Evictions and the Right to Housing

Experience from Canada, Chile, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, and South Korea

Edited by
Antonio Azuela, Emilio Duha, and Enrique Ortiz

International Development Research Centre
Evictions and the Right to Housing

Experience from Canada, Chile, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, and South Korea

Edited by Antonio Azuela, Emilio DuHau, and Enrique Ortiz

International Development Research Centre
CONTENTS

Foreword — Habitat International Coalition .............................................. v

Acknowledgments ................................................................. ix

Chapter 1
Canada: Hallmark Events, Evictions, and Housing Rights ..................... 1
— Kris Olds

Chapter 2
Chile: The Eviction of Low-income Residents from Central Santiago de Chile .... 47
— Alfredo Rodriguez and Ana Maria Icaza

Chapter 3
The Dominican Republic: Urban Renewal and Evictions in Santo Domingo ........ 83
— Edmundo Morel and Manuel Mejia

Chapter 4
South Africa: The Struggle for Access to the City in the Witwatersrand Region . . . . . 145
— Lauren Royston

Chapter 5
South Korea: Experiences of Eviction in Seoul .................................... 199
— Hyung-Hook Kim

Chapter 6
Overview: The Evolution of Housing Rights and Their Social Context ............ 233
— Antonio Azuela and Emilio Duhau

Appendix 1
Acronyms and Abbreviations .................................................... 253

Bibliography ................................................................. 255
Chapter 5

SOUTH KOREA
EXPERIENCES OF EVICTION IN SEOUL

Hyung-Hook Kim

Urban Poor Research Institute, Seoul, South Korea

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how the Seoul Metropolitan Government’s (SMG’s) policy of redeveloping urban-poor areas since the late 1950s has affected the welfare of the poor.1 South Korea’s policy regarding these urban-poor areas was criticized for placing too much emphasis on the beautification of the city and not enough emphasis on the well-being of the poor residents of these areas.

This study is divided into four parts. The first part discusses historical trends of the eviction-centred-redevelopment policies of the 1950s and 1960–70s relevant to the joint-redevelopment policy of the 1980s. The second part — the case of Sang Kye Dong — analyzes the socioeconomic malfunction of the eviction policy adopted in the joint-redevelopment plan. The third part describes the rise and fall of the poor people’s movement in response to the evictions; the right to housing is also discussed. The final section presents the conclusions.

This research was conducted using two methods: a literature survey; and an intensive verbal, qualitative case study, compiled through directed interviews. The literature survey provided general macrolevel facts regarding urban redevelopment and evictions. The case study focused on individual experiences of evictions at the microlevel.

---

1 Urban-poor areas refers to residential areas (frequently running up mountainsides or along sewage canals) where the urban poor are concentrated. The main problem is overcrowding — both in terms of houses and in terms of people. The ratio of housing to roads, paths, or open spaces is excessive, and the population density also verges on the extreme. All areas have electricity and city water; most have sewage systems. Thus, to use slums to refer to these areas would be misleading. Substandard housing is a very ambiguous term. The houses are too small and old and somewhat poorly constructed, but they will likely remain standing for 10 or 20 years.
The recent history of redevelopment policy

Increased urbanization in South Korea in the last half century, especially after the 1960s, caused not only an unemployment problem but also a serious housing shortage. In Seoul, the poorer groups collectively occupied vacant lands and illegally built houses, eventually forming squatter settlements in every corner of the city. The government carried out evictions and consolidated the district, using brute force; administration was also backed up by powerful governmental support. From the 1950s through to the end of the 1970s, this powerful policy was expressed in several ways.

1950s

The eviction policy in the 1950s was a “nonprovision and forceful eviction plan.” Later, the SMG created a resettlement project, developing the suburban regions. The Miari resettlement project was launched for the first time in 1958.\(^2\) In the meantime, politics had affected the eviction policy — before the national election, the urban-redevelopment project was temporarily suspended, which brought about “the interim procrastination of the shelters’ eviction” in August 1956. This plan was directed by the president himself, as evident from the fact that the eviction policy was promoted right after the election. “The interim procrastination of the shelters’ eviction” could be considered a makeshift political device.

1960–70s

The housing problem of the urban poor intensified as the housing shortage in the Seoul area jumped from below 40% in 1960 to more than 50% in 1966.

Because the political ideology of the government was to put national economic growth first, basic urban facilities, including housing, water supply, and a sewage system, received the least funding. The poorer groups were obliged to solve their housing problems by themselves. Their squatter houses were located near the downtown area, close to their workplaces (Figure 1). The eviction-centred policy of the SMG continued. The SMG looked on the residents of squatter settlements as criminals trespassing on government land and constructing illegal houses. This caused an asymmetrical antagonism between the government and the squatters. As a result, the “nonprovision eviction policy” of the 1950s and the subsequent “coercive relocation,” enforced by bulldozers, continued.

\(^2\) By 1972, more than 300,000 people from 64,140 households and 48,718 compartments had moved to 98 new areas in the suburbs. The total area was 930,000 pyong (1 pyong = 3.3 m\(^2\)).
During the 1960s, while the relocation project of the SMG was under way, it was regarded as a plan for the temporary accommodation of those evicted. Eviction was emphasized, but resettlement was overlooked. Because the evicted had no incentives to settle down permanently, most sold the land distributed to them and moved back to the midtown area of Seoul.

In the 1970s, the SMG, faced with the shortage of vacant land in the inner city, built a large-scale settlement town, Kwangju complex, in Kwangju county, Kyong Ki province, 25 km from downtown Seoul. But the area was just a vast tract of land without opportunities for employment, education, or commerce. This was the motive for the large-scale demonstration of the residents on 10 August
1971, known as the “people’s collective protest for the right to the city,” which showed potential for developing into an urban social movement that would challenge the government’s legitimacy. In response, the government started to design new ways to take full advantage of the existing housing facilities and the idle labour force. The plan was to mobilize the participation of the residents and, at the same time, to discern any signs of community movements before they got out of hand. In this context, during the 1970s, the housing-redevelopment policy reached a new phase, legitimizing squatter dwellings or reforming them into normal residencies. This policy was legitimized in 1973, when the *Interim Housing Improvement Act* was passed.

Under the new Act, change of land use in redevelopment areas was permitted. This enabled illegal buildings to become legitimate and the unlicenced plot of land to be approved with preemptive rights. Also, by selling the unlicenced shacks to the squatter dwellers, the SMG sought to reduce the financial burdens of providing the urban infrastructure. By transferring state property to private ownership, “efficient” land use was made possible. The policy also provided ideological legitimation externally, with the catchphrase “improvement of housing conditions by self-help,” in the face of opposing community movements. But this was only a strategy to change the status of the squatter settlements by enacting an improvement policy that legitimized illegal housing.

In the meantime, realizing that “eviction without provisions” would bring about antieviction struggles, the SMG devised a plan to compensate the evicted just enough to avoid community movements. So in the 1970s, the eviction policy included a variety of policy instruments such as financial aid for the evicted, rights to purchase municipally managed apartments, and a collective resettlement policy, as detailed below (see also Table 1):

- **Policy of collective resettlement in the suburban areas** — This was a policy promoting housing districts in undeveloped areas and the construction of tenement houses in allocated areas. Squatters, mostly living within 2 km of Seoul city hall, were collectively moved to outer parts of the city, yet to be urbanized, about 10–14 km from city hall (Lee 1977; Kim 1989). But, as with the collective-relocation policy of the 1960s, most of the residents moved back into the central parts of the city after selling their rights to the newly built residences.

