

SPARC Annual Report 2011-12



Making way for women and children centered community organizations that can commit to change locally but act globally

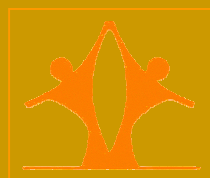


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The first area resource center of SPARC managed by the pavement dwellers in Byculla Mumbai set up in 1986



This center initiated a national and international process of setting up area resource centers in India and around the world. .



All towns in India have ARCs, this one is in Karnataka, and below in Pune. In Pune its on top of a community toilet built by Mahila Milan



ARC in Accra, Ghana: all focus is on giving communities a space that is their own to meet





Reflections of a year gone by

This has been a year of organizational challenges in which we have sensed a strange paradox of everyone mouthing concerns about urbanization but support to addressing its issues by grant makers seems to be reducing in the absence of quick returns. This means uncertainty for Civil society organizations to support organizational building, exploring innovations and creating bridges for the poor to interact with the state for inclusionary development.

More and more grant makers and national and international organizations are focusing on quick fixes, outcomes and project focused financing when critical inequity issues continue to encompass larger and larger populations whose expectations for support are confronted with unearthing of scams revealing corrupt practices, and a global financial crisis and reduced growth rate and high food inflation.

It has led to a deep reflection within SPARC of how environmental changes have the potential to change critical elements of institutional character practices and produce changes. More and more engagement has led to external organizations and agencies the Alliance deals with to treat our access to large numbers of people to make us sub contractors to undertake specific activities and “do projects” but which can distort our basic focus to engage the various government institutions to engage the urban poor in addressing issue of vulnerabilities, poverty and exclusion.

By seeking to collaborate rather than become sub contractors or consultants, SPARC seeks to promote learning engagement and the coproduction of practices, policy and programs that community and cities can undertake together. Seeking to demonstrate how solutions develop, get refined and adapted and through several cycles of undertaking projects develop both capacity for scale and quality.

Seeking to produce a response rather than a reaction, we have sought to demonstrate the contribution that the Alliance plays when it becomes the crucible to exploring solutions that work for the poor, engage the state and address long standing challenges to development for all in cities.

Rather than shying from outputs and outcomes, we hope through this report and other documentation we take up to show how real scalable and robust solutions don't get produced like a rabbit from a hat. From their conceptual unfolding, to initiating communities to design and develop strategies and manage them is a long journey of learning, making mistakes, learning from those mistakes and refining and adapting processes to actualize outcomes.

Actually assisting communities and their organizations to undertake activities after they have sought access to change and learning as they go along doing produces huge risks of failure, of coping with lack of experience and accusations of not producing perfect outcomes. Yet capacity to persist is vital to complete the several cycles needed for developing good practices.

This annual report attempts to share our view of how the cities are moving on a trajectory that continues to plan and develop without developing capacity to include the informal habitation and livelihoods co-existing with the formal city. It seeks to share the core focus of our work in developing federations and their capacities develop their ability to become knowledge creators and managers, teach learn and engage each other and the state to produce inclusive cities despite the hostile and irresponsive environment.

It will share the range of innovative and precedent setting practices that the various networks within the federations are developing, scaling up and working on that address the problems of the most vulnerable in cities producing assets changing lives and influencing policies and city practices.

Through all this we seek to reaffirm that the need for a institutional arrangement like ours is vital for the investments that need to be made to have cities and the poor engage each other to produce sustainable cities.

We like many other civil society organizations face challenges of demonstrating our value:

On the one hand by demonstrating leveragability of grants made to us by foundations and trusts we hope to demonstrate how much value emerged from such investments if the investment is patient. At the same time although very briefly in this report we begin to unbundle the immense crisis in the ability of the state to facilitate solutions that work for the poor, which lead to risks, initial failure and delays in developing strategies and solutions.

Government of India's policies for NGOS is changing with immense implications for SPARC. In the Indian context all our processes are operating in a situation where addressing access to land tenure basic amenities and habitat are crucial to the urban poor, but where the where the Direct Taxes regime is reducing what constitutes non taxable activities for non profits to welfare and charity as interpreted by the Tax department. Those NGOS who get funds from international sources have to register with the Home ministry and fulfill the requirements of the FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act) which we all now have to re register every 5 years instead of just once.

Sheela Patel

Director, SPARC

For more information aboutour work visit us

SPARC Website: <http://www.sparcindia.org/>

SPARC CityWatch Blog: <http://sparccitywatch.wordpress.com/>

SPARC Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/SPARC/98181527302>



Understanding the relationship between risks failure and development

Urban poor groups have strong aspirations for change but much of what they try to change does not work – or appears to outsiders not to work. We often assume that the choices they made were faulty, rather than recognizing the structural impediments they face. But what is seen as failure may be part of a process that later achieves success.

This issue is raised and discussed in a paper entitled **SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN THE DELIBERATIVE ECONOMY** by Arjun Appadurai who has worked closely with SPARC and Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) over the last ten years. We feel his essay will be very useful for philanthropists to discuss just as we in Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) are proposing to discuss this and consider its implications for our work.

Professor Appadurai argues that the deep aspiration and desire of those whose lives need desperately to change (and who philanthropy assists, supports and finances) fail many time before elements of their strategy get accepted and some change becomes evident. That process is a long and painful one, and stages on the way often get judged by outsiders as failures. Additionally, it is often not the choices made by the CBOs NGOs or groups that cause the failure but the inadequacies of the state. In addition, failures keep producing changes in the strategy until some impacts and outcomes become evident.

Many philanthropic institutions stop funding initiatives that are considered not to succeed or stop funding the institutions that managed them. What is needed is a **deeper reflection in how choices are made by foundations of what to fund and what is understood as external realities which impede the communities or organizations assisted from obtaining what they should have access to.** Systemic impediments, why they exist and how they produce constraints are often acknowledged when grant proposals are written, and increasingly project proposals which fit in three to five year cycles are assumed to breach their constraints.

In some instances, funding is withdrawn from specific types of initiatives (eg health education for children) as the funding institution seeks a deeper social change. But in most cases the assumptions of what can succeed to produce change and the time frame needed to do so have flaws from the outset. So the resources do not produce the anticipated impacts and support is withdrawn.

Change driven by urban poor groups takes time and its often not a question of good management: It is so often assumed that the solution is a management strategy when what constrains success is a deeply systemic and political obstruction of the rights and entitlements of severely deprived constituencies.

It is deepened further by the confusion of who will bring change. Most often both NGOs and foundations emphasize the need to create leaders within groups needing development investments so those whose rights have been denied take on leadership. But this assumes that creating leadership will cause some magical transformation in, for instance, state structures that will respond to their demands and make change happen within the time frame of their project.

Risks and their measurements are not bad words; They should be examined and understood well. The fact that there are risks that foundations cannot mitigate within the time frameworks of their support make program managers dilute or deny the extent of these risks. Or, grant seeking agencies either hide risks, or demonstrate over optimism about crafting change. This then raises false expectations of success – and projects are abandoned as they cannot meet these expectations.

Making choices to support the abstract whole or the specific output based focus for a project. Sustainable transformation is ultimately everyone's expectation yet systemic challenges require long process investments and assisting this is not a preferred option in today's development interment framework. So, increasingly, the institutional framework that forms the basis and foundation for various activities to occur, is not popular to fund, but a new short project demonstrating clear outcomes is.

Making risks work for the poor is the challenge of this century. Today cities and their governance crafted in the 18th century have to change to develop inclusive and equitable governance. Creating a genesis for engagement between the various stakeholders in the city means engaging the poor. Developing in them a confidence and capacity to believe they can and must contribute to the new city development strategy.

For the Alliance the federating of slums and creating a institutional arrangement that communities of the poor own and manage is a multi decadal commitment. Its internal governance and its external negotiating and management capacity are being crafted , experimented and executed each day. It's the OPERATING SYSTEM upon which the project (apps) depends. It is silent, seemingly invisible but cannot be substituted. It's worth making investments in !



Leveraging outcomes and outputs

Leveraging for change—organizations of the poor:

Organizations working for empowerment, social change and transformation of those whom development leaves behind are often stuck between a rock and a hard place. Foundations, grant makers and development agencies we work with have traditionally relied upon providing grants based on output. The concept of outcome based aid and grant making challenges those that strive to sustain a long term commitment to change. Long term sustainable changes are difficult to calculate in terms of definitive outcomes and outputs as recognized by funders.

Levels to develop a constituency	
1	Federation Building and institutional development amongst the disenfranchised
2	Federations seen as institutions of knowledge creating a sustained identity
3	Federations as representatives of constituency
4	Federations as designing problem solving R&D
5	Federations as stakeholders in demonstrating scalable solution delivery

Levels to leverage resources	
1	Federations creating their own resources financial and organizational
2	Federations are creating a pool of financial and non financial resources within their own constituency for change
3	Federations are leveraging subsidies by the state
4	Federations are leveraging resources from the market
5	Federations are leveraging practical demonstrations to develop policy locally, nationally internationally

Federation Building and institutional development amongst the disenfranchised and principles of leveraging grants

At SPARC we first considered the possibility of looking at the leveraging chain when we struggled to explain why investments in creating area resource centers, building federations and women’s collectives and federating them had to be seen as investments. A world which views goals in terms of the number of projects completed needs to understand that a larger force is in play. Creating a governance structure with urban communities is a crucial and critical aspect of making change sustainable and for the investments you make to remain long after the financial support to deliver projects has gone.

The Alliance has termed this the residue effect. It is what you leave behind after your organizational presence or project phase is over. In most development “projects” externally driven change agents come with resources. Money, and incentives for communities to get together and agree to change and to be given resources whose impact when seen within the project time forms basis of evaluations. Once the project is over and the external change agents are gone, those who were given the mantle of leadership, find their influence wanes with the withdrawal of structures, resources, and external legitimacy and support.

Federation bureaucracies: Federations are developed by the Alliance as institutions of creating knowledge and sustained capacity to engage various institutions through their identity as federations. Federations create informal institutional links with each other and when this reaches a critical mass, they have the ability to create knowledge, structure a robust network and provide solidarity to each other’s challenges and needs. Their ability to support the enlightened community through refining and circulating knowledge and insights created by their association is retained long after specific investments move on.

The Alliance believes and demonstrates that grants made to the Alliance not only fulfill the purpose of organizing communities, but also influences many other aspects of development essential to change the lives of the poor both federated by the Alliance as well as others who live in slums.

Summary:

Grant investment received sets the gears in motion. Funds are directly used to conduct the sanctioned / agreed upon activities - which is our legal obligation

Level 1 Leverage: Funds invested produce innovative processes that produce solutions (housing / sanitation / livelihood etc - usually at local level) that are acceptable to the community & state

- This results in opportunities to bring about a policy or programmatic change - at local, city, state, national or international levels since existing traditional / existing procurement systems are challenged by NGOs and CBOs - even if informally at first

Level 2 Leverage: investment 'pre finances' for project designs that will later be paid for and scaled up by the state / private sector

Level 3 Leverage: traditional state roles of delivering (housing / sanitation for instance) - transferred to community / federation: also leveraging subsidies and/or investment by private sector

Level 4 Leverage: Change in public practice - e.g. legal and political reforms

This annual report seeks to focus on a combination of who we are; what we do; how the cities and urban policy in India is emerging; to reformulate and rehash our roles and relationships to make cities equitable and inclusive.



Reimagining Indian Cities: inclusion possible or not?

Predictions depend on a range of variables and choices made consciously or by default that create the future of cities. Each choice produces a different scenario. What are the significant variables which will influence and impact the India of 2030? How crucial will issues of inclusion and governance be in making those choices?

Should evolution of cities continue on the present trajectory? Should we ignore the character of the Indian city and ape some model which has caught the imagination of an opinion leader? Such as Singapore? Shanghai?

Unfortunately, current city planning indicates that unsustainable metropolitan growth and car based transport planning lack complete indifference to growing informality of work and habitat for at least a quarter to half the city population; is the present trend. The small and medium towns want to develop like Indian metros which aspire to be like Singapore and Shanghai, thus selecting the wrong imageries and becoming more unsustainable. State interventions are always playing catch up, seeking to make investments only after problems reach insurmountable odds in which sustainable development becomes impossible.

The evolution of the individual cities defines their character of both past and present.

Unless we acknowledge our history and strive to learn from it, we will continue to make mistakes. Mumbai was a premier port as well as a textile hub. Mumbai sought migration and produced its class structure based on that. Unlike other traditional port cities such as New York, Amsterdam and London which have regenerated and redeveloped other usage of their port lands, The Mumbai Port Trust continues to be the biggest land owner and refuses to accept that its days as a premier port are over.

How should cities that no longer fulfill their past industrial or historical purpose reinvent themselves? What process and what debate facilitates this transformation? Mumbai lost its opportunity to produce public housing and open spaces when textile lands which were given to mill owners opted to build commercial or residential structures. The Indian state capitals and district towns each has a history, for example, Pune grew as an educational center and is now an IT city. Various other cities were either mandi or market towns, or grew around some industry. In almost every instance these evolutions have been incremental. Indian agriculture remains a crucial contributor to India's GDP yet little is understood and integrated into the district planning process. The district planning process is a constitutional activity striving to create stronger and more proactive links to strengthen what cities and towns can do for agriculture, be it markets, transportation, storage and/or value added industry at scale. Urban and rural investments are seen as being in perpetual contestation, rather than as a continuum interdependent on each other.

