



The self-help housing in Indonesia: The only option for the poor?

Devisari Tunas*, Andrea Peresthu

TU Delft, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urbanism, kerklaan 254, 2282CT Rijswijk, The Netherlands

A B S T R A C T

Keywords:

Self-help housing
Low-cost housing
Kampongs
Housing improvement
Indonesia
Low-income housing
Security of tenure

Self-help housing in Indonesia is related strongly to the *kampung*; being mostly a self-initiated and self-constructed urban settlement, with sometimes low housing qualities and always no security of tenure. In these low-cost self-management residential areas, the residents (must) rely mainly on their own efforts and their social networks. All known survival strategies of the urban underclass are practised here. Many *kampongs* were improved physically (especially with respect to their infrastructure) as a consequence of the huge Kampung Improvements Programmes ('KIPs'), but home improvement was never a main issue. Other *kampongs* are informal and illegal as well, or even dangerous because of the badly chosen locations (locations 'at risk'). Nevertheless, in a country where low-cost housing programmes are far from adequate, the *kampongs* are substantial and practical accommodation of the many urban low-income families. This paper explores the factors that led to the formation of *kampongs* in the first place and shows how *kampongs* benefit from or are adversely affected by the government housing policies. It ends with recommendations and suggestions for long-term strategic solutions.

© 2009 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction and background

Self-help housing in Indonesia could justifiably be represented by the *kampung*, a self-initiated urban settlement, characterised not only by informality, irregularity and illegality, but also by its flexibility and its resilience. In a country where low-cost housing programmes are far from adequate, the *kampung* makes a substantial contribution towards accommodating the urban underclass.

This paper explores the factors that led to the formation of *kampongs* in the first place and shows how *kampongs* benefit from or are adversely affected by (local) government housing policies. It ends with recommendations and suggestions for long-term strategic solutions.

The discussion is organised around several parts; the first part introduces the notion of self-help housing in Jakarta; the second part presents the theoretical discussion concerning the issue of the *kampung*, it discusses the notion of empowerment, the self-help character and the spatial conditions of *kampung*; the third part discusses the position of *kampung* within the national housing programme and policies. The fourth part discusses the dynamics of self-help housing in Jakarta and the impact of the market pressure, the social–economic injustice and the legal status of the *kampung*.

Based on the previous discussions, the fifth part discusses some recommendations towards the solutions of the problems.

Many urban authorities do not have the political will, the financial resources and know-how to do anything about informal settlements. The chaotic land registration system also makes it difficult to acquire officially land for public use. It requires careful planning, large amounts of capital, political consensus and dedication to design a low-cost public housing programme as well as a whole arsenal of skills to manage the different players and stakeholders, each with their own agenda and interests. Instead of providing proper low-cost dwellings, the government sometimes seems to be happy to let the urban poor live in their own self-help housing, under the condition they do not hamper the progress of main economic goals connected to urban development.

The private sector plays a major role in supplying housing stock, as it directs the trend in the housing market. It not only 'decides' the location of the middle-class housing (as consequence of the second economic deregulation), it also controls the social composition in development areas (as consequence of the lack of government control and regulation). The private sector targets mainly the middle or high end of the market to ensure the highest possible profit. Building for the poor is not an option; apparently it simply seems to be not lucrative enough.

The people who could not afford to enter the formal housing market started occupying available spaces by settling in coastal or marshy areas or by subdividing unused lots or taking plots along railway tracks, canals, rivers and roads and under bridges

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: tunastunas@gmail.com (D. Tunas), a.peresthu@tudelft.nl (A. Peresthu).

(Abeyasekere, 1987). *Kampung* density is increasing every year. These burgeoning informal urban settlements are scattered throughout the city of Jakarta and have created an urban patchwork of poverty. Pockets of poverty with poor infrastructure and no services literally lie side by side with the most fashionable business districts and residential areas in Greater Jakarta.

The self-help housing is a phenomenon in all Indonesia, mostly based on human life in village communities (*kampongs*), where family connections and neighbourly assistance are elements of the important *social networks*. *Kampongs* are to be found in (or in the vicinity of) big cities and the character of the *kampongs* there is quite different from the rural ones. This paper sheds particularly light on the megacity Jakarta and its surroundings, if urban aspects of *kampongs* are being discussed.

The theoretical discussion

Informal settlements in Indonesia in the urban range of influence, are characterised by the construction of self-help housing on a very massive scale. These settlements cannot be regarded as homogeneous entities. They may differ according to, for example, age, location, developmental process and demographic profile. Different types of self-help housing communities display different characteristics and typologies. Each has its own spatial and social relationship with the city; some are isolated while others are more integrated. Some *kampongs* benefit from the city and others are threatened by it. However, they still share a number of urban features, most notably: high density, poor living conditions, poor infrastructure and poor public facilities.

