

METHOD-ORIENTED PLANNING FRAMEWORK
UPGRADING INFORMAL URBAN SETTLEMENTS CASE
STUDY: BANDAR ABBAS CITY

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Abstract

Informal settlements are shelters for a high percentage of population in cities of developing countries. It is estimated that between 30 percent to 70 percent of population live in illegal or without any plan settlements. Different policies have been used by different countries at different stages. World experiences have shown that upgrading of the existing settlements is one of the most recent and most suitable policies. But a question remains that what existing settlements and what is the goal?

The current article presents the results of a feasibility study of upgrading informal settlements. The project was funded by World Bank in 2002 for the city of Bandar Abbas where the problem of informal settlement is severe.

Results of study approved John Abbot idea, 2002, that there is a need for defining new strategies for upgrading informal settlements and some strategies can be defined on the basis of particular conditions of a city.

Research was based on a method- base approach to do a feasibility study of upgrading policy. The framework of short- term and long- term planning was on the basis of considering physical, social, economic and environmental dimensions. Strategies were defined on the basis of these dimensions. Two basic policies (1)

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City's Integrated Development, and (2) Active Prevention. Policies were defined and then strategies to achieve these two Policies were determined. The main goal is reduction of poverty as world emphasizes.

Keywords: Method- Oriented Planning, Urban Poverty, Informal Settlements, urban management.

Introduction

More than 300 millions of poor urban population live in informal settlements, where they are dealing with numerous health and security threats (World, 2001). More than 200 millions in Asia, more than 50 millions in Latin American countries and more than 60 millions in deprived ours of African cities live in African cities, and these numbers are increasing. World experiences, has defined "upgrading policy" (upgrading of existing informal settlements) as one the most suitable policies. But John Abbot (2000) writes, the question remains that what are the most effective policies to reduce poverty (World, 1991, 2000).

Current paper is the result of a feasibility study of upgrading of existing informal settlements policy. This research was funded by the World in 2002 for the Bandar Abbas city. In an attempt to confront the problems of rapid urbanization, Iran government ours reconsidering the urban development policies and was preparing a pilot study in relation with low- income housing with the cooperation of World Bank.

The purpose of this research was to provide a data base for this research and future Research in relation with informal housing and un-planned housing. Survey (Data collection), data processing, literature review of Iran and world experience ended to updating and choosing measuring indicators of poverty and socio-economic and environmental conditions indicators of The second purpose was that after

determining the dimensions of poverty in the city, particular locations to be selected for planning.

Questionnaire and interview tools were used to collect the data.

The third purpose of this research was to define strategies for upgrading and enriching of deprived neighborhoods. Physical, social, economical, cultural and environmental, upgrading, managerial and legal reforms were considered. The results of study supports John Abbot belied that upgrading policy needs a "method-base" approach and a planning framework. The paper presents the results of a method-based approach for planning informal settlement.

Literature Review

Suggested policies in relation with informal settlements can be considered as a continuum. At one extreme, it is the modernist movements in architecture and planning in the 20th century that supports the demolishing and renewal policy (Lukurbosieh, 1929 and kalkohan, 1989). Some countries of developing countries were pioneers in demolishing informal housing units. In both developed and developing countries, the implementation of this policy ended in reducing the total number of housing units (Abraner, 1964). The second problem was that the residents of these housing units could not afford the redeveloped units because of their higher price (Mooki ja, 2001). In 1970s, World Bank emphasized two approaches: (1) providing improved land and services and (2) upgrading existing housing units (Haverjier, 1999).

This new strategy was emphasizing existing informal housing units. John turner writes that residents of these housing units prefer improving and solidifying housing units (Turner, 1972, Turner and Ficher 1972). Literature review shows that

a comprehensive upgrading plan can be designed to be implemented by a government.¹

John Abbot, 2002, writes that both plans can be used in a method-based approach. Planning and implementation can be done by government, people, as both (Hamdi, Gutert, 1996). Society can determine needs and government can have the planning and implementation role.

