THE INDONESIAN EXPERIENCE
IN THE KAMPONG IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME* 
by
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ABSTRACT

Kampung Improvement Programme (widely known as KIP) in Indonesia, which was introduced as early as more than 50 years ago (1939), had attained international recognition. In 1981 and 1986, KIP had received Aga Khan Award for Architecture, for its outstanding performance in upgrading the formerly uncontrolled and underserviced housing of the low income urban communities. The Indonesian Government had adopted a basic housing policy of progressive housing developments, derived from the actual process of kampung dwellers, with a conciliatory and accommodating attitude. Despite some minor negative aspects due to the lack of integrated approach and coordination among the closely related institutions, KIP in Indonesia had proven its success, particularly in the revitalization of urban kampungs.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decades, there has been a growing interest in slum and squatter housing, which is popularly known in Indonesia as Kampung. Kampung Improvement Project (KIP) in Jakarta received Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1981, followed by the similar award for KIP in Surabaya in 1986. However, despite the positive attitudes on upgrading KIP also generates conflicting and opposing images among different architects and policy makers. They fall into two broad categories according to their attitudes and approaches...

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towards kampung communities. The first are the planners who regard kampung as eyesore slums and illegitimate squatter settlements which do not conform to accepted urban norms. The second are the optimists, more sympathetic group who look upon them as communities of urban givers who have arisen in response to an acute shortage of low-income housing as well as other urban socio-economic inequality and inequality.

The first category of architects based their attitude on superficial notions of aesthetics and civic order, whereas the second category understand clearly the needs of the urban poor and appreciate their ability to fulfill their needs creatively and self-reliantly.

The former attitudes are not merely architects’ ways of looking upon kampungs, rather they also spawn two distinct policy approaches. The first attitude, leads to depopulation and evokes stringent regulatory measures. While the second calls for a thorough understanding of the functional role of these communities and requires public policies which would mobilize and rationalize people’s initiatives, inventiveness and self-reliance (Turner, 1976: 22). This paper will highlight the case of kampung improvement programme (KIP) in Indonesia, with the hope that the Indonesian experience may be beneficial for other developing countries.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

KIP in Indonesia is not a new phenomenon. It was started in the early 1950’s by the Dutch colonial government. The programme was directed towards urban settlements inhabited by non-European people, especially the native population, that grew without proper planning and with very little basic facilities provided by the government (Siles, 1985: 13).

During the Ficus Five Year Development (1970–1974), some local governments such as those in Jakarta and Surabaya, started some improvement activities financed partly by the people and either partly or fully by local governments. Jakarta’s KIP is chronologically the earliest and in scale the largest settlement improvement effort in Asia, now extended to some 200 cities in the country (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of City</th>
<th>Population size (000)</th>
<th>Number of cities</th>
<th>Target city (Pts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>100–500</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>20–100</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Darrundono, 1986.
KIP POLICIES

The KIP policy package is clearly a derivative of the global technocratic paradigm of recommended action for settlement improvement, municipal service extension, tenure security, capital recovery, socio-economic stimulation and local participation (Barros, 1981: 7). However, a closer examination of the implementation of the policy reveals differences in scale, emphasis and orientation in each city which reflect the practical constraints imposed by the type of low-income settlement development processes that these policies are supposed to assist.

The problems in the design of the policy were primarily financial and administrative. Thai is, to get the money to provide infrastructure in previously unvarnished areas and the technical manpower to implement the work. The financial problem was eased by foreign aid or loans to support the programme and the shortage of techno-administrative staff was resolved by designing a relatively simple improvement programme with a decentralized implementation structure (Angel, 1983: 75).

