



Slum Up-gradation Initiatives – Related Policies, Issues, Unintended Outcomes in India

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ABSTRACT: The neo-liberal urban economists regard slums as the natural response of the market in providing housing for the urban poor. Urban poor are engaged as consumers, producers, asset-builders by government and business leaders. So it is important to tackle urban poverty and its spatial manifestations within economic and social development framework of the nation. This paper deals with evolution of policies related to Basic Services and housing practices initiatives for urban poor taken up by GoI.

The discussion is divided into three sections. The first section talks about housing shortage scenario of urban poor using data from Census 2001 and 2011 and National Sample Survey's (NSS) Housing Conditions round units. Second section deals with slum upgradation schemes, approaches and poverty alleviation programmes in India resulting a shift from negative policies such as forced eviction, benign neglect and involuntary resettlement, to more positive policies such as self-help and in situ upgrading, enabling and rights-based policies.

Third section argues with the help of a case study of JJ Resettlement in Delhi and the case of Savda Gherva that though political resolve, finances and basic institutional capacity are not a constraint today, still implementation poses a formidable challenge. The discussion concludes with a statement that officers in Urban Local Body are unable to rapidly structure and implement Slum Improvement projects because of absence of an effective statutory tool and recommends for the same as envisaged by Bimal Patel and others. Conclusion will also be drawn from taking key lessons from International efforts by The Cities Alliance, The Urban Management Programme (UMP), The Municipal Development Programme (MDP).

Keywords : Slums, Housing, Basic Services, JJ cluster, Urban Local Body, GoI.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Twelfth Plan recognises the inclusive growth approach as the means to an end that would demand outcomes which yield benefits for all and particularly to the marginalised sections of society (Thorat and Dubey 2012). Urban poverty in India is large and widespread. In 2004-05, 80.8 million people out of an estimated urban population of 309.5 million person were below the poverty line in that their per month consumption was less than Rs. 538.6. These numbers constitute a significant proportion of the world's total urban poor estimated at 291.4 million (See Ravallion *et.al*, 2007). Over the past three decades (1973-2004), the numbers of the urban poor have risen by 34.4 percent and the shares of the urban poor in the total has increased from 18.7 per cent in 1973 to 26.8 per cent in 2004-05. In comparison the numbers of the rural poor have registered a 15.5 per cent decline over this period.

In addition, about 40-45 million persons are on the border line of poverty (GoI, NSSO, 2006). This process has meant increasing share of the urban poor in the total. Non-wage, informal employment and housing deprivations are the dominant characteristic of the urban poor households. Habitat I Conference which was held in 1976 at Vancouver says that the improvement of the quality of life of human beings is the first and most important objective of every human settlement policy and in striving to achieve this objective, priority must be given to the needs of the most disadvantaged people. Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992) was adopted at the UN World Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. The aspects covered by this agenda state that Safe and healthy shelter is essential to a person's physical, psychological, social and economic well-being.

In India several policies are being implemented in urban areas to tackle the housing problem with the mission of providing affordable housing for all and shelter and basic services to all slum-dwellers and urban poor. With rapid urbanization, Indian cities are going through an unprecedented transformation with a massive in flow of population. This has left many in search of proper living spaces within their budget. The failure of the market to meet the enormous demand for affordable housing, an ineffective urban planning system and lack of existing infrastructure to accommodate the low and marginal income householders, affordable housing is one of major problems India has to address today.

As per 2011 population census, the urban population of India was about 377.1 million representing 31.16 percent of the country's total population of 1210.2 million. The ever increasing number of slum dwellers causes tremendous pressure on urban basic services and infrastructure. The supply of land for housing has failed to keep pace with increase in urban population resulting in large number of households without access to basic services, poor housing and proliferation of slums and widespread poverty. It is a vision of the Government to make the country slum-free as early as possible, by providing slum-dwellers basic services and access to decent shelter and creating conditions of urban development that contain the need for the emergence of slums (Annual Report 2011-12 Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation).

