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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.266>

<b>Title</b>	The built environment element of economic development in post conflict response in Indonesia
<b>Authors</b>	Setiawan, W and Barrett, PS
<b>Type</b>	Article
<b>URL</b>	This version is available at: <a href="http://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/41534/">http://usir.salford.ac.uk/id/eprint/41534/</a>
<b>Published Date</b>	2016

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ASEAN-Turkey ASLI (Annual Serial Landmark International) Conferences on Quality of Life 2016  
AMER International Conference on Quality of Life, AicQoL2016Medan  
25 – 27 February 2016, Medan, Indonesia

## The Built Environment Element of Economic Development in Post Conflict Response in Indonesia

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### Abstract

The recent violent communal conflicts events at the end of 1990s in Indonesia has appointed to the importance of relationship within the community and linked to the role of economic sector and built environment. This paper presents some findings from interviews with four groups of stakeholders related to urban development on a recent study in the context of the communal conflict that occurred on three cases: Solo (Central Java), Poso (Central Sulawesi), and Sambas (West Kalimantan). The finding suggests that the economic development needs to seriously consider the role of traditional market place and informal sector, as well as urban heritage conservation.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the Association of Malaysian Environment-Behavior Researchers, AMER (ABRA malaysia)

*Keywords:* Traditional market; informal sector; heritage conservation; communal conflicts

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### 1. Introduction

Violent conflicts in Indonesia mostly have involved ethnicity and religious differences at the communal level. Researchers have been trying to explain how or why the incident happened. The current studies suggest that social

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cohesion becomes an issue in the rural and urban environment. In response to this, it seems that the post-conflict environments need sometimes to recover. Even after more than 15 years, some of the affected urban environment remains untouched. This situation partly links to the complex situation; no comprehensive understanding can define the concept of conflicts (Marfo, 2013). On the other hand, the global examples present on how post-conflict development could begin with. This includes some elements such as education, environment scarcity, housing, energy resources, human security, and so on (Marfo, 2013). However, the current studies tend to overlook the role of built environment. In short, the literature invites urban and community planners to pay more attention to the role of built environment in transforming communal behaviour in reducing conflicts at various level in the community (Shirotsuki et al., 2010).

This paper presents the dynamic between communal conflicts and the built environment. It begins with a brief overview of violent conflicts in Indonesia. Some examples have been listed as a lesson learnt which eventually appoints to the socio-economic development. The case study then discusses how the dynamic also touches upon the development of traditional and informal marketplace, along with urban heritage.

## **2. Literature context**

### *2.1. Social conflicts in Indonesia*

Following the economic crisis at the end of the 1990s, physical clashes turned into violent conflicts and spread over across the country. For instance, the people of East Java (especially in South Malang and Banyuwangi) lynched suspected 'witches' (Herriman, 2006). In Ambon (Maluku) and Poso (Central Sulawesi), open conflict occurred between Muslims and Christians which triggered by a clash between youths (Klinken, 2006). In West Kalimantan, local war exploded between Madurese and Dayak people (Peluso, 2006). In Solo, formally Surakarta, the local people were suspected of targeting Chinese people; the riot became the scapegoat of the food crisis (Purdey, 2006). Jakarta experienced big violence riot in 1998, but the violence in Solo was proportionally bigger due to the comparative town scales (Purdey, 2006). In fact, most of the conflict across the country appeared in communal level and involved different ethnicity and religious groups (Varshney et al., 2004). This phenomenon indicates how local factors under-laid most of the conflict among communities (Barron et al., 2009). This also highlights the importance of understanding the social elements that entail cultural gap within an urban setting (Purdey, 2006).

Researchers have been trying to explain how or why the incident happened. Some scholars attempt to explain, on a larger scale, why conflicts happen (e.g. Bertrand, 2008), but it cannot sufficiently explain why conflicts do not always occur in some other places. On the other hand, research on much smaller scales can better understand the circumstances under which conflicts have arisen (Loveband and Young, 2006), but only at a smaller level. However, researchers acknowledge that both research and development responses have paid less attention to the role of built environment to mitigate the conflicts (e.g. Matthew, 2011). The issue of conflict tends to be attractive to social researchers from the political point of view. In response to this, the future study needs to approach research on violent conflict with similar characteristics to better understand the complexity (Bertrand, 2008).

