

International Policy Workshop on  
Rural-Urban Poverty Linkages  
Hangzhou, 2-4 September 2014

# Peri-urbanization, Poverty and Population Policy in Asia: An Overview

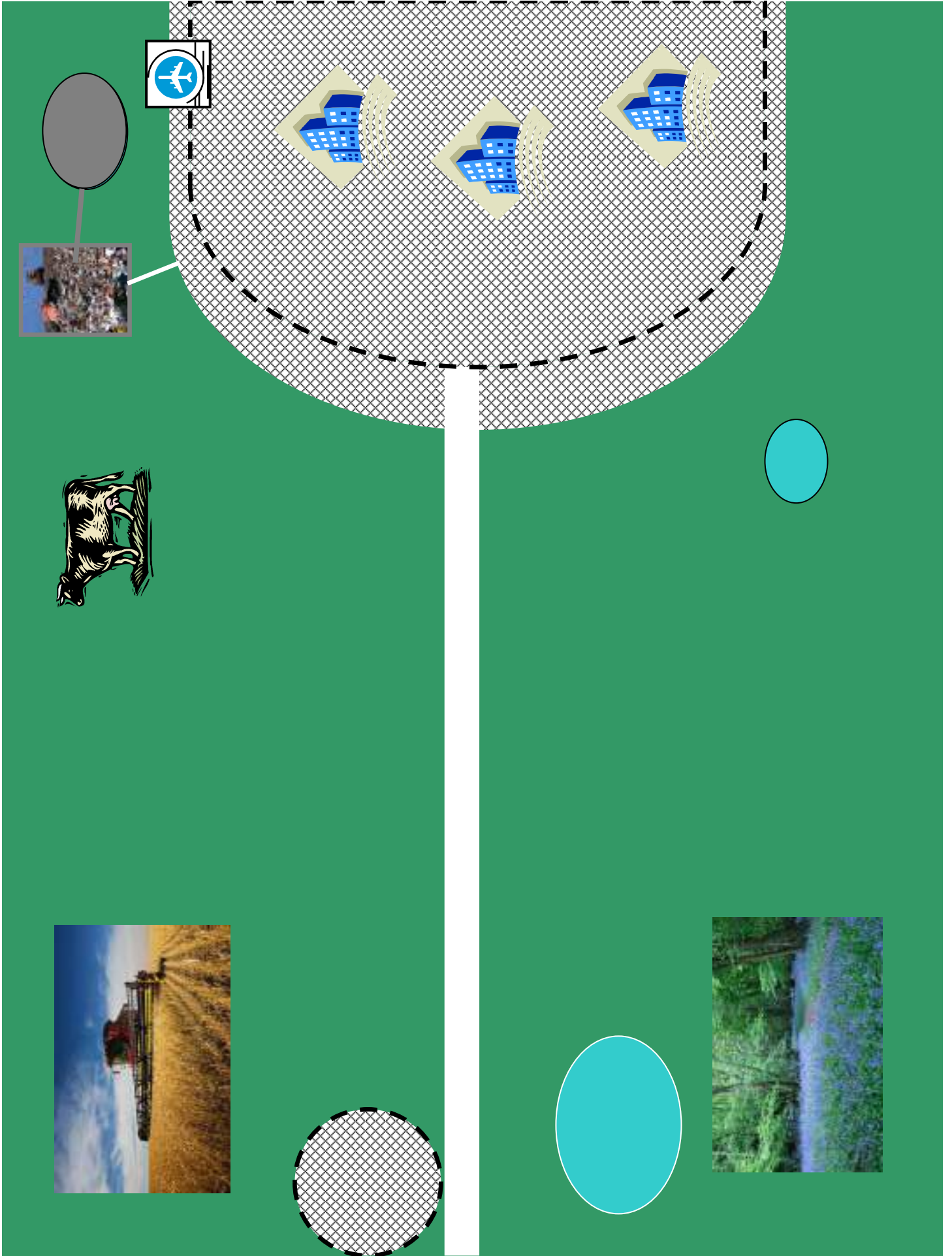
Yap Kioe Sheng

This presentation is an input to the international policy workshop on rural-urban linkages held in Zhejiang, PRC on 2-4 September 2014. The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the organizers (the Asian Development Bank [ADB] and the International Poverty Reduction Center in China [IPRCC]), or ADB's Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB and IPRCC do not guarantee the accuracy of the data and information in this paper.



