

INTEGRATED SLUM REDEVELOPMENT WITH A HEART

Mojosongo, Solo, Central Java, Indonesia

Antonio Ishmael Risianto

ABSTRACT

This paper briefly covers a “Community Planning” experience in “redeveloping” slum/squatter areas in Indonesia. “Community Planning” here is part of the overall community participation process which also includes community actions and implementation. This paper attempts to show that “Community Planning & Participation” were the key factor in making this project a reasonable success. It is an attempt to also show (especially to the Local Government) that so often they have taken the simplistic path by just evicting these slum/squatter communities by force. Yet it does not really solve the problem.¹ This paper briefly discusses the interlink/interface of a “holistic approach,” the integration and coordination of activities of the various key players (Stakeholders) in this “urban game” under this “community dynamic planning” and implementation process. It discusses the supporting means as well as the problem faced in enabling this slum/underdeveloped district to change to become a “normal” settlement as pockets “for the low income” to be able to also live in cities - being part of the total mutual symbiotic Urban Fabric of the overall City Plan.²

INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEXT/PROBLEM

This case study was conducted in one of the urban fringe areas (of about 200 Hectares) that were rapidly (but haphazardly)



Figure 1. The existing slum and squatters.



Figure 2. No jobs. Survival?

growing as an Urbanized Settlement.³ These fringe areas, as is often also the case in many poor underdeveloped countries (in Asia, Africa, and Latin America), were one of the poorest districts in the City. Most were the result of the pressure of mass urbanization phenomena of masses who were all searching and struggling for their survival. So how can we redevelop these underdeveloped areas in a more humane way for its citizens = “A City for All?”

The slum/squatter redevelopment efforts were done through several interlinking and integrated “problem solving development packages.” These were all done though the “Community Planning” approach.

- Community self-rearranging squatter’s land, voluntary self “informal housing” (shacks) demolition, and collective rebuilding new homes.
- Resettlement to a new “Community Based Housing” development (a special program where the community can become their own Developer) to make ways to logistically enable the existing squatters’ land to be re-developed.
- Re-arranging existing riverbank slum settlement, based on an “Eco Village Model.” Community internally re-ordering their physical environment, rearranging legal but hazardous “informal housing” all to “opening up” the way of the large World Bank’s anti-flood river normalization project.



Figure 3. The frequent slum evictions against the urban poor:

- Maintaining and improving the existing as well as creating new “(poor) peoples’ economic centers.”
- Improving the natural ecosystem along the over-polluted and flooded waterway zones, through resettling “pig farming” and introducing “appropriate technologies” for a collective/ ecological soy bean cake production operation.
- River Clean-Up program, including Community Garbage Management through Recycling and Composting Eco Station program and building Community Latrines.
- Improving the “settlement infrastructure” in providing special pedestrian and “only motor cycle accesses,” through community alley paving and bamboo bridge building program.

The fringe area of this low-income settlement (called “Kampung”) consists of a combination of sporadic still semi rural settlements, with pockets of very dense (legal) “slum” and (illegal) “squatter” settlements. The attention of the project focused on the most critical slum and squatter settlements at the crossing of the main inter-regional road, traditional market, all along the riverbanks, and along the edges of the creeks and even settlement encroaching the cemeteries.

A tertiary river branch passes through this “Kampung” which are so heavily polluted by rampant unorganized pig farming and the combination of un-ecological “Soya bean” production. On top of this, the lack of latrines and the rampant flooding caused by direct garbage dumping practices clogging waterways creates an unbearable foul smell in the whole environment for a livable human settlement - A water polluting source to the main river that covers a great area all through the southern end of the region. The uncontrolled growth of the squatter settlement started clogging the major regional circulation link from the *Center Business District* (CBD) to the more formal residential districts at the northern outskirts of the city. This then caused a city circulation “bottleneck.”



Figure 4. The garbage in the river.

The World Bank was then involved with a City & Regional Development Program (SSUDP) and placed this district as a priority zone to be “managed” for improving the overall city/region. This included the objective to “prevent wild” settlement growth and open up “new urban land” for supporting the City’s shortage of low-income housing. World Bank then set a major “Urban INFRASTRUCTURE” investment program, consisting of the building of roads, normalizing the city river with a citywide levy building program that also covers this district. Nevertheless, for more than 2 years after the levy project was approved and planned, it had faced a “dead lock” situation because of its inability to clear the needed river bank’s “land” for its construction.

