

A photograph of a man in a dark shirt looking down in a slum setting. The background shows a narrow alleyway with makeshift buildings, laundry hanging, and a dog lying on the ground. The overall scene is one of urban poverty.

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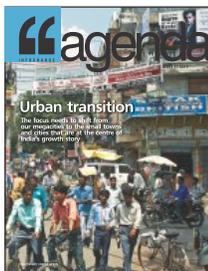
ISSUE 28 2014

Urban poverty

As poverty intensifies in urban India, what will it take to give the urban poor equal rights to our cities?

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How to make urban governance pro-poor

This introduction demystifies terms such as ‘the urbanisation of poverty’, ‘absolute’ and ‘relative poverty’ and the ‘informalisation’ and ‘feminisation of poverty’, and points out why urban poverty needs a different approach and set of solutions from rural poverty. Pro-poor urban governance follows on an acceptance of the poor as integral assets of the formal city

RAMANATH JHA

IF CITIES do not deal constructively with poverty, poverty will deal destructively with cities, said Robert McNamara, ex-chief of the World Bank.

The poor are an extremely important constituent of the city, a huge asset. But if one looks at them only as an asset as far as services go, and as a liability where services to be rendered to *them* is concerned, then the numerical strength of the poor is such that it is possible they will impact the city so adversely that the city’s infrastructure and services are destroyed. This was a warning given a long time ago, and it needs to be heeded today if cities want to enjoy balanced growth.

Three Es drive a city. The first is Economy. A city must provide employment. It must create jobs. That is the genesis of the city, where a large number of people gather together to offer their talents and their services, and the economy of the city grows and provides employment. Now if people gather in a place, a habitat, they obviously need to live there. And if they want to live there, there has to be a particular quality of life offered to them so that they can become productive instruments in the city’s economy. That aspect is encapsulated in the word Environment, essentially meaning quality of life where you have good air, clean water, efficient transportation, a good residence and other infrastructure, education, health and recreational facilities, all of which allow you to be a productive member of the city’s employment force. The third word relevant to urban poverty is Equity. It is not enough to have economy for certain kinds of people. It is not enough to provide quality of life for a section of the people. Unless both economy and environment are available equitably to all citizens, the city will not remain balanced. The seeds of destruction are sown when you neglect any one of these. A city revolves around these three Es.

Urbanisation in our country has been growing over the past two-three decades. Urban population as a percentage of the country has moved from 23% to 27% to 31%. About 31% of India is currently urbanised. Although there are over 5,000 towns and cities across the country, the categorisation is wide. C-class towns have populations as low as 5,000 and 10,000. B- and C-class towns go up to around 100,000; municipal corporations have several lakhs; and metropolitan cities have more than 1 million population. The Government

of India calls cities like Hyderabad and Bangalore, which have populations of over 5 million, metros.

Metropolitan cities have been growing fast, and the urban poverty in them is growing faster still. Sometime ago I heard a speaker very aptly describe the process: he said population was growing at less than 2%; rural areas were growing at 2%; urban areas at 3%; metropolitan cities at 4%; and urban poverty was growing at 5%. These may not be very accurate figures but they describe the rate at which things are happening in the urban scenario.

There are important facts about urban poverty that we need to look at on a broader scale. One, that there is urbanisation of national poverty. What do we mean by this? Earlier, we did not look at poverty as urban poverty; poverty was essentially rural poverty. When we became independent, India lived mainly in the villages. The poor were in the villages and the question was entirely about how to eradicate poverty there. Also, at that time we were talking about absolute poverty.

When we talk about poverty, the two terms that come up are ‘absolute poverty’ and ‘relative poverty’. Absolute poverty essentially means that a person does not have an income that allows him a minimum calorific value intake every day. If he is unable to do this, then he is absolutely poor and faces a question of survival. For a very long time we were dealing with that kind of poverty. But while in the process of doing that we found that large numbers of people were moving to the cities for employment and a better income that allowed them to feed their families and themselves, and because there was more on offer in the city. Therefore those who wanted to study, those who wanted to do business, those who wanted a better life for themselves opted to shift to the city.

As far as the poor were concerned, they mainly came to the city in search of employment. This led to the urbanisation of poverty which started becoming a big enough issue to begin competing with rural poverty. Soon the nation needed to look both at rural poverty and urban poverty.

What also happened within the urban scenario was that the

poverty that came into the cities was largely informalised. This term 'informalisation of poverty' is important. What it means is that the city, because of the inflow of the poor, gets divided into two cities: the formal planned city and the informal unplanned city. When you move into the informal unplanned city, you live in a slum; where you work in the informal city, you join the informal sector as a hawker, domestic assistant, any job that is not formal. The informal sector is characterised by undercapitalisation, low skill levels and small businesses. That is the kind of informalisation that has happened in terms of urban poverty, all over the country.

The third component is 'feminisation of poverty'. What we mean by this is that if we look at the profile of urban poverty we find that the worst off are women-headed households. They earn fewer wages, and the consumption basket available to them is smaller. Women's needs are not customised in the city; many are simply not taken care of. Therefore, the overall quality of life in women-headed households is worse than in other kinds of families within the fold of urban poverty.

These three key phrases: urbanisation of poverty, informalisation of urban poverty, and feminisation of urban poverty are what we need to keep in mind when we try and tackle the problems of urban poverty.

The natural tendency of people who devised policy for this problem has been to study rural poverty and then translate it to the urban scenario, building a replica of what we are doing with rural poverty, for urban poverty. This was the mistake that was being made for a long time, probably because our understanding was limited, and because the attention that urban poverty needed came late, when it had already become a huge problem.

What is it that differentiates rural poverty from urban poverty? Rural poverty is mainly a question of employment. People do not have enough income to give them two square meals a day. Income poverty therefore is the main plank of rural poverty. When people move into cities, they may have low incomes (some families may even be struggling in terms of income poverty), but what generally happens is that they exchange the kind of life they were living in the rural areas for an urban one. When they were living in rural areas, the air was not bad, housing was not a huge problem although they may not have had as good a house as their rich neighbours. Toilets were not a major problem. They went to the same school. They went to the same hospital and enjoyed the same medical facilities. When people shift to urban areas, income poverty may be taken care of partly but a whole host of new problems surround them, problems that have to do with the demeaning lives they live.



Vivek Singh

The quality of life deficits that come into an urban scenario distinguish rural poverty from urban poverty. Just to give you an example, Dharavi is the biggest slum in Asia. Mumbai in any case is the most densely populated city: it's almost 30,000 people per square kilometre, which is about the highest in the world. But the population density in Dharavi is 1.25 lakh people per square kilometre! If you live in that kind of density you can imagine the average area available to a citizen to live his life. They live on storeys in shanty structures. Very meagre toilet facilities, very little hygiene, very little space to dump solid waste. All these problems — of air, water, living space, sanitation, toilets, transport, long distances to travel to work which means you spend more money on transport and more time commuting — add to your poverty. These are aspects of urban poverty that do not get visited on the rural poor. The larger the city, the worse off the poor in the sense that, for instance, commuting distances are greater, cost of land increases as cities become larger. The urban poor are deprived of many services.

And unlike in the village where some kind of barter also works, in the city the economy is completely monetised. If you don't have money you cannot buy the service. Also, in the village, the basket of services is more or less the same for everyone. But when you move to the city, every service is different for every person. The poor will either walk or travel by bus; they cannot afford to drive in their own vehicle. If they have to go to a doctor, they cannot afford many of the medical services that are available. The same goes for education. And housing, and everything else that you need in your life. The basket of services offered to the poor is different from those offered to the rich. And it gets worse as cities move up the ladder.

The point I am making is that if you try and look at urban poverty in the same manner as you look at rural poverty, you will never be able to solve the problems of the urban poor. What you have to measure in cities is not income poverty, which would be one of the criteria, but urban vulnerability. Once you accept this as a definitional aspect of urban poverty, the entire scenario changes. Only then will you realise which aspects of urban poverty you need to strike at, and what the best possible solutions are.

What are the key issues in urban poverty? Firstly, when you look at laws you will see that most of them have nothing for the urban poor. Consider housing. When you live in a slum you are living in an unauthorised colony. Even if it gets authorised under the Slum Act, slums are usually outside the pale of the formal city. Urban planning laws do not recognise slums because they are not something the normal planning control regulations look at. Similarly, there is no place for hawkers in the plans. Although government recently passed the Street Vending Act, this is not enough because the Act must be reflected in all the laws that exist. If there is a separate Act that does not find place in the overall urban laws, then no planning will be done to provide for street vending. Therefore, we need to look closely at

legislation. Urban planning has to be changed because equity has never been part of the urban planning process. We borrowed most of our urban planning from the British and have since not changed our planning ethos to reflect the socio-economics of our country.

Shelter is another key issue that needs to be looked at. And livelihoods — how do we provide livelihoods to these people, what is the basket of services that must be offered, and at what cost because the aspects of both service and delivery and cost are important elements of service-provision. How do we give poor people access to credit? How does the flow of information get to the poor? This is an extremely important issue because the poor do not have access to all the information they need. How do they become part of the decision-making process in the habitat in which they live? These are important aspects of urban poverty.

All of this must be related to governance. How far has the *theory* of governance moved to accommodate the urban poor?

A famous civil servant once said that when government performs its function of administering a country, the function is called 'governance'. Governance is what a government *does*. But this is a somewhat naive statement because this is not what governance is. At best it is one kind of governance. The important thing is to what extent has the concept of governance evolved to move from one to all. That's the direction in which we are going, although we haven't reached our destination yet.

When we had kings, a single person was involved in the decision-making process. He decided, others followed. That was one kind of governance. Democratic governance moves beyond that. We have come to a situation where we have what we call a 'representative form of governance' in our country where we elect a person and he, on our behalf, participates in the decision-making process. The ultimate form of governance is where *everyone* participates in the governance process. Is that possible? Some say it isn't. I believe that if technology grows, and if everyone can give his/her opinion through the Net, then everyone's participation *is* possible. We would arrive at that point after some time. That is the direction in which governance has to move. Essentially, representative democracy gets replaced by participatory government and more and more people participate to make it more and more democratic so that the journey from one to all finally becomes the most democratic form of governance.

Governance is more than government. It recognises that power exists inside and outside the formal institutions of government. It includes what we call the 'social capital' of citizens, all of civil society. What happens in this kind of governance? What essentially happens is that the state continues to be an important element because it is the repository of a lot of power; it has the mandate to take

decisions. But it has the mandate to take decisions in a particular manner. It is not the sole decision-maker. It takes along other constituents of civil society — NGOs, citizens, business, anyone who is interested in lending his/her voice to the decision-making process. Therefore government, from being the sole decision-maker, moves to a place where it becomes the orchestrator of social consensus. Like the person who conducts an orchestra. He brings all the opinions together and then derives a consensus which is translated into a decision and gets implemented. That's the kind of governance we are talking about.

Governance includes three elements. They are: process, content, and deliverance.

Process is the manner in which decisions are made. When we add the word 'good' to governance, the 'goodness' of that governance is exemplified by the way a decision is taken. If it is taken in a transparent manner, where diverse opinions are taken into consideration and where the concerns of a large number of people, or everyone, are included in the decision-making, that's inclusive governance. Good governance demands that the process be as inclusive as possible. This has relevance when we talk about urban poverty, because empowerment comes about through the inclusion of the poor in the decision-making process. That's why it's important.

What is content? Content involves certain principles which, irrespective of how many people vote for or against them, remain constant. A majority of people may, for instance, want a certain group of people to be exterminated. That's not a value that good governance would allow, because everyone has an undeniable right to life. No matter how many people want a life to be taken, it cannot be done. Nazi Germany is not something that would ever qualify for good governance. There has to be justice, there has to be equity, there has to be fairness. Therefore, there are certain principles that form the content of good governance irrespective of the number of people who support or don't support certain decisions.

And deliverables. No matter what process we follow, no matter how much we talk about good governance, ultimately it must deliver something. I may talk endlessly about how everyone should get water, but at the end of the day if there is no water in the tap then that is useless good governance. The tap must have water. A deliverable has to come out of good governance.

Certain values and ideas are more or less accepted around the world with regard to good governance. Although there is a lot of debate among theoreticians, almost everyone agrees that they are the principles of good governance. One is the business of it being consensual. There must be as wide a consensus as possible. Another is a fair legal framework. Rule of law remains the bulwark of good governance.

Subsidiarity is a word that needs to be explained. Essentially it means that if a decision affects a mohalla and can be taken in a mohalla it need not be debated in parliament. If the mohalla is capable of taking the decision, it must be taken at that level. Decentralisation is the hallmark of good governance.

Equity is a very important consideration in good governance. Also, efficiency in service delivery. We talked about transparency and accountability, and security of life and property. These are principles that must be addressed by any society seeking to establish good governance.

We have talked about the urban poor, and we have talked about what governance is. We now need to see how the two relate through a governance mechanism that is pro-poor. In a nutshell, whatever you do, if you want to have pro-poor governance, ask one question: what's in it for the poor, how do the poor get impacted? Revisit laws from this point of view. When you do, you will see that there is very little in the urban planning laws, for instance, for the urban poor. Shelter is not adequately provided in the way land is distributed, and very few livelihoods are offered in the urban planning laws. Rework urban planning so as to deliver shelter and livelihoods — the two main issues that concern the urban poor. Pro-poor urban governance must recognise that if the poor are citizens of the city, if they are assets to the city, providing them shelter and jobs is paramount. Plan, finance and deliver infrastructure services to everyone. Once poor people are accepted as integral to the city then it becomes obvious that they must get water, they must have toilets, their children must go to quality schools, their medical needs must be taken care of. They need transport, street lights, roads, sanitation, and all of this in the habitat in which they live. You will start addressing these issues the moment you look at them as assets of the formal city. Plan, finance and deliver social services. Once you begin planning and relating plans to the kind of incomes poor people generate for themselves, you will realise that services have to be priced within the reach of poor people. Draw up a strategy for credit. Involve citizens' groups that work for the poor. There are CBOs and NGOs that link up with banks, guaranteeing that money flows backwards again.

Strengthen information flow. Set up kiosks where information can be distributed; educate the poor so that they can access the information they require. By listening to the poor, organisations of the poor, you will be empowering them. You will start to understand their problems. And they will be able to voice their concerns to you before decisions are taken.

Ramanath Jha is the former Municipal Commissioner of Pune, and Metropolitan Commissioner, Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority. A member of the expert committee for the preparation of the Model Municipal Law commissioned by GOI, 2002, Jha has authored two books on urbanisation and people-friendly cities and lectures widely on urban studies. He is presently CEO and Managing Director of Khed Economic Infrastructure Pvt Ltd. This article is based on a lecture by Ramanath Jha organised by CCDS and Janwani in Pune on March 14, 2014

Counting the urban poor

In all the noise over whether the urban poor can survive on a daily per capita expenditure of Rs 33 or Rs 47, we miss the point that we need to move away altogether from the income/consumption approach to measuring poverty to measurement on the basis of urban habitat — including access to safe water, sanitation and a clean household environment — and livelihood/disaster vulnerabilities

R B BHAGAT

Consumption/Income poverty

Poverty may be defined as deprivation of a minimum standard of living as per societal norms. Looked at this way, the notion of poverty differs from society to society. It is essentially a multidimensional concept — an outcome not only of deprivation of income, but also of education, housing, safe water, sanitation, and access to healthcare, etc. On the other hand, poverty is generally measured either on the basis of income or consumption levels of households. A poverty line is determined on the basis of household-level income or the least consumption expenditure required for an individual to avoid unacceptable living conditions.

In the first estimation of poverty levels in India by V M Dandekar and Nilakantha Rath, in the early-1970s, poverty

was defined as the inability of a person to get two square meals a day. Two square meals were pegged at 2,250 calories per capita per day. According to them, the poverty line was the total income, rather total expenditure, of a person that did not in fact permit the provision of food containing 2,250 calories per day in urban and rural India (Rath 2011). Due to lack of data on income, information on total expenditure available from the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) is mainly used. Along with consumer expenditure, NSSO also provided quantities of both food and non-food items consumed. It may be noted that total expenditure is not just expenditure on food but includes expenditure on non-food items. No norm, however, was fixed for non-food items; it was assumed to be appropriate at the respective level of total expenditure (Rath 2011).

Rajesh Vora



Originally, the poverty lines for rural and urban areas were fixed for the year 1973-74 at Rs 49 and Rs 56 monthly per capita, respectively. In subsequent years, this was updated using an appropriate price index, namely Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour for rural areas and Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers for urban areas. One of the strong assumptions in this estimation was that the basket of food items remained the same over the years.

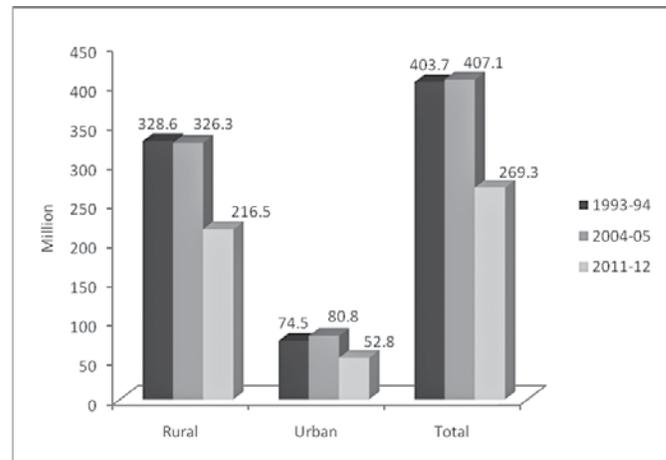
The Planning Commission has appointed several committees in the past. A committee under the chairmanship of D T Lakdawala was appointed in 1991 to re-examine issues related to the poverty line that were submitted in 1993. This committee changed the calorie norms, recommending 2,400 calories per head per day for rural areas and 2,100 calories per head per day for urban areas. It also suggested a spatial price index for different states, as prices of various food and non-food items vary across the states of India making it necessary to adjust the all-India poverty line to state-level prices. A monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs 356 and Rs 539 for rural and urban areas respectively was adopted for the year 2004-05.

Not satisfied with poverty estimations and aiming to counter some of the strong criticism surrounding poverty estimates, the Planning Commission appointed another committee under the chairmanship of Suresh Tendulkar, in 2009. The Tendulkar Committee addressed three main issues in the earlier estimation of poverty:

- The rural and urban consumption basket of food and non-food items had remained tied down to parameters over three decades old (1973-74) and were therefore outdated.
- Crude price adjustment using consumer price indices of agricultural labour for rural and industrial workers in urban areas was inappropriate.
- In the earlier poverty lines, private expenditure on education and health was covered in the base year 1973-74, but no account was taken of either an increase in their proportion in total expenditure over time or their proper representation in the available price indices (Planning Commission 2009).

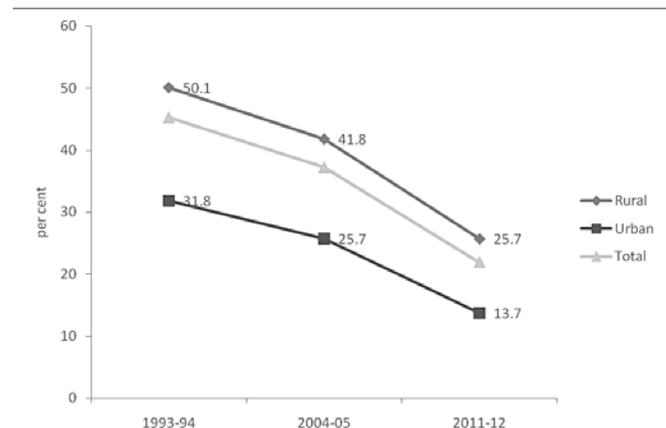
In order to counter the above criticisms, the Tendulkar Committee tried to move away from the calorie norm, but fixed the urban head count ratio provided by the Lakdawala Committee (25.7%) for the year 2004-05 as the new poverty line in order to maintain continuity of estimates. The committee also used implicit prices derived from quantity and value data collected in household consumer expenditure surveys to compute and update the poverty lines, and took into consideration the rising cost of education and healthcare expenditure. It is important to note that the Tendulkar Committee did not separate the urban and rural consumption basket of goods and services in estimating the new poverty lines (Planning Commission 2009).

Figure 1: Number of poor in rural and urban areas, India, 1993 to 2012 (in million)



Source: Planning Commission 2013

Figure 2: Poverty ratio in rural and urban areas, India, 1993-2012 (in %)



Source: Planning Commission 2013

Seen through Figures 1 and 2, it may be noted that the urban poverty ratio declined from 31.8% in 1993-94 to 13.7% in 2011-12, according to the Tendulkar Committee methodology, but the urban poor still exist in huge numbers, at 52.8 million. Although India has a low level of official urbanisation (31%), it harbours one of the world's largest numbers of urban poor. The largest concentration of urban poor was in Uttar Pradesh (11.8 million), followed by West Bengal (4.8 million) Maharashtra (4.7 million), and Madhya Pradesh (4.3 million) (Planning Commission 2013).

Since several representations were made suggesting that the Tendulkar poverty line was too low, the Planning Commission, in June 2012, constituted another expert group under the chairmanship of C Rangarajan to review the methodology of poverty measurement. The Rangarajan

Committee is deliberating the issue and is expected to submit its report by the middle of 2014 (Planning Commission 2013) (see box alongside — Ed).

According to the Tendulkar Committee methodology, the urban poverty line was fixed at Rs 1,000 and Rs 816 per month per capita for urban and rural areas respectively. On a daily basis, this would be Rs 33 and Rs 27 per capita for urban and rural areas respectively, for the year 2011-12. The figures caused an uproar in the media and political circles recently, with questions to the Planning Commission as to whether it was possible for anyone to survive on this paltry amount. According to Utsa Patnaik, it is in fact not a poverty line but a destitution line (Patnaik 2013). Further, if poverty is directly measured through consumption expenditure in each round of the NSS Survey, rather than fixing it to a year and adjusting for price rise, the estimates of poverty are glaring and India could be termed a 'republic of hunger' (Patnaik 2007).

Habitat and housing poverty

The official poverty estimates as accepted by the Planning Commission are based on consumption norms. Other aspects of poverty related to habitat and housing, such as access to safe water, sanitation and a clean household environment are not taken into account. It also does not take into consideration the differential vulnerabilities of urban populations associated with urban habitat, disasters and precarious sources of urban livelihood. Out-of-pocket expenditure is one of the most important factors causing the urban poor to remain in a vicious circle of poverty.

Households in urban areas suffer various housing and habitat deprivations apart from low income. The Census of India published important data related to housing and living conditions in rural and urban areas as part of its decennial census. Table 1 provides some of the latest data on urban conditions. It appears that there has been some progress in housing and living conditions as shown by indicators such as 'house with concrete roof', 'households with tap water', 'households connected with drainage and latrine facilities' and 'households using clean fuel like LPG/PNG' in 2011, as compared to the 2001 Census. However, nearly one-third of households do not have access to tap water and clean fuel, and one-fifth have no access to latrine and drainage facilities.

As a large number of households do not have access to treated drinking water, this could be a major factor causing waterborne diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery. Access to clean water and sanitation has been considered one of the most important social determinants of health. Water-related illness constitutes one-third of morbidities among adults, and two-thirds among children (HLEG 2011).

Further, due to lack of access to clean fuel like LPG/PNG, a significant number of households use coal, wood,

Urban poverty is pegged at 26.4%

The Rangarajan Committee, which has retained consumption expenditure as the basis for determining poverty, has pegged the total number of poor in the country at 363 million or 29.6% of the population against 269.8 million (21.9%) by the Suresh Tendulkar Committee. The Rangarajan Committee raised the daily per capita expenditure to Rs 32 from Rs 27 for the rural poor and to Rs 47 from Rs 33 for the urban poor, thus raising the poverty line based on the average monthly per capita expenditure to Rs 972 in rural India and Rs 1,407 in urban India.

Thus, for a family of five, the all-India poverty line in terms of consumption expenditure, as per the Rangarajan Committee, would amount to Rs 4,760 per month in rural areas and Rs 7,035 per month in urban areas. The Tendulkar Committee had pegged this at Rs 4,080 and Rs 5,000.

The Rangarajan Committee therefore put the percentage of people below the poverty line in 2011-12 at 30.95% in rural areas and 26.4% in urban areas as compared to 25.7% and 13.7% according to the Tendulkar methodology.

Table 1: Housing and living conditions in rural and urban India, 2001-2011

Amenities	Rural 2001	Rural 2011	Urban 2001	Urban 2011	Total 2001	Total 2011
% of households with concrete roof house	11.9	18.5	44.4	52.9	21.2	29.6
% of households with tap water	24.3	30.8	68.7	70.6	36.7	43.5
% of households with electricity as a source of lighting	43.5	55.3	87.5	92.7	55.8	67.2
% of households with latrine facility within the premises	21.9	30.7	73.7	81.4	36.4	46.9
% of households connected to drainage	34.1	36.8	77.8	81.8	46.4	51.1
% of households with bathroom	22.8	25.4	70.4	77.5	36.1	42.0
% of households using LPG/PNG	5.7	11.4	48.0	65.0	17.5	28.5

Source: Census of India, 2001 and 2011

cowdung and crop residue as cooking fuel, putting them at risk of indoor air pollution. Studies show that this form of pollution is a major public health problem. In India,

prolonged exposure to indoor pollution could lead to lung cancer, adverse pregnancy outcomes, cataract, and blindness. Several hundred thousand women and children die prematurely because of indoor air pollution (Mishra, Retherford and Smith 2002).

The urban poor living in slums and small- and medium-sized cities and towns are hardest hit, as deprivations of drinking water, sanitation and toilet facilities are most glaring here (Bhagat 2011). The 2011 Census also shows that 65 million urban residents live in slums. In other words, the number of those living in housing poverty was higher than the number of official urban poor, at 52.8 million for the year 2011-12. Thus, there is a need to understand urban poverty dynamics separately for slum and non-slum areas. This would be better understood if we moved from the income/consumption approach to poverty to the measurement of poverty on the basis of conditions of urban habitat and vulnerabilities.

Thus, there is a need to re-orient some of the conventional concerns of poverty measurement. From this perspective, a person may be defined as poor in an urban area if he or she fails to meet the basic needs of living, and also if he/she is vulnerable to loss of habitat and livelihood or is at risk from various disasters.

Concerns in urban policy

The eradication of habitat and housing poverty requires comprehensive urban planning addressing the needs of the urban poor. It is worth mentioning that India is passing through an urban transition and cities are looked upon as engines of economic growth. A just and spatially distributed urbanisation process would also help eradicate poverty in rural areas, as rural and urban poverty are interlinked in some ways through migration. This requires an urban development strategy for each Indian state which is not merely city-centric but designed to promote better rural-urban linkages in terms of flow of goods and services, financial resources, information and ideas. Cities and towns must not only take care of their poor but also serve in the uplift of the rural poor. Rural and urban poverty should not be seen as separate entities but an integrated one to be tackled through urban development strategy. This does not mean that we should not have a rural development strategy, but their possible integration in vision, planning and practice is essential.

As India's urbanisation is dominated by medium and small towns, it raises the important issue of providing civic amenities and improving governance in them. National programmes like the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) are essentially biased towards big cities; the urban poor living in medium and small cities and towns have a lesser voice, and their issues are scarcely addressed.

In order to deal with the large number of urban poor, as a result of faster urbanisation, India has to push through

urban reforms and policy changes initiated in the early-1990s. Though urban development is a state subject it does not hold the central government back from initiating centrally-sponsored urban development programmes, guidelines for urban development and promises of increased funds.

One significant reform initiated by the central government is the promotion of decentralised governance by urban local bodies through the 74th Amendment to the Constitution effected in 1992. The amendment envisages planning and development of urban centres by urban local bodies. This is possible only if urban local bodies are empowered politically, administratively and fiscally by their respective state governments to make a significant dent in urban poverty. Small towns and big cities have been facing two entirely different problems. Whereas many small towns are still governed by rural local bodies (panchayats) (Bhagat 2005), multiple agencies are responsible for planning, development and governance in big cities that have shown little concern for the urban poor (Bhagat 2012).

In fact, there is lack of local democracy and empowerment of urban local bodies both politically and fiscally. This has apparently hurt the urban poor most.

