The politics of urban displacement practices in Phnom Penh

Reflections from Borei Santepheap Pi & Oudong Moi

Giorgio Talocci[1] & Camillo Boano[1]

Giorgio Talocci, giorgio.talocci.11@ucl.ac.uk & Camillo Boano, c.boano@ucl.ac.uk,
The Bartlett Development Planning Unit (UCL), 34 Tavistock Square, WC1H 9EZ London / UK[1]

Abstract: With the specific ethnographic research conducted in two relocation sites (Borei Santepheap Pi and Oudong Moi) in the outskirts of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, the paper aims to contribute to the massive body of literature on urban displacement and to the current debate on Phnom Penh's fierce evictions and forced relocations. In so doing, we aim to offer an alternative vision that, deliberately, decides not to focus simply on the dynamics of socio-spatial segregation and exclusion intrinsic in the process of displacement: rather, the paper wants to reflect on the politics of designing displacement processes, on its discourses and practices. The current evidence allows us to say that relocation sites are configuring as big peripheral holes: giant planning and urban design failures where populations strive to survive or that decide to abandon to search for more secure livelihoods closer to the centre. Looking at two very different attempts to design relocation sites, from scratch, as new polities, the paper advocates for practices that could contest the current mode of urban development, and enable old and new urbanites to re-appropriate the act of designing, producing and governing their spaces.

Phnom Penh, marketed by authorities as 'the charming city' (PPCH, 2014), has seen 85 forced evictions between 1990 and January 2012 (STT, 2007, 2011a, 2012a). Enormous economic pressures over land in central areas have propelled demolitions of informal settlements and expulsions of the inhabitants in order to make room for new upper-class developments, malls and, in a few cases, new infrastructure and services (Paling, 2012; Percival & Waley, 2012; Tudehope, 2012). Often particularly brutal, evictions have fed a collective imagery about unscrupulous authorities and developers, heightening the level of contestation toward the authorities and the private sector (Adler, Ketya & Menzies, 2008; Springer, 2009, 2011). Also, the level of international attention to human and housing rights abuses against the evicted populations has increased and led to concerns amongst donors and investors (Amnesty International, 2011; UNHR, 2012). There is now much support by foreign activists, artists, photographers and directors.[1] The most widely broadcast evictions have probably been linked to the redevelopments of Boeung Kak and Borei Keila, and to the Railway Rehabilitation Project: these were perceived as an environmental disaster as well as a social one (as in Boeung Kak – STT, 2010; Schneider, 2011; Water & Ket, 2012) as there was apprehension related to the relocation of families with HIV-positive members from what has been renamed as an AIDS colony (as in Borei Keila and its relocation site Tuol Sambo – Licadho, 2009; Thiemann, 2012; McCurry, 2009; Jackson & Vandy, 2014). There was further disbelief in the involvement of international donors and cooperation agencies in the violation of the evictees' basic rights (as for the Railway Project, massively funded by the Asian Development Bank and Australian Aid – STT, 2011b, 2012b, 2012c; BABC, 2012; Carmichael, 2013).

Figure 1: The homogenous array of self-built low-cost housing (about 600USD per unit) in Oudong Moi (Tang Khiev)

The reality on the ground is probably even harsher than the one displayed in the international media. The eviction and relocation have rarely occurred in an agreed manner (STT, 2006); most situations suggest opaque negotiation processes with the communities, bribery of community leaders, lack of agreement and resistance that often culminates in bulldozing entire informal settlements and the use of violence to placate riots.

The evictees have been moved, scattered, and their original sites re-composed in 54 extra-peripheral spaces, 20 to 50 km away from the city centre (STT, 2011a, 2012a). The act of emptying the urban fabric in the city centre corresponds with the use of peripheral (and therefore cheap) land to relocate informal populations. Although forced displacements are in contrast with both national and international legal frameworks (Lindstrom, 2013), at least until 2012[2] authorities found no problems in enacting eviction orders. Disregarding how forced displacement de facto means the complete disruption of livelihoods and social networks[3] – with high rates of alcohol abuse amongst adults and of school dropout for children (UNHR, 2012) – authorities and developers have used it as the most important tool to govern the city's transformation and pursue their objectives of land speculation[4] and social cleansing, toward building the image of a 'charming', globalised and competitive city.