Study Area

Bandar Abbas, is a city of 400 years old with a population of about 300 thousands, located along Persian Gulf. The linear pattern of the city has created problems in terms of providing urban services. Problems such as providing sewage system, drainage system, garbage collection and urban utilities exist. Sandy hills and paths of seasonal rivers, covers the Northwest and west of this city. This part of the city does not have suitable topography and is occupied by informal settlement units. Physical separation of different social groups is observed in the city.

The socio-economic characteristics of Bandar Abbas city in the past three decades can be summarized into:

- 1- Dominance of governmental investment in mega activities ??? on port, industry, defense and lack of relation with city creates revenues outside the city.
- 2- Integrated multi-sectoral activities such as commercial, defense, petrochemical, oil and related activities that their revenues are not spent in the city.
- 3- Unbalanced and dual professional combination: (1) Experts, professional and non-local, (2) rural migrants, local non-professional residents and non-specialists.

Continuous escape of socio-economic resources from city exist and local concentration of poverty in the city happens. Therefore, Bandar Abbas functions as a peripheral location. War destroyed Khuzestan ports. Bandar Abbas is the gate for

¹ ??? initiated support-based intervening

imports and exports. Majority of employed population ??? in low level service sector. Lack of production potentials, climate, peripheral role of city in mega economic, lack of sufficient experts, luck of financial an physical capital are reasons for urban poverty and as a whole for the province. Lack of balanced distribution of income is another reason. Unbalanced distribution of income is higher than average for the whale country. Unemployment rate was (19.72), higher than average (14.2) for the country. High level of unemployment rate, high level ??? high population growth , low level of literacy, low level of employment for women, tendency to be employed in informal sector, are some of the socio-economic features of Bandar Abbas that all can be considered as reasons for the growth of informal housing. High construction cost and. Draught that have happened in rural areas are other reasons for the growth of informal housing. A bout 1/3 of population live in informal housing units and about 62 percent of population in this province live in Bandar Abbas.

Research Method

Use of available data, surveys, and interviews with the authorities of related organizations, to neighborhoods were defined as the poorest neighborhoods in the city.

A questionnaire was distributed to measure the socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of households in these neighborhoods, proportional random sampling was used to select the sample. Second questionnaire, provided deeper insight about social aspects of life in these neighborhoods. Literature review helped to define the most updated and most related indicators of poverty and socio-economic conditions. Twenty- two indicators of poverty and twenty indicators of measuring socio-economic conditions were selected and were approved by World Bank.

These indicators were used to rank the ten neighborhood. The goal was to select the most deprived neighborhood as pilot neighborhood, to determine the priority for providing urban services and other related activities. Their questionnaire was distributed among highest rank authorities. Their opinion and their suggestions in relation with solutions were asked.

In each neighborhood, discussion groups were formed to gain better insights about problem and priorities. Also, in central clinic, a group of representatives of each neighborhood were formed.

These representatives were trained in relation with feist medical aid and also these representatives were also had intermediate role between these neighborhood residents and charity organization and medical units.

Representatives also collected useful in formations in relation with the residents of each neighborhood and their opinions.

To create agreement authorities in related organization, “the research group joined the province Empowerment committee”. The result of research was presented to the committee and representatives of World Bank. The goal was to have a feedback and create agreement.

Collected information's were used to rank the neighborhoods. For each neighborhood. Problems were determined and were recorded.

Analysis of information ended to defining the major goals, objectives, and strategies. Upgrading policy was approved and related strategies to implement this policy were determined, considering the micro and particular characteristics of Bandar Abas and the macro condition of Iran.

Contact and having meeting with central empowering committee created agreement and support. The chair of Ministry of city planning and Hosing

announced that this organization can provide “improved lands” for the relocation of residents of high risk areas.

