

Drawing Up and Examine Some Indicators to Recognizing Blighted Fabrics (Case Study: The Fifth Area of Region 8 of Isfahan)

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Abstract: The dynamic system of city is changing constantly. With passing time, some problems such as poverty, disorganized, environmental pollutions, etc., will change the image of some parts of the city and give them a different image which has signs of deterioration. The issue which we face today is recognizing such these urban fabrics which is going out of city cycle and converted to blighted areas. Considering that there is no comprehensive description of blighted fabrics, there is neither some indexes for recognizing such these areas, nor research or project in this field. The main purpose of this study is to draw up some indicators for recognizing blighted areas in Iran with social, economical and physical dimensions. For resulting this purpose, 20 indicators with different contexts such as roads network, land use, the percent of arid lands, the existence of deteriorated fabric, the probability of natural disaster occurrence, public facilities and utilities, land value, size of lots, taxpaying, decreasing population, the percent of abandoned buildings, unsuitable urban industrial units and environmental pollutions have been drawn up. At the end, these indicators are studied in the fifth area of region 8 of Isfahan. The results show that this area with including 13 of 20 indicators is blighted.

Keywords: Blighted area, erosion, indicator, Isfahan

INTRODUCTION

Although there are a lot of mixed industrial-residential fabrics, uneconomical commercial areas, high amount of arid lands, environmental polluted areas and so on in Iran, the indicators to recognize such these areas have been drawn up just for two categories (deteriorated fabrics and informal settlements) which are not comprehensive enough. It is maybe because of that more than 67,000 ha of deteriorated fabrics with 8,500,000 populations in 383 cities and more than 39,000 hectares of informal settlements with 800,000 populations in 52 cities of Iran have been identified so far. Therefore, the most important issue is that blighted fabrics include some more areas which should be identified.

In Iran, the most concentration is on deteriorated fabrics and informal settlements and no research has been done for recognizing other blighted fabrics. Also, there is not any comprehensive description for such these fabrics. Therefore, the necessity of concentrating on this subject in this study is obvious.

The research method which is used in this study is descriptive-analytic method. So, first of all the indexes of recognizing deteriorated fabrics and informal settlements in Iran will be introduced and after that privileges and disadvantages of these indexes will be recognized through analyzing them. This way will

result in drawing up some new indexes in this field. At the end, one area in Esfahan will be exam with these new indexes as a case study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are some cases of implementing redevelopment area plans in some of developed and developing countries such as Canada, England, Thailand and India. But in Iran, the main focus of urban planners is on deteriorated fabrics and informal settlements and the phrase of 'blighted area' and 'redevelopment area plan' are not familiar for them. Therefore, there are not any indexes for recognizing blighted areas and there is no plan in the name of redeveloping an area. Which is why no papers, plans and finding were found in this field? Therefore, the conditions of the area and purpose of redevelopment area plan in two surveyed case studies would be summarized:

Carmer hill redevelopment area plan: Cramer Hill Study is located along the Delaware River Back Channel and adjacent land. This Cramer Hill redevelopment Plan proposes to strongly revitalize area businesses and housing and to create new commercial, housing and recreational opportunities during the next ten years.

The area's problems can be summarized as follows:

- Proliferation and concentration of vacant property, mainly former industrial site
- Underutilization of property
- Significant amount of fair to poor occupied housing conditions
- Extensive environmental contamination

Amritsar redevelopment area plan: The city of Amritsar is located in the north-west part of India about 465 km from New Delhi. It is located in the east of International Border (Pakistan). The aim of the redevelopment project in this city was to simply demolish and either widen the road or create a corridor and an open space.

Main features of Punjab redevelopment of damaged areas are:

- The Act could be applied in the whole state of Punjab
- Accordingly any area can be declared as damaged area under the preview of the Act for purpose of redevelopment/improvement
- This new legislation laid down a more convenient procedure for acquisition of land enabling the Trust to take immediate possession of land, defer the payment of compensation for land to each owner to a proportionate share of the income i.e., sale proceeds minus the cost of the scheme
- All redevelopment projects are to be planned and implemented on no profit, no loss basis
- Power to demolish the structures constructed in contravention to the sanctioned layout plan

METHODOLOGY

The survey method is descriptive and analytical. Therefore, first of all, the indicators of recognizing informal settlements and blighted areas have been analyzed. Then, the advantages and disadvantages of the indicators have been determined. After that some new indicators have been drawn to cover the disadvantages. At the end, the new indicators have been examined in a case study in Isfahan, Iran in 2010.