People are loaded on improvised trucks, often along with some scrap materials they have managed to save from their previous home. At the end of their journey, as if landing in a desert landscape, they find a flat virgin land: sometimes, but not necessarily, crossed by naked roads, sometimes with water and electricity connections, often with low lines of bricks to indicate their future plots, other times with awkward rectangular shapes – the toilette blocks around which they will have to build their future home. In the luckiest cases, an NGO (see for instance: Caritas Cambodia, 2012) or – with bitter irony – the developer who contributed to their eviction might have already provided roofed rectangular blocks ready for them (7NG, 2010). Most often though, at their inception, relocation sites resemble a landscape of plastic tents and wooden sticks (Vink, 2012a, 2012b). Then they will grow and change, some people with savings will start building stronger houses, and these same houses will get a second floor at some point, and a third one. The older relocation sites (see for instance Aphiwat Meanchey – STT, 2006) are today part of an urban fabric that has in the meantime grown till reaching and swallowing them, partially overcoming the spatial isolation they were initially born in. Nevertheless, year by year, poor have been shifted toward the outer districts[5] (STT, 2009) – often isolated, stigmatised and very hard to reach.

The eviction of Dey Krahorm settlement

In this article we will consider two relocation sites, Borei Santepheap Pi and Oudong Moi: Both originated from the eviction of Dey Krahorm[6] a central informal settlement developed in the middle of the area formerly known as Tonle Bassac Tribune[7] and evicted on the 24 January 2009 (Bredy & Neth, 2009) to make room for a new development[8] by 7NG Group (7NG, 2010). 7NG Group is one of the most important construction and investment companies in Cambodia, often allegedly linked back to government members. It is also involved in activities including microfinance geared toward poor families, and it has presented itself as working along with the government in a wider national strategy for reducing poverty (ibid.). After the failure of a land-sharing proposal for Dey Krahorm (Rabé, 2005, 2010), 7NG Group offered a land-swap to the community, a relocation site far from the city centre where the families would have been given a housing unit for free after entering a savings programme (Licadho, 2008; 7NG, 2010).

The whole story of Dey Krahorm – of the alleged bribery of community leaders and of the legal case that eventually declared 7NG as the rightful part – is beyond the scope of this article. In short, only few families agreed to voluntary relocate to Borei Santepheap Pi (some 20km out of the city centre) and most did so only after a forced eviction (Mgbako et al., 2010; Amnesty International, 2011; UNHR, 2012). Some of them were not entitled to a flat in the new site because they had not been long-term tenants; these ended up squatting on the land next to Borei Santepheap Pi before undergoing another relocation (STT, 2012), this time to Oudong Moi, 55km North from the city centre.

Despite sharing a common origin (and a common 'landlord', 7NG) Borei Santepheap Pi and Oudong Moi present almost opposite stories – the former being a relocation site where everything (housing, infrastructure, services, education, employment, microfinance) was provided by 7NG (although with many irregularities); the latter merely virgin land where people were literally dumped. We will continue this comparison in the conclusion. The following two sections will explore the sites' architectural forms and at the discourses that have given them shape. The data is one of the outcomes[9] of the nine-month doctoral research fieldwork of one of the authors, and it is based upon on-site observation, semi-structured interviews with a number of stakeholders, desk and archive research through secondary sources.

Borei Santepheap Pi (Domnak Trayoeung)

Borei Santepheap Pi (literally 'peace village two') is situated about 20km South-West of Phnom Penh in the locality called Domnak Trayeung (the name by which locals refer to it) along a road that is easily accessible from the National Highway passing along the city's international airport. It is hardly near the centre of the city – by motorbike it can take around 45 minutes; most roads are in bad condition and even worse during or after rainstorms. The site is very large; it accommodates 2000 households on over about 25 hectares, and although it was created to host the families evicted from Dey Krahorm it has 'collected' people evicted from other places, significantly also from Boeung Kak (Mgbako et al., 2010), over time. It is also a commercial development by 7NG, with a percentage of houses sold at market prices – mechanism that contributed to cross-subsidise the construction of units assigned to the evictees for free, basically just paying facilities through the savings mechanism[10].