Results

Collected data were analyzed at two levels: (1) Information for all the neighborhoods, and (2) Information for each neighborhood. Questionnaires were collected by the head of households. Majority were young residents age 35-45 years old and migrants of rural areas. The growth in the number of informal housing units is the result of two major events: (1) Islamic revolution, when the ownership of land in peripheral areas was reduced, (2) Recent years drought, majority of migrants (more than 40 percent) were residents of the Hormozgan rural area. Unemployment and lack of inappropriate jobs were two major reasons for migration, and majority did not own land.

Majority of employees are working for private sector and activities related to port as in low level governmental jobs. More than 70 percent of governmental employees have low salaries. Families have 5 to 8 children. The physical condition of houses are not bad and close to 99 percent of the houses have electricity and about 97 percent of respondents have piped water. 95 percent have telephone and 92 percent have

Have highest percentage of families below poverty line. Using 21 indicators for measuring poverty level showed that neighborhood Du Hezar is the poorest neighborhood and khojeh Ata is the richest neighborhood among ten neighborhoods (Table 1). Measuring social condition, using 22 indicators, showed similar results. The poorest neighborhood had the worst social condition. Illegal activities related to port, lack of security at night, drug exchange, harsh attitude toward women, self-burning and suicide are mentioned as problems. (Table 2)

Table (1): Poorest and Richest Neighborhoods in ten target Neighborhoods considering 22 indicators of

Poverty Indicators	Poorest (Du Hezar) %	Wealthiest (Khojoh Ata) %	Explanation
400/000 Rials below poverty level	88.6	73.6	-
Percentage of women Households	17.8	9	-
Percentage employed	61	80	-
Length of employment (20-30) years	29	38.5	Indicator of employment stability
Housing ownership (legal on illegal)	100	89.5	-
Type of job (independent)	75.8	34	Positive correlation between independent job and higher income
Type of salary (permanent)	23	58	Income stability
type of job (governmental)	41.5	33	Governmental job & less amount of salary

Indicators of Poverty	Poorest (Du Hezar) %	Wealthiest (Khojoh Ata) %	Explanation
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Public utilities			
A: Water	97	98	
B: Electricity	100	100	
C: Telephone	36.6	59	
Type of ownership			
Contract	34.7	33	
(Formal Contract)			
Major reason for			
Migration	40	27	
(not having a job)			
Number of households			
* single households	3	96	
* There households	83	3	
Lack of sewage system in the			
houses	92	1	
Construction			
(brick and iron)	1	60.8	
Percentage of single			
households per parcel	97	100	

	Poorest	Wealthiest	
Indicators of Poverty	(Du Hezar)	(Khojoh Ata)	
	%	%	
Loan sources	-	36	
Length of stay in the neighborhood	Mostly (20-30)	Mostly (20-30)	

	Years	Years	
Average family size (>3)	93	85	
Accommodations			
● Refrigerator	95	99	
● Air condition	92	100	
● stove	72	90	
● Television	69	90	
● Radio	38	91	
● Car	5	13	
● Motorcycle	1	25	

