

**RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOODS
CASE STUDY
LIVELIHOOD LIMITATION OF THE URBAN POOR IN JAKARTA'S KAMPUNG**

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Abstract

Jakarta's widespread internal migration also complicate efforts to provide its citizens with the care they needed. Pandemic exacerbates the social vulnerabilities of the urban people and increasingly shows the inequality that exists in the city. The question that this paper tried to answer is "To what extent the urban poor could access their entitlements to sustainable livelihood?". To help enhance our understanding on how urban poor access their rights and entitlements to sustainable livelihoods, sustainable livelihood framework needs to be combined with other approaches. Poor people stood at the centre and were seen to build their livelihood strategies on a set of vital resources. People found ways to make ends meet and got on with their lives. In the case of urban poor in Jakarta, it is important to note, that while the sustainable livelihood model stresses that poor people are the experts on their own conditions, it is condescending to assume that all of the people's livelihood strategies are inherently right. Many urban poor households lack access to information, broader overviews, and a knowledge of prior experiences outside their own area which mean that they may make mistakes and adopt livelihood strategies which are unsatisfactory at best or doomed to failure at worse.

Keywords: *migration, sustainable livelihood, urban poor in Jakarta, pandemic*

1. Introduction

From the early 2020, Covid-19 has disrupted many countries in the world. Everyday life in many cities has been cut off since then, and Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, is no exception. As the most populous city in Indonesia, Jakarta has become one of the epicentres of the Covid-19 pandemic. Jakarta is a metropolitan region and has a population of approximately 10.504.100 million people according to the 2020 census (Badan Pusat Statistik Jakarta, 2020), making it the second largest metropolitan city in the world. It is extremely densely populated compared to the rest region of Indonesia.

The fact that it has become the epicentre of the pandemic has attracted a lot of discussion about the vulnerability of the city, the resilience of the city residents, the readiness of the government, the public health system and so on (Sparrow et.al., 2020; Suryahadi et.al., 2020; Martinez, & Masron, 2020). The government of Jakarta is struggling to contain the spread of a pandemic to its large population with an inadequate health care system and many slums adding to a growing challenge (Sparrow et.al., 2020; Astiarani, 2020). Jakarta's widespread internal migration also complicate efforts to provide its citizens with the care they needed. Pandemic exacerbates the social vulnerabilities of the urban people and increasingly shows the inequality that exists in the city.

It cannot be denied that Jakarta is indeed the center of economic activity which makes Indonesian people outside Jakarta want to get access to economic activities that exist, hence the occurrence of rapid urbanization. Even though the rapid economic growth can be seen as a window of opportunity for the city development, Jakarta's development process is

deemed inadequate to serve the high needs of society, especially in the fields of health and education (Sparrow et.al., 2020). It is projected that the population of urban dwellers in Jakarta will surpass the rural counterparts surrounding Jakarta, rising to 60 percent by 2025 (UN Habitat, 2003). About 20 to 25 percent of Jakarta residents live in kampungs (Ibid). The term Kampung is used by Jakartan to denote a poorer neighbourhood that is contained within a city. The word itself literally means village. However, since kampungs are not administrative entities, there is no official data depicted the accuracy of how many of Jakarta's inhabitants live in kampungs. With Jakarta being the melting pot of socio-economic activities of the urban dwellers, the urban poor living in kampungs were pushed out. At the same time, land prices and land speculation have dramatically reduced available land for low-income housing, creating new illegal settlements and squatter of slumps.

This paper, then, aims to evaluate the current status of urban poor livelihood in one of the densest Jakarta's kampung in relation to their access to socio and economic activities in the city. The question that this paper tried to answer is "To what extent the urban poor could access their entitlements to sustainable livelihood?" followed by sub-questions: (1) What types of risk and vulnerability do the urban poor face?; and (2) How do their sustainable livelihood outcomes differ from intended in relation to their entitlements to the city?. In order to understand the existing dynamics of the urban poor livelihood, the approaches used includes sustainable livelihood framework, the livelihood, and the right to the city approach. The literature discusses urban informality issues in Jakarta, the urban poor livelihood, and the government efforts to improve the livelihood of the urban poor. The analysis includes the assets and vulnerability context of the urban poor and the livelihood strategies and outcomes of the urban poor in exercising their rights and entitlements of sustainable livelihood. Finally, the paper summarizes the current unsustainable status of the urban poor livelihood and inequality issues facing the urban poor, which contributes to a recommendation of making a better decision on people-centred urban development.