The first impression suggests that it is in the middle of nowhere. It is a big section of flat land with many factories (though developing very sparsely) and small villages, most of them very much smaller of Borei Santepheap Pi and surrounded by agricultural or idle

Figure 2: Neglected open spaces in Borei Santepheap Pi. In the background, the housing units (originally conceived as 'incremental') are slowly growing.

land. At the entrance of the site there is just a gas station selling also basic goods, the only official 'gate' to the site. There is no further structure nor a board[11], Beyond the gate, there is an infinite array of houses, with the same typology repeated endlessly, although the units do not all reach the same height and present many variations in the styles and finishing of their façades. The housing stock was in fact designed as incremental: every family would have received exactly the same rectangular unit, in armed concrete, and then be able to expand in height in the future. The units have big entrance doors, topped by a narrow horizontal window. The bare construction was then covered by white plaster and the gate closed through a shutter before being delivered to a family. The rationale behind this wants to recreate the conditions for the successful typology of the shop-house, which has long and established tradition in Phnom Penh and still today is the most sought after by the middle class because of its flexibility. It derives its name exactly by the possibility of opening a shop at the ground floor, and then to have the more private family spaces at the upper floors.

So far though, economic activities have not flourished at all in Borei Santepheap Pi, and the general impression is one of a ghost city, as if the site were partially abandoned.[12] It is interesting to investigate the profound contrast between the current situation and the way 7NG Group (2010) was proudly introducing the site in a slideshow presentation a few years ago. The new development was presented as a sort of promised land: the place where parents find work, children have access to education, and there are proper health clinics – as opposed to the situation in Dey Krahorm, rather described as unhealthy, dangerous, and even immoral. The slides of the presentation speak of "occupation, small businesses, market, factory works" (ibid.:24) while defining the context of Dey Krahorm as "anarchic, jobless, conflictual" (ibid.:15). The presentation shows how the on-site facilities work efficiently, using pictures of a market, a classroom, a paediatric clinic, a factory, all built by 7NG. The images convey a feeling of tidiness and efficiency, of happiness to a certain extent: "happiness" (ibid.:44) is precisely the word that is used to describe the mood and state of mind of the residents that had chosen to resettle voluntarily, while images of the raffle to assign the several units are shown. The presentation follows showing images of the voluntary dismantling of the housing units on Dey Krahorm by some families, and of their apparently easy trip to the relocation site. Such images are juxtaposed to pictures of families that had chosen to resist and try to remain on the original land: "a small problem [that] remains and will be solved peacefully" (ibid.:56), as a few slides showing people shouting and fighting against bulldozers state, amongst exclamations like "Please stop living like this! We have prepared a very good living place for you! Come to live with us!" (ibid. 60-61), or "Suggestion: please stop let your children playing here without going to school anymore! Come to live with us here, your children will have opportunity [to go] to school!" (ibid.:62-63).

The reality though is very different from the one portrayed by 7NG in its presentation. Many houses were never occupied, or have been left empty after a short period of occupancy by their 'owners'[13] which in the meantime have moved back to more central areas because of the general impossibility of finding a job in Borei Santepheap Pi and its surroundings, and the lack of convenience in commuting daily to the centre of the city. Some of the 'returners' sublet their units, while others sell them informally and below a reasonable market price, because of the urgency to move back toward the centre soon. In the northern part of the settlement, four dull public spaces, two squares with a market and other public facilities (a small school and the clinic provided by 7NG), couple with other two squares-to-be – now just leftover spaces covered by uncut grass. On the Northern-West tip lies a garment factory owned by the company itself,[14] providing employment, although at very hard conditions. Several NGOs are now working to provide as-

sistance to the population and an alternative to the system of employment, education and care put forward by 7NG. People Improvement Organisation, for instance, have started classes for children from 5 to 10 years old, after having done the same in several other areas of the city (PIO, 2014).

Oudong Moi (Tang Khiev)

Oudong Moi[15] is a much smaller relocation site in Oudong, Kandal Province, 55km North of Phnom Penh (about 70km from Borei Santepheap Pi): it takes about one hour and a half on a road constantly under maintenance and often blocked by traffic. Once arrived, we are in a different world if we compare it to Borei Santepheap Pi: the setting is rural, with naked and often muddy roads leading to a number of two-storey houses (again looking all alike) and a couple of bigger buildings. The 'grey' of Borei Santepheap Pi's asphalt and concrete squares is here replaced by the brown and green of the natural environment.