The theoretical discussion will elaborate on the self-help housing issues by concentrating on two major themes – (1) informal settlement empowerment and (2) the self-help character of the urban *kampung* – to provide a clearer understanding of the nature, structural problems, challenges and opportunities in the search for a suitable strategy that addresses the future of self-help housing in Indonesia.

Informal settlement empowerment

In the rapidly urbanising world, informal settlements have become an integral part of the urban scene in many developing countries where is no provision of 'public housing'. Such settlements are particularly prevalent in the city as they accommodate millions of urban poor people having no access to public housing. UN-Habitat (2003) estimates that 23% of the world's urban population lives in some kind of informal settlement, whether in *favelas*, *pueblos jóvenes*, *gecekondu* or in Indonesia: *kampongs*. The figure differs from continent to continent, with around 28% in South-East Asia, 78% in Sub-Saharan Africa and 39% in Latin America. According to the forecasts, 1.5 billion people will live in informal settlements by 2020.

The issue of informal settlements or *kampongs* has met up with various responses. Though many still see them as a sort of urban parasite that needs to be eradicated, but this seems to be changing (Pacione, 2005). There is a growing international recognition of the potential role that informal settlements could play in the search for solutions to the critical housing problems. Advocacies by UN-Habitat and other global organisations have contributed to this shift. *Agenda 21* of the Rio Earth Summit for example stresses the importance of the ability of local authorities to provide shelter for everyone. However, providing shelter is not enough if the right to claim it, is not legally protected. Millions of urban poor people are still evicted from informal settlements every year. These people need legal protection and public security. And, they need to be empowered to achieve sustainability. The empowerment of

informal settlements involves a number of key issues, viz: security of tenure, informal economies and social capital.

Security of tenure is the key to empowerment of the informal settlements. Many informal settlements occupy space that is not designated for residential use, such as riverbanks, green areas, wasteland along railway tracks, or space between built-up areas. This further complicates the situation. Without security of tenure, the inhabitants of informal settlements are reluctant to invest in improvements to their living conditions. de Soto (2000) mentions that without security of tenure, inhabitants cannot capitalise their property and use it to improve their living standard by performing economic activities as well.

The informal economy gives people who are unable to join the formal job market an opportunity to survive with the limited resources that are available to them. It also offers a certain flexibility which is non-existent in the formal sector: flexibility in labour conditions, flexibility in production processes and flexibility to avoid taxes. However, the informal economy is fraught with risks. First, as it lies outside the legal boundaries, continuity is not assured. Secondly, the residents cannot fall back on a social security system. Thirdly, it relies heavily on the local social network, which is (sometimes) vulnerable and needs to be maintained permanently.

Lyons and Snoxell (2004) suggest that the difficult economic environment and fierce competition in the informal sector depend on strong social ties, which give the players access to the social capital that helps to ensure their livelihood. 'Social capital', a phrase coined by Bourdieu in 1986 and also enriched by other scholars (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993, 2000), generally refers to resources that are accessed through social contacts, social networks, reciprocity, norms and trust (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Field, 2003; Kleinhans, Priemus, & Engbersen, 2007; Putnam, 2000). The importance of social capital was largely acknowledged after it was adopted as one of the key elements in the World Bank's campaign to alleviate poverty. The World Bank recognises social capital as the ability of individuals to secure benefits as a result of membership of social networks or other social structures (Imparato & Ruster, 2003). Social capital works through instrumental and expressive actions which do not appear in economic or human capital. It is characterised by four factors: information, influence, social credentials and reinforcement. It facilitates the flow of *information*, it creates social ties that *influence* the decision-making agents, the players may perceive the relationships as *social credentials*, and finally, the social relations lead to *reinforcement* of identity and recognition.

Self-help character of urban kampongs

As indicated in Ford's Model of the Indonesian City, *kampongs* have become a key feature of cities in Indonesia (Fig. 1). It is important to understand that there are different types of urban *kampung*, which some scholars classify according to origin, others according to location, and others according to age.

In Ford's model, which is a refined version of the South East Asian city model, there are four types of *kampongs* (Ford, 1993; McGee, 1967): *the inner-city kampung*, *the mid-city kampung*, *the rural kampung* and *the temporary squatter kampung* (see Table 1). The inner-city *kampung* originates from the colonial *kampung* and is usually located between colonial structures and new city centres. Its central location gives it excellent access to employment. This type of *kampung* invariably has a high density.

The mid-city *kampung* is usually located between fashionable residential or commercial areas. It has a substantially lower density than the inner-city *kampung*. The rural *kampung* is actually a former settlement in a rural area which has been gradually engulfed by

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات