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# acronyms

ACCA	Asian Coalition for Community Action	LMAP	Land Management and Administration Project
ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights	LOOC	Let's organize our community
ADB	Asian Development Bank	LTAOW	Let's talk about our water
ADHOC	Cambodian Human Rights and Development Organisation	MLMUPC	Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction
AU	Accessibility Upgrading	MPP	Municipality of Phnom Penh
AusAID	Australian Agency for International	NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
BCV	Building Community Voices	NTTI	National Technical Training Institute
BUDD	Building and Urban Design in Development	NU	Norton University
CAN-CAM	Community Architects Network - Cambodia	ODA	Official Development Aid
CDF	Community Development Fund	OHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner
CDMC	Community Develoment Management	PNBC	People's Network for a Better City
CDRI	Cambodia Development Resource Institute	PSE	Pour un Sourire d'Enfant
CIDA	Canadian International Development	RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
CLEC	Community Legal Education Center	RUFA	Royal University of Fine Arts
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions	RWB	Reporters Without Borders
COLLPI	Civil Ombusman League on Land-use Policy Implementation	SDI	Slum Dwellers International
CSNC	Community Savings Network Cambodia	SLMG	State Land Management Group
DPU	Development Planning Unit	SLWG	State Land Working Group
EV	Eco-Village	SSS	Sewage System and Sanitation
FSMP	Flooding Season Mitigation Programme	STT	Sahmakum Teang Tnaut
GDG	Google Developer Group	TIF	Teach it Forward
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	TPC	Trees that Protect the Community
	(German International Cooperation)	UCL	University College London
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	UDFI	Urban Development Fund International
IESM	Improved Electrical System and Maintenance	UN	United Nations
IMF	International Monetary Fund	<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
ISF	Indochina Starfish Foundation	URC	Urban Resource Center
ITC	Institut de Technologie du Cambodge	VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	WB	World Bank
LCOV	Let's Clean Our Village	WCHS	Waste Collection for Healthier Spaces
LGT	Let's get together		

# executive summary

This report offers critical strategies aimed at city-wide urban transformation in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It is the culmination of five months of research on and in Cambodia, the city of Phnom Penh, and several unique urban settlements, with a particular focus on Smor San. The research was conducted by students pursuing a Master of Science in Building and Urban Design in Development (BUDD) at the Development Planning Unit (DPU) in the Bartlett School of the Built Environment at University College London (UCL).

**Chapter 1** outlines our research question, which concerns the construction of possession in Phnom Penh. It elaborates on both the historical context of possession and its current condition. We provide definitions of transformation and transition and explanations of community and negotiation, the two transversal elements of our study.

**Chapter 2** deals with Cambodia's political history and the evolution of land development. We summarise the legal framework and policies surrounding land and housing and name the key actors and institutions that influence transformation in Phnom Penh.

In **Chapter 3** we discuss our conceptualisation of urban transformation through the lenses of gender and the built and natural environments. We address

the city and local scales to illustrate how we utilised these lenses to identify and understand certain challenges. We then introduce Smor San, the settlement in which we spent the most time, and outline some of the methods we used there.

**Chapter 4** situates our understanding of the challenges and opportunities we saw across the six sites we visited. Here we offer a more in-depth picture of the challenges as they relate to our goals and we map these to demonstrate the complexity and connectivity of Phnom Penh's development.

**In Chapter 5** we build upon our challenges and goals to devise city-wide strategies. The strategies are part of a coordinated effort to apply pressure on the government to recognise poor communities and meet their demands.

**Chapter 6** concludes with our proposition that transformation begin anew through the repositioning of the urban poor in socio-political-spatial negotiation. We charge the media with its responsibility to make emerge their stories in an accountable manner while drawing attention to the wider narrative of development in Phnom Penh. By reframing the understanding and application of possession there emerges an opportunity for all citizens to unite through the reclaiming of the city.





# BEGINNING

# a. possession

From the start of our research, we often circled back to the same question: What does it mean to possess land in Phnom Penh? This provoked a number of subsidiary questions: What rights and responsibilities accompany possession? How long does it last and what could cause a change in status? What is the difference between individual, collective, and institutional possession? What about public and private?

According to Meinzen-Dick and Pradhan (2002), "conventional conceptions of property rights focus on static definitions of property rights, usually as defined in statutory law. However, in practice there is co-existence and interaction between multiple legal orders such as state, customary, religious, project and local laws, all of which provide bases for claiming property rights" (Adler, Ketya, and Menzies, 2008: 12). After the war in Cambodia ended in 1979, the new government rapidly re-established a system of private property as the country transitioned from war to reconstruction to development. The pace of change has left in gaps in the legal framework, which Cambodians themselves have filled (Payne, 2005), resulting in a patchwork system that is unevenly applied.

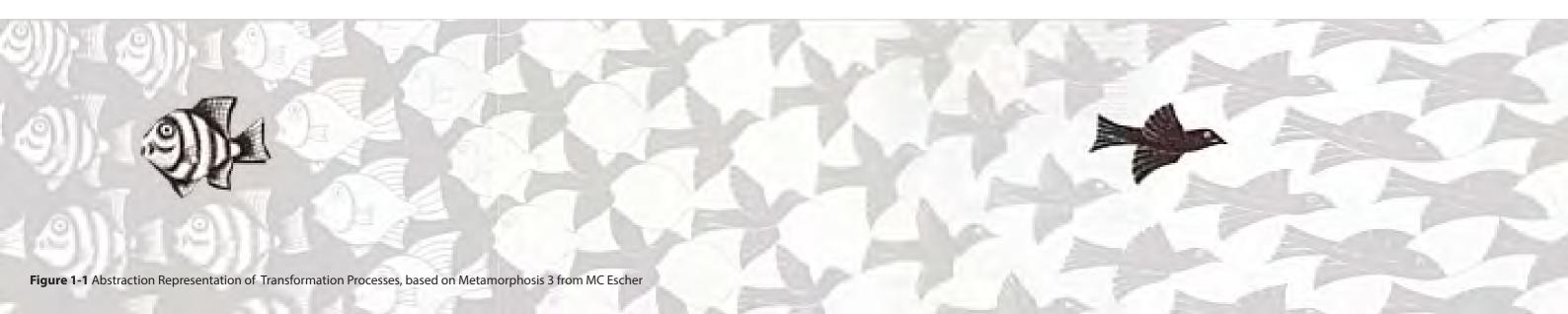
The people we spoke with in Phnom Penh linked possession to the right to determine how specific land is used or not used. It meant knowing you could stay, at least for a period of time and under certain circumstances. It also allowed you to transfer possession to someone else. In our study site, Smor San, we found that some residents connected housing quality to a sense of security, while for others the duration of their occupation was the most salient factor for rightful possession.

In sum, possession has both legal and moral dimensions: your right to possess and the righteousness of your possession. In the course of post-conflict transformation in Phnom Penh, "Authorities at all levels have favored business interests over the recognition of people's legitimate rights by referring to the latter as 'squatters' or 'new-comers' and using the development narrative to illegally evict them" (ADHOC, 2013). As a result, low-income residents are left making increasingly precarious claims to a decreasing share of urban space. Amnesty International estimated that 2.2 million residents of Phnom Penh were evicted during the last quarter-century (Eimer, 2015), even while the government was drafting and passing laws to protect the urban poor.

Our strategies seek to drive counter transformations through confronting these contradictions, enabling all residents—especially the urban poor—to contribute to change as active subjects central to a new discourse of development. The perceptions of these shifts are closely connected with the ability to tell a story and the means of transmitting that story to a wide audience. As practitioners, our proximity and access to certain actors influences the story we tell, providing us with the agency to disrupt the dominant narrative of "might makes right." In this way, we can influence the trajectory of transformation, making it more equitable, driven more by people and less by money.

Based on our research and experience, then, there must be an additional impetus before Phnom Penh's low-income residents are sufficiently united and powerful to negotiate with the government from a position of strength. Our strategies seek to build awareness, increase visibility, disseminate information, and direct the government on how best to respond to the realities of Phnom Penh's low-income residents.

"The gap between regulations and realities has inevitably been filled by the people themselves, and land not allocated for productive use has been extensively settled throughout Phnom Penh" [171]



# b. transformation in a time of transition

Phnom Penh has seen many political and economic transitions over the past 100 years. As in many other emerging cities, the current one is rooted in a neoliberal approach to land possession and capital accumulation. This has triggered transformations in both the aesthetics of the built environment and in the promulgation of an individualistic social class. This transition remains incomplete and it is in this intermediate stage when class conflict, inequality, and injustice must be vigorously contested before they become systematised, enabling the urban poor to reposition themselves as viable development partners (Boano and Kelling, 2013).

"The question is not how to 'train' the urban poor or change their behaviour but rather to identify how development interventions can nurture and develop the strength that already exists, letting people make change" (Boonyabancha, Carcellar, and Kerr, 2012: 444).



Repeated instances of exclusionary decision-making in Phnom Penh have undermined the rights of citizens, reinforcing the idea that "poverty isolates, geographically and socially" (Boonyabancha et al, 2012: 447). The paradox of a government that is both paternalistic and negligent subjects citizens to a convoluted process of achieving land ownership.

The Community Development Foundation (CDF)—one of the few NGOs that the municipality recognises—builds upon Lefebvre's concept of "the right to the city" in maintaining that the urban poor are equal members of society who have the same rights to space as any other citizens. In elevating the status of low-income residents, CDF seeks to amplify and unify their voices, enabling them to work together effectively. This is easier said than done, however, since residents in several of the settlements we visited had little trust in community savings groups and were more interested in individual possession over collective negotiation.

Rancière discusses two ideas that could resolve the dilemma between negotiation and collective action. The first is to treat the diversity of views and experiences as an asset, moving "from consensus back into dissensus, especially in the realm of design and spatialities, thus increasing the potential for innovation" (Boano and Kelling, 2013: 52). Groups like CAN-CAM could host creative debates or participatory design charettes to contest the prevailing conditions and behaviours within a settlement while ensuring equality of voices.

The second approach is to provide tools that enable people to think beyond their reality. "Art reflects an experience of life, it can create a feeling of recognition, of finding a previously unexpressed feeling or experience finally expressed" (Boano and Kelling, 2013: 54). This could blur the divisions between poor and wealthy, titled and untitled, offering a less homogenous perspective of the urban poor that legitimises their place in spaces of power.

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"Flow is a key of transformation" - Supawut "Tee" Boonmahathanakorn, Community Architects Network





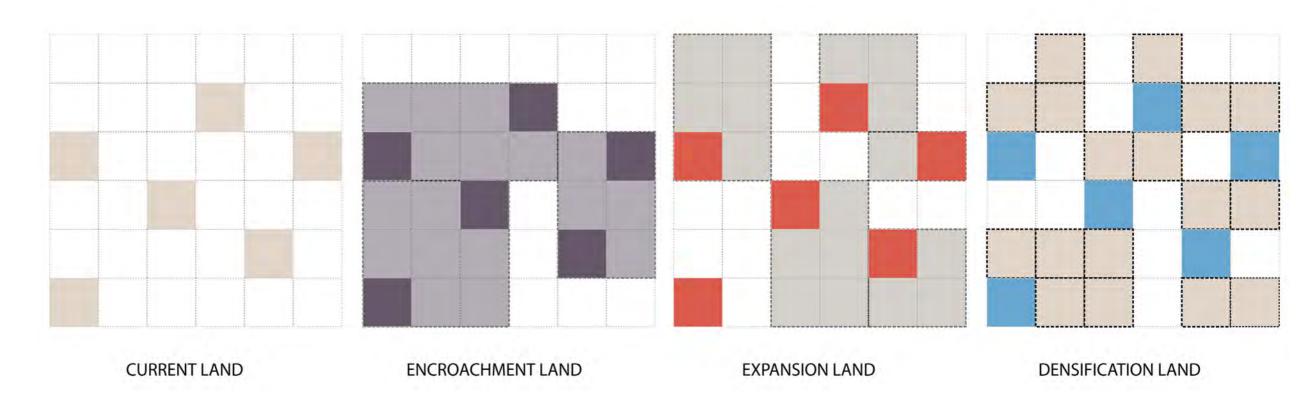


# UNDERSTANDING

# a. history

"It is estimated that more than 150,000 Cambodians live under threat of forced eviction, including approximately 70,000 in Phnom Penh" (COHRE Cambodia, 2008: 3).





# i. land development and eviction

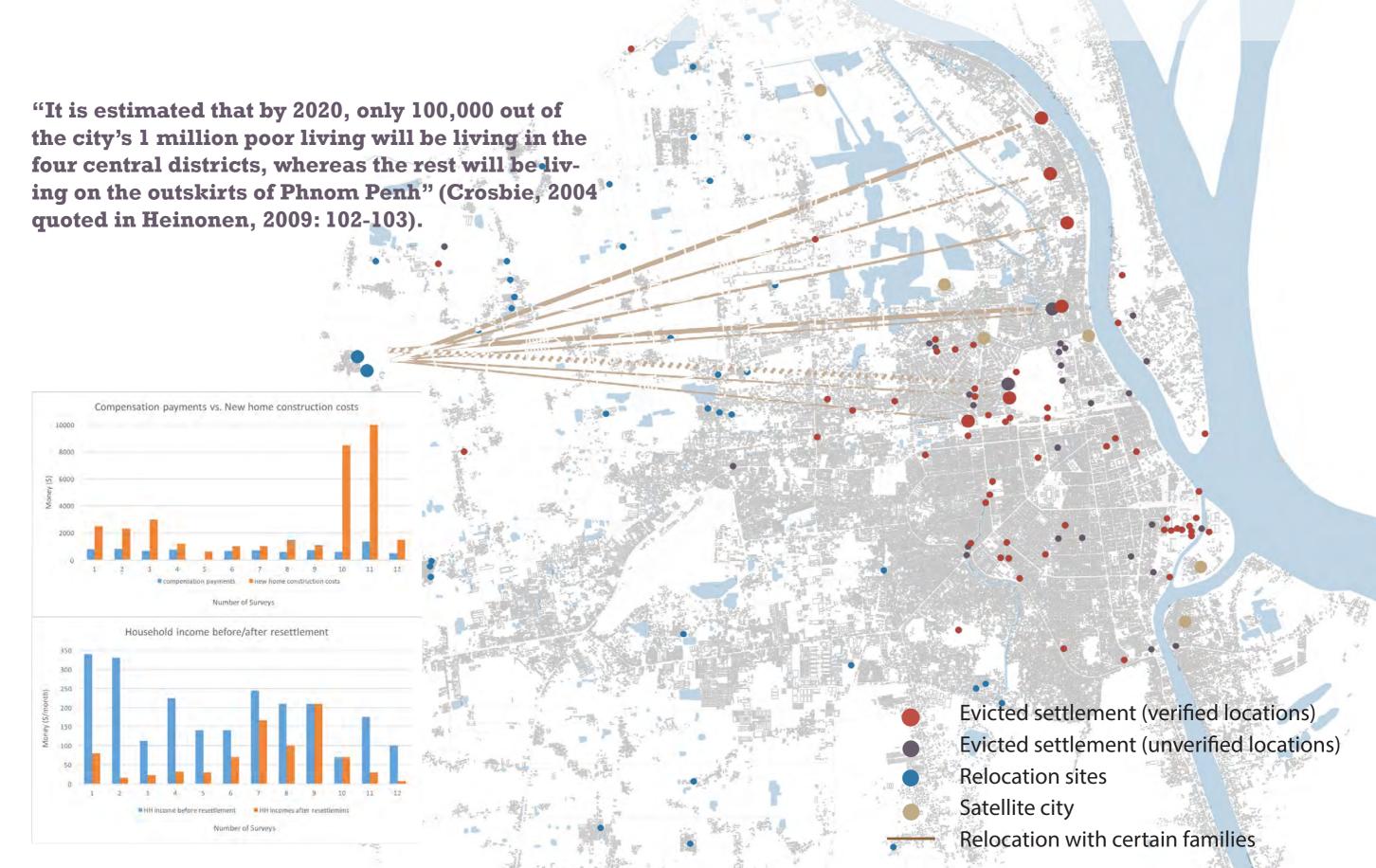


Figure 2-2 Relocation Impacts (Statistics from STT)

Figure 2-3 Relocations in Phnom Penh (Data of Map from STT, 2013)

# ii. a history of possession

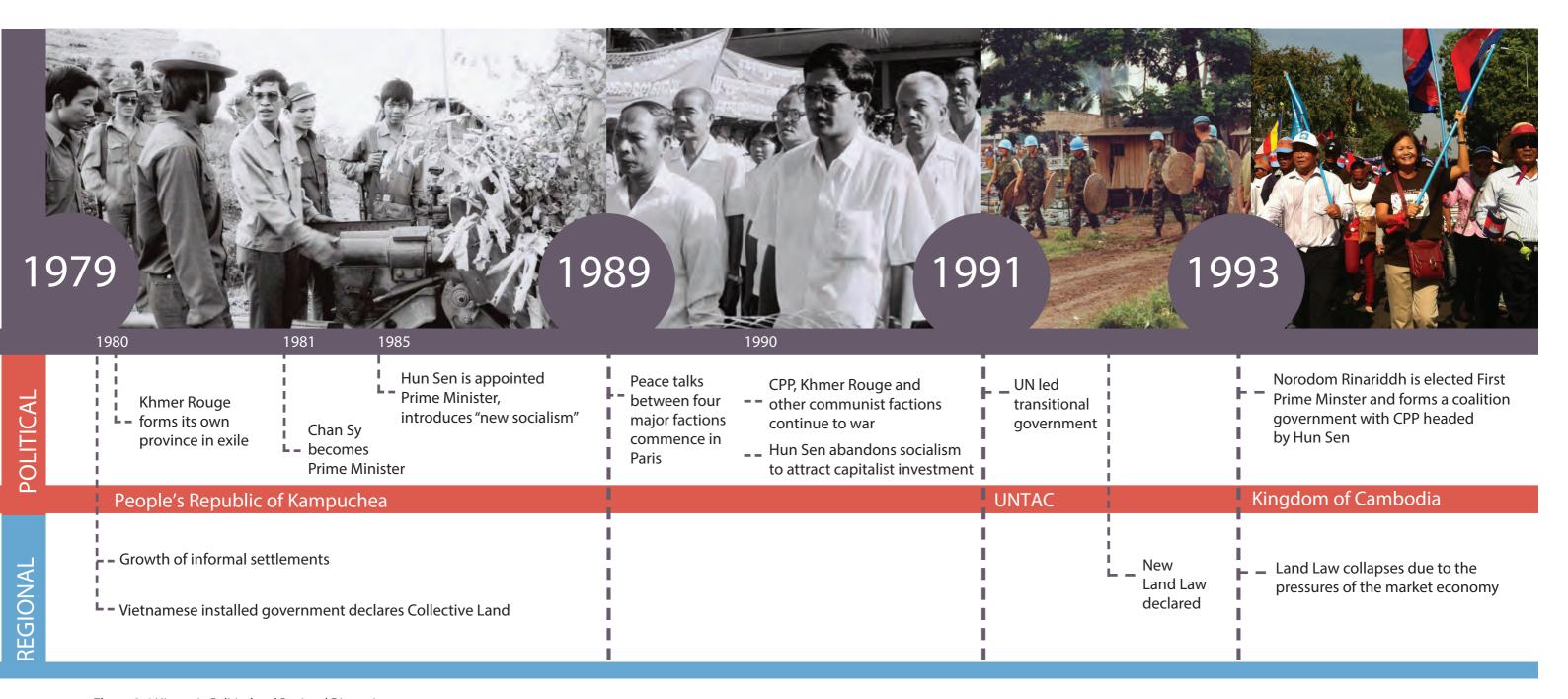


Figure 2-4 History in Political and Regional Dimensions

Our work in the field was rooted in history. Some of Smor San's residents arrived in the cemetery in the late 1970s as part of the first wave of migration to the area after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge. Their housing stories provide a glimpse into the survivalist nature of their living conditions early on, with many of them settling inside or underneath the morgue for several years before obtaining the materials to begin constructing houses. Subsequent waves of migration happened in 1993 after the UN peace accord and in 2007 when the riverbank collapsed.



