

A Study on Support System Establishment for Maintenance and Management of Low-rise Housing

Sim, Kyung-Mi
Oh, Chu-Hyoung

The research aims to present the support system and measures for system improvement for the maintenance and management of low-rise housing. It intends to go beyond the current temporary support based on redevelopment projects for low-rise housing that have been primarily promoted on a pilot basis. Targeting general low-rise houses with favorable environments, the research aims to present a universal support system for the renovation, and maintenance and management of existing housing stocks with low housing efficiency.

To this end, the study has analyzed the current status of the supporting organizations involved in the maintenance and management of low-rise housing, from which the accomplishments and limitations have been drawn. It also carried out field studies and questionnaire surveys among general low-rise houses both in Seoul and in provinces, in order to identify the status and problems of housing renovation, and the thoughts and demands of the residents.

Chapter Two of the article reviews existing legal systems for the maintenance and management of low-rise housing, and related projects, along with the recent trends. It also summarizes the meaning of the initiative for the maintenance and management of low-rise housing, and the value and necessity of the support for existing housing stocks.

While policies for maintenance and management that are targeted at low-rise housing are significantly insufficient at the moment, institutional changes are currently

anticipated, first, with the predicted introduction into 「the Building Act」 of the ground for the installation of the Housing Management Support Center, which is aimed at the maintenance and management of single-detached houses, and second, with the introduction into 「the Act on the Maintenance and Improvement of Urban Areas and Dwelling Conditions」 of the Housing Environment Management Project, which is targeted at the reorganization and management of low-rise housing.

Most of the projects involved in the maintenance and management of low-rise housing are concentrating on environmental improvement in the public sector, and the support for the repairs of individual houses is provided directly and individually for the house concerned, as part of the welfare policy for low-income classes. Furthermore, even the support is not guaranteed to be consistent since most of the projects are promoted on a pilot basis, and under the lack of institutional grounds. The point the research tries to stress is that it is worthwhile in environmental, social and economic terms to extend the lifespan of existing stocks of housing and make them useful by introducing the support policy for the maintenance and management of low-rise housing.

In order to prepare the support system for the renovation, and maintenance and management of low-rise houses, the study reviewed, in Chapter Three, the following four organizations that are currently active in the promotion of related projects, focusing on their way of operation: the Happy House Center of Jeonju City and the Village Creation Support Center, the Toad Housing, and the Neighborhood Carpenter of Jangsu Village.

To summarize the major findings of the case studies, first, once the support center is public-led, it is stable in terms of finance. However, it targets only a limited number of houses, and has limitations in implementing a comprehensive management of residential areas of a village unit. In contrast, private-led support centers are faced with huge difficulties in stabilizing the operation since they are dependent on public projects with the demand for paid repairs insufficient.

Second, the case studies have confirmed that it is too early to introduce the method of management led by the private market, considering people's too little

intention to pay for the repairs, and maintenance and management of their housing. Accordingly, it is important to prepare a variety of support measures and support systems led by the public, in order to comprehensively manage low-rise residential areas that are mixed with different types of housing. Third, projects of government departments and agencies that are related to energy efficiency improvement should be linked, and support should be provided to a household in an overlapping manner and through a comprehensive support. The substantial improvement of housing efficiency can be obtained only through this measure.

In Chapter Four, the study examines the physical status of low-rise houses, and the current status of the management of the middle sector including garbage handling, parking, crime-prevention and community space, along with the housing renovation status in the following villages: Ui-dong of Gangbuk-gu, Wolgok 2-dong of Sungbuk-gu, and Geumam 2-dong of Jeonju City. The investigation is intended to identify the social and economic characteristics of the residents of low-rise housing, and to explore the housing conditions, current status and problems with the maintenance and management of low-rise houses, as well as the residents' demands. Additionally, the research carried out questionnaire surveys and in-depth investigations on the residents, upon which to examine the residents' characteristics, the current status and difficulties in housing renovation, and the awareness and demands of the residents in regard of the need for the support for housing renovation.

The results show that, with the ratio of those aged 60 or older in the owner-occupied housing, the home owners were feeling significant economic burden whereas their intention for a renovation was high for reduced heating bills. The results of the housing renovation demand indicate that the demands were high for enhanced efficiency of insulation and improved water leakage prevention on the roof and rooftop, and for emergency repairs against electric leakage, water leakage, and freezing and rupture of water supply pipes. The lack of information on the construction firms is found to be the most difficult problem for the residents, along with the cost burden, in regard of housing repair. The examination reveals that the residents are enduring inconveniences due to such difficulties.

With regards to public support, the demand for the provision of the information on construction firms, support for emergency repairs, and support for training and technology for housing management is high. While the residents' awareness on the support center for low-rise housing is low, they have positive expectations on the establishment of the support center and the services to be provided in the future. In order to effectively maintain and manage low-rise residential areas, it is important to prepare measures of policy support taking into account such characteristics of the residents and current status of the areas.

