

ABSTRACT

Housing Policy Approaches to Community Development and Squatter Settlements

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This research paper attempts to identify trends in Housing Policy in Jamaica with special reference to squatter settlements and community development. The characteristics of persons living in six selected squatter settlements in the 1970s are reviewed within the context of the dual typology proposed by Stokes and Turner, Slums of Hope/Barriadas versus Slums of Despair/Corralones. The objective is to find out whether the six settlements, which were later chosen as squatter upgrading projects, exhibited characteristics of Slums of Hope, before the upgrading process began.

While looking at the process of squatter upgrading, the role of community development is reviewed to test the link between community development and shelter improvement, fulfillment of housing financial obligations and the development of self-sustaining communities and community organizations.

Two former squatter settlements in Kingston, Sievwright Gardens and Drewsland are used to examine the changes caused by upgrading and the effect of community development on the communities and community organizations.

The findings of the research suggests a link between community development and positive changes within the upgraded communities. The research also reveals the effect of the ideology of government on the community development approaches used in upgrading projects and highlights the influence of the local, national and international political environment on the outcome of community development.