

Greater Surabaya: *The Formation of a Planning Region*

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After the abortive coup in 1965 and as Indonesia started to rebuild itself, cities such as Surabaya reformulated development plans to accommodate the need for growth beyond the administrative boundaries. Great constraints in spatial management necessitated the inclusion of neighbouring areas far beyond the city limits. Hence the planning region of GERBANGKERTOSUSILA (Gersik, Bangkalan, Mojokerto, Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Lamongan) was formed. Moreover, by means of local government law no. 22/1999 and the law on the balanced redistribution of national resources (no. 25/1999), local government has now acquired greater autonomy in drafting and approving local development plans without intervention by central authorities.

By Johan Silas

It seems expedient to discuss different models of urbanization in order to gauge the specific situation in Greater Surabaya. An overriding element applying to all models is the interrelation between the host-city and neighbouring towns and cities. Those seeking employment in the cities drive intensification ('in-urbanization'), whereas investors from the city, seeking to reap profits from cheaper land and labour, drive expansion ('ex-urbanization'). In-urbanization takes place when under-used areas or wastelands are put into use. New migrants often transform these areas with their squatter constructions and by introducing hawking in public places. Clearly, city governments despise this type of urbanization, which so often creeps upon them. Ex-urbanization results when economic growth reaches beyond the city limits. Large investors play an important role in it, creating new suburbs and towns, while investments by lower-income migrants generate an urbanization process of different quality and at a different scale.

Studies into ex-urbanization in Surabaya have revealed three types of mega-urbanization around this city. Southward 'self-contained urbanization', which can be found near the airport, depends on local support and involvement. In the second and most common type of ex-urbanization, which has a 'strong link with and depends on the city', the suburban area serves as part of the host-city. The third type, 'centred mega-urbanization', basically occurs in small towns around the main city that are independent but maintain strong links with the host-city's centre.

Both in-urbanization and ex-urbanization are crucial for the future development of Surabaya, yet only when the local administrative authority creates the right conditions will mutually beneficial economic cooperation result.



Laboratory for Housing and Human Settlements ITS. Courtesy of the author

As Greater Surabaya's growth has been mainly realized through local investment with little central government involvement, a network of cities and towns has developed in which different land-uses can be observed. With this situation there is only limited urban problems such as traffic congestion, flooding, and pollution.

Economic interest generates different types and forms of development and, as such, is a dominant factor in forcing the urbanization process far beyond the city boundaries. Meanwhile, non-economic intervention has also been transformed into profitable economic ventures, such as the construction of very low-cost housing in order to stimulate development on the periphery. New economic potential, such as the rising demand for shrimps and prawns in East Asia and Europe,

The contrasting urban landscape of Surabaya.

stimulates urban expansion to the rural coastal areas. If communication in surface transport can be provided further expansion will doubtlessly follow. The combination of road and ferry services between Surabaya to the adjacent islands has shifted the mega-urban frontiers as far outward as Sumbawa and East Kalimantan. Simpler and cheaper movement of people, goods, and services than ever before has allowed medium-size enterprises to do business in the outer areas.

As goods and services from the city easily penetrate deep into the rural area, there are strong ecological repercussions (Reese 1992). People from rural areas also move to urban areas to seek better jobs and incomes. Some arrive well prepared, but most do not. Some stay for a limited time, most end-up staying longer and become permanent residents. Complementing by the reformation and 'democracy in learning', urban life is deteriorating at such a rate that only harsh and uncompromising actions by city government can keep the situation normal. Pressured by unrest and conflict in many areas, more people are pushed to the cities with a laissez-faire policy, which makes the situation difficult to resolve. Would a better understanding of mega-urbanization enable city governments to deal with the issue more adequately? Is it possible to maximize the positive and reduce the negative impacts of mega-urbanization without eliminating the favourable options for the underprivileged to improve their future livelihood?

We may conclude that in Surabaya the processes of intensification and expansion have led to different types of mega-urbanization. Local authorities have to create the optimal conditions for these processes to take a sustainable course. Mutually beneficial economic cooperation of the urban parts and integral consideration of the ecological footprint of town and hinterland are crucial for further solid mega-urban development in general and in the region of Surabaya in particular. <

Reference

- Reese, W., 'Ecological Footprint and appropriated carrying capacity', *Urbanization & Environment*, Vol. 4 No. 2 (Oct. 1992).

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