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The industry of ‘empowerment’

The urbanisation of India project is being executed in the name of the ‘urban poor’. But the urban poor themselves are lost in the debate over methodologies to identify and classify them and the thicket of entitlements, provisions and agencies to facilitate their ‘inclusion’ and ‘empowerment’

RAHUL GOSWAMI

2015 WILL BE THE TENTH YEAR of India’s largest urban recalibration programme. That decadal anniversary will, for one section of our society, be used as proof that new infrastructure in cities has lowered poverty, that new housing has raised the standard of living for those who need it most, that urban rebuilding capital is focused better through such measures and, because of these and like reasons, that giant programmes such as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) must continue. With or without the name of India’s first prime minister applied to the mission (itself a noun used liberally to impel urgency into a programme), it will continue, enriched with finance and technology. The JNNURM, a year from now, will be the foremost symbol amongst several that signal to some 415 million Indians (city-dwellers all, for that will be the approximate urban population a year from now) why city life and city lights are what matter.

For another section of society, less inclined because of experience with administrations indifferent or venal, life in India’s (and Bharat’s) 7,935 towns goes on minus the pithy optimism of governments and their supporters in industry and finance. The promise of higher monthly household incomes is somehow expected to compensate for the grinding travails that urban life in India brings, and it is a promise documented inside 50 years of gazettes and government orders, countless circulars and memoranda, hundreds of reports by committees high-powered and technical. Still the number of villages that are transformed, statistically and temporally into towns (census and statutory) grows from one census to another (and in between), and still the urban agglomerations — some sprawling uncaring from one district into another, consuming agricultural land and watershed — expand, for the instruction of the market is that it is this process of gathering citizens that leads to the growth of gross domestic product (GDP), the prime mechanic in the alleviation of poverty, whose workings in cities are much studied but elude definition.

The density of programmes and schemes that envelop urban-dwellers — those whose households hover above or below a poverty line, those whose informal wage earnings are insufficient to maintain a crumbling housing board tenement — is confusing, inside administrations as much as outside them. The thicket of entitlements and provisions that have been designed, so we are told, to ensure the provision

of ‘services’ and ‘amenities’, confounds navigation. There are economically weaker sections and lower income groups to plan for (provided they remain weaker and lower); there are ‘integrated, reform-driven, fast-track’ sub-missions and components that are aimed at increasing the effectiveness and accountability of urban local bodies, all as part of the ‘Urban Infrastructure and Governance’ standards to be applied under the Urban Infrastructure Development Schemes for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT, which defies any attempt to make acronyms pronounceable) in 65 mission cities.

Prominent within this grand and swelling orchestra of urbanisation are some of the star creations of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation. There is the Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHS DP) and these round up the gamut of concepts proffered by the urban planning dogma of our times: “integrated development of slums through projects”, “providing for shelter, basic services and other related civic amenities with a view towards providing utilities to the urban poor”, “key pro-poor reforms that include the implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act”, and “delivery through convergence of other already existing universal services”. There are public-private partnership templates to guide business (and the odd social entrepreneurship) through this new topology; there are special purpose vehicles formed that mendaciously grey the distinctions between bond and financial markets and the greater public good, but which we are assured will function as the money backstop for public administrations whose clerks peer befuddled at slick online reporting formats (transparency at work, round the clock, accessible through apps on the beneficiaries’ tablet phones).

There is ‘inclusion’ — that most essential salt that flavours the substance of governance today — to be found in every direction. There are plenty of beneficiaries to enlist in this urban social re-engineering that is proceeding on a scale and pace unthinkable a generation ago in our towns (public sector housing colonies and waiting lists for scooters), when ‘income inequality’ was an uncommon topic of discussion and ‘gini coefficient’ had yet to become a society’s alarm bell. The new cadre of GDP engineers is well schooled in the language of human rights and normative justice, and so we have ‘Social



Mobilisation and Institution Development' which attends 'Employment through Skills Training and Placement', both of which facilitate 'empowerment, financial self-reliance, and participation and access to government'.

About 30 years ago, *The State of India's Environment 1984-85* (Centre for Science and Environment) noted in a tone of cautious optimism that "planners are beginning to realise that squatters are economically valuable citizens who add to the gross national product by constructing their own shelter, no matter how makeshift, which saves the government a considerable amount of money". That was a time when governments still sought to save money and the CSE report went on to explain that squatters "are upwardly mobile citizens in search of economic opportunity and have demonstrated high levels of enterprise, tenacity, and ability to suffer acute hardships; that the informal sector in which a majority of the slum-dwellers are economically active contributes significantly to the city's overall economic growth; and that they should be helped and not hindered".

The 'help' of that period, envisioned as a light leg-up accompanied by informal encouragement, has become instead an industry of empowerment. There are "bank linkages for neutral loans to meet the credit needs of the urban poor", the formation of corps of "resource organisations to be engaged to facilitate the formation of self-help groups and their development", there are technical parameters to set so that "quality of services is not compromised".

Financial literacy — of the unhoused, the misnourished, the chronically underemployed, the single-female-headed families, the uninsurable parents and dependants, the uncounted — is essential so that 'no frills' savings accounts can be opened (the gateway to a noxious web of intrusive micro-payment schemata: life, health, pension, consumer goods). Such a brand of functional literacy is to be dispensed by city livelihoods centres which will "bridge the gap between demand and supply of the goods and services produced by the urban poor" and who will then, thus armed, "access information and business support services which would otherwise not be

Charting cities and slum populations

This chart describes how urban populations vary considerably in their composition, not only of slum and non-slum residents, but also between size classes of cities and the proportions of those who live in slums and outside them.

Plotted here are 98 of the top 103 cities in India whose slum populations are above 100,000 (2014 estimates). The five that are left out are Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Hyderabad. This has been done to keep the chart legible, else the scale of these cities (especially Mumbai) and their populations would obscure the details for smaller cities, particularly those with populations of 100,000 to 500,000 residents.

The left scale is used to plot the percentage of a city's total population which lives in slums. We can see a group of cities whose slum populations are above 50% — Loni (Uttar Pradesh), Korba (Chhattisgarh), Kulti (West Bengal), Ambarnath (Maharashtra), Rajnandgaon (Chhattisgarh) and Nizamabad (Andhra Pradesh) amongst them.

The bottom scale is used to plot cities by the size of their slum population. Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh), Chandigarh, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) and Nashik (Maharashtra) are amongst a group of cities all of which have slum populations of under 200,000 (and above 100,000), but these form less than 20% of their total populations.

The size of a city's circle in the chart indicates its total population. Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Surat, Kanpur and Pune are the largest circles to be seen, none of which has slum populations that are more than 16% of their total populations (according to Census 2011).

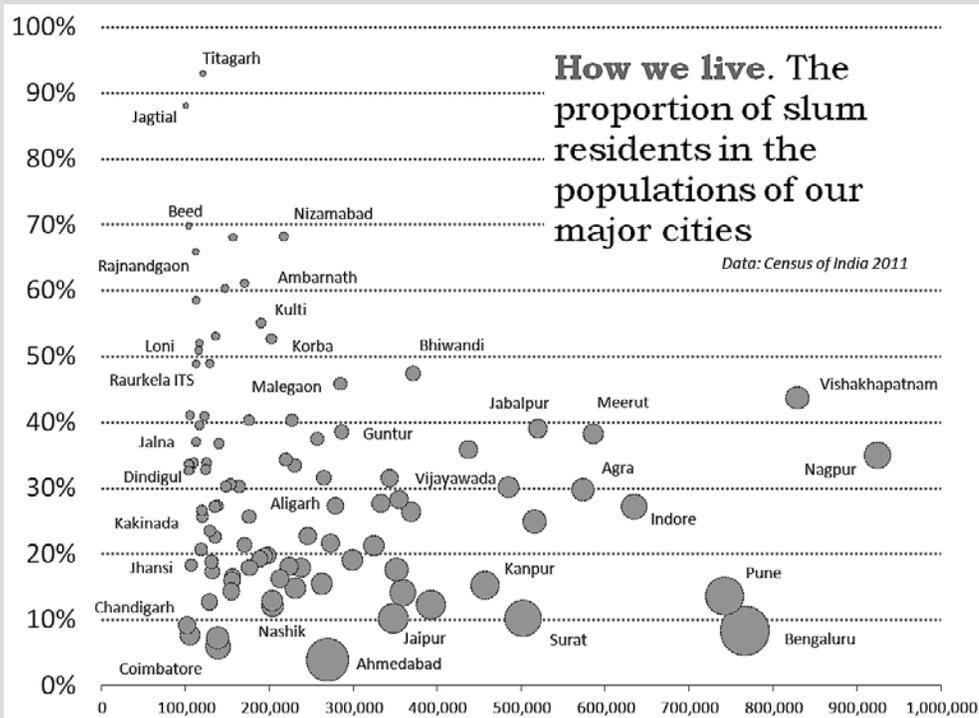
A chart such as this is helpful for urban comparisons between cities of similar size but different slum population proportions — Census 2011 enumerated 13.7 million households in slums reported from 2,543 cities and towns (out of 4,041). But it must be read with a variety of related material and data.

While this chart can quickly point out cities with slum population proportions above 20% — such as Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh), all of which have different-sized slum populations and total populations — this does not mean that those residents are worse off, in terms of household income and access to basic services, than similarly-housed residents in cities like Bhiwandi (Maharashtra), Rourkela industrial township (Odisha) or Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh).

Cities in which municipal councils practise policy and legislative inclusion of slum residents can and do foster the success of micro-enterprises by encouraging the provision of spaces in which these residents can work and live without fear of falling afoul of regulations.

A city with a slum population proportion of under 20% may — by forcing the location of work-home spaces in the margins, with poor ventilation, lighting and sanitary conditions — treat such a resident more unfairly than a city with 40% or more of its residents living in slums but whose needs and contribution to the city economy are recognised. That is why a slum household in Ambarnath may not be worse off than one in Kanpur, and a household in Vishakhapatnam may not be worse off than one in Jhansi.

— Rahul Goswami



affordable or accessible by them". So runs the anthem of the National Urban Livelihoods Mission, the able assistant of the national urban mission and its successor-in-the-wings, the Rajiv Awas Yojana.

The existence of the 'urban poor' is what provides the legitimacy (howsoever constructed) that the central government, state governments, public and joint sector housing and infrastructure corporations, and a colourful constellation of ancillaries need to execute the urbanisation of India project. Lost in the debate over methodologies to find in the old and new *bastis* the deserving chronically poor and the merely 'service deprived' are the many aspects of poverty in cities, a number of which afflict the upper strata of the middle classes (well housed, overprovided for by a plethora of services, banked to a surfeit) just as much as they do the daily wage earners who commute from their slums in search of at least the six rupees they must pay out of every 10 so that their families have enough to eat for that day.

These deprivations are not accounted for nor even discussed

as potential dimensions along which to measure the lives of urban citizens, poor or not, by the agencies that give us our only authoritative references for our citizens and the manner in which they live, or are forced to live: the Census of India, the National Sample Survey Office (of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation), the municipal corporations of larger cities, the ministries of health, of environment, and the ministry most directly concerned with urban populations, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation. Exposure to pollution in concentrations that alarm the World Health Organisation, the absence of green spaces in wards, a level of ambient noise high enough to induce stress by itself, the weekly or monthly reconciling of irregular income (at any scale) versus the inflation that determines all costs of urban living — these are but a few of the many aspects under which a household or an individual can be 'poor'. Income and food calorie poverty — which have been the measures to judge a household's position in relation to a line of minimum adequacy — are but two of many interlinked aspects that govern a standard of living which every government promises to raise.

How Census 2011 sees slums

From 2001 to 2011, the censuses listed an increase of 870 towns reporting slum populations — from 1,743 in Census 2001 to 2,613 in Census 2011.

"Under Section 3 of the Slum Area Improvement and Clearance Act, 1956, slums have been defined as mainly those residential areas where dwellings are in any respect unfit for human habitation by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements and designs of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light, sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to safety, health and morals."

"Higher productivity in the secondary/tertiary sector against primary sector makes cities and towns centres of economic growth and jobs. Cities act as beacons for the rural population as they represent a higher standard of living and offer opportunities to people not available in rural areas. This results in large-scale migration from rural to urban areas. Negative consequences of urban pull results in upcoming of slums characterised by housing shortage and critical inadequacies in public utilities, overcrowding, unhygienic conditions, etc."

"For the first time, in Census 2001, slum areas were earmarked across the country, particularly, in cities and towns having a population of 50,000 or above in 1991 Census. Subsequently, the slum data was culled out also for towns with 20,000 to 49,999 population in 2001 and statutory towns having population less than 50,000 in 1991 but reported more than 50,000 population in 2001 and were not considered for carving slum EBs earlier."

"Definition and types of slums (slums have been earmarked in all the statutory towns irrespective of their population size based on the same definition as in 2001):

- All notified areas in a town or city notified as 'slum' by state, union territories administration or local government under any Act including a 'Slum Act' may be considered notified slums.
- All areas recognised as 'slum' by state, union territories administration or local government, housing and slum boards, which may have not been formally notified as slum under any Act may be considered as recognised slums.
- A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in an unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities. Such areas should be identified personally by the charge officer and also inspected by an officer nominated by the Directorate of Census Operations. This fact must be duly recorded in the charge register. Such areas may be considered as identified slums."

This catechism was repeated when the Sixteenth Lok Sabha began its work, and President Pranab Mukherjee mentioned in his address to the body a common habitat minimum for the 75th year of Indian Independence, which will come in 2022 (at a time when the many vacuous ‘2020 vision documents’ produced during the last decade by every ministry will have neither currency nor remit). Housing for all, Mukherjee assured the Lok Sabha, delivered through the agency of city-building — “100 cities focused on specialised domains and equipped with world-class amenities”; and “every family will have a pucca house with water connection, toilet facilities, 24x7 electricity supply and access”.

That is why, although concerned academicians and veteran NGO *karyakartas* will exchange prickly criticisms concerning the use in urban study of NSSO first stage units or the use of Census of India enumeration blocks, it is self-determination in the urban context that matters to a degree somewhat greater than the means we choose to use to describe that context (see Box 2). From the time of the ‘approach’ discussions to the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-07) — which is when the notion, till that time regarded as experimental, that the government can step away without guilt from its old role of providing for the poor in favour of the private sector — the dogma of growth of GDP has included rapid urbanisation. That such GDP growth — setting aside the crippling ecological and social costs which our administrative technorati, for all their ‘progressive’ credentials, do not bring themselves to publicly recognise — is deeply polarising and is especially so in cities is not a matter discussed in any of the 948 city development plans (1,515 infrastructure and housing projects) of the JNNURM. From then on, the seeking and finding of distinctions as they exist within the residential wards of towns and cities has been treated as heretical.

A small matrix of classifications is the reason for such obtuseness, which any *kirana* shop owner and his speedy delivery boys could quickly debunk. As with the viewing of ‘poverty’ so too the consideration of an income level as the passport between economic strata (or classes) in a city: the Ministry of Housing follows the classification that a household whose income is up to Rs 5,000 a month is pigeon-holed as belonging to the economically weaker section while another whose income is Rs 5,001 and above up to Rs 10,000 is similarly treated as lower income group. Committees and panels studying our urban condition are enjoined not to stray outside these markers if they want their reports to find official audiences, and so they do, as did the work (in 2012) of the Technical Group on Urban Housing Shortage over the Twelfth Plan period (which is 2012-17). Central trade unions were already at the time stridently demanding that Rs 10,000 be the national minimum wage, and stating that their calculation was already conservative (so it was, for the rise in the prices of food staples had begun two years earlier) (see box, Monthly Pay Packet).

The contributions of those in the lower economic strata (not the ‘poor’ alone, however they are measured or miscounted) to the cities of India and the towns of Bharat,

to the urban agglomerations and outgrowths (terms that conceal the entombment of hundreds of hectares of growing soil in cement and rubble so that more *bastis* may be accommodated), are only erratically recorded. When this is done, more often than not by an NGO, or a research institute (not necessarily on urban studies) or a more enlightened university programme, seldom do the findings make their way through the grimy corridors of the municipal councils and into recognition of the success or failure of urban policy. And so it is that the tide of migrants — India’s urban population grew at 31.8% in the 10 years between 2001 and 2011, both census years, while the rural population grew at 12.18% and the overall national population growth rate was 17.64% with the difference between all three figures illustrating in one short equation the strength of the urbanisation project — is essential for the provision of cheap labour to the services sector for that higher economic strata upon whom the larger share of the GDP growth burden rests, the middle class (see box, Charting Cities and Slum Populations).

And so the picture clears, for it is in maintaining and adding to the numbers of the middle class — no troublesome poverty lines here whose interpretations may arrest the impulse to consume — that the growth of India’s GDP relies. By the end of the first confused decade following the liberalisation of India’s economy, in the late-1990s, the arrant new ideology that posited the need for a demographic shift from panchayat to urban ward found supporters at home and outside (in the circles of the multi-lateral development lending institutions particularly, which our senior administrators and functionaries were lured into through fellowships and secondments). Until 10 years ago, it was still being said in government circles that India’s pace of urbanisation was only modest by world standards (said in the same off-the-cuff manner that explains our per capita carbon dioxide emissions as being well under the global average).

In 2005, India had 41 urban areas with populations of a million and more while China had 95 — in 2015 the number of our cities which will have at least a million will be more than 60. Hence the need to turn a comfortable question into a profoundly irritating one: instead of ‘let us mark the slums as being those areas of a city or town in which the poor live’ we choose ‘let us mark the poor along as many axes as we citizens can think of and find the households — in slum or cooperative housing society or condominium — that are deprived by our own measures’. The result of making such a choice would be to halt the patronymic practised by the state (and its private sector assistants) under many different guises.

Whether urban residents in our towns and cities will bestir themselves to organise and claim such self-determination is a forecast difficult to attempt for a complex system such as a ward, in which issues of class and economic status have as much to do with group choices as the level of political control of ward committees and the participation of urban

The monthly pay packet

The National Sample Survey Office (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) measures consumption expenditures, the National Family Health Survey (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) measures the ownership of consumer goods, and the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) of 2005 was one of the first to measure detailed income.

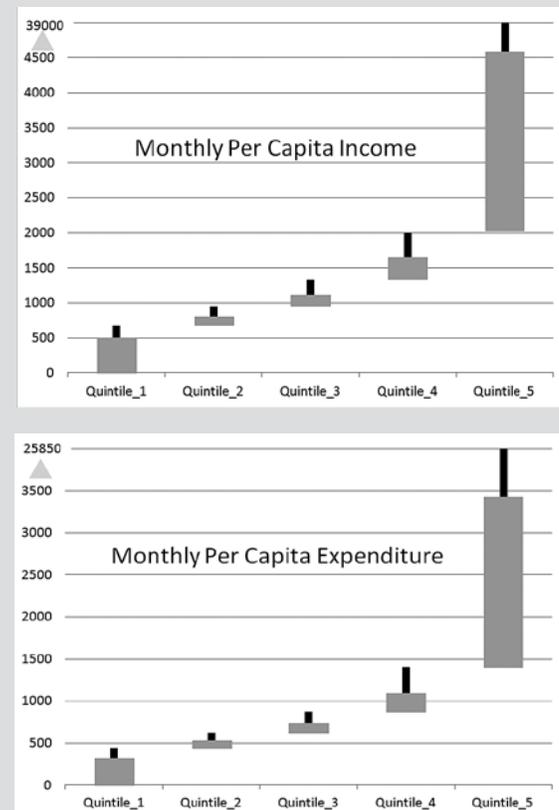
The detailed data sets of each provide a different aspect of economic position, and are best read together with a good lacing of subjective and qualitative study. Incomes can be gauged via many interlinked measures: wages and salaries, net farm income, family business net income, property, and pension incomes being but a few. The IHDS had found that the average Indian household (no rural and urban distinction) had an annual income of Rs 27,857 in 2004. Some households earned much more than this median, and so the mean was Rs 47,804: the five quintiles that households in this survey were divided into had their boundaries at Rs 14,000, Rs 22,950, Rs 36,098 and Rs 69,000. These income points and quintile boundaries are not automatically to be multiplied by the rate of increase in average per capita income to give us equivalences for 2014, but they serve to illustrate the breadth of the income classes and the startling difference between average and mean, differences that have undoubtedly widened and deepened over the ensuing decade.

Separate from the setting of income and expenditure quintiles is the matter of households (slum or not) undergoing current economic distress (or recovering from its effects). This is where the multiple aspects of poverty — of being poor for want of any one or a combination of several essentials that together contribute to a decent and safe standard of life — are seen but not documented, for even these households during their hard times (such as consumer goods owned, educational levels, security of titles and tenures) can appear to be moderate income households rather than poor households in the bottom quintile.

The report, 'Nature Of Poverty And Identification Of Poor In Small And Medium Towns', by the Institute of Human Development (New Delhi) for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation and the Planning Commission, 2012, provided a particularly valuable survey, small though it was, of income and expenditure in small and medium towns. Some of the salient findings were:

- Across towns, about 60% of the household expenditure was on food items (which can range between 70% and 55%), 24% on non-food items and 16.3% on health and education.
- The mean monthly per capita income of the lowest quintile was Rs 499 and mean monthly per capita expenditure was Rs 320. In the second quintile, the mean MPCI was Rs 808 and the mean MPCE was Rs 529. For the third quintile, the mean MPCI was Rs 1,110 and the mean MPCE was Rs 736. The mean MPCI of the fourth quintile was Rs 1,651 and the mean MPCE was Rs 1,088, while for the fifth quintile the mean MPCI was Rs 4,581 and mean MPCE was Rs 3,428 (all incomes and expenditures for 2012).
- Overall, the mean income of the self-employed was highest at Rs 7,243 per month, followed by regular wage/salaried workers whose mean income was Rs 4,393 per month, followed by own account workers at Rs 3,395 per month and finally casual wage labour earning Rs 3,055 per month. The lowest monthly incomes were of household-based piece rate workers who earned an average of Rs 1,660 per month.
- The highest incomes were earned by government teachers and doctors followed by security forces and other middle-level government staff. Other professionals such as doctors and engineers earned Rs 12,700 a month, followed by government clerical staff, small business owners and contractors.
- Workers who earned between Rs 4,000 and Rs 5,000 per month were autorickshaw drivers, masons, private drivers, shop owners, lower level administrative staff (privately employed), nurses, ward boys, salesmen, chit fund brokers, and government sweepers. Workers who earned between Rs 2,500 and Rs 4,000 a month were construction labour, brick kiln labour, head load workers, other factory and casual labour, rickshaw pullers and cart pullers, welders, carpenters, plumbers, hotel waiters, painters, hawkers and vendors, small household manufacturing unit owners, small shop owners (of tea/beedi/paan), repair mechanics, traditional artisans (weavers, bidri workers, kite makers, goldsmiths), security guards, priests, and barbers.

Income and expenditure quintiles in small- and medium-sized towns



The bottom of the grey boxes is the minimum, the top is the mean, and the thick black line represents the maximum values. For the fifth quintile in each chart the maxima have been scaled to fit the rest of the chart. Source: 'Nature Of Poverty And Identification Of Poor In Small And Medium Towns', by the Institute of Human Development (New Delhi) for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation and the Planning Commission, 2012

councillors, the grip of land and water mafias, the degree to which state programmes have actually bettered household lives or sharpened divisions. It is probably still not a dilemma, provided there is re-education enough and awareness enough of the perils of continuing to inject ‘services’ and ‘infrastructure’ into communities which for over a generation have experienced rising levels of economic stress. At a more base level — for sociological concerns trouble industry even less, in general, than environmental concerns do — India’s business associations are doing their best to ensure that the urbanisation project continues. The three large associations — Assocham, CII and FICCI (and their partners in states) — agree that India’s urban population will grow, occupying 40% of the total population 15 years from now.

The reason they pursue this objective in so predatory a manner is the potential of GDP being concentrated — their guides, the international management consulting companies (such as McKinsey, PriceWaterhouse Coopers, Deloitte, Ernst and Young, Accenture and so on), have determined India’s unique selling proposition to the world for the first half of the 21st century. It runs like this: “Employment opportunities in urban cities will prove to be a catalyst for economic growth, creating 70% of net new jobs while contributing in excess of 70% to India’s GDP.” Naturally, the steps required to ensure such a concentration of people and wealth-making capacity include building new urban infrastructure (and rebuilding what exists, regardless of whether it serves the ward populations or not). The sums being floated today for achieving this camouflaged subjugation of urban populations defy common sense, for any number between Rs 5 million crore and Rs 7 million crore is being proposed, since an “investment outlay will create a huge demand in various core and ancillary sectors causing a multiplier effect through inter-linkages between 254 industries including those in infrastructure, logistics and modern retail... it will help promote social stability and economic equality through all-round development of urban economic centres and shall improve synergies between urban and rural centres”.

Tiers of overlapping programmes and a maze of controls via agencies shaded in sombre government hues to bright private sector colours are already well assembled and provided governance fiat to realise this ‘transformation’, as every government since the Tenth Plan has called it (the present new government included). For all the academic originality claimed by a host of new urban planning and habitat research institutes in India (many with faculty active in the United Nations circuits that gravely discuss the fate of cities; for we have spawned a new brigade of Indian — though not Bharatiya — urban studies brahmins adept at deconstructing the city but ignorant of such essentials as ward-level food demand), city planning remains a signal failure.

Other than the metropolitan cities and a small clutch of others (thanks to the efforts of a few administrative individuals who valued humanism above GDP), cities and

towns have outdated and inadequate master plans that are unable to address the needs of city inhabitants in general (and of migrants in particular). These plans, where they exist, are technically prepared and bureaucratically envisioned with little involvement of citizens, and so the instruments of exclusion have been successfully transferred to the new frameworks that determine city-building in India. Democratisation and self-determination is permitted only in controlled conditions and with ‘deliverables’ and ‘outcomes’ attached — organic ward committees and residents groups that have not influenced the vision and text of a city master plan have even less scope today to do so inside the maze of technocratic and finance-heavy social re-engineering represented by the JNNURM, RAY, UIDSSMT, BSUP, IHSDP and NULM and all their efficiently bristling sub-components. The rights of inhabitants to a comfortable standard of life that does not disturb environmental limits, to adequate and affordable housing, to safe and reliable water and sanitation, to holistic education and healthcare, and most of all the right to alter their habitats and processes of administration according to their needs, all are circumscribed by outside agencies.

It is not too late to find remedies and corrections. “As long as the machinery is the same, if we are simply depending on the idealism of the men at the helm, we are running a grave risk. The Indian genius has ever been to create organisations which are impersonal and are self-acting. Mere socialisation of the functions will not solve our problem.” So J C Kumarappa had advised (the Kumarappa Papers, 1939-46) about 80 years ago, advice that is as sensible in the *bastis* of today as it was to the artisans and craftspeople of his era. For the managed socialisation of the urbanisation project to give way to organic groups working to build the beginnings of simpler ways in their communities will require recognition of these elements of independence now. It is the localisation of our towns and cities that can provide a base for reconstruction when existing and planned urban systems fail. Today some of these are finding ‘swadeshi’ within a consumer-capitalist society that sees them as EWS, LIG and migrants, and it is their stories that must guide urban India.

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Data discrepancies

We cannot address the problems of urban poverty and slum conditions until we know their magnitude and details. Masses of data are available, but given the inadequacy of official definitions of slums, it is limited in scope, coverage and standardisation/comparability

DEBOLINA KUNDU

NON-AVAILABILITY of adequate and reliable data has often been voiced as a major concern among researchers working on diverse aspects of urban development in India. It is well-known that the main problem in this context is not that the data does not exist or is not collected at sufficient levels of disaggregation, but that much of the information has problems of coverage and definitional anomalies and is not rendered comparable and made accessible to potential users. Information of a quantitative nature is available from national data-gathering agencies like the Population Census and National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) which bring out datasets at regular intervals. Enormous amounts of information are also generated by government departments, public and semi-public agencies engaged in urban development activities, in the course of their funds disbursement, programme implementation and other routine administrative work. It is rather unfortunate that all these datasets are only put to limited use in working out a development strategy at district, state or national levels; the data is used only for decision-making within the department or undertaking the collection of information. Consequently, it does not become an input in policymaking, planning and academic research at a higher level, remaining in data graveyards unless requisitioned by a state or national agency for a specific purpose, after meeting a complicated procedure. Since the basic concepts used for data-collection are not standardised and no rigorous format is designed for their compilation, it takes effort and resources to make them temporally and cross-sectionally comparable and useful for research or policymaking. Even the data provided by the national data-gathering agencies, like the census and NSSO, have serious problems in scope and coverage.