DISCUSSION

The survey of existing indexes in Iran:

Indexes of recognizing deteriorated fabric in Iran: The following indexes had been suggested for recognizing deteriorated fabrics by Renovation and Restoration Organization of Iran (2010):

- Blocks with more than 50% lots which are less than 200 m²
- Blocks with more than 50% unsustainable foundations

- Blocks with more than 50% passageway which has less than 6 m width (The Renovation and Rehabilitation Organization of Isfahan, 2006)?

In this regards, the Renovation and Restoration Organization of Iran emphasized that those fabrics can be determined as deteriorated fabrics which have all of three mentioned indexes.

Indicators of recognizing informal settlements in Iran: Considering disproportionateness population growth, physical spread of cities and the process of preparing dwellings and related facilities for those groups of people who do not have enough income and through forming urban poverty and the existence of agricultural lands around cities which attract immigrants from small cities and rural areas to achieve a job or more income. Those groups of people who do not have enough income will be inhabited in outskirts of cities and will build informal buildings. Therefore, because of these informal buildings, unsuitable road networks, lack of basic facilities and informal settlements will be formed.

The following indicators had been suggested for recognizing informal settlements by Ministry of Housing and Urban Development of Iran:

Indicators of recognizing physical traits:

- Morphology and form of these fabrics is erratic
- Physical dimension of most of lots is very small and most of dwellings are short in height (mostly one story) and do not have any plan
- Physical poverty and physical segregation
- High residential density
- Fabric form (more than 50% of passageways have less than 6m width and 90% of foundations have been built without engineering norms.)
- The fabric is not resistant against earthquake with medium Richter
- The fabric includes non secure places such as river bed, faults, streams and so on
- The materials of foundations are weak; because more than 50% of foundations have been built with unsuitable materials such as break, stone, mud, cement and so on
- Most of lots do not have water and sewage junction
- In some cases, there is illegal use from water and electricity networks
- There is not any hierarchy in road network structure. Also, per capita and width of roads is not enough

Indicators of recognizing economical, social and cultural traits:

- Non native inhabitants (a lot of rural immigrants and poor families)

- Disharmonic mixture of population, especially in big cities
- Social inelegance
- The existence of insecure places, especially for children, young people and women
- Low value of lands and dwellings
- Inhabitants do not have any tendency to improve the condition of their dwellings because of poverty
- Uncertain income sources of inhabitants
- Most of inhabitants are from low income people
- Personal and private organizations do not invest in these fabrics
- The existence of special jobs such as scrap and rubbish collection, pedlary and so on
- The segregation boundary of lots is not obvious
- There is not any formal land (possession) documents
- Illegal occupancy

Indicators of recognizing functional traits:

- Discordant land use in most fabrics (such as abattoir) or contiguity with airport, brickworks and so on
- Lack of utilities
- The existence of insecure spaces and insecure times
- Inefficient and unsuitable roads
- Unresponsive urban management
- Lack of public spaces

Indicators of recognizing environmental traits:

- Lack of suitable vegetation in thoroughfares
- Absence of a suitable system for leading and exclusion of surface waters and collecting rubbish
- Absence of a suitable sewage system
- keeping domesticated animals at homes
- Unsustainable and unhygienic environment (The Municipal of Isfahan, 2010; Shafaei and Sharan, 2005)

Analytical criticism of indicators: As it mentioned, blighted area in Iran include just two kinds of fabrics (deteriorated fabric and informal settlement). Presently, Renovation and Restoration Organization of Iran is codifying a new strategic document covered both deteriorated fabric and informal settlement. This is a positive step to achieve the aim of integrating blighted fabrics, but it should be considered that there are some other kinds of blighted areas that are not deteriorated or informal but they are blighted.

On the other hand, considering all of social, economical and physical contexts simultaneously is

really necessary; because it has been experienced that those plans and projects which has been prepared physically were not enough successful and they did not implemented completely.

Through an analytical look, it can be realized that all three mentioned indexes for deteriorated fabrics are physical and do not include social, economical and environmental components, While it is better to consider social subjects because of human possession in society. Also, the determined dimension of lots (200 m²) is not suitable and perhaps it is better to decrease this dimension through a more precise and expertise view. In addition, this figure should prescribe for each area toward its conditions.

On the other hand, in codifying indicators of recognizing informal settlements however all contexts have been considered, some of the indicators are general. Also, in some cases because of ambiguity of definitions, the concept of indicator did not observe and there is no scale or measure to recognize that a trait exist in a fabric or not. For example, when it mentioned that “Low value of lands and dwellings” is one of the indicators, it should specify that how can the value of lands and dwellings be evaluated and what is the main measure to consider this indicator as one of the indicators of an area. Moreover, it does not determine that how many of mentioned indicators demonstrate an informal settlement.