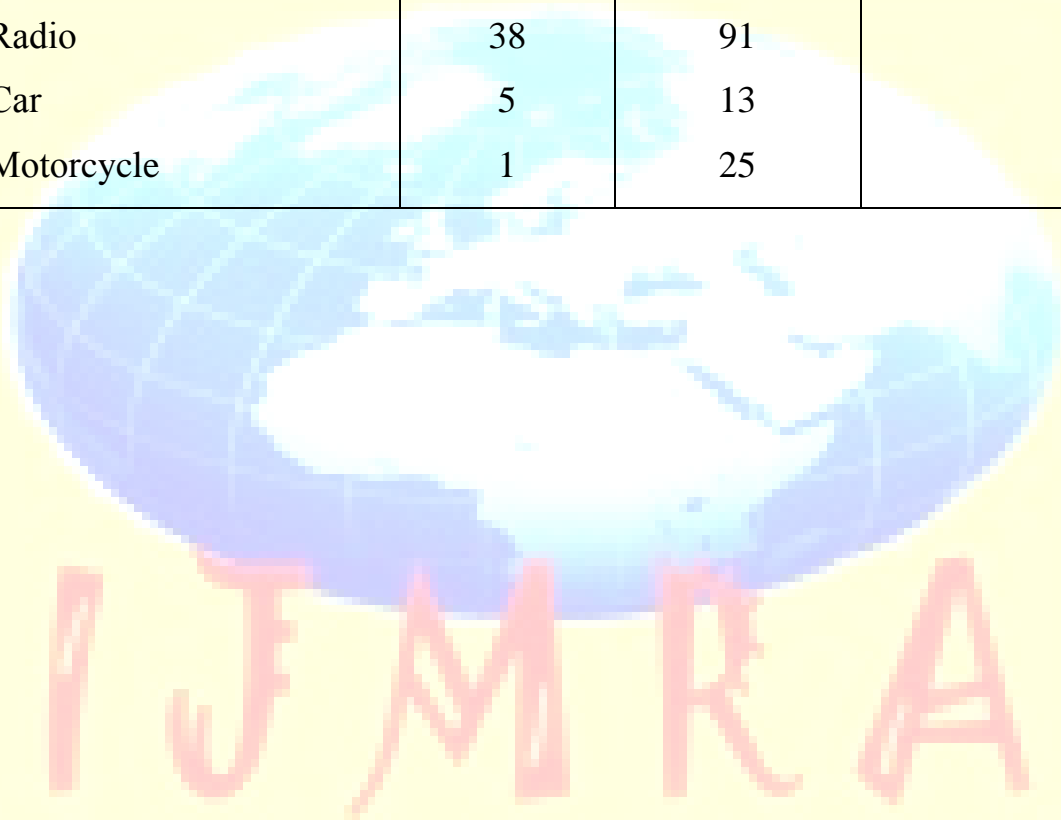


Table (2): Social Analysis of Neighborhoods, best & worst

		(Du Hezar)	(Khojoh Ata)
		%	%
1	Satisfaction with living in the neighborhood	52	83
2	Willingness to construct the houses during night	58	35
3	Satisfaction with public security	30	83
4	Commuting security	25	60
5	Willingness to follow rules and regulation	28	80
6	Conferring the existence of divorce and separation	84	79
7	Street bothering	70	65
8	Confessing left	68	44
9	Confessing the prevalence of drug	65	43
10	Confessing the existence of harsh attitude against women	72	29
11	Willingness to cooperate with governmental authorities	15	55
12	Trust in health organizations	43	72
13	Trust in water and electricity organization	45	85
14	Trust in water and electricity organization	45	85

		(Du Hezar)	(Khojoh Ata)
		%	%
15	Trust in municipality	9	65
16	Willingness to cooperate with neighbors to solve neighborhood problems	15	57
17	Willingness to cooperate in self- help activities	22	65

18	Public Participation	18	52
19	Positive prejudice toward a neighborhood	45	88
20	Participation in social activities	44	55
21	Cooperation with Associations	14	85

Interview with municipality authorities, water, electricity and housing organizations showed that there is no inter-organizational coordination. Municipality personnel complained that owners of vacant lands receive water service permission for lands before receiving permission from municipally and housing organization.

Lack of inter-organizational coordination, lack of agreement, contradictory laws and regulations among related organizations are some of the problems. Lands are occupied before being improved. Housing units, without any subdivision design are built. Lack of accessibility network, other problems such as lack of access of emergency services, problems of garbage collection, lack of sewage system, public light, lack of surface water drainage as a result of lack of accessibility-Many social problems are also created as a result of lack of accessible streets and alleys network. Therefore, establishing more accessible network was considered as priority.

The results of study was used to define two major policies and strategies to achieve them, at two levels:

- (1) City level and (2) neighborhood level

These was an agreement that the problem of neighborhoods and urban poverty can be solved only through integrated development (city and neighborhood level) (Tables ,).

