JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH
551

Abidemi Coker

Negotiating Informal Housing in Metro Manila

Forging Communities through Participation

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN EDUCATION, PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH 551

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Esitetään Jyväskylän yliopiston yhteiskuntatieteellisen tiedekunnan suostumuksella
julkisesti tarkastettavaksi yliopiston Agora-rakennuksen auditoriossa 3
huhtikuun 29 päivänä 2016 kello 12.

Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of
the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Jyväskylä,
in the building Agora, auditorium 3, on April 29, 2016 at 12 o'clock noon.

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2016

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Cover photo by Abidemi Coker

URN:ISBN:978-951-39-6590-7
ISBN 978-951-39-6590-7 (PDF)

ISBN 978-951-39-6589-1 (nid.)
ISSN 0075-4625

Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2016

ABSTRACT

Coker, Abidemi
Negotiating informal housing in Metro Manila: Forging communities through participation
Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2016, 148 p.
(Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research
ISSN 0075-4625; 551)
ISBN 978-951-39-6589-1 (nid.)
ISBN 978-951-39-6590-7 (PDF)
Finnish summary
Diss.

This research project examines socialized housing programs available to informal settlers in the megacity of Metro Manila, Philippines, and the socio-political and institutional relationships that enable or impede access to housing. Megacities are urban agglomerations with populations of over 10 million inhabitants and Asia and Africa contain some of the fastest growing cities in the world. The challenge of Southern governments to meet the housing needs of hundreds of thousands of urban poor is exacerbated by the influx of migrants into these economic hubs, the scarcity of land for low-income housing and the inequalities and infrastructure deficiencies in developing countries' cities. The study takes a three-pronged thematic approach to understanding the complexities of organizing housing for squatter *communities*. The core of the data forms the first focal point around the analytical concepts of access, participation and community building, and is drawn from 20 interviews with community members, NGO staff and state housing program coordinators. The second focal area cover examines the social programs in light of housing rights and urban governance. The third thematic focus is poverty and megacities. The study confirms challenges faced by poor families living in slums while at the same time highlights the relevance of viewing informal settlements as communities where resources are shared through informal associations. These associations are essential for gaining access to housing of both NGOs and government, but their roles are different for the two types of housing providers. The issue of *professional squatters* is examined, as their presence in squatter communities poses considerable concern and mistrust. The requirements of the housing programs are considered to be unique due to the formalization of "values formation" and "social preparation" as participatory actions for community building. The concept of *urban disconnect* is introduced to demystify the urban governance challenge. Finally, the thesis proposes that the increased application of community-level participation for housing access, especially by government agencies, have transformed power structures in ways that are reflective of a social movement.

Keywords: informal housing, informal settlers, professional squatters, community, participation, values formation, social preparation, poverty, megacities, Metro Manila

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NEUVOTTELUJA INFORMAALISTA ASUMISESTA METRO MANILASSA: YHTEISÖJEN LUOMINEN OSALLISTUMISEN KAUTTA

Yhteenveto

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee sosiaalisia asumisohjelmia, jotka ovat suunnattu Filippiinien megakaupungin Manilan informaaleille asukkaille. Lisäksi tutkimus analysoi sosio-poliittisia ja institutionaalisia suhteita, jotka joko mahdollistavat tai estävät asunnon saantia. Megakaupungit ovat urbaaneja keskittymiä, joissa asuu yli 10 miljoonaa ihmistä. Maailman nopeimmin kasvavat kaupungit sijaitsevat Aasiassa ja Afrikassa. Näiden alueiden maiden hallituksilla on valtavat haasteet vastata satojen tuhansien köyhien ihmisten asumistarpeisiin. Tilannetta pahentaa entisestään uusien siirtolaisten saapuminen kasvukeskuksiin, edullisten asuntojen rakentamiseen tarvittavien maa-alueiden puute, yleinen epätasa-arvo sekä kehitysmaissa yleiset heikkoudet suurkaupunkien infrastruktuurissa. Tutkimus koostuu kolmesta pääosiosta, joiden tavoitteena on ymmärtää asuntojen ja asumisen järjestämisen monimutkaisuutta keskittymällä infomaaleihin asumisyhteisöihin yksilönäkökulman sijasta. Tutkimuksen ensimmäinen osio rakentuu pääsyn, osallistumisen ja yhteisöjen rakentamisen käsitteille, jossa analysoidaan empiiristä aineistoa: 20 haastattelua yhteisöjen edustajien, järjestöjen ja valtion asumisohjelmien koordinaattoreiden kanssa. Tutkimuksen toisessa osassa aineisto on analysoitu laajemmalla teoreettisella tasolla, jossa selvitetään sosiaalisia ohjelmia asumisoikeuksien ja urbaanihallinnon valossa. Tutkimuksen kolmannessa osassa keskitytään köyhyyden ja megakaupunkien konteksteihin. Tutkimus tuo esiin köyhien slummeissa asuvien perheiden haasteet, mutta samalla korostaa informaalien asutusten roolia yhteisöinä, joissa resurssit jaetaan epävirallisten yhdistysten kautta. Nämä yhdistykset ovat elintärkeitä asuntojen saannille sekä asumisjärjestöjen että hallituksen kautta. Yhdistysten roolit ovat kuitenkin erilaisia riippuen siitä, mikä taho on asuntojen tarjoaja. Tutkimus avaa kysymystä myös ammattimaisista talonvaltaajista, koska heidän läsnäolonsa yhteisöissä tuottaa suurta huolta ja epäluuloa sekä yhteisöjen sisällä että asuntojärjestöissä. Asumisohjelmien kelpoisuusvaatimukset käsitetään tutkimuksessa ainutlaatuisiksi, koska ne formalisoivat ”arvojen muodostuksen” ja ”sosiaalisen valmistautumisen” sellaisissa yhteisöllisen osallistumisen tavoissa, kun asumisyhteisöjä muodostetaan. Tutkimuksessa tuodaan esiin uusi käsite, ”urbaani katkos”, joka auttaa demystifioimaan urbaanihallinnon haasteita etelän suurkaupunkien kontekstissa. Lopuksi tutkimus toteaa, että lisääntynyt yhteisötason osallistumisen tukeminen asumisohjelmissa, erityisesti hallituksen organisaatioiden taholta, on muuttanut valtasuhteita sellaisella tavalla, että ne ovat alkaneet muistuttaa yhteiskunnallisia liikkeitä.

Avainsanat: informaali asuminen, informaalit asukkaat, ammattimaiset talonvaltaajat, asumisyhteisöt, osallistuminen, yhteisöjen rakentaminen, arvojen muodostaminen, sosiaalinen valmistautuminen, köyhyys, megakaupungit, Manila, Filippiinit

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people supported me in numerous ways during the time it took to complete this project. Foremost, I wish to thank my supervisor Professor Marja Järvelä, for her unwavering conviction of my academic potential and for mentoring me as a student and colleague. Professor Marja, you are a treasure and I truly appreciate your simple but profound discussions and for urging me to dig deeper into the empirical data and let it guide the theory and analysis. I hope this thesis is authentic to the people and organizations about whom it was written. The research would have been meaningless without the families who welcomed me into their modest yet cheerful homes and the ardent hints given by other interviewees. I wish to thank Jay Endaya and Professor Emma Porio in Manila, for giving me insightful direction at the very beginning of my stay that proved fruitful in the outcomes of the fieldwork. Thank you Jessa Margallo and Mary Grace Punit-Daguro, for taking me to the far reaches of Manila that are true centers of urban life. Many thanks to the friends and acquaintances in Manila who candidly shared their views on my research and made me question my own observations and initial interpretations. Many thanks too to the Faculty and heads of Social and Public Policy for funding and for the flexibility to partake in this research from home. The fieldwork and final years it took to prepare this dissertation were made possible by funding from the Development Studies Graduate School. For dedicating precious nights to commenting on endless versions of text before I dared to present them to my supervisor, I am enormously grateful to Dr. Gavaza Maluleke – you know I would still be rewriting if not for you. To Dr. Päivi Pirkkalainen, thank you for the read-throughs, advice on structure and for always seeing the light at the end of the writing tunnel. Christal Spel, thank you for ensuring the voices of hardworking urbanites are heard. To the many wonderful friends, colleagues and family who babysat, brought food and sustained me through this unexpectedly challenging journey, I cannot thank you enough! To my father Dave Coker, well, what question will you now ask me incessantly? To my little munchkins Titilayo and Daniel, thank you for sharing your imaginations with me. I dedicate this thesis to my mom Eija Frangen-Coker for supporting me beyond comprehension and for encouraging me to observe the many surprises in our world through education.

CONTENTS

FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
BOI	Board of Investments
CBOs	Community based organizations
CMP	Community Mortgage Program
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DPWH	Department of Public Works and Highways
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ESCR	Economic Social and Cultural Rights
GK	Gawad Kalinga
HBRC	Habitat Building Resource Center
HDMF [Pag-Ibig]	Home Development Mutual Fund
HLURB	Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board
HUDCC	Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
LGU	Local Government Unit
MMDA	Metro Manila Development Authority
NCR	National Capital Region
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NHA	National Housing Authority
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
SEA-K	Self Employment Assistance – Kaunlaran Program
SHEC	St. Hannibal Empowerment Center
SHFC	Socialized Housing Finance Corporation
UDHA	Urban Development and Housing Act
UPA	Urban Poor Associates

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This doctoral research project centers on housing provision for the poorest in Manila, one of the world's megacities. The focus is on how informal settler families gain access to housing, and the institutional and socio-political relations associated with housing access and provision. Issues of good governance and growing populations continue to pose major challenges in megacities, which are described by the United Nations (UN) as urban agglomerations with populations of over 10 million inhabitants. There are said to be some 30 megacities around the world with some of the fastest growing cities in Asia and Africa. Metro Manila, the capital of the Philippines, is one such megacity with an estimated population of 11.8 million [1] in 2010 (Philippines National Statistics Office 2012). In these megacities in the South, millions of people compete over limited resources and many find themselves living in slums and informal settlements where basic amenities and social services are not available. The high levels of poverty and high population densities in urbanized areas pose immense challenges for the acquisition and provision of land, housing and social services.

Housing is a particularly difficult commodity for poor families in megacities to come by, as formal, private markets supply minimal low cost housing. With many governments in poor countries in the South finding it difficult to meet the needs of their growing populations, non-governmental organizations have become major actors in assisting communities with accessing water, sanitation and education, and increasingly, in providing

[1] The population of Metro Manila is contested, with estimates from Demographia World Urban Areas: 9th Annual Edition placing Metro Manila as the world's fifth fastest growing city with a population of over 21.2 million in 2013. However, this estimate includes the capital region and surrounding *urbanized* areas.

affordable, adequate housing. The presence of both government and non-state actors in housing provision, together with the very complex social, economic and political landscape in megacities forces the enacting of policies and programs to tackle the housing problem.

However, once seen as "recipients" of development aid, communities are increasingly being recognized as active agents in their own development and many poverty reduction programs now take into account the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. Despite the hope for development frameworks (such as the millennium development goals or MDGs) developed at the global level by the UN to "trickle down" to the local level, experience in housing rights research has shown that rights are often not implemented to the extent of the needs. The complex social setting that is often found in megacities is unique as a result of the phenomenal influx of people into the cities, the inequalities between rich and poor, and problems such as corruption.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study has three areas of interest, depicted in the figure below. The main aim of this research centers on the first wheel and is to gain insight on how poor communities in the megacity of Metro Manila organize in order to gain access to housing. An underlying focus on community considers what makes a slum "community" and the challenges faced in these communities, particularly in light of the phenomenon of professional squatters. The natures of socialized housing programs funded by state and non-state actors are analyzed, with particular attention on the forms of participation and how "community" is framed in these programs.

The second aim of this study is to examine the disconnect between urban governance and housing needs. This involves the analyses of various types of housing schemes, the power structures and actors involved, and the outcomes and challenges of the housing programs. This forms the second wheel below. The third aim, represented by the third wheel, is to understand socio-political processes not only from the community level but also from the macro level by considering how housing programs that emphasize participation and community are framed in urban social theory. Empirical data collection in Metro Manila focused on the first two wheels. The research methods are discussed in Chapter two.

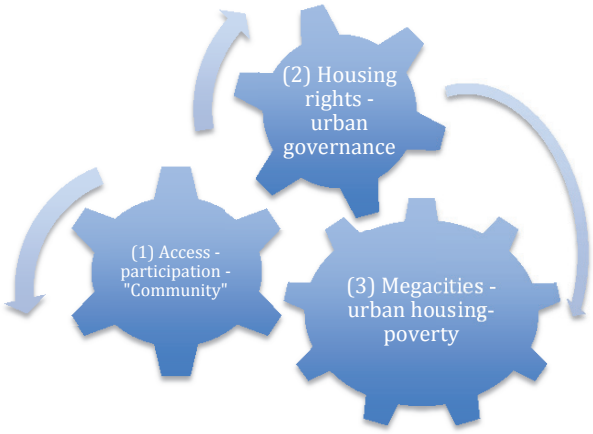

FIGURE 1 The three focus areas of the study

The study therefore asks three main research questions:

1. What are squatter communities and what are the peculiarities in these communities?
2. How do informal settler families gain access to housing? How are "participation" and "community building" framed in state and non-state housing programs, and how do they relate to theoretical discourse?
3. What are the outcomes and challenges of participation and community building in Manila given the complex social, economic and political context of megacities?

The empirical work in Manila examined the following questions:

- What are urban squatter communities like in Metro Manila?
- What types of housing programs are available to informal settler families?
- Who are the actors involved and what are their roles?
- How do state and non-state actors relate with each other?
- What forms does participation take?
- Who are professional squatters and how are they perceived in relation to squatter communities and housing access?

Considering the three wheels above, this research is based on the premise that Southern megacities are experiencing what I have coined 'urban disconnect' (see urban interconnectedness in Obrist et al 2006). '*Urban disconnect*' refers to the inconsistencies between social policies and living conditions and how these inconsistencies affect poor communities in megacities. This study will thus highlight the housing policies and social programs in Manila and demonstrate how these have or have not translated into the fulfillment of housing needs for the poorest segments of the population, and why.

1.3 Introduction to Metro Manila

Manila, the capital of the Philippines, is a megacity with an estimated metropolitan population of 11.8 million inhabitants in 2010 (NSO 2010).[2] The *metropolitan region*, however, is often calculated to include the surrounding urbanized provinces of Cavite, Bulacan, Laguna, Rizal and Batangas with a total population of over 24 million people in 2015.[3] The estimated population of the Philippines in 2015 was 100 million, meaning the metropolitan region holds almost one quarter of the national population.

The population of poor persons in the National Capital Region (NCR) was estimated at 460,831 in 2012, which constituted 76,530 families (NSCB 2013). The 2012 estimates indicate that 3.9% of people in the NCR were poor, compared to 25.2% nationally. These estimates were based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) of US$1.25 per day. However, the number of poor in the NCR is clearly high as a result of a higher population. The counting of the poor can be problematic in megacities as censuses are not taken yearly and other measurements such as unemployment or underemployment do not specify levels of poverty. The poverty levels in the capital have remained mostly unchanged over the past several decades, despite the Philippines' respectable economic growth average of 6.1% from 2010 to 2014[4]. The news is particularly startling given that the metropolitan area is also the nation's economic powerhouse. On the other hand, the Philippines maintain one of the highest birthrates in the world and migration into Metro Manila continues, which contributes to population increase and persistently high poverty in the capital.

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2 This data is from the National Statistics Office (NSO). https://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/attachments/hsd/pressrelease/National%20Capital%20Region.pdf
The populations of megacities are contested as counting for urban areas and metropolitan areas vary. In addition, due to high levels of informality, estimates are often unreliable and reports contradictory.

3 Demographia World Urban Areas, 11th Annual Edition, January 2015: http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf

4 GDP growth rate, World Bank 2015 (http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG) retrieved 6.8.2015.

The demand for low-income housing far outnumbers the supply in Metro Manila, creating considerable backlog in housing production. At the national level, housing backlog was at around one million from 2005 to 2010. However, Ballesteros (2009) posits that one million units of housing is a gross underestimation, due to the number of poor people who live in informal settlements, which she estimated to be around 70,000 families in 2009. Contrarily, government mapping of informal settlers resulted in an estimate of close to 200,000 informal settler households in 2007 in the National Capital Region, by far the highest in the country.[5] These numbers cause confusion and I note, that poor families are not necessarily informal settlers. The housing backlog, together with immense land shortages has created a very difficult and expensive problem to overcome. Most housing developments target high-income groups, leaving the poor to fend for themselves. A study by the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association Inc. and the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association Inc. reports that only a fraction of socialized and low-income housing units were supplied whereas they saw surpluses in medium and high-income houses built in 2012.[6]

National media have recently discussed the housing backlog in the Philippines, particularly in light of the controversial National Land Use Act, which proposes a unified body to manage the use of land for agricultural, commercial and settlement purposes, but this has languished in the senate for twenty years. Some critics of the bill have aired concern that the potential to reduce the housing backlog would be diminished as a result of the Act, which they contend prioritizes agricultural land and will make it challenging for housing to be constructed.

The metropolitan region or National Capital Region is simply referred to as Metro Manila or Manila and is composed of 17 cities or local government units (LGUs) each with their own elected mayors, vice mayors and councilors. Below is a political map of Metro Manila showing all the cities. The LGUs are further divided into barangays, the lowest unit of government in the Philippines. Barangays can be described simplistically, as neighborhoods. Manila has undergone extensive decentralization over the years, with each presidential administration augmenting the ministries and councils in charge of various functions. However, the overall plan and administration of cities in Metro Manila is overseen by the Metro Manila Development Authority or MMDA, which is responsible for providing services that "have metro-wide impact and transcend local political boundaries or entail huge expenditures such that it would not be viable for said services to be provided by the individual local government units [LGUs] comprising Metropolitan Manila."[7]

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5 Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) study presented in Cruz 2010

6 CREBA: http://creba.ph/

7 Metro Manila Development Authority: www.mmda.gov.ph

However, the MMDA does not have much control over land distribution or housing programs.

1

2

IMAGE 1 Political Map of Metro Manila (www.wikipedia.org)

IMAGE 2 Map of the Philippines (www.globalsecurity.org)

Housing is coordinated by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), which was created by former president Corazon Aquino's administration "to ensure the accomplishment of the National Shelter Program", as mandated in Executive order 90 of 17th December 1986 (Title II, Section 3). The National Housing Authority (NHA)[8] is one of the key agencies that remain in charge of low-income housing programs as concerns the implementation of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) [9] of 1992 and the Comprehensive Shelter Finance Act (CISFA) of 1994. The UDHA promotes localization of housing and participatory strategies in resettlement, and recognizes housing rights of the poor in the form of adequate relocation sites and secure tenure agreements such as usufruct and leaseholds as instruments of housing finance (Ballesteros 2009). The CISFA was a funding instrument for the main programs of the UDHA that includes the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) that is discussed in this study. The CMP is the most availed of the

8 Other agencies include The National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), and the Socialized Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) which oversees the Community Mortgage Program (CMP)

9 http://hlurb.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/laws-issuances/mandates/ra_7279.pdf

government housing programs (UN-Habitat 2009). These policies also emphasize the roles of local governments. The 1987 constitution provides that "independent people's organizations" are given a mandate to drive for the promotion of collective interests, together with increased roles of local governments (Shatkin 2002). The policies do not stipulate the intended nature of partnerships or collaboration between government and civil society.

Kuvaja (2007) notes that policy design is problematic due to the concentration of land resources and lack of political will, which in turn have rendered government initiatives for adequate housing unsuccessful. In addition, Manila is an interesting case due to the economic wealth of the city, and the fact that over the last decades, the administration has been restructured and decentralized in order to cope with complex problems. Furthermore, the city government is notorious for illegally demolishing informal settlements, defying the same policies they have created.

1.4 "Negotiating" what, how and by whom?

The idea of "negotiating housing rights in the megacity" came years ago during fieldwork for my Master's thesis in Lagos, Nigeria. During that time I worked with an NGO working on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) particularly housing rights and the prevention of evictions. The striking differences between the actions and intentions of different actors in the housing sphere stayed with me and transformed the way I perceived dynamics in the city. This experience had me thinking about how many megacities around the world had followed a similar trajectory of increased economic development and at the same time, increased informality. This framed my academic interest in the formation and implementation of housing rights in megacities, especially on the fragmentations that occur.

During this personal process, I also encountered housing conditions and programs in other cities, particularly Cairo, and found that more and more, the responsibility for housing was shifting from the state to civil organizations in surprising ways. For the purpose of doctoral research I eventually decided to focus on Manila where I had lived for five years in the early 2000s and whose socio-economic structure and politics had always perplexed me. Manila is an interesting case because of the multitude of social programs for slum upgrading and relocation of poor families from danger zones and other areas.

The investment in housing by NGOs such as Gawad Kalinga and their abilities to impact particular areas and local governments turned my interest from international and regional processes to local processes. In addition, as a student of social policy and development studies, I always had the impression that policies are supposed to be guides for development but what I found in Lagos and Manila was that the policies could be overlooked when political

interests were vested in land. Also, implementation of policies appeared to depend a lot on the power structures and political agendas of the ruling parties. This is a major challenge for the urban poor, who are often at the periphery not only in terms of where they live physically, but also in their access to infrastructure and to information. Therefore, a constant negotiation between NGOs, communities and the state occurs within the complex social, economic and political landscapes of megacities in such a way that housing rights have become negotiable and communities have had to defend or pursue their rights. During the years taken to complete this work certain main concepts have been maintained. The main key words are illustrated in Figure 1 above and are explained in the literature review in Chapters three and four.

1.5 Relevance of the Research

From a societal point of view, the research is important in that it looks to answer questions on compound social problems in one of the most difficult living environments in the world. An essential question can be raised about how the megacities of the South relate to the global city thesis, which has been at the core of the globalization debate for many years (e.g. Porter and Sheppard 1998, Järvelä 2007). According to this thesis introduced by Sassen (2001), global cities have capacities to co-ordinate and control the new international division of labor. Still, megacities in the South are increasingly polarized along social and economic lines with large numbers of poor people with derisory access to infrastructure and other services.

This project aspires to make a valuable contribution to development research in general, and urban social policy in particular by providing examples of housing actions that can be utilized by policymakers, activists and communities themselves to learn and create programs that are affordable and suitable to the needs of specific communities. Specifically, I outline both state and non-state driven processes for provision of low income housing and address some key issues pertaining to the institutional and socio-political frames within which these processes are carried out. This goes beyond mentioning the problems of the poor or vaguely pinpointing the governance issues, to instead focus on specific relationships and processes and analyze the impacts and potentials of the housing programs presented.

Therefore, this study builds both empirically and theoretically on the works of scholars such as Emma Porio (2004), Maria Ballesteros (2009 and 2011) and Gavin Shatkin (2004 and 2007) that have made valuable contributions to the study of informal communities in Manila and beyond. In addition, this dissertation is multi-disciplinary as it has a strong focus on the implementation of social policies, urban action and development initiatives. I believe the focus on megacities, and particularly, Manila, offers the opportunity to add

empirically derived evidence to the wealth of theoretical knowledge on social action. In addition, this research project examines contemporary forms of grassroots community building by diverse actors, therefore contributing to the discussion on urban forms of community that is minimal in development research. Furthermore, this study is one of the first to examine the concept, roles and impacts of professional squatters in urban communities in the South.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This research project takes on a qualitative approach to inquiry to examine various layers of the housing problem and housing provision in Manila. The aim is to study phenomena at the local level and to gain insight on how housing issues have developed and are being addressed by way of both structured and less structured means. The purpose of the study is to highlight interesting programs in the urban space, particularly in the context of community participation for low-income housing. Therefore, multiple sources and documentary materials were collected following constructionist and critical ethnology approaches.

2.1 Constructionism, critical ethnology and "talk"

Constructionism became an established approach in sociology, social work and political science in developed nations in the 1970s and has since dominated the study of social problems, now bypassing traditional positivism and quantitative methods. The increased application of constructionist approaches in explaining social problems was based on the fact that the experience of social life cannot be done objectively but rather on the notion that the material world is accessed through language and discourse (Jacobs et al 2004). Constructionism thus values the study of social interactions occurring in relation to particular phenomena (Silverman 2011). As this study focuses on processes of housing acquisition and provision, understanding different actors' perspectives is essential to being able to provide a description and analysis of the social field. In this way, social processes or "social facts" can be constructed by interpreting and questioning assumptions of both the social actors and their processes, and the theories linked to the research. Social facts can thus be considered,

according to Jacobs et al (2004, 3) "as contingent, contested and subject to considerable diversity of interpretations".

Jacobs et al (2004) pose interesting questions that have a direct relation to the interests of this study. Particularly the questions "Are there circumstances when groups of individuals can consciously impose their definition of social reality? What implications does this have for our ability to formulate issues, debate policies and criticize or support government action in the field of housing policy?" Although constructionism is often linked to producing results conducive for government policy-making, that notion is changing. The emphasis lies more in understanding social processes and highlighting the importance of the social, political and economic context of housing research (ibid). This is done by studying everyday processes, examining the construction of narratives and studying how these processes play out in reality (Silverman 2011).

A useful model for studying how social life is carried out is critical to ethnology or ethnomethodology, which Silverman (2011) closely links to constructionism. Ethnomethodology is described as treating facts as accomplishments or as facts that are produced in and through the practical activities of members (Ten Have 2004). Thus, constructionism and critical ethnology are carried out mainly in the form of interviews and in the analysis of "talk" or naturally occurring data, which, following consideration of the aims of this study, were deemed appropriate. The idea was to shed light on what was special, unusual or interesting within these processes. In a sense, this returns to Ten Have's notion that ethnomethodology shows a strategic preference for the extraordinary, often through the use of common sense (ibid). The use of ethnomethodology and talk combined added value to the findings from the interviews by making sense of or shedding light on otherwise complex social actions.

Silverman (2011) describes naturally occurring data and contextual sensitivity as strengths of qualitative research. Naturally occurring data is derived from everyday conversations and situations that did not occur as a result of the researcher's intervention. Contextual sensitivity refers to the researcher's "recognition that apparently uniform social institutions (e.g. 'tribes', 'families', 'crime') take on different meanings in different contexts" (ibid 467). Contextual sensitivity and naturally occurring data were useful considerations and naturally occurring data or "talk" were documented in fieldwork journals that were filled with both talk prior to or following an interview and talk with other persons not formally interviewed, in addition to my own observations from communities and organizations and casual conversations with interested acquaintances.

Although ethnomethodology "focuses of the intricate detail of social life and communication," (Payne and Payne 2004, 78), the core of my data was from the interviews – talk was not as rigorously coded and analyzed as the raw data itself. This is partly because not all talk was recorded, but rather notes were

taken. However, I drew on the conversations from early stages of analysis by pinpointing codes and key words used by interviewees and acquaintances, and friends with whom the discussions took place. I also considered talk and other naturally occurring data as fundamental to understanding the social and political context of the housing problems and processes I was investigating. This, according to Payne and Payne (2004) add to the technicality of the conversations and therefore the reliability and validity of the data.

2.2 Entering the field

Primary data for this study was collected in Metro Manila, Philippines between March and May 2012. The purpose was not only to understand the social interactions within the communities and between the actors in the social field, but also to shed light on how the processes of housing acquisition vary from place to place and how the relations between the actors in each process affect the process itself in addition to its outcomes. The thinking behind what I considered relevant and how/whom to consider as key informants was based on Thorns (2002). His notion on urban analysis was that "it needs to acknowledge the importance of particularly places and local configurations of natural and social factors and to understand the complexity of everyday life, so distancing itself from both structural over-determinism and the extremes of postmodern relativism" (Thorns 2002, 234). Thus selecting localities and understanding their histories was tantamount to understanding how residents related to other actors in their social field, and how the residents constructed their ideas or expectations of the housing programs. This thinking also allowed for an open-mindedness that was useful in determining how to proceed during the interviews, especially when many ideas or suggestions were appropriated by senior academics or trusted acquaintances.

Before arriving in Manila I approached organizations that worked directly with informal settlers in cities close to the central business district (CBD) of Metro Manila, located in Makati City. This choice was based on the premise that, despite the concentration of wealth in the CBD, there remained pockets of informal settlements in close proximity to the CBD. In addition, many of these settlements have been demolished and rebuilt over the years. The number of informal settlers in Makati City itself is the lowest in the country, yet some of the cities in close proximity had large numbers of informal settlers. However, I noted that following my move from Manila in 2004, several settlements next to train tracks had been cleared; some of these areas are now green. In addition, a number of settlements in prime areas had also been cleared, giving way to more skyscrapers and condominiums for the upper-middle income earners and elites. This gave the stark impression that wealth was being amassed in Makati and in the metro region, but the poor were being pushed farther outside the city center.

These were some of the entry points in the initial discussions with NGOs and academics that framed my ideas on whom to interview and on what topics. Receiving insights early on was also critical to my understanding of how the city and its housing processes had progressed over the years, who the current key government actors were and how to approach them. The time constraint of 2.5 months meant rigorous reading and planning prior to and throughout the fieldwork. I drew again on Thorns' (2002) work that emphasized research on everyday life as a means of understanding the impacts of urban change on how communities and interpersonal relationships are constructed.

2.3 Conducting interviews

The approach to inquiry was qualitative in nature, with in-depth interviews and openness about my topic of interest and "why I am here". With the time frame and the nature of the field, the direct interview approach was necessary. Silverman (2011) noted that interviews are useful in revealing the contexts and situations in which phenomena being investigated emerge. Beginning interviews with introductions or facts is common in qualitative interviewing. Although Ten Have (2004) discusses this style of entry as a means of establishing the interviewer as a requester and the interviewees as a provider, this was not always the case. My interviews were semi-structured, beginning with an introduction of myself (and my research assistant, when present), and my reason for wanting to speak with the person.

At the beginning of most interviews I also very briefly explained my overall research and most times, mentioned my history in the Philippines. I did not want to be "just a random" researcher to any of the groups of people I interviewed. Thus to obtain "rich data" I had to establish rapport and gain trust with the interviewees (see Silverman 2011). I found that introducing myself and asking a few basic questions about the interviewees created some rapport and eased the tension. An interesting aspect of the interviews was not only in the information gathered from what the interviewees said but from the naturally occurring data. I met with most community members more than once and in their homes, often with their children and family members in the vicinity, and often present.

The informality of the surroundings necessitated "talk" once in a while. A lot of insights on the thoughts and characters of the people I interviewed came through these "talks". In some communities the chats were extensive, and included looking at pictures and hearing about their lives and families. My familiarity with Manila also meant that many people gave me very specific details on dates and places and many appeared candid in their responses. This was very useful for gaining detailed information about the lives of the

community members and the processes they went through to attain socialized housing, and for NGOs and government interviewees to relax a little.