2. Theoretical Framework

a. Sustainable Livelihood Framework

The sustainable livelihoods framework presents the main factors that affect people's livelihoods and the interlinkages between them (DfiD, 1999). The framework is centred on people and aims to help stakeholders assess in structured and coherent debate about the many factors that affect livelihoods, their relative importance, and the way in which they interact with different perspectives (*ibid*). Thus, the framework will be useful to plan or explore development activities that should help in the identification of appropriate entry points for support of livelihoods.

Despite the sustainable livelihood framework is introduced mainly for the exploration of rural livelihood, there is apparently no inherent reasons why the framework cannot be applied equally well to urban livelihood. Farrington, et.al (2002) argued that the framework provides a systematic basis for identifying how people manage assets within the context of vulnerability and institutional frameworks that can be applied to urban areas as well. However, these opportunities will be realised only if urban development is tailored to the livelihood aspirations of the poor. As Farrington et.al (2012) argued the rationale to use the framework in assessing urban poor livelihood are:

- 1) the framework acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of poverty;
- 2) the framework recognises that the poor develop diverse and changing livelihood portfolios addressing their perceptions of their own poverty within the context of vulnerability;

- 3) the framework draws on and replenish capital assets; and
- 4) the framework has the livelihood strategies facilitated by a range of policies, institutions and processes (PIPs).

In other words, the framework could be implemented in the same way as in rural livelihood context with slight difference in some of the indicators affecting the livelihood.

Additionally, the sustainable livelihood framework adopts a distinctive perspective on the understanding of poverty and how to intervene to improve the conditions of the poor (Meikle, et.al., 2001). A sustainable livelihoods approach to poverty eradication is one that acknowledges that poverty is a condition of insecurity rather than only a lack of wealth. Thus, the indicators of the sustainable livelihood framework on urban livelihood can be grouped as follows according to Meikle et.al., (2001) and Farrington et.al (2002):

1. **Vulnerability** context has been defined as the insecurity of the wellbeing of individuals or communities in the face of changing environments such as ecological, social, economic, political in the form of sudden shock, long terms trends, or seasonal cycles (Meikle, et.al., 2001). Vulnerability then categorized into two dimensions: first, the scale of the response to external shocks and second, how quickly each household's livelihood recovers from shocks.
2. **Assets** is the ability to avoid or reduce vulnerability in which categorized into five capitals: human, social, natural, financial, and physical. The urban livelihood depends not only on the initial assets available but also on the capacity to manage them and to transform them for the urban poor basic necessities.
3. **Livelihood strategies** are shaped by a combination of the assets available, the urban contextual factors which determine the availability of these assets, and men's and women's objectives. The urban poor exercise various patterns of activities which together constitute their livelihood strategies. In the context of urban poor, however, many urban households are deemed opportunistic, diversifying their sources of income and drawing, where possible, on a portfolio of activities (such as formal waged employment, informal trading and service activities) (Farrington et.al, 2002). The livelihood strategy of an individual is therefore more or less vulnerable to unexpected changes which could affect their asset base.
4. **Livelihood outcomes** are the results of people's success or failure in transforming the assets into incomes and/or basic services they needed through a variety of strategies.