We can understand the origins of Oudong Moi through the words of one of its inhabitants. She is a middle-aged woman who had originally moved to Dey Krahorm, through advice from a friend, from the province of Svay Rieng, in search for a livelihood that only a more urban life could have given her. She does not get flustered while remembering the dawn of the eviction[16] when her family's house was destroyed and they could not save anything since they had been almost caught during their sleep. She had moved to Borei Santepheap Pi, where she found solid houses in concrete that were not meant for them, but only for those who could afford to participate in the savings programme organised by 7NG and were entitled to do so (she was not since she was simply a tenant in Dey Krahorm). They then settled in makeshift tents in an area in front of the 'official' settlement in the vain hope of being allocated a home. She lasted only a couple of months in this situation, then preferring to rent a room near the central Orussey Market, because she had found work as a cleaner in a club near the market, and because one of the village leaders at Borei Santepheap Pi had made clear that she and her family were not welcome. After about a year, in 2009,

also thanks to the support of some NGOs[17], the company 7NG proposed transfer to Oudong. The woman decided to move, because the husband had no fixed job and paying the rent was becoming complicated. Besides the fact they had no choice, the subtle blackmail was implicit in the assurances of 7NG who claimed that the move was economically sound. A poor family is obviously lured by the possibility of becoming owner of the land (although very small and tens of kilometres far from the city centre). However, they cannot imagine the rural isolation that they will have to face at the end of their trip; nor what kind of legal loopholes they will have to go through to be assigned the title of the property owner on the land, that perhaps will never arrive – forcing many people to trade it at bargain prices. Arriving in Oudong, along with the rest of the community, she found herself desperate and with no sources of income. Her group was the last one arriving therefore she could find only three lots available and had to bribe with some savings one of the employees of the company. The 'first version' of her house was built by her family with scrap materials, while many people were still finding shelter below plastic tents.

Here starts the story of the site as we see it today. After the transfer of 510 families (STT, 2012) from Borei Santepheap Pi to Oudong Moi (the size of which is about 2 hectares) was completed by a volunteer from an NGO of Christian inspiration (Manna4Life) began to help the population, raising funds for the purchase of blue tarpaulins to repair from the rain during the rainy season. Although the tarps were sold soon by the population to make some money, they eventually gave the name to the site, from those days known as Tang Khiev, precisely 'blue tents'. The volunteer kept working with the community, achieving reasonable results after almost five years. Saving groups have started, and through these funds all houses have been totally self-built by the community, using a simple design that rejects the 'expensive' models proposed by other NGOs[18] and that well interprets – through a wooden structure – the traditional rural family house in Cambodia, elevated from the ground to repair from floods, and making use of the covered space on

the ground floor for activities such as cooking, eating, resting, working or simply as a deposit for what does not find space upstairs.

Although most of the original 510 families, not different from Borei Santepheap Pi, have now left the site (a total of 104 families have stayed – STT, 2012), the community has kept thriving, and recently has built also a school and a centre for the promotion of agriculture, in an attempt to generate an income. In one of the public spaces, quite on the border of the site, there is a church: apparently an exogenous 'object' in a Buddhist community, but in the words of the volunteer definitely part of an effort to give hope to a group of people otherwise at risk to fall into depression because of the displacement they have undergone. "It was somehow relieving to have the opportunity to start all from scratch, you can almost plan an ideal community: we do not want K-TVs here, otherwise alcohol and prostitution will start again... We can use differently our collective energy" (Knight, 2013:1).

Conclusion

Much has been written already on Phnom Penh's evictions and relocation sites: articles and reports have focused mostly on the logics of spatial segregation and exclusion intrinsic in the dynamics of forced displacement, and on the constant and harsh violation of housing and human rights perpetrated against the evicted populations, on the disruption of their livelihoods and so on. Here though, we have tried to abstract ourselves and shift the focus of the discussion on two different sets of discourses – one coming from a powerful developer, the other one from a Christian NGO – which has produced different (though comparable) outcomes.

