

Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (United States)

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Summary

1. The Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) is a housing program based on the efforts of first-time, lower-income homeowners.

- This program has encouraging implications in that lower-income families can participate in building their new homes.

- To promote regional development, private and public organizations and local communities work together to provide non-luxury houses to local residents through various collaborative activities such as grants from the government, land trusts, grants or contributions from local governments, and contributions from other local organizations.

- Self-help housing has had a significant impact on lower-income families. Results have included lower housing costs, better stability in their children's education, better relationships with their communities, and improved communities. Thus such self-help housing programs need to be expanded along with the supply of public rental houses.

2. The success of SHOP can be attributed to several factors: systemic planning and management; efforts between communities and new homeowners to forge better relationships; and the fact that housing projects are customized to suit communities and involve consensus building among local residents and cooperation among various local organizations.

- It is a "self-directed model" customized to suit the characteristics of the local communities involved, and relies on the sharing of resources and teamwork among participating families. It also requires an efficient housing supply plan, as well as thorough education about and management of construction projects.

- Housing project teams consist of people with various skills and capabilities, which complement each other.

- Active participation from local supporters, including supporter activities organized by new homeowners, have promoted harmony in their communities.

Policy Implications

- ① To expand self-help housing programs, the following are necessary: planning and support from the central government, buy-in among local residents, and cooperation among local organizations and residents.
- ② Local business entities to assist with local housing projects should be sought out and promoted. There is also a need for cooperation among various organizations and for community-oriented planning of housing projects that can be managed on an ongoing basis.
- ③ A virtuous cycle should be created by providing revolving funds. In other words, the projects should rely on long-term financial support that considers the income levels and repayment abilities of lower-income families, long-term loans extended by a combination of various financial institutions, education, and monitoring.