Participatory Planning and Design Approaches for Housing Delivery Interventions

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都市スラムの解消と適切な住宅の供給は多くの途上国が抱える深刻な問題だ。本稿ではフィリピンでの実践を例に、そうした住宅の設計や供給に住民やNGOが積極的に参加することの意義を検証した。

Abstract

Housing inadequacies remain a serious challenge to sustainable living, particularly in most developing countries. In addressing the acute housing problem, the government and non-government organizations in the Philippines implement various initiatives that are optimistically viewed as ways to spur community development and boost housing delivery systems aimed to align with the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 11. Housing programs which are designed employing participatory approaches enable grassroots involvement –a widely adopted design philosophy nowadays.

A mix of research methods were used to explore the participatory planning and design approaches of selected civil society organizations (CSOs), specifically on the role they played in housing delivery interventions used in forming communities for beneficiaries from informal settlement areas. The results showed a significant similarity in the manner the selected CSOs utilized participatory approaches. Although when it comes to the implementation in the various stages of housing, the results manifest differences according to the category of each CSO.

Keywords	participatory planning and design, housing delivery, civil society organization

Introduction

Participation is an evidence of sharing, inclusivity, and heightened attention to every stakeholder in a community. The appreciation for the use, significance, and relevance of participatory approaches, in general, may be easy to understand and grasp. People would normally want to be involved and partake in activities with a foreseen positive outcome, especially, if they themselves are affected by issues, such as those concerned with shelter provisions. While encouraging the end-users to express their wants and desires is somehow an easy task and could be easily achieved, extracting vital insights and processing the idea contributions is an interesting and challenging aspect in the study of participation in relation to a successfully designed and built environment.

Design and planning experts are trained to create beautiful and functional environments, community organizers and developers know the process of building communities by heart, financial experts know a great deal on how to manage money matters, investment, and savings, historians can trace the roots and development of a community, and many other fields that contribute significant roles to the formation and evolution of a society. But there is also a need to recognize a segment of the society and communities who do not have the expertise, training, and the know-how, and yet are important stakeholders of communities. Building the capacities of this segment of the population could significantly increase the overall quality of life in societies.

Background

The shelter component has always been a core

element of communities and overtime has become a challenging issue, among governments and development experts, given the manifold growth in population across different parts of the world. According to statistics, the majority of the developing world's population will live in urban areas by 2020, increasing the number of urban residents by 2.5 billion. The development of communities and human settlements involves multiple disciplines or expertise, including architecture, planning, urban design, community development, and community organizing, among others. The experts from these different fields are expected to work cohesively in a concerted effort to provide for an adequate and suitable environment for various functions and sectors of the society.

The ideal traditional or conventional Housing delivery model usually involves planning and design engagement between the technical practitioners and the client/end-user. The process appears to produce higher effectiveness and efficiency when there is clear and direct communication between the technical practitioner and end-user, such as when a paying client commissions an architect to deliver architectural services. Ideally, the end-user preferences are solicited and identified at the onset of the project. Design decisions emerge to be successfully carried out when the physical house or building is constructed with continuous consultations between end-user, architect, and constructor.

However, the traditional or conventional Housing delivery model could only be afforded by end-users who have financial capabilities in the form of savings or have access to Housing loan facilities like the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System, and PAG-IBIG. The different lending institutions, whether government-controlled or the private lenders, can only be accessed by wage earners in the formal labor market, while families in the low income group and earners in the informal labor market usually make up the number of households in informal settlement areas. The need for job opportunities and inadequate financial capabilities of people have been cited as major reasons for informal settler proliferation in the urban setting, and thus resulting to uncontrolled growth of slum areas.

The magnitude of informal settler families (ISFs) in

the Philippines have been estimated with a growth rate of 7.2% annually between 1991 and 2012 (Ballesteros, Ramos, Magtibay, 2017). This figure does not yet account the number of families displaced by calamities, those living in danger zones and with cases of land eviction, and the homeless. The continuously increasing population contributes to the immense Housing need which was projected by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) to reach 6.8 million units for the 2017-2022 period while the compounding Housing backlog has been estimated by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) to reach 12.50 Million units by 2030. Also, according to the 2018 Philippine Statistics Authority figures, the proportion of informal settlers in urban areas have already reached 7.53% in 2016. The numbers raise an alarm that more demand would be created in the next fifteen years or so if collective actions from both the government and private sector will still not suffice. The figures are targeted by the Philippine government to be balanced out by 2030 in a means to achieve SDG Goal 11 target 1, which is to ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums. Corresponding questions arise as to what has already been achieved in addressing the housing problem as well as an inquiry about what else could be done and how to correct errors, if any, in the housing delivery processes which are already in place. These set of questions, simply put, requires the need for an assessment or evaluation in order to identify the good practices as well as the gaps and challenges.