Silverman (2011, 164) lists observations by Rapley (2004) on important points for enabling researchers to conduct interviews that go beyond technical matters. These included: trying to interact appropriately with a specific person; perceiving the interview as collaborative such that the interviewee is also a source of knowledge; perceiving the interviewer as an active participant by using follow up questions and opening and closing topics and the interaction as a whole; and, by being more or less active or passive, doing so depending on the situation, to maintain interaction. "Active interviewing" is considered especially useful for the interviewer to understand how the knowledge is constructed and not only what is being said (Ten Have 2004; Silverman 2011).

As I had lived in the Philippines for five years from 1999 to 2004, I have considerable social and cultural understanding of Manila that compensated for the short fieldwork visit. Having maintained friendships and armed with the aforementioned knowledge, I consciously applied my knowledge during the research process, by thinking carefully and contacting key persons in Manila about which questions were relevant and how to navigate challenges from bureaucracy to traffic. Hence the use of common sense was based on experience from Manila and Lagos, Nigeria my hometown. I was also conscious of the usefulness of what is around the field, described as "naturally occurring data". The considerations were crucial to the success of my interviews and in helping me determine how to proceed with specific interviews. Understanding of the social culture and even issues of "class" in Philippine society was also an advantage.

For this study, interviews were recorded, translated (from Tagalog to English when needed) and transcribed by my research assistant and myself. A third person checked the transcripts (particularly those translated from Tagalog) to ensure that jargon and everyday language were correctly translated and transcribed. Data analysis is discussed later in this chapter. Below is a list of the interviews conducted between March and May 2012. They are arranged according to location and organization. I conducted a total of twenty interviews, one of which was a group interview with new housing beneficiaries. I interviewed three types of people: community members from relocated and un-relocated communities, NGO workers directly involved in the programs for the three communities, and officials from the government units responsible for informal and low-income housing.

Community/ Organization	Number of interviews	Interviewee(s)
Ulingan, Manila	5	1 UPA community officer
		1 Community association leader
		3 Community association members
SHEC, Pasay	9	2 housing officers
		2 Phase II & III association presidents
		2 Phase II residents
		3 Phase III association members
GK, Taguig	2	1 group discussion with (5) homeowners
		1 GK housing officer for Pinagsama
NHA Manila	2	1 Community relations officer
		1 Relocations manager
CMP Main office	1	1 Main Office, Makati
Habitat for Humanity Philippines	1	Program advisor

FIGURE 2 Interviews in Metro Manila, March-May 2012

The three local government areas or cities in which fieldwork was conducted are Manila, Pasay and Taguig. The community in Manila is referred to as Ulingan, those in Pasay as SHEC Phases II and III, and those in Taguig as GK Pinagsama. These are terms based on how those interviewed called the respective communities. A total of 20 interviews were collected, 17 of which directly related to specific communities. These "community interviews" took place in or around the homes of the community members. The questions revolved around the housing situation and ongoing or finalized acquisition processes of the communities, plus the relationships and dynamics within the communities and between the various actors. The other three interviews concerned general issues on the informal housing situation and the processes and organizations involved in socialized housing in Manila. A thematic representation of the interviews is provided in the following sub-section.

2.4 Interview themes

The interviews covered the thematic areas in the first wheel and parts of the second wheel in Figure 1 (section 1.2 above) on the conceptual framework of the thesis. The first wheel focuses on the local level in terms of who has access to housing and how they obtain it, the forms of participation in housing programs, and identification of urban "communities". This forms the main empirical work of this study. The main concepts of participation and community were encountered frequently and are also analyzed theoretically. The second theme identifies and analyzes the programs of key housing agencies, NGOs and poor

urban groups relevant to meeting the housing needs of low-income urban communities in which interviews were conducted.

Semi-structured interviews allowed for the repetition and clarification of what the interviewer knew and/or what was said during previous interviews. Specifically, data collection focused on three groups of persons.

- Questions posed to the community members focused on the history of the community and the interviewees, their living conditions, sources of livelihoods, access to housing and services. For the relocated communities the questions focused on how they obtained access to their houses and their experiences related to that. Those from Ulingan were asked about their conditions, their knowledge of the situation of the site and their wishes. The descriptions of personal histories were brief but useful in understanding who the community members are and how they came to be in those localities.
- Questions posed to NGOs covered practical and theoretical areas. These included policy and conceptual issues, the processes implemented so far and further actions needed for the communities. These interviews also addressed the challenges and opportunities of housing programs and policies in Metro Manila.
- Questions to the government officials were also mainly on policy and practical matters including their processes and expectations in housing provision, what their roles were within wider housing policy, financial contributions, and the current challenges and objectives of their institutions.

The interview schedules for each group or interviewee were updated prior to the meetings. They were based on the specific contexts of included questions aimed to clarify or explain issues raised in previous interviews. The following sections look at some of the challenges faced during interview and how analyses were carried out.

2.5 Thematic Analyses for constructing processes

Thematic analysis was used for coding and interpreting the interview data. The use of thematic analyses, as opposed to content analyses, allows greater attention to be paid to the qualitative aspects of the research material (Marks and Yardley 2004). The systematic nature of thematic analyses engages the use of codes but with a contextual analysis of their meanings. This, according to Marks and Yardley, adds the "advantages of subtlety and complexity of a truly qualitative analysis" (ibid, 57). 'Theme' and 'code' are used interchangeably and refer to a particular pattern found in the data. These themes can be derived both

from the data and implicitly from talk, hence improving the interpretations from the contents of the interviews themselves.

For this study, both inductive coding (themes drawn from the raw data) and deductive coding (themes derived by the researcher from theory or other sources) were used. Due to the different ways in which actors in the housing arena spoke about certain issues (such as the use of the terms "squatter" and "informal settlers" to mean the same thing), deductive coding was important. This is in line with thematic analysis, which tries to focus on the perspectives of the participants and present accounts of social phenomena (Silverman 2011). However, during the analytic process it was important to refine and reconsider the labels or indicators attached to the specific codes. This permits checking the reliability of the codes (Marks and Yardley 2004). The analytic process was done manually, without the use of data processing software. Aside from being time consuming, this manual method ensured the thorough processing of codes and especially, the indicators, as all the interview data was read through and the themes reconsidered multiple times.

In addition, manual thematic coding and analyses provides the opportunity to see connections between the pieces of data and the interrelationships between the themes, which, according to Marks and Yardley (2004) are often criticized in thematic analyses. It is important to look at the connections in every phase of the analyses. Constant comparison entails taking a bit of distance from the text by trying to identify what is distinctive about the text and its content (Gibbs 2007). Gibbs recommended several techniques for bringing out meaning in the analyses. Those especially useful are to analyze words, phrases or sentences to determine if new meanings abound, to compare extremes in parts of a single question, to ask "what if" to explore all dimensions of phenomena, and to make "far out" comparisons. These allow the coding and analytic processes to be deliberate and use the knowledge and common sense of the researcher.

As the range of actors and their ways of describing the social field vary, the systematic data analysis was very useful, though challenging. The descriptive nature of the raw data derived from coding was suitable for the small sample size. According to Wilkinson (2011, 171) qualitative thematic analysis "records the *words* in which these 'mentions' are couched, presenting them as quotations under each category heading." However, unlike such claims that descriptions of thematic data are presented as illustrative quotations, I tried to describe the *bulk* of the data as recommended by Marks and Yardley (2004). Therefore, interpretations were carried out by looking at the data as a whole and by taking into account the naturally occurring data documented during fieldwork and in published academic and policy materials.

One of the main criticisms regarding the use of interviews lies in the idea that the interviewers do not get direct access to the facts or the events, and that interviews only produce representations of experiences, not the experiences themselves (Silverman 2011). However, following the constructionist approach,

the interviews are treated as topics in their own rights and become part of the world they describe (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Therefore, what interviewees say is treated as account or discourse that can be interpreted and re-interpreted (ibid). Constructionist thinking thus challenges the positivist and emotionalist notion that interview accounts are simple representations of the world. The importance of common sense in constructionism is emphasized now, as knowledge of the social world should be actively used.

These points were important in addressing the challenge of being the interviewer in different social and organizational contexts. The understanding, during and following the interviews, was to consider not only what the interviewee said but also how it was said (Silverman 2011). By concentrating on the thematic areas listed above, greater attention could be paid to specific issues. Taking notes during the interviews also allowed for the documentation of nuances that could otherwise have been overlooked, particularly in interviews that were carried out entirely or partially in Tagalog. In addition, transcribing immediately following the interview allowed the annotation of details that were of interest and that could be included in subsequent semi-structured interviews (Rapley 2004). These issues were reflected in how the interviews were analyzed, which also allowed for less narrow interpretation of the interview data.

CHAPTER 3: METRO MANILA, THE MEGACITY

This first part of this chapter brings together literature and data on megacities and discusses the specific living conditions in Metro Manila that are common to megacities, especially many those in the South. The second part of the chapter introduces the main organizations whose work were researched and are presented in this thesis, as well as Philippine and international policies related to housing that guide their work.

3.1 The world's megacities

Megacities are defined by the United Nations (UN) as urban agglomerations with over 10 million inhabitants. The significance of cities is such that as of 2007, half of the world's population lived in cities and this figure is set to increase to 60 percent of the world population in the next fifteen years. In addition, the rise of megacities and mega-regions around the globe has been startling, demanding new ways of viewing and categorizing urban areas, growth and development. The UN estimates growth in these megacities will continue from containing 9.9% of the world urban population in 2011 to 13.6% in 2025. This follows a new trend in urban growth such that new megacities are popping up around the world, but mostly in developing nations of the South, particularly in Asia, which today has 13 megacities and is projected to acquire another nine by 2025 (United Nations 2012). The growth trends are consistent with natural population increases and fertility assessments. Table 2 depicts the world's urban agglomerations with over 10 million inhabitants in 2012, the projections over the next decade, and the ranking according to population.

Rank (2011)	Megacity	Population (2011)	Population (2025)	Rank (2025)
1	Tokyo, Japan	37.2	38.7	1
2	Delhi, India	22.7	32.9	2
3	Mexico City, Mexico	20.4	24.6	5
4	New York-Newark, USA	20.4	23.6	6
5	Shanghai, China	20.2	28.4	3
6	Sao Paolo, Brazil	19.9	23.2	7
7	Mumbai, India	19.7	26.6	4
8	Beijing, China	15.6	22.6	9
9	Dhaka, Bangladesh	15.4	22.9	8
10	Kolkata, India	14.4	18.7	12
11	Karachi, Pakistan	13.9	20.2	10
12	Buenos Aires, Argentina	13.5	15.5	16
13	Los Angeles – Long Beach – Santa Ana, USA	13.4	15.7	14
14	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	12.0	13.6	22
15	Manila, Philippines	11.9	16.3	13
16	Moscow, Russian Federation	11.6	12.6	27
17	Osaka-Kobe, Japan	11.5	12.0	29
18	Istanbul, Turkey	11.3	14.9	18
19	Lagos, Nigeria	11.2	18.9	11
20	Cairo, Egypt	11.2	14.7	19
21	Guangzhou, China	10.8	15.5	17
22	Shenzhen, China	10.6	15.5	15
23	Paris, France	10.6	12.2	28

FIGURE 3 The world's megacities in 2011 (UN 2012)

The UN estimates provided above use median estimates or national census figures. However, estimates by Demographia World Urban Areas (2013) cover a wider geographical area than the UN calculations, as it takes into account continuously urbanizing areas and satellite communities adjacent to the city proper. In the case of Metro Manila, the figures include not only the population of the National Capital Region (Metro Manila), but also surrounding urbanized municipalities of Cavite, Bulacan, Laguna, Rizal and Batangas. The estimate for 2013 thus places the Manila metropolitan region as the sixth largest in the world with over 21 million inhabitants in a land area covering 1437 square kilometers (Demographia World Urban Areas 2013). However, population estimates such as those of the United Nations above placed Metro Manila, without the surrounding areas at 11.9 million inhabitants in 2011, making it the 15th largest urban agglomeration (United Nations 2012).

It is interesting to compare population figures from various organizations and institutions because of the variations in how these figures are derived, and more relevant to this thesis, how these numbers are reflected in conceptualizations of cities and megacities, and how they affect issues of policy

and governance for specific cities around the world. For example, Futures Proof (2012) estimated that in 2007 half of the world's population lived in cities. The megacities and the 'mega city-regions' sprouting from them are said to have become unprecedented centers of economic and population growth. These city-regions, such as the Hong Kong-Shenzhen-Guangzhou region, comprise a massive 120 million people (Futures Proof 2012). As much as some city authorities appear open to conceptualizing their domains as super-large urban agglomerations, others may prefer to look at the cities in pieces, so to speak – to focus on cities within cities. For example, the city of Manila, which is still considered the core of the metropolitan region known as Metro Manila, has 1.7 million inhabitants in 39 square kilometers.

Regardless of differences in counting of the urban population, the Manila metropolitan area remains one of the most highly congested in the world with a density of 14,800 people per square kilometer. Metro Manila sits on a mere 0.2% of the Philippines' total land area. It is thus necessary to make a claim on what one means by "city". For this study of Metro Manila, the case in point, will be taken as a megacity with a population of 11.9 million inhabitants. This choice is based on the interest of the research, which is to focus on the housing conditions, policies and relationships between actors within the areas designated as the National Capital Region.

3.2 Conditions in Metro Manila

Metro Manila is one of the most crowded and chaotic cities in Southeast Asia. The metropolitan area sits on a small piece of land measuring 638.6 square kilometers, yet holds approximately 11.9 million people. Berner (1997) described Manila as an unlivable city plagued by tremendous traffic and overcrowding, where the delivery of basic needs falters behind the large and growing population. The daunting traffic has unbelievably increased in recent years and the city is reported to become uninhabitable in four years should the traffic congestion remain unchanged.[10] Another persistent, striking feature of Manila is the repeated flooding that occurs each rainy season, shutting down city life for days and causing tremendous damage to public and private property. The rise in temperatures in Manila as a result of climate change has been discussed more and more in recent years as the city is susceptible to flooding during the typhoon season when inadequate drainage and environmental degradation (see Porio 2011 and Wood et al. 2014).

Metropolitan Manila has also been described as a city of contrasts, where spatial and social inequalities lie in visible extremity (Tyner 2009). Gated

10 Middleton, R. (2016) Philippines: Manila to be uninhabitable in 4 years if traffic chaos not resolved, 15.1.2016, http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/philippines-manila-be-uninhabitable-4-years-if-traffic-chaos-not-resolved-1538075

housing communities lie in proximity with squatter communities, their occupants live in significantly different conditions and access the city in varying ways. The rich living in their gated communities or high-rise condominiums travel the city in large air-conditioned vehicles while the poor from the adjoining squatter areas use the colorful jeepneys and exhaust-belching buses around the city. Of course, as with other megacities around the world, these stark contradictions have to be given context in that not all of Metro Manila's inhabitants are either rich or poor and live in one or the other of these two conditions.

3.2.1 Housing backlog

One of the main housing problems in the city is the housing backlog. According to Ballesteros (2009), the national housing backlog for the years 2005-2010 was estimated at one million units. However, she claims that one million units is most likely grossly underestimated as the number of informal settlers in Manila alone was then estimated at over 70,000. The extent of the backlog has been discussed in the media in recent years, with socialized and low cost housing being heavily under-produced while a surplus in medium and high-cost housing units continues to exist.[11] A study by Ballesteros (2002) found several issues that added to the constraints on the supply side of the urban housing market. These include poor planning and administrative bottlenecks in land and housing development, problems with property rights and transaction costs, highly concentrated land ownership as well as low property and land taxes that encourage owners to keep land idle and increased the cost of owning and servicing land.

The large number of people living in substandard housing indicates the backlog affects the poor much more than other income groups. Ballesteros (2009) expounds that urban areas exhibit higher housing shortages due to the high costs and lack of land as compared to non-urban areas. According to Porio (2009), the figures for housing backlog are consistent with the estimate that 30% of the population lives in informal areas or squatter settlements. Like many other megacities in developing countries, income distribution and access to services is gravely unequal. Meeting the needs of urban residents is thus complex and done through various government institutions, in addition to a multitude of civil organizations.

Additionally, the challenge of meeting housing needs is not only about construction but it also concerns the land on which to construct new units. As Manila is already a very congested city, this is a significant challenge. The poverty incidence, as discussed below, as well as continued urbanization, also make it difficult for backlogs to be reduced as the poor cannot pay for the

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[11] This is according to reports from newspapers including Manila Daily Standard, 7.2.2013, http://manilastandardtoday.com/2013/02/07/bill-to-worsen-housing-backlog/

higher cost housing that is available in the city (Ballesteros 2009). Some housing and infrastructure issues, such as the availability of adequate housing units, their affordability, and proximity of housing to one's place of work may affect many different city inhabitants. However, these problems are greater challenges for the city's poor families. Thus, the links between poverty and housing are discussed later in this chapter. However, the housing policies and socialized housing programs that seem unable to resolve the backlog and other infrastructure distribution to poor city inhabitants is only one side of the problem.

3.2.2 Migration

The challenge for megacities such as Manila includes the continuous in-migration into the city, exacerbating the problem of density and increasing the challenge for state and other housing providers to make affordable housing available. In addition, Tyner (2009, 2) posits that many migrants into Manila struggle to find work or shelter, causing them to join the ever-growing population of the urban poor. Poverty, according to Tyner (2009) is pervasive in Manila. The poverty incidence or threshold[12] among families in the Philippines has remained relatively unchanged at 22.3% in 2012, with the National Capital Region having a poverty incidence of 3.8%, a figure that is substantially lower than for other regions of the country (National Statistical Coordination Board 2013). However, given the prevalence of squatters in the city, this figure for the capital region is questionable.

As much as there is migration into Metro Manila, there is also emigration from Manila to other cities around the world. In addition, moving from Manila to another country is appealing to some, who, according to Tyner (2009), attempt to escape poverty and to attain a steady income. The July 2013 estimate for unemployment in the NCR is 10.9% for persons over 15 years of age. Tyner (ibid) makes a couple of interesting points regarding the increased migration. According to him, transnational migration for the purpose of work stems from globalization, but is particularly interesting in the Philippine case as a "globalizing region" where the government makes significant investments in the export of contract migrants, making the nation the largest government exporter of such migrants, a majority of them women.[13] The value attributed to

12 Poverty threshold refers to the proportion of families who are unable to meet the minimum income required to meet non-food needs such as housing, transportations, clothing, education and health, among other expenses.

13 The Philippine government has specific policies and agreements with certain countries to promote and regulate temporary labor emigration, often as seamen, nurses and household workers in other Asian countries, the Middle East, China, and the United States. The Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) legally enforces labor migration under Philippine law. (Kevin O'Neil 2004, Labor Export as Government Policy: The Case of the Philippines, www.migrationpolicy.org)

transnational migration points to the fact that economic conditions are dire, even in the nation's capital.

3.2.3 Living conditions

The standard of living for thousands of city inhabitants can be dramatic, with many living in squatter settlements, large and small. The squatter settlements are often located on the fringes of the city, or in pockets around the city, such as on abandoned land and buildings, close to rail tracks, or under bridges – to name a few. Some of the squatter areas are located within the city, even though larger squatter settlements in Makati city, which serves as the Central Business District (CBD), have been removed in recent years. The largest incidence of poverty (11.9%)[14] in Metro Manila is along the port area of the city of Manila, where many families live in shanty houses along the coast, where they are extremely vulnerable to natural weather events such as typhoons. In addition, Metro Manila has also been noted in the literature for the squatter communities that reside on garbage dumpsites, such as the former Payatas, where families, including children, lived off the waste by foraging and selling items from the dump. These conditions defy international calls for adequate housing, and the plights of the poor have been considered in urban development policies.

3.3 The people and organizations

This section provides background information on the communities in which research was conducted, and the organizations that worked directly with the communities. Urban Poor Groups are non-governmental organizations or associations that organize themselves and go to the government to request something, in this case, housing. These organizations can be small and municipality-based, whereas others are larger NGOs that work in various parts of the city and on wider issues.

This research focused on four NGOs working on housing provision in Manila. However, only two of these can be definitively referred to as 'urban poor groups' due to their size and the nature of their work. The two urban poor groups focused on Manila are Urban Poor Associates and St. Hannibal Empowerment Center. Urban poor groups have long histories working in specific areas and are known to have a wealth of knowledge on the people and situations in their areas of focus. These groups work very closely with the community on various issues from housing to water, education, and spiritual guidance. The larger NGOs studied were Habitat for Humanity Philippines and Gawad Kalinga.

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[14] National Statistical Coordination Board, City and Municipal-level Small Area Poverty Estimates 2009, http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2009_SAE/2009_sae_final.pdf

The information presented in this section is drawn from project documents, discussions with the NGO's and urban poor groups' staff, and the organizations' web pages.

3.3.1 Ulingan and Urban Poor Associates

Ulingan, which means "charcoal making" is also the name given to an area at the north end of Tondo, on Manila Bay. People have lived in the area since 1989, although it is owned by the National Housing Authority and is leased to a private company Pristine Corporation until 2016. The area is home to about 1000 families, 120 of whom produce charcoal using traditional means. The families that produce charcoal do so with the work of all capable members, including children. They earn about PHP200 (less than €4) per day per family for this hard and health-threatening work. The area is often brimming with smoke as the charcoal-making kilns (called "pugongs") are scattered about the area, sometimes adjacent to the houses of the families. In addition, the area's location at the end of the harbor and immediately next to the sea means it is susceptible to flooding and destruction during typhoons. The people of Ulingan are some of the poorest in Metro Manila.

IMAGES 3 & 4 Girl walking; Charcoal ready for sale, Ulingan, Manila (Coker 2012)

The entire community has been informed of the National Housing Authority's (NHA) intention to relocate them to areas just outside of Metro Manila, where they are being promised full housing rights including land and tenure security and access to water and other social services. Although the residents are squatters, presidential decree makes it illegal for them to be evicted without due process. This is why the NHA is working on the case. Several organizations are working in the area; some on housing while others focus on providing education and other needs.

Urban Poor Associates (UPA) is a Manila-based NGO that has been working on housing issues around the city for over a decade. UPA assists informal settler families in avoiding eviction by having dialogue with the government and the community. This is done, primarily, by raising awareness and educating the residents about their rights and the process they have to undertake. They encourage the settlers to approach the government and propose some ideas such as a case for on-site development that includes technicalities such as the master list of residents, soil tests and other arguments. UPA employs architects and engineers, and any other professionals needed to make such a "People's Plan" that is proposed to the government, starting with the barangay (the lowest unit of government in the Philippines). The people's plan is then lobbied with the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), which purportedly has some pro-poor officials from whom help is requested. An alliance with the barangay ensures communication with the local government and the DILG.

The NGO's work in Ulingan focuses on trying to convince the charcoal-makers to switch to a Smokeless Charcoal Maker, which also produces wood vinegar, a product that is even more valuable than charcoal. As fuel prices have increased, so has the demand for charcoal, so the hope of the NGO is to assist families in maintaining their income through safe means, and possibly, to create a cooperative to develop their businesses. UPA has a community officer in charge of Ulingan alone, and she visits the people weekly, ascertaining their living conditions, current situation with the NHA, and tries to convince them about the smokeless charcoal making units, which they are still in the process of obtaining full funding for. With funding from donors, the organization also provides assistance to families affected by natural disasters such as typhoons. Now UPA is closely monitoring the relocation plans of the NHA.

UPA has previously collaborated with other organizations to help informal settler communities gain access to services, such as water and improved sanitation and has been fundamental in rebuilding the community following typhoons. UPA also assists the community with information about the relocation plans of the NHA, which is currently on the active agenda of the local NHA office in Tondo, Manila.

3.3.2 Phases II and III and St. Hannibal Empowerment Center (SHEC)

Phase II in Pasay city is a relocated community composed of 121 families who previously lived in danger zones and waterways in Pasay. Phase II refers to the second community in Pasay that St. Hannibal's Empowerment Center (SHEC), an NGO working in the area, has built with the assistance of government, religious leaders and other NGOs. These were very poor families that applied for SHEC housing through their respective barangays. The Phase two buildings are four stories each with two floors per family. The units are small, usually

with two or three rooms, and they have all amenities including water, sanitation and electricity.

IMAGE 5 Houses in Phase 3, Pasay, Manila (Coker 2012)

Phase three is a project by SHEC that was yet to be completed at the time of fieldwork. The project aimed to relocate informal settler families mostly from one squatter community in Pasay that had been notified by the NHA that it would be demolished. That project was in the early stages and the families had formed an association, the representatives of which met with SHEC and the involved government agencies, to determine how to move forward. There were several complications with the project due to many families in the area refusing to join the association and resisting relocation.

SHEC is a Manila-based NGO created by a group of Rogationist priests and brothers to "empower" the poorest families in Pasay through Christian transformation. They aim to improve housing and livelihood, amongst other concerns. The policies and guidelines of SHEC are based on the social housing guidelines of the Urban Development Housing Fund. In Manila, the organization focuses on housing in the city of Pasay where a lot of poor families live along waterways and other danger zones. The task of the organization is to assist people in attaining security of tenure and in searching for relocation areas. The organization focuses on providing housing, particularly to families living in danger zones in Pasay, and works very closely with the communities

through immersion and determining their needs after relocation.[15] They organize the families into a *homeowners association*, acquire the land for relocation or ownership and handle the paperwork involved.

The families who benefit from the programs apply directly with SHEC and upon meeting the requirements, undergo "values formation" organized by the Church; hence beneficiaries have to join St. Hannibal's fellowship. SHEC has had two successful projects in Pasay where families living along the esteros (river banks) and other danger zones were transferred to newly built housing units with full tenure security. This was done in partnership with some other NGOs (such as Habitat for Humanity Philippines) and the local government of Pasay. The families pay small amortization costs through their housing association. Following their occupation of the new units, they have land titles and own their units.

3.3.3 GK community and Gawad Kalinga, Pinagsama

The Gawad Kalinga community in Pinagsama, Taguig that I met with and interviewed is composed of 50 families who have been relocated from danger zones mainly around the city of Pasay. The community members applied for housing through their barangay (the most local level of government) after hearing of GK's proposed project in the area. Many of the community members were very poor families.

Gawad Kalinga (GK), translated simply as "sharing and caring", is a registered NGO working to alleviate poverty by building faithful, peaceful and empowered communities in the Philippines. GK has a wide range of activities with a strong focus on giving land and housing and is involved in many municipalities across the country, including many in Manila. GK houses are known for being bright and colorful, to signify that the lives of people are meaningful. In addition, according to one of the team leaders, one of GK's goals is to eradicate poverty by 2024. Actually the organization's goals, according to their website, is to bring 5 million families in the Philippines out of poverty. Housing is one of the key areas for which GK is very well known.

The Gawad Kalinga housing program focuses on giving homes to the poor. The organization's approach is rather unique for the Philippines and from a global standpoint because, aside from the labor hours the future residents contribute and the time spent to successfully complete the values formation, the houses they receive are free. Once they move into their homes, no amortization is paid. However, the families do pay monthly association dues that go into a fund to assist fellow residents in times of need or to meet costs of repairs or other common needs of the association. GK also encourages "community building" and "empowerment".

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15 "Immersion" is the process whereby the community officer of the organization visits or lives in a particular community for a period of time in order to get to know the families and to gain an understanding of the needs of the families.

3.3.4 Habitat For Humanity Philippines

Habitat for Humanity Philippines Foundation Inc. is an independent locally registered NGO in the Philippines affiliated with Habitat International, which is based in Georgia, USA. Habitat for Humanity (henceforth referred to as Habitat) has the binding mission to irradiate "poverty housing", meaning to provide secure tenure for those living in substandard housing or without homes. Tenure security is a main concern for the organization. Habitat has four program areas, which include Urban Renewal and Development, which sees the NGO partner with local governments to provide shelter needs for informal settler families. Habitat engages in the local governments' mission to target families living in danger zones. This program extends to some rural areas as well, where informal settlers are affected too.

A second program area that relates to city dwellers is Housing for Public Servants, which assists government employees such as school teachers, police officers, soldiers and local government employees living far from their places of work and who do not own their own houses. A third relevant program is the Disaster Response and Mitigation Program, which provides shelter assistance to families who have survived disasters such as typhoon Sendong in 2012. For disaster response, Habitat distributes shelter repair kits composed of construction materials in the aftermath of the disaster.

The programs are carried out in coordination with local governments according to their shelter plans, which the local government units (LGUs) are expected to have. Shelter plans are inventories of available government owned properties and master lists of their informal settler populations. The mayor or LGU usually approaches Habitat to help them with house construction and other community development programs. On the other hand, it is possible for donors and corporate sponsors to give property or gift money to Habitat for which the NGO has to identify recipients. In most cases, identification of beneficiaries is done through the lists of government agencies. The process often includes the participation of organized groups such as urban poor groups in specific barangays. Habitat thus identified their role as a *community development provider*.

Various departments of Habitat are involved in the process, from project design and Memorandum of Agreement with governments and donors, to coordination of their own functions in the project. These departments include the Habitat Building Resource Center, which is the construction or technical team; the Community Development department, which is in charge of family selection and "soft" programs such as partners for education, tutorials, and feeding; and the Housing Support Services, a new department that does everything that is not directly linked to housing provision, for example connecting a family to micro-finance organizations to get a loan. Hence, in the chain of responsibility, these different departments supply various needs for the end goal, which is that a family gets a house. In the past, Habitat has

worked with affiliates, which are often small NGOs in municipalities, but the affiliate relationships got disconnected over the years and that part of their work is now being rebuilt under the Networks and Partnerships Department. The goal of Habitat is to develop a *holistic community development model* through the various departments, projects and partners.

3.4 Local government and state housing institutions

Local government has a major role in any urban development project as they are expected to keep track of land and settlements in their domain. They are primarily responsible for maintaining master lists of the formal and informal settlers, which are provided to the various housing organizations as needed. There are a plethora of state organizations responsible for services in Manila. However, this section points out the main tasks of organizations most relevant in this study.

3.4.1 Local Government Units (LGUs)

During authoritarian rule in the Philippines (1972-1986) governance was centralized and there was very little power in the local governments. However, following democratization and the accompanied decentralization, local governments gained increased authority around the world (Shatkin 2002). The LGUs have been urged to take greater control of their own municipalities, in addition to the wider picture of decentralization of the Philippine government and in city governance. By making significant transformations, leaders such as the late Jesse Robredo (1958-2012) from Naga City, showed how mayors could be key actors in evoking change and development at the city level. Thus in terms of decentralization, there is a possibility for mayors and other public servants to improve conditions in their own local governments by transforming the living environment and controlling the distribution of services and infrastructure in their cities. However, decentralization's direct impact on housing is difficult to ascertain and is beyond the scope of this research project. Still, authors such as Shatkin argue that the LGUs cannot engage in major city planning, as they do not have the necessary human resource and financial capacities.

