

6 Conclusions

§ 6.1 Introduction

Large-scale urban redevelopment in China has been taking place for decades since the market transitions from 1978, which have caused massive forced relocation of residents (He and Wu, 2007; MOHURD, 2013). This thesis has provided a comprehensive study on relocatees' perceptions and experiences at the pre-demolition phase of the forced relocation and state-led urban redevelopment. Through an extensive overview of existing literature on the experiences of the affected residents and in-depth interviews with residents and other stakeholders in urban redevelopment, the thesis shows that current studies have largely ignored the temporal feature and dynamics embedded in urban redevelopment and forced relocation in the Chinese context. Also, the ambivalence of relocatees' perceptions towards their lived experiences in their neighbourhoods is not fully addressed. Many studies and news reports have merely displayed the conflicting interactions between the residents and project initiators such as local governments or developers, and have considered the redevelopment projects as if they were a static event (He, 2012; Hin and Xin, 2011; Sichuan News, 2009). This conceals the mechanisms and complexity underlying the controversial and conflicting nature of forced relocation in the context of urban redevelopment.

Driven by these concerns, we especially focus on individual relocatees' perceptions, experiences, and behaviours towards impending forced relocation and urban redevelopment. We highlight the ambivalence in the interactions between residents and neighbourhoods (people-place) as well as residents, local governments and developers, from a residential mobility perspective. Our research therefore aims to gain a deeper understanding of how forced relocation and urban redevelopment affect residents of declining neighbourhoods in Shenyang, in terms of their pre-relocation neighbourhood perceptions and behaviours.

This thesis is organized as followed. Chapter 1 is the introduction, which focuses on the research background, research aim and questions, research data and methods, and the history of urban (re)development of Shenyang. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on the experiences of residents, particularly the homeowners, during forced relocation in the Chinese context. This chapter is also the theoretical basis for the

thesis, by identifying gaps in existing research and outlining the research questions for the following chapters. Chapter 3, 4 and 5 focus on the influence of Shantytown Redevelopment Programmes (SRPs) on the various dimensions of the perceptions and experiences of residents from declining neighbourhoods that are involved in the SRPs in the city of Shenyang. Chapter 3 investigates the evolution of the SRPs, related policies and the changing roles and interactions between the different stakeholders involved in SRPs, against changing macro-, social, economic and institutional contexts. Chapter 4 and 5 put the spotlight on individual residents' experiences by specifically focusing on the people-place interactions with regard to place attachment and the ageing in place of older people. These two chapters also reveal the influence of the impending SRPs and impending forced relocation on the people-place interaction. The following section firstly summarizes the key findings of each chapter. A reflection on the research is presented in section 6.3. The last section outlines future directions for research and the policy implications.

§ 6.2 Summary of the research findings

Chapter 2 has provided a theoretical framework for the study, based on the extensive review of existing literature on forced relocation and urban redevelopment affecting homeowners in China. Since 1980s, despite massive forced relocation of residents during urban restructuring in China, there are few studies which summarize and provide an overview and analysis on how residents undergo and experience the forced relocation process and its outcomes. For instance, the experiences of the affected residents at the pre-demolition stage and the active role that the residents play during the forced relocation have been largely ignored. Most studies concerning urban restructuring in China directly equate forced relocation with displacement, which has by definition a negative connotation. This exclusively negative view overlooks the multifaceted effects of forced relocation on relocatees.

Chapter 2 therefore aims to provide a better understanding of the nature and outcomes of existing research into the forced relocation of residents during urban restructuring in China. Forced relocation is conceptualised as a process with various and changing socio-spatial implications over time, and as a specific type of residential mobility that occurs in the context of urban restructuring. As such, chapter 2 presents a conceptual model that includes different stages and contexts to analyse experiences of relocatees over time, during and after forced relocation. It divides the process of forced relocation into three stages – the pre-demolition stage, the transitional stage and the post-

relocation stage – and investigates the social, economic, physical, psychological and behavioural dimensions of the experiences of relocatees as affected by the macro and micro context. The conceptual model is used to structure the analysis of the literature review and subsequently identify the gaps in the literature that should be addressed in future studies of forced relocation in the Chinese context. Studying the experiences of relocatees from household and residential mobility perspectives reveals the dynamic, variable and complex nature of forced relocation.