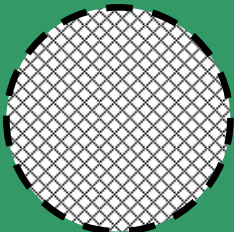
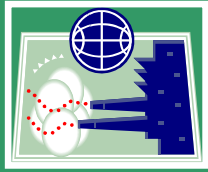
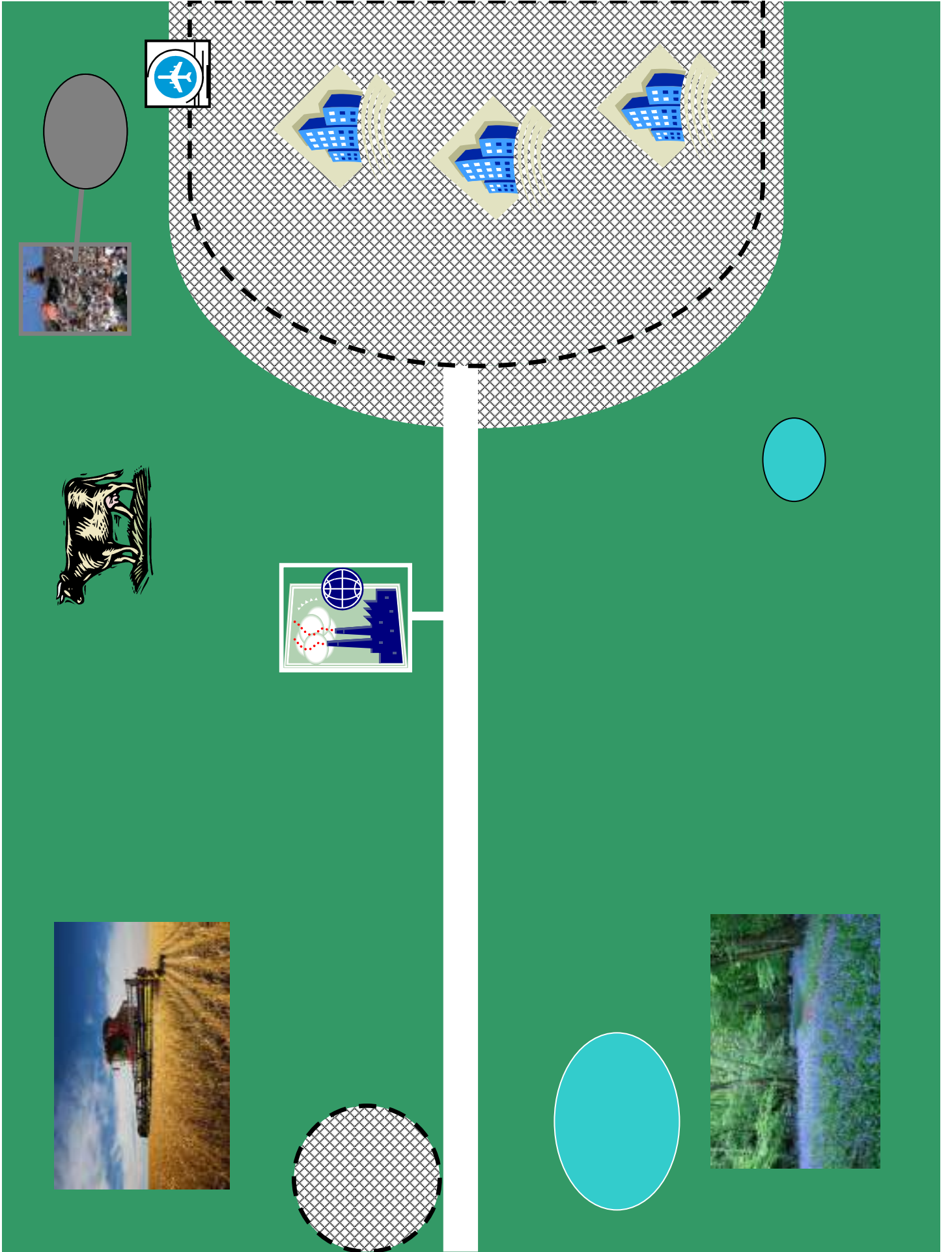
Some see a future cross-border mega-urban corridor linking large cities and including small cities, towns and rural areas

