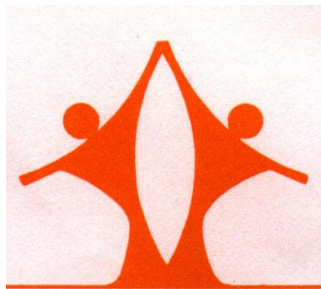
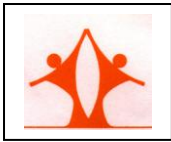


**SPARC, NSDF AND MAHILA MILAN  
Annual Report  
2005-2006**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

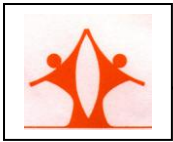
This report presents the work of SPARC for the year 2005-6. It has been a year of many contradictions as also of many new possibilities to work at policy and practice levels in many states of India as well as with many cities and communities. At the same time, there have been many new challenges to the participation of the organized poor being central to the process and directions of change. Negotiation for policy change remains a long standing and difficult business in development and one that somehow never gets reflected in annual plans and outcomes. However, many processes initiated by the alliance in the last few years have impacted the policies of state and city governments and the alliance can demonstrate its contributions to those transformations.

The word that echoes throughout this report is "challenge". These are challenging times from all perspectives. As a sector, NGOs face many challenges and one challenge that the NGO sector as a whole faces is that economic growth has increased disparity: there has been a significant increase in income for a few but many have not found place on the growth chart. It's also been a year of shrinking resources availability to the NGO sector as many donors move out of India even when statistics show that a population of over 160 million people live in slums in urban India. This is the second largest slum population after China (UNHABITAT REPORT on SLUMS). Many organizations, both urban and rural, have needed international aid not so much to use directly but to create a groundswell amongst the poor to put pressure upon the state to change its policies and direct its resources to those who need them. It is vital to build institutional capacity within civil society to ensure that state commitments to equity are properly addressed. This is more difficult in urban than in rural India: in the urban scenario, devolution is still in the process and while many responsibilities have been moved to the municipalities, local capacity and resources are not matched with the scale of the problem they have to address.

### **Changing India**

India is now acknowledged as one of the faster growing economies and this transformation is seen most vividly in its cities and towns. While investment in rural employment is being taken up aggressively by the government of India, it is clearly not going to stem the migration to cities or the development of small and medium towns in locations that were earlier rural or semi-rural. Demographers in India and in international agencies predict rapid expansion of urbanization and estimate that the present urban population of 35% will grow to 50% very soon. Already, in states like Maharashtra and other southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh Karnataka and Kerala, this population in cities has grown to around or over 40%. Between 20% in many towns and upto 50% in larger cities like Mumbai of the inhabitants live in slums and squatter settlements. What that indicates is an exclusion from the benefits of being located in the city and a denial of benefit from the development investment resources that cities provide to their citizens. India as a whole and its cities face huge challenges of how to produce sustainable and inclusive cities, and has few champions seeking to explore this strategy of inclusion.

Growing urbanisation represents one of the most significant socio-economic and developmental transformations in the world today. While cities have always been the source of trade and commerce and existed in all countries, rich and poor, there is evidence that the growth of cities in this millennium, both in numbers and size, will be exponential. With more than fifty percent of the world's population expected to live in urban areas by 2020, balancing economic growth and urban development with social justice and environmental sustainability has become one of the biggest global challenges.



While urban centers have presented enormous opportunities for people in the areas of employment, education, and scientific and technological innovation, the concentration of populations in urban areas has simultaneously presented a wide array of problems. These are observed in the form of accumulating backlog of housing, sub-standard economic, social and physical infrastructure, scarcity of serviced urban land and acute paucity of financial resources. Importantly however, the distribution of the benefits and services of urbanization across different sections of the population has been overwhelmingly inequitable, and skewed to the better-off neighborhoods and districts, with statistics suggesting that a very small percentage of the population has access to the vast majority of the services.

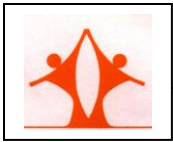
While income levels are commonly taken as the prime measures of poverty, there has been increasing recognition of the myriad dimensions and causes of poverty. At a broad level, poverty can be viewed as a combination of four vulnerabilities: economic, physical, social and human. Economic vulnerability includes irregular or casual employment, lack of access to credit, low paid work, lack of access to formal safety net programmes, and low ownership of productive assets. Physical vulnerability includes poor quality shelter without ownership or tenurial rights and lack of access to water, sanitation and other physical infrastructure. Social vulnerability includes lack of access to education and low skill base, low access to health services, low caste status and exclusion from local institutions. Personal vulnerability includes absence of security and discrimination on grounds of gender or disability and lack of access to information.

Poverty, when seen as a combination of these four vulnerabilities, assumes a complex and mammoth reality. In the Indian context, this has implied that a large number of people face continuing and severe health problems and nutritional deficiencies and lack adequate access to low cost services in the areas of water and sanitation, education and financial credit, all of which are integral to sustainable urban development. Over 40 percent of households in slums do not have access to safe drinking water, whereas 90 percent are without access to sanitation.

Employment opportunities, for a large section of the urban population, have not matched the growth in population. In some of the older industrial centres, the decline of the industrial base has pushed many unskilled and semi-skilled workers into unemployment. In the newly growing towns, inadequate capital for infrastructure have limited the growth of productive employment. With limited opportunities in the formal wage sector, it is the informal sector and casual employment that has grown significantly. Casualisation of labour has been shown to be one of the main and increasing sources of urban poverty.

Urban poverty has implied that a large number of the poor are relegated to the periphery of the economic, spatial and social spheres. Often, decisions influencing poor people's lives are taken by others who do not include the poor in this process. As a result, policy decisions rarely reflect the aspirations of the poor. Furthermore, the poor lack an effective negotiating platform to demand or advocate for a judicious mechanism to share city resources with the better-off classes.

The 21<sup>st</sup> year of SPARC and 18 years of its partnership with NSDF and MM have definitely contributed to demonstrating the power and possibilities of organized communities of the urban poor not only taking charge of their lives but also seeking to dialogue with their city and state institutions to change cities and towns in ways that benefit them and also solve other city problems. Much of this has meant that communities now wield some power and this has to be



accommodated in the city context where politicians, professionals, and administrators of various institutions see a new actor in development. In some instances, their hostility results in accusations of mismanagement, in others the strategy selected by the communities is challenged, in yet other instances, the very right of the organized poor to even explore some choices is contested.

Much of this year has been spent in dealing with these issues, clarifying the position of the alliance and communicating impact and implications of the choices that the federations make and which SPARC supports. Gradually and systematically, the alliance - especially the federations - is being accepted as new actors in the development process and politicians particularly were examining how they impact their constituency. Many suggest that federation leaders should simply stand for elections and that would solve some of the problems. However, experience in the past has demonstrated that individuals elected through various parties do not demonstrate the capability to withstand corruption and other pressures and often the federations lose skilled leaders, who become ineffective in these new roles.

Going to scale and sustaining levels of change explored in the process are huge challenges presently. Whether in housing or sanitation or just sustaining levels of participation of federated communities, maintaining those levels of change is a huge task. Since these are new and evolving practices, they need constant attention and nurturance and they need to be defended from the attacks of those who feel their power has been taken away from them. Even those who are experiencing a new sense of empowerment have to be assisted to navigate through the by-lanes of development, which is itself very frustrating and hard.

This year we also had an organizational review by Sida. It was useful in many ways, because it challenged us to examine our views and perspectives and stand by those we felt strongly about and explore changes where we believed it would benefit the alliance. This year also placed huge demands to fast track how we could become more self-sufficient as Sida and donors withdraw from India. This was a process which was to have originally occurred by 2010 but with less time available, other possibilities will have to be explored quickly.

The announcement of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) by the Prime Minister in December 2005, and our involvement and participation in JNNURM at both policy and implementation levels is a very exciting new opportunity. It is anticipated that JNNURM will provide resources for many of the projects that form the basis of partnership between the alliance and various municipalities and State Governments. With SPARC represented in many fora and various task forces to explore new possibilities, it is clear that it is the sustained work on the ground which opens these positions for us to influence policy. However, the challenge of finding resources to sustain that capability outside national government project funding remains.

### **The Challenge of dealing with vast numbers**

India has one of the world's largest economies and also among its fastest growing economies. It also has the world's second largest urban population (after China). United Nations figures show it has the world's second largest 'slum' population and that one in six of the world's 'slum' population lives in India's urban areas – a total of over 150 million people. India actually has more people living in 'slums and informal settlements' than a similar population in Africa. Most MDGs, it is acknowledged need to be fulfilled in India and China for sheer numbers to be covered while the populations endangered and vulnerable in Africa also need attention.



AS SPARC, we continue to expand the capacities of the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan to support the process of building community federations and assist them in developing proactive collective initiatives related to land security, safe housing and basic infrastructure and services; of scaling up solutions that work for poor people and for cities as a whole; demonstrating to city authorities, state or provincial governments and national urban policy making bodies, as well as the international funding community, the need to understand the mutual dependence of capacity building and infrastructure development support mechanisms; of broadening support for the Alliance's work through creating mechanisms and strategies for the Alliance's engagement with: other civil society agencies (Indian and international); municipalities and their associations; state governments; national government; bilateral and multilateral agencies; and financial agencies and banks.

### **Quantifying urban poverty**

Official poverty statistics are usually based on setting a 'poverty line' (the income below which a household is deemed 'poor') and determining the proportion of households with incomes that fall below this line. The poverty line is usually based on the cost of a 'minimum food basket' that is considered to provide an adequate diet. Recent studies point out that even families just above the poverty line do not earn enough for a minimum calorific intake and certainly much less than needed for a balanced diet. Usually, a small additional amount is added to the cost of the minimum food basket, in recognition of the fact that all households need to purchase some non-food necessities to avoid poverty.

However, in most nations including India, the allowance for 'non-food necessities' is very low and makes inadequate allowance for locations where non-food necessities are expensive. Generally, the larger and more prosperous a city, the greater the costs for housing (especially for those who rent accommodation) and transport (as poorer groups seek cheaper accommodation in peripheral areas far from sites where income-earning opportunities are concentrated). Many low-income groups in cities live in informal settlements where there is no formal provision for water and sanitation and so face high costs for water (for instance, when it is purchased from vendors) and often for sanitation (as the only sanitation facilities are public facilities). They often face high expenditures on health care (including expenditure on medicines). Some poverty-lines are based only on the cost of a 'minimum food basket' so make no allowance at all for all these non-food necessities. Education for children and even items like clothes are not included for purposes of computation.

The difficulties in making provision in poverty lines for the cost of housing and transport is acknowledged – but having been acknowledged, it is then generally ignored. In addition, poverty specialists often assume that urban residents have access to subsidized goods and services which is not actually evident on the ground or is evident only for a small proportion of the urban population. Many low-income urban dwellers may live in close proximity to water mains, schools and hospitals but it does not mean that they have access to them. This failure to make sufficient allowance for non-food necessities in setting poverty lines in India helps explain why the proportion of people living in 'slums' and informal settlements is generally higher than the proportion 'below the poverty line' in cities.

Defining poverty based only on a 'poverty line' income also misses many aspects of poverty - and in so doing, misses many means by which poverty can be reduced. Poverty lines do not identify who lacks adequate water and sanitation, safe, secure accommodation and health care. They do not identify who are not served by the rule of law and who do not get citizen rights and entitlements (including the right to



vote; those living in illegal settlements often cannot vote because to register they need a legal address).

The 10th five-year plan of the Government of India acknowledges that while the 74th amendment gave urban local bodies considerable power for urban development, their capacity for large scale and effective implementation of poverty alleviation programmes remains weak. It states that "the challenge to be met...is to assist these elected bodies grow organically to fulfill the demands of urban residents for a quality of life in line with world standards." (pg. 612); It recognises that there has been "no change in the basic level or improvement in the features of slum settlements despite several decades of programmes" (628); and recommends large scale land reform, provision of rental and affordable housing, and low cost community-led sanitation. For the first time, it acknowledges that "the practice of focusing on water supply to the exclusion of sanitation and waste water treatment should be given up in the Tenth Plan." (649).

### **Targets, Choices and Hypothesis about Urban Poverty**

At the international level, the Millennium Development Goals have also set ambitious targets for the urban poor. Specifically, goal 7 target 11 states that by 2020, there should be a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

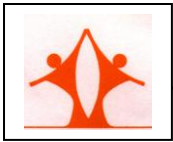
Most countries in the world, rich and poor, have made a commitment to address issues of poverty and to address this process through the MDGs. Given that the world is urbanizing rapidly, all MDGs are expected to be played out more and more in urban areas in the future and exploring sustainable strategies of development investments that initiate these processes now is vital. Charity and philanthropy alone will not address these issues. Inequity is a political fact in the most basic sense and the poor must seek to change their situation as much as other sections of society should explore this outcome because coexistence, cooperation and collaboration will produce the foundation for economic growth and prosperity.

Our hypothesis is that in such circumstances, it is not only necessary to form and build the capacities of poor people's organizations but also, in order to produce equity and access to basic necessities of life, establish partnerships with dominant institutions of all kinds in order to promote a model of inclusive development. The sustainable city cannot be imagined if a large proportion of people are excluded from the benefits that urban life confers upon its citizens. The resource gap is often cited as a cause of poverty but is this an adequate explanation?

To us, the issue is not just of outlays for development. As *the Indian Finance Minister recently said, outlays do not equal outcomes*. Funds are important but it is the exchange of ideas and knowledge and the sharing of innovative developmental models that are key. New relationships can be forged between federations of the poor, local authorities and other groups as roles and responsibilities are renegotiated. These new equations produce change. Even small money can generate large ideas and, as we seek to show below, these large ideas can have an impact well beyond a project – the city, the country, globally. The justification for our work lies in the fact that it builds the rights of the poor from below as also in the fact that it can go to enormous scale.

### **The challenge of inclusion... who will take the lead ?**

The thread that runs through all the sections of the annual report reflects the need to establish space for the participation of the urban poor so that they might seek a place in the liberalizing, globalizing economy. ***In the recent elections, most India***



**watchers world-wide commented that the poor do not oppose globalization, but seek to enjoy its benefits and participate in it.** Ideally, the knowledge and insights of poor communities need to inform macro - policies of the State: if such a fit can be made, it will surely lead to the formulation of innovative strategies that fulfill developmental goals to address poverty and ensure inclusion of the poor.

These partnerships can and should be of diverse kinds: with formal financial institutions for easy access to formal credit in housing and infrastructure for the urban poor; with municipalities and State Governments on safe shelter, secure tenure and land rights; with municipalities, State and Central Governments and training institutions in the area of sanitation and pro-poor governance initiatives in general; with academia; with bilateral, multilateral and global agencies to orient them and the policies of nation-states towards the poor.

The dominant paradigm of viewing the poor and dealing with them is to see them as beneficiaries and recipients of the fruits of development. The poor are subjected to "consultations" and "participatory process" but all this is a mere fig-leaf to legitimize what the external development agency intends to do.

### **A challenging path**

It is apparent that present developmental practice is hostile to the central participation of poor communities. Poverty cannot be addressed merely by budgeting resources: indeed new institutional arrangements that give the poor a place and a voice in making choices and exploring options must be put into place.

Over a long period of time, the poor and their leadership have been systematically excluded from any role in process of decision-making. Unfortunately, the global development culture valorizes collective action only for ephemeral project execution and does not recognize the need for long-term mobilization. As a result, there is a widening gap between the aspirations of the poor to participate and the reality of how developmental investments get to be made.

In such circumstances, we at SPARC ask ourselves each year whether we can continue to face the external challenge of securing development financing as we continue to partner National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan. The development industry wants new and topical projects that shift and change as global discourse moves to different topics and ideas. In contrast, our work is to sustain support for large numbers of poor communities in cities to experience participating in organizational forms, to learn to explore their priorities and negotiate for solutions that work for them.

### **The great Indian Urban leap**

In December 2005, Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, announced the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) by which development investment in urban India has finally begun seriously. What this program has sought to do is to make a commitment of US\$12 billion or Rs 50,000 crores over a period of 7 years to cities and towns in India in a complex and exciting program which requires State governments and cities seeking these resources to comply with a set of governance - linked reforms. It is an ambitious and yet fledgling process as all tiers of government and citizens begin to explore this framework to make development investments equitable (at the very least), while strengthening the abilities within cities to seek other investments from capital markets.





Sheela Patel has been appointed as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee set up by the Government of India for Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. We see this appointment as a function of the role that SPARC has sought to play in the last two decades.... of building capacity of the poor as citizens to propose solutions that cities can adopt to solve their problems while helping the poor; of constantly engaging public institutions as much to make them accountable to the poor as well as to help them work with communities; of seeking equity for the urban poor in the form of basic amenities and land security while acknowledging the need for cities to be competitive in the shifting global landscape.

This appointment gives us yet another opportunity to showcase the relevance of what we do as the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan ... to actually do what others advocate... and more importantly, to encourage other NGOs and civil society institutions to explore working on issues impacting cities and equity, and to explore engagement with city and state institutions who themselves have to undergo transformation to stay relevant in this new urban millennium.

Much of what we have listed as activities in this report are finding their ways into the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission processes... either directly as they begin to explore a policy framework or indirectly as illustration of what is possible. Many, especially in the NGO sector are very skeptical of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission often dismissing it as an investment that will ultimately displace the poor.

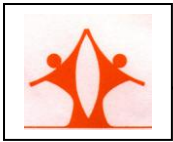
Whether that will happen or not depends as much upon those of us who advocate issues of equity as it does on opposing forces. The potential to explore this to challenge existing strategies and make them accountable to concerns we have as a sector is presently available...are we ready to take the risk? Many want guarantees, and none can be assured and to us in the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan, that is where we always start our explorations.

One hugely important challenge is for those stakeholders, who opposed each other, to explore new possibilities of working together. Many NGOs reflexively oppose the private sector; the corporate world is suspicious of NGOs and finds them annoying; city and state administrations often lack capacity to arbitrate between different world-views such that the contributions of both sectors can be aligned. Will Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission create the leadership framework to do that? If space is made for NGOs and CBOs to participate, will they rise to the challenge? Will Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission work for all cities or only the large cities that make demands on its resources? These are all issues that can only be answered in time. In the meanwhile, many like us have begun to explore the process. We will seek alliances and networks to build on activism based on issues of urban equity and social justice, that is both gendered and practical.

#### **Crisis of Grant funding for NGOs:**

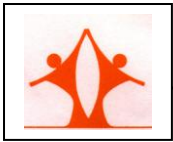
Grant funding for long-term processes, especially to sustain grassroots activism, is fading. As India seeks to shed its image as a nation needing funds, many International NGOs and bilateral agencies are withdrawing from supporting development in the country. While project based funding will probably remain available over time to NGOs, funds for nurturing community based institutions, building their ability to sustain themselves, sharing their risks and burdens as they explore development possibilities, which were always difficult, are now vanishing.

SPARC and other agencies can quickly don the mantle of consultants and probably earn resources to support the federation process, but that will alter the focus and the commitment of the leadership, who will become enmeshed in the politics of



development consultancies and contracts. These and many such challenges face us as we move into the next five year cycle of our planning... Hopefully, we will land on our feet and find a refreshed and invigorated approach to moving ahead... there can be no other way!

Sheela Patel. Director SPARC



## **UNDERSTANDING THE ALLIANCE OF SPARC, NSDF AND MAHILA MILAN**

### **Who we are and how we work together..**

SPARC is a non governmental organization set up in Mumbai in 1984 by a group of people who believed that development professionals need to examine new relationships with the poor in the cities. When SPARC began to work in the pavement slums of Mumbai, the women's collectives they worked with formed a network called Mahila Milan. NSDF was set up in 1974 by community leaders (mainly men), who had fought against evictions and demolitions around Mumbai and 8 other cities. In 1986-87, SPARC, NSDF and MM began to work together as an alliance. NSDF needed an NGO that was ready to be an equal partner and support its activism. SPARC, having started working with pavement dwellers in Mumbai, needed to link with a more broad based organization of the poor to strengthen the claims of groups such as pavement dwellers and others who were vulnerable in the city. After the three began to work together, Mahila Milan collectives were set up in all settlements in which NSDF worked.

**NSDF** (The National Slum Dwellers Federation) is a national organization that links federated slums at the city and regional level and builds their collective ability to defend the rights of the poor to live in the city and participate in its development. It organizes communities into local federations, and creates a loose network that transfers knowledge practices of effective organizational processes across this network. The NSDF also supports local groups to explore setting up a development agenda for slums and work with their local authorities to actualize their plans.

**SPARC** is a registered NGO, which manages the finances, undertakes the legal obligations of the alliance, monitors and documents the activities of the federations, creates spaces for the federations to explore, develops linkages and partnerships, manages information and data bases and works collaboratively with the federation on all issues.

**Mahila Milan now has collectives in all settlements of NSDF.** Mahila Milan provides women with public recognition of the roles they play in these communities and builds their collective skills to participate in leadership processes. Women who explore leadership in informal settlements at local level are encouraged to support each other nationally and gradually begin to participate in NSDF activities. Today, half of NSDF's national leaders are women.

### **NSDF Mahila Milan membership**

There are presently about 600000+ households in 11 states and union territories and 72 cities associated with the NSDF and Mahila Milan. Individuals or households do not become members. New communities collectively link up to their city federation, and based on the local context are linked to other communities who face similar problems. There is no membership fee, but an agreement to explore federation rituals.

The alliance of SPARC, Mahila Milan and NSDF has a deep commitment to create space for local activism and supports poor urban communities to develop the confidence and capacity to manage their own development aspirations. What have emerged as the most pressing issues for the urban poor, and what we have chosen to focus on, is access to land tenure and basic infrastructure.

### **Growth and Scaling**

The first lesson the federation taught SPARC was that although providing access to land, housing and infrastructure may ultimately need technical solutions, the problem of access was essentially a political one. Unless large numbers of the poor organised



collectively to demand these resources from their cities and government, no change would occur.

Our dialogue with state institutions also indicated that the solutions that the poor wanted did not fit within the existing policy framework. Moreover, while on the one hand, state delivery lacked accountability to the poor, on the other hand, because of this poor delivery by the state, there was an increasing shift towards privatisation. It was clear that unless communities were organised locally they would not have a say in this process. Thus our continuing challenge is to keep expanding the numbers of poor communities seeking change to produce a critical mass that the state cannot ignore and must engage in dialogue.

### **Dealing with differing capacities within federations**

Each year new cities and new communities join the federation, and the gap between the older and more mature federations and the new ones widens. At the same time, the networking practices of peer learning and exchanges mean a faster learning curve for the new federations, who have a much larger menu of solutions and strategies from which to learn. Each new tool developed by the alliance is accessible to all communities in the federations, but internalisation takes time, as does the reality of getting the government institutions to accept the idea as well.

### **Leadership challenges**

Local focus and global advocacy. The alliance is part of a transnational network called Slum Dwellers International (SDI). SDI links communities in India to similar groups across the world. This innovative process seeks to provide global exposure to local leadership and seeks to explore a global platform for advocacy by and for the issues of the urban poor. To date, all members of such networks are grassroots activists at local levels supported by the NGOs that work with them. What is often challenging for leaders is to simultaneously balance work in local communities and participate in global arenas. SDI works to widen this spectrum of international leadership.

Collective leadership with a gender balance. As the alliance matures and its roles and functions get legitimised, widening and deepening the leadership pool while ensuring that equal numbers of men and women work together remains a constant challenge.

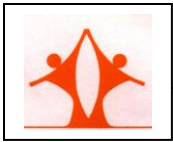
### Balancing quality and experimentation

Supporting communities to participate in designing and scaling up solutions means that we are constantly faced with demonstrating the legitimacy of this decision because:

- It takes time for communities to experiment and learn from their mistakes
- It is not easy to access financial resources for such experimentation
- While there is a steep learning curve, special attention needs to be paid to maintaining quality

### **Elaborating on Risks and their management and mitigation**

The most powerful insight that helped found SPARC in the first place is that NGOs undertaking development work have to have a clear understanding of risks. Being poor makes individuals, families and communities and their neighborhoods face risks all the time. Exclusion, marginalization and isolation are words we know well in the development processes; yet, we understand very little of how within very scarce and fragile resources, the poor manage to develop rituals and practices to survive. In urban areas, illegal status as a squatter, more than any other single variable produces invisibility for the poor. It makes all attempts to seek any upward mobility that much harder as resources erode through evictions, health suffers because of an unhygienic



environment and lack of access to infrastructure makes it impossible for people to consolidate their assets.

The Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan has sought to not only acknowledge these realities, but to empower communities through accepting that what they do in survival mode, despite all opposition, is not to be scoffed at but to be seen as a foundation of grit and determination on which a much more sustained development process must grow. However, there is a vast gap between that realization and actual access to the resources and legitimacy from the urban environment. It does not close automatically. The challenge of creating a situation where people's own resources and capacities can be blended with those of the city and nation is what the federation is all about.

That path to that solution is full of risks. Risks multiply when we seek and test new possibilities: to learn new ways to undertake projects and activities that will allow the poor and their organizations to participate and better still to drive the process; to be ready to fail a few times in that pursuit because transformation does not occur in practice without problems and failures. Much of what the Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan does is to share that burden of learning and transformation.

*"To be poor," says Jockin, "means we have no right to fail. We get only one chance and if we mess up, it's over for us and our reputation. But for the educated and the consultants and project managers, there can be many reasons why things did not work... the dirt ( of failure) does not stick on them, but it is stuck on us forever".*

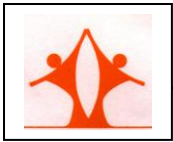
Every action, every process we explore and actualize has to first of all help the communities to begin to aspire... because if you don't have expectations, there can be no change. Yet the process of change has to begin with some small group having a new idea, exploring it and actually seeking to make it work for them and then sharing its good and bad aspects with everyone else.

Taking risks to bring about change has to be linked to a strategy of managing change. By having very large critical mass of communities working together, those who explore change see themselves as a vanguard. Whether they succeed or fail, their experience is useful to the whole federation... it's a learning process that others will build on and even failure has its lessons. It teaches you what not to do. By taking this attitude, fear of exploring the unknown is reduced. The knowledge that it produces is collective and it forms the basis of practical advocacy for policy change, the basis of active partnership for change with state and other institutions.

### **Scale , Risk and Pilot Projects**

Many NGOs and community groups are constantly criticized for not being able to scale up their innovation. India, many say, is a graveyard of pilot projects. Few, however, examine closely why that is so. The reality is that change is a slow and gradual process whose starting point is an alternative possibility and a practical demonstration of that alternative. If that process is not supported on an on-going basis to be considered as a development option, its efficacy and potential withers away. Getting a very large number of communities in many cities excited with this possibility and their, in turn, engaging their cities to explore options with the communities, sustains the momentum of the innovation. More than anything, the process builds skill sets, identifies the problems that such a transition produces and helps refine the process.

But even that does not ensure that the process will survive or that it will ensure perfection at the next level of scaling. Existing power structures and relations are



hostile to equitable development and block the access of the poor to processes of inclusion and services.

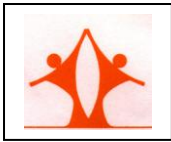
The Alliance tries to scale up its activities at different levels and tries to link this scaling up with larger State processes. While maintaining a focus upon the need for large investments in housing and infrastructure,, the alliance's central concern with participation and equity issues throws open the debate for collective and critical scrutiny.

Issues of credibility Initially, when federations take up activities, formal institutions are very sceptical because they have had no past experience with them. They simply do not believe claims of capacity to mobilize communities and to work with State institutions. It is when the work gets under way and results are there for all to see that credibility over a period of time.

Risks of Co-option It is difficult to work with State institutions and credit arrangements that work for the poor. It is easier to hold a hundred demonstrations and organize a hundred public rallies to berate the state for its failures and rhetorically call upon it to improve. However, while working with State institutions – always more powerful than NGOs and CBOs – we have to be aware of the risk of being co-opted by the agendas of others. Continuous and critical reflection is necessary to see that partnerships are still working towards the purposes originally envisaged.

As the newly emergent process empowers communities of the poor, it strikes at the roots of the politics of patronage and upsets the apple-cart of vested interests. It comes as no surprise then that changes in the balance of power invite wrath and hostility from those whose position is threatened. Accusations of corruption and inefficiency are flung to discredit this assertion of the poor and their interests.

All organizations face risks of the unexpected and the unknown in differing measure. For organizations of the poor and their partners, these risks are particularly acute because of the absence of statutory frames and some uncertainty about financial underpinning.



## **A SUMMARY OF THIS YEAR'S PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR A SOCIAL MOVEMENT.**

***Internally as was the case last year,*** to date the community federations continue not wanting to be registered legal entities, and the responsibility of developing formal proposals administering them, communicating formally with agencies, fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities is the task of SPARC. They have also decided for the foreseeable future not to participate in elections and to encourage federation membership for the poor of all faiths and parties. As many communities move into buildings and register as cooperatives, they become new legal micro-entities and their cooperative federations are evolving as new forms of legal entities. It is envisaged that these legal forms of association will replace the informal status of the federations over time and they will provide services and support to their members. Transitions in the manner in which roles are taken over by the NSDF and Mahila Milan are often not apparent to outsiders and many evaluators are very fearful for SPARC as they perceive this as a risk. In order that communities and their collective leadership remain the long-term actors in the process of city which is most relevant that they focus upon that mobilization. Therefore, SPARC retains many of the activities listed above so that the attention of the federation is not deflected from their primary purpose.

This year, we collectively reflected as an alliance about what the implications of such a role are. Later this was also discussed extensively at the Governing Board of SPARC. Our organization was created to support communities as they explored development and change. The shift from rhetoric to action and the transformation of the poor from being beneficiaries to central drivers of change was our mission. We acknowledged that the practice of supporting real change is a long and risky business. It was also clear that our lives and organizational processes would be so much simpler if we worked not as an alliance but directed the federations instead of treating them as partners. Unquestionably, we have seen amazing and fascinating strategies emerge from this process: these have inspired many other slum communities around the world to adopt the federation practices through the Shack Dwellers International (SDI) process. But the process of choosing a new and un-trodden path also means that there are no stock answers, no clear solutions or safe practices.

Our greatest risk mitigations have been the different kinds of financial and technical assistance that come to us through various donors and grant - makers. Their constant questioning about what we do and how we do it forces us to reflect upon the choices we make. Supportive yet critical assessment of what we do helps us understand how others look at what we do and provides crucial occasions for reflection and analysis. External assessment demands that we articulate and champion our positions and choices of action. It forces us to analytically rebut criticism (when unjustified) and explain the basis of our choices and the impact of those choices. The Sida review did that for us this year.

Another challenge we faced was a review by the World Bank who said they had some complaints against the alliance in the rehabilitation project of MUTP. Teams of investigators spent almost some weeks in the city to investigate claims, review our documentation and study our financial and contractual agreements. While each of these processes created difficult and traumatic responses initially as community and federation leaders questioned how they could be quizzed so much when so many flawed state driven activities continued, that process ultimately has strengthened us. At the end of each episode, our discussions with the federations sought to examine what weaknesses in our systems allowed others to attack our credibility and what changes needed to be taken up to address such weaknesses. AS the activities of the alliance scale up, so does the complexity of financing and the sophistication required to manage these financial practices. The alliance has never taken a short cut! So demands made from the external environment mean that the process has to be acceptable and doable by the whole alliance rather than SPARC alone. This has meant that this year the whole organization has set up new practices and sought



more professional support to improve its accounting practices, Training processes began with the various federation groups and their leadership. Many practices recommended to increase transparency have now been adopted by the federations. Similarly, the demand for reverse accountability from those who seek to check what we do has also begun more aggressively.

**Externally** the roles of the three partners in the alliance have grown exponentially.... At local, state, national and international levels, we have been asked to participate in a wide spectrum of activities and, in some instances, lead the process. Each month an increasing number of national and international exchange visits occur to see how we organize communities, what leaders do and how it transforms us and demonstrates sustained engagement with state institutions. Many academic institutions are now actually working with us on an annual basis to base their students' field work to learn the process of "partnership" with communities rather than to just visit poor people as an anonymous group. As a result of the meetings in Stockholm, over the years many Swedish agencies and institutions are exploring working with us.

In the past, we have claimed that while organizing and mobilizing communities is always possible, the value addition of creating linkages with city and state institutions cant make place when governance structures and policies are both stable and pro-poor. JNNURM now provides incentives to state governments and municipalities to work for the poor. Our challenge is how to manage and expand our processes to support communities to explore those partnerships in a situation of quickly diminishing resources. For almost every recommendation that we are making as members of Technical Advisory Committee to the Ministry for Urban Development, there is a demonstrated practice available within the federations. Many city government project proposals are also using their partnership with communities to initiate access to JNNURM Funds.

#### **Relocation and Rehabilitation:**

As cities seek to become more efficient, they have to develop a more strategic relationship with those squatting on lands needed for public purposes. Although many governments still try and evict households, it just postpones the issue of where they will finally live. The alliance is now invited to explore planned relocation by many land owners. It is paradoxical that while everyone laments the crisis of evictions, yet the exploration of options to mitigate that crisis are viewed with huge suspicion and hostility. When faced with the reality of forced evictions, hard choices have to be made which may not be 'perfect' in terms of locations, high densities and difficult transitional arrangements. The acceptance of these 'imperfect' choices is equated to being co-opted by the State. Within the alliance it is clear and evident that the window of opportunity to obtain secure tenure within the city is a slim one... fast disappearing as real estate practices and political greed transform the face of the city and diminish possibilities for both secure tenure or incremental slum upgrading.

#### **Monitoring and evaluation:**

This year has produced deep reflections in the organization as different challenges from various actors require the collective leadership to examine what it has done and how it proceeds to explore change. Each exchange and each event begins with a reflection of what has been done, what needs to change in practices of the alliance and what needs to be nurtured and protected. These reflections are communicated through the federation's leadership to SPARC and documented as anecdotes and photo milestones. Within SPARC this process is institutionalized through quarterly reflections assisted by Srilatha Batliwala on a regular basis and other visiting academics and practitioners with whom there is an on-going relationship. What these discussions with external professionals have shown SPARC is that what we do and how we do it either excites curiosity and excitement at exploring a new paradigm, or upsets and challenges many set paradigms in development, making professionals uncomfortable. What seems exciting and attractive





intellectually of aiding and supporting a mass movement is a difficult and long hand, messy and painfully unsystematic in practice, with a clear loss of control by the professionals. Though the outcomes are exciting and attractive and achieve many political gains for the poor, the process both baffles the professional and highlights risks and problems.

### ***The bridging role of the alliance***

SPARC and the leadership of the alliance are now deeply involved in many policy making fora... Some of them are: the Sanitation Task Force of the Ministry for Urban Development,, the Task Force on Housing Finance, the Task force on Mumbai Transformation, and many others. In each the role and contribution we make is to bring in the reality of how change can occur. What we try is to take an innovation that we have nurtured and go to scale with it while integrating it into state policy. It highlights once more that the sustainability of facilitating participation and change needs a huge laboratory of practical processes on the ground. While the state does not fund such experiment, it is happy to finance the projects that will emerge from those processes.

