

Ex-post Assessment of the World Bank Upgrading Plans and Discovering the Obstacles: A Case of Jafarabad Kermanshah, Iran

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Abstract: One of the World Bank's projects aimed to upgrading the informal settlement is *Jafarabad* Quarter located in *Kermanshah* province at north-west of Iran. This paper evaluates the first phase (2004-2008) of implementing the upgrading plans of *Jafarabad*. The study indicates that these projects have not completely achieved their objectives due to a number of obstacles existed. The obstacles can be categorized in three: internal obstacles such as theoretical and conceptual misunderstanding, lack of local experts' engagement, limitation on funding and inconsistency among relevant plans. The external problems include autocratic nation of Iranian planning system, lack of realism in visioning and inefficiency of funding allocation process. The executive obstacles include those that are related to the plan projects such as land release and timetable following. It is suggested that upgrading plans should be undertaken as a process considering negotiation with all these obstacles.

Key words: Evaluation • Informal Settlement • Planning System • World Bank, *Kermanshah*

INTRODUCTION

The Squatter Settlement is not a new topic to discuss and its history of discussion dates to back early 1960 [1]. According to UN-Habitat Agenda squatter settlements often referred to Informal settlements, however for this paper, the term 'informal settlement' refers to both slum and squatter settlements. Slum inhabitants are regarded as the majority of the poor settled down in some developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America [2] witnessing "most explosive" urban growth [3]. "The growth of cities in developing countries has been accompanied by a rapid growth of urban inhabitants living in the substandard conditions in slums. It is widely acknowledged that slum growth is largely a manifestation of poverty and that it is impossible to prevent slum settlements where poverty levels are high and urban growth happens fast"[4]. "Slums in the cities of developing countries cannot be wished away. The challenge is thus to find realistic and effective ways for addressing this problem" [4].

This paper consists of four sections. The first section is about background studies and the evolution of problem-solving approaches. The next section introduces the research methodology and gives more information regarding case study areas. The third section investigates the success of upgrading plans and discovers obstacles to fulfill them. The final section concludes.

Background: Many upgrading plans have been implemented in developing countries during the last decades, but the evidence indicates that these plans were less successful in achieving objectives [5]. After long periods of discussions over the best way to deal with such settlements, now the best way is to upgrade the settlements in their natural position. But despite such an agreement there is still controversy to which is the most effective way to achieve this. What remain are differently suggested approaches [6]. By the early eighties, among the obstacles to meet objectives is mere attention to physical aspects instead of socio-economical views. The problem of land tenure and associated policies, lack of

mechanism for returning expenses, are of legal barriers [7]. There are usually three specific approaches to squatter settlement upgrading [6]. They, known as "thematic approaches", have appeared from the literature to demonstrate a degree of reliability and focused on the following principles, while being underpinned by a methodological approach: (a) an incremental approach physical provision, (b) micro-planning at the local level and (c) the creation of a holistic plan.

The eradication approach was accompanied by a clearance and redevelopment model in which the inhabitants of informal settlements had to temporarily leave their original settlements while clearing the area and consequently building their new houses [8]. With a consideration of incensement in social and economical complexity, international organizations have started to fund and implement plans for upgrading settlement situation of these areas, desisting from clearance and redevelopment approach [8]. According to John Turner [8], the basic needs of rural or urban new comers cannot be unilaterally met by institutions and organizations, including public or non-governmental ones. Inhabitants of such units prefer to create opportunities for upgrading the environmental conditions and the existing settlement situation [9].

The new approaches relating to 1983-1993, however, proved to be more organized compared to the methods used in the decade before it, following civil reforms and development at a very more vast level [10]. In the middle of 1990's upgrading was referred to any effort to create government-built frameworks with different nature (legal, civil, economical, financial and social) for increasing economic productivity and social efficiency in development of housing sector [10]. Research on the evolution of these approaches indicates that there are two specific changes over the time: reduction in the technical and anatomical aspects and increase in the environmental, social and human aspects. Based on this, settlements built by the inhabitants of informal settlements can be viewed as some part of the capital of the civic society which should be regularized and organized by participatory planning and emphasis on the cooperation of the inhabitants themselves.