Interestingly, urbanisation, housing/slums and access to amenities reflecting deprivation and poverty at the household level are areas where massive amounts of information are available with the national and state data-generating agencies. It is a clear case of over-collection of data on the one hand, and low use and usability of the collected data on the other. The main reason for this is that the agencies do not provide the data in a comparable format and there is no organisation which can compile and clean up the data from all possible sources, removing the anomalies due to definitional changes and coverage, as part of an urban information system.

In the present context of urbanisation in the country, it is important to collect comparable and robust statistics on urban population, poverty and other socio-economic deprivations including slum conditions in different states and size classes of urban centres, and make them available to planners, administrators and researchers. The growth of urban populations at a rate significantly higher than that of the general population, and low investment in infrastructure and civic services have created problems of low employment growth in formal sectors and deficits in basic amenities in urban centres. This has resulted in a consolidation of informal employment and poverty, on the one hand, and poor quality of life and growth in slum populations, on the other. Although the two concepts — poverty and slums — have overlapping elements, both in conceptual and operational usages, there are significant differences in terms of causes, characteristics and methods of alleviating them which makes the issue of data compilation with total clarity in definitions extremely important. The issue assumes even greater significance in the Twelfth Plan in the context of the government's commitment to alleviate urban poverty and make India slum-free in a time-bound manner.

Given this scenario, the second section of this paper takes stock of the existing data on slum conditions, to identify data gaps and propose measures to clean these up for use. The key objective is to review the concepts of slums as used in official literature and policy documents, and critically analyse the available database, highlighting the deficiencies that prevent effective policy formulation and implementation. The final section puts forward a perspective for making the datasets comparable and usable in policymaking and makes a few recommendations for that purpose.

Data on slums

To design a macro-level strategy for alleviating poverty and making cities slum-free, the first requirement would be an assessment of the magnitude of the problem. Data on slums has been collected at the city level by municipal bodies, other local agencies and individual researchers for the past several decades. Unfortunately, these are extremely haphazard and fragmentary and it is difficult to make any cross-sectional comparison or draw temporal inferences based on them. As

the information is gathered by different agencies for different purposes, there is no standard format for data-collection and tabulation and consequently, no robust database on slums could be built at the national level. Given the diversity and variation in quality of field-based data, no research study has been able to tie or put together secondary and primary data for the purpose of cross-validation or drawing inferences going beyond the city level.

India stands committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goals during the period 1990-2015 (1). It is surprising that as far as Target 12, that of ‘achieving significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers’, is concerned, *India Country Report 2009* simply notes that the “pattern of change (is) not discernible due to lack of sufficient data” (2). There cannot be any more telling reason why collecting reliable information on the number and characteristics of slum populations is an urgent necessity in the country for launching any programme addressing their problem.

Slum data from population census

Data pertaining to slums in the 1981 Population Census was collected through statement IVA of the Town Directory, forming part of the District Census Handbook and not through the canvassing of questionnaires at the household level, as a regular census operation in the field. Information was obtained by the Directorate of Census Operations from the urban local bodies and was restricted to notified and recognised (3) slums, as existing in 1979. Only 12 states that reported slums were covered (4). The only union territory (UT) covered was Delhi, which accepted the incidence of a slum population. Unfortunately, Occasional Paper No 3, which brought out slum-related information in 1988, does not include Delhi because of non-availability of information on civic amenities in its slums.

The percentage of slum populations in the total population of towns reporting slums works out to 15% both for Class I and Class II towns. It is difficult to accept that there is no slum-like situation in towns other than the 269 centres reporting their existence in 1981. In towns below the Class II category, deficiencies in terms of housing conditions, water supply, sanitation, electricity, etc, are much more serious than the higher-order towns. This can be confirmed from the information on these three basic amenities provided in the Town Directory. A comparison of towns reporting the existence of slums with those not reporting them in terms of access of households to basic amenities, the main criteria for identifying slums, reveals that the latter are indeed worse-off in relative terms.

The Occasional Paper notes that “there might be notified slums in smaller towns, but it was difficult to collect data in respect of such slums, particularly the census towns which did not have local authorities such as municipalities to provide the requisite information”. The census is, thus,

circumspect in reporting information on slums and not categorical that the towns not reporting these did not actually have any slum. It mentions “information not made available” against a number of cities and towns instead of noting that these actually have no slums. It is possible then to stipulate that slum-dwellers constitute about 15% of total urban population in the 12 states if one assumes that cities and towns that do not report slums are no different from those reporting them, and it is only administrative factors and differences in understanding and interpretation of the concepts that have resulted in the ‘error’ of non-reporting.

The 1991 Census was a small improvement on its predecessor in terms of coverage. The information came from states reporting slums in the previous census, except for Jammu and Kashmir where the census could not be conducted in 1991. The additional units in this census were the state of Kerala and the UTs of Goa, Delhi and Pondicherry. It once again covered only the notified/ recognised slums of Class I and Class II cities/towns. The number of urban centres reporting slums in these 15 states and UTs were 247 and 260, as per the Town Directory Statements.

Table 1: Changing slum populations, estimated by different agencies

Source	Year/ Period	Slum population
Census of India, Occasional Paper No 3 of 1988, Foreword	Eighties	20%
Census of India, Occasional Paper No 3 of 1988 (269 cities/towns)	1980	15.10%*
Sixth Plan	1985	33.1 million
Town and Country Planning Organisation	1990	51.2 million
Census of India, 1991 (507 cities/towns)	1990	18.38%*
Town and Country Planning Organisation	2001	61.82 million
Census of India, 2001 (640 cities/towns; all 50,000+)	2000	42.56 million; 23.1%*
Census of India, 2001 (785 cities/towns; all 50,000+)	2000	44.61 million; 23.0%*
Census of India, 2001 (958 towns; all 20,000-50,000)	2000	7.74 million; 26.4%*
Pronab Sen Committee	2010	75.3 million; 26.3%
Census of India, 2011 (all 2,543 towns/statutory towns)	2011	13.7 million households; 17.4%
69th Round of the NSSO	2012	9 million households

Note: Percentage figures with a star are computed by taking the figures of urban centres reporting slum populations

The Registrar General of India (RGI) has for the first time collected detailed demographic data, both for notified and non-notified slums in 26 states and union territories of the country, through its household schedule in 2001 (see Table 1). The following were the three criteria for the identification of slums: (a) areas *notified* as 'slums' by state/UT administrations, housing and slum boards and local governments under any Act including a 'Slum Act', (b) areas not notified as slums under any Act but *recognised* as such by the above-mentioned agencies, and (c) compact areas of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households in poorly-built congested tenements in an unhygienic environment, usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities. Notably, the 1981 and 1991 Census covered only slums identified by Criteria A and B. The inclusion of non-notified and unrecognised slums therefore took place for the first time in 2001 through application of Criterion C.

In the first phase, Census 2001 collected information on slums from 640 urban centres that had reported populations of 50,000 or above in the 1991 Census, of which 378 were Class I cities and the others belonged to the Class II category. However, on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Demands for Grants and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation, it has covered 1,321 additional towns (1,151 with 20,000-50,000 population and 170 with more than 50,000 population) in the second phase. Of these, 1,103 have reported having slums (958 towns with a population of between 20,000 and 49,999 and 145 with more than 50,000).

The 2001 Census is an improvement over the preceding ones in terms of slum data as the information is now collected at the household level with all-India coverage by census officials who also play a role in the identification of slums. Further, non-notified slums are identified across the states, at least theoretically, using standardised criteria relating to settlement size, congestion, unhygienic environment, inadequacy of infrastructure and basic amenities. Inclusion of towns with populations of between 20,000 and 50,000 in the second phase has made it possible to assess the slum situation in these smaller towns as well.

There are significant differences between the information pertaining to slums from Population Census 2001 and the earlier two censuses. The former gives detailed demographic and socio-economic data for slum areas. This information is also provided for each of the slums identified in metropolitan cities. The Census of 2001 reports 42.6 million people living in slums in 640 cities with more than 50,000 people that reported a slum population, covered in the first phase. They constitute 23.11% of the total population residing in these urban centres.

How appropriate would it then be to assume that the states/UTs and cities and towns not reporting slums actually do not have any slums, or that slums occur only

As far as Target 12 of the MDGs, that of 'achieving significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers', is concerned, *India Country Report 2009* simply notes that the "pattern of change (is) not discernible due to lack of sufficient data". There cannot be any more telling reason why collecting reliable information on the number and characteristics of slum populations is an urgent necessity in the country for launching any programme addressing their problem

in large cities with a population of above 50,000? It is well-known that the objective and process of notification of slums varies widely across states and urban centres. Administrators in a few states consider it a reflection of bad governance to report slums to a national agency. Others have taken this as an opportunity and instrument to secure funds for infrastructural improvements from higher authorities. In a few states, slum notification takes place when the administration wants to acquire land under slum development projects and launch related activities. The notification or recognition of slums is therefore a matter of policy and programme rather than a reflection of certain physical living conditions. The RGI admits that the "concept of slums and their definition vary considerably across the states depending upon the socio-economic conditions or local perceptions prevailing in the society". It is therefore extremely difficult to work out a figure for percentage of slum population at the national level, particularly due to non-reporting of data.

For the purpose of the 2011 Census, slums have been categorised and defined as the following three types — notified slums, recognised slums and identified slums (5). For the first time in this census, datasets on housing stock, amenities and assets based on the Houselisting and Housing Census are being released. In Census 2001, slum information was released only on demographic characteristics based on population enumeration.

For this purpose, slum blocks were identified in statutory towns with a population of 20,000 by the local authorities in the population enumeration phase. In Census 2011, slum blocks have been delineated in all statutory towns irrespective of population size. Out of 4,041 statutory towns in Census 2011, slums have been reported from 2,543 towns. Although small slum clusters are now more prevalent compared to the big sprawls of earlier times, the census authorities persisted in using the old 60-70 household definition. Also, dwellings with roofs or walls of GI sheet were not counted as slums. These factors are responsible for the underestimation.

Slum data from National Sample Survey

The first systematic survey on slum conditions was conducted by the NSSO in its 31st Round in 1977. It, however, had been carrying out surveys on housing conditions and basic amenities since the 7th Round, conducted in 1953-54. These provide information on structural aspects of dwelling units and basic amenities (6). Subsequently, a comprehensive survey on housing conditions was undertaken in the 28th Round (120,000 households), spread over a period of nine months. The 44th Round of the survey was similar in scope and content, covering only 74,000 households, but was spread over one year. These surveys provided extremely useful information on quality and nature of housing and access to basic amenities separately for rural and urban areas. In the two subsequent surveys, the 49th Round and the 58th Round, information on housing and basic amenities was collected along with slum characteristics and certain other related aspects, and provided rich information on structural aspects of dwelling units as well as on construction activities of households in the preceding few years. These enable cross-tabulation of households by housing quality and access of households to basic services in slums, non-slum areas and squatter settlements, although the presentation of data in these rounds varies significantly.

The second nationwide survey on the particulars of slums was conducted by the NSSO in its 49th Round which combined this with the regular survey of housing conditions, as noted above. In the coverage, however, the new census towns got excluded, as happens in all NSSO surveys, because the latter takes the last census frame as the basis for data-collection. Besides the declared slums, “compact settlements with a collection of poorly built tenements,

mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions” were identified as slums belonging to the ‘undeclared’ category. The definition of undeclared slums was thus noted to have remained unchanged as in the 31st Round. One difference, however, was that the minimum number of households in a settlement to make it a slum was brought down from 25 to 20 only. Also, a new concept of squatter settlement was introduced in this round, which was unauthorised settlements with unauthorised structures but not categorised as slums.

The third slum survey was conducted in the 58th Round (2002) wherein only slums in urban areas were covered in the whole country (7). Besides, it assessed the housing conditions, levels of village amenities and consumption expenditure and brought out separate reports pertaining to all four themes. The survey designated areas declared as slums by respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities as ‘notified slums’ and not declared slums. It also included non-notified slums whose definition was the same as of undeclared slums in the earlier NSS rounds. It provided extremely rich and detailed information on households residing in different types of structures and having differential plinth areas, *ownership*, monthly per capita expenditure, access to and distance from different basic amenities, classified by slums, squatter settlements and other areas. Information on residential construction undertaken in the last five years, their costs, sources of financing, particulars of dwelling units, land owned elsewhere in the country, etc, was also provided.

The 65th Round of the NSSO is spread over the entire year from July 2008 to June 2009, as in the 44th Round. It is, however, different from two preceding slum surveys that were restricted to six-month periods only. It deals with the availability and not adequacy of facilities as in the preceding surveys. The coverage of slum conditions is restricted to urban areas, like its predecessor. The information on housing conditions is collected through Schedule 1.2, as in the 58th Round, although the schedules are significantly different from each other.

The 69th Round of the NSSO reported just under 9 million households as slum households. Roughly one-eighth of India’s urban population lives in slums, as per the NSSO. The number is significantly lower than the 14 million slum households identified by the 2011 Census. An estimated 8.8 million households lived in these slums, about 5.6 million in notified and 3.2 million in non-notified slums. The number of slums came down by 32.3% to 33,150 in urban India, in 2012. The NSSO, like the census, counted both slums notified by the state government and non-notified slums. The NSSO definition of a non-notified slum was slightly more generous than that of the census; any crowded settlement with poor sanitation and at least 20 households was considered a slum by the NSSO, while the census required there to be at least 60-70 households.

Conclusion

An overview of the data situation on poverty-linked deprivation, housing conditions and slums reveals serious problems of temporal and cross-sectional comparability in information generated by the national data-collection agencies and deficiencies in the existing system. These are meant to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

Some of the problems of comparability arise due to changes in scope and coverage by the national data-gathering agencies over time and space, and variations in the concepts canvassed by them. Given the structure of these agencies and the nature of their responsibilities, it would not be possible to expect that they would clean up their past data or make them comparable. This responsibility can be taken up by an apex agency created specifically for the purpose; it can attempt to achieve this, to the extent possible. The agency should build an efficient system to quickly disseminate information and be able to provide special tabulation of the data on request.

It has been noted above that the NSSO publishes much of the information on housing — quality and construction — at the national level. Only limited data is brought out at the state level. This makes it impossible to do any inter-regional, intra-regional or inter-city analysis. An increase in the sample size of the NSS could help generate reliable statistics on housing and basic amenities for districts and large cities. The removal of several bureaucratic and legislative constraints is urgently needed for cities to maintain their vibrant growth and attract much-needed investments in infrastructure. But this must not be done by strengthening the exclusionary character of cities wherein poor migrants are absorbed only in marginalised pockets within cities or in their degenerated peripheries. Designing this strategy requires a macro overview of the process of urban development in India which can only be built based on comprehensive information on socio-economic aspects that are comparable over time. In the absence of such a database and careful planning, interventions by public agencies will prove neither effective nor useful.

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Endnotes

1 The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has brought out a Mid-Term Statistical Appraisal as India Country Report 2009 which assesses progress towards achieving the MDGs for the 12 targets relevant in the Indian context, out of a total of 18

2 The confusion relating to magnitude is evident from the fact that while the report quotes from various sources to stipulate that the slum population during 1991-01 ranges between 40 million and 60 million, it claims that the country has 63% and 17% shares in South Asian and global slum populations respectively, the absolute figure working out to 170 million, about three times the census figure for 2001

3 "Sometimes, the states or local bodies do not formally notify slums under their jurisdiction but they maintain a list of such areas which are officially treated as slums. All such slums have been considered along with notified slums." Census of India (1988)

4 These are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal

5 'Notified slums' have been defined as 'all notified areas in a town or city notified as 'slum' by state, UT administration or local government under any Act including a 'Slum Act'. 'All areas recognised as 'slum' by state, UT administration or local government, housing and slum boards, which may have not been formally notified as a slum under any Act' have been defined as 'recognised slums'. 'Identified slums' are defined as 'a compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in an unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities'

6 The information has been generated annually up to the 23rd Round, excepting the 13th and 14th Rounds. All these were exploratory surveys to give broad parameters at the national level as the sample sizes were not large enough to generate estimates at the state or lower levels. It is important to note that the period of these rounds varied from six months to a year

7 Except certain areas in Jammu and Kashmir, the North East and Andaman and Nicobar Islands

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The feminisation of urban poverty

Economic globalisation rides on the backs of millions of poor urban women, forced into cheap labour in an unregulated and insecure informal sector. The increased visibility of women in the workforce could actually be read as a sign of economic distress, not empowerment

VIBHUTI PATEL

ACCORDING TO the C Rangarajan Committee which released its report in mid-2014, 26.4% of people in urban India live below the poverty line (BPL). Their per capita expenditure was Rs 47 per day, or Rs 1,407 per month, in 2011-12. Among the urban poor, it is women who experience more poverty than their male counterparts as most of them are poorly paid and in irregular jobs. In all the rounds of the National Sample Survey (NSS), the incidence of poverty among women in urban India has been marginally higher than among men. The percentage of women living in poor households was 34% in 1993-94 and 25% in 2013-14, in urban areas. Of the total number of women in urban areas, 25% fall in the poverty groups according to the 68th Round of the NSS.

There has been much debate on the inadequacy of income/expenditure as an indicator of poverty. Within the family, it assumes that the household is a harmonious unit, where the needs of every family member are taken care of judiciously and equally. This measure of gender poverty ignores intra-household inequalities in consumption. Other dimensions of poverty such as food insecurity, malnutrition and health also highlight the greater vulnerability of urban women over their male counterparts. Urban poor women do the cooking, cleaning, caring, collection of water, procurement of food and cooking fuel, besides engaging in full-time or part-time jobs.

Studies have shown that the burden of poverty falls more heavily on urban women than on urban men. National Family Health Survey (NFHS) studies have revealed that inequalities in income and consumption levels between women and men have been accentuated in recent times due to the reduction in social sector spending by the state. This is shown also in a study on health expenditure (Deosthali and Madhiwala, 2005) and data on malnutrition by NFHS 1, 2 and 3.

Women-Headed Households (WWH)

According to Census 2011, 27 million households, constituting 11% of total households in the country, are headed by women. In other words, these women-headed households are supported totally by the income of widows, single unmarried women, deserted or divorced women. They are the poorest of the poor households, socially the most excluded, and vulnerable (Patel, 2009). In disaster-prone areas where caste/communal/ethnic tensions are high, 33% of households are women-headed. A rise in communal and ethnic conflict

and displacement by huge development projects sends the percentage of women-headed households up.

In India, lack of access to family property and assets and insufficient micro-credit facilities contribute to the poor economic condition of female-headed households. Several studies have pointed out that intra-household discrimination against girls in education, which leaves them with fewer skills than boys, contributes to fewer economic opportunities for women, and consequently higher poverty rates among female-headed households.

The combined effect on these households of price rises, reduced quotas for PDS, reductions in healthcare and educational facilities, is devastating. Nearly 40% of women-headed households do not possess permanent shelter, around 45% of women-headed households live in one-room premises, and 29% of women-headed households do not possess any assets such as a radio/TV/telephone/bicycle/scooter. In spite of multi-tasking, they do not have enough resources to meet their basic needs.

Migration

Shrinking job opportunities in rural areas, which forces poor women to migrate to urban areas with or without their families, means that they are also de-skilled, since their skills in agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, forest-based occupations and artisanal activities become either redundant or poorly-paid. Occupations where poor women are employed include domestic work, caring for children, the elderly and the terminally ill, scavenging, vending and taking up informal sector manufacturing jobs. They get paid for home-based piece-rate work in garment-making, assembling of electronic items, food processing, finishing of plastic products and artificial-jewellery-making. These tasks are irregular, casual in nature and not very remunerative. The women are treated as unskilled workers (Majumdar, 2013).

In the urban world, the unpaid labour that women perform in taking care of family members and doing household chores is considered far less worthy (at least economically) than positions that require formal education or training. Poor women's jobs away from home are more likely to be informal employment in small unregistered enterprises unprotected by government regulation. Market segmentation associates them with specific kinds of work,

in a way an extension of housework such as teaching, caring for children and the elderly, domestic service, etc. These kinds of jobs lack stability and security and the possibility of earning a higher salary. The Arjun Sengupta Committee Report 2006 revealed that the lack of opportunities to upgrade skills and education subjects women to inequalities in wages and benefits. It is a shocking reality that 79% of the nearly 8 crore home-based women workers in the unorganised labour sector don't get the minimum government wage. They also don't have any property rights in their parental or matrimonial homes, and are prone to occupational hazards and harassment in the workplace.

Clearly then, the feminisation of poverty is not only a consequence of lack of income, it is also the result of deprivation of opportunities and gender biases in society, the labour market, and governance.

Informalisation

A section of urban women are employed in the manufacturing sector, in small and medium-scale industries. This is not a positive development, as women tend to be concentrated in declining industries with low productivity, belying the assumption that economic reforms are spurring employment opportunities in new economic sectors, as expected by the Arjun Sengupta Committee Report 'Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector', 2006. In fact, in a fast-changing and technologically-advancing economy, the burden of supporting

the family falls increasingly on women, as men who are poor become involuntarily or voluntarily unemployed. Thus the increased visibility/participation of women in the workforce that is reported in the official data system, when viewed together with gender segregation and unfair production relations, can actually be read as a sign of economic distress and sheer helplessness rather than self-fulfilling employment opportunities (Hasan and Hasan, 2013).

Service sector work

Marked features of women's employment in the service sector are employment discrimination at the point of entry and gender wage differentials once they get work. Due to a burgeoning middle class and thriving upper class that has enjoyed the fruits of the iniquitous economic growth following liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, the demand for paid domestic workers has risen. Among women and girl migrant workers, paid domestic workers are the most disadvantaged, spending a significantly higher portion of their day on unpaid care work in the family and poorly-paid work as domestic help. The amount of unpaid work done by women depends on, inter alia, the presence of children, sick, and the elderly at home. The expansion of service sector employment among women could be considered an extension of the unpaid care work in the market.

Women in the informal sector

For women and girls belonging to the economically weaker sections, it's an exhausting daily grind. The grim reality



Vivek Singh

of 92% of women who work in the informal sector has been documented extensively by the Centre for Women's Development Studies, Delhi, and the Human Development Reports of Mumbai (2009) and Delhi (2010). In export-oriented industries, and in the production of leather goods, toys, food products, garments, diamond and jewellery, piece-rate female labour is employed. Here, women work from sweatshops or from home or from stigmatised labour markets in Dharavi, Behrampada, Andheri-Kurla, Jogeshwari or Mohammed Ali Road in Mumbai, or in industrial areas of Delhi, Faridabad, Gurgaon, or in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) of Tamil Nadu and Gujarat. Home-based women workers are used as cheap labour by capitalism globally. The relationship between the formal sector and the decentralised sector is a dependent relationship where the formal sector has control over capital and markets and the 'informal' sector works as an ancillary providing cheap labour. Economic globalisation rides on the backs of millions of poor urban women and child workers at the margins of the economy. Women workers in the decentralised sector have a high degree of labour redundancy and obsolescence. These women have less control over their work and no chances of upward mobility because of the temporary, routine and monotonous work they do.

The link between economic reforms and the push towards the informal sector is illustrated by data from the 56th, 59th, 60th, 61st and 68th Rounds of the National Sample Surveys conducted between 2000 and 2012. Economic reforms have reinforced the trend of informalisation of the female workforce, as the formation of a 'flexible' labour force ready to multi-task is its key concept. The shift from a stable/organised labour force to a flexible workforce has meant hiring women on a part-time basis and the substitution of higher-paid male labour by cheap female labour. Poor women in urban India are thrown into an unregulated, erratic and insecure labour market that is becoming increasingly unequal. Congenial state support has been provided to large corporate houses which are closing down their units in big cities and using ancillaries in Tier II and III urban centres that employ unmarried girls (without responsibilities for families and children) on a piece-rate basis. These 'urban labour camps' have no safe environment, occupational health and safety standards, social security or robust self-help groups. The government of Tamil Nadu, for instance, proactively inducts young girls as workers for its SEZ manufacturing units in the name of the Sumangali Scheme, in which workers are treated as little more than bonded labour.

Home-based work by women and girls is easily legitimised in the context of increasing violence and insecurity in community life, unsafe streets and workplaces, riots and massive displacement and relocation.

In 2000, the National Alliance of Street Vendors in India (NASVI) undertook a study of seven cities. The study revealed that most female street vendors belong to households in which male members were once employed in better paid and secure jobs in the organised and formal sector. They became unemployed due to closure, lockout of their units, or

retrenchment. Male unemployment forced wives, daughters and sisters to take to street vending to make ends meet. These women constitute 30% of the total female population in the informal sector. Women vendors operate on a small scale due to limited access to credit, extension services and input subsidies. They are not unionised (Bhowmik, 2007).

Even in municipal corporation/municipal council-controlled markets, female petty traders cannot get shops on rent. Commuting with luggage in overcrowded buses and trains adds to the hazards of their daily activities. After sustained struggle, they managed a separate compartment in Mumbai's suburban trains. Time and again, these women have demanded special buses where vendors with large, heavy luggage can be accommodated.

Urban areas add thousands of tonnes of solid and liquid waste, the growing affluence of these areas only increasing the volume of waste. In Mumbai, there are 50,000-60,000 street and dumpsite ragpickers, of whom 60% are women and 20% are children, both boys and girls (Palnitkar, 2007). Even among the 100,000 door-to-door waste collectors and recyclers in Greater Mumbai, 50% are women. Pune's profile is more or less the same (Chikermane and Narayan, 2009).

Occupational health and safety

Multinational corporations operating in India's Free Trade Zones (FTZs), Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) employ urban girls in their production units or hire them on a piece-rate basis for home-based work (Contractor, Madhiwala and Gopal, 2006). High production quotas cause mental and physical stress among workers. Chemical hazards, improper ventilation and lack of health and safety provisions in EPZs make the women prone to respiratory ailments, burns, ulcers, and deteriorating eyesight. Of special interest to MNCs and TNCs are young unmarried girls who will not fight for their rights because of family pressure to earn. Corporate houses follow the same practice. Many of them have closed down their large units in industrial towns and cities, using home-based workers on a piece-rate basis instead.

The recent spate of attacks and killings of women workers and employees has brought the issue of workplace safety centre stage. According to the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013, all workplaces are required to have an appropriate complaints mechanism with a complaints committee, a special counsellor and other support services. The state must demand employer recognition of sexual harassment as a serious offence; it is the responsibility of the company/factory/workplace to prevent and deal with sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers are not necessarily insulated from that liability just because they are unaware of sexual harassment by the staff. An increasing number of employers in the private and public sectors are formulating anti-sexual harassment policies that include freedom from sexual harassment as a condition of work that an employee is entitled to expect. Women's rights in the workplace are human rights.

Quality of life

Social policy on food, nutrition, health and education of poor women has been piecemeal and haphazard. Moreover, in the post-liberalisation period there has been a withdrawal of the state in terms of expenditure on social services, while the private sector charges exorbitant 'user fees' for education and health facilities. Social policy also displays a complete lack of understanding of the burden of care work and women's disproportionate role in performing it. The absence of social protection has resulted in the emergence of care deficits in their households with the attendant implications on nutrition, health, education and wellbeing of members of the household.

According to Census 2011, 20% of urban women are poor and illiterate. NFHS 3 (2006) reports that one-third of those enrolled in school from urban poor households drop out by the time they complete primary school. More than half drop out after finishing the 7th grade, becoming child/adolescent workers. Nearly one-third of slum communities belong to the scheduled castes and tribes. Lack of access to healthcare, nutrition and poor environmental conditions all contribute to high infant and child mortality in the slums. Nearly 100,000 babies die before reaching their fifth birthday in urban slums. Only 40% of children from urban poor households receive all the recommended vaccinations (NFHS 3, 2006).

Less than one-fifth of slum households have access to piped water supply at home. And less than half the urban poor have access to toilets. Poor water and sanitation contribute to higher morbidity in slums. It also results in reproductive morbidity among women and girls and also enhanced vulnerability to sexual assault as they are forced to defecate in the open, in the dark (before sunrise and after sunset). A smaller percentage of households (16.8%) do not share toilets with other households.

Nearly half of urban poor children are underweight for their age. This is worse than even rural areas. Poor availability and access to health services among the urban poor is further reflected in the proportion of pregnant women receiving the recommended antenatal visits. Only about half of urban poor mothers receive three or more visits despite their proximity to world-class super specialty hospitals. Less than half of slum children are born in health facilities, according to NFHS 3. This contributes to high neonatal and maternal mortality among the urban poor. Nearly 60% of urban poor women aged 15-49 years are anaemic, increasing the likelihood of maternal and infant death, premature birth, and low weight babies (Dani, 2007).

