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THE SOUTHEAST ASIA SPEAKER SERIES



“Democratizing urban development: community-managed microfinance and slum upgrading in Surabaya”

A Presentation by **Ashok Das**, professor in Urban & Regional Planning at the University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa

Précis:

Microfinance has emerged as a powerful poverty alleviation idea and tool in the developing world. A multitude of actors/institutions are involved in microfinance – from community revolving credit associations to formal NGOs and banks. In regards to this, Dr. Das’ research aims to further our understanding on the concepts of microfinance and other urban development initiatives (such as *integrated* microfinance). Using multi-method analysis, he found that the microfinance performance in CKIP is independent of physical upgrading success. Factors such as project design and size, the composition and expertise of CBOs, the emphasis on savings, the levels of guidance and targeting provided by the local government, community cohesiveness, as well as the broader socio-political context tend to impact microfinance’s efficacy.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Ashok Das was trained as a planner and an architect. He received his Ph.D in Urban Planning from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and his research explores challenges to and innovations in ameliorating urban poverty in developing countries, primarily in South and Southeast Asia.