Therefore, this paper highlights how responses to the conflicts appoint to the role of economic sector and built environment, particularly in encouraging not only the economic activity but also the interaction among the communities. This paper presents a partial finding from a recent study in the context of the communal conflict that occurred in three cases: Solo (Central Java), Poso (Central Sulawesi), and Sambas (West Kalimantan). The study was initially based on a hypothetical question whether or not built environment has a significant role to the violent conflicts.

### *2.2. Research on conflicts and the built environments*

Whether the urban development practice has the possibility to transform the communal behaviour into a more social cohesive community still leave space to explore further. Research focusing on the relationship between the community with anti-social behaviour, particularly in the context of developing countries, often link to crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) (e.g. Sakip and Abdullah, 2011; Shibata et al., 2011). Although such study touch upon the role of community, it rather approaches on the crime event that involve 'criminals' at the

personal level, for example at housing level (Mohit and Elsawahli, 2010). Ideas exist to suggest ‘physical’ responses through CPTED for improving the safety and security (Marvi and Behzadfar, 2015), in term of social aspects, functional aspects, urban landscape, and physical aspects (Yazdanfar and Nazari, 2015: 233); those examples, however, are meant more for property security.

On the other hand, in a context of the built environment where conflicts happen or tend to occur, the theoretical position agrees upon the dynamic between ‘physical intervention’ and conflicts, similarly with the approach from CPTED. Examples exist to suggest the urban development to take social sustainability into account in various ways, including urban planning (Bollens, 2006), heritage and architectural conservation (Brett, 2001), inclusive urban space (Smith and Alexander, 2001), cultural physical symbol (McEldowney et al., 2001), spatial planning (Suchting and Weiss, 2001) and so on. Those practical examples have arisen from the cultural movement to spatial intervention. An example presents an interaction space for people with various socio-cultural characteristics (Gaffikin, et.al. 2001) to deal with a divided community in Belfast. This space welcomes different socio-cultural symbols in some forms from language to architecture, or from festivals to shops (see Bret, 2001; Suchting and Weiss, 2001). It implies that such development also considers the importance of economic issues (Bollens, 2006).

The ideas of built environment response to a violent conflict has appeared based on the concept of ‘contact hypothesis’ by Gordon W. Allport (1954, in Moghaddam et al., 2008). The concept suggests that under certain circumstances more contact between the social-cultural groups would encourage interaction and later reduce conflicts (Moghaddam et al., 2008). Therefore, this paper aims to highlight the emerging issues in which social interaction could take place in response to communal conflict events in Indonesia. This paper presents only a small part of a larger research which focuses on the built environment element that often also represents particular social groups existence, i.e. cultural and economic symbol.

### 3. Methodology

This research focused on the violent conflicts at communal level in which occurred in three urban environments: Solo (Central Java), Poso (Central Sulawesi), and Sambas (West Kalimantan). The research attempts to gather deep understanding while keeping the possibility of more information wide open. This idea, in particular, coincides with the characteristics of using open-ended interview style, which brings flexibility in ‘sequencing and wording question in different situation’ without losing more detail but deep information to appear (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006: 3). The research employed qualitative approach with the support of Grounded Theory Style in analysing the interview. The respondents came from four different stakeholders related to urban development: the government or the urban planning authority, the expert or planning practitioners, the NGO, and the local leaders representing different socio-cultural groups.

Table 1. Summary of respondents number in relation with sampling guidance

Methods	Number of ‘respondents’
Case study	3 cases: Solo, Poso, and Sambas
Interview	Solo: 13 respondents; Poso: 13; Sambas: 16
Grounded Theory Style	42 respondents

Source: derived from the guidance by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007)

### 4. Socio-economic and socio-cultural development: Finding and discussion

The finding indicates that social economic appeared to be one dominant motive in all three cases. In Solo, the conflict has been associated with the gap between Chinese ethnic group, which alleged to rule the economic activity, and Javanese, the indigenous people who suffered from the unequal development. Socio-economic motives might also occur as one reason in Sambas, where the people have to struggle for work under ethnicity line and occupational pattern. However, the latest conflict showed that it was not only socio-economic motives but also the cultural reason that drove the Malay people to enforce the Madura people to leave their property. Cultural could be problematic in West Kalimantan, and it appears to be problematic in Poso too. People used to live peacefully side by side respecting

the differences of culture and religion. The conflict has blurred the distinction between culture and religion. It involved people from different ethnic groups, coincidentally with different religious background – Muslim and Christian.