Peri-urbanization



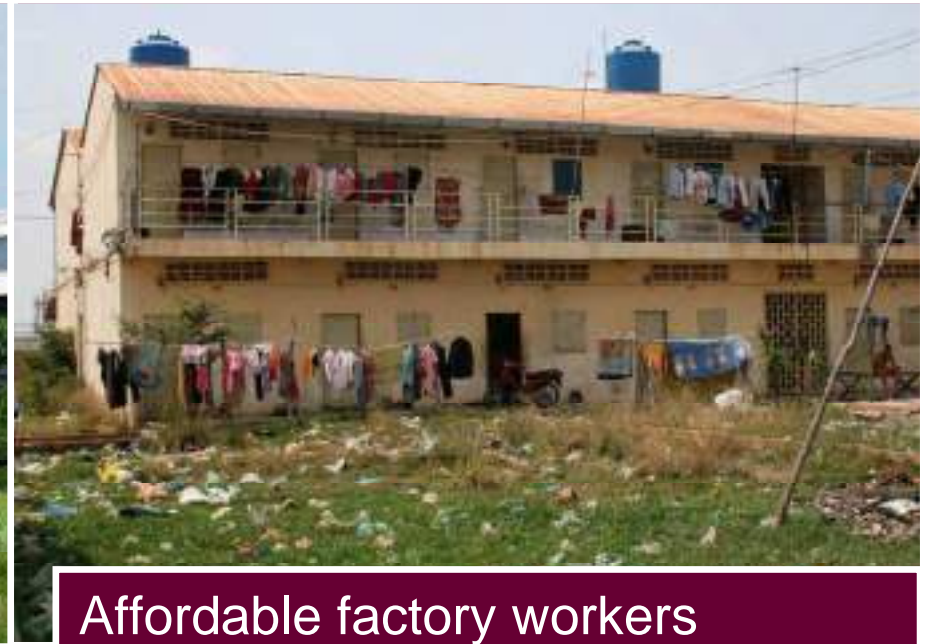


Environmental degradation  
and groundwater extraction



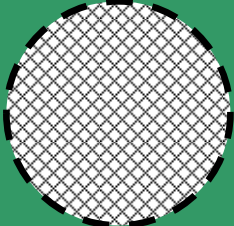
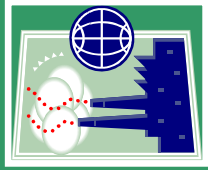
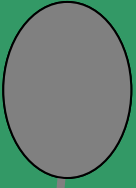
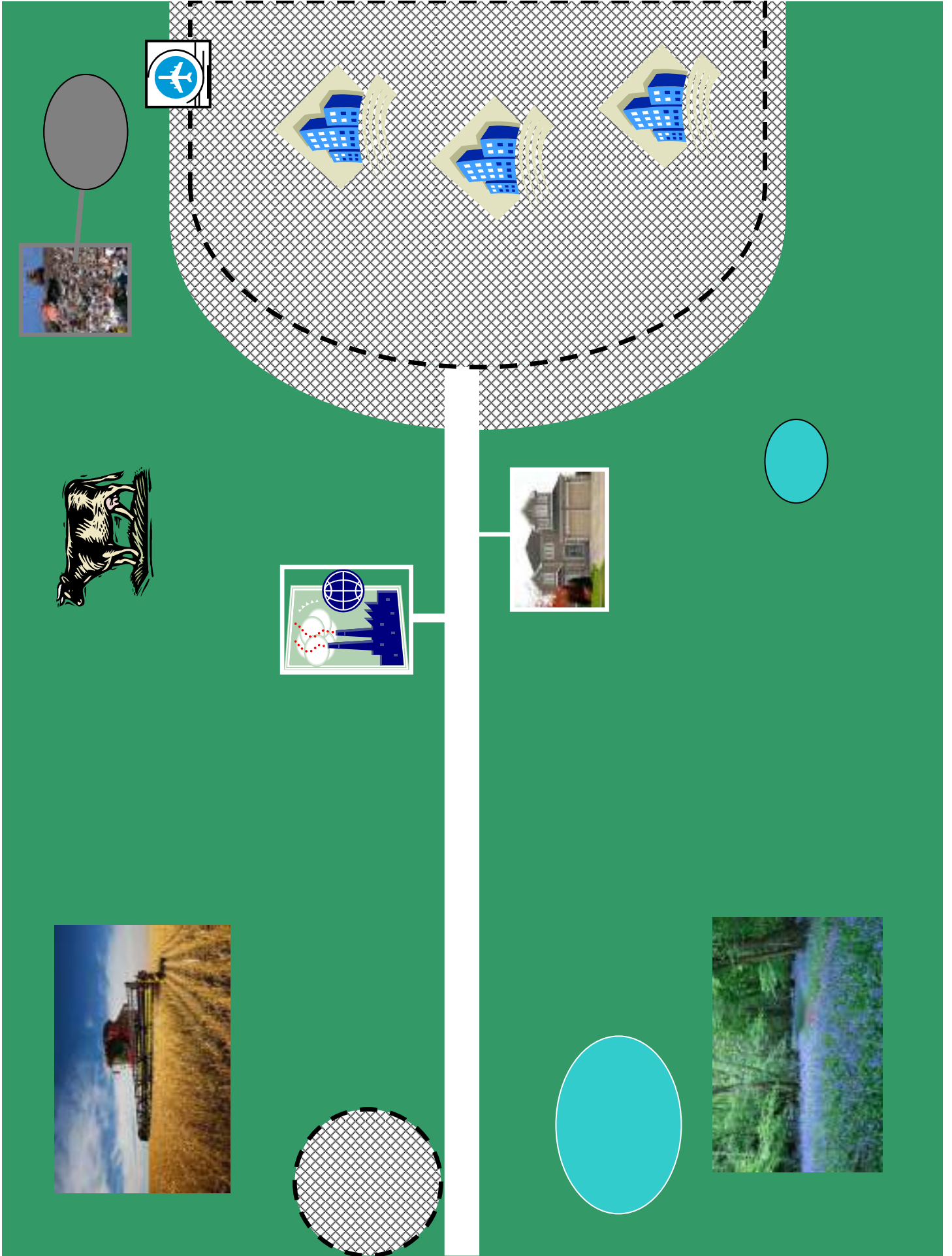


