

Impacts of the Crown Property Developments in the City of Bangkok: Two Case Studies

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Abstract

This paper is a report on part of a research project commissioned by the Crown Property Bureau, Thailand (CPB). CPB is a quasi-government agency responsible for managing the real property of the Crown of the Kingdom of Thailand. Its main duty is to manage this estate in an efficient, yet equitable way. In Bangkok, CPB lands amounts to nearly 20 per cent of the total municipal area. Therefore, the agency's land management policy not only affects socio-economic situation and living environments of CPB lands alone, but also broader planning and urban development of the city. Land development options can follow three options: 1) by the Crown Property Bureau itself, 2) in collaboration with private developers, and 3) in partnership with government projects. "The paper will illustrate and compare each of these land development options through case-studies that clarify the CPB strategic goals, achievements in socio-economic terms and impact on the wider neighborhood and urban development."

Keywords: Urban Redevelopment, Land Sharing, Regeneration Policy Bangkok, Low-income Communities, Community Participation, Housing Typologies

Introduction

During the 1980's, Thailand's economics had grown rapidly. Bangkok, which is the capital of Thailand, was grown both economics and urban area. This resulted to the emigration from rural areas to Bangkok. With the lack of housing policy, immigrants built their own houses on wastelands throughout Bangkok. Most of those lands are owned by State Railway of Thailand, Thailand Transport Portal, Department of Highway, Treasury, and Crown Property Bureau. As the number of immigrants had grown very fast like Thailand's economics, most of those wastelands had turn into slums and the insufficient of infrastructures had caused many security, safety, and environments problems.

Bangkok is situated in the central part of Thailand. As a water-based city, it has been divided into 2 riverbanks by Chaopraya River, but most of the developments have expanded on the east side only. Bangkok has seen rapidly urbanization since its population hit 2 million in the 1960s. Since the 1980s, Greater Bangkok's built-up areas have spilled beyond Bangkok Metropolis' borders to neighboring provinces, initially to the north and south. Due to lacking of strict zoning laws, the Metropolitan areas' growth looks rather random and everywhere. Central areas like Yaowarat, Siam, Sukhumvit and Sathorn have seen skyrocketing land speculation as foreign investors are allowed to own condominiums, giving rise to a Manhattanization. At the same time, fringe areas are being developed and the boundaries are no longer visible between each province the historic city centers. Due to the speed of this urban sprawl over the past twenty years, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration has sought to tackle rising problems of commute times,

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pollution and deteriorating air quality. Strong population growth always presents formidable challenges for governments. The Bangkok region's principal tasks will be to retain housing affordability by ensuring a competitive land market, and by providing a road system that reduces its exceedingly long travel times.

The Crown Property Bureau, which owns 20% of land in Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, is considered to be one of the major landowners in Bangkok. Its main duty is to manage and beneficially arrange their properties. Therefore, the agency's land management policy not only affects socio-economic situation and living environments of CPB lands alone, but also broader planning and urban development of the city. Land development options can follow three options: 1) by the Crown Property Bureau itself, 2) in collaboration with private developers, and 3) in partnership with government projects. (Panitchpakdi, K. & et al. 2014.)



Fig. 1: Map of Bangkok Districts that have CPB's Projects
Source: author

Thus, it will lead to the objective of this research as follows.

Research Objectives and Methodologies

The research objective is to illustrate each of these land development options through case studies that clarify the CPB's strategic goals, achievements in socio-economic terms and impact on urban development, both inside and outside the case studies.

The key question is "What are differences between the two types of slum clearance that are investigated in the case studies?"

The methodologies that were used in this research are: 1) Interview, which is the main part of this research, is including experts who had planned and made the policy, CPB's staffs who have worked from the start of the case studies until now, and occupants who have lived in the community and surroundings. This methodology will gain data on what CPB thought on that time, how can staffs work on the case studies, what are the different between living in the old slums and new housing that built by CPB, and do the case studies effect to surroundings. 2) Observation is a part of methodology that shows physical development of case studies and concrete impacts on both inside the case studies and surroundings. And 3) Literature Review is for conceptualizing and drawing conclusion.

