

Slum and squatters resettlement in asean countries



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

The urban population in the world is expanding in generally with Asia being estimated to hold 60% of the increase in world's urban population over the next three decades. Out of 23 cities with populations of more than 10 million people, nine cities are in Asia and the number is projected to increase in the future (Giok and Kai, 2007). Although urbanization is an indicator of economic development portrayed by population growth in urban areas, concurrently poverty is also urbanizing. Countries such as the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia are seeing rapid urbanization also because of the push from the rural areas where the job opportunities are driving migrants to cities. The concentration of economic development in a few cities and particularly the largest implies a population explosion in very short periods of time that in turn severely tests the coping capacity of city governments. One of the most visible outcomes of the rapid urbanization has thus been the persistence and formation of slums housing. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT, 2006) defines a slum household as a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following:

- Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions.
- Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same room.
- Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
- Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.

- Security of tenure that prevents forced evictions.

Issue at Stake

One billion people or one third of the world's population is estimated to be living in either slum or squatter settlements. The largest proportion of population living in slums in the world is in the Asian region, where urbanization speeds at fastest rate. In 2001, Asia had 554 million slum dwellers, where 28% of the slum and squatter settlement population existed in Southeast Asia (UN-HABITAT, 2001).

Slum and squatter settlements have formed mainly because of the inability of city governments to plan and provide affordable housing for the low-income segments of the urban population. Therefore, squatter and slum housing is the housing solution for this low-income urban population. In the mega urban regions or metropolitan areas, part of the problem would lie in the coordination among different authorities that are in charge of economic development, urban planning, and land allocation. Such coordination issues also exist between the city and national governments (Giok and Kai, 2007).

For the scale and speed of urbanization that has been taking place in developing countries of Asia, most municipal governments are unequipped physically, fiscally, politically, and administratively to tackle the problems of providing the basic infrastructure services to their people. In a situation of limited resource allocation, the urban poor are frequently badly placed to compete for essential services. In Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, neither the government nor the private developers are able to provide the housing needed for 50, 000 migrants per year. An additional 20, 000 young urban

households are formed annually who enter the real estate market. The resulting growth in squatter and slum settlements now comprises 15% of housing in the city (Marr, 2005). The slum housing in the city has created various negative consequences, which need immediate and appropriate solutions that are beneficial to all parties.

Slum and Squatters Resettlement in ASEAN Countries

Thailand

The Urban Community Development Office (UCDO) was set up by the government of Thailand in 1992 to address urban poverty. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Thailand's economic success had positive impact to the poor communities. Most of these poor people lived in house where the housing conditions had deteriorated. In addition, as the land prices and demand for central city sites increased, their settlements were also at the risk of being evicted. There was also recognition of the need to develop more participatory models of support for low income groups, and of the possibilities of doing so through supporting community-based savings and credit groups. Various local and international NGOs working in Thailand had also shown the possibilities for improving housing by working with low-income communities and networks of communities.

UCDO was provided with a US\$ 50 million as capital base where they provided loans, small grants and technical support to organized communities so that they could carry out activities related to housing, land acquisition and generating income. UCDO managed to developed links with a wide range of

community organizations, saving groups, NGOs and government organizations.

In 2000, UCDO was integrated with the Rural Development Fund to the Community Organisations Development Institute (CODI). At the time 950 community saving groups had been established and supported in 53 Thailand's provinces where they provided housing loans and technical support to 47 housing projects involving 6400 households, grants for small improvements in infrastructure and living conditions had been provided in 796 communities, benefiting 68 208 families and more than 100 community networks had been set up. The value of loans provided at that time was more than 1 billion baht (around US\$ 25 million) where half of the loans had been fully repaid. It was also estimated that assets of some 2 billion baht had been generated by the projects. The special fund to help savings groups facing financial difficulties had helped many communities and community networks to manage their debts and continue their development activities.

CODI continued to support the UCDO programmes until UCDO had been located within the National Housing Authority thus making CODI's separate legal standing as an independent public organization. This provided it with greater possibilities (for instance, being able to apply to the annual government budget for funds), greater flexibility, wider linkages and new possibilities for supporting collaboration between urban and rural groups. The main objective on supporting community-managed savings and loan groups and community networks remains, but it now covers 30 000 rural community organizations as well as the urban community organizations, and many community networks that CODI supports include both rural and urban

<https://assignbuster.com/slum-and-squatters-resettlement-in-asean-countries/>

community organizations. Similar to UCDO, CODI also has a board that includes representatives from government and from community organizations.

In 2003, Baan Mankong (Secure Housing) Program run by CODI was set up to support processes designed and managed by low income households and their community organizations and networks. These communities and networks work with local governments, professionals, universities and NGOs in their city to survey all poor communities in order to plan an upgrading programme. The program aims to improve conditions for all these within three to four years. After the plans have been finalized, CODI channels the infrastructure subsidies and housing loans directly to the communities. These upgrading programmes build on the community managed programmes that CODI and its predecessor UCDO have supported since 1992, and on people's capacity to manage their own needs collectively. They also build on what slum communities have already developed, recognizing the large investments that communities have already made in their homes.