Factories amidst the fields;  
is waste properly treated?



Affordable factory workers  
housing, but a planner's nightmare







## Housing estates between coconut plantations



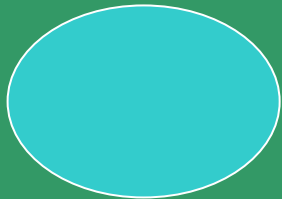
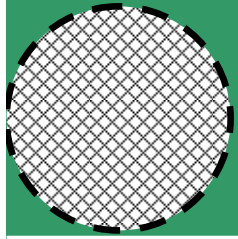
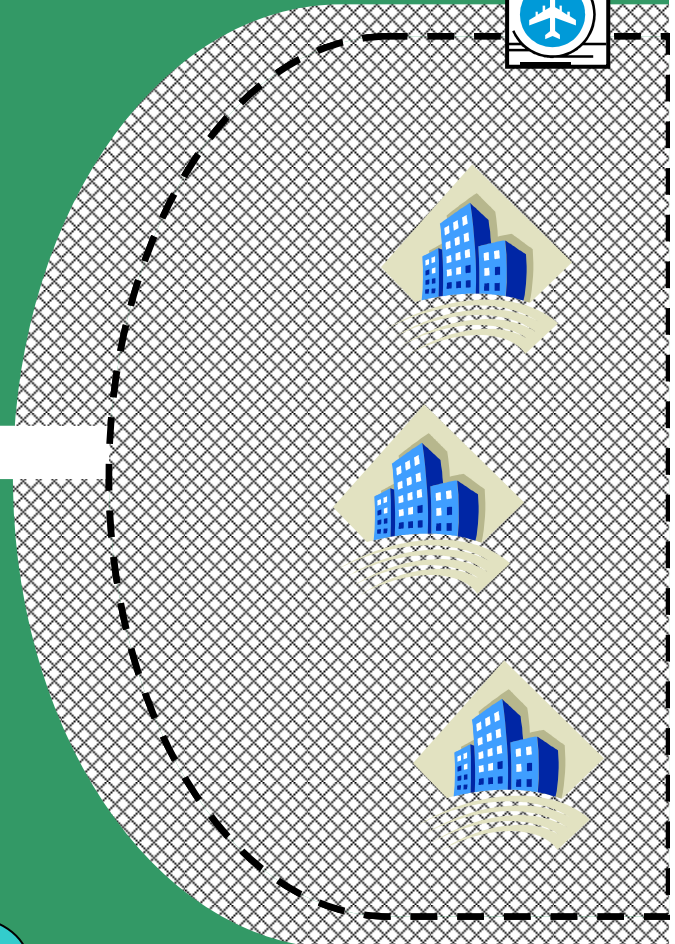
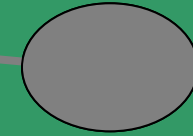
## Middle-income housing next to rice fields