### ***Reflecting on alliance work vis a vis Millennium Development goals (MGDs):***

India, seeking its position as a huge economic power house, is to be juxtaposed with the size of its population that it has to bring above the poverty level. Our work seeks to make the poor the critical local/global constituency for the MDGs while forcing urban local bodies to develop local MGD goals.

### ***Interacting with the international development agencies.***

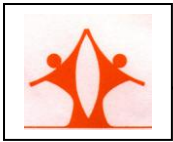
Today as one of the two secretariats of Shack Dwellers International (SDI) SPARC and the federations are represented as committee members on many international task forces, policy boards and discussion for a for urban poverty issues. In both Asia and Africa, the Indian alliance has been instrumental in helping community federations build capacity and confidence to negotiate with their governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies. Our work in India is a crucible for learning and many Shack Dwellers International (SDI) affiliates come for exchanges to explore options developed. For us this reflects a new definition of what is global... when many local institutions adopt a range of practices that are similar, they produce a new "global", which is driven by localities and is rooted in the reality of their situation.

### ***Dialogue with academia:***

Swedish, US and other European academic institutions are in the process of building long-standing partnerships with the alliance. It is also a testing ground for whether they can explore similar relationships with Shack Dwellers International (SDI) affiliates in the future. To develop and sustain equal relationships with such institutions requires special leadership from academic institutions. There must be humility to acknowledge that organizations of the poor can have ideas and processes to share...and skills to bridge communication and conceptual gaps in knowledge so that students can learn from them. It is envisaged that gradually these bilateral relationships will be consolidated into a grassroots academic network to undertake joint research, documentation of practices and development of curriculum.

### ***Tsunami: the natural and the man-made kind***

Tsunami the year before, floods of an unprecedented type last year in Mumbai and other cities in the south are now a routine reality in the lives of the poor. Man-made and environmental disasters are now accompanied by terror attacks of the kind we see in Mumbai, Srinagar and other cities in India. Collective and organized response is vital for this in the absence of state wide disaster preparedness. Navigating support after the initial crisis is very important but very hard to undertake in procedural tangles and administrative red tape. As though it was not enough to manage being poor and invisible in the city, now the poor have to deal with new and frightening disasters that can destroy their lives in moments.



## **THE REPORT FOR 2005-6**

This narrative report of Sida funded activities of the federation is to be read along with the detailed quantitative data that has been provided. While this report will describe the nature of our activities undertaken in the past year, and provide some reflections upon the same, it is the quantitative data sheets that will provide specifics of the exact locations of those activities that have been supported by Sida funds.

The reporting period is for April 2005 - March 2006. Our steep growth curve and learning process continued during this period. Particularly significant is that we have been approached by a number of municipalities as well as state authorities to collaborate on both housing and infrastructure projects, as was the case last year. The federation continues to build its own organizational capacity to better manage large-scale operations.

This report is divided into the following sections -

- i. **Capacity Building** - which looks at our federation building work including our mobilization, exhibitions, exchanges, surveys and discussions with local authorities. This section also looks at the conventions.
- ii. **Projects – and Precedent Setting** reflecting our housing, sanitation, relocation and other project activities this year.
- iii. **Regional, National and International Advocacy**
- iv. **Documentation, Monitoring and Evaluation**

These sections will focus on the kinds of activities that Sida has supported.

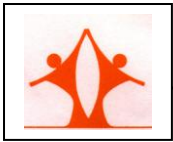
## **CAPACITY BUILDING OF FEDERATIONS**

The Alliance of SPARC-NSDF and Mahila Milan firmly believed that sustainable development interventions are based on the internal "readiness" or "preparedness" of poor communities. Of course, achieving this "readiness" is a long and complex process, involving the self-organization of communities into Federations and the building of their capacities to engage in dialogue with city and state officials. This mobilisation process includes building the federation's savings and credit activities, ensuring that women play a central role in community management of credit as well as in all public spaces, mentoring emerging leadership to survey their settlements and learn about housing and sanitation innovations through exchanges, and use their expanding knowledge base to come up with solutions through exhibitions. This capacity-building, in combination with the state's willingness to explore innovative solutions to the problems of housing and infrastructure for the poor, results ultimately in successful community-state partnerships and projects. The Alliance's multi-pronged strategy is therefore aimed at communities, municipalities, state officials and national policy makers simultaneously.

### **The federation tool box**

#### **Ritualizing activities, processes and practices**

It is a deep commitment of the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan to build a sustainable community-driven process which the urban poor own, manage and utilize to obtain what they need to fulfill their aspirations. The gradual aggregation of



explorations has produced a range of practices that are adopted by all communities who are members of the federation. The criteria for what works is simple. The activities have to be managed locally; they have to be communicated by peers even if initially they have been developed by the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan and may have a SPARC influence; they have to facilitate collective behavior and assist people in their day to day lives as well as in the medium and long term; and women have to be able to play a vital and central role in the activities. They produce insights, knowledge and outcomes that work both as a means and an end... so that the practices and knowledge help them as they undertake the activity

### **Outcomes from these processes**

The NSDF and MM seek to realign the relationship of the poor with their political leaders and local municipal authorities. This mobilization strategy, the tools of which are discussed in this section, is an educational process, deeply embedded in collective organizing.

### **Cities with federation presence**

No of states: 11

No. of cities: 53

JNNURRM cities: 22

### **1. Area Resource Center – the first building block**

An Area Resource Center (ARC) is a geographical and physical space for federated communities to collect, hold meetings and discussions, exchange views and ideas, and develop a collective set of priorities on which they base their federation activities.

Unless poor communities and their organizations own and manage such spaces, they cannot sustain institutional forms to advocate the changes they need. Although SPARC was directly involved in the setting up the first 8-10 Area Resource Centers, NSDF and MM now manage this process. They choose the location, and SPARC contributes towards telephone, electricity and meeting expenses on a yearly basis. But the identifying of issues to work on and the supervising of strategy sustaining the mobilization of these ARCs is done locally and nationally by the NSDF and MM leadership.

By creating these centers in or near informal settlements, women both manage and inhabit the physical space in these centers. All data collected by the community is kept here; when local groups see each other this is the venue. All documentation of savings and credit are kept here, exchanges are managed here and their meetings with officials, if in the community, are held here at these centers. The number of ARCs has not been increased this year; instead, there has been a consolidation of their processes and an attempt to help them deepen their activity.

In the last few years, many ARCs have moved in Mumbai from huts and informal settlements to buildings as households have moved to these new locations. There is a stipulation that a community center be provided to the communities and as people have moved, so have the ARCs. These community centers now may house the police Panchayat, the cooperative society offices, day care centers for children and special classes for young people.

### **2. Exchanges:**

These “exchanges” are an adoption of the informal strategies through which poor people in the past have learnt from each other. Of all the learning, this is one they have the most confidence in and it supports strengthening of neighborhood identity as they visit each other; they learn to connect with people who don't stay



in the geographical vicinity but share the same aspirations, and the sustained communication network helps the alliance link people's knowledge and experiences, good and bad, without constant supervision and management. Hosting others, managing events and representing these events to others are vital and crucial elements of the process of empowerment and confidence building.

### **Peer Exchanges within and between cities**

- *Isolation can be transformed into empowerment.* Knowing that many others face the same problems as you provides impetus for the poor to become proactive and seek solutions together.
- *Seeing is believing* for the poor who don't trust merely hearing about solutions.
- *The power of teaching and learning* has to be experiential to transform people. Community leaders always find they are "told" by the professionals about what is good for them...in a relationship which is not equal. Now that can be changed.

*These exchanges are all planned, managed and executed by the communities and reported to the leadership*

### **Regional and state level conventions**

*As exchanges build relationships, confidence to participate in debate and discussions, the process now evolves to many cities and community leaders meeting routinely at regional and state conventions.*

| <b>Cities hosting regional meetings</b>          | <b>Number of exchanges</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Delhi  | 4                          |
| Andhra Pradesh (1 city)                          | 5                          |
| Tamil Nadu ( 12 cities)                          | 24                         |
| Orrisa (1 city)                                  | 1                          |
| Karnataka (3 cities)                             | 13                         |
| Maharashtra (3 cities)                           | 7                          |
| Mumbai   | 30                         |
| <b>Total number of National exchanges are 84</b> |                            |

### **Value of Exchanges**

Exchanges take place routinely within a city, between cities and between countries. Secure tenure, housing and infrastructure like sanitation, savings and credit, etc. are always themes of discussion, exposure and training. Community exchange programs rest on a very simple concept: the poor learn best from the poor. In today's world where knowledge is appropriated by the literate middle class, exchanges create new fora of learning and build knowledge for poor communities. It is difficult to be exact about the number of exchanges, especially local visits within a city

### **National Conventions**

Each year there is one National Convention at which communities from all over India participate in



- the selection of their national leadership: this is a group of 75 leaders from the various cities. More than half are women and these women's leadership emerges out of their working within Mahila Milan collectives at local areas.
- To celebrate the most crucial and vital outcome of their processes. This year it was the relocation of the first 82 families from Dimtimkar Road and Sophia Zubair Road in Byculla to the building they themselves designed and built in Mankhurd. ( more about that in a separate section) This meeting was to have been in late February but was postponed to April 2006.

**Milan Nagar story:**

*Since December 2005, the first building of Milan Nagar was beginning to look as though it was ready for occupation. Rather than have the national convention in 2005 between November and December, it was decided that the celebration would be hosted along with the convention as all federations wanted to be present when these households moved. After all, most of the federation tools have been developed by these households and the, (the women in pavement federations) have taught them many skills. The event was then planned for Feb 06, and the South African Housing Minister had agreed to come for the inauguration as well.*

*However, her visit was postponed, and the issue of obtaining water for the settlement required this to be postponed, and so finally the dates were last week of April 06. Over 20,000 people were present, about 250 from 38 cities in India and SDI representatives from South Africa, Philippines and Egypt..The entire convention and all logistics were planned by the community network in Mumbai*

**International Exchanges**

The Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan is part of a global network, Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI). Jockin, the head of NSDF, is also the President of SDI. India and South Africa are the secretariats of this International federation of 22 country in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This process, like the local and national exchanges, facilitates communities and their leadership to learn and share with each other at a transnational level, and together produce an advocacy for the rights of the urban poor at international fora.

| Period            | Exchanges   |
|-------------------|---|
| Apr-2005          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bhubaneshwar and Pondicherry went to Srilanka for Tsunami linked planning.</li> <li>➤ Byculla Mahila Milan went to Kenya for SDI review and Bombay and Pondicherry to Bangkok for Tsunami linked network meeting.</li> </ul> |
| May-2005          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Visitors From South Africa to Bombay</li> </ul>  |
| May & June - 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Federation goes to South Africa</li> </ul>   |
| Aug-2005          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ACHR - Bangkok visited Mumbai</li> </ul>   |
| Sept-2005         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Philippines visit Mumbai for conference</li> <li>➤ Team from Philippines visited Kanchipuram</li> </ul>  |
| Oct-2005          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bombay team went for Philippines visit</li> <li>➤ Celine D'cruz and federations went to Nairobi, Kenya</li> </ul>  |
| Dec - 2005        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sheela Patel and A. Jockin (President, NSDF) went to Nairobi, Kenya, and Kampala, Uganda</li> </ul>  |
| Jan-2006          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Bangladesh organic farmers visit Palani</li> </ul>   |

**3. Enumeration  
Making Counting matter**



Enumeration, mapping and surveys of slums are critical tools in the process of community mobilization. The Federation introduces communities to these tools and encourages them to collect all details related to socio-economic conditions such as housing, sanitation, water, income and education at the individual at household and settlement level. Self-enumeration gives communities the ability to speak from a position of knowledge as they have access to information, which no one else has. This level of aggregation of what they collectively represent as a micro community... as a unit of planning is critical to establish dialogue with policy makers who don't have knowledge or data on these settlements. This lack of data is the actual basis of bad planning or invisibility of informal settlements. Aggregation of this data at city and national levels then further builds the credibility of the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan. In the past 20 years, time and again, governments - after denying the slum dwellers their right to tenure - have ultimately used this data for planning improved housing or relocation or provision of services to the settlements.

**Household Surveys,**

**Surveys Occur for different reasons and are formalised to different extents**

All federation linked communities collect data about themselves and aggregate it to the level they need in general terms. Data that is needed to produce formal outcomes is sent to SPARC for computerisation and report generation. Even when the data comes to SPARC, its review and updation are done by communities. So after collection, the strategy of how to use the aggregation and ownership of the information is that of the local group. This is in and of itself a deep political act and one that gets contested all the time by professionals and government officials.

| Sr. No       | Period of Survey  | Name of Project/City                                      | No. of areas | Total Households | Total PAPs     |
|--------------|-------------------|---|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1            | April'05-Feb '06  | MUIP-2003 (Baseline Socio-economic Survey)                | 61           | 2,103            | 4,115          |
| 2            | April'05-Mar'06   | MUTP II (Baseline Socio-economic Survey)                  | 66           | 876              | 3,477          |
| 3            | April'05          | NSDF Settlement Profile for Other Cities                  | 1            | 8                | 8              |
| 4            | April'05-Feb'06   | Mixed Allotment (MUTP II)                                 | 20           | 262              | 1,089          |
| 5            | April'05 - Nov'05 | Baseline Socio-economic Survey of (Navi Mumbai)           | 57           | 31,898           | 99,524         |
| 6            | Sept'05           | Flood Affected Households Survey of Mumbai (August, 2005) | 19           | 338              | 1,464          |
| 7            | Dec'05-March'06   | Permanent Building Data (MUTPII)                          | 12           | 645              | 3,035          |
| 8            | Jan'06            | Pavement dwellers Survey                                  | 4            | 182              | 1,173          |
| <b>Total</b> |                   |   | <b>240</b>   | <b>36,312</b>    | <b>113,885</b> |

**Plane table surveys or Mapping**

**Politics of mapping slums**

Since slums look like a sea of roofs and those from the outside don't understand how to distinguish one hut from the other, many years ago the federation began to appropriate the function of surveyors. They measured each structure and plotted it on a paper with reference markers for trees, water, stand pipes and so on. They also



started to number each hut and put that number on the structure. This served several purposes. Communities began to demarcate their community.... So it was possible to look at a sea of roofs and mark separate neighbourhoods. The numbering, which was done by the community, ensured that all households were included and produced internal accountability for inclusion. It also produced an accurate basis for linking the structure to a survey form which was vital in those situations where the federation was seeking to legitimize the data by asking the land owner or state government to endorse it. In those situations, a professional surveyor was then asked to put his maps on scale to produce a blueprint. It may be recalled that when relocation was planned for railway slums in 1995-2000, the federations already had such maps signed bilaterally by the railways and slum dwellers.

### **Challenges for moving to GIS**

It is now the practice to enter all this information into a computerised program which can link the map to information about each cell. As was the case initially with computerisation of data, the federations often see this as a disempowering process. To create, own and manage information is a new and recently developed skill, and computers continue to make people feel disempowered. However, unlike in the past we now have many community leaders comfortable over time with data outputs produced by the computer and that we hope the same will happen to the use of GIS in managing mapping at the scale the federation undertakes it.

### **Slum Surveys**

#### **Creating profiles**

WE often forget to mention this very important and always undertaken starting point of the enumeration process. Federation leaders enter into a community asking people to profile their settlement... it is like a quiz.... Do you know how many structures there are in your settlement? How many toilets? Taps? Who owns the land? How close is the nearest post office, Bus stand? railway station? Hospital and so on. This inquiry initiates the dialogue and often the basis for joining the federations of new groups. Very different for other data collection means that take the data and go away.

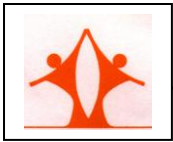
**Enumeration as the process of creating federations:** The most vital and crucial aspect of a well managed enumeration process, especially if it is able to aggregate the data, is that it facilitates the formation of a federation and it helps produce distinctive sub-sets of the whole. Aggregation and desegregation of information right down to the household level helps people to work together. This data is also a benchmark to monitor future change or improvements.

Our challenge in the coming years is to link with national level data collection initiatives to strengthen NURM city development with the data collection mechanism developed by the alliance. It will mean that we have to develop skill sets to link data to GIS and the cities will have to agree to incorporate our work in their systems.

## **4. Savings and Credit**

### **Not just micro credit**

Savings is the first step in getting an area resource centre together as it provides a non-controversial beginning to mobilization of the community along gender-sensitive lines. Women play an important role in savings and a public space for their involvement is created for women through savings and credit. Savings also create the foundation of many negotiations that the federation conducts with the state as collective savings reflect the financial strength of communities. State institutions and officials are prone to severely undervalue the financial capability of the poor by focusing on the incomes of individuals: the picture portrayed is that of helpless individuals. This picture changes as soon as the collective strength of the poor is presented by the poor themselves. Savings also establish the credibility of the



community to pay back loans and to guide their development. Savings and credit are also important to ensure sustainable relocation as additional monetary demands created by relocation are supported with the compulsory savings that communities create before shifting. This money takes care of expenses such as electricity, water and other maintenance. Credit for income generation gives families opportunity to expand their livelihood options and take risks for growth. Furthermore, savings represent the strength of the federation as daily savings and credit brings communities together, helps in building support networks and cementing trust between neighbors.