The finding also suggests socio-economic element as a common feature in the context of communal conflicts. Apart that it provides support in term of financial or occupation, economic activity has also a significant role in influencing the cultural landscape of the urban environment. At some point, the urban environment experiences spatial division across different socio-cultural and socio-economic groups, as mentioned by interview from Sambas (refers to SAM-01-RES, SAM-02-LLD, and SOL-07-URP).

*Then, beggars appear in the street. They were given relocation sites. Then, this place is a 100% for the refugee. The incident during the evacuation period was 'outstanding'. Slum. And people around it felt disturbed. Indeed, some small disturbance emerged, but not becoming a greater conflict. [SAM-01-RES][sic]*

*Because he's talking about economic issues. In my opinion, how could the conflict happen because of economic issues. They are equally poor. Either the Dayak, or Madurese, or Malay is poor. [SAM-02-LLD][sic]*

*But, (I) do not know how was the later move of Jokowi after many small communities were empowered. We hope they can become economically stronger, abler to fulfil their emotional needs and enjoy the development. Maybe, social conflicts, which caused by social differences, are expected to be reduced in the future. [SOL-07-URP][sic]*

It appears that in a conflict situation the response to conflicts touches upon the importance of social interaction between different socio-economic and cultural groups. The respondents also often link the recent conflict with the economic gap; therefore, the responses appear to focus also on socio-economic development to improve the quality of life. The findings appoint to the importance of post-conflict response to encourage a more inclusive economic development across different socio-cultural groups (Carnegie, 2010). In turn, this 'inclusive development' which discourage 'contestation along identity group lines' would decrease the chance for communal conflict in the long term (McCauley, 2013: 182). It also suggest that the response needs to involve collaboration among 'grassroot' stakeholders, such as community and local leader (Al Qurtuby, 2012)

#### 4.1. Social interaction

Social interaction between different socio-cultural groups has become a significant issue about post-conflict development. Some respondents mentioned the necessity of having good communication at every level of community, as it is an integral part of the response to the potential of communal conflict. The interview implies that the communication across socio-cultural and economic groups still needs an improvement (refers to interview with SAM-15-URP and POS-02-RES). For example, 'good communication' across ethnic groups in Sambas (Case 3) happens exclusively at a high or elite level.

*How communication spaces emerge? The communication is important so that they can interact, chat. Everything happens there, some activities there. So rich, there are Malay Madura, from all kinds. I do not see anything like this anymore, and communication between them, this sort of thing. [SAM-15-URP][sic]*

*It happens in almost all sectors of life. In offices too. It means that there is a familiarity between them. I see it this way. I try to reflect on how I get along with my friends at that time. [POS-02-RES][sic]*

To ensure that interaction takes place at every level, the discussions agreed upon the concept of a 'contact hypothesis' (e.g. Pettigrew, 1998). Pettigrew (1998) recognises four processes that influence social group interaction. These include 'learning about outgroup, ingroup reappraisal, generating an affective relationship, and behaviour transformation' (Pettigrew, 1998: 70-73). The concept of a 'contact hypothesis' enables a person from one particular socio-cultural group to interact with other groups and learn from these interactions. Through this interaction, a positive relationship would emerge, involving different social groups. This interaction will allow him

or her to reassess the characteristics of the social group, and in turn, will change their behaviour at an individual, or even communal, level. Additionally, this concept is believed to be able to stimulate better interaction between family, friends, or even strangers with mutual interests. In the end, it could 'open up' community to a different cultural environment, which will improve cross-cultural understanding (Murtagh and Ellis, 2011). Furthermore, it can take place in some locations such as 'informal public spaces, the marketplace, organised public spheres and education settings' (Comedia, 2007 in Murtagh and Ellis, 2011: 91). This coincides with the interview with one of the respondents from Solo (refers to SOL-07-URP).