Interview with municipality authorities, water, electricity and housing organizations showed that there is no inter-organizational coordination. Municipality personnel complained that residents of lands receive water connection permission before municipality and housing organization.

Also, the water organization complained that people who have occupied lands, receive electricity before water connection installment permission. Lack of coordination, lack of agreement installment and integrated planning, contradictory rules and regulations among related organizations mentioned as some of the problems.

Land is occupied before any improvements same of the are made. Housing units are constructed without any lay-out plan. Lack of accessibility network is also another major problem, which makes it impossible for emergency vehicles to enter fabric. Also, problems of garbage collection, sewage system, public light, surface water drainage exist. Lack of accessibility also causes social problems. Therefore, improving of the accessibility is defined as major priority goal.

Results of study were used to define two major goals: (1) Active Prevention, (2) Integrative Development Strategy, objectives to achieve major goals were defined and strategies to define these objectives were determined.

(diagram 1)

Integrated planning was determined as policy to create integrated urban Development. Ten poor neighborhoods are part of urban system. Contradictory laws and regulations were determined as the root cause of many problems at macro level, which needs major reforms at mega level.

Conclusion

What has happened in Bandar Abbas is the result of population migration because of: (1) Islamic Revolution and lack of control an occupying land, (2) severe draught during past few years. Unemployment and poverty in rural areas are two major reasons for migration of rural residents to Bandar Abbas. A bout 1/3 of housing units are informal housing units. Wide growth areas of informal housing, political conditions, budget limitation, and quality of housing ended to the selection of upgrading policy, to achieve the poverty reduction goal. Method oriented planning was defined as the basis for planning.

The basic framework of planning is an the basis of two major goals. Planning framework is based on two major goals (policies), what World Bank calls as "Goal-Oriented" Project planning (GOPP). (1) Integrated urban Development and (2) "Active prevention" were defined as two major "Community Government Partnership" goals. Problems and problems and priorities were defined by the community problems and needs and word Bank had the role of planning and implementation.

Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to prepare updated maps. Formation of cadastre (Land Ownership information System), inter-organizational coordination, laws and regulation reforms were defined as major fundamental objectives as a basis for planning. Strategies were defined at two levels: (1) City, and (2) neighborhood level.