***Sida funds have been utilized for supporting meetings and activities around savings - although no funds were loaned to people - in 39 centers across the country.***

#### **The Story of Milan Nagar: The genesis of the process**

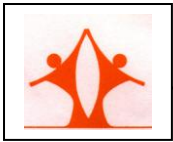
Soon after SPARC was set up in 1984, there was a city wide announcement that the houses of pavement dwellers would be demolished. By the end of 1985, it was clear that somehow the demolition did not happen at the scale it was anticipated and the crisis abated. But women from 6 neighborhoods in Byculla negotiated with SPARC to begin a journey to obtain a house. " We want a home for our grandchildren which is not this hut on the pavements", they said. So began the journey towards housing, and a partnership between these women who called themselves Mahila Milan and SPARC. NSDF joined in 1986 and while envisioning a home we looked at possible lands, we explored how to design houses and we visited banks to see where to get the money. At that time, putting money aside to pay the down payment to demonstrate to banks that they were trustworthy was the starting point of the savings. But being poor, women needed money for emergencies so they began the practice of saving whatever was left from daily shopping and purchases to form a pool of money from which they could borrow. There were very small amounts but they were available on the spot and returned immediately. Its impact was that women never needed to beg a moneylender or pay his high interest rates. Communities and families that benefited from this resource began to respect the process and the women, and it produced trust among the poorest women in neighborhoods in their collective behavior. Gradually, as the savings for both housing and crises and loans stabilized, the possibility of taking loans for small businesses or other needs sought their attention. At this point, SPARC began to develop revolving funds from capacity building grants... it trained women to manage savings and credit and to get loans repaid and the circle continued.

NSDF, which was predominantly made up of men in 1986, watched this process and invited these pavement women to teach women in their neighborhoods, and within a year Mahila Milan was a city wide network. In 1988, when SPARC joined the regional network, the Asian Coalition of Housing Rights, this practice caught the imagination of regional networks, and soon a learning network of women's collective began exchanges with each other. What was important here was not the act of savings and credit but its role in bringing women to the center of the process and linking it to sustained mobilization for long-drawn negotiations around land. In 1992 this strategy was adopted by the South African Homeless People's Federations and from 1996 is a key characteristic of Shack Dwellers International (SDI) .

Today ministers, mayors and city commissioners visit these settlements to experience the simplicity of the process as also its powerful outcomes.

**Insight about how the savings and credit group is managed.**





The 536 households of the first group which formed Mahila Milan have been saving from the year 1987-8. By and large, SPARC does not maintain computerized details of all the savings groups because it would not be financially or physically viable to do this degree of computerization. So the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan has a team that visits the area resource centers and checks how the process is managed, records kept and conflicts and confusion are handled. But longitudinal records are kept of the daily savings process of these 536 households to illustrate the process and help those who want to understand it better look at the information.

This money is collected every day from all the households. It does not include the money put aside for housing savings which is put in a formal bank. Each day, as the collector visits the home, women who need a loan make a request. All loans are usually under Rs. 1000 (the present average loan to date is Rs 987). If the collector has that much money she gives the loan on the spot, otherwise asks the applicant to come with her to the community center. If the loan is more than Rs.1000, and if it is needed for income generation or other purposes, she discusses it on the street in the presence of all others, then accompanies the person to the ARC, fills out the form, and gets the loan usually within a day or two of the request. (This is elaborated in the next section) The history of how that began is indicative of the empowerment process that collective behavior produces. All women need to borrow something on a day to day basis, and this is usually a loan taken from a person they work for in the buildings or a money-lender. To borrow from the person you work for meant that you had to work extra for that privilege even if the loan was deducted from your wages. The money-lender charged a hefty interest rate (sometimes 10% per day) even for very small loans. All this had to be accompanied by groveling, begging and crying. When women began to put money aside for their housing, it began with a commitment to show the banks that they were credit worthy and that this was their down payment. Today, an average of Rs 7500 per household has been saved by them with some having put that money in the Mutual Fund arrangement that SPARC had with Unit Trust of India. In discussions, women claimed the constant need to borrow made putting money aside impossible and they saw crises as eroding their savings.

"it is the fate of a poor woman who, if given a chicken, has to kill it to feed her family as against a chicken given to a better-off person, who can wait till it grows and lays eggs which she can either sell, or hatch the eggs and multiply the benefits!" is how some described their situation. Through this process they put aside their change every day and borrowed from that.... This self - managed savings and credit is how women also saw themselves getting out of the demeaning groveling for loans. In many ways this is a manifestation of how women manage all survival strategies for their families, making sure food is there at meals and collectively negotiate for water and protect homes against evictions. Managing the money and creating a pool which their families could access helped them strengthen their collective processes and sustain them through so many years of waiting for their homes.

Its indirect implication was that their leadership was accepted by traditional male leaders, who saw benefits accruing to their families. IF the woman can give the loan from her collection, she gives it right there and starts collecting the repayment from the next day . All this is recorded by the collector in a notebook and each woman's savings book where both loans and savings are recorded. They agreed to collect a service charge for the crisis loans rather than charge interest... treating them like loans that family members give each other. The service charge fulfills many needs. Often, when women bring in money there are always a few rupees more or less in the calculations. Although most of it gets evened out, if there is a discrepancy, then it gets reimbursed. If someone can not pay back the money and the family faces prolonged crisis, then the collective has discretionary money to waive the loan.

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In the last 15 years, almost everyone who comes to visit the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan in Mumbai end up doing a savings round with one of the collectors. Households treat these visits with good humor and participate in the daily transactions without feeling upset or conscious of being watched.... Sometimes, the visitors are asked to collect the savings, write the accounts and hand them over to the area resource center volunteers. This training ritual has been done at least two to three times a week in the last 15 years.

| Year         | Mahila Milan Byculla |                      |              |                     |                     |                  |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|              | Savings              | Withdrawn            | No. of Loans | Loan Amount         | Principal Paid      | Service charge   |
| 1987-1988    | -                    | -                    | 41           | 11,025.00           | 5,938.00            | 52.00            |
| 1988-1989    | 245.00               | -                    | 54.          | 12,450.00           | 9,935.00            | 209.00           |
| 1989-1990    | -                    | -                    | 93.          | 24,300.00           | 16,465.00           | 277.50           |
| 1990-1991    | 1,296.00             | -                    | 38           | 12,210.00           | 9,366.00            | 120.50           |
| 1991-1992    | 130.00               | -                    | 91           | 31,190.00           | 23,990.00           | 329.00           |
| 1992-1993    | 525.00               | -                    | 116          | 75,900.00           | 29,854.00           | 412.50           |
| 1993-1994    | 481,294.45           | 133,609.00           | 293          | 249,650.00          | 125,797.00          | 2,206.00         |
| 1994-1995    | 1,080,991.80         | 733,371.50           | 238          | 225,750.00          | 203,876.00          | 6,182.30         |
| 1995-1996    | 1,207,955.50         | 879,120.50           | 120          | 84,800.00           | 80,210.00           | 2,780.00         |
| 1996-1997    | 1,770,935.35         | 1,026,277.00         | 132          | 91,980.00           | 73,122.00           | 3,143.20         |
| 1997-1998    | 2,791,988.00         | 1,736,176.00         | 234          | 206,800.00          | 155,596.00          | 10,534.00        |
| 1998-1999    | 3,188,561.00         | 2,858,988.00         | 271          | 252,700.00          | 223,929.00          | 13,839.00        |
| 1999-2000    | 3,468,627.00         | 2,865,878.00         | 242          | 246,500.00          | 204,705.00          | 15,838.00        |
| 2000-2001    | 3,114,053.00         | 2,990,438.00         | 142          | 154,400.00          | 140,094.00          | 10,414.00        |
| 2001-2002    | 3,148,727.00         | 2,530,146.00         | 123          | 139,800.00          | 114,892.00          | 9,373.00         |
| 2002-2003    | 4,576,169.00         | 3,812,976.00         | 126.         | 178,600.00          | 124,047.00          | 9,380.00         |
| 2003-2004    | 5,295,867.00         | 4,405,910.00         | 194          | 307,800.00          | 237,321.00          | 12,835.00        |
| 2004-2005    | 5,291,322.00         | 5,139,432.00         | 158          | 273,950.00          | 234,267.00          | 13,881.00        |
| 2005-2006    | 5,584,916.00         | 5,224,909.00         | 109          | 199,000.00          | 200,537.00          | 22,280.00        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>41,003,603.10</b> | <b>34,337,231.00</b> | <b>2,815</b> | <b>2,778,805.00</b> | <b>2,213,941.00</b> | <b>34,086.00</b> |



### Credit lines managed by SPARC for Mahila Milan:

By 1993, the Mahila Milan collectives all over the city of Mumbai and other cities began to see the huge improvement in the monthly pattern of their incomes as the cost of borrowing went down. Some households had already begun to borrow small amounts towards their income generation but it was clear that that savings resources could not adequately finance this. In annual discussions, the possibility of borrowing money at a "wholesale or bulk "basis by SPARC and then lending it to the various federations and collectives through federations was explored. Even as this was discussed, the focus was on increased incomes for future aspirations. Communities continued to seek loans from their collector: if loans above a particular size were needed some additional people from other groups had to also involve themselves in the discussions. The delivery process was that the area resource center would give the loan from their savings collections and send the forms once a week to the SPARC office where the documentation was checked and the money reimbursed to the group. Each any every transaction for repayment was also documented.

| Year         | Total of all scheme's (Income Generation) |                 |                 |                  |                  |
|--------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
|              | No. of Loans                              | Loan Amount     | Principal Paid  | Int. 12% Paid    | Comp. Saving     |
| 1993-1994    | 320                                       | 828400          | 360431          | 8882.5           | 7957.5           |
| 1994-1995    | 665                                       | 2254800         | 1651721         | 73086.5          | 65790.5          |
| 1995-1996    | 1,149                                     | 2709500         | 2037456         | 117716.5         | 110678.5         |
| 1996-1997    | 1,120                                     | 2894200         | 2289697         | 157917.5         | 154230.5         |
| 1997-1998    | 1,593                                     | 3789700         | 3012261         | 235391           | 230225           |
| 1998-1999    | 1,412                                     | 4173500         | 3460425         | 266461.5         | 262686.5         |
| 1999-2000    | 2,267                                     | 8054500         | 3886811         | 358123           | 354191           |
| 2000-2001    | 1,844                                     | 6391300         | 4160508         | 607404.5         | 603629.5         |
| 2001-2002    | 2,085                                     | 6759530         | 4039958         | 752012           | 747495           |
| 2002-2003    | 1,770                                     | 6270300         | 5165281         | 883237.5         | 877946.5         |
| 2003-2004    | 1,501                                     | 6122000         | 4115577         | 624017           | 613800           |
| 2004-2005    | 1,156                                     | 5437000         | 4031641         | 564204           | 513465           |
| 2005-2006    | 811                                       | 3500500         | 2807296         | 471093           | 440895           |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>17,693</b>                             | <b>59185230</b> | <b>41019063</b> | <b>5119546.5</b> | <b>4982990.5</b> |

Loans taken by state wise break up:

| 9 States       | No. of Loans | Loan Amount     | Principal Paid  | Int. 12% Paid  | Comp. Saving   |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| City 35 cities |              |                 |                 |                |                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>17693</b> | <b>59185230</b> | <b>41019063</b> | <b>5119547</b> | <b>4982991</b> |
| Karnataka      | 1345         | 5024300         | 1806897         | 851320         | 851320         |
| % of total     | 8%           | 8%              | 4%              | 2%             | 2%             |
| Gujarat        | 479          | 681500          | 656530          | 43749.5        | 43749.5        |
| % of total     | 3%           | 1%              | 2%              |                |                |
| Andhra Pradesh | 413          | 1675400         | 286008          | 248303         | 248303         |
| % of total     | 2%           | 3%              | 1%              | 1%             | 1%             |
| Uttar Pradesh  | 850          | 2361800         | 2095539         | 193157         | 134257         |



|             |       |          |          |           |           |
|-------------|-------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| % of total  | 5%    | 4%       | 5%       |           |           |
| Maharashtra | 11456 | 40703530 | 29456423 | 3004776.5 | 2927120.5 |
| % of total  | 65%   | 69%      | 72%      | 7%        | 7%        |
| Orissa      | 252   | 1005900  | 427833   | 163126.5  | 163126.5  |
| % of total  | 1%    | 2%       | 1%       | 0%        | 0%        |
| West Bengal | 73    | 207200   | 95583    | 21023     | 21023     |
| % of total  | 0%    | 0%       | 0%       |           |           |
| Pondicherry | 440   | 1436000  | 1369676  | 107159    | 107159    |
| % of total  | 2%    | 2%       | 3%       | 0%        | 0%        |
| Tamil Nadu  | 2385  | 6089600  | 4824574  | 486932    | 486932    |
| % of total  | 13%   | 10%      | 12%      | 1%        | 1%        |

**Savings and Credit management process in summary:**

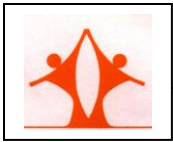
- All Mahila Milan groups at community levels manage this process and establish criteria for loans and give and take back loans. The money they circulate as crisis loans and their savings are managed by them locally.
- Loans that are not for crisis are also managed by the local Mahila Milan and given from the savings pool, but these are reimbursed from a set of centrally managed credit lines. One is from the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh which is a Government of India Ministry of Welfare managed facility. And the other revolving funds are created from grants given for this purpose.
- The interest rate charged is 2% per month on a declining basis of which 1 % goes to cover interest rates charged by the agency or in the case of the revolving funds, it retains the value of the fund. The other 1% is a national Mahila Milan fund to cover non-payment or dues that are forgiven due to death or illness. Loans are also given from this fund and the full interest is paid back to this fund to expand it.
- A national committee appointed by the NSDF and Mahila Milan oversees this process and takes responsibility to ensure that records are maintained at local level, money is paid back and documentation as required is prepared.

Table of sources of funds for lending to Mahila Milan groups

| Up to 2006                                | No. of Loans |     | Loan Amount |     | Principal Paid |     | Int. 12% Paid |     | Comp. Saving |     |
|---|--------------|-----|-------------|-----|----------------|-----|---------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| Total of all scheme's (Income Generation) | 17693        |     | 5,91,85,230 |     | 4,10,19,063    |     | 51,19,546     |     | 49,82,990    |     |
| Rashtriya Mahila Kosh                     | 7703         | 44% | 2,39,04,900 | 40% | 1,86,49,082    | 45% | 22,28,151     | 44% | 21,93,387    | 44% |
| Revolving Funds                           | 9990         | 56% | 3,52,80,330 | 60% | 2,23,69,981    | 55% | 28,91,395     | 56% | 2789603      | 56% |

Presently SPARC has a credit line from Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK): 8% of the 12% per annum that people pay is returned to RMK. Compulsory, savings is a community fund which is also used for further on-lending along with the other grant funds that donors may provide, and its from this money that those households that cannot repay get relief. At present, SPARC does not use this fund for covering costs, but that will be explored in the next three years as we seek to develop greater self-sufficiency. Many loans given recently to community people are for taking on construction contracts. Hopefully, after taking two such loans, banks will start giving these individuals or collectives loans. No compulsory savings is collected for those loans.

**Issues which challenge us:**



1. ***Making women's savings go further by creating savings products especially for housing savings.***
2. ***Strengthening decentralisation while maintaining accountability***
3. ***How to relate to present interest of banks to expand this lending and retain local autonomy.***

## **5. Housing and Toilet Exhibitions**

Our approach to housing and toilet exhibitions has begun to change over the last year or two. While much of our work in this mobilisation exercise involved events where a community of the urban poor got together and drew up a set of house or toilet models for themselves, which were designed innovatively, to fit their particular economic standards and need for space. They then invited other poor communities, city and state officials to examine these life-size models and get a clear understanding of available material, cost and design options.

However, in the last few years, with the expansion of our housing and toilet projects - many of which have been built by community contractors - it is the site of these projects that becomes the location for an exhibition - a permanent exhibition, which new communities can visit, learn from, get training on the site itself, and adapt to their local contexts. This is a powerful educational tool as the communities see what other federations have built, learn from that experience and are inspired to follow suit.

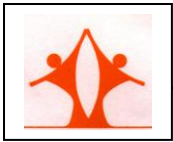
Currently there are 8 housing projects that the federation is undertaking and Sida funds supported exhibitions in 6 of these locations - specifically in Mumbai and Orissa. In fact, one of our housing exhibitions was for Swedish diplomats who visited our work in April 2004 to learn more about community driven approaches to housing. Another housing exhibition was held in Pune at the Hadapsar site, where 618 tenements are being constructed in multi-storey apartment blocks. The entire project is managed by the local Mahila Milan, who are also in charge of building one of the apartment blocks. In April 2004, a housing exhibition was held here to exhibit this work to poor communities from Thailand who are linked to the federation through the Slum or Shack Dwellers international .

Toilet exhibitions involve learning about building community toilets, maintaining community toilets (which might have been handed over by municipalities - as in the case of Theni) and also about building individual toilets (as in Pondicherry and Cuddalore). Sida funds were used to support such exhibitions in 6 cities.

## **6. Preparing for city dialogues**

Without the support of local and city authorities, no programme – however innovative – can be scaled up to benefit large numbers of the poor. NGOs and community organisations simply do not have the resources to go to scale on their own. However, before communities can approach their local and state authorities to work on housing, sanitation or other priority issues, they must be well organised, represent large numbers of the poor and be confident about the knowledge, the information and skills that they bring to the table. Moreover, often the State itself is incapable or unsure of the right approach to adopt, and so an important federation rule is – don't just talk about problems, go armed with a solution! Then, a true partnership can be initiated.