*If it's yes or no question, later the time may answers. From what the mayor proclaimed to build the grassroots and we know that such consistent programs in favour to this are quite a lot. (For example redevelopment of) Traditional markets, street vendors, informal trader, and so on. And, the perpetrators of the damage (actually comes from) their group. With this, it may be economically better, of course, it is also hoped to reduce further the possibility of this (conflict). [SOL-07-URP][sic]*

#### 4.2. The role of traditional market

The respondents suggest that social interaction, at a certain level, might not only happen between elites or high-profile people. On the contrary, in more informal situations, interaction also occurs at a lower level. The evidence from all cases shows that the traditional market becomes a multicultural and 'natural' meeting point. People from various socio-cultural backgrounds emerge naturally, with similar interests, in this traditional market. The marketplace represents the economic activity of people from a lower economic section. The traditional market provides a 'melting pot' for multicultural interaction (refer to interview with SAM-01-RES and POS-11-URP).

*I think the market can (provide meeting place) across ethnics mainly the three conflicting ethnics, Dayak, Malay, Madurese. The case in Sei Peny, a place before entering Mempawah, shows that community goes down there (from some surrounding areas). There they met, and there was no problem. It was after the conflict. [SAM-01-RES][sic]*

*If it should be quicker, people feel comfortable on the market, if they are in the market.... But people will quickly build trust, but it will take longer to assimilate. So it should be in a split. So there are smaller centres. The market may appear at the province level, the district, or the city. Then, small markets are distributed on the border. [POS-11-URP][sic]*

In fact, right after the recent conflicts, traditional markets become the 'go to' meeting place and transactional place for the multicultural community. Post-conflict developments often see this facility as one of the focus areas. Traditional market upgrading is believed to protect small scale economic activity and to support small scale entrepreneurship. An example from Solo shows that traditional market redevelopment also attempts to empower the informal sectors by upgrading them into formal markets (refer to interview with SOL-01-GOV).

*Informal sector (relocation) was (our) master piece, the re-arrangement of street vendors. We could organize thousands of street vendors (informal sectors) without conflicts. And they weren't not merely moved, but also got more benefited. Well, we provided them a place where they could go to the market as well. But also (they) do not have to compete with other businesses. Well, the design was that we place them closer to the trade centres. For example, a person builds a shopping mall area, he must still provide space for street vendors. [SOL-01-GOV][sic]*

#### 4.3. The role of informal sectors

It appears that less formal economic activities have an advantage in providing, not only economic opportunity but also meeting places for multicultural interaction. In addition to that, informal sectors provide a substantial support to the formal sectors. Formal sectors are mostly present in more urbanised environments with limited availability. Although it also provides an arena for cross-cultural communication, its limitations have excluded some ethnicities or socio-cultural groups, most of which are minority groups (refers to interview with SOL-04-GOV).

*I guess, because there are quite a lot of activities, a variety of age groups, a variety of groups, social class, it might potentially reduce the conflict. There are several activities that are channeled. Then from the environment view, there are city-scale activities every weekend night. We can interact with some merchants, which may represent (a specific) item from Solo, which we never see before. They only do for export. And this creative crafts they only have in their (specialties) shop. They can show off there every weekend night. So when I want the item, I can refer to this address, we come there. It's a way of moving the economy, very good, in my opinion. And social interaction with the community also occurs with the presence of large traders, small traders. People who had no idea about Solo could come and learn there, (see what) is happening there. [SOL-04-GOV][sic]*

In Indonesia, where dual society exists between modern and traditional or formal and informal sectors, 'kaki lima' (on-street vendor) markets has developed a mutual relationship with formal shops or sector nearby (Harjoko and Adiarto, 2012: 61). This phenomenon seems to coincide with a discussion of the relationship between economic development and social capital. In developing countries, a traditional market appears to be a successful 'transactional' space because it encourages people to take part in social networking and to reap the benefits at an individual level (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). One of the advantages is that it generates a 'capacity to live and work with those who are different' (Sandercock, 2003).

Along with the informal sectors, trading activity and traditional markets bring colour to the city. This kind of activity provides more opportunity for cross-cultural interaction. In fact, these trading activities cause urban environments to flourish. It illustrates how the transactional process happening in the market place could encourage the 'linking [of] people' which would increase the cross-group relationship (Cornell and Hartman, 2007: 8-9). In short, the interview indicates that traditional markets should become one area of focus in post-conflict development (refers to interview with SAM-06-LLD).