Variables that define the cities:

Transport—Unfortunately, flyovers, highways, and malls seem to define the imageries of development. Indian cities are catering to the 2-5 % car owners by allocating their resources primarily to transport investment. On the other side, a nation of walkers and cyclists are being pushed aside by development plans that build luxury apartments and gated enclaves for the elite and redefine the city spaces.

Migration choices and studying trends:

Are national demographers willing to work to make predictions based on migration choices and can planners in the cities build plans based on their understanding of these? What must cities do to be prepared? How do we cope with present regional migration impact and xenophobia? How well do we recognize city cultures and how can there be collective nurturing of city cultures as they develop? Will globalization and economic growth produce or force monoculture of staged activities and built form?.

Universal factors that will impact cities:

Are cities molded by dominant elite monoculture or spaces for a range of cultures and practices? Formality and informality: bazaar that include informality or malls that exclude them? Can the two co exist? Have we understood implications of this choice?. Peace and economic prosperity: capacity to coexist with differences or not. Where do women fit into this? Are cities able to put women into the equation? What about the slums? For a long time to come this phenomenon will continue as it is seen as a solution or a problem. What about climate change and calamities? What about educational options and value to produce sustainable livelihoods?

Our imagery of the next two decades is that of a young India on the move:

The future holds a whirl wind of movement as villages transform themselves into towns; where opportunities as and when created will seek talent and labor, but unlike in the past, cities will need to demonstrate their ability to attract people who will have choices and will not be desperately and helplessly pushed into the labor market. Identity and its universal recognition will be crucial in facing challenges as people move around. The present crisis of moving ration cards and election ids will not do.

No alternative to good inclusive governance of cities. Rarely have large singular investments (even in a place like Jamshedpur) occurred within a short period. How do these investments and what they leverage not be accidental success stories but emerge from a process of planning? Yet every successful city has done so because of good governance structures, an active citizenry and good infrastructure that seek to work for the next several decades.

This is an extract from a presentation made by SPARC at a conference held by Columbia University in Mumbai on planning and the future of cities.



The challenge of Indian cities defining themselves

CITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES (CDPs) and programs such as JNNURM are seen globally and by the Government of India as an articulation of the cities' visions for themselves. Organizations of the urban poor, whether habitat based or livelihood based, are primarily ignored in the visions of their cities except when allocations for fund transfers based on poverty programs need to be made.

Cities lack accurate up to date data about informality.

Although the JNNURM reform required a better information base for the cities, this commitment was clearly not fulfilled by almost all of the states and cities in the period of 2005-2012. Even today, the manner in which the National Government is suggesting doing the data collection on slums without proper systems to store and use the data makes a great part of this process seem wasteful.

Cities do not have the rights to provide even basic services to the poor on central government lands. Most cities do not strive to provide basic amenities to all. BUT EVEN THOSE WHO DO, FIND THEY NEED PERMISISON OF CENTRAL AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO SERVICE SLUM DWELLERS ON THEIR LANDS.

Almost no city development strategy ever fulfills its visions - even those that exclude the poor. Most CDPs have been developed by commissioned consultants and remain paper exercises, rarely owned by the city.

Governments at all levels abdicate their commitment to address poverty agenda in cities and do not connect slum upgrading to poverty alleviation. In an administrative set up developed 60 years ago for a "land of Villages" the definition of urban poverty still eludes the national government which recently had the prime minister of India announcing that the government had to go back to the drawing board for a robust urban poverty definition.

What about the various dimensions of poverty? There is no space to develop these nuances in a country that hosts some of the largest volumes of the poor in the world. The more complex definition of relative poverty, of poverty which is acute or chronic, in large cities or small towns, of women headed households, of localities under climatic stress is moot when considering India.

Urban poverty? Many cities in India don't have poor in cities when measured by just caloric measurements.

The Urban poor don't see themselves as all being in the same groupings. Creating a more nuanced understanding of vulnerability in cities is crucial.





Our reflections on slum upgrading in India : reality check

Slums and upgrading in India

1. The challenge of the perpetual deficit

- what is counted and what is not
- consequences of ignoring informality
- the local war of attrition between the urban poor and cities
- direct and indirect consequences of ignoring informal settlements
- underlying political perspectives

2. What people do and choices they have

- squat near work
- soft housing linked to insecurity
- incremental upgrading
- negotiating for recognition
- financing and construction options

3. State and National policy

- creating a queue for legitimacy
- older settlements first
- build full houses without participation
- assume private sector and markets will fill gap
- very faulty and poor sub-segmentation of slums
- no access to real formal finance

4. Present JNNURM strategy

- not even 50% absorption of subsidies
- new housing stock not occupied
- very few in situ upgrading plans
- very little slum participation
- no coordination of water, sanitation investments and upgrading

5. Proposed RAY strategy

- speak of tenure but no actual plans
- Very deep confusion about the road map
- financing completely unclear
- community process expected but no support structures.
- too subsidy driven
- lack of coherent multi-decadal plan
- same solutions for metros, medium and small towns
- with middle income housing not available, housing for poor poached upon
- no linkage with livelihood and transport planning
- no coherent access to basic amenities

Since 2005, there is a growing debate and investments nationally and state wise have begun to develop, but the process still has a long road to travel to have effective investments of the state and the community investments



PATNA BSUP REHAB CONSTRUCTION



PATNA PHULWARISHARIF

A study undertaken by SPARC for National Technical Advisory Group (NTAG) of JNNURM to study the Basic Services for the Urban Poor projects indicated some common challenges in delivery of improved housing for the urban poor.

1. The households chosen for the upgrading were not involved in the majority of the instances. Also a small percentage of slums of which a very small number of households actually benefited within the 7 year time frame for these investments.
2. Most upgraded projects did not have any access to water and sanitation.
3. A ground plus three building type seemed to be the standard model for construction in cities; even in cities where there was no convention of such housing in the city.

Government programs disregarded community participation when outlining detailed project reports (DPR). In addition the government further disregarded the suggestions of the beneficiaries between price escalations; households unwilling to relocate to new structures far away from the city; badly compiled household lists of the beneficiaries. The assurance that the 7 year focus on BSUP would develop a potential capacity in cities to become inclusive and upgrade slums remains unfulfilled since the houses remain either unconstructed and unoccupied.

See NTAG report on 11 cities march 2012 available with SPARC and NTAG of JNNURM



The great hope for the urban poor: lost in vertical top down plans

Rajeev Awas Yojana (RAY) the hope of 2009, has been a policy that is now turning into one that is confusing both cities and citizens.

Initially, it sought to make a course correction to what JNNURM could not achieve. It sought to develop social audits of what had not worked, and to develop a tenure policy which would be able to provide security for tenure to all. It sought to provide habitat linked housing and amenities to all, and committed to community participation.

The Alliance was deeply committed to RAY and thus began city wide slum profiles to begin a bottom up community driven strategy to demonstrate what communities could do in most of 2010-11 and part of 2011-12.

We began by seeking changes in the manner in which data was to be collected. The following were the suggestions which we made:

- A. Slum dwellers map slums, undertake their profiles and develop a city wide network of slums to dialogue with the city. This was to both build networks as well as a process of sustained dialogue to design and execute upgrading.
- B. Collect household data after selecting one slum and not for the whole city. We came to this conclusion after having seen the challenges of creating lists of households and the huge gap between data collection on households and giving them ID cards and the house being constructed without their involvement.
- C. RAY's main focus remains tenure yet state and national governments were all shying from the present reality of slums on various land holdings and the need to create a policy to ensure that the city can provide them tenure and amenities.

Instead we found that the Ministry for Housing and poverty alleviation has given states money to conduct household surveys which in turn were tendered to consultants.

RAY assumed banks would give loans and the subsidy would be reduced. Unfortunately, banks do not want to give loans and the State governments want the subsidy to remain at same level.

Announcements of change are seen, but no clear direction and action is visible.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, NEW DELHI
MONDAY, JULY 09, 2012

Rajiv Awas Yojana back on draft board, to get a facelift

RELAUNCH Govt to alter some mandatory norms to make it more acceptable to states

'RAY' OF HOPE



■ Applicants wait to get forms of the Rajiv Awas Yojana. HT FILE

The scheme will be implemented in two phases

The first phase — which will end in June 2013 — has an outlay of ₹5,000 crore

Phase-II will run for the remaining period of the 12th Plan

The urban slum population in India is expected to cross the **100 million** mark by 2017.

ht SPECIAL

Moushumi Das Gupta
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NEW DELHI: The Centre's ambitious scheme to provide housing to millions of India's slum dwellers is back on the drawing board, one year after it was formally launched.

Reason: Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) has failed to take off, with states expressing reluctance to comply with mandatory provisions for availing central funds under the scheme such as according property rights to slum dwellers and earmarking 25% of the municipal budget for spending in colonies and slums where the urban poor live.

The lukewarm response from states has now forced the Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation ministry, which is implementing RAY, to revisit the flagship scheme and alter some of the "mandatory provisions" to make it more acceptable to states. "We are in the

process of redrafting RAY," said a ministry official.

Under RAY, while the Centre gives 50% of the project cost to redevelop existing slums and create new affordable housing stock, the remaining 50% cost has to be borne by states, municipalities and the beneficiaries.

Sources said many states have also expressed inability to foot 50% of the bill and want the Centre to increase its share.

In the revised version, the ministry is considering doing away with the scheme's main thrust of providing houses to slum dwellers. "Instead we want to shift RAY's focus on developing infrastructure in existing slums. While the ministry would provide funds for improving basic amenities, slum dwellers would be given interest subsidy on loans to improve their homes," said a source.

The ministry also plans to relax the existing clause for enacting property rights legislation by states within a year after the first project is sanctioned if they want central funds.



Getting to know the Alliance of SPARC MM and NSDF

Seeing is believing !

Doing things is the only way the poor can learn and change their lives!

Believing that everything is possible!

SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers) was set up in 1984 to create institutional mechanism for professionals who wanted to work with communities of the urban poor in partnership. Without intending to the focus remains towards secure tenure, fighting evictions without relocation, towards affordable housing and sanitation. These are issues that small communities and their organizations cannot obtain. Through trial and error and experimentation, the Alliance has developed horizontal exchanges, peer learning, surveys and enumerations, developing collective priorities using data, negotiating with government institutions and demonstrating solutions that work for them as a means to collaborate with state to find scalable solutions for issues impacting the urban poor. SPARC is part of the process of creating these processes with NSDF and MM and the legal holder of all contracts and projects that the Alliance takes on. SPARC's relationship with NSDF and MM is symbiotic and all strategies risks and explorations emerge from a consensus to explore solutions for face challenges together.

Mahila Milan (women together) was the name that women pavement dwellers gave themselves when SPARC began to work with women and helped them to explore the power of association through getting to know other women and their networks on pavements. It was this engagement that helped SPARC innovate its first enumeration, WE THE INVISIBLE, when women from pavements sought the support of SPARC staff to seek dialogue and negotiation with the city of Mumbai rather than be confrontational when facing demolitions. The survey sought to help communities and cities acknowledge that those who lived on pavements came from the poorest districts of Maharashtra and India, worked at very low wages and had no assets in the village when they left it. The savings network also began in the pavement settlements and it was women from Byculla who developed the house model exhibition to demonstrate what kind of houses women could design given the chance.

NSDF (National Slum Dwellers Federation) was set up in 1975 by men defending their settlements against evictions and feeling betrayal and anger at the inability of the NGOS working in their neighborhoods to support this struggle. Over time, their explorations produced a city based associations and their networks linked communities across cities. In 1986, having observed SPARC and Pavement dwellers address demolitions through data collection and negotiations with the city, they sought collaboration with SPARC and the then nascent Mahila Milan. This engagement initiated SPARC into the trajectory of real partnership in which NSDF assisted pavement dwellers whom SPARC has begun to work with to become part of NSDF and Mahila Milan in turn moved from being collectives of pavement dwellers to becoming a sister organization of NSDF through which women in more traditional NSDF linked slums began to get an opportunity to work in partnership with men. NSDF committed to Mahila Milan and SPARC that gradually, as women developed capacity for leadership, NSDF would create space in the leadership structure for women, and today 65% of national leadership of NSDF are women .

SSNS (Sparc Samudaya Nirman Sahayak) Set up in 1997, SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan began to develop a deeper understanding into construction, design and financing of habitat and SPARC as a trust was unable to take on construction and seek finances for these projects. Together they created SSNS which is a not for profit company that supports communities to take on construction projects. It trains communities to design projects, assists them to work with professionals and provides them management support to apply for tenders for projects and put together project finances. SSNS serves to demonstrate alternate forms of construction practices that are driven by communities, and provides opportunities for men and women - a possibility to set up a small businesses in construction as they serve their communities.

Sadaak Chaap (Street Children's network) set up in 1988 to provide street children an opportunity to grow up safely assisted by NSDF and Mahila Milan, this network sought to design night shelters as an alternative to juvenile homes from which these children invariably ran away. Through informal partnership with child welfare, the police and communities all area resource centers were converted into night shelters, and soon after the city began to give spaces for night shelters across the city to NGOS working with street children.