# b. laws and policies

On the surface, Cambodian laws are clear in their basic answers to guestions about possession. The 2001 Land Law declared that all people have the right to land ownership and that anyone occupying the same dwelling "for at least five consecutive years, peacefully, unambiguously, and with the public acknowledgement" was entitled to continue living there (Pho, 2012). Nine years later, the National Housing Strategy reaffirmed those rights and additionally stated that the government seeks to provide housing to all Cambodians. Relocation, it said, was "a last option, used in accordance with the principles of voluntariness, good governance, transparency, accountability, and participation from the affected settlers" (General Secretariat of Council for Land Policy, 2010: 5). The government published a supplementary, non-binding clarification, Circular 03, the same year, which for the first time described a process that would legalise illegal occupation. It also provided a framework for just resettlement of communities where on-site upgrading was impossible (Lindstrom, 2013).

Under scrutiny, however, this straightforwardness begins to unravel, especially for the urban poor. To start, the Land Law gave longer term residents the right to continue living in their homes, but that did not mean they could claim full ownership (Pho, 2012). The government communicated this distinction poorly

and since the law's passage, many residents with certificates of possession have nonetheless found themselves under threat of eviction (ibid). The legacy of the Khmer Rouge period, during which private property, maps, and official records were abolished, further complicates land issues. When the regime collapsed in 1979, Cambodians streamed back into Phnom Penh and established themselves wherever they could. The new government nullified all legal claims to land prior to that year and registered most urban land as private. The remainder was classified as state public—which included roads, railways, ports, schools, etc.—and state private—belonging to state institutions. State public land had to remain public, but state private land could be fully privatised (Payne, 2005). Over time the government has increasingly, and often legally, sold off state private land to developers (AD-HOC, 2013). For its part, Circular 03 lacks the specificity to truly resolve many of the existing ambiguities in the law and, in any case, not being a law itself, it is subordinate to previous legal documents (Lindstrom, 2013).

There are significant demand-side barriers that inhibit people from using the law to their advantage. This is the result of limited awareness of rights, entitlements, and the process for making a legal a claim, as well as low literacy levels and a lack of availabil-

ity of legal aid. In addition, implicit or explicit threats discourage people from seeking legal recourse. Weak rule of law in Cambodia has reduced citizen confidence in established legal mechanisms, making it even more unlikely that people will turn to the law to resolve their problems (Bugalski, 2012b).

"The more legal it gets, the harder it gets for the poor" - Maurice Leonhardt, ACHR

# c. people and institutions

In 2009 the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) stated that it would, "administer, manage, use, and distribute land in an equitable, transparent, efficient, and sustainable manner" (Bugalski, 2012b). The declaration arrived on the heels of the premature cancellation of the World Banks' Land Management and Administration Project (LMAP) designed to create a policy framework to settle disputes over land titles in state land across the country. The Bank said that, "The project design under-estimated the complexity and politically fraught nature of state land management and failed to address directly and seek to overcome the commonplace corruption throughout the system" (World Bank, 2011: 7).

One aspect of the complex transformation in Phnom Penh is who is involved. We thus grouped actors based on scale and relationships. In terms of scale and resource consumption, the rapid urban growth prompted by developers, government, and wealthy investors far outpaces the progress that civil society groups, which rely heavily on individual donors and foundations, have made. For example, ACHR, recently dissolved its ACCA programme after the main financer stopped prioritising urban upgrading. The actor map also shows that there is an absence of media in the discourses on urban growth.

# Category of Actors Locals International Organisation Government & Public Sectors Private Sectors Civil Societues Financial Partners Academias & Medias

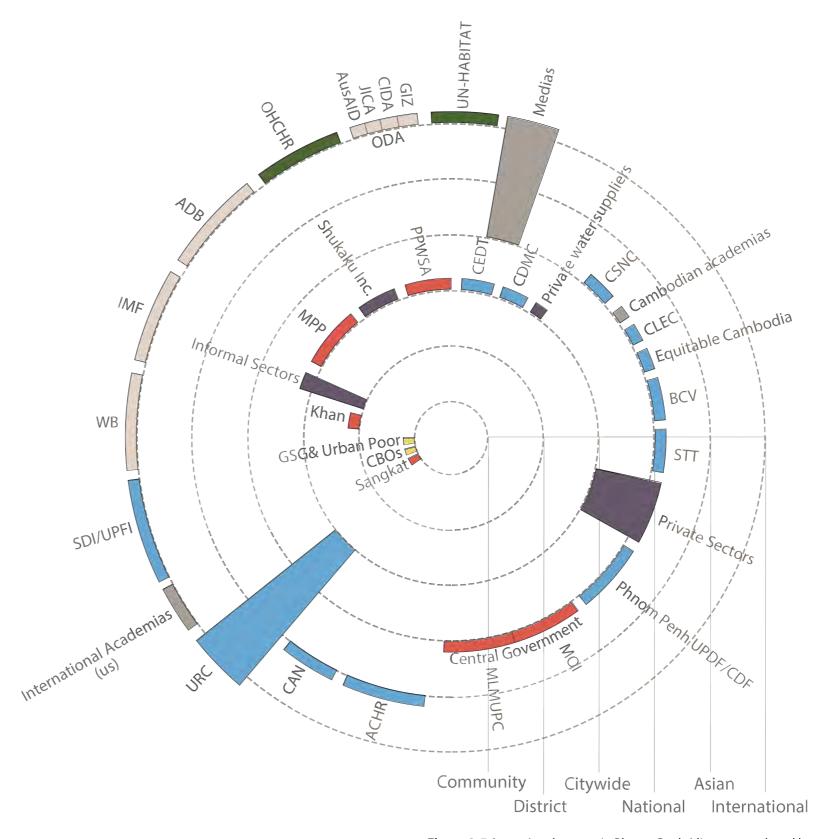


Figure 2-5 Actors Involvement in Phnom Penh (diagram produced by group)





# CONCEPTUALISING

# a. scaling up and down and back again

By examining the city and the sites simultaneously, we created a continuous loop of analysis at both scales.

Figure 3-1 Scale Loop: continuum between the sites and Phnom Penh (diagram produced by group)

# b. lenses of analysis

In conceiving of transformation in Phnom Penh, we used three lenses of analysis: the built and natural environments and gender. The two environmental lenses examine the conditions and the quality of urban space. The final lens seeks to disaggregate the impact of gender—women, men, girls, and boys—on how the urban poor live.

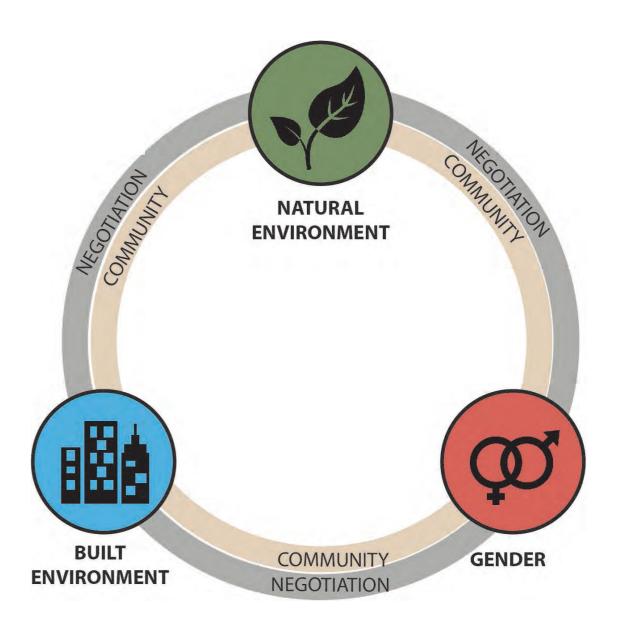


Figure 3-2 Analytical Lenses, including community and negotiation as transversal topics (diagram produced by group)

# c. methods on site i. feedback from the community

"Mapping is a process, with an aim that goes beyond making a piece of paper with lines on it. The success of mapping need not be measured solely by the production of a physical map; if the process leads to a common understanding and increased dialogue by community members about their relationship to their living space and their community's relationship to the wider environment, then this also is an indicator of success" (Archer, Luansang, and Boonmahathanakom, 2012: 118)

"I wish my dream house would fall from the sky"
- Manet, Smor San Community, 6 May 2016



# ii. plan of action

This is a diagram of our work in Smor San, a settlement of approximately 100 households in and around a cemetery in the centrally located khan Chbar Ampov in Phnom Penh. It also illustrates how our actions related to our analytical lenses.

In the spirit of co-producing knowledge, though we formulated a detailed plan of activities for each day, we consistently modified it mid-workshop based on responses from community members, our lenses of analysis, and the topics we wanted to bring to the fore.

**RESEARCH IN LONDON** 

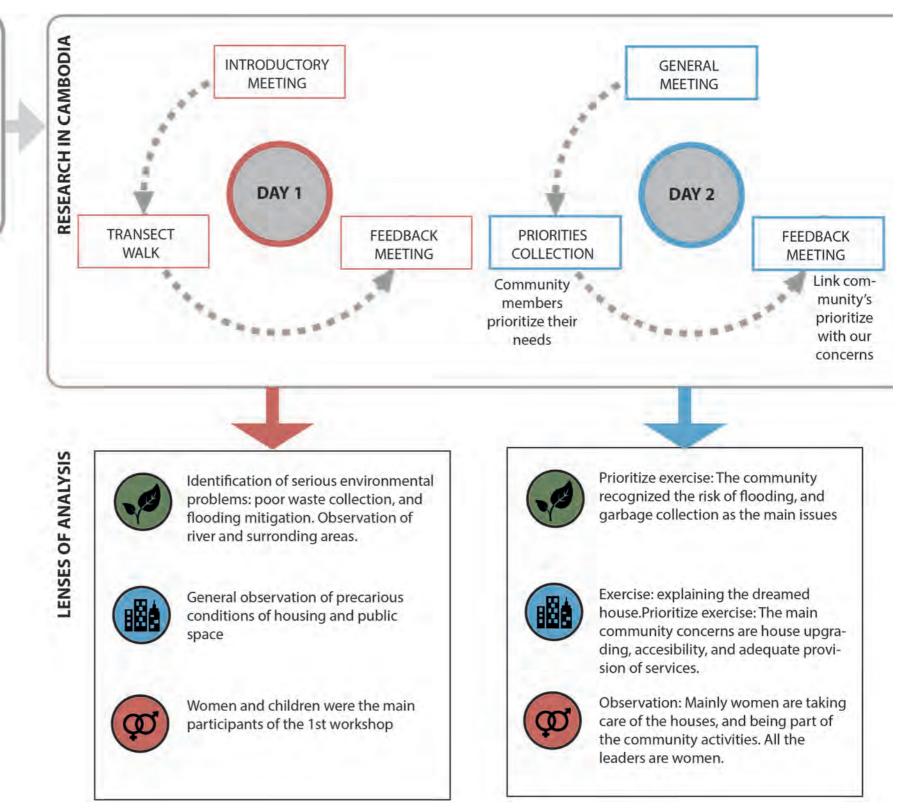
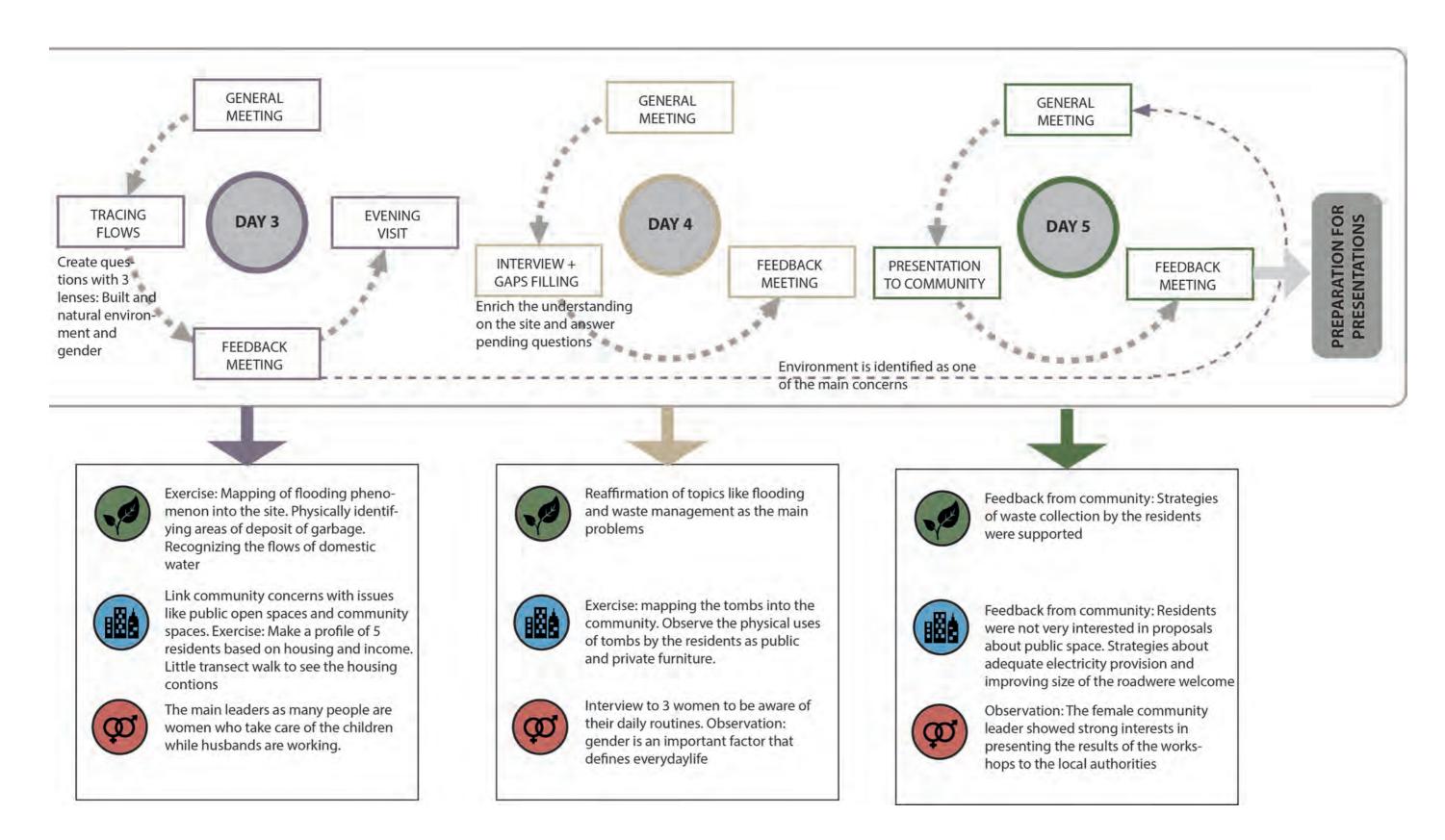
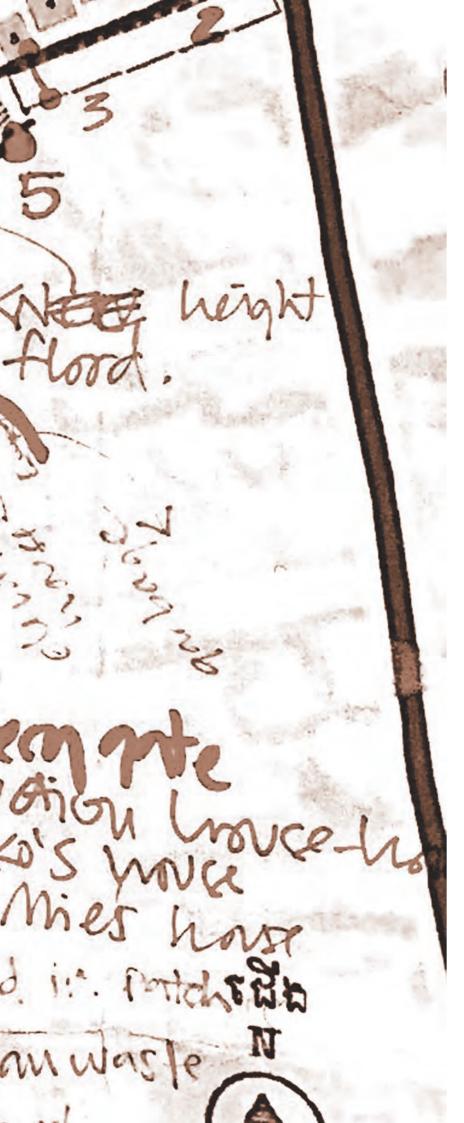