*For instance, at that time, there were many street vendors (informal sector) in the market. The government should think how to build the market. (They could) Include street vendor there. We can see a concept from Malaysia; it was built as a long carriage, a sort of rail hangar. Street vendor was included there. So they no longer sell things in front of the shop. Here, this does not exist. Only a few in the West Kalimantan. It's like that there (in Malaysia). Neatly organized. (There if we go) Shopping on street, walk, (we feel) comfortable. Garbage car is waiting (to collect rubbish). Why not was this emulated? It's been many years; nothing happened. [SAM-06-LLD][sic]*

Although some scholars believe that communal conflict has a direct causal link with economic development, the recent conflict and its relationship with economic dominance against ethnic sentiment, particularly in Solo, is debatable (Purdey, 2006). However, the development of an economic facility associates the pattern of development and cultural groups with certain economic activities. The way in which the Chinese group manages their shops and trading activity in Solo (Case 1) and Sambas (Case 3) exemplifies the dominance of one particular ethnic group. The Chinese group is believed to control trading and the business sector in Solo, Sambas, and Poso. In Poso, Arab and Bugis people also play a significant role in trading. During the period of conflict, many of them fled Poso and never returned. Therefore, the respondents allege that Poso has difficulties in redeveloping the city because it lost its economic resources. In other words, the informal marketplace has become a mediator for inequality regarding economic opportunities; it also provides public space for 'marginal population' (Kurniawati, 2012: 480).

In response to this challenge, an example from Belfast presents in rebuilding the city after conflict through 'cultural industries' (Gaffikin et al., 2001: 141). The urban redevelopment strategy, such as building and urban regeneration, has attempted to encourage more social cohesive space. At the same time, the development scenario also wants to revive the 'heritage economics', to improve the economic opportunity and encourage social interaction. In fact, there have been examples showing how heritage and conservation could provide a better atmosphere for 'shopping activities' that directly link to the economic regeneration of the urban environment (e.g. Hashimah and Ismail, 2010).

#### 4.4. Urban heritage and conservation

The idea of heritage movement coincides with the finding at some point. For example, an interview from Sambas (Case 3) acknowledged the potential of heritage conservation in improving the economic development (refers to interview with SAM-05-LLD).

*So, once I met with a Head Minister of Malaysia, similarly to the Governor. He said, Mr. Burhan, please do not build your Sambas following the way we built Sarawak and Kuching (Malaysia). Melayu Kampong is becoming extinct now, evicted by modern buildings. I was visited by a Netherlands. He said, Mr. Burhan can I buy all those houses starting from the bridge up to near the palace. I want to make a hotel, but it will not change it. Yes, the hotel will use the old houses. He wanted to preserve the Malay sites. And indeed, the Malay house model is now somewhat difficult to build because the building materials are now limited. The wood has been depleted, iron wood, shingle roof also. [SAM-05-LLD][sic]*

The interview picked up on architecture as being an important cultural symbol. They believe that cultural differences must manifest through a more tangible form than events and activities to represent the identity of an ethnic group. In Case 1 (Solo), the architecture appears to be one of the most important elements in representing cultural uniqueness. In fact, the local government has recently employed a set of local architecture characteristics to symbolise the development after the riot in 1998 (refer to interview with SOL-01-GOV, SOL-04-GOV, and SOL-10-LLD).

*Revitalization has been done a lot, for example, in Balekambang (one of green heritage park). There is the potential of the culture. There is also the potential for its ecology. Actually, we want to push Sriwedari (a heritage building for cultural performances). But it is still constrained by land ownership. Then, (we also) designed the area around the Ngarsopura (one of traditional market) corridor leading to Mangkunegaran (one of the Palace). [SOL-01-GOV][sic]*

*He highlighted Banjarsari Park. At that time, it was the place that the destruction of the city was very visible because this city park was inhabited by 989 informal sectors. Although in the whole town there also (some informal sectors) but it was rather sporadic. But this one was a concentration (of informal encroachment) in one place, it was so many. Then when he could clean it up, this effort became an outstanding achievement. [SOL-04-GOV][sic]*

*And Jokowi (the former City Mayor) always stress out to create different concepts, such as the naming of 'China Town', it's due to the character of the region which inherits China Town characteristics. (For more information) China Town was mentioned in Babat Solo (an old script about Solo), Rekso Pustoko (Royal Library). Inevitably Chinese characters must be raised, although the existing buildings might present characteristic of colonial (Dutch) buildings. So the concept is applied to the arrangement of green areas (spaces) with strengthened Chinese style. In addition, he is also very brave when choosing colours. If red colour is (really the original) domination, no need to worry. Because as long as the concept is correct, the concepts must be applied. [SOL-10-LLD][sic]*