Slum Dwellers International set up in 1996, SDI founded by several Alliances like the Indian Alliance seeks to expand the possibilities for horizontal exchanges learning and the right to advocacy to slum dwellers for their Habitat and identity at national and global levels. Championing the right to the city, to identity and right to participate in shaping cities ... are a few of the commitments of SDI.



Understanding how we work together: our tool kit

Core organizational commitments of the Alliance:

Setting up Area Resource Centers i.e.: community centers which communities OWN and manage.

Support communities to join a savings and credit program which builds trust within a settlement while simultaneously strengthening the financial assets of the participating families.

Assisting the communities to collect detailed information about themselves i.e.: enumerations, mappings, and surveys, so that they can negotiate with the local authorities from an informed position.

Facilitating exchanges and horizontal knowledge creating and learning for communities to visit each other, share ideas and learn from each other's experiences and lessons through peer exchanges.

Organizing housing and toilet exhibitions which showcase affordable housing and sanitation solutions to government authorities as well as local populations.

Conducting pilot or precedent setting projects to demonstrate the types of housing and infrastructure models that are beneficial to the poor and to demonstrate ways in which the city could be scaled up substantially.

Build bridges for dialogue between communities of the poor and government institutions

Advocating for pro-poor policy changes while keeping in mind our grassroots mobilization work and experience.



as guests of federations.



Area resource centers (ARC): SPARC is committed to setting up community owned and managed centers locally which SPARC then hands over to communities. ARC is the place where information gathered by enumeration and other data of communities is stored; where women document their money transactions as savings collectives; where the network they represent meet to discuss their communities' concerns and begin to work out solutions they need to present to cities and government institutions. In addition, the ARC provides the space where officials and guests can meet with communities when they come

Peer exchanges : The concept of creating peer exchanges emerged from the realization that women from pavement slums had not visited the women from the next street. First peer exchanges was a forum to share survival stories and develop a sense of self worth; later it eventually developed into a forum to explore possible strategies and solutions which a particular community had tried. Peer exchanges have become the basis of supporting and working together to address common problems. Gradually the peer exchanges began to extend to different parts of the city and eventually to other cities and other countries. Any innovation developed in a locality became available to any community or federation that sought to explore it.

Women's' savings and loan collectives: While the world was excited about micro credit, women from Mahila Milan began to explore setting up savings groups. Women long for a safe place to save money. The Alliance built their capacity to first trust one another to be able to give humble and modest amounts to one of their members to document and keep safely, and gradually to lend each other based on collectively developed rules for crisis and household emergencies. By default, the savings book has become a federation membership document. Over time, women have begun to manage larger loans for livelihoods and also housing. Savings improves the solidarity and connectivity of the neighborhoods. In addition, women are able to tackle the tough issues of habitat and amenities as they learn to assist and support each other on a day to day basis .

Enumerations of settlements and households: when in doubt count! This is a basis of how communities have learnt to survey their settlements, document all slums, and count households and produce identity for themselves that the city has failed to give them. NSDF did their first surveys when they were being evicted and SPARC and Mahila Milan did their first survey to demonstrate that pavement dwellers could be counted. Subsequently, surveys have been done jointly and over time, Mahila Milan and NSDF volunteers have taught communities to undertake these activities, learn to undertake analysis of quantification of data, and learn to use it internally to develop priorities on the basis of which their solution development and advocacy can be based on.

Precedent Setting and producing solutions: Often developing solutions for the poor means breaching existing rules, and creating a process of negotiation to demonstrate the validity of these choices, thus setting the precedents. Creating processes and products are all what we consider precedent setting. Before involving the city or the state, first the community must agree on the solution. Once the communities find it acceptable, then it is presented to the government representatives at different levels. Once a precedent is acceptable in one place it becomes the tool for advocacy for others in other cities and eventually in other countries to explore with some modifications.

Dialogue and negotiation to finding resolutions to problems and conflicts The Alliance believes that if the state trusts a bad solution for the poor, rather than accepting it, they can instead demonstrate the viability of another solution. In other instances resources allocated yet unused for the poor can be accessed through dialogue. In still other situations the needs of the poor or their rights are ignored by state policy and documentation and evidence can bring that to the notice of the state. The real challenge is capacity of the state to providing responses.



Understating how the federations functions

The federation model is based on the realization that solutions to urban challenges of informality do not exist within the present rule of law, and many things that can address the aspirations of the poor remain outside the realm of present rules and norms that provide the framework of the city. They need to be changed or replaced and organizations of the poor federated such as NSDF and Mahila Milan are ... have begun to produce some of these solutions.

Creating a basis for collective behavior. Although the informal slum dweller represents the majority of the population in many cities, they are marginalized and believe they can't make a difference, trapped as they are in a survival mode. Ethnicity, language, historical affiliations of caste, region and other such identities divide them. NSDF and Mahila Milan seek to produce an overarching identity as slum dwellers to create a better life for their children and to have them believe that together they can make a difference without shedding their other identities. The Alliance strive to explore the power of collective explorations, developing solutions that work for the poor which they can drive and learn from, and sharing and learning with peers.



Area Resource Centre

Creating a critical mass of communities ready to explore solutions to their problems.

PILOT PROJECTS designed by idealistic elite are being replaced by the desperate need for robust scalable solutions. Ideas and strategies when discussed and debated by large number of people are quite like putting any matter in a sieve to see what is solid and what is flaky. As more and more communities examine the solutions endless possibilities, lacunas and new add ons are discovered and pulled into the solution formation.

Community demonstration processes:

Federations approach entrepreneurial communities to volunteer to test the strategies developed by the federations. NSDF and Mahila Milan view this as a collective risk taking ring undertaken by the federations. Often times it is the individual who undertakes these explorations rather than the government. The federations explores this to demonstrate to the city the value of such an alternative that works for the people as well as the city.



Meeting with Corporator at Pune

The right to participate in solving problems has three values:

Firstly it provides the journey for robust scalable solutions. Secondly, it makes the urban poor centrally involved in developing and testing a solution. Lastly, it facilitates partnerships of varying kind between the state and the poor that remains absent in most development interventions.

The value of a federating process to a city manager or mayor:

It is often evident once the process begins. The common assumption by the government leaders is that the poor cannot address any of the challenges by themselves. Once the process begins, mayors and politicians join the exchanges to see what is happening in other cities.



Metro Rail Meeting at Marol Naka, Mumbai

Change and innovation needs to constantly be refined:

On the onset, strategies are far from ideal, they evolve and are refined based on different contexts and needs. Federations develop capacity to understand and make changes with experience and feedback.



Insights into Federation practices

Creating a transition for the urban poor from a survival and opportunistic mode to one of taking charge of their own destiny is a tough and risky process. Poor households and neighborhoods socialize in feudal set ups and have to cope with informal governance arrangements where allegiance is provided in return for informal security. Thus the poor risk a great deal to explore membership in the federating process.

More often women rather than men reach out to this exploration. The women aspire to create a better future for their children and grandchildren. Most importantly, the women want a secure place to live and to bring up their children. Creating organizational practices and institutional arrangements, however informal and producing practices and rituals that bring a new set of insights about the world around them is a tough and slow process. The risks which are a part of the process are dealt with each others support.. Unfortunately, those responsible for development have yet to embrace this strategy.



Organizing the most vulnerable is the essential first step: Community's and/or individuals which have the ability to solve their own problems do not need to federate. Only those whose problems seem unsolvable will seek the critical mass that federations produce. Fortunately, the benefits of a successful federation is reaped by others for years to come.

Women must be centrally involved to produce sustainable solutions: Often organized communities and/or development interventions of the poor don't involve women. In contrast, the Alliance's experience has shown that only when women are central to the creating of solutions that they are robust.

No solution trickles down: Development often seeks the LOW HANGING FRUIT. It assumes that early success will encourage more money to be made available for the process. However, rarely do these solutions trickle down. Instead when the solutions are created for the bottom 30%, they take time to develop refine and scale, but once they work, they are adapted to the better off while ensuring that the needs of the poorest are considered.

Solutions never emerge on a one time basis - federations need to repeatedly engage in the process: Federations have understood that exploring a new possibility equals to taking risks. Even though the initially the concept may be clear, there usually are many frailties' in the execution which need to be resolved over time. New solutions have to be given a chance to survive and scale up and produce policy and practice that benefits the poor.

Share strategies while they are happening rather than after the fact: Communities are able to adapt better if they are involved while the process is on going. For example, its like learning to cook while someone else is cooking and seeing the outcomes rather than coming after. For those who are exploring something new may get suggestions and encouragement if they allow people to question them.

Good solutions to complex issues requires patience It is not by chance that the needs of the poor are rarely acknowledged; that very little investments go into finding scalable solutions; and in most instances processes and projects get left half done. Federations believe that unless there is stamina patience and perseverance are the key ingredients towards a breakthrough for the poor. The federating process provides these qualities the resources and the support for innovation and experimentation and solidarity that produces ways and means for the poor to feel confident and qualified to explore, negotiate, and execute strategies.

Creating knowledge, peer learning and sustained engagement

Creating an institutional arrangement in which the urban poor are actively involved in development requires numerous processes to work simultaneously. Even though “crowd sourcing” digitally is the rage in development today, the challenge lies in creating changes in poor peoples lives and actualizing what advocacy can produce, engagement by those whose lives are to be impacted by this change and who are not part of the digitally connected and live beyond this digital line. NSDF and Mahila Milan share and mentor other communities to these values.

Creating a basis for collective behavior. Although the informal slum dweller represents the majority of the population in many cities, they are marginalized and believe they can't make a difference, trapped as they are in a survival mode. Ethnicity, language, historical affiliations of caste, region and other such identities divide them. NSDF and Mahila Milan seek to produce an overarching identity as slum dwellers to create a better life for their children and to have them believe that together they can make a difference without shedding their other identities. The Alliance strives to explore the power of collective explorations, developing solutions that work for the poor which they can drive and learn from sharing and learning with peers.



Breaking isolation and marginalization by creating networks through exchanges. The Indian Alliance clearly needs to extend beyond their network however large it may seem. Exploring how NSDF and Mahila Milan can share their experiences with other cities, through other networks is an ongoing challenge. This year teams have expanded to several cities outside their network to impart their understanding while aspiring for more.

Creating data that both aggregates and disaggregates the reality of the poor. Although outsiders who collect information from the poor claiming it is for their own good, seldom have an understanding of their needs. Community leaders, on the other hand, are trained to collect information about themselves and aggregating this at the settlement and the city level are able to transform their perceptions and determine how they present their demands and expectations collectively.

Designing savings and credit groups that bring women into the center and produce financial literacy. Since trust has to be earned, communities which are able to pool their money together in your community, account for it, lend it to each other and learn how to document it, creating that trust is perceivable. Experience has shown that if women undertake this activity then the outcome is usually favorable.

Building confidence to engage in dialogue and negotiation. For the poor, agreeing to strategies is difficult if they don't have the mechanisms to seek solutions. Before engaging external actors, it is important to create a consensus of what they seek from themselves and from the city. Enabling the communities with the confidence that they can engage in a dialogue is the first step in negotiations.

Set precedents for change. For the poor, changes needed seem impossible to craft. Hope arises when the communities hear that other communities like themselves have set PRECEDENTS that others can demand from their own city. These changes whet the appetite of communities to learn of precedents and explore if they can also set one themselves. .



Challenge of legitimacy for federation rituals and practices



Mainstream institutions have a deep rooted bias against the poor.

Creating legitimacy for the poor to gather data and present it contests what information the mainstream organizations have about the poor constitutes the RIGHT TO RESEARCH of the poor.

The challenge for producing partnership and collaboration. Solutions require more than one actor or stakeholder to produce change and access resources. Usually, cities and financial and technical institutional arrangements are not willing partners of the poor. Initially SPARC plays the bridging role but ultimately the linkages between the poor and cities or other organizations have to be sustained in and of themselves. Questions regarding how much time it will take and how well it plays out are issues that we are still learning about.

No solution is perfect and mistakes need time to be improved upon. Often initial outputs undertaken by the poor are discounted because perfection and collective learning don't go together. Federations support each other, seek to transfer insights to the extent they can, and in addition, the Alliance seeks to assist communities to undertake more than one project to build skills, refine their knowledge and build on their confidence.

Taking risks to find solutions has to get support at a wider scale and level. Change in habitat, in livelihoods, and in general addressing informality within formal institutional constraints is a difficult, long, and often unpredictable process. By and large, both NGOs and the government have not made substantial investments with regard to these issues. Clearly working in a few locations does not produce the critical mass for making change happen. Inevitably, there can never be any changes without taking risks.

1. Peer learning produces the knowledge and optimism to engage and negotiate. Peer exchanges occur when communities seek out other communities with similar concerns and aspirations. By meeting others who have sought to change their conditions through a collective process encourages other communities to explore new possibilities, learn new ways to explore the world and understand new conditions under which they can seek change.

2. Slum dwellers data challenges other data sets. Slum data of settlements of households, or individuals, collected and collated by the poor themselves is a powerful instrument for collective reflections and for seeking change. In light of these enumerations, many discussions, negotiations and projects have been initiated. This data has also become a crucial benchmark to assess impact and outcomes.