PROPOSALS

As it can be realized from analyzing existing indexes and indicators, the codified indexes and indicators in Iran for recognizing blighted fabrics are not comprehensive and they cannot cover all kinds of blighted fabrics. Therefore, in this section some new indicators will be drawn up to recognize blighted fabrics. If more than 50% of these indicators exist in an area, the area is blighted. These indicators are:

- Faulty street layout (Philadelphia City Planning Commission-2, 2006); such as those passage way which do not have asphalt or those which do not have enough width and so on. These dimensions are specified in Table 1:
- Economically or socially undesirable land use (some land use such as hospital decrease the value of land economically but commercial land use increase the value of land. Also, some land uses such as hospital, prison, stores and so on which are not desirable for inhabitants.)
- High percent of arid lands or undeveloped lots which have no tax receipts (at least 5% of redevelopment area) (Philadelphia City Planning Commission-1, 2006)

Table 1: Characteristics of passageways in a city of Iran

Road type	Synonymous	Minimum width of pavement (m)	Maximum linear slope	Width of each line (m)	Width of passage (m)
alley	Secondary pavement	4	10	-	4
Thoroughfare	Main pavement	3.5	10	2.5	6
Access road, neighborhood peripheral road	Secondary residential street, local street	1.5 in each side	10	2.75	10-12
Around neighborhood roadway	Neighborhood collector	1.5-2 in each side	8	3	15-18
Secondary arterial	Around parish roadway Secondary arterial, collector street	1.5-2 in each side	6	2.75-3.25	18-20
	Around area roadway	Main arterial	1.65-2 in each side	6	2.75-3.25
Main arterial	Passing way	Highway	3 in each side	5	2.25-2.5
	Highway	Expressway	-	5	2.25-2.5
	Freeway	Motorway	-	4	2.25-2.75
					According to regulations of road office

Habibi and Sedighe (1999)

Table 2: Per capita of urban land uses in Iran

Land use	Per capita (m ²)	
	Max.	Min.
Residential	50	40
Education	5	3
Hygienic and therapeutic	1.5	0.75
Urban facilities and utilities	7	5
Commercial	4	2
Sports	2.5	2
Administrative and police services	2.5	1.5
Industry	3.5	2
Religious- cultural	1.5	0.75
Transportation and passages	25	20
Green spaces	12	7

Housing and Urban Development Organization of Esfahan (2005)

- The existence of deteriorated fabrics (according to three indexes which is determined by Renovation and Restoration Organization of Iran, 2010);
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire and other causes
- The existence of buildings in which it is unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work because of decay, unsuitable design, faulty structure, inadequate facilities and so on (Ware, 2007)
- The laying out of property or lots in disregard of contours, drainage and other physical characteristics of the terrain and surrounding conditions in designing streets (American Planning Association, 2004)
- Inadequate streets and other rights of way (the per capita of passage network in cities in Iran is 20-25) (Housing and Urban Development Organization of Esfahan, 2005)
- Inadequate public spaces and utilities; the proposed per capita in this field in cities in Iran is specified in Table 2:
- The existence of properties or lots or other areas that are subject to inundation by water
- Inadequate suitable public utilities in the area (Oregon Constitution, 2009). (Suitable public utilities include major facilities and utilities which are education, hygienic and therapeutic, cultural, sports and green spaces (Shahrokhane Consultants, 2006). Per capita of these major facilities and utilities can be seen in Table 3:

Table 3: Per capita of major facilities and utilities in Iran

Major facilities and utilities	Per capita (area and inner area)	Per capita (outer area (region and city))
Education	2.25	0.62
Green space	32	8.87
Sports	1.6	0.54
Cultural	0.13	1.28
Therapeutic	0.18	1

Shahrokhane Consultants (2006)

- Very low value of lots and lands (as value of lots in redevelopment area be less than 1/3 of average of value of lots in the city) (Philadelphia City Planning Commission-1, 2006)
- The existence of subdivided lots of irregular form and shape and inadequate size (less than 180 m²) and those are in multiple ownership (California Health and Safety Code Sections 2005; The renovation and rehabilitation organization of Isfahan, 2006)
- Unpaid taxes for at least 3 years continually in the area (Philadelphia City Planning Commission-2, 2006)
- Loss of population because of deterioration of the area (Oregon Constitution, 2009)
- The existence of high amount of abandoned buildings (at least 10% of redevelopment area) (Philadelphia City Planning Commission, 2002)
- The existence of abandoned industrial areas and unsuitable industrial units (Urban Services Organization, Isfahan Municipality, 2010)
- The existence of areas with inadequate facilities and utilities (Department of Development of City of Camden, 2004; Urban and Rural Management Organization of Iran, 2006)
- Considerable amount of environmental pollutions (Keyvani, 2003)

