

**PLANNING
SUSTAINABLE CITIES
IN MALAYSIA**

Issues and Challenges



MARIANA MOHAMED OSMAN
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CHAPTER 7

STATE INTERVENTION IN LOW COST HOUSING ALLOCATION IN MALAYSIA UNDER THE COMPUTERISED OPEN REGISTRATION SYSTEM (ORS)

Syafiee Shuid

INTRODUCTION

In order to modernise and solve problems related to low cost housing allocation in Malaysia, the Open Registration System (ORS) was proposed by the Federal government in 1997 (MHLG, 1998). The National Housing Department (NHD) under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) was given responsibility for preparing the proposal to establish ORS. After consultation with the State governments, ORS was finally approved for introduction and implementation throughout the country in a cabinet meeting dated 28th May 1997 (MHLG, 2004 p.1) Thus, all State governments were required to adopt ORS and abandon their existing allocation system (MHLG, 2006, p. 54). However, Sarawak was the only state in Malaysia to refuse to adopt the ORS framework for low cost housing allocation until the present day.

The chapter is divided into four sections to discuss the operations, secondly the improvement to ORS since 1997, thirdly the importance of state intervention in low cost housing allocation in Malaysia and finally the conclusion.

THE OPERATIONS OF ORS

There were five main purposes for the establishment of the ORS (MHLG 1998); the first was to provide a countrywide “waiting list” of eligible low cost house buyers. The second was to standardise the criteria for the selection of eligible buyers who are considered qualified and therefore can be “short listed”. The third reason was to avoid misconduct in the selection of eligible low cost house buyers. The fourth was to ensure that only eligible buyers were entitled to buy and subsequently own low cost houses and that no buyers would be allowed to purchase more than one unit of low cost housing; and the final reason was to ensure the selection process became more transparent.

The MHLG (MHLG, 2006) expected full implementation of the ORS throughout the country to derive several outcomes; firstly, data on potential and eligible applicants and supplies of low cost housing stocks could be compiled by relevant authorities in a more systematic and comprehensive manner. Secondly, the allocation processes could be monitored with relative ease. Thirdly, an evaluation of the backgrounds of the applicants and the selection of eligible buyers could be done within a shorter time frame; and finally, the ORS could allow a more transparent and fair distribution of low cost houses. The idea of establishing a standardised and centralised