Each housing estate has its own private bridge to commute to the city by private car

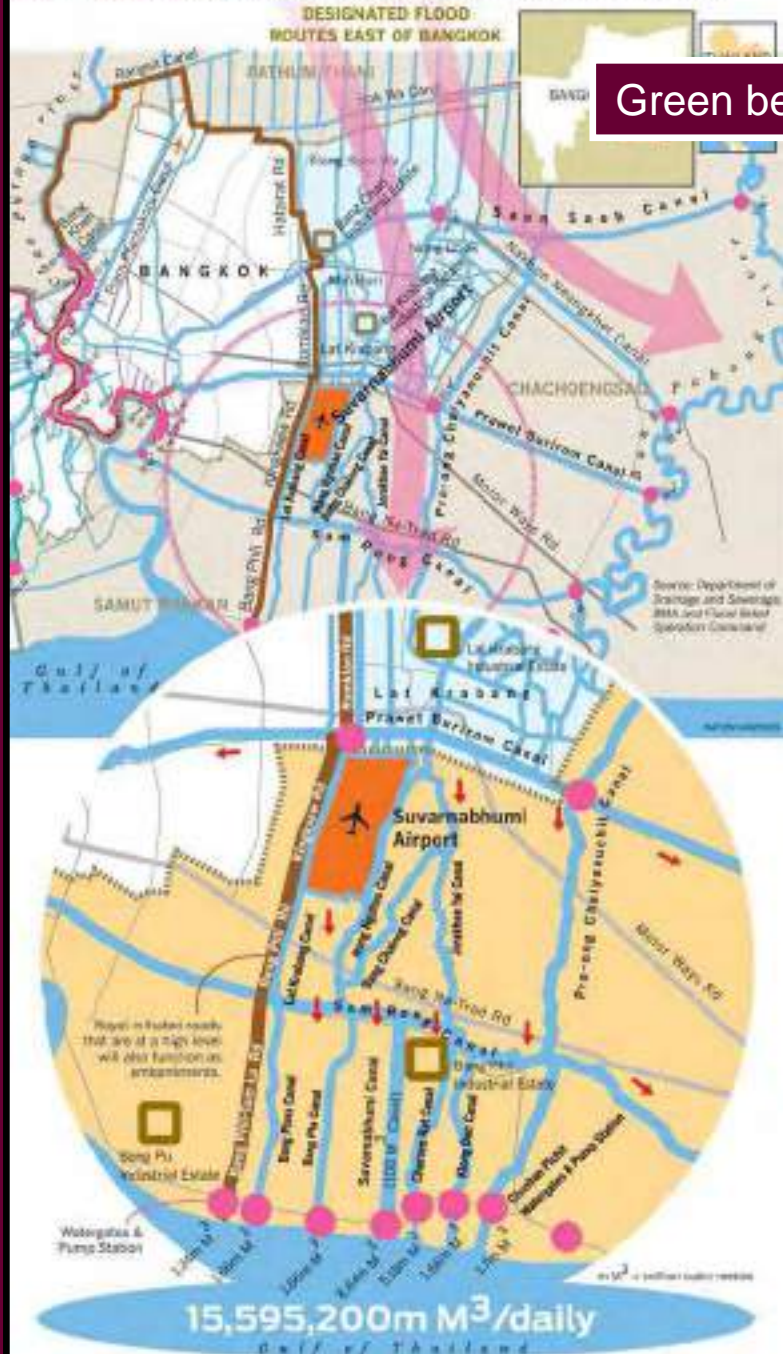


Aerotropolis



# HOW SAFE IS SUVARNABHUMI?

A look at emergency and natural water paths around the international airport.



