

PARTICIPATORY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, LEARNING FROM BEST PRACTICES

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Abstrak

Sejak paradigma perencanaan spasial berubah, dimana perencana bertindak sebagai fasilitator dan mediator bagi kepentingan pemegang kepentingan. Panduan perencanaan partisipatif berkembang dengan berbagai macam pola pendekatan, penelitian ini menggunakan sepuluh ide partisipatif sebagai panduan untuk mempelajari *best practice* dalam pengembangan proyek perumahan masyarakat di Kuba, Malawi dan Senegal. Membandingkan faktor-faktor kelemahan dan keandalan dari setiap proyek penelitian ini dapat mengambil kesimpulan bahwa keberhasilan perencanaan partisipatif adalah inisiasi dan kemitraan yang baik; metode yang baik; dialog antara masyarakat dan pemerintah daerah yang elegan juga termasuk keaktifan partisipasi dari kedua pihak dalam seluruh tingkatan kebijakan.

Key words : Perencanaan partisipatif, perumahan perkotaan, *best practice*

Abstract

Since paradigm change in spatial planning, where planner act as facilitator and mediator to connect the needs of stakeholder. The guidelines of participatory planning already emerge in several approaches, this study uses ten ideas of participation guidelines to test the best practices in housing development project that take place at Cuba, Malawi and Senegal. Comparing the weaknesses and strength points (factor for success) from the three projects, this study finally can concluded the main reason of successful participation planning in housing developments are good initiation and partnership; good methods and derive in to steps; permanent dialogue between the administrative authorities (the project) and the populations, as well as on their participation in all levels of the policy.

Kata Kunci : participatory planning, urban housing, *best practice*

1. Introduction

Community participation related to level of participation, from the weak participation (Information) through consultation, deciding together, and acting together to the higher participation level supporting independent community interests (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1994). Many attempts at community participation fail because organizations promoting involvement are unclear about the level of participation on offer.

Limited consultation with few real options, which is presented as an opportunity for active participation is likely to produce disillusionment

Community participation process also should be consider as crucial problem, Many problems in participation processes develop because lack of preparation within the supporter organization - with the result that when community interest is engaged the organization cannot deliver on its promise.

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2. Idea of active participations

There are 10 key ideas about participation that lead to Effective Participation. The ideas can aid thinking about community involvement (*David Wilcox, 1994*).

a. Level of participation

Opportunities for public involvement can be identified in each phase of a program or project. This includes program planning, implementation and evaluation; it also recognizes that the public may reap benefits or rewards. (*Department of Urban Affairs and Planning at Virginia Tech* :<http://www.uap.vt.edu/cdrom/intro/public.htm>)

b. Initiation and process

The guide deals with situations where someone, or some organization, seeks to involve others at some level. In the guide the process is described during four phases: Initiation - Preparation - Participation - Continuation.

c. Control

The initiator is in a strong position to decide how much or how little control to allow to. This decision is equivalent to taking a stand on the ladder - or adopting a stance about the level of participation.

d. Power and purpose

Understanding participation involves understanding power: the ability of the different interests to achieve what they want. Power will depend on who has information and money. It will also depend on people's confidence and skills.

e. Role of the practitioner (Professionals)

The guide is written mainly for people who are planning or managing participation processes - here termed practitioners.

f. Stakeholders and community

The guide suggests it is more useful to think of 'stakeholders' - that is, anyone who has a stake in what happens. It does not follow that everyone affected has an equal say; the idea of the ladder is to prompt thinking about who has most influence.

g. Partnership

The partners don't have to be equal in skills, funds or even confidence, but they do have to trust each other and share some commitment.

h. Commitment

People care about what they are interested in, and become committed when they feel they can achieve something.

i. Ownership of ideas

In practice that means running brainstorming workshops, helping people think through the practicality of ideas, and negotiating with others a result which is acceptable to as many people as possible.

j. Confidence and capacity

Ideas and wish lists are little use if they cannot be put into practice. The ability to do that depends as much on people's confidence and skills as it does on money.

From these steps, it is clear there are huge relations between stakeholders (community, local authorities and other element such Non Government Organization (NGO) and professionals). And community development also needs commitment, initiation and strong control.

As an authority in urban area, local government has power to become good Initiator, strong controller and of course source of economy (especially initiative fund). Bengston et al 2003, show one of the policy instruments that could

be used for managing urban growth is with regulatory approaches. This is meaning that government also has power in policy to guide the urban shape. In policy control, government could use the public policy instrument, "the set of techniques by which governmental authorities wield their power in attempting to ensure support and effect or prevent social change" (Vedung, 1998, p 21 in Bengston et al 2003).

This paper objective is to evaluate the factors to lead its success and possible factors that could make a failure. All of these best-practices case are dealing with providing adequate shelter/housing for the poor community.