Mumbai-based studies on intra-household distribution of resources show that among poorer households, gross malnutrition and nutritional deficiencies among girls and women was 25% more than among men. Spiralling inflation leading to high prices of pulses, cereals and vegetables and poor access to safe drinking water among the poor have proved extremely detrimental to women's health. For every three men using healthcare facilities in Mumbai, only one woman does so. In the 0-19 age-group, the death rate among girls is higher than among boys (Deosthali and Madhiwala, 2005).

Elderly and poor

Elderly women constitute 8.4% of the total population, while men make up 7.7% (Census 2011). According to the Institute of Public Administration's working paper 'Chronic Poverty Among Indian Elderly' (2009), in urban areas the most vulnerable group comprises elderly women; 64% of them are dependent on others for food, clothing and healthcare. This is one of the reasons why poor elderly women continue to work despite their failing health. They also have fewer opportunities to save over the course of their productive lifetimes, having spent more time than men as caregivers and engaged in household labour, and subject to limited labour market access and wage discrimination. Women also tend to benefit less from pension and social security schemes which were built to reflect formal wage labour, not household labour or activity in the informal economy where a higher proportion of women than men are employed. In the developing world, pension systems generally cover only a minority of women. Homelessness of elderly women in urban areas is a huge problem left unattended by the state.

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Making the invisible visible

Health, nutrition and wellbeing disparities in urban India are stark. Under-5 children in the most vulnerable sections of the urban poor are 2.5 times more undernourished than the urban rich. And their mortality rate is significantly higher than the urban aggregate. The urban poor are in fact far less likely to avail of ICDS and other schemes than the rural poor

SIDDHARTH
AGARWAL

IN 2008, for the first time in human history, the world's urban population surpassed its rural population (1). Between 2011 and 2030, the world's population is expected to increase from 7.0 billion to 8.3 billion (2). With urbanisation being the defining feature worldwide, the population living in urban areas is projected to gain 1.4 billion, increasing from 3.6 billion in 2011 to 5 billion by the year 2030 (3).

India's urban population has increased from 285 million in 2001 to 377 million (31%) in 2011. It is expected to increase to 535 million (38%) by 2026 (4). The United Nations estimates that 875 million people will live in Indian cities and towns by 2050. If urban India were a separate country, it would be the world's fourth largest country after China,

India and the United States of America.

According to data from Census 2011, close to 50% of urban dwellers in India live in towns and cities with a population of less than 0.5 million, while the four largest urban agglomerations — Greater Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi and Chennai — are home to 15% of India's urban population.

Urban poverty in India

Cities are centres of a multitude of commercial activities, with the urban component of India's economy contributing close to 70% of the country's GDP. However, behind the glitter of urban life is a large segment that is hidden, voiceless, deprived, hungry, with poor access to healthcare and basic

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services like sanitation, drinking water, housing, education.

Based on Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE), the Tendulkar Committee's (set up by the Planning Commission, Government of India) 2009 Report of the Expert Group to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty used 2004-05 National Sample Survey (NSS) data to determine a poverty line of INR 578.8 MPCE in 2005. The committee also used 1993-94 NSS data as a preliminary exercise to calculate poverty rates that could be compared to the 2005 numbers (5). The Tendulkar Committee's 2009 report revealed that in 1994, 31.8% of India's urban population was below the poverty line, amounting to 74.5 million urban poor residents. In 2005, urban poverty was at 25.4%, amounting to 80.8 million urban poor residents. The Planning Commission's 2011-12 Press Note on Poverty Estimates calculated an updated poverty line of INR 1,000 MPCE using the detailed analysis and methodology outlined in the 2009 Tendulkar Committee report. Evaluated together, these reports show an unambiguous trend. The Planning Commission's 2012 press note revealed an urban poverty rate of 13.7%, amounting to 53 million urban poor residents in 2012.

Thus it would appear that between 1994 and 2005, although urban poverty increased in absolute numbers it decreased as a proportion of the urban population, and between 2005 and 2012 it decreased significantly, in both absolute and relative terms, to below 1994 levels. These results lead one to conclude that urban poverty has in fact reduced drastically.

These urban poverty figures are misleading, however, because they adopt what C P Chandrasekhar calls a "minimalist notion of survival". According to the World Bank, USD 2/day represents the international median poverty line across developing nations, while USD 1.25/day represents extreme poverty. India's INR 1,000 MPCE poverty line converts roughly to USD 0.57/day (INR 33/day), which, when crudely compared, is significantly lower than the World Bank's standard for extreme poverty. Thus, in adopting a "minimalist notion" of what it takes to survive, the Indian government has adopted a maximalist definition of poverty — that is, in order to qualify as being poor in India one must be in the absolute depths of poverty by most global standards.

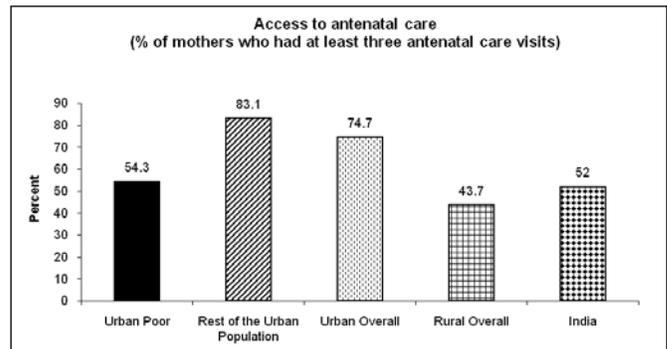
This clearly suggests that the Government of India's urban poverty ratio of 13.7% is a gross underestimation of the real proportion of urban poor and vulnerable. The National Food Security Act 2013, issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice in *The Gazette of India* dated September 10, 2013, designates 50% of India's urban population vulnerable and eligible for a minimum quantity of assured foodgrain per month at highly subsidised prices (6). With India's urban population in 2014 estimated at over 400 million, this translates to approximately 200 million officially designated vulnerable in urban areas.

Health, nutrition and wellbeing disparities in urban India

Maternal health: In the poorest quartile of India's urban

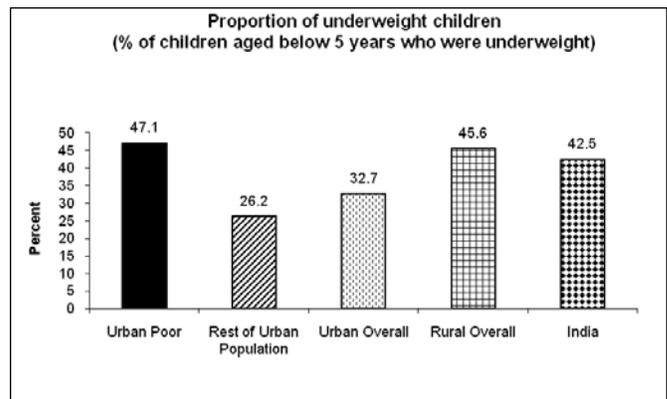
population, only 54% of pregnant women received at least three antenatal care visits compared to 83% for the rest of the urban population. Also, a very small proportion of mothers within the poorest quartile are adequately served in most states.

Only half of all births among the poorest quartile of India's urban population were assisted by health personnel in 2005-06, as against 83% for the rest of the urban population. The percentage of assisted births was particularly low among the poorest quartile of urban populations in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Bihar and Rajasthan. This proportion is likely to have increased between NFHS 3 and now, thanks to incentives provided to mothers to give birth at a government (or accredited private) hospital.



Source: Analysis of NFHS 3 by UHRC 2008

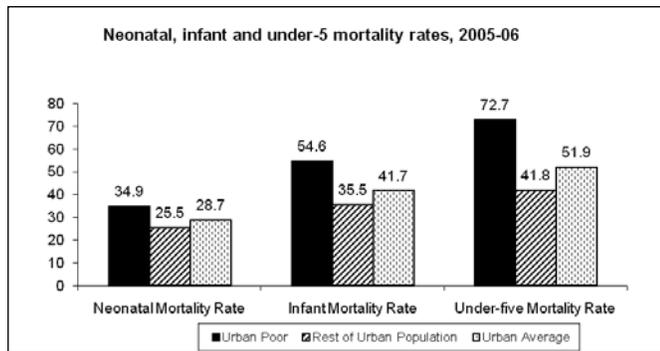
Childhood undernutrition: Undernutrition among the urban poor is 1.5 times higher than the rest of the urban population. The fact that nearly 54% of under-5 (U5) children were chronically undernourished (or stunted) among the poorest urban quartile, as per the most recent NFHS, illustrates the extent of the deprivation. Re-analysis of urban samples from NFHS 2005-06 shows that stunted U5 children in the poorest urban quartile is 2.5 times as high as those in the richest urban quartile.



Source: Analysis of NFHS 3 by UHRC 2008

Childhood mortality and immunisation: Re-analysis of NFHS 3 data reveals that the Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) among the urban poor was at 72.7, significantly higher than the

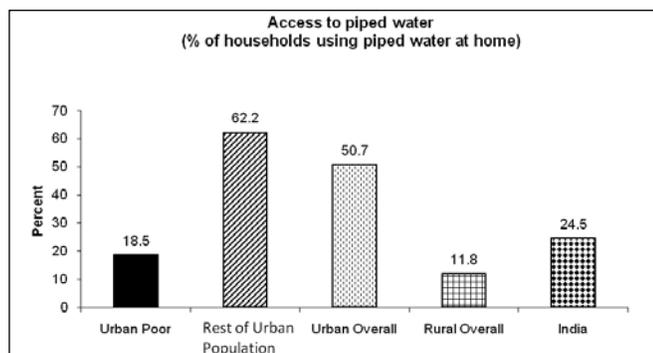
urban aggregate of 51.9. Similarly, only 40% of children were completely immunised in the poorest quartile, compared to 65% for the rest of the urban population. The percentage of children completely immunised was particularly low among the poorest quartile of urban populations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Jharkhand; it was also only 40% in Delhi. Complete immunisation in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh was less than 50%.



Source: Analysis of NFHS 3 by UHRC 2008

Access to piped water: Among the poorest quartile of India's urban population in 2005-06, 81.5% did not have access to piped water at home; among the rest of the urban population, 62% had access to piped water at home.

Even in better-performing states, only half the population in the poorest quartile had piped water in their homes; the all-India figure was less than 20%, and in Delhi, the capital and one of the wealthiest cities, it was only 30%. In Bihar, just 2% of the poorest quartile had access to piped water at home. In Uttar Pradesh, the state with the largest urban population, it was just 12%.

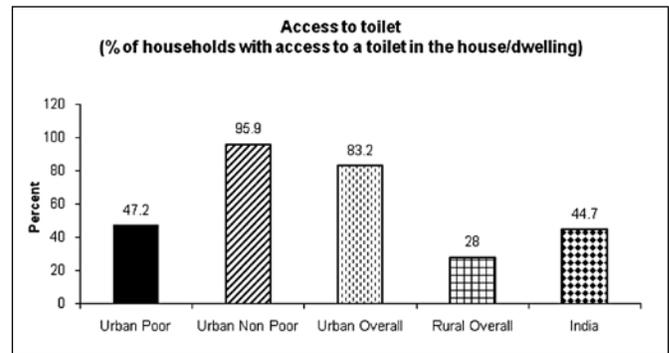


Source: Analysis of NFHS 3 by UHRC 2008

Access to sanitary flush or pit latrines: Among the poorest quartile of India's urban population in 2005-06, 52.8% did not use a sanitary flush or pit toilet; among the rest of the urban population, 96% used a sanitary toilet.

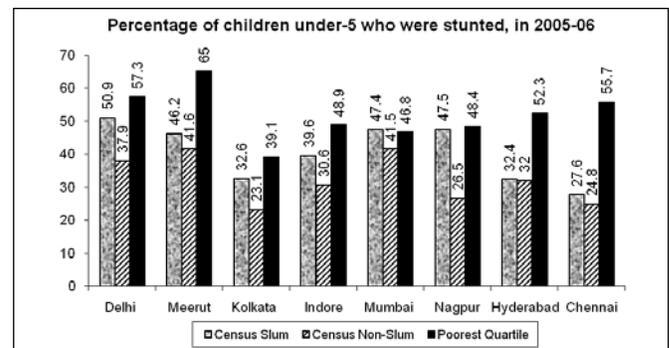
Considering a low 47.3% of people use pit or flush latrines, the proportion of people with flush toilets would be much

lower as pit latrines are still very common in urban areas. In Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, more than two-thirds of the poorest quartile did not use a flush or pit toilet to dispose of excreta. In Delhi, one-third of the poorest quartile did not have access to a sanitary toilet. Women and girls are the worst off under such conditions. Women in slums tend to eat less and drink much less water than they should, to avoid having to attend to frequent calls of nature in the absence of proper facilities and shrinking open spaces (personal observations and interaction with women during slum visits).



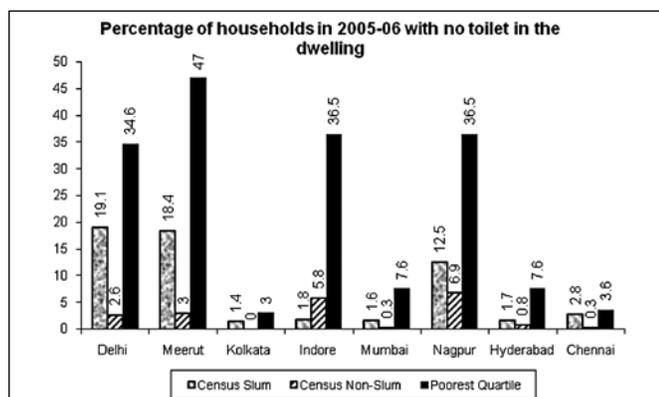
Source: Analysis of NFHS 3 by UHRC 2008

Data from an eight-city study: A study entitled 'Health and Living Conditions in Eight Indian Cities' (NFHS 2005-06: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India) looked at a range of health, maternal health and healthcare, and environmental health indicators. With regard to undernourished children, a high proportion was stunted (height-for-age) in all the cities (as was the case in urban populations of the states, as discussed earlier). When considering total city populations, Chennai had the lowest percentage of stunted children (25.4%), while Mumbai had the highest (45.4%). Across all eight cities, the proportion of stunted children was highest among the poorest population and also consistently higher in slum populations compared to non-slum populations.



Source: Eight-City Study, NFHS 3, 2005-06

In Delhi, Meerut and Nagpur, 10-20% of slum households had no toilet facilities. In Delhi, Meerut, Indore and Nagpur



Source: Eight-City Study, NFHS 3, 2005-06

more than 30% of the poorest households had no toilet facilities.

Operational challenges

Poor access to healthcare despite physical proximity

Re-analysis of the urban component of NFHS 3, presented above, clearly illustrates the disparity in access to basic healthcare that the poorest urban quartile faces. In spite of physical proximity to world-class health facilities, economic and social barriers often inhibit the urban poor from accessing these services.

The 'National Urban Health Mission Implementation Framework' issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, in May 2013, after approval by the Union Cabinet on May 1, 2013, states that most existing primary health facilities, namely Urban Health Posts (UHPs), Urban Family Welfare Centres (UFWC), and dispensaries function sub-optimally due to problems with infrastructure, human resources, referrals, diagnostics, case load, spatial distribution, and inconvenient working hours. According to a report 'Urban Health Schemes' by the Department of Family Welfare, Government of India, 2006, distribution of ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) and urban public health services is worse in smaller cities. Besides lack of availability, urban health centres are often not located close to slums and many are marred by inadequate health equipment and manpower (personal observations in several cities). Availability is likely to be worse at the city peripheries (Kundu N K, Kanitkar T. 'Primary Healthcare in Urban Slums', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XXXVII, No 51, December 21, 2002). Similarly, anganwadi centres are often not located in or near slums and there are far fewer centres in a slum than are required to serve the entire population (personal observations in several cities). Access to a wide network of private healthcare facilities in urban areas may be an advantage only for the relatively better-off.

The 'Evaluation Report of Integrated Child Development Services', prepared by the Programme Evaluation Organisation, Planning Commission, Government of India,

states on pages 48-49, quoting an NCAER study, that about 26% of rural mothers and 41% of rural children received ICDS services, compared with 11% of urban mothers and 18% of urban children.

Research and knowledge/information gaps

Urban health data is usually available as aggregate data masking disparities in health conditions among different segments of the urban population. Being informal or 'illegal', a large proportion of low-income urban clusters are not on the official slum lists and hence not represented as part of the urban poor population. As a consequence, they are often missed out in surveys and assessments. Consequently, health planning is not based on a complete understanding of the needs of the community. Lack of optimal systems for data-collection in slums results in ineffective planning, resource allocation and monitoring for infrastructure provision, programme efforts and assessment of progress.

Large proportion of urban poor not enumerated

A significant number of the urban vulnerable remain unnoticed for various reasons. According to the 65th Round (2008-09) of the NSSO, 49% of slums are non-notified in India (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2008). Owing to long delays in updating official slum lists many slums remain unlisted for years and continue to be deprived of services due to their illegal status. The Urban Health Resource Centre's (UHRC) study in Indore in 2004 showed that there were 438 officially recognised slums but a process of mapping found an additional 101 slums in 2004 (Agarwal and Taneja, 2004). In 2011-12, when the UHRC updated Indore's slum list and estimated population for the District Health Department of Indore, it revealed a total of 633 slums in the city with an estimated population of 918,575, nearly 50% of Indore's population. According to 2011 Census data, Indore's population in 2011 was 1,960,631, of which 590,257 people lived in slums, accounting for around 30% of the population (Directorate of Central Operations, Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal 2011).

This trend of underreporting extends to other large cities as well. Census 2001 estimated that 49% of Mumbai's population lived in slums. In 2006, it was estimated that 100-300 new families arrive in Mumbai every day. According to Census 2011, Greater Mumbai has a slum population of 5,206,473. However, in 2011, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai reported a slum population of 6.5 million out of a total population of around 12.5 million, amounting to roughly 52% of the population. According to Jan Nijman (Professor of Urban Studies at the University of Amsterdam), in 2008, over 50% of Mumbai's 12 million people lived in slums (7). Given this apparent consensus, the Census 2011 slum population figure for Mumbai is very likely an underestimation.

Low awareness and weak community capacity to demand and access healthcare

Another contributing factor to poor health among slum-dwellers is low awareness and practise of recommended behaviours as well as low utilisation of services that may be available. This, coupled with little confidence, contributes to a weak demand for services. Utilisation of available government health services by recent migrant groups is particularly low. Social heterogeneity, cultural diversity, fewer extended family connections, and more women engaged in work contribute negatively to building the urban slum community as a strong collective unit. Improving access therefore constitutes a major demand-side public health challenge. Migratory trends among this segment of the population also present a problem in service delivery.

Poor family support system and weak social cohesion in slums

Unlike in rural settings, women and children do not enjoy a socially well-knit community that ensures them physical safety, a fair level of food security, and the availability of social support, often from extended family connections, for childcare. Without these safeguards, women’s mobility in urban areas is limited, compromising their ability to avail of healthcare services for themselves and their children when required.

Inadequate public health infrastructure in urban slums

A single primary healthcare facility in an urban area caters to a much larger population than the norm of one centre for every 50,000-60,000 people (based on detailed situation analysis of Agra, Indore, Dehra Dun and Ranchi, conducted by a UHRC team). From the providers’ perspective, service delivery in slums constitutes a huge challenge given the large and sometimes mobile population that is usually covered by one health worker. This leaves them little scope to persuade target families to follow appropriate behaviour patterns. Also, there is an imbalanced focus on curative care and a consequent near-total neglect of preventive and promotive care. In most cities, particularly in large ones, too much emphasis is put on super-specialty care centres in the private sector which are clearly out of the reach of the urban poor.

High staff turnover, frequent transfers, absenteeism, inadequately skilled staff and lack of supportive supervision hinder effective implementation of services. The large number of medical and paramedical staff positions, absence of modalities and adequately maintained records also contribute to a weakness of services.

Poor coordination among different stakeholders

State health departments, municipal bodies, JNNURM or Rajiv Awas Yojana Urban Poverty Alleviation Cells in urban local bodies, ICDS, NGOs and charitable organisations are all responsible for providing services in urban areas. There

is poor coordination between the agencies, and service areas often overlap, with large areas offering no services at all. The absence of a well-plotted updated city map indicating slums, informal settlements, pavement-dwellers, small poverty clusters and facilities leads to the crowding of primary care facilities in a small area of the city, usually its centre (personal observations after city mapping in several cities). Slums/deprived settlements located on the fringes are often served neither by rural nor urban health staff (author’s personal observations in Indore, Agra, Dehra Dun).

How can the urban healthcare system be better designed and operationalised?

The reach and quality of health and wellbeing services vary across urban settings. A number of factors, in different contexts, impact the health and wellbeing of urban disadvantaged populations. Illness identification at the household level, prompt care-seeking, and care delivery are three constituents essential for effective utilisation of healthcare services. Fundamental public health services such as vaccination, safe water supply and sanitation, oral rehydration therapy, timely antenatal care, safe deliveries, newborn and infant care, and childhood immunisation continue to be important. Data-collection at the primary urban health centre and at the city level is necessary to properly understand the needs of the urban community and generate precise data to improve implementation, resource allocation and resource utilisation.

Addressing social determinants of health through coordinated interventions

There are a number of different sectors and avenues through which strategic interventions may be used to positively influence the health of urban disadvantaged populations:

- Physical, environmental and infrastructure services.
- Health, nutrition and food subsidy services.
- Poverty-alleviation and livelihood-improvement programmes.
- Gender inequity, alcoholism, domestic violence and other social ills.
- Building social capital among slum communities and associated governance-improvement efforts.

Generating community demand for healthcare services

The more communities know about which health services are available, and which are relevant to them, the more likely they are to seek these out.

Establishing public private partnerships to coordinate efforts

Partnerships between the private sector and NGOs is emerging as an important strategy in improving access to services for

vulnerable and neglected sections of the urban population.

Building the capacity of slum communities

While each of these recommendations is important, it is crucial to enable urban slum/vulnerable communities to overcome four socio-behavioural issues: an attitude of resignation; weak demand for rights; low social cohesion; a sense of powerlessness.

Translating words into action

While urban health has been recognised by the government as a thrust area since implementation of the National Population Policy (NPP) 2000 and National Health Policy (NHP) 2002, actual progress has been slow. The Tenth Five-Year Plan (Planning Commission, 2002) and the Reproductive and Child Health Programme, Phase II (RCH II) clearly recognised the failure of the existing health delivery system in India's urban areas to effectively address the health needs of vulnerable urban populations living in slums, informal settlements, construction sites, brick and lime kilns and other disadvantaged habitations.

Meanwhile, policy developments have continued:

- MoHFW's Urban Slum Health Project Guidelines issued in 2004.
- MoHFW's National Task Force to Advise the National Rural Health Mission on strategies for urban healthcare (2005-06).
- National Urban Health Mission (NUHM), beginning 2006 and announced several times, including more recently in 2013.
- Basic services to the urban poor component of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (2006 onwards) and the more recent Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), 2010, of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation which includes provision of resources for preventive health action.
- Amendments in the approach of the ICDS scheme to integrate urban deprived areas and shift some focus towards the urban poor (Government of India, 2013).
- The Supreme Court's order for anganwadis to be on 'demand' in slums and informal settlements.
- Continued mandate and resource allocation for urban health, with a focus on slums and deprived urban settlements in the government's Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Five-Year Plans have helped bring urban deprivation to light.

It is encouraging to see direct policies and programmes now focusing on vulnerable segments of India's booming cities, as a consequence of which the situation of the urban poor should, hopefully, improve. Now that NUHM has been accepted and is ready to be rolled out, the emphasis should be on increasing availability, inclusive access and acceptability of public health services particularly in slums and vulnerable urban areas. There is no need to reinvent the wheel through technical task forces, consultations,

deliberations. It is time to build on existing experiences and lessons to develop and expeditiously implement effective and efficient programme processes that set context-specific examples of what success and good practices look like in a wide variety of urban Indian settings.

(The author acknowledges the views contributed by slum communities from a large number of cities, the insight gained through interaction with stakeholders from municipal/city health and other departments/ministries, and the assistance of Vivek Bhatnagar and Neeraj Verma in updating the data cited in this paper)

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Minorities at the margins

While increased social exclusion and religious polarisation are pushing Muslims to urban areas, poverty amongst urban Muslims is 13-16% higher than the national average. In the western and northern states in particular, communalised state machineries and politics act as barriers to the economic and social mobility of Muslims. Malegaon, Mumbra and Bhiwandi in Maharashtra illustrate how poverty is concentrated and perpetuated amongst urban Muslims

ABDUL SHABAN

MUSLIMS IN INDIA suffer acute poverty and marginalisation. Relative poverty in the community in urban areas since 1993-94 has increased mainly in the western and northern states of the country, while in the southern states it has declined. Western states also manifest higher socio-spatial exclusion of the community, with the community largely concentrated in poverty-ridden small and medium towns such as Malegaon, Mumbra and Bhiwandi in Maharashtra, or marginalised areas of the large cities.

Historically, socio-cultural diversity has been India's unique feature. Of late, this diversity has also created many social ruptures. In recent decades, political formations have used or exploited existing or manufactured faultlines between the communities as tools to garner votes. This has intensified differences between communities, especially along caste and religious lines. Though bridging the gaps in development of different social groups has been one of the primary objectives of national planning and policy-making, differences between the two major religious communities of the country — Hindus and Muslims — have been reinforced over the years to such an extent that even the state is unable to effectively mobilise its bureaucracy and police to deliver development and protection to Muslims on an equal basis. This is well reflected in the fact that while the country has been able to initiate and sustain development policies along caste and regional lines, it has largely failed to safeguard the interests of Muslims, a deprived religious community that has been ignored or received less attention in the dominant and complex matrix of class, caste and region.

Over the years, India's Muslims have undergone a relative deterioration in their socio-economic situation and physical safety. Although they remain rooted to their regional culture and caste-class nexus, their religious identity is reified, which de-aligns or works against their effective and meaningful relationship with state machineries and developmental policies. Muslims, at 13.4% of the total population, constitute the largest religious minority group in the country (Census of India 2001). Geographically, this religious community is relatively more concentrated in urban areas and also in particular states. They are mostly concentrated in Jammu & Kashmir (67% of the total population of the state) Assam (30.9%), West Bengal (25.2%), Kerala (24.7%), Uttar

Pradesh (18.2%) and Bihar (15.9%). In fact, three states — Uttar Pradesh (31 million), West Bengal (20 million) and Bihar (14 million) — together constitute 47% of the total Muslim population in the country.

A distinctive feature of the Muslim community has been the level of urbanisation of the community, which is higher than for the total population. In 2001, 35.7% of the Muslim population was urban compared to 27.8% of the overall population. In states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh, a majority of Muslims live in urban areas. However, as shown below, this urbanisation of Muslims is largely of a subsistence nature, and is hardly related to any significant improvement in the quality of their lives.

A large share of the Muslim population in India lives in adverse economic situations. In rural areas they have higher landlessness and a majority of those owning land have lower size of landholding (NSSO 2007; Shaban 2011). The lower educational attainments in comparison to other socio-religious groups (Government of India 2006: 64) and prejudices against the community mar the aspirations of even the highly educated in the community. Among others, the aspiration for better wages and employment forces them to migrate to urban centres in relatively greater proportion to their number. The increased religious polarisation of communities in the rural areas of many states and fear of riots also act as push factors for Muslims to migrate to urban areas. In urban areas, Muslims are further confronted with strong and intensified forms of socially exclusionary practices and violence, leading to their concentration in a few towns or in marginal and peripheral areas within a large town (Shaban 2010; Robinson 2005; Masselos 1994; Phadke 2007). The section of Muslims living in older parts of towns/cities also finds it difficult to move to newly developed areas due to the fear of riots, lack of affordability due to rising house prices, and availability of housing finance (Shaban 2010). The consequence is that in urban areas a large section of the Muslim population lives in slums and shanties, or dilapidated older parts of towns/cities.

Maharashtra is a typical example of this kind of distribution of Muslim population. More than 70% of the Muslim population in the state lives in urban areas but is



concentrated either in specific marginal parts of bigger towns or in Muslim-concentrated small and medium towns such as Malegaon, Bhiwandi, Mumbra, etc.

The present paper attempts to examine poverty among Muslims in urban areas in the country and in some selected small and medium towns of Maharashtra. I first examine poverty at the national level among different religious groups and then discuss poverty among Muslims in the towns of Malegaon and Mumbra, in Maharashtra.