Chapter 3 investigates how SRPs are formally implemented by revealing how different stakeholders involved in SRPs interact with each other, taking Shenyang as a case study. Since 1978, market transition in China has significantly influenced the roles of the state, the market and the residents in urban restructuring. Since 2008, the central government has initiated Shantytown Redevelopment Projects (SRPs) to improve the living conditions of low-income residents living in declining neighbourhoods. Between 2008 and 2012, about 12.6 million households in China were involved in SRPs, and forced to move as their dwellings were demolished. Through in-depth interviews with various stakeholders (17 experts and 64 residents) and analysis of policy documents on SRPs, the chapter reveals a complex interplay between different stakeholders, which is characterized by the centralization of the inception of SRPs, the decentralization of actual SRP implementation, changes in the role of market forces, and decreasing housing affordability and multiple deprivation of residents in SRP target areas. We show how various stakeholders achieve consensus on the need for improving the living conditions in deprived neighbourhoods and on boosting the housing market. However, conflicts arise due to frictions between the central and local governments regarding the implementation of SRPs. We also find evidence of an entrepreneurial paradox in the relationship between local governments and developers. By taking over most complex and controversial parts of SRP implementation, local governments appear to behave increasingly entrepreneurial and have paved the way for developers to be more selective with their participation in redevelopment projects, depending on profit prospects. Finally, we have found evidence for a mismatch between the scope of SRP policy and residents' attempts to improve their socioeconomic situation.

Chapter 4 focuses on the influence of state-led urban redevelopment on the place attachment of deprived homeowners in *danwei* communities that are facing demolition in Shenyang, China. The chapter investigates the ambivalence in their lived experiences in the declining neighbourhoods, through semi-structured in-depth interviews with 33 homeowners in *danwei* communities which are in a pre-demolition phase. The chapter reveals how these homeowners cleverly mobilize local resources, such as strong social bonds, low living costs, flexibility on use of space (e.g. housing modification and space occupation) and good neighbourhood location (proximity to the city centre, hospitals, schools and public transport) to cope with their life

constraints, which is translated into their strong neighbourhood attachment. However, various forms of neighbourhood decline have decreased their quality of life. Meanwhile, they will have to move soon due to the impending neighbourhood demolition. State-led urban redevelopment, therefore, confronts those deprived homeowners with a dilemma concerning their neighbourhood dependence and their desire for better living conditions. The impending neighbourhood demolition uncovers accumulated social issues in *danwei* communities in the context of market reforms, SOE reforms, sharply rising housing prices and institutional changes in current China, such as the emergence of deprived social groups and their struggles for better housing.

Chapter 5 has studied how impending forced relocation affects the perspectives for ageing in place of older people living in declining neighbourhoods in Shenyang. Generally, ageing in place assumes people to become old at familiar places such as their home and stay in their trusted neighbourhoods as long as possible. However, urban redevelopment, which includes forced relocation of residents, often makes ageing in place impossible. This chapter aims to understand how the impending neighbourhood demolition affects the perspectives for ageing in place of older people in Shenyang, China. Starting from the press-competence model and related academic work concerning the influence of person-environment interaction on the well-being of older people (Hillcoat-Nallétamby, 2014; Lawton and Nahemow, 1973; Lawton, 1985; Portacolone, 2011; Van Der Meer *et al.*, 2008), the chapter explores the impact of forced relocation and demolition on the meaning of home, the living arrangements and the role of family, and residents' strategies to maintain their independence. Transcript analysis of 54 semi-structured interviews with older residents reveals their ambivalent feelings towards the impending demolition. Long-term residence in declining neighbourhoods makes them feel rooted and enables them to develop their living strategies and plans for ageing in place. However, neighbourhood decline is challenging their daily activities and they increasingly struggle to maintain their independence, which leads them to sometimes consider impending neighbourhood redevelopment as an opportunity to improve their living conditions. The impending forced relocation interrupts older residents' place-based identity and living strategies and causes significant stress due to their lack of autonomy in the decision-making for the relocation process, the move itself, and their uncertainty regarding their post-relocation life.