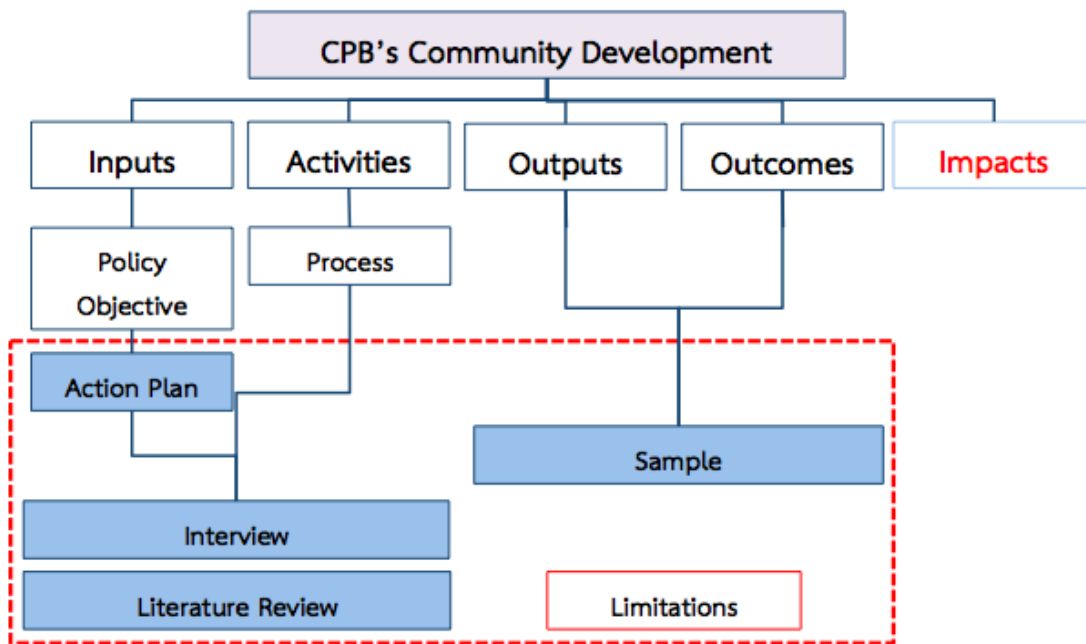


Fig. 2: Conceptual Framework
 Source: author

This research had started from the objective that is to illustrate land sharing development options through case studies, which are Klong Phai Singh To and Plubpla. They clarify the CPB's strategic goals, achievements in socio-economic terms and impact on urban development, both inside and outside the case studies. First of all, data and information of these two projects were gathered from related researches and project's factsheets. Second, researcher observed on the project's locations, types and quality of building, infrastructure, living environments, and occupants' behavior. Third, tools for interview experts, CPB's staff, occupants, and surrounding's occupants were designed. Samples of interview are 2 experts, 5 CPB's staff, 20 occupants, and 20 surrounding's occupants. Questions are about project's problems and obstacles, resolving suggestions, and attitude towards development process. Then, analyzing all of those data and information to conclude outputs and impacts.

According to the Crown Property Bureau, CPB has operated for a long time. Some historical data is not being saved to a file. It makes the present information is not sufficient. So, researcher designed to use a personal interview of those who have passed and those who have attributed instead.

Literature Review

Monitoring and Assessment

Monitoring and assessment are very important in term of working quality assessment. It is a continuing process from data collection and factor analysis. Then, comparing expecting outputs and real outputs with policy and project's action plan to reflect to developer for a better work.

Linda G. Morra Imas and Ray C. Rist. 2004.

Evaluation from monitoring and assessment will use “Theory of Change”. This theory can be a form for interview. It has five elements, which are 1) Inputs are policy or action plans. 2) Activities are project operations. 3) Outputs are products from project operations. And 4) Outcomes are results from products, and 5) Impacts are long-term effects from products and results.

Kuset and Rist. 2004.