Poverty and marginality among Muslims

Available data since 1993-94 shows that Muslims have been plagued by poverty and penury; at the national level poverty is highest among Muslims after the Buddhists who include a large share of dalit (scheduled caste) populations. At the aggregate level (rural + urban), poverty among Muslims has been higher by about 6 percentage points over the years (Table 1). But it is in urban areas that poverty pervades the lives of Muslims in a significant way. Whereas, on an average, poverty among Muslims in rural areas has been around 3% higher than the national average, it has been higher than 13-16% over the years 1993-94 to 2009-10 in urban areas. In fact, in 2004-05 and 2009-10, Muslims had the highest level of poverty among all religious communities living in urban areas. Compared to the Muslim minorities, Jains and Sikhs have significantly higher standards of living and less poverty.

Maharashtra is one of the Indian states where there has been a higher concentration of poverty among Muslims — more than 12% above the state's average poverty rate (Table 2). In 2009-10, the highest concentration of poverty among Muslims in urban areas was in Bihar (56.5%), followed by Assam (52.7%), and Uttar Pradesh (49.5%). Poverty among Muslims in urban centres in Maharashtra was about 31% in the same year. However, there are differential levels of development among the states, and states like Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh also have higher overall poverty rates. In comparison to these states, those from western and southern India are more developed and have lower overall poverty rates. It is therefore important to compare the poverty rate differences between Muslims and overall poverty in respective states of the country.

From Table 3, the following major observations can be made. First, there exists an enormous gap between urban poverty rates among Muslims and overall urban poverty rates in many states. Some of the prominent states which have higher poverty among Muslims than overall poverty are Assam (excess poverty among Muslims in urban areas was +26.8% in 2009-10), Gujarat (+24.8), Uttarakhand (+24.4%), Haryana (+19.4%), Uttar Pradesh (+17.8), Bihar (+17.1%), West Bengal (+13.0), Jharkhand (+13.3%) and Maharashtra (+12.6%). Thus, states with excess urban poverty among Muslims are mainly from the northern and western states.

Table 1: National rural and urban poverty rates by religious groups

Religious groups	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10
Rural			
Buddhists	73.2	65.8	44.1
Christians	44.9	29.8	23.8
Hindus	50.3	42.0	33.5
Muslims	53.5	44.6	36.2
Jains	24.3	10.6	0.0
Sikhs	19.6	21.8	11.8
Others	57.3	57.8	35.3
Total	50.1	41.9	33.3
Urban			
Buddhists	47.2	40.4	31.2
Christians	22.6	14.4	12.9
Hindus	29.5	23.1	18.7
Muslims	46.4	41.9	34.0
Jains	5.5	2.7	1.7
Sikhs	18.8	9.5	14.5
Others	31.5	18.8	13.6
Total	31.7	25.8	20.9
Rural + Urban			
Buddhists	64.9	56.0	39.0
Christians	38.4	25.0	20.5
Hindus	45.4	37.5	29.7
Muslims	51.1	43.7	35.5
Jains	10.2	4.6	1.5
Sikhs	19.4	19.0	12.5
Others	51.2	52.5	29.9
Total	45.5	37.8	29.9

Note: Suresh Tendulkar Committee poverty line (Government of India 2009) has been used to compute the level of poverty among different religious groups
Source: Panagariya and Mukim (2013)

Second, among states which have shown consistently increasing gaps between poverty rates among Muslims and overall state poverty are Gujarat (+17.6% in 1993-94, +22.2% in 2004-05, and +24.8% in 2009-10), Uttarakhand (+13.8%, +18.1% and +24.4%) and Uttar Pradesh (+12.5%, +14.3% and 17.8%), but in other states, notwithstanding the increase over 1993-94, the gap has either stabilised or declined during 2004-05 and 2009-10. Thus, among the relatively developed states, Gujarat stands out in terms of relative increase in poverty among Muslims in urban areas.

Third, the relative situation of Muslims over the years 1993-94 to 2009-10 has worsened in Gujarat. Muslims in the state have the highest relative poverty (the ratio between poverty rate among Muslims in urban areas in the state and overall urban poverty in the state). Poverty among urban Muslims was 1.6, 2.1 and 2.4 times higher than overall urban poverty in the state, in the years 1993-94, 2004-05 and 2009-10. After Gujarat, the highest relative poverty among Muslims

Table 2: Urban poverty rates (%) among Muslims vis-à-vis overall poverty rates (%) in major states in the country

State	Muslims			All religious groups		
	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10
Andhra Pradesh	44.5	32.7	24.7	35.1	23.4	17.7
Assam	50.4	24.2	52.7	27.7	21.8	25.9
Bihar	59.2	60.8	56.5	44.6	43.7	39.4
Gujarat	45.6	42.3	42.4	28.0	20.1	17.6
Haryana	51.7	46.5	42.4	24.2	22.4	23.0
Jharkhand	55.0	49.8	44.3	41.8	23.8	31.0
Karnataka	50.6	40.3	20.4	34.2	25.9	19.5
Kerala	27.6	23.7	17.1	23.7	18.4	12.1
Madhya Pradesh	36.4	48.3	31.7	31.7	35.1	22.8
Maharashtra	44.0	47.9	30.9	30.2	25.6	18.3
Punjab	50.8	40.5	23.7	27.2	18.7	18.0
Rajasthan	52.5	42.4	29.5	29.9	29.7	19.9
Tamil Nadu	35.4	19.1	11.2	33.5	19.8	12.7
Uttar Pradesh	50.7	48.4	49.5	38.2	34.1	31.7
Uttarakhand	32.5	44.3	49.4	18.7	26.2	25.0
West Bengal	56.1	45.7	34.9	31.2	24.4	21.9
Total	46.4	41.9	33.9	31.7	25.8	20.9

Note: Suresh Tendulkar Committee poverty line (Government of India 2009) has been used to compute the level of poverty among different religious groups
Source: Panagariya and Mukim (2013)

in 1999-10 was in Assam (2.0), Uttarakhand (2.0), Haryana (1.8), and Maharashtra (1.7).

Fourth, at the national level, relative poverty among Muslims is largely stable (1.5 times in 1993-94, 1.6 times each in 2004-05 and 2009-10). This stability is largely due to better performance in southern states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and also West Bengal where urban poverty among Muslims has declined. In Kerala, relative poverty among Muslims has marginally increased over the years, but this gap in comparison to states like Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand is smaller. Thus, we find a major difference between the southern, and northern and western Indian states in terms of dynamics of poverty among Muslims. In fact, it has been the northern and western states of the country which have undergone a significant transformation in social relations due to communal politics, and which have also been centres of communal violence (Shaban 2011). The torn social relations and communalised state machineries and politics act as barriers to developmental programmes and economic and social mobility among Muslims.

Poverty among Muslims in urban areas of Maharashtra

Maharashtra is one of the states that have seen a relative increase in levels of poverty among Muslims in urban areas in 2004-05 and 2009-10, compared to 1993-94 (Table 3).

Table 3: Relative poverty and poverty rate difference between Muslims and overall poverty in urban areas in selected states of India

States	Differences in poverty rates in urban areas (poverty rate [%] among Muslims in urban areas less overall poverty rates [%] in urban areas in respective states)			Ratio of poverty among Muslims in urban areas and overall urban poverty rate in respective states		
	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10	1993-94	2004-05	2009-10
Andhra Pradesh	9.4	9.3	7.0	1.3	1.4	1.4
Assam	22.7	2.4	26.8	1.8	1.1	2.0
Bihar	14.6	17.1	17.1	1.3	1.4	1.4
Gujarat	17.6	22.2	24.8	1.6	2.1	2.4
Haryana	27.5	24.1	19.4	2.1	2.1	1.8
Jharkhand	13.2	26.0	13.3	1.3	2.1	1.4
Karnataka	16.4	14.4	0.9	1.5	1.6	1.0
Kerala	3.9	5.3	5.0	1.2	1.3	1.4
Madhya Pradesh	4.7	13.2	8.9	1.1	1.4	1.4
Maharashtra	13.8	22.3	12.6	1.5	1.9	1.7
Punjab	23.6	21.8	5.7	1.9	2.2	1.3
Rajasthan	22.6	12.7	9.6	1.8	1.4	1.5
Tamil Nadu	1.9	-0.7	-1.5	1.1	1.0	0.9
Uttar Pradesh	12.5	14.3	17.8	1.3	1.4	1.6
Uttarakhand	13.8	18.1	24.4	1.7	1.7	2.0
West Bengal	24.9	21.3	13.0	1.8	1.9	1.6
Total	14.7	16.1	13.0	1.5	1.6	1.6

Source: Computed using data from Panagariya and Mukim (2013)

Given that more than 70% of the 10.27 million Muslim population in the state (as per Census 2001; the Census 2011 data on religion-wise distribution of population is still not available) lives in urban areas, this is great cause for concern. An analysis of Census 2011 data shows that a large share of the urban Muslim population lives in Mumbai, Mumbai (Suburban) and Thane district. Other cities like Nagpur, Pune, Nashik and Aurangabad also have a significant number of Muslims. However, among these urban centres, a large share is concentrated in specific towns like Malegaon, Mumbra, Bhiwandi, Mira Road, or marginal, peripheral and poverty-stricken areas of the big cities, like Gowandi, Sonapur-Bhandup, Kurla, Jari Mari, Nagpada, etc, in Mumbai. Detailed data on some of these areas has recently been made available from studies undertaken by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, and other higher educational institutions in Mumbai.

Marginalisation of Muslims in Malegaon and Mumbra

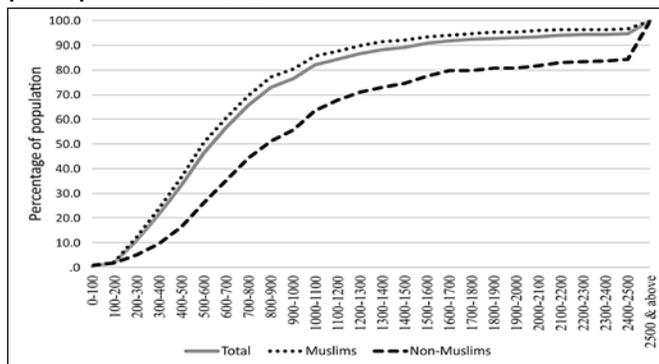
Malegaon is a typical Muslim town which has, over the years, stagnated due to neglect by development agencies. The town has had a glorious past and for over one-and-a-half centuries has been known for its handloom- and powerloom-based textile industries. The city has often been claimed as the Manchester of the East. However, notwithstanding its glorious history, enterprising people and hardworking labourers, this city of about 4.7 lakh population (Census 2011) remains underdeveloped and suffers a number of social problems including communal

strife and violence between Hindus and Muslims. Although institutions and networks of mutual help and support among religious communities do exist and are often portrayed as evidence of cooperation and symbiosis, at times they are ruptured and breached to allow inter-religious fights, killings, lootings and mayhem. The city is symbolised by extreme poverty, stark religious segregation, harsh working conditions (often spanning 12-16 hours), lack of housing, sanitation, educational and health facilities, and deafening sound pollution emanating from the looms. In other words, it has not only faced terror activities and communal riots, but also extremely harsh conditions, frightening underdevelopment, and stigmatisation.

The available data shows that a sizeable proportion of the population of Malegaon town lives in multidimensional poverty and penury: ill health, unemployment and lack of education, housing and other infrastructure (Shaban 2012). TISS sample survey data shows that about one-third of the town's population survives on a per capita income of less than Rs 500/month. The share of population living below the poverty line (according to the poverty line suggested by the Suresh Tendulkar Committee, updated per capita income of Rs 961.1 per month for 2010-11 is used to calculate the level of poverty) is 72.0%. Poverty among Muslims is more acute — about 77.5% of the total Muslim population lives in poverty, while among non-Muslims the share of population living below the poverty line is 49.7%. Figure 1 shows that about 82% of the total population lives below the per capita

income of Rs 1,000, and thus may be considered extremely vulnerable. The vulnerability among Muslims is significantly higher than among the city's non-Muslim population.

Figure 1. Cumulative share of Malegaon's population by per capita income (Rs), 2010



Source: Shaban (2012)

Mumbra represents another typical Muslim-concentrated town on the edge of two megacities, Mumbai and Thane. It symbolises what discrimination, communal politics, violence and marginality in an urban fabric can do. The town emerged as a place where Muslims from different parts of Mumbai and Thane began gathering after the violent communal riots of 1992-93. Seeking safety against

violence in numbers, Muslims began amassing here, occupying vacant lands or buying land from farmers to build their dwellings. The Thane Municipal Corporation which administers the town looked the other way, failing to provide amenities in proportion to their requirement, and making no attempt to regulate the construction of buildings. The result is haphazard growth of settlements and the collection of Muslims in illegally constructed buildings. The town has an area of about 28 sq km and its population doubled between 2001 and 2011, from 2.07 lakh to 4.07 lakh.

Though there have been no major communal riots in the Mumbai Metropolitan region since 1992-93, the 2002 Gujarat riots still occupy the psyche of Muslims and the search for 'safe living spaces' (free from communal violence and threat) even by many middle class and educated Muslims ends in Mumbra. Discrimination in the housing market against Muslims has also driven this trend.

Mumbra remains a town of illegal buildings (not sanctioned or regularised by the authorities). The fear of communalism has been used by unscrupulous builders from the Muslim community to construct multi-storeyed buildings within a few days by bribing and using their illegal nexus with local officials and the police. These buildings are extremely unsafe; many have collapsed in recent years killing a number of their residents. It is very unfortunate that the community



Table 4: Poverty among Muslims in Mumbra

Income category (Rs)	Percentage distribution of population	Cumulative per cent
500 or less	4.3	4.3
501 to 1,162	23.3	27.6
1,163 to 2,500	43.4	70.9
2,501 to 5,000	22.2	93.1
5,001 to 10,000	5.9	99.0
10,001 and above	1.0	100.0
Total	100.0	—

Note: Updated Suresh Tendulkar Committee poverty line income of Rs 1,126 for the year 2012-13 has been used to compute the level of poverty. Jain (2012). *Mumbra: A Status Report (Draft)*. Submitted to Maharashtra State Minorities Commission, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai

has had no respite from suffering and insecurity, ending up in a death trap of another kind — illegal and substandard buildings — whilst trying to escape the communal riots.

Given that Mumbra is located at the periphery of Mumbai, a major metropolitan centre and commercial and financial hub of India, one expects that poverty levels among the people living here will be lower as work and income opportunities are better. A study conducted by TISS in 2012 shows that though the condition of Mumbra's residents is relatively better than in Malegaon, even here about 27.6% of Muslims live below the poverty line while another 43.4% live on the margin or just barely above the poverty line, their per capita income ranging between Rs 1,163 and Rs 2,500 (Table 4). It is noteworthy that middle- and upper-middle-income groups among Muslims are almost missing as about 93% of the total population lives below the per capita income of Rs 5,000 per month. It may also be noted that the purchasing power of the rupee is quite low in the Mumbai region and the state average urban poverty line income of Rs 1,162 for the year 2012-13 barely enables a person to keep body and soul together.

Summing up

Available data reveals that Muslims in India, specifically those in urban areas, suffer acute poverty. Except for Buddhists, they have the highest poverty level among all religious groups in the country. There is a sharp regional divide with respect to the socio-economic situation of Muslims in the country. The relative situation of Muslims with respect to share of population living below the poverty line has worsened in northern and western states of India, whereas it has relatively improved or is stable in southern states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Among the eastern states, West Bengal has also shown stability in relative poverty among Muslims. This shows that southern states and West Bengal have a more inclusive social order and the fate of all communities moves

together, while the northern and western states have been more exclusionary towards Muslims. India's western and northern states have been more affected by right-wing politics and the state machinery and society in general are more communalised. Communal violence over the last 100 years has been concentrated in these states. Gujarat and Maharashtra are among the major states with a significant share of Muslim population. However, in these two states, due to increasing communal polarisation, Muslims are located in specific towns or specific Muslim-concentrated areas within cities. Malegaon and Mumbra are two typical examples of this pattern and the available data shows that a large segment of the Muslim population of these towns lives in sub-human conditions, without any significant developmental intervention from the state.

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Housing poverty by social groups

13.9 million households were living in slums in urban India in 2011. While housing conditions within slums have improved between 1993 and 2008-09, BPL and Muslim households continue to have poor access to safe water supply and sanitation. They should be the focus of future policy

DARSHINI
MAHADEVIA

Introduction

IN 2011, 377 million or 31.7% of India's total national population lived in urban areas and the rate of increase of urban population during 2001-11 was 2.81% per annum, both by all counts low given that India had registered a high economic growth rate for the decade. Even at this low level of urbanisation and urban population growth rate, 13.9 million (17.65%) households were living in slums in urban India in 2011. The housing shortage calculated by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty-Alleviation (MoHUPA) of the Government of India puts the total housing shortage in urban India at the beginning of the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-17) at 18.78 million units (National Building Organisation, 2012), which is 23% of

total urban households. This article focuses on housing poverty disaggregated by social groups in India in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and targets. The author has reprocessed the 2008-09 housing data for analysis.

Housing poverty by social groups, and MDGs

In the context of urban issues, Goal 7 of the MDGs is important. The targets of Goal 7 to be achieved by 2015 are presented along with the situation in the early-1990s (1), the period when the MDGs were framed. Target 10 of Goal 7 relates to increase in accessibility to safe drinking water and sanitation. Target 11 of Goal 7 calls for significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million



Rajesh Vora

Table 1: Water and sanitation indicators by social groups, urban India, 2008-09 (% of households)

Indicator	ST	SC	OBC	Muslims	BPL households	Non-metro	Metro	All-urban
As % of total urban households	3.3	14.4	37.8	13.2	29.7	74.0	26.0	100.0
Drinking water								
% using bottled water for drinking	3.0	1.1	2.6	1.2	1.3	2.5	3.2	2.7
% using tap water for drinking	68.5	69.8	71.6	67.9	61.8	70.7	84.5	74.3
% with no access to safe drinking water	28.5	29.1	25.8	30.9	36.9	26.8	12.3	23.0
% of households sharing a water source	66.5	68.1	58.1	56.6	68.7	55.5	45.7	53.0
% with water supply within the premises	67.5	57.3	71.7	71.6	55.5	71.3	83.6	74.5
Sanitation								
% with no access to a bath	27.6	37.1	23.6	27.2	40.5	21.7	20.8	21.5
% with attached bath	53.7	48.1	55.2	55.0	40.1	56.9	73.1	61.2
% of households with no access to a toilet	21.1	22.7	14.6	59.1	54.2	14.4	2.5	11.3
% of households with access to an individual toilet among those with access	57.0	54.1	64.5	10.9	27.5	67.9	59.5	65.5
% of households with access to a septic tank/flush toilet	82.7	84.1	86.2	80.8	77.6	84.2	94.4	87.1
% of households with no access to drainage	21.5	22.3	17.6	15.2	26.2	19.0	2.9	14.8
% of households with access to underground and covered drainage	51.2	44.1	52.2	48.6	33.9	48.4	82.7	58.5
% of households reporting garbage-collection by the local government	47.4	54.1	61.2	59.1	50.9	56.7	77.2	62.0

Source: Calculated from individual household schedule of National Sample Survey, 2008-09

Note: BPL is the bottom 30%

slum-dwellers by 2020. The data on overall progress in urban areas with regard to the targets, disaggregated by social groups, are also presented in this section.

The targets for Goal 7 discussed in this paper are:

- Target 10: Halving the proportion of households with no access to safe drinking water, from 34% in 1990 to 17% in 2015 (Central Statistical Organisation, 2011: 21).
- Target 10: Halving the proportion of households with no access to sanitation facilities, from 76% in 1990 to 38% in 2015. The India Country Report on MDG achievements, 2011 (Central Statistical Organisation, 2011: 21) states that this target will be missed. In 2015, 43% of households are expected to be without access to sanitation. The report states that the target for urban populations without sanitation was 12.14%, but what would be achieved is 11.64% (Central Statistical Organisation, 2011: 22).
- Target 11: Significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum populations globally, which constitutes reaching only 8.6% of the slum population. In real terms, it would mean bringing about 8.6% of slum households into improved housing. There is no target set for the country.

Target 10

Water supply

The water supply target stated was: reduction by half of the proportion of households with no access to safe drinking water. Among the various sources of water supply, we can assume that tap water is the safest. In the last half-a-decade, many urban households, particularly in higher expenditure groups, have begun to drink bottled water. This is because tap water is unsafe. But for normal households, even access to tap water is better than having to depend on hand pumps or personal wells. Households also aspire for tap water access to reduce the burden of water collection on women and children. Thus, households with access to tap and bottled water are together considered those with access to safe water.

In 2008-09, 77% of total urban households had access to safe drinking water (Table 1), from 70.5% in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table A5.2). In 1993, 29.5% of urban households did not have access to safe drinking water, dropping to 23% in 2008-09. This proportion should have been halved to 14.75%, which is not the case in 2008-09.

There are social differentiations with regard to lack of access to safe drinking water. BPL (below poverty line) households, that is those in the bottom 30% of the consumption expenditure class, have the highest proportion (37%) from among the social classes of households with no access to safe drinking water. The second worst-off group is Muslims: 31% of households did not have access to safe drinking water. All other social groups had higher than the all-urban average for the proportion of households without safe drinking water. Also, a very large proportion, 53% in all-urban but 68.7% among BPL households and 68.1% and 66.5% of scheduled class and scheduled tribe (SC and ST) households respectively shared a drinking water source. Thus, although there is progress in safe drinking water coverage, lacunae among certain social groups need to be kept in mind. Those below the poverty line and Muslims face greater deprivation than the general urban population.

In Table 1, metro and non-metro differentiations are also shown. This is because, as Mahadevia and Sarkar (2012) have observed, progress with regard to achievements in various urban services has been faster in metros (cities with a population of more than a million) than in non-metros where 70% of the urban population lives. Hence, to monitor the progress of MDGs in urban areas it is essential to differentiate between metros and non-metros. Interestingly, 34% of households in India's non-metros did not have access to safe drinking water in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table A5.2); this has come down to 26.8% in 2008-09 (Table 1), which is still high. In 1993, just 15% of metro households did not have access to safe drinking water. This dropped marginally to 12.3% in 2008-09. Thus, progress in the metros has stagnated whereas that in non-metros is slow, probably on account of the inability of metros to reach populations living in slums and squatter settlements, and also recent migrants to the cities.

Sanitation

Target 10 includes an indicator on sanitation coverage. Sanitation comprises access to a toilet, access to a bath, access to drainage, and garbage collection by the local authorities. It appears that the MDGs are monitoring only the target of access to toilets. Particularly in the urban context, it is not enough to only have access to toilets. Given the population density in urban areas, the sewerage generated in toilets and baths has to be transported away for disposal, requiring sewerage networks. The genesis of town planning has been the provision of sewerage networks in urban areas to prevent the outbreak of waterborne diseases. Hence, the sanitation target has to be divided into different sub-targets to monitor the MDGs. This has been done below.

In 2008-09, 11.3% of the urban population did not have access to a toilet (Table 1). This proportion was 30.6% in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table A5.16). If the proportion had to be halved by 2015, to reach 15.3%, then

that target has been achieved. But there are two groups that still lag behind in access to toilets: Muslim households (59.1% do not have access) and BPL households (54.2% do not have access) (Table 1). The proportion of households with no access to toilets among SCs and STs is nearly double that of the total urban population.

It is not enough to have access to a toilet. Standards of hygiene are poor in shared toilets as compared to individual household toilets. Among households with access to toilets on the whole, 35.5% of households shared a toilet in 2008-09 (Table 1). This proportion in 1993 was 41.4% (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table A5.18). The improvement here is marginal. Further, among Muslims, sharing is to the extent of 89% and among BPL households it is 72.5%, which is very high. Thus, the focus of future policies for the extension of toilets should be on neighbourhoods with a large Muslim population and slums where the poor are concentrated. Slums with a concentration of BPL households are those with insecure tenure and squatter settlements of recent migrants. Sharing toilets is observed as much in metros as in non-metros. While in metros there is lack of space to construct individual toilets, non-metro households do not have the money to construct individual toilets.

The second component of sanitation is access to drainage, specifically closed drains. If toilets are not connected to drainage, there are problems with cleanliness and hygiene at the local level. On the whole, 14.8% of households were not yet connected to any drainage network in 2008-09 (Table 1), an improvement from 26.8% in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table 5.12). This means that the proportion of households with no access to drainage has halved in the period and is likely to further improve by 2015. However, the proportion remains high in the non-metros (19%), among BPL households (26%) and among SC and ST households (slightly above 20%). There is therefore still some progress to be achieved with regards to non-metros and vulnerable social groups. Even if drainage is available, it is not covered or underground, constituting a serious health hazard. About 40% of households connected to drainage had open drains in 2008-09, an improvement on 70% in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table 5.14). In non-metros, 51.6% are still connected to open drains. Seventy-six per cent of BPL households, 51.4% of Muslim households and 56% of SC households have toilets connected to open drains. There is thus a long way to go in improving on drainage connections in non-metros and among BPL, SC and Muslim households.

The third aspect of sanitation is access to a bathing facility. Almost 21.5% of urban households do not have access to a bath, indicating that they either bathe out in the open or in a corner of the house itself. Most likely men bathe outside and women bathe in the house. The improvement is from 46.5% of the population not having access to a bath in 1993 (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: Table A5.10) to the current proportion of 21.5%. Thus, the proportion of households with no access to a bath has halved in the period 1993 to

Table 2: Housing indicators by social groups, urban India, 2008-09 (% of households)

Indicator	ST	SC	OBC	Muslims	BPL households	Non-metro	Metro	All-urban
Housing availability								
% of households with no dwelling unit	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
% living in slums	14.3	18.9	7.1	13.0	14.0	7.1	16.6	9.6
% living in squatter settlements	1.2	1.7	1.5	1.1	2.2	1.4	0.8	1.2
Housing structure								
% living in kutcha houses	5.0	4.4	2.5	2.2	5.6	2.5	1.0	2.1
% living in pucca houses	83.5	85.1	90.0	90.9	80.5	89.7	97.1	91.7
Congestion/crowding								
Average per capita living space (sq m)	10.1	8.0	10.1	8.6	7.0	11.1	11.7	11.2
% of households where the married couple does not have a separate room	52.9	52.1	59.0	55.6	54.3	62.0	54.2	59.9
% of households with a separate kitchen	52.2	46.2	61.8	53.2	44.5	63.6	59.8	62.6

Source: Calculated from individual household schedule of National Sample Survey, 2008-09

Note: BPL is the bottom 30%

2008-09. In this facility, the metro/non-metro difference is not seen as there is space available to construct a bath in non-metros, which is not the case in congested localities in metros. But there are differences within the social groups. Among BPL households, 40.5%; among SCs 37.1%; among STs and Muslims, about 27% of households did not have access to a bath.

The last component of sanitation in urban areas is garbage-collection which, if not carried out, could be the source of various vector diseases. The situation in this aspect is dismal with only 62% of urban households reporting garbage-collection by the local government (Table 1). The situation was better in the metros where 77% reported collection as against 57% in non-metros. But among BPL households, only 51% reported collection while among ST households only 47% reported the same. In 1993, only 14% of households had reported garbage-collection by the local authority (Mahadevia and Sarkar, 2012: A5.20). So there is significant improvement in this aspect.

Uncollected garbage decays and smells foul; if wet it seeps into the ground and, where water supply lines are old and corroded, mixes with the water supply causing waterborne diseases. The urban poor in cities face two major health scourges: waterborne diseases and vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, etc, on account of water impounding in some areas. Hence, garbage management, drainage and sewerage together contribute towards better sanitation. Attention must be paid to the various components of sanitation separately, rather than sanitation coverage in the abstract.