---

3 Korean politics had been dominated by a “development dictatorship” led by the military since 1962. Long and bloody civil action, led primarily by college students, succeeded at last in setting up a democratic regime in February 1988.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Squatter clearance (n)</th>
<th>Formation of resettlements (n)</th>
<th>Subsidies (n)</th>
<th>Right to purchase (n)</th>
<th>Municipally managed apartments (n)</th>
<th>Number of squatters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>13 556</td>
<td>13 556</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>178 998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>7 041</td>
<td>7 041</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>168 097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>6 554</td>
<td>2 033</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>163 543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>4 936</td>
<td>1 486</td>
<td>2 097</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>155 467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>5 964</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>3 591</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>149 503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>20 039</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7 194</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4 688</td>
<td>135 326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>18 828</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 864</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6 352</td>
<td>115 634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>14 919</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 694</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7 410</td>
<td>100 715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>12 992</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 648</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3 607</td>
<td>87 723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3 618</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 095</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2 539</td>
<td>157 068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3 021</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 971</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>154 047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1 790</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 790</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1 790</td>
<td>152 257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2 280</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 280</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2 280</td>
<td>149 977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>4 057</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 057</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>4 057</td>
<td>145 918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>5 839</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 839</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>5 839</td>
<td>140 079</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: KPW, South Korean won (in 1998, 1 278 KPW = 1 United States dollar [USD]); n = number of households.

* Moved to Kwangju complex.

b Estimated.
Policy of offering municipally managed apartments — This was a redevelopment policy to compensate evictees by offering them municipally managed apartments. Municipally managed apartments were the result of on-site redevelopment. In this case, the squatter areas were mostly in radial areas 5 km from Seoul city hall (Lee 1977; Kim 1989). Especially in the late 1970s, when there was a real-estate investment boom, a takji (certificate or ticket giving the right to purchase an apartment) was sold well above its original price, and eventually owners were persuaded to sell theirs. The evicted people’s poverty was another incentive for them to sell their tickets. The purchase rights were mostly sold to middle-class people, including lower-level white-collar workers.

Policy of financial aid — This policy was what the SMG called the “provision to protect the poor,” which meant granting the evicted people 100,000–500,000 KPW (in 1998, 1,278 won [KPW] = 1 United States dollar [USD]). At an earlier stage, this policy served as a subsidiary to other policies, but as living costs rose as a result of overinvestment in real estate, this financial aid was far too little to compensate for high rents.

All in all, the goal of the eviction and consolidation policy was consistently limited to “better quality of physical environments.” The policy was based on an environmental-deterministic viewpoint — that is, squatter housing was perceived merely as being “unsanitary and delinquent” and as “objects to be beautified.” The residents’ right to the city and the life of the urban poor were not considered in the policy. Thus, the eviction policy included no welfare policies for the poor, and later, when it did, it was only because of the need to compromise with the residents who resisted, trying to reclaim their rights to the city.

Although the government partially accepted the residents’ demands for eviction compensation and housing rehabilitation, the policy had changed in form only. The government’s goal was to win over the residents by concealing any opposition to its policy (Table 2). The strategy to raise the quality of the physical environment, without consideration for the welfare of the squatters, resulted in the reduction of the relative and absolute housing space of the poor, sacrificing it to the housing space of the middle class. The poorer group, constantly threatened by evictions, moved away to the outer parts of the city, eventually causing the enlargement of the city. Although squatter tenants made up more than half the population of the eviction areas, no compensation was provided for them because they were not considered as experiencing any adverse consequences.
### Table 2. Trends in compensation for the evicted, 1974–89.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974–78</td>
<td>Squatters could choose either a moving subsidy, the right to purchase municipally managed apartments, or a collective resettlement subsidy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979–81</td>
<td>Squatters could receive a moving subsidy (dwellers in redevelopment area received the right to purchase municipally managed apartments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–84</td>
<td>Both the moving subsidy and the right to buy the apartment were given to all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984–89</td>
<td>Prices of illegal squatter houses were estimated formally, and the right to purchase the apartment was given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985–89</td>
<td>After 1986, first-provision–then-eviction method was adopted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chang (1989).

The new mode of eviction policy in the 1980s: joint redevelopment

The change of direction and the development of the joint-redevelopment plan

Despite the coercive eviction-redevelopment policy, which continued until the 1970s, the number of urban poor increased, causing an increase in the illegal squatters in the outer-city areas where the eviction-redevelopment policy hadn’t yet been applied. This resulted in dilapidated housing and serious overcrowding in the outer-city areas.

It wasn’t long before the SMG grew interested in those areas. As the conflict between the state and the urban poor spread to the outer city, the shortage of vacant undeveloped land grew even worse. During 1965–85, housing prices rose by a factor of 50.5, whereas land prices rose by a factor of 163.7. This was due to the land-exhaustion phenomenon (KNHC 1987). Especially in the early 1980s, the increase in the urban population demanded new development and redevelopment of decent districts. To legitimize the government, which was jeopardized in the course of seizing political power, the 5th Republican Government (1980–87) tried to win over the middle class by helping them realize their dream of owning their own homes. In the early 1980s, a construction plan for 5 million houses was devised, and the redevelopment of illegal-squatter areas in the outer city was also discussed. But, of course, this policy, which had only political slogans, without any administrative and financial support, couldn’t be promoted and was buried under the economic-stabilization policy.

As the need to redevelop the “underdeveloped area” in the outer city increased, conflicts between the government and the squatters became more frequent. So the key to the eviction policy was to reduce any conflict between the government and the residents and, at the same time, consolidate the city space efficiently. To solve the latter problem, a “public-managed development” strategy
was planned, and to solve the former, the privatization of the eviction plan was prepared.

In the public-management strategy, the state mobilized administrative and financial resources and took full responsibility for redevelopment, including efficiency, costs, and property acquisition. The Mok Dong area (Figure 2) was a case in which that policy was applied. The Mok Dong area was located on the side of an arterial road to Seoul’s Kimpo International Airport. The road parallels the Han river. This area, including much of the river banks, remained underutilized,
although it was occupied sparsely by squatters. And the area was visible to foreign visitors using the airport. From the standpoint of the city managers, this made it a priority spot to be redeveloped. But the public-management plan only resulted in the organized resistance of the residents and damage to the legitimacy of the state’s development policy because of its failure to socialize the development profits (Chang 1990).

After the failure of this public-management policy, the SMG adopted a policy of privatization, but with indirect state intervention. Although privatization was inevitable, the SMG didn’t want full privatization. Thus, to leave room for indirect intervention and to vitalize redevelopment, the participants were diversified. The idea was to have interest groups, such as those with investment or speculative capital, intervene. At the same time, the SMG had a divide-and-control strategy to limit the residents’ organized resistance.

In the late 1970s, the flow of oil money from the prospering Middle East came to a halt, and this led to a stagnation of the construction industry in the early 1980s. The redevelopment project was promoted in 1983 to make use of the idle construction personnel and capital. In the midst of the squatter-area redevelopment, the newly built apartments became objects of speculation for small- to mid-scale capital owners, known as pokbuin (fortune women). The SMG also invested idle capital to assist the residents who couldn’t afford the development.