That this “conventional infrastructure engineering” project was unable to start was its failure to place the importance of the “Social Factor” in the total development package. A proposal was then re-introduced to consider the “PEOPLE’S PARTICIPATION” which got underway after we were asked to lead support this assignment.

THE OBJECTIVE: THE ‘MPE’ FACTOR

For simplicity, a way to see the “objective” is to see this effort as a “three-pronged focus” that was considered and implemented in this assignment as a whole and inseparable from what we believe can solve the slum/squatter redevelopment problem in a more sustainable way:

a. The “M”: “Meta Development”

An objective and effort that was often not so well “concerned” in conventional large “engineering based” projects was “the Mental & Social” development in the form of “trust,” “willingness,” “inner cooperation,” care, the mental frame, and “social togetherness” in solving problems. These are so gravely important in city development *where public resources are scarce* (common situation in most underdeveloped governments.) Other forms of this “Meta Development” are called “Human Capital Development,” the sense of belonging, the culture, the self enablement, the participatory energies . . . the willingness, the preparedness, the want to organize themselves (“community strengthening” or often called “organizing the unorganized” or “formalizing the informal sector”) . . . or basically “Giving a Heart.”

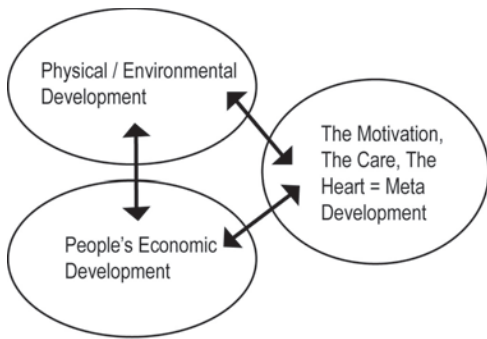


Figure 5. MPE Factor.

b. The “P”: Physical/Environmental Development

The development of the appropriate “Physical and Environmental development,” especially the support for basic infrastructure services (minimal water, sewerage, electrical access) will be key as a catalyst to trigger community participatory energies.⁴ This includes the development of public/community space and environmentally friendly infrastructures.

c. The “E”: (Poor) “People’s Economy” Development

This considers the underlying reasons of why the squatter settlers/low income population is there in the first place: looking for jobs/income to survive.

Solving with only the physical infrastructure and housing development alone does not seem to solve the underlying problem. The target Community cannot survive with just housing, riverbank levies, roads, and public toilets alone. They were basically there for “jobs/income” to survive without guarding this resource the sustainability to survive will fall apart. The low income will eventually be forced to move out.

Both physical development and “people’s economy”/self-supporting jobs/income, requires “mental energy” as a “bonding chemistry.” This is often the ‘missing factor’ in the total “development system.”

This is the “MPE “ objective/focus that we have learned and followed by an interlinking/interface “Community Planning and Implementation” process.

The (Community Planning/Participatory Development) Process

The process was a continuous link of working together between four main Actors/Stake Holders, namely, in this case: the target community (the poor, the squatters, the existing local inhabitants); the local city Government, the Community Facilitators, and the World Bank. Each of these “Development Actors” has basically their own unique resources needed “to be mixed for attaining feasible solutions.”



Figure 6. Community planning at night.

The process basically was, what is often named a “Symphonic Planning and Negotiation Process” among the various main Development Actors, each supporting the intricate and dynamic situation under a strategic, psychological and political sensitive game of constant changes, and negotiation/lobby process and all focused on the development of the aforementioned three-pronged MPE objectives.

Simplifying the Process (still rather complex looking) can be seen in the following diagram:

The parts of this Community Planning process are not really “phases” but all passing more a dynamic process and often incrementally just grow, refined and mixed to constant mobilization of enabling resources to gear towards concrete/real actions (whatever it is) . . . often called the “Dynamic Urban Planning” process.

a. The Understanding of the General Context: The role of the “External Development Analyst”

Looking at the Macro and Micro view. Seeing the problems from the external view based on the Science and the state of the art of Regional and Urban Planning “Knowledge,” Urban Management, and often practicing “Appropriate Technology” (AT). With this base, initially developing “Cards of Strategic Local Development Assumptions” of different possible problem solving development alternatives, possibilities, and preparing assumed scenarios.

b. The Community Entry Strategy and Learning “the local knowledge”