KIP thus evolved a low standard public works programme of road and waterway construction, some drainage improvement, provision of water through privately controlled public taps and where land was available, school and health centre construction. The policy emphasizes speed and equality of treatment for all low income settlements at the expense of depth (inclusion of socio-economic components and tenure regulation) and sensitive adjustment to local conditions. There are, however, two discriminating elements of the policy which exclude certain types of kampong from receiving improvements: (i) those settlements which were developed or encroached upon public or institutional property and are thought not to be suitable for residential use (carriageway, right of-way, river banks, etc); (ii) those areas which have been designated for other uses by the city's Master Plan (airport, extension, infrastructure construction, industrial zones, open space, etc.)

KAMPONG TYPOLOGY

Although the word "kampong", which is translated into English as "urban village", evokes a very specific image of residential environment, there are at least four different types of settlements. They represent a continuum from village type to high density urban environment (Barros, 1981: 12).

Urban Kampong

The majority of low income settlements in the still growing transitional belt of the big cities would fall in this category. These kampong, while dense, are not yet congested and when express a considerable openness and order. The infrastructure provision is rudimentary and what does exist (pedestrian walkways, shallow wells, communal toilets) was developed by the local community.
Tenement Kampong

These inner city kampongs date back to the colonial period and are concentrated in the inner parts of the city. Their encroachment by subsequent urban growth severely limited their expansion and has resulted in a considerable functional isolation and stagnation. While the housing stock is relatively old it has a high occupancy rate. Open space is practically non-existent, but due to their central location, the tenement kampongs have access to basic infrastructure.

Fringe Kampong

Growing at the outskirts of the city, small villages and settlements are gradually becoming the new reception areas of "owner-managed" house builders. Most of the newcomers are well established urban residents who, having a reasonably secure job move out from shared accommodation in the urban kampongs. Most fringe kampongs have low densities and open plots utilized for gardening. However, there is practically no infrastructure provision aside from individual and communal wells.

Illegal Kampong

While "end tenure and development status of many kampongs is of questionable legality, those which were listed in this category violate most blatantly the urban administrations' sense of order. Not only are they located on the land which does not legally belong to the residents (forestry, public right of way, flood plains and tidal marshes) but their very location is judged to be unsuitable for residential land use. These kampongs are characterized by high densities, temporary dwelling structures and severe environmental stress because of lack of infrastructure.

RAISON D'ETRE FOR KIF

Formerly, there is a general presumption that kampongs are blight on the urban scene and that they have an undesirable impact on the urban environment. However, a little reflection on the lifestyle of kampong dwellers leads to the conclusion that in the negative environmental sense kampong settlements are less environmentally destructive than more walled- up urban settlements. For example, it may be pointed out that kampong dwellers seldom own private cars and, therefore do not add to the pollution caused by auto exhausts. nor do they require much land for roads and parking spaces. Water use is less therefore. Pollution of water is extremely low (even when they often pay a lot more for the same amounts of water than well-to-do urban people). Electrical power is used mainly for essential lighting. The land used per family is substantially less than in more affluent neighbourhoods. The type of construction materials are generally impermanent and renewable, such as wood and bamboo. Besides they are often recycled materials.
This is not to say that there are no negative environmental effects. Indeed, there is the foul odour and disease caused by improper disposal of garbage and sewage, the unsightly condition of shanty houses, and the disorderly appearance of such communities which make them an eyesore for the larger community and for the elitist architects. They may prefer to demolish them and to build new better housing projects, provided with better infrastructures and facilities.

However, a renewal project will mean that many of the original inhabitants of the kampungs would be moved out to other sites where land and development cost are still relatively low and affordable to them. Such sites are usually located far from the city centre and work places so they have to bear heavy costs in transportation to their work places. Furthermore, the government cannot afford to compensate residents of demolished kampungs. The other disadvantage of urban renewal is the loss of the existing housing stock. While official housing statistics documented mounting shelter deficits, housing agencies (both government and private sector developers) were delivering too low rents too expensively, and often failing to reach or retain their urban target groups. In contrast with the poor performance of the state and private sectors, numerous empirical studies documented the vitality of the owner managed, popular housing sector in the kampungs, which actually houses a large proportion of low income families.