Chapter Five explores policies and support measures abroad that are related to housing improvement, focusing on several exemplary cases as follows: the Housing Repair Program of the King County in the US state of Washington, and the Home Wise: Weatherization Services Program of Seattle; the Quartiers Management(QM) Program of Germany, which is for neighborhood regeneration; the HIAs of Britain, which is a specialized housing management organization; and the A.N.A.H, the French Agency of Housing, and the PACT, the land readjustment program of France.

According to the findings, these initiatives are intended to promote support projects for housing improvement and for enhanced energy efficiency in housing that are targeted at low-income classes, which is similar to those at home. However, the programs have a specialized division towards achieving their goals, and have a separate set of legal systems for housing maintenance, upon which a specialized support organization is being operated, which is significantly different from those at home.

Besides, under the initiatives, a variety of programs and policies for housing improvement, and maintenance and management have been established and systematically run. Also, the database of related businesses have been built and maintained, upon which the construction firms are selected or referred to those in demand. This way, the quality of the construction could be ensured. In particular, after the implementation of the HIAs services in Britain, the neighborhood-based support service for housing maintenance and management has led to job creation and reduction in government spending; this proves the effectiveness of the program in

terms of social costs.

Based on these findings, finally the research presents the principles for the directions towards the maintenance and management of low-rise houses, and provides tasks for the support system establishment from each of the following three aspects: administrative system building, service infrastructure building, and institutional ground building.

With regards to the administrative system to support the maintenance and management of low-rise housing, the study suggests a two-tiered support providing system under which the Housing Management Support Center stipulated in the Building Act is installed in cities, counties and districts, with a professionals-assigned task force (tentatively named 'Housing Maintenance and Management Team') installed in the community center.

The former will be responsible for everything that has to do with the Housing Maintenance and Management Team within the community center. Coupled with this, it will have a construction team in place for urgent and simple repairs so as to directly carry out public-supported projects. Additionally, it will play a role in the following areas: database building and management in regard of the history of renovation, which involves both houses and businesses; guidelines and manuals compiling for architectural administration including development of index for housing maintenance and management; and legal consultations.

The latter will be locally based and act as a consultation office for residents on housing renovation; it will provide consultations on the projected costs, methods of renovation, and related materials; operate training programs for the residents; and offer cooperation for activities related to the Committee for Local Autonomy.

In order to perform these tasks, it is necessary, most of all, to run a professional workforce. In this sense, the research stresses the necessity for human services through the placement of professionals, as well as establishment of a specialized support center. Accordingly, the study suggests that public administration

workers specialized in architecture and urban, along with civil experts, be assigned to the Housing Management Support Center at the city, county and district levels. Also, a team of construction workers composed of multi-functional engineers should be organized.

To the Housing Maintenance and Management Team within the locally-based community center, civil experts are advised to be assigned who are either registered architects or those widely-experienced in the Village Creation Project, so as to introduce an administrative system under which public architects or village managers can work on a permanent basis. Lastly, the team of specialized construction engineers within the public support center is recommended to be minimized in size only in the initial stage, so as to cultivate and vitalize locally-based businesses or engineers who are involved in the housing renovation area.

Based on the administrative system presented above, the research provides measures to establish the service infrastructure and to lay the institutional ground, both of which are aimed at providing a variety of services including information provision on related businesses, provision of renovation manuals, and expanded support for housing renovation.

To be specific, first, the study presents detailed measures to operate the Housing Management Support Center, and to introduce the housing renovation history management system based on the proposed revision of the Enforcement Decree of the Building Act. Also, it presents the proposal to revise stipulations of the National Housing Fund and the Housing Environment Management Project, towards revitalizing the support for housing renovation.

In addition, the research proposes introducing the tentative 'Housing Maintenance and Management Law' as a unified law for housing maintenance and management, as well as the proposal to revise existing laws related, which is required to promote the support system presented in the research. To this end, the study proposes promoting, as soon as possible, the enactment of laws involving the maintenance and management of single-detached houses which are excluded from the Housing Act. The stipulations on housing maintenance and management of the

Housing Act can be incorporated afterwards into the laws to be newly enacted.

The significance of the research lies, most of all, in the fact that it has presented the directions towards providing support for housing maintenance and management, first by identifying the difficulties and problems the residents encounter in the process of housing repair and residence, and the residents' thoughts and demand, based on field studies and questionnaire surveys among general low-rise residential areas; and second, by drawing practical problems with the support projects in promotion in both the public and private sector. In particular, the importance of the research is huge in that it has confirmed the necessity to introduce government support policies on housing renovation for low-rise houses, and the validity of securing public budget for them, based on the case studies of several exemplary programs abroad.

Key Words: Low-rise Housing, Single-Detached House, Housing Maintenance and Management, Housing Repair, Housing Management Support Center