Solo has made a step forward from the situation that the urban environment needs to improve its performance both in term of social interaction and economic development. After the violent conflict, the city has implemented revitalization programmes on several traditional historic markets and urban settlements. The city has been recognized as a successful example to redevelop its infrastructure; it includes the revitalization of Pasar Gedhe (the heritage central market), informal market relocation from Banjarsari (a significant monument in Solo), redevelopment of Pasar Triwindu (an antique market adjacent to Mangkunegaran Palace), conservation movement in Laweyan Kampung Batik (a historic settlement), City Walk development along Slamet Riyadi Street, and so on.

This strategy usually utilizes the advantage of heritage building and streets to convey 'physical and spiritual strengths' of the area (Samadi and Yunus, 2012: 77). This development idea believes that social cohesion often needs improvement on a physical 'collective shared identity' (McEldowney et al., 2001: 115). Focusing on Belfast as the case, an 'open-minded' built environment has successfully increased the collective pride of a place and



‘community integration’ (McEldowney et al., 2001: 115-116). They suggest the use of architecture, either to fit traditional or newer fashions, to exhibit public pride at the local and city level. By applying this approach, public space will not only be benefited by its physical (regarding practicality and visual) improvement, but also by attracting more people in to use it (Neill, 2004).

The discussion on the use of development, on an urban design scale like urban heritage or the success of public space in mediating interaction, has been discussed by some scholars. A classic example from Jane Jacobs (1961) has discussed that urban public spaces, especially on street level, need more attention from people who either use them or live nearby. Such attention would be able to generate a certain level of ‘involvement, participation, sense of responsibility, feeling attachment, and natural surveillance’ (Jacobs, 1961: 42). This would improve the network on the neighbourhood scale, encourage children to be more responsible, and also help the environment to protect people; either ‘strangers’ or the inhabitants (Jacobs, 1961: 129). This argument indicates that an integrated, small-scale physical development, one which incorporates economic and physical development with social sensitivity, has a potential to increase the level of ‘security’. In line with this, Martin Bradshaw (1996) reads a report about ‘Vital and Viable Town Centre’ by the Department of the Environment (1994) and acknowledges the use of urban design to improve three components: ‘attraction, accessibility, and amenity’ (Bradshaw, 1996: 115-116). The improvement of ‘attraction’ includes the development of residential, business, retails, arts and cultural facilities, as well as other social infrastructures, such as education and health facilities. The ‘accessibility’ component links the access to and from the urban centre, and its network, with transport facilities. Finally, ‘amenity’ deals with ‘how pleasant a place [is] to be’ (Bradshaw, 1996: 116). This third element specifically contains a distinctive ‘identity’ of a place compared to other places, and ‘security’, which can be achieved by good maintenance of the place. In the end, this situation would improve ‘multicultural awareness’, which later would encourage cross-cultural interaction and reduce the tendency of violent communal conflicts (Awang-Shuib et al., 2012: 49, 58). In fact, the global community acknowledges the role of heritage and conservation in post-conflict development ‘in the name of making reparations for past atrocities’ (Jenkins, 2013: 120).

## **5. Conclusion remarks**

In the relationship with the issue of violent communal conflict, it appears that Indonesia has much to learn from the situation. Although the issue sounds more socio-political, the social conflict has become an element, in which research on the built environment, unfortunately, has overlooked whether or not it could contribute to the conflict resolution. However, the examples, from global experience and Indonesia, suggest that in communal conflicts link to problematic social interaction among the community groups. At some point, the response to this situation focuses on some elements including socio-economic development.

In term of economic development, traditional market and informal sectors (market) has become key elements. Not only they contribute to socio-economic development, but also they provide space for social interaction in an informal and natural way. In combination with the heritage and conservation movement, the built environment could even become the representation of cultural diversity and encourage a positive attitude to the inhabitants. People would learn from this nature to appreciate multicultural difference positively, which in turn would reduce the likeliness of conflicts to take place. In short, this paper argues that in order to improve the quality of life in a post-conflict environment, the built environment could actually play the role with the provision of ‘inclusive heritage economic development’.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the support from Directorate of Higher Education (DIKTI), the Ministry of Education, Republic Indonesia, for the funding for this PhD research.

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