Entering the community is one of the critical points of this “Building Block of Trust.” “The Student Entry” seems the best method so far, as “Students” are usually seen by the community as neutral, pure, free from “hidden interest” and “still learning.” “Just try not to act so smart but humble, “more human,” and that they are all just ‘learning together from each other’ to solve local problems.”

c. The Initial Confirmation of These Strategic Development Assumptions

This is done through informal “raps”/dialogs with the locals, that might surprise us for its outcome. The “External Party’s” perceptions of problems and assumed solutions might be so totally different/inappropriate. Often views and values were mixed with the discoveries of unrealistic to “ordinary external logic,” like hidden history of “local politics” or even mystical beliefs or even “non- modern values” (like cost).

These Refined “Cards of Strategic *Development Assumptions*” will then be the basis tools for the more focused Community Planning Action Plans.

With this information, the Community Facilitator can then conduct an array of meetings (even meeting to set meetings) towards these “Community Planning Sessions” often called “Community Discussion Together” sessions.) Usually starting with the Community Leaders then with large groups of representation and then smaller groups with different interest focus to solve problems.

The Community Planning Sessions were often prepared through the Community Facilitators gaming simulation exercises: especially of note were the preparation methods/strategy (and “tricks” to guard against the “Santa Claus Syndrome”/the “Begging Syndrome” and the “Demanding Syndrome.” Instead the overall Community Planning were with the strategy to shift: “Who NEEDS Who.” Or the game where the “COMMUNITY NEEDS the Government” instead of the “Government Needs the Community.” These strategies are very often the vital approach to enable to solve the problem.

Each specific CASE (Sub case/problems) then have its own “urban game play” to meet its own particular context and idiosyncrasies

Some Samples of These VITAL “LOCAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES”

- *Willingness in sharing resources, trading, shifting resources (especially on land or place) in rebuilding/rearranging, reordering the slums.*
- *The willingness to resettle to another location.*
- *Willingness to self – demolish their own informal housing that are necessary for the rebuilding slums or being in the way of the infrastructure construction zone.*
- *The willingness to shift or improve jobs if it is inappropriate, polluting, or inefficient or causing negative inter business competitions.*
- *Willingness to guard against “new” illegal squatters.*

- *Willingness to protect and manage rivers and waterways zones from direct garbage dumping.*
- *Willingness to temporarily stay at temporal accommodation while the construction of redevelopment is underway.*

The overall process of “Community Planning” were interfaced with the so-called “COMMUNITY MICRO ACTION” packages. The Community will only participate when they see the efforts benefit them. If the Community Planning is “No (real concrete) action, Talks only” (NATO), the whole process will die. Deliberate MICRO ACTION Packages are then necessary in the Building Blocks of the total Development. It often starts small and continues to significant community actions, such as demolishing 150 homes by themselves.

Some Samples of Micro Community Actions

1. Community Based Garbage Management: “Recycling and compost Eco Station.” Compost and Flower Pots for additional Income Generation.
2. Collective Soya bean waste treatment plant. Assisting local “people’s industry” (Bird Cage production and marketing support.)
3. Community Paving (muddy) Alleys program via the community Paving block machine Tool Loan program.
4. Multi-purpose block making as a community business.
5. Building community collective Bathroom.
6. Community Measuring Land Together as part of the self-rearranging settlements process. Community land surveying together in and for land sharing together.
7. The total Re-building process for NEW HOUSING Resettlement Development through the Community Based Housing Scheme (Tri Use Loan Program: Land –Construction – Income Generating) a scheme where the Target Low Income Community will be their own Real Estate Developer.



Figure 7. Self-help housing.



Figure 8. Block making machine triggering community energy.

8. Worker's Housing Quarters Consolidation: Demolishing their own homes, moving houses, even re-partitioning "row labor quarters" to make things fit. Self-Help Rebuilding infill housing with Micro loan, block machine tool loan program.

9. Cleaning the River Together: "Gotong Royong"

A legend: Clean River Program

A Goddess prosperity being cursed and captured as a Dragon in the bottom of the deepest spot of this polluted river. Only if the Community can release her from captivity by cleaning the river, the spell can be freed to raise the Goddess to the surface.... then back to the "Golden Age."

10. Re-building an existing legal riverbank slum settlement, based on an "Eco Village Model." Community internal rearranging of the physical environment, rearranging legal but hazardous "informal housing" and "opening up" the way of the large World Bank's anti-flood river normalization project.