Target 11

Target 11 relates to improvements in the lives of slum-dwellers. As mentioned earlier, 13.9 million (17.65%) households, or a population of 69.5 million, live in

Table 3: Status of housing and services in slums, urban India

Indicators of housing and services	1993*	2002**	2008-09**
House structure - pucca		48	57
- semi-pucca	34	35	29
- kutcha	35	18	14
% of households with access to tap water	65	78	78
% of households with no access to a toilet	54	34	15
% of households without access to drainage	32	30	17
% of households with garbage-collection by local government	52	61	65

Source: *NSSO (1997)
** NSSO (2010)

slums (Population Census, 2011). The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) estimate for 2008-09 is 10.8% of the urban population (Table 2), which is a 40.7 million urban population living in slums and squatter settlements. In the 2001 Census, this proportion was 26.3% (National Building Organisation, 2010: 20) or a 75.3 million population (16 million households). In 1993, as per the NSS's 49th Round, 15.3% of urban households were living in slums, which is an estimated 35.1 million population (2). Thus, by all estimates, the proportion of slum-dwelling populations and households has declined in both the 2001-11 and 1993-2008/09 periods. But the total number of households living in slums has increased, as per NSSO data. The census data shows a reduction in the number of households and populations living in slums in 2011 as compared to 2001.

The proportion of people without a house in urban India

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is very small. As per the Twelfth Five-Year Plan Housing Shortage Estimation Committee, the total number of households without a house in 2012 was 0.53 million (NBO, 2012: 4). This is because households coming to urban areas, no matter how poor they are, can squat and erect a temporary shelter in which to live. Hence, 'houselessness' is not an issue in Indian cities. The quality of the house is. The data in Table 2 is for all-urban households, not just slum households. The data is from the NSS's 65th Round conducted in 2008-09. Although the NSS data gives an under-enumeration of slum households in urban India, it can be used to analyse the characteristics of slum households.

On the whole, in urban areas, as per NSS data, 91.7% of households live in pucca houses (Table 2). This is an improvement from 73.8% in 1993 (49th Round of the NSS). The proportion among BPL households however was 80.5% in 2008-09, which is to be expected. The BPL households are not living in kutchha houses, as this figure is only 5.6%. A significant proportion of BPL households live in semi-pucca

houses. Only 2.1% of households lived in kutchha houses in 2008-09 (Table 2), from 8.3% in 1993 (49th Round of the NSS).

The per capita living space in urban areas was 11.2 sq m in 2008-09 (Table 2). In 1993, the per capita living space was 6.6 sq m (3). Hence, on the whole, there have been significant improvements in living conditions in urban India between 1993 and 2008-09. Crowding in urban living has eased over time. However, 60% of households still include married couples who do not have a separate room. They share space with other adult household members. Further, the per capita living space among BPL households is the lowest, at 7.0 sq m, followed by SCs (8.0 sq m) and Muslims (8.6 sq m).

Within slums there have been significant improvements in housing conditions between 1993 and 2008-09, as per NSS data (Table 3). The proportion of slum households living in kutchha housing units has declined to 14% from 35% in 1993; hence the proportion of households living in pucca housing increased from 31% in 1993 to 57% in 2008-09. This improvement has largely been the result of the efforts of slum-dwellers themselves as there have been no major slum development programmes implemented in India since 1990. Other indicators of slum housing have also improved within this period, as shown by data in Table 3. The data is however not available disaggregated by social groups.

There is a group that is systematically missed out in all the urban statistics: seasonal migrants. Also temporary migrants who move from place to place with their employers, such as construction firms. These two groups are unable to find a foothold in the city and are left out of all social protection programmes. Their children do not go to urban schools. They do not hold urban ration cards. They tend to live in squatter settlements with no hope of obtaining a slum residence. The statistics presented in this paper do not cover them. There are no estimates of them. This large section of urban migrants has been left out of the measurement and monitoring of MDGs.

Post-MDG framework

The post-MDG agenda should be process-oriented and have transformative outcomes. It should also take on board existing inequalities, particularly among communities and different sizes of towns and cities in the urban context. In other words, inter- and intra-urban inequalities have to be addressed post-MDGs in a country such as India. This paper has presented the facts on urban inequalities in the context of Targets 10 and 11 of Goal 7 of the MDGs and reflects on the processes through which the agenda of these targets can be met in the future. It establishes that STs do not migrate to urban areas in significant numbers as India's urbanisation process is not inclusive. Further, it identifies that SCs, Muslims and BPL populations in all cities and non-metro towns and cities lag behind in Targets 10 and 11

of Goal 7. Reaching out to these groups means identifying them in the urban space. This is feasible as Indian cities are segmented by caste and religion, with concentrations of SCs and Muslims in their segregated enclaves. While such segregation is negative, it assists in better targeting programmes. Further, BPL households tend to live in slums with low tenure security; therefore they too can be identified and targeted.

The target of access to safe water supply has not been met, as the proportion of households with no access reduced only from 29.5% in 1993 to 23% in 2008-09. This is because BPL households and Muslim households lag behind in access to safe drinking water. Progress in access to safe drinking water in slums is slow as 22% of households still do not enjoy access. Insecure slums are largely those on public lands, those along roads and those that are repeatedly displaced. The MoHUPA should formulate a water and sanitation policy for the poor which considers extending water supply and sanitation to all slum and squatter settlements irrespective of their tenure status, on the understanding that this is not an extension of tenure security. In other words, the extension of water and sanitation in all slums and squatter settlements should not be tied to tenure security. This facility could also be a shared facility. Non-metros lag behind metros in access to safe drinking water.

The concept of access to sanitation should be expanded to include not just access to a toilet but access to a bath, drainage and garbage-collection as well. The target of access to toilets has been achieved on the whole for urban India, but Muslim and BPL households lag way behind in achieving this target. Post-MDG, there should be a focus on these households. As discussed above, BPL households can be identified through levels of tenure security. Muslim households in many cities in India tend to be concentrated in a few geographic locations, which have to be identified for targeted intervention. While the target of access to toilets has been achieved, the quality of this service is very poor as slightly over one-third of households still share toilets and the proportion among Muslims and BPL households is extremely high. The next focus of work, in the post-MDG context, should be to ensure that the proportion of households sharing toilets declines, with a focus once again on BPL and Muslim households. Access to drainage is a problem among SC and ST households and BPL households; hence the focus should be on extending drainage lines in slums, in particular slums without security of tenure. Drainage has to be made either underground or at the very least, covered. Access to a bath is less of a problem than access to toilets and drainage facilities.

Garbage is ubiquitous in urban areas in India and the problem is greater in non-metros and low-income neighbourhoods in metros. While there has been an overall improvement, neighbourhoods with low-income populations and vulnerable groups such as SCs and Muslims remain problematic.

'Houselessness' is not an issue in urban India as squatting and informal housing remain possible housing solutions for low-income populations in urban areas. While the absolute number of households living in slums has increased from the 1990s in urban India on account of the process of urbanisation, the proportion of people living in slums has declined. Quality of housing and crowding, besides access to basic services, remain important issues. While on the whole, 92% of households live in pucca houses, 57% of households in slums live in pucca housing. Post-MDGs, there should be a focus on incremental housing and the most important agenda would be to improve the quality of the shelter unit in slums. This can be done through making unsecured credit available for shelter upgradation. The focus should be on households in slum settlements with a large number of BPL households.

Lastly, living conditions in slums have improved between 1993 and 2008-09. But the number of households living in slums has increased since, and is expected to grow. Therefore, improvements in Target 11 should be monitored even during the post-MDG period. The approach should be two-pronged: continuous upgradation of existing settlements, and an increase in the supply of affordable small lots with basic services to low-income households that can then build incremental housing on them.

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Endnotes

- 1 1993 National Sample Survey (NSS) data has been used to represent the status at the time of framing the MDGs
- 2 Estimated by the author by projecting the 1991 urban population and applying the NSS proportion of households living in slums
- 3 Calculated from data on the 49th Round of the NSS

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Multidimensional poverty in Pune

With income as the only indicator, an absurd 5% of Pune’s population would be classified as poor. But the Pune Municipal Corporation itself accepts that 40% of the city lives in multidimensional poverty, suffering residential, occupational and social vulnerabilities. While Pune’s poor have relatively higher levels of access to public services than the poor in other cities, a closer look reveals the extent of their vulnerability

CCDS report

A FAIRLY SIMPLE and popular way to define poverty is to use monetary indicators and proxies linked to estimates of income and consumption. The value of a basket of goods essential for daily living can be used as a monetary indicator. The ‘poor’ can be defined as those who do not earn enough to purchase the basket, or whose expenditure is less than the value of the basket. The percentage of people who cannot afford the basket of basic goods is called the ‘poverty rate’ of a given population.

Accordingly, in India, formal ‘head count’ of the poor uses the average, minimum daily calorie requirements per person, estimated in 1979 by a government-appointed taskforce as 2,400 calories in rural and 2,100 calories in urban India. The monetary equivalent of these requirements, or the poverty line, is based on the 28th Round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) for 1973-74. It was found that, on an average, at 1973-74 prices, consumer expenditure of Rs 49 per capita per month was associated with intake of 2,400 calories per day in rural areas and Rs 57 per capita per month with intake of 2,100 calories per day in urban areas. Poverty lines were then estimated for each state, using state-specific prices. Over the years, the poverty lines have been updated by adjusting for inflation.

Whatever purpose it may serve, this method does not account for the causes, dimensions, dynamics and relativity of poverty. It does not help us understand rural-urban, regional, gender, and social differences among the poor and non-poor.

In the urban context, the dimensions not captured by this method include vulnerability to fluctuations in income, vulnerability to health hazards due to crowded living conditions in urban slums, and lack of tenure security (right to occupy a dwelling site). Other dimensions not captured include access to basic services such as water, sewage, health and education, and safety nets to tide over crises.

There are also serious objections to the validity of data: the findings are said to be gross under-estimates as realistic adjustments have not been made for the extra costs of urban living — the higher expenditure incurred by urban households on housing, transport, and the fact that they cannot generally grow their own food.

Without all these adjustments, plainly absurd poverty rates can emerge. This is clearly seen in the case of Pune (excluding areas falling under the twin-city Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation). Using the 2004-05 all-India official poverty line of Rs 538.60 per person per month for urban areas (for minimum intake of 2,100 calories per person per day), the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) set Rs 591 as the poverty line for Pune in 2005, and thereby, through a survey of the city’s slum population, estimated that only 10,800 households in the city, constituting less than 5% of the total population, were below the poverty line (BPL). The figure, which has not been updated or modified, is not taken seriously by anyone — not even by the PMC, though it uses the list of 10,800 households to provide them some social welfare benefits.

The data that emerges from these efforts has limited use in locating the poor across and in cities.

Location of the poor is possible through BPL surveys conducted by state governments. The surveys identify eligible beneficiaries for poverty-alleviation programmes, using multiple indicators of deprivation. However, BPL surveys have been conducted across the country only in rural areas (1).

A third source of official data on the urban poor is Census of India surveys of urban slums. Strictly speaking, these cannot be used to estimate the number and location of urban poor, as everybody who lives in a slum is not ‘poor’ in the conventional sense: many slum-dwellers own assets like TV sets and motorcycles, which are not generally associated with the notion of poverty. Further, an exclusive focus on slums leads to exclusion of persons who do not live in slums but nevertheless face considerable deprivation or vulnerability, which are key criteria for identifying the poor.

That apart, the available census data on slums is of little use. According to Census 2001 data, only 15% of the country’s total urban population lived in slums. This patently gross under-estimate arose from the fact that the slum population data (collected through the census for the first time) was gathered only from ‘notified’ slums with at least 60 households, in cities and towns with a population of

50,000 or more persons in 1991. As a result, no slums were 'found' in over 100 cities/towns, and the percentage of slum population reported from many cities was plainly absurd: in Patna, for example, it was only 0.3% of the total population.

An expert group constituted by the Planning Commission in 2010, under S R Hashim, recommended a vulnerability-based identification of the urban poor. Rather than looking at only indicators of income, the committee said that vulnerabilities in three broad categories should be looked at: residential, occupational, and social. Recommended indicators of residential vulnerability included (in decreasing order of ranking): having no home, living in kutchha/temporary houses, and facing insecurity of tenure along with absence of civic services. Indicators of occupational vulnerability included: access to social security, susceptibility to significant periods of unemployment, susceptibility to informal/casual occupations with uncertain earnings, employment subject to unsanitary, unhealthy and hazardous work conditions, etc. Suggested indicators of social vulnerability included gender and age of the head of the household, disability and/or chronic illness, education status, and disabilities arising from religious and caste status.

The committee's recommendations formed the basis of the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011. Till the date of writing this article, however, even draft SECC data for Maharashtra and several other states was not available.

Slum populations in Pune

The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) uses a common Marathi term to describe a slum: *galicha vasti* ('filthy settlement'). While the term richly evokes brahmanical revulsion towards 'filth' and condemnation of people associated with 'filth', it does not help us identify and understand slums. Parts of many slums in the city are by no standards filthy, while quite a few housing societies of middle-class families are poorly maintained and dirty.

A more useful definition of a slum can be obtained from the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, 1971, which states that a "slum area" is one that "is or may be a source of danger to the health, safety or convenience of the public of that area or of its neighbourhood, by reason of the area having inadequate or no basic amenities, or being insanitary, squalid, overcrowded or otherwise"; and one in which buildings used for human



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habitation are “unfit” for this purpose, on account of dilapidation, overcrowding, “faulty arrangement and design of such building”, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities, or any combination of these factors, which is “detrimental to the health, safety or convenience of the public of that area”.

Another definition of a slum is used by the NSSO: a slum is a “compact settlement with a collection of poorly-built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions”.

The UN-Habitat defined a slum as a contiguous settlement where inhabitants have inadequate housing and basic services. Characteristic features of slums are:

- Inadequate access to safe water.
- Inadequate access to sanitation and infrastructure.
- Poor structural quality of housing.
- Overcrowding.
- Insecure residential status.

Using these definitions, particularly the last, one can calculate the number of slums in the city, and the number of households and persons living in slums. However, in the case of Pune, and probably all other Indian cities, we have no up-to-date and reliable data on slums or slum populations. What we have is different sets of questionable data:

- According to Census 2001, Pune had a slum population of 0.49 million people, constituting 19.39% of the total population (2.53 million). Enumeration of slum population was limited to slums having a population of at least 300 persons living in “poorly built, congested tenements”, and as such the data does not give us total slum population.
- Using unspecified internal sources of data, the PMC has been routinely saying that around 40% of the population of the city lives in slums. For example, without giving any source of data, the PMC’s revised City Development Plan (CDP) for JNNURM funding (May 2012) stated that the city’s slum population in 2001 was 1.1-1.2 million, or more than twice the Census 2001 figure, and using that figure, the CDP estimated that the city’s slum population was “approximately 40%” of the total population in 2012. The CDP stated that there were 564 slums in the city, of which 353 were notified, and the remaining 211 were not. However, this data is also suspect as according to the PMC’s draft Development Plan (DP) for 2007-27, this was the number of notified and non-notified slums in 2009 — there would surely have been an increase in the number of non-notified slums since that year (the PMC stopped notifying slums in 2001).

Households (HHs) living in slums have no legal rights over the land they occupy. Nevertheless, 80-90% of households

in Pune’s slums have built the house they occupy. Other households occupy rented tenements. In 2009-10, the average monthly rent paid by these households was reported to be Rs 1,000 (CHF International-Mashal report, Socio-Economic Profile of Slums in Pune, 2011).

Apart from expenditure incurred on construction and subsequently repairs and renovation, many households owning houses in slums have incurred expenditure for securing occupancy “rights”: they have paid some amount to the local goon or “slum lord”, who “developed” the slum and granted them the “right” to occupy a specific plot of land. Survey data on these amounts, and amounts that have to be paid to sell the “occupancy rights” are not available. However, some data on market rates for sale of slum houses is available, which shows that the rates are determined by the cost of land in different areas, and the cost of acquiring a pucca house of only 12 sq m in a notified and well-serviced slum in 2007 was over Rs 180,000, and could go up to Rs 350,000.

Access to basic services

Access to basic services such as health and education determines the vulnerability level of households. If poor households have access to affordable or free health and education services of good quality, they could, despite their low income, substantially reduce their vulnerability and improve their prospects for a better life.

‘That’s all we want’

“We want drains to be cleaned every eight days. (Public) toilets should be cleaned regularly. Wherever people are facing a water problem, they should be served. Widows should be given pensions. That’s all we want.”

— Woman participant in CCDS FGD

Both non-slum and slum populations in Pune appear to have assured access to safe drinking water. However, CHF-Mashal 2011 data shows that the percentage of slum households with personal water connections varies from 0% to 98% across different slums. There are around 40 slums in which over 70% of households are dependent on public water taps.

Most of Pune’s slum households have access to public toilets (free or paid). However, they are lacking both in quantity as well as quality. The PMC’s sanitation department estimated in 2012 that around 24,000 households (or over 100,000 persons) in the city do not have a toilet within walking distance. Further, as field group discussions (FGDs) conducted for this report revealed, many toilets are not safe or usable: they are used as meeting places by criminals, do not have adequate water, or do not have electricity. As a result, at least 8,000-9,000 persons in the city defecate in the open daily, using over 100 defecation “spots” (2).

A 2008 study (3) on the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) status in 256 PMC-run schools, which mostly draw students from low-income households, showed:

- Three schools had no toilets.
- 40% of schools had no separate toilets for girls, boys and staff.
- 16% of schools did not have water in the toilets.
- No school had soap for washing hands after using the toilet.
- Only 11% of schools had child-friendly toilets.
- 50% of schools had toilets with damaged doors requiring repair.

According to PMC data, all private, community, public, pay-and-use and group toilets in the city are connected to an underground sewerage system. Septic tanks have also been connected to the sewerage network. Over 90% of slum households also have access to drainage lines/gutters that carry away household liquid waste (CHF-Mashal 2011).

For collection of solid waste, the PMC has introduced a system of segregating and collecting waste door-to-door, and then transporting it through trucks. In 2012, the door-to-door collection system is estimated to have covered 52% of all households in the city, with the rest using neighbourhood bins. CHF-Mashal data however indicates that around 20% of slum households simply throw solid waste onto available open spaces and there are around 35 slums where over three-fourths of households dump garbage out in the open.

Only around 50% of the city is covered by closed drains that carry away rainwater (4). Thus, around half the city is prone to waterlogging during the monsoons. Worst hit are slums on hill slopes, along rivers, and in low-lying areas.

Access to health facilities

As in other urban areas of India, the people of Pune, including the poor, are dependent on private health facilities. Data for 2008-09 indicates that of the 10,000 hospital beds available in the city, over 85% were in private hospitals, 11% were in the state government's public hospital and only 6% were in PMC hospitals (5). Thus, according to both IIPS (International Institute for Population Sciences) 2011 and CHF-Mashal 2011 data, only around 21% of slum households use the services of government or PMC hospitals. According to PMC data for 2013-14, only 6,000-7,000 pregnant women avail of free pre-delivery, delivery and post-delivery services at its hospitals every year (6).

The most common reason for not using government/PMC health services, reported by over 43% of slum households, was that there was no such facility nearby; 27% of households also said that the waiting period at government/

PMC hospitals was too long (IIPS 2011); during FGDs conducted for this report, women participants linked poor service in public hospitals to class prejudice. Despite high dependence on private health services, less than 5% of slum households have medical insurance (CHF-Mashal 2011).

'Go to a private hospital'

"When we tell staff in government hospitals to cater to us promptly, they say: 'This is a government hospital... not private. If you have money why don't you go to a private hospital?'"

— Woman participant in CCDS FGD

IIPS 2011 data indicates that under key parameters like availability of essential infrastructure and equipment, government and municipal hospitals in Pune are as good as or better than private hospitals. However, the former are poorly stocked with some basic drugs like ORS packets.

IIPS 2011 data indicates that there is not much difference between slum and non-slum households on utilisation of reproductive and child health services. In fact, slum households report higher use of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), including supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check-ups and health counselling. But coverage of these services is low, with only one-fifth of eligible women living in slums getting supplementary nutrition and counselling.

Access to subsidised school education

Subsidised school education is available at government and municipal schools, government-aided private schools and, to some extent, from unaided private schools which have to reserve some seats for students from economically weaker sections of society under the Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009. Data for 2008 (before RTE came into force) indicates that the largest proportion (44%) of all school-going children in Pune were in private-aided schools, where parents have to spend money on uniforms, books, supplementary fees, etc. Only 26% of children were in municipal or government schools which, theoretically, do not require parents to spend any money on their children's education (7).

While it would be expected that most children from low-income households would go to PMC schools, 2008-09 data on nearly 2,000 school-going children from five slums showed that only 57% were going to PMC schools; in two slums, less than 40% of the children were going to PMC schools. The main reason was that there were not enough PMC schools near the slums.

Further, only around 10% of parents of school-going children in the five slum areas reported that they were spending

nothing on school education; nearly 50% of parents reported spending up to Rs 1,000 a year on uniforms, notebooks, etc, and nearly 10% reported spending over Rs 5,000 a year (8).

Access to subsidised food

CHF-Mashal 2011 data indicates that 90% of slum households in Pune have ration cards and 6% have two or more ration cards. Nearly 15% of households have a yellow ration card which entitles them to foodgrain at the rate of Rs 5-6 per kg; nearly 70% have an orange ration card which entitles them to foodgrain at a 50% higher rate. FGDs conducted as part of this study however revealed widespread dissatisfaction with the time required to procure commodities from ration shops, and the quantity and quality of commodities. Most FGD participants said they had to spend several hours getting their rations; some stood in queues at dawn, though the shops open only at 10 am. Many participants said they were forced to buy kerosene from the black market as the PDS allotment was inadequate. Large-scale data is not available on the average amount spent by slum households on subsidised and non-subsidised foodgrain to meet their monthly consumption needs.

'We get nothing if we go late'

"If we do not have money, and we go to the ration shop two-three days after the monthly stock has come, we should get our allotment but we get nothing... after it's already sold in black, what will we get?"

— Woman participant, CCDS FGD

Cooked food and nutritional supplements are directly given to children through the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme and ICDS centres. According to PMC data for 2012-13, 70,000 school-going children in the city are covered by the MDM scheme, and only 12,000 children are given nutritional supplements through ICDS centres (9).

Access to finance and social welfare schemes

As only 30% of slum households have at least one member with salaried employment, easy access to low-cost finance is a critical requirement for slum households, for starting or expanding a business, or investing in better housing. However, while around 12,000 self-help groups have been promoted and/or supported by the PMC (10), only 11% of slum households have used SHGs to access finance (CHF-Mashal 2011).

The PMC runs a plethora of social welfare schemes, funded by the central or state governments, or through its own finances, for the benefit of school students, women, women's self-help groups, people from backward classes and persons with disability. With total expenditure on all these schemes less than 1% of the PMC's annual budget, and the total number of beneficiaries less than 70,000 (11)

(half that, if student beneficiaries are excluded), the reach of the schemes appears to be scattered, and the monetary or other value of benefit and purpose served is not clear. No social audit of the schemes or beneficiaries has been done; it is unclear whether most vulnerable persons like widows and the aged living without family support have been targeted. FGDs conducted in a few slums for this report revealed that none of the women participants knew the name of the social welfare schemes run through the PMC's Urban Community Development (UCD) department, though some participants were aware of self-help groups formed or trained by UCD staff.

Grievance redressal

The PMC does not yet have an e-governance system, and follows the traditional system for dealing with complaints about basic services. Its website provides a complicated form for registering complaints only in English; the corporation does not have a 24-hour helpline or even an emergency number in case of disasters (12).

A "service demand and performance survey" undertaken by the PMC in February 2006 (13), covering a stratified sample of 2,523 "general citizens" and 1,196 "slum-dwellers" showed that:

- Only 16% of general citizens and 11% of slum-dwellers reported that they knew where to complain about a basic service.
- Only 14% of general citizens and 10% of slum-dwellers had ever registered a complaint with the PMC directly.

'Do we have only this work?'

"They (staff of PMC sewerage and water supply department) talk back to us. They roam around smartly dressed, wearing jeans, with cellphones held to their ears. When we approach them, they say: 'Do we have only this work (your complaint to resolve)? We have a thousand pending things to do'."

— Woman participant, CCDS FGD

So in slums, the general mode of registering a complaint is to approach corporators or their aides; FGDs revealed that attempts to get complaints addressed directly are generally unsuccessful. Complaints about broken toilets, choked drains and flooding in particular remain unaddressed for weeks.

'Our foreheads are bruised'

"Sometimes I think we should leave this place and go somewhere far away... our foreheads are bruised, falling repeatedly at the feet of these people (staff of sewerage department)."

— Woman participant, CCDS FGD

Access to affordable housing

In-situ redevelopment with existing horizontal density

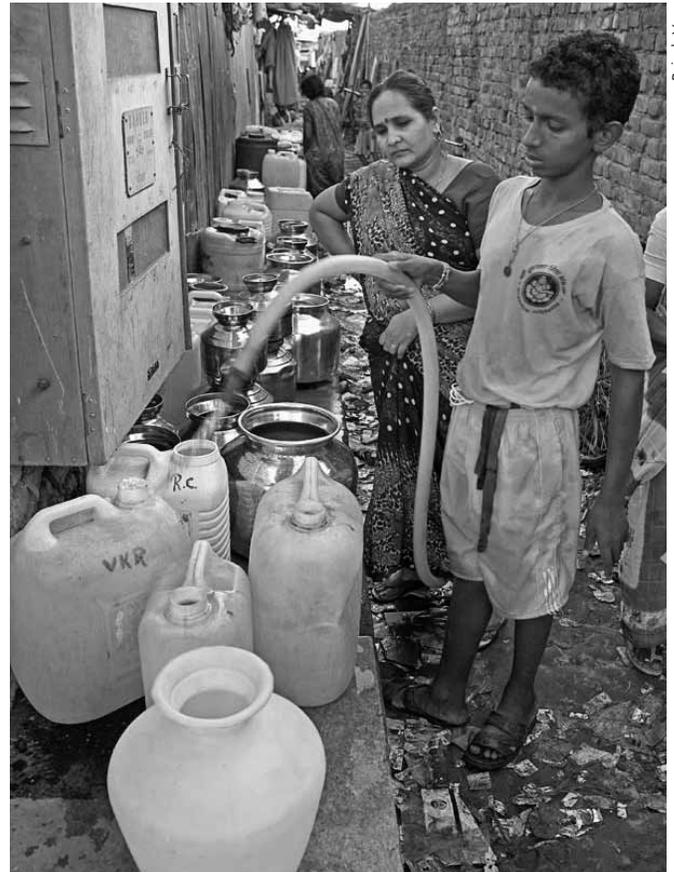
In-situ slum redevelopment, with existing horizontal density, has been tried out in Pune.

Funding from the Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) component of JNNURM is leveraged to encourage slum-dwellers to pay 10% of the cost involved in converting their kutcha homes into pucca homes of a minimum size; the rest of the cost is borne by the central government, through BSUP (50% of cost), the state government (30%) and the municipal corporation (10%). No BSUP funding is provided for acquiring land, so the option can be used only to redevelop slums on lands owned by the municipal corporation.

The PMC has used BSUP funding to enable In-situ reconstruction of 4,000 houses in two large slums of Pune. It roped in four NGOs to mobilise slum-dwellers, get their participation, and plan and monitor construction of houses according to specifications. A little over 2,000 slum houses were reconstructed by March 31, 2104 (14).

A visit to one of the sites of In-situ reconstruction (Yerwada) showed that:

- The reconstruction was initiated in a slum that is already well serviced, and where a majority of the houses were already pucca structures.
- The scheme was offered only to families occupying more than 10 sq m of land.
- The benefits of the scheme were offered only for construction of a pucca house of 27 sq m, which was built at a cost of Rs 300,000, with 10% (Rs 30,000) beneficiary contribution. (If households wanted larger houses, they had to pay for the extra cost of construction.) Some eligible households did not participate in the scheme either because the beneficiary contribution, payable in three instalments, was out of their reach, or they could not afford to take a house on rent in the same area while their own house was being reconstructed.
- The minimum size requirement led to scattered reconstruction, and construction of strange and mixed structures. For example, if a family occupied a ground floor structure of 12 sq m, it had to opt for a three-storeyed structure on the same amount of land. Space required to provide access to upper storeys has reduced the already small floor areas in houses, and reduced ventilation.
- Houses were built in isolation, without considering minimum space requirements for light, ventilation and easy movement of people through public areas. Construction of multi-storeyed houses along narrow pathways has reduced previously available light and ventilation.
- Construction of additional floors in individual houses allows for an increase in existing population density without



Rejesh Vora

allowing for optimum utilisation of total land available in the slum.

- Most importantly, from the point of view of beneficiaries, the reconstruction has not been supported by security of tenure. While they pay property tax, households have no legal title to the land they occupy.