3. Study cases

3.1 The Architect of the Community - A Participative Designing Method - (Cuba)

i) The me : Community Participation & Urban Governance

A participative design method for structure modification of dwellings based on the tight relation between architect and the family-customer by means of a detailed study of the place and inquiries among the members of the family using psychoanalysis techniques. According to statistics about 60/80 % of dwellings are modified or reformed during the useful life, usually without the proper technical assistance resulting unfavorable solutions which demonstrates the need to involve an architect in the social context where these facts are taking place. The action of the Group of Architects helped to decrease the pressure upon local authorities by those families with housing problems.

ii. Policy Instrument

As policy maker, local government provide policy instrument with regulation

- a. The State as the Provider
- b. The State as the Facilitator
- c. The role of the Professionals
- d. The role of the Private Sector (incl building societies, credit unions and other mortgagers)
- e. The role of the population

3.2 Low-Cost Housing in Malawi - (Malawi)

i) The me : Community Participation & Urban Governance - Homelessness & Housing

Habitat for Humanity (Malawi) works in partnership with local communities and the government to build simple, decent houses and latines. A locally-elected committee chooses applicants based on total combined income (less than US\$43 monthly - rural areas; less than US\$57 monthly - urban areas), their willingness to provide volunteer labor and their willingness and ability to repay the cost of the inputs. Habitat for Humanity (Malawi) provides all materials and skilled labor. Repayments are put into a revolving fund which stays in the community to build more houses and latines. The entire scheme is based on partnerships from the boardroom to the beneficiary; this diversity and input strengthens the organization. By providing a hand-up, not a hand-out, the program relies on the participation of the beneficiaries.

ii) Policy Instrument

- a. The Government and other change agents are focusing on this very basic principle as the means which will move

development forward in the country

- b. Government of Malawi has included Habitat for Humanity (Malawi) in policy formation on various issues (land ownership affecting women; housing codes and laws) both directly and indirectly.
- c. The Government's support of Habitat for Humanity (Malawi) includes taking the organization's needs into consideration when debating new policies and laws.

3.3 Settlement Upgrading Project (DUA/GTZ Project) – (Senegal)

- i) Theme : Community Participation & Urban Governance - Homelessness & Housing

The program which started in 1987 relies on the involvement (human and financial) of squatter's population in the improvement process of their living conditions. It is expected result for achieving adequate shelter through an enabling approach to shelter improvement. The main objectives of the project are: land tenure security, people's participation, cost recovery and financial replicability, infrastructures minimal intervention and environment and management of the surrounding.

- ii) Policy Instrument

- a. Establishing a new policy of upgrading uncontrolled settlements
- b. Establishing a new policy of Legalization of uncontrolled settlements.
- c. Arranged technical and financial from support from other institution.

4. Identification of Success and Failure

4.1 The Architect of the Community - A Participative Designing Method - (Cuba)

- i) The main problem

The population added an important amount of self – help dwelling to the housing stock, using handicraft method and without technical assistance, so, they are subject to a great variety of problems that affects the physical and psychological health persons

These dwelling, obviously, do not maintain the adequate level of quality and technology. They are of reduced dimensions, with local materials (sometimes recycled), built in the same urban design, on roofs or in the same parcel, progressively, in accordance with the growth or changes of the family. They are connected, sometimes in an abusive way, to the local water and electricity facilities (*Martha Garcilaso de la Vega*).

- ii) Key factor for Success

This project was supported by Government, Habitat-Cuba, Professionals and Community itself. Combining these supports, the project lead for success

- a. Governance Factor, (Vega, 2006) See Policy Instrument (3.a.ii. Policy Instrument)

- b. Habitat-Cuba (NGO) Factor, This project Implementing “Estrategia de Desarrollo” (*Development Strategy*), (*Habitat-Cuba, 2000*) which are:
 - Complement and support government policy and action; and
 - Active participation from all of the stakeholders (partners

and particularly the community) in the production process, and social management process.

c. Professional (practitioner) factor.

Involving professional (143 architects and engineers) from 37 offices.

- Technological, energy, economic and environmental sustainability solutions
- Social and gender equity
- Democracy and transparency
- Efficient and effective management

d. Community factor

The other key factor for success is support from the community itself. Support from the community not only because the community

would have cheap housing but they also can choose affordable materials, fully involve in creativity decisions in design and building execution.

iii) Risk of Failure

The link between Government, NGO, professional and community seems work well, but lack of community empowerment in cooperation as a group could also lead to sustainable failure. This project only aiming at individual household as client, for this case, household become a weakest part on this link. Improving the household cooperation especially in earning money would decrease their depending on the NGO's and government would lead to the community autonomous.