The housing dilemma is a continuous problem which must be addressed using adequate and innovative measures. To cope with the phenomenal Housing backlog as reported in government statistics, technical experts in government agencies are tasked to profile the informal settler families as well as create appropriate design and planning solutions like the provision of Housing resettlement areas. The efforts of the government in terms of community organization as well as for Housing design, planning, and implementation processes in various resettlement sites have been critiqued over time due to reports that beneficiaries have tendencies of abandoning

Housing units given to them. It is theorized that the application of the ideal traditional or conventional Housing delivery model is narrowed when applied in the delivery for mass shelter intended for the marginalized sector of the society or informal settler families (ISFs) and the low income group, and thus, creating a gap in the ideal planning and design process.

The supposition is that a negligible amount of consultation between designer and end-user is one of the significant factors in the resulting attitude of end-user/ beneficiaries towards the provided Housing. Most commonly observed outcome is that the end-user/beneficiaries return to their former informal settlement areas, mainly due to economic and practical reasons, which are inferred as having been overlooked during the planning and design stages. Further results are barren communities and poorly maintained Housing that the government had spent to design and build. Because of the apparent detachment of end-user/beneficiaries from the Housing provided by the government that participatory or bottom-up approaches are viewed as an alternative and innovative means for Housing delivery that can forge housing beneficiaries to build a strong connection with their new community, and develop an understanding and concern for the housing unit they may acquire. This approach has been championed by individuals and organizations pushing for a recognition to mainstream and integrate the process in the government-provided Housing. The bottom-up approach or also known as community-led or citizen-led organizing results to a people's plan.

Given the recognizable compounding problems in the country, efforts are made by ordinary citizens, non-government organizations (NGOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) to make contributions to the government initiated Housing programs. With the different initiatives from the government and non-government organizations from different parts of the world to address the existing problems related to community development and Housing delivery, there is an optimistic view that these problems can be alleviated when there is adequate involvement from the grassroots. Various NGOs or CSOs devise programs and initiatives in assisting and empowering citizens, especially the marginalized sector, in asserting their right to a decent Housing that they can call their home, in making dialogues with the concerned local government unit and various government agencies, in dealing with technical consultants and material suppliers, as well as the process that the end-users could adapt in order to eventually manage their community on their own.

Every human being has the right to a decent living environment. Housing was recognized as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations, 2009), and in September 2015, the United Nations also updated the Millenium Development Goals or MDGs (Agenda 21) and introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) to cope with current and future challenges aimed in addressing urbanization issues that include hunger, poverty, education, health, sustainable communities and inclusive human settlements, and climate change adaptations. Goal 11 specifically states: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable."

In its simplest terms, a participatory approach is one in which everyone who has a stake in the intervention has a voice, either in person or by representation. The staff of the organization that will run it, members of the target population, community officials, interested citizens, and people from involved agencies, schools, and other institutions. Everyone's participation should be welcomed and respected, and the process should not be dominated by any individual or group, or by a single point of view (Participatory Approaches to Planning Community Interventions). UN-Habitat defines participation as the process in which affected stakeholders of an urban plan take part in its development. Through a participatory process they can be actively involved in the process of informing the planning process and influencing the decision-making, the plan, and its execution. This process can range from months to years, in which stakeholders periodically come together in a moderated setting with a clear objective to provide input for a project (UN-Habitat, 2016).

One of the generally viewed concern with the use of participatory approaches is the tedious challenge of having to involve all stakeholders in, ideally, rounds after rounds of discussions and workshops before arriving with a consensus and decisions being made. This general understanding of the participatory process has been one of the setbacks why participation is shortened in the planning and design process. The numerous positive views on the use of participatory process as a means in making successful communities and improved Housing delivery deem it necessary to present adequate empirical evidence. Concrete proof of the positive outcome in the use of participation could further its integration in the planning and design processes that can serve as a basis in creating refined participatory planning and design models.