3. Savings and credit groups need to have multiple usages. The process of savings and loans within a community produces trust, it produces financial literacy and it creates sustained support networks and engagements which helps mobilize large numbers of the communities. Documentation practices of savings helps communities to demonstrate how these skills can be leveraged for other uses, such as managing projects, designing alternatives mechanism to deliver welfare; **the most important factor being that it facilitates women's central participation in the change process.**

4. Creating precedents and taking them to scale. The Alliance's experience shows that the solutions developed for formal housing doesn't work for the poor. Thus, developing alternatives demonstrated through a precedent setting project, design or process is essential. After the initial phase of demonstrating alternative, it is vital to scale it and begin to tease the scaling challenges so that these hard earned strategies survive for others to use.



Savings and Loans the critical educational tool

Total Savings Groups		
States	2011-12	2010-11
Maharashtra	122	116
Tamil Nadu	319	319
Andhra Pradesh	83	83
Pondicherry	99	98
Gujarat	19	19
Odisha	151	133
Uttar Pradesh	38	38
Karnataka	95	85
Delhi	1	1
Total	927	892

New Groups Formed		
States	2011-12	2010-11
Maharashtra	4	6
Tamil Nadu	8	8
Andhra Pradesh	9	9
Pondicherry	12	1
Gujarat	0	0
Odisha	0	18
Uttar Pradesh	0	0
Karnataka	0	10
Delhi	0	0
Total	33	35



Each woman who volunteers to collect money from 15 people in her neighborhood is often promoted to a community leader. She not only helps women to save, but also lends support to the households. The trust she creates enables many other activities to take place. The first ten women who developed this capacity have trained thousands of other women.

Women from several such groups meet regularly at their area resource centers, pool their money together, develop rules and accountability mechanisms which they present to their community centers. Their transformation and empowerment has changed their neighborhoods, and developed a dialogue with the external world to whom their ability to transact with money produces other possibilities.

Inter city networks now have more women than men who attend the national meetings. The strength of these large groups of women and men has helped address the urgent needs of habitat amenities livelihoods. Questions such as WHAT CAN WE DO? HOW SHOULD BE PROCEED TO ESTIMATE WHAT WE NEED? WHAT CAN WE ASK THE CITY OR STATE TO CONTRIBUTE? AND HOW SHALL WE ENGAGE THEM? are often discussed.

Amount lent to Communities		
MM Loans	23	Rs. 63,500
RMK Loans	684	Rs. 45,20,000
Revolving Fund Loans	341	Rs. 25,74,500

Leveraging Savings

- Organizationally:** organizationally there is a direct linkage between the trust that savings induces in settlements and the ability to remain mobilized while learning numerous actions that can benefit the households and communities.
- On gender linked issues :** The Alliance has always sought to embed women's central participation within the organizational process with a deep commitment to women's roles and status within their homes and their communities. By developing capacities to expand what they can do for their homes and neighborhoods, women find that their status within their home changes. It sets a precedent for others to review how men and women can work together for collective goals in development.
- Financially to access more funds :** Women's savings and lending have now created the basis for bulk borrowing, for expanded credit for various activities, and their ability to manage loans means the loans can be given at lower interest rates.
- In Project Management :** Women's collectives within the Mahila Milan have been the main "managers" of in situ construction. The Mahila Milan facilitates the women to participate in redesigning their homes, and participating in designing the final outcome.
- Within the SDI network this innovation has been spread to countries affiliated with the SDI where similar leverage emerges, thus making exchanges innovative refinements of strategies now circulating and involving men and women in committing themselves to strengthen women's participation.

Starting with the poorest women who save from their daily spending, Mahila Milan's first loans are for food, emergency medicines, and money for transport to find jobs. It is only the beneficiaries that can explain evocatively how powerful it is to get this money from peers with dignity rather than from the money lender.



Surveys and Information gathering: knowledge is power

State	Cities	Settlement Profiles Conducted
Maharashtra	8	592
Tamil Nadu	22	591
Karnataka	7	413
Pondicherry	4	145
Odisha	6	709
Gujarat	2	881
Andhra Pradesh	3	979
Total	52	4310



The image shows the biometric documentation that federations now produce completely internally for various city contracts for surveys of slums.

Table of household surveys done this year

	Settlements	Households
Tata Power Phase I-IV	8	51
MUTP	16	106
MbPT	9	203
Pavement Dwellers	24	538
Metro Rail Corridor	19	1315
Delhi	2	601
Toilet Study	8	1101
Total	88	4516



All residents number their homes (once all the numbers are accepted by everyone) in oil paint forming the reference numbers for future documentation.

Understanding how grant assisted learning is leveraged.

- Initially a pilot is undertaken to demonstrate its value to the community. Then the people get trained to undertake the surveys and fulfill all the steps mentioned.
- Next, through contestation, city and government officials begin to respect the data which is produced by the communities. On the basis of this information, development investments such as sanitation, upgrading, ration cards etc begin to be provided.
- Those connected to policy formulation (like MUTP, DHARVAI Redevelopment Project) along with others begin to adopt the process thus ensuring improved transparency to information gathered and its access to all.
- City and state procurements processes tender out survey contracts and pay for surveys and federations bid and win contracts.
- Government officials, along with organizations such as SDI highlight the process through exchanges of communities. The result being a domino effect in which more slum dwellers begin to undertake this project.



Communities map their settlements together which the surveyor then draws at scale so that the structure number on wall and on the map are connected and will be the number on the interview schedule .

Sl. No.	Hut No.	Male Head	Female Head	Family members		Age Group					Total	D.M.	D.W.	D.M. D.W.			
				Male	Female	0-6	6-14	14-65	>65								
1	K Sima	Srinivas	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	K Appya	K Saravathi	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	K Rabana	K Subhadra	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	4	K Jaganna	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	Tulasi Das	Padma Da	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	K Chima Rao	J. Sitama	3	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	7	M. Lachmana	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
8	8	m. varLaxmi	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
9	S.N. Andarala Rao	N. Talai	1	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
10	M. Nagalingam	M. Anayama	3	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11	11	M. Laama	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
12	12	Simana Rao	M. Bodanti	5	1	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
13	13	M. Sani Ramulu	M. Narayani	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
14	14	J. Ganesh	J. Gauri	3	2	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
15	15	K. Kakuru	K. Ratnaku	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
16	16	K. Simachala	K. Pradmbhai	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
17	17	K. Endaya	K. Jagadamba	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
		D. K. Venkatesh	D. K. Venkatesh	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

All of the data about the home, the household, and individuals is printed as a register and checked by the residents, the city, and land owner, creating the basis of project development . All of the entitlements in a project are based on this register.



SDI affiliates have adopted this as part of their organizational work. In Uganda, the national government in partnership with the SDI has commissioned the community federations to survey 60,000 households in 5 towns.

In South Africa information gathered by communities forms the basis of the housing subsidy delivered by the government to townships.



Housing projects: Demonstrating delivery from advocacy

BSUP Housing Projects			
	Total Units to be constructed	Under construction	Completed
Pune	1125	655	274
Bhubhaneshwar	578	175	67
Puri	164	21	7
Bangalore	1550	47	248
Nanded	1500	150	50
Total	4917	1050	646



The basic requirement for women is an improved home and a safe neighborhood. Mahila Milan's first step is to model houses and determine their cost.

See details in SSNS Annual Report 2011-12. This series of projects have been undertaken by communities through SSNS and total value is :

Rs. 600,210,000



Those who have secure shelter get incremental upgrading loans to improve walls, roofing and gradually upgrade their homes. These loans are given by Mahila Milan

Most poor people build their homes...

The enormity of the poor peoples' housing problems can not be addressed through a single solution. Thus, city based federations have taken up many different projects to explore what they can do. Federations have moved from grant based housing projects to project based financing solutions. (for more information on all construction projects see SSNS annual report)



Several city federations such as Nanded and Pune in Maharashtra, Bhubaneswar and Puri in Odisha and Bangalore in Karnataka have been able to get contracts to assist communities to build their homes. With state subsidies.

- Initially, men and women learnt to design cost, and build model houses with grant funds.
- As cities began to look at the strategies, the Alliance received state funds which they utilized to blend it with loans to build the communities houses.
- As construction projects increased, the Alliance set up SSNS, a not for profit construction business. The start up capital for SSNS came from CLIFF and UPFI and other donors to take on projects.
- Finally, banks, cities, and government policies are changing their procurements to allow community federations to build houses.
- SDI exchanges provides a platform for the slum dwellers from other cities to share their experience and present it to the international multilateral agencies as well.

Crores of rupees unused every yr

Shawan Sen | nca

Mumbai: If projects in the city are slow to take off or take an unduly long time to complete, the cause is not paucity of funds but the civic body's inability to fully use its finances. Every year of the last five, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has left unutilised funds to the tune Rs 3,000 crore or more. This inefficiency, experts say, undermines the ad hoc preparation of budgetary estimates and the lack of political will to execute projects.

In every budget, the corporation allocates a significant portion as capital expenditure on building new infrastructure like roads, storm water drains, water work as well as on education and slums. These constitute sections A, B, E and G of the budget. Importantly, though, over 40% of the funds remain unused by every financial year's end. More importantly these funds cannot be carried forward to the next financial year, allowing them to lapse.

For 2011-2012, the civic body had made a provision of 7,637 crore for capital works like roads, hospitals, water and the like. But three months before the financial year comes to an end, just about 30% of the money has been utilised. Similar has been the case every year since 2007. Around Rs 3,631 crore was not utilised in 2007-2008. The next year, the unused figure was Rs 4,819 crore; in 2009-10, it was Rs 3,096 crore; and in 2010-2011, Rs 3,222 crore.

Analysts blame the inefficiency on "ad hocism in preparing the budgetary provisions". "This data indicates that there has not been a detailed estimate of items that may be involved in executing a project," former civic chief D M Sukhtankar told TOI. "These provisions are made on an ad hoc manner without proper estimates, there are chances of projects getting stalled. Also, little progress is made."

The opposition has targeted the ruling alliance for not utilising funds. Congress corporator Sumaner Desai said, "This simply shows lack of political will in starting various vital projects like water mains, re-vamping Byculla zoo, etc. They simply disregard the revenues generated through sources such as property tax. The Shiv Sena claims it has

UNDER-DEVELOPED

Every year, the BMC uses only a portion of the funds allocated to develop new infrastructure

Year	Budget Provisioned	Budget Utilised
2007-08	5,631cr	1,990cr
08-09	6,619cr	3,800cr
09-10	8,985cr	5,995cr
10-11	8,239cr	5,017cr
11-12	7,637cr	1,500cr

All figures in rupees

fulfilled all its promises, but that is not the case. Only 35% of the work has been done in the last five years."

In the recent past, the under-utilisation of funds has impeded many important projects such as building of pumping stations, conservation of heritage sites, and construction of additional toilet blocks. Of the eight pumping stations it planned, the BMC managed to finish just two. The undertaking to complete 35,000 additional toilet blocks by 2011 under is also unfinished. "All these projects will now have to wait till the next general

In Mumbai there is a market based subsidy for slum dwellers who get a 25 sq mt structure if all households agree to live in walk up or ground +7 buildings. Federations have taken up some constructions to demonstrate what communities can do.

Subsidies allocated to various housing welfare and development activities remain under utilized and often lapse if not used within the time frame. Unwieldy procurement, poor supervision and lack of transparency are some of the reasons for the funds being unutilized.



Incremental housing: exploring new possibilities

The experience of the Alliance has shown that almost every structure in slums today is self-built, upgraded, and managed by the household families. Furthermore, almost every household has had some experience of working in some capacity in the construction industry. Several factors influence the household decisions on incrementally upgrading their house; affordability of materials; expenditure involved in the upgrade element; family priorities; and expansion. One of the important determinants is the security of land tenure based on which the family decides the extent of upgrade. It's important to note that the "perceptions of security seem more critical than documentation of secure tenure", and materials used in the setting up of the habitat are an indicator of these perceptions as well as gauging the financial capacity of household amongst many other factors.

Our observations indicate that perceptions of "incremental housing" by technical professionals and architects assume from the beginning a vision or "plan" as being in place for what the overall design is, and breaking it into stages to be built over time for various reasons. On the other hand, the poor evolve and develop housing gradually by observing others, assessing the money they have, taking into account external or environment element and determining the reaction of the city to their changes. This is a bit like making a patched work quilt. Some have all the materials and cut it symmetrically and start quilting, others (the poor) take whatever material they have and patch it over time.

SPARC has sought to explore the 'incremental housing', the design materials, and delivery of financing in the form of action research process which aims to legitimize how the poor add value to the national housing stock and explore the extent to which such practices can be formalized and recognized by various Government, NGOs and financial institutions as one of the effective means of improving the living conditions of the poor.

