Project 8

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Presentation Details

# Venue

Within Isla Puting Bato is a preschool that is sponsored by a Korean organization. This location is often used for UPA meetings with community leaders. Having already met here twice this place is proven central location that is spacious and familiar. While my focus group discussion was held in a community leader’s house, this preschool is better equipped for a PowerPoint project, having a flat unused wall, and the fact that the projector won’t be using a community members electricity.

# Attendees

Invited to this presentation was the general council of leaders over the community of Isla Puting Bato. These are the same leaders who attended the focus group discussion. These leaders represent all 5 *puroks* of the community and are well respected. The leaders are seen as the face of the organized community that is working towards gaining land rights for the community.

Also invited was my supervisor Tina Jurado from Urban Poor Associates. She has been instrumental in helping my build relationships with the community and has helped organized the community of Isla. Furthermore she is probably the person most familiar with the community, the law and the current affairs and politics affecting the Isla area.

My research assistants, Jen Bermundo and Edmond Fajardo were also invited as they have been part of the entire field process. Their work was invaluable. And their opinion as Filipinos and Jen as an informal settler herself provided insight into the data that was gathered throughout this process

# Time and Date

The presentation was held on Saturday, April 20, 2013 at 10:00 am. This was when it was most likely all invited attendees would be available. Furthermore the timing allows for the avoidance of the extreme heat of midday and afternoon.

# Language

This has been an issue of great contemplation and concern. But it was finally decided that for clarity’s sake the presentation would be held in English with and clarification being provided by Tina or my research assistants in Filipino. With the importance of this information I didn’t want my deficiencies in the local language to be an issue. And as most Filipinos are highly proficient in understanding English if not speaking it, this seems to be the best and most effective choice.

# Presenter

I myself was the main presenter having chosen to use English and being the most familiar with my data. Although not to the degree of Tina, I do have a relationship with the community and feel it is enough for me to present this data.

Presentation Content

# Schedule

The intended scheduling of events has myself, Tina and my research assistants arrive in the community at 9:40 am to prepare for my presentation. 10:00am is the intended start time, but culturally speaking people. The first section of the presentation is detailing the purpose of the research, my main research question and my methods. The second section is presentation of significant findings. The third is presentation of my recommendations. And the final section is my acknowledgements and recognition. This is expected to take around 60 minutes.

After the presentation is finished the floor will be opened for comments, questions and clarification.

# Format

The presentation will be held in conversational format, open to questions or point of clarification at any point though a time is reserved for such at the end. There is a power point presentation but only as a way to provide a written reference. The power point will have the main points being discussed shown as a way to keep everyone on the same page. But the power point itself is not the crux of the presentation. Maintaining everyone’s focus, attention and understanding in a culturally appropriate and effective manner would be best conducted through a conversational approach than a formal presentation style.

Presentation Conclusions

# Presentation success

There are ten leaders in the general council. Nine were in attendance. With such leadership roles being on a volunteer basis, I had not expected everyone to show up, especially since the demands of life within an informal settlement are many. In fact only nine were present for the focus group discussion.

For some of the leaders it seemed the English was perhaps intimidating. That was fortunately balanced with the help of my research assistants who were on hand to explain in Filipino any points of clarification.

The presentation portion actually took more than an hour. With the complexity of the data, it took longer than expected to lay out, in a simple and understandable manner the situation on hand. I think in terms of planning, I underestimated the length of the presentation portion because I myself am so familiar with the data. But conveying that data in a thorough yet easily digestible format is another matter.

# Positives of presentation

The PowerPoint though highly formalized nor visually aesthetic served its purpose well. The PowerPoint was intended to be a visual record of my presentation. Because I was speaking in English I wanted the information to be clearly communicated and not dependent on my language skills. The PowerPoint listed the main points in simple words. For example one slide listed the 8 variables that I used to assess the relocation situation if Isla. Another slide listed the available options for Isla’s relocation. It was in this way that I could refer to something concrete not abstract as a way to anchor the train of thought throughout the presentation.

It was wise to invite my research assistants along. Though I originally invited them as guests, I knew it was possible they might be needed in a translation capacity. My research assistants were useful during a few times in which the ddata I was presenting was a bit complex. But I don’t regret using English. It would’ve been difficult and a poor depth of explanation if I had used Filipino myself. And seeing as how I am most familiar with the information I needed to be the presenter, which was the right choice despite the language issue.

# Areas of improvement

While I did approach this presentation as more of a conversational than a formal approach. I feel like it would’ve be more effective to formalize my structure in a conversational way. Meaning, instead of being open to questions and clarifications throughout but only specifically having a community response portion at the end I think limited the give and take that could hvve been possible. Instead I should have opened time for responses after each section was presented and while this would’ve been less time effective, I think it would help solidify the grasp the community had on the data being presented as well as allow for a more dynamic experience.

As a whole the presentation went on without a hitch or as much as could be expected despite the language barrier. At the time of the presentation I hadn’t made handouts that detailed the information in a easily digestible manner. That is something I’m still working on so that the community can have a copy of the information for their own use.

# Usefulness of information

The community members were attentive for the most part to the data being presented. From the start, I was viewed as an educated outsider. Being partnered with UPA, an American, and student made my involvement in this something unique. My impression is that I was seen as less important than UPA, but my opinions were important because community members are looking for anything they can think of or use to help their situation.

That being said, my data was not necessarily the information that most of the community leaders expected to hear nor were happy to hear, and that was apparent on their faces. The leaders were polite. They verbally and even to my eyes appeared to be grateful for my interest in their case and the time spent on their behalf.

It seemed that the leaders were a bit disheartened by my presentation. I believe there might have been hopes that I could find some perfect leverage that would help the community get everything they want. But based on the questions from the leaders, they seemed to be interested in why I had come to the conclusions I had derived from the data. When I explained that I had balanced the various agencies and factors involved they seemed to take that response as something to ponder.

My recommendation to open lines of communication is something that was received well. UPA generally waits until they have all their ducks in a row before moving forward with a proposal to the NHA. But from my research and the data at hand, I have hypothesized that one form of accountability to the government would be community participation in the relocation which means opening lines of communication as soon as possible. This idea has struck a chord with community leaders. Even the UPA understood the dangers of putting all their eggs in one basket and not laying the foundation for various possibilities should they not get rights to the land.

My conclusion that the probability of getting land rights is low while treated politely was not something that was truly considered. UPA and Isla both believe they have a moderate chance at gaining rights to the land. Unless UPA also changes their opinion on the matter I do not believe the community will change their stance on the matter.

There was discussion as to what it would look like for community members to be the accountability to the governments’ relocation system. Based off of the focus group discussion in which the community leaders shared about their distrust of the government, I stated that armed with knowledge of their rights they could be a capable community that if they could muster the energy and organization might be able to guarantee for themselves as good of a situation as possible all things considered. I don’t have all the answers in regards to what it would specifically look like as this would be a new approach to relocation. It was a question I left the leaders with.

By the end of the presentation there remained a number of questions hanging in the area. At the very least a conversation was started. While it did not appear the community wanted to change their focus from land rights to relocation, they did begin to see the significance of planning and organization as ground work for a possible relocation rather than having a complete expectation of land tenure.

Among the questions that remained unanswered but were a sign that the data could be useful towards the efforts of Isla were:

What would it look like for us(Isla) to keep the receiving government and the NHA accountable?

What would the first step be towards opening up lines of communication?

Is it possible to have a just relocation if we (Isla) must relocate outside of Manila?