The first part of this paper will discuss urbanization trends, urban housing shortages of slums and non-slums, need for shelter programmes at international level. The second part will focus on slum scenario at global level, causes of slum, slum settlements and slum typology in India and Govt. of India initiatives related to housing, urban poverty. The third section describes a case study of resettlement colony of Savdha-Ghevra in periphery of Delhi. The fourth section elaborates managerial challenges before policy makers in implementations of slum improvement programmes and Slum Planning Schemes envisaged by Bimal Patel and others. The fifth section concludes that in order to implement a successful housing programme, the local body will need to develop housing designs in consultation with the poor, link families to housing credit through banks or community credit mechanisms. A 'whole city', 'all slums' approach should be adopted, rather than a piecemeal to ensure that all slums within a city, whether notified or non-notified, in small clusters or large, whether on lands belonging to State/Central Government, Urban Local Bodies, public undertakings of State/Central Government, any other public agency and private land, are covered by planning agencies.

II. URBAN CONDITIONS OF INDIA

Cities and towns of India constitute the world's second largest urban system. As per census 2011, about 377 million Indians comprising of about 31 per cent of the country's population live in urban areas. With the more rapid growth of the Indian economy in recent years, which is expected to continue, the rate of urbanisation will increase. Projections are that by 2031, about 600 million Indians will reside in urban areas, an increase of over 200 million in just 20 years. There is a concentration of the urban population in large cities and existing urban agglomerations. As per census 2011, there are 53 million plus cities accounting for about 43 per cent of India's urban population.

Census 2011 notes that the number of towns in India increased from 5,161 in 2001 to as many as 7935 in 2011. It points out that almost all of this increase was in the growth of 'census' towns (which increased by 2,532) rather than 'statutory' towns (which increased by only 242). Based on NSSO Report no. 508 (2004-05) it is estimated that the number of urban poor had increased by 34.4 percent from 1973 to 2004.

Challenges before Urban India:

- (i) Increase the efficiency and productivity of cities ensuring availability of adequate land, economic infrastructure, environmental services, and skilled and trained manpower.
- (ii) Provision and equitable distribution of environmental services to achieve orderly and environmentally sustainable development of cities.
- (iii) Reduce the incidence of poverty and deprivation in cities by engaging the poor in productive activities and enable them to gain access to basic services and affordable housing.

Urban Housing Shortages

As discussed in above section provision of basic services and affordable housing is one of the biggest challenge before Urban India. The Technical Group on Urban Housing Shortage, 2012-17 (TG-12), was constituted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation to estimate the figures as on 31 March 2012 to be considered for 12th plan period. The total urban housing shortages in 2012 comes out to be 18.78 million by adding the four factors (non-serviceable temporary houses, obsolete houses, congestion conditions and homeless conditions) by the TG-12 (Table 2). Of these shortages, 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 80 per cent and 3 per cent were on account of households living in non-serviceable temporary houses, obsolete houses, congestion conditions and homeless conditions, respectively.

According to TG-12, the households from EWS, LIG, middle and high income groups accounted for 56.18 per cent, 39.44 per cent and 4.38 per cent, respectively, of the total estimated urban housing shortage. (Source: Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and Report of the Pronab Sen Committee on Slum Statistics (2010).

Shelter Programme at International Level

Housing is a primary human need, being recognized at Habitat I conference which was held for the first time in 1976 at Vancouver, which declared:

“The improvement of the quality of life of human beings is the first and most important objective of every human settlement policy. These policies must facilitate the rapid and continuous improvement in the quality of life of all people, beginning with the satisfaction of the basic needs of food, shelter, clean water, employment, health, education, training and social security without any discrimination of race, colour, sex, language, religion, ideology, national or social origin or other cause, in a frame of freedom, dignity and social justice. In striving to achieve this objective, priority must be given to the needs of the most disadvantaged people.”(UN- HABITAT, 1976 as cited by Mahadevia). The Habitat Conference declarations set the stage for domestic housing policies in various countries. India has been a signatory to the following international policy making and UN treaties focusing on adequate housing.