In-situ redevelopment with vertical density

In Pune, a project for In-situ redevelopment of a slum with vertical density, through high-rise buildings, was first rolled out in the early-1980s. A developer made a deal with a private landowner whose plot of around 2,000 sq m was occupied by a slum with around 35 families. While the developer got the land — which the owner could not use — for less than the market price, he offered to build for the slum-dwellers, free of cost, a four-storey building with tenements of approximately 17 sq m, with independent water connections and shared toilets. This building was built on an area of 800 sq m. On the rest of the land, the developer built and sold 13 large apartments, using floor space index (FSI) (15) relaxations available for “economically weaker section” (EWS) housing schemes (16).

Despite the success of this project, the state government and PMC did not take any initiative to replicate it, until 1991

when a Slum Redevelopment (SRD) scheme was announced in Mumbai. It gave developers a higher FSI of 2.5 in notified slums. Developers had to construct tenements of 18 sq m each in multi-storeyed buildings, for families in a slum, and use the land that would be freed up to construct and sell residential or commercial properties at market rates. Developers were not obliged to give the 18 sq m tenements to slum-dwellers free of cost but it was obvious that these tenements would have to be heavily cross-subsidised, otherwise the slum-dwellers would simply not agree to move out of their existing homes. A similar scheme was announced in Pune in 1994, but it found few takers.

In 1995, the state government made slum redevelopment (SRD) more attractive by introducing the concept of transfer of development rights (TDR): the difference, if any, between total built-up area at an SRD site (area taken up by tenements built for re-housing slum-dwellers + area taken up by commercial properties built at the site) and the total built area available through FSI of 2.5 could be “transferred” by the developer to a construction site in another part of the city. The developer could use the extra development rights himself, or he could sell them.

Despite this incentive, the scheme did not attract many developers. In 2004, changes were made in the scheme to make it more attractive to all stakeholders, and, in 2005, the state government appointed a Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) for Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad to monitor the revised SRD scheme. In 2008, and then again in 2011, the Pune SRA revised the rules and regulations. Currently, the main rules and conditions are as follows:

- SRD schemes can be proposed even for slums on lands reserved for non-residential purposes, on condition that 33-40% of the land that becomes available is set aside for the original purpose of reservation.
- FSI available to developers at a slum site is 3, and can go up to 4 if density of tenements in the slum is higher than 650 structures in a hectare (10,000 sq m). The difference between maximum area available for construction in a slum site (with an FSI of 3 or 4), and area actually built for re-housing + area built for sale at the slum site, is available to the developer as TDR.
- Each eligible family living in the slum has to be given, free of cost, a residential tenement of 25 sq m carpet area, including a balcony, bath and water closet cubicle.
- Only families living in the slum before January 1, 1995, are eligible for free tenements.
- At least 70% of eligible families have to give written consent for the scheme. Eligible families that do not agree to participate in the scheme will be forcibly evicted from the slum site.
- During the period of construction, eligible families must be allowed to live in the slum site, or they have to be given transit accommodation within 2 km of the site.

- Buildings for re-housing slum-dwellers have to be constructed according to designs and specifications approved by the SRA. Specifications include the provision of cooking space in each tenement, lifts and parking space in each building. In sites larger than 10,000 sq m, rooms for a kindergarten and other purposes have to be built.
- Female-headed households and families that have physically handicapped persons are to be given first preference in the allotment of tenements. Others are to be allotted tenements by publicly drawing lots.
- For a period of 10 years, households cannot sell or rent the tenements they have got free. After 10 years, they can sell their tenements at market rates, after paying transfer charges to the SRA. Transfer to legal heirs is permitted.

Data made available by the Pune SRA shows that 166 proposals concerning nearly 56,000 slum-dwelling households were submitted by developers till January 2013, but barely 25% of the proposals made progress on the ground, with around 10% reaching completion stage. Around 40% of proposals were either at a preliminary stage, or were being processed. Nearly 30% of proposals were affected by litigation, with landowners securing stay orders before or after the framing of the SRD scheme.

Till January 2013, less than 1,200 households living in slums had got new SRD tenements, and tenements meant for 7,700 households were in different stages of construction. That is, in over 10 years of operations of the Pune SRA (17), less than 10,000 slum-dwelling households — less than 5% of all slum-dwelling households in the city — could be considered beneficiaries.

Plans for affordable housing for all slum-dwellers

The PMC’s draft Development Plan (DP) for 2007-27 talks about making the city “slum-free”. However, other than providing scanty and rough data, the DP does not elaborate on how this ambitious goal can be met. Neither the DP nor the City Development Plan (CDP) for JNNURM funding has the data required to make a realistic plan for a slum-free city, such as (18):

- An updated list of notified and non-notified slums, with details of ownership status of land, number of current houses and residents, level of infrastructure and level of housing; and with identification of “tenable”, “semi-tenable” and “untenable” slums (located on residential lands, located on non-residential lands, and located on environmentally vulnerable lands).
- A ward-wise inventory of vacant lands available for the construction of houses.
- Prevailing land values in areas surrounding slums.

On the basis of the above, it would be possible to choose, for each slum in the city, one of the following options:

- *Slum improvement*: extending infrastructure in slums where most residents have already invested in better housing.
- *Slum upgradation*: extending infrastructure and facilitating construction of better housing in slums where housing is generally of a poor status.
- *Slum redevelopment*: In-situ redevelopment of the entire slum after demolishing existing structures, at locations where prevailing land prices would draw the interest of private developers.
- *Slum resettlement*: relocation of untenable slums to alternative sites.

It would then also be possible to assess the investment requirements for each slum, taking into consideration cost of land, construction, and physical and social infrastructure. On the basis of total cost, financing options can be considered and criteria for determining beneficiary contribution fixed.

Without such an exercise, the Pune DP vaguely talks about how the housing needs of the poor could be met through SRA and BSUP schemes. To deal with future demand, reservation of land for EWS housing has been proposed. Remarkably, there is no discussion on how SRA and BSUP schemes have fared so far, and what has happened in the past and continues to happen to reservations made in the DP for EWS housing.

In relation to the last point, the following facts are important (19):

- In Pune's first DP, for the period 1966-76, which was finalised by the state government in 1987, nearly 75% of sites reserved for EWS housing were de-reserved. The decisions were made without inviting suggestions and objections from citizens.
- Rejecting a legal challenge to these de-reservations, the Bombay High Court (Sawant and Kantharia J J, July 18, 1988) ruled that it was not within the jurisdiction of the city planning authority to reserve plots for "residence of a particular section of society"—there was no need to reserve land for EWS housing.
- During 1966-76, the PMC acquired only 4% of the land earmarked in the first DP for public purposes.

Even after the DP was finalised and became a statutory document, the state government made several changes: between 1987 and 2001 reservation of 29 sites to be used for public purposes was deleted; 15 of these sites had been reserved for EWS housing (20).

It must also be noted that in all slum improvement, upgradation, redevelopment or resettlement schemes carried out so far, beneficiaries have not received security of tenure. There is no central or state government policy on this vital issue and the courts are not inclined to press for such a policy, reflecting the opinion of many non-slum residents, a

judge of the Bombay High Court observed that "public lands and government lands are not properties to be gifted away by the government to grabbers and encroachers" (21).

In these circumstances, far from preparing a platform for a slum-free city the DP exercise serves only to "foster real estate interests at the cost of access to even basic necessities of healthy living conditions for the low-income population" (22).

This is an excerpt from a CCDS (Centre for Communication and Development Studies) study on urban poverty and governance in Pune, supported by ActionAid. The report has been written by Ashok Gopal, an independent journalist and researcher based in Pune, with inputs from Anosh Malekar and CCDS's senior researchers Anjula Srivastava and Swati Shinde. Full text of this and a similar report on Thiruvananthapuram is available at www.infochangeindia.org

Endnotes

- 1 The PMC's 2005 BPL survey did survey households on multiple indicators of deprivation, but it negated the effort by using only the poverty line of Rs 591 to identify poor households
- 2 PMC, 2012b, 'Pune City Sanitation Plan 2012 (Final Draft)'
- 3 Sanskriti Menon and Avinash Madhale, 'WASH Programme in Pune, 2010', viewed in greenteacher.org
- 4 PMC, 2012b, op cit
- 5 Karve Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), 'Socio-Economic Survey of Pune City, 2008-09', Pune
- 6 Municipal commissioner's statement, PMC budget 2014-15
- 7 Karve Institute of Social Sciences, op cit
- 8 *Ibid*
- 9 Municipal commissioner's statement, PMC budget 2013-14
- 10 *Ibid*
- 11 *Ibid*
- 12 After bomb blasts in the city in 2010, the PMC announced it would set up an emergency telephone number, but the proposal was given financial approval only in July 2012; nothing has been heard about it subsequently
- 13 Undertaken by the PMC rather than an independent agency, the survey has questionable credibility. Among the unbelievable findings was that nearly 70% of "general citizens" use the corporation's bus service and only 28% use a two-wheeler. The findings are reported in PMC, 2006, 'City Development Plan 2006-12, Vol II'
- 14 Municipal commissioner's statement, PMC budget 2014-15
- 15 FSI is the total covered area on all floors of all buildings on a certain plot (gross floor area) divided by the area of the plot. An FSI of 2 would mean that on a plot of 1,000 sq m, gross floor area could legally go up to 2,000 sq m, through multiple storeys
- 16 Meera Bapat, October 2012, 'Market-Based Urban Poor Housing Strategies: The Case of Pune, India', Bangkok: Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR)
- 17 While the Pune SRA became operational in 2005, it was given authority over SRD proposals submitted earlier
- 18 Adapted from (undated) 'Draft Guidelines for Preparation of a Slum-Free City Plan of Action Under the Rajiv Awas Yojana'
- 19 Meera Bapat, July 14, 1990, 'Allocation of Urban Space: Rhetoric and Reality: Evidence from Recent Jurisprudence', *Economic and Political Weekly*
- 20 Meera Bapat, October 2012, op cit
- 21 Justice Sharad Manohar, in an order dated March 2, 1988, cited in Meera Bapat, 1990, op cit
- 22 *Ibid*

Undermining RAY

The Rajiv Awas Yojana recognises the right to land and security of tenure of the urban poor, requires slums to be redeveloped or upgraded in-situ, and mandates community participation in rehousing plans. Then why are slum-dwellers federations in Karnataka rejecting the scheme and governments continuing to push for one-size-fits-all multi-storeyed housing and PPP models?

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NOT LONG AGO, in 2013, 1,512 tin sheds belonging to slum-dwellers living on EWS (economically weaker section) land in Ejjipura, Bangalore, were bulldozed, leaving over 5,000 people homeless. While the state moved with alacrity against the poor, no such speed was displayed in following up on more affluent looters of lakhs of acres of public lands in Karnataka identified by a legislative committee and taskforce. Here there have been no bulldozers, no lathi charges, no evictions, arrests, or seizure of lands by the zealous, law-enforcing state.

Forced evictions without ‘prior informed consent’, adequate alternatives and compensation are considered illegal, unjust and a gross violation of human rights, according to international law. The Bangalore evictions happened despite the rolling out of the Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), a new central government scheme aimed at providing housing for all, in 2011.

Nearly 96% of the housing shortage in the city is among economically weaker sections and lower income groups even as thousands of luxurious skyscrapers lie vacant, waiting for speculators to invest in them as second or third homes.

The Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) was introduced as an improved version of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) which preceded it. The Centre took note of a number of gaps in implementation of the JNNURM, as highlighted by civil society, and incorporated certain corrective measures in the new scheme.

RAY took important recognition of the right to land and security of tenure of the urban poor. Earlier, slum-dwellers in Bangalore would refuse to vacate their dwellings to enable redevelopment of their land as they were not given written assurance of a house at the redeveloped site by the state. RAY required that a ‘letter of intent’ guaranteeing a house to each identified beneficiary be given before people were asked to leave the land. Countering perpetual complaints by the states about shortages of land for the poor, the new scheme called on states to mandatorily set up land banks for economically weaker sections.

JNNURM required states to pass laws reserving 15% of land

or 25% of dwellings in every new public/private housing project for lower income groups and the economically weak. Many states failed to do so. RAY called on states to make this reservation during the preparatory stage itself, between 2011 and 2013. Noting the states’ reluctance to offer ownership rights to slum-dwellers, RAY asked states to legislate mortgageable property rights to slum-dwellers. Unlike JNNURM, where often a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model of multi-storeyed housing was imposed on slum-dwellers, RAY mandated that communities be consulted and plans drawn up with their informed consent, through associations, housing societies or cooperatives. While under JNNURM there was no option of giving ‘rights to a piece of land’, which is what most slum-dwellers wanted, RAY sent a ‘model law on property rights to slum-dwellers’ to the states, defining a ‘dwelling place’ as either a dwelling unit or ‘a piece of land’ which would allow slum-dwellers to own land and build houses on their own if the states so legislated.

To stop states from pushing slum-dwellers off prime land in the city centre to the city’s peripheries and cutting them off from their sources of livelihood, RAY required slums to be redeveloped or upgraded in-situ. Relocation was to be the last resort only for slums on ‘untenable’ land — those on lake beds, along stormwater drains, etc. Taking note of the state authorities’ callousness in evicting slum-dwellers without providing them transit housing during the period of redevelopment, RAY recognised the right to transit housing.

Under JNNURM, slum-dwellers could not be given soft loans to raise their contribution amount of 10-20%. This forced many to seek out moneylenders with their high rates of interest. RAY came up with various measures linking slum-dwellers to low-interest loan schemes.

The much-maligned Slum Redevelopment Authority (SRA) model adopted in recent years to supplement provision of housing to economically weaker sections and lower income groups through public private partnerships (PPP) involved giving away about 50% of the land occupied by slum-dwellers to a builder for commercial development. In Ejjipura, for instance, 50% of the land was handed over to a private builder for construction of a mall. The builder, in return, would build free high-rises with over 10 floors for

the slum-dwellers. This reduced the already meagre 1-2% of urban land occupied by slum-dwellers to just 0.5-1%, and brought about a greater densification of their areas. There is no mention of this PPP model under RAY. Instead, an Affordable Housing Policy was announced which spelt out how the private sector would be incentivised with tax exemptions, easy credit and subsidies to invest in housing for the economically weak and low income groups. Nothing is mentioned about a portion of land to be given for commercial development.

However, the initial guidelines for RAY did not offer financial assistance to the states to acquire or purchase land to house the poor. And so, states could simply throw up their hands and say they could not afford to pay for land, limiting the number of slums that could be rehabilitated. Another weak point was, and remains, the absence of a decisive policy to provide social rental housing for short-term migrants to cities who do not wish to own a house but still cannot afford the market rate for rents. The Centre should have studied social rental housing schemes in other countries where the state provides subsidies on rent to poor/needful tenants, or alternatively, subsidises landlords who rent their houses at less-than-the-market rate to state-identified poor/needful households.

Despite the many favourable provisions in RAY, government officials in Karnataka still push multi-storeyed housing, PPP models and the right to tenure for dwelling units only, not pieces of land, on slum-dwellers. They failed to pass laws on land reservation for the economically weak in all housing projects and also the Property Rights to Slum-Dwellers Act. Instead, they busied themselves preparing detailed project reports for individual projects. No slum-level committees



After the demolition of homes in Ejjipura, Bangalore

“For all its forward steps RAY seems to have gone backwards because of the context and interpretation, and the way the authorities in each state want to see it... States are creating their own wraps, so to say, and therefore they are holding the proverbial Damocles sword over the heads of the poor, with what could have been a potentially good tool”

were formed involving slum-dwellers in the planning of projects despite elaborate guidelines prepared by the Centre for community participation and preparation of Slum-Free City Action Plans. Token ‘capacity-building programmes’ were conducted in Bangalore for municipal commissioners and officials who subsequently returned to their cities to carry on ‘business as usual’. No NGOs or slum-dwellers associations were invited to the so-called capacity-building exercises.

Even as activist Medha Patkar welcomed RAY, slum-dwellers federations in Karnataka mobilised slum-dwellers to reject the scheme, a job made easy as no awareness programmes on exactly what was contained in RAY’s many guidelines were ever conducted. The slum-dwellers went only by what municipal officials told them. Narasimha Murthy, President, Slum Janandalona-Karnataka, said: “GIS is being done under RAY to identify the locations of slums which can be evicted so that land is handed over to the real estate mafia and builders. There is no provision under RAY to give slum-dwellers land to build their own houses or to give them property rights to the land. We do not want either the government or builders to build our houses for us. Let them just give us the land and we will build our own houses.”

Ramachandra, a member of Slum Janandalona-Karnataka, from Hospet, Bellary district, said: “Under the Affordable Housing Policy, all slum-dwellers are being made to buy houses from private builders, and tax exemptions, incentives and subsidies are being given to the builders to build these houses to enable them to make runaway profits at the cost

of the slum-dwellers. This is an abdication of government responsibility of enabling the poor to build their own houses. No more grants will be given under RAY to slum-dwellers to build their own houses.”

Social activist Rajendran Prabhakar said: “It is a scheme to push all slum-dwellers to the city periphery, deprive them of their livelihood and make cities beautiful and slum-free.” Isaac Arul Selva of Slum Jagattu added: “The capacity-building of the municipal cadre to implement RAY is being done with the intention of creating a cadre capable of identifying all slum-dwellers with Aadhar numbers and hounding them out. We want the state government instead to implement its own Slum Act and other circulars issued over time promising property rights to slum-dwellers.”

Similar violations of RAY guidelines have been recorded from other states in a multi-state study of pilot projects under RAY done by Simpreet Singh and Raju Bhise of Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan. According to the study, consultants prepared detailed project reports (DPRs) in Madhya Pradesh and no new survey was done for RAY. Meanwhile, money was taken from the central government and shown to be utilised for the survey. For most cities in Madhya Pradesh, RAY projects propose multi-storeyed dwelling units, something that is rejected by the slum-dwellers as their demand has always been: ‘*Hamari Chhat, Hamara Makaan*’ (our house, our roof).

In the recent past, thousands of slum-dwellers have been evicted in Ahmedabad under the Sabarmati River Front Development Scheme, in Surat for development of the Tapi river, and to make way for BRTS. Removal of slums for Aji river development in Rajkot was also being considered.

The understanding of ‘tenable’ and ‘non-tenable’ in Ranchi is such that old villages are considered ‘tenable’, and households living on rent and communities situated on government or private land considered ‘non-tenable’. As a result of this classification, many households have been rendered ineligible in spite of being eligible, depriving them of the benefits of in-situ development.

Although slum-dwellers in 25 Mumbai slums did demand implementation of RAY, the state government or urban local body had not agreed to their demand at the time of writing this report. A major area of contention has been the issue of a cut-off date (1995); the state government had not agreed to extend it to 2009 at the time of the study.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation surveyed a total of 377 slums in the city, of which 56 were recognised by the BMC as tenable and the rest as non-tenable. The criterion for the 56 slums being tenable and the rest untenable was that the former were notified slums, the latter non-notified. This is against the guidelines issued for preparing the Slum-Free City Plan of Action. In Bhubaneswar, the proposed relocation site (Rangamatia) was 15 km away from the main city. The land was being used by local villagers for their yearly cultural

activities, hence there was strong opposition to the move. Further, relocation of residents from non-tenable slums 15 km away from the city would have seriously jeopardised their livelihoods. In Uttar Pradesh, the Uttar Pradesh Property Rights to Slum-Dwellers Bill was not available in the public domain.

In Lucknow, under USHA, a comprehensive slum profile and household and livelihood survey that was supposed to be initiated, was not done properly. A plan of action (PoA) was being formulated without the survey being completed. Kukral Nala in Lucknow was considered untenable when the slums were present; after the slums were removed the land was deemed tenable.

Everywhere, efforts at building relationships with community members were undermined. Indeed, participation and acceptance would have been higher had there been greater awareness and education about RAY in the communities.

Dunu Roy from the Hazards Centre, and a member of India Habitat Forum (INHAF), says: "Lately, the state has become very adept at taking the words of 'activists' (contained in documents sent to them as petitions and appeals) and putting them into documents so that they sound very progressive. Eventually, though, the interpretation is left to the state authorities, and they can argue about things like 'shortage of land' and 'value addition' and 'cities as engines of growth' and 'returns on investment'. I would be happy to go through the Model Property Rights Bill as well as the RAY guidelines word-by-word to show how context determines the actual outcomes."

Anita Reddy, founder of the Association for Voluntary Action and Services (AVAS), which has enabled several award-winning housing projects by giving land rights to slum-dwellers to build their own houses, says: "For all its forward steps RAY seems to have gone backwards because of the context and interpretation, and the way the authorities in each state want to see it. Very conveniently, states are creating their own wraps, so to say, and therefore they are holding the proverbial Damocles sword over the heads of the poor, with what could have been a potentially good tool instead."

In October 2013, following alleged pressure by state governments on the central ministry, revised guidelines for RAY were issued that nullify the good points of the initial guidelines. Whereas earlier all projects were to be planned in consultation with slum-dwellers, now material considerations have crept in and PPPs with commercial development have been made mandatory where land values are high or of a medium level: "The slums and vacant lands will need to be further classified into sub-categories based on the land ownership information and land value (market price) to decide the redevelopment model to be followed for each slum pocket within the zone. Slums that can be developed on the PPP model will be given preference." Cooperatives of slum-dwellers to design their own houses

will be allowed only where the land is of low value.

Kirtee Shah, President, India Habitat Forum, says: "I made presentations on RAY to both the secretary, HUPA, and then President of India Pratibha Patil that the early idea — of giving property rights (land rights) to slum-dwellers — had lots of merit and strength and that the watered-down later version would go nowhere, solve no problem, make no city slum-free. The time is ripe to tell the government why RAY offers no hope. I am doing so at every conceivable opportunity I get."

"In my letters to the government, I have defined 'property'. The early idea saw property as land for slum-dwellers. Cities, municipalities and consultants have inflated the role of multi-floor apartments. That is because they think there is not enough land and also because formal housing means projects and contracts and money, not only for contractors and businessmen but also for NGOs. Ask some NGOs that are building such apartment buildings how much money they earn building them as contractors under special — and favoured — conditions. I have it from the horse's mouth that the amount runs into tens of crores. Therefore who will argue for land as a property right for slum-dwellers under RAY?"

Shah continues: "With property rights entitling facilitation and in-situ slum improvement as a housing improvement strategy, RAY will go far. In any other way, it will fumble. Flats for slum-dwellers will remain traditional tokenism. It will not ensure cities without slums as you will only be dealing with a small number. Slum-formation being an on-going process, more slums will come up even as you build and give away flats. It is a zero-sum game, a losing proposition at all ends, for all concerned."

Wherever slum-dwellers and their associations have been made aware of the RAY guidelines they have successfully demanded their right to land and single-dwelling housing. Ramachandra of Hospet says their informed struggle has resulted in the municipality preparing a DPR for 630 single houses for slum-dwellers to be financed under RAY. N P Samy of the Karnataka Kolageri Nivasigala Samyukta Sanghatane (Karnataka Slum-Dwellers Federation) and member of INHAF supports this view and adds that wherever slum-dwellers have demanded the right to land and single housing, they have been able to realise it.

Will state governments demonstrate the political will to implement the good points in RAY to make our cities truly slum-free? Or will they continue their long-standing callousness towards the poor? Will the spokespersons leading the slum-dwellers movements empower them to engage with the state government and demand that the state eschew faulty PPP models and instead implement the various progressive measures laid out in RAY?

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Resettlement projects as poverty traps

Mass-scale state-constructed slum rehousing schemes serve more to eradicate the poor from the city than to eradicate poverty. The 15,000-unit Kannagi Nagar project in Chennai illustrates how mass tenement-construction promotes spatial and social segregation, and perpetuates or reproduces poverty

KAREN COELHO

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, makes urban poverty distinct from poverty in general or rural poverty in particular? The latter has preoccupied Indian social scientists and policymakers since the birth of the nation, but understanding urban poverty is a more recent endeavour and remains a work in progress.

One distinction of urban poverty is its spatial aspect. This does not refer only to slums, the classic *gestalt* of urban deprivation. Slums may constitute the greatest spatial concentration of the urban poor, but it is worth noting that some of the poorest city-dwellers may not make their way into slums, and that not all slum residents are poor.

In the volatile landscapes of Indian cities, periodically reshaped by tides of eviction, demolition, gentrification, settlement and resettlement, slums represent only one node in the struggle of working families for a foothold. The housing arrangements available to the urban poor — pavement dwellings, squatter settlements, slums and resettlement colonies — do not fall into a linear spectrum reflecting a progression in income or prosperity. Rather, they form a circuit of options within which the city’s working poor negotiate tense trade-offs between decent housing and the economic or educational opportunities that mark the urban as a place of hope and aspiration.

These trade-offs are determined by the exclusionary form that Indian cities have taken over the last three decades, a spatial apartheid which has rendered its working classes outsiders or fringe inhabitants of urban centres that many of them helped to build and continue to service. While we may still find small clusters of squatter and pavement dwellings and a few slums resolutely holding their ground in inner-city areas of large metros, the geography of urban poverty is increasingly seen in the form of sprawling settlements on urban peripheries, outside the ambit of municipal services and far from the mainstream of urban life.

These settlements are also, more often than not, located on undesirable or uninhabitable, precarious or dangerous lands: on marshlands prone to flooding, hillsides prone to landslides, or along river banks and canal edges, burial grounds and railway lines. This is the irony of

“slum ecologies”: the most fragile, hazardous and hostile landscapes of the city are densely settled by the most vulnerable of its population. Urban poverty is now made and found on the margins of metros, where the push from destitute agrarian economies encounters the push from cities seeking to eject the eyesores that mar their world-class vistas.

How does the state perceive urban poverty? Two somewhat contradictory patterns shape the official lens on this phenomenon. On the one hand, state definitions rely heavily on technologies such as Head Count Ratios (HCR) and poverty line measurements, which approach poverty as an attribute of discrete individuals. On the other hand, recent official reports like that of the High-Powered Expert Committee (HPEC) on Urban Infrastructure Investments, headed by Isher Ahluwalia, expand the definition of urban poverty to encompass conditions of poor housing, infrastructure and services.

This latter notion of “shelter poverty” suggests a collective, experiential, spatial phenomenon. The HPEC report argues that “individual poverty can be overcome more easily, but an environment of poor access to basic services, public health, and other inputs into human development is harder to change. The latter perpetuates individual poverty”. This broader environmental definition of poverty resonates with



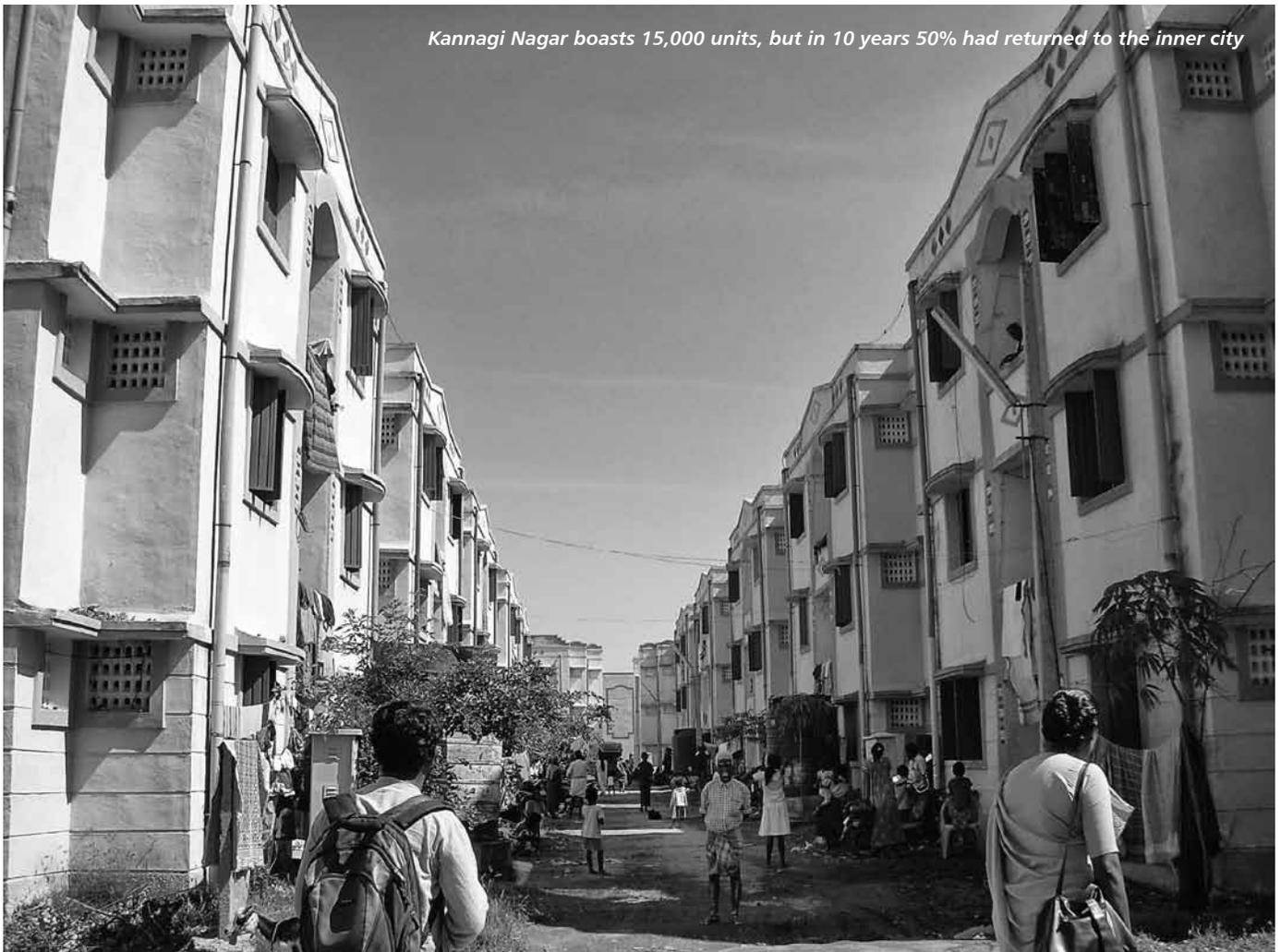
Amartya Sen's articulation of poverty as a condition of deprivation in the realms of functionings and capabilities. But it adapts Sen's ideas to fit a market-oriented approach to poverty. In other words, reframing urban poverty as a function of housing and basic services produces a new commonsense, wherein the solution spurs demand for more infrastructure, in turn calling for enhanced market finance, and thereby investor-friendly reforms. The problem of urban poverty gets subsumed into the problem of slums, and provision of housing in pursuit of slum-free cities becomes the touchstone of 'inclusive' urban development.