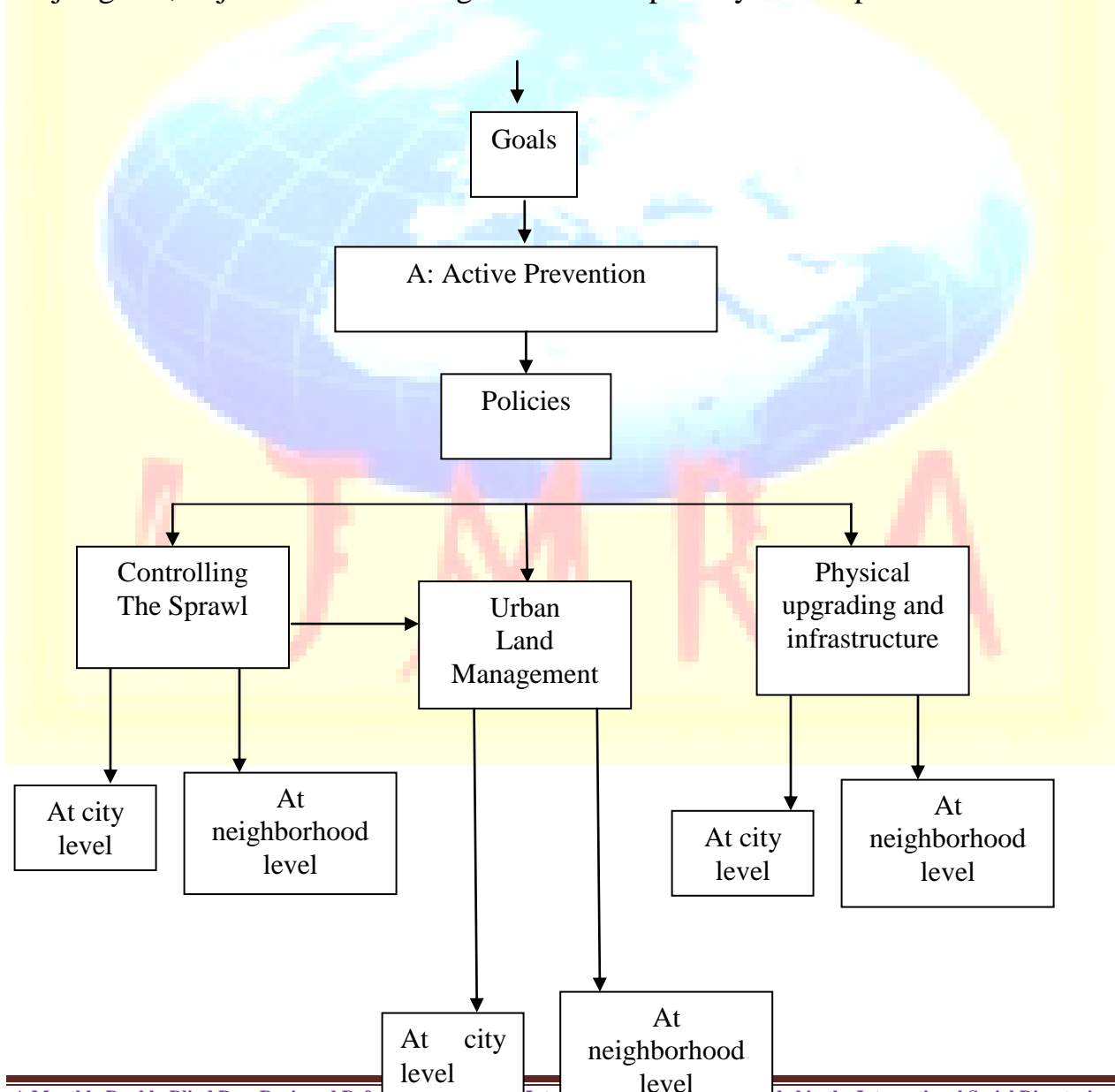
"upgrading policy" was chosen and was implemented.