State	Number of Households enrolled	Average loan amount/ household	Remarks
Karnataka	557	Rs. 12,600/-	409 loans fully repaid until 2012
Odisha	15	Rs. 48,000/-	Loans given in Apr 2011.
Pondicherry	19	Rs. 30,000/-	Loans fully repaid in 2001-02
Tamil Nadu	6	Rs. 27,500/-	Loans fully repaid in 2001-02

Creating a financial mechanism that can provide the necessary financial assistance to the households and communities to perform the incremental upgrade is the focus of this exploration, although it seeks to be a process with multiple outcomes. Firstly it seeks to build on what the poor are already doing with a view to improve access to finance and give new conduits to funds earmarked to be lent to the poor for housing which never gets spent. This is because the medium and long term higher value loans don't work with most households in the informal sector. Secondly, many compromises of design, ceiling heights, ventilation, and use of materials initially taken up by the slum dwellers in the process of incremental upgrading can be optimized with improvement, in other words, can the insight of professionals create outreach of public knowledge to produce better returns for the finance invested?

Finally we would be exploring the possibility of developing building materials that can make construction, upgrading etc. more standardized with improved quality and reduced costs and the possibility of the improved materials being easily available at a good value combining with market linked scale and livelihood.





Slums and Sanitation: slum dwellers advocacy for change

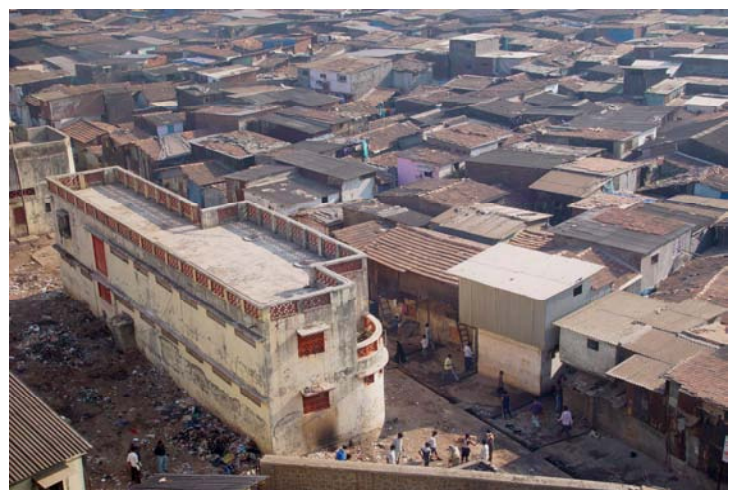
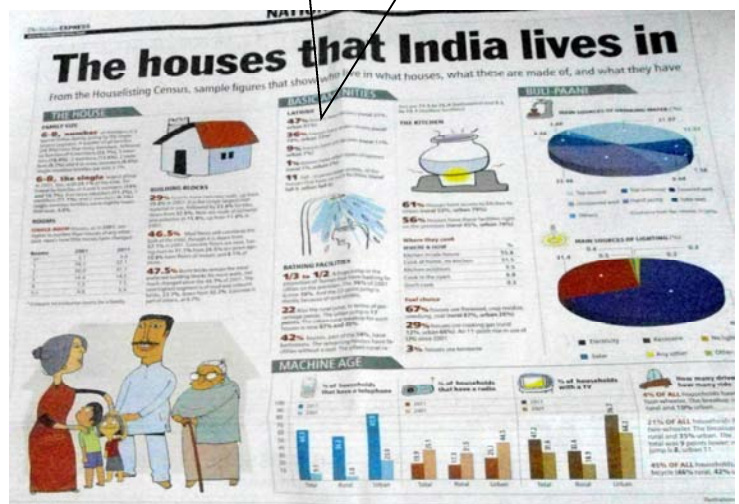
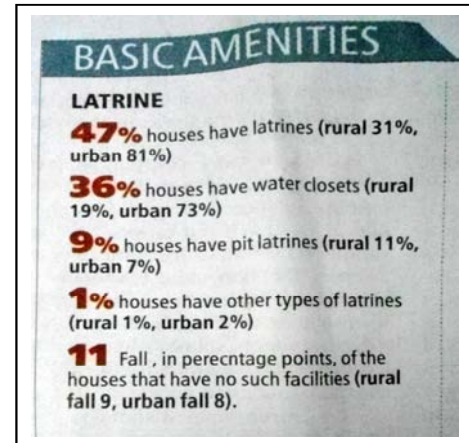
The crisis of sanitation

It is a mockery of development that there are more cell phones in India than there are toilets. Of all the MDGs that remain behind target, access to sanitation is lagging behind the most, especially in the cities. The biggest burden of informality is the inability to access basic amenities, most importantly sanitation. This burden falls more heavily on women and children. Women can't go to defecate in the day time since they have to do it in the open and also they face harassment and sometimes molestation when they seek secluded spaces. UNICEF in India has indicated that young girls at puberty tend to drop out of school if the school lacks sanitation facilities. It has been found that feces of children who defecate in the open have more infections and a higher impact on health. Children often get worm infestations and further exacerbate malnutrition.

Why is sanitation a governance issue

Even though it may seem easier for NGO's to consider solutions to the sanitation problem by procuring private funders, the Alliance feels that it is advisable to involve the state at the onset of any such project. Only the state has the capacity to scale up the project and provide the necessary amenities such as water and sanitation. For the Alliance, sanitation access by the city remains its first dipstick into inclusion, governance and transparency on equitable investments in infrastructure.

The paradox of fund allocation and national and local neglect for access to sanitation is that even the meager funds allocated for sanitation in the cities are often unutilized. Providing sanitation to the poor is paradoxical. On the one hand, while waiting for too long for sanitation delivery the slums become too dense, and thus retrofitting toilets is both difficult and often not possible. This is further exacerbated by the fact that if slums are not part of the sewer linkages it gets exponentially expensive. As a result, sanitation without basic bulk infrastructure for fecal disposal and water access becomes a challenge. On the other hand, cities don't want to allocate amenities before a significant number of people come to stay.



The Alliance, as the first set of actions to be undertaken, has pledged itself to ensure that minimum sanitation is provided to the poor, The Alliance is working with the cities to make this happen. To date:

261 toilet blocks with average of 20 seats per block means 5229 seats used by approx 261000 users is completed

In Mumbai and MMR Region, out of 617 toilet blocks 512 blocks are completed. This will mean 12340 seats for 5,12,000 people will be served.



All toilets have separate areas for men, women, and children, a room for the family of caretakers, and if possible a community center. A committee of residents manage and maintain the toilet, hire the caretaker and collect money per family. to cover costs.



Sanitation delivery to slum dwellers

Campaigning for universal sanitation: The Alliance has been advocating universal minimum sanitation for all since 1995. In 2000, the Alliance along with some other organizations began a campaign to get the government to have a policy on universal sanitation. In 2009, the cabinet of the government of India approved the sanitation policy as developed by the Ministry of Urban development. 400 towns and cities were reviewed for their sanitation status and asked to develop a sanitation delivery plan. The bulk of the process has been accompanied by actual demonstration projects, collective learning and capacity building of cities, their ability to deliver sanitation, and community capacity to design and deliver sanitation.

Why Community toilets - Dense slums which do not have a sewer connection and where the houses are less than 300 sq feet should not have toilets inside their houses. For such conditions, the only option is community toilet blocks.

To create communities that are able to manage the sanitation issues while playing an active role in transforming their settlements is the first step in developing a relationship with the municipality and building capacity in the communities. Designing a maintenance fund which is jointly managed by the city and the communities is the next milestone we seek to develop.

Dealing with quality and learning process. In almost all instances of attempting scale, the first generation of construction has many challenges of design, quality and management. Both city and communities have to learn as they go along and only when they build the second and third generation of the same projects do the learning and capacity get developed. Challenges of undertaking new practices owning them and learning to collaborate in activities that neither have taken up before and for which professionals also have little experience produces challenges that are intimidating yet critical to overcome.

Design and behavior change: Once the construction of the basic facilities are completed, the challenges of developing improved designs, creating an efficient management, and understanding the behavior changes of users are explored. However, even in vigilant communities behavioral changes takes time. A constant problem is the theft of taps and soap disappears. In addition, maintenance challenges such as lack of water, overflowing septic tanks, over usage which results in the early breakdown of doors and flooring are ever present. Fortunately, observations and strategies experimented by some have produced solutions for others.

Individual toilets: If the situation is ideal for installing individual toilets, then the Alliance is not against individual toilets. Usually, in smaller towns, where the houses are bigger and where other aspects of managing disposal of fecal matter is possible, the Alliance encourages the communities to get individual sanitation facilities. This is presently accomplished by either blending a modest sanitation subsidy that some of the cities provide to the slum dwellers topped off with a loan or a loan which the households have to repay over 15 months.

The Alliance is exploring ways to develop a joint venture with the municipalities to digitalize location mapping of toilet facilities. In doing so, the communities can upload the challenges and the solutions the communities have explored to sustain the sanitation facilities in cities. Many cities both nationally and internationally have come to examine this model.





Moving from evictions to secure habitats for the most vulnerable

Eviction as a form of state inflicting violence: Individual households or a slum can rarely compel the city to stop its practice of demolition which seeks to “clear slums”. The city or the administration rarely acknowledge the fact that people living in slums do so out of necessity rather than a willingness; that often the most vulnerable in the city are evicted more than others destroying whatever meager assets they have. The courts rarely provide a solution to the thousands who face this insecurity every day.



Development investments in cities are exacerbating evictions: UN statistics show that development investments have increased evictions world wide, which is defiantly evident in India. NSDF and MM have sought to create federations of settlements which face evictions by assisting them to undertake enumerations. In addition, the Alliance helps the community to explore alternative of relocation rather than living in constant fear of eviction. The Alliance's experience has shown that demonstrating an organized response to the threat makes a difference to the outcome.



The Alliance in Mumbai and Pune have worked with communities affected by infrastructure to create a strategy for relocation. Under regular circumstances these households would never have accepted relocation as an alternative. The households are on pavements, along railway tracks, on port trust lands, and along the water mains. All of these places do not allow for in situ development or have public sector undertakings to restrict relocation.



Numerous in-situ redevelopment can mean rapid gentrification which is also a form of eviction. Often the land on which the slum is located has great economical value which overshadows redevelopment. Capitalization on the land value is deemed more important than the residents of the slum. In Dharavi, residents associations have sought to withstand this plan of government, not to stall development but to explore possibilities to produce a solution which will work for the city and the residents and improve their lives and livelihoods. The Alliance is working with the community networks as well as with professionals to facilitate the community processes.



Until recently all of the projects undertaken by the Alliance for relocating were with the public sector. Tata Power sought the assistance of the Alliance to design relocation of households affected by their need to increase the heights of their transmission power towers. The Alliance helped to document the number of households affected by this project and to locate tenements that Tata Power could purchase to relocate the households. Given the power crisis of the nation, the state of Maharashtra also agreed that this as a vital project. It demonstrates that our commitment to seek relocation for the most vulnerable households can be adapted by the private sector as well.





Upgrading urban infrastructure and securing Habitat options



Long needed city infrastructure has produced conflicts between slums and projects.

The SLUM REHABILITATION ACT designed in 1995, estimated that 20% of the informal settlements would need to be relocated to produce space for the city's urgent need for infrastructure. Today that number has gone up to 40%. Herein lies the paradox, the 60%+ slum dwellers already live in less than 10% of the land and they are now required to move, often to un-serviced distant spaces, away from present livelihoods. Yet unlike earlier situations, the structure for structure relocation policy ensures that they have some alternative.

This year, the Alliance has supported the federations in these locations to stay steadfast and to seek a role in the Airport redevelopment project.

Numerous theories on whether households should be relocated. Within the development community there are various opinions about this. The community federations have chosen to relocate especially those who live by the pavements and railway tracks because their homes can never be upgraded and each generation is paying a heavier price by living in such conditions, where the average size of the house in less than 100 sq feet without any amenities.

NSDF and federation of Slums along the Mumbai Airport : what are people's expectations. The situation of the households along the Airport is also linked to the infrastructure needs of the Mumbai airport. Interestingly, this federation sought land tenure and sought to realign to give the airport more space as part of their attempt to get secure tenure 20 years ago. A large number of them work in various services at the airport today. The community has agreed to move back and live in multi story structures but they are not ready to relocate to make space for convention centers, hotel, and/or malls.



The value of community participation, and the value of their undertaking the survey process.

Community networks seeking space and opportunity to work with government have so far been denied in the midst of all the externally produced lack of transparency. Presently there are over + 98000 households or structures as part of the huge sea of slums surrounding the airport.

Like Dharavi, the capital value of land is distorting the commitment of the state to redevelop the slums to integrate them into the city to improve the quality of their lives. The land is being sought out by the private construction companies and the state.

How do principles of equity, transparency and good governance accompany such development?

The Alliance takes up relocation only if all other options fail, or in the circumstances in which the people believe that relocating will improve their situation.



Police Panchayats and community police collaborations

The creation of Police Panchayats in Mumbai reflects a form of leverage by organized communities exploring a relationship with the police.

Seven women and three men along with a policeman from the nearby police station work together to address the issues which create conflicts in their neighborhood.

These processes cover a wide range of issues: two families fighting because of misunderstanding between children, girls being teased by boys in the neighborhood, parents dealing with children who have run away to get married, girls returning home due to harassment right to dealing with murders, kidnapping and other such serious crimes.

The Panchayats seek to be the first court of call for those seeking assistance, and solve as much as they are able to. The cases which require further scrutiny are handled by the mainstream police system with the assistance of the Police Panchayat.

Senior police leadership in Mumbai accept that policing in slums remains uncovered and the ratio of policemen to population is very low. Communities of the poor are fearful of the police and thus police inquiries into matters that come to the police station do not get resolved.