Figure 3-4 Research Processes (diagram produced by group)







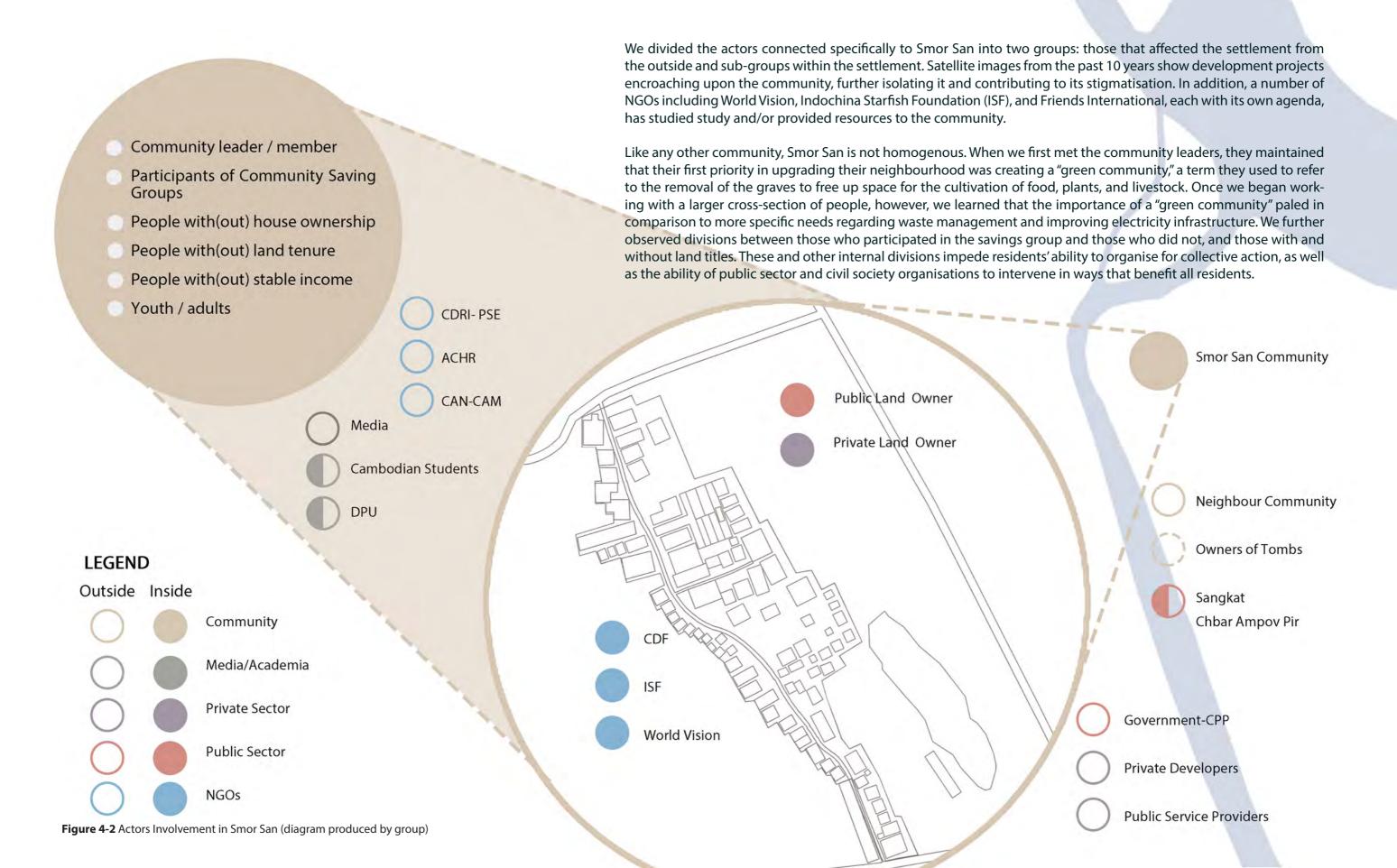
# SITUATING

# a. six sites

ISSUES	POSITIVE ASPECTS					
Waste Management	Documentation Book as Negotiation To	ool				
Flooding Risk	Close to Job Factories		. 第一。	STEUNG KOMBOT		
Drainage and Sewage System		i,	11 112	1 1 1		
Threat of Evictioin (private land)			A A STATE			
Lack of Trust						
Waste Management	Central Location		.1			
Sewage / Sanitation	Good Access to Public Services	10.1				
Extreme Living Condition			FR -			
Division of Groups			Sale V	10 - NO 21 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 - 10 -		
Insufficient electricity provision		14				Á
<b>Unilateral Communication</b>			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
Risk of Fire			P. 中植土			
Waste Management	Central Location					
Health Hazards	Saving Group	and the same	-		HEAM CHEAT	
Electric Safety	Access to Public Facilities					
Ambiguos Tenure Security	Human Resource	•/	C C . H			13
Underemployment	Social-Physical Scale	1.	7			
Risk of Fire	Support from Organisations					
Drainage System		to the				en le
Internal poor Accessibility		W 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14	3			
Poor Housing Quality						100
Flooding	Close Relationship and Cooperation wit	th Actors around the Community		STENG MI	EACHEY	
Road Accessibility	Experiences of Self-upgrading				1. * 1.	
Waste Management	Biggest Community Saving Group					
Flooding	Democratic Leadership					
Lack of State Service Supply	Partnership with Organisations	1				
Threat of Eviction	<b>Experiences of Self-upgrading</b>		PONGRO SE	NCHEY		SMOR SAN
Drainage System			Paralle			
Flooding by landfill	Large Farm Land around as Job Potentia	als				
Road Accessibility	Adequate Income Generation		The said		PREK TAKONG	
Passive Communication		A STORY	The Man of		THER IT MOIT	
Threat of Eviction		The state of the s				
		Aller and a fine of the second	100 and 100	2 - 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	ES 2 FF	The Property of

Lack of trust in government

# b. people



# c. built environment **DAUN PENH** CHAMKAMORN SATELLITE CITY TOUL KORK Figure 4-3 Land Prices in Central Phnom Penh (Statistics in map from http://realestate.com.kh)

Shatkin (2008) refers to a process of 'bypass-implant urbanism' through which a "diversified portfolio of integrated urban mega projects are linked by a growing network of rail and toll roads. Phnom Penh lacks the 'bypass' component, resulting in a vision that only involves a disconnected array of relatively isolated implants" (Palling, 2012: 904).

**Figure 4-4** Diamond Island View from Smor San Side (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu)



Understanding environmental concerns is all about balance: striking the right chord between the built and natural environments, ensuring that all residents have access to health and sanitation services, and promoting growth while protecting natural resources.

As in many cities, the government is unable to tack-le these every issue alone and must rely on assistance from private providers and residents themselves. Without adequate regulation, incentives, and subsidies however, decentralisation results in lower calibre or sometimes nonexistent services for people who cannot afford to pay or who live in places that the government deems illegal. Land and environment are additionally linked through the elevation of economic growth over social development, for example when flooding occurs

because land is reclaimed to make more space for a satellite city. Together, these circumstances result in greater vulnerability for the already vulnerable, and further impoverishment for the already poor.

In Smor San, the community's profanation of the tombs into housing foundations, cooking surfaces, play equipment, beds, firewalls, chairs, areas to wash and dry laundry, and more, has transformed a cemetery from a place for the dead into a place for the living. Similarly, in other informal settlements throughout Phnom Penh, low-income people have modified places not envisioned as residential areas into neighbourhoods, appropriating sometimes unexpected spaces into homes, businesses, and community infrastructure.

**Figure 4-5** Electricity Distribution in Poor Settlements (photo taken by Muhammad Nelza Mulki Igbal)



**Figure 4-6** Favorable Housing conditions in north end of Smor San (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu)



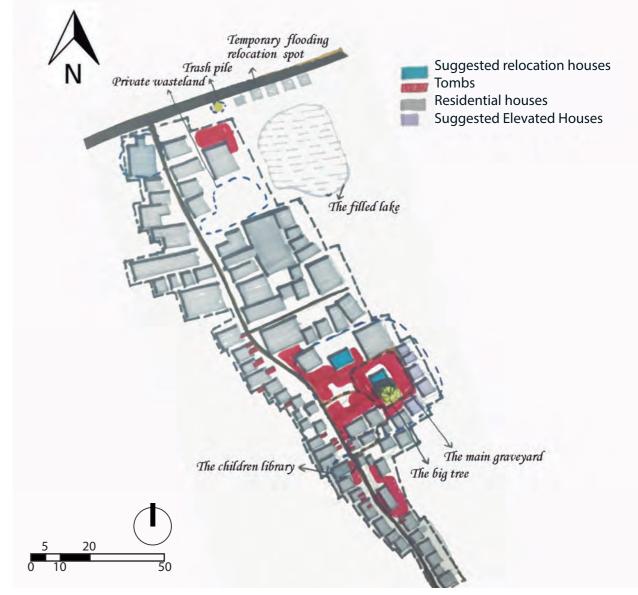
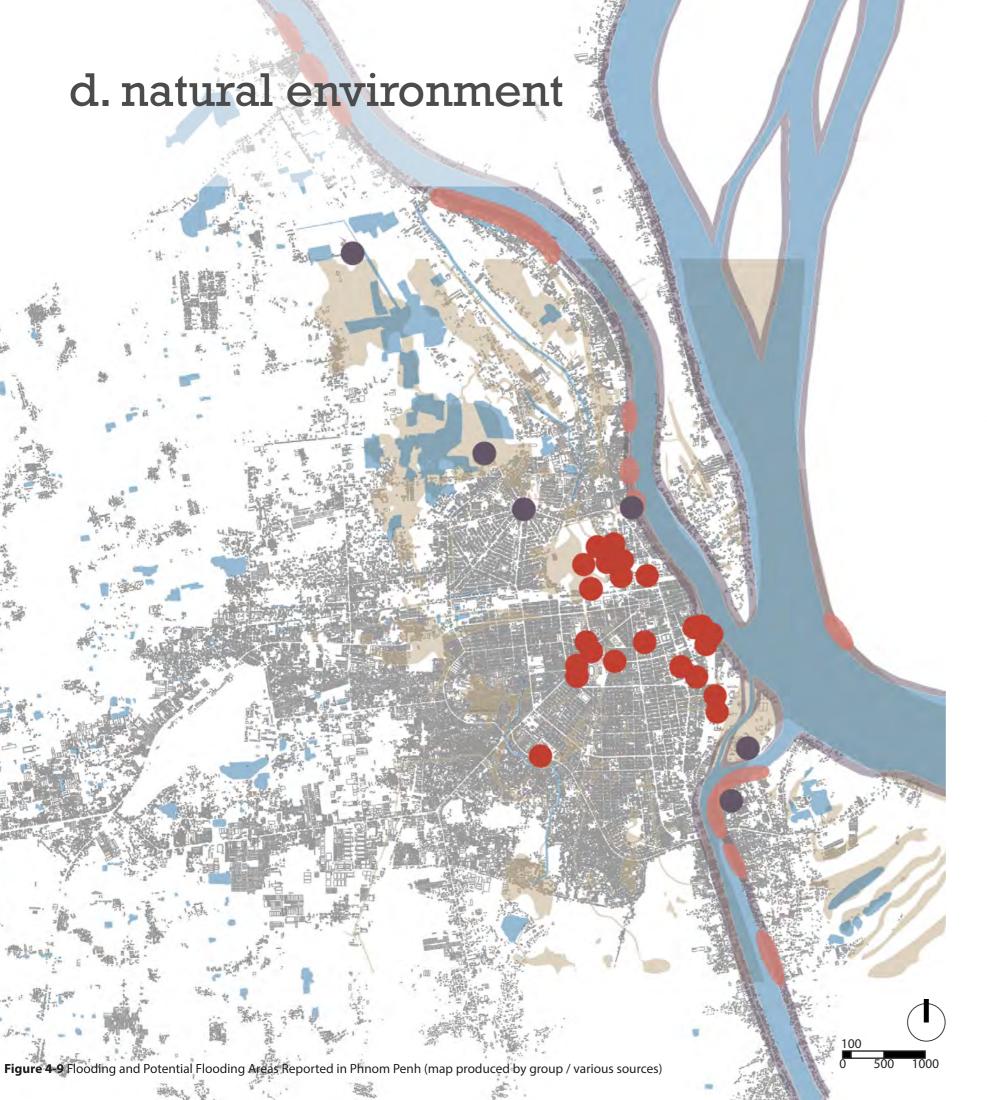


Figure 4-8 Tombs and Public Spaces in Smor San (sketches produced by Yuxuan Tu)

**Figure 4-7** Precarious Housing Conditions in central area of Smor San, during Flooding Season (photo from http://www.ngoinsider.com/2012/10/living-amongst-dead-doeum-slung-phnom.html)



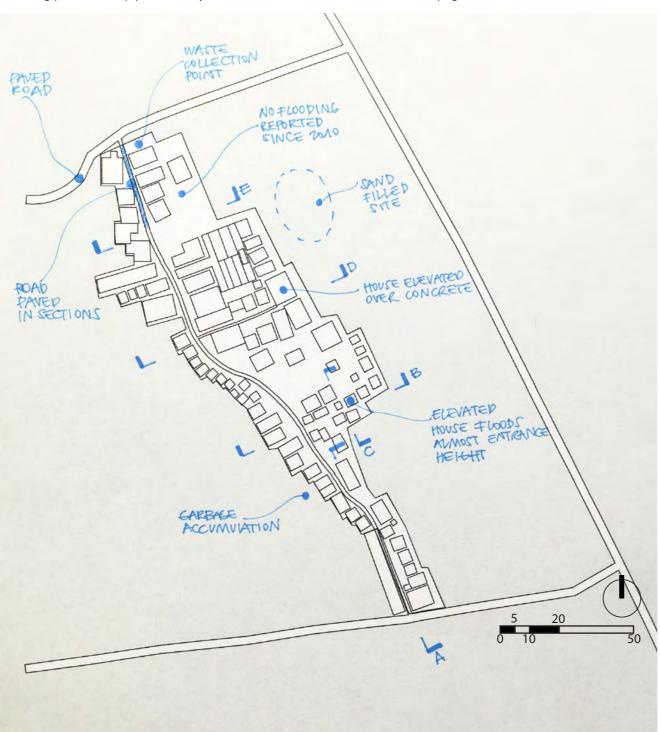


Private developers in Cambodia have 99-year leases on almost 50% of the arable land in the country (Tuy, 2007), making productive land vulnerable to the pressures of development. Specifically, urban growth in Phnom Penh shows not only the rapid expansion of the city's core, but also significant infilling of bodies of water to make room for satellite city projects such as Diamond Island, Cam-Ko City, and, most controversially, Beoung Kak Lake City. The filling of Boeung Kak Lake in 2010 not only displaced thousands of residents reliant upon the river for their livelihoods, but also led to severe flooding in adjacent areas.

Similar environmental destruction has occurred on the banks of the Mekong River due to massive excavation for the construction of Diamond Island and around the village of Prek Takong. In the latter, infilling resulted in the disappearance of fertile agricultural land for growing rice to make way for a mega-city project that will completely redirect the Mekong's natural water run-off. In Smor San, many of the residents' most critical concerns centre on environmental hazards: not only the threat of natural disasters, but the disposal of sewage and trash and the precariousness of electrical wires that run through dead trees, increasing the risk of fires and power outages.



**Figure 4-10** Natural Environment in Smor San: flooding areas mapped according to community members, to understand flooding patterns (map produced by Maria José Martínez Gertner). Sections in page 62.

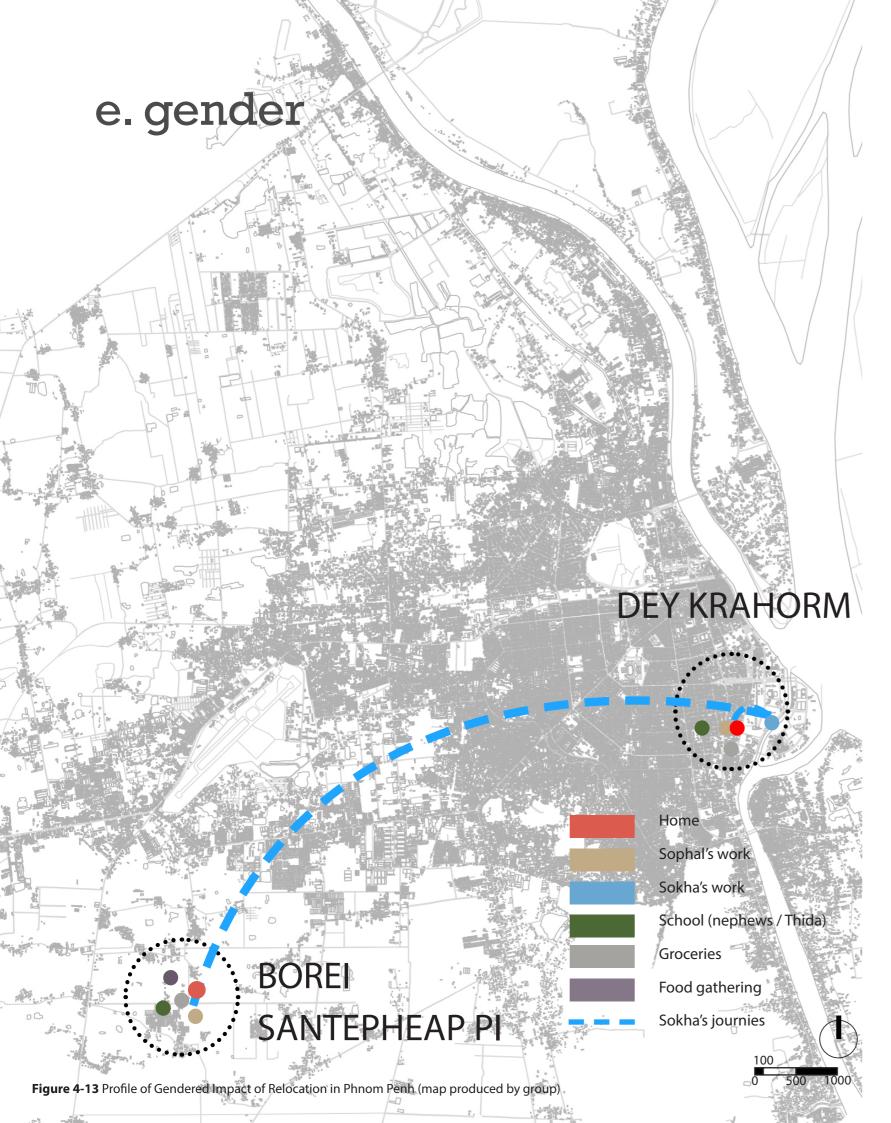




**Figure 4-11** Children in Flooding Season (photo from http://www.ngoinsider.com/2012/10/living-amongst-dead-doeum-slung-phnom.html)

Figure 4-12 Living Environment and waste in Smor San (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu)







**Figure 4-14** Women Fight in Front Line (photo from httpwww.huffingtonpost.com20150225transitioning-cambodia-photos\_n\_6744814)

We chose to concentrate on gender because of the relative absence of explicit focus on the topic despite its clear relevance. We saw photos of women at the front lines of conflicts with law enforcement, playing the role of peacemakers while also bearing the brunt of aggression if things turned violent. We read about NGOs that address children, education, and health issues, including HIV/AIDS, all of which affect people differently depending on their gender. We understand that statistics for literacy, primary school attendance and survival, and more Cambodia are not always equal for girls and boys (UNICEF, 2013).