CASE STUDY

The fifth area of the eighth region of Esfahan which includes 6 sectors named Limjir, Koojan, Masoudiye, Kooye Mellat, Parteman and Ferdavan, is located in green and agricultural lands of Esfahan that after years, some dwellings and other buildings have been constructed because of increasing population

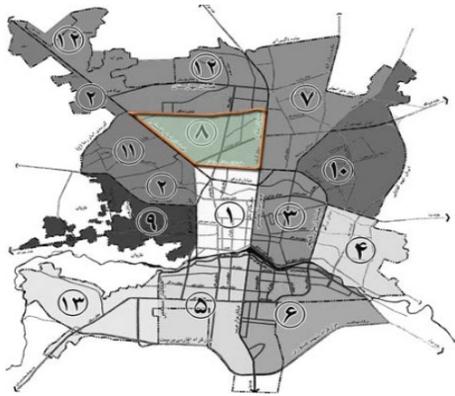


Fig. 1: Location of region 8 in Esfahan



Fig. 2: Location of area 5 in region 8

(Fig. 1, 2). This area includes deteriorated fabric, informal settlement and those fabrics which has rural past.

Analyzing blighted indicators in the area: In this section, the drawn up indicators are evaluated in the 8-5 area.

Indicator 1: In this area, most of the streets have standard width but most important issues are: the hierarchy of road network is not observed; the Level of Service (LOS) in one of the main highways (Imam Khomeini highway) is D; the lightening of the streets is not suitable and some of the roads do not have suitable asphalt or other pavements. So, this indicator is true for this area.

Indicator 2: As region 8 of Esfahan is located in agricultural lands, high percent of lands in area 5 is devoted to agriculture. It means that 252 lots which are 551160 m² of agricultural lands are located in this area. These lands were used for cultivation when there were no buildings on them because there were out of boundary of city. But these lands are in boundary of city and have more value than before. On the other hand, agricultural lands are not economically suitable.

Therefore, considering both which mentioned above, it will be resulted that it is better to reuse such these lands for another land use.

Indicator 3: Based on new statistics, 15.56% of area's lands are arid (which is absolutely more than 5%), which is mentioned in indicator. So this indicator is true in this area (Naghsh Jahan Pars Consultants, 2005).

Indicator 4: Considering the renovation and improvement organization report, a part of Koojan sector with an area of 48.35 ha is identified as deteriorated fabric. Therefore, this indicator is true in this area (The Renovation and Rehabilitation Organization of Isfahan, 2010).

Indicator 5: There is no land use such as wood store, oil and gas store and etc in this area which is dangerous for inhabitants because of danger of fire. So, this indicator is not true in this area.

Indicator 6: In the eighth region of Esfahan and especially in its fifth area as a case study of this study, most of buildings are not standard and more than 67% of buildings are not constructed according to building codes and physically are not stable. This statistic is without those buildings which do not have building permit from municipality (The Municipal of Isfahan, 2006).

So, when more than 50% of buildings in the area are not suitable for people to live in, this indicator is true in this area, too.

Indicator 7: Physical situation of area's lands and topography of the area is not similar to which is mentioned in indicator. Therefore, this indicator is not true in this area.

Indicator 8: According to the indicator, it is suitable to devote 20 to 25% of the area to road network. In this area, 20.07% of the area is road network which is more than the digit mentioned in the indicator. So, this indicator is not true in this area.

Indicator 9: For surveying this indicator, the table of per capita of each land use of the area is compared with per capita table which suggested by Housing and Urban Planning Organization.

Analyzing the Table 4 shows that the area has lack of all land uses except in transportation and passages field that is about 0.07 more than the minimum of which is suggested by Housing and Urban Planning Organization. In other cases, the per capita of land uses in the area -especially for Greenery-is much less than the presented standard land uses' per capita. So, this indicator is true for this area.