Rationale

Proponents of participation primarily argue that it produces superior results, that is, in terms of built environment upgrading, participation improves the responsiveness, the 'fit', between the resulting environment and the needs and wants of the people it is supposed to serve (Frediani, et. al., 2011). In the Philippine setting, there are positive impressions, among development circles and the Housing end-users, about how participatory approaches tends to increase efficiency and success in Housing delivery concerning both the physical environment and improved social cohesion among community members. Given the indications that participatory approaches gain positive results and advantages, there seems to be a weak link in terms of documentation substantiation in terms of the actual proceedings of participatory activities happening on the ground. The observed gap suggests an opportunity to find and present empirical evidence to concretely capture the details on how participatory approaches are contextualized and carried out by civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Philippine locale. A clearer understanding of the CSOs role in paving the initiatives to mainstream participatory approaches across the different community development stages can inform the development of future participatory planning and design models.

Statement of the Problem

The study intends to look into the participatory planning and design approaches employed by selected civil society organizations (CSOs) and infer on the role they played in the performance of Housing delivery interventions.

The following are the sub problems:
- Determine the nature and extent of stakeholders' participation in the design and planning approaches applied by the CSOs in their Housing delivery programs.
- Identify/document good practices, similarities, differences, constraints, and gaps in the way participatory planning and design approaches are applied by CSOs
- Look into the assessment or evaluation of the performance of the Housing delivery interventions and how it reflects on the participatory planning and design approaches applied by the selected organizations.

Key Research Questions

1. What are the participatory planning and design approaches employed by selected civil society organizations (CSOs) in their Housing delivery programs?
2. What is the nature and extent of stakeholders' participation in the civil society Housing delivery interventions?
3. What are the good practices, similarities, differences, constraints, and gaps in the way CSOs apply participatory planning and design approaches in their Housing delivery programs?
4. What are the currently used international criteria and procedures for the assessment of participatory planning and design approaches for Housing delivery that can apply in the context of the selected CSOs?
5. How can the Housing delivery system of the subject CSOs be characterized in terms of performance related to the participatory process used, and how do these reflect in the designed and built Housing?

Goal of the Study

To contribute a clearer understanding of participatory approaches in planning and design towards an improved application in Housing delivery and community development.

Significance of the Study

Probing how the participatory approaches are utilized by the selected CSOs in rendering assistance for Housing delivery, a critical component in the development of communities, is an attempt to contribute insights in the continuous efforts of both the government and non-government organizations in identifying gaps and deficiencies, which processes and practices works, and what alternatives could be generated to create further mechanisms for an efficient Housing delivery system.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of the study delves on the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Housing delivery focusing on evidences in processes which used participation modes, and specifically, focused on the design and planning stages and how participatory approaches were integrated and utilized in creating design outputs.

The study addressed the cases of six (6) CSOs with operations in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The CSOs were initially determined through referral and is a sort of convenience sampling method in terms of selection, with the benefit of access to data and information. The Housing projects of the selected CSOs featured in this study focused only on particular samples with integrated participatory approaches and not all projects handled by the CSOs.

The data and information concerning the stakeholders were gathered from CSO officials such as executive directors, community organizers, technical team members, Housing beneficiaries from ISFs including those affected by typhoons/calamities and from identified danger zones, key Philippine shelter agencies' information bulletin and key official publications, websites and social media pages.

Methodology
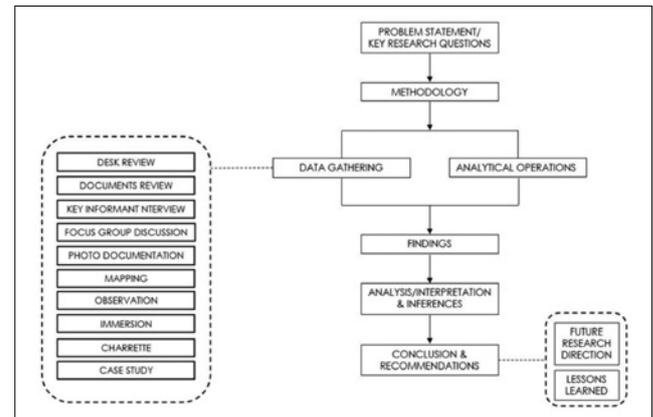
Fig. 1. Methodology of the study

The study used qualitative methods in gathering data, analytical operations, and in producing inferences. Data gathering strategies used in the conduct of the study include desk research, documents review, observations, key informant interviews (KII), mapping, survey, photo/voice/video documentation, immersion, focus group discussions (FGD), charrette, and case studies.