One of the most devastating events in the lives of the urban poor is their forceful eviction from their homes. In fact, working with the municipality to acknowledge that demolitions only result in confusion, destruction and increased insecurity, is one of the first issues the federation helps new communities negotiate. We are very clear that evictions increase urban poverty rather than reduce it. Once certain communities are able to acquire security of tenure in one part of the city, a precedent is set, and it becomes easier for other communities. Much of the work the pavement dwellers federation of Mumbai was involved in this year was organising communities living along footpaths to strengthen their savings, examine the housing options that the Mumbai federations were creating, and build their leadership and negotiation capacities. In the midst of the demolitions, it was this pavement dwellers



federation that took the lead in meeting with ward and local officers to try and prevent them from destroying homes. Currently, there is a possibility that the 25,000 odd families of pavement dwellers will be relocated across the city, and this federation is working hard at organising communities to create awareness about this project and build systems that ensure transparency and fairness in relocation.

The tsunami has also meant that the federation is working closely with local authorities in Pondicherry, Villipuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam and surrounding areas to survey the people who are affected, provide relief and temporary shelter and also initiate permanent housing projects for 100 federation families in Pondicherry.

Another very important initiative that is extremely successful among the federations in Mumbai has been the community policing programme. Sida funds have supported several functions where settlement level neighbourhood police committees - comprising 7 women and 3 men from the community and a police constable - were inaugurated. More details about this programme and its significance are available in the annual report.

Finally, depending upon their priorities, communities have initiated dialogues on water, garbage collection, access to electricity, land tenure and sanitation. The details of these dialogues are available in Annexure .

## **7. Conventions**

Conventions provide an opportunity for senior leadership to reflect on their activities, share and analyse their experiences, support and mentor younger, emerging leaders and collectively plan for the future.

This year, as mentioned before in the introduction, has been extremely significant for the federation as much time and energy has been spent identifying and training key leaders and setting up creating city-level, regional and national committees. Jockin, the founder of the federation, is playing the role of advisor and encouraging other leaders to take more responsibility. It is a difficult and slow transition but one that the federation recognises as essential to sustain its own energy and outreach. At the Hyderabad convention in December 2004 (which Sida funds supported), national and regional committees were elected. There are 5 Mahila Milan presidents - from Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore and Orissa - who meet every few months to review the overall progress of the federation. In fact, when one of the Pune Mahila Milan leaders was chosen as a national president, the mayor of her city held a special function to honour her!

Sida funds have also supported regional conventions in Orissa (where leaders from 4 cities meet for a monthly review), Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In Pondicherry, the opening of the 100<sup>th</sup> branch provided an opportunity for leaders from the South to meet. For more details of Sida supported conventions, please see Annexure .



## **PRECEDENT SETTING**

### **What is Precedent Setting?**

In the Indian administrative processes, change comes from precedents. If there is no “precedent”, then anything new or different is not acceptable. In the early years of SPARC and communities’ exploration of seeking permissions from government to attempt solutions that work for the poor, the stock response was: “there is no precedent so it is not possible”. An examination of how generally precedents were set, whether by the poor or other sections shows that, it was usually a crisis or a long-standing breach of rule of law which was often adopted as the new regulation, justifying that particular practice or act. Take most illegally constructed structures in both the formal and informal housing in most cities. Initially they may be demolished, but gradually when the numbers are huge and the political implication of huge demolitions makes non-adherence to the rule of law obvious, laws are enacted to justify these structures.

Poor communities are constantly facing the price of being illegal because whatever works for them seems to be outside the purview of the law. Our experience has been that policies are not usually based upon emerging practice: it takes time for something initially unacceptable to gain acceptance by authority. The challenge is to create conditions under which poor people can experiment and see what works for them; the next step is to publicize the success and get its essentials incorporated into public policy and programme. The stage is set for the solution to become a precedent. Grants to NGOs are usually made for specific activities but it is in the very nature of experimentation that the future cannot be predicted and outcomes are unknown. Innovation emerges by moving away from well-traveled paths but grant makers are often loath to finance open-ended developmental interventions. Such is the dilemma faced by NGOs which need funds to go in new directions rather than succumb to a grant seeking mentality that does not encourage fresh thinking.

In a discussion on financing mechanisms at a conference planned by International Institute for Environment & Development (IIED) and LSE in London three years ago, it became clear that setting up funds that are neither outright grants specified by donors or loans are crucial in the development of a process of transition. Transition toward exploring new possibilities of using funds, of learning new ways to manage funds, and to explore long term lending which is developed on the basis of studying these emerging funding possibilities is the way ahead. Our work reveals that truly sustainable and scalable solutions in development must be rooted in the practices and innovations of organized communities at the grassroots. However, although these communities have many ideas for solving their problems, they face numerous technical, financial, administrative and legal constraints, and their ideas rarely have a chance of being tested. Moreover, the costs associated with the risk of failure are often so high – for example, funding being withdrawn – that organizations that work with the poor are unwilling to adopt an entirely community-centric approach.

So within federation parlance “precedent setting funds” are funds that are recommended by the federations to cover costs that may set new precedents in practices by federations, to explore new possibilities in a particular sector or city, or to address new problems areas of and their solutions. The experiences that emerge from developing these precedent setting processes and projects are shared with other poor communities, municipalities, state and national governments and partner NGOs and donors. Eventually, it is these learning’s, emerging from the ground, that form the basis for city-wide, state-wide and often country-wide policies and programmes to address urban poverty.



For instance, the World Bank had been working with the Railway Authority in Mumbai to expand the city's rail networks since the 1990s. The project involved the resettlement of 20,000 families that lived along the track, but neither the bank nor the railways knew how to manage this. In 1998, 800 households who lived along the railroad track, with the support of the federation, agreed to break their homes, relocate to another area and rebuild new homes. Their relocation – which was peaceful and participatory– set a precedent for the remaining 19,000 households. In fact, it was so successful that it has set the basis for the Bank's resettlement policy all over the world, and in the city of Mumbai, the state government initiated a road expansion project in which resettlement – along the federation model – for 35,000 families was incorporated into policy.

The lessons, challenges, successes and experiences of any project or initiative that we undertake are shared with other federated communities so that they can begin similar processes and dialogues with authorities in their cities. This year we look at all our projects in the area of housing, relocation, sanitation and other areas through this perspective.

### 1. Housing

While the major construction management and financial investments in housing projects is now the business of SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak ( SSNS), which is a non profit company set up to facilitate communities to take on construction, the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan initiates these projects on demands from communities, undertaking to do all the initial organizational processes, negotiating for land, developing possible designs, setting up cooperatives, etc. It is only with the recommendation from the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan that Nirman (SSNS) will undertake to finance and provide technical supervision for construction. Each project is a demonstration to the government, the municipality and financing agencies BUT MOST important to the poor themselves of how they can drive development. Most projects are of three to five years duration and each project produces learning for both the federations and the cooperatives. That process is managed by the Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan.

Sida funds have been used to support the sharing process within and across cities for a number of our projects.

#### Ongoing Housing projects - 2005-06

| CITY   | TYPE, HHS affected  |
|--|---|
| <b>TYPE OF SUPPORT FROM SIDA</b>                     | Meetings, exchanges, mobilization other possible communities      |
| a. Mumbai – Rajiv Indira - Suryodaya Housing Project | Construction of 5 buildings for 209 families                      |
| b. Mumbai – Milan Nagar Housing Project              | Construction of 5 buildings for 326 families living on pavements. |
| c. Mumbai - Oshiwara 1 Housing project               | Construction of 5 buildings for 780 households                    |
| d. Mumbai- Oshiwara 2 Housing Project                | Construction of 17 buildings for 2480 families                    |
| e- Mumbai- Bharat Janata Project                     | Construction of 5 buildings for 147 families.                     |
| f. Pune Housing and Resettlement- Hadapsar           | Construction of multi-storey housing for 618 HHS                  |
| g. Solapur bidi Kamgar                               | Construction of 501 individual tenements                          |
| g. Orissa -Bhubaneshwar                              | Construction of 54 individual tenements                           |





|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Housing                     |  |
| h. Orissa- Cuttack Housing  | Construction of 113 individual tenements |
| i. Orissa- Paradeep Housing | Construction of 361 individual tenements |
| k. Sunudugudu- Karnataka    | Construction of 74 individual tenements  |

**[Note for Sheela** I am not aware of Orissa housing projects. Sundar.]

Most of our work in housing is in Mumbai, and we are constantly supporting federations from across the city and the country to visit these project sites and learn from their experience. For example, Milan Nagar in Mumbai (which is for the resettlement of pavement dwellers) is designed and supervised by the Mahila Milan themselves and thus is a source of encouragement for people from other cities to participate in their projects in similar manner. Sida funds have supported the meetings, exchanges, visits and mobilization work for the communities and leaders for managing the above projects.

This housing project of Milan Nagar has initiated the possibility of a project to relocate 25,000 households residing on pavements in the island city. This is what we mean by precedent setting.... The women designed and managed their construction, they demonstrated the value of putting very poor people in ground plus 4 and not taller buildings and by organizing other communities, they have shown that they can scale up this possibility with others like them.

*In a Sida review, held this year, there was concern about the buildings that the alliance has constructed that were more than ground floor or ground plus 2 to 3 floors. There seemed to be an assumption made by the evaluators that the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan were promoting the concept of ground plus 5-7 floors and they were critical of that. In a clarification made to the evaluators and Sida personnel, it was indicated by us that choices of densities had to be location specific, and based on the realities of the local situation. In Rajeev Indira and Milan Nagar, the combination of the number of households to be relocated, availability of land and autonomy for making choices led to the alliance designing building of ground plus 3 and ground plus four floors. In other instances, we were not able to negotiate such suggestions. Sometimes, the threat of sending these families outside or far away from the city has made us choose a multi-storeyed tenured option in the city centre, even if that would not have been our first choice if we had a free hand. Take the case of a slum in Hyderabad. There, the city gave the land to a political party on instructions by the state government and the households would have been evicted. The negotiations led to the possibility of land sharing, which meant that the households would move from their village like settlement (which is in the middle of the city) to a building. These are not simple or easy choices and the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan often has to dialogue back and forth with city and community to hammer out a negotiated solution that is pragmatic.*

Entitlement to secure housing is an aspect of urban poverty where the impact of globalization is most evident. Indian cities which have between 30% to 50% slum dwellers have a small window of opportunity to get tenure.... through negotiating to stay within the city in a process of densification. The poor cannot afford high market prices so government policies seek to balance equity by giving leases to informal settlements with densities to free up some of the land for other uses. By demonstrating what communities can do within such processes helps include them in the discourse about land use, and once these dialogues begin, then issues of sustainability and changes in norms of densities can be explored. We have strongly recommended lower densities in the relocation of pavement dwellers in Mumbai, but these ideas may not be accepted. If that is so, we will have to choose between having higher densities (which is not ideal) and not having any resettlement programme at all. We



are forced to recognize that tenure cannot be given in situ and that our negotiations have spanned more than 20 years. Given this background, our solutions to be pragmatic.

A key principle of our work is that when communities – through their activism and collective negotiations – successfully access housing and sanitation, the construction contracts that these involve should also benefit them.

These projects have huge livelihood implications as increased construction means more jobs in the construction industry. Over the last few years, the Alliance has sub-contracted much of its housing and toilet construction work to community contractors, who are experienced leaders from federated settlements keen to explore a new livelihood option. The Alliance trains and supports these leaders in construction skills, and they, in turn, mentor new community contractors. This year, Sida funds helped support community construction in Kanjur Marg, where about 110 houses had to be shifted and rebuilt to make way for the construction of five multi-storey buildings. 10 community contractors were employed for this job, which they completed within a month.

Ongoing projects

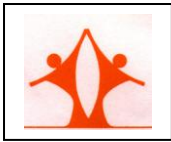
[Sheela, this table is a repetition. Sundar]

| CITY                                     | TYPE, HHS affected                                 | TYPE OF SUPPORT FROM SIDA                      |
|--|--|--|
| <b>1. Housing</b>                        |  |  |
| a. Mumbai – Rajiv Indira Housing Project | Construction of 5 buildings for 209 families       | Meetings, exchanges, mobilisation              |
| b. Mumbai – Milan Nagar Housing Project  | Housing for 326 families who are pavement dwellers | Meetings, exchanges, mobilisation              |
| c. Mumbai - Oshiwara 1 Housing project   | Construction of 5 buildings for 780 households     | Meetings, exchanges, exhibitions, mobilisation |
| d. Pune Housing and Resettlement         | Construction of 2 story housing for 618 HHs        | Meetings, exchanges, exhibitions, mobilisation |
| e. Bhubaneshwar – Housing construction   | Construction of 54 individual tenements            | Meetings, exchanges, mobilisation              |
| f. Cuttack                               | Construction of 113 individual tenements           | Meetings, exchanges, mobilisation              |
| g. Paradeep- Housing                     | Construction of 361 individual tenements           | Meetings, exchanges, mobilisation              |

New projects

| CITY                       | TYPE, HHS affected                             | TYPE OF SUPPORT FROM SIDA                      |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Housing</b>             |  |  |
| Oshiwara Housing Project 2 | Construction of 24 buildings for 2420 families | Meetings, exchanges, exhibitions, mobilisation |

Mumbai's slum upgrading policy is one of the best developed in the country. As a result, the major share of our work in housing is in Mumbai, and we are constantly supporting federations from across the city and the country to visit these project sites and learn from their experience. As our work in Mumbai continues to grow and expand - we were recently awarded our largest housing project for 2420 households - our ability to leverage new projects, engage financial institutions in supporting this work, and advocate for better standards of housing and construction is strengthened. In fact, this year has seen a great deal of dialogue with local and state authorities in



Orissa to visit Mumbai and understand the policy context. Sida funds have supported meetings, exchanges, visits and mobilisation work for the communities and leaders managing these projects. Similar support is also provided to communities in Pune, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Paradeep.

**2. Sanitation**

Sanitation and housing have been the focus of the alliance work in all the cities. These are the most difficult and yet most important concerns of women. Housing and sanitation cannot be accessed just by mobilizing communities: that requires an active partnership with State and other formal institutions. To the alliance, access to clean toilets is an indicator of people's power and a tool for building collective power to ensure equity in distribution of resources. The alliance's campaign for zero open defecation advocates universal minimum sanitation in large, medium and small cities across the world. As part of the campaign, active steps to involve more and communities in building toilets were taken: twenty-three cities across seven states were involved in sanitation related projects and discussions in the year 2005-2006. The campaign also saw concrete results in the number of new built and functioning toilets. Negotiations with central and state governments were carried out and people's collectives were formed around the issue of toilets. Community toilet blocks were built with separate space for men, women and children, along with a community hall and caretaker's room. Federation's resolve to ensure zero open defecation is reflected in the number of toilets built in the year 2005-06.

| Sanitation                                | TYPE OF SUPPORT FROM SIDA                                |
|---|--|
| a. Mumbai – Community Toilet Construction | Mobilising communities for managing toilets, Exhibitions |
| b. Pune                                   | Exchanges, mobilisation, exhibitions                     |
| c. Hyderabad                              | Technical support, mobilisation                          |
| d. Vijaywada                              | Technical support, mobilisation                          |
| e. Vishakapatnam                          | Supporting dialogue and survey                           |

No. of Toilets Built in 2005-06

| S<br>r<br>.<br>N<br>o<br>.<br>1 | State      |
|---------------------------------|------------|
|                                 | TAMIL NADU |



|   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
|   |                 |
| 2 | KARNAT<br>AKA   |
|   |                 |
| 3 | GUJAR<br>AT     |
|   |                 |
| 4 | MAHAR<br>ASHTRA |
|   |                 |
| 5 | PONDIC<br>HERRY |
|   |                 |
| 6 | KARNAT<br>AKA   |
|   |                 |
| 7 | ORISSA          |
|   |                 |



The type of support from Sida ranged from mobilizing communities for managing toilets, exhibitions, exchanges, surveys and technical support.

*Sanitation is also the location of many opaque practices, the federations not only have to deal with the challenges of building toilets, but of delays due to agreement by land owners to allow sanitation blocks to be built, of politicians wanting to treat the slum as their territory and wanting to manage the construction contract, and municipality staff seeking extra favors and delaying payments as well as neglecting supervision. The Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan seeks to support community toilet blocks wherever households have an average size of less than 250 sq feet space per unit. Sida evaluators were very vehement about suggesting individual toilets and argued that these could lead to land tenure. Our experience is that where space and affordability permit – as in smaller towns – we have supported the construction of individual toilets by giving loans.*

The federation's community toilets are also used to promote community contractors - an important part of the federation strategy to expand livelihood options available to the urban poor. Community contracting is an area where leaders from the community take responsibility for construction in the capacity of contractors. Not only does this build livelihood options in the community, it also builds community entrepreneurs. Sida funds were used to provide technical assistance to community contractors in carrying out the construction. This year the federation's community toilets were built entirely by community contractors - an important part of the federation strategy to expand livelihood options available to the urban poor. Sida funds were used to provide community contractors working in Hyderabad, Pune as well as Vijaywada technical assistance in their construction.

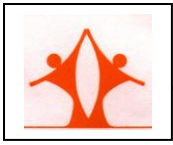
In April 2004, a detailed slum survey of 236 slums led by Mumbai's senior federation leaders to identify the sanitation situation in the city was supported by Sida funds. Information on 81,000 households was collected. The mobilisation work that followed to create awareness and mobilise communities in this city was also supported by Sida funds. Similarly, mobilisation and training in maintenance was supported in Pune, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Vijaywada

Apart from the above, the federation was involved in negotiations with the following states

Sr.  
No.  
1.

State

ANDHRA  
PRADESH



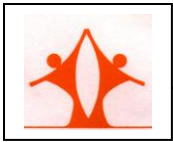
2.