III. ASSESSMENT OF SLUMS

Today there are nearly one billion slum dwellers worldwide of a total world population of slightly under seven billion (UN, Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 2011). Since 1990, the number of people living in slums has increased every year. The good news, however, is that the proportion of urban dwellers living in slums is decreasing due to robust slum improvement programmes in existing slums and increase the supply of new affordable housing at scale to prevent new slum formation. However, the reality in many developing countries is that slums remain a large and growing feature of the urban landscape, and this is something that requires urgent attention. Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest number of slum dwellers (roughly 200 million), followed closely by Eastern and Southern Asia. At the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in September 2000 world leaders agreed to establish a series of goals for humanity in the 21st century. Amongst them is Millennium Development Goal 7, Target 11 which aims to “significantly improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020.”

Various Causes of Slums

There are various reasons behind the appearance of slums in cities:

- (a.) Poor government policies,0
- (b).The failure of the market to meet the enormous demand for affordable housing,
- (c).Shortage of affordable land.
- (d).Low state investment in infrastructure,
- (e).An ineffective urban planning system and a misdirected regulatory system
- (f).Rural-urban migration

Development of Low- income neighbourhoods

Developed from his Latin American field experiences, John Turner (1976) emphasizes the positive aspects of low-income neighbourhoods. He argues that the urban poor typically pass through three phases as they move from living in slums to lower middle income neighbourhood (which they develop themselves). Poor families in each of these phases he calls “bridgeheaders” (a migrant family whose priority on arrival in the city is to find a [temporary] place to live close to employment opportunities), “consolidators” (occupying a piece of land on the fringes of the city and consolidating its place in the city), and “status seekers” (aiming to legalise tenure, acquire urban services and extend and improve its housing). Turner’s views on housing and slums have been very influential over the last 35 years and provide the logic behind many programmes to upgrade slums. (See also Turner, J. (1970, 1969) and Turner, J. and R. Fichter, eds. (1972).

Slum settlements and Slum Upgradation in Urban India

Slum settlements often referred to informal settlements without any formal title - represent the most visible manifestation of poverty in urban India. The 2001 Census puts the slum population at 42.6 million which forms 15 per cent of the country’s total urban population and 23.1 per cent of population of cities and towns reporting slums. The Census further reports that slums are an urban phenomenon confined to big-town and cities, supporting it with the fact that 41.6 per cent of the total slum population resides in cities with over one-million population. According to the 2011 Census of India data (GoI, 2011), the urban population of India is 377.1 million (31.16% of the total population), of which 93 million reside in urban slum conditions. Urban poor settlements are developed in various ways. In Slum up-gradation processes Settlements are upgraded in incremental ways through which residents, municipal agencies, or NGOs and CBOs improve infrastructure within the settlement- for example by installing public water taps, paving roads, building community toilets and so on.

In relocation and resettlement projects slum dwellers are moved from their current housing to new housing in another area. This is usually the least preferred option as it disrupts the lives of residents in terms of their access to jobs, schooling, and other services. Relocation and resettlement takes place when settlement dwellers reside in areas that are hazardous in nature (pavements, near railway lines, flood prone areas). In fourth section Savdha Ghevra resettlement colony will be described in detail.

Govt. of India Initiatives in Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation:

In India several policies are being implemented in urban areas to tackle the housing problem with the mission of providing affordable housing for all and shelter and basic services to all slum-dwellers and urban poor. Valmiki Ambedkar Malin Basti Awas Yojana (VAMBAY), National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), Interest Subsidy Scheme for Housing, NULM (National Urban Livelihood Mission), PMAY (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana), Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission 2005 (JnNURM), with its components like Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) and the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP); National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, 2007; Affordable Housing in Partnership, 2009; Interest Subsidy Scheme for Housing the Urban Poor (ISHUP), 2009; and Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) and Rajiv Rinn Yojana (RRY), 2013 are some of the existing schemes which emphasize their focus on economically weaker sections (EWS), slums and also incorporate other weaker sections of the society. The various housing schemes shows that Indian Govt. is making continuous efforts to alleviate poverty and housing deprivations. But the success rate is very low due to implementation strategy adopted by local self govt. institute. The following section describes how a planned colony becomes a planned slum due to apathy of local state actors.

