

## COLLECTIVE ACTION TO PROTECT AND REVITALIZE THE INFORMAL KAMPUNGS SETTLEMENTS IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA

The Project [\*Housing Rights in Jakarta: Collective Action and Policy Advocacy\*](#) implemented in Indonesia won the [GOLD world -Habitat Award in 2024](#).

[The webpage of the World Habitat Award](#) presents detailed articles with the main characteristics of this initiative which has achieved significant social results: 1180 restored residency rights, renovation of 152 riverbank homes and 924 people housed in new homes.

[“Like many major cities across the world](#), Jakarta is home to numerous informal settlements, where

thousands of low-income families have made their homes and set up businesses. The settlements, known as ‘kampung’ in Indonesia, often occupy prime land with potential for commercial development. For decades, politicians portrayed the kampungs as a serious barrier to the creation of a modern, well-planned and clean Jakarta. This narrative proved popular with voters and meant kampung residents lived in fear of forced eviction.

In 2015, these fears became reality for more than 10,000 families who were forced to leave their homes. Flood management, road construction, urban planning and illegal land occupation were among the reasons the city government gave for the mass evictions, which were largely backed by the public. With the help of grassroots organisations, a group of kampung residents fought back. They set up a project called Housing Rights in Jakarta: Collective Action and Policy Advocacy called for legal and political changes that would give them the right to stay in their neighborhoods and improve their living conditions. Initially, the project (“Housing Rights in Jakarta: Collective Action and Policy Advocacy”) focused on two cases of eviction from four kampungs in the city: Kampung Akuarium in the heritage area of Kota Tua, and Kampung Tongkol, Lodan and Kerapu on the riverbank.

[The project is run by three organisations](#): Jakarta Urban Poor Network (which represents residents of 25 kampungs); Rujak Centre for Urban Studies (a think-tank focusing on urban issues); and Urban Poor Consortium (a networking and advocacy organisation). Other organisations provide legal and technical support when needed.

The city government argued that proposed evictions in the riverbank kampungs were necessary to improve flood management, public order and spatial planning. So, project organisers worked with residents to see if homes could be altered in a way that would solve these issues and allow them to stay.



A residents' association was formed – Komunitas Anak Kali Ciliwung (KAKC) – and a series of community meetings and negotiations with the city authority were held.

Through a mixture of community collaboration, political advocacy and network development, the project successfully stopped the evictions of 256 people in three riverbank kampungs, and helped 400 families, who had already been evicted, return to their neighbourhood to live in new apartments. In addition, the project challenged negative public perceptions of informal rural settlements and achieved city-wide regulatory changes that now protect all kampung residents from forced evictions.

This project is the first of its kind in Indonesia and has maintained or restored residency rights for 1,180 kampung residents. 152 homes were renovated in the riverbank kampungs and more than 900 people will be rehoused in the new apartment buildings in Kampung Aquarium.

The project's pact with the new governor led to policy and regulatory changes which have benefitted thousands of residents of other kampungs across Jakarta. These included a government programme to channel funds into neighbourhood improvements and another to include residents in these processes. The project further strengthened community involvement by establishing several kampung residents' associations and cooperatives. Other regulatory changes include the reclassification of existing kampungs as legal settlements and the issuing of building permission certificates for 9,706 houses in 32 kampungs.

The project is ongoing and aims at securing building permits and re-classification changes for 5,000 kampung households.

In the short term, the project plans to complete construction of the remaining apartment blocks at Kampung Aquarium and finalise the donation of the building to the cooperative. It also hopes to settle the legal status of the riverbank kampung lands to secure the community's right to live there.

The project's approach has already been scaled up to other kampungs in Jakarta and there is strong interest from Indonesia Urban Poor Network to replicate it both regionally and nationally. What began as a localised effort to help residents push back against forced evictions in four kampungs has grown to have far-reaching benefits for thousands of people living in informal settlements across Jakarta and possibly the whole country. Despite a long history of mass evictions, many kampung residents now have the right to live on the land they occupy in improved conditions, while others have reason to be hopeful about their future.

World Habitat is an international not-for-profit organisation/foundation established in the United Kingdom. Their operations are linked to UN Habitat in the context of the World Habitat Awards that are operated in partnership with UN-Habitat.

The World Habitat Awards were established in 1985 to celebrate, identify and promote good habitat practices. In 1987 the World Habitat Awards were a contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. Since then, each year the initiative gives Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards, in



conjunction with UN-Habitat, to projects that provide practical, innovative solutions to current housing needs, with a particular focus on decent, affordable housing

Over the 35 years, years, a large range of excellent habitat projects were identified in the countries of the global North and the global South. These projects of different sizes and shapes tackle a wide range of housing issues. From the very beginning, the focus has been not only on the identification of good housing practices but also in the sharing of knowledge and experience to others who can transfer them in their own situations. [The first international peer exchange to a World Habitat Award project winner was in 1987](#) and the exchanges have continued ever since.

### **To know more**

[World Habitat Award winners 2024](#)

[Housing Rights in Jakarta: Collective Action and Policy Advocacy](#)

[Case studies of the project](#)

[World Habitat Awards](#)

[display World Habitat Award winners since 1986.](#)

[World-habitat.org Annual Report 2023](#)

