

Rethinking Sustainability of Vertical Housing Policy for Low-Income People: Lessons Learned from the Management of Walk-up Flat Dwelling in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, housing in the form of apartment (for middle class) and walk-up flat (for low-income) has been offered on a massive scale recently. However, there is a question whether people do actually need and want to live in vertical housing. In general, many units are unoccupied or sold but remain empty. Thus, it leads to further issue whether vertical housing policy may be sustainable. In particular, walk-up flat, as part of housing policy in Indonesia, has been delivered massively for low-income people (*Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah / MBR*) during recent years since mid 2000s. The program is continuously carried out until today despite several signs of limitation such as vacancy proportion/percentage, rejection from people in general and the tendency of becoming vertical slum. It is worried that the program will not sustainable and become difficulty in the future instead of solving housing problem for the targeted group.

Parallel to that, it is interesting to know that, in the case of walk-up flats, low-income people are doing their best when shifting their experience from horizontal to vertical living. They make adaptations to their former habits when dealing with the limitation of living in vertical housing. This can be considered creativity within a relatively new and fixed place setting. As a result, the above question of sustainability is then being re-thought.

Considering these above situations, this paper discussed the success and challenges of the management of walk-up flat housing by studying cases in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The research to several walk-up flats was explored to assess the sustainability of vertical housing policy, by exploring people daily activity within walk-up flat, its managerial aspect and related factors. This research was carried out by using qualitative approach, while the quantitative data became supporting argument.

The findings showed that the managers of walk-up flat have done creative management in operating walk-up flat. This effort is supported by the residents in form of community involvement in day to day activity.

Keywords: vertical housing policy, sustainability, walk-up flat, management, Yogyakarta-Indonesia

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Starting in 1980s and then becoming massive in 1990s and 2000s, many walk-up flats (*rumah susun*) have been built in many big cities in Indonesia. This type of building was developed as an alternative solution for housing the community, mainly for low income people (*Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah / MBR*). There was an interesting fact that people (both residents and surrounding community) may acclimatize to this shifting experience from horizontal to vertical (Swasto 2009, 2010). However, there are some situations in which the provided walk-up flats are remain empty or in the end, start to become slum, which lead to unsustainable condition. There is a challenging fact that the manager deals with low-income community (who relatively has a very limited resources), in which he/she must handle the 'survival activity' in order to be sustained.

In Yogyakarta Special Province, there are several units of walk-up flats that have been built until 2011. Some of them are built in Yogyakarta City (along the Code riverbank), while the others are built in other regencies. It is interesting to know that there are differences of managing the walk-up flats among the respective managers, both in city/regency area level and even among the respective flats (within the same city/regency), although they have similar 'sustainability' objective.

1.2. Definition of Walk-up Flat

Walk-up flat may best be described as a multi storey building, which consists of units that functionally structured both horizontally and vertically. These units can be owned and lived separately by respective resident and equipped with sharing unit, land and infrastructure (Law No. 16/1985 concerning Walk-up Flat and the regulation of the Minister of Public Works No. 5/PRT/M/2007 concerning the Technical Guidelines Development for Walk-up Flat).

The characteristic of walk-up flat may be distinguished by its concern of not having lift / elevator to minimize budget. Therefore, stairs become the only vertical equipment. This is the main reason why the height of walk-up flat is considered 'only' 4 storey (more or less, which may up to 6 floors in some cases in Indonesia), considering 'humanity' concern or easiness factor of walking up and down regularly and the affordability issue for the (potential) occupants.

1.3. Issues

In later developments, although the walk-up flat has several positive sides, not all parts of the community do like or want to live in this housing unit. Most people still prefer to live in ordinary landed houses for various psychological and socio-cultural reasons. They still want to live in a low-rise building (landed house) that directly connect with the ground or garden to grow crops, nurture pets, and to play with kids. They need to be close with the yard surrounding the house. In addition, they also do not like to be bounded too much by several rules that apply for living in flats (Yudohusodo et al, 1991: 352 in Herlinawati, 2010).