The catch here is that, given the appetite of most governments for large engineering and concrete solutions to any problem, the centre-staging of housing provision as the pivot of pro-poor policy has brought us back — in regress — to mass tenement construction as the hegemonic *modus operandus* in urban centres across the country.

Large projects of state-constructed mass housing as an approach to clearing slums were abandoned in many parts

of the world, including many Indian cities, by the 1980s, for three main reasons. First, its high cost allowed for low replicability and coverage, making it an exclusionary approach. Second, the projects, which often comprised poor-quality construction in the first place, soon revealed problems of neglect and poor maintenance; low-income housing tenements typically turned into vertical slums over time. Third, the spatial and social segregation, the 'ghettoisation' that such projects in most cases engendered, contributed to the same poverty trap as found in slums, constricting the socio-economic mobility of residents, and yielding scenarios of high alcoholism, crime, and outbreaks of violent discontent.

Yet, the current era of hyped central funding for 'inclusive' urban development has revived the clamour for large-scale tenement construction. In Chennai, nearly 80% of funds under the Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) component of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) was used to erect multi-storeyed concrete tenements. These differed from Chennai's earlier generation



Kannagi Nagar boasts 15,000 units, but in 10 years 50% had returned to the inner city

of tenement projects primarily in scale: the largest of Chennai’s slum rehousing schemes of the 1970s and ‘80s comprised around 600 apartments, while its most famous new-era resettlement project, Kannagi Nagar, completed in 2000, boasts close to 15,000 units. Kannagi Nagar is located 25 km from the city centre, yet it is the closest of Chennai’s slum resettlement colonies. This is the second distinction between the new and old rehousing projects: the latter were mostly built in-situ, on or near the sites of cleared slums.

A study conducted in Kannagi Nagar in 2011-12 (1), 10 years after the first wave of slum-dwellers from the city was moved there, highlighted the multiple pathways through which this strategy of mass peripheral resettlement of the urban working classes serves to perpetuate or reproduce poverty.

First, it revealed the dilemmas and dynamics of housing as an anti-poverty instrument. Despite being offered concrete homes with toilets at low monthly hire-purchase rates, over 50% of allottees, according to the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board’s estimates, had sold their flats and returned to high-rent or squatter accommodation in the city. The isolation of the resettlement site, dislocation from jobs, economic opportunities and schools, and dearth of basic facilities in the early years rendered this place a wasteland of despair, reputed for its squalor, alcoholism, and violent crime.

Eleven years later, the settlement has been transformed, inevitably, into a buzzing urban neighbourhood. Hidden behind its vigour and dynamism, however, are years of struggle by its residents, for water, electricity, roads, transport and jobs. These struggles, and the ruptures that almost all workers had suffered in their occupational trajectories — ranging from a few months to several years — had cost them dearly in ‘development time’. Many had to rebuild from scratch their networks, skills, and career mobility.

Of the 1,086 workers (in 726 households) surveyed in the abovementioned study, 288 had either lost jobs or had abandoned working altogether after the resettlement. Of these, 207 were women. Women’s employment was among the greatest casualties of the forced move. Women’s jobs, predominantly concentrated in domestic work, unskilled factory jobs or as office/sales assistants, were location-specific and hence highly vulnerable to the disruptive effects of relocation. In addition, the challenges of running a household in a resettlement context, with poor water facilities, weak social networks and lack of childcare options were compounded by issues of distance, timings, and transport. These conditions forced large numbers of women out of the labour force.

Even after a decade, when jobs had become abundantly available in the neighbouring region — now transformed into Chennai’s IT corridor — women’s employment remained low, fluctuating, and precarious. Jobs for Kannagi Nagar’s

women, even in large global firms on the IT corridor, were of poor quality — almost without exception casual, insecure, and poorly paid, with physically taxing working conditions and scant opportunities for economic mobility. Women quit their jobs frequently and voluntarily owing to the impact of strenuous work and long hours on their health, or on their children and families; this, in turn, kept them from climbing higher up the wage ladder and perpetuated the vicious cycle of ‘working poverty’.

Informalisation of labour was a significant outcome of the resettlement. Aside from women, formal sector workers were the most severely hit by the relocation. Almost half of those who had worked for registered companies, large firms or government establishments prior to the resettlement had lost their jobs and were forced into the already crowded ranks of the self-employed or informal labour force in the new settlement. Despite Kannagi Nagar’s proximity to the high-end ‘new economy’ establishments along the corridor, our study revealed that less than a third of Kannagi Nagar’s workers worked in the ‘formal sector’.

A key contributor to the persistence and reproduction of poverty in Kannagi Nagar, then, was the quality of jobs that were on offer for its residents, even when the quantity had expanded. This was at least partly attributable to the ghetto effect of the mass resettlement. Badly maintained infrastructure and poor living conditions contributed to, and were exacerbated by, the pervasive and persistent stigma attached to Kannagi Nagar as a den of thieves and drunkards. Despite its significant proportion of educated workers, this reputation marked it as a market for low-skilled, low-wage workers. Residents themselves echoed this characterisation: a highly skilled tailor working as a security guard because he could not make an adequate living in tailoring there, said: “This is a place for the labour class; it is a place of poor people.”

All of this suggests why mass-scale state-constructed slum rehousing schemes work more as a strategy to eradicate the poor from the city than to eradicate poverty. For the urban working classes, maintaining a stable foothold in urban space is more critical to their upward economic mobility than the bald benefit of ‘housing’, shorn of spatial meaning. That the government remains stubbornly blind to this reality is evidenced in the new rash of tenements — over 20,000 of them — close to completion in Perumbakkam, a further 6 km from Kannagi Nagar, off Chennai’s IT corridor.

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Endnotes

1 For details, see Coelho Karen, Venkat T, and Chandrika R: ‘The Spatial Reproduction of Urban Poverty: Labour and Livelihoods in a Slum Resettlement Colony’, in *Economic and Political Weekly* (Review of Urban Affairs), Vol XLVII, Nos 47 and 48, December 2012

Participatory budgeting

Urban local bodies are responsible for urban poverty-alleviation. And municipal budgets reflect the priorities of government. But unless the urban poor participate in envisioning and planning budgets, all sorts of general expenditure ends up booked as allocation for the poor, as the case of Pune illustrates, and the opportunity for targeted poverty-alleviation is lost

NAIM KERUWALA

If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost

— Aristotle

According to Schedule XII of the Constitution of India (74th Constitutional Amendment), urban local bodies are responsible for urban poverty-alleviation. A budget reflects the efficiency and priorities of a government. Municipal budgets play a crucial role in reducing poverty and facilitating the social and economic development of the poor and the marginalised.

Pune has a population of 3.5 million people (excluding the twin city of Pimpri-Chinchwad), 40% of whom live in slums. Responding to this reality, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) claims to 'allocate/budget' 40% of its budget expenditure towards the urban poor. The Pune Municipal Corporation's budget has substantially increased in the past decade, from a mere Rs 487.37 crore in 2001-02 to Rs 2,962 crore in 2012-13.

Allocation made by PMC for participatory budgeting			
Year	Total budget (in Rs crore)	Allocation for participatory budgeting (in Rs crore)	Percentage of participatory budgeting against total budget
2007-2008	1713.04	17.62	1.02
2008-2009	1575.31	27.27	1.73
2009-2010	2031.64	35.00	1.72
2010-2011	2335.23	30.16	1.29
2011-2012	2776.56	34.73	1.25
2012-2013	2962.11	26.24	0.88
2013-2014	4167.48*	29.52	0.71
2014-2015	4180.02*	35.56	0.85

*Budgeted amount
Source: PMC Budget

While allocation towards the urban poor has correspondingly increased, the methodology to calculate this allocation remains flawed. Code 'P' has been assigned by the PMC to works targeted at the urban poor, and a separate sheet is presented in budget documents under the head 'P Budget'. In the fiscal year 2013-14, the PMC allocated Rs 1,666.67 crore to the urban poor; the amount decreased to Rs 1,633.83 crore in the current fiscal. These figures include the following:

Sr No	Particulars	Percentage share
1	BSUP (Basic Services for Urban Poor)	100% of allocation treated as 'P Budget'
2	Primary education	100% of allocation treated as 'P Budget'
3	Secondary education	100% of allocation treated as 'P Budget'
4	Clinics and hospitals	100% of allocation treated as 'P Budget'
5	Roads and electricity	75% of allocation towards roads and electricity treated as 'P Budget'
6	Road sweeping	75% of allocation towards road sweeping and cleaning treated as 'P Budget'
7	Cultural centre	40% of total allocation treated as 'P Budget'
8	Solid waste management	40% of total allocation under SWM treated as 'P Budget'
9	JNNURM	15% of total allocation for JNNURM treated as 'P Budget'
10	Roads	15% of road department budget treated as 'P Budget'

Thus, instead of targeted programmes and a long-term vision for poverty-alleviation, a percentage of the overall budgets for city services is treated as allocation for the urban poor. This oversimplification has not helped much. In the current budget year (2014-15), of the Rs 1,633.83 crore claimed to be targeted at the urban poor, almost 1/4th is towards roads!

The biggest problem lies in assessing the impact of such programmes, as actual expenditure is not published separately and one has to go through every line of the 600-page document and mark every item under code 'P'.

One of the weakest links in participatory budgeting in Pune is low participation by women, the urban poor and dalits in the city. Women constitute almost half of Pune’s population but their participation in the process of governance remains low. More than 70% of suggestions submitted under participatory budgeting are from the upper-middle class, and men

Moreover, it has been the general observation across various ULBs that most of the projects not directly targeted at the urban poor are notional in nature. A road constructed to connect the central business district to the airport might pass through a slum and the cost of that entire stretch along the slum may be treated as part of the ‘P Budget’.

Participatory budgeting

This makes participation of the urban poor in envisioning, planning and budget-making crucial. Participatory governance is about getting citizens to participate in the decision-making processes that only officials and politicians are otherwise involved in. In recent times, participatory budgeting has become one of the most important tools of civic engagement.

Participatory budgeting is a democratic process of deliberation by citizens, civic officials and elected representatives on issues that need attention and collective decision-making on inclusion in the budget of the government. This process helps citizens voice their opinions and decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget towards the improvement of their neighbourhoods. Participatory budgeting empowers citizens to present their demands and priorities for improvement, and influence through discussion and negotiation, budget allocations made by their municipalities. It is an opportunity for citizens to decide on the allocation and distribution of public expenditure in their area or region.

The New York City Participatory Budgeting website defines participatory budgeting thus: “Participatory budgeting lets the whole community participate in decision-making. It’s

a year-long process of public meetings, to make sure that people have the time and resources to make wise decisions. Community members discuss local needs and develop proposals to meet these needs. Through a public vote, residents then decide which proposals to fund.”

It’s been 24 years since the concept originated, but only a few cities in India — Bangalore, Mysore and Pune — have experimented with participatory budgeting. In 2001, Bangalore became the first Indian city to implement participatory budgeting, thanks to the local NGO, Janaagraha. The campaign resulted in citizens’ budget priorities being approved in over 20% of the city’s wards. As time passed, however, the concept lost ground in Bangalore. In 2006, Pune implemented participatory budgeting for the first time and got a massive response from citizens as well as city-based NGOs Janwani, National Society for Clean Cities (NSCC), Centre for Environment Education (CEE) and Nagrik Chetna Manch, amongst others.

Pune has always been a city with an active citizenry. A public meeting of the PROOF (Public Records Of Operations and Finance) programme organised by Janaagraha in Bangalore was attended by Dr Nitin Kareer, then municipal commissioner of the Pune Municipal Corporation. In 2006, Kareer discussed the idea of citizens’ involvement in budgeting with PMC Standing Committee members, but the idea was not accepted; one of the members even termed the proposal the ‘death of democracy’. Multiple public meetings were conducted, with one by NSCC in October 2005 drawing over 100 participants. Following this meeting, citizens and organised groups gave their requests for budget works to their ward offices, marking the commencement of citizen participation in Pune’s budgeting process.

However, when elections were announced and the general body dissolved, the new general body opposed participatory budgeting. It later accepted the process following the efforts of civil society organisations.

Under participatory budgeting, each prabhag (comprising two electoral wards) in Pune is allocated a budget of Rs 5 million, with the maximum limit of a single project not exceeding Rs 500,000. There are 76 prabhags in Pune; each prabhag can implement any number of projects but the total amount cannot exceed Rs 5 million and the cost of each project cannot exceed Rs 500,000. Hence, an upper limit of Rs 38 crore has been set on allocation towards participatory budgeting.

New York City’s annual budget is approximately \$ 50 billion and the allocation towards participatory budgeting is \$ 10 million, whereas the Pune Municipal Corporation’s annual budget is Rs 4,000 crore and the allocation towards participatory budgeting is Rs 38 crore, a much higher proportion than New York City. Even though New York City allocates a much smaller share of its budget towards participatory budgeting, the proportion of participation by citizens is much higher than in Pune and knowledge

management on the process and results is commendable.

Process of participatory budgeting in Pune

The PMC publishes an advertisement in the local newspapers inviting suggestions from the people by July/August each year. Citizens submit their suggestions at respective ward offices; these are compiled and sent to the prabhag samiti. It is the prabhag samiti that has the authority to approve or reject suggestions on the basis of public necessity and feasibility. Approved suggestions are forwarded to the accounts department which scrutinises and prepares the final list of works suggested for incorporation in the budget. While the initial years saw a lot of enthusiasm among citizens, the participation graph has seen a sharp decline in the recent past. Participatory budgeting for the year 2012-13 in Pune witnessed only 600 suggestions from citizens, in a city with a population of over 3.5 million people. The number increased to 3,300 in 2013-14 and 6,000 in 2014-15. While citizens' participation has seen a recovery, allocation towards participatory budgeting by the authorities hasn't. The allocation, which was 1.73% of the total budget in 2008-09, fell to 0.71% of the total budget in 2013-14.

The way ahead

One of the weakest links in participatory budgeting in Pune is low participation by women, the urban poor and dalits in the city. Women constitute almost half of Pune's population but their participation in the process of governance remains extremely low. There is no study to substantiate this but it has been a general observation that more than 70% of suggestions submitted under participatory budgeting are from the upper-middle class, and men.

Low participation from the marginalised sections is also reflected in the allocations made under participatory budgeting. In the current fiscal year, of the Rs 35.52 crore under participatory budgeting, 34% has been allocated towards roads whereas slum improvement has the second lowest share after water.

It is the responsibility of civil society to ensure greater participation of the urban poor in participatory budgeting so as to advance their interests. Local area meetings should be held where problems faced by the urban poor are discussed, major areas of intervention prioritised, funds aligned towards these areas, and projects monitored by local communities. A similar exercise was successfully done in the Bavdhan area of Pune with a group of senior citizens. This should be replicated across the city with local groups of urban poor. Greater participation by the urban poor could ensure that allocation towards slum improvement, water, sanitation and drainage are made priorities.

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Exclusionary cities

2015 marks a centenary of urban planning legislation in India. As good a time as any to reflect on the entrenched colonial legacy of divided cities

AMITA BHIDE

TOWN PLANNING legislation in India completes a centenary in 2015. This, then, is an opportune time to review the trajectory of urban planning in India and particularly what it has meant for the poor.

Urban planning has entrenched the colonial legacy of a divided city. The poor have staked a claim to the city in spite of urban planning, rather than because of it. Further, planned projects have more often than not been characterised by violence towards the poor. In the backdrop of this historical trajectory, the question of relevance of planning to the poor is moot. However, revisiting the idea of urban planning is important in the context of the struggles of the urban poor in the political domain, on the one hand, and the emergent contours of city development on the other.

This article argues that engagement with planning is an imperative for the poor in the contemporary moment. Urban planning needs to be recognised not as a technical exercise but as a social enactment that involves extension of power in multiple domains. Consequently, engagement with planning needs to be seen as an empowering process for those hitherto excluded from the plans.

Urban planning in colonial India

In the chequered urban history of India, urban planning is clearly recognisable as a colonial legacy. This legacy is intertwined with multiple strands of colonial urban development — the extension of private property rights and the establishment of the eminent domain (Dossal 2010); the threat of disease and the need to extend public health (Dutta 2012); colonial aesthetics and the need to produce familiar environments (King 1976) and economic growth. Several of these rudiments are shared with the planning history of UK, with one critical departure — the absence of universal citizenship (Chaplin 1999). The focus of planning, as shaped by these concerns, was land use rather than socio-economic planning. This made planning essentially a project of dominion, of exertion of control.

Colonial urban planning was India's first encounter with the 'production of space' (in the Lefebvrian sense) by professionals and through an institutionalised space.

Planning seen in this fashion brought together several instruments — law, projects and schemes. The British used law as an instrument to facilitate their control over space; often projects of major importance were conceived and executed as collaborations between certain indigenous interests and the rulers. Town planning institutions were powered by experts and acted as agencies of the municipal bodies. Plans were envisaged as a series of projects that would get implemented. Those who got short shrift in the plan were expendable and often relegated to the rural peripheries; they were not the concern of the planning authorities. Sharan (2006) notes how the plans were preoccupied with notions of nuisance, defined as a broad range of ‘offences concerned with public health, safety, convenience, morals and decency’. Fines and cessation of activity were the two principal modes of dealing with such offences (Sharan, op cit). Such planning produced divided cities or planned cities with unplanned peripheries.

This legacy was developed in major cities such as Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, and some hill stations, and gradually extended from a few parts of the town, in the form of town planning schemes and improvement plans, to more comprehensive city plans.

Post-Independence urban planning: Continuing the colonial legacy

In post-Independence India, planning and urban planning in particular was equated with modernism. The goal of democratic socialism outlined in the Constitution was acknowledged in the national Five-Year Plans but not in urban plans. The attempt to continue the same trajectory and ensure even more grandiose plans saw the light in new state capitals and the national capital. The other golden child of the post-Independence era was the Master Plans. Ford Foundation supported the creation of the Delhi Master Plan, and other cities such as Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar followed in quick succession (Correa 1965). These plans wanted to do away with the colonial legacies of slums and congestion by creating a more comprehensive planning base and by giving the state an enormous plane of action based on rational plans.

However, the key change was not in content but in institutional tilt. In their content, the plans did not deviate from colonial traditions except to give more emphasis to physical planning (Nallathiga 2007). Ostensibly, these plans covered the entire city so that ‘the needs of all members of the urban public could be served’ (GOI, cited in Sharan 2006). However, they failed to create an equitable space for the poor in the cities, except for creating a space for workers and weaker section housing in the peripheries, albeit in places with some access to work opportunities. The Chandigarh Master Plan, for example, provided for some space for migrant construction workers only after an agitation (Sarin 1982). Here too, the concern was with providing ‘minimum standards of services’ that would

‘enable a transition of submerged citizens to community consciousness and integrated citizenship’ (Mayer).

In other cities that did not enjoy the benefits of resource investment on this scale, planning continued to have grand visions; however, very little was translated into actuality. Less than 15% of Mumbai’s first Development Plan of 1964 was thus implemented. In cities with less resource capabilities, the extent of plan implementation was even lower. The inability to implement gradually became a characteristic of Indian planning. It had no impact on the nature and content of plans which became more and more ambitious in their reach and scale. In Maharashtra, for example, town planning schemes gave way to city Development Plans in 1954 and then to regional plans in 1966. While planning expanded, its implementation lagged. In all these enhanced scales of planning, planning for all or for the weakest was a key note. However, the actual extent of reservations for the poor or weaker sections was low and it is in the matter of these reservations that implementation almost never happened. Singh (2007) shows how lands reserved for the poor or for weaker sections in the Development Plan for Mumbai were actually used to benefit the more privileged sections.

There are multiple analyses of the failure of Indian cities to plan. Nallathiga (2007) attributes the failure of plans to their excessive focus on physical planning without due attention to economic dimensions and unrealistic controls imposed by them. Others, for example Phatak (2009), attribute the failure to an excessive use of legal instruments. Verma (2002) attributes the failure to the softness of the Indian state, its inability to pursue its own stated preferences under the influence of NGO lobbies and other actors interested in the perpetuation of slums and other informalities. Roy (2009) concludes that Indian cities can never plan because they use informality as a technology of governance and are embedded in a series of simultaneous mapping and unmapping.

The failure to plan is correlated to the emergence of cities where people live in unacceptable living conditions. The dichotomy between stated plans and the actual state of irregularities which are accommodated through a regularising regime has become a defining characteristic of Indian urbanism (Nair 2013). Jai Sen in 1975 wrote of the ‘unintended city’ that had been created as a result of planning. This unintended city comprised informal, semi-urban forms of life at total variance with modernist planning. The Indian urban scenario today is replete with unintended cities, with such cities exceeding the ‘planned’ component in places like Mumbai. Should one therefore assume that the violence associated with planning has also been kept at bay and made Indian cities more inclusive?

Staking claim to cities: Limits to political society

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It is evident that Independence failed to transform the relationship between plans and the poor and that the place that the poor have in cities is a space that has been acquired through their struggles. These assertions of the poor can be seen as revolutions from below. In a similar vein, Neuwirth sees cities generated through the claims of poor people as shadow cities

that the poor have in cities is a space that has been acquired through their struggles. Asef Bayat (1997), in the context of Cairo, sees these assertions of the poor in space as the quiet encroachments of the ordinary, as revolutions from below. In a similar vein, Neuwirth sees cities generated through the claims of poor people as shadow cities, as an assertion of claims to capital-driven, planned cities that advance the logic of property. Sundaram (2010), following Benjamin (1991), argues that a regime of pirate modernity is in place, a regime that locates itself in ambiguity and porosity, enabling the subaltern to pursue new routes to access the city.

These routes to access the city are negotiated routes. Benjamin in his thesis on occupancy urbanism explains the networks that feed on the porosity of state systems and operate as a system of exchanges enabling access to several. Such access that has been generated in the context of Indian cities has taken the form of slums and has been treated as a separate discourse, kept apart from the discourse on urban development. Chatterjee (2004) invokes the concept of 'political society' to refer to this space located between the rights — recognised governmentality and civil society of modernism and populations that are compelled to bypass its moral and legal norms. There is no doubt that this space

was mobilised and expanded via representative politics of the governed in most Indian cities in the 1970s and 1980s. It is this route that has enabled recognition of a phenomenon called slums by urban policy and today made it 'an integral part of Indian urbanism'.

What is often not recognised is that slums, in spite of their ubiquitous nature, are treated as exceptions and dealt with accordingly. Though policies pertaining to slums have theoretically progressed from clearance to improvement to upgradation and redevelopment, slum-dwellers are treated as secondary citizens. They are perennially vulnerable to eviction, the quality of amenities available is poor, and they are perpetually dependent on external and especially political networks. Living in a slum implies a daily struggle for the most ordinary life tasks. In cities like Mumbai which have a significant proportion of third-generation slums, the label 'slum' is one that restricts dwellers in further development of their settlements and lives. As Roy (2011) points out, this route may have enabled access to the city, but it has not led to a just city.

The Mumbai case makes for an illuminating example. Slums occupy about 8% of the land area of Mumbai, though they house over half its population. The Slum Redevelopment Scheme, which can be said to be a continuation of the political society regime in the neoliberal era, began to be implemented in 1991. The scheme was heralded as a recognition of claims of the urban poor on space, and their value addition to the same. More than two decades after the launch of the scheme, the underlying principles have come under critique. 'Free' housing has enabled the state and developers to form a nexus and has drastically reduced the space under slums. Occupants of the new houses have claims over developed property but several more have been displaced and others are condemned to live in vertical slums devoid of critical infrastructure and living space that is even more congested than the erstwhile slum.

Contemporary approaches to urban development: State abdication of planning?

In contemporary times, cities and urbanisation have received a fillip in the national imagination. There is a substantive investment in creating new cities and in developing infrastructure in others. From an excessive focus on physical planning, contemporary approaches to urban development emphasise the economic dimensions, both as outcome and as a part of infrastructure-generation. The framework that guides these investments is being led by a different regime of planning. Framing development through projects that are not part of a publicly laid out plan, that are funded by bilateral and other international sources, has become routine in large cities. The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) which heralded the beginning of massive investment in cities compelled beneficiary cities to prepare Vision Plans or Comprehensive Development Plans. The latest

version of planning to be introduced is City Investment Plans which have also been prepared by several cities. This new regime of planning is one where government agencies and town planning authorities are reduced to commissioning agents; plans are prepared by consultants and approved by higher levels of government. There is no framework where priorities and goals are agreed upon, where several domains of the city, its present and its future, are addressed, and where projects are aligned in their objectives and operation. Moreover, there is no process of public debate or consultation. The other trend is where Master Plans or Development Plans are seen as an unmanageable exercise. In Maharashtra, the state where town planning legislation took birth, Master Plan periods for several cities are exhausted. New plans haven't been prepared or haven't been sanctioned. It seems like the state which celebrated planning is in the process of abdicating planning or identifying shortcuts to the process.

Sundaram and Benjamin (*ibid*) had suggested that ambiguity marks the access of the poor to cities. Our research in small cities in Maharashtra shows that there is a lot of confusion on the ground in terms of prevailing uses and norms for approval of any construction. In the meantime, cities are developing via an informal route. Ambiguity has increasingly become an instrument of the privileged and has, in several cases, reduced the poor to accessing the most degraded environments for staking claims. The regularisation of informalities favours those who are better-off and leaves the poor to fend for themselves.

Claiming a right to the city via planning

It is in this backdrop that there is a need to recognise planning as a domain for struggle. Yiftachel (1998) proposes that planning structurally involves a relationship between state-social peripheries-space. This takes planning beyond a technical, professional exercise to a recognition of the paradoxical, reform-control, resistance-compliance dialectic therein. Yiftachel further suggests that planning as a public policy and decision-making domain has four dimensions: a) territorial (involving land ownership, allocation of relative value), b) procedural (participation/exclusion of particular groups, notional participation to consultative), c) socio-economic (relative impacts on particular social groups), and d) cultural (values upheld/undermined; impact on diverse identities). Planning today represents one of the few available public domains, though under threat as the state in India is well on its way to abdicating planning. A regime that thrives on informalities and regularisation can only facilitate this abdication.

Hence it is important to recognise the dialectical tensions in planning and engage with the process in its multiple dimensions. Such an engagement should contest the planning dimension in all its structural dimensions, leveraging the ostensible 'public' character of the process. Minimally, it can only lend strength to the political struggles

of the urban poor and push the envelope on 'justice' in the perpetuated history of divided cities.

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