RAJASTH

3.

GOA

The alliance work goes beyond directly measurable output. Last year, Sheela Patel, Director, SPARC, was appointed one of the members of a committee assigned by the Prime Minister to review the functioning of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). She is making efforts to see that city development plans, submitted to the Government of India for funding, invariably have a section on slum sanitation. This will be an important means of reorienting cities to the cause of slum sanitation. Moreover, Sheela Patel and Sundar Burra, Advisor, SPARC, are members of



a National Task Force on Sanitation, which is another important mechanism for spreading the message of universal sanitation.

The toilets were also a tool to renegotiate the relationship between the city and the communities and a number of city - community partnerships were established in the past year in the cities of Ahmedabad, Puri, Vijaywada, Vishakapatnam, Hyderabad and Tirupur. This list however only indicates recent initiatives and is by no means exhaustive. Many events relating to ground-breaking ceremonies and inauguration of toilet blocks involved city officials such as Councilors, Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Mayors, Members of Parliament (MPs), Municipal Commissioners and other municipal officials. Today, there is a contract to construct 14 new toilets and to repair 10 toilets in Vishakhapatnam, of which 9 toilets are already completed, work is in progress for 4 and 1 is still to be started. However, we are in close touch with the Municipal Commissioner for whom we are preparing a city-wide sanitation plan. There is a stated commitment on his part to provide universal sanitation but this is yet to be translated into a concrete plan and programme.

#### Toilet exhibitions

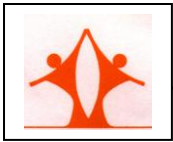
Exhibitions of the work done on toilets is an important aspect of knowledge sharing with other communities, organizations and the state. Three toilet exhibitions were held this year at Theni (Tamil Nadu), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh) and Ahmedabad (Gujarat).

### 3. Relocation

As mentioned earlier in this report, the federation was involved in resettling nearly 5000 households that were living in transit accommodation to permanent apartments across the city of Mumbai. Managing such large scale shifting in such a short span of time is an enormously complicated task, and this was the first time that the federation faced such a situation. It has set precedents for the relocation work that the federation is going to have to handle in the upcoming year - nearly 20,000 families within the same span.

When the World Bank agreed to explore the transit accommodation for households along the railway track, a caveat was included to make sure that households were moved within 3 years. By 2004, although houses and buildings were ready, the necessary infrastructure was not yet in place and the alliance was caught between the pressure from the communities and the government to move households and the reality that the houses were not completely ready. There were three issues that came up during this relocation process.

- i. Shifting all these families quickly. Although the government is supposed to pay for the cost of shifting belongings from one location to the other, the bureaucracy involved in this process causes long delays. In this case, the federation decided to extend its own funds and then recover them from the authorities. Sida funds were used for this purpose. **(This money -- Rs. 7,50,000 - has now been reimbursed by the government to SPARC and is put into the revolving fund.)**
- ii. The federation sorted out the problem of water shortages at relocation sites by volunteering to arrange for tankers to provide water and recover the bills from the government agency.
- iii. The relocation occurred in the middle of the school year. There were no convenient bus routes between the old schools and the new relocation



sites. This caused tremendous pressure on the communities. The federation responded by hiring buses and negotiating with the local authorities to pay for this.

Why is this seen as precedent setting? Because unless the federation seizes all opportunities available, the poor will always be left behind and denied what is their due. And this is precisely what these monies are meant for: to support communities take that risk even if they are even unsure if the money will come back. Unless this leap is made, no new practices of dealing with government, or holding authorities responsible for their promises, or ensuring participation of communities or seeing that resettlement happens in a timely manner can ever happen.

The MUTP project had no predecessors to draw lessons from. Each resettlement, each negotiation, each lesson, has set a precedent. What is clear is that communities need time and space to understand the complex and numerous procedures that are involved in shifting and getting the necessary infrastructure at their new locations. A breakdown in communication can be disastrous -- with authorities and other funding organisations throwing up their hands and announcing the entire project a failure.

During the year 2005-06, about 4500 families were relocated, of which 3915 families, affected by the Mumbai Urban Transport Project were shifted into permanent apartment buildings in the city of Mumbai. Majority of the families who were relocated this year were the ones affected by the construction of road from Santa Cruz to Chembur that links western line of Mumbai to the harbour line, whereas the rest were those affected by the rail project. Some of these families were shifted to transit camps while their apartments were under construction. This shifting involved almost daily meetings with communities and local officials to ensure that everyone was included, that all data and identification was verified, that people were assigned apartments in a transparent and fair manner, that nobody was excluded, and that everyone was well aware of all procedures and protocols involved in this massive shifting exercise.

The table below gives details on the number of households that were relocated to permanent accommodation in the year 2005-06.

| P<br>E<br>R<br>I<br>O<br>D<br><br>W<br>H<br>E<br>N<br><br>M<br>O<br>V<br>E<br>D | C<br>I<br>T<br>Y |
|---|------------------|
|   | T<br>O<br>T      |



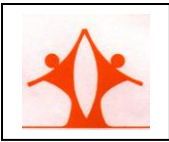




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| O<br>c<br>t<br>-<br>2<br>0<br>0<br>5  | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
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|  |  |                            |
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|  | l<br>o<br>t<br>t<br>e<br>d<br><br>b<br>u<br>t<br>y<br>e<br>t<br>t<br>o<br><br>b<br>e<br><br>m<br>o<br>v<br>e<br>d<br>) |                            |
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|  | F<br>e<br>b<br>-<br>2<br>0<br>0<br>6   | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
|  | F<br>e<br>b<br>-<br>2<br>0<br>0<br>6   | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
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| n<br>e<br>,<br>0<br>5<br>t<br>o<br>F<br>e<br>b<br>,<br>0<br>6 | n<br>e |
|---|--------|

Sida funds also supported communities who had made this shift in the previous years to continue to build their leadership, provide savings and credit services as well as employment opportunities to more vulnerable households and strengthen their collective networks. The alliance has realised that this kind of support is required for the communities for at least 3-4 years after shifting to achieve stability and establishing systems to maintain their society in the new place as many poorer families may not be able to afford the move.

**Relocation in 2004-05 households that have been supported in post relocating processes**

| PER<br>IO<br>D<br>WH<br>EN<br>MO<br>VE<br>D    | C<br>IT<br>Y               |
|--|----------------------------|
| Au<br>gus<br>t -<br>De<br>ce<br>mb<br>er<br>04 | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
| Ma<br>rch<br>-<br>Apr<br>il<br>05              | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |



|                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                   |                            |
| Ma<br>rch<br>05                   | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
| Ma<br>rch<br>-<br>Apr<br>il<br>05 | M<br>u<br>m<br>b<br>a<br>i |
| Jan<br>-<br>Ma<br>rch<br>05       | P<br>u<br>n<br>e           |



Sida funds also supported leadership developed by the alliance in these localities to anticipate at a very early stage what the communities need which either is not provided by the government or not anticipated by the project and delays due to red tape ensure that these needs get neglected. All this money is due to be reimbursed to SPARC and will be part of the ongoing revolving fund.

| sida               | Date       | purpose        | Amount     |                     |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|------------|---------------------|
| <b>MAHARASHTRA</b> |            |                |            | <b>2,296,357.05</b> |
| <b>Bombay</b>      |            |                |            |                     |
| <b>Vashinaka</b>   |            |                |            | 626,707.05          |
|                    | 01/04/2005 | For relocation | 59,707.05  |                     |
|                    | 12/07/2005 | For relocation | 506,100.00 |                     |
|                    | 11/02/2006 | For relocation | 60,900.00  |                     |
|                    |            |                |            | 1,454,650.00        |
|                    | 06/07/2005 | Tanker Water   | 22,100.00  |                     |
|                    | 06/07/2005 | Tanker Water   | 257,975.00 |                     |
|                    | 16/07/2005 | Tanker Water   | 420,150.00 |                     |
|                    | 16/07/2005 | Tanker Water   | 494,425.00 |                     |
|                    | 24/10/2005 | Tanker Water   | 260,000.00 |                     |
|                    |            |                |            |                     |
|                    |            |                |            |                     |
| <b>Mankhurd</b>    | 22/04/2005 | Tanker Water   | 215,000.00 | 215,000.00          |

This year as a result of poor access to water and problems during shifting, this money was used to ensure that households did not suffer while negotiations between different government departments to increase access to water proceeded.

Finally, in preparation for relocation work in 2005-6, federation leaders collected detailed socio-economic data for households on:

- The remaining number of families affected by the Mumbai Urban Transport Project.
- The Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Project. This is a road-widening project undertaken by the city and which involves the resettlement of approximately 30,000 families living along the roads. The federation has been contracted to manage the entire resettlement process.
- Families affected by a resettlement project initiated by the Andhra Pradesh Housing Board. The federation has been approached to manage this resettlement.
- All slum families living in the Navi Mumbai area. The federation has been approached by this municipality to collect data on slum dwellers and then come up with a housing and relocation strategy for this municipality.

| Sr. | Date     | Name of Project/City   | No. of Settlements | No. of HHs    | No. of People |
|-----|----------|--|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
|     |          | <b>TOTALS</b>  | <b>370</b>         | <b>29,503</b> | <b>86,858</b> |
| 1   | April 04 | Baseline Socioeconomic Survey of those affected by the Mumbai Urban Transport Project (already surveyed over 20,000 ppl) | 7                  | 1,506         | 6,187         |
| 2   | April 04 | Baseline Socioeconomic Survey of those affected by the Mumbai Urban  | 333                | 19,039        | 45,859        |



|   |        |  |    |      |       |
|---|--------|--|----|------|-------|
|   |        | Infrastructure Project                 |    |      |       |
| 3 | Jan 05 | Socio-economic HHs Survey of Hyderabad | 3  | 348  | 1565  |
| 4 | Jan 05 | Navi Mumbai Survey                     | 27 | 8610 | 33247 |

#### 4. Garbage

The Alliance has undertaken a number of projects to clear garbage and encourage communities to take over the cleanliness of their neighbourhoods, rather than depending on the municipality to do this task. In Mumbai, the federation has accessed a local subsidy that gives communities a certain budget to form a committee and hire and supervise cleaners. Sida funds have been used to hold meetings which familiarize federated communities across the city about this programme and to help them form and manage their garbage committees.

#### 5. Water

Water is a precious resource that rarely finds its way to the poor communities. The need for water is mostly the first issue that communities raise when asked about issues facing them. Water then also is the issue around which communities organize themselves. SPARC's involvement in water related issues was carried forward as regular dialogues with the local authorities on the issue of water supply and construction of hand pumps. In this year one hand pump each was built in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) and Karaikal (Tamil Nadu). Karaikal hand pump served the urgent need for water of the tsunami affected people.

#### 6. Police Panchayats

Slums have their own peculiar problems of policing; including crime, criminals, public order and security related issues. Police Panchayat is a carefully conceived program to strengthen and streamline policing in the slum areas of Mumbai. The project is a joint effort between the Mumbai Police Department & the National Slum Dwellers Federation and till now the alliance has been able to establish 151 Police Panchayats in Mumbai. The Panchayats establishes partnership between the Police and the slum dwellers. In this way the Police gets a helping hand in solving the problems and the people also come to know the local residents as well as the police. Along with this, there is also a reduction in the prejudices that both (slum dwellers and police) had against each other. As a result, this creates trust and understanding between the community & the police which further leads to a healthy & long term relationship. This year three Police Panchayats in Mumbai (Antop Hill, Mankhurd, Vikhroli) were awarded prizes for their exceptional work by Mr. R.R.Patil. Dy.Chief Minister, Maharashtra.

One of the most innovative programmes initiated by the alliance, police panchayats are neighbourhood committees that are formed to monitor safety in slums and to change stereotypically hostile relationships between the police force and the poor. Each committee comprises 7 women and 3 men who meet weekly with a local constable and together they resolve local disputes in their communities. This concept has been so successful that, in the past year alone, about 80 such committees have been formed in the city of Mumbai. In fact, this year, the Police Commissioner of Mumbai and the Director General of Police of the state of Maharashtra were invited as the chief guests to the National Convention, the highest honour the federation bestows on local officials. There is now discussion on how to expand this programme to other cities across the state.



### 7. Working with street children:

a long term commitment to exploring options for children who run away from home Sadak Chaap literally means 'stamp of the street' in Hindi. In 1988, the Alliance conducted a survey on homeless boys in Mumbai. What was revealed was that the most pressing need for these boys was a safe place to sleep. Thus the Byculla Area Resource Center became a shelter at night. Today there are three night shelters across the city where these boys cook their own meals, receive informal education and use as a safe place to meet and sleep in. Also, it was felt that an effective strategy would be to allow them to form their own loose federation, which could then be mentored by and link up with SPARC-NSDF-Mahila Milan Alliance. A number of Sadak Chaap boys today are part of the Federation and some even work as administrative staff in the SPARC office. (see annex for a detailed discussion with Jockin about this process\_

### Revolving the precedent setting funds:

Each year when the money provided for precedent setting is disbursed with the possibility that it will be returned. If it is returned to SPARC either by the government departments or communities, it goes into a revolving fund Last year, Precedent setting funds from Sida were used to give loans to support various housing, sanitation and relocation activities. This year, many of those communities have repaid their loans. The table below gives details.

| CITY        | ACTIVITY     | AMOUNT RECEIVED (Rs.) |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|             | <b>Total</b> | <b>191,392</b>        |
| Pondicherry | Housing      | 157,417               |
| Theni       | Housing      | 2700                  |
|             | Toilet       | 31,275                |

### Dealing with Emergencies

Disasters in whatever form always brings devastation and misery to all, but most especially it is the poor who are affected the most. At this point the alliance feels that the poor people need immediate support and thus tries to provide.

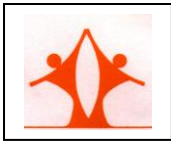
During last year's Mumbai floods, tens of thousands have seen their homes and all their belongings being washed away, and have been left with only the clothes on their backs The alliance carried out several surveys of those slum and pavement dwellers that have been severely affected and identified 10,000 families for immediate relief as also assistance to rebuild their homes and lives.

The federation distributed packages containing some basic food (sugar, dal, oil, masalas, salt, milk powder, tea) medicine (soap, electrol, alum, cough syrup, crocin, chlorine tablets) and household (chattais, blankets, sheets) items. Also it coordinated with Food and Civil Supplies Department and supported the distribution of grains to the affected people through the police panchayat.

Type of relief

TOTAL





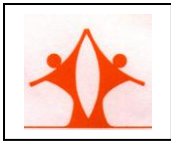
**Packages  
made by  
federation -  
Basic food,  
Medicine  
and  
household  
items**

**Government  
rations -  
grains**

Private in kind contributions, and financial assistance from Oxfam, UTI bank and State Bank of India helped with grant for the relief efforts which included food for affected people and houses for those whose houses were washed away in the flood. IN all instances the federation's capacity to assist its own members and to help others was further strengthened by its partnership with the Mumbai police. In the 26/7 flooding in Mumbai, the only credible public institution on the street was the Mumbai police. Between the Police Panchayat and the federation network, huge distribution of food etc apart from what we reported in this report was distributed. Ironically everyone made donations to the Police commissioner and he in turn sought assistance from federations to distribute the relief.

Then came the challenge of re-housing the people whose houses were washed away. We took on the commitment to re-house about 500 households. Sida kindly gave us a substantial grant to cover re-housing of those we had identified in the Mumbai floods as needing houses. Here the problems began; we started by understanding what the city and state was doing. We found that some of the households we had identified got compensation from the state and we assisted them to get that money and reconstruct their homes or to get advise on rebuilding. Then there were some houses that did not get compensation because they were not considered eligible. In those cases, we had to get an assurance from the local ward office that they would not face evictions if they rebuilt their homes. This process took over 6 months, in the meanwhile people had support to build makeshift houses. Finally we supported 230 households rebuild their homes, using most of the budget as their homes ended up costing more than we had anticipated per house. Since the numbers had decreased it was possible to do so in the amount we had... these will be completed by the first week of June 06. One particular group pf households whose houses were washed away were in Pushpa Vihar, a settlement near the railway track and one which would have eventually got re-housed under MUIP or MUTP. However 38 of these households were with adults who are recovered leprosy patients with obvious disfigurements, and they did not want to live in a building which was with others as they found that their children constantly got into a fight if others referred to their parents as "lepers".

The SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak ( SSNS) construction referred to as Oshiwara 1 had a NGO building which we were going to sell as part of the project which has 38 tenements and we offered that to the MMRDA to rehouse these pop[le and they now live there. It demonstrated once again that choices get expanded when federations undertake many activities. We still have



Later in August September many small towns in Tamil Nadu also faced floods and many houses were washed away there. A federation team visited these areas after the initial crisis period, and worked out a strategy where a part grants and part loan was give to the households once they worked out the detailed documentation. This was provided by IIED from the various support grants they act as conduit to provide us with.