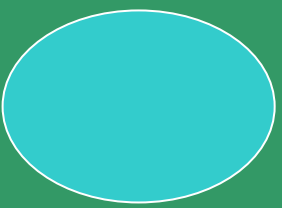
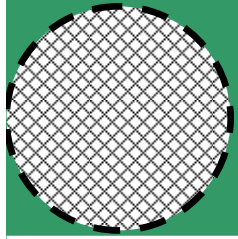
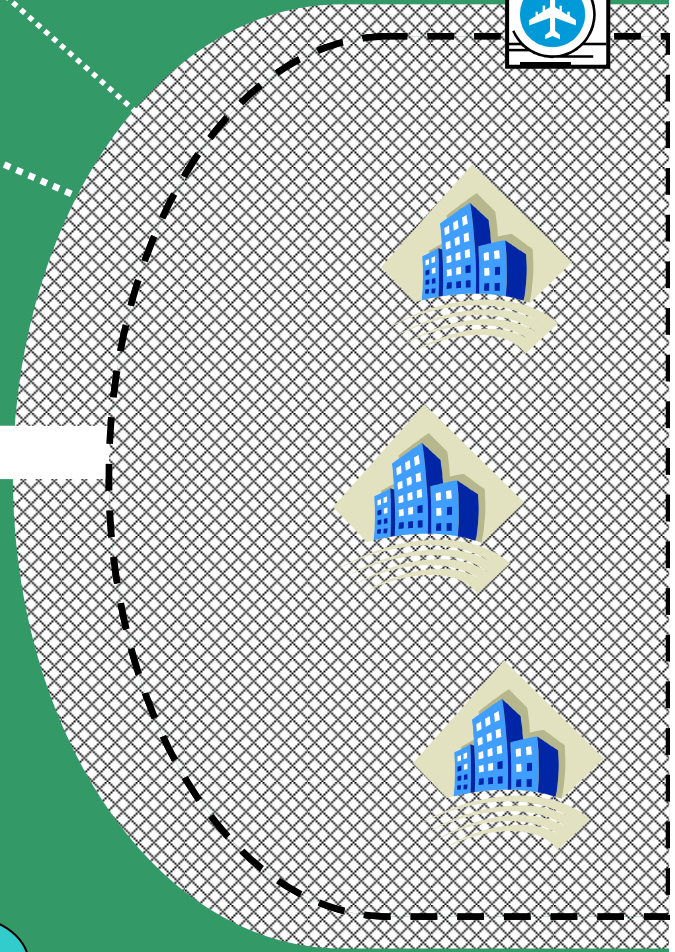
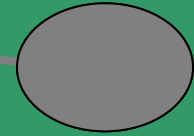
Green belts are difficult to protect



Suvarnabhumi Aerotropolis



Aerotropolis



## Problems of peri-urbanization, as “urban meets rural”:

- poverty among farmers; possible urban food insecurity
- inefficient urban development patterns
- environmental conflicts and degradation
- lack of employment for the poor evicted from the city

Peri-urbanization is as a set of processes, driven by a range of agents who are attracted by lower land values and increasing road access. The processes do not occur at the same place, at same time and at same speed





Views on peri-urban areas differ; they are seen as:

- a transition phase between rural and urban development
- an unique new type of mixed urban-rural development
- a threat to the eco-system of mega-urban regions



This raises two questions:

- Is peri-urbanization the best way to expand urban areas and can it be done in a better way?
- Is expansion of mega-cities acceptable or should growth be distributed over more cities, and if so, how can this be done?

# The importance of developing smaller cities



## Urban population by settlement size (2000-2010)

	Population (millions)		Percentage of urban population	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
10 m +	152.7	234.5	11.7	13.8
5-10 m	129.3	181.3	9.9	10.7
1-5 m	144.6	181.1	11.1	10.7
0.5-1 m	125.3	176.6	9.6	10.4
<0.5 m	749.1	926.4	57.6	54.5
Total urban	1,301.0	1,699.8	100.0	100.0
Total rural	2,468.0	2,479.6		
Total	3,769.0	4,179.5		

Definitions of “urban” differ from country to country.

## The large city is the engine of economic growth

### Thailand GRP per capita (2012)

Region	US\$/year	Growth rate
East	13,307	9.8
Bangkok	11,314	8.6
Central	7,123	8.8
South	3,928	-4.7
North	2,891	16.1
Northeast	2,135	12.3
Thailand	5,780	8.8