The process of managing an organization, which starting from the inputs, consisting of the needs or demands, and support that is the driving force or motivation organization to begin the process of management (Internal Process). Then, it will cause the output or outcome to meet the needs and sponsorship. The output or results from this are reflected back to the input again. The process control and evaluation is another factor to better reflect the performance of the resulting efficiency and productivity back into the management process. Improving strategies for better results development or expand the operation further.

Land Sharing Development

During the 1970's and 1980's, slum dwellers in Bangkok had been waging their own “battle for living space” with developers, against a backdrop of rapid economic growth characterized by extremely dynamic urban land and real estate markets. Seven land sharing agreements, which five of them were held by CPB, were concluded that were universally praised as models for urban redevelopment, given that they managed to accommodate commercial development without displacing resident slum dwellers.

Rabe, P. 2010.

Land Sharing Development is one of the methods that were used to develop Bangkok's slums. It's the sharing between landowners and low-income occupants, with the help from public organizations. (Thananta, N. 2014.) Landowners have to share some parts of their land for low-income occupants to rent in lower rates, and then, landowners can develop another part. After that, public organizations or occupants will do the land readjustment for long-term rental with infrastructures provide by the government, building their houses with support from financial institution.

Land sharing in Thailand (Boonnak, C., Boonyabanha, S. 1985.) had started from the basic concept of a coordinated effort between the residents, who live without prior permission and the development of the city by allowing the adjustment of land use. Meanwhile, the city was able to develop and the former residents still obtain housing. The land issue in Bangkok can be caused by the following conditions: 1) Low-income eviction, 2) Slum upgrading, 3) Political influence, 4) People organization, and 5) Human Rights.

The starting point of land sharing in Thailand (Boonnak, C., Boonyabanha, S. 1985.) is from Rama IV community (Theppratan) was evicted, which is on the Crown Property Bureau's land. Villagers have offered to share the land with Bangkok United Development Company. Villagers had been proposed that the land could be divided equally between the residents and the company, and villagers would build their own homes. However, it appears that the company did not accept this offer. He offered to build flats instead. Although, the other parties will not accept the proposed division of land mentioned above. But the idea of "Sharing" is generally recognized

by the public due to the strong locals. And the housing problems had been recognition in the society. It made an important effect to the government to study on solving this problem.

Principles of construction new slums have the key concepts and possibilities as follows: 1) Land Sharing, 2) Densification, 3) Rebuilding, 4) Community Participation, and 5) Cost Recovery.

Results of land sharing from related research (Mrauksirisuk, P. 2001.) are: 1) the community can continue living in the area with housing stability. The environment and infrastructure are improved. 2) Benefit to both landowners to develop their land and existing residents who have lived in the same area. 3) A residential development by locals themselves. 4) Related organizations turn their roles from planner to supporter. 5) The construction of new housing may be below the required standard, but it represents the size of the actual needs of the residents. Encourage agencies to focus more on housing standards. And 6) it shows that low-income housing development in the city and urban development.

From related researches, land sharing processes are as follows (Phungsutjarit, T. 2013.): 1) Community household survey and residents list, 2) Considering the rights of those who will be in the project after the development and the period of actual residence, as well as the needs of each family, 3) Make an agreement for the price and details of land or long term rentals, 4) Occupants have to form a cooperative dwelling to act as the agent. To collect rental fares from members to pay the landowners every month until expiration, (Thankul, M. 2014.) 5) Indicate the form of new housing with shared infrastructure, and 6) Occupants have to maintain public facilities and infrastructure in the project.

Community Participation

Because CPB's development projects have involved with local community members, CPB's staffs have used "Community Participation" as a technique to make occupants understand what they will do in the development's process. Community Participation means process that members are working together to demonstrate the need, achieve a common goal, and improve the economic, social, political and social status of the community. (Jariawittayanon, S. 1981). Participation of citizens is essential to national development. It can strengthen the community. Most of the conflicts from development projects are from the lack of participation of people with an interest in directly. (Chulalongkorn University. 2003). The opinions expressed are 2 types of Positive Attitude and Negative Attitude.