The Panchayats seek to facilitate this as a bridge between the slum dwellers and police and ensure that those who would never seek assistance for fear of the police, especially women, can now approach the Police Panchayats' assistance to address their problems.



In all area resource centers, 7 women are nominated, usually from Mahila Milan, along with three men. They agree to a date and time on a weekly basis to meet. This meeting is also attended by the policemen. Minutes of meetings and cases are maintained and signed off by Panchayats and parties on resolution of the complaints if deemed to everyone's' satisfaction.



Every year there is an annual gathering of all Police Panchayats in which there is a sharing of experiences and issues raised for the police leadership to examine. Policemen who work with the Panchayats also share their experiences and explain how the involvement of the police Panchayats transforms their relationship with the slum dwellers.



Each year the best Panchayats are felicitated by the police commissioner and home department. There is a gradual but increasing acknowledgement that sorting out problems while they emerge, if done judiciously and sensitively, these cases don't end up at the police station and they don't take up court time.

Globally, the challenges faced in policing make it clear that preventing and resolving conflicts at an early stage are more important when addressing such issues. In many countries, individuals from communities volunteer to assist the police.

Likewise, respected members of the communities are nominated to listen to problems and conflicts. In India this set up came to be known as Panchayats. The transparency and simplicity by which they are managed and the presence of police men in the process provide a sanctity to the process.

No of police Panchayats : 83

Average no of cases taken up by them :602 (since 2004)



Sadaak Chaap and homelessness in in the city

In 1987, NSDF and Mahila Milan began to explore ways in which to work with the street boys.

In a study “waiting for tomorrow,” SPARC identified the challenges and vulnerabilities of street children. While small well managed NGO and state centers is more suitable for girls, a more open and community managed support system in which they can participate is better for street boys.

Boys who ran away from home needed a safe place to sleep, “guardians “ who could vouch for them, and mentors who could help them work out what they should do next.

NSDF and MM began with turning their ARCs into night shelters for children. Women cooked simple home food meals for the children and encouraged those who were willing to go to school. The older boys wished to work were helped with getting apprenticeship in the neighborhood. The shelters vouched for the boys if they were “caught” by the police.

Over time, as young men began to work and thus earn a living, began to go home to reacquaint themselves with their family. Some of the boys have gotten married with MM and NSDF representing themselves as their family to whom the “girls” side negotiates for their marriage.

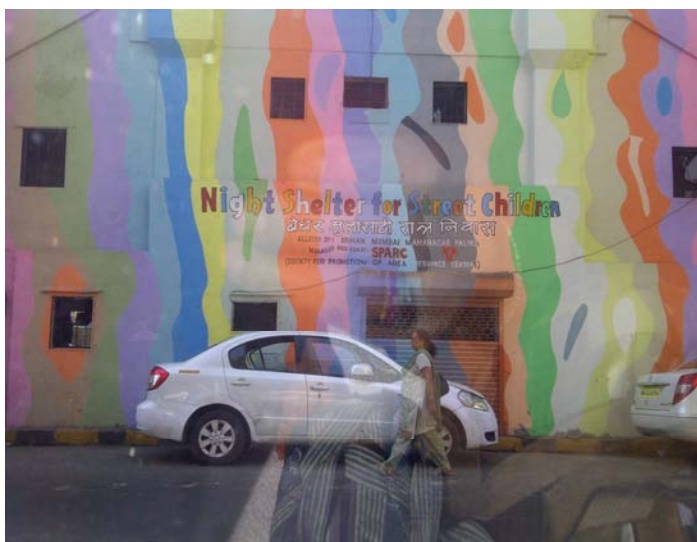


Recently the government and the municipality provided spaces for the children to stay under supervision. Such night shelters are managed by older children and NSDF in different parts of Mumbai.



Volunteers and older street boys manage daily chores and routines and assist boys to get school admissions, manage homework, and deal with health and work issues. A combination of some basic rules such as no drugs, no violence and an open collective management ensures that the boys don't run away from the shelter.

There are a large number of street children in the city. ROOFLESS and ROOTLESS, they live in small groups working wherever they can with a daily wage that covers their food costs. Most of these children have run away from their punitive households and others, on a whim of anger and/or rebellion. Too many demands only ensures that they run away once more!



200+ children are fed and stay in various shelters and over 1000 stay linked to the network in some capacity. Over the years, many of the older boys who are now married or working full time give their time and support to the program.

This night shelter is at Churchgate opposite offices of the Income tax department.



Informality and vulnerability: women and children - critical groups

Critical issues to reflect on :

The changing demographics and migration patterns has compelled the Alliance to reexamine the relationship between women and cities. Increasingly younger women are migrating to cities with their families or with their spouses or alone. A large percentage of these women will end up living in the slums. Most of these women are doing unpaid labor, managing their homes and the settlements. Their choices are limited and with having little to no say of their situation, they are forced to continue their lifestyle.

Cities rarely offer women security. City planning and amenities and services provided by the city impact the women adversely, be it access to water and sanitation, transport, safe neighborhoods, or even secure and recognized identity. With no daycare and no specific attempts to train and build the skills of the women, generations of women are losing opportunities to earn decent wages.

Critical mechanisms for empowerment for women in Panchayats have demonstrated the impact and the value in bringing women's leadership to the fore. Unfortunately, in the cities almost all of the seats for women are filled by women who are unable to function without the assistance of a man..

The Alliance of SPARC, Mahila Milan, and NSDF seeks to transform the role and the contribution of women in their struggle for safe and secure habitats and neighborhoods. In addition, they seek to make women's collectives the foundational anchors to the process. In doing so, the Alliance hopes to change the women's perceptions of themselves and to change their families' perception of them as well.



Women and children in informal settlements have ideas, voices, and an understanding of their needs that has to be channeled into making them actors in their own development.

By creating a platform to express their reflections and insights, the Alliance has created an atmosphere in which the community can take on the suggestions.

Community organizations, parents are the most effective and sustained champions of children and their aspirations. This when articulated and discussed with women underlines their quest for safer neighborhoods for their children and ensuring their access to services and amenities. In turn, this lays the foundations for better health and other such aspects essential for their development.



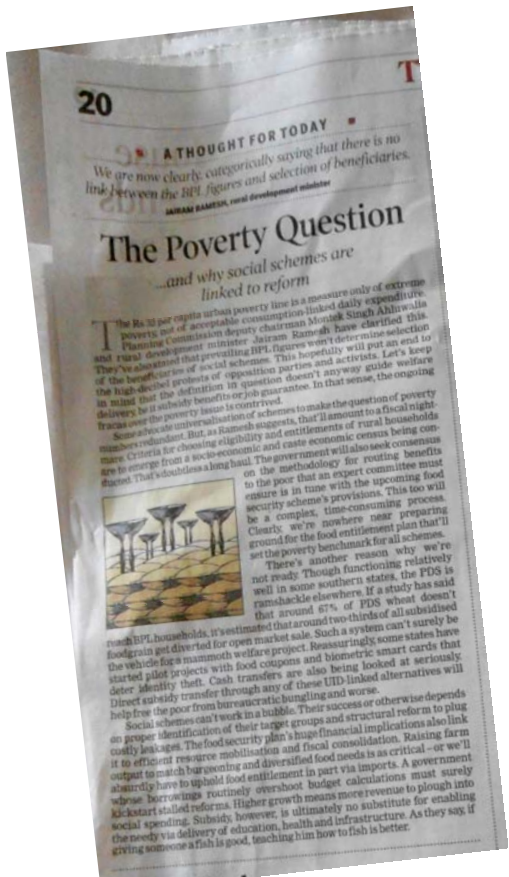
Creating child safe neighborhoods: As the city begins to develop detailed plans of slum up gradation, it aims to incorporate the needs of boys and girls of different age groups. It is important to create spaces for children to undertake activities in and around the settlements. For instance, mothers want their babies in plain sight with the ability to reach them while they are working or socializing.

THIS TRANSFORMATION IS AT THE HEART OF ALL OUR STRATEGIES.





Measuring poverty and vulnerability in urban areas



The Indian national debate of what constitutes poverty continues inconclusively while the 12th plan of the government is being developed. The debate on what constitutes urban poverty is further complicated by issues such as inflation of food and costs of transport, health, education and housing. In addition, it brings into discussion the challenge of addressing the relative issues of poverty within the cities as well.

In India the BPL card (below the Poverty Line card) the SC ST documentation that certifies that persons are of backward caste and minority status get linked to entitlements that should be allocated to the poorest and most vulnerable. Unfortunately, in the cities and the towns of India neither the delivery mechanisms nor the identification mechanisms seem to be working.

NSDF and MM federations have demonstrated that the collective organizational processes of the poor are often the first that the most vulnerable turn to for help. When the assistance is not individually targeted, the relatively better off in the slums help more vulnerable households to get assistance. However, if individuals or households compete within settlements, those who are better connected and have better documents access the benefits and 'win' the race for entitlements. The exploration the Alliance seeks is at both settlement level and households level to identify vulnerabilities before measuring poverty lines.

In a multi year study, the Alliance seeks to undertake a deeper articulation for what is vulnerable when slums and their profiles are compared. This will allow the Alliance to demand basic amenities to be provided to the needy rather than the city and/or state governments only looking at recognized slums.

At the household level, the reflections will seek to link indicators of community level observations on vulnerability with the indicators from surveys. By matching the two, the Alliance can form the basis for dialogue with the government.





New partnerships and expanding champions for the poor in cities



The Alliance is aware that despite its ability to scale, it can never reach all of the towns and the cities in India. The challenge which the Alliance faces today lies in building networks of organizations seeking to raise their voices on issues of inequality in cities.

Through a joint partnership of SPARC and PRIA, SPARC seeks to expand the network of organizations focusing on urban issues by initiating meetings in different cities and states and by compelling NGOs, CBOs, and government officials to meet the challenge of India's urbanization.

NSDF and Mahila Milan present at these events have demonstrated what communities can do and how city officials can explore a partnership with them. Also, NGOs understand that by supporting communities to collect data, they can help with creating awareness and also a constituency seeking change. Lastly, government officials have both space and demonstration of how their roles can change to fulfill their targets for development.

Initially, the focus remained on RAY because in its early form, participation of the poor, provision of tenure for slums, and commitment to explore city wide solutions was evident. However, in the past year, many of these elements have been under review. Rather than wait for the ideas to firm up, RAY now seeks to engage civil society and city on general inequity, define the challenges faced by informality, and a need to universalize amenities and services to all.

NGOs in different states have volunteered to anchor events and meetings. PRIA and the Alliance provide content and engage in the learning explorations. For all those who learn and for those who share in this process, it is useful to expand networks seeking to engage the state and the national government to address the challenges of urban poverty that have so far not been mainstreamed in development.

In 2011-12, meetings in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Kerala have been undertaken. Many groups and organizations have begun to undertake surveys, exchange visits, and explore the possibilities of working on a range of issues.

It is clear that creating new partnerships to bring in more actors and stakeholders, more strategies to utilize state resources (that remain unutilized) on the one hand and to expand the repertoire of solutions that can support change of policy and practice are urgently needed.



Adaptation to climate change is better infrastructure



Cities need to acknowledge the existence of every neighborhood to judge its vulnerabilities: By not recognizing the slums within the city, the government is not compelled to provide the basic infrastructure to the community. This in turn exacerbates their vulnerability and also means that they will remain invisible if and when a crisis hits them.

Relationships built before a crisis brews always produce better joint efforts to contain it: If the informal settlements have a pre crisis relationship with the cities, then they can work together more efficiently to address the challenges presented by the crisis.

Vulnerability must avoid to produce more evictions and a sense of deeper vulnerability: Often, when preparation to face climate change is taken up, it produces evictions of households in locations of flooding or mud slides without relocating solutions. It is inhuman to rationalize such evictions without relocation.

Better drainage improves habitat and reduces vulnerability. Better infrastructure is in itself a valuable mechanism to reduce the crisis and also fulfills the equitable development goals.

The community's involvement in information gathering and post crisis activities ensure a proper coverage and absorption of the assistance. When the communities are engaged, the solutions are more effective and also reach the vulnerable more effectively. Often the resources are available but can not be dispersed effectively if the community is not involved.

A crisis of climate change and resilience can produce more equitable cities

The experience of the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) and that of the Alliance indicates that the communities which are organized and have experience with linking to the state institutions are able to manage crisis caused by natural calamities by reaching the area for crisis management on their own, and by facilitating the processes effectively. In addition, the information which is gathered about the families prior to the catastrophe helps identify the most vulnerable who become more invisible after the devastation. Most importantly, collective behavior improves the morale of neighborhoods and puts a stop to the beneficiary syndrome in which the people feel helpless. The very act of doing things, helping each other, being part of a larger effort, and solving other peoples problems builds confidence and makes rehabilitation that much easier.



Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) and the Alliance

Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) has federations in 33 member countries. NSDF and Mahila Milan are the founding members of SDI. The SDI supports national federations by providing a platform from which they are able to learn from each other and to advocate for local solutions.



Community federations have been working for many years and in many cities to design and influence procurement systems of the government in order to receive contracts for projects for sanitation, housing, relocation and slum mapping.