Upgrading Plan of Kermanshah (UPK): The city of Kermanshah is situated 33 degrees and 19 minutes northern latitude and 47 degrees and 7 minutes northern longitude of Greenwich meridian. With an average altitude of 1'320 meter above the sea level, the city is located in an

echo-tone serving as the boundary between one or more diverse natural region. Kermanshah With a population of approximately 750'000 has been facing problems associated with informal settlement for many years. The growth of urban population and development of newly formed migration colonies in the outskirts of Kermanshah since 1962 coincided exactly with the *Land Reform* in Iran and marks the rise of informal settlements not only in Kermanshah, but also many other main cities across the country. *Jafarabad* is the largest quarter with informal settlement in Kermanshah and located over the hilly lands on the east of city grown without any predetermined plan. Owing to the lack of supervision over construction, it has an irregular fabric with poor quality buildings that are highly vulnerable towards environmental hazards such as earthquakes. Apart from what so far mentioned, the quarter is faced with the following major environmental issues: inefficient collection and disposal of sewage; lack of surface run-off water disposal network; inefficient water supply system network; and inefficient garbage collection and disposal.

All the way through urban development plans approved for Kermanshah, a little attention paid on the future of informal settlements and their inhabitants' problems. The Comprehensive Revision Plan of Kermanshah [11] was prepared at a time when one third of the city population resided in these quarters. However, in the mentioned plan, the share of report dedicated to these areas was minor. These issues have not been fully considered in The Comprehensive Plan (1983-2003), so there will be many flaws within the Detailed Plan of Kermanshah (DPK) for the application of effective strategies and suitable measures. Studies on UPK commenced at the end of year 2002 with the necessary information for preparing the plan being collected in a short period of time [12]. According to the first stage of the studies of UPK, Kermanshah has 36 problematic quarters, 13 of which are clearly confronting poverty and unable to undergo improvement of their critical state and breakout from the dead-end of problems. One third of the urban population - that is 270'000 people - lives in these quarters over an area of 670 hectares. Meantime, the other two thirds of the urban population have settled on a total of 9'400 hectares. The rest of city has experienced a regular development, enjoying its specific services. However, the informal fabrics are under-serviced. These quarters and their population are not addressed in planning and decision-making, despite being established some 40 years ago [11].

Level of the Plan Fulfilling During the First Four-Year Period:

The scope of fulfilling the Plan during the first four-year period in this quarter is evaluated here. The analysis shows that from the whole social and economic projects, including 26 projects of which the documents have been offered to the World Bank, nearly all of them have remained quiescent [13]. All social and economic projects - which were to be done in the first phase of UPK - have only been summarized in establishing a social services center in 2008. Among 20 urban service projects, there are eight infrastructural projects and four upgrading and revitalizing projects to be started and carried out, indicating the improper procedure governing their implementations. Among 20 intended urban service projects, the documents, maps and other items belonging to nine projects have been completed and the contractors of four projects merely have been determined in the middle of 2007. One of these five projects has no executive map, while on the contrary, according to the approved Plan, the implementation of many projects was started in 2004 and ended in 2008 [13]. While most of projects were conducted at the first phase, they were placed as under-construction informal quarters projects in the end of 2007 [11, 13]. After four years, only two contracts have been signed with a Counselor.

The current situation and the procedure governing the implementation of upgrading projects of *Jafarabad* quarter show that the fulfillment of the project is too slow. On the other hand, considering the current procedure and lack of a considerable change in the performance governing the implementation, it is unlikely that the plan strategies in the second phase will be fulfilled in 2013, even at a middle level.

Obstacles to Fulfill the Plan: Several obstacles can be listed. They are divided into three categories: external, internal and executive barriers.

External Obstacles

Process Centralization Authority in Preparing and Implementing the Plan: A brief review of the process of preparation and approval of the urban development plans in the country shows that there is a centralization in the preparation plans [14]. UPK plan has been provided by counseling engineers with the funds of the international and local institutes without an effective connection between the plan providers and its

executives such as municipality and other related organizations, stakeholders and the inhabitants, so accordingly, there will be many problems facing this plan in practice.

Weakness in Speculative Principles: The lack of comprehensive approaches in solving the problem of informal settlements in Iran and imitative use of World Bank's models, without taking into account the local conditions have misled UPK in some cases. The elimination of the methods is done without any substituted methods in the native conditions. So it is possible to reach the objectives of an approach when principles and related methods are completely used. Considering specific native circumstances, in case of incomplete implementation and non-substitution of the methods, it would be very difficult to obtain the objectives, if not impossible.

Internal Obstacles

An Urban Service Outlook of the Plan in Compiling First Four Year: Implementing the compiled projects of the plan, including urban services, economic and social plans in general, will lead to some impacts which in turn, will influence the procedure of advancing the projects. For instance, implementing the projects relating to urban service section will lead to social and economic reflections; however despite such impacts about which some attentions would be constantly paid. The planned funds allocated to social upgrading was only two percent of the whole allocated funds during first four-year period, showing an insignificant attention paid on social problems. While the funds allocated to the plan had been increased during the next 6-year period, based on plan preparation, it lacks such social and economical reflections within first four-year period (Table 1).