In both cases, the ideal behind the 'design' of the relocation site has been one of working toward the creation of new 'polities' – self-sufficient within their boundaries, with attempts to start education and savings programmes and create sources of income; with self-built housing (or self-expanded housing in the case of Borei Santepheap Pi) gathering around a few public spaces hosting the programmes for the collective activities. The 'ingredients' used by two completely different actors (in this case 7NG and the

Figure 3: Oudong Moi: in the course of time housing has diversified and improved. Families with better income have expanded their units on the ground floor, although this could represent a problem in case of flooding.

NGO Manna4Life) have not been so different after all, although this must obviously be read as a provocation. In fact, while on one side we have a big developer strictly involved in the government of the city and its transformation, on the other side we have found an NGO (next to many others, for instance the ones now acting in Borei Santepheap Pi) that is trying to work in the cracks left by the failure of the governmental plans carried on by authorities and private sector.

The current evidence allows us to say that in the coming years it is likely that most of the relocation sites will configure as big peripheral holes: giant planning and urban design failures where populations strive to survive or that decide to abandon to search for more secure livelihoods closer to the centre. Although with many contradictions, the example of Tang Khiev in Oudong tell us that a new urbanity is being born in Phnom Penh's outskirts. Possibly another one will be born soon in Borei Santepheap Pi and in other relocation sites too, but this can happen only at the condition of inventing practices that could contest the current mode of urban development, and enable old and new urbanites to re-appropriate the act of designing, producing and governing their spaces.

Endnotes

[1] Evictions have been the main focus of the work of photographers such as John Vink, that through its website and publications has documented the 'quest for land' going on in Phnom Penh (Vink, 2012a / 2012b).

[2] The last eviction happened in Borei Keila on the 3rd of January 2012. After that event the eviction processes seem to have temporarily stopped, probably due to the upcoming political elections in July 2013 and the subsequent weakness of the ruling party (Cambodian People Party).

[3] In a report on Tuol Sambo for instance, many interviewees mentioned the distance between their work place and the city centre as a main problem, especially because of the money they were spending on gasoline (UNHR, 2011).

[4] The Land Laws of 1989 and 2011 were de facto conceived as instruments to facilitate land speculation.

[5] A report by STT (2009) highlights how in the 12 years between 1997 and 2009 figures have reverted between the 4 inner Khans (districts) and the 8 outer ones, with two thirds of the urban poor populations living in the outskirts of the city today while it was exactly the contrary in 1999. The report speaks of over 100,000 families displaced since 2000. STT has been probably the most active organisation in documenting the eviction processes over the last 15 years: The issues 11, 19, 21 of 'Facts and Figures', the periodic publications of STT, refer to evictions at the urban scale, helping to understand the process through tables and maps (STT, 2009; 2011a; 2012a).

[6] The name of the settlement in Khmer means 'Red Land'.

[7] For a thorough account of the monumental project for the Tonle Bassac Tribune (about 1963) see: Grant Ross & Collins, 2006.

[8] The development has never been built. Today, Dey Krahorm settlement has been replaced by a much smaller and slowly proceeding construction site.

[9] The research has focused on the cases of Borei Keila, Railway Rehabilitation Project, and Dey Krahorm (along with the so called White Building next to it). The work on the relocation sites is considered partial and can open future streams of research.

[10] The use of cross-subsidies from commercial developments had already been used by Phan Imex Company in Borei Keila.

[11] This absence is significant considering Borei Santepheap Pi has been developed by a private company: in Cambodia most of such private developments have almost monumental entrances, sometimes emphasised by an arch.

[12] Foucault's definition of 'dispositif' (Foucault, 1980) is used as model for understanding urban governmental mechanisms in the doctoral research mentioned above.

[13] 'Owner' is not the correct term since land title will (or might) be issued only after 5 years of stable occupations.

[14] It now appears as property of the garment

industry company 'The Willbes Cambodia & Co. Ltd.'– as stated in the entrance gate. This research has not been able to verify possible linkages of this company with 7NG.

[15] The translation simply reads as 'Oudong One': three more relocation sites have been built in its close surroundings in the following years (STT, 2012).

[16] It is a custom in Cambodia to wait for 6am to start bulldozing a settlement.