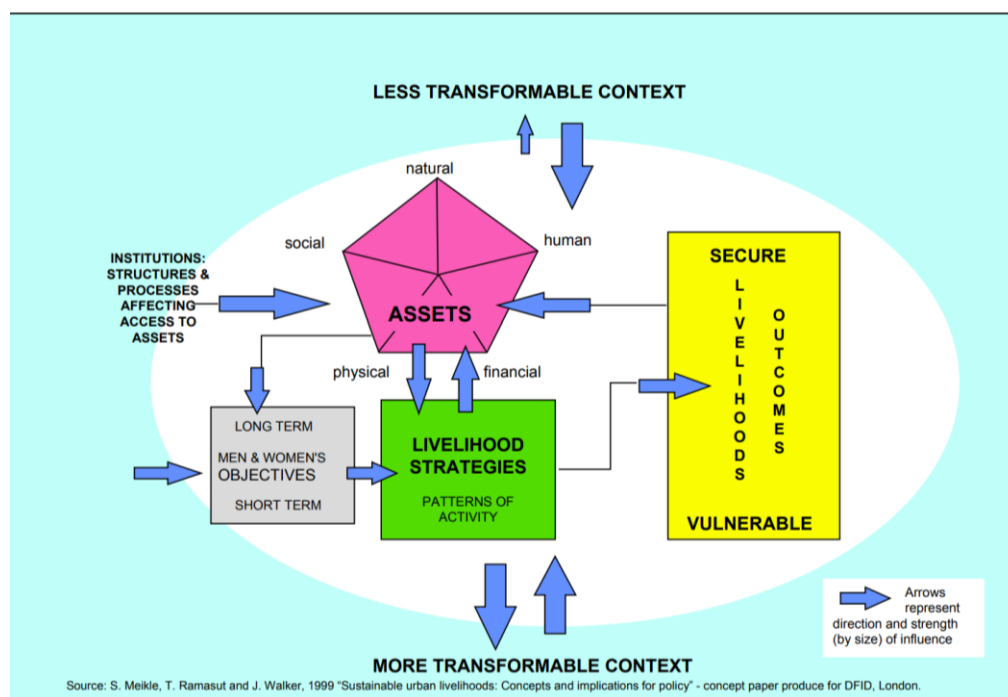


Figure 1. The Sustainable Urban Livelihood diagram

b. Livelihood and the Right to the City Approach

To help enhance our understanding on how urban poor access their rights and entitlements to sustainable livelihoods, sustainable livelihood framework needs to be combined with other approaches. Thus, to emphasize more on the assessment on how, why, and by whom such entitlements might be denied to the poor this paper uses the livelihood and the right to city approach. When combined with sustainable livelihood analysis, the livelihood and rights-based approaches may enhance understanding on the redistribution of the overall 'pie' which is the city of Jakarta. Therefore, combining those approaches might enhances the trade-offs insights between growth and equity that commonly have to be faced by the urban poor.

It is also important to note that the livelihood approach focused very much on how people organised their lives, more on opportunities and on agency (de Haan, 2012). Livelihood includes complex, contextual, diverse and dynamic strategies developed by households to meet their needs (Gaillard et al. 2009, 121). This approach is strongly motivated by the need to develop more effective policies on poverty alleviation and to engage more participatory methods which are emphasising on urban poor's live and daily needs (de Haan, 2012). The livelihood approach also discussed for the wider context in which how the urban poor organised their livelihood strategies. By using this approach, it will allow to evaluate the livelihood strategies of the urban poor because this approach recognizes that these strategies are highly dependent on urban structures and are regulated by institutions. As de Haan (2012) stated that it is fundamental to consider as it will allow to see opportunities and constraints that would either enable or hinder the poor from organizing effective livelihood strategies.

The right to the city approach is another vital element of sustainable livelihood. Currently, in almost every city in the world, the property rights of owners outweigh the use rights of urban dwellers, and the exchange value of property determines how it is used much more so than its use value (Purcell, 2014). The approach coined by Henri Lefebvre argued about the rights of all urban dwellers, regardless of citizenship, ethnicity, ability, gender and so forth, to participate in shaping the city (Harvey, 2003). The right to the city emerges partly because

the struggle of the working class to regain a way of life that is endlessly not mediated by market exchange mechanisms and rationalist planning (King, 2018). The right to the city thus challenges existing power relations and the deep roots of the capitalist system that drive urban development and the production of urban space, including social, political and economic relations (Mitchell, 2003). This approach marked the tenacity of the urban poor to decide to rise up and reclaim space in the city in which will allow a wider discussion on how the urban poor strategies in reclaiming their rights and entitlements to the city. As they develop the ability to manage the city for themselves, they give shape to the urban livelihood when they assert use value over exchange value, encounter over consumption, interaction over segregation, free activity and play over work to the appropriate space.

3. Result and Discussion

Livelihood Limitations of the Urban Poor in Jakarta

a. *Kampung* Tambora Urban Poor

Kampung is where the urban poor live in unplanned settlements with physically damaged conditions and inadequate facilities. These kinds of settlements are sometimes considered as the scapegoats of various environmental hazards and they also damages the beautification of the capital city of Indonesia. With an estimated population roughly equal to five largest cities combined in Indonesia, Jakarta has the second highest proportion of growth (53 per cent) due to migration (McCarthy, 2003). Urban growth due to migration may, in reality, be higher than officially indicated, as the percentage do not attempt to take into account seasonal migration, even though many seasonal migrants spend as much as ten months of the year in the city. *Kampung* settlements are understood as transitional conditions that will fade along with economic development. However, as McCarthy (2003) argued that economic development has led to uncontrolled urbanization and has created enormous economic disparities. This condition then has resulted in a housing deficit, inadequate infrastructure, and rapidly growing rural settlements. Thus, economic developments cannot automatically eradicate slums or *kampungs*.