As we delved deeper into our research, we came to understand the social expectations and realities of reproductive and productive roles, and the gendered impact of eviction and relocation. We found that women tended to participate in community savings groups at higher rates than men. While women dominate community engagement in Smor San, that was not the case in every community. Indeed, men delivered almost every official presentation at the start of the urban upgrading workshop whereas women played mostly supportive roles. We repeatedly heard certain generalisations, like that men did not manage money as well as women did, and we saw some evidence of those expectations being borne out in behaviour: there were almost no idle women in Smor San, but we observed groups of young men playing games.



## **SOPHAL**



Sophal and her family were the subject of a profile conducted by Amnesty International in 2011. Sophal lost her job and her extended family network because of forced relocation. This story helps to spatialise and understand the gendered impacts of relocation on everyday life and livelihoods.

**Figure 4-15** Sophal's Family (Amnesty International 2011)

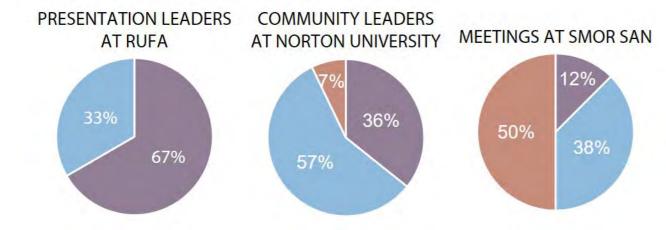


Figure 4-16 Gender ratios during different stages of the workshop (charts produced by group)

## KHLEANG SO KHORN





In depth interview for understanding daily routine

### PROFILE:

- 53 years old
- Moved to Smor San in 1990 after land slide
- Husband: Construction painter and independent moto-taxi driver
- Children: 2 girls & 3 boys
- No payed work; was vegetable seller before
- Participates in community saving groups

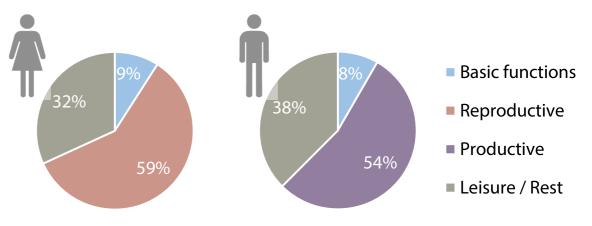
Figure 4-17 Khleang, living in Smor San (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu



**Figure 4-18** Former Community leader: generally women (photo from http://www.ngoinsider.com/2012/10/living-amongst-dead-doeum-slung-phnom.html)

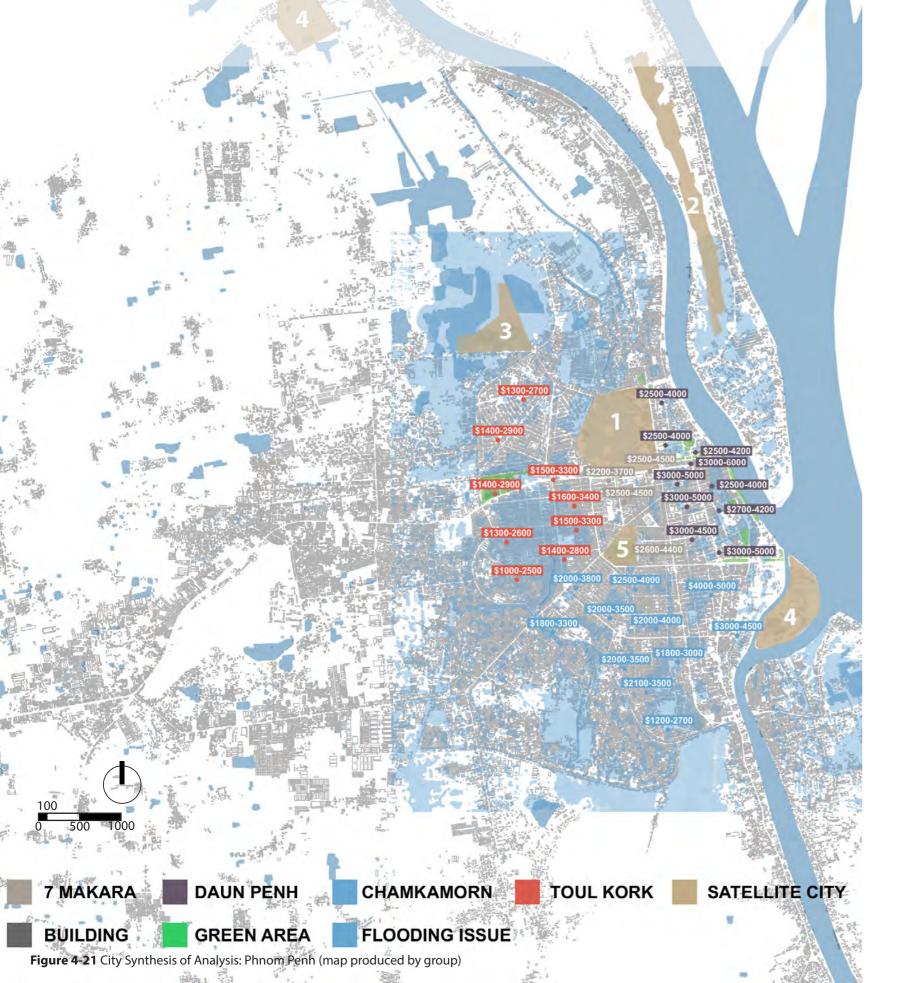


**Figure 4-19** Gender Distribution in Participatory Process: mainly women and children (photo taken by Muhammad Nelza Mulki Iqbal)



**Figure 4-20** Time Distribution of Khleang's Family (charts produced by group according to interview reviewing daily routines)

# f. challenges & opportunities



The larger map to the left, offers a broad picture of several driving forces acting upon Phnom Penh. The smaller map depicts the same forces acting upon Smor San. The large map shows areas impacted by flooding, satellite cities and the market value of land. We believe all of these elements interact with each other to produce conditions which are hostile to communities in need of housing. We also highlight opportunities such as green space and public buildings.

The challenges we identified on the city scale come from our analysis of the six sites. These illustrations contextualise the spatial conditions underlying our strategies.

"The local authority has almost no involvement here and that's been the case since 1979 when I moved to build my own home" Resident, Smor San



### **CHALLENGES**

**Environment** 

Services

### **GROUP OF ISSUES**

**Health Hazards** 



**Poor Houisng Quality** 



Waste Management

Drainage System

Sewage System

**Poor Accessibility** 

**Electricity Distribution** 

Flooding Risk



STEUNG KOMBOT



**HEAM CHEAT** 



**SMOR SAN** 



Kids As Human Resource

**GROUP OF POSITIVE ASPECTS** 

tional Organisations

Support From Ngos & Interna-

Connection With Local And

International Universities

Democratic Leadership





ation With Actors Around The

Community



**Human Resources** 

Accessible Sup-

port From Civil

zations

Societies And In-

ternational Orgni-

**OPPORTUNITIES** 

Housing, Land & Income

Trust & Sense

Of Belonging



**Under Employment** 



**Uncertain Land Tenure** 

Distrust Between People

Hinders Saving Group

Lack Of Trust In Government

**Unilateral Communication** 



**Threat Of Eviction** 



Low Income





**PONGRO SENCHEY** 





**PREK TAKONG** 









Adequate Methods To Generate Income





gotiation Tool

Saving Group



Successful Community Self-Upgrading Examples







**Access To Public Facilities** 

Social-Physical Scale



Large Farm Land Around

Others







# STRATEGISING

# a. goals

This diagram depicts the logic of our analysis. Specifically, peering through the lenses of the built and natural environments and gender while maintaining a focus on community, we used the continuous loop described above to connect challenges and opportunities with goals at the site and city levels.

> "Negotiation is better than fighting" - HE Mann Chhoern, **Director of Housing, Ministry of Land Management and Urban Planning, RUFA**, 1 May 2016

#### **ABBREVIATION**

**Accessibility Upgrading** 

COLLPI Civil Ombusman League on Land-use Policy Implementation

EV

**FSMP** Flooding Season Mitigation Programme

**IESM** Improved Electrical System and Maintenance

LCOV Let's Clean Our Village LGT Let's get together

Let's organize our community LTAOW Let's talk about our water

**PNBC** People's Network for a Better City

SSS Sewage System and Sanitation

TIF Teach it Forward

TPC Trees that Protect the Community WCHS Waste Collection for Healthier Spaces

#### **LEGEND**

**LENSES** 

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



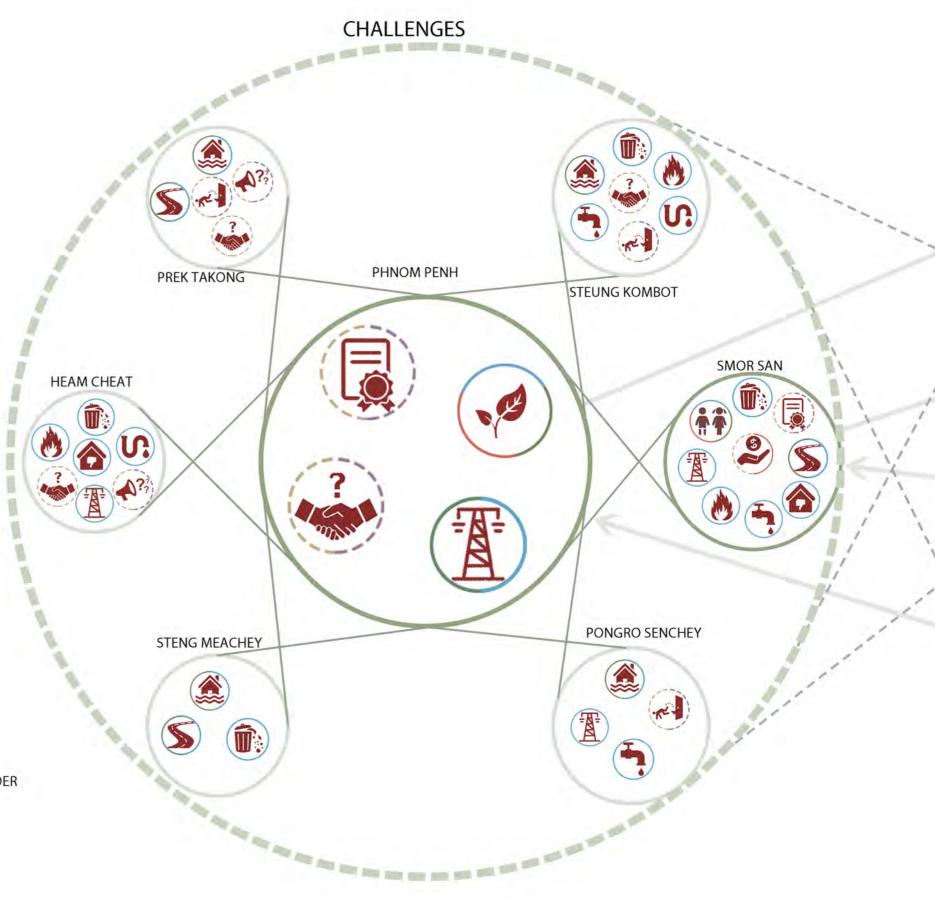


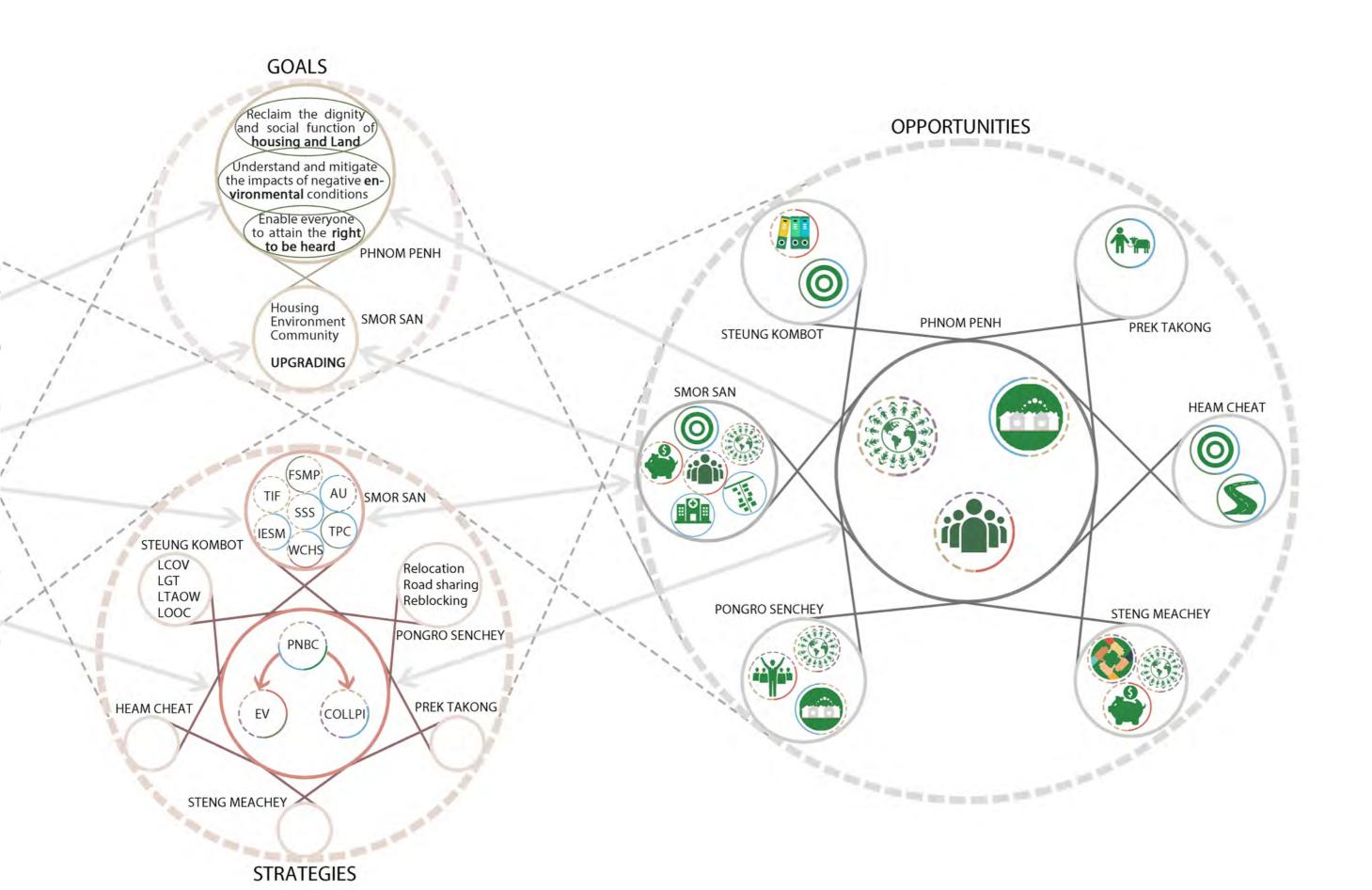
**GENDER** 

#### TRANSVERSAL LENSES







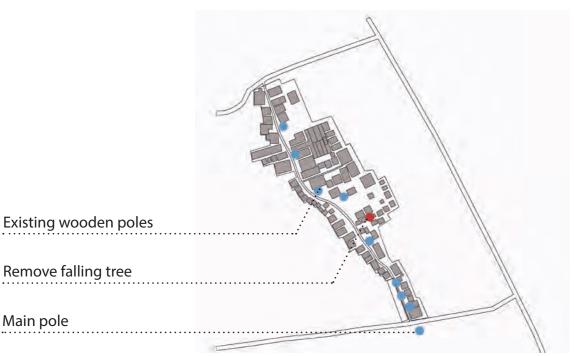


# b. strategies in Smor San

The following section describes the strategies that we co-produced with the community and that they presented to officials from the local government.

## STRATEGY 1: IMPROVED ELECTRICAL SYSTEM AND MAINTENANCE

Improve electrical connections into buildings and in public spaces and mitigate potential causes of electrical shock and power outages. To ensure a safe living environment for residents, the local authority replaces the electrical pole. Electricité du Cambodge, Cambodia's utility company must keep electrical infrastructure in good working order, just as it does in other parts of the city.