But the poor people collectively resisted the state’s eviction policy, claiming that their right to the city was at stake in the course of the eviction redevelopment. The SMG needed a plan to dissolve the residents’ solidarity and thus weaken their resistance. This brought about the plan to use part of development profits as a device for amelioration. Soon there was a split between the squatter owners, who received slight compensation, and squatter tenants, who received nothing. This was the so-called joint-redevelopment plan, in which the construction company took responsibility for the project, including payment for the residents’ land, and the residents supplied the land.

**The characteristics of the joint-redevelopment policy**

The redevelopment plan changed direction when the *Improvement Act*, which emphasized the allocation of land, expired in 1982. That law was replaced by the *Urban Redevelopment Act*, which served as an institutional device to push forward the development of private land by land owners. The outline and procedures enacted by the SMG were as follows:

- The redevelopment cooperative, constituted by squatter owners in the region, was to be the main agent of the joint redevelopment;
• The construction company was to be selected by the cooperative;

• The construction company was to lend each household 5 million KPW, free of interest, and ensure that the area was completely vacated; and

• The construction company was to make a profit by selling the houses left after distributing houses to the previous home owners and should therefore build 1.5–2 times more houses than the number of previous owners.

This meant that ownership by the formerly illegal home owners was lawfully accepted. The home owners who gained legitimacy grew positive about the redevelopment plan, as they were to receive at least a small amount of the development profits, compared with what had happened in the 1970s. However, tenants gained nothing but the loss of their houses. The former state-versus-poor-groups antagonism was converted into group conflict.

The SMG was responsible only for managing the redevelopment process and for selling some parts of unsold government properties. In this respect, the joint redevelopment could be characterized as "privatization of housing redevelopment." The government's intervention decreased, and the construction company's interest in maximizing its profits was to take its place.

As the profits that the construction company would make depended on there being units left over after distribution to the cooperative members, the company wanted to construct as many apartments as possible. The SMG, to ensure that it could "anticipate the construction company's participation," responded to the company's requests. The former building law permitted only a 50% volumetric ratio, so the building-to-land ratio was increased to 400%, enabling the company to construct highrise buildings (Kim 1985). The housing redevelopment was reactivated after being delayed by many obstacles. As a result, the SMG was able to raise more revenue by collecting taxes from the newly built legal houses and by selling government land. For instance, in 1984, the SMG made 10 billion KPW from selling government land in Kuro District 1 and Cheon Ho District 1, where redevelopment was occurring.

The government could also minimize the political costs of discordance with the residents because, with the new plan, the conflict was between the cooperative and the residents. Thus, the SMG could efficiently achieve its goals while mobilizing the least number of administrative forces and providing the least amount of financial support. The practical precipitators in the redevelopment were the speculative capitalists, a hidden factor. The urban poor, who lived on a day-to-day
basis, could only feel intimidated by the moving costs and the long wait for construction.

Speculators took advantage of the prolonged redevelopment process. They sold takji, at a slightly higher price, to appease the former residents and also to enable outsiders to infiltrate the community as home owners and convince the residents to agree to the redevelopment.

Let us now consider the social and economic outcome of the joint redevelopment. In March 1987, apartments for 29,564 households, had been or were being constructed on a land space of 445,000 pyong in 44 redevelopment districts. This was about three times the scale of the 4,010 apartments on 140,000 pyong in 15 districts anticipated in the original November 1985 plan and 1.5 times all of the housing development executed from 1974 to 1985.

The joint-redevelopment plan seemed to be more rational than the approach taken in the past. Nearly all the illegally occupied government or public land was put on the market and included in the capitalistic system through the development plan. Housing construction increased immensely because the profit depended on the number of high-density apartments built. For example, in 1987, the number of apartments to be built was 29,564, more than twice as many as the households to be evicted (14,446).

But on the whole, the joint redevelopment not only ignored the poorer groups' housing problems but actually aggravated them. During the first 2 years of joint redevelopment, the evicted households numbered 4,666, which represented 48% of the newly built apartments. This showed that the increased housing stock was of little use.

It can be noted that each of the illegal shelters had an average of 2.5 households, including both owner and tenants. Before, the owner and tenants maintained friendly relations. In most cases, the tenants' deposit represented part of the payment for the house. Also, the rental income formed a considerable proportion of the owner's total income. In times of crisis, such as unemployment or long-term disability, home owners could easily become tenants. Tenants, through savings, could become home owners. As the owner-tenant relationship was interchangeable, there was little cause for conflict surrounding the ownership of the house.

The tenants began to distrust the redevelopment plan when the profits were distributed in an unequal way, and soon the tenants' movement evolved. As they were excluded from the redevelopment benefits, the tenants organized a movement, claiming the right to the city (Lee 1986; Hong 1990). The tenants' struggle, which had started as an owner-tenant conflict, eventually developed into a political struggle against the redevelopment plan itself.
The owner-tenant conflict concerning evictions spread as the home owners were displaced by speculative-capitalist outsiders, who hastened the redevelopment to pursue their own profits. What had apparently been a conflict between tenants and owners became more a matter of tenants versus outsiders as the eviction period drew nearer. The residents’ inner conflict was in fact a conflict between the tenants, who stressed the utility value of the houses, and the capitalists, who emphasized the exchange value of the houses.

But actually, the owners were victims, too. The owners usually disposed of their houses at a slightly higher price than the market price to speculators who had information before the public notice. So the former owners received only a small proportion of the redevelopment profits. In the course of disposal, the owner often became a tenant of the outsider who bought the house. Eventually, the residents moved to squatter areas. At the time of joint redevelopment, the clearance of squatter areas increased, which meant that the home owners had no option but to use up all their allocations when the shortage of houses caused housing costs to soar (Cho and Cho 1988).

In conclusion, the public authorities had developed a new model, joint redevelopment, to appropriate redevelopment costs by introducing both construction and speculative capital. The government’s intention was to transfer all the rights concerning the redevelopment to the redevelopment cooperative, thus enabling the privatization of the plan while remaining a third party. This strategy, which partially included the owners but excluded the tenants, served as a device to divide and control the owners and tenants. In the course of the joint redevelopment, people were evicted from their accommodations by brute force and replaced by the middle class. This fact was revealed in the case of the eviction gangs mobilized for coercive eviction in some areas where there was resistance.

Joint redevelopment: the case of Sang Kye Dong

The overall situation of Sang Kye Dong

The beginning of the evictions: the enforcement of joint redevelopment

Part of Sang Kye Dong was designated a redevelopment area on 20 April 1985. The area, with 1 528 households, was in 173 Sang Kye Dong, Do Bong Ku, Seoul. The formal title of the project was Housing Improvement Redevelopment Plan of the Sang Kye Dong 4th District, Area 1. This particular area had been under military protection for 20 years, until March 1985. In January 1985, the line-4 subway section was opened. The need to beautify the city in preparation for the Seoul Olympics reinforced the need for the redevelopment plan.
The situation of the area before redevelopment

The 173 Sang Kye Dong area was near the northeast boundary of Seoul, where the surrounding mountains form a graceful landscape. This area had developed in 1964/65 with the relocation of people evicted from other areas. People from the Cheong Kye Cheon and Hannam areas had settled there as a result of the SMG's resettlement project of the 1960s. Before joint redevelopment, it was a community with 1,528 households living in 3- to 4-pyong single rooms with kitchens in 148 apartment buildings on government land totaling 43,620 m². Among the residents were 947 squatter owners and 581 tenants. In comparison with other squatter areas, where two or three households resided in one house, the houses in Sang Kye Dong area were separate, each with one room and one kitchen. Here, the owners and tenants didn't live in the same house.