That said, the role of the LGUs ranges from minimal to penetrating, depending on the leadership in that local government. Moreover, as state organizations still necessitate the inclusion of the LGUs in, for example, the NHA's housing programs that emphasize the inter-agency approach, and the development of the Localized Community Mortgage Program, there is greater room for LGUs to be involved in decision-making, administration, and financial contribution to pro-poor housing programs in Metro MAnila. Aside from the

potential ability of the state housing providers such as the NHA and CMP to have meaningful partnerships with LGUs, NGOs also showed interest in working directly with LGUs as they anticipated better access to land, technical expertise, and other forms of assistance. Some LGUs have been progressive in developing services that fit the needs of their own populations and negotiating with private sector suppliers of, for example water, to provide subsidized services for specific communities. Local government is therefore an important level of governance in housing provision yet, possibly due to their lack of finances and political influence, many LGUs have been unable to make significant contributions to their localities without major collaboration and financial input from national level organizations. The responsibilities for housing improvements have thus shifted to community organizations and NGOs.

3.4.2 Community Mortgage Program (CMP)

One of the key national organizations for housing for the poor is the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), which is currently under the mandate of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) based in Manila. The Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Financing Act (1994) provided the 12.78 billion Pesos (about USD2.7 billion) budget for the CMP. Until 2012 only around 9 billion Pesos had been consumed. The CMP receives 500 million Pesos each year from the national government, to which they add the money received from previous payments on loans. Although the CMP had a significant budget for the program, at the time of fieldwork, discussions were ongoing for additional funds from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.[16]

The Community Mortgage Program is an innovative and potentially important housing program for the poorest in Manila. The requirements are reasonable, the repayment costs low and the possibility that the community would not have to be relocated, but rather have their homes rebuilt, could be attractive to informal settlers. However, the lack of thorough implementation is startling and the program has stagnated over the years due to a lack of emphasis in informing people about the CMP – most people are simply unaware of its existence. This is something that clearly requires increased effort and more local government input, so that not only would the program itself be invested in providing housing, local government areas and the squatters themselves can also have greater input in how their living environments are reconstituted.

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16 As of September 2015, the exchange rate was PHP47 to the US Dollar. Therefore approximate exchange for PHP9 billion was USD208 million and PHP500 million was USD10.65 million.

This suggestion has already started to play out with the Localized Community Mortgage Program (LCMP),[17] which is implemented in partnership with the cities and municipalities (LGUs). This is also overseen by the SHFC. Under the LCMP, the partner LGU covers either 25% or 10% of the overall costs, depending on the LGU's classification. The more urbanized the municipality, the higher its class and these usually fall from first class to sixth class. The majority of municipalities in Metro Manila are classified as fourth or fifth class. Fourth class pays up to 25% of the cost of the whole development, while fifth class covers up to 10%. The contribution of the municipalities can be in the form of cash, or on-site development if they do not have the cash but have the equipment. The form of the contribution is flexible, and the LGUs are encouraged to provide whatever is available. The level of implementation by the LCMP is minimal thus far but could eventually be a meaningful way for local governments to make significant improvements in their own areas while contributing to citywide developments in social housing.

3.4.3 National Housing Authority (NHA)

The National Housing Authority (NHA) is a large state institution in charge of providing housing for the poor and the homeless by awarding land to informal settlers for relocation or upgrading. In most cases communities are relocated, not upgraded. Field data on the NHA was gathered through interviews with NHA staff in the city of Manila and two NGOs that have carried out projects in the city of Pasay and Manila in cooperation with the NHA.

The government involvement in relocation should, according to NHA staff include the allotment of the property, making the master list of qualified beneficiaries, and clearing the area once relocation has been approved. The NHA is directly in charge of all aspects of the relocation. For example, in the informal settlement Parola the NHA was responsible for the "social preparation" of the community, the allotment of property, construction, relocation, provision of services in the new area, and continuous social visits following official relocation. The NHA should also be involved in assisting the residents with attaining livelihoods in the new area. This NHA process is carried out using an inter-agency approach; meaning government agencies such as the City of Manila, the HUDCC, Manila Health, Ministry of Education and Department of Social Welfare and Development are involved. Additionally, the process should include rigorous dialogue with the community and with NGOs working with the families involved.

The NHA works in counterpart with a local NGO. For example St. Hannibal Empowerment Center, a local NGO working closely with informal

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17 http://www.shfcph.com/download%20files/Downloadable%20Forms/LCMP%20fastfacts.pdf

settlers in the city of Pasay collaborated with the NHA in providing housing to families living in danger zones in the area.

3.5 Housing and Land Rights in the Philippines

Many of the challenges in addressing the housing problems have been linked to complex land and housing rights legislation, as well as to increased decentralization that has both enabled and obstructed the abilities of local governments and other agencies to adequately tackle housing issues in Manila. Key housing and land rights legislation are discussed in this section, with attention on their focus on the poor. The ways in which housing and land is regulated is through legislation, usufruct agreements and presidential proclamations that declare how certain areas or communities can be developed (for example by giving legality to an informal settlement). More commonly though, government programs are mandated by the policies below. These policies are guided by international housing principles such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both of which the Philippines is party to. These are briefly discussed later in the chapter.

3.5.1 Philippine housing legislation

Two major housing policies enacted in the 1990s, the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) of 1992 and the Comprehensive Shelter Finance Act (CISFA) of 1994 are fundamental in how housing rights are addressed in the Philippines. The two legislations saw a shift from highly centralized policies during the 1960s and 1980s to market-oriented and participative housing (Ballesteros 2009). The UDHA is meant to be "an act to provide for a comprehensive and continuing urban development and housing program, establish the mechanism for its implementation, and for other purposes." (UDHA 1992) Its areas of focus are improvement of the conditions of low income and homeless people and to make available the "rational" use of public land such that economic opportunities are increased at the same time as to improve public health; improve land tenure systems; encourage people's participation in urban development processes; and to improve the effectiveness of local governments in these processes (UDHA Article 1, Section 2). The law institutes the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and local governments to guide the creation of a housing framework under the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board. These National Urban Development and Housing Frameworks serve as guides for government housing agencies and local governments as well as other organizations such as the UN-Habitat and NGOs on how to plan their urban development goals.

One of the most significant directives of the UDHA is its position on land acquisition. Firstly, the law entitles families facing eviction the right to be relocated to adequate housing units. Secondly, the act requires action from all of the nation's five housing agencies[18]. In the early years the National Shelter Program of that time (1993-1998) was said to have produced over 1.3 million housing units, while the CMP formalized the housing of over 67,000 households (Ramos, n.d.). Ramos adds that land was identified for socialized housing in addition to land use and zoning ordinances. Thirdly, the Comprehensive Shelter Finance Act (CISFA) of 1994 provided the funds for these programs of the UDHA. Major programs whose objectives can be linked to those of the "pro-poor" housing law include the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) and community development programs of the NHA.

The UDHA as well as specific pro-poor housing programs have been criticized in the media as being tools for informal settlers to receive dole outs from the government, maintain their informality or keep valuable land at no cost. In addition, other actors have raised concern over the ineffectiveness of the policies and institutions through which the programs are run. The problem of financing for socialized housing is especially problematic, according to Ballesteros (2011). She posits that government efforts to reduce financial losses led to the restriction of financing to the low-income housing sector, which is highly problematic as that is the sector that requires the most investment – hence why the available but limited subsidy system for low-income housing does not effectively address the objectives of the National Shelter Program (ibid, 7). As affordability remains a major issue in the Philippines, Ballesteros maintains that effective housing finance, alongside changes in land management and rights policies can address the affordability issue. Without the provision of national affordable housing, international obligations of state provision or support of housing needs remain unfulfilled. The data collected for this thesis will discuss in detail some of the government housing programs. However, it is now necessary to detail two other interesting forms of housing provision, presidential proclamations and usufruct agreements.

3.5.2 Presidential proclamation

Presidential proclamation is the transfer of government owned land to informal settlers occupying that land. Some presidential proclamations also involve government acquisition of privately owned land that is then disposed to intended beneficiaries. The beneficiaries can be current informal settler families occupying the land, or those in other areas, as well as employees of government

[18] These are the National Housing Authority (NHA), the Socialized Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC), the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HULRB) and the umbrella organization the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

agencies or local government units. (UN-Habitat 2012) The practice of such proclamations date to the 1950s and initially involved, under then president Magsaysay, the reduction of the price of the land so that its occupants are able to afford it. Later, claiming the need for presidential decrees as "socially urgent" President Marcos unsuccessfully attempted to designate and upgrade certain slum communities in Metro Manila to give the slum dwellers tenure security and ownership. The implementations of these plans were left for succeeding administrations. Presidential proclamations have however picked up steam, as president Macapagal-Arroyo issued 56 decrees aimed to benefit over 200,000 informal settler families in the early 2000s. By 2006, 35 proclamations by various presidents were located in Metro Manila, and were further institutionalized under the Macapagal-Arroyo administration. (UN-Habitat 2012)

The UDHA discussed above provided girth to presidential proclamations as recognized legal policy for the regularization of tenure of informal settler families. The proclamation is usually in the form of an executive order and the Local Inter-Agency Committee (LIAC) carries out the process of land disposition with coordination by the local government under whose jurisdiction the site falls. The processes became more standardized and roles more specified, particularly the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

Full ownership is granted when the identified beneficiaries have completed payment of the agreed price. This payment is either done directly to the government (in cases where the price is very low) or through government programs such as the CMP or NHA programs. As part of post-proclamation, land and housing units acquired through presidential proclamation cannot be sold or leased by the beneficiaries for 10 years following the issuance of ownership. The role of the local government may be limited or more comprehensive depending on the leadership and administration of the particular LGU. (UN-Habitat 2011)

Citing a particular informal settlement in the city of Manila, for which presidential proclamation was used to attain tenure for the informal settlers, UN-Habitat (2012 & 2011) identified key issues critical to tenure regularization. These were determination of the beneficiaries, how suitable the site was for residential use, and attaining agreement between the stakeholders and authorities on the allocation of land uses in the area. For the Baseco example cited, challenges in these three areas caused disagreement and delay in the informal settlers' securing of the land. Although the proclamation maintains a legal basis and has guidelines, the above challenges as well as varying political agendas muddled the process. Another example cited in the report refers to how administrative challenges, such as disputes over who can be beneficiaries, lack of government funds, and lawsuits regarding the value of the land, can seriously hamper the implementation of presidential proclamation – by up to four decades.

The Habitat report outlines a few benefits and limitations of presidential proclamations. Benefits include the simplicity of the process, which can be significantly shorter than other socialized housing processes, and one that provides protection of informal settlers from eviction during the entire process. The proclamations also put pressure on local government to regulate tenure in their areas in addition to challenging squatting syndicates and private landowners. However, one of the limitations to the program is that the pre-proclamation process can be grueling; there are many actors and political intentions involved, and these actors cannot necessarily be held accountable. In addition, funding varies per project and the proclamation itself can be revoked, for example, if the land is deemed uninhabitable. However, where political will and enabled government agencies, together with strong community organizations are involved, the presidential proclamations have immense potential to contribute to relieving the housing problems faced by informal settler families. (UN-Habitat 2012).

3.5.3 Usufruct agreements

Usufruct agreements are legally recognized in the UDHA as housing tenure agreements. The agreements stemmed from government and non-governmental organizations' experimentation with new ways to provide tenure without land ownership. With usufruct, a person is given the legal right to use and profit from property belonging to another person or entity (UN-Habitat 2011). Under usufruct agreements, the land remains in the ownership of, for example, the local government, but poor families in their areas can occupy that land for 25 to 50 years, with possible renewal. The agreement is legally binding and presented in documents such as Memoranda of Agreement and Contracts to Sell. The housing units constructed on such lands are often financed by NGOs, private individuals or organizations and are a lot more affordable than some other housing schemes since amortization payments are lower.

In the Philippines, other actors in the process may include community organizations, the NHA and a government inter-agency committee. The occupants' rights are usually only transferable to heirs that also qualify under the project's beneficiary selection criteria. Thus, following due process, usufruct and leasehold rights are recognized as instruments for secure tenure for housing finance (see Ballesteros 2009). Usufruct is thus a useful tool for tenure regularization for informal settlers and the UN-Habitat (2011) found that beneficiaries of such projects felt more confident about their tenure when NGOs and various state agencies were involved.

Although not widely used, the usufruct agreements are interesting and valuable instruments due to their ability to address housing needs at more affordable costs. However, tenants themselves had contrasting opinions regarding the inability to own the land – some tenants voiced dissatisfaction while others found it reasonable. Another interesting finding of the report is the

fact that some beneficiaries struggled with adjusting to living in the densely populated medium-rise structures and with the little control they had over making changes or improvements to their units. (UN-Habitat 2012) The following section briefly looks at the international human rights instruments that are expected to guide national objectives and make governments responsible for development.

3.6 International housing instruments

Numerable documents and instruments recognize the importance of housing, and its place as a fundamental human right. The human right to adequate housing is an essential piece of any human rights legislation, and is represented in international law, and to varying degrees in regional instruments and national legislations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1948 is the first human rights agenda to be inclusive of the right to housing. Article 25.1 of the UDHR states that:

> "Everyone has the right to a standard living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, *housing* and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." - Article 25.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Human rights can simply be defined as alienable rights to which all human being are entitled. This is therefore inclusive of housing rights, which are the extensive body of rights at the international, regional, national, and local levels that apply to housing ownership, tenancy, housing quality (Leckie 1995). When defining housing rights, and aside from the critical structures of walls and a roof, there are basic aspects that must be included in order for housing to be considered adequate. These are accessibility, habitability, access to services and infrastructure, affordability, location, security of tenure, and cultural adequacy. The right to adequate housing thus constitutes the structure, the entitlements (tenure, equal access and participation in decision-making), and the freedoms (from arbitrary forced evictions and freedom of movement).

The issue of forced evictions has been commonplace in many cities in developing countries, including Manila. Forced eviction is "the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of and access to appropriate forms of legal or other protection" (General Comment No. 7, ICESCR). However, as informal settlers have no tenure security they are most vulnerable to forced evictions. As a result secure tenure and protection from forced eviction go strongly together and form the

foundations of housing rights. Due legal process is a strong part of housing rights protection.

An interesting note on the international proposals is the inclusion of the right to participation. Parties to the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) are requested to adopt national housing strategies that "reflect extensive genuine consultation with, and participation by, all of those affected, including the homeless, the inadequately housed and their representatives."[19] However, these applications are largely negligible due to difficulties in implementation and the institutional disregard for the promotion of housing rights. Nonetheless, the right to adequate housing does not equate the right to land or housing per se. Under the Habitat Agenda[20] governments were encouraged to develop an enabling framework for the progressive realization of housing rights through the promotion and protection of these rights, but are not expected to provide housing for their entire populations. Disputes over land, housing and property rights can lead to major conflicts, sometimes amplified by the ambiguous role of the state (Leckie 2013). According to Leckie, the level of legitimacy of the state and its capacity to guarantee the implementation of housing and land legislation varies extensively, as customary laws juxtaposed with statutory laws sometimes have complex interactions.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Fact Sheet 21 solidifies the international agreement that access to adequate housing increases likelihood to enjoy other rights because it influences realization of the rights to environmental hygiene and the highest attainable level of physical and mental health. Access to adequate housing is key because housing offers the possibility for income generation, protection from natural and man-made environmental disasters, and some basic level of security. The importance of housing as an instrumental asset for the development of the urban poor is illustrated in development discourse, which notes that housing improves livelihoods of the poor, develops the informal sector, and consequently, the economy of the city. This economically driven pro-housing rights discussion also involves large international and inter-governmental organizations such as the World Bank, which sees improved housing in terms of improved health, which in turn means improved labor productivity (Arku and Harris 2005). The impact of improved housing of a particular community can therefore translate to the wider social system.

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19 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment No. 4 on right to adequate housing.

20 The Habitat Agenda, alongside the Istanbul Declaration, was a framework developed during the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements held in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.

3.7 Summary

Metro Manila is one of the largest cities in the world, with a growing population of 11.9 million inhabitants. The city has not been exempt from the many challenges that other megacities in the South face in meeting the needs of their residents, especially those in lower income groups. Where economic growth in the city has not "trickled down" to the poor, many people struggle to survive in the overcrowded city where access to housing and social services can be a challenge.

However, there are many national and international efforts to improve housing, although these may fall short of meeting needs when it comes to their application. What the usufruct agreements, presidential proclamation and other alternative policies of the Philippine government do present are reasonable strategies to meet the tenure needs of thousands of poor families in Metro Manila. According to the UN-Habitat (2012), these approaches allow for long-term control of land, which is an expensive and limited commodity in Metro Manila, yet improves the provision of basic services to the poor. They are thus more flexible and sustainable approaches that are perceived to improve the administration and registration of land, which has been inundated by deceptive land claims or squatting syndicates that have benefited from the difficulty to authenticate records. However, better coordination between housing agencies and local governments together with the streamlining of the complex and multiple arrangements for land registration will be necessary for increasing efficiency.

The role of international bodies, as is entrenched in the international human rights laws has not been addressed extensively, in terms of what may be expected from inter-governmental organizations to support urban development and housing. Additionally, local government appears to be a key for the continuity and efficiency of the programs, particularly as these approaches are thought to work better with more localization. (UN-Habitat 2012) Again, how these local governments can be supported is fundamental to how poverty and housing can be addressed. The following chapter considers the factors that lie at the heart of low-income housing endeavors. These include poverty and informality and how the identification of the challenges of cities in the South is being reconsidered.

CHAPTER 4: POVERTY AND INFORMALITY

This chapter outlines the key concepts discussed in this study in relation to informal housing. The challenges of population growth for Southern cities' governments have been documented for several decades. As discussed in the previous chapter, megacities in the South face immense struggles to provide what are deemed as basic human rights – water, housing, sanitation – for the poorer segments of their populations. The range and extent of urban issues led to the labeling of many urban areas in terms of what they lack and their inferiority to cities in the West (Varley 2013). Yet more urbanists and social scientists have also considered the dynamic aspects of the city and its inhabitants. The city in the global South is being identified and studied not only as divided and polarized but also as sites for dynamic and sometimes oppositional forms of government that contribute to distinctive political struggles and influence the city as a whole (Samara, He and Chen 2013). This section discusses some of the key issues raised on developing countries' cities and is written with the principle of identifying literature that also recognize developing world cities and their occupants as more than victims of urbanization and economic and political disregard.

4.1 A planet of slums?

Historically, there have been strong and controversial ideas regarding urban problems in the city. Authors such as Robert Park (1967) classified as "human junk" those who were "useless" or resistant to the requirements of progress. Park denounced such individuals as belonging to specific sites in urban areas in the United States, for example ghettos in Chicago. Within that context, slums were regarded as incubators of "social diseases of poverty and delinquency" (Park 1967, 118). Such spatialization of social problems was common to the

Chicago school approach to urban theory, which referenced the growing urban *problem* and was the foundation for urban social policy in the latter half of the twentieth century. Yet the mass production of slums does not speak for the diversity of and in slums, and of the squatters that live there. As Robert Neuwirth (2005) ascertains, the large numbers of slum inhabitants are diverse. Furthermore, authors such as Tonkiss (2005) emphasized the need to veer from spatialization and focus on the complex systems of neighborhoods and social factors that contribute to the urban ecology and social organization in the city. This is discussed further in the next chapter. This section examines the relationships between urbanization (in terms of population growth) and why people in megacities, particularly Metro Manila, find themselves squatting. It also considers some of the implications for local and citywide governance.

For many cities in the south, with increased productivity and economic growth following independence came larger numbers of migrants and the duplication of informal housing. Economic growth in Metro Manila was coupled with "the massive migration into the city since Spanish times…creating problems of overcrowding, poverty, health and sanitation, security, basic infrastructure provision and others" (Caoili 1999, 65). As the Philippines became more urbanized and Manila grew, so did the increase in slums and pockets of informal areas where squatters occupied vacant lots especially in and around the city of Manila, from which economic activity had been moved to Makati. New residential subdivisions arose in some parts of the city, while squatter settlements also arose in others. According to Caoili (ibid.), the metropolitan area's landscape was transformed as a result of the rural-urban and urban-suburban migration.

In effect, Caoili (1999) argues, due to their relatively lower education and skills and the existing urban population, most migrants into the city could not adequately compete in the job market and were pushed into slums and informal settlements where they could afford housing. This insinuates that increased urbanization resulted in the rise of slums, which is also the groundwork for Planet of Slums by Mike Davis (2006). Caoili (ibid) expounds on this idea by providing statistics that illustrate how the increase in economic, social and educational prowess of Metro Manila drew migrants from the rural areas, drained other parts of the country and created uneven development. She also provided statistics for the argument that unequal income distribution was apparent between rural and urban areas, but also in urban areas where income inequality was significantly greater. Factors affecting housing and inequality will be examined in the following chapter. Important to note here is that until today, there are often clear divisions between various parts of the city where more squatters reside compared to other areas where higher income groups live.

In his notable book, Mike Davis (2006) focuses on urban explosion and the increasing inequality found within and between cities of varying sizes and economic specializations. Urbanization in the "third world" continued at roaring speeds in the 1980s and 1990s despite being accompanied by falling

wages, soaring prices and skyrocketing unemployment. Davis continues that the global forces that "push" people from the countryside sustained urbanization even when the "pull" of the city was dramatically reduced by debt and economic depression (p.16). Consequently, "rapid urban growth in the context of structural adjustment, currency devaluation, and state retrenchment has been an inevitable recipe for the mass production of slums" (ibid, p.17). As the supply of housing is mostly left for people to figure out themselves, city inhabitants turn to self-built shanties, informal rentals and pirate subdivisions, or, the sidewalks. This has become prevalent in housing supply in many cities in the South. For the poorest in Metro Manila, land inflation resulted in people living in high risk areas, such as on river banks that are prone to flooding, or to nest in the interstices of wealthier subdivisions, where eviction is a constant threat (ibid, 92).

Government responses to the explosion of slums in the 1970s were alarming, as slums were considered sores on cities. However, certain groups such as the Bretton Woods institutions took on powerful roles that brought significant changes in urban policies and how slums were to be managed. According to Davis (2006), the World Bank increased its lending for urban development exponentially between 1972 and 1988, and up to 1990, helped in financing 116 sites and services and/or slum upgrading schemes in 55 countries (see also Pugh 1995). This small but significant financial contribution by the World Bank gave it the authority to impose its own theories on urban policy and management, particularly in that slums should be improved rather than replaced. This became the new orthodoxy requiring international collaborations and the rise of NGOs as "enablers" of the poor (Davis 2006). The proliferation of World Bank policies, according to some researchers, led to the minimization of local government and other state support in housing development for the poor.

The Philippines was a pilot country for these new strategies. Several "areas of priority development" were identified, together with the Marcos regime in the 1970s, yet the poor who lived in those areas were inevitably removed and the areas replaced by wealthier residents (Davis 2006, Berner 1997). There was also the tragic consequence of the investments being transferred to land developers and the construction industry. The extent of the failures led the Bank to reframe its projects to sites-and-services schemes in resettlement areas outside Metro Manila. Sites-and-services schemes were denounced eventually, as the poor did not take to being moved outside of the city, far from livelihood and city life. Yet these schemes, whereby relocation and social services are provided in different sites from the original place of residence, continue to be used in Metro Manila to this day, despite the contention that they are problematic.

Although Mike Davis presents interesting arguments on the rise of slums, other scholars including Tom Angotti (2006), Jennifer Robinson (2006) and Abdoumaliq Simone (2012) reject the perception that slums define the urban landscape in the South. Angotti in particular derides Davis's Planet of Slums for

"fomenting simplistic dualisms ignoring the multiple connections between formal and informal" (Varley 2013, 2). Angotti points out that Davis asserts informality as disconnected from the rest of society to the extent that this perceived status quo cannot be challenged. On the other hand many authors that have studied communities in the Latin America and Asia have been stern in their contention that informality does not signify fragmentation and division in the ways Davis denotes (see Riley, Fiori and Ramirez 2001).

With this comes the conception of slums as fluid spaces and informality as a changing state of being. In recent years the notion of slums has thus shifted from spaces of poverty and despair at the peripheries of the city to being recognized as essential economic and social hubs of the cityscape. The fact that slums and city life can be contested so strongly is exactly the complexity this thesis aims to focus on. We cannot simplify poor city inhabitants in the South as victims of urbanization. Other factors such as persistent poverty and the lack of or failure of citywide development are relevant to understanding how cities in the South operate. The following section brings together some thinking on this issue.

4.2 Factors of housing poverty

The identification of social problems has mostly gone hand in hand with descriptions of problem spaces and problem groups. Essentially the problem spaces have been labeled as ghettos in the North and slums in the South and noted as spaces of poverty, joblessness and crime (Tonkiss 2005). In the South, housing shortage appears to be central in the urban problematique – housing shortages and high costs can affect low and middle-income groups in urban areas, where prices tend to be considerably higher than in rural or peri-urban areas. However, the situation of the poor is exacerbated as their ability to access adequate housing from the formal market is compounded within the housing shortage problem. The open market is indirectly forbidden to poorer segments of the population.

However, it can be argued that the massive slum communities found in the South illustrate that some form of a housing market does exist for all members of the society, especially newcomers to the cities. As Mitlin (2003, 394-6) puts it, when the urban poor are unable to meet the costs of conventional infrastructure and service provision, they compete amongst themselves to provide these services. The difference in this thinking from what Davis (2006) discusses, is the recognition of the people. According to Mitlin, these services are often provided by informal and often "clientelistic" arrangements, which are often more important for poor urban dwellers than relations with formal institutions. Clientelistic relationships are informal reciprocal arrangements between local governments and community organizations seen in the form of

financial or political benefits for politicians and rewards (e.g. public sector jobs or grants, or access to investment funds) for community members.

Particularly in the case of Manila, Jenkins (2001) refers to this as political patronage – whereby the barangays rely on elite leadership for access to resources and services from higher levels of government. Caoili (1999) discussed the clientelist political relationships of Manila's dominant powers as causes of the failure or lack of interest to respond to the growing urban problems in Manila. On the contrary, other research point to the successes of community-led or community-based initiatives that appropriate services provision for the benefit of the whole community (e.g. Shatkin 2007; Baud and Post 2002; Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2004b; Simone 2012).

4.2.1 Housing Poverty

Berner (2001, 294) poses a sound descriptive discussion on the housing–poverty debate. He argues that lack of quality, infrastructure and space, together with insecurity in substandard informal housing serve as *factors*, *indicators* and *causes* of poverty.

Housing as a *factor* of poverty	Lack of quality, infrastructure and services	• Quality of life affected by crowding, noise, dirt, pollution, garbage, inadequate facilities • Health affected by lack of sanitation, unsafe water supply • Future prospects affected by restricted access to education
	Insecurity	• Threat of evictions results in loss of assets, inaccessibility of income sources – greater vulnerability
Housing as an *indicator* of poverty	Lack of quality, infrastructure and services	• Reliability: only the poor are expected to accept the above conditions
	Insecurity	• But: not all residents of informal settlements are poor
Housing as a *cause* of poverty	Lack of quality, infrastructure and services	• Lack of water, electricity and accessibility is a liability for enterprises • Bad reputation may put off potential customers
	Insecurity	• Risk of demolition prevents investments, e.g. in immobile assets or environmental upgrading

FIGURE 4 Dimensions of housing poverty (Berner 2001, 294)

The table above allows a look at the housing-poverty relationship as multi-dimensional and interrelated. Several other researchers, including Mitlin (2003) perceive poverty as multi-faceted and dynamic. Carter and Barrett (2006) present strong arguments on different ways of perceiving poverty, and are especially critical of the use of static poverty lines in measuring poverty. Instead, Carter and Barrett emphasize the need for poverty to be identified through longitudinal research that allows differentiation between different systems of poverty. The main tool is asset-based approaches, which were also revered methods in the 1990s and 2000s for addressing poverty, particularly in developing countries. This study looks at urban poverty as a socio-economic condition that depends largely on housing as the main asset, but moves away from the focus on assets to community-based initiatives for housing, as discussed in the following chapter.

4.2.2 Overcrowding

An issue that is often mentioned as an element of low-income and informal housing, but not often regarded as critical to the crisis is that of overcrowding. However, UN-Habitat's (2006) *State of the World Cities* devoted an entire section to this discussion. Although some cultural groups do not mind sharing a small space between several people, there is always an operational limit to how many persons can comfortably and safely share a living space. UN-Habitat's understanding is that improved housing quality and living conditions decreases the likelihood of illness and child mortality. "The risk of disease transmission and multiple infections increase substantially as the number of people crowded into small, poorly ventilated spaces increases" (ibid, 68). Aside from diseases, other daily life activities, such as children's ability to study and personal space for recreation is hindered by the lack of space. A further consequence of overcrowding is the deterioration of dwellings, which violate rental agreements and lead to the eviction of tenants. This may result in loss of a key informal livelihood source, and consequently, increase vulnerable to poverty.

Issues of overcrowding can be linked to governance patterns particularly increased decentralization. Sassen (2001) considers division of city space as maps of social difference. In addition, Tonkiss (2005) speaks of the concentration of power in the center of the city, despite city expansion – this, she calls, the dual logic of decentralization and concentration. This is relevant to Manila where decentralization has progressed and where we see informal areas in all parts of the city. However, Manila is generally a crowded city, even in formal residential areas. Still, the portions of informality are smaller in areas closer to the central business district and larger as one goes farther from the CBD.

4.2.3 Economic development

There are arguments (such as Arku 2006) about whether housing is a tool for economic development or vice versa, economic development as the tool for improving housing. On the one hand investment in housing is seen, for example by Gilbert and Gugler (1992, 133) as "the classic means of slowing economic growth" because its takes away from the investment in industry or industrial infrastructure (Drakakis-Smith 1997). This anti-housing dialogue also depended on the argument that the improvement of housing provided an incentive for migration into the urban centers, which eventually leads to uneven development (Arku 2006). On the other hand the more common discourse identifies housing as an investment in people and in the city as a whole. Here emphasis in on improving livelihoods of the poor, developing the informal sector and consequently the economy of the city. In addition, the World Bank saw improved housing in terms of improved health, which in turn means improved labor productivity (Arku and Harris 2005). Thus, powerful actors, including the UN, see a major link between the realization of tenure security to poverty reduction, economic development and social stability (UN-Habitat 2011).