§ 6.3 Reflections

§ 6.3.1 Reflection on the research outcomes

This section reflects on the major findings of the research, which revolve around four aspects: 1) the significance of residents' experiences in the pre-demolition/pre-relocation stage of urban redevelopment, 2) the agency of the residents, 3) their ambivalent feelings towards their neighbourhoods, and 4) their sense of uncertainty with regard to the urban redevelopment and forced relocation.

1 The pre-demolition stage of urban redevelopment

This research focuses on homeowners' experiences at the pre-demolition stage. Focusing on their experience at this stage is significant to understand the causes of residents' behaviours during forced relocation. This is because it is the very first stage of urban redevelopment in which relocatees are informed about their impending movement due to neighbourhood redevelopment and have not moved out of their neighbourhoods. It also includes the coping of the residents at this stage which affects their following experiences (see chapter 2). Urban redevelopment and forced relocation often last for months or even years, during which period various incidents happen to relocatees in parallel with the changing macro (social, economic and institutional) and micro (personal physical, psychological and socio-economic) contexts. Therefore, by capturing the sequence of the events that occur to relocatees during urban redevelopment, it helps to reduce the distraction caused by the accumulation of the dynamics of relocatees' experience as the urban redevelopment proceeds over time (chapter 2). The pre-demolition stage is therefore worthwhile to study. However, current studies about China mostly treat forced relocation and urban redevelopment as a static and single event (Day and Cervero, 2010; Fang, 2006; He and Liu, 2013; Hu *et al.*, 2015). They mainly target the relocatees who are already at the post-relocation stage to recall their experiences before being rehoused to evaluate the outcomes of forced relocation, which might lead to distorted retrospective accounts of their experiences and causes of their behavioural and emotional responses to the forced relocation (Goetz, 2013; Higgins and Stangor, 1998).

Second, this stage is the most conflicting stage during urban redevelopment. The homeowners need to make significant decisions with regard to the type and the amount of compensation (in-kind or monetary) that they can get from local governments and/

or developers. Often, conflicts arise due to the disparity about what the residents expect to get and what local governments and/or developers can compensate. From a political-economic viewpoint, this is related to the uneven redistribution of capital accumulated via urban space reproduction such as the replacement of declining neighbourhoods in which low-income residents reside, with newly-build high-rise dwellings for middle- or high-income residents (Qian and He 2012, Weinstein and Ren 2009). As shown in chapter 3, 4 and 5, prospective relocatees are very stressful at this stage. They are anxious about the compensation criteria, the value assessment of their dwellings (which is at the basis of the compensation), and the negation and interaction with government staff. Also, they were worried about the chaotic moving process after moving out their current neighbourhoods and the packing and unpacking of their stuff, especially in case of the older respondents.

2 The agency of the affected residents from a residential mobility perspective

Relocatees may have behavioural and psychological experiences that are similar to voluntary movers, such as previously existing intentions to move, the search for (replacement) housing and the housing choice (Chapter 2). However, when considering the moving experiences of those who are involved in forced relocation, one may unjustly assume that residents are only passively involved since they are forced to move by the local governments or developers (Hin and Xin, 2011; Sichuan News, 2009; Weinstein and Ren 2009). Their right to stay put is often considered as being violated and their wishes regarding neighbourhood redevelopment are often regarded as being ignored, since they have limited influence on the decision-making of forced relocation compared to other stakeholders in the Chinese context (He, 2012; Shin 2014). Also, they are often regarded as becoming displaced, due to the negative influences of urban redevelopment on them (Day and Cervero 2010; Fang 2006).