[17] Mainly STT and Licadho.

[18] Habitat for Humanity for instance proposes a typology (deemed too 'Western' by many communities) that costs about 2000 USD, while in this case the cost of each single unit was about 600 USD.

References

7NG Group Co. Ltd. (2010). Loan for Housing and Company Vision for Urban Development. Phnom Penh: 7NG. Retrieved from http://www.forum-urban-futures.net/files/Chanthou_Urban development and Housing %E2%80%93 a private sector perspective.pdf

Adler, D., Ketya, S., & Menzies, N. (2008). Land, Development and Conflict: Urban & Peri-Urban Phnom Penh. Working paper: Centre for Advanced Studies. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/3758683/Land_Development_and_Conflict_Urban_and_Peri-Urban_Phnom_Penh

Amnesty International. (2011). Eviction and Resistance in Cambodia - Five Women tell their stories. Amnesty International.

Caritas Cambodia. (2011). Caritas Germany Delegates Visits Caritas Cambodia's Programs. Retrieved October 29, 2014, from http://www.caritascambodia.org/index.php/component/content/article/34-news/100-caritas-germany-delegates-visits-caritas-cambodias-program

Carmichael, R. (2013). Cambodia railway project a disaster for relocated households. Retrieved from http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-05/an-cambodia-railway-project-a-disaster-for-relocated-households/4734786

Foucault, M. (1980). Power/knowledge : selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977. (C. Gordon, Ed.). Harlow: Longman.

Grant Ross, H., & Collins, D. L. (2006). Building Cambodia: New Khmer Architecture. Bangkok: The Key Publisher Company Ltd.

Jackson, W., & Vandy, M. (2014, August 23). Life still a struggle for "AIDS colony" families. Phnom Penh Post, pp. 2–5. Phnom Penh. Retrieved from http://www.phnompenhpost.com/post-weekend/life-still-struggle-%E2%80%98aids-colony%E2%80%99-families

Knight, K. (2013) Excerpt from interview conducted by Giorgio Talocci, 10 October.

Licadho. (2009). HIV/AIDS families evicted from Borei Keila - Briefing Paper 26.06.2009. Phnom Penh.

Licadho Canada. (2008). Dey Krahorm Community Land Case Explained. Retrieved from http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports/files/118DeyKrahormCommunityLandCaseExplained.pdf

Lindstrom, N. (2013). Policy for the Poor? Phnom Penh, Tenure Security and Circular 03. Phnom Penh: The Urban Initiative. Retrieved from http://www.kh.boell.org/downloads/Policy_for_the_Poor_2013_Circular03.pdf

McCurry, J. (2009, July 28). Cambodian government accused of creating "Aids colony." The Guardian. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jul/28/cambodian-government-accused-aids-colony

Mgbako, C., Gao, R. E., Joynes, E., Cave, A., & Mikhailevich, J. (2010). Forced Eviction and Resettlement in Cambodia: Case Studies from Phnom Penh. Washington University Global Studies Law Review, 9(1). Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.law.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1040&context=globalstudies

Paling, W. (2012). Planning a Future for Phnom Penh: Mega Projects, Aid Dependence and Disjointed Governance. Urban Studies, 49(13), 2889–2912. doi:10.1177/0042098012452457

People Improvement Organization. (2014). People Improvement Organization in Cambodia. Retrieved from www.peopleimprovement.org

Percival, T., & Waley, P. (2012). Articulating Intra-Asian Urbanism: The Production of Satellite Cities in Phnom Penh. Urban Studies, 49(13), 2873–2888. doi:10.1177/0042098012452461

Phnom Penh Capital Hall. (2014). Phnom Penh Capital Hall Homepage. Retrieved from www.phnompenh.gov.kh/

Rabé, P. E. (2005). Land Sharing in Phnom Penh: An Innovative but Insufficient Instrument of Secure Tenure for the Poor. Expert Group Meeting on Secure Land Tenure: New Legal Frameworks and Tools. UN-ESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand—8-9 December. Retrieved from https://www.fig.net/commission7/bangkok_2005/papers/3_3_rabe.pdf

Rabé, P. E. (2010). Land Sharing in Phnom Penh and Bangkok: Lessons from Four Decades of Innovative Slum Redevelopment Projects in Two Southeast Asian „Boom Towns" (pp. 1–29). Paper presented at the "Places We Live: Slums and Urban Poverty in the Developing World" policy workshop in Washington. Retrieved from http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/urban/places-we-live-competition-Rabe.pdf

Schneider, H. (2011). The conflict for Boeng Kak lake in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Pacific News, 36 (July/August), 4–10.

