

**AN ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY FOR SLUM IMPROVEMENT: SOME LESSONS FROM URBAN TCCSS IN COLOMBO**

Developing countries, in the past few decades have tested a combination of models with respect to slum improvement, where human efforts have been mobilized to substitute for constraints imposed by limited financial resources. One such model tested in Sri Lanka was the Urban Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies (TCCSs) movement. In the City of Colombo this experiment commenced its operations in 1986, and by the end of 1990 there were 25 urban TCCSs within the city limits, which were engaged in housing development and related activities. However, the performance of these TCCSs with respect to slum improvement has not been very encouraging, particularly when compared with their rural counterparts.

This study attempts to ascertain why Urban TCCSs have failed to make any noteworthy impact on improving the condition of slums in Colombo, while the rural TCCSs have succeeded in mobilizing rural resources for housing development. An adapted version of the Institution Building (IB Model) developed by Eastman, M.J., was employed to study the capabilities of two urban TCCSs selected by the author.

The study identified six institutional variables and three environmental variables (linkage variables) responsible for the current state of affairs of the Urban TCCSs. Of these nine variables the philosophy, leadership, membership, and the regulatory framework have been identified as the most prominent in explaining the sluggish performance of the Urban TCCSs. The individual and collective contributions of these variables explain the status of urban TCCSs in Colombo.

**References**

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