However, our research has shown the agency of homeowners in the Chinese context, which is manifested through the finding that that some of them are willing to accept the urban redevelopment. This especially applies to homeowners in deprived neighbourhoods involved in SRPs (chapter 3, 4 and 5). State-led neighbourhood redevelopment has become an opportunity for the deprived households to improve their living conditions with the compensation they get from the local governments, since they cannot afford to move into better dwellings in the context of sharply rising housing prices in urban China. Meanwhile, they intend to maximize their benefits from the redevelopment, by mobilising strategies such as constructing illegal buildings to improve the overall value of their dwelling, or by making appeals to local governments to intervene in the redevelopment (chapter 4). The agency of the residents during urban redevelopment (see also Manzo *et al.*, 2008; Posthumus and Kleinhans, 2014) shows that consensus can emerge between residents and local governments and/or developers, in addition to conflicts (chapter 3).

3 Residents' ambivalent feeling towards neighbourhoods and urban redevelopment

This study has revealed ambivalent feelings of residents, i.e. a coexistence of willingness and unwillingness towards urban redevelopment and forced relocation. It has found that many of the long-term homeowners already have an intention to move due to current neighbourhood decline. For this reason, they are willing to accept the pending urban redevelopment (chapter 3, 4 and 5) as it may improve their living conditions. From the people-place interaction point of view, this might be contradicting earlier research which emphasizes the more 'romantic' side of people-place interaction, such as place attachment and its related components (e.g. neighbourhood-based social networks and mutual help), that contribute to relocatees' willingness to stay in their neighbourhoods when facing neighbourhood redevelopment and demolition (Fried, 1963; Manzo *et al.*, 2008).

In fact, previous research has not fully justified the complex interactions between people and place of different characteristics, since the lived experiences of deprived residents in declining neighbourhoods are not purely positive (see e.g. Feijten and Van Ham, 2009; Livingston *et al.*, 2010; Vale, 1997). As shown in chapter 4 and 5, the long-term homeowners have an ambivalent feeling towards their neighbourhoods. On the one hand, they have negative neighbourhood experiences due to neighbourhood decline (e.g. physical deterioration, high residential turnover, lack of facilities), which motivates them to consider a move. On the other hand, they are attached to their neighbourhoods, especially the older residents. We found that the long-term stayers (homeowners) are particularly dependent on functional dimensions of their neighbourhoods, since the opportunities and convenience of economic (e.g. income or low cost) and physical (e.g. size of their dwelling) aspects of neighbourhoods enable them to relief their life constraints. Therefore, when studying the influence of urban redevelopment on relocatees, the impacts of place attachment on their moving behaviour should be monitored by carefully examining their positive and negative lived experiences and the roles of different dimensions of place attachment (Livingston *et al.*, 2010; Oakley *et al.*, 2008; Vale, 1997).

4 Residents' sense of uncertainty toward urban redevelopment

This research also finds that many long-term homeowners are unwilling to move due to the uncertainties inherent in forced relocation and urban redevelopment. Forced relocation is not only about residential physical movement and changes of location. It captures their place-related strategies with regard to their daily space (e.g. dwelling size and autonomous use of space), the location (proximity to public and commercial facilities) and the activities (people-people and people-place interaction). Local

governments in China undertake efforts to reduce these disruptions by compensating the homeowners and by promising to construct similar public and commercial facilities surrounding the relocation neighbourhoods. However, residents still hold their sense of uncertainty. They feel incapable to assess in advance how and to what extent the forced relocation may lead to negative impacts after the move and how long these impacts may last (chapter 3, 4 and 5). This is in line with earlier research, which finds that the outcomes of forced relocation and urban redevelopment on relocatees are often mixed and not as unilaterally positive as expected, and can change over time during and after forced relocation (Goetz, 2013; Goetz and Chapple, 2010; Popkin, 2006; Popkin, *et al.*, 2003, 2004). Positive, moderated or negative outcomes can happen to the relocatees in different combinations, with regard to their living conditions, physical or mental health, crime and poverty rate, economic well-being, etc. (Goetz, 2010; Popkin, 2006; Popkin, *et al.*, 2004). Popkin and her colleagues (2003) have explained that both the contextual obstacles (e.g. the socio-economic status and racial composition of the residents, institutional and housing market context) and administrative factors (e.g. behaviour of the implementation agencies) can influence the actual implementation of urban redevelopment and forced relocation, which makes the outcomes of relocatees difficult to predict.

