

Intergrated Housing Development as Instrument to Alleviate Urban Poverty (the case of Addis Ababa)

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SUMMARY

The city administration of Addis Ababa is undertaking a massive integrated housing development program to address the acute housing problem of the city since 2005. Housing supply is not the only goal of this program; instead its ultimate desire is to use Integrated Housing Development Program (IHDP) as a tool to reduce urban poverty, which is the prime problem of the city. Since its launch the program has supplied more than 100,000 houses to citizens and there are near to 100,000 houses which are under construction and expected to be completed in one year time. This program has benefited more than 500,000 inhabitants of the city directly by providing decent and affordable housing. As the vision of the program is to alleviate urban problem, the following activities are integrated as components of the program.

- Job creation for unemployed residents of the city,
- Creating market opportunity to small scale enterprises,
- Promoting affordable housing scheme,
- Promote targeted subsidy to the urban poor,
- Promoting credit facility for the urban poor,
- Promoting saving culture among the urban poor,
- Upgrade/ renew environmentally polluted areas (slums),
- Provision of basic infrastructure like access road, clean water, sanitary facilities, power, green areas and the like,
- Promoting innovative and adaptable construction techniques to reduce cost, wastage, and construction time.
- Promoting economic usage of the scarce urban land.

The paper tries to explain on how the program tried to address each of the above issues, which are crucial in tackling urban poverty, the priority issue of my country. This paper tries also to articulate on the role played by good governance, the initiation, commitment, and determination of the city administration of Addis Ababa, to tackle this severe problem of the city. It will be also discussed how decentralization played an important role in the success of the program. Explanation will be given about the importance of political commitment and mobilizing own resource to ensure the sustainability of the program. The program is trying to put in place an arrangement to ensure housing ownership rights to the urban poor, which always is a life time question of the citizens in general and the urban poor in particular. The aim of this paper is to draw lessons from Addis Ababa's housing development projects and try to show its shortcomings and open dialogues to enrich the ongoing massive program that aimed to alleviate the urban poverty. It is also obvious that other developing countries can learn from this unique success achieved in the Addis Ababa government lead IHDP. This program is already acknowledged by UNHABITAT and many counties send delegates to learn from the program.