Table 1. Case Studies

HOA location	No. of respondents	Project stage
Iloilo	15	Occupied
Quezon City	8	Occupied
Tacloban	117	Construction
Valenzuela	12	Reblocking
Total	152	

**Fig. 2. Charette workshop**

Conceptual Framework
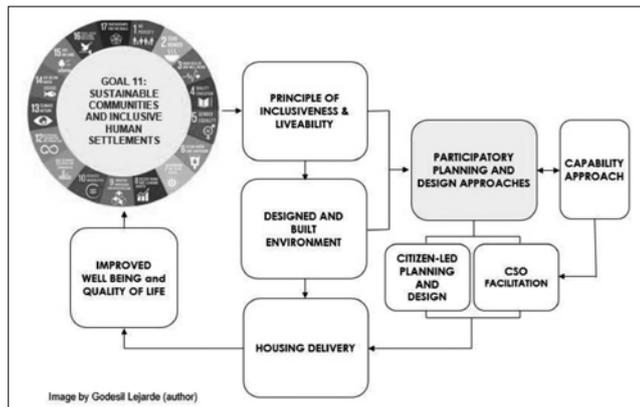
Fig. 3. Conceptual Framework

Arnstein's ladder of participation serves as the theoretical base for the study. The Sustainable Development Goals are viewed to be successfully achieved when the quality of life and well-being of people is enhanced by means of access to adequate, safe, and decent Housing. The initiatives and measures can dramatically improve the designed and built environment concerned with shelter provision when people or end-users work together with CSOs that facilitate improvement of their capacities in order to assert their access and rights to Housing and a community that supports development for the different stages of family life.

Results
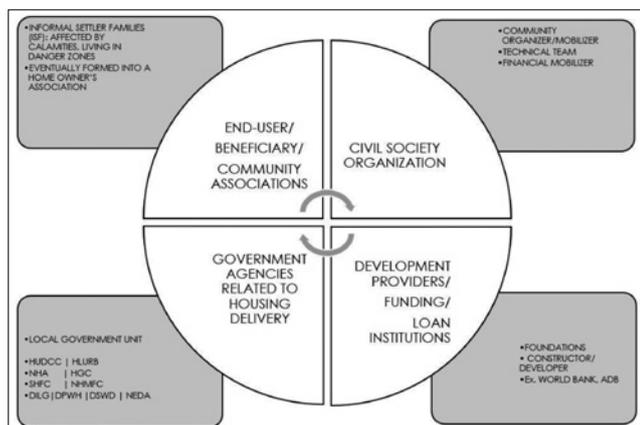
Fig. 4. Observed Stakeholders

The delivery of a Housing project and the organization of the community entails efforts from different roles that must work in harmony. The physical setting and the social cohesion of the observed communities takes years to organize and requires various expertise in order to address particular issues and concerns at each stage of the project development. Putting together people from different backgrounds to form a community is a challenge. Understanding individual rights, preferences, values, beliefs, and way of life usually affects the degree of community cohesion.

Using all the findings and results of the data gathered from all methodologies used in the study such as desk research, documents review, mapping, observation, photo and video documentation, key informant interviews, survey, focus group discussion, immersion, and charrette, there seems to be a prevailing inclination or trend showing that participatory process is popular and frequently applied among CSOs, but particularly in organizations with faith-based foundation.

Looking at the details of the process, there is evidence that participation can be found in different stages of the housing delivery system. However, it is more frequent in the design stage where members of the community are involved in brainstorming, discussions, arguments, workshops, and charrettes. Participation is also shown in planning, procurement, and construction, but not as frequent in design.

As shown in the analytic diagram of the participatory process, the resultant Housing is a product of the inputs from community members during their participation in community workshops followed by the work of the members of the technical team in formalizing the plans. The expertise of the technical team is still required to check compliance with building codes and regulations as well as technical documentation. After the technical team preparations of the technical drawings, another round of workshop-consultation is conducted to validate the outputs with the community members. This process of validation is a key stage in the success of the participatory process.