Even though living in a *Kampung* has created a unique and empowering social interaction between communities, traditions, and identities, it also challenges the way of life to fit in confined spaces. One of the densest *Kampung* in Jakarta is located in Tambora District, West Jakarta. It has the infeasible environment and poor quality of life. With a population of around 260.100 people and covering an area within five square kilometer (5.4 km²), *Kampung* Tambora is well known for its home-based garment industry, which supports the livelihood of the community (Lirensza, et.al, 2020). This *Kampung* includes the strategic area for trades, small industries, and services. It is also dominated by dense housing, slum environment, and varied social and economic condition. This is an area where there are too many people for the infrastructure to cope. The houses in this slum area are rising to four stories in places. As Brown (2013) described that even though the ground floor homes are well constructed, as they ascend, they become increasingly makeshift, with walls and floors made from wood and scrap metal. There is no even sunlight that could lighten the area, the sunlight is in short supply throughout due to the narrow alleys and tall buildings. In the densest areas, people have built across the top of the alleyways, cutting out the sun altogether and plunging the lanes into perpetual night time (Brown, A., 2013).

b. Sustainable Livelihood of the Urban Poor in *Kampung* Tambora, Jakarta

The livelihoods of the urban poor are defined in large part by the opportunities and constraints under which they are operating. It is therefore necessary, in order to understand the nature of sustainable urban livelihoods, to understand the indicators in which embedded

the urban poor livelihood. This paper will then look at specifically the vulnerability aspects of the urban poor, several assets that they have, and the livelihood strategies that they exercise aiming to evaluate opportunities and constraints to their sustainable livelihoods.

Vulnerability

The analysis of vulnerability, therefore, involves not only identification of the possible threats to the urban poor's welfare but also requires an assessment of the resilience of the urban poor in exploiting opportunities, resisting, or recovering from negative effects (Mar'iyah, Chusnul, 2019). Vulnerability is therefore closely linked to access to and control over assets.

In the context of people living in *Kampung* Tambora, they are prone to vulnerabilities in legal status such as informal employment, inadequate social services, and lacking political rights. Those in informal employment generally lack labour rights. Thus, the urban poor are susceptible to sudden unemployment and prone to unprotected working conditions with the risk of poor payment and insanitary or unsafe conditions (Mitchell, 2009). Most of the inhabitants of *Kampung* Tambora are migrants from Kalimantan, who came equipped with sewing skills as their strategy for survival (Lirensza, et.al 2020). The residents of *Kampung* Tambora apply a method of integrating the garment industry into their homes, which is recognized as a form of informal economic activity. In this area, there is an alley consists of 41 houses, one mosque, and several informal home-based enterprises such as traditional food stalls, shop, and sewing machine reparation shop. However, due to limited space, all houses are attached to each other and work activities disrupt the domestic area, imposing a spatial negotiation process to accommodate the flexibility of life and work needs (*ibid*).

In addition, the urban poor in *Kampung* Tambora also have to live with inadequate services. The urban poor living on illegally occupied land or informal settlements lack legal tenure rights (Marx, et.al, 2013). As such, they experience poor housing quality and face the threat of eviction. Poor living environments also often endanger the lives and health of the urban poor. This creates further vulnerability as they are forced to live and work in marginal areas that lack of alternatives. In the densest areas of *Kampung* Tambora, people have built houses across the top of the roads and alleyways, resulting in no sunlight and the only light comes from neon tubes and bare lights bulbs hanging from wires. The air is stale and the lanes smell of rubbish and sewage. As Brown (2013) reported that one of the residents who lives and works in the area said that they do not even have a bathroom in their house and have to pay 1,000 IDR to use the public toilet. Even when they have poor living environments, the urban poor choose to stay living in the area as they have no other place to go with the lack of their legal status.