Despite lacking basic urban services, such as public transportation, water supply, and sewage systems, the residents enjoyed a comfortable atmosphere in which the neighbours were always willing to help and cooperate with one another.

The characteristics of the joint-redevelopment plan

The joint-redevelopment policy was applied to this area. This eviction-redevelopment policy had been criticized for transferring the problem of squatters instead of solving it. Figure 3 shows how the problem was transferred in the case of 1,528 households in this area. Many of the home owners with lawful rights to participate in the redevelopment experienced financial problems and had to leave the area. Of the 947 owners' households, 862 (91%) moved out. In other words, only 85 owners' households moved to new apartments in the redeveloped area.

The tenants had no rights to the redevelopment area, causing many of them to leave spontaneously and individually. During the initial stage of redevelopment, up to 271 squatter-tenant households left without even claiming any housing rights. Some of the tenants organized struggles, asserting their housing rights. The main issue was to build a community in a new place. In response, the redevelopment cooperative and the construction company provided them with a settlement area in Pocheon, Kyong Ki province, 30 km from the eviction area (Figure 4). In May 1986, 134 households settled in that area. But the tenants who had organized the movement refused to move to the Pocheon area, demanding a place with better living conditions.

The government forcefully evicted the people remaining in Sang Kye Dong on 14 April 1987. Several households had left individually, tired of the struggle. Ultimately, 374 tenants' households moved out; 73 tenants' households remained
Figure 3. Mobility situation of the residents.
struggling, but they later moved their sites to Myong Dong Catholic Church, appealing to public opinion. In June 1987, with some financial aid from the Church, 39 households were able to leave the temporary settlement. The new settlement they moved to was located in a greenbelt area in Namyangju county, about 4 km from the redevelopment area (see Figure 4). The 34 households that resisted until the end moved to the outer part of Pucheon city, Kyong Ki province, in January 1988, with the support of the construction company.

The research
For the sake of research, the owners can be divided into two groups: resale owners, who sold their houses, and resident owners, who actually moved into the newly built apartments. The tenants can be divided into individual movers, who
were forced out by government pressure, and collective movers, who first struggled in the organization but eventually moved out as well. Individual movers scattered to other parts of Seoul, but collective movers moved to three different places in Kyong Ki province (see Figure 3).

As shown in Table 3, this study covered 457 households (30% of the total 1,528 households involved). Because of the difficulty detecting the individual movers, who were all scattered, only 20% of the total owners put to analysis were found to be resale owners, and 23% of the tenants were found to be individual movers. The collective movers were much easier to survey because of geographic conditions.

With the help of the Dong Residence List, provided by the Dong administrative office (the lowest local authority), the Illegal House List, and the List of Actual Residents in the Apartments, it was possible to trace the movers and confirm which households had actually moved in. The status of social welfare (whether or not the people were scattered) and the level of housing were determined through face-to-face interviews and questionnaires.

The effects of the joint redevelopment on owners and tenants
Changes in the level of home ownership
Initially, having hopes of excessive returns, the owners established the redevelopment cooperative with 96% approval for redevelopment. But as the price of the houses rose during redevelopment, some owners sold their houses to outsiders and moved out of the area. During the construction phase, many of the owners had to move to other areas, so they had no choice but to sell their takji to speculators or brokers. Once the ownership was sold, the ticket tended to be resold in succession by the speculators. Of all the houses that had switched ownership, 18% had changed owners more than five times. In sum, 91% of the owners moved to other areas, and only 9% moved into the newly built apartments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Subject of study.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Owner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population A (N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample B (n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B/A (%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of difficulty detecting individual movers, who were scattered.
Most couldn't afford to pay for the house or to cover the management expenses. The new apartments were much too large for the poor people. The government standard for poor peoples' houses was 24 pyong, but the supply of houses close to that size was far too low. The demand amounted to 817 households, whereas the supply was only 330. This situation occurred because large houses were more profitable to the construction company.

Tenants, receiving no housing subsidy at all, faced a disastrous situation. In the joint redevelopment, only the owners had rights to participate in the cooperative, which left the tenants with no right to protest. But it made no sense to them to have no claims at all:

This area was developed 20 years ago when the Seoul Metropolitan Government moved the evicted people to governmental land, and it thus became a liveable place. So we also have the right to participate in this area's redevelopment program. The market price of the land is 600,000 won and the government is paying 300,000 won for it, but the benefits all go to the owners. Until now if the owners have paid the government rents, we have paid much higher rents to the owners. In fact, we were the people who occupied the governmental land, as tenants, and not the owners, who didn't even live there. We also have rights concerning Sang Kye Dong.

There was no formal response from the cooperative, but it acted as if it were bestowing charity. Most of the tenants who suffered received money for moving or settling costs from the SMG; compensation from the company; and reimbursement of the deposit, as well as some bonus, from the home owners. Eventually, the tenants moved out of Sang Kye Dong, either individually or collectively.

**Effects on Home Ownership: A Synthesis** — The redevelopment directly affected housing ownership and rent levels of the residents of the area. The Sang Kye Dong redevelopment affected ownership in four possible ways — some owners remained as owners, some owners became tenants, some tenants became owners, and some tenants remained as tenants (Table 4):
• Of the original home owners, 29% bought new houses. Most of the houses bought were in squatter areas, and after purchase, most owners rented them out to subsidize the payment for the house.

• Of the original home owners, 71% became tenants after redevelopment. They either sold their right to purchase or returned the deposit to former tenants, which left them with just enough money to rent another house at a higher price. Before redevelopment, as owners, they had no worries about rent or moving expenses, but in the course of redevelopment it turned out to be otherwise.

• Tenants who became owners after redevelopment constituted less than 1% of the total households. In most cases, these tenant households had secondary incomes from family members, and the tenants were merely carrying out their previous plans to purchase a house through the redevelopment.

• Tenants who were still tenants after the redevelopment fared the worst. Most of them not only had to pay high rents and moving costs, but also lost their employment-information network; 99% of the tenants were in this category. They moved to nearby squatter areas, causing rents to rise. In the Sang Kye Dong area, the rents rose by as much as 100%. Of the tenants, it turned out that 78% of them paid higher rents after redevelopment; 19%, the same; and 3%, lower.

Geographical mobility of owners and individually moving tenants
The owners and tenants were likely to move their living bases in the course of redevelopment. It was natural for most of the tenants and most of the home owners who sold their rights to move out, but to remain in the adjacent areas. A few of the home owners succeeded in moving back into the new apartments. The owners who moved into the newly established apartments constituted 85 households, only 9% of the total 947 households. Of these, 61 households, or 72%, left their houses for much inferior areas because they didn't have the money to pay for the new house.