Based on the various data collected and particularly as taken from observations made, the participatory

Table 2. Featured civil society organizations

No.	Name of Civil Society Organization		Office/s	Type of Organization	Date Established
1		Center for Community Assistance and Development, Inc. (CCAD)	Quezon City	Non-governmental Organization; community-based	1989
2		Community Organizers Multiversity (COM)	Quezon City/ Davao City	Non-governmental Organization; community-based	1994
3		Foundation for Development Alternatives, Inc. (FDA)	Quezon City	Non-governmental Organization; faith-based foundation	1985
4		Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP)	Quezon City	Non-governmental Organization; community-oriented; faith-based foundation	1988
5		Philippine Alliance (PA)	Quezon City	Community organization; faith-based foundation	1998
6		Urban Poor Associates (UPA)	Quezon City/ Tacloban City	Non-governmental Organization; faith-based foundation	1992

Source: Desk review of CSO background and interviews of CSO officials; © Godesil Lejarde

Fig. 5. Beneficiaries' Aspirations and Resultant Housing

process applied by the selected CSOs has to some extent achieved satisfactory performance and success. This inference does not however rule out the presence of deficiencies encountered. In fact, CSOs in particular, are likely known in the monitoring and assessment/evaluation field as those with more advanced practices and techniques in determining what works and what doesn't in terms of their process, as well being the leading advocates of the principle of participation.

Conclusion and Learnings

Participatory processes are evident in various stages of involvement by the CSOs. The role of the CSOs can be enhanced to further strengthen their contributions in developing communities and assisting the marginalized sector of the society to attain their goals of owning their house.

Looking into participation is like looking at a mix of ingredients which may work if taken individually, but might have more compounding constructive results when taken all together. Given that this study is only an initial attempt (1% of the tip of the iceberg) in understanding the use of the participatory approaches in the Philippine context, it will contribute to the larger global setting by emphasizing the importance of participation and eventually support the integration of the concept of livability across different cultures.

The study provides clearer understanding on how the engagement of end-users in the development process results to the building of capacities especially in informed decision-making on the housing development across project stakeholders. This understanding also highlights the vital role of civil society organizations for the efficient development of communities towards housing delivery and that a successful housing project is a collaboration and cooperation of all stakeholders-- the community, civil society, funding agencies, private and government institutions. They all together contribute to the development of a better built environment and cohesive society.

N o.	Name of Civil Society Organization (CSO)	Location Office Address	Year Establis hed	Areas of Operatio n	Nature of CSO	Affiliation ts	Staff Size	Participati on Mode	Average Number of Participa nts	Sample Project	No. of Benefici aries (units)	Assessed Level of Participatio n	Other Stage of Participatio on	Sample photo of participation	Sample of Designed and Built Housing
1	Philippine Alliance (PA)	Quezon City	1998		Community organization	SIDA	70	DESIGN: CONSTRN	50	CLIFR RVHDA	172	MODERATE	procurement ; community management	source: PA	
										DRCHDA	96	MODERATE	land acquisition		
2	Urban Poor Associates (UPA)	Quezon City/ Tacloban City	1992	NCR, Tacloban	Non-governmental Organization	Christian Aid, CCODP, MISEROER, SELAVIP, MERCY RELIEF	25	DESIGN: CONSTRN	30	POPE FRANCIS VILLAGE	566	MODERATE	procurement ; community management		
3	Foundation for the Development of Urban Poor (FDUP)	Quezon City	1988	NCR, Cebu	Non-governmental Organization		10	DESIGN: CONSTRN		ERNEST VILLE	212	MODERATE (based from interview)	community management		
4	Foundation for Development Alternatives, Inc. (FDA)	Quezon City	1985	NCR	Non-governmental Organization	PHILSSA PHILDHRR A		DESIGN		MARANGAL VILLAGE	720	MODERATE (photodocume nts only)	community management		
5	Community Organizers Multiversity (COM)	Quezon City/ Davao City	1994	NCR, Davao	Non-governmental Organization		24	DESIGN		APOAMF	2867	MODERATE (photodocume nts only)	community management		source: APOAMF
6	Center for Community Assistance and Development, Inc. (CCAD)	Quezon City	1989	Region 1-5	Non-governmental Organization		9	land acquisition		SAMACA	69	FAIR (based from interview)	community management		

Fig. 6. Summary Analytic Diagram

An important realization put forth as a result of the study is that there is no single template in the development of communities and in the delivery of housing projects. The varied culture that end-users bring with them to their new community has an effect even in the immediate and mundane steps of the development process. It follows that there is no one size, fits all method or strategy to address the issues and challenges of communities for housing delivery.

Why participation should be encouraged and further enhanced or integrated in the development process has been accepted by development practitioners for many decades now as also proven by this study. This has been widely acknowledged especially in the enhancement and streamlining of monitoring and evaluation processes. Altogether, it is realized from the study that participatory planning and design models need to be further developed using more empirical evidence by improving documentation strategies and activities.

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