Similarly during Tsunami, the Pondicherry Slum Dwellers Federation did the survey of all the affected areas and helped in the relief and rehabilitation work. In the first phase of this work, apart from distributing food rations, utensils and clothing (which the members of the federation contributed from their own funds) the following relief efforts were undertaken by SPARC:

| S. No. | Affected Area |
|--------|---------------|
| 1      | Pondiche      |
| 2      | Cuddalor      |
| 3      | Villipuram    |
| 4      | Kanchipu      |

The second phase involved reconstruction efforts and this was coordinated by the Pondicherry Government, which requested NGOs to enter into an MOU and to take over construction projects. SPARC and the PSDF were requested to build 250 houses at the rate of 1.45 lakhs per house. However, SPARC could only secure funds for 100 houses. Note: Miserior and Homeless International gave grants for relief operations for tsunami affected people; IIED gave grant for Tamil Nadu flood relief in July'05

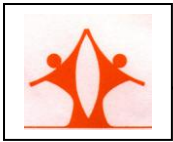


## **LOCAL REGIONAL AND NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY WORK**

The approach to advocacy which the Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan does is different from that of the other NGOs. The advocacy focus is as much around highlighting the right of the presently excluded communities to have access to entitlements as well as their right to participate in the design and execution of the development intervention. SPARC seek to create access to this advocacy itself, and creates space for the community federations to participate in the process. SPARC s views its roles as a "seat warmer" that mean that it sits in committees in taskforces and consultative committees until either federation representatives are ready to play that role and or the institutions of the state are ready to actively acknowledge the potential of community leaders taking that role. Another role that SPARC takes on is initial arbitrator of the relationship between community federation and external institutions. In the past members of SPARC lead all delegations representing the issues and strategies. Now in almost all instances federations' leaders are partners and in some instances will lead the delegation. Interestingly in a Consultative advisory committee of "eminent citizens" to transform Mumbai, the Maharashtra government has invited Jockin the president of NSDF of the member and not SPARC.

The advocacy also attempts to showcase what communities can do as a part of the advocacy and is based on a perspective that in the present urban context, state institutions cannot deliver development and arbitrate policy. At the same time, conventional private sector in the form of large businesses should also not be seen as the only institutions to whom the state divests its present delivery modes. The presence of Mahila Milan is also crucial to ensure that in these advocacy processes women play a critical role in representation as well as content of what is put forward as a community alternative to present practice.

Unlike the conventional advocacy process of many other NGOs, the federations require SPARC to first get consensus from their own constituency to the proposed strategy. This is a long and difficult process as its stages start from identification of issues and building consensus on it. Then processes to create an exploration, find a strategy that will build skill sets and demonstrate solutions and scale them have to be explored internally before advocating them to cities and external people. At this state and in all other stages, SPARC or an external individual can suggest issues for the federation to take up. But whether the federation will take it up or not is based on how well communities identify with the issue. As a result this has both positive and negative implications. Take the issue for health, education, HIV AIDS for instance. The federations feel that they want to focus on land housing and infrastructure because others take up other issues more easily .... What that means is that those issues can be dealt with at local community levels but at overall federation level, those issues are not in the basket of advocacy of the alliance. Those of us with a commitment to specific issues then navigate to address these internally. Its positive implications are that the Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan does not flit from one issue to another based on donor proclivities. We have seen that many NGOs end up working on a new issue every three to five years based on funder priorities. The down side is that the power of the federation does not go behind some crucial issues that could use that clout. As can be seen with the project activities and our federation tool kit this process is at the heart of the federation process. They are our crucible on the basis of which we undertake advocacy. As our projects' portfolio and community reach keeps expanding, we are being constantly approached by local municipalities, state governments and national bodies to present our work, join advisory boards and task forces and to build collaborations.



How the federation undertake advocacy is also different from others.

The Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan

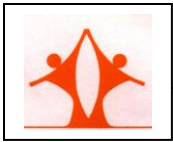
- **Initiates** advocacy at all levels at the same time. That is because all things urban have a local global connectivity and each level impacts the other. Ideas and legitimacy require all levels to accept strategies and their dissemination moves through these cycles. We believe that NGOs and community groups working at only one level will remain ineffective for that reason. The federation structure there fore works at sub city and city level state and national level in India, and as Shack Dwellers International (SDI) in the international level.
- **Locates** champions in various institutions who they seek to dialogue with and get them to understand what they are suggesting and explore how what they want can be included in the local development process. Often times, municipal state government and national.
- **Demonstrates** tangibly what the suggestions and changes in policy that they advocate to the champions and their institutions, clearly showing value in that strategy to the institutions as well.
- **Execute** strategy at different levels and scale based on feasibility of the situation on the ground. So while in one city or town it may be helping 40 households to relocate in others it may be 14000 households.
- **Circulates** ideas that work, now the championing of the strategy is not just by SPARC or the Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan but it now includes institutions of the state or private sector with whom that strategy is developed.

This work presents many challenges to us

- Creating space for a community driven engagement with the government is long process and one whose benefits can only be seen in hindsight over long time. Yet its benefits are that the process produces activities precedents and projects on the ground and so policy inputs can be demonstrated once they start functioning.
- Most city and state governments are cash strapped, and at the same time, have no inclination to explore multiple stakeholder partnerships which involve banks, communities and the state agencies. Yet most scaling will occur only when that happens and this process takes time.
- Turnover of politicians and staff of state and city government departments means that the set backs keep occurring during policy and project activities and time frames are often distorted.
- Finally the state and communities are not always ready at the same time, and the cost of the disconnect often has to be borne by the intermediary. Yet given the urgent need for scale this is a risk we have to take.
- Governments often renege on promises made to the poor. Demolitions of slums of hawkers and such activities kick start the hostility and insecurity that the poor feel about a state. Often this is provoked to ensure that the poor retain their feudal allegiance to local political figures, and it has to be dealt with by the alliance whose own credibility is constantly at stake through this process.

The long period of exploring this strategy has also taught us some valuable lessons:

- The state is not one whole entity which acts harmoniously. Instead it is made of parts that often do not communicate with each other. Its can be something that can cause despair, or it can be a strategy to seek to manage to form relationship with those that are sympathetic and use that entry to convince the other parts.



- Understanding the manner in which the state functions, understanding the logic with it makes choices, however positive or negative that is needs to be understood before a dialogue is established.
- Perseverance and patience while exploring strategies and solutions and getting them accepted by the state require leaderships of communities to agree to this process, which is a huge challenge given that the poor face the problems due to the very negligent behavior of departments.
- Coping with “set backs” works if there are other options so creating a wide net of possibilities and working on many fronts at the same time helps. Here the strategy for the alliance to work in many states, in many cities is very useful.
- Gradually testimonials from other agencies and through the exchanges beget more possibilities for partnerships and joint ventures.
- Sustained work with central government although it provides no direct outcomes produces the back drop for many possible engagements as most frameworks for out puts and monitoring of goals set for state governments are taken up by the central government.

This year the focus of work had been with working with cities and state governments on sanitation and housing, and with the advent of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission the potential to work in various states and various issues with NGOs and governments has suddenly expanded... almost exploded.

As Shack Dwellers International (SDI) the Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan has the responsibility of supporting other federations in Asia and Africa and this year in Latin America. This transnational federation of 22 countries, all like the Indian city federations, is at very different levels. Like in the Indian context, the stringer and more evolved support the newer more vulnerable federations and back stop them both in their internal exploration of developing their tool kits and projects and their advocacy with their local national and international levels.

Participation as members of various committees and invitation to be a member of various boards reflects the acknowledgement that we have in our work. In each of these boards the presence reflects an acknowledgement of the need to have the presence of grassroots reality.

### **Representation of committees and Boards**

#### **On behalf of Alliance of SPARC, NSDF and Mahila Milan -- on the following Committees and Boards**

##### **In India**

1. PRIA: Chair of Board of Society for Participatory Research in Asia
2. Pukar: Trustee of Partnership for Urban Knowledge and Research
3. HUM: Secretary of Handspun for urban Markets
4. Vani: member of Board of Voluntary Action Network of India
5. Chair of Campaign for universal Sanitation for urban areas.
6. Member of the Technical advisory Group for Ministry of Urban Development for JNURM
7. Member of Prime minister's review committee of JNURM.
8. Member of the Board of UTI Bank Trust.
9. Member of the Technical advisory committee JNURM

##### **Internationally:**

1. Chair of Shack Dwellers International
2. Chair of the Policy Advisory Board of Cities Alliance



3. Member of the World bank Water and Sanitation Council
4. Advisor to Hi level Committee on Land Tenure of UNDP
5. Member of the Advisory Council for the India China Institute of the New School.
6. Member of the Commission for Knowledge on urban health set up by WHO.
7. Board member of Institute for Environment and Development) International (IIED) UK.
8. Member of the eviction task force set up by UNHABITAT
9. Member of the Board of the Slum Upgrading facility of UNHABITAT.

## **DOCUMENTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **The right of the communities to assess their own participation in social change:**

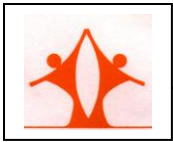
The Alliance of SPARC-NSDF and Mahila Milan are continuously addressing this question of how to monitor and evaluate our work. While we recognize the right of external funding agencies to demand accountability from the NGOs and CBOs they fund, for us, evaluation is inextricably linked to our practice. And our biggest challenge is to feed reflection and knowledge generated from our work back to communities from which these have emerged. Thus we see, the flow of knowledge as two-way, and ultimately as a tool of empowerment for the communities we work with.

In 2003-4 in conjunction with a DFID supported project seeking to link Amartya Sen's work of "freedoms" a team of people working with Professor Sen spent time working with the federations. That process was based on the belief that the poor have the right to One very important conclusion they drew was that while development has very well developed strategies to assess and evaluate what happens from the NGO upwards is not matched with what happens below that level. The reflections lead to our collective realization that most evaluations were focused on financial accountability to the provider of resources. That information from the process was processed based on the perspective of the giver of funds, and rarely from the perspective of the poor, whose right to agency for their own development while accepted in conceptual terms was rarely accepted in the assessment process.

The federation tool kit, the sustained mechanism to facilitate participation and ongoing planning execution and assessment undertaken through the exchanges was seen as a mechanism that facilitated those freedoms. Today, since that assessment, many UNDP offices across the world have supported this exploration and send community and grassroots groups to spend time with the NSDF and MM to explore this possibility.

Supporting communities to document their own activities is the first level of monitoring and evaluation for the Alliance. The Alliance's strategy for the past year has been largely around strengthening community processes and supporting them to articulate their own understanding of the impacts of relocation, improved housing, and infrastructure. Thirty cities are now sending field reports outlining their activities - these reports are both narrative and pictorial. Others need help and assistance by the core representatives of NSDF who do this when they visit those cities.

The second level is the joint reflections by the core teams of SPARC Mahila Milan and NSDF.. The process is robust and routinised to serve internal requirements of accountability planning and action., However, its accessibility to external review needs to be strengthened. Therefore the setting up as a data base has been a long standing challenge. This challenge is to create a balance between tracking of qualitative and quantitative information. This we have done in two ways, firstly, this



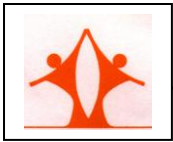
year we have worked hard to streamline this process so that the information that comes from the field, after due monitoring and tracking, feeds into our documentation system at SPARC. The information system at SPARC is organised month and city wise, allowing us to track and collate the progress on the ground. This information will provide the basis for a longitudinal quantitative analysis of the growth and consolidation of the Alliance.

To support the qualitative reflections, Srilatha Batliwala, founding member of SPARC, has worked with SPARC since 2003-4 to set up a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of SPARC's work. Through a series of workshops and discussions with Alliance members as well as analysis of the existing documentation produced by SPARC, she has already completed a detailed evaluation of the Alliance's Resettlement and Rehabilitation process in Mumbai and Pune. A comprehensive document that will be published, this work will also support the federation to strengthen its existing relocation strategies.

Finally, in order to develop capacity to balance these internal processes with external accountability, several measures are taken up. Sida and other donors in the past have assisted us to improve our fiduciary and accounting practices. SPARC is also part of an international learning network coordinated by IDS Sussex (UK) which seeks to bring NGOs, academia and consultants to reflect on creating a parallel learning agenda along with creating an exchange of strategies. This group comprises of most of the leading consultants on participatory evaluation approaches and SPARC is invited and has participated in this activity. Through writing articles, and contributing to various books and publication request, a lot of documentation of our work continues.

IN the mid project review undertaken by Sida in October- November 2005 several crucial issues emerged. The two evaluators were generally not very comfortable with the federation model and question many of the practices from those perspectives. Their concerns were genuine and yet the discussions subsequently with Sida lead to SPARC and the alliance stating more succinctly our basic assumptions and values on the basis of which many choices were made. Initially both disappointed and yet challenged by that review, there was discussions at all levels at SPARC governing board, staff and with federations, and based on that a presentation was made to Sida at both India and Stockholm where our perspectives were presented. Yet the issues related to addressing vulnerabilities, improved managing strategies and strengthening capacity of federations and SPARC is well taken and is a clear commitment for us in the next three years.

Sida's withdrawal from India and its recommendations to the alliance to make itself more self sufficient has also created a very important milestone for the alliance. How to plan that, how to develop a much earlier self sufficiency strategy is now being considered, yet it's a process which we believe will take us some time and will take some time as we cannot make very fast changes without upsetting the federation functioning.

**ANNEXES:****Acronyms:**

ACHR: Asian Coalition of Housing Rights

AILSG: All India Institute of Local self government

ASCI: Administrative staff college of India, Hyderabad, India

Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns

MM Mahila Milan

NSDF: National Slum Dwellers federation

National Slum Development Programme

Nirman Bharat Abhiyan

JNNURM or NURM: Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Reform Mission.

SDI: Shack Dwellers International

The Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana SJSRY

SPARC: Society for the Promotion of area resource centers

SSNS: SPARC Samudaya Nirman Sahayak

SRA: The Slum rehabilitation Authority

Yashada: Yashwant Rao Administrative center, Pune, Maharashtra\

Vambay

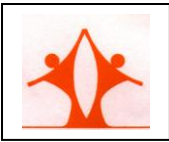
ULBs





**LIST OF INDIAN CITIES WHERE THE ALLIANCE WORKS (OW UNDER JAWAHARLAL NEHRU NATIONAL URBAN RENEWAL MISSION ARE IN ITALICS AND BOLD)**

| SR. NO.   | PLACE                   | STARTED     | NO. OF YEARS |
|-----------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------|
|           |                         |             |              |
| <b>1</b>  | <b>MAHARASHTRA</b>      |             |              |
| <b>1</b>  | <b><i>Mumbai</i></b>    |             |              |
|           | Pavement                | 1986        | 17           |
|           | Collector               | 1974        | 29           |
|           | BMC                     | 1974        | 29           |
|           | Railways                | 1987        | 16           |
|           | Airport                 | 1991        | 12           |
|           | Others                  | 1974        | 29           |
|           | Dharavi                 | 1991        | 12           |
| <b>2</b>  | <b><i>Pune</i></b>      | <b>1994</b> | <b>9</b>     |
| <b>3</b>  | <b><i>Nashik</i></b>    | <b>1994</b> | <b>9</b>     |
| 4         | Ahmednagar              | 1994        | 9            |
| 5         | Pimpri                  | 1994        | 9            |
| <b>6</b>  | <b><i>Nagpur</i></b>    | <b>1997</b> | <b>6</b>     |
| 7         | New Bombay              | 1994        | 9            |
| 8         | Sholapur                | 1997        | 6            |
| 9         | Sangli                  | 2002        | 1            |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>KARNATAKA</b>        |             |              |
| 10        | Chikmaglur              | 2001        | 2            |
| 11        | Raichur                 | 2001        | 2            |
| <b>12</b> | <b><i>Bangalore</i></b> | <b>1987</b> | <b>16</b>    |
| 13        | Mandaya                 | 2000        | 3            |
| 14        | Kolar Gold Field (KGF)  | 1991        | 12           |
| <b>15</b> | <b><i>Mysore</i></b>    | <b>1989</b> | <b>14</b>    |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>TAMIL NADU</b>       |             |              |
| <b>16</b> | <b><i>Chennai</i></b>   | <b>1976</b> | <b>27</b>    |
| 17        | Coimbatore              | 1992        | 11           |
| <b>18</b> | <b><i>Madurai</i></b>   | <b>1988</b> | <b>15</b>    |
| 19        | Chengalpet              | 1988        | 15           |
| 20        | Theni                   | 1988        | 15           |
| 21        | Tirpathur               | 1994        | 9            |
| 22        | Tirunelveli             | 1999        | 4            |
| 23        | Tiruvalluvar            | 1987        | 16           |
| 24        | Vellore                 | 1997        | 6            |
| 25        | Kanchipuram             | 1988        | 15           |
| 26        | Tiruvannamalai          | 1999        | 4            |
| 27        | Trichy                  | 1999        | 4            |
| 28        | Villupuram              | 2001        | 2            |



|    |                       |             |           |
|----|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 29 | Cuddalore             | 2000        | 3         |
| 4  | <b>PONDICHERRY</b>    |             |           |
| 30 | Pondicherry           | 1993        | 10        |
| 31 | Karaikal              | 2001        | 2         |
| 5  | <b>ANDHRA PRADESH</b> |             |           |
| 32 | <b>Hyderabad</b>      | <b>1987</b> | <b>16</b> |
| 33 | Secunderabad          | 1999        | 4         |
| 34 | Guntoor               | 1999        | 4         |
| 35 | <b>Vijaywada</b>      | <b>1999</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| 36 | <b>Vizag</b>          | <b>1999</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| 37 | Warangal              | 1999        | 4         |
| 6  | <b>UTTAR PRADESH</b>  |             |           |
| 38 | <b>Kanpur</b>         | <b>1993</b> | <b>10</b> |
| 39 | <b>Lucknow</b>        | <b>1993</b> | <b>10</b> |
| 40 | <b>Banaras</b>        | <b>1999</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| 7  | <b>MADHYA PRADESH</b> |             |           |
| 41 | <b>Indore</b>         | <b>1996</b> | <b>7</b>  |
| 42 | <b>Bhopal</b>         | <b>1994</b> | <b>9</b>  |
| 43 | Bilaspur              | 1997        | 6         |
| 8  | <b>GUJARAT</b>        |             |           |
| 44 | <b>Vadodora</b>       | <b>1991</b> | <b>12</b> |
| 45 | <b>Ahmedabad</b>      | <b>1991</b> | <b>12</b> |
| 46 | <b>Surat</b>          | <b>1993</b> | <b>10</b> |
| 10 | <b>DELHI</b>          |             |           |
| 47 | Delhi                 | 1987        | 16        |
| 11 | <b>ORISSA</b>         |             |           |
| 48 | <b>Bhubhaneshwar</b>  | <b>2000</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| 49 | Cuttack               | 2000        | 3         |
| 50 | <b>Puri</b>           | <b>2000</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| 51 | Paradeep              | 2000        | 3         |
| 12 | <b>WEST BENGAL</b>    |             |           |
| 52 | <b>Kolkata</b>        | <b>2000</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| 53 | Kharagpur             | 2002        | 1         |
|    | TOTAL                 |             |           |



## SANITATION TASK FORCE AND MOUS WITH TRAINING AGENCIES

In March 2003, **the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)** (a national training institute for various levels of government officials), **Yashada** (a state-level training institute in Maharashtra government officials), the Water and Sanitation Programme of the World Bank and SPARC held a national conference on the Provision of Universal Sanitation in cities in India. The purpose of this meeting was to address the challenges – financial, institutional, community organising - of scaling up the provision of universal sanitation in India. Sixty delegates attended from the Government of India, municipalities, NGOs, training organisations and community groups across the country. Field visits were followed by extensive discussion and presentation on various community-sanitation options.