Table 4: Per capita of land uses in the area

The land use	Area (m ²)	Percentage	Per capita
Residential	1214979	34.69	30.21
Education	42180	1.20	1.05
Hygienic and therapeutic	7361	0.21	0.19
Urban facilities and utilities	1215	0.4	0.03
Commercial	56179	1.6	1.4
Sports	11708	0.34	0.29
Administrative and Police services	801	0.02	0.02
Industry	81152	2.33	2.02
Religious-cultural	16199	0.47	0.4
Transportation and passages	802892	23.05	20.07
Greenery	13611	0.39	0.34
Other facilities	69619	1.49	1.69
Others	1180153	33.69	29.33
Summation	3502054	100	87.08

Shahrokhane Consultants (2006)

Table 5: Major facilities and utilities in the area

The land use	Area (m ²)	Percent	Per capita
Education	42180	2.2	2.05
Parks and public greenery	13611	0.39	0.34
Sports	11708	0.34	0.29
Religious-cultural	16199	0.47	0.4
Hygienic and therapeutic	7361	0.21	0.19

Shahrokhane Consultants (2006)

Indicator 10: The situation of the area and its surrounding lands has some features which do not correspond with this indicator. So, this indicator cannot be considered for this area.

Indicator 11: For surveying this indicator in the area, per capita of major facilities and utilities in the area was compared with the per capita table which is mentioned in the indicator. The per capita of major facilities and utilities in the area is shown in the following Table 5:

Comparing the per capita of major facilities and utilities in the area with the per capita table which is mentioned in the indicator is shown that the area has lack of all major facilities and utilities except in hygienic and therapeutic field (0.19 per capita). In other cases, the per capita of major facilities and utilities in the area-especially for Greenery (0.34 per capita) -is much less than the presented standard land uses' per capita. So, this indicator can be considered for this area.

Indicator 12: As in this indicator, the value of residential and commercial lands is comparing with the average value of lots in the city; in the following table the value of lots in the city is presented.

Table 6: The value of lots in regions of Esfahan

Region	Residential			Commercial		
	Min.	Max.	The average	Min.	Max.	The average
Region 8	70000	1500000	785000	600000	6000000	3300000
The average of the city	229286	2821430	1532500	1371430	10157143	5597143

According to municipality's assessment office and Isfahan Regions Real Estate Agencies (2010)

According to the Table 6, 1/3 of the value of residential and commercial lands in the city is 510833 and 1865714, respectively. In this area, in some sections such as Ferdavan and Parteman, the minimum cost of 1 m² residential lots is 500000 Rials which is considerably less than 1/3 of average of value of lots in the city. Also, it is through for commercial lots; because the minimum cost of 1 m² commercial lot is 600000 Rials. Therefore, this indicator is through for the determined area.

Indicator 13: According to statistics, in this area, around 62.7% of residential lots are less than 180 m². So, this indicator is true for the area, too (Table 7).

Indicator 14: Based on municipality's statistics, in 2011, from approximately 80000 of lots' owners in section 8 just 18348 of them paid their taxes which means that only around 23% of inhabitants paid their taxes. Therefore, this indicator can be seen in the area.

Indicator 15: Although the fabric of the area is deteriorated and unsuitable, as the cost of lots are considerably low, many poor families who lives in rural areas tend to prefer to migrate to this area. Furthermore, because of the poverty of the area's inhabitants, they are not able to migrate to other parts of the city. So, loss of population cannot be seen in the area.

Indicator 16: In this area, about 0.66% of buildings are abandoned which is significantly less than 10%. So, this indicator is not true for the area (shahrokhane consultants, 2010).

Indicator 17: There are 237 lots of abandoned or unsuitable industrial units in the area. So, this indicator is seen in the area, too (shahrokhane consultants, 2010).

Indicator 18: Some parts of the area have lack of main land uses. Take for example: there is not enough school in eastern parts, enough parks and library in southern parts and enough polyclinic and sports area in whole parts. Moreover, there is not any fire fighting station in the area. Therefore, this indicator can be seen in the area.

Indicator 19: The Environment Organization of Iran has divided industries into different groups based on the amount of pollution that they produce. Considering this division, some of the industries in the area such as molding and mosaic tile workshop are illegal in neighborhoods. In addition, using strong poisons and

Table 7: The percentage of different type of lots with various sizes

Size of lots (m ²)	Less than 120	Between 120 and 180	Total
Percentage	31.6	31.1	62.7

Shahrokhane Consultants (2006)

pouring sewage of factories into the agricultural lands, streams and sumps would lead to pollution of soil and water. So, this indicator is seen in the area.

It was mentioned that existing more than 50% of the indicators in an area prove that the area is blighted. Therefore, as 13 items of codified indicators are true for the area, the fifth area of the eighth section of Esfahan is blighted.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious that as not only Isfahan, but as a whole all of Iran have different kinds of fabrics with various characteristics with sort of blighted areas. Lack of some indicators for recognizing blighted areas in these fabrics is very important. By giving these areas, internal development and preventing urban sprawl would be more practical. In this way, in one hand, there would be a considerable success in urban growth. On the other hand, many unprofitable areas would be revived.

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