The movers moved only 2 km from their original residences (63% of the owners and 67% of the tenants, as shown in Table 5). The short distance was due to local advantages, such as employment, schooling, and other facilities.
Table 5. Distance moved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance (km)</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Tenant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency (%)</td>
<td>Cumulative (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤0.5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;0.5–1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1–2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;2–3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;3–4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who didn’t participate in the housing-rights struggle mostly moved to more distant areas, whereas the participants who moved out at a later time settled nearby. Households with single incomes and households dependent on income earners with difficulty getting time off (day workers and those in home crafts or technical services) moved out of Sang Kye Dong area at an earlier time and to far-away regions. There turned out to be a positive correlation between mobility frequency and moving distance: the more frequent the moving was, the greater the distance became. The tenants who moved out individually experienced extremely unstable housing conditions: 69% of these people moved more than five times during the 4 years after being forced out of Sang Kye Dong in 1986; 27% of the resale owners moved more than five times.

Effects on housing welfare

In Sang Kye Dong, the effects on the standard of welfare could be divided into three categories: housing conditions, use of neighbourhood utilities, and degree of access. The details of the housing conditions included number of rooms, the floor space for each household, the number of households sharing a house, the facilities and materials of the building, and the use of space. Use of neighbourhood utilities was examined in reference to schooling, hospitals, water supply, sewage system, electricity, garbage disposal, and purchase of goods. Employment, education, and cultural opportunities were researched to determine the degree of access.

Owners had more or less the same or better housing conditions and neighbourhood facilities after the redevelopment as they had had before. But they had difficulty with degree of access. According to Table 6, 44% of the respondents indicated that their housing conditions had improved, and 40% said these conditions had remained the same. The number of rooms and the floor space remained the same or increased. The number of households sharing a house was the same.
Table 6. Change in housing conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Number of rooms (n) (%)</th>
<th>Floor space (n) (%)</th>
<th>Households sharing (n) (%)</th>
<th>Overall housing conditions (n) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>29 (36)</td>
<td>38 (41)</td>
<td>49 (54)</td>
<td>40 (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td>35 (43)</td>
<td>37 (41)</td>
<td>39 (42)</td>
<td>36 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>17 (21)</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
<td>4 (4)</td>
<td>15 (16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n = number of respondents.

Use of neighbourhood utilities was similar because the home owners mostly moved within the same neighbourhood. Medical facilities, water supply, sewage system, and garbage disposal improved. The marketplace was farther away. Cultural institutions, such as entertainment facilities and libraries, were more or less the same. Work sites and schools were farther away because most of the residents maintained their jobs in the former Sang Kye Dong area or continued going to the same school there. Finding full- or part-time employment became challenging because of the destruction of the community information network.

Tenants who moved individually experienced the worst changes in housing conditions. They moved to new squatter settlements near their former homes. The number of households sharing a house increased by 90%. The floor space available to each household decreased, and 84% of households experienced a decrease in the number of rooms — they now had one, instead of two. The rents increased, but the overall housing conditions were similar or even worse. The marketplace was not as convenient. The supply of electricity remained the same. The degree of access to employment decreased. Unemployed people searched for their former housemates to obtain employment information. Commuting and attending schools was difficult because people started to use public transportation, increasing transportation costs and time — formerly, they had walked.

Households had to pay the psychological price of leaving their community and adjusting to a new atmosphere. People who moved out later were sometimes called "demonstrators" in their new neighbourhoods.

Effects on collectively moved tenants: those most adversely affected

Coercive eviction — A few conscientious tenants opposed the eviction-centred joint-redevelopment plan. In the course of the struggle, there were two camps: the pacifists and the hard-liners. All struggles imply sacrifice and suffering, and in this case it was the hard-liners who experienced much suffering. The struggles between
the government and the owners and tenants intensified in June 1986, when two tenants were imprisoned and four others died. Many were taken to police stations or arrested during the struggles. Eventually, many tenants gave up fighting and were forced to leave the property; half left voluntarily, and half were coerced.

Those who participated in the antieviction struggles moved collectively. The three groups of collective movers differed in their degree of struggle. Those who moved out last were the ones who struggled the most. They were moved out of Seoul into Kyong Ki province. In May 1986, tenants moved to Pocheon county; in June 1987, to Namyangju county; and in January 1988, to Pucheon city (see Figure 3).

The resettlement area in Pocheon county was 30.5 km north of Sang Kye Dong. It took more than 1 hour to get from Seoul by bus, which ran every 2 hours. Those who were moved on 30 May 1986 were allocated 10 apartment houses that had been converted from poultry farms and pigsties into housing for 145 households: 4- to 5-pyong shelters built on a 3 116-pyong plot of land.

It was evident that the houses were inappropriate for human dwelling. The walls were too weak and thin for protection against the cold or the heat. The neighbourhood smelled of leather, furniture, machines, cement, and straw bags, and there were no convenient utilities nearby. For medical or administrative services, residents had to walk for more than 30 minutes or take a taxi. It took 30 minutes to get to the local market; 85% of the residents went to the markets in Seoul instead. Access to educational institutions was poor. Schools were nearby, but 25% of the middle-school students and 100% of the high-school students went to schools in Seoul. Despite the transportation difficulties (the money and time involved), high-quality education was the only hope for these people's children: of the heads of households, 67% were labourers; 13% were in small-scale trades; 7% were factory workers; 7% were drivers; 3% were janitors; and another 3% were office workers.

At first, the only job opportunities were in Sang Kye Dong. Thus, people had no choice but to bear the transportation costs and physical fatigue of commuting. As time went by, old people and women changed job sites to nearby leather, furniture, straw-bag, and veneer-board factories. But even at the time of this research, more than 80% of the men were still commuting to Seoul and Sang Kye Dong. The residents had been given 600,000 KPW for settlement fees, provided that they not move again for 5 years. Consequently, they could not move to other places; nonetheless, 27% secretly left their houses empty and rented other houses in Seoul.

Doksong Rhi, a new settlement in Namyangju county, was in the greenbelt area in Kyong Ki province, about 4 km from Sang Kye Dong. The government
tore down the new settlement every 15 days or so, claiming that construction was forbidden in that area. The residents called this place Borum house (which means "15-day house"). Registration of permanent-address transfer wasn’t permitted, which greatly inconvenienced people receiving mail, etc. In this settlement, 65% of the heads of households were labourers; 17% were in commerce; 12% were factory workers; 4% were drivers; and 2% were janitors.

The houses in Nare village (meaning "let's live here with wings wide open") were made of vinyl. They were originally built for people raising crops. The neighbourhood had one supermarket and one nursery. The marketplace, hospitals, pharmacy, and administrative office were all 4–5 km away, up in Sang Kye Dong. People used the mountain stream for water supply. Schools and workplaces were all in Sang Kye Dong, and the transportation was very inconvenient. The area had no public telephones, let alone any cultural facilities.

Kokang Dong was in Pucheon city, Kyong Ki province, about 40 km from Sang Kye Dong. Here, on an 850-pyong land tract, was where the final strugglers — the "39 households" — settled, in January 1988. Soon after they moved here, the government of Pucheon city tore down their temporary shelters. The reason it gave was that the area was near the highway where the Olympic Torch was to be carried. The government was worried that this settlement of homeless people might lower the country's reputation. Before three temporary tenements were built in July 1988, the people were forced to live in underground caves.

The condition of the public housing was as follows: The houses were built with thin blocks, and each house was about 8 pyong, with a temporary screen to separate the kitchen from the main room. At first, they had no water supply or sewage system. Also, no electricity was available. However, public medical service was better than in the other two resettlement areas. The market was nearby, but the school and work sites were very far, causing transportation problems. Seventy percent of the people commuted to Seoul, and 80% of the middle- and high-school students attended schools in Seoul as well. Of the heads of households, 68% were labourers; 11% were in commerce; 13% were factory workers; 4% were janitors; 2% were drivers; and another 2% were unemployed.