Two main outputs emerged from this conference. First, the signing of a declaration that committed to universal sanitation provision throughout the country by all the delegates. And second, a proposal to set up a Task Force led by the Joint Secretaries of the Union Ministry for Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation (who were in attendance) to examine how to spread this message of universal sanitation.

The Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)-Yashada-SPARC partnership represented, for the very first time, a comprehensive and organized support system for municipalities, state and local authorities to make universal sanitation for the poor a priority in their cities, and a structure in which all three organizations brought very specific skills and networks to the table.

Moreover, the Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation of the Government of India, in partnership with the UNDP, has set up the 'National Resource Centre for Urban Poverty (NRCUP).' The NRCUP will be jointly supported by RCUES, **All India Institute for Local Self Government (AIIISG)**, Mumbai and Yashada, Pune. Since the objectives of the NRCUP include enhancing the understanding on multiple dimensions of urban poverty and various types of vulnerabilities that the poor face, it is expected that it will have significant impact on promoting urban sanitation for the poor.



## **JAWAHARLAL NEHRU NATIONAL URBAN RENEWAL MISSION (NURM)**

### **The program:**

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) was launched in December, 2005. The Mission Statement focuses on "reforms driven, fast track, planned development of identified cities with focus on efficiency in urban infrastructure/services delivery mechanism, community participation and accountability of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) towards citizens". It has a Sub-Mission on Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) whose objectives are:

1. Focused attention to integrated development of Basic Services to the Urban Poor in the cities covered under the Mission.
2. Provision of Basic Services to Urban Poor including security of tenure at affordable prices, improved housing, water supply, sanitation and ensuring delivery through convergence of other already existing universal services of the Government for education, health and social security. Care will be taken to see that the urban poor are provided housing near their place of occupation.
3. Secure effective linkages between asset creation and asset management so that the Basic Services to the Urban Poor created in the cities, are not only maintained efficiently but also become self-sustaining over time.
4. Ensure adequate investment of funds to fulfill deficiencies in the Basic Services to the Urban Poor.
5. Scale up delivery of civic amenities and provision of utilities with emphasis on universal access to urban poor.

### **Coverage of cities:**

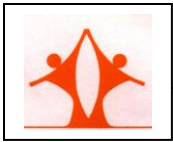
63 cities have been selected under the JNNURM and for most of them Central grants will be upto 80% of the project cost. Those cities not covered by JNNURM will be covered by Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP), which has similar provisions and conditionalities.

### **The Mission Components are:**

- i. integrated development of slums, i.e., housing and development of infrastructure projects in the slums in the identified cities.
- ii. Projects involving development/improvement/maintenance of basic services to the urban poor.
- iii. Slum improvement and rehabilitation projects.
- iv. Projects on water supply/sewerage/drainage, community toilets/baths, etc.
- v. Houses at affordable costs for slum dwellers/urban poor/EWS/LIG categories.
- vi. Construction and improvements of drains/storm water drains.
- vii. Environmental improvement of slums and solid waste management.
- viii. Street lighting.
- ix. Civic amenities, like, community halls, child care centers, etc.
- x. Operation and maintenance of assets created under this component.
- xi. Convergence of health, education and social security schemes for the urban poor.

### **Implications for SPARC and its alliance with NSDF and MM :**

For the alliance of SPARC, NSDF and MM, JNNURM and IHSDP represent opportunities to further the cause of the urban poor. It is the first time that the government of India has announced a major program for addressing both governance and investment in cities. This mission now forms the framework for all activities by the government but also international assistance to cities in India. Its focus on seeking state governments to take on vital issues of urban reform, make cities work more efficiently and devolve more power to them. Once the state government has committed to these reforms the city too has to agree to similar reforms and when it does, it can develop a city development strategy and seek government funds. Its vital for cities to demonstrate

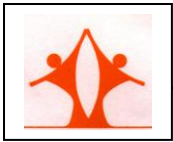


that they have sought the involvement and participation of the civil society involved. Already as we write this proposal, many projects suggested by the federations are being taken up by the cities.

Slum Enumerations done by the federations are now being sought by cities . For example, in Orissa, working with local partners, an offer has been made to the Government to do slum amenities surveys in the selected cities so these can become part of City Development Plans. The significance of these new initiatives, apart from the fact that assistance is linked to reforms, is that there is an attempt to institutionalize services to the poor in the city plans.. New Bombay with whom the federations undertook a survey of 40,000 households in slums will similarly form the basis of future slum upgrading activity, and Mumbai the survey and relocation suggested by pavement dwellers is also being discussed as this proposal gets written.

Sheela Patel Director SPARC being invited to be on both the PMO committee and the TAG for the ministry reflects the acknowledgement of the last two decades of seeking responses from the central government on policies related to the issue of urban poverty. This was acknowledged in the first review of the NURM by the Prime Minister on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 06, when he and the deputy chairman of the planning commission acknowledged that the government has very little experience on working on urban poverty issues and hopes to work closely with NGOs like SPARC to build up knowledge and create improved and refined strategies to address urban poverty. Already there is a request to bring NGOs together to address and expand issues that should be reflected upon, the need to develop strategies to provide tenure to squatters and improve basic amenities to the poor and creating workable financing strategies are some of the immediate activities suggested to the committee.

The prime minister was very emphatic that unless the issues of addressing sanitation and water for the poor and improving their living conditions was not the main focus NURM would lose its real value to the government.



## **LINKAGES WITH SHACK DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL (SDI) AND ASIAN COALITION FOR HOUSING RIGHTS (ACHR)**

### **Indian alliance and ACHR and SDI**

SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan were founder members of ACHR Asian Coalition of Housing Rights in 1988, whose secretariat is based in Bangkok and which works in 18 countries in Asia. In the last two decades of working within this network. The Indian alliance has learnt and helped others refine the strategies of savings and credit, initiated community exchanges and shared its various federation rituals. As part of ACHR the alliance links up with CITYNET a network of Asian cities based in Japan, and links to ESCAP on city development strategies.

It was through its linkages with ACHR that the Indian alliance started working in South Africa and with ACHR helped initiate many federations in Africa and created SDI in 1996 which now had federations in 22 countries in Asia Africa and Latin America. It is a method of helping communities in India federated with NSDF to develop a peer relationship with poor people in other countries and begin to explore linkages that are critical in this globalising world where many locations for learning advocacy and negotiations are not in the locality where you are but in global spaces.

SDI uniquely creates a space in the global for a where the communities often seen as beneficiaries and passive recipients of development can begin to explore a way to represent themselves and seek to help global actors begin to explore how to deal with local communities in the global spaces.

### **The federation model:**

More than anything else, the SDI process proposes a new organisational method to those seeking to organise the urban poor, one in which the poor are not locked in a locality but are assisted to federate so that their reach voice and choices can be placed legitimately and directly by them and their representatives to those who hold resources in national and international arenas.

Some unique impacts:

- Between 1996-2000, SDI has assisted many communities initiative a dialogue with their mayors and ministers many of whom came on exchanges to learn some successes in other countries.
- In 2001 SDI demonstrated how the poor show what they can produce at the Istanbul +5 in New York when they put up house models and toilets ) life size in the United nationals lobby which was appreciated by the Secretary General Kofii Anaan and many delegations.
- The global secure tenure campaign was initiated by UNHABITAT in Mumbai with SDI in 2002, then in Philippines and South Africa and Namibia and other countries.
- In many countries demolition shave been replaced by slum upgrading ( Cambodia) and relocation of railway track encroachers in Nairobi and Philippines developed their own strategy after seeing the work of the railway slum dwellers federation in India.



## EXPLORING RELATIONSHIP AND ASSOCIATIONS

It is clear that long before we begin to get peer NGOs to agree to what we are doing, much of the theory and practice of what we do has to be mainstreamed in the development education in various sectors of education. Apart from the following institutions which have sought to have an ongoing relationship with the alliance, almost 10-15 students each year from as many universities come to intern during their school requirements or vacations.

### **In 2004-5 several relationships were initiated for explorations:**

Hauser centre Kennedy school USA:

KTH Stockholm Sweden:

Royal Institute of Art and Architecture Stockholm Sweden

Berlin technical University Germany

Delft University Netherlands

Development Planning Unit University College London, UK

Michigan State University department of architecture USA

New School, New York, USA

### **The strategy for creating peer or horizontal linkages with teaching training and knowledge institutions.**

Most often these institutions or their staff and academics treat NGOs and CBO as research topics. That implies that their assumptions of what needs to be done and how and why cannot be challenged by the organisations, and this has huge implications when they form the parameters of how these organisations are viewed and assessed by donors for funding. Therefore the idea of partnership is where each sets of actors have something to give and something to take, both have equal voice and choice to negotiate for challenging each other's assumptions and hopefully that will add value to the knowledge and practice base of both sets of institutions.

Presently it is very hard to develop this relationship with corresponding Indian institutions, who have more rigid and conservative teaching and academic programmes and so far we have not met professors who are willing to take the risk to explore this kind of rather unconventional relationships. But given that we operate in India, our strategy is to consolidate our relationship with an International program, and then use that linkage to bring the Indian counterpart into that process.

### **Some basis or criteria for exploration of the relationships**

**Stage 1:** Agree to an annual process of interaction both in India and internationally, evaluate its impact to decide whether it should be an annual feature.

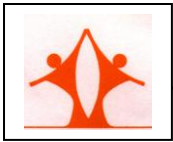
**Stage 2:** based on the individual linkages that move to a sound footing, seek to link them to an Indian counterpart.

**Stage 3:** Begin to network three or four institutions or more to begin a network of academic and practitioners.

**Some early explorations and possible outcomes.** Already all the above mentioned agencies have begun to explore the first phase. This will be completed and already we see some early possibilities of this being useful on both sides. For instance the Royal Institute of Art and architecture have completed their first visit and we will now begin to examine how the outputs can be developed.

### **Creation of federation based knowledge and processes:**

These interactions have huge impact on the SPARC and federation leadership. The discussion, sharing of ideas and possibilities, arguing about various options in an environment of debate and dialogue produce huge learning. When the Berlin



technical University student of architecture came, they worked with pavement dwellers. The challenge of designing densities to provide maximum houses while keeping the number of floors low and open spaces was discussed at great length and will form the basis of their presentation to us at the end of this semester as their project of the class.

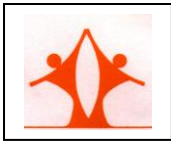
**Win win strategy and its implications.**

We are very concerned about the fact that the reality of how we work, why we make choices that we do and how we produce change is not well understood and we are constantly defending it in evaluations and with external review mechanisms. While these reviews are vital to help sharpen and deepen our practices, we feel we need a larger pool of scholars and academics who support and work with us to do this on an on-going basis. For us there is great value in such processes as they produce participatory outcomes that produce knowledge and new possibilities to explore.

When professors discuss with us the benefits they get, they feel their students get a reality infusion when they work with organisations like us where they see potential outcomes emerging from their thesis work. In a globalising world, there are very few urban organisations who work in the manner that the alliance does, and it provides the most realistic laboratory for students to start practising their skills.

We also find that out of this process we produce the most extraordinary advocates of this process. Many people from past such experiences have started working in development agencies, share their work with us, and often propose the alliance strategies in their work.





Annex: The Alliance of SPARC NSDF and Mahila Milan and the "Sadaak Chaap" strategy of working with street children.

**The real perception behind night shelter..... by Mr. Jockin**

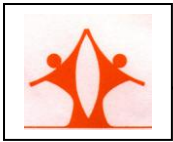
Jockin says it's the easiest form of development work imaginable. Just be with them and let them be themselves and let them help themselves. One day, the Night Shelter here at Churchgate will be run entirely by former alumni. No development workers in sight! It's quite a thought! ..... In the opinion of Jockin says those are great ideas. But they contain one major flaw. They all unconsciously assume that we can and should make that street child over into our own image and idea of what a street kid should be, what goals he should aim for, his vision of the "better" future. In other words, liberal social workers invariably try to make street kids in their own image. They try to give them middle-class values. And it simply doesn't work. Jockin says "it's perhaps the Original Sin in all development work." When started off - street children - we said 'We don't know what to do. But we know what we should not do.' All the things we shouldn't, we know very clearly: like not to have a regular house, not to have attendance, not to ask them to clean, not to have them bath - all those things which we said... the children will not like, don't like according to our understanding... "All what they should not do we know!"

".. Not taking a bath, not being clean is very hard for us middle-class adults to accept. This is what we feel to be important. But the street kid can turn round and say to you or me: "I don't feel, I don't feel anything like this. You feel for yourself. Where is the question of me? How can you tell me what I should do?" Imagine for a moment: You're a social worker, committed to helping street children. You meet a dirty, tired, hungry boy, obviously in distress. What's the first thing you'd do? Give him something to eat and then ask him: "Where's your father? How did you get here? Where did you come from?" Government and the welfare organisations then add their two cents worth: "Why don't you send them home? Why doesn't he have a house? Why can't he go and stay in a hostel? Why can't he go and stay in a hostel" Obviously, there's a huge difference between how we look at the poor, and how the poor see themselves.

Try to understand them on their own terms and help them accordingly. Then, maybe, and it's always a big maybe, something lasting might result. In the case of street kids that also means often remembering one other basic reality. (though not in the case of little Gopi) These are children who took a conscious decision to leave home, however unlikely this appears to us. Jockin says you have to start by respecting that:

"Now they will make a decision how to live: the decision which nobody can make..so they are the best decision-maker. You have to provide them a chance to decide about it, because you have to understand them, that they know how to make decisions!" The other great liberal, middle-class "myth" is that we should help and equip the child to fit back into society. Social work as rehabilitation, where the ideal model is how we conceive of society. We never really respect the child for what he is already doing now. Most of these children are at the bottom of the recycling industry, picking up scraps from street corners, from lanes. And I don't understand why we can't treat that as being an important job? Why is it that it is looked upon as something that needs to be changed?"

In Jockin's mind "Tolerant" doesn't mean "Anything goes", turning a blind eye to delinquent behavior. The Street Kids also have their own code of basic morality - stealing or drugs are simply not tolerated. Fine. So far, so good. It's the next bit I've always had a hard time understanding: Jockin himself treats them pretty firmly, sometimes in ways that make even me wince. I've seen him give kids a good thrashing with his belt. Or hang them up by their shirt from a nail on the wall. Treat the



***Street Kid with some basic human dignity. Firmness or "Tough love": yes. To show the limits of what he - Jockin - will tolerate. But respecting human dignity? Either I still don't understand, or I simply cannot agree. But I do agree that the best people to help them are the pavement dwellers.***

Literally "Stamp of the Street" in Hindi. Sadak Chhap is an organization of several thousand street kids in Bombay and other Indian cities, closely allied with Mahila Milan, the pavement dwellers organisation in Byculla. Sadak Chhap is run and organised by Jockin. Mr. Jockin had come on board with the National Slum Dwellers Federation, in the mid Eighties, that he started thinking seriously about organising the street kids. UNICEF asked SPARC/Mahila Milan and NSDF to do a survey of Street Children. Jockin got Celine involved. They both agreed that any organisation should be for the street kids and by the street kids.

The idea behind the running night shelter is you go to the street children, where they are....make them say what they want. Give them the technical support they need and let them get on with running their own lives." But it hides a real kicker. If most of us were asked to devise a program to help street kids, what would our goals be? Get them back into school. Teach them some skill so they can earn a living, and develop some self-esteem. And try and reunite them with their families.

Because they share a similar culture and experience. And they're not the enemy. They're the next step up on the ladder. It was starting when I was living in Byculla back in the early 1990s: Some Sadak Chhaps start helping pavement dwellers in their business. They get in the habit of, maybe, eating with the family. Then sharing their huts. And pretty soon, when they've got a steady income of their own, they settle down to a hut of their own. One Sadak Chhap on P D'Melo Road's had just got married to the daughter of a pavement family and gone to live with them. Now, many of the kids I knew and roamed the city with are married, with kids. Jockin says it's the easiest form of development work imaginable. Just be with them and let them be themselves and let them help themselves. One day, the Night Shelter here at Churchgate will be run entirely by former alumni. No development workers in sight! It's quite a thought!