The public participation can be obtained from the lowest to the highest levels of the 7 levels (Burikul, T. 2005.) depending on the purpose and details. Number of people who take part in each level is proportional to the level of participation. If the level of participation is low, number of participants will be a lot. But in a higher level of participation, number of participants will be reduced. The involvement of the public in order from lowest to highest are as follows: 1) Informing Data, 2) Exposure to comments from the public, 3) Consultation, 4) Joint Planning, 5) Cooperation, 6) Joint Monitoring and Assessment, and 7) Controlled by the public.

People who live in the community have expressed their opinion and the others were aware of the problems and the changes that have occurred. Because the one who have known their needs and conditions at their best is themselves, not from the outside that wants to determine the well-being of the people over there. So, community works that rely on community participation is a powerful combination and interact with community's people. Those events are set to

sweep the streets or campaign activity, such as garbage collection, doing the walk, cleaning canals, etc. From small events, I can find a way to expand into the larger, such as the creation of housing or the creation of a community center. The most important part is the process. It usually begins with the data collection and analysis. Then, Learning of community management, problems and obstacles that can be occurred. All of this will lead to adequate housing design, which will meet the needs of the residents.

Roonrakwit, P. 2001.

From a variety of public participation, the techniques that can use to achieve participation are variety too. These are examples of techniques that can be applied to the development of the community. (Pattanapongsa, N. 2004.) 1) Mind Map and Future Search Conference. 2) Appreciation Influence Control. 3) Community development involvement techniques.

Impacts of the development of Klong Phai Singh To

Klong Phai Singh To Community (KPST) is situated on Rama IV Road in Klong Toey district. It has 380 households and all of them are low-income occupants. From the beginning, it was a tanning factory, but after it was abandoned, immigrants had moved to the site and build their own houses, which had turned to slums in the 1980's. In 1981, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) had planned for Ratchadapisek Road that will cut through this area. Then, CPB decided to develop the slum in this area by using Land Sharing Development as a tool, which CPB can use other lands after land sharing development for commercial purpose.



Fig. 3: Location of Klong Phai Singh To Project
Source: The Crown Property Bureau

The process for KPST Community had started from 1989 to 1997, when the building was completed. After moving occupants to the new high-rise building, CPB gain lands from slums to develop into other commercial projects such as Stock Exchange (1993), and Queen Sirikit National Convention Center (1989), which is the best side. (Chaidetsuriya, S. 2014.) But on the other hand, moving slum people into high-rise building without their participation on any process was challenging at that time because low-income community cannot live in high-rise building. Most of low-income people are trader or working as employee, and they are living as a group of relatives. These had caused many problems to the building such as using parking lot as a shop store, taking motorcycle to their room by elevator, stolen fire extinguish, and etc. (Champathong, P. 2014.) Besides, they had caused troubles to nearby surroundings like throwing

their junks outside the window from on higher floor. So, their junks had flown through some roofs of houses nearby. (Champathong, P. 2014.)



Fig. 4: Stock Exchange
Source: The Crown Property Bureau



Fig. 5: Queen Sirikit National Convention Center
Source: The Crown Property Bureau

However, moving slum people into high-rise building on the same location has some benefits to those occupants and surroundings' socio-economic (Rojnakarin, J. 2003.) because they don't have to move to another place and find new jobs. 65% of occupants have been working on the same job since they were living in slums (Rojnakarin, J. 2003.) such as street-side restaurants, workers, drivers, and etc. Meanwhile, the building itself also has an impact because it was a new high-rise building at that time, which was very modern and full of facilities. It had raised the look of surroundings to be more modernized.

After uncountable test, CPB's staffs and occupants have found their agreements on living in high-rise building. CPB found that participation is a very important part of this project. If they let all occupants participate in their process of design, problems learning, planning, and building up their friendship, Occupants would realize about their duties and responsible to common property and they will have a feeling that this building is their real home. (Rojnakarin, J. 2003.)