11. Rebuilding the Slum (West Bank Housing through Land Consolidation and Tri Use Loan Program).

12. Developing "People's Economic Street Hawker Center" from the income generating Loan Program mix.

13. Filling the Center with a Heart: Active people enabling improving local Art and Dances as a Community Income generating business. Music and local dance performance traditional food cooking (via local competition).

14. Preparing for an indigenous street fair tourism destination event (unfinished program).

All these Problem Solving Community Actions were like a WEB and slowly reinforcing itself to become a stronger and a more sustainable rebuild of the new "settlement."

All these cases were based on the "Participatory Community Design" approach, not only following Architectural or City Planning Design, but also its relation to designing the legal Land Re-certification, Area Management by the Users themselves.



Figure 9. Envisioned Housing.



Figure 10. The physical result.

CONCLUSION

There are no specific conclusions to note, but more of an experience learned.

This case study was an ongoing project. Even though it has been selected as UNDP's Best Practices and selected by the Ministry of Human Settlement as a main sample for national slum redevelopment programs, it still has a long way to go, with lots of problems – bureaucracy, politics, ego feuds, and corruption. Some examples of Community Planning Design deviation include: the designed "low-income housing" without clothes-drying facilities, the cancellation for urban "community gardening" micro project along the river bank, the change of having the traditional people's market become a "low income super market," and car access entering the low income neighborhood, all contributing to a danger of marginalization.

One of the worst of these problems was a "political, bureaucratic delay." A long awaited and promised disbursement of a housing loan forced group of the community to live in pig pens as their "temporary housing" for almost a year!

I hope, we can learn from each other, while making new friends in this "Pacific Rim" conference. The hope for all of

us to support each other to make our efforts and work easier, especially in convincing the various City Managers/Executing Governments, Policy formulators, and also International Development Institutions, that “Community Planning” should not be an “experiment” any more but a “Common Practice” in urban (even rural) management of making our cities/environment a better and sustainable place to live (including the poor in most underdeveloped countries).

Especially directed to large International Development Agencies (a.o., WB, ADB, JBIG, etc.), I hope they can be more adaptive to this process and more able to support the “Community Planning” approach in the overall Development strategy — to realize the underlying missions/existence/purpose in “poverty alleviation/sustainable development.”

Especially now, there is a need to rethink the larger Macro/Global Development issues that are a more apparent cause of mass unemployment, mass rural-urban migration, and mass environmental depletion all over the globe. These are often issues ‘above the clouds’ beyond comprehension (including for me) where ‘below’ on the ground, the poor are struggling with their lives, a day-to-day survival.

When the poor have nowhere to go and become a growing mass in despair, caused by these intangible and negative global forces, there tends to become a hidden push to terrorism. We can’t just ignore this and pretend the global poor don’t exist.

ENDNOTES

¹ It was indicated that mass evicted squatters usually just move to another place to squat to survive. A never-ending “solution?”

² Especially appropriate and logistically needed if the City’s majority population is low income.

³ One of a medium size city in, Solo, Central Java (Population of about 500.000 people in 1997).

⁴ Review a “Guided Land Development Method” (GLD) which is also,

a preventive land and urban development program from unplanned growth that requires “Community Planning” as a key factor for its implementation.

Antonio Risianto is Team Leader SSUDP Mojosongo Development Consultants: To add, this assignment was in large part done by a very dedicated team of friends and unforgettable student volunteers. Among others, Mr. Rossario, Mr. Yamto, Mr. Bahrul, Mr. Adir, Mr. Bagyo, Mr. Widi, Andi Sul, Ambo and Andi Siswanto (Pt Wiswahkarman) and lots of advice / support from Mr. Suhadi (ex World Bank), Sri Probo (USAID), Parwoto (World Bank), George Soraya (World Bank), Mr. Tjahyono Rahardjo (Univ. Sugiopranoto), Tonny S. (from the Local Provincial Government), Prof. Hassan Poerbo (ITB), Thanks to Prof. R. Geothert, MIT, Prof. Chris Alexander / Prof. Sara Ishikawa, teaching me “the magic of Pattern Language” at UC Berkeley, Prof. Richard Meier: Urban Game Simulation, at UC Berkeley, who all are leaders and have struggled for this “Community Planning/Participation approach together. Without them, Mojosongo wouldn’t even have a chance to be redeveloped.



Figure 11. The center becoming a market: modernization?