Viewed from the physical form of building condition, which is inhabited by many households adjacent to each other and the utilizations of the area and several objects are shared, there may bring potential for conflict and resistance. Related to all obstacles and limitations that exist in living in the walk-up flat, it is needed to have scheme and or organization that can regulate the behaviour of occupants. This organization or manager then can form rules to regulate rights, obligations, prohibitions, and sanctions for the occupants. These norms can originally source from the legal rules established by government institution (builder of the walk-up flat) or an agreement among residents. Rules are used as guidelines in doing occupancy and expected to cover all aspects of the residency, including safety, security, health issue, cleanliness, order, convenience, aesthetics, harmony, and humanity. Thus, unwanted disruption and potential conflicts can be minimized (Herlinawati, 2010). In conclusion, the manager or this management issue plays quite vital role for the maintenance of the walk-up flat development, considering its sustainability and tenant's limited affordability. It can be added that the social aspect in form of managerial capacity is very important to support the sustainability of walk-up flat delivery.

In 2008-2010, it was explored in Yogyakarta that the community, both the residents and the surrounding, relatively have no difficulty in adapting their habit when shifting their daily life experience from landed house / horizontal situation to vertical housing / walk-up flat or *rumah susun / rusun* (Swasto, 2009 and 2010). In addition, it was also interesting to observe that there was 'local creativeness' produced by the residents in this occupancy. In 2012, the further study, exploring the inquiry of the same issue in management level, discover that the finding in community level did not stand alone but relates with other 'creativity' by the managers (Swasto, 2012). This paper is then suggested to summary those above findings from walk-up flat cases in Yogyakarta as the main focus. The result is expected as the lessons learned of the management of walk-up flat dwelling.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This paper is trying to explore what experience can be learned as the lessons from walk-up flat management in Yogyakarta. Generally, this paper is developing the findings of 'creative spaces' by the community, taken from bottom-up view (Swasto, 2009 and 2010), and 'creative management', taken from top-down perspective (Swasto, 2012). The research is developed by exploring the managerial situation of walk-up flat cases in Yogyakarta Special Province, by looking at three flats along Code Riverbank in Yogyakarta City (Cokrodirjan / Code, Jogoyudan / Gowongan and Juminahan / Tegalpanggung walk-up flat), and compare those with other three flats in Sleman Regency (Gemawang, Mranggen and Dabag / Pringwulung / Condongcatur / Seturan walk-up flat). The case study research approach was used, in which qualitative method became the main tool.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Concept of vertical living

The term vertical housing can be best replaced with multi-storey housing as argued by Towers (2000). He explained that this approach has an inter-related history with slum clearance. Chandler, Clancy, et al., eds. (2010: 67 and 95) categorized height limitation of 1 to 5 floors by low-rise housing, together with the type of row house (and the term of townhouse and terrace housing), while 5 to 15 stories means it has already included in mid/medium-rise. Moreover, they stated that this type of housing has benefit of allowing private entries to individual dwellings units within a narrow width of street frontage and providing for high density (and low rise dwellings of) 25-40 units per acre in general. It is also efficient, flexible and becomes liveable solution for families as well as attractive to singles and empty nesters (since it save expense for daily maintenance, compared to single/freestanding house). In addition, this townhouse type may support good transition from less to more dense housing types in mixed-type housing communities since it is built tightly together, saves efficient land use, allows higher densities and preserves open space.

The basic concept of vertical housing policy is to place people (usually) from low-rise / landed condition into vertical experience. In relation to slum clearance situation, the idle/vacant space being created after removing overcrowded buildings then can be utilised as a green or open space as explained above. There are several assumed consequences upon the implementation of vertical housing approach, such as the behaviour or habit change of the dwellers, impact to surrounding environment, change of land value and others. These conditions are sometimes categorised into physical, social and economic impact. In addition, McCallum and Benjamin (1985) stated that housing must be understood not for what it is, but for what it does. Furthermore, they argued that housing policies should consider in detail of how the poor acquire housing and how they actually use and benefit from it.