Weakness in Theoretical Base: Sections 9 (economical upgrading of quarters) and 12 (group participation mechanisms) from UPK show that the plan has been prepared deficiently according to authentic and reliable theoretical fundamentals. The reasons for this can be the massive and huge amount of data needed to analyze and make suggestions for the problem of informal settlements and the number of specialists employed the consulting engineers which have diminished the quality of the plan in these sections.

Table 1: Sources Providing upgrading Funds for the 4 Main Quarters Based on the Supplying Source and the Main Chapters of the Program in the First 4 Years (Million Rials According to Fixed Rates of Year 2003)

Sum	Other savings bank	Organizations and other banks	The World Bank	Provincial	National	Sections of program
191083	16374	6/7802	7/71505	6/51639	1/43761	Urban service
148207	6/15487	22231	52/51205	4/29641	4/29641	Infrastructure and urban development
68/50716	16/6593	5173	1/18090	2/13050	3/7810	Social capability
156756	58/13414	-	12/53985	84/45262	12/44094	Economic capability
40	-	-	-	16	24	Studies on upgrading and revitalizing the context
1461700	7/293801	55/440702	7/727195	-	-	Fund of upgrading and revitalizing the context
2008498	04/345671	15/475904	14/921982	76/13910	92/125329	Sum total

Source: Tadbir Shahr Consulting Engineers, 2003

Change of the Definitions of Concepts and Their Use:

Studying the sections obtained from UPK [11] indicates that what is offered as participation in UPK document is dispersed, without enough integration. The compiled participatory strategies show that UPK without taking into account the localizing of these procedures has compiled the objectives. Furthermore, the study of UPK shows that the concept of the participation of inhabitants means corporation in the forms of financial and human labor support. The comparison of the used concepts in UPK shows fundamental differences with the theoretical concepts of participation [15].

Incomprehensiveness to All Groups Based on Age and Gender:

In order to obtain the objectives set by the quarters upgrading plan, the following question have to answer in the Plan: how women's capabilities can be used in active participation on the quarter subjects. While some limited cases about the increase in households' income, a little attention is paid to the women's potential contribution to upgrade the quarters by women in UPK. There is a short and not professional outlook in UPK on social and cultural capabilities, they have not acquired the necessary sanction and in the related reports, there are not any effective preparations and pre-defined funds to be allocated in the plan.

Lack of Realism Outlook to the Implementation: The documents of UPK indicate that the economical development of the settlements has been based on cooperative activities and UPK has defined its economical projects based on the establishment and activation of cooperation. In a paper by Shadi-talab, the study of the characteristics of domestic cooperative companies reveals that there are many instances of formal and legal companies that were failed and the most important reasons for the failure of cooperative companies by the

research group, showed that in the quarters with informal settlement, including *Jafarabad* there are three common local challenges: lack of specialized native applicants, lack of a multilateral investigation on the plans and deficiency of the experts in the local authorities [16].

Lack of Native Experts Engaging: According to the analysis, some 60% of the native personnel of Cooperation General Office, that are responsible as the executive assist of the economic strategies, have lower than bachelor [17]. Kermanshah Municipality, as the main part for executing UPK, comprises 95 percent personnel without academic education (lower than bachelor's degree) of which more than 20 percent are illiterate shows many realities on unusual recruitment. The existing data reveal the situation of academic education in other involved organizations. Although training the experts of the upgrading staff can improve the conditions, but it requires an effective change.

Providing Financial Resources of the Plan: An evident aspect in UPK is inattention to the procedures of financial supply as well as the ways for returning the costs consumed in the case of implementing the plan projects. A little attention has been paid to channel financial resources from organizations and to study feasibility of the projects. The investment options include the World Bank's loan and the allocated national funds and the plan has tried to solve financial complex problems of the plan with a simple and initial method. An exogenous approach is used for the predicted funds of implementing the plan, during which it is regarded as financial and executive facilities of the projects includes the budgets that are being provided by government and the World Bank. On the other hand, security difficulties lead other financial supply channels, (including a share of the charges of Municipality) to be faced with the problem of financial

Table 2: Number and percentage of the funds required for implementing the plan in four quarters, Dolat Abad, Kowli Abad, Jafar Abad and Shater Abad during a ten-year period (Million Rials According to Fixed Rates of Year 2003)

Sum	Next years (6 years)		First four years		Number of projects	Main sections of the program	Row
	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount			
265818.00	28.12	74735.00	71.88	191083.00	67	Urban service	1
223141.02	33.58	74934.32	66.42	148206.70	32	Infrastructure & Urban Development	2
51588.63	0.00	0.00	100.00	51588.63	67	Social Empowerment	3
156756.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	156756.00	36	Economical Empowerment	4
697303.65	61.70	149669.32	78.54	547634.33	212	Sum	

Source: Tadbir Shahr Consulting Engineers, 2003

resources, such as lack of investment in the quarter. In addition to social difficulties, although initial investments, as the heaviest part of the infrastructure expenses, is being carried out in the quarter, the facilities available in *Jafarabad*, in general, are lesser than other quarters of the city. Therefore, financial resources such as charges of municipality are failed to provide through the related channels due to reduced motivation of private section for investment.

