment and dissemination of information, the development of indigenous materials and techniques, and applied research on the solution of specific problems.

The main activities include:

a- Building Research:

This activity consists of scientific work covering areas of materials, structural engineering, and environmental physics. The projects on materials are aimed at improvement and better use of traditional and/or local materials for rural and urban housing, as well as introduction of new materials hitherto not used in the country.

b- Housing Research:

In the area of housing research the BHRC is concerned with the problems of architectural design, socio-economic aspects of housing and construction methods. Projects currently underway include development of performance specifications for housing based on users' need, and rural renewal using asphalt sun-dried bricks. The performance specifications will be used both for procurement of housing and as a basis to develop national building codes and regulations for Iran.

c- Information and Documentation Center:

The responsibility of this division is to present all available information to a broad spectrum of users through publications, training programmes, advisory services and materials and components display.

d- Agreement Evaluation:

This work consists of assessing whether a new product or process is suitable for use. Certificates will be issued giving technical specifications of material, component, or process based on laboratory tests.

2- Plan and Budget Organization

Plan Organization was established in 2508 (1949) for the purpose of planning for the overall development of the country. The Fifth Development Plan period will soon come to an end and the Sixth Plan with clear definition of spatial objectives and the inclusion of the space dimension as a determinant of investment decisions, will commence.

The PBO through integration of socio-economic and spatial planning and preparation of development budget is capable to guide and direct the development efforts in the next plan period. The PBO through its various sub-organizations contributes to better planning and implementation of spatial planning projects.

The following institutions are dealing directly with various

aspects of spatial planning, while there are few others who have indirect contributions:

a) Centre for National Spatial Planning

In the light of the need for spatial planning at the national level, the government has created a centre for National Spatial Planning, under the Plan and Budget Organization.

The Centre is governed by a council consisting of the Ministers of Water and Power, Industries and Mines, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, State and Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Development, State in charge of Interior Affairs, state and the Head of the PBO (Head of the Council) and the Deputy Prime Minister and Director of the Department of Environment.

The Centre has three sections for Administration and Personnel, Documentation and Information and Technical and Research.

The overall responsibility of the Centre is the preparation of the national spatial plans and guidelines, compilation of information and research work.

b) Tehran Development Council

The Tehran Development Council is the comprehensive Planning body for the Tehran Urban Region. The Secretariat of the Council

was established as the professional staff of the Tehran Development Council to develop strategies, plans and policies; to undertake appropriate research; to analyze existing plans, propose development projects; and to coordinate and control the actions of national, municipal and private entities in the Tehran Urban Region.

The overall responsibility of the Tehran Development Council is: To give direction to the growth and development of Tehran; to act as coordinating body between the various ministries and agencies involved in urban development; and to serve as an authority to stop uncontrolled growth in the region.

The TDCS has just completed a review of the existing comprehensive Plan for Tehran, and has issued an Interim Policy Report on Major Planning and Development Issues Affecting Tehran's Future.

c) Bureau for Provincial Planning

The Bureau for Provincial Planning of the Plan and Budget Organization is responsible for regional socio-economic research, study on the way and means of implementing the strategy of decentralization and deconcentration, provision of the technical assistance to the Department of Provincial Planning and participation in the planning activities of the Provincial Planning Offices.

3- Others

a) Iran Housing Development Corporation

The IHDC was established in 2527 (1968) to implement housing development for the farmers and workers.

The capital of IHDC has been paid by two organization from the workers social security funds.

Social Welfare Organization 80%

Worker's Welfare Bank 20%

The IHDC up to now has developed 16500 dwelling units for the farmers and 19835 units for the workers.

The IHDC is also responsible for the development of hospitals and clinics financed by the Social Welfare Organization.

b) Building Utilities Corporation

The BUC was established in 2526 (1976) to design, produce and control the prices of building utilities. As part of its operation, the BUC has already set up two production companies; Elevatro Co. & Prefabricated Bath-Room Co.

c) Khuzestan Urban Development Organization

Khuzestan Urban Development Organization has been established to implement the development of the Southern cities of Bandar-Shah-pour and Bandar Mah-Shahr.

The KUDO is also responsible for the development of housing projects in the southern part of Iran.