The major focus of Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) affiliates exchanges to India is to examine how contracts are procured. The exchanges include meeting government officials who are critical counterparts to developing these procurement practices; examining the partnership between community leaders and professionals to design and execute the projects; studying the manner in which local and external financial resources are blended to produce outputs at expanding scale.



Mumbai and Pune have hosted the majority of these exchanges. The exchanges have included national and local government officials so that they may understand the project delivery mechanism.

Indian delegations have also attended exchanges in other Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) countries to support local negotiations, attend peer learning processes, and participate in Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) multi-affiliate linked projects.



The SDI has observed that there is an increase in the number of countries that have to focus on the challenge of their city and country not being able to afford subsidy funding for land or housing, and seeking land lease from government with incremental financing for upgrading housing.

Incremental housing linked documentation and research undertaken by the Alliance seeks to develop learning and knowledge by creating strategies that might be shared and compared with other Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) affiliates who clearly see this as the only way forward for their members.

This year has seen many country groups visiting from Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SD) affiliates to explore sanitation projects and subsidy driven housing projects designed and managed by community and financed by the state .



Critical milestones this year with Slum/Shack Dwellers International

The Learning Monitoring and Evaluation strategy for Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) which was devised in early 2012, has begun to produce a range of activities that seek to document refine and upgrade practices in many rituals of the federations.

The development of reflections and shared learning for :

- Enumerations
- Savings
- Sanitation
- Procurement

form the focus for this year.

The Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) network has participated in many international events and will be preparing for the World Urban Forum where a substantial delegation will attend the event in Naples.

Visit www.sdinet.org for more information on activities of Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SD)



Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) in Bombay to plan enumeration publications in Environment and Urbanization (see documentation and publication section)



Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) affiliates at UNHABITAT Governing Council meeting where Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) prepared a housing exhibition



Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) provides a transnational network for support, solidarity and peer learning for community networks exploring the federation model in their own country where often the other organizations are more professional driven while working in smaller slum settings.

Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) becomes a very effective backdrop for each local and national affiliate to test the potential for a local practice to be scaled up to become transnational.

Practical aspects of rituals enacted by their peers in different locations helps learning more effectively than sitting in workshops and being told by professionals what is good and must be done. Even better when your mentoring trains you to work in collaboration *with* professionals rather than under their supervision and to negotiate with politicians who seemed unreachable before you formed federations.

Increasingly the institutional arrangements at national levels of the Alliance and Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) become critical interfaces between formal institutions and those trapped in informality of habitat livelihood and identity. They transform destructive and asset depleting practices such as evictions and demolitions of homes, neighborhoods and workspaces which also breach the human rights commitments that the state states it is committed to. These interfaces seek to build confidence and capacity to engage those very same forces and institutions into treating those who are poor and vulnerable and citizens with a constitutional claim on the resources of the state. Developing an expanding set of strategies to undertake negotiations forms the core of what we in India and Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SD) internationally seek to do keeping communities at the center.

Engaging the academia, development activists, and grant makers

New ideas and possibilities which are emerging within the urban informality have to be scaled up to survive and inhabit the mainstream development. Engaging with academia gets exposure for what the poor are doing and explores possible partnerships. This forms a vital part of the Alliance's ongoing yearly engagement in India and internationally.

Ongoing multi year engagements: The time and space for PILOT PROJECTS designed by idealistic elite is being replaced by robust scalable solutions. Ideas and strategies when discussed and debated by large numbers of people are like putting any matter in a sieve to see what is solid and what is flaky. As more and more communities examine the solutions, endless possibilities, lacunas and new add-ons are discovered and adjusted into the solution formation. Sharing these with committed partners and scholars interested in exploring solutions brings new ideas to the Alliance along with taking some of the federation innovations into educational processes.

Participation in academic programs: The value of this process is three fold. Firstly it produces the journey for robust scalable solutions. Secondly, it makes the urban poor centrally involved in developing and testing solutions. And thirdly and most importantly, it facilitates partnerships of varying kind between the state and the poor that otherwise remains absent in most development interventions.

Some highlights of this year:

Ongoing projects with KRVAI :

- Working with communities in Dharavi to develop a project .
- Studio of students in Nanded for slum plans for upgrading.

IIED UK:

- Identification of vulnerability in slums
- Climate change and vulnerable slums

University of Melbourne:

- Studio for students in Dharavi
- Exploring joint projects

University of Manchester:

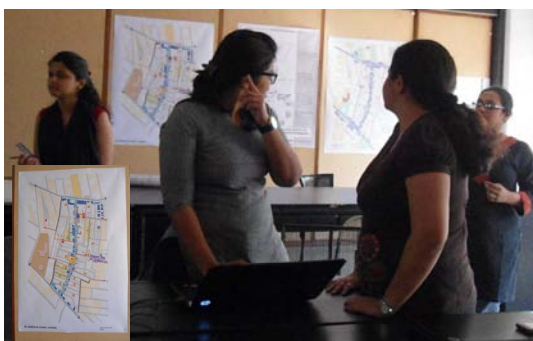
- Exploring joint projects



Heather Grady, VP Rockefeller Foundation with Mahila Milan understanding how the Alliance works.



Almuth and Beatrice from Miserioir at SPARC office



KRVAI students at a Studio on Nanded settlements slum layouts.

Issues discussed with various academic foundations and scholars:

New explorations and precedent setting activities that need reflection on: Federations are always looking for entrepreneurial communities who volunteer to test the solutions and explore actualizing the process or project as developed by the federations and discuss it till it produces some viable strategy.

The NSDF and the Mahila Milan view this as a collective risk. Often times it is an individual who undertakes these explorations rather than the government. The federations are determined to demonstrate to the city the value of such alternatives that work both for the people as well as the city.

- *Challenges of acknowledging that development investments for change need to take risks.*
- *Solutions that are robust need to combine what communities aspire to with a scaffolding of a policy framework.*
- *Exploring how to make informality that envelopes what the poor survive with understood while creating inclusionary solutions that require a deeper study than what is being done today.*
- *Informality has to be viewed as a need to create positive rather than negative changes. Unless informality is seen as positive it cannot be accommodated and its negative impacts reduced.*



Volunteers, Interns, and Visitors and ongoing discussions



Interns and student volunteers

Each year, both Indian and international volunteers visit SPARC for anywhere between two weeks to six months. The volunteers usually inform the SPARC coordinators about the issues they would like to work on with the assistance of the Alliance. Those who stay for at least three months find that their stay has been useful to both themselves as well as to the Alliance.



Masters and PhD students

Each year students visit SPARC to do their thesis on subjects associated with the work of the Alliance. In some instances they can finish their documentation while in India, while others continue to work on this after they leave. In all instances, they are expected to present their findings to SPARC's research team and present them with a draft document.

Visiting faculty and students

Numerous groups of students along with their faculty visit SPARC every year to spend a day or two with the Alliance. Most of these groups are visiting India for the first time and travel around India to meet with government, NGOs and slum communities.

Both SPARC and the federations are generally happy to facilitate an exposure to the groups and deepening their insights on issues of the urban poor. Almost half of those visiting maintain multi year contacts with the Alliance and often invite Alliance members to make presentations at their university. Some of these initial explorations have produced long term engagements.

University of Melbourne studio on Dharavi for study of design and planning



Melanie Walker of the Gates Foundation brings Young Global leaders from the WEF to Dharavi at the India meeting of the world economic forum



The Managing Director of the World Bank and the Vice President of the World Bank visited Mumbai and spent an afternoon with the Alliance seeking to understand how the SDI and the Indian Alliance created capacity to engage from below. They spent time understanding what Dharavi residents sought for themselves while seeking to engage the state to ensure their needs and aspirations are understood and acknowledged. Later they sat with Mahila Milan from different parts of the city to try and understand how women linked their own empowerment to getting amenities and services for their children.

Documentation for learning monitoring and evaluation

The purpose of documentation activity in the Alliance

Firstly, documentation facilitates internal learning, reflection, and creates the capacity to record information at all levels. The act of taking a photo of what you did and later using it to recall what your community did is crucial to build the confidence and self image of the community leaders. Secondly, since the bulk of the work is multi year and often decadal, tracking this process and linking the milestones to events, artifacts maps etc... helps reflection and links the milestones to learning. Thirdly, this is a vital element of the peer exchanges in which events and processes are shared. The exchanges are also documented as a process. Finally, these processes and their impacts and outcomes are shared within the Alliance, the government, peer organizations, grant makers, and Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI).

Types of documentation, who undertakes these activities, and how it is done

Since the majority of the first generation leaders either do not write comfortably or speak and write in different languages, the material is often written in a different language and then translated into Hindi and English. The Alliance prefers documents in the form of photographs that the leaders take, audio and video recordings of meetings, processes, presentations etc... which are jointly done by SPARC, NSDF, and the communities. All of the documents are then edited, transcribed, and produced by the SPARC staff. Maps, drawings, and survey forms and reports are scanned and stored as archival material at SPARC. Interns, volunteers, and external researchers working with SPARC also contribute to producing, managing, and developing the data base.

Outputs and observable outcomes:

Communities maintain albums and retain most of the documentation which they produce. The NSDF and the MM circulate the materials that they feel may be useful to other cities. This material is also used to produce reports, prepare presentations, and assemble various documentations. However, internally significant processes are tracked longitudinally and help uncover storylines by the communities which SPARC can then document. SPARC can share these stories by developing posters for exhibitions, developing audio visual materials, and short videos. The format is simple as it follows the style of the communities sharing the story. Most of the material is available with SPARC, on YouTube, the SPARC website, or the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) website.

Reflections

Most outputs we produce are for internal communication, reflections and monitoring purposes. Since the Alliance operates in a decentralized manner, it is essential that its mechanism for reflections also sustain that process. Creating communication links to sustained information flows are vital between those who document for internal reflection and external dissemination. Creating space and focus for community leaders to assist in communicating with outsiders works best when exchanges occur and their narratives are in the form of story telling.

Building skills within the organization emerges from the reality that creating outputs first and foremost to respond to internal demands have to be simple and straightforward. The challenge it presents is that their external manifestation is not available quickly and is often with flaws or too detailed for external consumption. However, gradually our ability to produce externally publishable material is improving due to more accessible technology, experience from feedback received from involved external comments, and increasing confidence as decadal projects produce outcomes that can be shared more easily than processes.

Websites, videos, and published material are mainly done in house. It is vital that core teams within the Alliance develop these skills to retain learning and capacities. An increasing number of organizations are seeking research documentation with the Alliance as well as exposure, thus expanding our repertoire for documentation.

Our Websites

SPARC Website: <http://www.sparcindia.org/>

SPARC CityWatch Blog: <http://sparccitywatch.wordpress.com/>

SPARC Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/SPARC/98181527302>

SPARC Youtube Page: [sparcnsdfmm](http://www.youtube.com/user/sparcnsdfmm)

SDI Website: <http://www.sdinet.org>

There is a very fine balance between working together with external researchers and documentation requests and becoming the documented and object of other peoples projects.

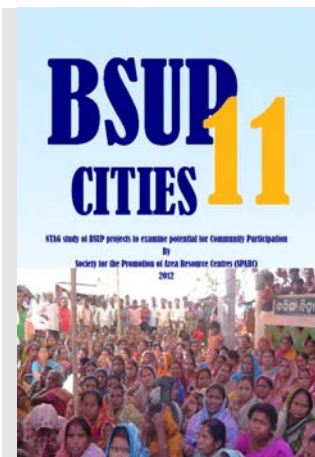
Many researchers come to “do their projects” and see the Alliance as a gateway to facilitate this process. If their subjects don't align with us, if their subjects don't interest present of past focus we avoid involvement.

Attitudes of demanding time when it suits them, being intrusive or sometimes outright rude to community leaders occurs despite initial whetting. But over the years some very positive and constructive relationships with individuals and organizations have emerged leading to publications and material about Alliance practices.





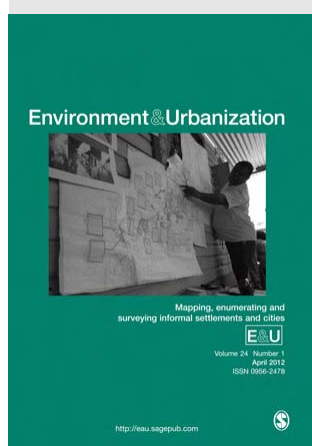
Publications



This study was undertaken by SPARC to study Housing projects in 11 cities connected to JNNURM's Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP). It was undertaken for the National Technical Advisory Group (NTAG) of JNNURM. Its focus was to review the projects and to examine the community participation aspects of project design and delivery.

The report will be available with SPARC and will be posted on the NTAG website after being initially circulated to the Government of India, NTAG, and the cities involved in the study.

The findings reflect the inability of the design and execution mechanisms to facilitate community participation in many instances and the range of unresolved issues of infrastructure, land ownership, procurement and financial management challenges. These issues have impeded the development of the cities' capacity to address the need for secure habitat for slum dwellers.