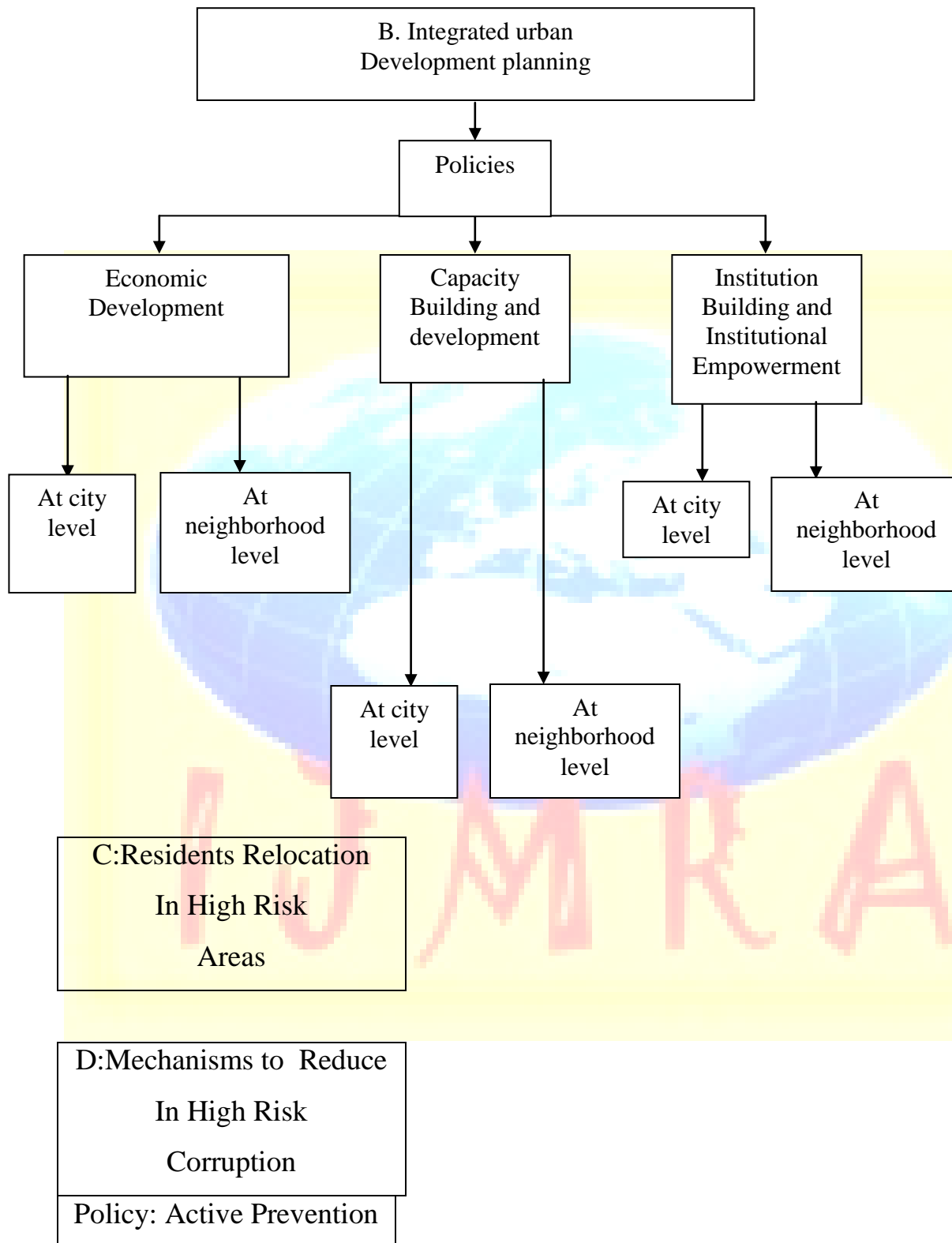
As the person conducting and also doing this research project (a feasibility study), I did not believe that upgrading informal settlements is the appropriate and best policy. Interviewing the head of "Housing Organization", he announced that they have land available and they are ready to improve land for a "relocation project."

Existing occupied lands are located as in high risk areas, in a river path as in high, steep slopes. "Upgrading policy" seems to me to function as an encouraging strategy.

For occupying the land which is improved. I believe that relocation policy could function as an effective policy-upgrading an organic, irregular subdivision plan and upgrading neighborhoods that are built an illegal lands will function only as encouraging mechanism.

Major goals, objectives and strategies to reduce poverty and empowerment.





A: Controlling the Sprawl (Objectives)

A-1: At City Level

A-1-1- Up to date Master Plan and Detailed plan

A-1-2 Inter-Organizational Coordination in Providing Urban Services

A-1-3- Cadastre (Land Information System)