Figure 1. Picture of the Architect of the Community - A Participative Designing Method in Cuba

(Source -

<http://www.utoronto.ca/iwsgs/wemag/contents/50-51.htm##houwom>)

4.2 Low-Cost Housing in Malawi - (Malawi)

i) Main problem

With approximately 90% of its population living in rural areas, the economy is predominately agricultural and is otherwise dependent on substantial international assistance. Three quarters of the population live on less than \$2 USD a day. (*Habitat for Humanity Malawi*).

ii) Key factor for Success

As the project in Cuba, the Malawi project also have strengthen the community participation which supported by government and Non Government Organization (in Malawi case is a religious organization – Habitat for Humanity). Partnerships are foundational to this project.

a. Partnership Factors

Partnerships are formed at all levels for the strengthening and furthering of the work between government, NGO and the community

b. Output Factors

The other factor that leads to success is because the program emphasized over output. The average constructing community builds less than 10 houses per month. But as the work is facilitated at the community level, the combined number of people being housed grows exponentially. Further, by teaching people that they can overcome their own problems by forming local committees and developing self-help revolving funds, thousands are being housed.

iii) Risk of failure

Risk of failure in this project not from the site (on-site problems) but it come from out-site. As a national problem, urban migration brings bad impact for urban area especially in project site.

The poor, under-educated rural population is increasingly moving into urban centre's looking for work or an improved living standard. Increasing populations are straining cities' abilities to provide basic services - water, sanitation, shelter, education, health care. At the same time rural populations are dwindling, thus lessening the agricultural base and in many cases decreasing the nation's food stores. These problems could bring a failure to low-cost housing project in Malawi.



Figure 2. Low-cost housing project in Malawi

4.3 Settlement Upgrading Project (DUA/GTZ Project) – (Senegal)

i) Main problem

Senegal, like many developing countries is under pressure from the urban squatter settlement problem. In order to deal with such uncontrolled urbanization which represents almost 25% of Senegal's urban areas and meet the strong demand for decent housing, the government has engaged in three series of actions among which is the upgrading housing program.

ii) Key factor for Success

And to support the decentralization process, it can act as a counsel-structure in order to reinforce the actions of local organizations in the field of urban planning.

The strategy developed during the pilot project was based on a

permanent dialogue between the administrative authorities (the project) and the populations, as well as on their participation in all levels of the improvement process of their environment (decision-making, planning, implementation, financing and management).

a. Government Attention,

The Senegalese authorities have widened the scope of the approach all phase, (see 3.a.ii. POLICY INSTRUMENT)

b. People's participation (Community factor)

The squatter's population or their representative take actively part in all stages of their living conditions improvement process: decision-making, implementation, financing and facilities management.



Figure 3. Settlement Upgrading Project (DUA/GTZ Project) – (Senegal)

Source: <http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/upgrading/case-examples/overview-africa/country-assessments/reports/Senegal-report.html>

c. Strong objectives

The program has 5 main goals:

- (a) Land tenure security
- (b) People's participation
- (c) Cost recovery and financial replicability
- (d) Infrastructure: minimal intervention
- (e) Environment and management of the surrounding

iii) Risk of failure

Almost the same with the second project, this project also have same problem from out-site. Improving partially could bring a new problem. The other issue is about project finance

Project finance remains crucial to understanding the successes and failures of upgrading projects. This section examines in some detail Africa's experience with financing upgrading and recovering costs from project beneficiaries. The main financial issues are highlighted here in particular with reference to financing arrangements, sample project costs, and cost recovery rates (Gulyani et al, 2002).

The third issue is about professional's involvement, this project shown a lack of professional involvements. (function and position although participation in the implementation is possible in some sites, especially in the task of clearing public roads, the experience has shown that all civil engineering works must be left to professionals).

5. Conclusion

The ideal community participation is combinations between

all the stakeholders, as a local authority and policy maker, government has to be sensitive with roots problem, essentially responded to and endorsed people-driven. They also have to be a good initiator (even not always the first one) and strong controller.

Right across the government side, as a weakest part, individual or household has to merge and cooperate as a strong community. Community has to be sensitive with the problem, and always keep reminds the government about the real situation, understanding of needs, and service on local committees.

In between, the NGO's could play a big rule. They should become a bridge, communicating between these two groups, they also could merge as a professionals and to provide: partial funding, training and education materials, volunteers, accountability.

Even still have problems with risk or failure, all these three project cases shown same key factors for success. The main factor is a good Initiation and partnership between the all of the stakeholders, they also could manage a good methods and derive in to steps. The strategy developed during the pilot project was based on a permanent dialogue between the administrative authorities (the project) and the populations, as well as on their participation in all levels of the improvement process of their environment (decision-making, planning, implementation, financing and management). They almost meet all the 10 key ideas about participation that lead to Effective Participation.

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