**Figure 5-2** Existing Electrical Wooden Poles in Smor San and Connection to City Supply (map produced by group)

## STRATEGY 2: FLOODING SEASON MITIGATION PROGRAMME

Inspired by successful waste management programmes in other parts of the city, including Steung Meanchey, this initiative seeks to minimise waste in advance of the flooding season through environmental education and activism.

Existing waste collection point

Main flooding areas



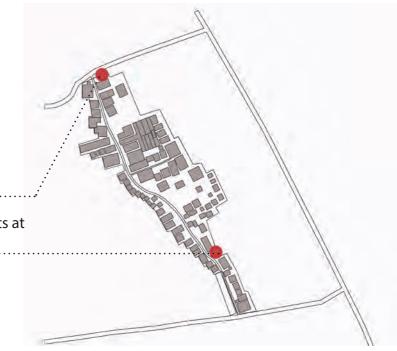
**Figure 5-3** Environmental Issues in Smor San: Waste and Flooding (map produced by group)

## STRATEGY 3: WASTE COLLECTION FOR HEALTHIER SPACES

Because the width of Smor San's main throughway is insufficient for garbage trucks to enter, place rubbish bins throughout the community to encourage proper domestic waste disposal. Additionally, place a dumpster at the northern end so it is accessible for pickup by a passing truck.

Existing waste collection point

Proposed collection points at available plot



**Figure 5-4** Waste Collection Points Proposed for Smor San (map produced by group)

#### STRATEGY 4: TEACH IT FORWARD

Create a network for sharing information concerning employment opportunities and requests for services to make it easier for residents to find out about jobs while providing an impetus to build their skills to suit market needs. Take advantage of existing NGO-led on-site training programmes to maximise the impact of current initiatives.

Community centre

Community library

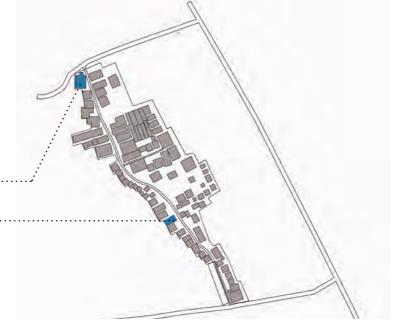


Figure 5-5 Community Assets (map produced by group)

## STRATEGY 5: SEWAGE SYSTEM & SANITATION

Implement an adequate system of domestic water running from dwellings to the standard utilities network. Surveys will provide data on current toilet coverage and sanitation conditions within the settlement.

Main sewage line

Proposed public toilets at available plots



**Figure 5-6** Sewage System Proposal, raised in the presentation to the Local Authority (map produced by group)

## STRATEGY 6: IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

Remove certain tombs and re-block sections of the main road to widen it enough to allow the passage of garbage trucks and emergency vehicles.



**Figure 5-7** Removals for Re-blocking in Smor San (map produced by group)



**Figure 5-8** Re-blocking for Inner Accessibility, proposed after presentation as a reflection over the work done (map produced by group)

# Steng c. strategies for city-wide upgrading WE TIGH

Prek

Takong

Senchey

Figure 5-9 Synthesis of Citywide Strategies (map produced by group

The following three strategies are grounded in our understanding of the study sites and how they compare with broader urban transformations in Phnom Penh. We acknowledge both their ambition and their limitations. While we designed the strategies as interconnected to enhance their impact, we recognise that that may be impractical. At the core of each strategy is an emphasis on data, providing poor residents with essential information for their own development and to use as a bargaining chip, and enabling them to track instances of social and spatial injustice. Relying on open data ensures that this information is equally accessible to women, men, girls, and boys, implying that all people, regardless of gender, have the right to be heard and to effect change according to their needs and experiences.

"By gathering all the collected information into a database, residents can create a valuable tool for planning purposes, having to hand the necessary information about financial resources, skills base, disaster risks and infrastructure needs, among other things" (Archer, Luansang, and Boonmahathanakom, 2012: 118).

# i. people's network for a better city

PNBC is a live application aimed at creating a rich source of information for all to access. In providing this platform, it holds the government and other actors accountable. Any user can upload content via mobile phone. This data is then sorted into maps, diagrams, and statistics and made available to the public on a dedicated website. The application organises the information into categories such as housing construction, infrastructure projects, government/NGO activity, community action, etc. The NGO Forum on Cambodia monitors and verifies the data, which is promoted to other NGOs and media outlets to raise awareness of current issues in Phnom Penh.

#### CONTEXT

A 2014 study showed that 81.4% of Cambodians own cell phones and 51.7% of those are smartphones. There are roughly 2.9 million smartphone users accessing applications like Facebook on a daily basis. Several organisations promote app development including IOSKhmer (an application development forum in Khmer) and Google Developer Group Phnom Penh, which holds free monthly training sessions for Cambodians interested in making their first app (Phong and Solá, 2015).

App development could provide a public platform to the urban poor in a city where the media devotes little attention to their concerns and information from NGOs rarely reaches a wide audience. In addition, members of poor communities tend to be isolated within their settlements, confronting challenges without recognising that they fit into patterns of injustice throughout the city.

#### **STAGES**

#### Stage1

Initial proposal for the app is submitted to Google Developer Group(GDG) by the NGO Forum

- Google Developer Group nominates young developers to lead the app creation with targeted calls for proposals in informal communities
- App is built and tested
- Launch of the PNBC

#### Stage 2

- Continual input from public users (both community members and NGO workers)
- Application rapidly sorts data, publishes it to the appropriate categories, and maps the location of the information source
- NGO Forum routinely monitors data and mapping, looking for errors and/or contradictions in the information and verifies it
- Media utilises the data by reporting it through their own channels as news stories
- Other NGOs utilise the data to understand the challenges and conditions of the urban poor

#### Stage 3

- The data becomes part of an archive grouped by year to create an accurate picture of urban transformation over time
- Translation of data into English to facilitate use by international media

#### **SCALE**

The PNBC is meant to create links between local activity and the broader city. It is a live resource that serves people in Phnom Penh, multi-national organisations, and local, national, and international media.

#### **ACTORS**

Civil society: NGO Forum on Cambodia STT VOICE

Media: Beehive Radio Phnom Penh Post

Private: GDG- Phnom Penh ioskhmer.com

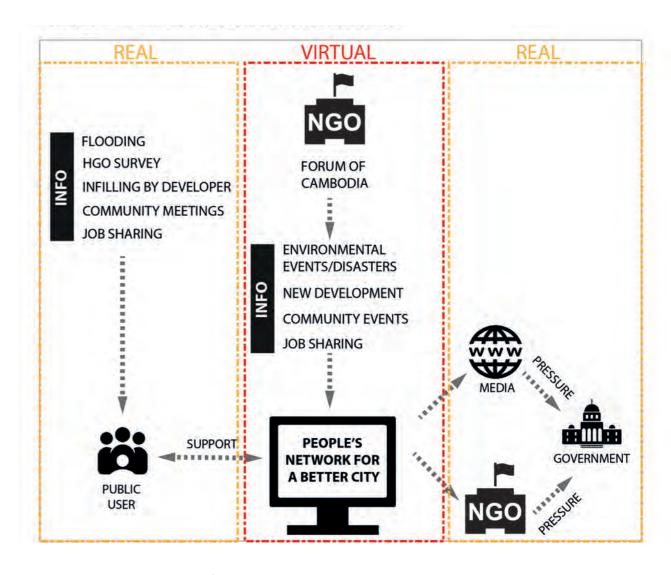


Figure 5-10 Processes of How to Achieve Ecological Collective Actions (diagram produced by group)

# ii. eco-villages: ecological collective actions to gain adequate living space people's network for a better city

Eco-Villages are parallel activism and education campaigns to improve public space and services for everyone in Phnom Penh. These campaigns could create a symbiotic relationship between residents and local authorities to address environmental challenges. Local authorities offer in-kind matching rewards to incentivise residents to upgrade their built and natural environments through, for example, collecting waste, cleaning canals and open spaces, maintaining trees, gardening, and more. In doing this, the government saves time and money on public service provision. An additional investment in education campaigns seeks to change behaviours from an early age all the way through university level. All of the initiatives could begin as pilot projects, perhaps in the six communities we visited.

Local media coverage as well as links with PNBC facilitate connections between environmental organisations, creating a network for sharing information on ecology and preservation and sparking action on a larger scale. Shining a spotlight on these initiatives—and on the conditions that make them necessary—could put pressure on the government to "clean up its act."

#### **CONTEXT**

Though Article 31 of the Cambodian Constitution guarantees all Cambodians the right to an adequate standard of living (Kingdom of Cambodia, 1993), there is a severe lack of basic service provision to settlements not recognised by the government, and efforts to provide services often come at a heavy cost. Exacerbating these issues is the low level of environmental education in Phnom Penh, particu-

larly among the urban poor. Students and faculty at RUFA, NU, ITC, and NTTI are well positioned to kick-start these campaigns since they are familiar with urban poor communities and the environmental challenges they face.

#### **STAGES**

#### Stage 1

NGO Forum identifies existing community organisations that could participate in neighbourhood greening, such as the Cambodian Sanitation and Recycling Organisation and the Association for Protection Development for Cambodia Environment Appointment of an inter-university committee on environmental curriculum development

Alerting local media and urban poor community leaders of the start of the parallel campaigns and providing initial talking points

#### Stage 2

Initiation of pilot community projects

Presentation and publicising initiatives through local media channels

Representatives of initiatives seek and hold meetings with government officials to negotiate in-kind matching schemes

Drafting of environmental curriculum and identification of teacher trainers throughout the city

#### Stage 3

Refining and expanding community projects Presentation of curriculum to Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport with a period for public comments Rollout of curriculum to teacher trainers

#### **SCALE**

This strategy could begin as a series of pilot micro projects that could grow in reach and scope with time, success, and publicity. Ideally these projects will attract the attention of local and national media, government, and civil society organisations, all of whom already acknowledge the importance of environmental issues at all levels in Cambodia.

#### **ACTORS**

Civil society:

Students and faculty at RUFA, NU, ITC, and NTTI

NGO Forum and the community organisations it recommends PNBC

Government:

Teacher trainers
Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport

Media: Beehive Radio

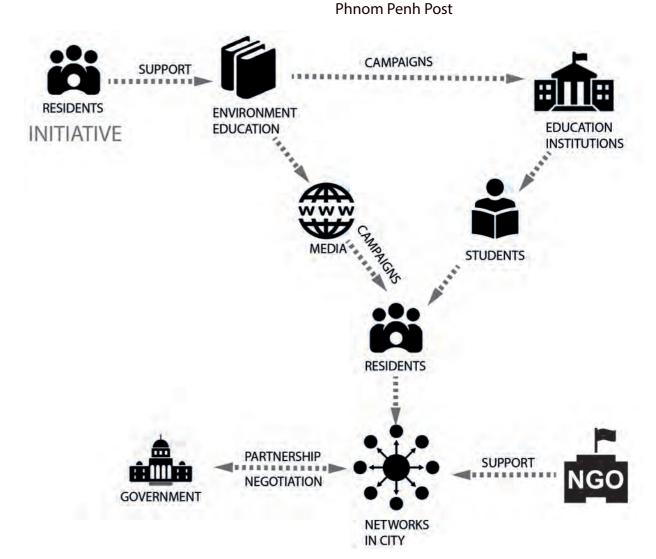


Figure 5-11 Processes of How to Achieve PNBC (diagram produced by group)

# iii. civil ombudsman league on land-use policy implementation (COLLPI)

COLLPI is an independent advocacy and legal organ-housing rights and available legal resources and link isation initiated by community activists and support- these initiatives to the Eco-Villages campaigns ed on a voluntary basis by researchers, attorneys, and Create a free resource for legal advice on land and university students to promote and monitor the implementation of pro-poor land and housing policies. It necessitates close collaboration with the media, Stage 3 especially investigative media outlets, and other organisations that promote transparency.

#### **CONTEXT**

Land and housing legislation in Cambodia is both unevenly implemented and insufficiently specific as described in Section 2b above. Further, knowledge of legal recourse and confidence in the judicial system are limited, especially among the urban poor.

#### **STAGES**

#### Stage 1

- -Students who participated in the city-wide upgraddevelop a proposal for the COLLPI project
- -Pitch the project to local universities and solicit participation from attorneys and researchers
- -Seek institutional capacity building support from NGOs and international organisations such as Building Community Voices (BCV), Transparency International(TI)

#### Stage 2

- -Pursue partnership with Open Development Cam- settlements. bodia(ODC) to seek media coverage and advocate for transparency and clarification to land and housing legislation.
- -Collaborate with STT, ACHR, and MLMUPC, especially State Land Management Group
- (SLMG) and State Land Working Group (SLWG) to propose revisions to the National Housing Strategy and Circular 03
- -Begin public awareness campaigns on traditional and social media to improve knowledge of land and

housing rights, perhaps through PNBC

- -Publish a layperson's guide to housing and land policies in Cambodia that is revised on a regular basis -Solicit broader participation on and offline including compiling a list of local, national, and international organisations working on these issues and seeking to connect them to each other
- -Develop feedback mechanisms
- -Exert concerted pressure on government and other interest groups to achieve desired changes, at the same time partner with Reporters Without Borders (RWB) to defend the freedom of reporters in Cambodia.

#### **SCALE**

While COLLPI would operate on a city scale, its iming workshop partner with community activists to pact would be national: reduced corruption, greater government transparency, improved collaboration, and more clarity in land and housing policies. While the number of people formally involved in COLLPI may remain small, the data and resources available would grow, enabling an increasing number of people to advocate for themselves, seek assistance when necessary, and demand accountability from their elected and appointed representatives, all of which would contribute to more secure tenure in informal

#### **ACTORS**

Civil Society: STT, BCV, TI Government: MLMUPC RWB, ACHR, PNBC, Students and faculty at MPP RUFA, NU, ITC, and NTTI SLMC Eco-Villages campaign leaders **SLWG** 

*Private sector:* Media Attorneys

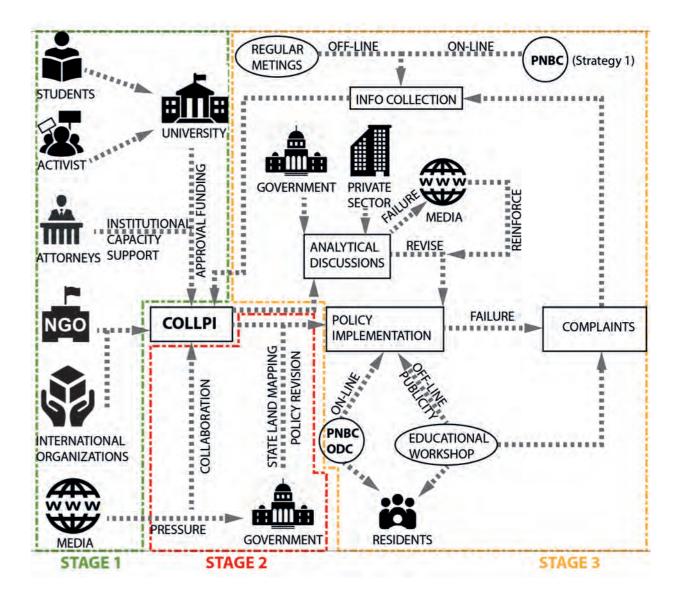


Figure 5-12 Processes of How to Achieve COLLPI (diagram produced by group)







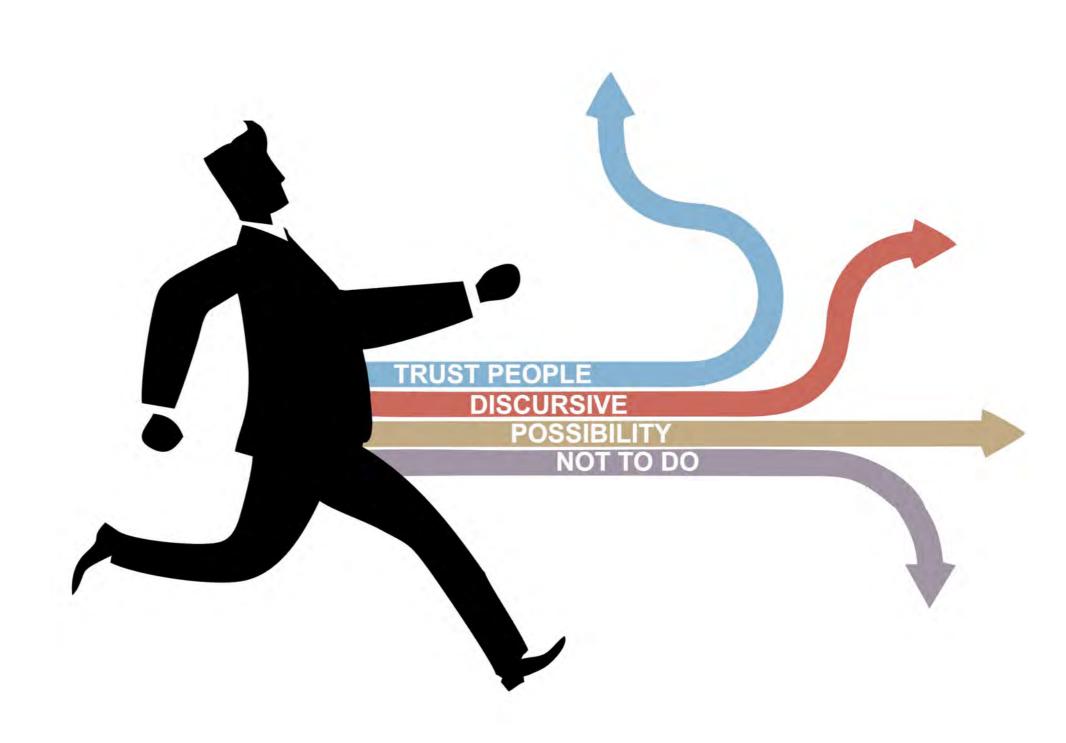
BEGINNING ANEW

## a. the role of the practitioner

Reflecting on our role as students and as practitioners throughout this project, we can identify four key themes: trust, discursivity, possibility, and the ability not to do. Co-production requires trust and faith, never more so than in challenging conditions. Arriving in Cambodia armed only with what we had read and only being able to scratch the surface during our short stay, our greatest asset was our willingness trust in the lived experience of the people we met, their knowledge, and their expertise.