The lack of legal status may also limit the access to formal settlements and basic social services. Many of the urban poor are vulnerable to the sudden withdrawal of key social services and may also be fined or punished for illegal use of these service. Informal residents lacking legal registrations may be disenfranchised and excluded from political decision making and may not included in a policy which are fundamentally dependent to their livelihoods. Yet many Jakartans argue that evictions are necessary measures to fix the city's notorious slum areas and to prevent seasonal flooding. Many also argue that the evictions are justified since many of the *kampung* dwellers do not possess certificates of ownership for the lands they occupy. Nevertheless, evaluating the vulnerabilities aspects allow us to acknowledge the dynamics of the urban dwellers and urban poor in the urban context of social and economic divides in Indonesia's capital.

Assets

Despite the lack of assets that the urban poor have, one that could be identified and affect their livelihood outcomes is the capital asset. Many of the migrant who came to Jakarta is aiming for a more stable income and welfare than when they are living in rural areas. It is no different with the Tambora residents. Tambora's community fulfils its livelihood in the form of the home-based garment industry, through the flexibility offered by combining domestic and working activities in the same place. This gave them an asset of financial income.

The emergence of the home-based garment industry in Tambora was initiated by several embryos, which then encouraged the other homes to be used for home-based garment industries. Whereas most home based economy in Jakarta emerge to create sustainable livelihoods in harmony with various formal sectors, home-based garment industries in Tambora have a reciprocal relationship to create sustainability in the clothing sector. Many of the home-based industry are coordinating with malls in the areas which give the urban poor more stable income. Moreover, home-based garment industries have similar characteristics, which are not only economically binding but also create the flexibility of spatial networks and morphologies in one area. Even though some people have been living in *Kampung* Tambora for generations, others are migrant workers who stay for just a few months as they valued the area as a center for economic activity for them. Other assets are very lacking but the people living in the area chose to stay as they feel that it is good for business and that it is uncertain that they will get similar income if they move out from the area or go back to their villages.

Livelihood Strategies

As a means of earning for living, urban poor in *Kampung* Tambora utilized their skills to establish a home-based garment industry. Its existence is supported by neighboring garment centers such as Mangga Dua, Tanah Abang, and Senen that provide lower-middle-class clothing. Therefore, with the flexibility of working and living within one space, Tambora's home-based garment industry is classified as home-based growth enterprises. Although it could create another problems of informal economic activities such as issues of cost, resources, and the limitation of space. Nevertheless, home-based enterprise is a strategy to generate income and reduce poverty at the neighborhood scale of *Kampung* Tambora. Home-based enterprises could help create flexibility in controlling the use of electricity, water, and other resources in one given space as well.

Poor people stood at the centre and were seen to build their livelihood strategies on a set of vital resources. In the area of Tambora, people who have lived all their life in the area and even for generations manages to adapt with the conditions that they have. The men work for a business installing water pumps or being a blue-collar workers and the women run food stalls or engaging with the home based industry. Even with highlighted hygiene issue in the slum, with houses built on top of rubbish from previous generations they managed to get water by buying them from the local mosques. People found ways to make ends meet and got on with their lives.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions

In the case of urban poor in Tambora, it is important to note, that while the sustainable livelihood model stresses that poor people are the experts on their own conditions, it is condescending to assume that all of the people's livelihood strategies are inherently right. In reality many urban poor households lack access to information, broader overviews, and a knowledge of prior experiences outside their own area which mean that they may make

mistakes and adopt livelihood strategies which are unsatisfactory at best or doomed to failure at worst. This is what can be seen with the urban poor in Tambora. The strategies of adapting and staying in a unhealthy environment with inadequate services make them more vulnerable to other crucial conditions such as risk of health and security, hence failing to meet their intended livelihood outcomes. However, as they have no other choice they managed to adapt by applying livelihood strategies that might not be sustainable for their livelihoods. The condition of livelihood is even worse as government is not giving the urban poor priority and excluded from the participatory of decision making process when it is their live that are at risk.

The key element of today's paradigm of "Sustainable Human Development" is the idea of enablement, helping the poor help themselves. This is of significance where policy makers attempt to lend support to the survival strategies of the poor. It is clear that policy makers should not give blanket support to all survival strategies, and in some instances should promote alternatives. This means that to reduce inequalities in access we need to look beyond the network to develop more meaningful policy responses to close the gaps of inequality. One cannot agree more when they carry on that, in order to continue to make progress with Sustainable Livelihoods, it is important to build on concrete achievements and learn from what we know.

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