4.2.4 Livelihood and poverty alleviation

Anzorena and others (1998, 168-169) make an interesting proposition on the urban development dilemma. They present initiatives that challenge the traditional divide between the improvement of housing and living conditions as "poverty alleviation" and the support for income generation as "poverty reduction". Housing and basic needs are central to both of these dichotomies due to the poor's own identification of housing as their main priority. The following reasons for placing housing and basic needs as central to poverty alleviation are given:

- *Increasing the asset base* increases security. As a capital asset, housing value can be increased through the people's own efforts.
- *Difficulties in employment creation* mean gathering resources for housing improvement is problematic. If the poor do not have the money to improve their housing and living environment, outside intervention is necessary.
- *Stability and security is increased*, especially for more vulnerable members such as children and women.
- *The health burden* is reduced.
- *Possibilities for successful negotiation for support or resources* from various actors are increased, especially with the help of community organizations.

Experiences from the field indicate that housing is indeed an essential tool for improving livelihood as the urban poor are often engaged in employment within or around their homes. Thus adequate housing has the potential to improve livelihood, particularly through improved services such as water and electricity. Carter and Barrett (2006) found that the transition from poverty to non-poor is either due to the accumulation of new assets or greater returns on already owned assets. According to Mitlin (2003, 394) "the importance of strengthening assets to improve livelihood opportunities has now been accepted by many development interventions."

Aside from the income generated by the poor during housing construction, backward linkages during self-help and upgrading activities also create livelihood sources (Tipple 1999). Therefore Anzorena's and Tipple's findings from various locations are critical, in that housing improves livelihood security of the urban poor. As much as the literature covers many of these issues affecting city life, there has been a shift in conceptualizing communities in the South not as victims of poverty, but as active agents in their communities. The following chapter brings together some of the latest thinking on cities in the South.

4.3 Re-envisioning cities in the South

Discussion on megacities in the South is mostly shrouded in dark descriptions of city life, particularly surrounding poverty and helplessness. In addition the challenges of effective management of housing, transportation and waste, to name a few, is consistent in urban studies research with examples from the South. There has also been much research on the links between urban population growth, environmental hazards, sustainability and climate change (e.g. Hardoy, Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2001; Betsill and Bulkeley 2007). While the focus in the 1990s and 2000s was on sustainability, livelihoods and governance, whereby cities in the South were compared to and contrasted with each other and with those in the North, there appears to have been a shift in what is relevant in studying Southern cities.

Several authors have recently made conscientious efforts to engage the thinking that, although the concerns for the above-mentioned issues are justified, researchers need to consider how the differences between cities in the North and South should broaden our understandings of what cities are and what they could be (Simone 2010; Kraas et al. 2014). On the other hand authors such as de Blij (2009) express the thinking that regardless of perceived globalization, one's locality remains an important force that determines our place in power and inequality structures in that locality. The works of Simone (2010) and de Blij (2009) were profound for the researcher with interest in

theorizing the urban while avoiding underestimating the dynamisms and complexities of individual cities.

Simone (2010) was successful in raising the point that city life abounds with many contradictions but that the focus of cityness is local, with the emphasis that people in these localities work together to live. Hence, according to Simone city life in the South has less to do with planned, abstract cities and more to do with the local intersections that experiment with new ways of governance whereby people themselves play major roles that have, until recently, been seen as government responsibilities. Such capabilities in the cities often occur in "ambiguous spaces and times" in that the results of the residents' actions is not always clear, yet the actions have to take place (ibid, 3).

This is especially useful for this thesis, in looking at how local residents organize themselves, the forms these organizing endeavors take, why, and what the intended outcomes and eventual outcomes are. What is also profound is Simone's claim that what would appear as a coherent city "is only possible when unruly eruptions, interference, and murkiness are negated or erased". This he connects to the "urban development" that conceals the extent to which "specific hopes embedded in the ways of doing things that end up being erased or pushed aside is never certain" (Simone 2012, 11). Simone thus problematizes research on city governance that does not take into account the two forms of the peripheral – of initiatives occurring at the periphery (what happens in the city, its spaces, the peoples) and the efforts of the city on the outside (for example in terms of economic activities).

Simone (2012, 148-149) asks us to consider city residents from a broader perspective, particularly by seeing them as channels for developing resources, ideas and labor for the growth and movement of capital, as well as to consider what happens in between the obvious mega-projects around which the cities' residence and economy are reformulated. These intersections are important in understanding how various aspects of city organization – for example in the management of infrastructure – are collaboratively managed assets for specific localities, but with city-wide impact. The governance of cities, according to Simone can thus be perceived with complexity, as it ranges from transnational cooperation to increased decentralization. Decentralization holds certain challenges for city residents but may also bring greater flexibility and variation. In addition, these new ways of residents' engagements in infrastructure provision may result in closer political ties between residents of different cities.

For de Blij (2009), the conception of the world as a melting pot is flawed as the disparities between and struggles within various localities have more bearing on people's destinies than the outcomes of perceived increased homogeneity and a borderless world. He considers locals as the "poorest, least mobile, and most susceptible to the impress of place", who, as population statistics demonstrate, will outnumber the globals (those whose worlds appear comparatively limitless) (p.5). Much can be said regarding de Blij's use of the term "local", which makes subjects of people born in the periphery (presumably

non-Western countries) and seen as less internationally mobile. The globals are subjected as citizens of Western states, as well as such citizens living as expats in the periphery. Globals, according to de Blij, also constitute "newly rich domestic globals" (p.146). De Blij's contentions on local and global are problematic in their apparent ethnocentrism. In addition, and as discussed in Chapter Five, Edensor and Jayne (2012) make the assertion that looking at the world through the core and periphery lens is outdated. Yet de Blij makes the point that most of us will live and die relatively close to where we were born. And those who are the "locals" are more likely to remain closer to their birthplaces, despite the fact that millions of people migrate annually.

What stands out from the arguments is that the poorer tend to remain poor in their localities – they are bound by "the confines of place" that imposes "severe limits on human thoughts and action, engendering…inequalities affecting individuals and families at one end of a continuum that has communities and regions at its other end…." (de Blij 2009, 4). This point is well taken, and other authors, such as Chen, Orum and Paulsen (2012) have identified place as the sites where larger social, political and economic problems manifest, yet where the actions of residents and groups can affect changes in those localities.

Therefore, what de Blij does not postulate is that there is increasing evidence that given the confines of place, mobility has taken on a different form, as Simone (2012) gives accounts of. Instead, more relevant are the collaborations within and between the various confines of place that bring new people, ideas and processes to the forefront of local organizing and city governance and goes beyond the identification of life in various parts of the globe as those of *locals* and *globals*. The focus has thus shifted to looking at the communities themselves, particularly in terms of housing and infrastructure provision within and between districts in the city. This is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

4.4 City life beyond poverty and informality

This chapter looked at the themes related to informal housing, particularly poverty and population growth. The chapter identified several studies that contribute to the knowledge that poverty is not one-dimensional, as was once perceived in literature. Indeed, the megacities in the South have visibly distinct geographical features that make clear the differences between rich and poor that in the past was viewed in a one-dimensional manner. This was seen in research inundated with data on how many migrants into the city got trapped in poverty and into squatter areas, without viewing what these migrants' experiences and perceptions were.

The initial focus of research was the difficulty city governments had in meeting the demands of growing urban sprawl. However, there has been a significant change in the ways in which poverty and informality are discussed. The shift has been in discussing the urban poor not as passive city inhabitants but as active locals, who contribute to city life in many ways. Simone (2012) asks us to consider city residents as active participants within their localities, who contribute their ideas, knowledge and resources and are part of the intricate organization for housing and services seen in cities in the South. Although de Blij (2009) also emphasizes the importance of localities, he does so through the global-local lens – and placing the "locals" in the periphery, or in other words in developing countries in the South.

Although I appreciate the new light that de Blij has shown on localities, I argue that there is more to learn from authors such as Simone (2012), Chen, Orum and Paulsen (2012) and Edensor and Jayne (2012) who consider the local as dynamic communities with social, economic and political conditions that community members come together to address. The endeavors of the urban poor affect not only their basic needs as a community but may also spread into other parts of the city. More generally, manifestations of city life in the South are noted as somewhat distinct and evolving, in comparison to the studies of cities in the North, and therefore require a shift from the Chicago School and other Western-centered urban theories. This forms the backbone of the theory part of this thesis, which focuses on core concepts of participation and community.

CHAPTER 5: THEORIZING URBAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

This chapter delineates the theoretical framework for this study. It begins by outlining the evolution of urban social theory and finds that community building theory, which examines the micro activities of key actors in society, provides ample tools for engaging with the city through the underlying concepts of community, networks and participation. The focus is on how communities are framed, the relevance of networks, and how participation has been discussed in urban social theory over the past few decades. The challenges in community building are discussed in the light of urban disconnect, a concept I propose to explain why community building remains a difficult goal and process, as a result of the divergent actions of various actors and institutions on the urban scene.

The chapter proposes that community organizing for housing has the potential to be urban social movements and is based on one of the most groundbreaking works in urban social theory, Manuel Castells' theory of social movements. For Castells (2012, 15), "the origins of social movements are to be found in the emotions of individuals and in their networking on the basis of cognitive empathy…" Closer look is taken at Castells' vision of social movements and everyday life, which was influenced by Alain Touraine, and incorporates collective movements on a broader base than class and labor. Castells' theory of collective consumption entails that some issues, such as environment, traffic and housing, have an impact on all groups in society and that class conflict alone cannot explain why collective action is taken.

The chapter then bridges the collective identity discussion vis-à-vis Ulrich Beck's take on the modern community that has evolved from the traditional in such a way that urban residents can now experiment with lifestyles and social relations. As with Castells, emerging divisions between groups are no longer

class based yet often have "politically provocative effects" (Beck 1992, 98).[21] The chapter poses that political manifestations, or in Beck's words, "coalitions", that form are to rebuild modern communities in fashions that aim to reduce inequalities by providing basic amenities and developing strong personal bonds between community members. As the community building programs of NGOs providing housing rights are discussed extensively in the presentation of empirical data, the hypothesis is thus on whether the outcome of community building can be framed within social movement theory. This analysis is tackled in Chapter 8.

5.1 Urban social theory: an evolution

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the Chicago School of the 1920s and 1930s was the starting point for contemporary urban theorizing. Then, cities were formulated around an urban ecological perspective, with groups forming concentric rings around the core. Any social change was seen to occur through socioeconomic transitions, and particularly, in Chicago's ghettos (Low 2002). By the 1950s, interest shifted to the consideration of urban "communities" based on kinship and family ties and included policy research on housing in developing countries. Network analysis departed from there, gradually taking on more quantitative strategies in the study of the social organization of residents in rapidly expanding urban populations in Latin America and Africa. The study of networks continues to be valued for urban researchers as an important methodological strategy and theoretical model (ibid.).

Castells coined the concept 'urban social theory' in the 1970s. Since then, urban social theory has been written and developed by scholars from a range of disciplines, and been infused with their distinct thoughts (Harvey 2009; Sassen 2001; Castells 1989). Studying the local in relation to urban planning and design gained ground in Latin America where conflicts at local, national and international levels were researched ethnographically. This phase included the study of the power/knowledge of planning and architecture technologies, and urban renewal and community rebuilding following disasters. According to Low (2002), the establishment of contemporary poststructuralist studies of urban struggles for adequate housing and tenure rights, and planning and architecture for social control was based on the anthropological analysis of conflicts that emerged among government institutions, planning experts and local communities. Leeds (1973; in Gilbert and Gugler 1992) made a momentous contribution to the theory of the flow of goods, labor and services between the

[21] I recognize Beck's work is framed around Northern cities, but believe there are intersections between his and Castell's work as well as other discussions on community that are relevant to urban communities in the South.

cities and the rural areas. His analysis was at the state and supra local, and local levels, and concentrated on linkages in these complex relationships.

However, as this dissertation is based on empirical data on socio-political processes in relation to housing, it is vital to consider how more ethnographic theorizing has developed, in this case through the lenses of Setha M. Low (2002). According to Low, despite anthropologists having made contributions to theories from globalization to planning and urban poverty, anthropological and ethnological theorizing has been minimal in sociology, geography, history and urban planning. Low argues for the importance of urban theorizing as part of understanding changes in our postindustrial/advanced, capitalist/postmodern societies. She asserts that the city is the best place to study the linkages between everyday practices and macro processes due to the intense natures of these linkages in the city. This leads to greater understanding of the need to consider theories that also confront complex city life in developing countries, as are discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

The most profound theoretical transition, according to Low (2002), was the introduction of the study of the political economy of the city in the 1980s. Authors such as Susser (1982), Hannerz (1980) and Mullings (1987) piloted a decade of "critical studies of the structured forces that shape urban experience". Within this political-economy paradigm, the city was theorized through the examination of the social effects of industrial capitalism and the deconstruction of inequality and alienation in urbanism (Low 2002, 4). The political economy paradigm was followed by a period of "radicalized urban ethnography" which added value to theory-building by making possible the link between everyday practices and more general processes of class formation.

According to Jacobs (1993) the new postmodern cities, or representational cities, need to be analyzed in ways that the built environment becomes a discursive realm. This trajectory of urban studies has persisted, with the study of social relations in African cities as well as the study of shantytowns and favelas and the informal economy in Latin American cities (Low 2002). However, a lot of the studies from Asia have focused on more developed countries like Japan and China, where urban hierarchies are the focus.

The urban shift that has occurred around the world over the past several decades has opened a foray on what modern day urbanization means and how our society has changed at individual and community levels, in addition to the industrialization and market economy trends that have taken place across the globe, more so in the West. Urbanization and the urban have taken heterogeneous forms that move away from the traditional society to the modern society. Urbanization can be seen as "the constitution of specific spatial forms of human societies characterized by the significant concentration of activities and populations in a limited space and to the existence and diffusion of a particular cultural system, the urban culture" (Susser 2002, 28).

The urban culture will not be dealt with systematically here; rather, urban culture in light of poverty in cities in the South will be discussed later, from the community perspective. However, I do want to point out the shift in urban theorizing is focused on the meaning individuals and groups attach to their homes and communities (and neighborhood and city) and less on predicting the patterns of change. The search for answers is contextual and linked to everyday urban life (Thorns 2002).

Low (2002) emphasizes the role of anthropological theorizing as discussed above and formulates images and metaphors to highlight the range of frameworks, concepts and ideas scholars have used to analyze the city. The key areas of these theories are in social relational processes, economic processes, urban planning and architecture, and religious and cultural aspects. The most relevant images discussed include the divided city, the ethnic city, the contested city, the gendered city, the modernist city, and the postmodern city. However, the majority of studies related to these images center on cities in the United States and other cities in the North. Thus from an empirical standpoint the social relations and means of formulating communities are better understood through the frameworks of community, collective action and participation.

5.2 Collective action and community

In our globalized world social formations have continued to evolve, with social networks becoming ever more complex, cutting across unexpected levels of society, and linking people from localities that would have previously been perceived as 'far away'. In a sense, the risks and conflicts that have remained permanent have triggered and maintained the development of "specific organizing effects" (Susser 2002), often through social networks. The relationship between public and private life has also been restructured whereby emphasis is made on rights and responsibilities rather than on universal entitlements (Thorns 2002, Simone 2012).

Collective action occurs more frequently where social ties are thick and where, according to Shatkin (2007), people have developed a sense of collective identity around local space, i.e., in a community. Here I operationalize space in terms of a social space; a community's space that is linked to immediate social networks or social ties. Shatkin (ibid) argues that the development of social ties is dependent on the demographic composition of the community, its historical formation and history of collective action, and how residents perceive their political environment. Shatkin's work deals particularly with collective action, community and participation in terms of urban poverty alleviation. Thus he addresses the forms in which collective action can take place at the community level. These actions will be discussed further in this section. Currently, it is

necessary to define the contested (and contestable) concept of "community" as it has been discussed in general terms, and in the South.

Community is commonly described as the source of support for families and individuals. Yet the concept comes with problems in defining it sociologically. It has been defined as that which links people to a "sense of place" (Warburton & Yoshimura 2005). A definition of community that is all-encompassing is that of Flecknoe and McLellan (1994, 8):

> "Community" is that web of personal relationships, group networks, traditions and patterns of behavior that develops against a backdrop of the physical neighborhood and its socio-economic situation.

Hillery (1955, in Gilchrist 2009) describes community as coming from "regular, mostly cooperative interaction among a set of people over time." Earlier sociologists such as Tönnies (1887) and Durkheim (1893) considered the emotionality of community as what sets it apart from 'society' as common understanding, shared experiences and mutuality. Communities are not isolated from each other or wider society (horizontal linkages), and have vertical links to all levels of governance, particularly in the face of advanced technologies available today. Castells' (2000, in Susser 2002) notion of a networked society also identifies the use of technology to connect social groups with each other globally.

Over the past several decades, and due to policies and programs by and from states and international organizations, more has been added to the meaning of community. These include the notion that a community must share a common interest or bond, and that there are expectations of loyalty, support and affirmation, and the personal, collective and organizational networks that differentiate community from state and civil institutions. Gilchrist (2009) based her book on the belief that the informal networks that exist between people, between groups and between organizations generate the experience of community. Community is viewed as a source for good whereby everyday interactions between localized networks of family and friends sustain the feelings of community.

Yet community can be difficult to study and to define: it can also be seen as "liquid" in the sense that communities shape themselves to accommodate changes in circumstances and to follow trends and discourses. This alludes to the discussion on coalitions formed and dissolved based on their needs to address specific issues and situations (Beck 1992). In addition, Gilchrist (2009) notes that globalization has changed the ways in which people interact and in how networks are organized. These interactions need not be viewed through social classes alone but through the new embodiments of social relations and social and political alliances that have emerged in recent years (Beck 1992). This is relevant to developing countries as well as more developed nations. Social problems are now tackled in different ways than a few decades ago, with various groups from different aspects of society and social hierarchy forming

and dissolving temporary coalitions in the interest of a *particular issue* and a *particular situation*. Beck continues that such coalitions "represent pragmatic alliances in the individual struggle for existence and occur on the various battlefields of society" (ibid, 101).

Therefore, the main feature of community is *social networks* constructed by members. Informal social networks can "enhance people's ability to cope with difficulties and disasters by keeping hope alive and bolstering well-being…" (Gilchrist 2009). For example it is common for poor communities to share scarce resources and this can be crucial for the survival of some community members. Communities with strong social networks are more likely to recover from difficulties and disasters, which can be raised in line with social resilience discussions. Conversely, social networks extend beyond the immediate locality and geographical boundaries and can include networks around work, faith and hobbies. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the conventions and customs of social networks can be resources, these customs can also constrain individual aspirations and choices (ibid.).

A second core feature of community is *locality* (Gilchrist 2009, Shatkin 2007, Castells 1983), in that communities are often attached to a locality. This can be associated with strong social networks but also with high population turnover (for example as a result of migration), which undermines feelings of trust, cohesion and personal security (Livingstone et al 2008). These negative feelings within a community have often led to government initiatives that aspire to engage local decision-making in the belief that communities may get more involved if they feel they have a stake in their locality. Specific to the urban South, the creation of localities is "almost exclusively restricted to run-down blocks of flats, slums and squatter areas" (Berner and Korff 1995, 212). In other words, community building is most likely to be attempted in poor areas of the city and requires a high degree of networking in order for these communities to mitigate urban politics and social stratification.

Without overlooking the challenges of collective action in the South (e.g. Simone 2012) it is essential to recognize how dynamic and complex cities are, and to consider the multiple social networks of varying intensity, associated with many different kinds of economic and social processes, and with different locales that bring together people, resources and ideas in diverse combinations that make cultural, religious, political, design, planning, informal trading, financial, institutional and inter-governmental connections (Edensor and Jayne 2012). The incorporation of histories, particularly colonization, and the newly identified yet not fully understood mobilities defy the potential for generalizations.

5.3 Community in the South

Within the urban domain, Edensor and Jayne (2012) assert that collective action[22] has demonstrated value from the perspective of enhancing secure tenure, making visible the many forms of poverty and marginality, and the means of communication and coordination among these different situations and the people who live in them. Collective action is said to have harnessed the financial and political capital necessary to make improvements in material and social conditions and established mechanisms for the distribution of responsibility. These improvements in living conditions, security and political power can thus be attributed to the successful negotiations between networks forged by community organizations (ibid).

Consequently it is possible for the attainments of community action to be taken outside of the domain of the community itself, as individual members can avail of the social or infrastructure attainments for their own benefit. Therefore greater emphasis must be placed on how in cities in the South, residents attempt to maximize the potential opportunities by making contingent efforts to form connections with as many people, networks and scenes as possible (Edensor and Jayne 2012). Although questions about which inhabitants of these cities are making these initiatives and how far these efforts go is arguable, the point is that Southern cities do not reflect the homogeneous patterns that have been pulled from Western theories. Generally, some changes have been seen in how the terms are operationalized in various contexts. For example in India, community development is often referred to as community organizing, and more focus has been, alongside social capital, on "community capacity", "community empowerment" and participation (Gilchrist and Taylor 2011). These terms may mean more to the people who create and use them, yet they evoke feelings of coming from the outside – communities tend to be loci of action but not the source of the action.

In the context of development programs, communities' informal networks become essential to struggles for access to services and survival of difficulties. Social networks can mobilize flexible and efficient ways of delivering support and practical help to members, especially in times of crisis. (Coates 2007, in Gilchrist 2009) The strongest sense of community is said to be from those who find themselves threatened and therefore construct a community identity that provides a sense of solidarity and resistance. Following this school of thought, Gilchrist suggests community building as a device for collective empowerment. The associated social movements tend to lean along two main lines that each requires participation of community members.

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22 In this paper collective action is defined as people coming together for a common goal. Some authors refer to the same definition as 'community action'. These will be used interchangeably.

First, in the defense of the local community, the movement affirms the rights to live in a particular place and to take advantage of urban services such as housing in that place. Secondly, the environmental movement advocates for better quality of life, often with defensive reactions that are localized (Castells 2000, in Susser 2002, 396). Indeed there exists the danger of such social movements to contribute to spatial fragmentation. Yet these social movements have been persistent and have alerted wider society about many inequalities. Communities are essential parts of society in which inequalities are visible and in which the effects of changes can be seen. The concept of community has been incorporated in government policies whereby the involvement of communities is seen as tantamount to the success of local and city-wide programs.

Velasquez et al (2005) discuss community in relation to sustainable development but pose some interesting points:

- Community ushers an aim – *why* we implement certain programs, what we want to achieve and how we want to live. Community, here, becomes the ideal society in which people know and care about each other;
- Community is used to describe *who is participating* in policy matters;
- Community describes the process – *how* things should happen: through participation, grassroots, local action, self-help;
- And to describe the location for policy – *where* it is enacted: places we can know and be known.

Communities themselves tend to welcome programs that focus on their participation. In addition, community participation has been recognized as effective in the success of long-term programs due to the notion that communities themselves have great resources and the power to take responsibility to improve their own circumstances (Velasquez et al. 2005). However, according to Velasquez, some assumptions about community can prompt failure:

- The notion of some type of idealized community seen in previous years. Communities have changed in their construction, their dynamics and their purposes and this needs to be acknowledged.
- Secondly, one should avoid the assumption that poverty and social exclusion are issues the poor can solve by attaining skills through training or capacity building. This assumption belies the fact that social issues can be structural, created by the nature of economic and political systems.
- A third assumption, that community is exclusively a solution for the poor, limits the positive impacts community building can have on wider neighborhoods and at city levels.

- Fourthly, the assumption that capacity building is needed before disadvantaged people can participate in community action when in fact other groups may not be provided such training for the same purposes can be challenged.
- Fifth, social exclusion of disadvantaged communities is often assumed to be concerned with economic status and not power or politics, when in fact it could be associated with political exclusion.
- Lastly, the notion that communities are always good has to be reconsidered. The nature of communities in the past and present have lent practical understanding to the fact that some communities can be oppressive, divisive and hierarchical – this has been seen in both ghettos and gated communities.

Inasmuch as the discussion on community above was linked to the demands for *new processes* in dealing with challenges faced in the South, particularly sustainable development, it may also be linked to the actual manifestations of social transformations that are already taking place to fight poverty and reduce social inequalities. Sustainable development opened the debate regarding community participation in governance, as it challenged the previous top-down approaches that pushed for economic growth, wealth accumulation and the trickle-down effect to reduce poverty. Sustainable development made significant contributions to the development of community-based approaches, especially in its emphasis on the importance of *innovativeness*.

Yet the manners in which civil society raised not only their voices but took action can be argued to come from the need to find solutions to very localized social inequalities (for example in urban service provision) as much as the willingness of local governments to allow or support such solutions to take hold in their localities (see Low 2002; Hickey and Mohan 2004). Thus sustainable development, in certain contexts, may serve as the background for why community involvement was precipitated in the 1990s, but not why specific actors in development carry out community building or participatory programs today. This relates to Castell's (2012, 9) discussion on power whereby social movements exert counterpower "by constructing themselves in the first place through a process of autonomous communication, free from the control of those holding institutional power." Civil actors and state actors may not necessarily carry out programs aimed at improving living and environmental conditions in the name of 'sustainable development'.

'Community' as described above was initially used for industrialized societies of the North. Over the past few decades the social-scientific term has been expanded through development policies and programs, to be used in the South. For the most part, discussions on community are loaded with revolving concepts of social capital and empowerment. 'Community' and 'social capital'

have long been associated with each other.[23] Hanifan first used social capital in 1916 and described it as "those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people" (Gilchrist 2009). Indeed, social capital measures the level of trust between people and social institutions, the networks between personal contacts, and participation in social and civil activities. However, in development discourse social capital and community are, essentially, referring to the same thing, except that social capital retains a strong economic backbone and a class-based parallel to earlier concepts of community.

5.4 Participation for community building in the South

This section focuses on participation as a tool in community building and one that goes hand-in-hand with collective action. The role of participation in development has been linked to various programs that seek to harness collective action at the grassroots level. These have either been piloted by government institutions or by NGOs – in the interest of specific improvements that entail holding meetings in the communities, appointing leaders and establishing committees.

A second mode of participation has been seen in collective organization by locals themselves, where neither state nor other outside actors have mandated the initiative. Such 'community-based collective action' is often with the intention to protect the community from outside threats, to develop infrastructure and services, or to persuade other actors, particularly the government and NGOs, to do so (Shatkin 2007). Less research has been done on this second mode of participation. Yet Shatkin finds that participation from the grassroots is more important to everyday functioning and the formation of social ties because basic collective activities build trust and can motivate the institutionalization of collective action into community based organizations (CBOs). Shatkin's reference to 'community action' is synonymous with 'participation' – the action required in collective organization is participation.

In development research, participation originated from Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), which emphasized the needed role of the grassroots to have greater bearing on development projects and policy development. According to Henkel and Stirrat (2001), the discussion on PRA expresses how participatory approaches to development are an innate part of the process of modernity. They also argue that participatory methods may have found ways of bringing people into the new types of development projects. Participation

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[23] Social capital has since taken foothold in sociological and development discourse, with great influences from Bourdieu (1986), Jacobs (1961), Coleman (1990), and Putnam (1993, 2000). The main difference between social capital and community appears to be that social capital tends to "quantify" a sense of community spirit by assessing the quantity and cooperative quality of a society's social interactions (PIU 2002, in Gilchrist 2009).

was given a central role in local development in terms of communities' participation in service delivery and the formation of social capital. These occurred in the milieu of sustainable development that called for participation in principle and in practice (Velasquez et al. 2005).

As a result, participation can be a tricky theoretical tool due to the many forms in which it has been used and in varying contexts – from rural to urban, in terms of political participation or in cases of local governance or services supply. Thus discussion on participation cannot do without dealing with the criticisms. Questions have been raised on the potential benefits of participation in the context of cities in the South. Developments would generally entail a political atmosphere open to or willing to allow such engagements to take place. However, despite decentralization being lauded as a key in participatory governance and social change, there are some challenges involved. Devolution of power to local authorities also requires that these authorities have the resources together with genuine authority.

In addition, the strong possibility for tokenistic participation persists (Hickey and Mohan 2004a) and can cause communities to become the loci of conflict (Simone 2012). This reinforces the earlier concern of participatory processes being pushed aside by local governments and other political institutions (Shatkin 2007), which can inhibit the potential for social action to gain necessary political support and subsequently be transformative. According to Shatkin, participation has been seen as an excuse for the reduction of funds for community improvement or as a process imposed on the poor by government. According to this thinking, urban poor slum dwellers know little about policies and lack enthusiasm for participation.

A third concern of participation is that it is limited to particular groups within the communities and that, if excluded, some groups may find participation detrimental to their communities. This is noted due to fragmentations that often occur in communities in cities – communities are not often homogeneous. However, Hickey and Mohan (2004a) present convincing examples on why the conception of participation can move away from "participation as tyranny" to "participation as transformation". A few interesting assertions are made.

First, the authors insist that despite the challenges faced by NGOs, there are so many NGOs with varied intentions and activities that some of them have been successful at producing initiatives "capable of promoting participatory development in ways that *do* involve transformations" (Hickey and Mohan 2004, 163). Secondly, there have been impressive results such as improved gender relations, community-state relations, and between age groups in communities, where the REFLECT[24] approach has been used. It uses grounded techniques to

[24] REFLECT stands for Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques. REFLECT is theoretically informed by gender and development thinking and is a rather popular approach for NGOs, which cements the pedagogical and political philosophy of Freire with techniques of participatory rural appraisal (PRA).

acquire knowledge in and with the community (mostly in projects focused on women) about their problems and means of solving them. Thirdly, through the rights-based approach, NGOs have been successful in locating their challenges in the wider framework that is universally recognized and politically powerful. This allows the promise of empowerment and has been successful at transforming "the way in which NGOs engage with marginal groups, relating them as agents with claims rather than as victims in need of 'rescue and rehabilitation'" (ibid, 164).

Fourthly, the shift from project-based work to advocacy has improved the potential for transformation in such a way that poor people's capacities to demand their rights and participate in decision-making are increased. The authors explicate that this may be considered one of the contributions that link participatory development with participatory governance in cases where participation does not simply take the form of popular protest but rather, parties with a rights-based agenda and citizenship approaches. Fifth, Hickey and Mohan (2004) identify that, where participation has played a major role, significant advances have been made across several fields of development and governance to the effect that the potential for empowerment has been reaffirmed. These developments are seen as going beyond simple technical fixes and making clear direction towards more structural transformations.

To summarize, participation has the potential to bring about social transformation, given certain conditions. For community building processes to be successful, they need to take into account the wider socio-economic arena, and to situate the needs of the community into broader city-level agendas. Essentially, community action has to be truly participatory, the goals and means explicit, and political and governance institutions fully on board and willing to engage in the process and with the knowledge that 'communities' are actors in their own right. Given the achievements of many community-building efforts, there remain fundamental issues that continue to cause difficulties in community building endeavors aimed at reducing poverty and inequality. These are discussed next.