The sense of uncertainty has been translated into a stressful decision-making process for the relocatees with regard to the choice of and negotiations regarding compensation, and the move itself. To cope with this uncertainty, relocatees try to bargain 'fair' compensation from local governments and/or developers. A sense of 'fair' compensation appears to include more than the consideration of the size of their current dwelling(s). Rather, it is closely related to residents' well-being brought by their location in their neighbourhoods, their autonomy regarding use of space, and their living strategies (Day and Cervero 2010; He, 2012; Luo, 2012; Shao, 2013), which, as shown in chapter 3, is not within the scope of the current SRPs. Forced relocation does not only influence individual residents. Our research (chapter 5) shows that in the Chinese context, it is a collective experience for the whole family (beyond households). Fierce interactions, discussions or conflicts within families are taking place with regard to the appropriate type and amount of compensation they should get and whose demand and preference on housing should be taken as the priority. We conclude that within families and households, compensation needs and desires may be fundamentally different and contradictory.

§ 6.3.2 Reflections on the methodology and the data

This research focuses on the residents who are experiencing the pre-demolition stage. Our research is mainly based on semi-structured, in-depth interviews with different stakeholders, enabling us to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions and behaviours of residents in the pre-relocation stage. In an ideal situation, we would have followed the residents over time, from the pre-demolition stage through the transition stage and into the post-relocation with a longitudinal, large-scale survey. However, due to constraints of time, staff capacity and finances, we did not aim to conduct a large-scale and longitudinal study by following up residents throughout each of the stages. Moreover, a survey does not provide opportunities to explore certain issues in more details, since it may constrain respondents' answers through the design of the questionnaire. Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews, however, provide us with the opportunity to explore in depth the perspectives of affected homeowners by recording and analysing their narratives, tones and emotions, which shows their perceptions, opinions and behaviours towards the SRPs.

In preparing the fieldwork, we needed to identify neighbourhoods in Shenyang that are slated for urban redevelopment but had not been demolished yet. Based on the SRP plans issued by the local governments and the assistance of acquaintances and interviewees, we were able to identify and gain access to neighbourhoods (i.e. *danwei* communities and urban villages) that are currently undergoing SRPs and still accommodate some residents. We were able to interview those residents who were still living in these neighbourhoods but had been informed that their neighbourhoods will be demolished due to state-led urban redevelopment. The assistance of local university colleagues and some respondents' acquaintances during the fieldwork helped to quickly establish a sense of trust between the respondents and the interviewer, and to increase the familiarity of the interviewer with the fieldwork environment. This turned out to be very useful since our research is focusing on the most conflicting stage of during urban redevelopment, making it difficult to gain access to local governments and affected residents. Overall, relocatees were often mentally, physically and economically stressed while the fieldwork was conducted. This had both a positive and negative influence on our fieldwork. On the one hand, this offered a chance to document relocatees' real-time reactions, which helps to gain a deeper understanding of the influence of the forced relocation through their narratives on stress, choices, and worries. On the other hand, some interviews were conducted in a quite sensitive and emotional atmosphere, which made it difficult for the interviewer to follow the interview schedule since these residents considered the interview as a good chance to let the outsider (the interviewer) know their 'miserable experiences'.

Another key experience is the strong focus of residents at this stage on compensation. Therefore, they tended to talk more about how unfair they think the compensation is that they get from the local governments. They hoped the interviewer to acknowledge how unjustified the compensation is. Also, some of them were already occupied with packing and planning their leave of their neighbourhoods. When talking about attachment to their neighbourhoods, they sometimes tried to conceal their feelings towards their current neighbourhoods and their neighbourhood-based social networks, and the emotional dimensions of their place attachment, which cannot help them to gain more compensation. They tended to provided practical details about how their neighbourhoods could satisfy them and how they are functionally attached and dependent on their neighbourhoods to show that SRP causes losses to them and that they therefore deserve more compensation.