3.2. Management of Walk-up Flat

Living in 'relatively' very different circumstance does also mean having different experience. This situation also occurs in walk-up flat phenomenon. People, who are considered low-income and usually live in low-rise situation or landed house and equipped with a quite minimum infrastructure, now move to vertical housing with different 'standard', both physical and social. This new situation also endorses their habit to adapt with the new situation of occupancy and dwelling process as argued by Seek (1983).

Parallel to that, there is also a concept of housing policy implementation. Ham and Hill (in Malpass and Means, 1993: 5-6) summarised the two main approaches in implementation theory, which are top-down and bottom-up perspective. The top-down perspective is related to the significant role of the policy maker while the bottom-up perspective see otherwise, in which the stakeholders (or lower level implementers) and the process in the implementation stage play significant role. The criteria of top-down perspective is further described as prescriptive, perceives the definition of both policy and implementation as non-problematic and sees the control of

implementing agencies as feasible and desirable. Therefore, the key challenge is the feasibility of establishing clear policies with clear objectives. On the other hand, from bottom-up perspectives, the stresses key is negotiation and compromise. Furthermore, by looking at its implementation, the walk-up flat delivery in Yogyakarta can be viewed from two points of view, which are 'end' and 'open' process as argued by Galster (2002). Subsequently, this view can be derived as a 'top-down social control' and 'community consensus' and or in other words 'engineering approach / expectation' and 'people interpretation'.

The issue of managing walk-up flat as part / product of public housing can be derived from above two approaches. The local government see the management aspect as a top-down concern or written regulation, while the community see from bottom-up point of view or communal negotiation. These two aspects will then become the main discussion in this paper.

4. CONTEXTUAL SETTING: WALK-UP FLAT IN YOGYAKARTA

In Yogyakarta, the development of walk-up flat was initiated in 2004/2005 by constructing Cokrodirjan/Code walk-up flat in Code riverbank. It was followed by other walk-up flats, in which until this moment (2013), there are more than 26 walk-up flats (building) according to the data of Department of Public Works at Yogyakarta Provincial Level (last updated 2011/2012), including student dormitory and public foundation flat. The 'pure' walk-up flat / rumah susun / rusun (to distinguish those flats aimed for student, public/civil servant and other groups) targeted for low-income people are in amount of 13 units among total of 26 and located in Yogyakarta City (3 locations), Sleman Regency (3 locations), and Bantul Regency (2 locations). Since these walk-up flats use renting system, they are also called rental walk-up flat or *rumah susun sewa / rusunawa*. There is no walk-up flat for sale (*rumah susun milik / rusunami*) until today in Yogyakarta.

Among 5 cities/regencies within Yogyakarta Special Province, Yogyakarta City (since 2004/2005) and Sleman Regency (since 2005/2006) has the earliest start of walk-up flat development, compared to other 3 regencies. There is no walk-up flat in Gunungkidul Regency until 2012. The walk-up flats in Yogyakarta City were built along Code River as part of upgrading program, considering this area as the most densely populated area (Swasto, 2009). There was also a reason of finding the most suitable land and available space for constructing the walk-up flat building, while social acceptance also became important consideration. Almost similar reason of finding available space was the walk-up flat development in Sleman Regency. The village vacant land (or *tanah kas desa*) became the most possible and affordable option for doing construction. However, different to Yogyakarta City walk-up flat cases, the walk-up flat development in Sleman Regency was not 'strongly' focused on 'upgrading' program or dedicated to existing / surrounding area (like those cases in Code riverbank). As a consequence, the (potential) walk-up flat residents in Sleman Regency come from various places as well as their characteristic backgrounds, unlike those in the Yogyakarta City (except in Juminahan / Tegalpanggung walk-up flat).

In general, the comparison of walk-up flat cases in Yogyakarta City and Sleman Regency can be described as follows.