Maintaining discursivity in our work required our readiness to diverge from our well-laid plans and adapt and respond to feedback almost instantaneously. Despite conflicting opinions and stories, we listened intently and strived to continue building upon existing momentum. In many instances, we were internal actors—especially in Smor San and with our Cambodian student counterparts—just as much as we were external observers.

We consistently attempted to position issues as opportunities. Indeed, when we presented our most ambitious interpretations of these opportunities to the community for the first time, they rejected our proposals. They were interested in possibility, but it needed to address their concrete and pressing issues. When the community leaders picked up the poster we made and began to rehearse their presentation to local authorities, we relinquished control of the process, realising at that moment that we had made a significant contribution. It was our ability not to do that enabled all of us to avoid generic solutions and make way for knowledge co-production.



**Figure 6-1** The Role of Practitioner (produced by group)

# b. reframing possession for transformation

To change the current trajectory of development in Phnom Penh is to change a socio-political-spatial environment riding powerful currents of globalisation and personal capital accumulation. The belief that each person rises or falls based on her will to succeed excludes many people and fundamental changes must occur before the narrative is reframed in favour of the masses.

In the meantime, we proposed strategies that "let people be the solution," to quote main slogan of ACHR (Somsook Bonyabancha). We believe all of us have an unrelenting capacity to begin anew, to transform our lives for the better and reposition ourselves to gain visibility in spaces of power. Cambodia's turbulent history has demanded that its people embark upon this process more than once.

We observed notable social capital in Smor San and in the other settlements we visited: bold women, resourceful men, and countless curious and energetic children. Though financial hardship stigmatised their conditions, "the power of their numbers takes the place of the missing power of money" (Boonyabancha et al 2012: 444), which is to say that social ties can spur collective action. Our proposals—disseminating information generated from within on an accessible platform, catalysing environmental improvements, and establishing accountable mechanisms for implementing pro-poor policies—could be a starting point.

Despite the potential we see, we nonetheless acknowledge the challenges of bringing people together. Unity requires celebrating difference while rallying around shared ideas. Transparency, data-sharing, and self-reflection can provide the fodder for negotiating with powerful actors from a position of strength. Equally, it is the the media, shared by all, that must hold every actor accountable, itself included. Harnessing this power in service of Phnom Penh's poor would rewrite the city's narrative of development, capturing realities that rarely emerge from the communities in which they originate. With this in mind, we hope for yet another paradigm shift in a city already in flux. To echo ACHR, "People make cities; poor people do too."



**Figure 6-2** View of City Development from Urban Poor Settlement (photo taken by Hye Jung Park)

# appendix



Figure 6-3 Group photo with Smor San Community

## The following numbers of the appendix are broken into parts corresponding to the chapters of this report.

- (02.a.) stastics of land ownership and eviction threats
- (02.c.) actors' relationship
- (03.a.) study of Phnom Penh: general information
- (03.a.) study of Phnom Penh: statistics on urban poor
- (03.b.) study of Smor San: statistics and general information
- (03.b.) daily routine of women in Phnom Penh (before and after relocation)
- (04.e) daily routine of women in Smor San
- (03.c.) housing information collection
- (03.c.) daily participation of the community
- (04. b.) study of Phnom Penh: mapping information
- (04.c.) study of Phnom Penh: mapping information
- (04.c., d.) study of Smor San: mapping information

# (02.a.) statistics of land ownership and eviction threats



An information collection and a practice to understand level of eviction and find consequence to urban development in Phnom Pehn, includidng understanding the voices upon tenure security in differenet location

: land ownership characters, types of eviction threats, and types of developments causing eviction

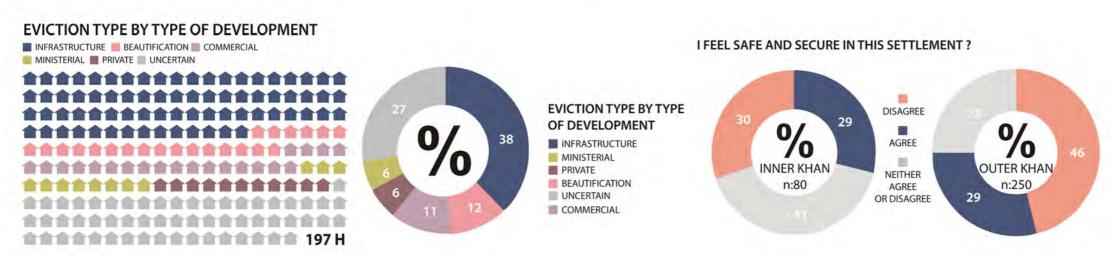


Figure I Eviction in Phnom Penh (diagram produced by group)

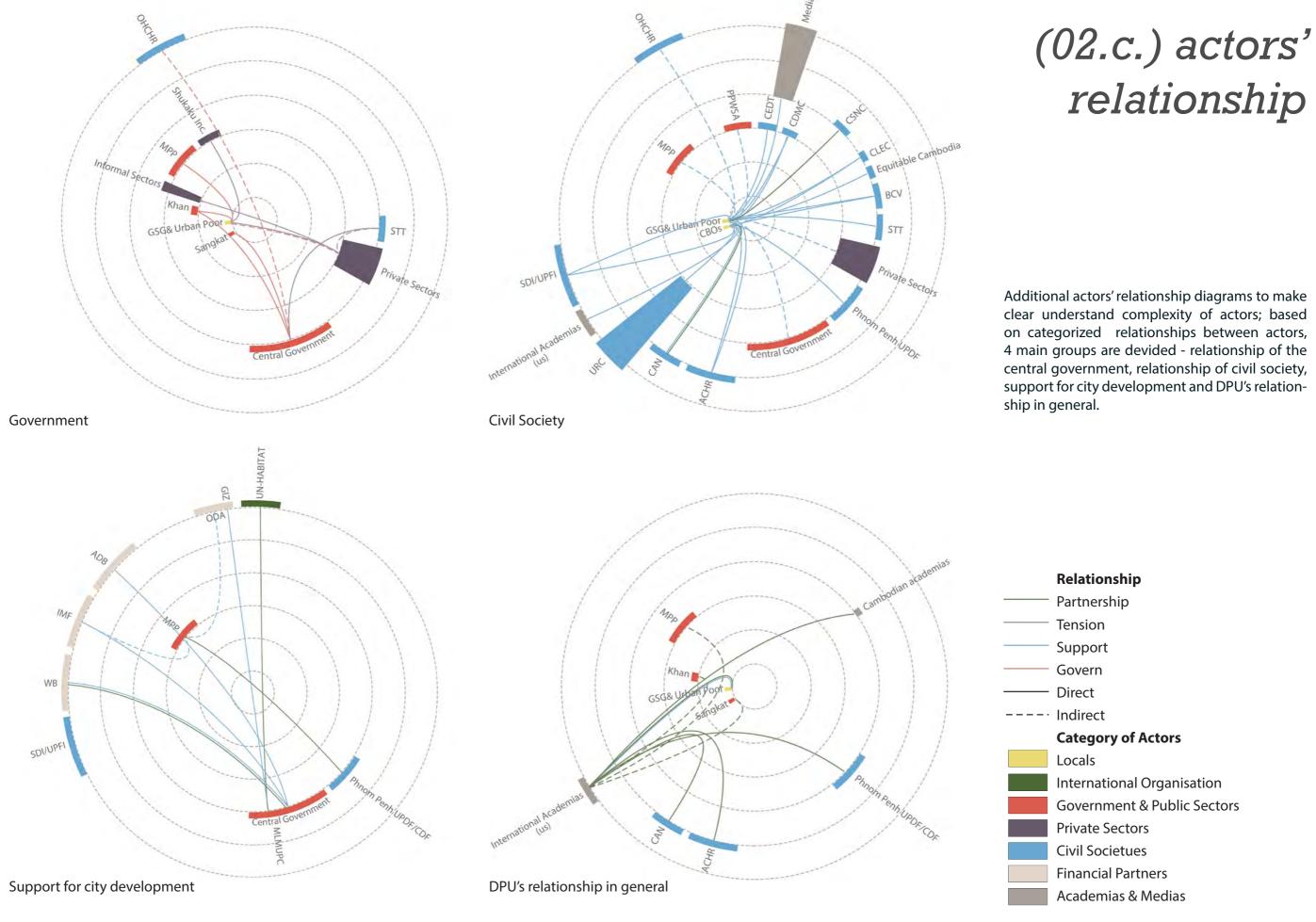


Figure II Relationships of Actors in Terms of Government, Civil Society, Support for City Development and DPU (diagram produced by group)

# (03.a.) study of Phnom Penh: general information

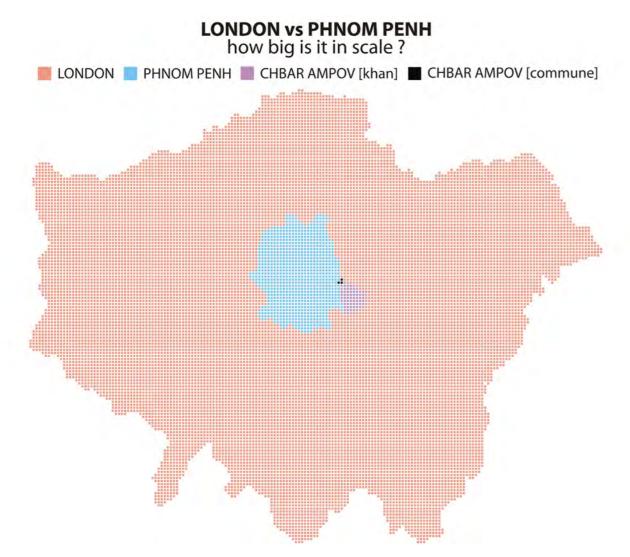


Figure III Comparison between London and Phnom Penh in Scale (map produced by group)

A practice to understand the city scale of Phnom Penh by comparing with London; followed before and after practice of reading urban context such as road, density of city center, and amenities, following activities in lecture, defining scale, understanding scaling up in urban environment.

Followed by searching type of land extablished, parallel to urban poor families in and outside of Kahn, aiming to understand correlation of owners of the land and residential area of urban poor.

# (03.a.) study of Phnom Penh: statistics on urban poor

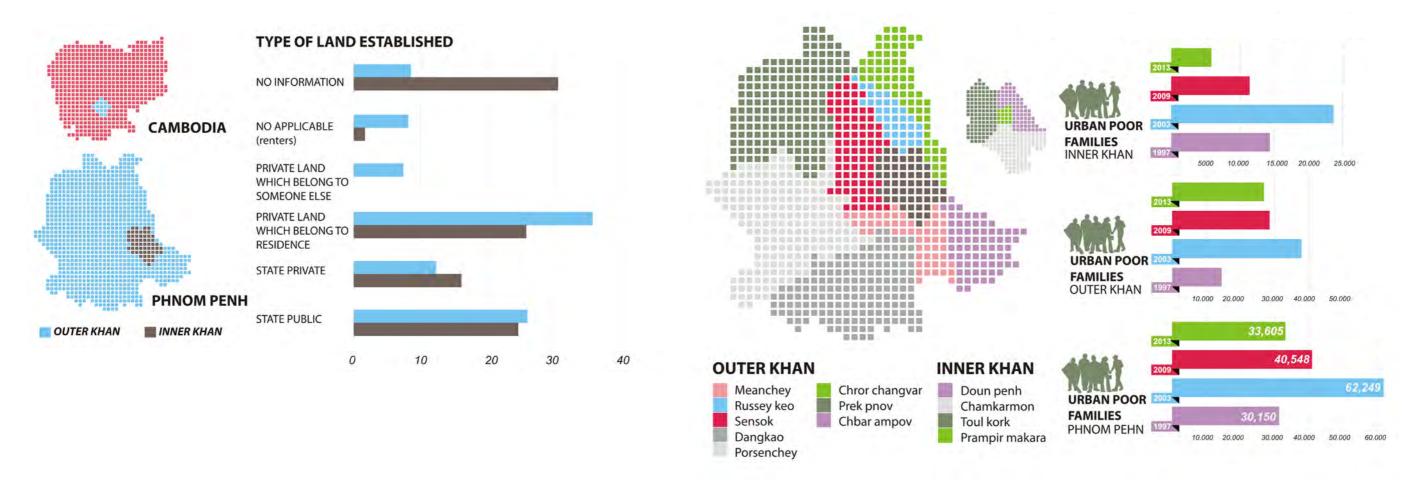
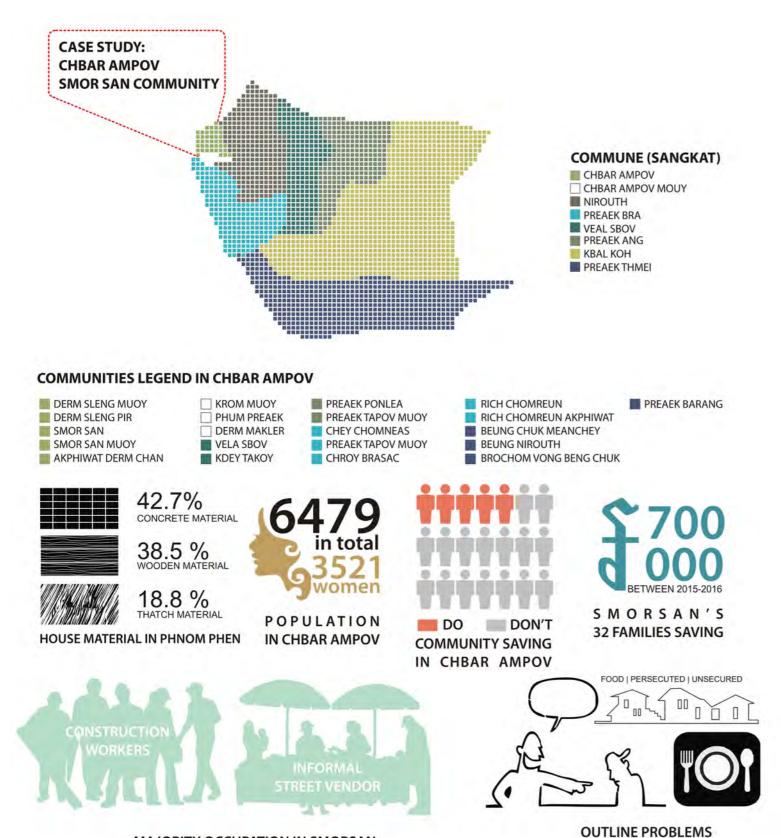
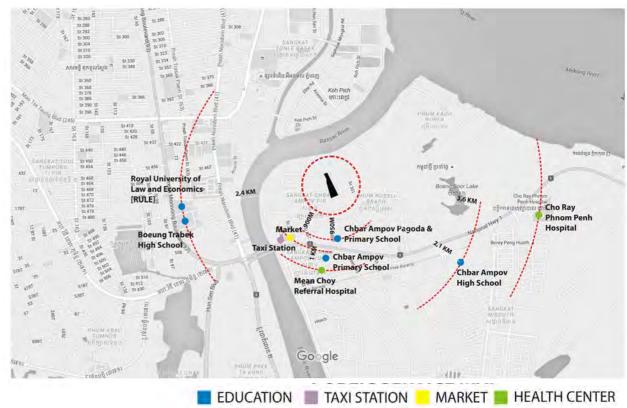


Figure IV Type of Land Established (diagram produced by group)

Figure V General Information in Cambodia (produced by group)

# (03.b.) study of Smor San : statistics and general information





(right) Figure VI Case Study of Smor San before Trip (produced by group)

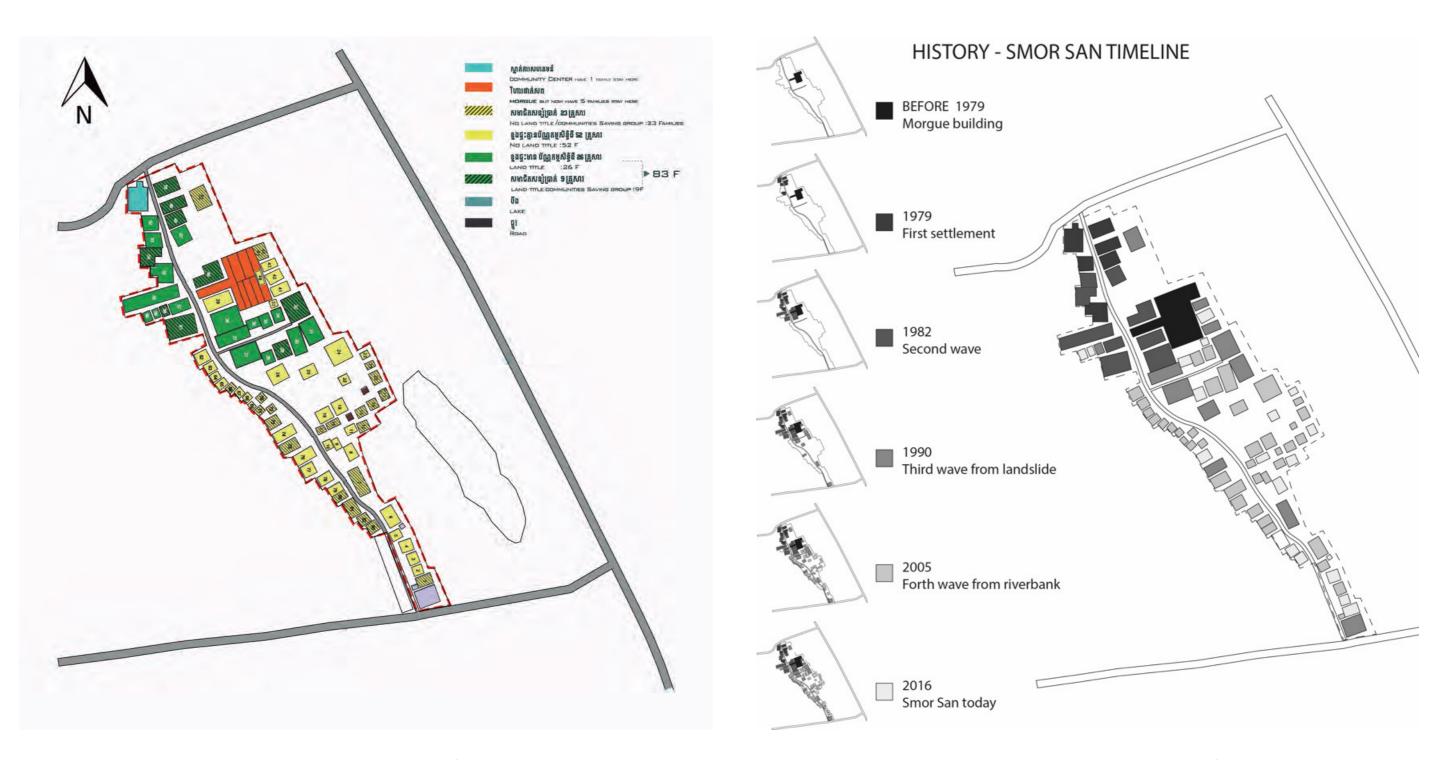
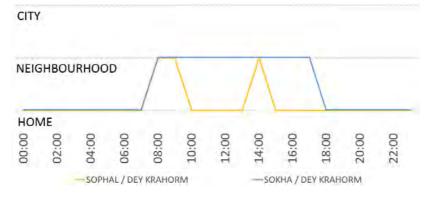


Figure VIII General Information in Smor San (map produced by CDF)

**Figure IX** Growth of Smor San (map produced by group)

# (04.e.) daily routine of women in Phnom Penh (before and after relocation)





**SCHEDULE 1** 

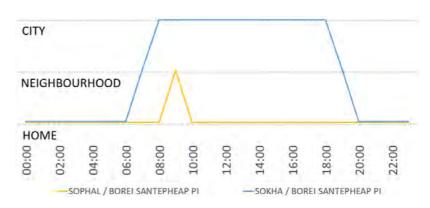
The following graphs show the impact

on time poverty caused by relocation in the lives of the family described in sec-

tion 04. e. gender.