The interviews with governors, developers, planners and experts were recorded by making notes. This was required by these experts as a precondition for the interview, as they did not consent to tape recording the interview. This is not uncommon. In general, experts and government officials are cautious while being interviewed, since they are being held responsible for their comments and they want to avoid misuse of interview recordings. In this research, governors, developers and planners were even more cautious while talking about issues related to compensation and forced relocation of residents, since conflicts between residents and local governments regarding these issues are common.

§ 6.4 Future research directions and policy implications

§ 6.4.1 Directions for further research

Our research specifically focuses on the low- and middle- income long-term homeowners involved in the pre-demolition- and pre-relocation stage of state-led urban redevelopment and forced relocation in one city. This specificity limits the external validity of our research findings in relation to a broader context, such as in cities in other regions in China or in other international contexts. Therefore, in this part, several directions for future research are suggested. Firstly, more research on temporal changes of individual perceptions and experiences during and after urban redevelopment is needed. Currently, most research takes forced relocation and urban

redevelopment as a static event and focuses on the post-relocation stage. Therefore, the sequence of the events that happen to the relocatees and the related influence on the residents should be carefully studied. Ideally, this should be done through a longitudinal panel survey following relocatees from the pre-demolition stage of the redevelopment through the transition phase and into the post-relocation stage to identify how and why forced relocation and urban redevelopment affect the well-being of the relocatees over time and how the outcomes of relocation vary over time.

Second, the heterogeneity of the affected residents and the interrelationship of this heterogeneity with their experiences should also be addressed more specifically in future research. Residents can be divided into different social groups based on their age differences, socio-economic status (e.g. income, homeownership, educational level and occupation), institutional status (e.g. local *hukou* or not and affiliation to the *danwei* or urban village or not) and neighbourhood types (*danwei* community, urban village, old inner city neighbourhood, newly-built neighbourhoods, etc.). Different social groups from different types of neighbourhoods can reveal varying people-place experiences and expectations about urban redevelopment, which can affect their moving intentions and moving behaviours. Future studies can also explore the influence of forced relocation and urban redevelopment on particular social groups. For instance, this study has targeted predominantly the homeowners and the older relocatees. We know much less about other age groups, such as middle aged (40-50 year), younger or adolescent people. Also, renters or rural migrants in declining neighbourhoods can be a focus of research as well (Wu, 2012). The comparisons between different social groups or residents of different neighbourhood types can be made by the longitudinal approach. Meanwhile, when studying the coping efforts and influence on the relocatees, it is significant to highlight the macro social, economic and institutional contexts, since they decide the resources available for relocatees to cope with the challenges and chances caused by forced relocation and urban redevelopment. In particular, we suggest that the cultural context which is related to the traditions, norms and values of a society, such as the legacy of the socialist era, filial piety, Confucianism, and patrilocal traditions on caregiving can affect the informal interactions and behaviours between different stakeholders. These dimensions of the cultural context have been not taken into account sufficiently and should be highlighted in future research (He and Lin, 2015; Li *et al.*, 2017).

Last but not the least, in addition to the declining urban neighbourhoods such as *danwei* communities, inner city old neighbourhoods and urban villages, Shantytown Redevelopment Projects (SRPs) increasingly also include remote rural communities established by state-owned enterprises and enterprises specialised for mining, agricultural and forestry production. These types of neighbourhoods should be studied in future research as well. Moreover, SRP has been a national level large-scale

redevelopment project which has been conducted for almost a decade across different cities and regions in China. We therefore suggest that more comparative studies should be conducted with regard to governance of SRPs and its influence on the relocatees from different regions and cities across China.

§ 6.4.2 Policy implications

Our research findings can be useful for the central state and the local governments to recognize the problems existing in SRPs, such as the disparity between the project scope and the expectations of the residents, the ignorance of the diverse needs of the affected residents, and the uncertainties and related negative influence on the residents in relation to the project implementation.