5.5 Urban disconnect: the challenge to social transformation

As the previous sections demonstrate, community building is a dynamic process in which social networks, relationships and interactions are constantly being renegotiated within broader socio-political and economic realities. Hence, a striking direction is toward the involvement of the grassroots in community action, but with consideration of what increased participation and successful attempts of community building would require. I theorize that due to considerable differences in the goals and attitudes of communities and other actors in the city, there exists disconnect that interminably challenges efforts of

communities and institutions toward solving local problems. *Urban disconnect* is a concept that I propose to explain the intricate inconsistencies between social policies, institutional behavior and living conditions witnessed in megacities. It refers to the evidence that rights and the laws that accompany them do not often translate into the fulfillment of effective policies and programs that target the poorest segments of the population – even when the enacted policies are socially progressive.

Thus, urban disconnect is found, firstly, in the *fragmentation and differentiation* between various groups and the multitude of varying philosophies and opinions. These variations have demonstrated ability to create a gridlock when it comes to city planning, services supply and services delivery in large metropolises, where social realities are very complex. As Castells (1989, 226) presented, our cities are "a variety of social universes whose fundamental characteristics are their fragmentation, the sharp definition of their boundaries, and the low level of communication with other such universes." Part of this is due to the speed at which urban centers and everyday life have changed, without accompanying transformations in deep social structures and political institutions. Berner and Korff (1995) raise an interesting hypothesis in which metropolises are characterized by conflicts between globalization and localization. Essentially, they point out that the center and the periphery form the background in which urban conflicts in cities in the West and in the South intensify. As profound as the arguments on center and periphery have been, Edensor and Jayne (2012) assert that this way of visualizing the urban is outdated – the center can no longer be seen as being Western, as important economic, political and social centers are increasingly regional. However, the conception of communities as potential centers of conflict in the urban South remains (see Simone 2012).

Given this backdrop, Berner and Korff (1995) expound that due to the limited links the majority of the urban population have with elites or the state, the majority has to develop "social agency" as a basis for the protection of their interests. Social agency is seen in the formation of groups within certain localities, such that the locality is where "group building" [community building] and organization can create multiple relations and interdependencies. Such group building often occurs in the form of community associations that oversee various activities within that community. Berner and Korff however argue that the possibilities for social organization among the urban poor are reduced, given the spatial fragmentation of their contacts. This is due to the *highly localized levels of interaction as they have limited means of communication and scope of action*. Engagements between various actors are often awkward and tedious as they "try to figure out what to do with each other when they find themselves in the same room" (Simone 2012, 35). Additionally, because collective action entails that communities "step into" municipal governance, they become accountable not only financially but also in terms of how the partnerships are created and fostered. Communities entering the domain of government may

require a third actor (see Castells 1983) and in the production of housing, it is NGOs that take the lead. Here lies the first argument for urban disconnect. Informal communities cannot actually take the lead in housing, without the direction of a well-networked NGO, or through some state-approved collaborative program involving other actors.

Secondly, Berner and Korff (1995) also pointed out that *trust, loyalty and solidarity are crucial in the formation of local associations* and thus for community building. Lack of these qualities in the community disengages their local associations and reduces the potential for meaningful action. In addition, one can argue that if such disconnect occurs within communities themselves, disconnect is also likely to occur within other organizations, in state institutions, and between many actors that are involved with local organizations. Therefore, the increasing visibility of participation in poverty reduction in communities poses both a challenge and an opportunity for communities and the NGOs that often work with them, and for the other institutions within whose reach these participatory processes have to or are able to take place.

Thirdly, arguments for *increased mobility and empowerment* that enable communities to navigate the city in terms of their contacts and communication do not go far enough to explain why, despite those improvements, priorities such as housing and other social services are still beyond the reach of the poorest communities. Poverty and its manifestations can be seen as integral to the cities due to these disconnect, rather than as outcomes of failed city planning (Berner and Korff 1995). It becomes a major endeavor to represent the urban poor as active and essential actors in the city, especially due to the popular notion of informal settlers as pests on the city landscape, who take away prime land on which they live for free. The importance of the informal economy on which the poor mostly strive and which contributes to the overall income in the city is often overlooked. Instead of trying to engage with poor communities, many city governments use discriminatory policies to evict them, ignoring their rights.

Fourthly, *increased decentralization* has not only caused what Simone (2012, 33) refers to as the "miniaturizing of local administration and public services". It has occurred to the extent that the gap between local governments and the communities they are supposed to serve has increased stupendously. This has challenged the potential for participation of the communities and local governments to develop from the communities themselves. Instead, 'community organizing' mostly occurs through 'organized groups' such as housing associations, or more frequently, through third parties such as NGOs. In addition, as outlined previously, community building through participation requires shared values and trust. Therefore such circumstances would require a deeper level of engagement than what both the community and the institutions they partner with are accustomed to.

Coupled with this, the issue of governance raises a major challenge to collective action in the city. As "…governance requires both a language of

articulation that enables these domains to recognize themselves as part of the 'same city' and, at the same time, allows singular forms of decision-making and administration," there should be agreements regarding rights and obligations, and communities should have access to implementing institutions and rights "to shape these demands" (Simone 2012, 45). Again the role of third parties is often crucial; they have to know this language and the needs, priorities and workings of all partners and serve as 'representatives' of the people. This raises the long-standing question on who regulates the work of such NGOs and enforces arguments that NGOs' engagement with poor communities can hinder the poor themselves from mobilizing horizontally. This demonstrates even more of the complexity of governance in the sense that various vertical connections are necessary for community building; yet these relationships can also foster patronage by the NGOs (see Hickey and Mohan 2004; de Wit and Berner 2009).

If we can consider the potential of community building to overcome urban disconnect, we can also consider the potential for these initiatives to direct social change. This raises the question: can the community building activities of NGOs in Manila point to social movements? Why/how? The following section raises the main points of social movements, particularly through the lens of Manuel Castells.

5.6 Identifying social movements

The previous sections concentrated on urban social theory with community building and participation as focal concepts. Following the notion that participation and collective action have the potential to address social problems, this section considers how collective action may be transformative. Here I work under the consciousness that transformations of city life through community action may in fact be identified as social movements.

By reviewing developments in policy and political arenas in which structural transformations were visible in one way or another, Hickey and Mohan (2004a, 168-170) identify four *conditions* within which participation can be transformative.

- The explicit articulation of the broader project that was both political and radical in the sense that the objective was to challenge power relations rather than pursue technically efficient service delivery that does not take power relations into account.
- Approaches that achieved transformation at structural and institutional levels and did so by engaging closely with underlying processes of development. These are in the forms of, for example, social movements pioneered by political parties and NGOs, but which seek to strategically

alter inequalities and democratize unequal power relations. One example given is the REFLECT approach referenced above.

- The focus on participation as citizenship draws on ideas of bringing people into the political process, transforming and democratizing the political process, particularly in light of inclusion and exclusion processes present in communities. Essentially this condition is entwined in the REFLECT approach in terms of citizenship formation. It is based on the notion of people's abilities to participate in civil society and the consequent enablement to assert their rights and assume responsibilities (Archer 1998, in Hickey and Mohan 2004a).
- The manners in which political and economic power are accumulated should be structurally disentwined. An analysis of the political economy of participation is needed for full evaluation of the relationships involved in order to determine that ongoing patronage in the name of participation is not being concealed.

There appears to be a somewhat profound connection between collective action, participation and social movements because, as discussed above, these activities challenge power structures and institutional norms. Of course, collective action and participation can be taken as concepts or theoretical tools in themselves. However, these themes repeatedly appear in discussions on social movements. For example, Castells (1983) determines that urban social movements are the most striking expression of new methods of *collective creation of everyday life*. He determines that social movements tend to take place in specific localities or "communities". Thus it is necessary to consider if some forms of urban collective action are in fact social movements.

Like many sociological concepts, social movements can be difficult to specify and to define. The challenge, according to Crossley (2002) lies in some definitions being too broad and others too exclusive – some movements share features while at the same time, all similar movements do not share all the same features. However, one can identify repetitive themes and terms used in the explanation of what a social movement is or how it has developed. These include "collective", "network", "organization", and are drawn from some form of dissatisfaction and to produce "a new form of life" (Blumer 1969, in Crossley 2002). The "creative" quality of social movements is said to be a positive aspect that counters routine institutionalized behavior.

Perceptions of social movements have changed considerably since the inception of the concept. Whereas scholars and elites alike feared social movements prior to the 1960s, the civil rights movement in the United States was just one of the collective actions that changed the theorizing of movements. Both Castells (1983) and Beck (1992) relegate the need to focus on social class alone, and emphasize the need to examine the social structures that have emerged through social transformations. This is especially useful when looking at non-Western societies, so as not to superimpose archetypes of Western

societies on communities in the South. In addition, "networked social movements" as coined by Castells (2004; 2012) emphasizes the dramatic changes in the means of communication and formation of movements as a result of global technological advances. These movements are found in various regions of the globe.

Authors including Eyerman and Jamison (1991) perceive social movements in terms of the processes and forms of activities of the actors on the one hand, and place social movements in political-historical contexts relative to their place and time, on the other hand. This cognitive approach considers social movements as momentary collective creations from which society may draw ideas, identities or ideals (Eyerman and Jamison 1991, 4). Della Porta and Diani (1999) also postulate social movements as struggles that oppose elites and authorities. The issue of protests as elements of social movements has been argued to be part of some movements, but not all. In addition, the idea of movements springing from dissatisfaction is heavily challenged, as not all social movements precipitate change. Yet the consideration of why movements begin and how they are sustained cannot be avoided.

The origins of social movements, according to Castells (1983), can be seen in individuals and in their networking, which is based on cognitive empathy. Furthermore, the ideologies of the movements are embedded in their practices and how this process is constructed "determines the role of these ideational materials in the meaning, evolution and impact of the social movement" (ibid, p.16). Castells considers movements that become ideological experiments or political instruments as those whose defined goals and representations are too far from their reality. He claims that movements whose ideas are based on the experiences of their participants and thus generated from within have the potential to be more representative and enthusiastic.

In addition to the question of why social movements arise, I perceive four core questions often discussed in social movement literature: are social movements individual or collective, in what spaces are they found, what are the connections between the individuals and their networks, and what are the impacts of these networks on institutions and on the movements themselves (Castells 1983, Harvey 2009). The issue of networks ties into the earlier discussion on community. It is now necessary to understand what collective action and networks mean in terms of social movements and to address the issue of spaces and how the individual fits into the collective action discussion.

5.6.1 Collective identities in social movements

Considering social movements through the lens of collective identity appears crucial in social movement theorizing. Crossley (2002) identifies several definitions for social movements centered on identities, shared beliefs and solidarity, as discussed by della Porta and Diani (1999) and Castells (1983). In addition, social movements theories are engrossed with the key concepts of

collective behavior, resource mobilization/political process and new social movements.[25] Together with the resource mobilization theorists, network theorists including Jo Freeman placed networks and social ties at the center of social movements. However, at that stage, the emotional aspect of social movements remained obscure (Goodwin and Jasper 2015).

Collective identity on the other hand, has been heavily substantiated as it is through this concept that theorists try to understand the gaps in resource mobilization and political process models. Collective identity has been the main concept used to explain how social movements are engendered and sustained, and how the actors identify each other and maintain cohesive relationships (Fominaya 2010).[26] Poletta and Jasper (2001, 285) define collective identity as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity."

Poletta and Jasper (2001) present four key questions collective identity attempts to answer:

- Why do collective actors come into being at a specific moment? This question helps to explain how specific interests emerge by focusing on the macro historical contexts in which the movements develop.
- What motivates people to participate? Collective identity encapsulates the issues that persuade people to mobilize and is a good alternative to material motivations.
- How are strategic choices made? This considers that people make choices to join movements intrinsically – a reflection of what they believe, like, are comfortable with, and who they are.
- What are the cultural effects of social movements? This is to capture the movements' outcomes as well as how movements transform cultural representations and social norms.

Of course, as with other concepts further questions arise, and one that is particularly of interest here is on whether collective identities are imposed on groups or invented by them (Poletta and Jasper 2001). In this respect, others can

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25 The resource mobilization school of the 1960s and 1970s found that formal organizations created social movements due not only to the availability of discontented people in society, but as a result of having the resources to fund the movements. With the emergence of the Internet the potential to raise funds for the growing numbers of movements continues to be relevant to the sustainability of a social movement (Goodwin & Jasper 2015).

26 According to Fominaya (2010), the concept of collective identity has been discussed due to the notion that other theories such as resource mobilization, political process models, rational choice theories, which are more structural, did not consider necessary social-psychological, emotional and cultural factors.

first construct a collective identity but its enforcement depends on those to whom it is applied, and collective identity comes with positive feelings for other members of the group. Nevertheless the success of the social movement is dependent on the activists' abilities to politicize the existing collective identity (see Goodwin and Jasper 2015).

5.6.2 Connections between individuals and networks

Castells (1983) considers social movements as the most striking expression of new methods of the collective creation of everyday life. These movements are likely to occur in communities that have strong social ties and where members have collective identities around local spaces. According to Susser (2002) Castells' creative thinking is essential to understanding how social movements are able to precipitate social change. In The City and the Grassroots Castells (1983, 294) makes a distinction between political systems, which he considers as dependent and as part of the state, and social movements which "exist, develop and relate to civil society, and are not necessarily limited to, or bound by, the rules of the game and the institutionalization of dominant values and norms."

Hence, social movements are hinged on the dynamics of group formation and cohesion. The focus of social movements on identities, ideas and ideals form the 'new social movements' debate drawn by Castells. These new social movements, such as environmentalism, post-1960s feminism, etc., move away from 'old social movements' that were heavily class-based. When based on collective consumption, social movements are deep enough to effect major shifts in the goals and values of societies, and these shifts cut across social classes (Susser 2002). The emphasis is such that through civil society, social movements intrinsically provide the basis for challenging the norms and values that are to be enforced by the state. However, Castells proclaims the individual as the source of the practices that foster the birth of social movements and the change of institutions and social structure (1983, 13).

When speaking of social movements and collective action, the role of the individual in relation to the community is more useful than social capital. Theorists often identify the instigators of social action as "agency" (Castells 2012). However, Castells calls these persons individuals, as will I. Here, I perceive the individual as an actor in the field and that the actions or motivations of the individual do not need to be cloaked in concepts such as social capital or agency. Castells argued that at the individual level, social movements are emotional in nature and the emotions most relevant to social mobilization are fear and enthusiasm. For Castells (2012), hope is founded on goal-seeking behavior of the approach system, whereby individuals are enthusiastic about mobilizing toward a cherished goal. Nonetheless, individuals have to overcome fear or anxiety in the avoidance system for hope to prevail and for the need to connect with other individuals through a communication process. This process entails sharing of feelings and "the faster

and more interactive the process of communication is, the more likely the formation of a process of collective action becomes…" (ibid., 15) These emotions are essentially personal, therefore individual. Hence collective action is taken, in the simplest sense, by a group of individuals.

Nevertheless, Castells' choice of the individual does not mean that he does not recognize collective identity. What Castells proclaims is that it is individuals who connect with each other and their communication leads to collective action. The networks created between these individuals are based on shared feelings and togetherness. This notion of networking and forms of communication are very similar to discussion on community, as described earlier in this chapter. Networks are firm components of community life.

5.6.3 Spaces for social movements

Space is imperative in social movement discussion. Yet it is a very complex issue that raises a string of additional concepts. Space is defined by Kuper (1972; in Pellow 2002, 278) as site, a specific piece of "social space" that is separate from other spaces, where values can be identified. Simply put the social construction of space attempts to connect the individual (or agent) to a specific place through everyday practices. Space appears to have a more value-loaded meaning than land-based meaning. Of course the use of space is linked to the infrastructure in and around it, and perhaps who built or commissioned the space. For example Pellow identifies colonial powers' use of local resources in the colonies to create spaces similar to those in the home country. Post-colonization, these spaces become representative of history, although residents may choose to change these spaces and create a social movement.

Castells (1983) and Harvey (2009) presented a range of examples of grassroots organizations dealing with housing issues from class-based perspectives. Harvey (2009, 34) emphasizes the need to engage with the processes that occur in social spaces because social space is composed of "individual feelings and images about and reactions toward the special symbolism surrounding the individual." From his perspective, individuals derive common images from group norms, judge their significance and behave in the same way. However, group behavior can vary depending on the groups' characteristics.

From the point of view of people's utilization of social movements to control dominant classes, Low (2002) identifies Castells' and Harvey's failures to address the agency of the individual actor and how spatial structures influence behavior (and how behavior influences experience, use and allocation of space). It follows that one can also consider urban social spaces as formulated around particular interactions, conventions and values (Tonkiss 2005). Crossley (2002) discusses social movements as potential sites of argument and internal disagreement, which follow Eyerman and Jamison's (1991) notion of public

spaces or public sphere. Thus social space is as unique from physical space as it is complex, heterogeneous and possibly, discontinuous (Harvey 2009).

The underlying issue here is *power* in the use or control of space. This can be a complex issue with various conceptions of how power relations are played out. Low (2002a) outlines the theorizing of power in relation to space by Foucault and other scholars, who examines the role of architecture as a form of political technology for governments to have power over individuals. However the issue of how space is re-appropriated was overlooked in the architecture discussion, which could have recognized the practices of everyday life more concretely. Bourdieu's (1977) spatialization of everyday behavior "examines how the sociospatial order is translated into bodily experience and practice" (in Low 2002a, 114). Bourdieu's concept of habitus provides principles of collective strategies and social practices for the reproduction of existing structures; it also identifies the resistance and the impacts of feedback on the social system.

According to Castells (2012), institutions embody power and the ways these state and non-state institutions regulate individuals' lives is dependent on the constant interactions between power and counterpower. Counterpower is conceptualized by Castells as social actors' abilities to challenge the power of institutions in order to claim representation of their own values and interests. Counterpower is somewhat synonymous with Bourdieu's 'resistance'. Principally, counterpower can be significant enough to ensure that state monopoly in the form of coercion or intimidation cannot be sustained (ibid.).

Low's (2002a) own anthropological work identified sociopolitical forces, efforts aimed at social control, and spatial practices as areas of insight into conflicts arising from groups' endeavors to claim and define the urban spaces. She highlights the importance of values and people's representations of these values in their public spaces. Furthermore, the control of spaces can be increased by the state when previously invisible (and often illegal) activities are made visible by the renewal of public space, and exposed by modern landscape or architecture. According to Low, when the strategy for control fails, the state abandons and rebuilds the space. This representation raises the dichotomy of defining and owning space, and the politicization of space.

Attempting to clarify the issue of space within urban social theory can be daunting. However, Tonkiss (2005) raises two main points that frame the politization of space and allows consideration of the many concepts raised in this chapter. First, urban spaces are both points of struggle and resources for political mobilization. Essentially, she politicizes spatialization, which raises questions about power, identity, and ownership of space. Secondly, Tonkiss identifies spaces as urban sites of micro-politics where individuals exercise their spatial rights and at the same time negotiate the spatial claims of others. Accordingly, conflicts over the meaning and uses of space can be traced from everyday experiences to wider perceptions of social order and social inclusion (ibid).

5.7 Summary

Social networks and locality are seen as operational concepts necessary in the analysis of community, especially in the South. This was supported by Ulrich Beck's (1992) discussion on urban communities, in which coalitions or networks form the basis of efforts to reduce inequality and develop strong bonds between community members. Such networks are strongest where community members have fervent social bonds and collective identity. However I introduce the concept of urban disconnect to help identify and understand sources of complexities in urban social life. I further explore the potential for power shifts in socio-political systems to foster social movements, as Castells (2012) outlines – but only if they can overcome urban disconnect. Castells' (1983; 2012) theory of social movements emphasizes the importance of social networks and social ties that cross social classes, challenge norms and bring about changes in social structures.

Urban social theory concentrates on urban social forms and forces that shape onto everyday life. A shift in theorizing everyday life from the traditional to the modern society emerges in such a way that the heterogeneous forms of spatial, structural and cultural practices are recognized. In this chapter, these spatial forms are discussed in relation to the roles of collective action and participation in communities. The utilization of urban social theory as well as the concepts of participation and community that are found in development discourse shows the multidisciplinary nature of this study. I attempt to use these ideas in a complementary manner, to identify where they converge and can be used to grasp the complex social setting in the analyses of the empirical data. The following chapters present and analyze the empirical data from Metro Manila.

CHAPTER 6: INFORMAL SETTLERS AND HOUSING PROGRAMS IN METRO MANILA

This chapter discusses the findings of this study at the community level, focusing on the first wheel presented in chapter one. Firstly, there are many actors working on housing for the "poorest of the poor". Secondly, the programs follow various means of providing shelter with a fundamental component involving information and training sessions prior to, during, and sometimes following relocation. These are referred to as "social preparation" and "values formation". Thirdly, the presence of professional squatters appears to pose a challenge to the families seeking adequate housing and the organizations offering housing programs.

The chapter attempts to pull together knowledge on professional squatters and the ways in which housing providers in Metro Manila encapsulate unique forms of community building, for example through 'values formation' and 'social preparation'. Unless otherwise stated, the chapter utilizes primary data gathered during fieldwork, mainly through interviews and observation from two informal settler communities and two relocated communities as they were encountered in Manila in 2012.

6.1 Who are "squatters" and "informal settler families"?

Many terms have been used to describe people who live in unregulated areas or on illegally occupied land. In the Philippines, the terms "squatters" and "informal settlers" are commonly used. "Informal settler families" is a universal term for squatters in the Philippines to denote persons who live in informal settlements. It was previously "squatters", which was seen to be politically incorrect; hence the government now uses informal settler families. Some organizations also use "underprivileged persons". NGOs and other

organizations also use the term. The National Housing Authority considers informal settler families as the poorest 30 per cent and as informally employed. Sources of livelihood for informal settlers are selling of banana cue, hawking, driving of motorcycle sidecars, and scavenging, to name a few.

IMAGES 6 & 7 Houses and livelihood in Ulingan, Manila (Coker 2012)

The term "squatter" is widely used in everyday language, and by squatters themselves, to denote persons or families living in informal settlements. It appears to have the same social meaning as the more official 'informal settler families'. For example according to one of the interviewees who had lived in the area for 26 years:

> "Because of our situation here, we are squatters, we are not secured of our living here, we never know how long we will be living in the area." (Marisol, interview 2012)

Although the definitions of squatters given by interviewees working for the government centered on informality of employment, Habitat for Humanity Philippines found that some squatters were in formal employment such as teaching. One of the women interviewed also worked as a teacher while squatting for many years. In some of the families that I interviewed, husbands were employed as company drivers or cooks, while some women worked in factories or as cleaners employed by the city. Informal employment is thus

common among squatters, but even for those living in danger zones, informal employment cannot be seen as a defining aspect (see Neuwirth 2005).

A more holistic definition would involve acknowledging squatters as *very low income families who do not have access or resources, or are unwilling to access formal housing for which they would have tenure security, and who live illegally in unregulated areas or structures without amenities such as potable water, sanitation, drainage, paved roads and waste management.* The settlements squatters inhabit are often very dense and sometimes located in danger zones, such as along waterways, under bridges and rail tracks, where they are vulnerable to extreme weather and to fire. Some informal settlements, such as Ulingan in Manila, may revolve around a specific means of livelihood, in this case charcoal production. A third of families in Ulingan are charcoal producers and children also help in the process. Informal settler families in such areas are vulnerable to a string of health issues.

The root cause for the high number of informal settlements was attributed to the high land prices caused by immense scarcity of property in Metro Manila. High prices make it difficult for informal settlers to buy or rent formally, hence they are forced to squat. The urban poor cannot afford to pay for the land, particularly privately owned land, which is sold at the commercial price. Seldom can one find available plots for housing in Pasay and other cities in Metro Manila, as the metropolis is already very crowded. The issue of scarcity and high prices is a major contributor to squatting:

> "[it is] really hard for squatters to look for a better place, like in villages... Of course they cannot afford that" (AD, Interview 2012).

In the above quote, the interviewee refers to villages, which are formal and often gated communities popular in Metro Manila. When many of the interviewees moved to Manila they came as single or newly married. The family sizes grew, as several interviewees had 5 or 6 children. In Ulingan, many children whose parents had a charcoal kiln helped in the charcoal production process, indicating that the families were too poor to send their children to school, or that they needed them to work so they could earn more money. The average income of families in Ulingan was around 300 Pesos per day, about 4,50 Euros per day. This level of poverty means that renting adequate housing from the private market is really not an option for these families.

6.1.1 Where they live

In Ulingan, the informal settlement in the city of Manila where one set of interviews were conducted, most houses were built from light materials and many were located right on the sea wall. These houses are very susceptible to flooding and had periodically been destroyed during heavy rains and typhoons.

IMAGES 8 & 9 Houses along the end of Manila Bay, and an alley, Ulingan, Manila (Coker 2012)

In addition, the residents spoke of the dangers of potential fires with great seriousness, especially in Pasay, where structures are dense. NGOs in the area were also gravely concerned as it caused intense fear and danger for residents. Anytime there is a fire alarm, people take their belongings outside and return to their homes if nothing serious has happened. This fear and uncertainty has made it difficult for Ana to sleep at night, as many fires happened in the evenings or at night.

It is well documented that common problems in slums are sanitation and waste management (UN-Habitat 2010; Wilson et al. 2006). Most waste ended up in the adjacent sea in Ulingan and the Pasay river. As there are no paved roads or drainage infrastructure in most informal settlements, the rainy season means muddy walkways and stagnant water, which results in residents contracting malaria and dengue fever. Families in Pasay were located along the river, which was polluted by garbage and human waste from shared toilets dumped directly into the river.

> "The lifestyle there was very hard, we always have troubles" (Ana, Interview 2012).

Interviewees humorously described the river as "a very big septic tank". The river was so full of garbage that she and her son were easily sick and always had to see a doctor. The women in Pasay had also experienced very strong flooding when the water from the river overflowed. For Ana, the idea of having her own "comfort room" (local term for toilet) was somewhat of an obsession

and she was nearly in tears as she recounted her experiences with the shared toilets. She dreamt that she would one day have her own bathroom with tiles.

The conditions of informal settlements trigger unease especially where children are concerned. Although I cannot make assertions on the health of the children I encountered, studies show that the health of children in slums tends to be considerably worse than in other areas of the city or rural areas (UN-Habitat 2010; Fry et al 2002). The smoky conditions in Ulingan are particularly concerning for the children who live there. There are many school-age children (around ages 7 to 10) in Ulingan who do not attend school because their families need money and the children work in the charcoal-making process selling what they get from the wood and leftover charcoal. Thus aside from the health concerns from the environment, the work some of the children do causes additional concern. Some of the children who work in the charcoal kilns were said to have come from "broken families" where there is only one parent and they need to help the single parent. A teacher in the area stated that about 60 students enrolled in the local public kindergarten at the beginning of the school year but only 40 would graduate. Interviewees in Ulingan said their children did go to school and the schools were close by; walking distance or a single jeepney [local commuter jeep] ride away. Issues to do with children are not as researched as one would expect.

This sub-chapter identifies squatters as low income families living in informal housing areas and who do not have access or are unwilling to access tenured housing in Metro Manila. It identifies the main social and economic challenges affecting the communities visited during the empirical data collection as extreme poverty, lack of access to health services, and environmental hazards not only from the environment but also from the sources of livelihood in the case of Ulingan.

6.2 Access to land and social services

Empirical data shows that informal settler families are people who live illegally on land that they do not own or that they rent from illegal landlords. The land is often privately owned and the occupants do not have security of tenure. The houses are often built on such land located along waterways, dumpsites and under bridges and electricity lines, which are classified by the city governments as danger zones. The living conditions of informal settler families vary according to where they are located, the type of houses they occupy and the kinds of services available in the area. These areas grow from a few houses to hundreds over long periods of time, with some residents living in the area for 20 or 30 years, or more, without ever making payments to the legal landowner. After living there for some time, the squatters tend to perceive the place as their permanent home.

There exist some subtle differences between informal settlements. Although the levels of poverty may not vary dramatically, the environments in which the people live can vary significantly. In Ulingan for example, the abundance of smoke from the charcoal kilns made the air and everything in the area black. In fact many children encountered had black hands, feet and faces, and had apparently been working. In addition, Ulingan is located at the very end of Pier 18 in Manila Bay, hence being extremely vulnerable to typhoons and heavy rain. The type of shelters in the area intensified this feeling. Houses located close the charcoal kilns were mainly made of lightweight materials and were covered in charcoal dust. However, across the main access road into the area, houses where built from bricks and brightly covered.

In a second informal settlement in Pasay, many houses were made of a combination of materials, mostly bricks and wood. Those houses made of more substantial materials gave the impression of being permanent, and they are often brightly colored, making them nicer and neater, compared to the charcoal-covered houses in Ulingan. However, the squatters in different parts of Ulingan had lived there for an equally long time. It then appears to be either an issue of choice or of financial ability to upgrade the quality of housing. Access to services in the informal settlements is a serious problem for squatters. As they have no tenure security, they cannot make demands on landlords to provide basic services, nor are these families automatically included on any local government services such as water, sanitation and electricity. Many squatters found themselves buying water at high cost in Ulingan.

IMAGE 10 A water collection point in Ulingan, Manila (Coker 2012)

However, informal settler families can group together to gain access to loans, for example in order for water services to be formally delivered to the community. In the case of Ulingan, Councillor Dennis Alforeza assisted the community with obtaining the loan that enabled them to pay the connection fees for Maynilad. Before the Maynilad water they fetched water at 3 Pesos per container; following the connection it is 2 Pesos per container.

Those who had electricity in Ulingan tapped it from nearby lines while a few had sub-meters. However, the interviewees in Pasay were connected to the electricity grid and had their own meters. There were a few informal settler families who had televisions and other electronic and household appliances. For example an interviewee in Ulingan was a shopkeeper who had electricity and a working refrigerator. Her store and home gave the impression that she was a little bit better off than some other inhabitants in the area.

The challenge of not having ownership and legal rights clearly stems from the communities' inabilities to access housing rights. For example potable water was available for all in Ulingan while only a few had electricity, which was tapped from power lines near the area. The potable water was accessed following initiatives of the local housing association and the local government, decades after people had settled in the area. This is relatively common in squatter settlements; local politicians or NGOs assist the families in accessing amenities.

6.3 The problem of professional squatters

Living amongst families in the slums are likely to be *professional squatters*, who may have been some of the first to arrive in the area, established their homes and rent rooms to newcomers. The issue of professional squatters continued to appear during interviews with persons from local NGOs and with the government agencies. "Professional squatters" is a term that has appeared in academic text on the Philippines and a few other developing countries since the early 1990s, albeit sporadically and minimally. Yet in almost every interview with housing providers in Manila, there was mention of professional squatters.