Table 1: Comparison between Walk-up Flat Cases in Yogyakarta City and Sleman Regency

	Walk-up Flats in Yogyakarta City	Walk-up Flats in Sleman Regency
Target	Enhancing slum area to healthy housing (<i>rumah sehat / RSH</i>), dedicated for existing low-income people (<i>MBR</i>)	Delivering decent housing (<i>rumah layak huni</i>), dedicated for low-income people (<i>MBR</i>) in general
Management issue	Handled 'independently', managed by community leader / appointed person	Managed by Integrated Management Unit (<i>UPT</i>) of Sleman Regency
Location	Situated in 'relatively' slum area (riverbank) in downtown	Located in an 'empty / vacant land' / (village vacant land / tanah kas desa) or unproductive land
Difficulty	Negotiation of renting price, physical quality maintenance, finding 'idle / vacant' location for construction	'Sustainable' maintenance in long-term and in general (facing casuistic phenomenon)
Other aspect	The residents are mainly the first applicant Handed over issue (case of Jogoyudan/Gowongan and Juminahan / Tegalpanggung)	The cases of subletting or the resident is not the applicant but his/her family Handed over issue (case of Dabag / Pringwulung / Condongcatur / Seturan)

Source: Analysis

5. MANAGEMENT OF WALK-UP FLAT IN YOGYAKARTA: LESSONS LEARNED

The success of the implementation of walk-up flat cannot be escaped with its management, mainly during occupancy period. One of the interesting facts in the walk-up flat administration is the variety at managerial level. The management of walk-up flat in Yogyakarta city have different condition with its neighbour or Sleman regency. In the case of walk-up flat management in the city of Yogyakarta, there is also variation in internal management. Here, it can be seen that there are differences in management levelling, in which the responsible institution or actor is diverse as well as its role, depend on the context.

In Yogyakarta city, the management is handed over to the community, through the role of informal leader, with the concept of training community independency. In Sleman regency, the administration is more formalized, since it is conducted by forming certain body / organization called Integrated Management Unit or *Unit Pengelolaan Terpadu / UPT* under the authority of the local government of Sleman. This effort is carried out to maintain the continuity of management, while also to anticipate the development of other flats in the following years. The discussion of the aspects related to walk-up flat management in Yogyakarta province can be explored as follows.

5.1. Top-down regulation and communal consensus: code of conduct of living vertical and landed house norms

In Indonesia, living in vertical situation is only an option. People are usually live in low-rise / landed house although they dwell in relatively 'bad' situation (squatter area and or others). Thus, this low-rise / landed house culture, particularly in kampong habits, must now be adjusted when people move to vertical walk-up flat. As a result, the new norms are created related to this situation. The new code of conduct should be followed by the resident of walk-up flat in order to live in harmony and even 'survive'.

The walk-up flat is generally targeted for low-income people. However, there are two different situations related to the objective of its building. One is dedicated for relocated people (living in considered slum / squatter area) as part of upgrading / renewal program and the other is targeted for low-income people in general. The latter can also be categorised into two targets, which are low-income people with similar occupation (for example the labour job) and the other is for mixed-occupation background. In its progress, there is also blended situation in which the relocated people may also be mixed with general low-income people.

Generally, in walk-up flat dwelling, there are two types of norms, which are common regulation, as endorsed by the manager or the local government, and community norm, which becomes social contract. From top-down situation or management perspective, the initiation to create certain regulation is important in order to operate the walk-up flat. This 'common regulation' is usually related to building safety to minimise risk of living in flat and managerial aspect, such as prohibition of keeping pet, blocking stairs, bringing heavy material (which may endanger the construction) and doing criminal things.

Parallel to that, there are community values / social norms, as explored from the experience of the residents, which also determine the success of walk-up flat delivery. It can be said that this communal consensus is related with day to day activity. These community values are for example the need of sharing (or raising communal awareness, consensus and responsibility), the need of doing tolerance (or generating concept of living in harmony within limited resources and heterogeneous condition), and the need of creating association of the residents (as an organization to coordinate social activity and conduct regular communal dialogue). In practice, the example of this consensus is to participate in cleaning the environment, maintain quiet situation, and so on.