This kampung housing activity not only solved the existing urban housing problem, but had a substantial macro-economic impact on the various informal sectors activity associated with housing resourcefulness. In an economy of scarcity, the mass of common people, though poor, possess the bulk of the nation's human and material resources for housing (Turner 1976 : 1957). Seen in this way, the larger urban and rural environment may be better served by conservation of kampungs through RUP rather than by replacing them with new housing projects provided by modern enterprises.

INTEGRATED APPROACH

It must be realized that physical improvement alone is not enough. The ultimate goal of RUP is to improve the kampungs as a whole, and to raise the living standards and living conditions of its population. Therefore, physical conditions must be improved along with the quality of life and economy. The program for improvement in quality of life is directed toward the improvement and maintenance and nutrition for the people, family welfare, health and education. The economic or business improvement program is directed toward the creation of new additional jobs for family members within the kampungs, such as home industries, small shops and repair shops, to augment their household income. Thus, RUP requires integrated approach and coordination of many institutions such as the ministries of Public Works, Social Welfare, Home Affairs, Health, Trade.
Cooperative, Education and Culture, Labour, and similar agencies at the local government level. Semi-governmental and non-governmental organizations in the kampongs (pantai, orang asing, etc.) play the biggest role. Without their involvement KIP would not succeed. To get optimum results from KIP, good coordination is needed among the institutions involved.

Whereas the implementation of physical improvements has moved fast and with significant success, the non-physical improvement program is still in its initial integration process.

CONCLUSION

KIP is based on an understanding that the improvement is for the benefit of the kampong inhabitants. It is thus imperative that they actively participate in the program. They have to feel that the program is theirs, so that they participate in one way or another. The community participation is needed at different stages of the program, starting from the preparation or planning and design stage, and continuing through the construction stage to the operation and maintenance stages.

At the planning and design stage, the opinions of the kampong inhabitants are needed by KIP architects, to determine what parts of their kampong need to be improved and what has priority. This can be done through community meetings under the chairmanship of the architects and the elected community organization leader. This direct input to the program will ensure further participation of the inhabitants in the construction, operation, and maintenance stages. While at the construction stage, community participation can be realized in various ways. The easiest, and minimum participation expected from them is their favourable attitude, which means that they neither hinder nor obstruct the ongoing construction works in their kampong.

The kampong inhabitants are also expected to participate in the operation and maintenance of the infrastructure and facilities constructed during the improvements programme. For certain maintenance works, the participation can be done individually, but for the other works the whole community has to be involved. The individual tasks include clearing of drainage ditches and cutting of grass along roads adjacent to the building lots. Community involvements are represented by cleaning open spaces and playgrounds, public toilets and public taps. The architects should keep this in their mind, so that they always plan and design the KIP components in such a way that the local kampong people have the ability to maintain them by self-help.

The KIP experience reminds architects of the complexity of their profession, and it gives a sense of progression of on-going movement. Architects deal with the organic not the mechanism; they rely on an on-going tale, rather than the linking of formulae. Architects who have been educated to ascribe to a prescri-
give view of design dominated by a few set models and procedures will not find it
easy to accept this kind of NHP pragmatic analysis. But they must conclude that
there is no one ideal model for urban settlement in these circumstances. They
should be involved. From the past experience, architects learn to ask who defines
our societal and environmental problems, how do they do it and why. The same
style of questions will govern the future.

Ways of planning and designing that will affirm positive values in the local
community are being sought for. Initiative which will give rise to community
development should be taken. For it is through its growth that desirable changes
take place. Architects will be seeking contributions to the urban form of human
happiness in many diverse ways. It is in this context that architects should receive
a new role and changing instructions: it is their job to hear not to dictate, to
receive and not to preach.

To summarize, the author would like to quote Charles Correa’s statement
on the role of the architect, that ‘It is the responsibility of the Third World
architect to conceptualize and help catalyze major restructuring of our cities’. The
architect should always remember that he and the poor people are on the
same side of the table, so that everyone will come out a winner.

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