

## POLICY CHANGE



### VIETNAM :

#### Collective housing redevelopment standards are changed.

Thousands of poor families living in ramshackle old social housing in Vietnamese cities are being pushed out of their houses as their neighborhoods are redeveloped to make them more “modern”. But the ACCA housing project in Vinh has demonstrated a powerful new people-driven redevelopment model in which nobody gets evicted.

As a direct result of this project, the local government has changed its policy on redeveloping the city’s run-down collective housing. Before, the people were mostly evicted and redevelopment was done by contractors, to a set of standards which even those who remained couldn’t afford. Now the communities can rebuild their own housing and infrastructure themselves and get land title. And everything is much cheaper - *and the houses are beautiful.*

Now in that same city, two similar housing projects are underway and more are planned. With ACVN acting as intermediary and bringing this knowledge into a larger platform of cities, other cities are seeing this innovation and realizing that they don’t have to evict people! Now the same thing is happening in Hai Duong.

The big question is always how to translate real action in city-wide upgrading by communities on the ground into changes in policy? Policies which allow this kind of people-driven slum upgrading to be sustained, scaled-up and institutionalized, as part of a larger structural change process in these countries? During the three years of ACCA, we have already begun to see some changes at the policy level in several countries which are making room for this new alternative people-driven model :

#### 1 CAMBODIA : New national housing policy and free land for the poor.

In almost all of the ACCA cities, the government is providing free land for the housing projects (both relocation and on-site), and this has become the norm now. At national level, a new housing policy has been adopted which is based on the citywide, community-driven and partnership-based community upgrading strategies that have been developed by the CDF and the National Savings Network.

#### 2 INDONESIA : Political support for people-driven housing in 4 cities.

In Makassar, Surabaya, Yogyakarta and Kendari, the urban poor networks have negotiated big breakthroughs in free land for housing, government support for infrastructure upgrading and permission to upgrade riverside settlements in-situ.

#### 3 NEPAL : Political support for city development funds.

The CDF concept, which was piloted in Kathmandu, has now spread to seven cities, with local governments in four of those cities contributing money to the funds and free land.

#### 4 KOREA : Breakthroughs for “vinyl house” squatter communities,

which have won the right to house registration (which is necessary to access various government entitlements like schools, health-care and services), and the network in Seoul is negotiating with the new mayor to implement a people-managed housing process as a new alternative to the developer-driven public housing model.

#### 5 PHILIPPINES : Free land to squatters, for the first time.

In Mandaue, the first case ever of public land being given free to the communities who’d been squatting on that land. Several other cases of free land for housing have followed.

#### 6 PHILIPPINES : First housing board set up in Quezon City,

in which the citywide urban poor coalition is represented on the board which oversees city budgeting, urban development and land use planning.

#### 7 PHILIPPINES : City Shelter Code enacted in Iligan City,

which provides a legal framework for the urban poor to take part in city government decisions on issues of housing and land tenure, and creates a provision for housing and resettlement allocation in the local government budget.

#### 8 PHILIPPINES : The poor help write Kidapawan’s City Shelter Plan.

The Homeless People’s Federation has also persuaded the city to allocate a portion of its annual budget to support self-help land acquisition, site development and housing projects of the urban poor - especially families living in high-risk areas.

#### 9 FIJI : National MOU to do city-wide upgrading in 15 cities.

ACHR has signed an MOU with the the Ministry of Local Government and Housing and the People’s Community Network to jointly do citywide upgrading in 15 cities in Fiji. This partnership has already yielded big tracts of public land for housing 2,794 poor families in six of the seven ACCA cities - an astonishing 290 hectares of land.

#### 10 THAILAND : The city fund movement takes off.

The ACCA projects which helped to pilot new city-based development funds in a few cities has helped to ignite a city-fund movement in the country, where there were never any city funds before, only the national CODI fund. City-based funds are now being operated by community networks in over 200 cities, and the number is growing fast.

#### 11 LAO PDR : First government land leases to urban squatters.

In a country with no history of any community housing projects and no alternatives to eviction, the ACCA housing projects have set a new alternative, in which on-site upgrading is done by the communities themselves and the government provides the secure land. These projects are the first cases of squatter communities being given long-term leases to the valuable public land they already occupy.

#### 12 PAKISTAN : Land titles for 997 “goth” settlements in Karachi :

OPP-RTI has worked with these traditional agricultural communities on the outskirts of Karachi to map and improve their settlements, as a strategy to defend themselves against eviction by the developers, and the government has approved land titles and budget for trunk infrastructure for 977 of the total 1,800 goth settlements.