These above two issues are assumed to be necessary for future sustainability in walk-up flat dwelling. However, it is not easy to create situation which support each other. It needs time and specific effort to blend the balance.

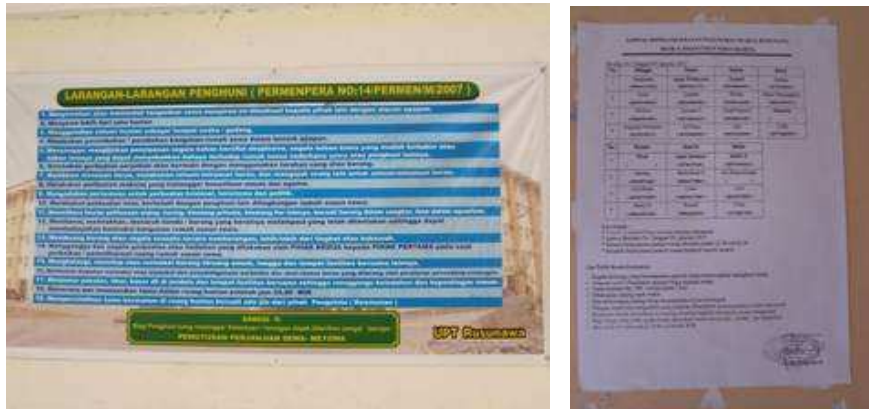


Figure 1. The banner of common regulation for living in walk-up flat in Sleman Regency (left) and social announcement concerning community rotary patrol in Yogyakarta City (right)

Although there are general regulations, for instance in Sleman Regency cases (as provided by the Integrated Management Unit), the implementation may differ based on respective 'local' manager decision. The social agreement or communal consensus among the residents may also influence this concern. Every issue is discussed by sitting together in order to achieve better solution and gain continuous improvement. One example of different implementation is related to the issue of keeping a pet (such as bird).

The regulation for this issue is different from one to another walk-up flats, based on respective consensus. For example, in one walk-up flat, the managers only allow their residents to keep bird in 1st floor, while the manager of the other walk-up flat may allow keeping it in certain area or even in front of unit of the owner. This code of conduct may change based on opinion of the resident, considering its impact to communal concern. Other issue such as who will be responsible for public space cleanness (i.e. whether it is decided to do rotate shift or maybe the manager will hire somebody to clean it based on expenses of the resident) can also become social consensus. The community association (*paguyuban*) is usually created to maintain social dialogue as well as become a bridge between the manager and the residents.

The above situation indicates that in its implementation, the top-down control initiative by the local government in walk-up flat delivery is 'adjusted' by the people with their own bottom-up consensus / social control in maintaining day to day activity in vertical living. This 'system' is needed to keep harmony or to make regulation 'works'.

5.2. Engineering consideration / expectation and resident interpretation / response

Generally, both the central and local government as the provider, and the community as the user, have quite similar objective. They want to endorse situation in which people be able to live in sustainable harmony, in relation to the shifting of living experience from horizontal situation to vertical. However, there are actually two different approaches. The local government, taken from top-down perspective, implements the walk-up flat policy by using engineering

consideration in which the delivery is expected to meet certain standard, regular arrangement and controlled regulation. The walk-up flat should be able to be dwelled by the low-income group and is expected to be self-sustained. The mass production of walk-up flat units within short construction period and with relatively the most economical budget becomes the decision to solve urban housing problem.

On the other hand, the residents, taken from bottom-up view, response to this delivery based on their own interpretation. They consider that walk-up flat is not only a product, but more than that. The process of dwelling shows social dynamics within the walk-up flat, and it leads to assumption that delivering units is not as easy as just giving it. This situation is similar to the argument by Turner, J. and R. Fichter, Eds. (1972) in which housing should not be treated just as a product, but the importance is to involve people in its process. Otherwise, it is worried that the mass production of walk-up flats will not meet its target.