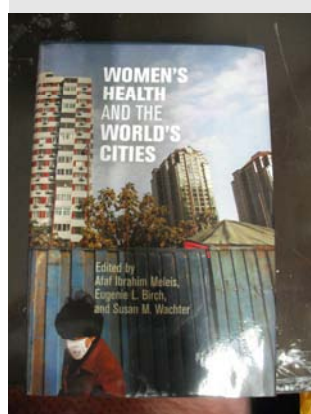


This issue of Environment and Urbanization was edited by SDI and features the enumeration practices of SDI affiliates. It outlines the process of surveys initiated in India by the Alliance and its journey to many countries through the Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) network. It emerges from a Learning Monitoring and Evaluation process initiated in 2010-11, to systematize information gathering and knowledge creation. This serves to sharpen and deepen the articulation capacities of various organizations who undertake the work, and to share with development actors. IIED's Human Settlements group's support to make this happen was both essential and critical since many of the authors were undertaking this for the first time.



Several years ago, the Rockefeller Foundation invited SPARC as part of Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) to participate in the committee that would advise the curators of this exhibition. It facilitated SPARC, NSDF, and MM to examine its work in developing projects in terms of "design". Over a ten month period, videos, maps, photos and many forms of documentation were shipped to New York.

This book has a collection of works of many city level organizations, whose quest for alternatives are documented as design options for the people living in cities within informal structures and spaces.



The University of Philadelphia hosted a conference on women's health in which the Alliance's perspective of the social determinants of women's health was also presented as a chapter in the book .

Both as part of our on going reflections, as well as a result of seeking to articulate what we do to the outside world, the alliance explores possibilities of publishing articles writing chapters or making presentations which reflect on what the poor can do to bring change in their olives which also ensure improved governance transparency advocating inclusive development. Many projects are presently being explored for the coming years.

Photo gallery for incremental investments



Slum dwellers produce homes using sweat equity and recycled materials and incrementally upgrade their homes.

What roles and policy support can we provide to build on what they have done, rather than destroy it when universal full replacement is not possible?



A multi year exploration is presently being undertaken. Federations in the cities of Karnataka are developing loans to communities for incremental upgrading. 700 loans have been given through Mahila Milan in 6 cities and towns for housing upgrading.

In 2011-12, SPARC began to streamline these loan applications along with their delivery and tracking. SPARC is exploring ways to expand this portfolio, examine who we need to network with, and to expand larger access beyond federations for this kind of upgrading.

SPARC will seek to develop engagements with other organizations in 2012-13 to study incremental housing further. Also, SPARC hopes to develop possible means to involve banks and financial in addition to encouraging government policy to view this as one option available to households to drive their home improvements.



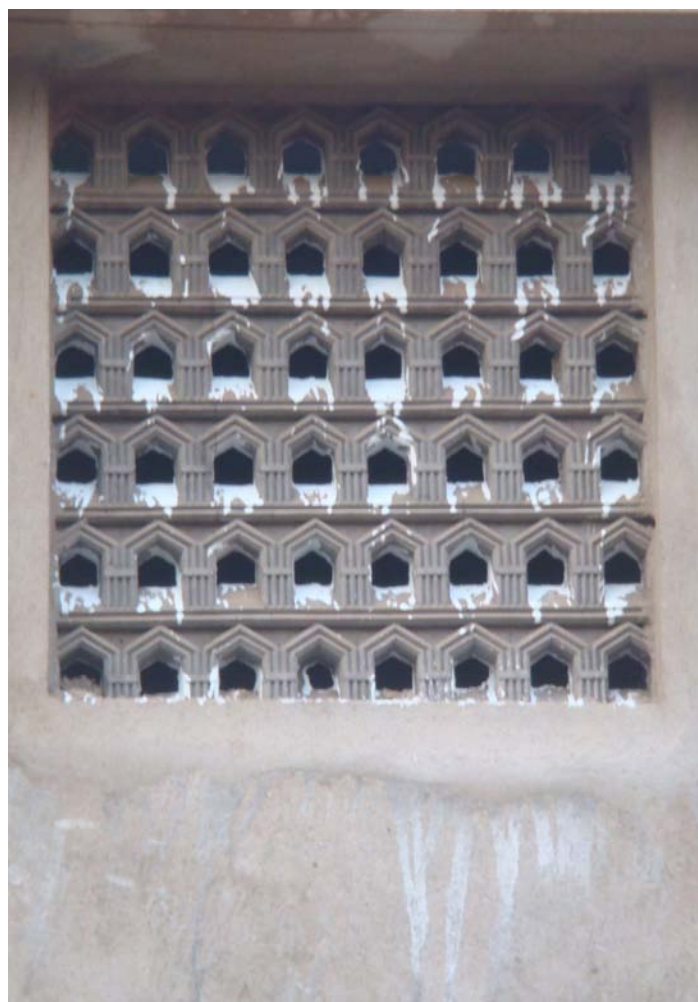


The light and ventilation and aesthetics of “Jaalis”



For the last several decades, households have used “jaalis” instead of windows for light and ventilation. Thus, as we began to explore the innovations that households undertook while building their homes, the world of “Jaalis” was already embedded in our documentation.

When the Alliance began to take on construction, it was the preferred alternative to windows. Jaalis were precast and sold near the informal settlements by entrepreneurs. This has led to an inquiry within the Alliance to explore how to expand the repertoire of pre-fabricated materials that can be made available to self built upgrading of homes.





Looking back

Reflections, through monitoring ongoing activities, planning new projects, deepening ongoing processes and creating a more effective engagement with the state, peers, grant makers and others form the most useful and effective mechanism that can produce useful learning. They also improve our ability to articulate what we do, to make our presentations more succinct, and to develop a better capacity to gauge who has an appetite to plunge into the depths of complexities or get an elevator speech.

Looking back at various decades –our milestones: Between 1984-90, SPARC concentrated on developing and expanding the nature of the Alliance and its activities, rituals, and processes. 1991 to 2000 was a decade of setting vital precedents that demonstrated how the organisational capacity built within member affiliates of NSDF could help them sort out their own problems and make vital contributions to the development agenda of cities and states in which they were located. Between 2001 to 2010, many of these activities were scaled up as projects or as processes. Since these models were considered to be robust, many of these models were adopted by various government agencies and by grant makers.

So where are we today ?

SPARC has developed institutional arrangements of relationships between professionals and communities of poor. SPARC was founded with this intention and with its alliance will surge forward to consolidate the value of people participating in their own development. We build our capacity to negotiate with the external world based on how much we negotiate with each other to agree on solutions we seek to produce and the course of actions we should take. Much of how we proceed depends on space to dialogue with resource providers, legal and developmental constraints within which the solution has to be developed, and space for communities to participate in them. Also, essential SPARC's relationship with NSDFG and Mahila Milan is the commitment to transferring the functions which were initially managed by SPARC to the federation leadership. This brings up the issue of risk management and addressing sustainability. SPARC cannot grow or replicate its competencies at the scale required for what is needed in the cities. Thus, sustainability and organisational commitments requires us to hand over as many functions as possible to the community leadership of the NSDF and MM.

So where do SPARC's core competencies lie today?

SPARC is now able to operate on a continuum of advocacy to asset creation. SPARC's association with the federations and its constituency of the urban poor demands that advocacy without resource delivery or impact of its outcome is empty and meaningless and not worthwhile to the poor whose rights are being sought. This requires a different trajectory to create those entitlements and how they are obtained, ideally through setting precedents rather than other forms. It entails taking risks to develop those precedents and also to facilitate the communities to drive those outcomes and their delivery.

It often entails taking risks to produce outputs. Initially, it entails developing an insight into the manner in which the process evolved. Our reflections indicate that there are three levels of scale. Initially, where both communities and the state institutions agree to undertake the project but both struggle to make the system work. External pressures, internal inexperience, and poorly planned financial and management systems produce flaws, low quality, and delays in delivery. In the second phase, internal improvements and advocacy to improve state institutions capacity begins but is not achieved. Its often in the third phase that the state policy and practice begins to change and a more aligned partnership begins. SPARC is in the process writing a paper on this process for more reflections both within the alliance and for reflections with state institutions.

The challenge of demonstrating leverage remains constant, but our ability to demonstrate it has improved with each decade is now evident. The fact of the matter is, however impressive our own growth is, the real impact of scale has to overflow into a community of practice adopted by the state. Thus engagement with the state at all levels, while working on any activity, be it a process or a project, is vital. It also demonstrates that an almost decadal time frame is needed to create such outputs. Yet neither researchers, academics, grant makers, nor development actors have invested in research to observe these cycles and actually accept that all financial strategies are modelled on 2-3 year cycles which is required to produce impact and outcomes.

The Indian Alliance very proudly seeks to legitimize the federation model as a means to deliver development at scale treating the urban poor as central to the process. Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) having adopted this strategy has created both local and national and international explorations that are refining this strategy and engaging various governments.

Will we manage to mainstream the federation model?

Can we get recognition as the crucible we are for addressing development challenges with poor as participants rather than beneficiaries?



Looking forward 2012-2015

Building on what we have created and consolidating its value to the urban poor remains the most vital aspect of SPARC NSDF and MM focus.

Informality in cities is growing exponentially creating deeper exclusionary divides, and facilitating mediation between these two part of the city remains a challenge.

The next five years will show us whether our roles as a crucible for exploration, experimentation and creating innovations for scale remain vital and will get independent financial assistance or whether we join others to become financially viable and do projects.

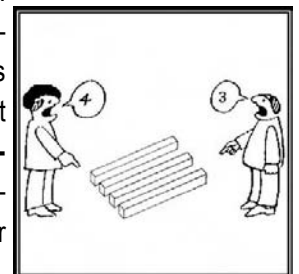
In the period 2012 and 2015, remains a period of global uncertainties which had both direct and indirect impacts on what happened in cities and how it affected us. National elections are in 2014 in India, and global discussions of what happens post MDGs in 2015 have begun. The overall development slow down has impacted both cities and the national development investments for cities. NGOs and non state development actors are used as soft targets blamed for the crisis in governance and their ability to participate in development. This results in a general reduction of support for assistance to organisations like us whose ability to explore possibilities, innovations, and scale depends on grants. The trend seems to push us into becoming sub contractors in project delivery within the state, the private sector, and even aid agencies. How we will survive this phase of uncertainties is difficult to anticipate or to plan because organisations like ours are driven by what constituencies of slum dwellers' need.

The most immediate challenge is funding. We will need to be careful to balance between exploring projects which fulfil the needs of the most vulnerable against those which only help raise funds for the organisation. We have to deal with the sense of pessimism on the paradox that while urbanisation is expanding global and national frameworks for urbanisation, there is no developed a foresight to address its challenges and development intervention continues in the trajectory to impede urbanisation. The impact of global slowdown and natural disasters are also bringing more people to the city, increasing tensions as cities are not developed to accommodate them and increasing the strife between new immigrants, religious groups and formal and informal city dwellers. There is a clear and distinct increase in disparities within the urban population and huge income and habitat disparities between the rich and the poor. Global consumerism has pushed the population of youth in slums to aspire for materialistic things matching that of elite youth.

Our Critical focus therefore lies in staying on course, to strengthen deepen and scale up, and organise communities of the urban and informal poor to produce inclusive cities and equitable urbanisation. Our commitment is to work on a continuum of seeking entitlements but not making the poor beneficiaries; to designing processes of participation that bring innovation and lateral thinking within informal organisations that can help bridge the divide between formal and informal; to develop an agency for vulnerable and poor in cities and open possibilities for change that impacts the next generation rather than two generations later; to be opportunistic and to seize possibilities while ensuring we stay within our remit of commitments.

Addressing leadership challenges has always been a valuable part of the internal reflections. Founding leaders of NSDF and SPARC remain crucial assets. Our challenge is to deepen the mentorship that builds cadres of leaderships to several levels to take this process wider and forward in the coming years. We know that we have been building on our assets. **The federation model is our biggest asset** through which city level and neighbourhoods get an opportunity to learn from each other and feel confident in creating a clear space for what they want to do. Through Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) our belief that we can all work with a local focus and yet undertake global advocacy to create space for communities to drive development is beginning to have an impact. But it has a long way to go and national federations and professionals have a big role to play in consolidating this space. Making investments in Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) is making investments in the work we do.

A more recent exploration which we will pursue in the next three years is **forms of reflections for looking at failures and mistakes.** The urban poor never produce solutions through an easily understood or observable process. It's convoluted, messy, and often filled with mistakes and failures. SPARC faces the challenge of extracting, learning, and building improved strategies and action from each of these experiences and demonstrating these tasks were not disaster to be abandoned but foundations to be strengthened and built upon. **In the end, SPARC's most critical role is that of a bridge that interfaces the formal and informal.** It shares the bouquets and the brickbats emerging from collective action and seeks to reduce risks and increase opportunity for the urban poor in their quest to make the change they want to be.



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Tamil Nadu

Chennai-
Thiruvalluvar
Kanchipuram
Madurai
Andipatti (District
Theni)
Periyakulam (District
Theni)
Bodi (District Theni)
Thiruchirapalli
Valliyur (District
Thirunelveli)
Thirupattur
Thiruvannamalai
Chengam
Arani
Pollur
Tirupur
Coimbatore
Ambur
Vellore
Veniyambadi
Erode
Tarapuram
Salem
Palani (District
Dindukal)
Dharapuram
Kumbakoonam
Thiruvarur

West Bengal
Kolkata
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Kalyan

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(Bangalore)
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K.G.F
Mysore
Raichur
Maddur
Chikmanglore
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