> "Because it's really very hard to pinpoint who are the professional squatters and who are the real squatters... Of course I have my subjective point of view on that no. But there are… I see also a lot of professional squatters. For example there are some families who are living in the danger zones but their houses are air-conditioned. I've seen one house there, maybe the area is half of this office, but the whole house is air-conditioned. And then there are some families who have not only one house in the area but they have plenty of houses, they rent out, that's actually their business. In fact in one of the areas the barangay captain is, I don't know, if you can consider him as professional squatters... He owns a lot of houses in the area." (BG, interview 2012)

> "…[the houses are made from] light materials, shanties also. But since she bought maybe the rights, then [she] rented the house made of light materials. But the place where she is staying, is concrete. Her house is made of concrete and of course it's air-conditioned. But she has a lot of properties there in the area. Not only three, four, five, maybe up to 10 or even more." (BG, interview 2012)

IMAGE 11 Informal houses on the Pasay river, Manila (Coker 2012)

The explanations of the NGO interviewees indicate that professional squatters are those residing in very poor communities but who may not be regarded as the poorest of the poor. The use of air conditioning speaks for income level, as the use of air conditioning is very expensive in Manila – something that would be a real luxury for very low-income families. What is significant about the recognition and concern about the professional squatters is that all the persons in NGOs and government that I spoke with mentioned their concern about professional squatters and the importance of ensuring their programs are not availed by such families.

IMAGE 12 Boys posing in Ulingan, Manila (Coker 2012)

The following was discussed in the first interview conducted in Manila. The interviewee, an NGO worker, tries to explain who professional squatters are.

> JE: From what I understand, let's say there's a family. This family will avail of a socialized housing program of the government, meaning this family will get a house and lot in a relocation site, which is most probably in Rizal. San Mateo, Rizal or Montalban… and then what the family will do is sell it, not in a formal way, but just give me money and you can stay in my house, and then they will go back and squat again. And then eventually they will avail of another program, so it becomes a business.
>
> Abidemi: It's smart to pull that off. But how [do] you get away with it over and over again?
>
> JE: I'm sure you know this, there's professional squatting, and there are syndicates there, where in a group asks money from all the other [families]. So these guys are actually paying rent. (Interview 2012)

State actors interviewed also spoke of professional squatters in terms of persons who live in the danger zones and access housing which they then sell or transfer into the names of close family members. The family that initially got the house then moves back to their former home in the slum and applies once more for the same or another housing scheme. A description from an NHA officer was:

> "They are giving other names. I am the awardee already, then they will transfer it to other names, their daughters, their in laws, etc. Just to get the benefits of the relocation." (SM, interview 2012)

On the other hand professional squatters could be identified through their lack of interest in the housing programs. The concern of housing programs was that families who did not want to participate in housing acquisition claimed they could not afford the amortization payments. The interviewees from government institutions and NGOs were all of the opinion that although the families were extremely poor, the amounts to be paid were low enough for them to meet. One manager from an NGO gave an example of a couple that updated on their amortization payments despite being scavengers (they collect and sell paper and bottles) with a large family. Therefore those who did not want to access housing with tenure security were inadvertently considered professional squatters.

A second reason given by squatters who did not want to move was that they preferred free housing, or that they were already homeowners as they had built their houses themselves already. This was true for many families in Ulingan and Pasig – they had lived in the area for a long time, and had their children and extended families living in the same area. Those that came in later had family members who had been there for longer, sometimes decades. In some cases these people rent houses or rooms to other squatters. As they are currently living rent free, they do not want to be transferred and burdened by

the cost of the new housing – no matter how low this cost may be. This attitude exists despite the fact that both the areas visited were to be evicted eventually, and all squatters in the area were given the opportunity to be relocated to an area where, as they perceive it, they will be required to pay "rent". This rent is actually payments for ownership of subsidized low cost housing units in new areas through the NHA's housing scheme. The lack of interest in relocation indicates the possibility that some of those families who do not want to transfer are professional squatters.

An added dimension of the squatters perceptions of relocation and payments has to do with the different ways in which information is given to them by the government, on the one hand, and the NGOs on the other. During the field visits, some squatters asked about the conditions in the relocation areas, as they heard squatters relocated in other government sponsored projects arrived in the new homes to find there no water or sanitation or electricity. These families were therefore reluctant to join the program even though they were interested in formal housing. Consequently, a major problem of having professional squatters in the community has to do with the fact that their presence may significantly hamper community-organizing efforts that are geared toward improving the housing area, or attaining government and NGO programs for relocation.

The presence of professional squatters and the difficulty in separating regular informal settlers from professional squatters has made the administrative process longer by undermining the legitimacy of other authentic housing applications and causing NGOs and government agencies to invest a lot of time and effort in deciphering them from families who are in need. Despite the foremost challenge of ensuring that squatters who have once received social housing do not make second successful application, the interviewee at the NHA local office felt they were equipped to handle the problem – it just took a bit of time.

> "We are very experienced; we know the tricks they have been doing to us." (SM, interview 2012)

Some professional squatters want to attain new houses that they then sell off, while others want to remain on the land on which they currently reside without having to pay rent or ownership costs. These persons also fit the description of "incalcitrants" as they are often referred to – people who complicate or lengthen the process of housing access by disapproving plans for the area, not attending meetings and changing their stance time and again, or causing conflict in the homeowners associations. The issue of professional squatters cannot be downplayed as they can undermine the process dramatically, increase the timeline and create distrust between the families and the organizations, especially state providers. This is one of the main areas where urban disconnect can be seen in Manila. The need to conduct thorough checks takes considerable

time. The checks are necessary and feasible in the smaller housing programs seen, but the rigorous checks can be problematic for larger scale projects.

6.4 Housing for the 'poorest of the poor'

The families living in the informal areas identified for relocation in the cases presented earlier are considered some of the poorest in the city as they lacked not only adequate housing, but also social safety nets. State housing authorities such as the Community Mortgage Program considered these families the "poorest of the poor" – homeless and under-privileged. They are recognized as families without security of tenure and as informally employed. In the case of Ulingan described above, environment in which the families lived – on a former waste dumpsite – is an indication of their level of poverty. Defining poverty does not need to be a contentious issue. Earning barely enough to pay for food and shelter are established parameters for determining poverty.

For those living in challenging and health threatening environments, housing poverty is often seen as the most present problem. Thus the families in Ulingan and Phase three informal housing areas can be considered not only as poor, but chronically poor. Chronic poor are individuals or households that are poor for extended periods or for their lifetimes and whom are least likely to be affected by national or international development (Hulme et al 2001). As "poor" can be a very political term, that some of my interviewees were the poorest of the poor is my perception, which correlates with that of the NGOs working in these informal settlements. Thus the well-founded goal in all the projects studied was to relocate the poorest families to adequate housing areas and provide them with affordable units with security of tenure. This, for all actors was due to the knowledge of the conditions of the poor families as well as the understanding that the families in the informal areas are unlikely able to attain adequate housing on their own.

Due to the increased understanding of urban housing and the presence of professional squatters, for both state and NGO housing initiatives, the first step is to identify genuine squatter families and those that have not previously availed of other housing schemes. This recognition of families as informal settlers is done by the local government units (LGUs), which, according to presidential declaration, must have their own shelter plans. The shelter plans are essentially inventories of government-owned properties within the LGU and master lists of informal settlers in their locality. The master list is crucial in the allocation of housing to informal settlers so as to avoid awarding houses to professional squatters. Hence the LGU's master list had not only to identify the members of the area but also to ascertain whether they are squatters and/or considered poor. It was gathered that the distinction of informal settlers was made mostly on the nature of their housing as well as the services (or lack

thereof) of the families. Area census data was also used by LGUs to determine which families were the poorest.

The housing units of relocated families varied but they all had access to basic amenities – potable water, electricity, waste management. This study did not consider the direct correlations between housing access and poverty reduction and other social challenges within the new communities. However, the relocated community members interviewed felt housing poverty was diminished as a result of the programs, which allowed them to improve their overall standard of living. In simple terms they could afford food, education for their kids and felt comfortable with their living conditions. In addition, many families spoke not only of the improved quality of life in the new areas but also the responsibilities that came with being a member of the new community and the security they felt from that. The process of housing provision was not merely about getting the physical house. The programs of SHEC and Gawad Kalinga had strong emphasis on changing the mindset of the people. This was done through social preparation and values formation, discussed in section 6.7.

6.5 The processes of housing provision

Many of the steps for housing provision were the same for different communities and organizations. As complex as some of the schemes were, the first task of the organizations was to identify qualified families living in informal communities or danger zones. A representative or team from the NGOs or the state institution often did this, and are expected to get to know the community well. SHEC for example initially did an immersion of its staff into the communities to learn the experiences and needs of the people in order to develop the project. Their housing programs were deemed a priority, as housing is apparently what the families living in danger zones said were most important to them.

Once the families apply, the master lists on the residents in the area have to be checked. In the case of Gawad Kalinga, families applied for the program through their barangay. As stated earlier, the master lists developed by local government units were important for all organizations in this identification procedure so as to avoid the enlisting of professional squatters in the housing programs. The second step was to approach the families and request they form a communities association and register their association with the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). This was the case for the programs of the National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Community Mortgage Program (CMP).

The process for housing acquisition for all the organizations is generalized as:

1. Identification of families either through their applications or by immersion of organization's staff
2. Checking of master lists
3. Formation of a community association (for NHA the association has to be registered with HLURB)
4. Identification of the needs of the community and partners
5. Identification and purchase of land (either privately or government owned)
6. Agreement on the housing plans (this includes social preparation by state providers and values formation by NGOs)
7. Commencement of building (and families' sweat equity)
8. Completion, relocation and continuation of values formation

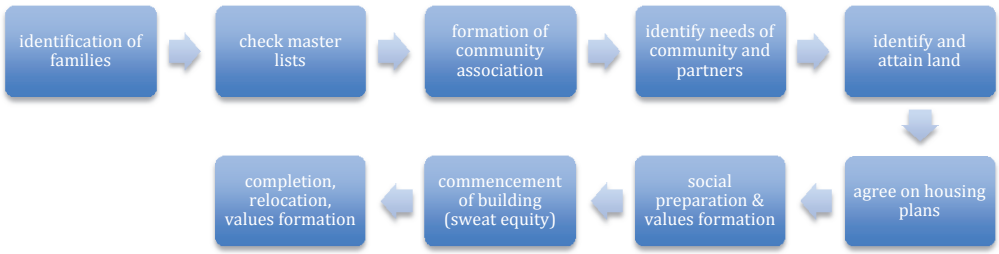

FIGURE 5 Simplified process of housing provision in Manila

The formation of associations was a necessary step for all applicants, whether families applying through the CMP or other direct application method, or when an organization initiates the process in an existing informal settlement. One example of access to services through an association is from Ulingan where their community association received the assistance of city councilor Dennis Alforeza and raised 220,000 Pesos for Maynilad [water company] to bring water to their community.[27] The councilor, fondly called DA, made the down payment worth 100,000 Pesos and the community paid the balance of 120,000 Pesos in installments. The association also repaid the councilor over time. This process took place from 2004 to 2009, and the community was connected to water in 2008. The association gathered not only enough money for the water connection but continued to save. The savings of the association have been used to pay not only for the continued water supply but also for unforeseen expenses such as assisting members in case of death in their family.[28]

27 PHP220, 000 was around USD4685 in September 2015 and USD1 equaling PHP47.
28 Figures are based on interviews with community members and urban poor group working in Ulingan. The two actors corroborated the figures.

Collecting membership payment was useful not only for services but for assisting in the cost of housing and land. The only organization to give land and housing completely for free is Gawad Kalinga, which receives donations from business leaders and politicians, and in some cases from the local governments. As participatory activities were key in all the housing initiatives studied, the various participatory methods will be discussed in the following chapter. The next two sub-sections focus on the specific characteristics of state-run housing programs (through the NHA and CMP) and non-state programs. Particular attention is given to the differences in terms of expectations of the communities and networks or partners of the different organizations.

6.5.1 State housing

In some cases, the NHA partners with a local NGO, such as with St. Hannibal Empowerment Center. In this respect the NHA mainly contributes technical expertise in the form of the vigorous check that families applying for the program had not received social housing previously, and financially, by contributing significantly to the costs and acquisition of the land and financing the housing loans. However, whereas the CMP often deals with privately owned land which they then ask the landowner to voluntarily sell to the occupants, the NHA often handles government owned land, from which they relocate settlers to another part of the city.

The local government is tasked then with providing an area for the relocation of families, or in the case where the land was privately owned and given to certain organizations to build on, it is the LGU that demolishes existing structures on the plot. They work together with the NHA and the NGO involved but do not provide direct financial input. As an example, the homeowners association in an un-relocated community in Pasay, where fieldwork was conducted, had invited the local government and the NHA to join their meetings during the negotiation and planning process, even though the program was overseen by a local housing NGO. This dialogue and inclusion of the LGU makes access to certain resources, such as land, more viable within the city itself and promotes partnership with the NGO working in that community for current and future projects. Mainly, the funding authority and the necessary government institutions carries out the process depicted above.

Despite the challenges, a key in the application of the NHA's housing program is the gravity of its concentration in ensuring that applicants who avail of their programs are truly members of squatter communities and have not availed of socialized housing programs before. This makes their database very important not only for their own organization but also for other government programs such as the CMP and NGOs providing housing for the poor. Working with the NHA would be important for maintaining the fundamental purpose of pro-poor housing schemes. Moreover, as the organization is a national

institution, it has the potential to serve as the main conduit for implementing housing rights in lieu of the national poverty reduction goals.

Thus the NHA, like the Community Mortgage Program is a reasonable institution for meeting the housing needs of the poor. The NHA has a more localized reach as it has offices in local government areas around the metropolis and oversees projects directly through these local wings. This makes considering the needs of the people more possible, though it adds to the amount of time and bureaucracy involved in the process. The NHA's process takes at least two years, for various reasons, including the fact that it works across cities and local governments (such as in a recent project that cleared and relocated squatters along a main train track). The problem with the state programs is that although the CMP and NHA target "the poorest of the poor" and provide very similar programs, there are variations in their process that have resulted in both schemes not meeting the extent of the housing needs in the city. Clearly, some duplication of tasks is taking place.

What are particularly of interest to this study however, are the participatory components in the housing process, which include the formation of associations early in the process and the subsequent values formation and social preparation activities. Participation is mandatory and requires significant dedication from the families involved in the projects.

6.5.2 Housing by NGOs

The GK community I met with and interviewed is composed of 50 families who have been relocated from danger zones mainly around the city of Pasay. The community members applied for housing through their barangay after hearing of GK's proposed project in the area. Once they successfully met the criteria, they were referred to GK and those willing to proceed had to undergo "values formation". The community is somewhat artificially created during the values formation and in the process of building their own homes. This took several months and the project was completed with over 1200 man-hours per family. The completed buildings are on two floors, and each apartment has two floors. Although small, the residents appeared very content with having security of tenure and took great pride in keeping their surroundings and relationships with each other sound. Many of the community members were very poor families and most of the women I spoke with or encountered were housewives. Others are a street cleaner and factory worker, and domestic helper, to name a few.

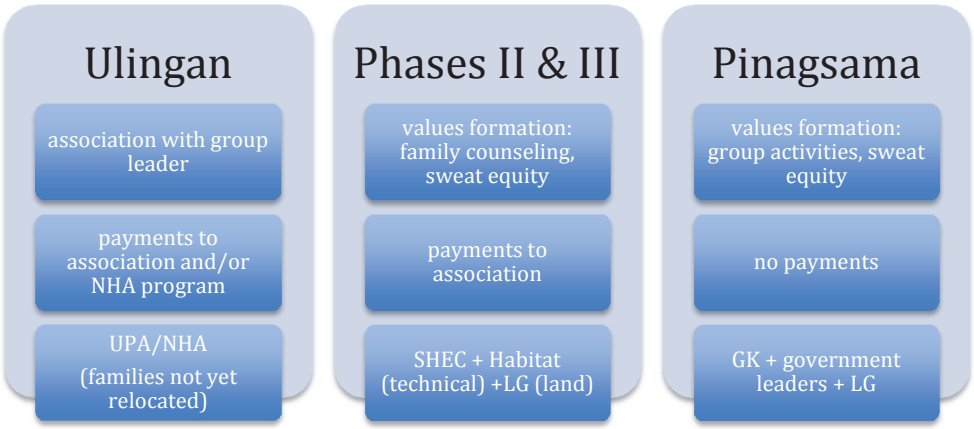

FIGURE 6 Features of NGO programs in Manila

In the case where a community or group of families approaches Habitat with a need, if Habitat is unable to provide for them, they are referred to the Socialized Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) and its subsidiary the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), which is a government institution that provides loans to organized urban poor families to buy property – either the one on which they already live, or a new piece of land. These organized urban poor groups, sometimes referred to as "homeowners associations" would request the assistance of Habitat to construct the houses on land they have acquired through loans from the SHFC or other means. One such project was with another NGO, St. Hannibal Empowerment Center (SHEC), whose Phase II project was part of this research project. Habitat was in charge of the technical aspect of building the houses into which informal settlers where relocated in Pasay city.

6.6 Informal settler families and the formation of associations

Formal community associations are very important for enabling access to services. Forming associations also enable families to gain access to loans, for example, as was the case for Ulingan to get access to water. As one NGO officer pointed out:

> "When urban poor families are organized, they can take out a loan from this organization to buy the property where they are living, or any other property. So this is one mechanism for them to get tenure, to get a property of their own. So what happens sometimes, an organized urban poor group, sometimes we call them

> 'homeowners associations'… would approach us and they will tell us 'Ok, we are buying this piece of land, can you help us in constructing the houses?'" (FG, interview 2012)

> "This gives the beneficiaries something to be proud of, that they worked for what they have; it wasn't simply given to them" (RR, interview 2012).

The associations had officers such as presidents and treasurers who were charged with collecting fees and negotiating on behalf of the community. Small association dues were collected and kept by the respective treasurers, which were used to assist the NGOs in purchasing small tools or necessities. For Gawad Kalinga the beneficiaries are expected to share not only their time in building the houses (sweat equity) but also to assist with very small financial contributions needed during the building stages, e.g. to buy nails. As housing from GK is otherwise without cost to the beneficiaries, the small financial inputs are their only monetary contributions.

Those who were not members of this association would be likely to face eviction without certainty for resettlement, while members of the association were likely to be relocated to another site. Community organizing was tantamount to securing tenure either in the current place of residence or in new locations through the housing programs. The community members who were members of associations had stronger relations with NGO workers and urban poor groups as they were expected to attend meetings and were better informed about the situation of their cases. Formalized housing associations are thus a tool and a means of community building and for housing access. However, this raises the question of whether the community can be seen to be close-knit due to the presence and activities of the community associations, or if these associations are simply manifestations of the individual families' needs to acquire formal housing.

For example, there was camaraderie between members of the housing association that I interviewed but when asked about those who are not members of the association, it was clear that the pending relocation program was causing some level of division in the community between those who wanted to access the housing program and be relocated, and those who wanted to remain residents in the informal settlement area. This division could have significant impact on the eventual decision of the government and other actors involved in the relocation program and points again to the presence of professional squatters unwilling to attain formal housing. Joining the association appeared to be a safer option for families when faced with eviction.

A second example of how informal settlers benefit from the formation of community associations is one in Pasay. Squatters seeking relocation formed an association and their chair represented the association at weekly meetings with the local NGO St. Hannibal Empowerment Center (SHEC), sometimes with the presence of NHA staff. The chair of the association was responsible for keeping the association members informed about the progress of their case, collecting

weekly savings from the members and depositing the money with SHEC. Many members had already reached the recommended savings of 15,000 Pesos per family, necessary for them to get the loans for the new houses to be built. As the program was conducted by SHEC, all association members attended the values formation program headed by the head of the NGO. Members of the association were also expected to participate in established committees of SHEC, such as health, environment and livelihood, but their level of involvement is unclear. The association members who were part of the SHEC project for relocation were certain that they will receive their houses, as the organization had a good record in the area and they were very aware of the fact that their area belonged to the airport authority which was clearly working to regain possession of that land.

Some families in the area allegedly had not joined the association because they did not want to pay for housing and/or did not like how the NGO's leader managed the project and/or did not believe that SHEC would give them housing. Those people are lobbying to own the lot on which they currently live, which members of the association believe is not possible. Those who are not members of the association were negotiating with local politicians who promised to help them. According to interviewees in the NHA and SHEC, it is very likely that the houses of those who chose not to relocate with the scheme provided will be demolished in the next few years.

When families decide to participate in a housing program, there are conditions involved. Loans for the payment of the lot are done through the NGO SHEC. For SHEC, the families were expected to save certain amounts of money prior to relocation. In Phase 3 they were asked to save up to 15,000 Pesos (under 300 Euros) per family prior to the beginning of the construction of the units. The families were also expected to put in *sweat equity*, which is a number of hours of labor they contribute during the construction of the building. Sweat equity is also used in Gawad Kalinga projects and by Habitat for Humanity, thus appearing to be an NGO-related activity. Sweat equity reduces the cost of employing labor for building construction, and for SHEC projects, possibly the amortization. The families seemed very open to and happy about the sweat equity because it meant they were/would be directly involved in the construction of their homes. The process of involvement also meant that Gawad Kalinga's beneficiaries had the opportunity to get to know each other well, which was evident during the interviews and visits to the area.

The overall role of informal settler families in housing access in Manila, thus shifts between active and passive, depending on whether the organization providing the housing is an NGO or a state institution. State institutions such as NHA and CMP do have some levels of community engagement, but not to the extent that NGOs do. The NGOs include the communities in many aspects of planning, building and relocation and the common use of participatory activities such as values formation (to be discussed later in greater detail) and sweat equity. The impression was that the association members involved in

these participatory activities were mostly pleased with it and found their role significant. It also gave them the hope that the projects would be successful and appeared to bring the participants together. However, one can ponder the extent of their role – how much impact does their presence in these processes effect the intentions of the NGO and other actors and the steps that have to be taken?

6.7 Values formation and social preparation

For most of the actors in this study, the provision of housing comes with preparation of the recipients in forms of "values formation" and "social preparation", which takes a lot of time prior to the actual relocation. It appears that many of the actors, particularly NGOs are inclined towards creating *communities* that are secure, clean and harmonious. This section illustrates what values formation by NGOs is and how the housing programs are designed to include values formation and forge communities. I use the term "forged communities" because, in the process of values formation and housing access, communities are artificially created and bonds are built between the family members. This does not intend to insinuate that the communities are not authentic; strong bonds developed during the values formation process appear to have created the feeling of community for the members of the group.

Values formation can be described as part of the process of community building necessitated by NGOs. During values formation members of the associations involved in the housing program attend trainings, workshops and couples counseling arranged by the NGO to educate and "empower" the squatters on how to live fuller, richer lives and in better living environments. By association members participating in values formation and in the construction of their homes, they are able to transition "from trainee to trainer" and members can eventually lead their communities. This "empowerment" is also expected to help the beneficiaries stand by themselves and move "from being receivers to being weavers" (BG, interview 2012).

Members of housing associations formed to access government programs are also expected to participate, except that their form of community building consists of a less vigorous "social preparation" before and during relocation. These social preparations are a series of meetings and trainings to prepare the beneficiaries for relocation. Contrary to the NGOs' values formation, social preparation as part of the state's housing creation process did not include the goal of "empowerment". The difference in the intensities of the NGO and state processes and inadvertent outcomes varies significantly. The social preparation of the government appears to focus more on receiving and maintaining consensus on the housing program and to minimize conflict during the process.

Although social preparation was said to continue following relocation, I was unable to ascertain what form that preparation takes.

The NGOs on the other hand were more concerned with how the communities will function following relocation and were determined that the members of the new community have shared values and community spirit so that the community will be harmonious. It goes as far as claiming empowerment as a result of the values formation. The intention of Gawad Kalinga, for example, is that the mindset of people will be transformed through housing provision and values formation, so that people can be smart and use what they have to change their priorities and improve their circumstances.

Values formation is not a common concept in urban housing programs in general – it appears to be very specific to NGO housing programs in Manila. As much as the end goal to "empower" the families is much rooted in NGO and poverty discourse at the international level, empowerment also carries many contested meanings. The general definition of empowerment can be discussed as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied them" (Kabeer 2001). Similarly Malhotra and Schuler (2005) reference Deepa Narrayan's 2002 definition of empowerment as an "expansion of freedom of choice and action to shape one's life". These definitions are considered in the context of development for "disadvantaged groups" or the "poor".

Although empowerment was very much mentioned as a goal of the housing programs, its meanings and reference points were not clearly defined on the part of the NGOs. For example one NGO interviewee described empowerment as

> "Because maybe it's also the effect of empowering them, of giving the values formation, that education, for example is very important, cleanliness is important, order is important. For me, for us, I guess, that's an impact. With the formation given them we have seen that they don't want to remain in poverty, but they want to improve themselves. And in fact we encourage them to improve themselves or to improve their condition." (BG, interview 2012)

In the above quotation empowerment and values formation are described as synonymous to each other. From this perspective the impact of values formation or empowerment is education. In addition values formation is here viewed as an educational process with the intention of improving the beneficiaries' living conditions and empowering them.

This forms the first striking point in relation to what values formation means for NGOs in Manila. By raising the notion of empowerment in their programs, the NGOs align themselves within the international framework of empowerment. In addition, if the programs of these NGOs can be considered successful in the use of the universally recognized framework of empowerment, the assertion by Hickey and Mohan (2004, 164) would hold true: that the NGOs

transform the way they engage with marginal groups by relating to them as "agents with claims" within the rights-based approach. Thus the participatory nature of values formation (or "empowerment") can be linked to the discussion on "participation as transformation" (See Hickey and Mohan 2004a). Hickey and Mohan explain that many NGOs have been successful in participatory community building efforts, which made significant contributions to, for example, community-state relations. This may also partially explain why NGOs choose to use the terms empowerment and values formation instead of community building and participation.

A second observation is that through the fundamentally participatory nature of values formation, what the NGOs have been successful with is in developing *community values* such as friendship and trust. This can be seen from two dimensions. One, the importance placed on participation relates to the participation as transformation discussion also from the point of view of the involvement of the state. The improved community-state relationship that may develop during the provision of socialized housing is taking form not only through the NGOs but also in the state engagement with communities in social preparation. Two, Gilchrist (2009) and Berner (1997) discuss locality as a center for community, which makes sense in these cases. The participation necessary in the programs occurs through community associations and residents of a particular locality form these associations.

As discussed in Chapter 5, community is built on shared values and norms, on bonds between its members and on the collective networks between family and friends in a specific locality. For SHEC's "Phase II" project for example, Habitat for Humanity Philippines was in charge of providing the technical skills for building the homes. Following relocation of families, SHEC takes care of the legal issues such as transfer of ownership and title deeds to the families or new owners' association. The transfer of deeds is done through the government unit Registry of Deeds. It is through the homeowners associations that the families pay their amortization for the newly acquired houses. The houses built are simple but of good standard, with potable water, electricity and sanitation. The Phase II project visited is also a gated community in the sense that strangers coming into the area are noted and families living in the area are not allowed to have long-term visitors. The feeling of "community" is very strong as the interviewees seemed to know each other relatively well and expressed care for their homes and the rules of their association. Thus in the process of attaining legal housing, community values are established.

A key component of the participatory process is "sweat equity". For example SHEC receives various forms of funding from different organizations, such as Habitat and government, including the office of the President. Due to the minimum payment made by the families themselves, the organization has what they described as "quite substantial debt" that requires further grants to pay off. The Phase II project did not involve any international funders. What the organization is able to do is get companies and Habitat to encourage volunteers

to do sweat equity, where they contribute their time and energy in constructing the homes. This lowers the cost of skilled workers significantly. Sweat equity is also expected of beneficiary families and the expectation of sweat equity is that through the process, the members of the association will become close and due to their combined effort will value their homes and new relationships.

A third observation is the perception that 'empowerment training' or 'education' is what the poor need, which is controversial. Knowing the context of Manila, in which land and affordable housing are difficult to come by and how complicated the housing schemes are, it is problematic for the NGOs to propose that education or empowerment is what is needed for the urban poor to lead better lives. It presupposes that these issues are linked to poverty when drinking, gambling, environmental cleanliness and other private matters can also be considered general social problems. However, the goal to build new communities without such problems and the power these organizations have to enforce the attendance of such trainings appear reasonable to those who do become beneficiaries of the NGO housing programs.

6.8 Squatter "communities" in the megacity?

This study has drawn several empirical findings on squatters and their housing conditions, as well as the types of housing programs available to squatters in Manila. Firstly squatters are defined here as

> Very low income families who do not have access or resources, or are unwilling to access formal housing for which they would have tenure security, and who live illegally in unregulated areas or structures without amenities such as potable water, sanitation, drainage, paved roads and waste management.

Informal settler families often live in the same place for generations, laying claims to land on which they build, rent out rooms or apartments, and do business. On the other hand some communities have also been found to be forged by NGOs who give or assist poor families in accessing formal, tenured housing. The forged communities come about when there is a need for certain services such as water, and the community members form an association through which they are able to raise funds and apply for the said services, with the help of an NGO or urban poor group. This section attempts to characterize what squatter communities living in danger zones in Manila are like.

> "I guess the people here, especially those who stay here for a very long time, they know each other. So I guess they can help each other. The only problem here is the newcomers, cuz there are some who are going here and then stay here so those are not yet member of the Samahan [community], so as if they are not yet part of the community. They are part of the community but they are not yet member." (AD, interview 2012)

The findings of this research point to the presence of "communities" in Metropolitan Manila. The above quotation indicates a geographic community consisting outside of an emotional community. It points to the well-established notion of community as a group of persons with shared values, trust and reciprocity. Becoming part of that established community can be difficult for newcomers, especially those who are not members of a family already residing in the area (see Simone 2012). In addition, informal settlements can be seen as communities in the sense that people reside there for long periods of time and get to know each other very well. They share the same services and organize themselves to get, for example, water, or to have a shared toilet. The community is necessary because the landowners or people renting the houses do not take responsibility for the necessary services. Additionally, the presence and activities of professional squatters is, in a way, creating and perpetuating communities in the sense that even if demolished, they rebuild in the same locations. Thus there are firm businesses built around squatting and the problems in informal settlements do not change (SS, interview 2012). Furthermore this is clearly why the actors involved are all so careful about checking the master lists.

The interviewees of the new communities appeared to have both appreciation for their new homes and strong bonds with other members of the community. In addition, because of the vertical networks built between the communities, the NGOs and the other actors involved in these successful relocation projects, the communities' potential abilities to cope with disasters and difficulties are increased (see Gilchrist 2009). This is also due to the investments made by state and other powerful actors in the housing programs. Still, the development of such communities that occur through the planned manner of values formation gave me the impression of a forged community – the community did not happen accidentally or spontaneously as most communities discussed in the literature do. Rather, its members were selected from a pool of applicants, underwent participatory processes *aimed* at making them feel like a community.