Based on above discussion, the situation can be offered a term of legal-informal consensus which is implemented by the community, as opposed to legal-formal policy which is endorsed by the local government. Although this does not mean dichotomous, however in the practice, it can be seen that the community have different view and interpretation towards government policy. The government deliver the walk-up flat policy as an opportunity to provide massive, cheap and fast solution to house the low-income people quantitatively, whilst people, as the target, treat it as an opportunity to enhance themselves qualitatively.

6. FURTHER DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In relation to the management of walk-up flat in Yogyakarta, there are factors related to its implementation which are assumed become the key reason why the unit is accepted by the resident, the dwelling situation can be maintained in relatively good harmony and the overall delivery is considered a success. Generally, the lessons learned can be concluded as follows.

6.1. Creative and good managerial aspect

The factor of managerial creativeness is related to local government flexibility in managing walk-up flat within the issue of non-ideal location and imperfect finishing quality. In this issue, the local government must deal with the issue of awaiting period of handed over, which may take months to years, before the local government may generate their policy to manage the walk-up flat (for instance in putting the management financial source to local tax and revenue (*Pendapatan Asli Daerah / PAD*). This situation leads to dilemma and less optimal maintenance. However, the local manager conduct creativity management by losing a little bit the strict or ideal objective of targeting low-income people, so the main priority shifts from ideal concept to less target. It can be said that the new objective is to have full tenants which then lead to the ability to cover the expense of maintenance. Nevertheless, after the handed over process is realized, the delivery can be brought back to its ideal target.

In addition, there is an issue of keeping social interaction among the residents within temporary period. Although the potential user come from relatively

similar condition in cases of walk-up flat in Yogyakarta City (regarding its objective of upgrading program), generally there are various backgrounds and characteristics of the residents in the long run. As a consequence, there will be also heterogeneous community and its related communal interaction. In addition, added by the fact in which living in walk-up flat is just a temporary experience and adaptation, it will not be easy to maintain good social interaction within such 'limited' period. The issue of keeping sustainable social harmony is quite challenging. Nevertheless, knowing that it will be impossible to do by his own, the manager usually 'generate' the residents to create such an association (*paguyuban*), in which it can help him/her to bridge the ideas for common concern. The rules and reward-punishment system then can also be disseminated easily through group leaders. In addition, potential conflict among residents can be early recognized and or solved together, while social activity can also be planned and implemented.

Regarding the support from the community, there is an effort to minimize negative impact to (external) surrounding as much as possible. In order to do this, mainly in social aspect, the managers are encouraged by the local government to be able to keep good relationship between the residents and the community in general. Therefore, community involvement / participation are endorsed to be conducted as the basic social approach. The objective of this effort is to build social tolerance and mutual benefit, in which it is considered also helpful for security and sustainability concern.

6.2. Social control and community involvement

The other aspect related to success factor is the social control in walk-up flat management, which is related to the issue of maintaining new norms or consensus in day to day activity, as a consequence of living in vertical situation. There is a communal consensus that becomes part of managerial regulation. Every issue is discussed by sitting together in order to achieve better solution and gain continuous improvement. This code of conduct may change based on residents opinion, considering its impact to communal concern.

In relation to local government or manager initiative, there is also an issue of raising (internal) community awareness. It is a fact that the manager deals with low-income community who relatively has a very limited resources and also minimum environmental concern. Therefore, it sometimes becomes difficult to deal with the community will of maintaining, for instance, sharing facilities. However, certain circumstance is created in which rules, code of conduct, and social norms can be recognized and easily followed by the community. Since the beginning, there is preliminary orientation for the potential residents before they can enter to occupy the walk-up flat unit. It is strongly be underlined that living in the flats is different with living in landed house. Communal concern should be put first before somebody is (individual) right.

Considering above processes, it can be seen that community involvement in walk-up flat management also plays important role. Although their occupancy is only short, but the effort to maintain social consensus becomes a factor which determine the successfulness of walk-up flat delivery. The spirit of *kampong*, which is stimulated by social consensus or social control, as a basic

principle of living in densely populated landed house area in Indonesia, is still taken as a spirit to live in harmony in vertical situation.

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