A-1-4- Land Policing

A-1-5- Land Use Planning

A-2: At the Neighborhood level

B-1: At City Level

B-1-1- Inter- Organizational Coordination

B-1-2- Laws and Regulation Reforms

B-1-3- Land Formalization

B-1-4- Land Ownership Security

B-1-5- Government Finance

B-1-6- Land Policing

B-1-7- Land Supply

B-2: At Neighborhood Level

C: Physical Upgrading and Infrastructure
Development

C-1: At City Level

C-1-1: Land Improvement Before
Construction

C-1-2: Land use Control

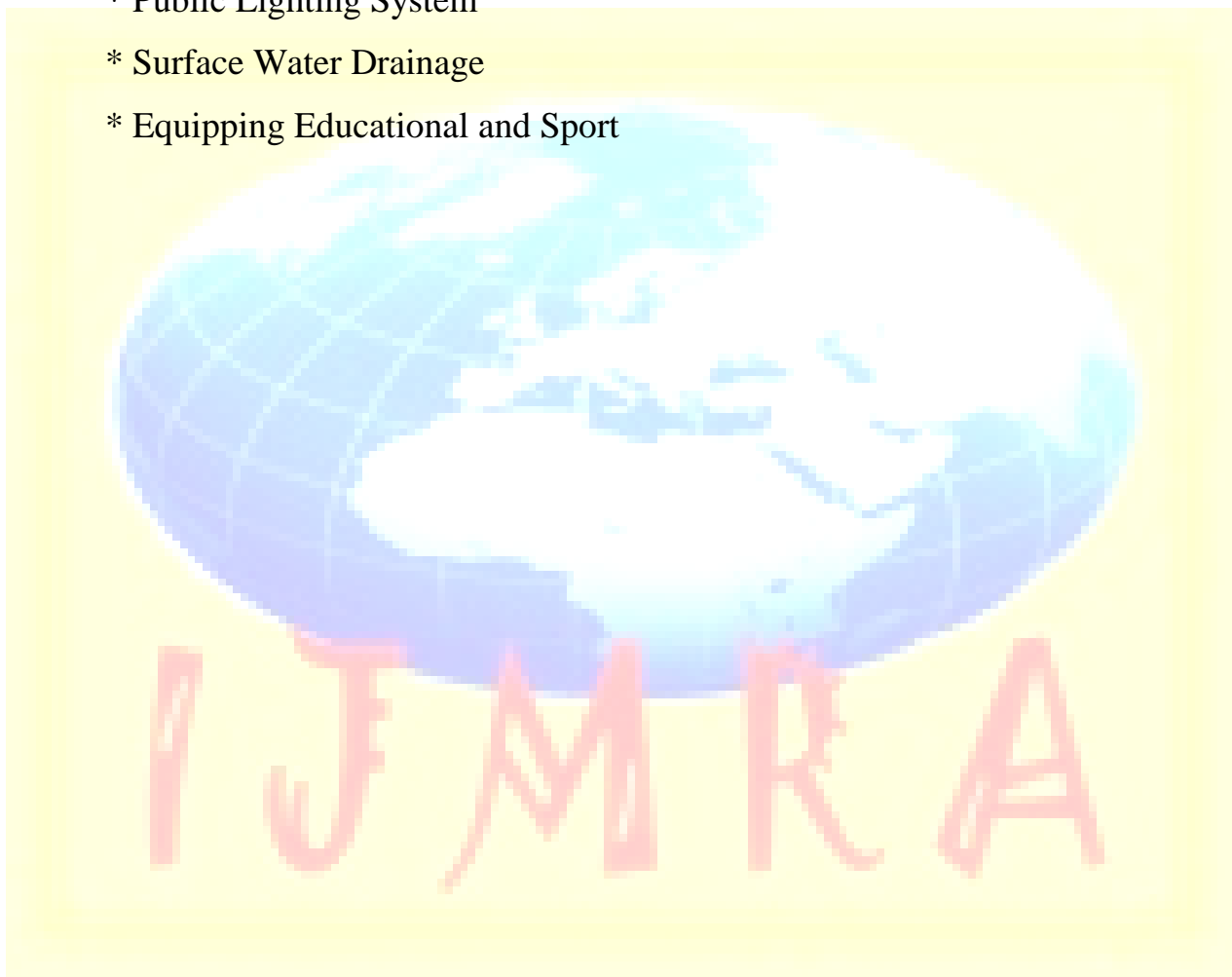
C-1-3: Increasing Construction

Material Production

C-2: At Neighborhood Level

C-2-1: Upgrading Physical Conditions

- * Garbage Collection
- * Asphaltting the Streets and Alleys
- * Public Lighting System
- * Surface Water Drainage
- * Equipping Educational and Sport



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