6.9 Summary

This chapter presented the main empirical data for the research. It identified squatters or informal settler families as very low income families who live in illegal structures or in unregulated areas without basic amenities, and who have no access or willingness to access tenured housing. In terms of identifying the "poorest" the issue of professional squatters becomes important as their presence raises questions on the homogeneity of "squatters" and requires a consideration of both the principles of housing rights as well as the processes of housing provision. These will be tackled in the following chapter.

The second task was to determine the roles and relationships between actors in housing provision, and the processes they use to meet the housing needs of the poor. I identify participation in the housing association and in values formation and social preparation activities as key components of NGO's and government processes. Values formation in particular, is quite unique in development organizations in the sense that the type of holistic development the NGOs aim at while relocating poor families from danger zones around the city goes beyond fulfilling their housing rights. The immediate outcome of the housing process is a new "community" and NGOs that control the housing program themselves have been successful in providing housing for squatters within the city at affordable costs. These projects are deemed a success because the new homeowners have remained in their homes and experience adequate living conditions in the newly forged communities.

CHAPTER 7: MULTIPLE ACTORS, MULTIPLE ROLES

This chapter continues with the second wheel presented in Chapter One, by focusing on the main actors in housing provision in Manila and their relationships. It demonstrates the complexity of housing rights starting from the viewpoint that there are multiple state and non-state actors with socialized housing programs in the megacity, and that NGOs are taking on increased roles in housing, by providing affordable programs that meet the housing needs of the poorest members in the municipalities. In addition, the ways in which different actors engage to meet the housing needs is analyzed. At the forefront of the analyses is the discussion on professional squatters and how knowledge of their activities influences the housing provision process and creates challenges for urban governance.

FIGURE 7 Actors and institutions in urban governance (categorized), adapted from Devas 2004

As housing rights and housing provision are major tasks in urban governance, there are a multitude of projects and institutions working on some kind of housing at any given time. The myriad of government institutions and non-state actors are illustrated in Figure 3 above. The figure identifies different levels of government institutions that can be involved in urban governance, as well as civil society organizations such as churches, NGOs, community-based organizations, and families/individuals. In the business sector, international companies and local businesses often provide housing or housing benefits for their employees. At the same time, the informal sector has already been discussed as one of the highest producers of housing in developing countries. Utility companies, both publicly and privately owned, are also considered actors on the urban scene. By no means does the figure encapsulate the complete web of organizations involved. It simply tries to visually identify entities involved in providing low income housing in Manila and group the actors directly encountered during fieldwork for this study according to the descriptions drawn from interviews and secondary data.

7.1 Similarities and differences between actors

One striking feature of the housing organizations is their overlapping responsibilities. Key examples are the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) and the National Housing Authority (NHA), which provide low cost loans to low-income families, including informal settler families and the homeless. Organizations involved in socialized housing recognize that many squatters are informally employed and therefore cannot provide proofs of income otherwise needed in loan acquisition.

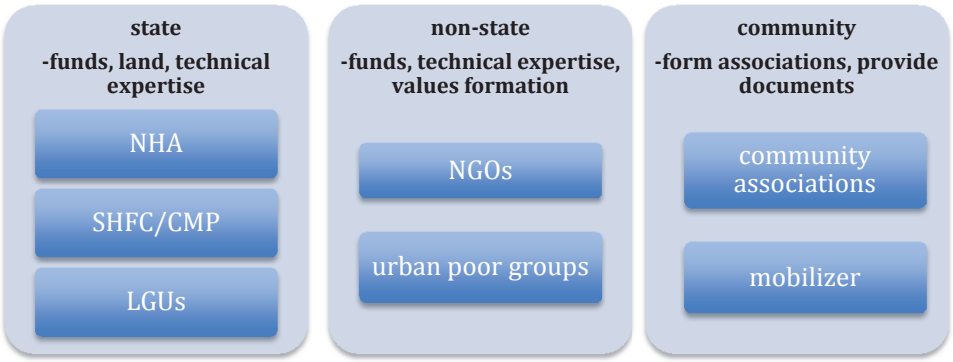

FIGURE 8 Main actors in socialized housing in Manila

Given the acknowledgement of informality in the megacity, there is evidence that state and non-state actors and communities do work alongside one another to provide or gain access to housing. This study found that the relationships in housing provision appeared in two forms – with the state actors taking the lead through national programs such as the NHA and the CMP, or with local NGOs taking the lead. As Figure 4 above shows, state actors in this study included the NHA and the CMP which both require some level of cooperation with the local government. Non-state actors include NGOs and urban poor groups that work directly with communities and harness funds for the housing programs from various sources, and also complete projects with cooperation with the local government.

It appears that the work of the CMP and NHA are somewhat duplicated: both organizations are interested in helping the same group of city inhabitants with attaining affordable loans to purchase land and build homes through an association. The reason for this duplication lies in policymaking whereby housing policies are in the form of the UDHA and presidential proclamations, and what I perceive as problems in the devolution of responsibility. In most cases the processes for housing acquisition by squatters is carried out with certain intermediaries such as NGOs and urban poor groups who work locally with the communities. This entails not only allowing non-state actors to be involved in the process, but their presence and dialogue with the community can have a serious impact on how the process develops. For example, in one of the slums studied, the NGO and the NHA had a different perception of what was needed for the community and communicated their ideas with the community, which appeared to cause some confusion or reservation for some informal settlers on whether to trust the government's relocation plans. Such miscommunication and distrust can cause a gridlock, lengthening the time frame for completion of projects. This is one example of urban disconnect, whereby organizations that are meant to be working together are unable to do so effectively.

That said, although CMP and the NHA intentions are similar, the two state providers work in slightly different ways: firstly, the CMP requires that community associations work with an accredited "mobilizer" which can be an NGO or LGU or even a private person or the NHA. The mobilizers are registered with the CMP and must have a track record in housing development or community-based assistance and have the capability to provide such assistance. The role of the mobilizer is to assist the families in gathering, completing and submitting the necessary loan requirements, to negotiate with the landowner on behalf of the community, to be involved in the values formation, and in harnessing support for the community. The mobilizer thus falls into the third column in Figure 4 above. When the project is lead by the NHA, the organization does not require such a middle organization; in this case the NHA works directly with the community through its project offices. Nevertheless the NHA appears to recognize that there will be NGOs invested in

those communities, whom they must acknowledge and work with. Thus for NHA projects, the NGOs can serve mainly as advisors to the community association, if the association so wishes, but do not have an explicit, formal role as in CMP programs.

The second way in which the two state providers differ is that the CMP is keen on buying land in the city or the land on which the squatters presently reside. This makes their offer more appealing to the settlers and may be a more realistic option as it avoids some of the dangers of relocating families to areas outside Metro Manila. The NHA's scheme that mostly purchases land for relocation outside the city has received backlash due to families returning to the city to squat as a result of a lack of jobs, infrastructure and amenities in the relocation areas. In addition, the NHA has also seen poor repayment rates. However this affects both the CMP and NHA schemes, which have been criticized for being very slow, their lending requirements "restrictive", and their difficulty in raising their loan portfolio (UH-Habitat 2012).

7.2 Shifting roles: government and NGOs in housing provision

The housing organizations present in Manila are many and are complex but they mainly fall within the clusters of state and non-state actors. State actors are government agencies that have an urban poor component, or that are fully geared at providing housing for the poor. These were the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) in Manila. Non-state actors are non-governmental organizations of different forms and sizes that work locally or nationally. Some NGOs work solely on housing while for others, housing is a key component but not their only concern. The NGOs whose programs are discussed here are Gawad Kalinga (GK), St. Hannibal Empowerment Center (SHEC) and Urban Poor Associates (UPA). The activities of Habitat for Humanity Philippines are discussed mainly in relation to their partnerships with other NGOs or state projects.

Whereas in the past the roles of NGOs centered on their abilities to take over some of the functions of the state, in some instances, NGOs and other civil organizations can now be described as sharing some of the traditional roles of the government. As housing providers, the NGOs' major concern was to relocate informal settler families from dangers zones in Metro Manila. Danger zones are commonly identified as esteros (river banks), areas in close proximity to the sea, rail tracks and under bridges or highways. Those living in these areas are considered squatters or informal settlers and as the poorest of the poor. For the most part, informal settler families do not have the same access to financial resources and banking services as do higher income groups, making it especially difficult for them to purchase houses on the private market. Thus many of the key actors in housing provision attempt to provide squatters with

low-cost loans that they will be able to repay given their income level. However, the loans are often provided to families within a group – through a community association of which all eligible families are expected to be members. The length and complexity of the process of attaining housing varies according to the type of housing provider, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, government agencies tend to have greater bureaucracy and longer processes than non-state providers.

Consequently, there have been calls in development dialogue for governments to 'move closer to the people.' Ballesteros (2009) posits that with decentralization comes increased localization of shelter programs and plans, which therefore creates greater responsibility for local governments. This is also a result of donor agencies' conditions that emphasize democratization and popular participation together with decentralization – whereby decentralization vies to bring the government closer to the people (Post and Baud 2002). The resulting responsibilities in urban governance make the local governments the main implementers of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) in Manila. If this is the case, for professional squatters to be effectively identified and dealt with according to the law, LGUs must improve their databases as well as the communication between themselves and the other authorities involved. However, LGUs in Manila and other cities in developing countries are often without the resources and capacities to take on such urban management roles. Ballesteros (2009) also notes that political will to undertake these roles is often lacking in LGUs. Giving the LGUs greater responsibility that entails increased collaboration with various other government institutions involved in housing projects and urban management is a complex yet limited responsibility that many seem unable to fulfill in the current political structure. Some local governments have been able to meet the role of creating and maintaining master lists and assisting NGOs and housing institutions in the proliferation of land for relocation of squatters. However, their roles in the processes of housing delivery are very limited.

The NGOs, on the other hand, have penetrated the various layers of urban governance, by asserting rights as the basis for socialized housing provision and creating linkages and relationships with influential international NGOs and local and national leaders. The leadership of the NGOs appears to be an important factor for their ability to initiate and maintain these productive relationships. For example, Gawad Kalinga's founder is said to be a very charismatic and determined man, who galvanized the support of key, high-level government officials and harnessed the idea that the poorest should have access to free housing. Similarly, the leaders of SHEC harnessed the potential for local housing development in the municipality of Pasay itself, and with technical support from large NGOs such as Habitat for Humanity Philippines, SHEC initiated and built low cost housing units for former squatters from the city of Pasay, in Metro Manila.

At the same time the communities themselves, as outlined in the previous chapter, are expected to be the part of the process. Their role is to come together and create a housing association in order to be considered for housing projects of both state and non-state providers. The association should select the leadership of their association, who is tasked with putting forward their ideas and needs to the NGO and represents the association at relevant meetings. This was the case for the Phase 2 and 3 SHEC projects, which saw active elected members of the community take forward the ideas of the group. Here the necessity of an organized NGO cannot be undermined, as it is the NGOs that have information and access to knowledge on the processes and can advise and organize the community association on how to meet the requirements of the NHA and CMP projects. Where the NGO itself is the provider, as in SHEC, the association leaders work closely with the staff and provide the support and consensus needed in the development of participatory activities of values formation. As a result, the NGOs have a wealth of knowledge as well as considerable influence on some aspects of state-community relations, as well as with local governments, with which they often work closely.

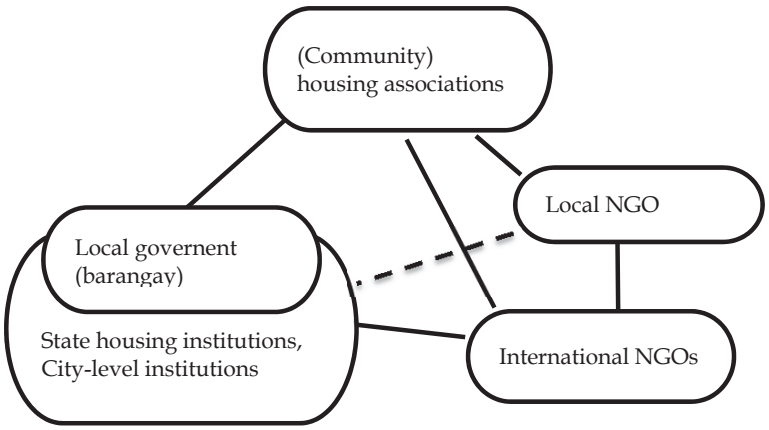

FIGURE 9 Linkages between actors in urban governance, adapted from Merken 2001[29]

The diagram above is adapted from Merken's 2001 UNESCO report and depicts the fact that all actors discussed here are linked to each other in one way or another. The author placed emphasis on the state as a social regulator in terms of poverty reduction policies and execution. However the original diagram did not include a direct link between local NGOs and state institutions, which is contrarily, an essential relationship as seen in the Manila examples. The formalized linkages between local NGOs and community associations enable or

[29] Denis Merken, "Fight urban poverty: A general framework for action", UNESCO Policy Paper No. 8. http://www.unesco.org/most/pp8_eng.pdf [retrieved 1 June 2015]

enhance the community organization's access to local government, and especially, to larger institutions such as the NHA and CMP. In addition, the Merken notes that the state, through local government, has a major role in policies to fight poverty, as they are natural host institutions for participation by neighborhood organizations. However, the diagram also points to the fact that local governments do have to step aside for some aspects of housing provision for the poorest, as they do not facilitate the participatory processes or the actual delivery of housing. As NGOs take greater roles in housing provision, their processes can largely circumvent complex government procedures, given the approval of local governments and key leaders and institutions.

Thus the decades-long shift toward creating an enabling environment for the non-governmental sector to take on prior roles of the state also involves, as Post and Baud (2002, 10) put it, "a shift in the existing balance of power – from central to local governments, and from governments to private sector and local communities." This, the authors claim, is why difficulties abound in implementing policies of privatization, decentralization and participation. However, on the basis of some of the government programs existing in Manila, I disagree that the devolution of power has shifted to the local communities. "Communities" are not synonymous to NGOs or urban poor groups and do not hold the power or political clout needed to approach a state housing agency. There was little evidence that the communities themselves can successfully access housing without firm support and information from key resource persons (the mobilizers for NHA and CMP programs) or from NGOs and urban poor groups. The role of the community, which appears in the third column in Figure 4, is to form an association representing the informal settlers. It is through the association that members can gain access to housing of both state and non-governmental providers.

Although it is clear that local communities and non-state organizations working with them have taken on roles that imitate or take over some of the previously traditional tasks of the government, government institutions in Manila have also positioned themselves as housing providers for the poor, especially by creating local offices in charge of specific districts or local government areas around the city. Thus we can consider that power is shifting but that the state institutions still hold tremendous power over the city's infrastructure and housing development.

The National Housing Authority is one example. The NHA structure is such that field offices have various units including estate management, community relations, information and the finance units. For specific projects, field officers who work directly in the areas report to the estate management unit, who report to the manager for the project. The manager covers four sub-offices, within the project level and the output from the manager goes to the NHA main office. The main office itself has various levels, from levels one, two and three to National Capital Region level and then the Assistant General Manager and the General Manager. The general manager approves all master

lists for relocation projects. The structure described is illustrated in Figure 6 below.

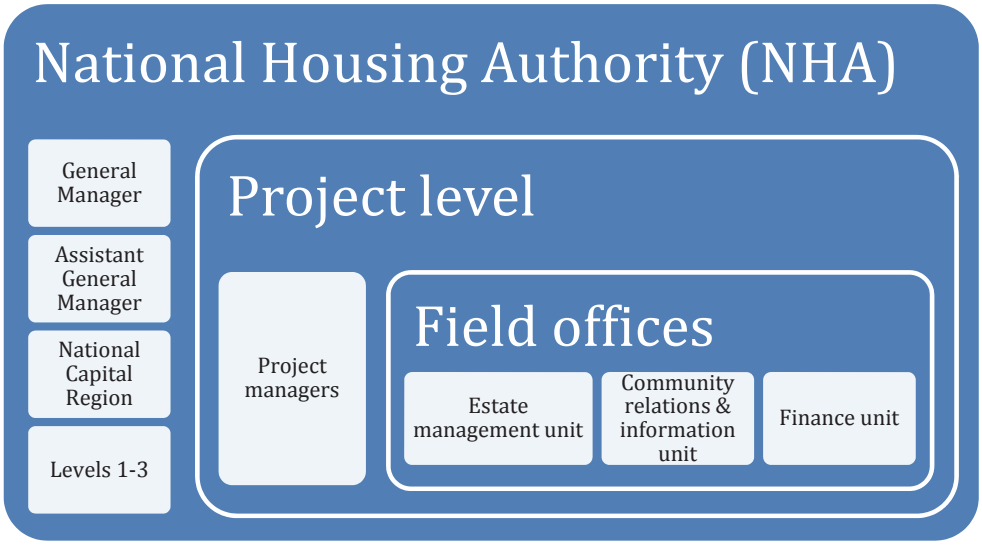

FIGURE 10 Simplified structure of the National Housing Authority (NHA)

Of course, these national or city level institutions do work with the local government, but the local governments are not the main providers. The National Housing Authority (NHA) and the Community Mortgage Program are such examples of state housing, albeit with influences from the initiatives of civil society (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2004a), and these large highly bureaucratic institutions have specific mandates and ways of action that put them in a position of power, with minimal possibilities for LGUs or NGOs, let alone squatter communities, to participate in any changes.

The power shift is thus not to communities as such but towards the NGOs that have been able to assert themselves as key players on the housing scene. The NGO Gawad Kalinga (GK) presents an interesting example. A major role of GK in Manila is their ability to bring companies and politicians together to partner with the organization. GK informs them through multi-sectoral lobbying, from oil companies to politicians. They have made the call for housing a Filipino value, to serve the communities and join GK's *holistic integrated community development*, which adds a personal touch to convince partners that communities can be transformed through *caring and sharing*. GK's approach is quite impressive in that the beneficiaries do not pay amortization

and the organization's work is well known and admired by other housing providers in the city.

Therefore two outcomes can be seen from these changing dynamics. Firstly, the relationships between state and non-state actors has changed in such a way that there is increased willingness to restructure relationships between local organizations and local authorities, and in some cases, with other state and private organizations (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 2004a). This involves not only the NGOs positioning themselves as housing providers, but also state providers allowing and often supporting the work of these organizations and associations in different ways. Secondly, state programs have engaged locally and with an emphasis on community participation, which was formerly the domain of NGOs. The next section focuses on the practical policy matter that is land and how is it being negotiated in Manila.

7.3 Land and relocation

The NHA employees interviewed gave a very positive impression of what the government was trying to do for the poor in Manila. Despite this, a community officer for an NGO working in informal settlements had a critical opinion on how government is dealing with housing. According to this interviewee, the government sees relocation of informal settlers into provinces outside Metro Manila as a permanent solution (JM, interview 2012). The understanding is that government should try to keep families within the National Capital Region (NCR), although the cost of land is high in the capital and the areas in which the poor live are sometimes designated as inhabitable. This land availability and cost dilemma is highly problematic in megacities. Yet according to the budget of the CMP, for example, it appears that government agencies are in a good position to negotiate with private landowners on purchasing land in the NCR for the poor, particularly if the land has been occupied by informal settlers for several years.

However, for areas such as Ulingan, a major complication is that the land on which the families currently live is designated as commercial land and a danger zone, where there should be no residential structures. This poses a significant challenge for the community members who may want to remain in the area and the NGOs who oppose relocation. The middle way that was being sought by the NGO was to move the squatters to another piece of land nearby. However, this thinking was apparently not being negotiated with the NHA. Thus a gridlock on how to resolve the issue persists and the difference in opinion may contribute to divisions in the community as well, as all members have to agree on the plans in order for the relocation efforts of the NHA to move forward.

Studies elsewhere in Asia found that several other options aside from relocation should be considered for informal urban poor communities. The ACHR (2004) study in Phnom Pehn found that upgrading and redevelopment of existing settlements, or relocation to sites nearby when relocation is unavoidable would be better suited than relocation to areas farther away. Yet site upgrading and redevelopment are major tasks considering the land ownership and titling challenges. As land is an expensive commodity in Metro Manila, "it is a huge disincentive for the landowner to sell their land below market prices to unauthorized occupants" (UN-Habitat 2012, 19).

> "If they [landlords] are to choose between getting nothing… and having the informal settlers living there for nothing forever… they will opt for the CMP instead". (EL, interview 2012)

In addition, landowners face the challenge of actually taking control of their land, which is necessary for them to dictate a price (Berner 1997). In Manila squatters are still seen as a nuisance and landowners have been accused of sometimes taking matters into their own hands by causing fires in the areas, to force the occupants out. Therefore the CMP's ability to offer to buy land but at a lower price than its market value does not always have a positive outcome. The CMP, as the quote above shows, believes landowners can be negotiated with, to sell their land at a lower value, rather than to have squatters occupy their property for free indefinitely.

In any case, the role of the LGUs did not appear to be very significant except when the locality for relocation is in the LGUs' domain, and where NGOs have a stronger part to play. According to UN-Habitat (2012) few LGUs have used their own resources and approaches to provide housing programs to the poor. Land acquisition, site upgrading and other means of providing housing for the poor requires significant capital investment that many LGUs simply cannot raise. In addition, the highly decentralized system that calls for increased local democracy has created what Mitlin (2004, 4) describes as "a new generation of local politicians" with strong links to local political activists and the interest to explore partnership arrangements with groups that the state was formerly not keen to work with. Furthermore, Mitlin argues that provincial and national governments may encourage links between local government and local organizations with shared development agendas (ibid, see also Mitlin 2003). In Manila, LGUs can assist community organizations in accessing national housing programs including the CMP (Porio 2004). This goes hand in hand with the rights-based *enabling environment* discussion that emphasizes the creation of structures such as urban poor offices and housing committees, the passing of legislation and financial instruments as initiatives to drive NGOs and urban poor groups to partner with local government (ibid.). With the ongoing development of the Local Community Mortgage Program (LCMP), LGUs will be more capable to make financial contributions to housing programs in their localities, according to their capacities.

In the case of non-state housing providers, NGOs tend to bypass some government bureaucracy by organizing and funding the processes through the assistance of LGUs, other (larger) NGOs or international organizations, and private donors. In some cases such as with Gawad Kalinga, the organization was able to provide housing free of charge, which is a task that requires considerable funds and the ability to negotiate the price of land (or to receive land as a donation) from the private landowner or the local government. Porio et al (2004, 67) emphasized that NGOs have a significant role in the decentralization of social housing in the sense that they have increased professional links with local governments through consultancies in areas such as urban planning and land registration. This, Porio posits, gives the NGOs a "mediator" role between community organizations and government authorities that is especially significant in decisions on areas for social housing. The work of Gawad Kalinga can serve as an example of this, as the NGO is well-known for its strong ties with certain local governments as well as other powerful individuals and organizations that enable its acquisition of land for social housing.

Land for relocation is acquired by negotiating with the owner, usually a private person or corporation, to donate or sell the property at a price the informal settlers can afford. Land acquisition is somewhat of a political endeavor, as it requires the assistance of powerful partners such as high-level religious leaders and politicians. The NGO SHEC thus works as a middleman and mitigates between the families needing housing and the various institutions they need in order for housing acquisition to be achieved. The organization has worked with various government institutions and other NGOs in the process of providing housing for these families. However, the issue of professional squatters again becomes relevant in terms of the potentials of established communities to seek housing from both state and non-state actors as a group. It was not determined what the impact of professional squatters is or can be on the price or availability of specific parcels of land. However, their impacts can be perceived from different standpoints in relation to the community itself.

7.4 Professional squatters: participants or threats?

The previous chapter identified professional squatters as a potentially powerful segment of the squatter population. This thesis defines squatters as very low income families who do not have access or resources, or are unwilling to access formal housing for which they would have tenure security, and who live illegally in unregulated areas or structures without amenities such as potable water, sanitation, drainage, paved roads and waste management. One of the earliest academic mentions of "professional squatters" in Manila is in

Defending a Place in the City, by Erhard Berner (1997, 210) which makes reference to the UDHA's definition as "slum dwellers with income above the poverty line." In fact Article 1, Section 1(m) of the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 states:

> "'Professional squatters' are individuals or groups who occupy lands without the express consent of the landowner and who have sufficient income for legitimate housing. The term shall also apply to persons who have previously been awarded homelots or housing units by the Government but who sold, leased or transferred the same to settle illegally in the same place or in another urban area, and non-bona fide occupants and intruders of lands reserved for socialized housing. The term shall not apply to individuals or groups who simply rent land and housing from professional squatters or squatting syndicates."

From the interviews with NGO personnel in Manila, professional squatters can be considered as those persons who live in squatter areas and serve as illegal landlords who rent out housing to informal settler families but provide neither tenure security nor amenities, and as a result of running a rental business have significantly more financial resources than others in the area. The assumption in this study is that professional squatters do not pay taxes on income earned from rental housing. The UDHA definition is naturally the more common definition, seen in simpler terms in academic articles such as Ballesteros (2009) and Shatkin (2007). As encompassing as this definition is, it remains considerably problematic because people living in squatter areas may have fluctuating incomes, and especially if derived from the informal sector, the actual incomes may be difficult to ascertain. Additionally, a lack of more concrete tools to identify professional squatters raises questions on how seriously the 'problem' that they pose can be addressed without having clear measures of who these people are.

As gathered from interviews, professional squatters were perceived as a nuisance for government institutions and non-governmental organizations intending to provide housing for the poorest of the poor. One of the problems associated with professional squatters is the fact that their presence in the slums creates confusion within the communities and complicates and elongates housing access procedures by forcing the housing providers to conduct thorough checks of each family application. Secondly, one has to ponder how the participation of professional squatters in the communities fosters or impedes community-building efforts. The focus now shifts to the second concern from two dimensions.

7.4.1 Professional squatters impede community building

From one dimension, professional squatters may be considered to impede community building efforts geared toward gaining access to socialized housing for the entire community when they play the role of "incalcitrants" (interviews 2012). Incalcitrants are considered by the NHA as individuals or families who

cause confusion in the community by, for example, causing conflict in the homeowners associations, not attending meetings, disapproving plans for relocation or upgrading, or changing their position regarding the project at various stages. Because these are qualities used to describe the activities of professional squatters, based on such ideas, incalcitrants are essentially synonymous to professional squatters, but only if it becomes known that these people have previously received government or other socialized housing that they have subsequently sold, and have returned to another area to squat. Otherwise, they simply remain those who are undecided or unconvinced about the housing project in their area and inadvertently disrupt the projects.

The state and non-state employees interviewed in this study expressed their concern for ensuring professional squatters are thwarted, and there are instruments in place to do so. The UDHA requires vigilance against the activities of professional squatters from both the government and the community, which requires coordination and enforcement by various authorities and the communities themselves (see Ballesteros 2009). Indeed, the UDHA specifies that the communities report professional squatters to the authorities. The authors of "Manila's Poor: Bridging service gaps and strengthening mental resilience" found this to be a successful community-based solution. Although it was not reported in which ways this recommendation was derived, the idea is that since professional squatters impede the process of housing acquisition to the disadvantage of the rest, whistle blowing would have a strong incentive, assumedly, for the community. The article further asserts that considering the other disadvantages and complications caused by the professional squatters, local governments need to be cooperative and find ways to prevent professional squatting.

According to Ballesteros (2009) however, efforts towards enforcement and arrest have been weak due to insufficient coordination by the parties involved. Nevertheless, if whistle blowing were to be encouraged, whom do the whistle blowers report to, who is accountable, and what can then be done? The challenge with this notion lies in both the sensitivity of reporting your neighbor for valid or personal reasons as a professional squatter, how these accusations can be verified, and by whom. Whistle blowing could be very useful in fishing out potential professional squatters, but it raises concerns about how socio-political dynamics in the communities themselves can play out in this scenario. In addition, one needs to consider that whistle blowing may be altogether unrealistic in localities where professional squatters are recognized local gangs who extort money or are feared by other families in the area.

As discussed in section 5.2, communities often feature localized networks of family and friends who share a common interest or bond. This feeling of community, according to Gilchrist (2009), is often strongest with those who are threatened. In addition, the connections of informal settler families and professional squatters to their localities may be grounded in "identities, loyalties and solidarity" that cannot be anticipated either as impeding or

promoting community building without empirical analysis of the particular localities, its people and its history (de Wit and Berner 2009, 943). Without understanding the position of professional squatters in a given community, it is problematic to see all persons fitting the UDHA definition of professional squatters as impeders to social cohesion or community building.

7.4.2 Professional squatters as active community members

A second dimension concerning the participation of professional squatters is that their activities in communities may foster community building. Firstly, one could argue that some professional squatters provide a service – housing – which the state and private sector is unable or unwilling to provide. The essence of this argument lies in the fact that there is an inherent need for low income housing in Manila, as in many other cities around the world. The question then is, provided they have not benefited from a housing project, can they automatically be negated as potential families for socialized housing? Of course syndicates and clear professional squatters should not be included in the process but, during fieldwork, I wondered about some other families who had, for example, jobs in the formal market, and whether they could be considered professional squatters since they earned more than the average family in Ulingan.

Professional squatters are often portrayed as part of syndicates, even gangs. As certain as this is in some cases, it is also certain that some professional squatters are individual families that simply make a living out of renting homes to other squatters. One such example in Ulingan is a squatter who bought the house of a neighbor who moved from the area. She then developed the house to be a shop and rents out a room there. This example highlights the fluidity of ownership in the slum that operates much in the same way as formal neighborhoods of the city. Additionally, it points to the fact that individuals and families try to make smart decisions on how to improve their financial situations. Whether this can be described as professional squatting needs to be reconsidered – "professional squatters" as currently defined – are not necessarily a homogeneous sub-group in the slum.

However, there are potentially different types of actual "professional" squatters. One example are those who have acquired significant wealth, for example, the case from Pasay where one family owned several houses that were rented out with no amenities while the family's own home had air conditioning. Ursula Grant's (2004, 54-55) study found that income earning was the foremost preoccupation of the urban poor. In addition, a critical element in achieving livelihood security lies in the access to land and it is through housing that the poor can generate home-based work. Thus some squatters may find that investment in housing may assist in earning higher incomes and they are willing to the take the challenge of buying structures, as in the Ulingan example. The Pasay and Ulingan examples are very different, yet may both fall under

"professional squatting", if level of income or housing ownership are the main variables.

Of course, if the level of income is much higher than what is designated as "poor", certain families should be excluded from the housing projects. However, when considering livelihood, one more concern arises: can exempting professional squatters from housing access contribute to increased poverty? If the Ulingan woman described above would be considered a professional squatter, eliminated as a potential socialized housing owner and evicted without relocation, she would lose her sources of income. These families may not earn much more than anyone else in the area and would encounter dramatic difficulties if labeled professional squatters. In addition, one should consider the potential of such individuals and families to contribute to their community in a meaningful way. For example, the same resident mentioned above is an active member in the community, who, as much as others, may need the adequate housing they have rights to. In addition, such members could play greater roles in the community, as this woman serves as a community association leader, or being otherwise active and helpful members of the community. Fostering good relationships within the community could be beneficial for families to ensure that the housing project is successful and that they all get houses.