Inconsistency Between UPK and DPK: Some urban service projects have other application in the DPK than what is suggested in UPK. So it is necessary to have an administrator for the issues relating to land possession and changing the land use whose survey should be declared and agreed by municipality and related commission. After agreements, the land must be bought from the owners that needs time, budget and a strong administration.

Executive Obstacles

Making Executive Management: According to the analysis on how to pay the invoices of the contractors as well as on the file offered by province's Task Force for Enabling Informal Settlements 2007, one of the obstacles to implement the project is the manner of executive management of the plan which is done through two representatives in the capital and the center of the province. All payments must be done after confirmation of the province's representative and sending the documents to Tehran, the capital. This leads to a delay in payment and, consequently a delay in project making the non-investing contactors unsatisfied. Considering that the fees are calculated and paid to contractor per square meter, any delay in the payments leads to be a great loss.

Financial Supply of the Land: Although the World Bank has taken into account a fund for buying land and the projects province sources confront the

shortage in resources which leads to a delay. Since the administrator for supplying the land, i.e. buying from owners, is unknown, it, leads to a delay in supplying money.

Urban Service Outlook to the Plan During Implementing the Projects: The efforts of the Province's Task Force For Enabling to remove the obstacles show that in the Staff opinion, social problems have received little attention in the executive plans [17] reflecting the viewpoint of the plan's participants. According to Table 2 fewer funds have been allocated to social projects, amounting to seven percent of total allocated funds. On the other hand, considering the lack of strong and useful strategies, the principal part of the funds spent promotion fees which are far for on the life of inhabitants.

Implementing the Project from a Constructive Perspective: Considering the research method, it has been started to fill the questionnaires by the managers and the executive forces involving UPK. According to the data collected from 18 questionnaires filled by the participants involved in the executive and supervising projects engaging in different organizations, nine persons graduated in Civil Engineering, without having planning insights and information on the upgrading problems. While these staffs are engaged in very important influential positions, other educated people including - those with architecture or urban development degrees- are busy in less important sections.

Other Constraints: Other results are obtained from the reports of the Province's Upgrading Staff, the contractor companies implementing the projects, as well as interview with the supervisors and individuals involving in the projects. There are some other obstacles included: having claimer for taking possession, nonexistence of complete maps and technical

specifications, non-execution of geotechnical surveys, late payment of the contractors' invoices (averagely paid every four months). The shortage of construction materials, the problems of opening pathways, termination of the contract, contract problems, inadequacy of technical skills of the contractors, delay in providing the lands considered for implementing projects [18], as well as the lack of availability of a robust timetable make the situation worse. Furthermore, lack of conformity with the World Bank's regulations and contracts as well as contradiction between urban detailed plans should be mentioned.

CONCLUSION

The study of the level of fulfillment and implementation of UPK showed that despite the World Bank's objective on reducing poverty, the Plan has not been successful in achieving its objectives in the first phase 2004-2008. Some developing countries, in fact such as Iran are confronting the poverty of planning system and efficient urban management [19] which is considered as one of the main obstacles to fulfill the plan during past years. Furthermore, UPK projects have been changed to be an instrument for keeping the life of native administrative authorities. On this basis, planning is defined to determine channels for funds distribution, instead of removing the worries concerning the problems presented in the society, in a way that any organization tries to allocate more funds for its expense. Lack of a transparent informing system in the process of implementing UPK is a major concern. Since there is no pressure lever by mass media on the inefficient native management the managers of UPK which are responsible for upgrading settlement conditions of 60000 inhabitants in the quarter as well as 270000 population of the city, cannot even offer an acceptable report on their performance after passing 6 years, while not answering to any public institution about their achievements. Furthermore it is necessary to make amendments in semi-centralized framework which does not welcoming participatory agencies [20]. Therefore, practices on upgrading seem to be poor and inefficient in encountering with the problems. A special attention needs to be paid to the operations and instruments for an effective management of the plan; because the obstacles including the lack of construction materials and unsuccessful tenders, demonstrate that the executive management of the plan is placed in lowest level since such difficulties cannot prevent the implementation of such plans.

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