: Sophal picks up nephews from school in the afternoons

#### BOREI SANTEPHEAP PI: 2009/today



SCHEDULE 2

: Sophal lost her business, Sokah spends 1 extra hour in transport

Figure X Relocation Impact on Daily Schedule of Sophal (charts produced by group)

# (04.e) daily routine of women in Smor San

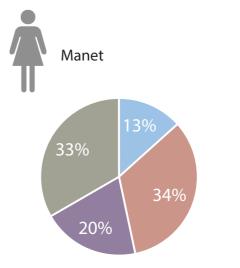
#### **MANET**



- 39 years old
- Moved to Smor San in 2003, because of marriage. Her husband moved there in 1980s
- Husband: Construction worker. Used to borrow motorbike from relative for going to work, but now has to live on site.
- Worked as librarian and librarian trainer for other communities
- Currently also cooks breakfast for selling in the community
- Community leader assistant (non-elected)
  - Seeks help from NGOs for community
  - Participant in other community nearby
  - News deliver
  - Mediator of conflicts in community
  - Participate in community activities







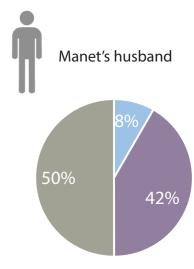


Figure XI Manet and Her Home (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu)

Figure XII Time Distribution of Manet's family (charts produced by group)

#### **E DANY**

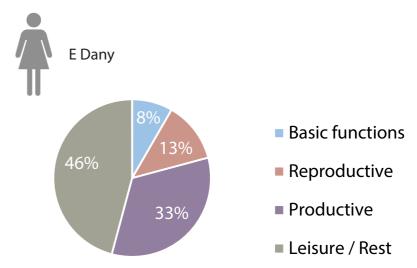


- 49 years old
- Moved to Smor San in 1990 after land slide
- Widow
- Children: 1 boy & 1 girl
- Used to work as cleaner at NGO, but stopped for health problems. Diary according to working routine
- Participates in community saving group









**Figure XIV** Time Distribution of E Dany (chart produced by group)

# (03.c.) daily routine of women in Phnom Penh (before and after relocation)

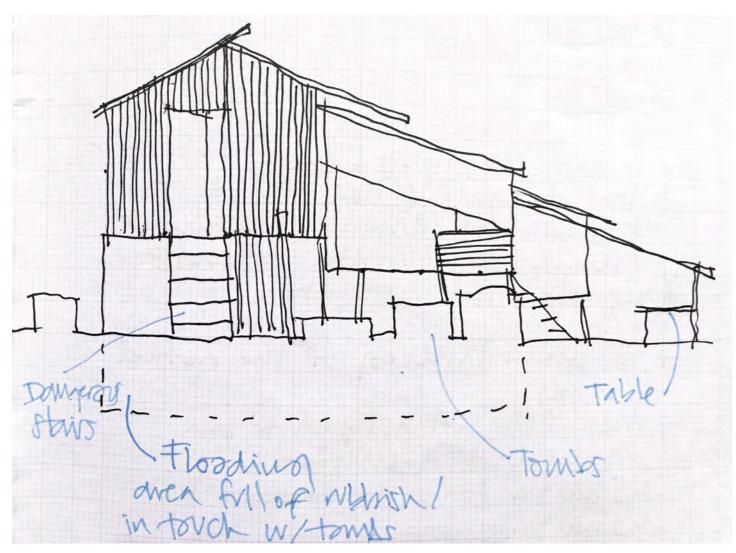
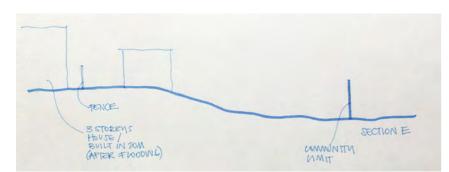
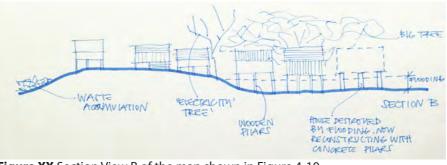


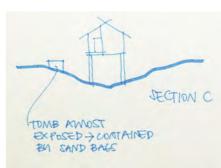
Figure XV Typical House Type in Smor San (sketches produced by group)



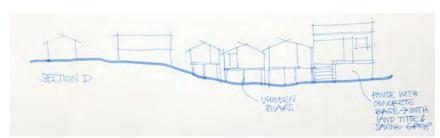
**Figure XIX** Section View E of the map shown in Figure 4-10 (sketches produced by group)



**Figure XX** Section View B of the map shown in Figure 4-10 (sketches produced by group)



**Figure XVI** Section View C of the map shown in Figure 4-10 (sketches produced by group)

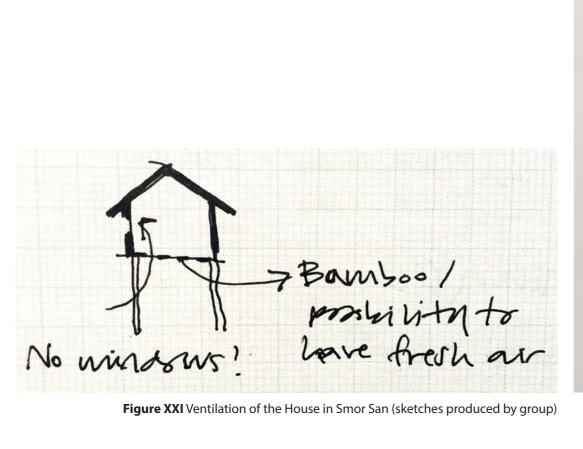


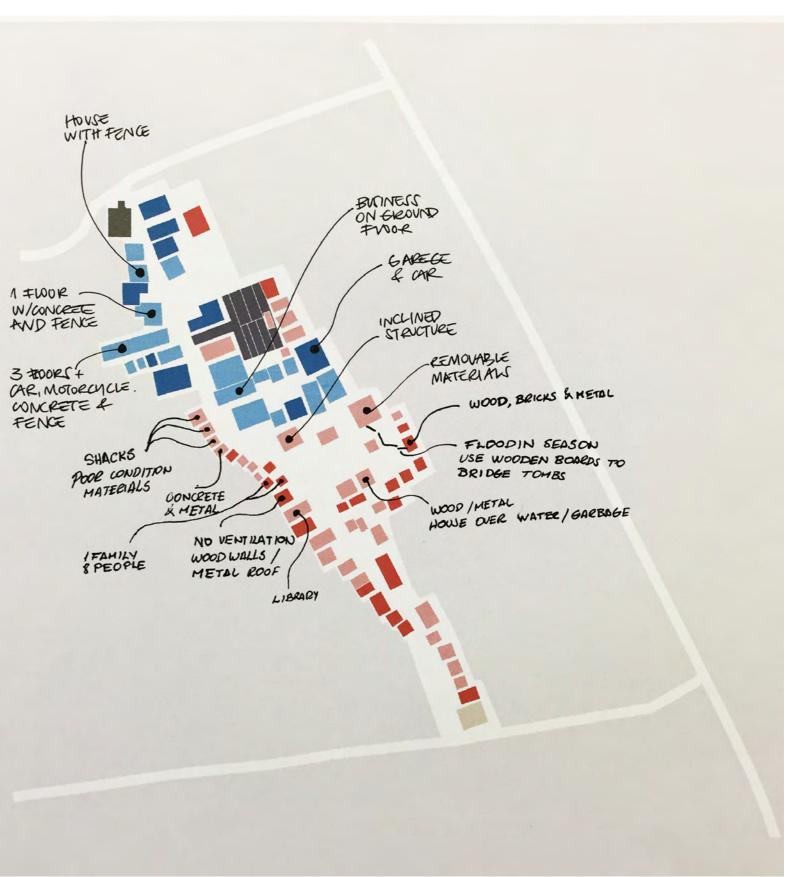
**Figure XVII** Section View D of the map shown in Figure 4-10 (sketches produced by group)



**Figure XVIII** Section View A of the map shown in Figure 4-10 (sketches produced by group)

Map of combined information from CDF and site exercise: both qualitative and quantitative data of housing condition (gathered by observation), status of land tenure and members of Community Savings Group included.





**Figure XXII** General Housing Conditions in Smor San (sketches produced by group)

# (03.c.) daily participation of the community







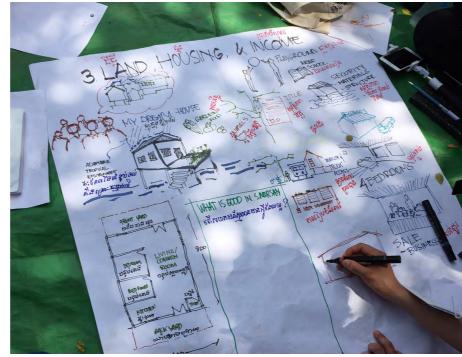


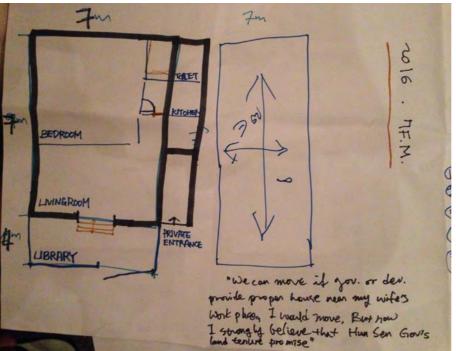
Figure XXIII Activities and Outcomes, Day 1 and 2 (photos taken by Yuxuan Tu, Muhammad Nelza Mulki Iqbal)

- 5 days of working in community including 4 days of community members' participation
- : the first day of participation focusing on prioritizing communities' main issue through the talks in sub-groups. Outdoor space was provided, 4 sub group with 4-5 community members each.
- : the second day, focusing on main issues and the conversation upon them. House visiting, village facility check and short meeting with other organization went along togeter.

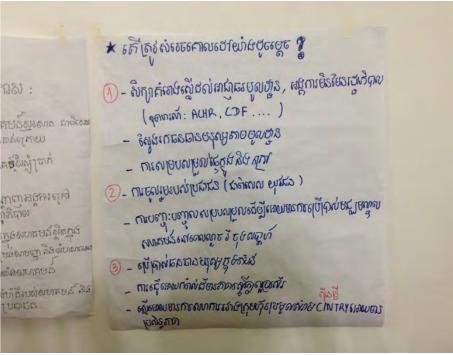
: the third day, one-to-one interview to each residents to collect their own story in Smor San and to make collective understanding through different stories; housing history, and daily diary

: the fourth day, the presentation of our analysis and strategies to the community, based on participatory work for last three days; learning how to deliver strategies, 'why you can do this'.



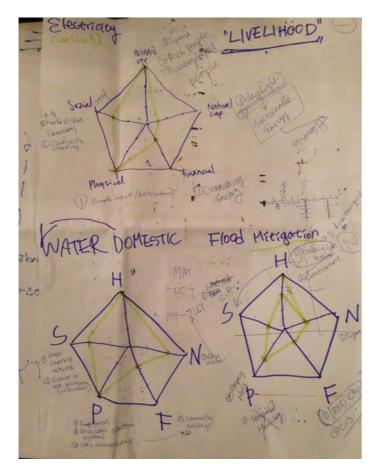






**Figure XXIV** Activities and Outcomes, Day 3 and 4 (photo taken and by Muhammad Nelza Mulki Iqbal, Giorgio Talocci, Hye Jung Park)

# (03.c.) negotiation & rehearsal with community



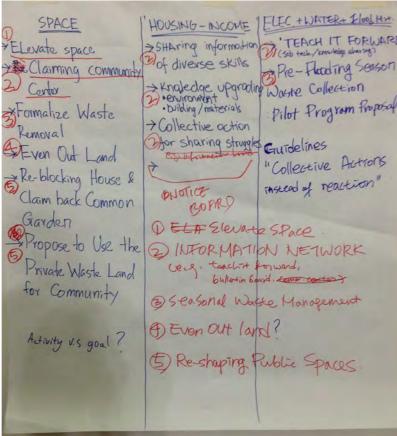


Figure XXV Feedbacks from Community (produced by group)

The process of re-framing strategies building evidence of 'why the community can do this', which is essential to negotiate and make community members feel confident to be a part of the presentation to the local authority.



**Figure XXVI** Presentation Rehearsal to Local Authority by Community Members (photo taken by Yuxuan Tu)

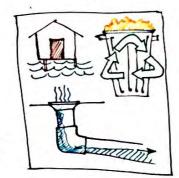
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# CHALLENGES RISTAINSTEN

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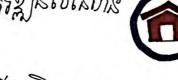
उर्देशाय - क्षित्रक होंगे होंगे कि कार्य कार्य