The main point here is to raise the possibility that some "professional squatters" may in fact make significant contributions to existing informal community associations that could enhance, not impede, the housing projects. They could be key players in community building – they provide a service and may be leaders in the community, in a city where urban planning, as Berner (1997, 28) put it, "never offered a viable alternative to squatting". Therefore it is worth considering what additional roles that these families play in the community. For example, Berner (1997) discussed the importance of core family members and friends and neighbors living in close vicinity as those that his respondents (who were squatters) consulted with on everyday life conditions or difficulties. This highlights the importance of kinship within the localities, which is tantamount to community as described by Gilchrist (2009). Berner (1997, 103-104) described his respondents as having a "we-consciousness" and that the households "become cores in the process of community building, and in the formation of organized groups capable of collective action." These groups may originate from different hierarchies yet form and dissolve coalitions in order to address specific issues and situations (Beck 1992), such as gaining access to water or housing. Thus, such persons or families may be instrumental in their communities in the struggle against eviction and for access to housing for the community as a whole. On the other hand, "real" professional squatters could also have vested interests in the community that sees them being active with other members in housing associations with the intention of accessing housing. These are the professional squatters that need to somehow be identified and prevented from accessing socialized housing.

This elicitation that professional squatters may contribute positively to the community has had no coverage in academic literature but strikes me as a potential answer for why professional squatters are not easily identifiable, and why suggestions such as whistle blowing could be detrimental to the social relations in the community. As much literature on and data from Manila indicate how complex the housing system is and the multitude of organizations involved, some professional squatters or syndicates may be successful in remaining undetected by the multiple organizations involved in the housing process and may successfully feed off of the lack of organization of the local governments and regulatory bodies. However, the organizations involved should also consider that professional squatters, according to the standing definition, are not all syndicated well-off families trying to misuse the government system. This second point on professional squatters above consequently raises concerns regarding governance in project implementation.

7.5 The challenge of urban disconnect

One of the striking issues raised during this research project was that many organizations were attempting to address the housing problems of the poor in Manila. The positive outcomes of some of the housing schemes have been noted in previous sections. The NGO programs detailed here were successful and there is a lot to be learned about how that success was achieved. Through the case studies featured in their book, Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004a) identified four routes that organizations can take to provide families with limited incomes better quality housing with infrastructure and services. These included reducing the cost of housing, infrastructure and services; enabling the use of credit over a period of time; cost recovery from the families that can be used to finance other improvements; and strengthening community organizations and negotiating with external actors to secure additional resources and/or to correct undesirable measures that impoverish them. The NGOs and state providers have made strides in the first three areas.

The fourth outcome on strengthening local organizations and negotiating with other actors remains a critical problem in Manila and forms one point on urban disconnect. I perceive meeting the challenges of urban housing from a more general governance perspective than solely a housing challenge. Overall city development that reaches barangays and connects the cities is necessary for long-term development. These two issues appear to be the basis for why, given the range and number of housing programs in Manila, the level of housing provision remains low in proportion to the number of families in need – very few squatters are being housed, and too many gridlocks continue to plague the systems.

The NGOs are making strides in pulling various aspects of community needs to build more holistic communities, which center around values formation programs and other group-based initiatives that bring the community together. On the other hand, in an article on the activities of the Homeless People's Federation of the Philippines (HPFP), Yu and Karaos (2004, 113) emphasize the challenge of community groups to bridge the divide "between the rigidity of formal shelter processes and the flexibilities and rudimentary capacities of informal settlements." These arguments give sound examples of urban disconnect as the actors have many of the same interests yet falter at effectively meeting the housing needs of the poor.

The complex questions further demonstrate how difficult it can be for the poor to maneuver the many organizations and their housing programs. To add to this point, Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004a) argue that the daily struggles that the poor must face are attributed to failures or inadequacies of local organizations. An example that supports Simone's (2012) argument is again the NHA, which has such power that even the NGO or urban poor group working with community find it difficult to negotiate with the agency. The NHA's lack of interest or inability to negotiate with the third organizations working with communities, shows disconnect in their approach and contribute to the lack of success of their programs.

In addition, by having another state program (the CMP) being more successful, there should be an inclination toward communication and knowledge sharing between the two, which is not the case. The obvious question is also on why the two agencies exist to do almost the same thing. The problems with government programs in Manila, according to Porio (2004), are grounded in the financial structure, weaknesses in macro level institutions, while the social orientation of the NGOs and associations is at the community level. Such relations leave little room for dialogue and negotiation. A further missing link here are the LGUs that have a lot of political responsibility and do not in fact make much of an imprint on housing provision. Thus the gap between state housing providers and communities remains colossal.

No matter the level of collaboration between actors, the concern for funding remains tantamount to improved housing options for the poor. Challenges in urban governance have been addressed extensively in urban development research. Overcrowding, poverty and lack of social services are common features of large cities in the South. However, these same cities have immense potentials for growth, development and poverty reduction. From a policy perspective, there exists the notion that improved infrastructure potentially contributes to long-term economic development for most cities (UN-Habitat 2012a). Interestingly, the report, identifies Manila as an emerging economy city, and emphasizes the fact that many cities do not capitalize fully on the advantages of population growth. This is clearly due to high urbanization and a low institutional capacity of lower income countries, which is how the Philippines is usually identified.

Wegelin (2002, 365) argued that slum upgrading "often fails to address social and economic issues" and calls for a more comprehensive approach that includes education, healthcare and livelihood development. These are exactly the areas in which state-provided housing is most criticized. Manila is a city that has seen tremendous growth over the last few decades yet poverty has persisted. The fact that government housing institutions such as the CMP have the financial resources to make significant changes on the housing landscape thus feeds to the problem of overall city development in terms of land distribution and development of infrastructure in ways that benefit poorer parts of the city. The aforementioned report also raises the link between inequality and urban prosperity – the former involves reducing barriers on the potential of individuals and groups, expanding opportunities and strengthening civic engagement and human agency. The report mentions Manila as one of the most unequal cities in developing countries, and indicates that many Asian countries also struggle in this regard. Therefore, this concern over income distribution alongside infrastructure development remains necessary, despite the achievements of low-income housing.

The concern for overall development and poverty reduction points to the need for greater emphasis on the body of rights rather than on housing provision alone. Keeping families close to livelihoods, infrastructure and services is part of overall city policy. Thus the NHA's predisposition towards relocation outside of or at the fringes of Metro Manila appears to be creating conflict with communities, NGOs and urban poor groups. Furthermore, there have been reports that many NHA projects have been unsuccessful in the sense that relocated families return to the city for two main reasons. One, new homeowners do not have jobs in the areas in which they were relocated, or the distances they traveled to their livelihoods were too far; and two, the NHA has been accused of taking months – even years – to provide adequate services such as water and sanitation in the relocation sites. These issues make returning to the former areas attractive, and may even contribute to the activities of professional squatters who may rent out their new homes yet return and rebuild in the former settlements.

A third point on disconnect is that the expectation of local governments to participate is not accompanied by the technical and financial support necessary for the LGUs to make meaningful contributions to housing programs. Although LGUs are closest to the communities, their roles don't often go beyond providing master lists. Even then, the master lists are not always available. This could be an issue of prioritization, whereby the financial and technical means to produce the shelter plans are there but has been channeled for other priority areas. It is possible that the funds are being allocated to other areas such as education and health. (JE, interview 2012) I consider this lack of foresight on LGU's participation in the process a great hindrance to both the state providers and the NGOs. It may be unreasonable to anticipate a level of partnership between state and non-state actors reaching a level of reconciled equality.

However, since NGOs have been able to raise reasonable funds for housing, it would be beneficial to the LGUs to receive support from programs such as the Local Community Mortgage Program (LCMP) to foster improvements in their own barangays in cooperation with the local NGOs.

The urban setting has so many fields in which power over land, infrastructure and services remains in the hands of a few. City planning and service delivery remains fragmented; there are many ways in which housing policies are enacted (for example UDHA versus presidential proclamation) and several government institutions through which these are implemented (CMP, NHA). Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2004a, 246) state that the many deprivations faced by a large number of urban dwellers are "caused or exacerbated by unequal power relations with external people or organizations", including landlords and government offices that discriminate against the poor and exclude them from attaining services. Furthermore, Porio (2004) argues that unlike in other Asian cities, there exists an absence of broad savings and self-help initiatives among poor communities in Manila, which reinforces the mistaken notion that the poor are unable to generate resources for their own housing. This may be the thinking of the NGOs that provide housing at no or very minimal cost to the beneficiaries. This fragmentation is discussed by Simone (2012) in terms of how decentralization and the devolution of power and responsibility have led to ambiguity regarding which institution is responsible for providing social amenities. Contrarily, Porio (2004) claims that CMP processes in particular need to be decentralized to minimize bureaucracy.

7.6 Overcoming urban disconnect?

Empirical data outlined in previous chapters indicate that most of the impacts of community building and participation are seen locally, at the level of "community", as informal settler families are relocated to adequate homes with tenure security. However, there is also indication that government institutions have had to be involved in the processes of housing delivery in one way or another. Thus the challenge of penetrating social and political structures in the city has been overcome, to some extent, by the NGOs studied. These NGOs have taken on the housing challenge and have found ways around the bureaucracy and political stalemates to provide housing within the city. The usual argument for urban disarray in the South is framed around the expectation that complex institutional frameworks and inadequate policies hinder the development of cities in developing countries. Therefore the importance of the political and institutional power harnessed by the NGOs cannot be overemphasized. It signifies that even in the chaos of a developing megacity like Metro Manila, urban disconnect can be overcome.

Sub chapter 5.5 outlined the features of urban disconnect. Now I examine these features in terms of the cases in this study in relation to how housing rights were conceived and applied given the complex interrelationships between actors. Urban disconnect, firstly, is found in the fragmentation and differentiation between actors, who have varying and often contradicting institutional practices and philosophies that can cause a gridlock. From the examples of the Phase Two and Gawad Kalinga projects discussed previously, it becomes clear that the actors, particularly as a result of the push of influential local NGOs, were able to communicate about the needs of specific groups in the city. Castells (1989) discusses how cities have sharp definitions of their boundaries and low levels of communication. These barriers to city development were overcome as state institutions allowing the NGOs and associations to penetrate these boundaries and encapsulate roles that are originally government roles. In addition, the group building and agency of the participants at the community level enable greater potential for engagement with the state. However, despite Berner and Korff (1995) placing emphasis on the spatial fragmentation of communities, I found that through their networks with the NGOs, local communities were able to communicate with the state and other actors, thus also avoiding what Simone (2012) called "awkward" engagements. Therefore, the NGOs play an essential role in overcoming disconnect, as they are a bridge between state institutions and local communities.

The second point raised concerned issues of trust, loyalty and solidarity, as exemplified by Berner and Korff (1995), which were tantamount in the associations progress in the housing process. For example, a lack of trust and belief in the housing programs complicated and stalled the process of relocation in communities yet to be housed (Phase 3 and Ulingan). In Phase 3, some residents of the community refused to join the association. The association leader explained that those families did not believe the local NGO was going to be successful at providing housing for them. The opposing views and interests divided the community and created conflict not only within the association but also in terms of what the housing providers were able to do. However, where the NGOs were able to gain trust and assist individuals and families to joining the association, participatory processes effectively created feelings of community during and following relocation.

From the first two points presented one can ponder that the NGOs have become instrumental middlemen between communities and other actors. This relates to the notion by Simone (2012) that decentralization has miniaturized local administration and public services. I argued that disconnect occurred to the extent that this gap between local government and the communities has widened and therefore communities often need to be organized in order to communicate with or raise demands from their local government. Although the relations between the local government and communities may be good, the local governments do not have the "participatory" mechanisms to organize the

constituents. In addition, issues of trust between the groups have been overcome mainly through the involvement and negotiation with the NGOs.

Finally, it is the NGOs that have shown the potential to navigate both the community level dynamics and institutional bureaucracy. Overcoming disconnect requires not only community participation but also the reframing of policies of key institutional players. As Held and McGrew (2000) put it, the state remains the institution with the legitimacy, capabilities and resources to engage in high-level governance. Although NGOs have shown increased capabilities and incredible effectiveness in amassing resources, the role of the state in megacities cannot be undermined – in the realm of land distribution, provision of services and infrastructure, and overall city and national development. Therefore, by partnering with the state and powerful leaders, the NGOs must avoid pointing fingers at the state and rather, open a rights-based, or "empowerment" dialogue that emphasize informal settlers as actors in the city. These wider philosophical leanings show that linkages go beyond political and institutional affiliations. Wittingly or inadvertently, the NGOs connect different levels of government and other urban actors to the global human rights and urban governance agendas.

7.7 Summary

This chapter found that alongside challenges in the implementation of large housing programs of the NHA and CMP, NGOs' housing programs found success in providing housing by developing a "we consciousness" (Berner 1997) that called for the major actors on the urban scene to support their housing programs. However, a major challenge continues to be in identifying professional squatters and ensuring they do not access socialized programs. Two aspects of city life are reconciled; it considers the social processes occurring at the community level as well as the state level and considers the relationships constructed around housing projects. As Simone (2012) put it, coherence in the city becomes obvious when challenges and disruptions are erased. Hence it is important to enter the interstices of urban organizations and understand their relationships with local communities at the center of social action. The chapter argues that urban disconnect can be far reaching, and undermines the programs. Urban disconnect thus lies in local governments not being able to have more central roles in housing provision as well as the power struggles that occur within squatter communities and between the various actors involved.

CHAPTER 8: HOUSING RIGHTS, COMMUNITY BUILDING AND URBAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The key point in this chapter is that despite the challenges, some impressive programs exist that not only provide adequate housing but appear to be successful at building new communities in the relocation sites. The following sections draw the discussion in chapters 6 and 7 to a theoretical level, by analyzing how participation and community building examples in this study are related to urban social theory as outlined in Chapter 5. The analysis is built up to consider whether the forms of participation and collective action seen in Manila are transformative enough to be considered social movements.

8.1 Community participation in housing access

This study has maintained the importance of understanding social issues and processes from the community level and up. Particularly due to urban disconnect, the complexities of urban life are visible mostly from the community level. De Wit and Berner state this challenge well. "Identities, loyalties and solidarity cannot be taken for granted and reciprocal relations and collective action in a slum occur within subgroups more often than at the level of the 'community'" (de Wit and Berner 2009, 943). Hence community is referred to in line with 'villages' in more or less distinctive local districts (Järvelä 2005; Kuvaja 2007; cf. Kaufman and Alonso 1997). Moreover, Järvelä (2007 and 2005) has referred to this new urban way of life as the homestead principle in which local communities are connected to a particular urban space and to each other in urban districts. Through these connections, communities form complex social networks whose values lay in their potential to produce effective ties that enable communities to cope with threats of arbitrary forced

eviction on the one hand, and daily challenges such as access to infrastructure and services on the other.

The importance of networks is clear, as emphasized above. Associations' networks with NGOs are particularly interesting. The community associations appear to use their network to meet several purposes; they have the association for housing, but other horizontal and vertical linkages for different purposes, such as livelihood, religion, culture, etc. Of course, these are to meet individual and family needs yet in the informal areas, what benefits one family often benefits the neighbors. This can be seen in the access to services such as electricity. Conversely, the communities can use one association to meet multiple needs. In Ulingan for example, the housing association was initially set up so that the community could access water. Once that need was met the association continued to thrive – the monetary contributions were used to assist members in times of emergencies and eventually the same association became involved in the relocation process. The same can be seen with the relocated GK community and SHEC's Phase 2. Nevertheless, sub-groups of these housing associations were set up for members to join – for example, a women's livelihood group, couple's groups and fathers/men's group.

A second interesting point is that these networks are cultivated within the frame of "community" and experienced or lived in everyday life. Community was defined in 5.2 as the web of group networks, personal relationships, behaviors and traditions that occur in the context of a physical neighborhood (Flecknoe and McLellan 1994). Hence the associative or group format of networks is only one aspect of community. The question arises of whether it matters that participation is expected for housing access and is initiated from the 'outside' when community is in fact lived in one's locality. As far as housing acquisition goes, there is an interface between formal and informal networks that is important. Although the NGOs or state institutions may require and initiate formal group formation for the purpose of housing, the informal ties between the members of the group is still fundamental to how the association actually proceeds.

As Mitlin discusses, central governments may have identified weaknesses in their agencies and perceive citizen participation in local politics as a means of addressing these weaknesses. Although the potential for these initiatives to be successful lies in the existing power structures and the nature of the relationships, such participatory governance initiatives create "space for negotiation" for non-state actors (Mitlin 2004, 5). The presence of NGOs in this negotiation space is something that is somewhat unprecedented, as there is little possibility for the associations to understand and maneuver state housing programs (CMP and NHA) without knowledgeable assistance from the NGOs.

8.2 Participation as a requirement

Participation is a requirement for accessing socialized housing in Manila. This is seen from the perspective that both government and non-state housing providers require that families hoping to benefit from their programs are members of a housing association. Secondly, the purpose of such participatory housing processes by NGOs is community building, which at the institutional level was linked with power shifts and social transformations.

Two modes of participation were identified in 5.4. The type of participation found in this study fits with the first, which specifies participation in development programs as stemming from governments or NGOs, with the intention of making specific improvements. This study has outlined how NGOs and urban poor groups assist squatter families in Manila to form associations. I stress that these organizations are external, and cannot be considered within the frame of the 'community'; the associations, families and individual members are part of the community. However, as the community is the locus of action (Beck 1992, Shatkin 2007) the horizontal and vertical networks stem from the community, not the other actors – with NGOs usually serving as the first strong linkage.

Therefore communities are also the loci of conflict as a result of tokenistic participation (Hickey and Mohan 2004a). Tokenistic participation occurs where actors participate in one program in order to meet other concerns. The discussions on professional squatters exemplify this. The intention to fish out professional squatters is explicit in Philippine urban housing policy, and has been made a responsibility for all actors in the housing process. Therefore, community organizations and individual members are obligated to "out" professional squatters on the basis that the involvement of professional squatters in the community may hamper progress. Thus the requirement for group formation may not be only for the purpose of housing provision but to meet the wider goals of the institutions, in this case to identify professional squatters. However, Shatkin (2007) points out that squatters know little about policies. Therefore, without the promise of housing, informal settlers may otherwise be unwilling to "out" their neighbor. The presence of professional squatters is most problematic for a local government that may have other uses for land or that has conflict with professional squatters. Thus participation also meets the interests of the LGU up to the more powerful state institutions. Hence, the requirement of participation promotes tokenistic participation from both the state and the community members.

The potential of participation to be transformative is particularly interesting given the cases presented here. Hickey and Mohan (2004a) describe the transformative qualities of participation. I approach these based on the premise that participation is required, not initiated by the informal settlers. First, although participation in values formation and social preparation is determined

as important by actors outside the community, the nature of the housing processes and networks penetrate socio-political boundaries and change the ways the networks and policies are framed. Secondly, participatory frameworks may contribute to bringing the state closer to the people, at least at the local government level, since these institutions open themselves up to negotiating with the community and the NGOs. In addition, conflicts within the community itself need to be overcome in order for the association to move forward.

However, I find problematic the third point on communities as agents in the rights-based approach. In terms of squatter families' access to and abilities to contribute to transformative social housing processes, not all members of the associations can be considered as agents because some of these members can be very passive and their roles as individuals cannot always be determined. Agents, or active individuals are the association leaders and NGO staff, and the association as a whole. Thus I perceive agency in this way as group-based, as the families participate within a group and it is as a group that they approach and negotiate with other actors. The group or associative factor is core to participation as witnessed in Manila's housing programs.

As for the fourth point, participation in the association affords the families opportunities to make advances across different areas of development. In Gawad Kalinga for example, livelihood programs are part of the overall participatory framework, as development is seen holistically. In addition, the presence of different external actors in these programs exposes the associations to a broader network, which can allow GK's goals to contribute to the structural and philosophical transformation of this wider range of institutions. This relates to the discussion on the need and potential for housing to be inclusive of more extensive infrastructure development at the city level, and how this may be related to social movement discourse. However, the relationship between participation and power needs to be addressed.

8.3 Negotiating urban housing, transforming power structures

Participation is seen as a tool in community building and can be described as the collective action that occurs at the grassroots. Participation is a useful concept when considered as "participation as transformation" (Hickey and Mohan 2004a). Hickey and Mohan explain that many NGOs have been successful in participatory community building efforts, which made significant contributions to, for example, community-state relations. In addition, when rights-based approaches have been incorporated, NGOs have been able to locate their challenges within the wider social framework, such as with empowerment and together with the shift toward advocacy, thereby allowing greater commitment from state and other institutions. Furthermore, successes

have been noted when the objective is to go beyond technical fixes and aim for structural transformations.

As power is central in the relations between actors and in the nature of collective action (Castells 1983; Hickey and Mohan 2004a), this section tries to understand the outcomes of collective action and participation in communities in terms of the power structures. Locality is where social interaction and group building occurs, which can create interdependencies and community organizing (Berner and Korff 1995). It is through associations in localities that squatters articulate their common interests and become capable of collective action and conflict (ibid). In addition, Berner and Korff argue that it is through associations that squatters "improve their bargaining position, form vertical links to political allies, and demonstrate that they can put up considerable resistance against attempts to destroy the place they call their own" (p.183). The wider housing issue is based on the connections between space and citywide planning, which requires constant negotiation within the politics of participation.

Access to city space is very much linked to the ways power is regulated between state and non-state actors and the constant interaction between power and counter power (Castells 2012). There is an innate state of conflict whereby government and landowners do not want squatters on prime land or in danger zones while informal communities perceive these places as their homes and sources of livelihood. Before relocation, these spaces are segregated within the barangay and in relation to the city as a whole. Thus contests of power are staged, as Tonkiss (2005) puts it, *in the city and over rights to the city*. This belies a negotiation of city space, as Tonkiss asserts.

Furthermore, counter power is seen as the activities and abilities of NGOs to challenge powerful government institutions and reproduce their values and interests in the field of housing. Gawad Kalinga is an excellent example of how counter power is posed by the organization and its leaders to the extent that not only do institutions support their values for free housing for the poor, but also in the transformation of social spaces in the municipalities where they work. GK's housing units are particularly colorful and unique and this leaves an impression in the immediate surroundings. The NGO's power to transform urban space demonstrates the possession of economic resources as well as negotiating power with institutions and landowners, who essentially, must allow the changes to take place. Thus the NGOs have demonstrated abilities to effectively engage with the micro-politics of urban spaces, as described by Tonkiss (2005).

I have previously outlined how the NGOs have been instrumental in the housing sphere to overcome urban disconnect and make housing rights a reality for thousands of families. However, Hickey and Mohan (2004a) identified conditions within which participation is transformative. Due to the more development-based discourse here, these conditions contain power dynamics at the wider city level. One, the authors' position is that the objectives

of the participatory processes are in fact to challenge the power relations in addition to service delivery. This is likely the case for NGOs that are instrumental in negotiating with the political elite, as the success of future programs requires that they have increased potential and wider networks to provide housing for more families. Two, by engaging with housing rights, NGOs and state providers address a wider issue of inequality and poverty reduction that is a global concern. Yu and Karaos (2004) see the requirement of community participation as a progressive turn in governance that contributes to communities' understanding of their capacities to utilize the state options.

What this study was not able to determine is the extent to which economic and political power are intertwined and the role of patronage in these interrelationships, as per the fourth condition. However, the examples signify the spaces for negotiation are as wide as they are vertical. The nature of collective actions and networking seen in Manila are creative processes that counter routine institutionalized behavior (See Crossley 2002; Castells 2012). At the general level, these conditions that have been fulfilled have a basis for the consideration of social movements – the ability of collective action to make transformative change on institutions and break into arenas of power. The following section analyzes this potential of social movements in terms of the process of producing new communities.

8.4 Forged communities as social movements?

The relationships necessary to create new communities are striking as central to the discussion on social movements. These relations and linkages are drawn from dissatisfaction with housing for the urban poor and have the intention to create new forms of community life. Values formation and social preparation, the participatory processes in which community members attend workshops and trainings to prepare and "empower" them, exemplify these linkages, in addition to the regular associational life of the families during and after the housing programs. Values formation provides an interesting example of community building. As values formation is an essential participatory tool for building solidarity and shared values in the communities visited, we have to consider the value of the process and whether it contributes to social change. This concerns how norms are being reproduced during values formation and how these norms are related to those of the wider society. In addition, the NGOs here incorporated religious dimensions in their values formation activities, such as in couples counseling.

The significance of collective identity created in the process of housing provision is startling. Poletta and Jasper (2001) noted shared beliefs, solidarity and strong social networks and ties as characteristics of collective identity in communities. Collective identity is said to be important in a specific moment. In

the Phase 3 and Ulingan cases, collective identity stems from the joint situation of the families facing eviction. In Phase 2 and GK examples, families' shared experiences of everyday life in danger zones as well as a shared interest to change their living conditions provide commonality for the formation of collective identity. Castells (2012) discusses the importance of fear and emotions on the development of collective identity. The families seeking relocation share emotions, such as fear of fires, of evictions, and the challenge of the lack of tenure security and safety. In addition, the cultural effects of collective identity could be, for example, shared moral and religious beliefs, as SHEC and GK are both faith-based organizations. The renewed cognitive, moral and emotional connections of values formation when juxtaposed with the broader community or institutions could allow for social movements to spurt (Poletta and Jasper 2001). Furthermore, depending on how the movement is politicized by the activists (in this case the NGOs) collective identity can allow the new community – as a group – to fit into the new environment once relocated (Goodwin and Jasper 2015).

Stereotyped visions of social movements are of protesters holding placards outside the offices of government institutions or transnational companies. However, the housing movement in Manila is very rarely loud – negotiations happen quietly between the main actors and power holders. Thus, social movements here are not necessarily popular protests, but a slow and discursive process that cuts across different levels of city authority. Moreover, adapting how socialized housing is produced shows an agreement on the part of the state that NGOs' housing provision mechanisms have produced good results and that the political structure is becoming more conducive to meeting national priorities and reformulating values and norms of the institutions (See Castells 1983). This is a gradual process that occurs over time and with powerful players building horizontal and vertical networks that allows development of shared interests and commitments (Beck 1992).

These forged communities are in regularized areas and enter the formal domain where the families are citizens whose environment and services are governed. The myriad of actors involved in shaping the new communities continue to be present in their new formal lives and therefore the families themselves may have to have direct contact with these institutions that they previously were connected to via the NGOs. I consider this a significant transformation of everyday life as networks are widened and relationships are renegotiated constantly but with the families having greater knowledge and access to various institutions. According to Shatkin (2007), the communities' success in attaining housing may create positive perceptions on their potential impacts on policies and programs. As the ties are not only between the community members but also between the community and the organization (for example GK), the community can attempt to assert influence on state and political actors through their NGO.

However, the idea to give land and housing to the poorest may not be popular amongst the general population – land in the city is scarce and even middle class families do not necessary have the resources to own housing units. Nevertheless Hickey and Mohan (2004a) point out that the intentions of these processes are both political and radical from an urban governance perspective. Thus by changing the living conditions and institutional barriers at the local level, the actors also change the social structure. For example, relocated families may no longer be considered as "the poorest of the poor". The transformation of urban space and the communities in specific localities therefore points to a transformation of social life. This transition from squatter to legal resident (or homeowner) is highly significant.

It thus becomes necessary to examine in the analysis of social movements the structures within which it takes place. Castells (in Borja and Castells 1997) emphasizes the international level. However, city structures today are not only dictated by international orders but by national economic priorities, social engagements, and the norms and values of its own institutions. With the influx of people from different backgrounds into cities, traditional forms of community are being transformed – moving beyond family ties and towards networks appropriated by individuals themselves, and social ties that are increasingly reflexive (Beck 1992). The shift to greater individual choice and communities that are more loosely organized has enabled the construction of networks that are "formed on the basis of the interests, ambitions, and commitments of individuals who regard themselves as organizers of their own circles of contacts and relationships" (ibid, 98). If individuals, families and associations of the newly forged communities are able to transform and organize themselves, the conditions for social movements become compelling.

8.5 Conclusion

This study produced three significant empirical findings that make an important contribution to the wealth of knowledge about cities in the South. The first is the persistent presence of professional squatters and the challenges in identifying them in communities, as well how to prevent them from attaining socialized housing. The second finding centers on values formation as a participatory tool for community building in Metro Manila, where NGOs in particular anticipate outcomes such as "empowerment". The presence of professional squatters and the process of values formation contribute to the discussion on who is considered poor and how housing rights should be implemented. Lastly, urban disconnect is a concept I propose that encapsulates the challenges in megacities where social and political networks are extraordinarily complex. Urban disconnect adds to the literature on the governance of cities by identifying formerly ambiguous challenges as the lack

of collaboration between government institutions and other actors in ways that would be beneficial to the promotion of housing rights. In addition, where communities are increasing their participation in urban governance with the assistance of NGOs, the diminished role of the local government is startling given its geographic, political and economic proximity to the communities.

At the policy level, I propose that there has been a shift in values that has influenced government policies and the political elite, and allowed for the transformation of social space in municipalities in Metro Manila. The transformations that have occurred required NGOs to develop powerful networks with the state and influential elite and to overcome urban disconnect. In addition, by aligning with the human rights agenda, NGOs adhere to international social policy frameworks that push for social change. Therefore I propose that the NGOs' successes at transforming both the everyday life of squatters and the institutional housing frameworks in Manila can be considered social movements. One way to overcome the institutional aspect of disconnect would be to recognize squatters as legitimate actors in urban development, as proposed by Robert Neuwirth (2005), and to develop creative processes across the city and in the various strata of social, political and economic life. These creative processes can be influenced by the participatory methods outlined in this study, by combining wider development goals such as poverty reduction and the transformation of urban neighborhoods. However this has to be done in such a way that the families themselves determine the forms and degrees of participation and make meaningful networks that include, but are not limited to, the NGOs.

This study raised a few areas for further research. One could consider how specific community building tools and the processes of access discussed relate to the debate on the "responsibilization of the poor". A potential research question follows, on the long-term impacts on the communities and families of socialized housing programs that engaged in participatory processes, and to what extent values formation contributed to other aspects of life, such as income, education, etc. By researching the long-term outcomes and values of the new communities, we can develop ideas on whether participation is effective and perhaps, how to harness the participation potential and solve urban housing problems for millions of city inhabitants. A second question could focus on how communities, NGOs and state institutions involved in housing address the issue of professional squatters over time. It would be interesting to compare the challenges of professional squatters in different urban areas and even regions and to identify the ways in which policies and programs can be successful despite the presence of professional squatters.

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