Fig. 6: A View of Klong Phai Singh To
Source: The Crown Property Bureau



Fig. 7: Klong Phai Singh To Building
Source: The Crown Property Bureau

Finally, the advantages of Klong Phai Singh To Project are 1) Occupants still live nearby their old houses. 2) The building can contain occupants more than they had estimated. 3) Physical

development of the old community and surroundings. And 4) It has been a resident for low-income workers. However, there is a disadvantage of living on high-rise building misunderstanding of occupants that caused troubles to both inside community and nearby. But, this problem was already solved. (Khamyung, P. 2014.)

Impacts of the development of Plubpla

Like Klong Phai Singh To, Plubpla project was starting from the trail breaking in 1988, which is called “Ram Intra Road”. It is situated in Wangthonglang District in the outer zone of Bangkok. Total area of Plubpla is 300 rai and has 260 households, contains both side of Ram Intra Road. CPB had moved slums, which spread all over the area, into the area near Plubpla canal. So, this community has divided into 2 communities, called Moo Ban Plubpla Community (30 rai) and Klong Plubpla Community (46 rai). With this Land Sharing Development, CPB has gained lands for commercial development and has lands for low-income community that serves workplaces around the area. (Champathong, P. 2014.)



Fig. 8: Plubpla Before & After Land Sharing
Source: The Crown Property Bureau

Plubpla had used Low-Rise Land Sharing Development as a tool in development land and community. The project has started in 1988. By that time, CPB had surveyed and negotiated low-income community in this area for setting infrastructure. But they had some problems between CPB’s staffs and the occupants, so they brought the “Community Participation” method to use in participation with occupants. In 1992, after many meetings with occupants, CPB had announced housing criteria for the project and started design process in 1994. The first phase was Moo Ban Plubpla Community, which had 46 rai, and then to the second phase, which is called Klong Plubpla Community 30 rai. The project finished in 2001 and CPB still develops both physical and quality of life in community.

After occupants moved back to Plubpla, the research results show that nearly all of them still works in the same jobs, which are nearby workplaces such as hospital, government offices, private companies, etc. (Champathong, P. 2014.) It has impacted to occupants by upgrading their quality of living in both physical and socio-economic. But the real impact is the development process, when CPB developed Moo Ban Plubpla Community 46 rai by provided infrastructure

and built the houses. Another part, which is Klong Plubpla Community 30 rai, saw the development and interested to upgrade their community. (Chaidetsuriya, S. 2014.) This is the case that shows the will of occupants, who wished to develop their community and participated with the landowner to find a way on development.



Fig. 9: A Bird's Eye View of Plubpla
Source: The Crown Property Bureau

However, Plubpla Project had caused some problems of 1) The change of occupants' lifestyle, and 2) Inequality of taxes, rental rates, and size of housing, which CPB has to find the way to solve those problems later. (Phungsutjarit, T. 2013.) But there are more advantages on this project that 1) Occupants can live in the same area and has more security on living, 2) Better quality of living of occupants, 3) They can reach infrastructures from government, and 4) CPB gained the other parts of this area for developing.

Conclusions

Even though, these two projects have used land sharing as a tool in development. There are some differences between them such as the type of development. Klong Phai Singh To is a high-rise building but Plubpla is a low-rise community. This effects to occupants in separated way. High-rise building had caused more problems of living changing than low-rise community. CPB has to try to make occupants understand how to live in high-rise building and to concern about nearby environments. But in low-rise community, occupants don't have to change their lifestyle much, but have to understand about common property and how to live with others.

In common ways, both projects have effect to nearby surroundings as follows 1) CPB gained the other parts of this area for commercial development, 2) They have urged nearby surroundings to upgrade and develop their properties, 3) They have upgraded images of city of Bangkok as they are part of the city, and 4) They are affordable housing for low-income people in Bangkok, which serve and drive the city movement.

Finally, suggestion for CPB's developments in the future is Collaboration with Local Government such as Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) would be a better way on developing and planning of the CPB's land. With more than 20% of land in Bangkok's urban area, CPB and BMA can lead the way of Bangkok overview development and will be guidelines for other landowners,

and private developers on project development that concerns about impacts to nearby living environments and urban socio-economic in the future.

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