Springer, S. (2009). Violence, Democracy, and the Neoliberal "Order": The Contestation of Public Space in Posttransitional Cambodia. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 99(1), 138–162.

Springer, S. (2011). Violent Accumulation: A Postanarchist Critique of Property, Dispossession, and the State of Exception in Neoliberalizing Cambodia, 00(March), 1–19.

STT. (2006). Relocation or removal ? Facts and Figures, (02).

STT. (2009). The 8 Khan Survey. Urban Poor Settlements in Phnom Penh. Phnom Penh. Retrieved from teangtnaut.org/download/The-8-Khan-Survey-2009.pdf?

STT. (2010). A Home No More: Stories from Boeung Kok Lake. Facts and Figures, (18). Retrieved from http://teangtnaut.org/PDF/A-Home-no-more.pdf

STT. (2011a). Displaced Families: Phnom Penh 1990-2011. Facts and Figures, 19, 1–6.

STT. (2011b). Rehabilitation of Cambodia's Railways: Comparison of field data (pp. 1–26). Phnom Penh: STT. Retrieved from http://teangtnaut.org/PDF/Rehabilitation of Cambodias Railways_STT July 2011.pdf

STT. (2012a). Losing the Plot: Rapid Assessment of Household Debt in Trapeang Anhchanh. (N. Lindstrom, Ed.). Phnom Penh: STT. Retrieved from http://teangtnaut.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Losing-the-Plot_STT-2012_FINAL.pdf

STT. (2012b). Oudong Mapping, (May).

STT. (2012c). Railway Relocation in Phnom Penh: Six Women Tell their Stories. Facts and Figures, 20. Retrieved from teangtnaut.org/railways-relocation-six-women-tell-their-stories

STT. (2012d). Resettling Phnom Penh: 54 - and counting? Facts and Figures, 21, 1–14.

STT, Water, W., & Ket, M. (2012). Outside the Lines: Households excluded from the 12.44Ha Boeung Kak concession. (N. Lindstrom, Ed.). Phnom Penh: STT. Retrieved from http://teangtnaut.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Outside-the-Lines_STT2012_FINAL.pdf

Thiemann, J. (2012, November 16). Inside the HIV village, mutual jealousy divides the poor. The Phnom Penh Post. Retrieved from http://www.phnompenhpost.com/7days/inside-hiv-village-mutual-jealousy-divides-poor

Tudehope, M. (2012). A tale of two cities. A review of the development paradigm in Phnom Penh. (N. Lindstrom, Ed.). STT. Retrieved from www.teangtnaut.org

United Nations Human Rights. (2012). Eviction and Resettlement in Cambodia Human Costs, Impacts and Solutions. A study on Selected Urban Resettlement Cases. Phnom Penh: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Cambodia Country Office. Retrieved from http://cambodia.ohchr.org/WebDOCs/DocProgrammes/Resettlement_Study-28_Feb_2012_Eng.pdf

Vink, J. (2012a). A bag of rice, a tarp and you're clean…. Retrieved October 29, 2014, from http://blog.thecauseofprogress.com/2012/01/09/a-bag-of-rice-a-tarp-and-youre-clean/

Vink, J. (2012b). The Quest for Land. John Vink. Retrieved from https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/quest-for-land/id520997749?mt=8

Corresponding authors: Giorgio Talocci [giorgio.talocci.11@ucl.ac.uk] is an architect and educator. He is Teaching Fellow at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London, where he is currently co-directing the MSc Building and Urban Design in Development. He is in the process of completing a PhD thesis on 'inoperative' spaces and urban 'failures' in Phnom Penh.

Camillo Boano [c.boano@ucl.ac.uk] is an architect, urbanist and educator. He is Senior Lecturer at The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College of London (UCL), where he directs the MSc in Building and Urban Design in Development and co-direct of the UCL Urban Laboratory.