THE JOYS AND SORROWS — The reclaimed community was built through sacrifice. The most important secondary effects of the evictions were poverty, the destruction of families, and the loss of humanity. For instance, an elderly woman moved with the collective movers, but her two sons moved out individually. As normal domestic and work life became impossible, four couples divorced: one each in Pocheon and Namyangju counties and two in Pucheon city. Some people showed mental disorders. Many felt intimidated by the harsh treatment.
But the children suffered the most. They witnessed their parents demonstrating, being taken away by the police, and being beaten up. Children would scream in terror on seeing a hammer. “They are going to tear our houses down!” However, external oppression sometimes results in internal solidarity. Several autonomous organizations and a community life developed in the villages. Students’, young people’s, men’s and women’s, and parents’ associations provided places for discussion of various topics concerning the village. Support for the elderly was one of the most important concerns.

Their common experiences enabled the people to share their sorrows and joys with one another. The solidarity of the residents was strong, and they also maintained ongoing relationships with other urban-poor associations in Seoul. They never lost hope for the future. They named their places Saiteo (“new land”) and Narai (“wings”), and Boram (“fruitfulness”) for hope. The collective movers who moved to Saiteo, in Pocheon county, were planning to construct three 15-story apartment buildings in 1992: 165 households were to move into 20-, 24-, and 30-pyong apartments. This plan was executed without any outside aid.

The Narai village, in Namyangju county, was left with transportation and public-facility problems. In October 1990, 25 households moved into the new permanent-rent public-housing apartments in Shinheung Rhi 4, Namyangju county. Each house was 13 pyong and required a rent-deposit of 1.280 million KPW and monthly rent of 50,000 KPW. Thirty percent of the workers commuted to Sang Kye Dong; 50%, to Seoul; and 20%, to Kyong Ki province.

The Boram village of Pocheon used to have extremely inconvenient and neglected buildings. For some time, the people who moved there received help from the urban-poor associations, but soon a conflict arose. Some moved to nearby tenement houses, and the other 11 households (mostly Roman Catholic) stayed in the community village. Their intention was to construct community houses for other poor people like themselves.

**The development of housing rights**

Ha (1992) pointed out that housing rights in Korea were already confirmed in the Constitution:

- According to the Preamble, all the people should have equal opportunity to advance in life;

- Article 10 states that everyone should be respected and valued as human beings and have the right to the pursuit of happiness;
Article 35 states that all the people have the right to live in a healthy and pleasant atmosphere;

Article 35 states that to assure these rights the state must provide adequate housing conditions through housing-development policies.

Thus, as expressed in the Constitution, people do have the right to adequate (humane) living and housing conditions.

The Association for the Realization of Housing Rights, believing this right was being ignored, declared 3 June 1992 the “Day of the People Not Owning Houses.” This civic organization for the authorization of housing rights as a basic right declared the following:

- Housing rights must be recognized and protected;
- Poor people must be protected from forced relocation and eviction;
- A system of public rental housing for low-income groups must be established; and
- The tenants’ right of lease must be completely protected.

These were (and still are) the claims of the tenants of the squatter settlements, for whom the question of housing rights is crucial.

The failure to recognize housing rights originated from the lack of social consciousness of the poor people evicted. To most people, the lack of housing was due to the individual’s inability to secure it. The lack of housing was a manifestation of poverty, and most peoples’ attitude was that poverty was a sin and that responsibility for the lack of housing was the individual’s, rather than the government’s. This perception was reinforced by the social situation. As the Korean slogan “clothing—eating—housing” demonstrates, Koreans traditionally underestimate the importance of housing, compared with the two other necessities. Given the basic needs of human beings, the slogan should be “eating—housing—clothing.”

Within this cultural context, the housing-rights situation was as follows. Any collective behaviour resisting the evictions was forbidden. The squatter settlements were illegal; thus, resistance to the government’s eviction policy was also considered illegal (and antisocial). Any collective acts or claims to housing rights were stopped at the outset.
South Korea's legitimacy was established on the basis of opposition to North Korea's communism, and most people still had bad memories of the Korean war. So even though the poor people's claims might have seemed just in humanistic terms, the common people supported the government's position that the poor people's claims would destabilize the whole of society, which would eventually be advantageous to the communists. The poor people's antieviction movement received no positive response, and the issue continued to be perceived as a minor problem.

The government's policy of industrialization in the 1960s promoted export trade. One of successful results of this policy was that international trade began to grow rapidly, and the need arose to promote Seoul as a world-class city. The expansion of the basic urban infrastructure and the plan to hide the squatters were priorities. The people in the squatter settlements adjacent to the main roads were thus the first to be evicted. The government had no concern about the evicted people's housing situation. The people had no choice but to move to areas where the government's eviction policy was not yet being carried out. Their ignorance of their right to housing was related to the lack of any organized activities promoting housing rights for the poorer groups. The academic community ignored the housing situation of the squatters. For instance, architects were constantly dwelling on elitist desires, designing houses only for the higher income groups (Kang 1986).

The social origin of the recognition of housing rights

The recognition of housing rights arose in the early 1980s. In preparation for the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the SMG commenced a large-scale urban beautification project. The priority of this urban beautification was the squatter areas, where the new town-development plan and the joint-redevelopment plan were in progress.

The Mok Dong apartment complex, near Kimpo International Airport, was a housing-construction project directly executed by the SMG and thus a large-scale undertaking. The joint redevelopment took place in every part of the city, including the squatter settlements near the Olympic sites. Improvised plans were implemented in several areas simultaneously. The improvised large-scale projects, resulted in large-scale mishaps. The eviction of the squatter settlements in Mok Dong caused much damage. From their residences in 580 legitimate and 1 779 illegal apartments, a total of 2 846 tenant households and 2 359 owner households — more than 10 000 people — were forced to move without any provisions.

The recognition of the right to housing developed during the implementation of the government's inconsistent urban-redevelopment policy. The Mok Dong area, like many other joint-redevelopment areas, was a settlement that had been
provided by the government as a part of its relocation policy of the 1960s. Thus, it seemed to the dwellers that because of its lack of welfare provisions, the government’s redevelopment policy was inconsistent and a repeating failure. They had been forced by the government to move into that very same area only a decade or two before.

The claims of the residents of Mok Dong 1, presented by the eviction-provision committee on 9 March 1985, were as follows:

Fully discontinue the redevelopment policy with no provisions for the Mok Dong residents: The Seoul Metropolitan Government must return all the profits from the Mok Dong area speculation: Construction and installment after the compensation for housing provision: Stop the brutal kicking and beating up of the residents who want discussion: We are going to struggle with all our might if the violence and arresting without provision continues.

(Lee 1985)

Some of the poorer groups began to suffer the damaging effects of the government’s policy. The squatter tenants suffered the most. The squatter owners were given housing provisions, but the tenants had only a “private” relationship with the owners and thus were ineligible for provisions from the government. Presenting this policy, the SMG stated that

according to the law or the society’s general attitudes, the problem of the tenants should be solved by the owners but it can be evaluated as valid that the tenants of Mok Dong area, being mostly low income groups, might be allowed to move in the new apartments, which can be viewed as a “relief policy.”