The Baan Mankong Program supports upgrading existing settlements whenever possible. As an example, if relocation is necessary, a site is sought close by to minimize the economic and social costs to households. The Baan Mankong Program has set a target of improving housing, living and tenure security for 300 000 households in 2000 poor communities in 200 Thai cities within five years. This represents at least half the urban poor communities in Thailand.

According to Boonyabancha (2005), the Baan Mankong Program differs from conventional approaches based on following:

- Urban poor community organizations and their networks are the key actors where they control the funding and the management. They also undertake most of the building which makes funding go much further and brings in their own contributions.
- It is demand driven by communities rather than supply driven as it supports communities who are ready to implement improvement projects and allows a great variety of responses, designed to each community's needs, priorities and possibilities.
- The programme does not specify physical outputs but provides flexible finance to allow community organizations and local partnerships to plan, implement and manage directly. Government agencies are no longer the planners, implementers and construction managers delivering to beneficiaries.
- It promotes more than physical upgrading. As communities design and manage their own physical improvements, this helps stimulate deeper but less noticeable changes in social structures, managerial systems and confidence among poor communities. It also changes their relationships with local government and other key actors.
- It helps trigger acceptance of low income communities as legitimate parts of the city and as partners in the city's larger development process. It works to develop urban poor communities as an integrated part of the city. People plan their upgrading within the city's

development framework, so their local housing development plan is integrated within city planning and city development strategies.

- Secure tenure is negotiated in each instance locally and this could be through a variety of means such as cooperative land purchase, long term lease contracts, land swaps or user rights. But in all cases, the emphasis is on communal, rather than individual tenure.
- Its focus is city wide development with a commitment to reach all low income communities within a three to four year period, drawing on local resources.

Johor Bahru, Malaysia

The State Government of Johore has taken some managerial methods in order to handle the slum settlements in Johor Bahru. It includes giving land tenure, Temporary Occupation Licenses (TOLs), moving to low cost housing named *Projek Perumahan Rakyat* (PPR) and enforcement of Land Act.

Generally the Malaysian government had implemented two programs in order to eradicate the existence of slum housing. The first program introduced was the Zero Squatter Policy which aims to clear the slum and squatter settlements. The following program is the Public Housing Program where public housing was built for the slum communities. Both of these programs were also being implemented by the Johor state government.

Land tenure is the common method being used by the Johore state government in whereby in this method the state government relocates the slum communities back at the land that they settled in the first place. It caused decrease in the value of the land because the state government had

to change the status of the land from no man's land to man's land. However this act it is much better because the state government is able to reduce the amount of expenditure government have to spend in paying compensation if these slum communities were to relocate somewhere else. This method has been applied by the Johore state government in few slum settlements namely Kampung Seri Serdang, Kampung Sri Jaya Baru, Kampung Sentosa Dua, Kampung Sri Aman and Kampung Melayu Gelang Patah.

The next method is TOL, whereby in this method the state government provided the slum communities with TOLs to avoid them being illegal residents of that area. The licenses were provided to permits the residents living there but in the future if the government decides to regain the land back, the residents won't receive any compensation from the government. This method also saves costs in terms of providing compensation to the slum communities. This method was applied to several slum housing in Kampung Tawakkal, Kampung Paya Kenangan, Kampung Bunga Ros, Kampung Ulu Pandan and Kampung Lembah Murni.

The Johore state government also relocated the slum communities to a low cost housing area known as *Projek Perumahan Rakyat* (PPR). In this method, the total cost and expenditure of developing the new housing area will be bear by the party who wishes to develop that slum settlements. Therefore, this method is cost consuming and has been implemented in Kampung Laut, Batu 10 Skudai and Kampung Lembah Jaya, Tebrau.

The enforcement of the Land Act was also introduced by the Johore state government in order to handle the slum settlements. Section 425 of the

National Land Code 1965 claimed that action must be taken towards the slum communities residing at the area especially foreigners. Mostly foreigners involved are from Indonesian, Myanmar, Cambodia, India, Bangladesh, etc. The act of encroaching reserve land by a person is considered as legally wrong especially when it comes to foreigners that are most likely to be illegal immigrants. Therefore the enforcement of land law must be taken seriously in order to overcome this issue. Slum settlements that have been recognized as settlements of foreigners are Kampung Pertanian Masai, Kampung Pasir Dalam, Kampung Sungai Tiram and Kampung Sc Batu 2.

Now let's take a look at the Zero Squatter Policy. This policy was introduced by Ministry of Housing and Local Government (Kementerian Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan, KPKT) in 2005 to eradicate slum settlements in city and other areas involved as well. This program was launched nationally including in Sabah and Sarawak. Census at the slum housing was conducted in order to determine the exact number of slum residents that exists. Eradication was done after taking into consideration various aspects including implementation cost and the welfare of the slum communities.

Last but not least, is the Public Housing program. This program was framed by Majlis Tindakan Ekonomi Negara (MTEN) with the collaboration of KPKT to provide new settlements for slum communities all over the country. Among approaches being introduced are Program Perumahan Rakyat Bersepadu and Program Perumahan Rakyat Dasar Baru where houses for rental and sell are provided. All of these programs mentioned above are in parallel with the

objective of zero squatter implementation to overcome the problem arises from slum settlements.