IV. CASE STUDY OF SAVDA GHEVRA RESETTLEMENT COLONY

The Delhi government defines eight types of settlements in the city, including "Planned Colonies". The others are: slum designated areas, jhuggijhopri clusters, unauthorised colonies, regularised unauthorised colonies, resettlement colonies, urban villages, and rural villages. The following section presents the case of a resettlement colony, Savda Ghevra taking references from the study conducted by Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.

Records of the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) describe that the Savda Ghevra JJ Resettlement Colony was established in 2006 in Phases I and II of Savda and Ghevra. Sited on 250 acres on the western periphery of the city, it is the newest resettlement colony resulting from the most recent wave of evictions and relocation in Delhi. There are 8,686 plots developed in two phases. The colony was realized on agricultural land that had been shared by the neighbouring villages of Savda and Ghevra. JJC residents were relocated to Savda Ghevra from communities located at a substantial distance from the new colony. The closest of these, located at, was 20 kilometres distant, while the furthest, at, was 44 kilometres away. This resettlement location has set a new standard of peripheralisation for the urban poor in Delhi; while the earlier resettlement colonies established in the 1960s and 1970s were located more centrally, within 20 kilometres of Connaught Place.

Plot allotment system of the DUSIB (Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board) did not take care that people who had been neighbours at previous locations would live near one another at Savda Ghevra. In fact, people who had previously been living in the same JJC (Jhuggi Jhompari cluster) were allotted plots in different blocks in the resettlement colony which led to social fragmentation of existing communities. The majority of residents lost their livelihoods when they were relocated from their long-standing homes. Some do continue to travel large distances to their original places of work. A number of residents are self-employed in the resettlement colony itself, including as fruit and vegetable vendors and small shopkeepers. Majority of population suffered economic and social setback. Technically speaking resettlement sites should have complete physical and social infrastructure facilities as per urban development guidelines. But there is no sewerage system in Savda Ghevra Resettlement Colony. In the absence of a trunk sewer system, residents mostly use community toilet complexes that are connected to septic tanks. Residents who can afford it have also built toilets in their homes, connected to individual septic tanks or less formal cesspools. Savda Ghevra residents recall that at the time of resettlement, there were electricity poles in the area but no electricity supply. After a few months the issue of electricity was resolved. There is no single system of garbage collection in Savda Ghevra (Sheikh *et al*, 2014). This disruption of relocation was not balanced by clearly improved security of tenure: residents' property rights remain severely limited, Savda Ghevra presents a case of what some scholars have called a "planned slum": even as these residents are explicitly

shifted out of 'encroachments', they maintain similar, poor access to government services. It exemplifies a mode of settlement in which the state has in effect designated an unserved zone for specific populations on the periphery of the city. In a direct attempt to strengthen community structures, CURE, (Centre for Urban and Regional Excellence) an NGO active in the colony, has promoted the formation of residents' welfare associations (RWAs) in certain blocks so that community can raise their voice before development agencies.

Relocation and resettlement are least preferred options of slum development. This option is successful with active community participation only. In Savda Ghevra colony beneficiaries were not asked to participate in finalization of relocation site which is the first step in project formulation process. In the absence of the state, nongovernmental actors and market actors have emerged to provide services as basic as water and toilets. Various shelter programmes discussed above vouch that the most marginalised section do expect certain goods from the state (Sheikh et al, 2014).

V. MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES BEFORE SLUM-IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Slum-improvement projects, are very complex due to their illegality and exclusion from the formal urban planning procedure. A number of diverse, complex and wide-ranging tasks have to be accomplished (Patel et al, 2011). Some of the key considerations are listed below:

- (a) A large number of people in the slum community have to be communicated through a participatory and collaborative engagement with community.
- (b) The community and the settlements have to be surveyed and mapped.
- (c) Information from a large number of land owning agencies has to be collected to understand the complexities of land tenure issues.
- (d) Disputes pertaining to land ownership have to be resolved through negotiations which is again a herculean task.
- (e) In land sharing and redevelopment projects, the land developers have to be given structured and justified incentives.
- (f) Project financing, formal auditing and architectural and engineering expertise, have to be drawn up.

From the above, it should be amply clear that slum-improvement projects pose a very complex managerial and organizational challenge.

As mentioned by Patel and others (2011) the following section describes a ten-step procedure that shall be required to follow for structuring and implementing Slum Planning Schemes (SPS):

- (a) Statutory Declaration of Intent and Demarcation

- (b) Statutory Enumeration and Identification of Stakeholders
- (c) Statutory Recognition of Community-based Organizations (CBOs)
- (d) Statutory Declaration of Quantified Rights
- (e) Mutual Acceptance and Statutory Declaration of Final SPS Proposals
- (f) Plebiscite on Proposals and Statutory Declaration of Final SPS
- (g) Conversion of CBO and Statutory Registration as Housing Cooperative Society
- (h) Statutory Registration of De-jure Tenure
- (i) Implementation of Physical Development Scheme
- (j) Statutory Closure of the SPS

VI. CONCLUSION

Proliferation of slums, as much of the evidence both in-country and international suggest, is not so much a manifestation of demographic shifts, but the result of the failure of the land and housing policies, and legal and delivery systems. The absence of affordable and legal housing forces urban poor to squat on public lands. Lack of land tenure also gets in the way of local governments providing legal services to such settlements at levels similar to those provided to the rest of the city.

Extensive literature suggests that slum up-gradation should be carried on with the consultation of community based organization and slum community itself. Resettlement and relocation must be voluntary in order to ensure that it increases social welfare and that it can usually be avoided through innovative urban design (UN-Habitat & UNESCAP, 2008). Housing being an important part of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, the city will need to identify appropriate sites for housing for the poor. In order to implement a successful housing programme, the local body will need to develop housing designs in consultation with the poor, link families to housing credit through banks or community credit mechanisms.

A 'whole city', 'all slums' approach will be adopted, rather than a piecemeal, isolated approach, to ensure that all slums within a city, whether notified or non-notified, in small clusters or large, whether on lands belonging to State/Central Government, Urban Local Bodies, public undertakings of State/Central Government, any other public agency and private land, are covered. The same has been adopted in Rajiv Awas Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

Authorities should treat all slums equally without any discrimination on the basis of nomenclature. As some studies have shown dramatic differences in access to services and infrastructure between these three (Notified, Recognized and Identified slums) slums kinds of slums (Edelman and Mitra, 2006).

Notified slums generally provide better conditions because they may have political affiliations and relationships with municipal officers that put them in a better position for securing basic services like water, electricity, and toilets (Subbaraman *et. al*, 2012).

The task of improving and integrating Indian slums is a long-standing humanitarian challenge. Successfully structuring and undertaking slum-improvement projects seem to require a rare combination of entrepreneurial, managerial and political skills and highly favourable external conditions. Public agencies officials have to be empowered with special overriding powers to cut through accumulated revenue and planning regulations. The purpose of the Slum Planning Schemes (SPS) framework is to rapidly and sustainably improve and integrate slum communities within the formal city. Creation of the SPS framework requires enactment of robust enabling legislation and establishment of a network of local, state and national agencies that can collaborate with civil society organizations and businesses to rapidly structure and implement SPSs. To attain the goal of cities without slums, developing country cities should implement urban planning and management policies designed to prevent the emergence of slums, alongside slum upgrading and within the strategic context of poverty reduction.

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