(Lee 1985)

When the eviction was initiated, the tenants attributed their situation to their own failings and thought that, with their deposits returned by the owners, they would be able to move to similar settlements. But soon they discovered that in other squatter areas the rents had risen drastically. The redevelopments in several parts of the city reduced the available housing, thus raising the average rent. The tenants’ disappointment and discontent nearly exploded.

The anger of the squatter dwellers, especially the tenants, intensified as a result of the social situation. During the 5th Republic (1980–87), the students’ movement opposing the illegitimate government was very active. The citizens soon grew sympathetic toward the students. The tenants realized that their disadvantage was a direct result of the illegitimate government’s policy. The government, ignoring the welfare of the poor, tended to concentrate on a showing-off strategy, such as hosting the Olympics, while endeavouring to cover up its own
illegitimacy. Society’s antigovernment attitude precipitated the tenants’ antieviction movement.

Religious groups entered the squatters antieviction movement. Christians started to participate in social movements, including the antieviction movement, after the events in Mok Dong in 1985. Two religious associations supported the poor people’s seizure of political power as a priority in Korea: the Presbyterian Poor People’s Missionary Committee and the Catholic Poor People’s Association. The reason for their participation was their “religious awakening.” By this, they meant their realization that “those who seek God without seeking social justice cannot reach the truthful God.” So they asserted that they would “find the right path of the poor people’s movement and give expression to the injustices of the redevelopment policies.” The organizations also mobilized the tenants’ housing-rights movement. The participation of the Christians served as a shield against the government’s accusations that the members of the poor people’s movement were communists (although, according to the recollection of Father John Daily, who participated in the poor people’s movement, the security police stirred up a rumour that he was an American communist). In that respect, the Christian associations acted as a safety valve.

A study of the participation of religious groups in the poor people’s movement (Park 1992) showed that 87% of their activities were events to increase the political power of the urban poor; of these, 47% were demonstrations and sit-ins. From January 1988 to June 1989, the poor people’s movement was responsible for 165 official events: 102 organized by the Presbyterian Poor People’s Missionary Committee and the Catholic Poor People’s Association, separately or together; and 63 put together by other movement organizations. Forty-three percent of these official events were rallies with more than 300 people, and the most frequent activities (67) were demonstrations and sit-ins (Park 1992).

The Sang Kye Dong incidents’ enhancement of the recognition of housing rights

The new claims for housing rights

The Sang Kye Dong incidents in 1986, following the events in Mok Dong, marked another significant manifestation of the struggle for the right to housing. Above all, extreme conflicts were occurring between the squatter owners and tenants. This was because, in contrast to the owners, the tenants were receiving no compensation at all. When the tenants realized this, they started participating in organized struggles. They were somewhat encouraged by the provisions for the
tenants in the Mok Dong area. The tenants remained and struggled in the redevelopment areas until they were forced out. Then they moved to the army tents inside the Myong Dong Catholic Church to be under the protection of the religious group:

... so we fought with our bodies. At first the struggle was like throwing eggs at a rock. Those who were the victims got arrested. But to us it was winning by losing and beating up by being beaten up. In 1986 we were evicted 10 times and many people were hurt, and our households were destroyed. 5 were arrested and 4 got killed. We were accused of being Communists.

(SKDTC 1988)

The Seoul Catholic Parish representatives appealed to the government, the ruling party, and the high-ranking officials for the welfare of these people. The religious leaders demanded that these people's housing rights be formally considered and thus that the government carry out a welfare policy in the redevelopment areas. The SMG agreed to provide subsidies for the tenants in the Myong Dong Catholic Church but refused to do it officially. The high-ranking officials' response was that they didn't have administrative and financial provisions ready for all the evicted people who would be demanding their rights if the tenants in Myong Dong Catholic Church received any official compensation. In the end, the tenants in Myong Dong Catholic Church were divided into two groups and moved into outer-city areas.

The events in Sang Kye Dong are noteworthy, as it was the first time that residents partially maintained their community and moved collectively. Poor people's communities mean more than just living in the same area. The Sang Kye Dong case is an example of how solidarity can be preserved in a new settlement community.

The lesson of Sang Kye Dong

The events in Sang Kye Dong had several significant effects on the eviction-centred-redevelopment policy. First, it was wrongly understood that even if the authors of the eviction plans were the civilian cooperatives, they must be held fully
responsible for the welfare of the people to be evicted. In Mok Dong, the compensation for the residents was from the government in charge, but in Sang Kye Dong the development was led by private enterprise, which was considered responsible for the tenants. This can certainly be regarded as progress in housing rights.

Second, the tenants, although in separate units, settled in groups and were able to maintain their former community. This provided momentum in stabilizing and maintaining the tenants’ community after redevelopment. In the Mok Dong case, the tenants received some compensation, but they had to break up their community and move individually to different areas. The Sang Kye Dong case provided a precedent for the provision of settlement areas — another step forward in the new promotion of housing rights. A lesson is that an achievement in one area stimulates further achievements in others.

Third, social groups started to advocate for the squatter tenants and raised consciousness of the housing and subsistence rights of the tenants. Social groups, including the press and the poor people’s organizations, regarded the struggles of the squatter tenants as a social problem, not as individual problems whose outcomes depended on chance. The events received frequent press coverage. But compared with the international press, domestic coverage was fragmented. For instance, channel 4 television in the United Kingdom covered the Sang Kye Dong evictions as an example of absurdities in Korean society’s preparations for the Olympics. The moral support of such groups aided greatly in the improvement of the tenants’ situation. This was because the international interest focused on South Korea was always the main concern of the government.

**The progress in housing rights in the 1980s**

The progress in housing rights in South Korea in the 1980s was largely the result of the tenants’ struggles in the joint-redevelopment areas. Those who struggled might have been only a small proportion of the tenants, but their struggles were fierce. Their achievements cannot in any way be considered as charity from the construction company, the redevelopment cooperative, or the government. In the long course of struggle, 60 tenants were arrested and hundreds were detained. Eighteen people were killed or committed suicide. The press coverage of the casualties evoked social disapproval of evictions. Eventually, evictions were recognized as an important social issue.

The persistent struggles of the Sang Kye Dong and Sa Dang Dong tenants paved the way for the future implementation of the housing provision for squatter tenants. Poor people’s organizations, such as the Catholic Urban Poor Organization and the Presbyterian Urban Poor Missionary Committee, supported the tenants in
organizing the Seoul Evicted People’s Committee (the Seochulhyup). A new compensation policy was brought forth as a result of the continuous struggle.

The historical developments in the compensation process were as follows. As a result of the consistent collective demonstrations of the Sang Kye Dong tenants, in November 1986 the government enacted the first compensation provision for the tenants. This provision, announced by the Minister of the Economic Planning Board, was called the “housing provision payment” (equivalent to 2 months’ average expenditure of an urban worker). In May 1987, the provision was expanded to a choice between “moving provision aids” and a ticket to purchase a 7-pyong “small apartment.” But the tenants’ ticket — the right to purchase an apartment at a low price — resulted in speculation. The tenants in need of money sold their rights to speculators or other higher income groups and then moved to other squatter areas. This shows that the provision policy wasn’t actually aiding the housing welfare of the poor. Those participating in the tenants’ movement continued to demand fundamental provisions, so in May 1989 the government upgraded the 7-pyong tickets to provide permanent rental houses in the neighbourhood or 3 months’ moving costs.