Currently, most urban redevelopment in declining neighbourhoods in China merely focuses on the physical improvements of the living conditions via neighbourhood demolition and spatial movement of the relocatees, which can disrupt relocatees' neighbourhood-based living strategies such as incomes and social networks, and the accessibility to job chances and public services (Chapter 4 and 5). Meanwhile, forced relocation means that their traditions and habits on use of space and location also need to change since relocatees are very likely to move from their current low-story dwellings into high-rise dwellings, as shown in chapter 3. Thus, these changes might challenge the moves of residents inside and outside their dwellings and the social interactions among neighbours. This is especially important for the aged or disabled residents since their mobility can be greatly affected by physical barriers. Therefore, local governments should consider more thoroughly the potential physical, social, economic and psychological implications of redevelopment on residents when initiating redevelopment policies and implementing the projects, as these issues are closely related to the life chances of the affected residents and how they would perceive and react to the redevelopment plans and their implementation.

Relatedly, the heterogeneity of the affected residents should be recognized better during the preparation and implementation of urban redevelopment projects. In particular, local governments need to identify the hard-to-house groups among the relocatees (i.e. the low-income, disabled, unemployed or older people), as neighbourhood demolition and the associated forced relocation are especially threatening to these vulnerable residents (Gilroy, 2012; Popkin *et al.*, 2004; Posthumus and Kleinhans, 2014). Based on the narratives of some of our respondents (Chapter 4 and 5), the current 'one size fits all' compensation policies might hardly

relieve the life constraints of deprived residents. Even worse, the redevelopment might dispossess their 'slum home' (chapter 5), which provides them with stable housing before the redevelopment. In the course of redevelopment, the deprived relocatees might have limited feasible housing choices due to the high housing prices and low housing affordability. These deprived residents therefore are very likely to be displaced. Local governments need to better investigate the socio-economic and family situations of affected residents before the redevelopment and forced relocation, since the needs and the expectations of different relocatees about redevelopment differ as well. In particular, local governments need to carefully design the compensation policy, which concerns the relocatees' most urgent needs, such as the housing size, floor, nearby public and commercial facilities, and job chances.

The time span of the whole redevelopment and forced relocation process contains great uncertainties as it can last from several months to several years, both in the Chinese context and other international contexts such as the US and the Netherlands (Goetz, 2013; Li *et al.*, 2016; Posthumus and Kleinhans, 2014). This extended time span can cause continuous disruptions to the relocatees. Therefore, during the implementation of redevelopment project, we suggest that local governments make detailed and feasible plans about the tasks and the time needed at each stage. In addition, local governments need to provide more counselling services and help the relocatees to gain access to relevant housing information, especially for the transitional stage and post-relocation stage. In particular, we recommend local governments to pay special attention to the older people involved in the forced relocation with regard to older' people decision-making process, by providing more information on their compensation choices and taking their life chances (social contacts, living costs, need for facilities and living arrangement) and family interaction into consideration.

In the context of Chinese market transition, local governments, but especially the central government, continue to be obliged to provide social services for the public, and to take both people's well-being and economic growth into account (Li, 2015). Therefore, in the face of the changing macro social, economic and institutional context, governments need to make corresponding governance arrangements and design operational practices which boost the smoothness of urban redevelopment and forced relocation. For instance, the issues with regard to improving the life chances of relocatees are not within the current evaluation on local governments' performance on the SRP implementation. The current evaluation system of the central government mainly focuses on the pace or the scale of the SRPs. Therefore, we suggest that a comprehensive evaluation system, focussing on the social, economic and physical implications of SRPs for residents, should be established by the central government to assess local governments' performance on SRPs. Moreover, it is also necessary for the central and local governments to realize that urban redevelopment featured

by neighbourhood demolition and forced residential relocation should not be by definition the first option for local governments to combat neighbourhood decline, to achieve urban area beautification or to improve living conditions. It seems to be a direct and relatively easy way to tackle the above mentioned challenges by demolishing neighbourhoods and provide the residents with in-kind or monetary compensation. However, considering the chaos and challenges (e.g. the conflicting interaction between different stakeholders, tightened financial situations and disruptions to relocatees) involved in the current urban redevelopment, governments should be aware of the importance of 'regular' neighbourhood management and maintenance before the actual physical deterioration taking place in these neighbourhoods.

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