-ใกมะกรับกระ





–หริงสูงอัณ์เล่หง





-मनिर्द्राहरानमह



🕦 ការខែទាំនិងការរ្យប្រហិន្ទិ អគ្គិសនីអោយប្រភិសិទ្ធិទី

การเบยูงเล่ายารียุรียุงกิดเล่า

เมียเพิ่รแพกเกาเพงพรษธ์







4 ការរៀបចំអោយមាន ការពាធិមានសំរាប់ភូមិ



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HOUSING & 





# (04. b.) study of Phnom Penh: mapping information

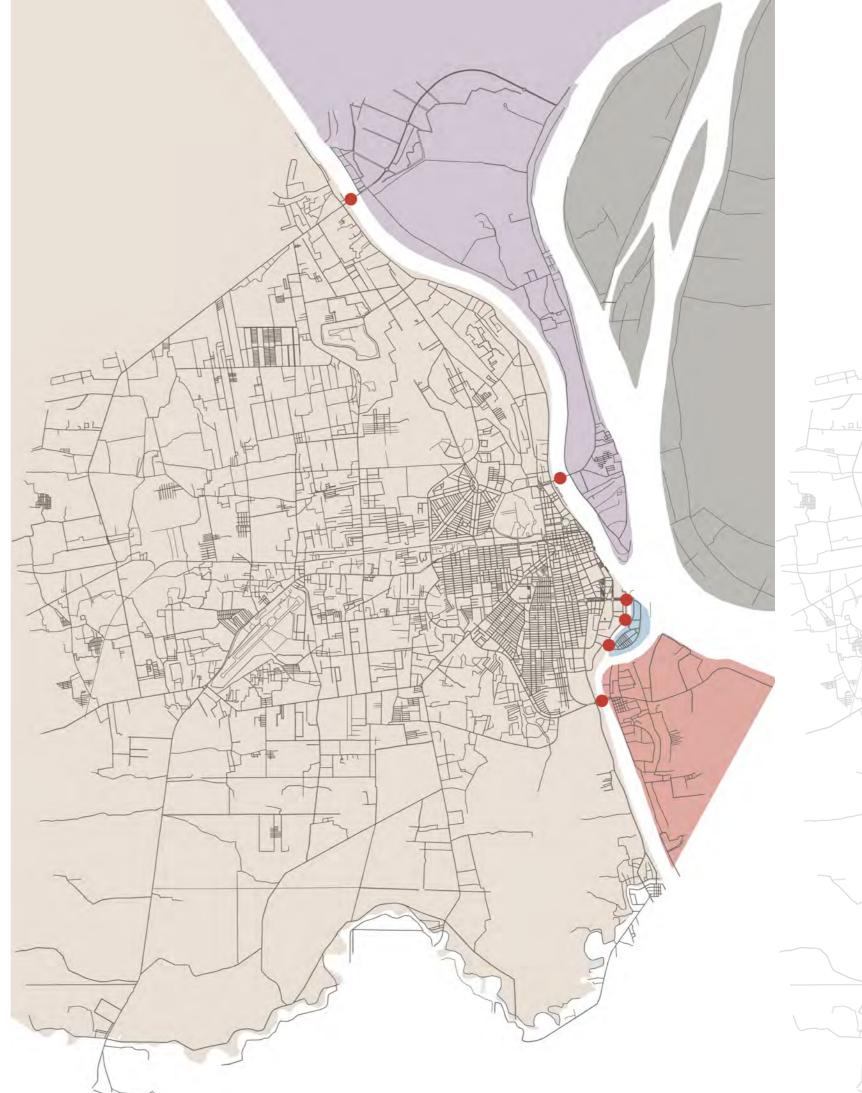
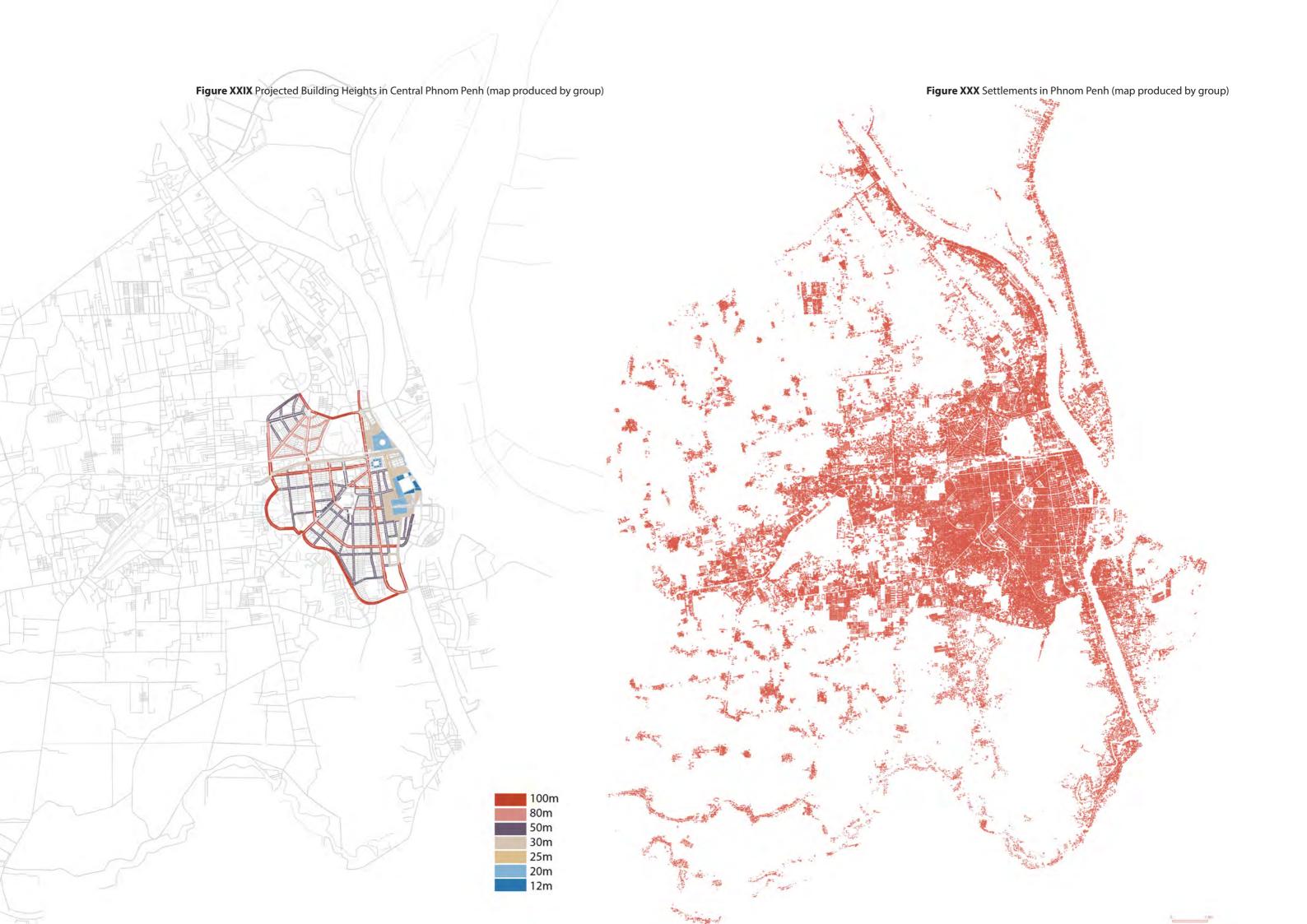
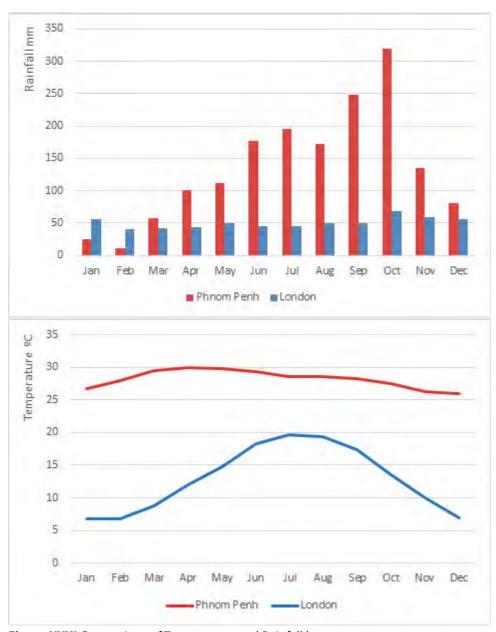


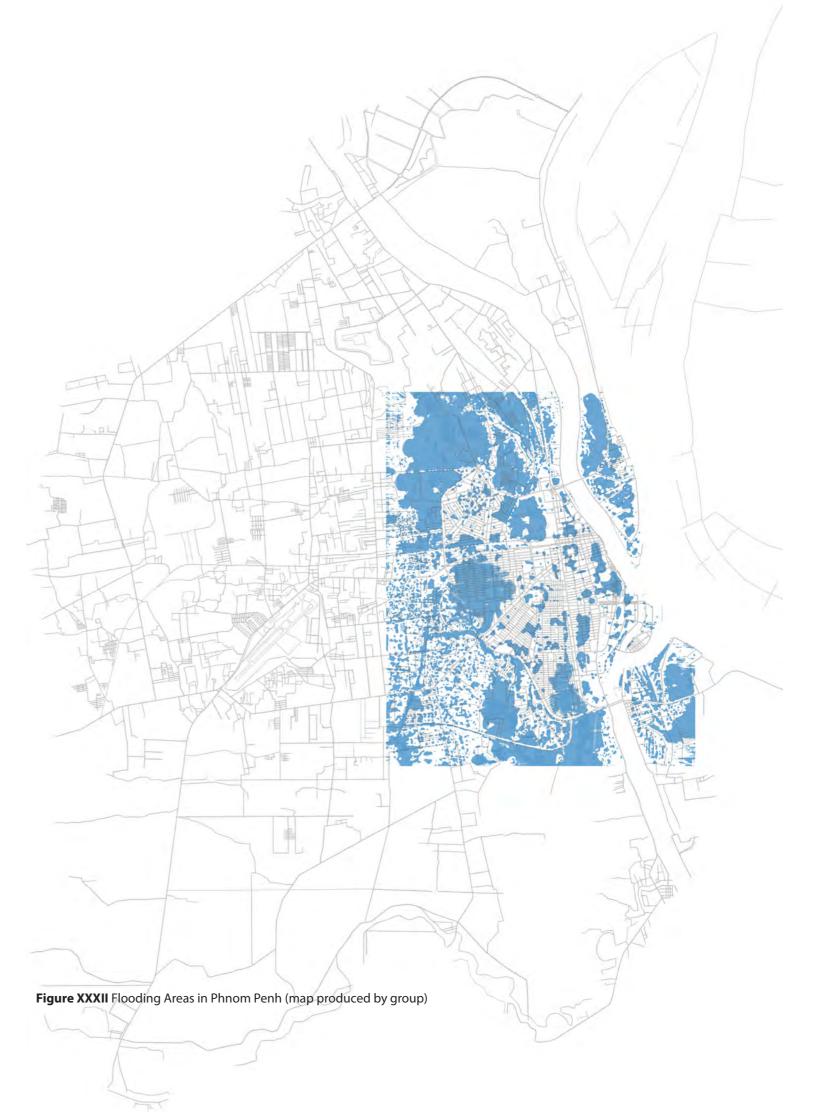
Figure XXVIII Bridges in Phnom Penh (map produced by group)

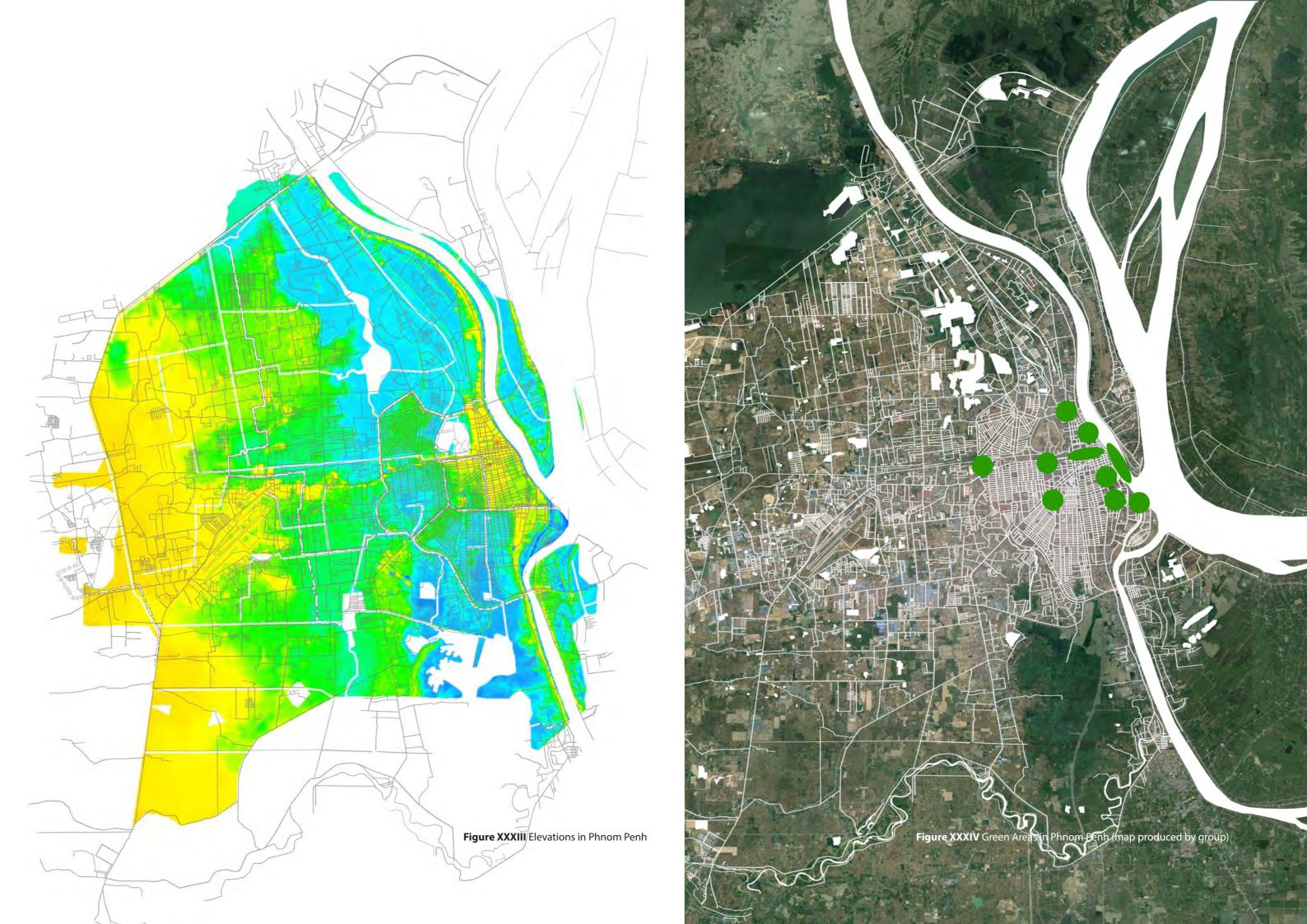


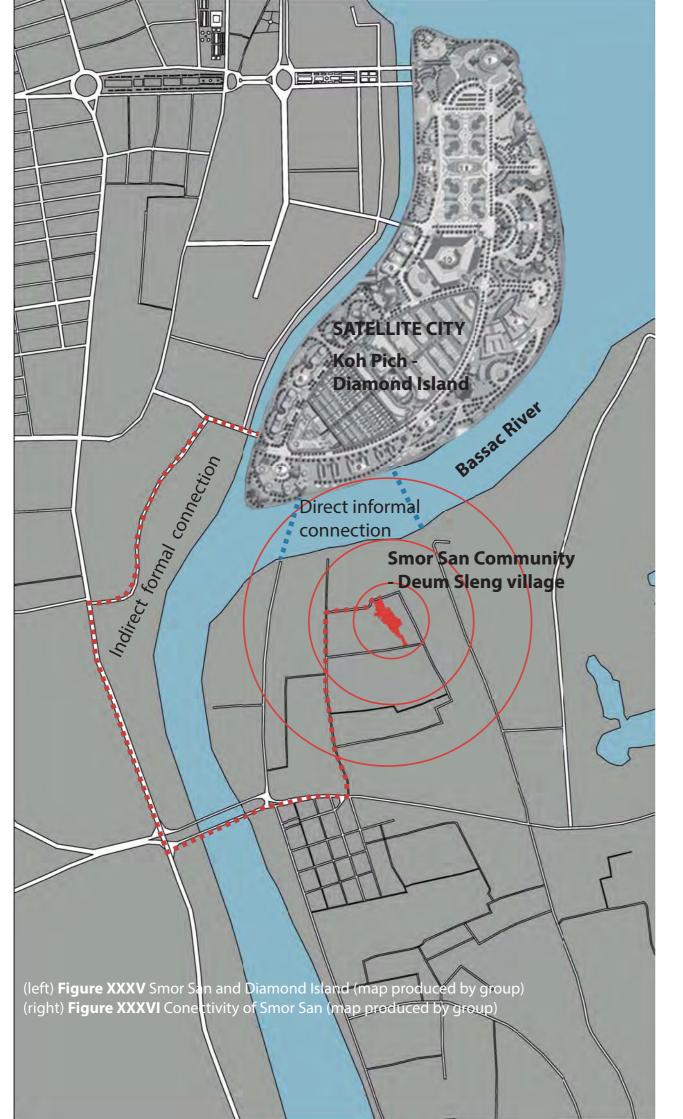
# (04.c.) study of Phnom Penh: mapping information

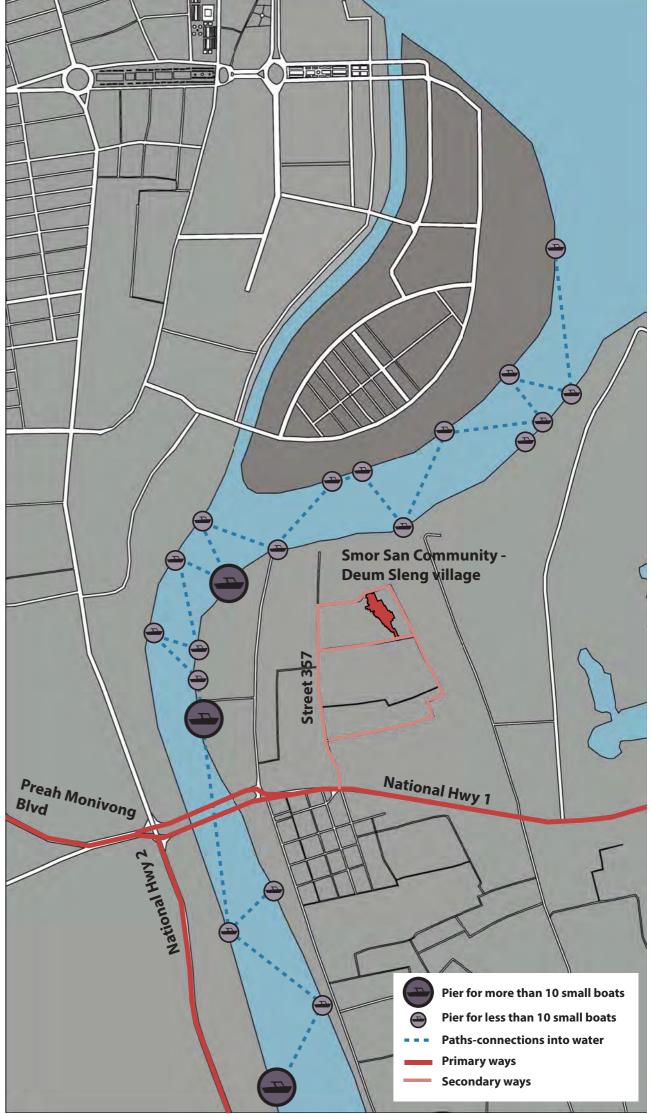


**Figure XXXI** Comparison of Temperature and Rainfall between
Figure XXXV Smor San and Diamond Island (map produced by group)



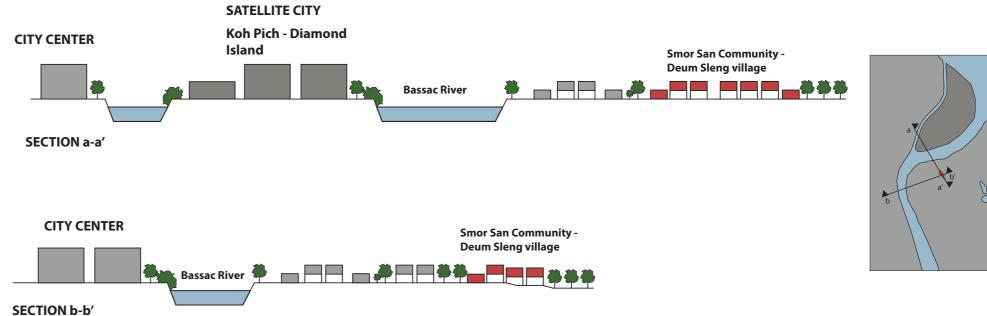






# (04.c., d.) study of Smor San : mapping information







(left) Figure XXXVII Flooding Impact on Smor San (map produced by group) (above) Figure XXXVIII Section Views of Smor San (produced by group)

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University College London
The Bartlett Development Planning Unit
MSc Building and Urban Design in Development

Final Report Transformation in a Time of Transition 3rd International Workshop City Wide Upgrading Transformation in Cambodia 2016

In partnership with CDF, ACHR, CAN-CAM and DPU