Differences in economic opportunity have led to massive migration to Bangkok



Battambang, Cambodia



Capacity development in smaller cities is critical



Taunggyi, Shan State, Myanmar

Large cities will always attract private and public investments



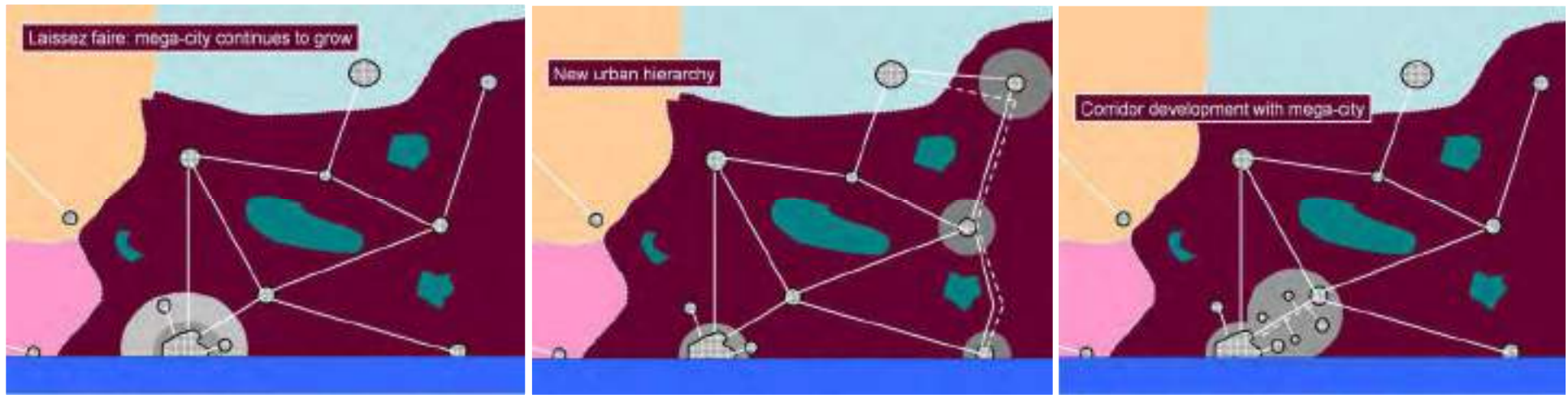
### Small-city development requires

at local level:

- economic potential
- urban management capacity
- inclusive urban policies

at national level:

- long-term political and financial commitments
- “genuine” devolution



## National Urban Development Strategy (NUDS)

Laissez-faire policies lead to continued mega-city growth, until diseconomies overwhelm the city, but when is that?

Alternative national urban development strategies:

- Development of a distinct new urban hierarchy with a large city, smaller cities and towns in a backward region
- Polycentric and urban corridor development: promote centres within or somewhat outside the large city

Natural growth is often the main factor in urban growth, so large cities will continue to grow. Whatever the NUDS, peri-urbanization as such also needs to be addressed

**Components of urban population growth in India (%)**

	1961-1971	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001	2001-2011
Natural increase	64.6	51.3	61.3	59.4	44
Migration	18.7	19.6	21.7	21.0	25
Reclassification	13.8	14.8	9.4	6.2	30
Urban expansion	2.9	14.2	7.6	13.0	

**Components of urban population growth in Thailand and Bangkok (%)**

	1960-1970		1970-1980		1980-1990		1990-2000	
	TH	BKK	TH	BKK	TH	BKK	TH	BKK
Natural growth	70.4	59.2	37.7	29.4	47.1	69.4	13.0	69.8
Net migration	15.4	5.6	5.2	6.7	13.9	30.6	11.5	30.2
Reclassification	14.2	35.2	57.1	63.9	39.0	-	75.5	-

# Planning mega-urban expansion



## Questions about peri-urbanization:

- Should peri-urbanization continue with minimal planning as the most practical form of urbanization?
- Do local and national governments have the capacity and political willingness to plan peri-urbanization?
- As the urban poor are evicted from the city to peri-urban areas, how can peri-urban poverty be reduced?
- Should the peri-urban natural resources be protected as a critical part of the eco-system of the mega-city?





