

SA2.13

Relocation, Removal, and Displacement (Special Track: Urban Issues in Central & South America and the Caribbean)

Impact of Relocation on Quality of Life. A Case Study in Villahermosa, Mexico

Presenter: Roberto A Cantu_Garza, Texas A&M, (robertocantugarza@yahoo.com)

Author: Roberto A Cantu_Garza, Texas A&M

This study focuses on Quality of Life (QOL) in the context of relocation. The effect of relocation projects is a global and long-standing issue and it has been extensively studied (Badri, Asgary, Eftekhari, & Levy, 2006). Nevertheless, while much research has been done in that field, there is still not enough knowledge on how to incorporate relocation on QOL. Particularly, this research aims to get a better understanding about which dimensions and to what extent the QOL is affected due to relocation. That said, the following research questions arise: 1. How do the relocated people perceive their QOL before and after relocation? 2. Are the relocated people's perceptions about their QOL congruent with their actual objective QOL measurement? 3. Does the QOL of the people relocated into different areas match? In order to answer these questions, this research will use a survey that will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The significance of this research lies on the identification of factors that affect the QOL of the relocated people expecting to find that the relocated people's perception is that they had a better QOL in their former location. It is also expected that the objective characteristics of the new location compared to the subjective perceptions of their life may not match. Finally, it is expected that the people, who live closer to the downtown area, enjoy a better QOL. This research is currently underway as a PhD dissertation. I expect to have final results by March 2014. Badri, S. Ali, Asgary, Ali, Eftekhari, A.R., & Levy, Jason. (2006). Post-disaster resettlement, development and change: a case study of the 1990 Manjil earthquake in Iran. *Disasters*, 30(4), 451-468.

Garden City in the Tropics: Applying Clarence Stein's New Town Principles in Bolivia

Presenter: Lesli Hoey, University of Michigan, (lhoey@umich.edu)

Author: Lesli Hoey, University of Michigan

For thirty years after Bolivia's 1952 agrarian revolution, land reform encouraged over 300,000 highlanders to "colonize" the tropical lowlands, bringing considerable land use, cultural, political and economic changes to regions they settled (Eastwood 1985). Over 70% of this movement was "spontaneous" – where pioneer families voluntarily occupied land without external support (ibid). At the other extreme – "directed" colonization – were costly efforts where planners often relocated families and managed all decisions, including land clearance, choice of crops, and

housing. Both forms of colonization experienced abandonment rates between 50 and 90 percent (Fifer 1982; Wiggins 1976; Works 1974). This paper considers a third approach that emerged in 1972 – “semi-directed” colonization – used to settle over 6,000 people in San Julian over a 10 year period (Painter et al 1984). Although San Julian attracted significant attention from USAID, the World Food Program, the Bolivian government and development scholars, all hopeful the endeavor would rectify twenty years of disappointing land redistribution schemes (Hess 1980), few asked about the planning theories guiding its design or its long term impact. These are questions worth asking as San Julian has become the country’s fastest growing city and Bolivia’s soy capital. I suggest that San Julian’s core design elements paralleled Clarence Stein’s New Town principles and the Garden City movement, particularly efforts to build community through its radial design, in sharp contrast to the typical keyboard layout of parcels along a main road. Through interviews and archival work, I explore the origins of the San Julian design and its long-term equity, ecological, urbanization and economic implications. Findings offer planning lessons for renewed efforts in Latin America and other low-income countries to alleviate population growth, reduce poverty, and increase food security through land redistribution today (Dangl 2011; Achtenberg and Currents 2013).

Confronting Dislocations: The Impact of Resistance on Communities Threatened with Removal in São Paulo, Brazil

Presenter: Maureen Donaghy, Rutgers University, (maureen.donaghy@rutgers.edu)

Author: Maureen Donaghy, Rutgers University

In cities around the world low-income residents are often left at a disadvantage in the midst of urban development, particularly in informal settlements in which residents do not have formal land rights. Community organizations and social movements, however, often form to protect the rights of these residents and negotiate for state benefits when residents are forcibly removed. In São Paulo, Brazil, recent economic prosperity and planning for the 2014 World Cup has brought increased removals of residents in informal communities. This paper seeks to assess how community organizations and social movements fight back to ensure that residents’ rights are respected and substantial benefits are provided to those who must relocate. Through surveys, interviews, and case studies, I find that the movements in São Paulo most often rely on the strategies of linking to larger movements, using judicial action, and appealing for assistance through bilateral negotiation with government officials. Those communities who maintain constant, united pressure and use a variety of strategies, including modes of contestation and cooperation, appear to achieve the most successes in terms of remaining in place or benefits provided by the government upon removal. The study illustrates the ways in which communities use rational-decision making in choosing strategies, the importance of social capital and civic capacity, and the factors that ultimately impact outcomes for communities under threat of removal.