What was the guiding force behind the achievement of this progress in housing rights? It was the tenants’ consciousness of the injustice of evictions. A squatter tenant complained that

the nearby rents had risen two or three times and it was even hard to find one of those [apartments]. We ran around to the Dong administration office, the Ku administration office and the city hall to appeal for moving provisions. But their consistent reply was that they didn’t know. It was of no concern to them to pry into private affairs of the residents themselves. Or they understood the situation but they would like us to make the sacrifice for our descendants and the Olympics. Who are the “we” that they are talking about? They include only the residents-to-be of the new high-quality apartments [referring to Sang Kye Dong Olympics].

This recognition of injustice grew from the perception of both social and individual conditions. The perception of social conditions was based on the critical view of the government’s urban beautification policy for the Olympics. The nation might benefit from the Olympics, but if it meant distributing the benefits unequally and, in exchange, sacrificing the poor, then it could not be tolerated. The

---

5 The Mok Dong redevelopment, in 1985, and the Sang Kye Dong joint redevelopment, in 1986, provided the opportunity, and afterward more than 20 committees were assembled from Yang Pyong Dong, Sa Dang Dong, and so on. In 1988, more than 10,000 households participated (Kim 1988).
tenants' perceptions of individual conditions were that they were getting worse as a result of the eviction-centred redevelopment policy. Also, they soon realized that without a struggle, no welfare policy would be provided for them.

The tactical efforts to publicize these events should also be noted. The tenants made videotapes showing scenes of the damage at the eviction sites and used these to publicize the issue. A documentary film, *The Sang Kye Dong Olympics*, satirized the destruction caused by the Olympics. The film began with the following narration:

The 88 Olympics is called the glory of the nation, the festival of the world. But the evicted people of 200 places, including Sang Kye Dong, are against the Olympics. The redevelopment in accordance with the Olympics deprived the people of their living sites and caused permanent wounds to their bodies and souls.

(SKDTC 1988)

Like the phrase “progress does not and cannot mean equal and simultaneous progress for all” (Carr 1967), the fact that the allocation of provisions depended on the degree of struggle motivated the movement. Some tenants submitted to the evictions and left voluntarily, but others fought for their rights and succeeded in attaining collective resettlement villages. And this success stimulated the housing-rights movement.

**The trials and errors of the housing-rights movement**

Looking back at the achievements in housing rights in the 1980s, one sees that the efforts of the poor people's movement began to peak in the late 1980s. The tenants who had achieved their goals within the collective movement soon reverted to individualistic attitudes. But every action has an equal but opposite reaction. Contrary to the pervasive attitude that one should adapt to the present situation was the desire to continue the housing-rights struggle and to broaden the housing-rights horizon. Continuous action and reaction cause chaos. Within the community, the tension and conflict intensified. Groups in the movement began to distrust each other, and this also caused friction. As the Seochulhyup decreased its activities, the National Association to Realize Housing Rights (*Chukeo Yonhap*) separated and went its own way. The Seochulhyup proclaimed that a political revolution was the short-cut to the realization of housing rights: the group’s slogan was “no democratization without subsistence rights for the poor.” But the Chukeo Yonhap accepted the system and sought to realize within it the dimension of subsistence rights. In 1992, 10 or so sites were being led by the Seochulhyup; 60 sites, by the Chukeo Yonhap.
During our study, the tenants in the eviction areas were taking a defensive stand. This was partly due to the absence of any incentives, but the major reason was the government’s divide-and-control policy, which was backed up by brute force. Article 34 of the *Urban Redevelopment Act* stated that the plan could be executed only if an interim-settlement complex was provided for the residents. But the SMG’s *Housing Reformation Redevelopment Guide* stated that the company should pay the moving provision for interim residency and not necessarily build an interim-settlement complex (Chang 1990). This enabled the redevelopment to go through without the provision of an interim-settlement complex.

**Housing rights in the 1990s**

Despite the ups and downs, the continuous struggles of the tenants led to several changes in the government’s provision policy. For example, permanent rental houses must now be established in the community. Despite the government’s announcement that no more provisions are possible, the persistent struggle for housing rights is sure to bring about improved provisions. The poor people’s movement for housing rights has many goals, as already noted. The Association for the Realization of Housing Rights has raised several issues, of which the following are of first priority.

**Participation of the tenants**

The *Urban Redevelopment Act* does not give tenants a mechanism for voicing their opinions on such matters as the designation of redevelopment areas and the plans for redevelopment; nor does it give the tenants permission to participate in enforcement.

**The claim to interim-settlement complexes**

Another problem for the tenants is the lack of interim-settlement complexes. During redevelopment, residents move to other areas, which causes much inconvenience and community destruction. If the interim settlement is a necessity for owners, it is even more essential to tenants.

The construction of redevelopment apartments takes at least 2 years. In the meantime, people need residences, but house and rent prices are much too high for people who have been evicted. One method to guarantee housing rights is to provide an interim-settlement complex for tenants. But officials of the autonomous district contend that they have insufficient budget and land to accommodate the numerous tenants.

The goal for the future is to ensure the stabilization of an interim-settlement complex before redevelopment begins. The existing law permits...
exceptions, in which case redevelopment may proceed without the provision of these complexes. The law should stipulate that arrangements for an interim-settlement complex must be completed by the time permission is given for redevelopment.

The protection of the tenants' right of lease
The protection of tenants’ right of lease applies not only to squatter tenants but also to indigent tenants living in legal houses. The rising price of real estate as a result of the “bubble economy” of the late 1980s, followed by the high rents of the 1990s, jeopardized the poor. In the early 1990s, rent deposits increased by 50–100% in only a few months; a few tenants, unable to endure their economic situation, committed suicide.

South Korea has no rent act similar to those of other advanced countries. After rents rose suddenly in 1980, the government enacted rent legislation (Act 3379, 5 March 1981). But this Act has had little practical effect. Practical devices, such as the rent-coordination committees and rent-assessment process one finds in the United Kingdom, are lacking, so the law does not function as it should. The legislation must be revised to improve tenants’ welfare.

Conclusions
In 1992, housing rights in South Korea were still unclear. The situation was different from that in the developed countries of the West, where rent and housing acts were already established. Hwang and Yoo (1989) have outlined a lawful basis for housing rights. However, a lawful basis is meaningless unless applied in practice.

The process of obtaining housing rights in South Korea should be viewed in an historical context. From this perspective, the possibility of a completed and resolved solution is precluded — the pursuit of happiness can have no end or completion. The consciousness-raising of the poor concerning housing rights and erroneous government policies should be examined from this perspective. In this context, it is inevitable that the right to housing in South Korea will be achieved as a matter of historical progress.

Since the late 1980s, with the government’s housing-welfare provision for squatter owners, and later, with the provision for tenants, housing rights have received a higher profile and more consideration. Of course, the lack of interim-settlement complexes still requires the attention of the housing-rights and poor people’s movements. But even though this lack should be redressed in the near future, the resolution of this issue won’t be the completion of the task.
232 EVICTIONS AND THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

It is difficult to anticipate the future of housing rights because the reality of the housing-rights movement is characterized by improvised reactions to both coercive government pressure and dogmatic capitalist intervention. In this respect, the future of the housing-rights movement is in the hands of socially conscious groups and the affected parties themselves.