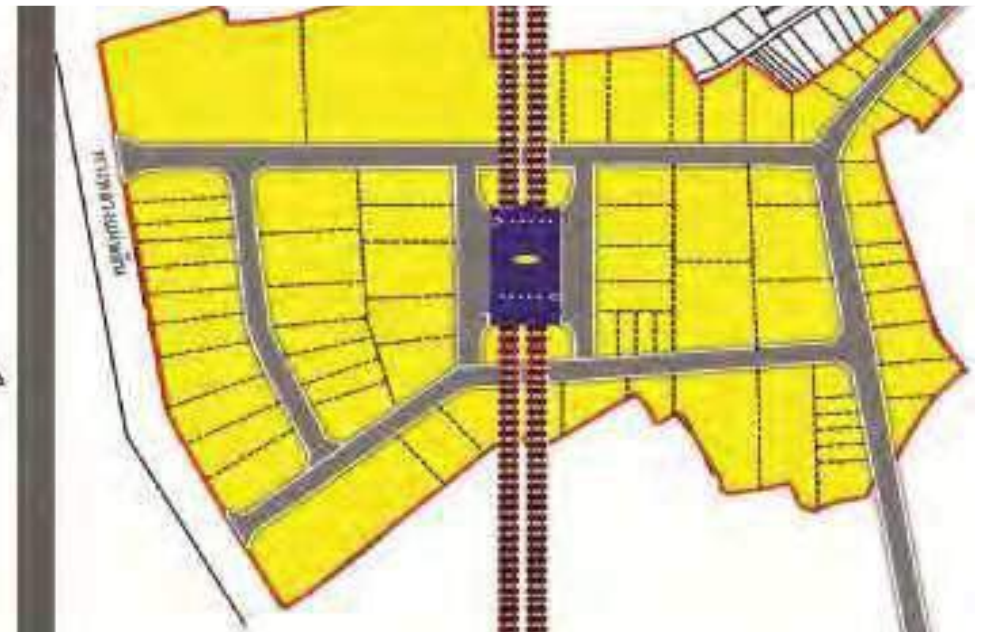
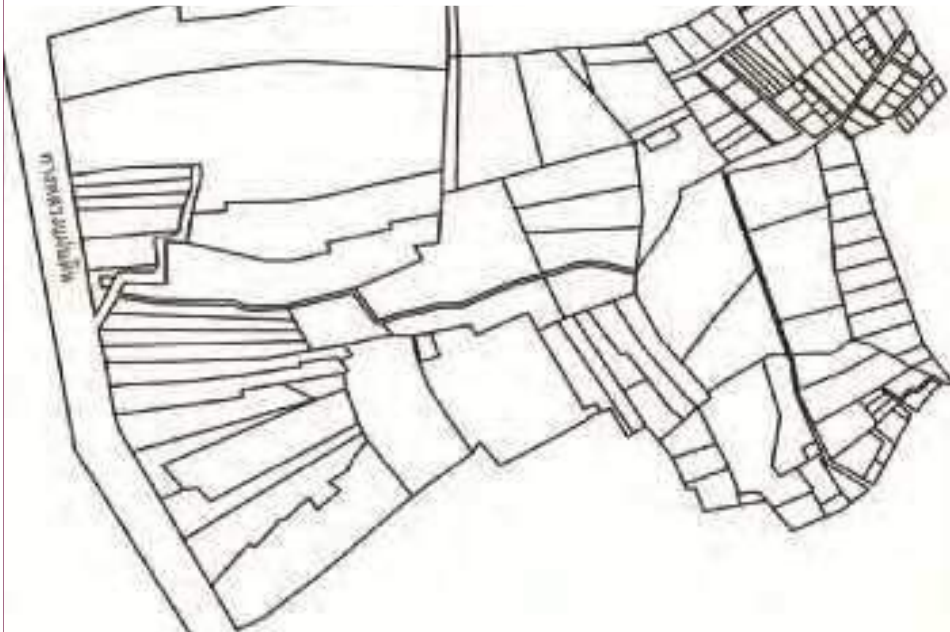
It is “easy” to make plans for urban expansion; the problem lies in implementation, as many public and private, national and local, rich and poor stakeholders are involved

Angel recommends a minimalist approach:

- enlarge city boundaries for expected urban expansion
- ensure adequate land supply to meet growing demand
- prepare plans for future infrastructure provision
- acquire spaces of sensitive habitats and nature parks
- develop arterial road network to guide the processes



Land readjustment can lead to more efficient development and free land for housing the poor, but most landowners are unwilling



# Urban and peri-urban poverty reduction

Urban poverty implies a lack of:

- income to meet basic needs
- capabilities to live in dignity

Adequate housing and access to services improve capabilities

Housing must have easy access to centres of economic opportunity

Services include safe water and sanitation, education and health care, credit and information, transport etc.

As peri-urban areas urbanize, urban centres emerge. Until then peri-urban life is difficult for the poor





In small cities, providing land and services is easier, but large cities offer more economic opportunities and better services

City centres are better for the poor than urban peripheries, but land values and cost of living in urban centres are higher

From a locational perspective, poor households must strike a balance and may apply multi-locational income strategies

As markets prevail, the poor must be empowered to negotiate with local government, landowners and private employers



Thank You